

**Amesbury Public Schools**

**Tiered Focused Monitoring Report**

**Continuous Improvement and Monitoring Plan**

**For** **Group B Universal Standards**

**Tier Level** **1**

**Dates of Onsite Visit:** **January 25-26, 2021**

**Date of Final Report:** **April 1, 2021**



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Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education

During the 2020-2021 school year, Amesbury Public Schools participated in a Tiered Focused Monitoring Review conducted by the Department’s Office of Public School Monitoring. The purpose of the Tiered Focused Monitoring Review is to monitor compliance with regulatory requirements focusing on special education and civil rights.

Districts/charter schools are reviewed every three years through Tiered Focused Monitoring. This review process emphasizes elements most tied to student outcomes, and alternates the focus of each review on either Group A Universal Standards or Group B Universal Standards.

Group A Universal Standards address:

* Student identification
* IEP development
* Programming and support services
* Equal opportunity

Group B Universal Standards address:

* Licensure and professional development
* Parent/student/community engagement
* Facilities and classroom observations
* Oversight
* Time and learning
* Equal access

In addition, the Department has reserved a specific set of criteria, collectively known as Targeted Standards, employed when LEA or school-level risk assessment data indicate that there is a potential issue. Identified Targeted Standards are assessed in addition to the Universal Standards.

Universal Standards and Targeted Standards are aligned with the following regulations:

Special Education (SE)

* selected requirements from the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA-2004); the federal regulations promulgated under that Act at 34 CFR Part 300; M.G.L. c. 71B, and the Massachusetts Board of Education’s Special Education regulations (603 CMR 28.00), as amended effective March 1, 2007.

Civil Rights Methods of Administration and Other General Education Requirements (CR)

* selected federal civil rights requirements, including requirements under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; the Equal Educational Opportunities Act of 1974; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, together with selected state requirements under M.G.L. c. 76, Section 5 as amended by Chapter 199 of the Acts of 2011 and M.G.L. c. 269 §§ 17 through 19.
* selected requirements from the Massachusetts Board of Education’s Physical Restraint regulations (603 CMR 46.00).
* selected requirements from the Massachusetts Board of Education’s Student Learning Time regulations (603 CMR 27.00).
* various requirements under other federal and state laws.

Tiered Focused Monitoring allows for differentiated monitoring based on a district/charter school’s level of need, the Tiers are defined as follows:

LEAs in Tiers 1 and 2 have been determined to have no or low risk:

* Tier 1/Self-Directed Improvement: Data points indicate no concern on compliance and performance outcomes – meets requirements.
* Tier 2/Directed Improvement: No demonstrated risk in areas with close link to student outcomes – low risk.

LEAs in Tiers 3 and 4 have demonstrated greater risk:

* Tier 3/Corrective Action: Areas of concern include both compliance and student

outcomes – moderate risk.

* Tier 4/Cross-unit Support and Corrective Action: Areas of concern have profound effect on student outcomes and ongoing compliance – high risk.

The phases of Tiered Focused Monitoring for Amesbury Public Schools included:

Self-Assessment Phase:

* The district reviewed special education and civil rights documentation for required elements including document uploads.
* Upon completion of these two internal reviews, the district’s self-assessment was submitted to the Department for review.

On-site Verification Phase:

* Review of additional documents for special education or civil rights.
* Surveys of parents of students with disabilities: Parents of students with disabilities were sent a survey to solicit information regarding their experiences with the district’s implementation of special education programs, related services, and procedural requirements.
* Interviews of staff consistent with those criteria selected for onsite verification.
* Interviews of parent advisory council (PAC) representatives and other telephone interviews, as requested, by other parents or members of the general public.
* Observations of classrooms and other facilities: The onsite team visited a sample of classrooms and school facilities used in the delivery of programs and services to determine general levels of compliance with program requirements.

**Report: For Tier 1 & 2 Tiered Focused Monitoring Reviews**

Following the onsite visit, the onsite team holds an informal exit meeting to summarize its comments for the superintendent or charter school leader. Within approximately 20 business days of the onsite visit, the onsite chairperson forwards to the superintendent or charter school leader the findings from the Tiered Focused Monitoring Review. All districts/charter schools in Tiers 1 and 2, as part of the reporting process, then develop a Continuous Improvement and Monitoring Plan (CIMP) for any criteria receiving a rating of "Partially Implemented," "Not Implemented," and “Implementation in Progress.” The CIMP outlines an action plan, identifies the success metric, describes the measurement mechanism and provides a completion timeframe to bring those areas into compliance with the controlling statute or regulation. Districts and charter schools are expected to incorporate the CIMP actions into their district and school improvement plans, including their professional development plans.

# **DEFINITION OF COMPLIANCE RATINGS**

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| **Commendable** | Any requirement or aspect of a requirement implemented in an exemplary manner significantly beyond the requirements of law or regulation. |
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| **Implemented** | The requirement is substantially met in all important aspects. |
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| **Implementation in Progress** | This rating is used for criteria containing new or updated legal requirements and means that the district has implemented any old requirements contained in the criterion and is training staff or beginning to implement the new requirements in such a way that the onsite team anticipates that the new requirements will be implemented by the end of the school year. |
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| **Partially Implemented** | The requirement, in one or several important aspects, is not entirely met. |
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| **Not Implemented** | The requirement is totally or substantially not met. |
| **Not Applicable** | The requirement does not apply to the school district or charter school. |

Amesbury Public Schools

**SUMMARY OF COMPLIANCE CRITERIA RATINGS**

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|  | **Universal Standards**  **Special Education** | **Universal Standards**  **Civil Rights and Other General Education Requirements** |
| **IMPLEMENTED** | SE 15, SE 32, SE 35, SE 36, SE 50, SE 51, SE 52, SE 52A, SE 54, SE 55, SE 56 | CR 3, CR 7, CR 7A, CR 7B, CR 7C, CR 8, CR 10B, CR 12A, CR 16, CR 17A, CR 20, CR 21, CR 22, CR 23, CR 24 |
| **PARTIALLY**  **IMPLEMENTED** |  | CR 10A, CR 10C, CR 25 |
| **NOT IMPLEMENTED** |  |  |

The review instruments, that include the regulatory requirements specific to the special education and civil rights criteria referenced in the table above, can be found at [www.doe.mass.edu/psm/resources/default.html](http://www.doe.mass.edu/psm/resources/default.html).

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| **Rating:** Partially Implemented |
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| **Description of Current Issue:** A review of documents and administrative interviews indicated that the district's student code of conduct does not contain the district's responsibility to provide every student with an opportunity to make academic progress during the period of suspension whether in-school, out-of-school, or expulsion. Administrative interviews also indicated that the district does not have a code of conduct for teachers. |
| **LEA Outcome:** Amesbury Public Schools will ensure that the student code of conduct includes the district's responsibility to provide every student with an opportunity to make academic progress during the period of suspension whether in-school, out-of-school, or expulsion. In addition, the district will develop a code of conduct for teachers. |
| **Action Plan:**  By August 23, 2021, Amesbury Public Schools will submit the revised student code of conduct.  By August 23, 2021, Amesbury Public Schools will submit evidence of the development, distribution, and training for teaching staff on the teacher code of conduct. |
| **Success Metric:**  The student code of conduct will be revised and distributed to the school community. All teaching staff will receive and be trained on the teacher code of conduct.  Evidence:  \* Links to handbooks containing the revised student code of conduct  \* Copy of the teacher code of conduct or link to the online version  \* Documentation verifying training of all teaching staff on the teacher code of conduct, including an agenda and signed attendance sheets |
| **Measurement Mechanism:** Continuing after the completion deadline:  1) All student handbooks containing the student code of conduct will be reviewed annually to ensure the district's responsibility to provide every student with an opportunity to make academic progress during the period of suspension whether in-school, out-of-school, or expulsion is included.  2) All teaching staff will annually receive a copy of and training on the teacher code of conduct. |
| **Completion Timeframe:** 08/23/2021 |
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| **Improvement Area 2** |
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| **Criterion:** CR 10C - Student Discipline |
| **Rating:** Partially Implemented |
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| **Description of Current Issue:** A review of documents and administrative interviews indicated that the district does not have disciplinary procedures for in-school suspension. |
| **LEA Outcome:** Amesbury Public Schools will develop written in-school suspension procedures to be consistent with 603 CMR 53.10 and M.G.L. c. 71, sec. 37H3/4. |
| **Action Plan:**  By May 25, 2021, Amesbury Public Schools will submit written in-school suspension procedures consistent with 603 CMR 53.10 and M.G.L. c.71, sec. 37H3/4.  By August 23, 2021, the district will submit evidence of training for all school administrators on the in-school suspension procedures.  By August 23, 2021, the district will submit evidence of distributing the procedures to the school community via the student code of conduct. |
| **Success Metric:**  The written in-school suspension procedures will be developed and distributed to the school community. All school administrators will receive and be trained on the in-school suspension procedures.  Evidence:  \* Links to all school handbooks containing the revised disciplinary procedures  \* Documentation verifying training of all administrators on the in-school suspension procedures, including an agenda and signed attendance sheets |
| **Measurement Mechanism:** Continuing after the completion deadline:  Each school handbook containing the student code of conduct will be reviewed annually to ensure the district's in-school suspension procedures are included. |
| **Completion Timeframe:** 08/23/2021 |
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| **Improvement Area 3** |
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| **Criterion:** CR 25 - Institutional self-evaluation |
| **Rating:** Partially Implemented |
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| **Description of Current Issue:** A review of documents and administrative interviews indicated that although the district has recently assessed its student learning objectives and instructional practices to create a culture of achievement for all students, document review indicated that the district does not evaluate all aspects of its K-12 program annually to ensure that all students, regardless of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, limited English proficiency, sexual orientation, disability, or housing status, have equal access to all programs, including athletics and other extracurricular activities. |
| **LEA Outcome:** Amesbury Public Schools will develop a system to evaluate its K-12 academic, athletic, and extracurricular programs annually to ensure that all students, regardless of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, limited English proficiency, sexual orientation, disability, or housing status, have equal access to all programs. |
| **Action Plan:**  By May 25, 2021, Amesbury Public Schools will have established an Equity Team to conduct the annual review of equal access to all K-12 programs.  By May 25, 2021, Amesbury Public Schools will have developed the annual review process, which will include a plan identifying the data to be reviewed, the review instruments (online or paper surveys, focus groups, equity walks) to be used to collect student/parent/staff/administrator input, and the estimated annual timeline for collecting/reviewing/analyzing/posting the results.  By October 1, 2021, Amesbury Public Schools will have administered the review instruments, collected the data to be reviewed and analyzed the results. A summary of the results and an action plan to address any inequities found will be developed. |
| **Success Metric:**  The annual review of equal access to all K-12 programs will be completed and shared with the school community.  Evidence:  \* Names/roles of the Equity Team members and a schedule of proposed meeting dates  \* Description of the annual review process (data to be reviewed, instruments to be used, timeline for annual implementation, completion, and posting results)  \* Summary of results and action plan |
| **Measurement Mechanism:** Continuing after the completion deadline:  1) Each fall the Equity Team will examine the annual review process and revise as needed.  2) Each spring the Team will implement the selected review instruments, analyze the data collected, and develop an action plan to address inequities found.  3) Each summer the Team will post the results of the equal access review on the district's website with recommended actions to address any inequities for access. |
| **Completion Timeframe:** 10/01/2021 |
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