

**Ayer Shirley Regional School District**

**Tiered Focused Monitoring Report**

**Continuous Improvement and Monitoring Plan**

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

**Tier Level** **2**

**Date of Onsite Visit:** **December 14, 2021**

**Date of Final Report: May 9, 2021**



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**MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION**

**TIERED FOCUSED MONITORING REPORT**

**ayer SHirley Regional School District**

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**MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION**

# **TIERED FOCUS MONITORING REPORT INTRODUCTION**

During the 2021-2022 school year, Ayer Shirley Regional School District participated in a Tiered Focused Monitoring Review (TFM) conducted by the Department’s Office of Public School Monitoring (PSM). The purpose of the Tiered Focused Monitoring Review is to monitor compliance with regulatory requirements focusing on special education and civil rights.

Each school district, charter school, vocational school, and virtual school undergoes a Tiered Focused Monitoring Review every three years. The statewide Tiered Focused Monitoring cycle is posted at <<https://www.doe.mass.edu/psm/tfm/6yrcycle.html>>.

Regularly monitored standards are divided into two groups, known as Group A Universal Standards and Group B Universal Standards. Districts and schools are monitored on an alternate set of Universal Standards every three years.

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

The Department has also reserved a specific set of criteria, collectively known as Targeted Standards, employed if LEA or school level risk assessment data indicate there is a potential issue; the 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 the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA); 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.

**PSM Team:**

Depending upon the size of a school district and the number of special education programs to be reviewed, a team of one to four Department staff members conducts onsite activities over one to five days in a school district or charter school.

**Tier Level:**

The level of monitoring varies based on tier designation, aligning supports to the level of need and ensuring that districts and schools with greater needs receive appropriate supports to make sustained improvements.

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| Tier | Title | Description | Level of Risk |
| 1 | Self-Directed Improvement | Data points indicate no concern on compliance and student outcomes. | Meets requirements |
| 2 | Directed Improvement | No demonstrated risk in areas with close link to student outcomes. | Low |
| 3 | Corrective Action | Areas of concern include both compliance and student outcomes. | Moderate |
| 4 | Cross-unit Support and Corrective Action | Areas of concern have a profound effect on student outcomes and ongoing compliance. | High |

For the 2021-2022 school year, the tier assignments are based on:

* Five-year cohort graduation rate for students with disabilities
* Public School Monitoring compliance data from the previous review
* Problem Resolution System data, specifically findings of noncompliance
* Special education State Performance Plan/Annual Performance Reports (SPP/APR) compliance Indicator data for Indicators 11, 12, and 13 (Group A only)
* Indicator 11: Child Find
* Indicator 12: Early Childhood Transition
* Indicator 13: Secondary Transition
* Special education SPP/APR performance Indicator data for Indicators 5 & 6
* Indicator 5: Education Environments (6-21)
* Indicator 6: Preschool Environments
* Significant Disproportionality data 2019-2020 & 2020-2021

Tiering adjustments may be made for districts engaged in work with the Department’s Statewide System of Support and have schools identified as requiring assistance and intervention. Tiering assignments may also be adjusted for schools and districts unable to remedy noncompliance within one year of the previous TFM review, as well as for charter schools requiring additional oversight based on conditions of their charter.

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

Following the onsite visit, the PSM team holds an informal exit meeting to summarize the review for the superintendent or charter school leader. Within approximately 20 business days of the onsite visit, the chairperson forwards the TFM Feedback Summary that includes findings from the Tiered Focused Monitoring Review to the superintendent or charter school leader.

As part of the reporting process, all districts/charter schools in Tiers 1 and 2, 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 is due to the Department within 20 business days after the issuance of the Feedback Summary and is subject to the Department’s review and approval.

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. Department staff provide support and assistance to districts and charter schools on the development of a CIMP.

Once the CIMP is approved, it is issued as the Final Report.

Department staff also provide ongoing technical assistance as the school or district is implementing the approved CIMP. **School districts and charter schools must demonstrate effective resolution of noncompliance identified by the Department as soon as possible but in no case later than one year from the issuance of the Department’s Feedback Summary.**

For more information regarding the TFM Review Process, including district and parent resources, please visit < <https://www.doe.mass.edu/psm/tfm/default.html>>.

# **TIERED FOCUSED MONITORING FINAL REPORT**

**Ayer Shirley Regional School District**

The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education conducted a Tiered Focused Monitoring Review in the Ayer Shirley Regional School District during the week of December 13, 2021, to evaluate the implementation of Group B Universal Standards in the program areas of special education, civil rights, and other related general education requirements. The team appreciated the opportunity to interview staff and parents, to observe classroom facilities, and to review the programs underway in the district.

In preparing this report, the team reviewed extensive written documentation regarding the operation of the district's programs, together with information gathered by means of the following Department program review methods:

**Self-Assessment Phase:**

* District review of special education and civil rights documentation for required elements including document uploads.
* Upon completion of the self-assessment, the district submitted the data to the Department for review.

**On-site Verification Phase:**

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

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| The Tiered Focused Monitoring Report includes those criteria that were found by the team to be implemented in a “Commendable” manner, as well as criteria receiving a rating of "Partially Implemented," "Not Implemented," and “Implementation in Progress.” (Refer to the “Definition of Compliance Ratings” section of the report.) The Tiered Focused Monitoring Reports do not include criteria receiving a rating of “Implemented” or “Not Applicable.” This will allow the district/school and the Department to focus their efforts on those areas requiring corrective action. Districts are expected to incorporate the corrective actions into their district and school improvement plans, including their professional development plans. |
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# **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; 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. |

**Ayer Shirley Regional School District**

# **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 54, SE 55, SE 56 | CR 3, CR 7A, CR 7B, CR 7C, CR 8, CR 10C, CR 12A, CR 16, CR 20, CR 21, CR 22, CR 23,  CR 24, CR 25 |
| **PARTIALLY**  **IMPLEMENTED** |  | CR 7, CR 10A, CR 10B, CR 17A |
| **NOT**  **IMPLEMENTED** | None |  |
| **NOT**  **APPLICABLE** | SE 52A |  |

The full list of criteria and information regarding the requirements can be found in Appendix B of the Tiered Focused Monitoring Toolkit available at < <https://www.doe.mass.edu/psm/resources/tfm-toolkit.docx>>.

| **CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT AND MONITORING PLAN** |
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| **Improvement Area** **1** |
| **Criterion:** CR 7 - Information to be translated into languages other than English |
| **Rating:** Partially Implemented |
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| **Description of Current Issue:** A review of documents and staff interviews indicated that the district translates written materials, including student handbooks, standardized test results, IEPs, and promotional materials into the major languages spoken by parents or guardians whose primary language is not English. However, district procedures do not ensure that information provided to students about activities, responsibilities, academic standards, extracurricular activities, and school events is provided to English Learners and to their parents/guardians in a language and mode of communication that they understand. |
| **LEA Outcome:** The district will ensure that information provided to English Learners (ELs) and their parents/guardians about activities, responsibilities, academic standards, extracurricular activities, and school events is always provided in a language and mode of communication that they understand. |
| **Action Plan:** By June 1, 2022, the district will submit written procedures on providing information to ELs and their parents/guardians in a language and mode of communication that they understand. The district will also submit a description of an internal monitoring system to track staff training and document translations.  By September 1, 2022, the district will submit evidence that all staff have received training on the new translation procedures. Also, the district will submit a sample of materials related to activities, responsibilities, academic standards, extracurricular activities, and/or school events that have been provided in a language and mode of communication that ELs and their parents/guardians understand. |
| **Success Metric:** By September 2022 and beyond, all staff will consistently implement the procedures, ensuring that ELs and their parent/guardians receive information in a language and mode of communication they understand.  Evidence:   * New procedures * Description of the internal monitoring system * Agendas, training materials, and attendance sheets * Sample of translated communications concerning activities, responsibilities, academic standards, extracurricular activities, and school events |
| **Measurement Mechanism:** The Assistant Superintendent and Director of Equity and School Counseling will implement the internal monitoring system and provide appropriate training to ensure staff provide ELs and their parent/guardians with communications concerning activities, responsibilities, academic standards, extracurricular activities, and school events in a language and mode of communication that they understand. |
| **Completion Timeframe:** 09/01/2022 |
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| **Improvement Area 2** |
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| **Criterion:** CR 10A - Student handbooks and codes of conduct |
| **Rating:** Partially Implemented |
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| **Description of Current Issue:** A review of documents and staff interviews indicated that the district recently updated their student discipline policy and procedures to include all required elements under M.G.L. c. 71, section 37H ¾; however, these policies and procedures are not included in the Ayer Shirley Regional School District Preschool - Grade 8 Handbook and the Ayer Shirley Regional High School Handbook. |
| **LEA Outcome:** All handbooks will include the updated student discipline policy and procedures that address the required elements under M.G.L. c. 71, section 37H¾. |
| **Action Plan:** By June 1, 2022, the district will submit revised handbooks that include the updated student discipline policy and procedures.  By September 1, 2022, the district will submit evidence of staff training on the student discipline policy and procedures. The district will submit evidence that the updated student handbooks have been made available to the school community. |
| **Success Metric:** By September 2022 and beyond, the Ayer Shirley Regional School District Preschool - Grade 8 Handbook and the Ayer Shirley Regional High School Handbook will contain all required policy and procedural requirements under M.G.L. c. 71, section 37H¾.  Evidence:   * Updated handbooks * Agendas, training materials, and attendance sheets * Evidence of dissemination |
| **Measurement Mechanism:** On an annual basis, the Assistant Superintendent will review the district's student discipline procedures in the student handbooks and revise them as necessary. Appropriate training will be provided to address any changes. |
| **Completion Timeframe:** 09/01/2022 |
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| **Improvement Area 3** |
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| **Criterion:** CR 10B - Bullying Intervention and Prevention |
| **Rating:** Partially Implemented |
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| **Description of Current Issue:** A review of documents and staff interviews indicated that the districts Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan and the Ayer Shirley Regional High School Handbook do not include a member of the school staff as a potential "aggressor" or "perpetrator" in the definition of bullying, as required under M.G.L. c. 71, section 37O. |
| **LEA Outcome:** The district's Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan (Plan) and the high school handbook will be updated to include a member of the school staff as a potential "aggressor" or "perpetrator" in the definition of bullying, as required under M.G.L. c. 71, section 37O. |
| **Action Plan:** By June 1, 2022, the district will submit the updated Plan and high school handbook to include a member of the school staff as a potential "aggressor" or "perpetrator" in the definition of bullying.  By September 1, 2022, the district will submit evidence of staff training on the updated Plan. The district will submit evidence that the updated Plan and student handbooks have been made available to the school community. |
| **Success Metric:** By September 2022 and beyond, the district's Plan and high school handbook will be updated to include a member of the school staff as a potential "aggressor" or "perpetrator."  Evidence:   * Updated Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan * Updated high school student handbook * Agendas, training materials, and attendance sheets * Evidence of dissemination |
| **Measurement Mechanism:** On an annual basis, the Assistant Superintendent will review the district's Plan and handbooks and revise them as necessary. Appropriate training will be provided to address any changes. |
| **Completion Timeframe:** 09/01/2022 |
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| **Improvement Area 4** |
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| **Criterion:** CR 17A - Use of physical restraint on any student enrolled in a publicly-funded education program |
| **Rating:** Partially Implemented |
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| **Description of Current Issue:** A review of documents and staff interviews indicated that although the district has a restraint prevention and behavior support policy (JKAA), they have not developed procedures with methods for preventing student violence, self-injurious behavior and suicide; methods for engaging parents and youth in discussions about restraint prevention and use; a description and explanation of the program's alternatives to physical restraint; and methods of physical restraint in emergency situations. |
| **LEA Outcome:** The district will develop procedures that include methods for preventing student violence, self-injurious behavior and suicide; methods for engaging parents and youth in discussion about restraint prevention and use; a description and explanation of the program's alternatives to physical restraint; and methods of physical restraint in emergency situations. |
| **Action Plan:** By June 1, 2022, the district will submit physical restraint prevention and behavior support procedures that address all requirements under 603 CMR 46.04.  By September 1, 2022, the district will submit evidence of staff training on the physical restraint prevention and behavior support procedures. The district will also submit evidence that the revised procedures have been made available to members of the school community. |
| **Success Metric:** By September 2022 and beyond, the district's procedures will contain all elements required under 603 CMR 46.04. The district will train all staff on the procedures annually.  Evidence:   * Procedures for physical restraint prevention and behavior support * Agendas, training materials, and attendance sheets * Evidence of dissemination to the school community |
| **Measurement Mechanism:** On an annual basis, the Assistant Superintendent will review the restraint prevention and behavior support procedures and revise as necessary. The Assistant Superintendent will also ensure that all mandated training materials are updated and that all staff are trained annually on the most current restraint regulations. |
| **Completion Timeframe:** 09/01/2022 |
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