

**Ashburnham-Westminster**

**Targeted and Focused Monitoring Report**

**Review Dates:** **March 31, 2025 - April 4, 2025**

**Date of Final Report:** **05/02/2025**



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Interim Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education

During the 2024-2025 school year, Ashburnham-Westminster participated in a Targeted and Focused Monitoring Review conducted by the Department’s Office of Language Acquisition (OLA). The purpose of the Targeted and Focused Monitoring Review is to monitor compliance with regulatory requirements focusing on English Learner Education.

District/charter schools are reviewed every six years through Targeted and Focused Monitoring. There are 12 ELE criteria that target implementation of the requirements related to ELE programs under state and federal law and regulations:

ELE 1: Annual English Language Proficiency Assessment

ELE 2: State Accountability Assessment

ELE 3: Initial Identification of ELs and FELs

ELE 5: ELE Program and Services

ELE 6: Program Exit and Readiness

ELE 7: Parent Involvement

ELE 8: Declining Entry to a Program

ELE 10: Parental Notification

ELE 13: Fallow-up Support

ELE 14: Licensure Requirements

ELE 15: Professional Development Requirements

ELE 18: Records of ELs

The monitoring process differs depending on the thorough data analysis the Department conducts.

The review process includes the following:

1. Self-Assessment
* District reviews English Learner Education documentation for required elements including document uploads.
* District reviews a sample of English learner (EL) student records selected across grade levels and EL focus areas such as opt-out students, former ELs and students and/or parents who need translation and/or interpretation.
* Upon completion of these two internal reviews, the district’s self-assessment is submitted to the Department for review.
1. Verification
* Review of EL student records: The Department may select a sample of student records and request certain documentation to be uploaded to the WBMS as evidence of implementation of the ELE criteria.
* Review of additional documents for English Learner Education
* Surveys of parents of ELs: Parents of ELs are sent a survey that solicits information regarding their experiences with the district’s implementation of English Learner Education program(s), related services, and procedural requirements.
* Interviews of staff
* Classroom observations as applicable
* Parent and student focus groups as applicable

**Report:**

Within approximately 20 business days of the onsite visit, the onsite chairperson will forward to the superintendent or charter school leader the findings from the Targeted and Focused Monitoring Review. Within 10 business days of receipt of the findings, the district reviews and comments on the findings for factual accuracy before they are finalized. After the report is finalized, districts 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. District 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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| **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. |

For more information on the Targeted and Focused Monitoring approach, please visit the Department’s [website](https://www.doe.mass.edu/ele/cpr/default.html).

Ashburnham-Westminster

**SUMMARY OF COMPLIANCE CRITERIA RATINGS**

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|  | **English Learner Education Requirements** |
| **IMPLEMENTED** | ELE 1, ELE 2, ELE 8, ELE 10, ELE 18 |
| **PARTIALLY****IMPLEMENTED** | ELE 3, ELE 5, ELE 6, ELE 7, ELE 13, ELE 14, ELE 15 |

| **Improvement Area** **1** |
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| **Criterion:** ELE 3 - Initial Identification of ELs and FELs |
| **Rating:** Partially Implemented |
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| **Description of Current Issue:** Staff interviews and documentation indicate that while the school has written initial identification policies and procedures for the identification of English learners, there are no policies and procedures in place for the identification of Former English Learners. The Department concludes that the district may not properly identify students who need English language support and the current written initial identification procedures are not in compliance with 603 CMR 14.02(1) that requires districts and charter schools to establish procedures in accordance with the Department guidelines. |

| **Improvement Area 2** |
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| **Criterion:** ELE 5 - Program Placement and Structure |
| **Rating:** Partially Implemented |
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| **Description of Current Issue:** Interviews, documentation, and a review of student records indicate that the district lacks the capacity to effectively provide essential components of an ESL program, such as providing all English Learners with regular, structured ESL instruction.The review also indicated that the district does not consistently support an ESL curriculum across all grades. Literacy and reading programs and materials do not replace an ESL curriculum which is integral to an effective ELE program in which ELs of all grades and proficiency levels become English proficient at a rapid pace. Interviews with staff members further indicated that when students are scheduled to receive ESL instruction through a push-in model, English language development doesn't always happen. In many cases, the ESL teacher pushing in assists the content teacher in teaching content standards but does not provide explicit ESL instruction. The district does not provide structured support for SEI instruction, such as systematic co-planning time or clear expectations for SEI strategies and language objectives from evaluators. These practices do not align with the requirements of G.L. c. 71A, 7, and 603 CMR 14.04(3), which mandate that SEI programs deliver content instruction that is comprehensible and supports English language development. Interviews with staff members indicated that the district has two separate grading systems - one for English Learners at developing levels of English proficiency and one for non-English Learners and English Learners at higher levels of proficiency. The Department determines that ELs with low English proficiency levels have inequitable access to the district curriculum and grade level standards and they are not expected to show mastery of grade level standards as their English-speaking peers. Finally, district documentations, a review of student records, and conversations with staff members indicated that the district has not adopted procedures to identify English learners who do not meet English proficiency benchmarks and has not established a process for the district to: (i) identify areas in which identified English learners needs improvement and establish personalized goals for the identified English learners to attain English proficiency; (ii) assess and track the progress of English learners in the identified areas of improvement; (iii) review resources and services available to identified English learners that may assist said learners in the identified areas of improvement; and (iv) incorporate input from the parents or legal guardian of the identified English learner as required under M.G.L. c. 71A, ? 11. |

| **Improvement Area 3** |
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| **Criterion:** ELE 6 - Program Exit and Readiness |
| **Rating:** Partially Implemented |
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| **Description of Current Issue:** Interviews with staff members and a review of student records indicated that the district has two sets of exit criteria by which students may be reclassified. Although district documentation show a legally compliant set of exit criteria, in practice, some students are exempted from the exit criteria. The district's current reclassification procedures are not in compliance with 603 CMR 14.02 that requires districts to establish exit criteria in accordance with the Department guidelines.Furthermore, a review of district documentation found that students who meet the exit criteria of an overall ACCESS score of 4.2 and a composite literacy score of 3.9 are eligible for reclassification, whereas state guidance prescribes that’s students with those qualifying scores must exit the program. |

| **Improvement Area 4** |
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| **Criterion:** ELE 7 - Parent Involvement |
| **Rating:** Partially Implemented |
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| **Description of Current Issue:** Interviews indicated that although the district provides translated documents and interpretation for families who need them, it does not have policies and procedures in place to ensure that staff members may identify which families have requested language assistance. |

| **Improvement Area 5** |
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| **Criterion:** ELE 13 - Follow-up Support |
| **Rating:** Partially Implemented |
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| **Description of Current Issue:** A review of student records and conversations with staff members indicated that although the district has policies and procedures in place to monitor Former English Learners (FELs) for four years, the district has no mechanism to provide support to FELs when they struggle to make progress in the general curriculum. |

| **Improvement Area 6** |
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| **Criterion:** ELE 14 - Licensure Requirements |
| **Rating:** Partially Implemented |
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| **Description of Current Issue:** SEI Endorsement data indicated that most core academic teachers assigned to provide sheltered English instruction to English learners hold the SEI Teacher Endorsement, but some do not. Similarly, most administrators assigned to supervise or evaluate core academic teachers who provide sheltered English instruction to English learners hold the SEI Administrator Endorsement, but some do not. |

| **Improvement Area 7** |
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| **Criterion:** ELE 15 - Professional Development Requirements |
| **Rating:** Partially Implemented |
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| **Description of Current Issue:** A review of documentation reveals that district professional development plans do not include district level activities for teachers to earn 15 PDPs related to SEI, English as a Second Language or Bilingual Education in order to be eligible to renew their licenses. The Department concludes that this practice is not in compliance with 603 CMR 44.06(1) which requires districts to develop a professional development plan and provide training for teachers in second language acquisition techniques for the re-certification of teachers and administrators. |