

# PUBLIC SCHOOL MONITORING

## PARENT RESOURCES

### FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

[What is Public School Monitoring?](#)

[What is Tiered Focused Monitoring?](#)

[What is Group A and Group B TFM Review?](#)

[Where do I find my district/school's report?](#)

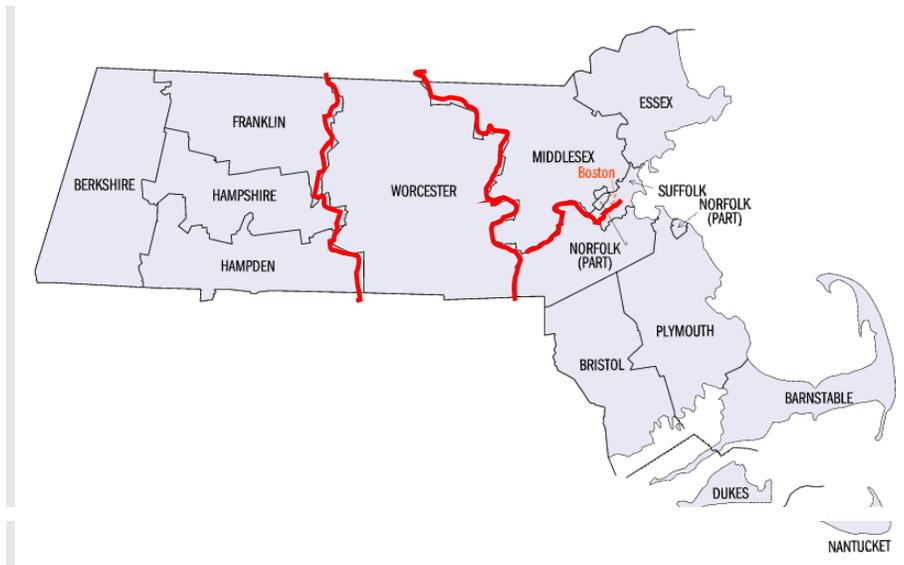
[What role do parents/guardians play in the Tiered Focused Monitoring Review?](#)

### What is Public School Monitoring?

The Office of Public School Monitoring (PSM) is a unit within the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE). This office is made up of monitoring teams that work with school districts, charter schools, vocational schools, and virtual schools to ensure that the many different state and federal laws and regulations for special education and civil rights are being followed.

There are four PSM monitoring teams, with each team focused on one of the four regions of the state: Western, Central, Southeast, and Metro/Northeast.

[PSM Contact Page](#)



This is important work. The PSM teams collaborate with districts and schools to promote positive outcomes for all students. This is accomplished through a process called Tiered Focused Monitoring (TFM).

## What is Tiered Focused Monitoring?

[Tiered Focused Monitoring \(TFM\)](#) is the review of select policies, procedures, student records and building facilities to see if districts and schools are in compliance with, or following, the state and federal laws and regulations for special education and civil rights. This process allows the Office of Public School Monitoring (PSM) to provide districts and schools with support and technical assistance to further benefit students. PSM reviews all school districts, charter schools, vocational schools, and virtual schools across the state [every three years](#). There are five parts of a TFM review:

- district self-assessment
- parent survey
- PSM on-site visit
- analysis and report
- district support

Please see the [Parent Orientation](#) for details.

Examples of special education areas reviewed through a TFM Review include:

- Assessments
- Determination of eligibility for special education
- Individualized Education Program (IEP)
- IEP development and implementation
- Programs and Services
- Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SEPAC)

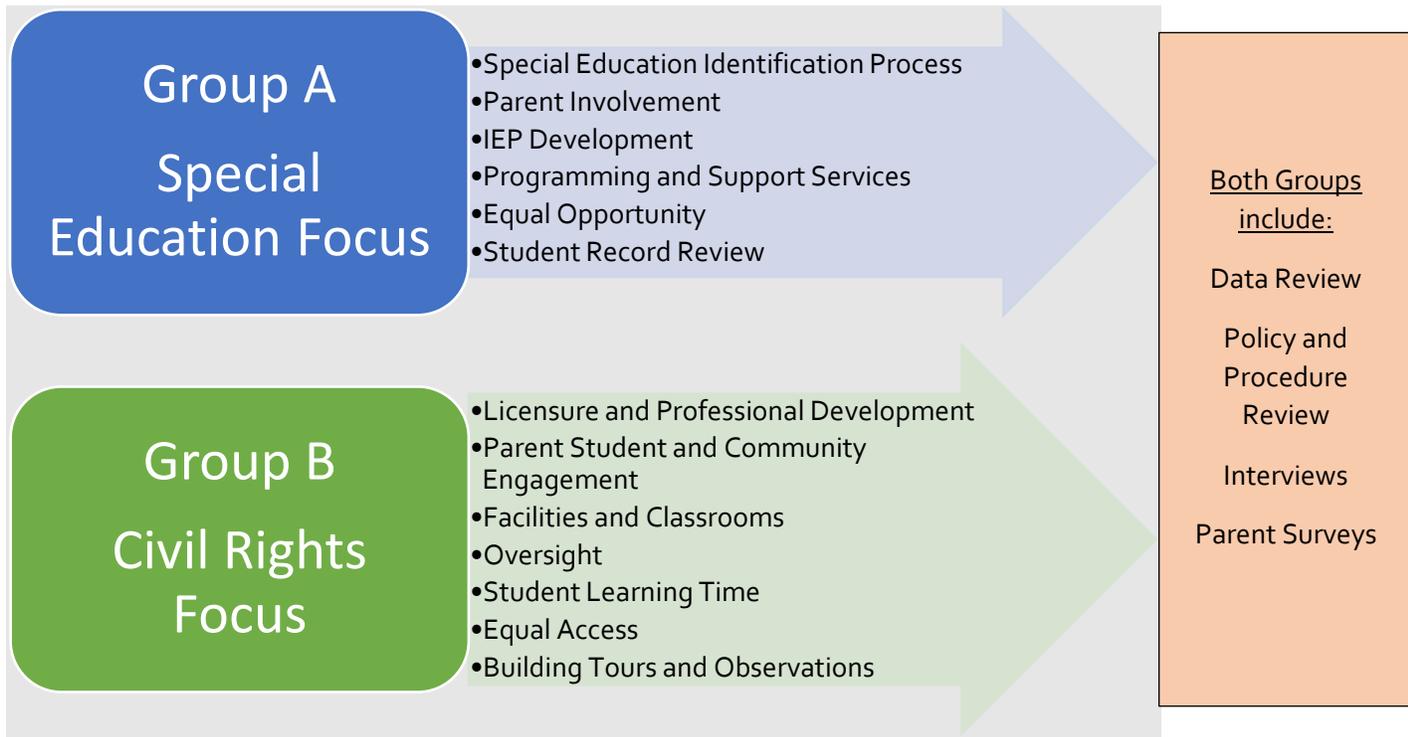
Examples of civil rights policies and procedures reviewed include:

- Bullying
- Student discipline
- Physical restraint
- Equal access to school programs for all students
- Non-Discrimination

There are two types of TFM Reviews called Group A and Group B (See next section).

## What is Group A and Group B TFM Review?

Tiered Focused Monitoring Reviews are broken into two groups, Group A and Group B. Each group has a different monitoring focus and different review activities. Regardless of the group, the reviews always include data review, policy and procedure review, school community interviews, and parent surveys.



## Where do I find my district/school's report?

At the conclusion of the Tiered Focused Monitoring Review, Public School Monitoring develops a report. The report further supports districts and schools in directing time and resources to activities that will improve student outcomes. The report is available to the public through the [PSM webpage](#).

## What role do parents/guardians play in the Tiered Focused Monitoring Review?

Parent involvement is an important part of the Tiered Focused Monitoring (TFM) Review process. There are several ways parents are involved:

- **Parent Orientation**

A member of The Office of Public School Monitoring (PSM) presents a Parent Orientation for districts and schools in a Group A review. The orientation provides a general overview of the Tiered Focused Monitoring Review process. PSM organizes the parent orientation with the district or school and the SEPAC at a time and location that works for parents. A copy of the Parent Orientation can be found [here](#).
- **Parent Surveys**

PSM sends two anonymous electronic surveys. Surveys are available by email in English, Spanish, and Portuguese and in 14 other languages by mail. Surveys are sent before a PSM team visits a district or school.

  - **Special Education Parent Survey**

This survey is sent to all parents with a student receiving special education in the district or school. It focuses on the special education process.
  - **Equity and Access Parent Survey**

This survey is sent to parents who have students in grades 3, 7, and 11. It focuses on a student's opportunities to access school activities, such as extracurricular events, and a student's experiences in the school setting.
- **Parent Telephone Interview**

Parents may request a telephone interview. The district or school publishes a press release to notify parents and the public when a PSM team will be in the district or school to carry out monitoring activities. This is called the PSM on-site visit. Contact information (email and direct telephone) for a PSM member is included in the press release.
- **Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SEPAC) Member Interview**

During the PSM on-site visit, a PSM team member interviews a parent involved in the district's or school's (SEPAC).

### General Resources

Scope of Tiered Focused Monitoring: <http://www.doe.mass.edu/psm/tfm/default.html>  
Parent Information on Special Education: <http://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/parents.html>  
Special Education Links and Resources: <http://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/links.html>

**The Office of Public School Monitoring** is committed to ensuring that parents have the information they need about the Tiered Focused Monitoring Review process, what we do, and how our reviews impact the education of your students. If you have questions or there are areas you'd like to see included here, please contact us at [publicschoolmonitoring@doe.mass.edu](mailto:publicschoolmonitoring@doe.mass.edu).

You can also call the supervisors of each region:

Michelle Poulin, Western Region, 413-314-6710

Amy Paulin, Central Region, 781-338-3737

Jane Ewing, Metro/Northeast Region, 781-338-3741

Alexis Glikman, Southeast Region, 781-338-3702

**The Problem Resolution System (PRS)** is the Department's process for addressing complaints from the public about students' educational rights and the legal requirements for education. PRS staff are available by phone and email between 8:45 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. every business day to discuss your issues, answer your questions, and if needed, to help you to file a complaint with the Department.

Website: <http://www.doe.mass.edu/prs/>

Main Telephone: 781-338-3700

TTY: N.E.T. Relay: 1-800-439-2370

Fax: 781-338-3710

Compliance Email: [compliance@doe.mass.edu](mailto:compliance@doe.mass.edu)

COVID19 Email: [COVID19K12ParentInfo@mass.gov](mailto:COVID19K12ParentInfo@mass.gov)