

**Dover-Sherborn Public Schools**

**Tiered Focused Monitoring Report**

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

**Tier Level** **2**

**Date of Onsite Visit:** **February 6, 2020**

**Date of Final Report:** **July 7, 2020**



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Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education

During the 2019-2020 school year, Dover-Sherborn 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 and 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 Dover-Sherborn Public Schools included:

Self-Assessment Phase:

* District reviewed special education and civil rights documentation for required elements including document uploads.
* Upon completion of this internal review, 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.
* Interview of a parent advisory council (PAC) representative 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. Within approximately 20 business days of the onsite visit, the onsite chairperson forwards to the superintendent 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. |
| **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. |

**Dover-Sherborn 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 52, SE 52A, SE 54,  SE 55, SE 56 | CR 3, CR 7, CR 7A,  CR 7B, CR 7C, CR 10A, CR 12A, CR 16, CR 20, CR 21, CR 22, CR 23, CR 24 |
| **PARTIALLY**  **IMPLEMENTED** | SE 51 | CR 10B, CR 10C,  CR 17A, CR 25 |
| **NOT IMPLEMENTED** |  |  |

The Tiered Focused Monitoring Toolkit, which includes the regulatory requirements specific to the special education and civil rights criteria referenced in the table above, can be found at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/psm/resources/default.html>.

| **Improvement Area** **1** |
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| **Criterion:** SE 51 - Appropriate special education teacher licensure |
| **Rating:** Partially Implemented |
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| **Description of Current Issue:** Document review and interviews indicated that a special education class located at Dover-Sherborn Middle School is currently staffed by paraprofessionals who provide direct special education services. During one block of the school schedule, a grouping of seven students is divided into two separate classrooms which are located down the hall from one another. While there is a licensed special education teacher assigned to both rooms, this individual splits their time between the two groupings to monitor instruction, leaving each paraprofessional unsupervised for extended periods of time. |
| **LEA Outcome:** The district will address the identified grouping concern by keeping students together in one classroom with the licensed special education teacher and paraprofessional support. The district will ensure that 100% of special education teachers working in the district are appropriately licensed or have an approved waiver. The district will also ensure that all special education classes and services are staffed by licensed special education teachers. |
| **Action Plan:** By August 1, 2020, the district will submit a description of an internal monitoring process developed to ensure that all teachers providing direct special education services are appropriately licensed. The process will include periodic review of teacher licensure status and a quarterly review of special education service delivery schedules.  By September 15, 2020, the district will submit a statement of assurance indicating that the identified teacher no longer splits their time between the two groups of students. Instead, the student groups will remain in one space with the licensed teacher. |
| **Success Metric:** By September 2020 and beyond, all eligible students will receive direct special education services from licensed special education teachers.  Evidence:  1. Description of internal monitoring process  2. Statement of assurance |
| **Measurement Mechanism:** The Director of Student Services will ensure all eligible students are taught by special education teachers who are appropriately licensed by conducting periodic reviews of licensure status and completion of the annual district performance evaluations. The district will further ensure all new faculty have appropriate certification or waiver upon hire. Special education service delivery schedules will be reviewed quarterly for compliance. |
| **Completion Timeframe:** 09/15/2020 |
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| **Improvement Area 2** |
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| **Criterion:** CR 10B - Bullying Intervention and Prevention |
| **Rating:** Partially Implemented |
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| **Description of Current Issue:** Document review indicated that the district's employee handbook does not contain the relevant sections of the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan relating to the duties of faculty and staff and relevant sections addressing the bullying of students by a school staff member. |
| **LEA Outcome:** The Dover Sherborn (DS) employee handbook will be updated to include the relevant sections of the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan, including the duties of faculty and staff and relevant sections addressing the bullying of students by a school staff member. |
| **Action Plan:** By September 15, 2020, the district will submit the updated employee handbook. The updates will include information relating to the duties of faculty and staff and relevant sections addressing the bullying of students by a school staff member.  By November 1, 2020, the district will submit evidence that the employee handbook updates were approved by the superintendent and re-posted on the district website.  By November 1, 2020, the district will submit evidence demonstrating that the updated employee handbook was disseminated to all staff.  By November 1, 2020, the district will submit evidence demonstrating that each DS building principal has trained staff members on the topic of staff-to-student bullying and reviewed the updated sections of the employee handbook. Evidence will include an agenda and sign-in sheet. |
| **Success Metric:** By November 2020 and beyond, the DS employee handbook will include the required components of the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan, including the duties of faculty and staff and relevant sections addressing the bullying of students by a school staff member.  Evidence:  1. A copy of the updated employee handbook  2. Documentation of superintendent approval  3. Evidence of dissemination of updated employee handbook to all staff  4. Staff training agenda and sign-in sheet |
| **Measurement Mechanism:** Annually, the DS administrative team will work together to ensure the employee handbook is updated and compliant with current regulations. It will be submitted to the district's attorney to review for compliance. |
| **Completion Timeframe:** 11/01/2020 |
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| **Improvement Area 3** |
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| **Criterion:** CR 10C - Student Discipline |
| **Rating:** Partially Implemented |
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| **Description of Current Issue:** Document review and interviews indicated that the district does not have a School-Wide Education Service Plan. Specifically, the Plan must satisfy the requirements set forth in 603 CMR 53.13 and include the following: a description of the educational services that the school district will make available to ensure that students who are suspended or expelled for more than 10 consecutive days have the opportunity to make academic progress during the period of suspension or expulsion; provision of educational services based on and provided in a manner consistent with the academic standards for all students; the principal's responsibility to notify the student and their parent of the opportunity to receive education services and arrange such services at the time that the student is expelled or placed in long-term suspension; and the district's responsibility to facilitate and verify enrollment of the student in the service, upon selection of an educational service by the student and the parent/guardian.  Furthermore, document review and interviews indicated that the district does not have procedures in place for periodic principal review of discipline data by selected populations. Specifically, the procedures must state that the district disaggregates data by race and ethnicity, gender, socio-economic status, English language learner status, and disability status; address the principal's need to assess the extent of in-school suspensions, short and long-term suspensions, expulsions and emergency removals and the impact of such disciplinary actions on selected student populations; and address the principal's need to determine whether it is necessary or appropriate to modify disciplinary practices due to an over reliance on suspensions, expulsions or removals on selected student populations compared with other students. |
| **LEA Outcome:** The district will develop a School-Wide Education Service Plan that includes the following: a description of the educational services that the school district will make available to ensure that students who are suspended or expelled for more than 10 consecutive days have the opportunity to make academic progress during the period of suspension or expulsion; provision of educational services based on and provided in a manner consistent with the academic standards for all students; the principal's responsibility to notify the student and their parent of the opportunity to receive education services and arrange such services at the time that the student is expelled or placed in long-term suspension; and the district's responsibility to facilitate and verify enrollment of the student in the service, upon selection of an educational service by the student and the parent/guardian.  Secondly, the district will develop and implement a procedure for periodic principal review of discipline data by race and ethnicity, gender, socio-economic status, English language learner status, and disability status to assess the impact of disciplinary actions on these student populations and modify disciplinary practices as necessary and appropriate. |
| **Action Plan:** By September 15, 2020, the district will submit its School-Wide Education Service Plan, as outlined above, to the Department for approval.  By November 1, 2020, upon approval of the Department, the district will submit evidence that the updated policy has been posted on the district website.  By November 1, 2020, the district will submit evidence that principals have trained all staff on the updated plan. Evidence will include an agenda and sign-in sheet.  By November 1, 2020, the district will submit evidence that it has initiated periodic reviews of discipline data by selected student populations, including, but not limited to, race and ethnicity, gender, socio-economic status, English language learner status, and student with a disability status. The submission will also include evidence that principals have worked with their support teams to assess the impact of disciplinary actions on selected student populations and have modified disciplinary practices as necessary and appropriate. |
| **Success Metric:** By November 2020 and beyond, the district will develop and implement, as necessary, a School-Wide Education Service Plan that includes all requirements. The district will also periodically review discipline data by selected populations to assess the impact of disciplinary actions and modify practices, as appropriate.  Evidence:  1. The School-Wide Education Service Plan  2. Link to School-Wide Education Service Plan on district website  3. Staff training agenda and sign-in sheet  4. Documentation of the periodic review of discipline data by selected student populations and modifications to disciplinary practices, as necessary and appropriate |
| **Measurement Mechanism:** The district will develop a School-Wide Education Service Plan that is compliant with 603 CMR 53.13. The district will also initiate a plan for periodic review of discipline policies and procedures to ensure compliance with current state and federal regulations, modify disciplinary practices as appropriate, and provide ongoing staff training as necessary. |
| **Completion Timeframe:** 11/01/2020 |
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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:** Document review indicated that although the district has a policy on the restraint of students, it is lacking written restraint prevention and behavior support procedures which include the following: 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 method of physical restraint in emergency situations; and the requirement of the principal to conduct a periodic review of data and documentation on the program's use of restraint. |
| **LEA Outcome:** The district will revise and update the Physical Restraint Prevention and Behavior Support Policy and Procedures consistent with 603 CMR 46.00. |
| **Action Plan:** By September 15, 2020, the district will submit the revised Physical Restraint Prevention and Behavior Support Policy and Procedures for Department review.  By November 1, 2020, the district will submit the updated policy and procedures to the school committee for approval.  By December 1, 2020, upon school committee and Department approval, the district will submit evidence of training provided to building administrators on the new policy and procedures. Evidence will include an agenda and sign-in sheet.  By December 1, 2020, the district will submit evidence of training for all staff on the new policy and procedures. Evidence will include an agenda and sign-in sheet.  By December 1, 2020, the district will disseminate information regarding the updated policy to the school community via the district website and email system. |
| **Success Metric:** By December 2020 and beyond, the district will maintain an updated version of the Restraint Prevention and Behavior Support Policy and Procedures and train staff as appropriate.  Evidence:  1. Updated Restraint Prevention and Behavior Support Policy and Procedures that are consistent with current regulations  2. Documentation of school committee approval of the updated policy and procedures  3. Training agendas and sign-in sheets  4. Copy of email sent to school community  5. Link to updated website |
| **Measurement Mechanism:** The district will initiate a plan for annual review of physical restraint prevention policies and procedures to ensure compliance with current state and federal regulations and provide ongoing staff training. |
| **Completion Timeframe:** 12/01/2020 |
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| **Improvement Area 5** |
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| **Criterion:** CR 25 - Institutional self-evaluation |
| **Rating:** Partially Implemented |
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| **Description of Current Issue:** Document review and interviews 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:** The district will annually evaluate all aspects of its K-12 program 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. |
| **Action Plan:** By September 15, 2020, the district will submit proposed surveys for students, staff and families developed to obtain feedback on the accessibility of all programs, including athletics and other extracurricular activities, for all students regardless of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, limited English proficiency, sexual orientation, disability or housing status.  By October 1, 2020, the district will submit evidence of dissemination of surveys to students, families and staff.  By December 1, 2020, the district will submit the results of the self-evaluation, identification of needs, and targeted root cause analysis completed by the Leadership Team. The district will also submit an action plan to address any identified areas of inequity. Data from the second round of survey distribution will be harvested at the end of the 2020-21 school year. Additional data will be analyzed and reviewed as part of the Leadership Team Summer Institute 2021. |
| **Success Metric:** By the end of the 2020-21 school year and beyond, the district will disseminate two surveys per year to students, staff and families. Data harvested as a result of these efforts will be analyzed and reviewed by the Leadership Team to ensure continuous quality improvement with respect to compliance with CR 25 and the district strategic plan.  Evidence:  1. Surveys developed for students, staff, and families  2. Documentation of dissemination  3. Results of self-evaluation, identified issue(s), targeted root cause analysis and action plan to remedy issues |
| **Measurement Mechanism:** The district's Civil Rights Coordinator will work with the Leadership Team to ensure surveys are administered and data analyzed twice per year. Any access issues indicated will be resolved and data will serve as a driver for continuous quality improvement efforts. |
| **Completion Timeframe:** 12/01/2020 |
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