

**Braintree Public Schools**

**Tiered Focused Monitoring Report**

**Continuous Improvement and Monitoring Plan**

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

**Tier Level** **1**

**Dates of Onsite Visit:** **January 10-11, 2023**

**Date of Final Report:** **May 12, 2023**

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**MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION**

**TIERED FOCUSED MONITORING REPORT**

**Braintree Public Schools**

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**MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION**

# **TIERED FOCUSED MONITORING REPORT INTRODUCTION**

During the 2022-2023 school year, Braintree Public Schools 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/3yrcycle.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 September 20, 2022.

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

For the 2022-2023 school year, the tier assignments are based on:

* Annual drop-out rate for students with disabilities
* 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 SPP/APR compliance Indicator data for Indicators 4B, 9 & 10
  + Indicator 4B: Significant discrepancy by race or ethnicity in removal of students with

IEPs greater than 10 days

* + Indicator 9: Overall disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups identified

as eligible for special education

* + Indicator 10: Disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups within specific

disability categories

* Special education SPP/APR performance Indicator data for Indicators 5 & 6
  + Indicator 5: Education Environments (6-21)
  + Indicator 6: Preschool Environments
* Significant Disproportionality data 2021-2022 & 2022-2023

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**

**for Braintree Public Schools**

The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education conducted a Tiered Focused Monitoring Review in Braintree Public Schools during the week of January 9, 2023, 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 administrative, instructional, and support staff consistent with those criteria selected for onsite verification.
* Interview of 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.) Tiered Focused Monitoring Reports do not include criteria receiving a rating of “Implemented” or “Not Applicable.” This will allow the district 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. |

**Braintree 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 54, SE 55, SE 56 | CR 3, CR 7, CR 7A, CR 7B,  CR 7C, CR 8, CR 10A, CR 10B, CR 10C, CR 12A, CR 16, CR 20, CR 21, CR 22, CR 23 |
| **PARTIALLY**  **IMPLEMENTED** | SE 51 | CR 17A, CR 24, CR 25 |
| **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>>.

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| **CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT AND MONITORING PLAN** |
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| **Improvement Area** **1** |
| **Criterion:** SE 51 - Appropriate special education teacher licensure |
| **Rating:** Partially Implemented |
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| **Description of Current Issue:** Document review and staff interviews indicated that one special education teacher who provides direct special education services does not hold an appropriate license or an approved waiver. |
| **LEA Outcome:** All district special education teachers who provide direct special education services will hold an appropriate license or an approved waiver. |
| **Action Plan:** By June 30, 2023, the special education teacher identified by the Department will obtain the appropriate license or approved waiver. |
| **Success Metric:** By June 2023 and beyond, all district staff who provide special education services will be appropriately licensed or have an approved waiver.  Evidence:   * Valid license or waiver for the identified special education teacher |
| **Measurement Mechanism:** Continuing after the completion deadline, the district will review special education staff licensure prior to the start of each school year to ensure all staff are appropriately licensed. If noncompliance is identified, the district will implement appropriate corrective action. |
| **Completion Timeframe:** 06/30/2023 |
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| **Improvement Area 2** |
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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 the physical restraint training provided to all staff does not include the types of permitted physical restraints; related safety considerations, including information regarding the increased risk of injury to a student when any restraint is used; and consideration of medical or psychological limitations of individual students. |
| **LEA Outcome:** The district's physical restraint training will include all requirements, including the types of permitted physical restraints; related safety considerations, including information regarding the increased risk of injury to a student when any restraint is used; and consideration of medical or psychological limitations of individual students. |
| **Action Plan:** By June 30, 2023, the district will submit updated physical restraint training materials that include all requirements.  By September 30, 2023, the district will submit evidence demonstrating that all staff were trained on physical restraint requirements within the first month of the school year. |
| **Success Metric:** By September 2023 and beyond, the district will provide all district staff with physical restraint training that includes all requirements.  Evidence:   * Updated training materials with all requirements * Training agenda and attendance sheets |
| **Measurement Mechanism:** Continuing after the completion deadline, the district will provide all district staff with annual physical restraint training that includes all required elements. The training will occur within the first month of the school year, and, for employees hired after the school year begins, within a month of their employment. |
| **Completion Timeframe:** 09/30/2023 |
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| **Improvement Area 3** |
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| **Criterion:** CR 24 - Curriculum review |
| **Rating:** Partially Implemented |
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| **Description of Current Issue:** A review of documents and staff interviews indicated that while the district has a curriculum review board and subject-matter directors who review curricular materials, the district does not ensure that individual teachers review all educational materials for simplistic and demeaning generalizations. Furthermore, the district does not ensure that individual teachers provide appropriate activities, discussions, and/or supplementary materials to provide balance and context for any stereotypes depicted. |
| **LEA Outcome:** All individual teachers in the district will evaluate all educational materials for simplistic and demeaning generalizations on the basis of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, and sexual orientation. Appropriate activities, discussions, and/or supplementary materials will always be used to provide balance and context for any such stereotypes depicted in materials. |
| **Action Plan:** By June 30, 2023, District Department Heads and the Assistant Superintendent will receive training from representatives of the Department on curriculum review requirements and available resources in the DESE LEA Equity Guide and CR 24/25 Toolkit.  By September 30, 2023, the district will develop procedures and tools for conducting the curriculum review, including a plan for internal monitoring. Additionally, the Department Heads will train all teachers on how to review their specific education materials, lessons, and activities and provide appropriate activities, discussions, or supplementary materials for balance and context.  By December 30, 2023, the district will conduct internal monitoring of the implementation of the curriculum review process and document the results. Additional training will be provided as needed. |
| **Success Metric:** By December 2023 and beyond, all teachers in the district will review all educational materials for simplistic and demeaning generalizations, lacking intellectual merit, on the basis of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, and sexual orientation. Additionally, the district will ensure that appropriate activities, discussions and/or supplementary materials are used to provide balance and context for any stereotypes depicted in materials.  Evidence:   * Curriculum review procedures * Training materials, agendas, and attendance sheets * Description of internal monitoring findings and recommendations |
| **Measurement Mechanism:** Continuing after the completion deadline, the district will conduct annual training for all teachers on the procedures and tools for individual teacher review of educational materials. The district will also conduct periodic internal monitoring of the implementation of curriculum review protocols and provide additional training to address any identified needs. |
| **Completion Timeframe:** 12/30/2023 |
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| **Improvement Area 4** |
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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 staff interviews indicated that the district does not conduct an annual institutional self-evaluation of its K-12 program to ensure that all students have equal access to all programs, including athletics and other extracurricular activities, regardless of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, limited English proficiency, sexual orientation, disability, or housing status. |
| **LEA Outcome:** The district will conduct an annual institutional self-evaluation of its K-12 programs 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. Each year, the district will make such changes as are indicated by the evaluation. |
| **Action Plan:** By June 30, 2023, district leadership will receive training from the Department on conducting institutional self-evaluation.  By September 30, 2023, the district will develop evaluation procedures and tools that include data review; root cause analysis and prioritization; input from families, teachers, athletic directors, and students; action planning; and progress monitoring. Additionally, the district will submit evidence of training staff and other parties responsible for conducting the institutional self-evaluation.  By December 30, 2023, the district will submit a self-evaluation summary that includes the results of the data analysis with any discrepancies identified; the root cause analysis and prioritization; the action plan to address discrepancies; and progress monitoring timelines. |
| **Success Metric:** By December 2023 and beyond, the district will have procedures in place to conduct annual institutional self-evaluations.  Evidence:   * Procedures for annual self-evaluation * Training agendas, attendance sheets, and materials * Completed institutional self-evaluation summary, including:   + Description of data collected and analyzed;   + Description of stakeholder input process and feedback from staff, students, and families;   + Results of root cause analysis and prioritization; and   + Action plan with progress monitoring timelines |
| **Measurement Mechanism:** Continuing after the completion deadline, the district will conduct an annual self-evaluation and implement appropriate actions to address any access gaps. Any new staff responsible for conducting aspects of the institutional evaluation will be trained on the evaluation procedures during the onboarding process. |
| **Completion Timeframe:** 12/30/2023 |
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