

**Hamilton-Wenham Public Schools**

**Tiered Focused Monitoring Report**

**Continuous Improvement and Monitoring Plan**

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

**Tier Level** **2**

**Dates of Onsite Visit:** **May 4-5, 2022**

**Date of Final Report: December 13, 2022**

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**MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION**

**TIERED FOCUSED MONITORING REPORT**

**Hamilton-Wenham Public Schools**

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**MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION**

# **TIERED FOCUSED MONITORING REPORT**

During the 2021-2022 school year, Hamilton-Wenham 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/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 or CAP. **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**

**Hamilton-Wenham Public Schools**

The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education conducted a Tiered Focused Monitoring Review in Hamilton-Wenham Public Schools during the week of May 2, 2022, 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 (dependent upon Group A or Group B Universal Standards):**

* Interviews of administrative, instructional, and support staff consistent with those criteria selected for onsite verification.
* Interviews of parent advisory council (PAC) representatives and other telephone interviews, as requested by other parents or members of the general public.
* 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 solicits 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. |

**Hamilton-Wenham 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 51,  SE 52, SE 52A, SE 54,  SE 56 | CR 3, CR 7, CR 7A, CR 7B, CR 7C, CR 8, CR 10B,  CR 10C, CR 12A, CR 16, CR 17A, CR 20, CR 21,  CR 22, CR 23, CR 25 |
| **PARTIALLY**  **IMPLEMENTED** | SE 55 | CR 10A, CR 24 |
| **NOT**  **IMPLEMENTED** | None |  |
| **NOT**  **APPLICABLE** | None |  |

The full list of criteria and information regarding the requirements for each 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:** SE 55 - Special education facilities and classrooms |
| **Rating:** Partially Implemented |
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| **Description of Current Issue:** Observations and staff interviews indicated that the Cutler Elementary School utilizes a time-out room that is not safe and appropriate for the purposes of calming. |
| **LEA Outcome:** Hamilton-Wenham will remove the door and bolt to ensure the time-out room at the Cutler Elementary School is safe and appropriate for the purposes of calming. |
| **Action Plan:** By December 21, 2022, the Department will conduct on onsite observation to ensure the time-out room at the Cutler Elementary School is safe and appropriate for the purposes calming. |
| **Success Metric:** By December 2023 and beyond, the time-out room at the Cutler Elementary School will be safe and appropriate for the purposes of calming.  Evidence:  • Onsite observation  • Pictures of the time-out room with the door removed |
| **Measurement Mechanism:** At the beginning of each school year, the use of the time-out room at Cutler Elementary School will be considered based on whether the students enrolled in the program require a time-out room or calming space. If a time-out room is needed, the BCBA will check the room to confirm that it remains safe and appropriate for the purposes of calming, train staff on procedures for the safe use of the room, and the requirements for a time-out log. If non-compliance is identified, physical safety issues will be addressed through maintenance and facilities and additional coaching will be provided to staff using the time-out room and log. |
| **Completion Timeframe:** 12/21/2022 |
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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 the district's parent and student handbooks indicated that discipline procedures do not address the specific requirements applied to students not yet determined eligible for special education, including the need to conduct an expedited evaluation to determine eligibility upon parent request. |
| **LEA Outcome:** Hamilton-Wenham Public Schools will ensure that all parent and student handbooks include disciplinary procedures that address the requirements applied to students not yet determined eligible for special education, including the requirement to conduct an expedited evaluation to determine eligibility upon parent request. |
| **Action Plan:** By December 21, 2022, the Director of Special Education, along with building principals, will review and update procedures for students not yet determined eligible for special education to ensure all requirements are addressed.  By February 28, 2023, the Director of Special Education will train principals and school psychologists on the procedures for an expedited evaluation. In addition, all parent and student handbooks posted on the district’s website will be amended to include the requirement for an expedited evaluation for students not yet determined eligible for special education. |
| **Success Metric:** By February 2023 and beyond, each parent and student handbook will contain discipline procedures that address the specific requirements applied to students not yet determined eligible for special education, including provision of an expedited evaluation upon parent request.  Evidence:  • Procedures for providing an expedited evaluation  • Training agendas, materials, and signed attendance sheet  • Links to each updated parent and student handbooks |
| **Measurement Mechanism:** Each spring, the parent and student handbooks will be updated, as necessary. Appropriate training will be provided to ensure procedures are followed. |
| **Completion Timeframe:** 02/28/2023 |
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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 although the district has partnered with a vendor to provide curriculum review training, the district does not currently ensure that all individual teachers 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. Furthermore, the district does not ensure that teachers use appropriate activities, discussions, or supplementary materials to provide balance and context for any stereotypes depicted in the materials. |
| **LEA Outcome:** Hamilton-Wenham Public Schools will ensure that individual teachers 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. The district will also ensure that appropriate activities, discussions, and/or supplementary materials are used to provide balance and context for any such stereotypes depicted in materials. |
| **Action Plan:** By December 21, 2022, the Director of Teaching and Learning, together with the Curriculum Leaders, will review the DESE LEA Equity Guide, the CR 24 Toolkit, and culturally responsive teaching resources to select the procedures and protocols for teacher use. In addition, the district will develop an internal monitoring system to ensure teachers review all educational materials and provide appropriate balance and context for any stereotypes depicted in materials. The internal monitoring may include classroom observations, checklists, and/or equity walks.  By February 28, 2023, the Director of Teaching Learning, together with the Curriculum Leaders, will provide training for all teachers and administrators on the review procedures, protocols, and internal monitoring system.  By May 1, 2023, the Director of Teaching and Learning, together with the Curriculum Leaders, will summarize the results of the first internal monitoring review. If noncompliance is identified, the Director of Teaching and Learning will conduct additional training and coaching with teachers, as appropriate. |
| **Success Metric:** By May 2023 and beyond, all individual 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. In addition, the district will ensure that appropriate activities, discussions and/or supplementary materials are used to provide balance and context for any such stereotypes depicted in materials.  Evidence:   * Procedures, protocols, and internal monitoring tools * Training agendas, materials, and signed attendance sheets * Completed internal monitoring tools * Additional training and coaching based on results of the internal monitoring data |
| **Measurement Mechanism:** Each spring, the Director of Teaching and Learning, together with the Curriculum Leaders, will coordinate a review of protocols and data gathered through the internal monitoring process to identify areas of improvement and ensure ongoing compliance. If noncompliance is identified, the Curriculum Leaders will provide staff retraining, mentoring, or coaching, as necessary.  Each fall, refresher training will be provided to all teaching staff by the Director of Teaching and Learning and the Curriculum Leaders. |
| **Completion Timeframe:** 05/01/2023 |
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