

**Southbridge**

**Targeted and Focused Monitoring Report**

**Review Dates:** **May 21 - May 28, 2024**

**Date of Final Report:** **07/12/2024**



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Acting Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education

During the 2023-2024 school year, Southbridge 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).

Southbridge

**SUMMARY OF COMPLIANCE CRITERIA RATINGS**

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

| **Improvement Area** **1** |
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| **Criterion:** ELE 5 - Program Placement and Structure |
| **Rating:** Partially Implemented |
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| **Description of Current Issue:** The Department conducted a review of the district’s ELE programs to evaluate their effectiveness serving English learners as required by G.L. c. 71A, § 7A. A review of data as a part of the evaluation of the district’s ELE program indicated that English learners do not demonstrate sufficient growth in English language acquisition and the ELE program needs improvement to promote and support the rapid acquisition of English language proficiency by ELs. The Department also identified the following issues with the district’s ELE programming: Content Instruction in DL and SEI Programs * Content teachers do not always use sheltered content instruction strategies that focus on meaningful and engaging activities designed to build content knowledge while strategically taking into account the language demands that ELs face in content classrooms, identifying appropriate language objectives, scaffolding appropriately to meet these demands, and delving into specifics about the language of the content by developing language objectives aligned to WIDA Standards 2020.
* Although the district provides content teachers information related to English learners in their classes, most teachers do not know who they are or what their English language proficiency levels are.
* Classroom observations and interview with staff indicated that the district’s Dual Language (DL)program at elementary schools have adopted effective teaching strategies aligned to DESE guidance; however, the DL program in middle school needs improvement to show positive academic, language and literacy, and cognitive outcomes for the students in the program in both English and the partner language.
* Students who are at English proficiency levels 1 and 2 are provided some of the content instruction by educators who are not licensed in that content area and therefore, they do not have access to high quality content instruction delivered by qualified, licensed teachers.

ESL instruction in DL and SEI Programs * When students are scheduled to receive ESL instruction through a push-in model, the ESL teacher pushing in assists the content teacher in teaching content standards but does not provide explicit ESL instruction.
* ELs in the district’s dual language program in middle school are not provided ESL and therefore the district is not in compliance with M.G.L. c. 71A, §4 that requires all ELE programs should include ESL component.
* ELs in substantially separate special education programs are not provided ESL instruction.
* The district does not have an ESL curriculum that meets the linguistic needs of English learners, aligned with the district’s academic vision and used by ESL teachers in fidelity.
* The district sometimes provides ESL instruction through push-in and co-teaching models; however, staff interviews indicated that teachers do not have time to collaborate and plan accordingly for their practices to be effective and students have the opportunity to master their content standards while they are provided English language development.

Benchmark Requirements * The district identifies students who have not met their English language proficiency benchmarks as measured with ACCESS; however, the district has not developed procedures to identify English learners who do not meet English proficiency benchmarks and has not established a process to (i) 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.

SLIFE and Newcomers * The district does not have a process to determine what academic and linguistic needs of Newcomer students and Students with Limited and Interrupted Formal Education (SLIFE) are and to provide instruction that is specifically designed for them with the overarching goals of English language development and academic content achievement as the state laws require.
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| **Improvement Area 2** |
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| **Criterion:** ELE 7 - Parent Involvement |
| **Rating:** Partially Implemented |
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| **Description of Current Issue:** Although the district has procedures in place to ensure that competent, appropriately trained staff or outside resources to provide translation and interpretation services to families who need them, staff interviews and a review of documentation indicated that schools heavily rely on bilingual staff, sometimes even for IEP meetings, and sometimes on students who come to parent-teacher conferences with their families. The Department has determined that the district does not communicate its expectations regarding effective language assistance to parents whose preferred language is not English and therefore, does not always meet the obligation to communicate effectively with parents to include them in matters pertaining to their children's education. |

| **Improvement Area 3** |
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| **Criterion:** ELE 8 - Declining Entry to a Program |
| **Rating:** Partially Implemented |
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| **Description of Current Issue:** The district monitors students whose parents opted out of ELE services annually to determine whether they have made adequate linguistic and academic progress; however, the district does not monitor such students throughout the academic year to ensure they have meaningful access to the curriculum, they are progressing academically and linguistically as measured by their grades and ACCESS and content area assessments and they are provided support as necessary. |

| **Improvement Area 4** |
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| **Criterion:** ELE 10 - Parental Notification |
| **Rating:** Partially Implemented |
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| **Description of Current Issue:** Interviews and a review of the documentation indicated that the district has not sent a notification to the parents of ELs to inform them of their rights to: (i) choose a language acquisition program among those offered by the school district under section 4; (ii) request a new language acquisition program under said section 4; or (iii) withdraw a student from a language acquisition program. |

| **Improvement Area 5** |
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| **Criterion:** ELE 13 - Follow-up Support |
| **Rating:** Partially Implemented |
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| **Description of Current Issue:** The district monitors students who been reclassified as Former English learners (FELs) annually to determine whether they have made adequate progress; however, the district does not monitor such students throughout the academic year to ensure they demonstrate adequate progress as measured by their grades and content area assessments after their classification as ELs has been removed and they are provided support as necessary. |

| **Improvement Area 6** |
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| **Criterion:** ELE 14 - Licensure Requirements |
| **Rating:** Partially Implemented |
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| **Description of Current Issue:** Documentation and a review of ELAR indicated that ESL licensed teachers teach ELs core content in self-contained classes. Every teacher or other educational staff member who teaches ELs should hold an appropriate license for the subject matter they teach or a current waiver issued by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. Documentation, interviews, and a review of ELAR data also indicated that not all ESL staff hold a license or current waiver issued by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. Staff interviews and the relevant 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, not all administrators assigned to supervise or evaluate core academic teachers who provide sheltered English instruction to English learners hold the SEI Teacher Endorsement or the SEI Administrator Endorsement. Finally, not all teachers teaching content in a language other than English in the district's dual language programs hold bilingual endorsement. |