



**Tiered Focused Monitoring Report  
for Group B Universal Standards  
Special Education and Civil Rights  
District: Union 61-Tantasqua Regional School District  
Onsite Date: March 7, 2019  
Tier Level: 2**



Jeffrey C. Riley  
Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education

During the 2018-2019 school year, Union 61-Tantasqua Regional School District 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 Union 61-Tantasqua Regional School District included:

Self-Assessment Phase:

- The district reviewed special education and civil rights documentation for required elements including document uploads.
- Upon completion of this 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.
- Interviews of parent advisory council (PAC) representatives 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 or charter school leader. Within approximately 20 business days of the onsite visit, the onsite chairperson forwards to the superintendent or charter school leader 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

<b>Commendable</b>	Any requirement or aspect of a requirement implemented in an exemplary manner significantly beyond the requirements of law or regulation.
<b>Implemented</b>	The requirement is substantially met in all important aspects.
<b>Implementation in Progress</b>	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.
<b>Partially Implemented</b>	The requirement, in one or several important aspects, is not entirely met.
<b>Not Implemented</b>	The requirement is totally or substantially not met.
<b>Not Applicable</b>	The requirement does not apply to the school district or charter school.

## Union 61-Tantasqua Regional School District

### SUMMARY OF COMPLIANCE CRITERIA RATINGS

	Universal Standards Special Education	Universal Standards Civil Rights and Other General Education Requirements
<b>IMPLEMENTED</b>	SE 15, SE 32, SE 36, SE 50, SE 51, SE 52, SE 52A, SE 54, SE 55, SE 56	CR 3, CR 7, CR 7A, CR 7B, CR 7C, CR 10C, CR 12A, CR 16, CR 17A, CR 20, CR 21, CR 22, CR 23, CR 24, CR 25
<b>PARTIALLY IMPLEMENTED</b>		CR 10A, CR 10B
<b>NOT IMPLEMENTED</b>		

The review instruments, that include the regulatory requirements specific to the special education and civil rights criteria referenced in the table above, can be found at [www.doe.mass.edu/psm/resources/default.html](http://www.doe.mass.edu/psm/resources/default.html).

**Improvement Area 1****Criterion:** CR 10A - Student handbooks and codes of conduct**Rating:** Partially Implemented**Description of Current Issue:** Document review and interviews indicated that the discipline policy and procedures in the 2018-2019 Brookfield Elementary School Student Handbook do not include procedures for in-school suspension.

The discipline policy and procedures in the 2018-2019 student handbooks for the Brimfield, Holland, Burgess and Wales Elementary Schools, as well as the handbooks for the Tantasqua Regional Junior and Senior High Schools, do not include the following:

- Procedures for emergency removal;
- Procedures for principal hearings for both short- and long-term suspension;
- Procedures for in-school suspension; and
- Procedures for superintendent hearing.

**LEA Outcome:** The language regarding student discipline in the student handbooks for the Brookfield, Brimfield, Holland, Burgess and Wales Elementary Schools, as well as the handbooks for the Tantasqua Regional Junior and Senior High Schools, will use consistent language from the district's approved discipline policy and procedures, including detailed required language for:

- Procedures for emergency removal;
- Procedures for principal hearings for both short- and long-term suspension;
- Procedures for in-school suspension; and
- Procedures for superintendent hearing.

**Action Plan:** By August 14, 2019, the Tantasqua Regional/Union 61 districts will update and submit to the Department the handbooks to include consistent language using the district's approved discipline policy and procedures, which contain required language for:

- Procedures for emergency removal;
- Procedures for principal hearings for both short- and long-term suspension;
- Procedures for in-school suspension; and
- Procedures for superintendent hearing.

Evidence:

All district websites will have updated student handbooks.

**Success Metric:** For the start of the 2019-2020 school year, 100% of Tantasqua Regional/Union 61 district handbooks will have the approved discipline policy and procedures, which contain required language for:

- Procedures for emergency removal;
- Procedures for principal hearings for both short- and long-term suspension;
- Procedures for in-school suspension; and
- Procedures for superintendent hearing.

**Improvement Area 1**

**Measurement Mechanism:** To ensure consistent language in all district student handbooks, Union 61 will develop a template for the handbooks. Yearly, the Leadership Team will review all handbooks for policy and language updates,

**Completion Timeframe:** 08/14/2019

<b>Improvement Area 2</b>
<b>Criterion:</b> CR 10B - Bullying Intervention and Prevention
<b>Rating:</b> Partially Implemented
<b>Description of Current Issue:</b> Document review and interviews indicated that the student handbooks have not been updated consistent with the amendments to the Massachusetts anti-bullying law, which became effective July 1, 2013, to extend protections to students who are bullied by a member of the school staff, and do not make clear that a member of the school staff may be named the "aggressor" or "perpetrator" in a bullying report.
<b>LEA Outcome:</b> The Tantasqua Regional/Union 61 district handbooks will be updated to be consistent with the language that is currently posted on the district website in the approved District Bullying Plan. This includes wording that is consistent with the amendments to the Massachusetts anti-bullying law, effective July 1, 2013, to extend protections to students who are bullied by a member of the school staff, and make it clear that a member of the school staff may be named the "aggressor" or "perpetrator" in a bullying report.
<b>Action Plan:</b> By August 14, 2019, the Tantasqua Regional/Union 61 will update and submit to the Department each handbook using the language that is currently posted on the district website in the approved District Bullying Plan.
<b>Success Metric:</b> By the beginning of the 2019-2020 school year, all handbooks will have wording consistent with the amendments to the Massachusetts anti-bullying law, effective July 1, 2013, to extend protections to students who are bullied by a member of the school staff, and make it clear that a member of the school staff may be named the "aggressor" or "perpetrator" in a bullying report.  Evidence:  All district websites will have updated student handbooks
<b>Measurement Mechanism:</b> Yearly, the Leadership Team will review all student handbooks for policy and language updates.
<b>Completion Timeframe:</b> 08/14/2019