

Douglas Public Schools

21 Davis Street, Douglas, MA 01516 (508) 476-7001 FAX (508) 476-4427 www.douglasps.org

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John Calabresi, Director of Technology

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Cindy Socha, Curriculum Director

Tara Sobaleski, Director of Special Education & Student Support Services

School Committee Agenda Item Summary

Date: 12/15/2021
Prepared By: Tara Sobaleski, Director of Special Education & Student Support Services
Reviewed By: Paul Vieira, Superintendent of Schools
Subject: JB Policy Revision-First Reading

Background

The last Tiered Focused Monitoring (TFM) Report, CIMP, received by the district on March 26, 2021 reported that "A review of documents 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." Full procedures have since been developed to assist the district with implementing an annual "Institutional Self-Evaluation Process" 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. These procedures have been approved by DESE as compliant and meeting the district's obligation to complete an institutional self-evaluation annually.

Discussion/Analysis

The District's current JB policy should be updated to reflect the change in procedures regarding the annual self-evaluation 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.

Extensions were given to the district based on the due date of June 30, 2021 for the first action step related to this finding and the change in leadership within the special education department.

Next steps in meeting our outlined action steps within our CIMP include the following:

1. Training all relevant staff members on the protocols, procedures, and tools developed to conduct the annual self-evaluation.
2. Conducting an annual civil rights self-evaluation of K-12 programs, including athletics and other extracurricular activities.
3. The Superintendent will make recommendations to the school committee for the necessary policies, program changes, and budget resource allocations needed to address the results of the self-evaluation.

Financial Impact

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There is no financial impact.

Recommendation

If the School Committee is in agreement, the following motion is recommended for approval:

MOVE to approve the JB policy revisions after the third reading.

Attachments

1. Current JB Policy
2. Revised JB Policy
3. CR 25 Institutional Self-Evaluation Procedures
4. Copy of Final Report and Continual Improvement Monitoring Plan from DESE dated March 26, 2021

Excellence in Education

The Douglas Public Schools welcomes and is open to all students, and offers equal opportunities in all approved programs and courses of study without regard to race, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, national origin, homelessness, or disability.

File: JB - EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES-Current

In recognition of the diversified characteristics and needs of our students and with the keen desire to be responsive to them, the School Committee will make every effort to protect the dignity of the students as individuals. It also will offer careful consideration and sympathetic understanding of their personal feelings, particularly with reference to their race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation or physical and intellectual differences.

To accomplish this, the Committee and its staff will make every effort to comply with the letter and the spirit of the Massachusetts equal educational opportunities law which prohibits discrimination in public school admissions and programs. The law reads as follows:

No child shall be excluded from or discriminated against in admission to a public school of any town, or in obtaining the advantages, privileges and course of study of such public school on account of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin or sexual orientation.

This will mean that every student will be given equal opportunity in school admission, admissions to courses, course content, guidance, and extracurricular and athletic activities.

All implementing provisions issued by the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education in compliance with this law will be followed.

UPDATED: June 2012

LEGAL REFS.: Title VI, Civil Rights Act of 1964

Title VII, Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended by the Equal Employment Opportunity Act of 1972

Executive Order 11246, as amended by E.O. 11375

Title IX, Education Amendments of 1972

M.G.L. 76:5; 76:16 (Chapter 622 of the Acts of 1971)

BESE regulations 603 CMR 26:00

BESE regulations 603 CMR 28.00

CROSS REF.: AC, Nondiscrimination

Excellence in Education

JB - EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES-Revision In recognition of the diversified characteristics and needs of our students and with the keen desire to be responsive to them, the School Committee will make every effort to protect the dignity of the students as individuals. It also will offer careful consideration and sympathetic understanding of their personal feelings, particularly with reference to their race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation or physical and intellectual differences.

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This will mean that every student will be given equal opportunity in school admission, admissions to courses, course content, guidance, and extracurricular and athletic activities.

The district shall 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. The district will make such changes as are indicated by the evaluation.

All implementing provisions issued by the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education in compliance with this law will be followed.

UPDATED: December 2021

LEGAL REFS.: Title VI, Civil Rights Act of 1964

Title VII, Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended by the Equal Employment Opportunity Act of 1972

Executive Order 11246, as amended by E.O. 11375

Title IX, Education Amendments of 1972

M.G.L. 76:5; 76:16 (Chapter 622 of the Acts of 1971)

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CR 25 Institutional Self-Evaluation Process

General Information: The district evaluates 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 and makes such changes as are indicated by the evaluation.

Annual Procedure:

1. Each Spring, building principals will administer questionnaires to solicit responses from parents, students, teachers and administrators regarding equity and equitable access for all students (template attached).
 - a. The templates may be adapted to ensure their accessibility.
2. At least once in the Fall and once in the Spring, building and district administrators will complete equity walks using the attached form at each building level to assess equity across classrooms and schools.
3. Each Fall, building and district administrators will review current and previous data regarding:
 - a. distribution of students in programs, including athletics and extracurricular activities, by race/ethnicity, gender, LEP status, IEP/504 plan status, and housing status
 - b. entrance criteria for remedial or advanced classes;
 - c. supports for students taking advanced classes;
 - d. athletic policies;
 - e. school and district policies and procedures;
 - f. publicity and participation in extracurricular activities;
 - g. incidences of bullying, hate crimes, and harassment/discrimination;
 - h. student identification for Title I, 504, and/or special education services
 - i. complaints or concerns about the accessibility of programs, including athletics and other extracurricular activities;
 - j. Performance on MCAS and other progress monitoring measures;
 - k. attendance;
 - l. family engagement; and/or
 - m. student discipline.
4. Upon the completion of review of the data sources states in procedure three (3) above:
 - a. Building principals will complete parts I-IV of the district's self-evaluation form.



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- b. The Superintendent will hold a meeting with building and district leadership to review and debrief the findings at each level and to collectively complete part V of the district's self-evaluation form.

District Tools Used to Solicit and analyze Data Regarding Equity:

- Questionnaires - to solicit responses from parents, students, teachers and administrators regarding equity and equitable access for all students
- Equity Walks - to assess equity across classrooms and schools
- Annual Civil Rights Self-Evaluation Form - to organize and analyze data and develop a root cause analysis (template attached)

Data Reviewed To Assess Equity:

1. distribution of students in programs, including athletics and extracurricular activities, by race/ethnicity, gender, LEP status, IEP/504 plan status, and housing status
2. entrance criteria for remedial or advanced classes;
3. supports for students taking advanced classes;
4. athletic policies;
5. publicity and participation in extracurricular activities;
6. incidences of bullying, hate crimes, and harassment/discrimination;
7. student identification for Title I, 504, and/or special education services
8. complaints or concerns about the accessibility of programs, including athletics and other extracurricular activities;
9. Performance on MCAS and other progress monitoring measures;
10. attendance;
11. family engagement; and/or
12. student discipline.

Annual Institutional Self-Evaluation (CR25) Form

SY:



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Part I: Analysis of Student Outcome Data

Student outcome data analyzed

[Insert list]

Insights

1. What does the data tell us about the experience of different student groups in the district?

[Insert bullets]

2. What connections can we make between student outcomes by different student groups and access to the district's programs?

[Insert bullets]

Recommendations

3. What steps do we recommend following the identified connections between student outcomes and the different student groups?

[Insert bullets]

Part II: Analysis of Student discipline data, athletics and extra-curricular participation data

1. Student discipline data analyzed

[Insert list]

Insights

2. What does the data tell us about the student groups impacted by disciplinary actions in the district?

[Insert bullets]

Athletics and Extracurricular activities participations data analysis and insights

3. What observations can we make from the data regarding student access to the district's athletics and other extracurricular programs?



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Recommendations

4. What recommendations do we make following the insights of this data review?

Part III: Survey Feedback from Administrators, Teachers/Staff, and Students about Access

What do the results of these surveys say about access?

1. **Teacher/Staff Survey -**

2. **Parent Survey -**

3. **Student Survey -**

4. **Family Survey -**

Recommendations

[Insert bullets]

Part IV: Review of School Policies and Procedures

[Insert list of policies and procedures reviewed]

Insights

1. Which policies/procedures, in their current form, support equal access for all students?

[Insert list]



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2. Which policies/procedures, in their current form, require revision/amendment in order to support equal access for all students?

[Insert list]

Recommendations

3. What specific adjustments, if any, do we need to make in the identified policies and procedures in order to ensure equal access for all students?

Part V: Root Cause Analysis

Root Cause—the deepest underlying cause, or causes, of positive or negative symptoms within any process that, if dissolved, would result in elimination, or substantial reduction, of the symptom

Identified Problem 1:

Why? Because...

Why? Because...

Why? Because...

Why? Because...

Why? Because...

Identified Problem 2:

Why? Because...

Why? Because...

Why? Because...



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Why? Because...

Why? Because...

Identified Problem 3:

Why? Because...

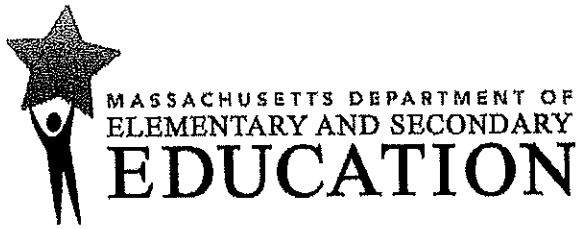
Why? Because...

Why? Because...

Why? Because...

Why? Because...

Part VI: District's K-12 program evaluation key findings, questions for exploration, and/or next steps



Douglas Public Schools

Tiered Focused Monitoring Report

**For Group B Universal Standards
Tier Level 1**

Date of Onsite Visit: January 20, 2021

Date of Final Report: March 26, 2021



Jeffrey C. Riley

Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education

During the 2020-2021 school year, Douglas 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).

Template Version 072820

- 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 Douglas 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.

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 three staff members consistent with those criteria selected for onsite verification.
- Interview of a parent advisory council (PAC) representative.
- Observations of classrooms and other facilities: The team reviewed floor plans 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

Commendable	Any requirement or aspect of a requirement implemented in an exemplary manner significantly beyond the requirements of law or regulation.
Implemented	The requirement is substantially met in all important aspects.
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.
Not Implemented	The requirement is totally or substantially not met.
Not Applicable	The requirement does not apply to the school district or charter school.

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SUMMARY OF COMPLIANCE CRITERIA RATINGS

	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 55, SE 56	CR 3, CR 7, CR 7A, CR 7B, CR 8, CR 10A, CR 10B, CR 10C, CR 12A, CR 16, CR 20, CR 21, CR 22, CR 23, CR 24
PARTIALLY IMPLEMENTED		CR 17A, CR 25
NOT IMPLEMENTED		CR 7C

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.

Improvement Area 1

Criterion: CR 7C - Early release of high school seniors

Rating: Not Implemented

Description of Current Issue: A review of the district's calendar indicated that the conclusion of the seniors' school year is more than 12 school days before the regularly scheduled closing date of the high school.

LEA Outcome: Douglas Public Schools will ensure that neither the conclusion of the seniors' school year nor graduation is more than 12 school days before the regularly scheduled closing date of the high school. The school committee will approve a compliant 2021-2022 school calendar and the district will implement procedures that ensure future compliance.

Action Plan: By April 16, 2021, Douglas Public Schools will submit a 2021-2022 school calendar that ensures neither the conclusion of the seniors' school year nor graduation is more than 12 school days before the regularly scheduled closing date of the high school.

By May 5, 2021, upon Department approval of the calendar, the school committee will approve the 2021-2022 school calendar. Evidence will include meeting minutes indicating approval.

By June 30, 2021, the district will disseminate the school committee-approved calendar to the school community. Evidence will include notification of dissemination.

Success Metric: By February 2, 2022 and beyond, Douglas Public Schools will ensure that neither the conclusion of the seniors' school year nor graduation is more than 12 school days before the regularly scheduled closing date of the school.

Evidence:

- * Updated school calendar
- * School committee minutes indicating approval
- * Notification of dissemination to the school community

Measurement Mechanism: The Assistant Superintendent of Student Support Services shall review a proposed school calendar each February to ensure compliance. Following this administrative review, the Assistant Superintendent of Student Support Services shall submit the calendar to the school committee for approval no later than March of each year.

Completion Timeframe: 06/30/2021

Improvement Area 2

Criterion: CR 17A - Use of physical restraint on any student enrolled in a publicly-funded education program

Rating: Partially Implemented

Description of Current Issue: A review of documents indicated that the district's written restraint prevention and behavior support procedures are not consistent with regulations 603 CMR 46.00 regarding appropriate responses to student behavior that may require immediate intervention. Specifically, the procedures do not include a description of the program's training requirements.

LEA Outcome: Douglas Public Schools will update its written restraint prevention and behavior support procedures so that they are consistent with regulations under 603 CMR 46.00. Once approved by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, the district will disseminate the updated procedures to staff, students, and parents/guardians of students. The district will ensure all staff receive the required trainings related to restraint prevention and behavior support policy and procedures. The district will also ensure that the policy and procedures are reviewed annually.

Action Plan: By June 30, 2021, Douglas Public Schools will submit revised restraint procedures that include a description of the program's training requirements.

By November 1, 2021, upon Department approval of the procedures, Douglas Public Schools will disseminate the updated procedures to the school community. Evidence will include a link to the online policy and procedures and notification to the school community.

By November 1, 2021, Douglas Public Schools will submit evidence of training for all program staff on the district's revised restraint procedures. Evidence will include training materials, meeting agendas and signed attendance sheets.

Success Metric: By February 2, 2022 and beyond, the Douglas Public Schools' written restraint prevention and behavior support policy and procedures will be consistent with regulations under 603 CMR 46.00. The district will annually disseminate the policy and procedures to the school community. All staff will receive the required trainings related to the restraint prevention and behavior support policy and procedures. The policy and procedures will be reviewed annually.

Evidence will include:

- Revised written restraint prevention and behavior support procedures
- Link to the online policy and updated procedures
- Notification to the school community
- Training materials, meeting agendas, and signed attendance sheets

Measurement Mechanism: Douglas Public Schools' leadership team will annually review the written restraint prevention and behavior support policies and procedures, as well as review the means of dissemination to the school community. District leadership will provide and track staff trainings to ensure all staff are trained within the first month of each school year and for staff hired after the school year begins, within a month of their hire date.

Completion Timeframe: 11/01/2021

Improvement Area 3

Criterion: CR 25 - Institutional self-evaluation

Rating: Partially Implemented

Description of Current Issue: A review of documents 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: Douglas Public Schools will 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. The district will make such changes as are indicated by the evaluation.

Action Plan: By September 1, 2021, Douglas Public Schools will submit protocols, procedures, and tools developed to conduct an annual self-evaluation of its K-12 program.

By October 1, 2021, Douglas Public Schools will train all relevant staff members on the protocols, procedures, and tools developed to conduct the annual self-evaluation. Evidence will include training materials, meeting agendas and signed attendance sheets.

By November 1, 2021, Douglas Public Schools will conduct an annual civil rights self-evaluation of its K-12 program, including athletics and other extracurricular activities. Evidence will include the results of a completed annual self-evaluation.

By December 1, 2021, Douglas Public Schools will submit the Superintendent's recommendations to the school committee for the necessary policies, program changes, and budget resource allocations needed to address the results of the self-evaluation. Evidence will include a summary of recommendations made by the Superintendent to the school committee.

Success Metric: By February 2, 2022 and beyond, Douglas Public Schools will 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. Likewise, the Superintendent will make annual recommendations to the school committee for any necessary policies, program changes, and budget resource allocations needed to address the results of the self-evaluation.

Evidence will include:

- *Protocols, procedures, and tools developed to conduct an annual self-evaluation
- *Training materials, meeting agendas, and signed attendance sheets
- *The results of a completed annual self-evaluation
- *Summary of recommendations made by the Superintendent to the school committee

Measurement Mechanism: Douglas Public Schools leadership, including the Assistant Superintendent of Student Support Services and the Director of Curriculum, will lead the district leadership team in the development and annual review of the protocols, procedures, and tools used to conduct the annual self-evaluation. The Assistant Superintendent of Student Support Services will ensure that appropriate training occurs annually for those engaged in the evaluation. The district leadership team will annually evaluate its K-12 program, including athletics and other extracurricular activities, and will make such changes as are indicated by the evaluation. The district leadership team will review the annual program evaluation in the summer of each school year and make recommendations for any necessary policies, program changes, and budget resource allocations needed to address the results of the self-evaluation. The Superintendent will annually present the results of the evaluation to the school committee and make recommendations for any necessary policies, program changes, and budget resource allocations needed to address the results of the self-evaluation.

Completion Timeframe: 12/01/2021