

Executive Summary

This report presents a summary of the findings of Fiscal Year (FY) 2012 monitoring reviews, fulfilling the reporting requirement, Section 641A(f), of the Head Start Act. It highlights the enhancements made to the FY 2012 monitoring review system, summarizes grantee review outcomes, and describes the types of findings most commonly identified in FY 2012.

Head Start monitoring assesses grantee compliance with requirements governing Head Start programs. Monitoring reviews take several forms; each Head Start grantee receives a full on-site review immediately after completion of its first year (First-Year review) of providing Head Start services and full on-site reviews on a triennial basis thereafter (Triennial reviews). Grantees also may receive “Other” reviews at any time if the Office of Head Start (OHS) determines they are at risk. Any grantee found to be out of compliance with Head Start requirements during any review—First Year, Triennial, or Other—receives a “Follow Up” review to ensure that all findings are corrected. Exhibit 1 summarizes the four types of reviews.

Exhibit 1: Types of Reviews

Type of Review	Description
First Year Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Full on-site review immediately after completion of their first year ▶ Mandated by Section 641A of the Head Start Act
Triennial Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Full on-site reviews conducted on a triennial basis ▶ Mandated by Section 641A of the Head Start Act
Other Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Grantees may receive if they are determined to be at risk
Follow Up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Conducted for grantees found to be out of compliance with Head Start requirements to ensure that all findings are corrected

Notes: Reviews are conducted by a team of reviewers who are knowledgeable about Head Start and led by a Review Team Leader (RTL). To assess grantee compliance, review teams use the Office of Head Start Monitoring Protocol, which employs a standardized approach to assess program services and quality. Areas assessed include education, health, mental health, disabilities, nutrition, family and community partnerships, program management, governance, fiscal controls, facilities, enrollment, recruitment and selection, and program design.

Enhancements to the FY 2012 Review Process

Each year, OHS re-examines the monitoring review system to ensure ongoing system improvement of its review process. In FY 2012, OHS implemented enhancements to reflect changes in policy and procedure, ensure compliance with the Head Start Act (as amended in December 2007), and improve the overall monitoring process. Specific changes included:

- ▶ Enhancing the Monitoring Protocol and software to capture more information on grantee performance;
- ▶ Inclusion of sampling to ensure the generalizability of information collected through the review process; and

- ▶ Further integrating the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS™) instrument into the monitoring process.

Monitoring Protocol and Software

In FY 2012, OHS reduced the number of standards observed through the Protocol during onsite reviews from 600 to 400 to narrow the scope of on-site monitoring and ensure rigor in the areas most important to grantee success. OHS also restructured the FY 2012 Protocol to contain seven sections (rather than 11) that focused evaluation on the core functional service areas and how grantees' systems support grantee performance. OHS focused its FY 2012 monitoring system refinements on tightening consistency across the system.

OHS introduced the Evidence Assessment System to provide reviewers with consistent language for evaluating and describing grantee compliance. This system, which replaces the "Yes"/"No" system of previous years, allows OHS to evaluate the scope and materiality of findings. FY 2012 reviews include random samples selected using a probability sampling scheme for file reviews and observations. The algorithm used to select the sample is built into the software to ensure consistency in sampling methodology across review teams.

Enhancing the use of the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS™)

In FY 2012, the Office of Head Start, in consultation with the CLASS™ tool's developer, Teachstone, increased the sample size for CLASS™ observations. In addition, the amount of time reviewers spent reviewing each classroom was modified. In FY 2012, CLASS™ reviewers observed two 20-minute cycles per classroom, rather than the three 20-minute cycles that were observed in FY 2011. Data collected in earlier years suggested that this would allow the Office of Head Start to better understand the grantee's overall performance.

In addition, CLASS™ reporting was enhanced to allow grantees to better understand their scores. Review reports included standardized summaries (by dimension) that were used to inform grantees of the meaning of their score.

Expanded Implementation of Unannounced Reviews

As a part of OHS' continued dedication to increasing transparency and accountability, the agency continued the use of unannounced monitoring reviews. In FY 2012, approximately 12 percent of all Triennial and First-Year reviews were unannounced.

Outcomes of FY 2012 Monitoring Reviews

OHS completed 949 monitoring reviews in FY 2012, including 425 Triennial reviews, 9 First-Year reviews, 54 Other reviews, and 461 Follow Up reviews. Monitoring reviews have three possible outcomes: 1) Compliant, 2) One or more noncompliances with no deficiencies, or 3) One or

more deficiencies. Grantees with one or more deficiencies also may have noncompliant findings. Key outcomes of monitoring reviews included:

- I. **Consistent with previous years, 20 percent of grantees were compliant in FY 2012.** Of the 474 grantees that underwent a Triennial, First-Year, or Other review in FY 2012,¹ 19.4 percent were found to be compliant on all reviews, 67.7 percent were found to have one or more noncompliances and an additional 13.9 percent were found to have one or more deficiencies.
- II. **Grantees correct nearly all findings during follow up reviews.** Almost 80 percent of grantees corrected all findings on their follow up review in FY 2012(77.1 percent).
- III. **Some groups of grantees had more performance issues than others.** Similar to previous years, larger grantees had more deficient findings than smaller grantees, and grantees that provide only Head Start services had a lower proportion of compliant grantees than findings than those that provide only Early Head Start services or both Head Start and Early Head Start services.
- IV. Head Start program CLASSTM average scores in FY 2012 were in the middle range of quality for Emotional Support and Classroom Organization domains, averaging 5.9 and 5.45 out of 7, respectively. Scores for Instructional Support also were in the middle range of quality, but at the lower end of this range, averaging 2.98 out of 7.

Number and Types of Findings Identified in FY 2012

A total of 1,556 findings were identified for 474 grantees receiving First Year, Triennial, and Other monitoring reviews in FY 2012. Of the 474 grantees reviewed, 382 (80.6.8 percent) had one or more findings. Key trends with respect to the number and types of findings included:

- I. **As in FY 2011, most FY 2012 grantees with findings had a small number of findings.** Among grantees with only noncompliances, close to one half (44.9 percent) had two or fewer findings. Similarly, a little over one-half (56.1 percent) of grantees with deficiencies had two or fewer findings (noncompliances or deficiencies).
- II. **Most findings were areas of noncompliance.** Nearly 95 percent (94.7 percent, 1,474) of findings were areas of noncompliance; 5.2 percent (82) were deficiencies. A total of 316 grantees, 71.8 percent of all grantees reviewed, had one or more noncompliances. Sixty-six grantees (15.0 percent) had one or more deficiencies and noncompliances.
- III. **Grantees with deficiencies averaged more findings per review.** Overall, grantees with findings averaged 4.1 findings per review. Grantees with one or more areas of noncompliance averaged 3.9 findings per grantee; this is similar to the average in FY 2011 (4.0). Grantees with one or more deficiencies averaged 4.7 findings

¹ Note that 474 grantees received a total of 488 reviews (425 Triennial + 9 First-Year + 54 Others) in FY 2012. Twelve grantees received both a Triennial review and an Other review and two grantees had two Other reviews in this fiscal year, accounting for the difference of “14” between the number of grantees and the number of reviews.

(noncompliances and deficiencies)². This FY 2012 average is lower than that in FY 2011, when grantees with one or more deficiencies averaged 7.8 total findings per review. The overall decline in total noncompliances across all reviews from FY 2011 to FY 2012 may help explain the decrease in average number of findings per review. In addition, the scope of the protocol and the number of standards for which programs could be cited was reduced between FY 2011 and FY 2012 which could also explain the lower average in FY 2012.

Most Common Findings Identified in FY 2012

Many grantees with findings struggled with similar issues. In FY 2012, grantees were most likely to have findings in Criminal Record Checks (38.7 percent of grantees with noncompliances). We describe other frequently cited issues below.

- IV. ***Grantees were often cited in FY 2012 for issues pertaining to “Reporting to the Governing Body and Policy Council”.*** This was the most commonly cited finding in FY 2011 and the second most common in FY 2012, with over one-fifth (21.7 percent) of grantees that had noncompliant or deficient findings being cited for this issue.
- V. ***Code of Conduct issues were common among grantees with deficiencies.*** Approximately 60 percent (40 out of 66, 60.6 percent) of the grantees found to have one or more deficiencies were cited for at least one deficiency in Code of Conduct. Examples of Code of Conduct deficiencies include engaging in corporal punishment or leaving children alone or unsupervised.

New Directions in Monitoring for FY 2013

In FY 2012, OHS will continue to implement changes to the monitoring process to improve the consistency and quality of the monitoring process. Anticipated changes to monitoring for FY 2012 include:

- I. ***Standardized Methodology.*** In FY2013, the Office of Head start will formalize the requirements that they’ve developed to ensure consistency, objectivity, and accuracy within the review process. The new guidelines, known as Standardized Methodology, define the full set of requirements designed to promote high standards for consistency and objectivity and for which Review Teams will be held accountable. Standardization not only improves the reliability of the information collected during reviews, but also provides OHS with the ability to analyze Review Teams’ performance and prioritize needs for training and support.

² It should be noted that there are several outlying grantees that have very high numbers of findings which is inflating the average despite the fact that approximately half of the grantees have only one or two findings. Of the grantees that had only noncompliances, six had fifteen or more findings in their FY 2012 review. Of the grantees that had deficiencies, six had fifteen or more findings in their FY 2012 review.

- II. **Reorganization of CDE section to focus on School Readiness.** In response to the Congressional mandate requiring grantees to establish School Readiness goals, Compliance Measures in the Monitoring Protocol (the tool that guides the on-site monitoring review process) are being designed to assess grantee performance in setting School Readiness goals and monitoring and reporting progress toward meeting those goals. Methods of evidence collection will include interviews with the Early Childhood Development (ECD) Coordinator, Head Start Director, and ECD Staff to assess the program's progress in collecting, analyzing, and using both child-level and program-level data.
- III. **CLASS™.** In FY 2013, new teachers and substitute teachers will have worked with a group of children for ten days or more before they can be observed using the CLASS™. In addition, new background questions will be added to the CLASS™ monitoring software to collect contextual information on the observation cycle (e.g., whether the observed teacher is a substitute or new teacher; the time of day the observation takes place).
- IV. **Systems Matrix.** In FY 2013, a new visualization tool will be added to the software to collect systems data throughout the review process and organize it in a way that highlights high-level grantee performance strengths and weaknesses.