PRISM

Program Review Instrument for Systems Monitoring of Head Start and Early Head Start Grantees

PRISM Guide
2004

The *PRISM Guide* was developed by The Lewin Group and its subcontractor, Xtria, under Contract No. 282-98-0016. Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the material in this guide; however, if any discrepancy exists between language in this guide and in any applicable statute or regulation, the language in the statute or regulation is controlling.

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What's New in the FY 2004 PRISM Guide

The Fiscal Year (FY) 2004 version of the *PRISM Guide (Guide)* is newly designed to address an audience that includes PRISM team leaders, reviewers, and grantees. It replaces the *PRISM Federal Team Leader Planner* and the *Grantee Guide to PRISM* of past years. While most language in the *Guide* is addressed to the team leader, the information provided is intended to benefit all audiences. In some instances, the language is addressed specifically to reviewers and grantees. Forms in the back of the *Guide* are labeled for their particular audience.

KEY CHANGES TO PRISM (FY 2004)

Key changes for FY 2004 are intended to accomplish two objectives. The first objective is to collect and review as much relevant material as possible prior to arrival on-site, and the second objective is to increase the discretion of the team leader to customize evidence-gathering activities, as appropriate, to the circumstances of specific reviews. Together, these changes are intended to increase the time available for review teams to engage in activities fundamental to conducting an expert review, including:

- The collection, verification, and analysis of information (i.e., evidence) from multiple sources to establish relevant facts;

- Analysis of relevant facts to assess compliance with applicable standards; and

- Development of high-quality (i.e., accurate, clear, and concise) Head Start Review Reports using the PRISM Software.

In addition, the elements of a PRISM review have been reorganized to reflect more precisely that a PRISM review includes not only the activities that occur while the review team is on-site, but that it consists of the activities that occur prior to the arrival of the review team and following its departure, as well. As such, these three phases of the review have been reorganized as follows:

- Advance Activities (formerly referred to as Prereview)

- On-Site Activities (formerly referred to as During the Review)
- Grantee Notice and Program Improvement (formerly referred to as Postreview)

Consistent with the goals outlined above, the following key changes take effect in FY 2004:

- **Advance Document Review—All Reviewers.** Consistent with procedures implemented in some regions in prior years, team leaders in all regions must now send reviewers as much background and other material (obtained from the grantee and Regional Office) as possible for review prior to the team's arrival on-site. Reviewers must review this material in advance so they are familiar with the relevant aspects of the grantee's operations before arriving, preparing them for data gathering on-site (pages 18–19).
- **Advance Document Review—Fiscal Reviewers.** To address a Head Start Bureau concern that Fiscal Reviewers have not had sufficient time in the past to conduct a thorough review of a grantee's fiscal operations, the Bureau is implementing a policy that Fiscal Reviewers may arrive 1 day in advance of other review team members to conduct an advance review of relevant fiscal documents. Under this new policy, Fiscal Reviewers, when appropriate, travel to the grantee location in advance of the other team members and spend the full day Sunday at the hotel reviewing materials requested by the team leader and provided by the grantee. Fiscal Reviewers doing this will be compensated for a full day (page 19).
- **Fiscal Reviewer Core Question Assignment.** Team leaders must assign Fiscal Reviewers responsibility for the Fiscal Management Core Question only. Fiscal Reviewers should not take the lead on other Core Questions nor engage in review activities that are not related to the grantee's fiscal management systems (page 16).
- **Optional Group Interviews.** Four group interviews—Management Team Interview, Content Area Experts Interview, Staff Group Interview, and Delegate Directors Interview —are optional and conducted at the team leader's discretion (page 21).
- **Assignment of Reviewers to Group Interviews.** The team leader also has the discretion to assign reviewers only to those group interviews that provide information relevant to their Core Questions (pages 24–26).
- **Summary Meeting.** The two events formerly referred to as the Final Grantee Briefing and the Exit Meeting have been combined into one event called the Summary Meeting. The Summary Meeting is scheduled as the final event of the On-Site Activities Phase, after completion of the draft Head Start Review Report (pages 33–34).

PROCEDURAL CHANGES

Procedural changes incorporated into the PRISM process for FY 2004 include:

- **Grantee Right of Refusal.** Upon receipt of the review team roster from the team leader, the grantee may request the replacement of one review team member. The grantee is not entitled to appeal the selection of the replacement reviewer and is limited to one replacement request per review team (page 15).
- **Determining Income Eligibility.** Some review teams will be required to review a sample of income eligibility determination records as part of an effort to identify erroneous payments. Further guidance on conducting this records review is forthcoming (page 23).
- **Protocol for Retaining Handwritten Notes.** On the last day of the on-site review, reviewers are required to initial and date each page of their handwritten notes and turn these into the team leader. Similarly, all checklists, observation forms, and interview guides that include comments written during the on-site review must be initialed, dated, and given to the team leader (page 34).

Other procedural changes include requirements that Regional Office staff:

1. Ensure that the Area Summary in the final Head Start Review Report for a program that does not have any strengths or areas of noncompliance consists of a short paragraph documenting that the area was reviewed and that there were no areas of noncompliance identified in the content area (page 31).
2. Ensure that descriptions of program strengths and of areas of noncompliance within the final Head Start Review Report contain required elements. That is, descriptions of strengths should (a) specify what the grantee is doing that constitutes a strength and (b) include specific examples. A grantee strength is the provision of service that extends above and beyond what is required or that constitutes an exemplary practice or model. Descriptions of areas of noncompliance should (a) cite the applicable standard with which the grantee is out of compliance; (b) describe the evidence the team relied on in identifying the noncompliance; and (c) if the grantee is not in compliance with all parts of a standard, describe the difference between what the standard requires and what the grantee is doing (pages 31–32).
3. Ensure that descriptions of areas of noncompliance within the final Head Start Review Report include a reference to the Federal citation (e.g., 1306.32) as well as the full text of the standard (page 32).
4. Mail the cover letter and the final Head Start Review Report to the grantee within 45 calendar days of the end of the On-Site Activities phase. As well, effective FY 2004, on the same day these documents are mailed to the grantee, a copy of the report and cover

letter must be mailed to (a) the Policy Council Chairperson; (b) the Head Start director; (c) the Executive Director; (d) Paul Blatt, Head Start Bureau Monitoring Lead; (e) the Regional Office T/TA Coordinator; and (f) DANYA International (Attn: Monitoring Support Contract). A copy must also be given to (g) the grantee's Program Specialist (page 39).

5. Confirm the receipt of the cover letter and the final Head Start Review Report by the grantee for all reports, regardless of the decisions regarding compliance, using the least costly mechanism (page 40).

6. Track the resolution of each area of noncompliance and deficiency within the PRISM Software (page 42).

REVIEW DECISION CHANGES

The Head Start Bureau issued a revision in terminology on April 28, 2003, in order to improve consistency with the Head Start Act and the Performance Standards and to improve clarity for the grantee. The term "no findings" was replaced with "no areas of noncompliance." Both "findings" and "substantial findings" were replaced with "areas of noncompliance." The citation of a deficiency remains in the purview of Regional Office management. Any area of noncompliance has the potential to be deemed a deficiency at the Regional Office. These changes in terminology will be reflected in the PRISM Software in FY 2004.

- Terminology Used With Grantees. The word "deficiency" must not be used by team leaders or reviewers during the Summary Meeting or at any time during the review when communicating with the grantee. In addition, the term "noncompliance" should not be used, but rather the terms "potential" or "preliminary" areas of noncompliance should be used when discussing compliance issues with grantees (page 30).

- Making Review Decisions. The *Guide* clarifies the roles of review team members and Regional Office management in making review decisions. During the On-Site Activities phase, reviewers make recommendations about compliance, and team leaders make preliminary decisions regarding compliance. Regional Office management finalizes these decisions during the Grantee Notice and Program Improvement phase (pages 30, 35).

- Correction Timelines. Generally, the expectation is that most areas of noncompliance can be corrected in 90 days, but the responsible Regional Office official has discretion to establish correction periods of shorter or longer duration (but in no case to exceed 1 year), based upon the relevant facts and circumstances of the noncompliance (pages 39, 41).

CHANGES TO THE *PRISM GUIDE*

Team leaders, reviewers, and grantees will notice an increased emphasis throughout the *Guide* on collecting and verifying information to establish relevant facts, which serve as the basis for compliance decisions. In addition, the *Guide* includes increased emphasis on writing well-substantiated, accurate, and succinct Head Start Review Reports.

Other changes were made to increase the usability of the FY 2004 version of the *Guide*. A new tab was added on Resources to provide team leaders and others with immediate access to information that may be helpful during an on-site review. Appendices were renamed, and the names now include a description of the content behind the tabs. This includes the tab on Forms (formerly, Appendix II) and the PRISM Instrument (formerly, Appendix I).

Report Writing Term Changes

In order to reduce confusion with regard to the terms used in report writing, the following definitions will be used for FY 2004:

- Draft Head Start Review Report: The draft report that is prepared in the PRISM Software by reviewers and Report Coordinators during the On-Site Activities phase. The draft Head Start Review Report consists of three sections: (1) Area Summary, (2) Review Decisions, and (3) Areas of Noncompliance.

- Final Head Start Review Report: The final report that is prepared in the PRISM Software at the Regional Office during the Grantee Notice and Program Improvement phase and mailed to the grantee.

- Cover letter: Formerly referred to as the Letter of Understanding (LOU), the cover letter is attached to the final Head Start Review Report and mailed to the grantee. The cover letter and final Head Start Review Report together constitute legal notice to the grantee of the presence of any areas of noncompliance and determination(s) of deficiency(ies), as applicable.

New and Revised Forms

Several new forms are in use during FY 2004 in order to respond to policy changes. Copies of these forms and instructions on their use appear in this document. These include a Reviewer Code of Conduct, which must be signed by each reviewer every year. The content of the Prereview Activities Checklist was divided between two new checklists, the Team Leader's Advance Activities Checklist and the Grantee's Advance Activities Checklist, each of which contains items relevant to the respective audience. The PRISM Records Request was also updated.

The increased emphasis on completing forms online and on recording and transmitting information online is seen throughout the manual. Team leaders must complete their Review Team Request Forms online. Regional Review Coordinators must use the online system to identify reviewers and then track them throughout the process. Reviewers will update their personal information online later in FY 2004. In addition, a new Web site for reviewers and team leaders (www.headstartreviews.com) serves as a rich resource not only for forms, but also for training materials and information about what is happening at the national level.

CHANGES TO THE PRISM INSTRUMENT

Several changes were made to the PRISM Instrument, including:

- The addition of Core Question 18, which addresses Child Outcomes.
- Minor changes in Core Questions 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9a, 10, 12, and 15, which include moving standards and bulleted items related to child outcomes to Core Question 18.
- Revision of language in Core Question 16 to more precisely reflect requirements regarding enrollment opportunities for children with disabilities.
- Changes to the Summary of Review Decisions chart (formerly, the Summary of Findings chart) to reflect the new terminology of "no areas of noncompliance" and "areas of noncompliance" and the addition of a Core Question on Child Outcomes.
- Changes in the Bus Ride Checklist to provide more accuracy in citing standards, as well as changes reflecting the July 2001 transportation standards.
- The addition of an item to Area 1 on the Fiscal Checklist, which refers to planning.
- Changes showing that the Management Team Interview Protocol, Delegate Directors Interview Protocol, Content Area Experts Interview Protocol, and Staff Group Interview Protocol are now optional.

PRISM Overview

The *Guide* describes the Federal monitoring process for Head Start and Early Head Start programs and provides guidance to Federal Team Leaders (team leaders), review team members, and grantees regarding the conduct of reviews.

The *Guide* is divided into five chapters:

- What's New;
- PRISM Overview;
- Advance Activities;
- On-Site Activities; and
- Grantee Notice and Program Improvement.

Three appendices are included at the end of the *Guide*:

- PRISM Instrument;
- Forms; and
- Resources.

This chapter, PRISM Overview, begins with a brief background on Head Start and program monitoring. The remaining sections of the chapter summarize the elements of the PRISM monitoring process.

BACKGROUND: HEAD START AND PROGRAM MONITORING

The Head Start Program, which is authorized under the Head Start Act, provides grants to local public and private nonprofit and for-profit agencies to provide comprehensive child development services to economically disadvantaged children and families, with a special focus on helping children develop the early literacy and numeracy skills they need to be successful in school. Intended primarily for preschoolers from low-income families, Head Start promotes school readiness by enhancing the social and cognitive development of children through the provision of educational, health, nutritional, social, and other services. Head Start programs emphasize cognitive, language, and socio-emotional development to enable each child to develop and function at his or her highest potential. At least 10 percent of the enrollment opportunities in each program must be made available to children with disabilities. Head Start engages parents in their children's learning and helps them in making progress toward their educational, literacy, and employment goals. The Head Start program also emphasizes significant involvement of parents in the administration of local Head Start programs. In 1995, the Early Head Start program was established in recognition of the mounting evidence that the earliest years, from birth to 3 years of age, matter a great deal to children's growth and development.

Head Start is administered by the Head Start Bureau of the Administration on Children, Youth and Families (ACYF). ACYF is a part of the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) within the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).

Head Start program requirements are specified in the law (i.e., the Head Start Act and other statutes) and in various Federal, state, and local regulations.[1] (Regulations are rules issued by governmental agencies that have the force of law.) The set of regulations that pertain to Head Start and Early Head Start programs includes the Head Start Program Performance Standards (Performance Standards), other Head Start regulations, and other relevant Federal, state, and local regulations.

The Head Start Act mandates that each Head Start grantee receive a full review at least once every 3 years, that each new program be reviewed after the completion of its first year (and then at least every 3 years thereafter), and that follow-up reviews be conducted for grantees that substantially fail to meet applicable standards.[2] During an on-site review, a team of qualified reviewers, led by a team leader, assesses whether or not the Head Start program is in compliance with all statutory (i.e., Head Start Act and other applicable laws), regulatory (i.e., Performance Standards and other applicable Federal, state, and local regulations), and policy requirements.

WHAT IS PRISM?

The Program Review Instrument for Systems Monitoring (PRISM) is both a set of instruments and the process used to conduct Federal monitoring of Head Start grantees. PRISM was developed to integrate into the monitoring process the 1998 revisions to the Performance

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[1] Throughout the *PRISM Guide*, "Head Start" is used to include both Head Start and Early Head Start programs, unless otherwise specified. Both programs are authorized under the Head Start Act (42 USC 9831, et seq.).

[2] 42 USC 9836a.

Standards, which reorganized the standards to reduce fragmentation and encourage holistic approaches to the delivery of quality services.[3]

PRISM organizes elements in the Performance Standards, other program regulations, and portions of the Head Start Act into **Core Questions**. Each Core Question addresses a set of related items and prompts the review team to assess whether the Performance Standards related to the Core Question are being met. Included are nine questions on the program services and partnerships that all Head Start grantees must implement. (Reviewers with primary responsibility for these Core Questions are the **Service Reviewers**.) The remaining nine questions focus on the program systems that are in place to support delivery of services and partnership building. (Reviewers with primary responsibility for these Core Questions are the **Systems Reviewers.**)

A sample Core Question layout (from the Core Questions section of the PRISM Instrument) is shown in Figure 1. The Core Question number and title appear at the top of the page; the top left portion of the page contains the full text of the Core Question. The top right section of the page includes citations of all standards (i.e., requirements of the Head Start Act, the Performance Standards, and other applicable laws and regulations) applicable to the Core Question. The bottom portion of the page includes instructions on how reviewers gather information pertinent to that particular question. The Core Question framework "drives" the review—by the end of the visit, the team recommends decisions under all 18 Core Questions. The **PRISM Instrument** is the tool that review team members use to gather data to answer the Core Questions. The specific tools contained within the PRISM Instrument include:

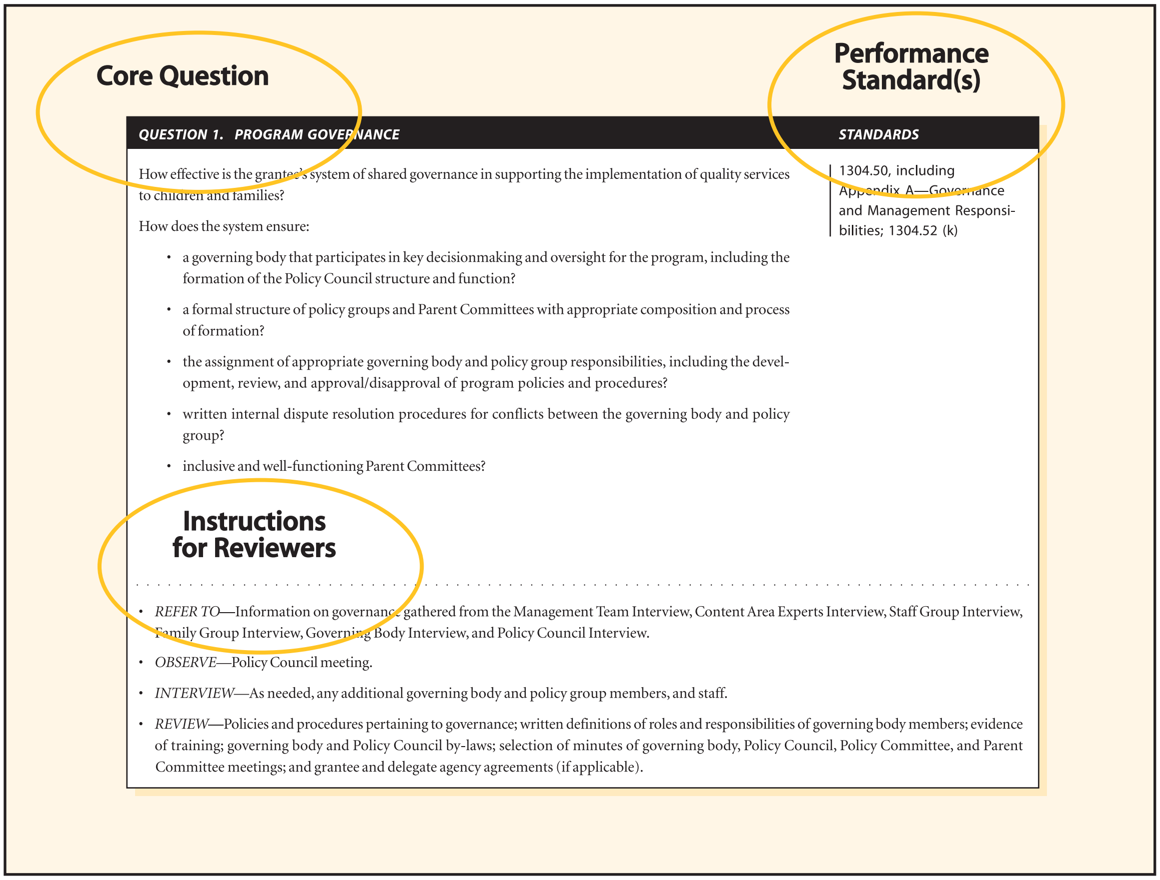
- The set of 18 Core Questions;
- Guidance on conducting internal review team meetings;
- Guidance on conducting an initial meeting with grantee management and staff;
- Protocols for interviewing grantee staff, Head Start families, Policy Council and Governing Body members, and child care and other community partners; and
- Instruments and checklists for recording observations during visits to classrooms, homes, and other locations.

HOW DOES THE PRISM PROCESS WORK?

Fundamental to the PRISM process are the collection, verification, and analysis of information (i.e., evidence) from multiple sources to establish relevant facts. Based on the analysis of these

[3] The revisions to the Performance Standards were finalized in November 1996 and took effect on January 1, 1998. For more information on the evolution of the Performance Standards, including the increased emphasis on holistic, integrated service delivery, see the discussion in the Preamble to the Final Rule (*Federal Register*, Vol. 61, No. 215 (November 5, 1996)).

Figure 1.—Sample Core Question Layout



QUESTION 1. PROGRAM GOVERNANCE	STANDARDS
How effective is the grantee's system of shared governance in supporting the implementation of quality services to children and families? How does the system ensure: • a governing body that participates in key decisionmaking and oversight for the program, including the formation of the Policy Council structure and function? • a formal structure of policy groups and Parent Committees with appropriate composition and process of formation? • the assignment of appropriate governing body and policy group responsibilities, including the development, review, and approval/disapproval of program policies and procedures? • written internal dispute resolution procedures for conflicts between the governing body and policy group? • inclusive and well-functioning Parent Committees?	1304.50, including Appendix A—Governance and Management Responsibilities; 1304.52 (k)

- *REFER TO*—Information on governance gathered from the Management Team Interview, Content Area Experts Interview, Staff Group Interview, Family Group Interview, Governing Body Interview, and Policy Council Interview.
- *OBSERVE*—Policy Council meeting.
- *INTERVIEW*—As needed, any additional governing body and policy group members, and staff.
- *REVIEW*—Policies and procedures pertaining to governance; written definitions of roles and responsibilities of governing body members; evidence of training; governing body and Policy Council by-laws; selection of minutes of governing body, Policy Council, Policy Committee, and Parent Committee meetings; and grantee and delegate agency agreements (if applicable).

facts and recommendations of the review team, the team leader makes preliminary decisions regarding grantee compliance with applicable standards (i.e., requirements of the Head Start Act, the Performance Standards, and other applicable laws and regulations), which are finalized by the responsible official within the Regional Office. The process culminates in the development of a Head Start Review Report, which summarizes program strengths and communicates final compliance decisions. Integral to the PRISM process is a "systems" approach to information collection and analysis, as well as use of a special process to examine the experiences of a sample of Head Start children and their families. While on-site, review team members communicate frequently with the grantee regarding potential areas of noncompliance and with each other through daily team meetings. Each of these elements, including the three phases that comprise a grantee review, are described more fully below.

Three Phases

The three phases of a grantee review include (each of these phases is described in more detail in subsequent chapters):

- **Advance Activities.** Activities during this phase include collecting background information, making logistical arrangements, requesting and assigning reviewers to a review team, selecting sites and focus children, and advance review of background and other information by review team members.

- **On-Site Activities.** Activities during this phase include grantee meetings and information collection and verification activities to establish facts, including document reviews, center- and home-based visits, interviews, and grantee briefings. During this phase, reviewers participate in team meetings to share and analyze information. During the final stage of this phase, the team develops the draft Head Start Review Report.

- **Grantee Notice and Program Improvement.** Activities during this phase include finalizing compliance decisions within the Regional Office and developing and delivering to the grantee the final Head Start Review Report. This phase also includes program improvement activities (if applicable), development of Quality Improvement Plans (QIPs) by grantees in deficient status, and access to training and technical assistance (T/TA).

Systems Approach

PRISM employs a “systems approach” to monitoring, reflecting the vision articulated within the Performance Standards that strong systems are essential to maintaining program quality. Under this approach, a failure within a service area or in partnership building typically signifies an underlying systems problem, which the review team seeks to identify, verify, and assess. PRISM focuses on how a grantee’s systems, services, and partnering activities interact to create and maintain a quality program. The PRISM Framework (Figure 2) illustrates the interrelationships among systems, services, and partnerships.

Focus Child and Family Process

Through the focus child and family process, reviewers use various PRISM instruments and protocols to examine the actual experiences of a group of Head Start children and their families, covering material from the time they entered Head Start to the present. This holistic, multifaceted view of a selection of children and their families allows reviewers to see how the grantee integrates systems and services.

Team Meetings

Team meetings are the vehicle for integrating and analyzing data on the Core Questions. They are analytic sessions through which review team members share information, integrate their individual observations, identify and analyze strengths and underlying issues, and discuss additional information collection and verification needed to establish relevant facts and circumstances. The team leader directs the work of the group during team meetings, facilitating discussions, probing for analysis, and assigning reviewers to follow up on issues identified during the meeting. During the final team meeting, the team leader makes

Figure 2.—PRISM Framework

EFFECTIVENESS OF SYSTEMS	**IMPLEMENTATION OF SERVICES AND PARTNERSHIPS**								
	Child Development and Health Services					**Family and Community Partnerships**			**Program Design**
	Prevention & Early Intervention	Individu-alization	Disabilities Services	Curriculum and Assessment	Child Outcomes	Family Partnership Building	Parent Involvement	Community Partnerships	Facilities, Materials, Equipment, and Transportation
Program Governance									
Planning									
Communication									
Record-Keeping & Reporting									
Ongoing Monitoring									
Self-Assessment									
Human Resources									
Fiscal Management									
Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment, and Attendance									

preliminary decisions regarding compliance, which are finalized by the Regional Office management.

Ongoing Communication With the Grantee

The team leader guides the team in providing ongoing feedback to grantee staff during the review through informal and formal grantee briefings throughout the week and through the Summary Meeting.

Head Start Review Report

The Head Start Review Report is prepared at the end of the On-Site Activities phase (i.e., draft Head Start Review Report) and finalized at the Regional Office (i.e., final Head Start Review Report). The review report summarizes grantee strengths and identifies compliance decisions. Because the review report provides legal notice to the grantee of any areas of noncompliance, it is imperative that the review report provide accurate compliance decisions that are clearly articulated and based on well-substantiated evidence. Review reports must also be written using succinct and clear prose.

The final Head Start Review Report, accompanied by a cover letter, **must** be mailed to the grantee within 45 calendar days of the end of the On-Site Activities phase. Typically, the cover letter summarizes grantee strengths, identifies any areas of noncompliance contained in the final Head Start Review Report, and specifies any necessary corrective action and the period for making such corrections. Because the review report does not include sufficient information related to deficiency determinations or their correction, deficiency information must be detailed in the cover letter. (Specific guidance regarding development of the cover letters is provided in the Grantee Notice and Program Improvement chapter.)

Advance Activities

The Advance Activities phase emphasizes collecting and reviewing as much relevant material as possible prior to the On-Site Activities phase. This allows the review team to maximize time available for collecting and verifying information that is only available on-site and for writing high-quality (i.e., accurate, clear, and concise) Head Start Review Reports.

There are five main activities undertaken by the team leader during the Advance Activities phase, some of which are conducted in collaboration with the grantee. These include the following: (1) initial contact with the grantee and collection of background and other information from the grantee and Regional Office; (2) logistical preparations; (3) selection of review team members and assignment of Core Questions; (4) selection of delegate agencies, centers and settings, and focus children and families; (5) and dissemination of background information to review team members.

Refer to the advance activities checklists (i.e., Team Leader's Advance Activities Checklist and Grantee's Advance Activities Checklist) in the Forms appendix for detailed guidance on specific advance activities to be performed by the team leader and grantee, respectively.

COLLECTING INFORMATION IN ADVANCE

The team leader should contact the grantee and relevant Program Specialist from the applicable Regional Office early in the Advance Activities phase. In addition to making introductions and advising the grantee and Program Specialist of the review dates, a primary goal of this initial contact is to request background and other information in advance of the On-Site Activities phase of the review.

Collecting and reviewing information from the grantee directly, as well as from the Program Specialist in advance of the On-Site Activities phase, has a number of critical benefits. First, this information can help the team leader to determine the types of reviewer expertise needed and assign reviewers to their roles. Second, review of materials in advance by the team members reduces the potential workload associated with the On-Site Activities phase, allowing more time for data collection, verification of on-site data, and the development of an accurate, clear, concise, and high-quality Head Start Review Report. Finally, having reviewed background materials, reviewers are better positioned to prioritize on-site activities and identify specific lines of questioning. Refer to the PRISM Records Request in the Forms appendix for an exhaustive list of documents that are candidates for advance review.

LOGISTICAL ARRANGEMENTS

Early in the planning process, the team leader should contact the grantee to discuss logistical arrangements for the meetings and interviews as well as for the document and file reviews that will occur during the On-Site Activities phase of the review. For meetings and interviews, such logistics typically include specifying the dates and times during which the meetings and interviews will occur, specifying participants for each of the meetings and interviews, identifying locations where the meetings and interviews will be conducted, specifying any materials or equipment required (e.g., flip-chart stand and flip-chart paper, pens, extension cords for laptop computers, projection screen, overhead projector, or LCD projector), specifying any reasonable accommodations needed by grantee or review team participants, and arranging for transportation (e.g., transporting parents, children, and grantee staff to and from meetings and interviews and transporting review team members to and from classrooms, centers, and other locations), as applicable.

Refer to the Team Leader's Advance Activities Checklist and Grantee's Advance Activities Checklist in the Forms appendix for additional guidance on making logistical arrangements for on-site activities. All on-site activities are described in detail in the On-Site Activities chapter.

REQUESTING AND ASSIGNING REVIEWERS

The team leader is responsible for determining the team expertise and number of reviewers needed for the review team and for assigning team members to take responsibility for particular Core Questions. The size of the review team and the roles and responsibilities of the team members will vary across reviews.

Team leaders must adhere to guidelines pertaining to reviewer selection articulated within a Head Start Bureau Information Memorandum issued in December 2002.[1] This memorandum, effective January 1, 2003, requires that Regional Office staff will request review team members based on reviewer skills needed. This is a change from the practice of requesting reviewers by name. DANYA, the national monitoring support contractor, will assemble review teams based on the specific skill sets identified by the team leader. Specific reviewer selection practices that are intended to improve the composition of review teams have also been implemented. These practices address the number of new reviewers required on a team and the use of reviewers

[1] Administration on Children, Youth and Families (2002). "Changes to the Head Start On-Site Monitoring Review Process" Information Memorandum (ACYF-IM-HS-02-11) (December 18, 2002).

who are employed by a Head Start grantee or delegate agency, as opposed to consultants (those who are not employed by a Head Start grantee).

The following sections provide a set of recommendations to help guide the team leader through this decision-making process. A description of how the Regional Review Coordinators assemble the review teams is also included.

Requesting Reviewers

Together, review team members must have the expertise to review all 18 Core Questions. The team leader can select reviewers with expertise in the following areas:

- Early Childhood Development (ECD);
- Health (HEA);
- Disabilities (DIS);
- Infant and Toddler Development (ITCD);
- Infant and Toddler Disabilities (ITD);
- Infant and Toddler Maternal and Child Health (MCH);
- Family and Community Partnerships (FCP);
- Program Design and Management (PDM);
- Fiscal Management (FIS); and
- Report Coordination (RC).

Determining Team Size and Expertise. The team leader should keep in mind that **a key objective in forming a team is to use the fewest number of reviewers possible without compromising the team's ability to conduct a thorough, high-quality review.** Conducting reviews with the smallest team possible is desirable for at least two reasons. First, keeping teams small helps minimize review costs. Second, the presence of small review teams helps minimize for the grantee any disruptive effects associated with the reviews, simplifies review logistics, and facilitates an efficient review process (e.g., team meetings of shorter duration with focused discussions).

In determining both team size and expertise, the team leader should consider various relevant factors, such as:

- Complexity of the grantee's management structure;

- Presence and number of delegate agencies;
- Geographic considerations (e.g., distance between centers, classrooms, delegate agencies);
- Complexity and nature of program options;
- Presence of child care partner agencies;
- Languages spoken;
- Grantee type (e.g., county government, community action program, school district);
- Recent program changes (e.g., recent program expansion or key staff turnover);
- Factors relevant to the grantee's fiscal operations (which might suggest the need for one or more additional Fiscal Reviewers), such as:
  - — The presence of a qualified audit regarding compliance with the terms and conditions of the grant;
  - — The presence of many delegate agencies;
  - — The presence of problematic or complex fiscal issues (as identified in a previous Head Start Review Report, for example), such as unusual or complex cost allocation situations, non-Federal costs that are contingent primarily on volunteer services, or expenditures not included in the funding application;
  - — The presence of a complex organizational structure, such as multiple shared staff, partnerships, and/or program options; or
  - — Recent turnover among fiscal managers or within the governing board.

The team leader might also wish to request reviewers who have expertise relevant to other key grantee characteristics, such as special knowledge of issues specific to tribal or migrant and seasonal programs. Finally, for grantees with large delegate agencies, the team leader may choose to employ multiple review teams (i.e., one team for the grantee and additional teams for each delegate).

In addition to the considerations described above, the team leader must comply with the following requirements:

- If the grantee provides Early Head Start, review team members with relevant Early Head Start expertise (i.e., Infant and Toddler Child Development or Infant and Toddler Maternal and Child Health) must have completed approved Early Head Start training. (The team leader does not need to request reviewers who have completed such training;

the Regional Review Coordinators will include on review teams only those reviewers who have received required Early Head Start training.) In addition to monitoring the Early Head Start program, these reviewers may be given additional monitoring responsibilities, depending upon their knowledge and expertise.

- Unless the grantee provides only Early Head Start, the review team must include at least one reviewer trained to evaluate the grantee's approach to measuring outcomes for children. That is, the team must include a reviewer who attended outcomes training in fall 2001 or summer 2002. This individual will assist the team leader to ensure that all other team members understand their roles regarding monitoring child outcomes requirements.

The Review Team Request Form. Once the team leader has determined the number of reviewers and areas of expertise needed on the review team and has verified that the experience of the reviewers requested matches the characteristics of the grantee, he or she summarizes this information on the Review Team Request Form. This form must be completed online at the team leader Web site (www.headstartreviews.com) and submitted no later than 100 days prior to the program review. Instructions for completing the Review Team Request Form online can also be found on the team leader Web site.

In addition to selecting reviewers based on a particular service area expertise, expertise with program option or size, and bilingual skills, **team leaders can also indicate those areas in which they do not want a new reviewer or areas in which they need an experienced reviewer.** (An "experienced" reviewer is defined as someone who has participated in at least nine reviews in the past 3 years [i.e., since FY 2000], while a "new" reviewer is someone who has never participated in a review or who did not participate in a review in the prior fiscal year.)

Assembling the Review Team

As part of the national monitoring support contract, the Regional Review Coordinator uses the information provided on the Review Team Request Form, together with information maintained in the Head Start Review Tracking System, to set up each review and select a team of reviewers that is appropriate for the grantee. The Regional Review Coordinator will make every attempt to assemble teams based on the skill sets requested by the team leaders. In some instances, there may be limitations to identifying reviewers with specific degrees or experiences based on the information contained in reviewer profiles. While the entire national pool of reviewers is available to all regions, Bureau policy does not allow reviewers to review programs within the state in which they live.

In addition to the skill sets requested by the team leader, the Regional Review Coordinator uses guidelines set by the Head Start Bureau to determine the number of times individual reviewers can be assigned to a review team and the ratio of new and experienced members on a team.[2] These guidelines follow:

- Reviewers who are employees of a Head Start grantee or delegate agency are limited to participating in a maximum of three reviews per year.
- Reviewers not employed by a Head Start grantee or delegate agency are limited to participating in a maximum of 17 review teams per year.
- Staff employed by a grantee or employed by a delegate of a grantee identified as deficient cannot participate on a review until the deficiencies have been resolved.
- Reviewers cannot review programs within their home state; they may only participate in reviews outside of the state where they live.
- Each review with a team size of seven or greater will include two reviewers who are PRISM-trained but who have not been used on a review team in the last year. On reviews for which the team size is less than seven, one such reviewer will be used.

Reviewers with Limited Availability. Certain reviewers are available only 1-2 weeks of the year to conduct reviews. If there is a shortage of a particular reviewer specialty, such as Report Coordinators or Fiscal Reviewers, Regional Review Coordinators are permitted to fill up to 5 percent of their review assignments without using the computer-assisted system, provided that the limited availability has been approved by the Head Start Bureau. In such cases, those reviewers with the least availability are listed first. For example, in a region with 300 reviewers, 15 persons (5 percent) would be identified without using the computer-assisted system. Those reviewers in the approved area of need who were available for only 1 week per year would be listed first, followed by those available for only 2 weeks, until the 15 persons were identified. The availability of these consultants would then be assessed, and they would be placed on teams based solely on skill sets and their availability.

Regional Review Coordinators are responsible for tracking the responses from the selected pool of reviewers. Follow-up reviews are not required to include new or unused reviewers on review teams.

Review Team Modification. Once the Regional Review Coordinator completes the assignment of individual reviewers to a team using the computer-assisted process, names of individual team members are shared with the team leader. Although team leaders cannot proactively indicate that they do not want a particular person assigned to a team, there may be a situation that warrants modification of team composition (e.g., known conflict of interest, need for an

[2] Administration on Children, Youth and Families (2002).

experienced reviewer in a particular content area). Such a situation must be addressed on the Reviewer Change Order Form, and the team leader must secure approval of the change through the Regional Office approval procedure. Only one such modification per review team can be made at the regional level. If additional modifications are necessary, the Regional Office must submit a Request for Exception to the Associate Commissioner, Head Start Bureau, for approval. The following guidelines apply to the replacement reviewers:

- Reviewers who are last-minute replacements (within 1 week of the review) for team members will not have the substitution review count against the number of reviews they can conduct per year.
- In those instances in which the reviewer is dismissed early in the week (before Wednesday), the Regional Review Coordinator will attempt to provide a replacement if requested by the team leader.
- Replacement reviewers who join the team mid-week may be from within the state but will be subject to all conflict of interest clauses in their contract and the Reviewer Code of Conduct.

Beginning on February 1, 2004, grantees also have the ability to request a modification to the composition of the review team. To facilitate any such request, the team leader must submit to the grantee in writing, within 3 days of the team leader's receipt of the final review team roster from the Regional Review Coordinator, a list of the names of review team members selected for the review. Within 5 days of receipt of the list, the grantee may request the replacement of one review team member. Any such request must be submitted to the team leader in writing (submission of such request via e-mail is acceptable).

Upon receipt and approval of the grantee's replacement request, the team leader must complete a Reviewer Change Order Form and submit the form, accompanied by the grantee's written request, to the Regional Review Coordinator. The Regional Review Coordinator will, consistent with the process used to replace a review team member at the team leader's request, identify a replacement reviewer. The team leader must forward to the grantee the name of the replacement reviewer, upon receipt of the name from the Regional Review Coordinator. The grantee is not entitled to appeal the selection of the replacement reviewer and is limited to one replacement request per review team.

Assigning Reviewers to Core Questions and Use of Fiscal Reviewers

Each reviewer is assigned responsibility for taking the lead on Core Questions related to his or her field of expertise. The team leader should assign responsibilities for Core Questions to ensure that (a) all systems, services, and partnerships are covered and (b) team members are assigned to make best use of their knowledge, skills, and experience. A summary of the Core Questions assigned to Systems and Service Reviewers appears in Figure 3.

Figure 3.—Review Team Assignments

Team Members	***Core Questions***
Systems Reviewers	1. Program Governance 2. Planning 3. Communication 4. Record-Keeping and Reporting 5. Ongoing Monitoring 6. Program Self-Assessment 7. Human Resources 8. Fiscal Management – Fiscal Reviewer 16. Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment, and Attendance
Service Reviewers	9. Prevention and Early Intervention 10. Individualization 11. Disabilities Services 12. Curriculum and Assessment 13. Family Partnership Building 14. Parent Involvement 15. Community Partnerships 17. Facilities, Materials, Equipment, and Transportation 18. Child Outcomes

Once the Regional Review Coordinator has notified the team leader of the confirmed list of review team members, the team leader can make these individual assignments using the Team Assignment Worksheet. The Team Assignment Worksheet summarizes general assignments of responsibility and specific assignments for review activities. A blank form can be found in the Forms appendix. It begins by providing space to summarize responsibilities for the Core Questions. Next to each of the 18 Core Questions, the team leader can record the name of the lead reviewer and the names of reviewers who will support the lead reviewer in gathering information and preparing the report. **Beginning in FY 2004, team leaders must assign Fiscal Reviewers responsibility for the Fiscal Management Core Question only.** Fiscal Reviewers should not take the lead on other Core Questions nor engage in review activities that are not related to the grantee's fiscal management system. This change was initiated in an effort to ensure that Fiscal Reviewers have adequate time in which to review a grantee's fiscal operations.

Following the set of Core Questions, the worksheet lists the required meetings that will occur during the initial day(s) of the review. **In order to maximize the time that reviewers have to conduct data-gathering activities related to their area of expertise, team leaders should use discretion in assigning individuals to interviews.** For each meeting, information can be recorded to summarize who will attend, when the meeting will be held, and where it will occur. If there are special roles for individuals (e.g., facilitator and note taker), there is space to write in the names of reviewers who will assume those roles. **In keeping with the effort to ensure that Fiscal Reviewers have adequate time to review a grantee's fiscal operations, team leaders should assign Fiscal Reviewers to participate only in those meetings and interviews that address fiscally relevant issues.** While the team leader has discretion in making such assignments, it is expected that the Fiscal Reviewer would attend, at a minimum, two interviews: (1) the Governing Body Interview and (2) the Policy Council Interview.

The data-gathering activities, information sharing, and reporting aspects of the review are listed next. These include assignment of focus children and their families, activities related to the focus child and family process, attendance at the Policy Council meeting, contacts with child care and community partners, the interview with governing body members, the Family Group Interview, riding the bus, and so forth. Again, for each activity, there is space to record who has responsibility, when the activity will take place, and where it will occur. It is usually helpful to the team leader and review team members to refer to a review itinerary that lists the review activities in chronological order, and this form provides one mechanism for doing so.

SELECTION OF DELEGATES, SETTINGS, AND FOCUS CHILDREN

This section presents the selection process undertaken by team leaders to make a solid, reasoned judgment of the settings to visit and the children on whom to focus. It is not necessary to visit all delegates, centers, and classrooms of a grantee in order to determine the effectiveness of the grantee's systems or services. For most grantees, it will not be possible to visit all family child care homes or accompany all home visitors. The selection process is designed to allow the team to monitor the effectiveness of systems and the implementation of services and partnerships in all types of settings.

Selecting Delegates. When grantees have delegate agencies, the team leader should consult with the grantee in determining the delegates the team will visit. It is very important that the team see the full range of program services offered. Decisions should not be based on a theory of rotation (i.e., a delegate is not selected just because it was not visited in the last review).

Selecting Centers or Geographic Areas. The team leader, in partnership with the grantee, also selects the centers and geographic areas (used to select family child care homes and home visitors) that the reviewers will visit. The sites selected should represent the grantee's program, including its diversity of families, ages served, as well as program options. It is important to include, for example, an Early Head Start site, a child care partnership, and a home-based or family child care option, to the extent these are present.

Selecting Classrooms, Family Child Care Homes, and Home Visitors. If a chosen center or geographic area has many classrooms or home visitors, the team leader will need additional help from the grantee with the selection. In general, the team leader can randomly choose classes within selected centers or family child care homes or home visitors within a geographic area.

Selecting Focus Children and Their Families. The team leader will also work with the grantee to select the children and their families that will be a focus of the data-gathering activities during the On-Site Activities phase of the review. As part of this process, the team leader may ask the grantee to provide enrollment rosters or class lists, or the team leader may ask the grantee to choose one to four children in each class—one to be a focus child and the others to act as back-ups. At a minimum, focus children and families should include children enrolled in each classroom and family child care home to be visited. It is not expected that every program activity will be represented by every family, but rather that the experiences of the group of children and families chosen will give reviewers a comprehensive view of how the program works. Careful attention should be given to ensure that the children selected reflect the age groups served as well as (1) families involved in child care partnerships and (2) children with disabilities, including at least one child with more significant disabilities. Typically, each Service Reviewer is assigned three to five focus children and their families by the team leader.

The Forms appendix contains a document entitled "The Selection Process," which provides a step-by-step methodology to use in preparing for a review, using the Selection Tree Form. Instructions are given for selection at four different levels: (1) delegate agencies; (2) centers or geographic areas; (3) classrooms, family child care homes, and home visitors; and (4) focus children and their families. A blank Selection Tree Form may be found in the Forms appendix.

SHARING INFORMATION WITH REVIEWERS

It is critical that team leaders send to review team members logistical and relevant background materials obtained from either the Regional Office and/or the grantee (see Collecting Information in Advance, earlier in this chapter), as applicable.

All Reviewers

Background documents provided to all reviewers might include, for example, a copy of the program's self-assessment, community assessment, Program Information Report, and an organizational chart. Review team members must review thoroughly all background materials received prior to the start of the On-Site Activities phase of the review to ensure they are familiar with relevant grantee characteristics and ready to begin gathering data upon arrival at the grantee site.

See the Team Leader's Advance Activities Checklist and the PRISM Records Request (in the Forms appendix) for more detailed information regarding the collection and dissemination of background information for advance review.

Fiscal Reviewers

Fiscal Reviewers often do not have sufficient time to conduct a thorough review of a grantee's fiscal operations. **For this reason, the Bureau is implementing a policy that, when appropriate, Fiscal Reviewers may arrive in advance of other review team members to conduct an advance review of relevant fiscal documents. This policy becomes effective February 1, 2004.**

Under this new policy, the team leader, when choosing to have the Fiscal Reviewer arrive early, should require the grantee director to certify that relevant fiscal documents, as identified on the PRISM Records Request form, will be delivered to the review team's hotel no later than the Saturday afternoon before the Fiscal Reviewer is scheduled to begin. This certification must be made 30 days in advance of the Fiscal Reviewer's anticipated arrival date, so that travel arrangements can be made that take advantage of advance lower fares. Fiscal Reviewers must spend a full day on Sunday at the hotel reviewing fiscal materials. The Fiscal Reviewer, in such cases, is expected to attend the Review Team Planning Meeting (usually on Sunday evening) and will be compensated for a full day rather than a half-day of work.

When the advance fiscal review option is chosen, the materials requested in advance by the team leader may vary depending on the specific circumstances of the grantee. The team leader should contact the Fiscal Reviewer as soon as the Fiscal Reviewer has been selected to agree on the set of documents to be requested for advance review. The intent of this advance review is to ensure the Fiscal Reviewer has an understanding of the grantee's fiscal operations prior to the beginning of the On-Site Activities phase of the review; it is not intended to substitute for the in-depth review of fiscal information that will be conducted on-site. Materials that should be requested for advance review may include:

- The grantee's most recent audit report and management letter;
- The grantee's current and prior year Financial Assistance Awards (FAAs);
- The grantee's current financial statements, including the balance sheet for the agency and the financial statements from the Head Start program;
- Organizational chart or list of staff and function of each staff person, including any vacancies;

- The grantee's Policies and Procedures manual(s) covering fiscal operations;
- The grantee's indirect cost agreement and cost allocation plan;
- The grantee's most recent financial reports as delivered to the governing bodies;
- Any construction and renovation awards and lease agreements;
- The grantee's most recent SF-269 (Financial Status Report) and PMS-272 (Federal Cash Transaction Report) with supporting documentation; and
- The grantee's most recent budget application.

On-Site Activities

During the On-Site Activities phase of the review, the review team gathers and verifies information from multiple sources to establish relevant facts, the team leader makes preliminary decisions regarding grantee compliance based on these facts, and the review team develops a draft Head Start Review Report. During this phase of the review, information is collected through the Entrance Meeting, group and individual interviews, file and other record reviews, and observations at centers and other settings. Reviewers exchange information during the day and during nightly team meetings. This phase of the review concludes with a Summary Meeting.

Beginning in FY 2004, four group interviews are now optional to provide the team leader with increased discretion to customize evidence-gathering activities, as appropriate, to the circumstances of specific reviews. These optional interviews include the Management Team Interview, the Content Area Experts Interview, the Staff Group Interview, and the Delegate Directors Interview. The final grantee briefing and Exit Meeting have been combined into a single Summary Meeting, the timing of which is determined by the team leader based on the time needed to complete the draft Head Start Review Report.

PHILOSOPHY OF PARTNERSHIP

During all phases of the review, and most critically during the On-Site Activities phase of the review, review team members should work to establish a sense of partnership with grantee staff. While the review team possesses detailed expertise regarding program requirements, it is the grantee administrators, staff, and parents who possess detailed information regarding community needs, family and child characteristics, and other factors that influence decisions regarding service delivery, procedures, and partnering activities. It is the responsibility of the review team to ensure grantee compliance with all applicable standards, and it is the responsibility of the grantee to identify and implement specific solutions to any areas of noncompliance identified during the review. To ensure that the philosophy of partnership is maintained, all review team members should:

- Show respect for grantee staff at all times;

- Value the time that grantee staff spend with reviewers by coordinating review team activities to minimize or eliminate multiple queries or requests for information;
- **Discuss all potential areas of noncompliance with appropriate grantee staff as soon as they are identified; and**
- Work to resolve any conflict if and as it occurs.

COLLECTING INFORMATION

Using the PRISM Instrument, reviewers are responsible for making recommendations about whether the grantee is complying with all applicable standards (i.e., requirements of the Head Start Act, the Performance Standards, and other relevant statutes and regulations) by:

- Collecting information during the On-Site Activities phase of the review week and verifying and confirming the accuracy of the information collected;
- Sharing information with other review team members to ensure that the relationships among systems, services, and partnerships are being examined;
- Integrating data and making recommendations to the team leader; and
- Reporting the results.

Information-collecting responsibilities of team members differ, depending on their specific roles during the review. All review team members must, however, participate in the Review Team Planning Meeting and the Entrance Meeting so that everyone shares the "big picture" of the grantee and its services and partnerships.

- **The Review Team Planning Meeting** occurs prior to meeting with grantee staff, usually the evening before the first day of the On-Site Activities phase of the review. The purpose of this meeting is to describe the grantee and any delegates that will be reviewed, discuss assignments and the schedule of events of the review, and clarify the team leader's expectations.

- **The Entrance Meeting and Grantee Presentation** serves as an introductory session for the review team and grantee staff. It generally includes a welcome from the grantee director, an introduction of staff, and an overview of the organization of the agency. It also includes welcoming remarks from the team leader, an introduction of review team members, and a brief overview of the on-site activities planned for the week. Following introductions, the grantee may make a brief presentation to discuss information about the community served by the grantee or delegate agency, the agency's goals and objectives, the general organization of services, outcomes for children and families, and staffing patterns.

- Some review teams must **review a sample of income eligibility determination records** as part of the Head Start Bureau's efforts to identify potential erroneous payments. Further guidance on conducting this records review is forthcoming.

With the exception of the activities described above, the roles and responsibilities of Service and Systems Reviewers diverge during much of the remaining on-site activities. These roles and responsibilities are outlined below.

Collecting Information: Service Reviewers

Service Reviewers monitor compliance with applicable standards (i.e., the requirements of the Head Start Act, Performance Standards, and other relevant statutes and regulations) by examining grantee service delivery and partnership activities. It is the Service Reviewers, as well, who participate in the focus child and family process. During this process, Service Reviewers use a variety of PRISM instruments and protocols to examine the actual experiences of a group of Head Start children and their families.

Service Reviewers must address information on nine Core Questions,: Prevention and Early Intervention; Individualization; Disability Services; Curriculum and Assessment; Family Partnership Building; Parent Involvement; Community Partnerships; Facilities, Materials, Equipment, and Transportation; and Child Outcomes.

Working closely as a team, Service Reviewers coordinate specific review assignments. Tasks assigned to Service Reviewers may extend beyond their primary areas of expertise. Specific assignments for Service Reviewers include:

- Observing in children's settings. Service Reviewers observe their focus children in their center or home settings in order to get an overall picture of their circumstances, including the environment, interactions, and curriculum activities. These observations are integral to the child and family focus process. Service Reviewers use one of the two observation instruments in PRISM to record their observations. The **Classroom, Family Child Care, or Socialization Experience Observation Instrument** is used to record observations of a classroom, a family child care home, or a socialization experience that is part of a home-based option. The Home Visit Observation Instrument is used to record a reviewer's observations during home visits that are part of the home-based option.

- Completing a **Health and Safety Checklist** for each of the group settings in which they observe.

- Completing a **Bus Ride Checklist**, if the agency offers transportation services to children, after riding a bus route.

- Interviewing education staff—teachers, home visitors, disabilities experts—who provide services to focus children.
- Interviewing family service staff who work with focus families.
- Reviewing child files on focus children, paying attention to information on enrollment, screening, health services, disabilities issues, anecdotal notes, ongoing reports of child progress, and child outcomes. Reviews of child files on focus children enable Service Reviewers to get a comprehensive picture of what services to children and families have been documented.
- Reviewing files on focus families, including information on family partnership development and participation in parent activities.
- Reviewing other documentation in order to answer questions related to services and partnerships. This may include, for example, Education Committee minutes, the child outcomes plan, Health Services Advisory minutes, menus, and information related to transportation.
- **Participating in group interviews.** At the discretion of the team leader, Service Reviewers may participate in any of the scheduled group interviews. In particular, it may be helpful for at least one Service Reviewer to attend the following interviews:
  - **Family Group Interview.** This interview is an integral part of the focus child and family process. The purpose of the Family Group Interview is to find out from the focus families what their experience has been in Head Start. All focus families should be invited to attend the interview. Reviewers should make every effort to talk to members of all focus families during the review, including those who are not able to attend the Family Group Interview, so that there is a broad representation of parents in the review process. Alternative ways to contact parents who are not able to join the interview include telephone calls in the evening, speaking with parents when they drop off or pick up their children, or going on a bus ride.
  - **Community Partnerships Interview.** This interview is conducted with staff from agencies that work in partnership with Head Start. It may be appropriate to ask both Systems and Service Reviewers to attend the interview to ensure that issues related to systems, services, and partnerships are covered.
  - **Child Care Partnerships Interview.** Designed for use with Head Start child care partners, this interview assists reviewers in understanding the development and implementation of the grantee's child care partnerships. It may be appropriate to ask both Systems and Service Reviewers to attend the interview to ensure that issues related to systems, services, and partnerships are covered.

During the **focus child and family process**, Service Reviewers look at focus children and their families from the perspective of their specific area of expertise, and they use this process to answer the Core Questions for which they have the lead. At the same time, they have a wider lens—looking at the whole child and family. This means that Service Reviewers engage in activities outside their own area of expertise. For example, Service Reviewers specializing in Family and Community Partnerships conduct classroom observations or look at a child's Individual Education Plan (IEP). Service Reviewers specializing in Child Development Services review children's health files to see if their focus child has received all required screenings and at family files to see how the program has engaged in a partnership with their family. Service Reviewers specializing in Health examine screening and assessment data, assess how the program has individualized services for the focus child, and track outcomes. Because individual reviewers may not be experts in all areas, it is vital that all reviewers coordinate their work closely. It is the responsibility of all reviewers to regularly share with each other information they encounter (i.e., through file and document reviews, interviews, and observations) in areas outside their own area of expertise to enable the team to identify patterns.

Collecting Information: Systems Reviewers

During the On-Site Activities phase, Systems Reviewers make use of one checklist and several interview protocols from the PRISM Instrument to address information on nine Core Questions: Program Governance; Planning; Communication; Record-Keeping and Reporting; Ongoing Monitoring; Self-Assessment; Human Resources; Fiscal Management; and Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment, and Attendance. In addition, Systems Reviewers are responsible for providing support to Service Reviewers for the Core Question on Child Outcomes. Specific assignments for Systems Reviewers include:

- Interviewing staff with direct knowledge of systems issues.
- Reviewing documentation to obtain information related to systems.
- Participating in group interviews. Four protocols are helpful in understanding the grantee's systems, including the following:
  - **Governing Body Interview.** This interview contains questions for members of the grantee governing group and assists in addressing the issues related to how the governing body is involved in the agency's planning process, exercises oversight, and ensures accountability.
  - **Policy Council Interview.** This interview also contains questions pertaining to governance and is used with Policy Council members following a regular business meeting of the Policy Council.

— **Community Partnerships Interview.** As noted, it may be appropriate to ask both Systems and Service Reviewers to attend this interview.

— **Child Care Partnerships Interview.** As noted, it may be appropriate to ask both Systems and Service Reviewers to attend this interview.

- **Completing the Fiscal Checklist.** The PRISM Instrument provides one checklist that is useful for Systems Reviewers in understanding the grantee's fiscal systems—the Fiscal Checklist.

VERIFICATION OF INFORMATION

As review team members gather information from multiple sources during the On-Site Activities phase of the review, they must also verify the accuracy of the information they collect. Accurate information is crucial to establishing correctly the relevant facts that serve as the basis for assessing grantee compliance. In collecting information, reviewers should follow these principles:

- **Collect information from multiple sources** (i.e., whenever possible, the reviewer should seek to obtain additional information that might corroborate or contradict the accuracy of the information already gathered);

- **Rely on the best evidence available** (e.g., firsthand information is preferred over secondhand information); and

- **Weigh the evidence when considering contradictory information** (e.g., give less weight to uncorroborated testimony than to corroborative written evidence from multiple sources).

In obtaining information from as many sources as possible, reviewers should consult both with the grantee and with each other, as described below.

Consulting With the Grantee

When and if, based on information collected, a reviewer first identifies a potential area of noncompliance with one or more applicable standards, the reviewer should consult immediately with the grantee, identifying the potential area of noncompliance and summarizing for the grantee both the content and sources of information collected that have led to the concern. This consultation provides the grantee an opportunity either to confirm the validity of the potential area of noncompliance or to direct the reviewer to additional relevant information, if available, that might resolve the reviewer's concern(s).

Consulting With Review Team Members

If the grantee confirms the validity of the potential area of noncompliance or is not able to provide clarification or additional information sufficient to resolve the concern, the reviewer should alert immediately the team leader and one or more review team members so that these reviewers might pursue information relevant to the potential area of noncompliance, as well. In particular, Service Reviewers who have identified potential areas of noncompliance should immediately consult with one or more Systems Reviewers to ensure that relevant systems are examined for information concerning inter-relationships between systems concerns and service concerns. By alerting other reviewers immediately to potential concerns, reviewers who are best-positioned to gather relevant information have the opportunity to do so as soon as possible. Early efforts to verify critical information also ensure multiple opportunities to exchange information during team meetings and to identify additional approaches to gathering and verifying data. Finally, alerting Systems Reviewers immediately to potential concerns maximizes the time available to Systems Reviewers to identify any systems irregularities that might underlie problems in service delivery or partnering activities.

REVIEW TEAM MEETINGS

Team meetings, which usually occur at the end of each day while on-site, are a critical component of the On-Site Activities phase. Typically, team members participate in five team meetings while on-site, with the first meeting occurring on Sunday evening and the fifth meeting occurring on Thursday. Overall, the team meetings provide review members with opportunities such as:

- Sharing information about the grantee's systems, services, and partnerships;
- Clarifying each reviewer's understanding of relevant facts, as established by the information (i.e., evidence) gathered, that will form the basis for decisions regarding compliance;
- Planning for the subsequent day's activities;
- Providing the team leader with the information needed so he/she can make preliminary compliance decisions; and
- Writing the draft Head Start Review Report.

Expectations of Reviewers at Team Meetings

To ensure that team meetings are conducted efficiently, reviewers must come to the meetings prepared. For example, reviewers are encouraged to organize and summarize their notes prior to the nightly meetings. This includes reviewing checklists and any observation instruments used (e.g., the Health and Safety Checklist). When reviewers have worked in pairs or small groups (e.g., to conduct a Governing Body Interview), they should compare and reconcile their notes and recollections prior to team meetings. Such interaction—outside of team meetings—is critical to ensure an efficient use of time in the team meetings.

During the meeting, reviewers are expected to summarize their results and **recommend** decisions regarding compliance. (The team leader is responsible for making **preliminary** compliance decisions; decisions are **finalized** at the Regional Office.) Some guidelines for this process follow:

- Reviewers must ground their judgments in fact, based on what they or other reviewers observed, heard, or read.
- Reviewers must identify the specific Performance Standard, other applicable regulation, provision of the Head Start Act, or other applicable statute associated with each suspected area of noncompliance.
- The individual with the lead for each Core Question begins the discussion by summarizing the grantee's strengths and any issues that have arisen.
- All other team members may provide input about a system, service, partnership, or the connections among the three.

Purpose of Each Team Meeting

The purpose of the first team meeting—usually conducted the Sunday evening prior to the team's Monday arrival at the grantee site—is to review planned activities and to ensure that all team members understand their individual roles and responsibilities and the team's common objectives. During the meeting conducted at the end of the second day on-site (i.e., Monday), reviewers process and analyze information gathered during the Entrance Meeting and other activities, including observations, interviews, and reviews of documents, and they begin developing a common understanding of the grantee's systems, services, and partnerships.

During the meetings conducted at the end of the third and fourth days on-site, the review team continues to process and analyze the data gathered through the PRISM review activities, including the focus child and family process. Such activities include document and file reviews, observations of center- and home-based activities, interviews, and completion of related checklists. During these meetings, reviewers share information, seek clarification, determine if assistance is needed, and they begin to conceptualize their recommendations for decisions regarding compliance.

The final team meeting conducted on the last full day on-site (i.e., Thursday) is dedicated to final analysis of the facts, followed by preliminary decisions from the team leader regarding grantee compliance and completion of the draft Head Start Review Report.

By the end of the final team meeting:

- Reviewers must complete recommendations on the grantee's strengths;

- Reviewers must recommend compliance decisions under each Core Question and cite evidence for each potential area of noncompliance;
- The team leader must make preliminary decisions regarding grantee compliance;
- All review team members must assist in writing the draft Head Start Review Report; and
- The team leader must direct review team members regarding the content of presentations at the Summary Meeting.

Additional communication and coordination during reviews of grantees with delegates. If a review has multiple teams (i.e., "subteams") monitoring a variety of delegate agencies simultaneously, the team leader also must communicate and coordinate with the subteam leaders. Such practices ensure that each subteam can follow up on an issue raised by another subteam. For example, if one subteam finds a lack of ongoing monitoring of health issues on the part of the grantee, the team leader can ask all other subteams to check on this issue in their agencies.

GRANTEE BRIEFINGS

In addition to the ongoing dialogue that takes place among reviewers, grantee staff, and parents in connection with review activities, the team leader should frequently brief the grantee regarding review developments. Such briefings are helpful for several reasons. First, they provide opportunities to discuss the review results to date. Second, they provide opportunities for the team leader to ask for clarification or seek additional information regarding potential problem areas. Third, they provide opportunities for the team leader to seek, and for the grantee to provide, feedback on review progress, logistics, potential problem areas, and other issues. Because the review is conducted as a partnership between the review team and the grantee, it is important that grantee staff be given regular opportunities to receive information about issues and concerns and to provide input about them. The team leader may choose to conduct these briefings alone with the grantee director or may invite team members to participate.

MAKING REVIEW DECISIONS

At the end of the data collection, verification, and analysis process, the team leader makes preliminary compliance decisions for each of the Core Questions, indicating whether there are (a) no areas of noncompliance or (b) areas of noncompliance.[1] The following terms and criteria are used in making compliance decisions:

- **No areas of noncompliance** means that no instances of noncompliance were identified

[1] Changes in terminology described in the bulleted items (i.e., "noncompliance" instead of "findings") took effect April 28, 2003.

during the review. That is, the evidence indicates that the grantee is meeting all applicable standards (i.e., requirements of the Head Start Act, Performance Standards, and other regulations). This category was formerly called "no findings."

- **Areas of noncompliance** means that at least one instance of noncompliance requiring corrective action was identified during the review. A review decision that identifies one or more "areas of noncompliance" indicates that the grantee is not meeting all applicable standards (i.e., requirements of the Head Start Act, Performance Standards, and other regulations) in at least one Core Question. The single term "areas of noncompliance" replaces the use of "findings" as well as "substantial findings."

Determinations of deficiency are not made during the On-Site Activities phase. Instead, the determination of whether a grantee is in deficient status is made at the Regional Office during the Grantee Notice and Program Improvement phase. If, however, in the course of conducting the On-Site Activities phase of the review, the team leader suspects that the grantee may be in deficient status, the team leader should notify his or her manager immediately while on-site. The manager may have suggestions for additional data to be gathered (e.g., people to interview, classrooms to observe, files to review) or actions to take (e.g., redirecting the focus of the team to the area of concern) to ensure that all facts relevant to the deficiency determination have been established. While any area of noncompliance has the potential to be determined a deficiency at the Regional Office, **the term "deficiency" must not be used in discussions with grantees or reviewers during the On-Site Activities phase of the review. In addition, the term "preliminary area of noncompliance"** (**instead of "area of noncompliance"**) **should be used in discussions with grantees during the On-Site Activities phase of the review.**

As Core Questions 9a and 9b require separate sets of decisions regarding compliance, the team recommends a total of 19 sets of decisions. For grantees with delegates, decisions are made at two levels. Thus, 19 sets of decisions are made for each delegate agency included in the review and up to 19 sets of decisions are made for the grantee, depending on whether the grantee is a direct provider of services.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE DRAFT HEAD START REVIEW REPORT

The results of the review are compiled into a draft version of the Head Start Review Report, which is organized into three parts around the major areas of the Performance Standards: (1) Child Development and Health Services, (2) Family and Community Partnerships, and (3) Program Design and Management. In turn, each of these sections of the report has three parts, including the (1) Area Summary, (2) Review Decisions, and (3) Areas of Noncompliance. A description of each of the sections is listed below. In reviews of grantees with delegate agencies, teams prepare a report for each delegate agency and a report for the grantee, with all decisions attributed to the grantee.

The draft Head Start Review Report does not include recommendations for quality improvement. Review team members must not provide recommendations for quality improvement or technical assistance at any time during the review or in the report.

Each review team member is accountable for the accuracy of the material he or she contributes to the report, whether that information is conveyed verbally (e.g., during team meetings or other discussions with review team members) or in writing (e.g., during a report writing session). The team leader is accountable for the content of the draft Head Start Review Report, and the responsible Regional Office official is accountable for the content of the final Head Start Review Report.

Area Summary

The Area Summary is a succinct narrative statement that summarizes the grantee's strengths and areas of noncompliance in each content area. The Area Summary does not include:

- Regulatory or statutory citations;
- A lengthy description of the area(s) of noncompliance;
- A history of the grantee;
- A description of the services provided by the program; or
- A description of the activities undertaken by the review team.

If a program does not have any strengths or areas of noncompliance, the Area Summary should consist of a short paragraph documenting that the area was reviewed and that there were no areas of noncompliance identified in the content area.

When writing about program strengths in the Area Summary, descriptions of strengths should:

- Specify what the grantee is doing that constitutes a strength and
- Include specific examples.

The narrative should provide enough detail to describe precisely the service, partnership, process, or procedure that constitutes the strength. For example, if the content of a specific service is a strength, a description of the content should be provided as opposed to providing only the name of the service. Whenever possible, the narrative should also include multiple examples of the strength. Finally, the narrative should describe the sources of information consulted by the review team and the methodology used to gather data from the sources.

Note that instances in which a grantee is simply meeting the applicable standards (i.e., requirements of the Head Start Act, the Performance Standards, or other regulations) do not constitute a strength. Rather, a grantee strength is the provision of service that extends above and beyond what is required or that constitutes an exemplary practice or model.

Review Decisions

For each Core Question, preliminary decisions of "no areas of noncompliance" or "areas of noncompliance" are made by the team leader, based on recommendations from review team members. These decisions, generated automatically from the PRISM Software, are organized by Core Question in this section of the Head Start Review Report. Even though decisions are organized by Core Question, it is important to keep in mind that the Core Questions merely provide a framework for conceptualizing categories of the Performance Standards and other regulations. Specific compliance decisions (i.e., whether a grantee has "no areas of noncompliance" or one or more "areas of noncompliance" within a given Core Question) are made by assessing grantee compliance with all relevant applicable standards.

Areas of Noncompliance

When a program is not meeting an applicable standard (i.e., requirements of the Head Start Act, the Performance Standards, or other regulations), the review team must write a description of the area of noncompliance within this section. Descriptions of areas of noncompliance must contain the following elements:

- Cite the applicable standard. The citation must include a reference to the Federal citation (e.g., 1306.32), as well as the full text of the standard.
- Briefly describe the problem that explains why the grantee is out of compliance.
- Describe the evidence the team relied on in identifying the noncompliance;
- If the grantee is meeting some but not all the requirements of the standard, describe the difference between what the standard requires and what the grantee is doing.

In describing the evidence the team relied on in identifying the noncompliance, reviewers should write enough about what was seen, heard, and read to provide a clear description of the problem. Multiple examples should be provided whenever possible, and numbers should be used to quantify and demonstrate the size of the problem, if appropriate. The sources of information should be included to demonstrate thoroughness in data gathering, corroboration, and verification.

In describing the difference between what the standard requires and what the grantee is doing, reviewers should provide enough detail to make clear how and to what extent the grantee's practice(s) differs from the requirements of the applicable standard. If the grantee is meeting some but not all the requirements of the standard, the description must clearly identify which practices, or absence of practices, fail to meet the requirements. If a standard states that something specific must be in place (e.g., first-aid kits in each center) or some activity must be part of the daily schedule (e.g., toothbrushing), then stating that this did not occur is sufficient.

For information regarding features in the PRISM Software that will assist with the development of the Head Start Review Report, refer to the PRISM Software guidance, available at http://www.air.org/hsware/prism/index.htm

Report Coordinators

In general, Report Coordinators perform four tasks. The first task is to take notes, identifying important points from the group interviews, and sharing succinct notes with the review team. Second, Report Coordinators edit and consolidate, as necessary, the respective portions of the Head Start Review Report written by individual reviewers to ensure that the team leader has a complete draft of the Head Start Review Report at the end of the review. In this capacity, they coach reviewers on elements of good writing and on the required elements of area summaries, descriptions of grantee strengths, and areas of noncompliance (as applicable). Report Coordinators might also write sections of the report. Third, they coordinate use of the laptop computers and provide technical support for the software. Fourth, they may engage in data-gathering activities if requested by the team leader.

SUMMARY MEETING

Beginning in FY 2004, the two events formerly referred to as the Final Grantee Briefing and Exit Meeting have been combined into one event called the Summary Meeting. The Summary Meeting allows the review team to present a condensed form of the information gathered during the On-Site Activities phase of the review. **The meeting must take place after the review team has completed the draft Head Start Review Report.** The grantee determines who will attend the meeting and advises the team leader.

The team leader closes the Summary Meeting with information regarding the next phase of the monitoring process—Grantee Notice and Program Improvement—indicating that the draft Head Start Review Report will be reviewed at the Regional Office and **the final Head Start Review Report will be mailed to the grantee within 45 calendar days.**[2]

[2] The Head Start Program Performance Standards require that the grantee be notified "promptly" in writing of any noncompliance or deficiency (see 45 CFR 1304.61(a) and 45 CFR 1304.60(b), respectively). For this reason, delivery of the final Head Start Review Report within 45 calendar days of the end of the on-site phase of the review is imperative.

When grantees have delegate agencies, the team leader works with the grantee director to determine the format of the Summary Meeting. In general, teams hold a separate Summary Meeting for each delegate. However, it is possible, especially when a grantee has only a few delegates, for the review team to present at a single meeting. When a grantee has many delegates, it is possible to hold a Summary Meeting for the grantee after the Summary Meetings for the delegate agencies have been conducted, allowing more time for the team leader to consolidate the results across multiple delegates.

DOCUMENTATION OF REVIEW ACTIVITIES

As reviewers collect information during the On-Site Activities phase of the review, they must take comprehensive notes—either directly on the various checklists, observation forms, and interview protocols—or on their own notebook paper. On the last day of the On-Site Activities phase of the review, reviewers are required to initial and date each page of their handwritten notes and turn these into the team leader. Similarly, all checklists, observation forms, and interview guides that include comments written during the On-Site Activities phase of the review must be initialed and dated and given to the team leader. This serves as an official record of data-collection activities. Given the important nature of these notes, reviewers must be diligent in their note-taking during the On-Site Activities phase of the review, documenting relevant details of all review activities in which they participated, including identifying who they interviewed, what they observed, and what files they reviewed.

Grantee Notice and Program Improvement

After completion of the On-Site Activities phase, the PRISM review enters its final phase, Grantee Notice and Program Improvement. This phase of the review encompasses up to three activities, conducted within the Regional Office, depending upon the results of the review. Such activities include:

- Finalizing compliance decisions;
- Finalizing the Head Start Review Report and cover letter; and
- Assisting the grantee in obtaining access to training and technical assistance (T/TA), reviewing and approving Quality Improvement Plans (QIPs), as applicable, and ensuring resolution of all areas of noncompliance and/or deficiency determination(s).

GRANTEE NOTICE

Grantee notice activities include finalizing compliance decisions and finalizing the Head Start Review Report and cover letter. These activities are described below.

Finalizing Review Decisions

The final Head Start Review Report and the cover letter together notify the grantee of all final decisions regarding compliance, including identification of any areas of noncompliance, determinations of deficiency, and any requirements for corrective action, as applicable. Authority to finalize these decisions resides with the responsible official within the Regional Office as articulated within relevant provisions of the Performance Standards, which are identified below.

Areas of Noncompliance. The Performance Standards specify authority to identify areas of noncompliance and subsequent requirements to notify the grantee as follows:

> *If the responsible HHS official, as a result of information obtained from a review of an Early Head Start or Head Start grantee, determines that the grantee is not in compliance with*

Federal or State requirements (including, but not limited to, the Head Start Act or one or more of the regulations under parts 1301, 1304, 1305, 1306, 1308 or 1310 of this title) in ways that do not constitute a deficiency, he or she will notify the grantee promptly, in writing, of the finding, identifying the area or areas of noncompliance to be corrected and specifying the period in which they must be corrected.[1]

Deficiencies. The Performance Standards specify authority to make deficiency determinations and subsequent requirements to notify the grantee as follows:

If the responsible HHS official, as a result of information obtained from a review of an Early Head Start or a Head Start grantee, determines that the grantee has one or more deficiencies, as defined in Sec. 1304.3(a)(6) of this part, and therefore also is in violation of the minimum requirements as defined in Sec. 1304.3(a)(14) of this part, he or she will notify the grantee promptly, in writing, of the finding, identifying the deficiencies to be corrected and, with respect to each identified deficiency, will inform the grantee that it must correct the deficiency either immediately or pursuant to a Quality Improvement Plan.[2]

The Performance Standards define a deficiency as follows:

(i) An area or areas of performance in which an Early Head Start or Head Start grantee agency is not in compliance with State or Federal requirements, including but not limited to, the Head Start Act or one or more of the regulations under parts 1301, 1304, 1305, 1306, 1308 or 1310 of this title, and which involves:

(A) A threat to the health, safety, or civil rights of children or staff;

(B) A denial to parents of the exercise of their full roles and responsibilities related to program governance;

(C) A failure to perform substantially the requirements related to Early Childhood Development and Health Services, Family and Community Partnerships, or Program Design and Management; or

(D) The misuse of Head Start grant funds.

[1] 45 CFR 1304.61(a). The reference to transportation regulations (i.e., 1310) does not appear in the original and was added here.

[2] 45 CFR 1304.60(b).

(ii) The loss of legal status or financial viability, as defined in part 1302 of this title, loss of permits, debarment from receiving Federal grants or contracts or the improper use of Federal funds; or

(iii) Any other violation of Federal or State requirements including, but not limited to, the Head Start Act or one or more of the regulations under parts 1301, 1304, 1305, 1306, 1308 or 1310 of this title, and which the grantee has shown an unwillingness or inability to correct within the period specified by the responsible HHS official, of which the responsible HHS official has given the grantee written notice of pursuant to section 1304.61.[3]

Specifically, as noted in 45 CFR 1304.3(a)(6)(i)(C), the difference between an area of noncompliance and a deficiency is a matter of level of significance.[4] The responsible Regional Office official determines whether a specific grantee has one or more deficiencies based on the relevant facts established during the grantee's review.

Finalizing the Head Start Review Report and Cover Letter

The development of the final Head Start Review Report and cover letter, which communicate review findings and specify any requirements for correction action, are described separately below.

Finalizing the Head Start Review Report. The responsible Regional Office official must ensure the draft Head Start Review Report is finalized as soon as possible after the final compliance decisions have been made. The responsible official must also ensure the final Head Start Review Report is prepared using the PRISM Software. The final report must be organized in the same manner as the draft report. **The responsible Regional Office official must ensure that:**

- **All assertions of fact include references to evidence sufficient to support the respective assertions;**
- **Specified areas of noncompliance (if any) are consistent with and supported by the facts;**
- **Specified areas of noncompliance (if any) are accompanied by applicable and accurate**

[3] 45 CFR 1304.3(a)(6). The reference to transportation regulations (i.e., 1310) does not appear in the original and was added here.

[4] In the Preamble to the Final Rule (Federal Register, 1996), the Administration for Children and Families notes that "a determination that a grantee is out-of-compliance with one or more requirements will not, in and of itself, constitute a deficiency. Rather, these areas of noncompliance must be of a level of significance that results in the failure of the grantee to substantially provide required services or to substantially implement required procedures. As used… the term 'substantially' does not necessarily mean that a majority of the requirements are not being met but, rather, that a knowledgeable person reviewing the findings would determine that the grantee agency is not operating a quality program."

citations (i.e., references to relevant provisions within the Head Start Act, Performance Standards, and other applicable laws and regulations), as well as the full text of the standards;

- Required elements are easily identifiable in the descriptions of grantee strengths and areas of noncompliance, respectively;
- Any area of noncompliance summarized in the Area Summary is fully described in the Areas of Noncompliance section of the report; and
- The report is edited for grammar and clarity.

Developing the Cover Letter. In addition to overseeing the preparation of the Head Start Review Report, the responsible Regional Office official must also ensure that a cover letter to the grantee is prepared and sent with the review report. The cover letter must be dated (i.e., the date the letter is mailed), addressed to the grantee governing body president, and include the grantee name and grant number. The letter must make reference to the dates of the review and identify all programs monitored (i.e., Head Start and/or Early Head Start) and should describe the purpose of monitoring reviews and the authority for conducting such reviews. Finally, the letter must specify the individual to contact with questions or for assistance.

For grantees found to have one or more areas of noncompliance, the cover letter must:

- Identify the area or areas of noncompliance to be corrected, referring the grantee to the Head Start Review Report for references to the specific applicable standards; [5]
- Specify a timeframe(s) for making the correction(s);[6]
- Specify the mechanism(s) to be employed for certifying compliance (e.g., grantee letter certifying compliance, follow-up visit); and
- Advise the grantee that failure to correct the area(s) of noncompliance within the specified period will result in a determination of the grantee having a deficiency(ies),[7] which, if left uncorrected, will lead to termination of the grant or denial of refunding.[8]

For grantees determined to be in deficient status, the cover letter must:

[5] For guidance on citing areas of noncompliance properly, see Development of the Draft Head Start Review Report section within the On-Site Activities chapter.

[6] 45 CFR 1304.61(a).

[7] 45 CFR 1304.61(b).

[8] 45 CFR 1304.60(f).

- Identify the deficiency(ies) to be corrected; include the definition of a deficiency contained in the Performance Standards (i.e., 45 CFR 1304.3(a)(6) et seq.);
- Cite the applicable standards for which the grantee is out of compliance (i.e., areas of noncompliance) that, collectively, constitute the deficiency;
- Identify any area or areas of noncompliance to be corrected that are unrelated to the deficiency (if any), referring the grantee to the Head Start Review Report for references to the specific applicable standards;
- Specify for each deficiency the timeframe for correction (not to exceed 1 year from the date the grantee receives official notification of the deficiency);[9]
- Specify the requirements for developing, submitting, and receiving approval for a Quality Improvement Plan (QIP), if applicable; [10]
- Specify the mechanism(s) to be employed for certifying compliance (i.e., follow-up review); and
- Notify the grantee that failure to correct the deficiency(ies) within the specified timeframe will result in grant termination or denial of refunding.[11]

The final Head Start Review Report and accompanying cover letter must be mailed to the grantee governing body president within 45 calendar days of the end of the on-site review.[12] As well, effective FY 2004, on the same day these documents are mailed to the grantee, a copy of the report and cover letter must be mailed to:

- **The Policy Council Chairperson;**
- **The Executive Director;**
- **The Head Start Director;**
- **Paul Blatt, Head Start Bureau Monitoring Lead;**
- **DANYA International (Attn: Monitoring Support Contract);**
- **The Regional Office T/TA Coordinator.**

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[9] 45 CFR 1304.60(c).

[10] 45 CFR 1304.60(b).

[11] 45 CFR 1304.60(f).

[12] The Head Start Program Performance Standards require that the grantee be notified "promptly" in writing of any noncompliance or deficiency (see 45 CFR 1304.61(a) and 45 CFR 1304.60(b), respectively). For this reason, delivery of the final Head Start Review Report within 45 calendar days of the end of the on-site phase of the review is imperative.

A copy must also be given to the grantee's Program Specialist. Review team members may request a copy of the Head Start Review Report for any reviews on which they participated by submitting such a request to Steve Martin at smartin@danya.com.

The responsible Regional Office official must verify that the report (and cover letter) are received by the grantee, regardless of the decisions regarding compliance, using the least costly mechanism to confirm receipt (e.g., return receipt on regular mail).

For grantees with no determinations of deficiency and no areas of noncompliance, the Grantee Notice and Program Improvement phase of the review concludes with the delivery of the final Head Start Review Report and cover letter. For grantees with final compliance decisions that identify one or more areas of noncompliance or include one or more deficiency determinations, program improvement activities begin, which are described below.

PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT

Program improvement activities, which are applicable to grantees with deficiency(ies) and/or areas of noncompliance, include engaging the training and technical assistance (T/TA) system to ensure that grantees have the support needed to facilitate improvement, reviewing and approving the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP), and monitoring resolution of each noncompliance and deficiency, as applicable.

Grantees With Areas of Noncompliance

The responsible Regional Office official must ensure that all areas of noncompliance are corrected within the specified period. In ensuring that areas of noncompliance have been corrected fully and in a timely fashion, the Regional Office may request from the grantee a letter certifying that any areas of noncompliance, as specified in the final Head Start Review Report and cover letter, have been corrected and specifying the date(s) of such correction. The responsible Regional Office official may choose to have Regional staff conduct one or more follow-up visits to verify full and timely correction in the place of or in addition to the letter of certification. A grantee that is unable or unwilling to correct the specified areas of noncompliance within the prescribed time period will be judged to have a deficiency that must be corrected, either immediately or pursuant to a Quality Improvement Plan (see 45 CFR 1304.3(a)(6)(iii) and 45 CFR 1304.60).[13]

Grantees With Deficiencies

The Head Start Act requires the Federal government to make available training and technical assistance to grantees with deficiencies, as feasible and appropriate, to assist in the development and implementation of QIPs.[14]

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[13] 45 CFR 1304.61(b)

[14] 42 USC 9836(a)(d)(3).

Quality Improvement Plans

The requirements for developing a QIP are specified in the Performance Standards as follows:

> *An Early Head Start or Head Start grantee with one or more deficiencies to be corrected under a Quality Improvement Plan must submit to the responsible HHS official a Quality Improvement Plan specifying, for each identified deficiency, the actions that the grantee will take to correct the deficiency and the timeframe within which it will be corrected. In no case can the timeframes proposed in the Quality Improvement Plan exceed 1 year from the date that the grantee received official notification of the deficiencies to be corrected.*[15]

To expedite the development of the QIP, the responsible Regional Office official may ask the grantee to provide drafts so that the official can provide immediate feedback. Responsibilities of the Regional Office in reviewing a QIP are specified in the Performance Standards as follows:

> *Within 30 days of the receipt of the Quality Improvement Plan, the responsible HHS official will notify the Early Head Start or Head Start grantee, in writing, of the Plan's approval or specify the reasons why the Plan is disapproved.*[16]

For disapproved plans, the grantee must revise and resubmit the QIP. Resubmission requirements are specified in the Performance Standards as follows:

> *If the Quality Improvement Plan is disapproved, the Early Head Start or Head Start grantee must submit a revised Quality Improvement Plan, making the changes necessary to address the reasons that the initial Plan was disapproved.*[17]

Responsible Regional Office officials must ensure that prompt return visits to grantees with one or more deficiency determinations are conducted to confirm the full and timely correction of such deficiencies.[18] Immediately after the QIP is approved with a designated timeframe for correction, the Regional Office must schedule the follow-up review, which must occur within a few days of the end of the QIP period. If a grantee has more than one deficiency, and the deficiencies have different end dates, the team leader may organize multiple follow-up visits.

Team leaders may choose to conduct an interim visit, if resources allow. If possible, this visit should coincide with a governing body meeting to ensure that the governing body is fully engaged in resolving the deficiency. This visit provides the Regional Office with information

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[15] 45 CFR 1304.60(c).

[16] 45 CFR 1304.60(d).

[17] 45 CFR 1304.60(e).

[18] 42 USC 9836a(c)(1)(C).

on progress and the grantee with a midcourse correction, if one is needed. If the grantee had areas of noncompliance that were not a part of the deficiency(ies), this visit also provides an opportunity to verify that those have been corrected. If the areas of noncompliance have not been corrected after the identified correction periods have expired, they become a deficiency.[19]

In building the team to conduct the follow-up review, team leaders need only identify reviewers with expertise relevant to the issues identified in the Head Start Review Report and cover letter as contributing to the deficiency. The team leader must ensure that follow-up team members are properly credentialed, should it be necessary to proceed toward termination. The team leader should select the follow-up team using the same procedure used in the initial team selection (i.e., the team leader requests reviewers by expertise, and the Regional Review Coordinator assembles the team).

Prior to meeting with the grantee, the team leader should ensure that all review team members have read the respective Head Start Review Report, cover letter, and the QIP and that each team member understands the contents of the documents and the purpose and objectives of the follow-up review.

In making a preliminary determination regarding deficiency status (i.e., corrected or not corrected) at the conclusion of the follow-up visit, the team leader must refer to the requirements specified in the cover letter and the Head Start Review Report. During the conduct of the follow-up visit, the team leader should direct review team members to gather sufficient evidence (e.g., through document and file reviews, interviews with grantee management and staff, and observation of operations) to determine whether the deficiency has been corrected. This is critical; while a grantee may have implemented all actions identified in the QIP, the deficiency is corrected only if the grantee has complied with all requirements specified in the Head Start Review Report and cover letter.

Final determination regarding the status of a deficiency(ies) is made by the responsible Regional Office official. For grantees with deficiencies judged to have been corrected, the Grantee Notice and Program Improvement phase ends (notwithstanding any outstanding areas of noncompliance) with the correction of the deficiency(ies). The Performance Standards specify that for grantees with deficiencies judged to persist beyond the specified period, the responsible Regional Office official must terminate the grant or deny refunding.

Tracking Resolution During the Specified Correction Period

Beginning in FY 2004, it is mandatory that Regional Offices track corrective action and program improvement activities for grantees with areas of noncompliance and/or

[19] 45 CFR 1304.3(a)(6)(iii).

deficiency(ies) within the PRISM Software. The software tracks information on the QIP submission, approval, and correction process. In addition, Regional Office staff should use the Notes section to explain the circumstances surrounding the correction process in more detail.

PRISM Instrument
(Appendix I)

Core Questions

These 18 Core Questions guide reviewers through the Head Start Program Review Instrument for Systems Monitoring (PRISM) review process. Each reviewer has responsibility for providing input on these Core Questions. Review decisions for each question are made through team discussion, with the final decision by the team leader. Reviewers need to rely on their own information and information collected by others.

There is a page devoted to each Core Question. The Core Question is at the top of each page, and to the right of the Core Question are the specific citations—the Performance Standards and other regulations—included in, or represented by that Core Question. Beneath the Core Question are several bulleted items. The bullets at the bottom of each page suggest data collection methods for that particular Core Question.

- First, they ask reviewers to refer to pertinent information gathered during various parts of the review;
- Next, they tell reviewers what to observe;
- Third, they tell reviewers which Head Start staff, parents, and community members may need to be interviewed;
- Finally, they indicate which documents and materials are pertinent for the review.

Reviewers can take notes on the page facing each Core Question. The notes should be clear, since they will be submitted to the team leader at the end of the review.

WHAT'S NEW IN 2004?

The listing of standards in Core Questions 3, 9a, and 12 have been revised so that they are in numerical order. In Core Question 10, standard 1304.21(b) has been added to the list. In Core Question 15, standard 1308.4(l)(1)-1308.4(l)(7) has been restated as 1308.4(l).

A new Core Question (Child Outcomes) has been added as Core Question 18. This question directs the review team to determine how the grantee has implemented requirements related to child outcomes. Several new standards previously listed under Core Questions 7 and 12 are now listed under Core Question 18, including Head Start Act, Section 642(e) and Section 648(a)(1)(A) and Head Start Act, Section 641A(a)(1)(B) and Section 641A(b)(4).

On page C-1, the Summary of Review Decisions chart has been revised to reflect the new terminology for review decisions. "No areas of noncompliance" replaces the heading of "no findings," and "areas of noncompliance" replaces "findings." The heading of "substantial findings" has been eliminated. The chart has also been updated to include the Core Question on Child Outcomes.

PRISM Framework

EFFECTIVENESS OF SYSTEMS	IMPLEMENTATION OF SERVICES AND PARTNERSHIPS								
	Child Development and Health Services					Family and Community Partnerships			Program Design
	Prevention & Early Intervention	Individu-alization	Disabilities Services	Curriculum and Assessment	Child Outcomes	Family Partnership Building	Parent Involvement	Community Partnerships	Facilities, Materials, Equipment, and Transportation
Program Governance									
Planning									
Communication									
Record-Keeping & Reporting									
Ongoing Monitoring									
Self-Assessment									
Human Resources									
Fiscal Management									
Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment, and Attendance									

Question 1. Program Governance. How effective is the grantee's system of shared governance in supporting the implementation of quality services to children and families?

NOTES ON ISSUES, QUESTIONS, AND FOLLOW-UP

QUESTION 1. PROGRAM GOVERNANCE

How effective is the grantee's system of shared governance in supporting the implementation of quality services to children and families?

How does the system ensure:

- a governing body that participates in key decision-making and oversight for the program, including the formation of the Policy Council structure and function?
- a formal structure of policy groups and Parent Committees with appropriate composition and process of formation?
- the assignment of appropriate governing body and policy group responsibilities, including the development, review, and approval/disapproval of program policies and procedures?
- written internal dispute resolution procedures for conflicts between the governing body and policy group?
- inclusive and well-functioning Parent Committees?

STANDARDS

1304.50, including Appendix A—Governance and Management Responsibilities; 1304.52 (k)

- *REFER TO*—Information on governance gathered from the Management Team Interview, Content Area Experts Interview, Staff Group Interview, Family Group Interview, Governing Body Interview, and Policy Council Interview.
- *OBSERVE*—Policy Council meeting.
- *INTERVIEW*—As needed, any additional governing body and policy group members, and staff.
- *REVIEW*—Policies and procedures pertaining to governance; written definitions of roles and responsibilities of governing body members; evidence of training; governing body and Policy Council bylaws; selection of minutes of governing body, Policy Council, Policy Committee, and Parent Committee meetings; and grantee and delegate agency agreements (if applicable).

Question 2. Planning. How effective is the grantee's ongoing system of program planning in supporting the implementation of quality services to children and families?

NOTES ON ISSUES, QUESTIONS, AND FOLLOW-UP

QUESTION 2. PLANNING	STANDARDS
How effective is the grantee's ongoing system of program planning in supporting the implementation of quality services to children and families?	1304.51(a); 1305.3; 1306.30(a); 1306.30(d); 1306.31–1306.36; 1308.4

How does the system ensure:

- a community assessment that is used for program planning, including selection of appropriate program options?
- consultation with the grantee's governing body, policy groups, staff, and other community organizations?
- long-range goals and short-term program and financial objectives that address the findings of the community assessment, are consistent with the philosophy of Head Start, and reflect the findings of ongoing monitoring and the self-assessment?
- written plan(s) for implementing quality services for children and families, and supporting pregnant women as appropriate, that result in positive outcomes and are reviewed, revised, and updated as needed?

- *REFER TO*—Information on planning gathered from the Management Team Interview, Content Area Experts Interview, Staff Group Interview, Governing Body Interview, and Policy Council Interview.
- *INTERVIEW*—As needed, any additional staff, governing body members, or parents as to their involvement in and knowledge of the program's planning process.
- *REVIEW*—The community assessment, statement of long-range goals and short-term objectives, decision-making about program options, and written plan(s).

Question 3. **Communication. How effective is the grantee's communication system in supporting the implementation of quality services to children and families?**

NOTES ON ISSUES, QUESTIONS, AND FOLLOW-UP

QUESTION 3. COMMUNICATION	STANDARDS
How effective is the grantee's communication system in supporting the implementation of quality services to children and families?	1304.20(c)(1); 1304.22(a)(4); 1304.22(b)(3); 1304.41(a)(1); 1304.51(b)–1304.51(f); 1308.4(l)

How does the system ensure:

- effective communication between staff and parents, carried out on a regular basis throughout the program year and in the primary or preferred language of parents?
- that required information is shared among staff, the governing body, and policy group? (This information includes reports; HHS policies, guidelines, and communication; and program plans, policies, procedures, and grant applications.)
- that delegate agency governing bodies, Policy Committees (when applicable), and staff receive all regulations, policies, and other pertinent communication in a timely manner?
- strong communication, cooperation, and information sharing among agencies and their community partners (e.g., LEA or Part C agency, child care providers, etc.)?
- regular communication among all staff?

- *REFER TO*—Information on communication gathered from the Management Team Interview, Content Area Experts Interview, Staff Group Interview, Family Group Interview, Governing Body Interview, and Policy Council Interview.
- *OBSERVE*—Focus children's settings using the Classroom, Family Child Care, or Socialization Experience and/or the Home Visit Observation Instruments.
- *INTERVIEW*—As needed, any additional staff, parents, delegate agency staff, and community partners regarding the quality and extent of communication in the program.
- *REVIEW*—Examples of written communication among staff, such as minutes of meetings, reports, and memos; policies and procedures pertaining to communication; examples of written communication between the program and families, the program and its governing body and policy groups, and the program and child care and community partners; and examples of minutes of governing body and policy group meetings.

Question 4. Record-Keeping and Reporting. How efficient and effective are the record-keeping and reporting systems in providing accurate, confidential, and timely information regarding children, families, and staff and in supporting quality services?

NOTES ON ISSUES, QUESTIONS, AND FOLLOW-UP

QUESTION 4. RECORD-KEEPING AND REPORTING	STANDARDS
How efficient and effective are the record-keeping and reporting systems in providing accurate, confidential, and timely information regarding children, families, and staff and in supporting quality services?	1301.30; 1304.20(e)(5); 1304.22(c)(3)–1304.22(c)(5); 1304.51(g)–1304.51(h); 1304.52(k)(3)(i); 1308.4(l); 1308.6(e)(4)

How are the record-keeping and reporting systems used to manage data and generate status reports that:

- identify and report program progress toward goals and objectives, and result in revised plans for the implementation of services as necessary?
- provide information on preschool children's progress?
- control program quality and maintain program accountability?
- advise Federal staff, governing bodies, policy groups, and staff of progress in implementing services?
- identify and report child abuse and neglect in compliance with applicable State and local laws?

- *REFER TO*—Information on record-keeping and reporting gathered from the Management Team Interview, Content Area Experts Interview, Staff Group Interview, Family Group Interview, Governing Body Interview, and Policy Council Interview.
- *INTERVIEW*—As needed, program management personnel about what kinds of data are collected, how data are organized, and what reports are prepared; and policy group members and members of the governing body about the extent and quality of reporting.
- *REVIEW*—Program policies and procedures pertaining to confidentiality; files of focus children and families (including assessment data); a selection of status reports; and a selection of reports for the governing body, policy group(s), and staff.

Question 5. Ongoing Monitoring. How effective is the grantee's ongoing monitoring system in supporting the implementation of quality services to children and families?

NOTES ON ISSUES, QUESTIONS, AND FOLLOW-UP

QUESTION 5. ONGOING MONITORING	STANDARDS
How effective is the grantee's ongoing monitoring system in supporting the implementation of quality services to children and families? How does the system ensure: • the ongoing implementation of Federal regulations, including the analysis and use of data contained in written reports, tracking systems, and the on-site observation and supervision of staff? • ongoing monitoring to ensure tracking of patterns of progress and accomplishments for groups of children in learning and development, as well as in health and disabilities services and family and community partnerships? • effective oversight of the delegates' ongoing implementation of the Performance Standards and other Federal regulations, when applicable?	1304.51(i)(2)–1304.51(i)(3); 1308.4(d); Part 74.51; Part 92.40

- *REFER TO*—Information on ongoing monitoring gathered from the Management Team Interview, Content Area Experts Interview, Staff Group Interview, Family Group Interview, Governing Body Interview, and Policy Council Interview.
- *OBSERVE*—Centers and/or family child care homes and focus children's settings using the Classroom, Family Child Care, or Socialization Experience and/or the Home Visit Observation Instruments.
- *INTERVIEW*—As needed, program management personnel and any additional staff to determine the implementation of a monitoring process within the grantee and any delegate agencies.
- *REVIEW*—Program policies and procedures pertaining to ongoing monitoring; any written documentation of periodic monitoring activities, including reports to any delegate agencies; the Bus Ride Checklist; and the Health and Safety Checklist.

Question 6. Self-Assessment. How effective is the grantee's approach to self-assessment in supporting the implementation of quality services to children and families?

NOTES ON ISSUES, QUESTIONS, AND FOLLOW-UP

QUESTION 6. SELF-ASSESSMENT	STANDARDS
How effective is the grantee's approach to self-assessment in supporting the implementation of quality services to children and families?	1304.51(i)(1)–1304.51(i)(3)

How does the system ensure that:

- the self-assessment examines the effectiveness and progress in meeting the grantee's goals and objectives and the implementation of Federal regulations?
- the process involves policy groups, parents, and as appropriate, other community members?
- the grantee analyzes the results of the self-assessment and uses the information to address continuous improvement and to inform the grantee's planning process?

- *REFER TO*—Information on self-assessment gathered from the Management Team Interview, Content Area Experts Interview, Staff Group Interview, Governing Body Interview, and Policy Council Interview.
- *INTERVIEW*—As needed, program management personnel, policy group members, and staff or governing body members regarding their involvement in the self-assessment process, its results, and any actions taken in response to the results.
- *REVIEW*—The annual self-assessment data and analysis, including progress toward meeting program goals and objectives and the implementation of Federal regulations.

Question 7. Human Resources. How effective is the grantee's human resources management system in supporting the implementation of quality services to children and families?

NOTES ON ISSUES, QUESTIONS, AND FOLLOW-UP

QUESTION 7. HUMAN RESOURCES

How effective is the grantee's human resources management system in supporting the implementation of quality services to children and families?

How does the system ensure that:

- the organizational structure supports the accomplishment of the grantee's goals and objectives?
- all required functions (e.g., management, content area experts, etc.) are appropriately assigned?
- there are adequate provisions for staff supervision and support, including annual performance appraisals?
- all staff are qualified for their positions?
- services for children meet the staffing requirements set out in the Performance Standards?
- appropriate standards of conduct are delineated and followed?
- staff do not pose a significant risk to the health and safety of children and families?
- the training and development system provides a structured approach to assisting staff, governing body members, Policy Council members, and volunteers in acquiring or increasing the knowledge and skills needed to fulfill their job responsibilities, including the areas of child abuse and neglect, transportation, and transitions?

STANDARDS

1301.31, including Appendix A—Identification and Reporting of Child Abuse and Neglect; 1304.24(a)(2)–1304.24(a)(3); 1304.52; 1306.20–1306.23; 1308.4(e); 1308.4(k); 1310.16–1310.17

- *REFER TO*—Information on human resources management gathered from the Management Team Interview, Content Area Experts Interview, Staff Group Interview, Family Group Interview, Governing Body Interview, and Policy Council Interview.
- *INTERVIEW*—As needed, program management personnel, policy group members, volunteers, and staff to clarify position assignments, the staff appraisal process, and training and development activities.
- *REVIEW*—Program personnel policies, a set of teacher files to check for the status of CDA and progress towards obtaining 2-year and 4-year degrees, a set of staff files to check for written documentation on staff background and qualifications, initial employment information and performance appraisals, the Bus Ride Checklist, written documentation on professional development and training opportunities, and any written information on staff-child ratios.

Question 8. **Fiscal Management. How effective is the fiscal management system in supporting the implementation of quality services to children and families?**

NOTES ON ISSUES, QUESTIONS, AND FOLLOW-UP

QUESTION 8. FISCAL MANAGEMENT

How effective is the fiscal management system in supporting the implementation of quality services to children and families?

How does the system ensure that:

- Federal regulations regarding fiscal management are met?
- the budget is developed and approved to support program goals and objectives?
- expenditures are monitored and analyzed and the budget is revised to ensure fiscal and program accountability?
- status reports reflect the appropriate use of funds to support quality services?

STANDARDS

1301.10–1301.13, (Subpart B); 1301.20–1301.21, (Subpart C); 1301.32–1301.33; 1304.20(c)(5); 1304.23(b)(1)(i); 1304.50(f); 1304.50(g)(2); 1304.51(h)(1)–1304.51(h)(2); 1304.52(d)(8); 1305.9; 1308.4(m)–1308.4(o); 1310.23(b); Part 74, Subpart C; Part 92, Subpart C

- *REFER TO*—Information on fiscal management gathered from the Management Team Interview, Content Area Experts Interview, Staff group Interview, Governing Body Interview, and Policy Council Interview.
- *INTERVIEW*—As needed, the fiscal officer regarding the system of fiscal management and program management, governing body members, and policy group members about their involvement in fiscal management of the program.
- *REVIEW*—Items listed on Fiscal Checklist.

Question 9a. Prevention and Early Intervention. How does the grantee implement a comprehensive system of services for preventing health problems, and intervening promptly when they exist?

NOTES ON ISSUES, QUESTIONS, AND FOLLOW-UP

QUESTION 9A. PREVENTION AND EARLY INTERVENTION	STANDARDS
How does the grantee implement a comprehensive system of services for preventing health problems, and intervening promptly when they exist?	1304.20; 1304.21(c)(1)(iii); 1304.22–1304.24; 1304.40(c)(1)(i)–(iii); 1304.40(c)(2); 1304.40(f); 1304.41(a)(2); 1304.41(b); 1304.53(a)(6); 1304.53(a)(8); 1304.53(a)(10)(i)–1304.53(a)(10)(iii); 1304.53(a)(10)(v)–1304.53(a)(10)(xvii); 1306.30(c); 1306.33(c)(3); 1308.6; 1308.20; 1310.21

How does the grantee ensure that:

- parents are involved as full partners in prevention and early intervention?
- children and families are linked to an ongoing source of continuous, accessible health care; children are kept up to date on a schedule of well-child care that includes immunizations; and all timeframes are met?
- the health and safety of children is assured through (1) teaching children and parents preventive health practices; (2) the establishment and practice of effective health emergency procedures, including methods or handling suspected or known child abuse; (3) conditions for short-term exclusion and admittance; (4) medication administration procedures; (5) injury prevention measures; and (6) hygiene procedures?
- nutritional services meet all applicable laws; staff and families work together to identify and meet children's nutritional needs; meals are served family style and include a variety of foods, taking into account cultural and ethnic preferences; and nutrition education is provided for children and families?
- pregnant women enrolled in EHS are assisted in accessing prenatal and postpartum care and are provided with prenatal education?
- a regular schedule of on-site consultation by a mental health professional supports parent and staff efforts to address children's needs in a timely manner?
- developmental screening plays a role in child development and health services planning for children?

- *REFER TO*—Information on prevention and early intervention gathered from the Management Team Interview, Content Area Experts Interview Staff Group Interview, Family Group Interview, and Community Partnerships Interview.
- *OBSERVE*—Centers and/or family child care homes and focus children's settings using the Classroom, Family Child Care, or Socialization Experience and/or the Home Visit Observation Instruments; food preparation and storage; food transportation, if applicable; and meal and snack time.
- *INTERVIEW*—As needed, health, nutrition, and mental health services staff and consultants; staff involved in food services and nutrition education activities; Health Services Advisory Committee members; and community partners about prevention and early intervention in the program.
- *REVIEW*—Focus children's files for results from developmental screenings; health records; health- and safety-related policies and procedures; results from environmental tests, if applicable; menus; plans for health and safety activities; the Bus Ride Checklist; Health Services Advisory Committee meeting minutes; the program's plan for early childhood development and health services; and the Health and Safety Checklist.

Question 9b. Health Care Tracking and Follow-up. How does the grantee track the provision of all child health and developmental services and ensure that follow-up services are received in a timely manner?

NOTES ON ISSUES, QUESTIONS, AND FOLLOW-UP

QUESTION 9B. HEALTH CARE TRACKING AND FOLLOW-UP	STANDARDS
How does the grantee track the provision of all child health and developmental services and ensure that follow-up services are received in a timely manner?	1304.20(c)–1304.20(f); 1304.41(a)(1); 1304.51(g); 1308.18

How does the grantee ensure that:

- mechanisms are in place that support communication among staff, parents, and community providers to assure follow-up services are received?
- all confidentiality requirements are met and those who need information can access it?

- *REFER TO*—Information on tracking and follow-up of health services gathered from the Management Team Interview, Content Area Experts Interview, Staff Group Interview, and Family Group Interview.
- *INTERVIEW*—As needed, staff responsible for overseeing tracking of child health and development, teachers and/or home visitors, and parents about how the program tracks and provides follow-up on child health and development concerns.
- *REVIEW*—Health tracking system and its relationship to the grantee's record-keeping and reporting system (Core Question #4).

Question 10. Individualization. How does the grantee individualize the program of child development and health services to meet each child's unique characteristics, strengths, and needs, as determined in consultation with the family?

NOTES ON ISSUES, QUESTIONS, AND FOLLOW-UP

QUESTION 10. INDIVIDUALIZATION	STANDARDS
How does the grantee individualize the program of child development and health services to meet each child's unique characteristics, strengths, and needs, as determined in consultation with the family? How does the grantee ensure that: • individualization is based on the results of ongoing child assessment linked to curriculum goals and reflected in the program's curriculum, planning, record-keeping, and family partnership process? • individualization addresses child interests, learning and development, temperament, language, cultural background, and learning style?	1304.20(d); 1304.20(f); 1304.21(a); 1304.21(b); 1304.21(c)(1)(i); 1304.23(b)(1); 1304.40(a)(2); 1308.19

- *REFER TO*—Information on individualization gathered from the Management Team Interview, Content Area Experts Interview, Staff Group Interview, and Family Group Interview.
- *OBSERVE*—Focus children's settings for evidence of individualization of the curriculum based on the ongoing assessment information using the Classroom, Family Child Care, or Socialization Experience and/or the Home Visit Observation Instruments.
- *INTERVIEW*— Teachers and/or home visitors, family child care teachers, and parents of the focus children about how the program individualizes services, using information gathered from the ongoing assessment of children.
- *REVIEW*—Written curriculum, periodic recordings of each child's developmental progress, and the program's plan for services for children.

Question 11. Disabilities Services. How does the grantee ensure that individualized services are effectively provided to children with diagnosed or suspected disabilities?

NOTES ON ISSUES, QUESTIONS, AND FOLLOW-UP

QUESTION 11. DISABILITIES SERVICES	STANDARDS
How does the grantee ensure that individualized services are effectively provided to children with diagnosed or suspected disabilities? How does the grantee: • ensure the timely assessment of special education/related services needs of children with disabilities, conducted in coordination with the Part C agency and/or LEA? • provide parents with information and assistance in understanding and advocating for services and support needed to address their child's special needs? • provide staff with the information, guidance, and resources needed to help children and families meet the individualized goals and objectives in the IFSP/IEP? • modify activities; remove barriers; and provide support, as needed, for inclusion of children with disabilities in the full range of program activities?	1304.20(c)(4); 1304.20(f); 1304.21(a)(1)(ii); 1304.23(a)(2); 1304.24(a)(3)(iii); 1304.41(a)(4); 1304.53(a)(10)(xvii); 1304.53(b)(1)(iii); 1308; 1310.22(b)

- *REFER TO*—Information on services to children with disabilities gathered from the Management Team Interview, Content Area Experts Interview, Staff Group Interview, Family Group Interview, and Community Partnerships Interview.
- *OBSERVE*—Centers and/or family child care homes and focus children with disabilities using the Classroom, Family Child Care, or Socialization Experience and/or Home Visit Observation Instruments.
- *INTERVIEW*—As needed, teachers, home visitors, family child care teachers, and disabilities services staff who work with focus children, and community partners serving children with disabilities about the program's policies on and provision of services to children with disabilities.
- *REVIEW*—IFSPs; IEPs; results from developmental screenings and assessments, including records of children's ongoing progress; the program's plan for disabilities services; the Bus Ride Checklist; and the Health and Safety Checklist.

Question 12. Curriculum and Assessment. How has the grantee engaged in a process of curriculum selection and/or development, implementation, and evaluation resulting in a written plan that supports the growth of children's social competence, including school readiness, for each identified program option?

NOTES ON ISSUES, QUESTIONS, AND FOLLOW-UP

QUESTION 12. CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENT

STANDARDS

How has the grantee engaged in a process of curriculum selection and/or development, implementation, and evaluation resulting in a written plan that supports the growth of children's social competence, including school readiness, for each identified program option?

How does the grantee ensure that:

- the written curriculum includes (a) goals for children's development and learning; (b) the experiences through which children will achieve these goals; (c) what staff and parents can do to help children achieve these goals; (d) the materials needed to support the implementation of the curriculum towards achieving the stated goals; and (e) consistency with the Performance Standards and sound child development principles?
- the curriculum implementation, including assessment, provides appropriate environments and comprehensive programming for children from birth to age five?
- ongoing child assessment (a) is linked to curriculum goals and (b) provides for the collection of information on children's progress?
- the curriculum and assessment process support the inclusion of children with disabilities?
- parents are involved in curriculum implementation and reporting child progress?

1304.3(a)(5);
1304.21;
1304.23(b)–1304.23(c);
1304.40(e)–1304.40(f);
1306.30(b);
1308.4(c); 1310.21

- *REFER TO*—Information about curriculum development and implementation, including the linkages with child assessment, gathered from the Management Team Interview, Content Area Experts Interview, Staff Group Interview, and Family Group Interview.
- *OBSERVE*—Focus children's settings using the Classroom, Family Child Care, or Socialization Experience and/or the Home Visit Observation Instruments.
- *INTERVIEW*—As needed, teachers and/or home visitors, family child care teachers, family workers, and parents of the focus children about their involvement in curriculum development and their knowledge and involvement of its implementation in the program.
- *REVIEW*—The grantee's plan for child development services, the written curriculum, daily schedules, and the Bus Ride Checklist.

Question 13. Family Partnership Building. How does the grantee engage in a process of collaborative partnership building with parents?

NOTES ON ISSUES, QUESTIONS, AND FOLLOW-UP

QUESTION 13. FAMILY PARTNERSHIP BUILDING

STANDARDS: 1304.20(e); 1304.21(a)(2); 1304.23(b)(4); 1304.40; 1304.50(a)(1); 1306.30(b); 1308.19(j); 1308.21

How does the grantee engage in a process of collaborative partnership building with parents?

How does the grantee ensure that:

- meetings and one-on-one interactions are respectful of each family's diversity and cultural background?
- opportunities exist for parents to develop relationships with program staff and to participate in an individualized family partnership agreement process?
- staff work with families throughout the year to identify family goals, strengths, and necessary services and supports, and to describe progress in achieving family goals?
- staff work with parents to identify and access services and resources responsive to their interests and goals, and follow up with them to ensure that the referrals met their expectations and circumstances?
- for programs that enroll pregnant women, infants, and toddlers, assistance is available to mothers in accessing comprehensive prenatal and postpartum care?

- *REFER TO*—Information on family partnership building gathered from the Management Team Interview, Content Area Experts Interview, Staff Group Interview, and Family Group Interview.
- *OBSERVE*—Focus children's settings using the Classroom, Family Child Care, or Socialization Experience and/or the Home Visit Observation Instruments.
- *INTERVIEW*—Relevant community partners and, as needed, focus families and family services personnel and other staff working with families about how the program partners with parents, how the family partnership agreement process is developed and implemented, how progress is monitored, how families are connected to community resources, and what services are provided to families with pregnant women.
- REVIEW—Conversation or anecdotal notes; any evidence describing family goals and progress in meeting them, such as family portfolios; information on pre-existing plans with other agencies, when applicable; and the program's written plan for family and community partnerships.

Question 14. Parent Involvement. How does the grantee provide parent involvement opportunities?

NOTES ON ISSUES, QUESTIONS, AND FOLLOW-UP

QUESTION 14. PARENT INVOLVEMENT	STANDARDS
How does the grantee provide parent involvement opportunities?	1304.20(e)(4); 1304.23(d); 1304.24(a)(1); 1304.40(b)–1304.40(h); 1304.50; 1308.19(j); 1308.21

How does the grantee ensure that:

- parents are involved in the development of the program of services for children, including home visits; parent conferences; the delivery of health care services to children; the development of the curriculum; planning, implementing, and evaluating nutrition services; and developing and implementing services for children with disabilities?
- opportunities are responsive to the ongoing and expressed interests and needs of individual parents and groups of parents?
- parents have opportunities to enhance their skills and knowledge in the following areas:

- knowledge of child growth and development, the program's curriculum, the child assessment process, and parenting skills;
- prevention of child abuse and neglect;
- family literacy;
- medical, dental, mental health and nutrition (encouraging parents to become active partners in their child's health care process and learn the principles of preventive health and safety);
- community advocacy (encouraging parents to influence the character and goals of community services);
- transition activities (assisting parents in becoming their child's advocate as the child moves to public school or another child care setting); and
- prenatal education on fetal development, labor and delivery, and postpartum recovery, as appropriate?

- *REFER TO*—Information on parent involvement gathered from the Management Team Interview, Content Area Experts Interview, Staff Group Interview, and Family Group Interview.
- *INTERVIEW*—As needed, focus families, family services and other staff working with families, policy group members, and relevant community partners about how the agency plans for and fosters parent involvement.
- *REVIEW*—Documentation of home visits and parent/teacher conferences, records of parent involvement activities, documentation of parent participation in Parent Committee and policy groups, staff or parent training records, and the program's plan for parent involvement.

Question 15. Community Partnerships. How does the grantee take an active role in community planning and advocacy to improve the delivery of services to children and families?

NOTES ON ISSUES, QUESTIONS, AND FOLLOW-UP

QUESTION 15. COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

STANDARDS: 1304.23(b)(4); 1304.24(a)(3)(iv); 1304.40(e)(4); 1304.41; 1308.4(l); 1310.23

How does the grantee take an active role in community planning and advocacy to improve the delivery of services to children and families?

How does the grantee:

- develop community partnerships, supported by interagency agreements, as appropriate (e.g., with the LEA or Part C agency, child protective services, or local transportation system)?
- establish collaboration within the grantee agency and across agencies?
- promote the access of children, families, and pregnant women, as appropriate, to community services that are responsive to their needs, such as child care?
- coordinate services to children with disabilities and their families with community agencies?
- encourage volunteers to participate in Head Start?
- support the transitions of families in, through, and out of Head Start and Early Head Start?
- establish and maintain an effective Health Services Advisory Committee that includes parents, professionals, and other volunteers from the community?
- establish and maintain other service advisory committees as appropriate to address program issues and to help the program respond to expressed family and community needs?

- *REFER TO*—Information on community partnerships gathered from the Management Team Interview, Content Area Experts Interview, Staff Group Interview, Family Group Interview, Governing Body Interview, Policy Council Interview, Child Care Partnerships Interview, and Community Partnerships Interview.
- *INTERVIEW*—As needed, a small number of community partners; focus families; Health Services Advisory Committee members and other advisory group members, as appropriate; and staff (including disabilities services staff) about the existence and effectiveness of community partnerships and interagency services for children and their families.
- *REVIEW*—Interagency agreements; community resource guide to determine if it addresses families' comprehensive needs; the program's plan for community involvement, planning, assessment, and advocacy for all families; services for children with disabilities; and activities to facilitate transition.

Question 16. **Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment, and Attendance. How does the grantee approach eligibility, recruitment, selection, enrollment, and attendance in an attempt to meet the needs of Head Start-eligible families and in response to the community assessment?**

NOTES ON ISSUES, QUESTIONS, AND FOLLOW-UP

QUESTION 16. ELIGIBILITY, RECRUITMENT, SELECTION, ENROLLMENT, AND ATTENDANCE	STANDARDS
How does the grantee approach eligibility, recruitment, selection, enrollment, and attendance in an attempt to meet the needs of Head Start-eligible families and in response to the community assessment?	1305.3–1305.8; 1308.5

How does the grantee:

- define the recruitment area?
- determine the eligibility of children, ensuring that no more than 10% come from families that exceed the low-income guidelines?
- ensure that at least 10% of enrollment opportunities are made available to children with disabilities?
- recruit those most in need of Head Start services, including previously underserved populations?
- select children and families based on enrollment criteria, and maintain a waiting list?
- assign children to program options that meet the needs of their families?
- meet the service requirements for each option?
- maintain the funded enrollment level, fill vacancies as they occur, and analyze enrollment data to inform the planning process?
- analyze the causes of absenteeism, when average daily attendance falls below 85%?

- *REFER TO*—Information on eligibility, recruitment, selection, enrollment, and attendance gathered from the Management Team Interview, Content Area Experts Interview, Staff Group Interview, Family Group Interview, Governing Body Interview, and Policy Council Interview.
- *INTERVIEW*—As needed, family services personnel, focus families, and policy group members.
- *REVIEW*—The current community assessment; eligibility, selection, and enrollment criteria; written information on the recruitment process and the recruitment area; the current waiting list of eligible children; income verification forms from focus children's records; class rosters and home visitor assignments; the set of attendance records; written enrollment procedures; evidence of recruitment and enrollment of children with disabilities; and the Policy Council meeting minutes concerned with eligibility, selection, and enrollment issues.

Question 17. **Facilities, Materials, Equipment, and Transportation. How does the grantee ensure that facilities, materials, equipment, and transportation services, when they are provided, are safe, appropriate, and conducive to learning and reflective of the different ages and stages of development of each child, including children with disabilities, for the conduct of all program activities?**

NOTES ON ISSUES, QUESTIONS, AND FOLLOW-UP

QUESTION 17. FACILITIES, MATERIALS, EQUIPMENT, AND TRANSPORTATION

How does the grantee ensure that facilities, materials, equipment, and transportation services, when they are provided, are safe, appropriate, and conducive to learning and reflective of the different ages and stages of development of each child, including children with disabilities, for the conduct of all program activities?

How does the grantee ensure that:

- construction of facilities and purchase of vehicles meet all requirements?
- required inspections, maintenance, and repairs are taking place, and facilities and transportation vehicles are in compliance with all relevant Federal, State, tribal, and local requirements?
- center-based environments are free of toxins, such as smoke, lead, pesticides, and herbicides?
- arrangements and space, as well as types and uses of materials and equipment, match the grantee's identified curriculum?
- the facilities, materials, equipment, and vehicles are accessible to persons with disabilities as required by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act?

STANDARDS

1304.21(a)(4)(iv); 1304.21(a)(5)–1304.21(a)(6); 1304.22(e)(7); 1304.23(e); 1304.53(a)(1)–1304.53(a)(5); 1304.53(a)(7)–(9); 1304.53(a)(10)(iv); 1304.53(a)(10)(xiv)–1304.53(a)(10)(xv); 1304.53(a)(10)(xvii); 1304.53(b); 1306.30(c); 1308.4(o)(4)–1308.4(o)(6); 1310.10; 1310.12(b); 1310.13–1310.15(b); 1310.15(d); 1310.20; 1310.22(b); 1310.23; 45 CFR 84.5

- *REFER TO*—Information on facilities, materials, equipment, and transportation gathered from the Management Team Interview, Content Area Experts Interview, Staff Group Interview, and Family Group Interview.
- *INTERVIEW*—As needed, a small number of staff to determine accommodations for children with disabilities or special needs and adequacy and maintenance of facilities, equipment, and transportation vehicles.
- *REVIEW*—The results from ongoing monitoring of health and safety, the annual safety inspection, licenses, maintenance logs, procurement requests and/or purchasing records (if needed), the Health and Safety Checklist, and the Bus Ride Checklist.

Question 18. Child Outcomes. How has the grantee implemented requirements related to child outcomes?

QUESTION 18. CHILD OUTCOMES	STANDARDS
How has the grantee implemented requirements related to child outcomes?	1304.21(a)(1)(i); 1304.40(e)(5); 1304.51(a)(1)(ii); 1304.51(a)(1)(iii); 1304.51(g); 1304.51(i)(1); 1304.51(i)(2); Head Start Act, Sections: 641A(a)(1)(B); 641A(b)(4); 642(e); 648A(a)(1)(A)

How does the grantee ensure that:

- long-range goals and short-term program objectives reflect the findings of ongoing monitoring and the self-assessment, including analysis and use of child outcome data?
- the record-keeping and reporting systems used to manage data and generate status reports provide information on preschool children's progress on the required domains, elements, and indicators when they enter the program, at a midpoint in the year, and at the end of the year?
- ongoing monitoring ensures tracking of patterns of progress and accomplishments for groups of children in the 8 domains of learning and development?
- the results of the self-assessment, including child outcomes data on patterns of learning and development for groups of children in the 8 domains and the 13 mandatory elements and indicators of literacy, numeracy, and language are analyzed; and that the information is used to address continuous improvement and to inform the grantee's planning process?
- individualization addresses the 8 domains of learning and development?
- for preschool children, the curriculum includes experiences in the 8 domains of language, literacy, mathematics, science, creative arts, social and emotional development, approaches to learning, and physical development and health?
- ongoing child assessment includes, in the case of preschool children, accomplishments in the 8 domains and 13 required elements/indicators?

- *REFER TO*—Information on planning, ongoing monitoring, record-keeping and reporting, self-assessment, individualization, curriculum development and implementation, and child assessment, including linkages to child outcomes gathered from the Management Team Interview, Content Area Experts Interview, Staff Group Interview, Family Group Interview, Governing Body Interview, and Policy Council Interview.
- *INTERVIEW*—As needed, program management personnel, policy group members, and staff or governing body members regarding data collection and reporting, the monitoring process, their involvement in the self-assessment and planning processes; teachers and/or home visitors, family child care teachers, and parents of the focus children about how the program individualizes services, and their involvement in curriculum development and its implementation.
- *REVIEW*—Statement of long-range and short-term objectives, decision-making about program options, and written plan(s); files of focus children and families (including assessment data) and a selection of status reports; program policies, procedures, and written documents pertaining to ongoing monitoring; the annual self-assessment data and analysis; periodic recordings of each child's developmental progress in each of the 8 domains of learning and development; and the written curriculum reflecting the inclusion of the 8 domains, and daily schedules.

Summary of Review Decisions

Core Question	Review Decisions	
	No Areas of Noncompliance	Areas of Noncompliance
1. Program Governance		
2. Planning		
3. Communication		
4. Record-Keeping and Reporting		
5. Ongoing Monitoring		
6. Program Self-Assessment		
7. Human Resources		
8. Fiscal Management		
9a. Prevention and Early Intervention		
9b. Health Care Tracking and Follow-up		
10. Individualization		
11. Disabilities Services		
12. Curriculum and Assessment		
13. Family Partnership Building		
14. Parent Involvement		
15. Community Partnerships		
16. Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment, and Attendance		
17. Facilities, Materials, Equipment, and Transportation		
18. Child Outcomes		

Entrance Meeting and Grantee Presentation

PURPOSE

- To provide an opportunity for the team leader to make some general comments about the course of the review.
- To provide an opportunity for team members and Head Start staff to meet one another.
- To provide grantee staff with the opportunity to make a presentation about their program to the review team.

LOGISTICS

- **Content:** The entrance meeting includes two activities: (a) an entrance session for general comments and introductions, and (b) an optional grantee presentation. The grantee presentation does not have to follow a specific style or manner. In preparing its presentation, the grantee should consider the following topics:
  - the agency's history and the grantee's organizational structure and program design, including program options and child care partnerships;
  - the context in which the program operates, including available resources and community demographics; and
  - the strengths and challenges of Head Start families, and how the program is designed to build on strengths and deal with challenges.
- **Duration:** The entrance meeting lasts no more than an hour. The grantee presentation is voluntary.
- **Review team participants:** All review team members must attend. If the grantee does not make a presentation, the team leader covers the topics of grantee organization and community context during the Management Team Interview.
- **Grantee participants:** Any grantee staff may attend.

OPTIONAL

Management Team Interview Protocol

PURPOSE

- To foster the partnership approach during the monitoring process through open discussion;
- To continue to provide a general overview, or "big picture," of the program from the grantee's point of view; and
- To provide an initial understanding of how the grantee describes its systems.

LOGISTICS

- **Duration:** This optional interview lasts 2 hours and is held on the first day of the monitoring review, following the entrance meeting.
- **Review team participants:** The team leader leads the interview. Any review team members assigned by the team leader may attend. One review team member takes notes.
- **Grantee participants:** The grantee's entire management team participates in this interview. The group includes the agency director, the grantee's Head Start/Early Head Start director, the fiscal officer, program managers (individual(s) assigned the management of child development and health services and family and community partnerships), a representative from the governing body, and the Policy Council chair.
- **Group size:** Attendance depends upon the grantee's organizational structure; however, a group size of 10–12 is recommended.

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this meeting is to provide a general overview, or "big picture," of your program. To do so, we will talk with you about the systems that are in place in the program to support the delivery of services to children and families. Let's start with introductions. Please tell us your name and role in Head Start/Early Head Start.

Grantee and Community Background

(Ask the following question if grantee staff did not make the optional presentation at the entrance meeting, or if they did not provide adequate information during the presentation.)

1. Before beginning an in-depth discussion about the grantee's systems, we want to be sure that we understand the organizational structure of your program and the context in which it operates. Briefly describe your community, the agency's history, and the program's organizational structure and program design, including program options and child care partnerships.

   Listen for:

   - the community in which the grantee operates, including available resources and community demographics;
   - community strengths and the major difficulties faced by the community;
   - how the Head Start program takes these factors into account when planning and implementing program services;
   - the strengths and primary challenges of Head Start families;
   - key community issues facing families, such as welfare reform, child care, literacy, substance abuse, and employment issues;
   - how the program is designed to deal with these challenges.

Planning

2. Let's talk about your grantee's planning process. How do you arrive at your goals and objectives? Do you have a long-term or "strategic" plan? What does it involve? How did you decide on this plan? Describe your plan for **collecting**, **analyzing**, and **using** information on child outcomes.

   Listen for:

   - how the program has moved towards reaching these goals and objectives; and
   - how progress towards reaching outcomes, including child outcomes, is measured.

Communication

3. In general, how would you describe your communication system?

   Listen for:

   - regular communication between staff and parents (carried out in parents' preferred language);
   - information sharing among staff, governing bodies, and policy groups;
   - if grantee has delegate agencies, information sharing with delegate agency governing bodies, Policy Committees, and staff;
   - communication, cooperation, and information sharing with community partners;
   - regular communication among staff.

Program Governance

4. How does the program's governance fit into all of the other systems we have been talking about today?

   Listen for:

   - governing body participation in key decision-making, including program oversight;
   - the governance structure, including the governing body, policy groups, and Parent Committees;
   - roles and responsibilities of each of these groups;
   - internal dispute resolution procedures.

Record-Keeping & Reporting

5. In general, how does the program organize its system of record-keeping and reporting?

   Listen for:

   - records maintained for children and families;
   - procedures for producing and disseminating status reports, including those related to child outcomes;
   - how staff in management positions use records to revise program plans, manage program quality, and maintain program accountability.

Ongoing Monitoring

6. How does the grantee monitor the quality of program services on a regular basis?

   Listen for:

   - checking progress towards meeting goals and objectives;
   - analysis of information contained in tracking systems and written reports, including information on child outcomes;
   - on-site observation and supervision of staff;
   - how information from ongoing monitoring is used to make program changes;
   - oversight of delegate agencies and child care partnerships, when applicable.

Self-Assessment

7. Describe the process for your agency's annual self-assessment. How is information that is gathered used for program improvements? How is information about child outcomes included in the annual self-assessment?

   Listen for:

   - who is involved in the process,
   - description of where the grantee is in the process of implementing the child outcomes initiative,
   - changes made as a result of self-assessment.

Human Resources

8. Please describe the overall organization of your staff.

   Listen for:

   - how staff are organized to support the program;
   - how staff are supervised;
   - planning for and status of plans to meet staff qualifications, including teacher requirements for CDAs, and 2-year and 4-year degrees;
   - how staff are trained to measure, track, analyze, and use information about children's progress;
   - the program's system for staff training and development, including orientation and performance reviews.

Fiscal Management

9. Describe the fiscal system, and how the management team and the fiscal officers work together to support the delivery of Head Start services.

   Listen for:

   - how Federal regulations regarding fiscal management are met,
   - how the budget is developed and approved,
   - how expenditures are monitored,
   - what reports are produced and how they are used,
   - how the grantee maintains accountability.

SUMMARY

Is there anything else you would like to tell us that will help us understand the context in which your agency operates, your organizational structure, or your systems, or that will help set the stage for us as we continue this review?

OPTIONAL

Delegate Directors Interview Protocol

PURPOSE

- To be used with a grantee that has many delegate agencies, at the discretion of the team leader. If the grantee has one or two delegate agencies, the directors of these agencies may be invited to the Grantee Management Team Interview in lieu of completing this protocol.

- To provide the review team with necessary information on the relationship of the grantee to its delegate agencies. Eight systems connect the two entities—planning, governance, communications, ongoing monitoring, record-keeping/reporting, self-assessment, human resources, and fiscal management.

- To provide an opportunity for directors of delegate agencies not included in the full review to talk with the review team about grantee management system involved in the oversight of delegate agency programs.

LOGISTICS

- **Duration:** This optional interview lasts about 2 hours and should follow the Management Team Interview. Since the Delegate Directors Interview only occurs in grantees with many delegate agencies, it generally is held prior to the start of the full review, not more than 1 month before the review. It can also be scheduled on the first full day of the review.

- **Review team participants:** The team leader generally leads this interview. If this interview is held prior to the full review, other Federal staff who will serve as subteam leaders also attend. In cases where it is held on the first day of the full review, the team leader may choose which review team members should attend. If possible, a representative of the review team looking at grantee oversight attends.

- **Grantee participants:** In consultation with the team leader, the grantee selects delegate agency directors to attend this interview. Delegate agency directors who have not been selected to be part of the rest of the review should be included.

- **Group size:** A group size of 8 to 12 delegate directors is recommended.

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this meeting is to bring together a group of delegate agency directors to discuss the grantee's oversight and monitoring of delegate operations. Most of your agencies will not be a part of the full review, and this meeting provides you an opportunity to contribute your perspectives about grantee operations and how they affect you. To begin, please tell us your name, the agency you direct, and a little about the agency.

Planning

1. Let's talk about how the grantee and delegate planning systems fit together. How would you describe your planning system and that of the grantee? How do these systems connect? How do grantee staff support your agency in planning?

   Listen for:

   - the instructions (e.g., funding guidance) the grantee provided to describe the grantee's versus the delegate's role in planning;
   - a description of the grantee's community assessment, the role the delegates play in this process, and the information it provides to the delegate OR the delegate's own community assessment and the role the grantee plays in that;
   - how the grantee connects the results of the community assessment with its funded enrollment decisions and how these decisions are related to other elements of the planning process;
   - how the grantee is involved in other planning activities within the delegate agency (e.g., the development of program plans or decisions about program options).

Self-Assessment

2. What is involved in the grantee's process of self-assessment? How do your procedures interface with those of the grantee?

   Listen for:

   - whether delegates conduct a separate self-assessment;
   - if the self-assessments are separate, the role the grantee plays in the delegate's self-assessment and the way the grantee uses the information collected by the delegate;
   - inclusion of a review of child outcomes and the use of this information in program planning.

Communication

3. How does your communication system connect with that of the grantee? What kinds of things does the grantee communicate to you and ask from you? What evidence do you have that your communication system supports quality services for children and families?

   Listen for:

   - procedures and timetables the grantee has communicated to the delegate;
   - how the grantee assures that its delegates receive all HHS regulations, policies, guidelines, and other communications;
   - a description of the grantee's funding guidance to the delegate to ensure that it describes the grantee's expectations for the application/refunding process and how the grantee will communicate with the delegate about reports, provision of training and technical assistance, etc.;
   - schedule and substance of meetings of the grantee and delegates, and a description of how information from such discussions is used;
   - opportunities and methods for delegates to communicate issues of concern, recommendations, or useful information to the grantee.

Governance

4. How does the grantee's governance system interface with that of the delegate agencies?

   Listen for:

   - opportunities for information exchange and decision-making between the grantee and each delegate agency's governing body, with explanations of the processes, who is involved, and who initiates communication;
   - grantee procedures for assuring that the governing body of each delegate carries out its oversight and fiduciary functions and shares decision-making with the delegate's Policy Committee;
   - specific stipulations in the delegate agency contract about the relationship between the grantee and the delegate's governing body (meetings, training, etc.);
   - communication between the Policy Council and Policy Committees;
   - how the grantee ensures that parents at the delegate agency are appropriately involved in governance functions.

Record-Keeping and Reporting

5. Please describe the record-keeping and reporting systems that connect you and the grantee. How do they support each other?

   Listen for:

   - the types of program and fiscal reports the grantee provides the delegates and how this information is used by the delegate;
   - the types of reports the delegate provides to the grantee and how this information is analyzed and used by the grantee;
   - the kinds of trends and patterns you identify in your reports to the grantee and the actions that are taken by the grantee in response to these;
   - how the grantee monitors to ensure that your records provide sufficient detail to assure quality services to children and families;
   - what delegate agencies do with the feedback received from the grantee.

Ongoing Monitoring

6. What is the grantee's process for the ongoing monitoring of delegates? How do you share information with the grantee about your ongoing monitoring of your own systems and services?

   Listen for:

   - how the grantee uses delegate reports of program and fiscal operations in its monitoring processes;
   - how the grantee provides assistance to delegates if problems are identified during the delegate's own monitoring;
   - how the grantee communicates to the delegate about (a) serious issues (e.g., items constituting noncompliance or a deficiency) detected during the grantee's monitoring and (b) its expectations concerning the resolution of these issues;
   - how the grantee follows up to ensure that its concerns are appropriately and adequately addressed.

Human Resources

7. How do the grantee and delegate agency human resources systems interface?

   Listen for:

- how the grantee's organizational structure supports the accomplishment of delegate program objectives;
- the role the grantee plays in the hiring of delegate agency staff;
- how the grantee ensures that adequate and qualified staff are employed at the delegate agency to provide quality services;
- how the grantee assesses that training and technical assistance (T/TA) needs of the delegate are met;
- how the grantee supports the ongoing professional development of delegate staff.

Fiscal Management

8. Describe the interface between the grantee and delegate fiscal systems.

   Listen for:

   - the grantee's system for advances to delegates and reimbursements of delegate expenses;
   - the way the grantee monitors the delegate's fiscal procedures to ensure operating efficiency and the delivery of effective services;
   - how the grantee oversees and monitors each delegate's expenditure of funds so that re-budgeting can occur when necessary; and
   - the grantee's process for assuring that audit findings at the delegate are corrected.

9. Is there anything else you would like to tell us that will help us understand the interaction of the grantee with its delegate agencies?

CONCLUSION

Thank you for taking the time to talk about these issues. We've been able to get a much clearer picture of grantee and delegate interactions from the things you've shared with us during this interview. As we close, we'd like to ask each of you to share with us one example of how you participate in ongoing monitoring to ensure quality services to children and families.

OPTIONAL

Content Area Experts Interview Protocol

PURPOSE

- To foster the partnership approach during the monitoring process through open discussion;
- To help reviewers obtain the "big picture" of the grantee's services and understand how services are integrated and carried out;
- To provide the framework for the focus child and family process.

LOGISTICS

- **Duration:** This optional interview lasts 1½ to 2 hours. It is conducted as soon as possible after the Management Team Interview. It may take place at the same time as a Staff Group Interview.
- **Review team participants:** Unless a Staff Group Interview occurs simultaneously, all review team members, as assigned by the team leader, participate in the Content Area Experts Interview. The team leader may assign reviewers representing Child Development and Health Services, Family and Community Partnerships, and Management Systems to attend. One reviewer facilitates the interview, while another takes notes.
- **Grantee participants:** All of the content areas as specified in the standards should be represented in the group interview (e.g., child development and health services [including disabilities], family and community partnerships, etc.). The group also includes mental health and nutrition consultants, when used by the grantee.
- **Group size:** A group size of 10–12 is recommended. With some grantees, the content area experts may also have attended the Management Team Interview.

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this group interview is to get a "behind-the-scenes" look at how your grantee operates. We've already had a meeting with your management staff to help us get a feel for the "big picture" of how systems operate in the program. Now we would like to hear how your team designs, implements, integrates, and oversees delivery of services for children and families. To help us get an integrated perspective, we'd like to hear how all content area experts contribute to child development, health services, and family and community partnerships.

We'd like to keep this informal, so feel free to jump in with answers to any question. Please don't feel pressured to answer any question you don't feel comfortable answering. We're looking forward to getting to know you and to learning more about your Head Start/Early Head Start program. Let's start by introducing ourselves. As you introduce yourself, please tell us how you got involved with Head Start/Early Head Start, and share one positive thing about the program that has directly affected you.

Family Partnership Building

1. Let's talk about how your team of content area experts works to build partnerships with the families in this program.

   Listen for:

   - partnerships that include family-identified goals,
   - follow-up with parents to ensure that appropriate referrals are made,
   - tracking of family goals and accomplishments,
   - interactions with families that acknowledge and respect their diversity and cultural background,
   - assistance to pregnant women in Early Head Start in accessing comprehensive prenatal and postpartum care.

Parent Involvement

2. How does the team develop parent and family involvement opportunities and make sure they are implemented?

   Listen for:

   - involvement in a variety of program activities, including those related to program governance;
   - efforts to conduct these activities in ways respectful of the various languages spoken by families;

- participation in experiences related to children's learning, developmental progress, and assessment;
- encouragement to become active partners in their children's health care process.

Community Partnerships

3. How does this team get involved in community planning and advocacy with and for parents to improve the quality of services for children and families?

   Listen for:

   - information regarding community partnerships, supported by interagency agreements;
   - collaboration within the grantee agency and across agencies;
   - partnerships with child care agencies and agencies providing special services to pregnant women, infants, toddlers, and children with disabilities;
   - participation of volunteers to enhance program services;
   - support for the transitions of families in, through, and out of Head Start/Early Head Start;
   - evidence of a Health Services Advisory Committee, including parents, professionals, and other volunteers from the community.

Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment, and Attendance

4. How does the team use the information from the community assessment to develop a plan for eligibility, recruitment, selection, enrollment, and attendance that meets the needs of Head Start/Early Head Start-eligible children and families?

   Listen for:

   - efforts to meet and maintain funded enrollment,
   - eligibility and enrollment criteria,
   - efforts to ensure that no more than 10% are over income,
   - efforts to ensure that at least 10% are children with disabilities,
   - maintenance and use of the waiting list,
   - ongoing monitoring of attendance.

Prevention and Early Intervention

5. How does this team make sure that there is a comprehensive system for preventing health problems and for intervening when problems exist?

   Listen for:

   - parents as full partners in prevention and early intervention;
   - evidence of an ongoing source of continuous and accessible health care;
   - appropriate preventive health practices;
   - nutritional services that reflect the diversity of families;
   - services for pregnant women, infants, and toddlers in Early Head Start;
   - provision of mental health services.

Health Care Tracking and Follow-Up

6. How does the team track the provision of child health and developmental services?

   Listen for:

   - procedures to ensure that follow-up treatments are provided in a timely manner,
   - evidence that confidentiality requirements are met and those who need information can access it.

Curriculum and Assessment

7. Please describe your curriculum. How do you ensure that the assessment process is aligned with the program's curriculum and includes experiences that support school readiness, the eight domains of learning and development, and required domain elements and indicators?

   Listen for:

   - description of a written curriculum;
   - explanations of how child assessment occurs in each program setting or option;
   - alignment of the curriculum with results of children's ongoing assessment;
   - parent involvement in the selection, development, implementation, and evaluation of the curriculum for each option;
   - staff training and development related to curriculum and child assessment;

- staff supervision;
- ongoing monitoring of curriculum implementation.

8. How are you involved in the child outcomes process?

   Listen for:

   - plans for assisting or training teaching staff,
   - plans for the ongoing monitoring of this assessment process,
   - involvement in the analysis and use of child outcome data,
   - review of child outcomes data at least three times during the year,
   - the inclusion of requirements related to child outcomes in the agency self-assessment.

Individualization

9. How does the team make sure that information gathered through the child assessment process is individualized for each child in consultation with the family?

   Listen for:

   - individualization that is reflected in the program's curriculum, planning, record-keeping, and family partnership process;
   - evidence of how individualization addresses children's strengths and needs, temperament, language, cultural background, and learning style.

Disabilities Services

10. How does the team make sure that individualized services are effectively provided to children with diagnosed or suspected disabilities?

    Listen for:

    - necessary accommodations that are made to the assessment process for children with disabilities;
    - coordination with the Part C agency and/or LEA for timely assessment;
    - encouragement of parent advocacy for services and support;
    - education of staff on the information, guidance, and resources needed to help children and families meet the individualized goals and objectives in the IFSP/IEP;

- efforts to modify activities, remove barriers, and provide supports for children with disabilities.

Facilities, Materials, Equipment, and Transportation

11. How do you, as a team, make sure that the facilities, materials, equipment, and transportation, including buses, are appropriate for children of different ages and stages of development, including children with disabilities? How do you make sure that appropriate space is provided to conduct all program activities?

    Listen for:

    - required safety checks, inspections, maintenance, and repairs;
    - when applicable, details about the transportation system;
    - compliance with relevant Federal, State, tribal, and local health, safety, or licensing requirements;
    - toxin-free, center-based environments and materials;
    - arrangements, space, and types and uses of materials and equipment that support curriculum;
    - adherence to requirements in Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.

CONCLUSION

Thank you for taking the time to talk about your program with us today. We've been able to get a much fuller view of your program because of the things that you shared with us during this interview. As we close, we'd like to ask each of you to share with us one example of how you conduct or participate in ongoing monitoring to assure quality services in the areas we have just discussed.

OPTIONAL

Staff Group Interview Protocol

PURPOSE

- To foster the partnership approach during the monitoring process through open discussion;
- To help reviewers understand how services are delivered to children and families from the perspective of the direct services staff;
- To continue to give reviewers a picture of how systems support services; and
- To provide information to be used in the focus child and family process.

LOGISTICS

- **Duration:** This optional interview lasts no more than 2 hours and takes place on the first day of the review, after the Management Team Interview. Depending upon grantee size, complexity, and the geographic distance between sites, it may be necessary to hold multiple Staff Group Interviews.
- **Review team participants:** The team leader may assign reviewers to participate in either a Staff Group Interview or the Content Area Experts Interview. If these meetings do occur, it is helpful if two reviewers attend each interview—one to facilitate, one to take notes.
- **Grantee participants:** This interview involves direct services staff, representing a variety of roles (e.g., teachers, family service workers, teaching assistants, cooks, bus drivers, and other support staff).
- **Group size:** A group size of 10–12 is recommended.

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this interview is to help us get a sense of how families move through your Head Start/Early Head Start program, from initial contact to present involvement, so we can get a feel for the services provided for the family and how these services are documented. We are going to ask questions about how a typical child and family experience Head Start/Early Head Start. You might find it helpful to think of a specific family as you answer the questions, although if you talk about real families during the discussion, please don't use their names, so we can ensure their confidentiality.

We'd like to keep this informal, so feel free to jump in with answers to any question. Please don't feel pressured to answer any question you don't feel comfortable answering. We're looking forward to getting to know you and to learning more about your Head Start/Early Head Start program. Let's start by introducing ourselves. As you introduce yourself, please tell us your name, what role you have in the program, and share one thing that you've learned since you've been working with Head Start/Early Head Start.

From Recruitment to Enrollment

1. How do your families find out about Head Start/Early Head Start? What is your first contact with a family like?

   Listen for:

   - use of a variety of recruitment methods,
   - communication with families about the Head Start/Early Head Start philosophy,
   - assistance to parents as they gather paperwork and complete the application.

2. Tell me how the decision is made to accept a particular child into the program.

   Listen for:

   - criteria and system used to make decisions,
   - procedures for handling families unable to document eligibility,
   - communications with and support for families on the waiting list.

Learning About Children

3. Describe the process you follow to screen children for developmental, sensory, and behavioral concerns.

Listen for:

- procedures for securing parent permission,
- what occurs if a parent refuses to give permission for screenings,
- procedures that staff follow to ensure screenings are completed on time,
- use of a systematic and effective approach to screenings that relies on multiple sources and looks at all areas of development.

4. When the results of a screening indicate that a child may have a suspected delay, what do you do?

   Listen for:

   - staff communication with families,
   - family involvement in the process,
   - strategies for when a parent disagrees with the outcome of a screening.

5. What would happen if a multidisciplinary team recommended a placement for a child that the parents did not agree with?

   Listen for:

   - assistance to parents to help them communicate concerns and preferences to the multi-disciplinary team,
   - staff advocating for the least restrictive environment,
   - coordination with other agencies to maintain children in the environment preferred by parents.

In the Program

6. What is your process for ongoing assessment and individualizing the curriculum for children?

   Listen for:

   - a systematic ongoing assessment process, linked with the curriculum, that gathers information on children's progress in each of the eight domains of learning and development, and required domain elements and indicators;

- families participating in setting individual goals for their children based on what is learned through the assessment;

- teacher ability to tie individual children's goals into the overall curriculum.

7. Tell me about the ways staff communicate with parents. Give me some examples of how this happens and the kinds of things you talk about.

   Listen for:

   - frequency of home visits and conferences;

   - range of topics, including child progress, discussed during home visits and conferences;

   - other formal and informal communication strategies (e.g., newsletters, phone calls, conversation with staff at drop-off and pickup).

Family Partnerships

8. Tell us about how you build partnerships with families. What are the first things you do?

   Listen for:

   - assistance to families in the identification of their family strengths and needs,

   - development of family partnership agreements,

   - assistance to families in accessing community resources and supports,

   - use of a procedure that ensures follow-up across the year to determine if the services and supports accessed are meeting the families' needs and expectations.

9. Tell me about opportunities families have to be involved in the program and how they hear about those opportunities.

   Listen for:

   - use of a variety of strategies that enable parents to be involved in their child's setting (e.g., classroom volunteer, parent training opportunities);

   - assistance to parents in accessing programs for developing literacy skills, vocational skills, parenting skills, and advocacy and communication skills;

   - participation in Parent Committees (e.g., education, health, nutrition, community advocacy);

   - participation in the policy group or governing body.

10. How do you help families prepare for their child's transition from Early Head Start to Head Start or from Head Start to public school?

    Listen for:

    - assistance to parents in the identification of transition issues for their child and in learning advocacy skills,
    - development of parents' awareness of their rights and responsibilities,
    - staff encouragement of parents to maintain a high level of involvement with their child's program following transitions.

11. Give an example of a parent calling or coming to speak with you about an issue or concern. How do you handle it?

    Listen for:

    - staff knowledge about where to direct parents' issues and concerns,
    - support for staff in their responses to parents' issues and concerns.

Human Resources and Program Management

12. Tell me about how you find out what's going on in the program and how you let managers know about issues you have.

    Listen for:

    - formal and informal communication strategies,
    - communication between managers and classroom staff.

13. Tell me about how you learn what is expected of you in your position and the kinds of support you get to help you do a better job.

    Listen for:

    - staff knowledge and implementation of Head Start/Early Head Start philosophy and Performance Standards;
    - staff receiving ongoing supervision and training from program managers, including training and supervision related to child assessment;
    - managers encouraging staff to participate in professional development opportunities;
    - frequency and usefulness of performance appraisals.

CONCLUSION

Thank you for your time and input today. As we close, would you each describe something you see as a strength of the program and something about the program you feel we must see or experience while we're here?

Family Group Interview Protocol

PURPOSE

- To continue to clarify reviewers' understanding of the grantee's systems and services as seen through focus families' experiences in Head Start/Early Head Start.

LOGISTICS

- **Duration:** The interview lasts no more than 2 hours. It is scheduled after reviewers have had an opportunity to observe children and talk with staff, and when it is convenient for most focus parents to attend.

- **Review team participants:** At least two reviewers, preferably a child development and health services reviewer and a family and community partnerships reviewer, are present for the Family Group Interview—one to facilitate the discussion, the other to serve as notetaker. All service reviewers attend when possible.

- **Grantee participants:** All parents from focus families are invited to attend. Reviewers should make every effort to use alternative means to talk with focus parents who are unable to attend.

- **Group size:** If there are more than 20 focus families, consider dividing them into smaller groups. A group size of 10–12 is recommended.

INTRODUCTION

Today I would like to talk with you about your experiences with Head Start/Early Head Start. My goal is to learn how Head Start/Early Head Start has worked with families and children, including things that have worked well and those areas in which you would like to see some improvement. We are here to work in partnership with the grantee to help make the program the best it can be.

We know that everyone's experience with Head Start/Early Head Start is different, and we appreciate the opportunity to talk with you about your experiences. We would just like to get a good picture of what the program has been like for you and your children. Let's start with introductions. Tell us your name, your child's name and age, what center or program option your child is enrolled in, how long you've been involved in the program, and one thing that your child has learned in Head Start/Early Head Start.

Recruitment and Enrollment

1. Tell me how you found out about Head Start/Early Head Start and what it was like for you to get into Head Start/Early Head Start.

   Listen for:

   - communication with families about Head Start/Early Head Start philosophy;
   - assistance to parents during the application process;
   - communication in parents' preferred language;
   - when applicable, parental choice of program option;
   - various methods through which parents learned about the program.

Family Partnership Building

2. In Head Start/Early Head Start we talk about the child and his/her family. Tell me about ways in which Head Start/Early Head Start has been supportive of the goals you have for your family, your child, and yourself.

   Listen for:

   - family-identified goals and program support for the goals;
   - referrals and follow-up;
   - interactions with families that acknowledge strengths and respect diversity and cultural background;

- assistance to parents in learning advocacy skills.

3. Talk about how the program helps you prepare for your child's transition from Early Head Start to Head Start or from Head Start to public school.

   Listen for:

   - parent involvement in the transition process.

4. Tell me about the ways that you are involved in Head Start/Early Head Start and about what happens in your child's classroom.

   Listen for:

   - individual as well as group activities,
   - a variety of program activities,
   - efforts to conduct these activities in ways respectful of the various languages spoken by families,
   - a variety of strategies for making contact with families.

Prevention and Early Intervention/Follow-up Services

5. How does Head Start/Early Head Start work with you to make sure that your child has good health care and is developing well?

   Listen for:

   - parents becoming active partners in their child's health care,
   - links to ongoing accessible health care,
   - ongoing communication about health issues,
   - referrals and follow-up for children with health problems or disabilities.

Curriculum, Assessment, and Individualization

6. Talk with me about the kinds of things your child is learning in the classroom. What kinds of things do you and your child's teacher talk about? Do you get a report that keeps you informed of your child's progress and accomplishments?

   Listen for:

   - information on how parents have input into the curriculum,

- a curriculum reflective of family cultures,
- families that participate in setting goals for their children,
- staff that address children's strengths and needs,
- frequency of home visits and conferences.

Disabilities

7. Are you aware that your Head Start/Early Head Start program is serving children with disabilities? What have you seen teachers and staff do to support and involve those children and their families?

   Listen for:

   - parents who think children with disabilities are getting necessary services,
   - assistance to parents in communicating concerns and preferences to multidisciplinary teams,
   - involvement in development of IFSP/IEPs,
   - coordination with other agencies.

Community Partnerships

8. How has Head Start/Early Head Start helped you connect with other community services and resources?

   Listen for:

   - referrals to appropriate community agencies;
   - access to programs for developing literacy skills, vocational skills, parenting skills, and advocacy and communication skills;
   - assistance to pregnant women in accessing comprehensive prenatal and postpartum care;
   - examples of partnerships with other child care agencies and providers.

Program Governance

9. What opportunities do you have to discuss ideas or concerns you have about the program with other parents and staff?

   Listen for:

- participation in Parent Committees,
- knowledge of work done by Policy Council/Policy Committee,
- examples of ideas or concerns that parents have taken to Parent Committees or policy groups,
- inclusion of parents from Early Head Start and all program options in policy groups.

Facilities, Materials, Equipment, and Transportation

10. Talk with me about Head Start/Early Head Start buildings and the equipment and materials you have seen in the classrooms. Tell us about any transportation services that your child receives from the program.

    Listen for:

    - safe facilities and transportation services,
    - appropriate and adequate materials.

CONCLUSION

Please share with us anything that you really like about Head Start/Early Head Start and want to see continue, as well as anything you would like to see changed or handled differently within Head Start/Early Head Start or your children's classrooms.

Thank you very much for taking the time to talk with us today.

Child Care Partnerships Interview Protocol

PURPOSE

- To understand the development, implementation, and future directions of the grantee's child care partnerships.

LOGISTICS

- **Duration:** The interview lasts from a half hour to 1 hour.
- **Review team participants:** At a minimum, a Systems Reviewer and a Service Reviewer conduct the interviews. The Systems Reviewer listens for issues of planning, communication, record-keeping, staff qualifications and training, ongoing monitoring, and fiscal management. The Service Reviewer listens for information about how services are delivered to children and families.
- **Child care partnership participants:** This interview is for directors or other lead staff members from child care programs that receive funds or resources from Head Start to serve children who are counted as "Head Start/Early Head Start" children.
- **Group size:** This interview may be done individually or with a group. If done in a group, a group size of 10–12 is recommended.

OPTION

This protocol may be combined with the Community Partnerships Interview Protocol, at the discretion of the team leader.

INTRODUCTION

I would like to talk with you about your experiences in partnering with Head Start/Early Head Start. My goal is to learn how Head Start/Early Head Start has worked with your agency, including things that have worked well and those areas in which you would like to see some improvement. We are here to work in partnership with the Head Start/Early Head Start grantee to help make the program the best it can be. There are no "wrong answers" here. We would just like to get a good picture of what the partnership is like.

Background and Nature of the Partnership

1. Tell me about the development of the partnership you have with this Head Start/Early Head Start program.

   Listen for:

   - history of the partnership,
   - goals for the partnership,
   - shared planning.

2. Describe the agreement you have for this partnership.

   Listen for:

   - the responsibilities of each organization,
   - the form of the agreement (written or verbal),
   - financial arrangements.

3. Describe the relationship between your agency's governing body or board (if any) and Head Start/Early Head Start's governing body.

   Listen for:

   - interaction between governing bodies,
   - the nature of the interaction.

4. Describe how communication occurs between your organizations.

   Listen for:

   - types of information shared,

- strategies used for communicating,
- procedures for addressing confidentiality.

5. Describe some activities conducted by you and/or the Head Start/Early Head Start program to ensure quality services.

   Listen for:
   - knowledge of Performance Standards and other regulations;
   - oversight and support from the Head Start/Early Head Start agency;
   - participation in program self-assessment;
   - ongoing monitoring to ensure that Performance Standards, child outcomes, and other regulations are met;
   - opportunities for staff development.

6. What do you see as the major effects of this partnership?

   Listen for:
   - strengths of the partnership;
   - impact on service delivery, including classroom activities, health services, and services to children with disabilities and families;
   - challenges.

Future Directions

7. What are the "next steps" in your partnership with Head Start/Early Head Start?

Community Partnerships Interview Protocol

PURPOSE

- To understand the development, implementation, and future direction of the agency's community partnerships.

LOGISTICS

- **Duration**: The interview lasts no more than 1 hour. This interview may be used in conjunction with or instead of the Child Care Partnerships Interview.

- **Review team participants:** The team leader decides which reviewers conduct this interview. At a minimum, two reviewers, a Systems Reviewer and a family and community partnerships reviewer, attend the meeting. One reviewer facilitates, the other takes notes.

- **Community partner participants:** This interview involves directors or other lead staff members from community agencies that are partners with Head Start/Early Head Start. Appropriate attendees may include directors from social services, mental health, LEAs, Part C agencies, health care providers, and other community partners.

- **Group size:** The interview may be done individually with a single partner agency or with a group representing several partners. A group of no more than 10–12 is recommended.

OPTION

This protocol may be combined with the Child Care Partnerships Interview Protocol, at the discretion of the team leader.

INTRODUCTION

Today we would like you to talk with you about your experiences with Head Start/Early Head Start. Our goal is to learn how Head Start/Early Head Start has worked with your agency, including things that have worked well and those areas in which you would like to see some improvement. There are no "wrong answers" here. We would like to have a picture of how the partnership works.

Background and Nature of the Partnership

1. Please describe your agency's role in the community. What is your role in the agency?

2. Tell us about the partnership you have with this Head Start/Early Head Start program.

   Listen for:

   - history of the partnership,
   - purpose and objective of the partnership,
   - major activities or initiatives underway.

3. I'd like to hear about your agreement with the program.

   Listen for:

   - responsibilities of each organization,
   - the form of the agreement (written or verbal).

4. Describe how communication occurs between your organizations.

   Listen for:

   - types of information shared,
   - strategies used for communication,
   - procedures for addressing confidentiality.

5. What do you see as the major effects of this partnership?

   Listen for:

   - strengths of the partnership,
   - the effect on service delivery and access to resources for families,

- accomplishments that meet community needs,
- challenges.

6. For members of the Health Services Advisory Committee: How long have you been a member of the Health Services Advisory Committee? What sorts of issues has the Committee addressed this year?

7. For LEAs or Part C agencies: How do you work with Head Start/Early Head Start to support children with disabilities? What arrangements do you have to assist children and families in their transition from Head Start/Early Head Start?

Future Directions

8. What are the "next steps" in your partnership with Head Start/Early Head Start?

Policy Council Interview Protocol

PURPOSE

- To obtain information on how the grantee is engaged in shared decision-making with parents and community representatives on the Policy Council.

LOGISTICS

- **Duration:** The interview lasts no longer than 30 minutes.
- **Review team participation:** At a minimum, two reviewers, a Systems Reviewer and a family and community partnerships reviewer, attend the Policy Council meeting and conduct the interview. One reviewer facilitates; the other takes notes.
- **Grantee participation:** Policy Council members are invited to take part in the interview after the Policy Council meeting. Depending upon member availability after the meeting, a group interview may not be possible. In such a case, individual interviews with Policy Council members at other times during the review may be necessary.
- **Group size:** A group of no more than 10–12 is recommended.

INTRODUCTION

Thank you for letting us sit in during your Policy Council meeting. We learned some important things about program governance in your organization. Now we'd like to ask some additional questions to help us understand how your Policy Council works.

Policy Council Composition and Background

1. Tell us how you became a member of the Policy Council.

   Listen for:

   - election process.

2. Tell us about the Policy Council. How many people are on it? Whom do they represent?

   Listen for:

   - representation from Early Head Start/Early Head Start and all program options,
   - length of service on the Policy Council,
   - selection of community representatives,
   - program support of Policy Council.

Functions of Policy Council

3. Was this meeting typical? In what ways? In what ways was it not typical?

   Listen for:

   - description of typical agenda items.

4. What kinds of things does the Policy Council do? Can someone describe a recent activity or project?

   Listen for:

   - approval of recruitment areas, program options, and program design;
   - involvement in the grant application and budget process, program planning, personnel decisions; and
   - involvement in the program's self-assessment process.

5. Describe any training that Head Start/Early Head Start has offered to you this year and last year.

   Listen for:

   - training on program governance, including roles and responsibilities of Policy Council members.

6. What kinds of information or documents does the agency provide to the Policy Council? What is the process of dealing with these?

   Listen for:

   - copies of program plans and policies,
   - financial reports,
   - relevant information from Head Start/Early Head Start,
   - child outcome data that describe patterns of accomplishments for groups of children.

7. What is the process for communicating with the governing body?

   Listen for:

   - ongoing communication,
   - procedures for resolving disputes.

8. How does the Policy Council communicate with parents?

   Listen for:

   - opportunities for parents to express ideas and opinions to the Policy Council,
   - Policy Council encouragement of parent involvement,
   - availability of child care and transportation for parents involved in Policy Council meetings.

Governing Body Interview Protocol

PURPOSE

- To describe how the governing body exercises its oversight responsibility and ensures accountability.
- To describe how the governing body is knowledgeable about the Head Start/Early Head Start Program.

LOGISTICS

- **Duration:** The interview lasts no more than 30 minutes.
- **Review team participants:** The team leader determines which reviewers attend this interview. Generally, a Systems Reviewer leads this interview. Other available staff may attend, and one takes notes.
- **Agency participants:** Members of the agency's governing body are involved. This interview may be conducted in a group setting or with individual governing body members during the review.
- **Group size:** A group of no more than 10-12 is recommended.

INTRODUCTION

Thank you for taking time to talk with me about your role as a member of the governing body for Head Start/Early Head Start. We are interested in finding out just what the role of the governing body is in this grantee. First, we'll talk about how the governing body is involved in the grantee's overall planning process. Then, we'll discuss how the governing body exercises oversight and maintains accountability.

Planning and Communication

1. How do you learn what's expected of you as a member of the governing body in the Head Start/Early Head Start program?

   Listen for:

   - written policies that define the roles and responsibilities of governing body members;
   - appropriate involvement in the grant application and budget process, program planning, personnel decisions, self-assessment, and selection of delegate agencies (if applicable).

2. Describe your ongoing working relationship and communication process with the Head Start policy group.

   Listen for:

   - examples of recent projects and communication,
   - reports,
   - satisfaction with relationship.

3. How and when are you and the policy group involved in the grantee's planning process? How are the timeframes and procedures for planning established?

   Listen for:

   - development of program goals and objectives.

4. How do you ensure that the policy group has had an opportunity to act on items that must be decided through shared decision-making, such as new hires or terminations?

   Listen for:

   - communication with Head Start/Early Head Start management staff.

5. What role do you and the policy group play in the self-assessment process?

   Listen for:

   - examples of activities conducted during most recent self-assessment,
   - use of self-assessment results.

6. How does prior consultation occur on "must approve" issues before those issues are acted on by the full governing body? For example, how was the grant application presented to you? How did the process of approval work?

   Listen for:

   - examples of decisions approved during past year,
   - satisfaction with the process.

7. How does the governing body (and policy group) participate in decisions about seeking new funding?

   Listen for:

   - description of the process used,
   - satisfaction with the process.

Program Governance

8. What role does the governing body play in establishing or changing the composition of the policy group? In selecting community representatives?

   Listen for:

   - familiarity with the composition of the policy group,
   - description of selection process.

9. What reporting is provided to you and the policy group to keep you informed about progress, problems, or changes needed in the program?

   Listen for:

   - types of reports received.

10. Do you currently receive reports describing patterns of progress and accomplishments for groups of children, i.e., child outcome data? If you're not currently receiving those, what are the plans for implementing this kind of reporting in the upcoming year?

    Listen for:

    - familiarity with the child outcomes initiative,
    - description of the planning process.

11. How do you exercise oversight and ensure accountability for program outcomes and fiscal integrity?

    Listen for:

    - communication with appropriate program staff, and
    - reporting process.

12. What written impasse procedures are in place? How were the policies developed?

    Listen for:

    - description of the procedures, and
    - process used to develop them.

Health and Safety Checklist

Classrooms/Centers Observed

A. ______________________________

B. ______________________________

C. ______________________________

D. ______________________________

This observation form will help you to record your observations regarding a number of health and safety issues. Items are not intended to be an exhaustive list of Performance Standards related to health and safety, but rather items that can be rated according to a "checklist" format.

This tool is intended to assist in answering Core Question #17 on Facilities, Materials, Equipment, and Transportation and Core Question #9a on Prevention and Early Intervention. In addition, information from this form may be useful to reviewers in other areas related to child development and health services. In order to obtain a complete picture of facilities and health and safety issues in the agency, it will be necessary to combine information from this instrument with information obtained from other observations and interviews.

Please indicate whether the item is supported by observations. Rate each item by placing a check under the appropriate center and/or classroom (space has been provided at the top of each page for you to indicate multiple center or classroom names). In addition, at the end of each section, space is provided for comments and observations in each area. Please use this page to describe any problems or concerns that you witnessed in the observation or to explain instances where items were not observed.

HEALTH AND SAFETY CHECKLIST

Area #1: Classrooms

Infant/Toddler

A.	B.	C.	D.	
				1. Sanitation and hygiene procedures for diapering have been adopted that adequately protect the health and safety of children served by the program and staff. [1304.22(e)(5)]
				2. The diaper-changing area is located away from areas used for cooking, eating, or children's activities. [1304.53(a)(10)(xiv)]
				3. Diapers are disposed of in a safe and sanitary manner. [1304.53(a)(10)(xvi)]
				4. Infant sleeping arrangements use firm mattresses and avoid soft bedding materials, such as comforters, pillows, fluffy blankets, or stuffed toys. [1304.53(b)(3)]
				5. Cribs are at least 3 feet apart from each other. [1304.22(e)(7)]
				6. Infant toys are made of nontoxic materials and are sanitized regularly. [1304.53(b)(2)]
				7. Toilet training equipment is available for children being toilet trained. [1304.53(a)(10)(xv)]

Comments:

Area #1: Classrooms (continued)

All Classrooms

A.	B.	C.	D.	Item
				1. Nonporous gloves are available for use when dealing with bloody bodily fluids. [1304.22(e)(3)]
				2. Staff promote effective dental hygiene among children in conjunction with meals. [1304.23(b)(3)]
				3. Toys are stored in a "safe and orderly fashion" (e.g., in their assigned places, not out where people can trip over them). [1304.53(b)(1)(vii)]
				4. The indoor and outdoor space for infants and toddlers is separated from general walkways and areas used by preschoolers. [1304.53(a)(4)]
				5. Toys, materials, and furniture are safe, durable, and in good condition (e.g., materials free of sharp edges and loose pieces, balloons and/or plastic bags not used, no choking hazards). [1304.53(b)(1)(vi)]
				6. Center space is organized into functional areas that can be recognized by children and that allow for individual activities and social interactions. [1304.53(a)(3)]
				7. Staffing patterns support regulations regarding class size and number of adults per class. [1306.20]
				8. Staff, volunteers, and children wash their hands with soap and running water after diapering or toilet use, before food-related activities, whenever hands are contaminated with blood or other bodily fluids, and after handling pets or other animals. Staff and volunteers also wash their hands with soap and running water before and after giving medications, before and after treating or bandaging a wound, and after assisting a child with toilet use. [1304.22(e)(1)–(2)]

Comments:

Area #2: Indoor Facilities

Sanitation/Hygiene

A.	B.	C.	D.	
				1. Facilities are available for the proper storage and handling of breast milk and formula. [1304.23(e)(2)]
				2. Bathroom facilities are clean, in good repair, and easily reached by children. [1304.53(a)(10)(xiv)]
				3. Bathroom facilities are separated from areas used for cooking, eating, or children's activities. [1304.53(a)(10)(xiv)]
				4. Indoor and outdoor premises are cleaned daily and kept free of undesirable and hazardous materials and conditions. [1304.53(a)(10)(viii)]
				5. Garbage and trash are stored and disposed of in a safe, sanitary manner. [1304.53(a)(10)(xvi)]
				6. A utility sink is specifically used to clean potties. [1304.22(e)(6)]

Comments:

Area #2: Indoor Facilities (continued)

A.	B.	C.	D.

Safety

1. The facility has approved, working fire extinguishers and an appropriate number of smoke detectors that are tested regularly. [1304.53(a)(10)(v), 1304.53(a)(10)(vi)]

2. Windows and glass doors are constructed, adapted, or adjusted to prevent injury to children. [1304.53(a)(10)(xii)]

3. Electrical plugs accessible to children are covered. [1304.53(a)(10)(xi)]

4. The heating/cooling system is insulated to protect children and staff from potential burns (Note: Look at pipes and/or radiators.) [1304.53(a)(10)(i)]

5. There is an absence of highly flammable furnishings, decorations, or materials that emit toxic fumes. [1304.53(a)(10)(ii)]

6. Flammable and other dangerous materials/poisons are stored in locked cabinets or facilities separate from medications and food and accessible only to authorized persons. [1304.53(a)(10)(iii)]

7. Appropriate licenses (water/sewage, food/sanitation, fire codes, and vendor/contractor licenses) are seen. [1304.53(a)(6) and (10)(xiii), 1304.23(e)(1), 1306.30(c)]

Comments:

Area #2: Indoor Facilities (continued)

Facility Layout and Environment

A.	B.	C.	D.

1. If necessary, there is a safe and effective heating and cooling system. [1304.53(a)(10)(i)]
2. There is at least 35 sq. ft. of usable indoor space per child (not including bathrooms, halls, kitchen, staff rooms, and storage places). [1304.53(a)(5)]
3. Facilities enable the safe and effective participation of children with disabilities. [1308.4(o)4)]
4. Rooms are well lit. [1304.53(a)(10)(iv)]

Comments:

Provisions for Emergencies

A.	B.	C.	D.

1. Exits and/or evacuation routes are clearly marked. [1304.22(a)(3), 1304.53(a)(10)(vii)]
2. Emergency lighting is available. [1304.53(a)(10)(iv)]
3. Emergency telephone numbers (e.g., EMS, Fire, Police, Poison Control) are clearly posted. [1304.22(a)(2)]
4. Policies and plans of action for emergencies that require rapid response on the part of staff (e.g., a child choking) or immediate medical or dental attention are clearly posted. [1304.22(a)(1)]
5. A well-supplied first-aid kit is available, accessible to staff, and out of reach of children. [1304.22(f)(1)]

Comments:

Area #2: Indoor Facilities (continued)

A.	B.	C.	D.

Medication Administration

1. All medications are properly labeled (i.e., name of child/staff, name of medication, dosage, name/number of pharmacy/physician). [1304.22(c)(1)]

2. Medications are under lock and key and out of reach of children. [1304.53(a)(10)(iii), 1304.22(c)(1)]

3. Medications in need of refrigeration are refrigerated. [1304.22(c)(1)]

Comments:

Area #3: Outdoors

A.	B.	C.	D.

1. There is at least 75 sq. ft. of usable outdoor space per child. [1304.53(a)(5)]

2. The playground equipment is in good repair and safe condition (e.g., adequately secured to the ground, free of sharp edges and/or splinters, soft falling surface). [1304.53(a)(7), 1304.53(a)(10)(viii), 1304.53(a)(10)(x)]

3. The outdoor play area is arranged such that no child can leave the premises or get into unsafe or unsupervised areas. [1304.53(a)(9)]

Comments:

Fiscal Checklist

Files Reviewed and/or Persons Interviewed ______________________

____

____

____

This form will help you, as a reviewer, to record your observations regarding several key items relating to fiscal management. It is designed to assist you in answering Core Question #8 on Fiscal Management and is organized into several topic areas. You will find the topic area listed in bold on the left-hand side of the page and a list of items under it. Please record your observations in the space provided. Provide enough detail so that a person reading this form can understand your observations of each area and your sources of information. Observations can be based on your review of documents and/or interviews with key personnel. Some documents that you may find useful include:

- current and prior financial statements,
- detailed general ledger or A/P disbursements journal,
- written accounting procedures,
- program budget planning documents,
- chart of accounts,
- audit reports,
- grant proposals,
- notice of grant award,
- indirect cost agreement/cost allocation plan,
- lease agreements,
- property inventory and files for recent major purchases,
- procurement policies,
- codes of conduct from personnel policies,
- payroll journal,
- 269s,
- PMS-272s,
- insurance policies,
- interagency agreements,
- disabilities service plan.

WHAT'S NEW FOR 2004

In Area 1, item 12, relating to short- and long-term financial objectives [1304.51(a)], has been added.

FISCAL CHECKLIST

Area #1: Accounting and Budget Practices

Yes No

___ ___ 1. There are written accounting procedures to determine allowability, allocability, and reasonableness of costs and ensure that costs were incurred during the funding period. [45 CFR Parts 74.21(b)(6), 74.28, 92.20(b)(2), 92.23]

___ ___ 2. For new grantees and/or delegate agencies, accounting systems have been certified. [1301.13]

___ ___ 3. Appropriate internal controls have been established to safeguard Federal funds, interest income from Federal funds, and program income, and controls include the hiring of a qualified fiscal officer and annual audits. [1304.50(g)(2), 1304.52(d)(8), 1301.12, 45 CFR Parts 74.21(b)(3), 74.21(b)(5), 74.21(d)(1)(3), 74.22, 74.24, 74.28, 92.20(b)(5), 92.21, 92.23, 92.25]

___ ___ 4. There is a method so that budgeted costs are compared to actual costs. [45 CFR Parts 74.21(b)(4), 92.20(b)(4)]

___ ___ 5. Financial reports are communicated regularly to governing bodies, program management, and policy groups. [1304.51(d)(3), 1304.51(h)(1), 45 CFR Part 74.21(b)(1)]

___ ___ 6. Requests for change that require prior approval were submitted for approval prior to making changes. [45 CFR Parts 74.25, 92.30]

___ ___ 7. Interfund loans have not been made. [45 CFR Parts 74.27, 92.22]

___ ___ 8. If grantee is operating a multifunded program, records adequately identify the other costs and reimbursement amounts. [45 CFR Parts 74.21(b)(2), 74.27, 92.20(b)(2), 92.22]

___ ___ 9. Financial data and records were used in preparing the SF-269s and PMS-272s for the budget period. [45 CFR Parts 74.21(b)(7), 74.52, 92.20(b)(6), 92.41]

___ ___ 10. There is a method by which financial data are related to performance data, and unit cost information is developed whenever practical. [45 CFR 74.21(a)]

___ ___ 11. Previous audit deficiencies have been addressed and/or corrective actions have been implemented. [45 CFR Parts 74.26, 92.26]

___ ___ 12. There is a written plan that demonstrates the formulation of both multi-year and short-term program and financial objectives; the plan is reviewed at least annually and updated as needed. [1304.51(a)]

Comments:

Area #2: Development and Administrative Costs

Yes No

___ ___ 1. Costs for development and administration are necessary and of benefit to the program and do not exceed 15% of total costs unless a waiver has been granted. [1301.32(a)(1)]

___ ___ 2. Costs of organizationwide management are charged and categorized as development and administrative costs. [1301.32(b)(2), 1301.32(e)]

___ ___ 3. Costs directly associated with delivery of program services are charged and categorized as program costs. [1301.32(c–d)]

___ ___ 4. The grantee has identified and appropriately allocated the portion of costs that are dual benefit costs. [1301.32(d)]

___ ___ 5. Indirect costs are appropriately categorized as administrative or program costs and the 15% administrative limitation is not exceeded, even taking into account the amount of indirect costs categorized as development or administrative. [1301.32]

Comments:

FISCAL CHECKLIST

Area #3: Indirect Costs

Yes No

___ ___ 1. If the grantee charges indirect costs, these costs are supported by agreement. [1301.32(e)(2), 1301.32(f)]

___ ___ 2. Costs included in the indirect cost pool are appropriate to Head Start. [45 CFR Parts 74.27, 92.22]

___ ___ 3. The grantee correctly calculated and recorded indirect costs in the organization's financial records and charged them properly on the SF-269 report (e.g., not also listed as direct). [45 CFR Parts 74.21(b)(2), 74.27, 92.20(b)(1)–(b)(2), 92.22]

Comments:

Area #4: Non-Federal Share

Yes No

___ ___ 1. The Federal financial assistance award to the grantee does not exceed 80% of the total grantee budget unless a waiver has been granted. [1301.20; 1301.21; 45 CFR Parts 74.27, 92.22]

___ ___ 2. The source, use, and accounting of non-Federal funds meets requirements, and accounting of funds is supported by the proper source documents. [45 CFR Parts 74.23, 92.24]

___ ___ 3. Volunteer services are accounted for properly. [45 CFR Parts 74.23(d), 74.23(i)(1), 92.24(c)(1)]

Comments:

FISCAL CHECKLIST

Area #5: Property Management

Yes No

___ ___ 1. Grantee property management standards for nonexpendable personal property include requirements for (a) accurate property records (including vehicle titles) covering all items over $5,000 or lower, if a lower threshold is defined by the local agency; (b) conducting a physical inventory at least once every 2 years; and (c) a control system to ensure adequate safeguards to prevent loss, damage, or theft to the property, and to investigate and document any loss. [45 CFR Parts 74.30, 74.33–74.34, 92.31–92.32]

___ ___ 2. If the grantee owns any of the facilities used for the program during the budget period, the grantee only charges a depreciation or use allowance based upon the purchase price. [45 CFR Parts 74.23(h), 74.27, 92.22, 92.24(b)(4)]

___ ___ 3. If the grantee rents any facilities, lease agreements show that charges are reasonable. [45 CFR Parts 74.27, 92.22]

___ ___ 4. If the grantee is using occupancy costs as non-Federal share, values are calculated appropriately. [45 CFR Parts 74.23(h), 74.27, 92.22, 92.24(g)]

___ ___ 5. The agency has made reasonable efforts to coordinate transportation with other human services agencies to control costs and improve quality and availability. [1310.23(a); 1310.23(b)(2)–(3)]

___ ___ 6. Renovations included in the grant are appropriate and charged in accordance with the cost principles and ACF guidance. [45 CFR Parts 74.27, 92.22]

Comments:

FISCAL CHECKLIST

Area #6: Procurement

Yes No

___ ___ 1. The grantee has established written procurement policies and procedures which, at a minimum, provide for a review of (a) proposed procurements to determine need and possible alternatives, (b) requests for bids that contain clear specifications and do not contain features that unduly restrict competition, (c) positive efforts to use small and minority-owned businesses, (d) price comparisons or cost analysis on all procurements, (e) checking of invoices against purchase orders and receiving reports, (f) goods and services being provided prior to payment, (g) maintenance of files for all large purchases, (h) contractor follow-up, and (i) recent purchases over the simplified acquisition threshold of $100,000. Also, contractors are excluded from bidding on items in which they have a prior interest. [45 CFR Parts 74.42–74.47, 92.36]

___ ___ 2. All procurement transactions are conducted in a manner providing maximum open and free competition. [45 CFR Parts 74.43,92.36(c)]

___ ___ 3. Bid announcements for school buses and allowable alternate vehicles include the correct specifications and a clear statement of the vehicle's intended use. [1310.14]

___ ___ 4. The agency has identified the true costs of providing transportation. [1310.23(b)(1)]

___ ___ 5. The grantee maintains a code of conduct as part of personnel policies and procedures that require that officers, employees, or agents engaged in the award and administration of contracts do not accept gratuities, favors, or anything of monetary value from contractors or potential contractors. [45 CFR Parts 74.42, 92.36(b)(3)]

___ ___ 6. Arrangements are made for bonding those authorized to disburse program funds. [1301.11(b)]

___ ___ 7. There is proof that the agency has all required insurance (e.g., liability insurance, insurance on vehicles, student accident insurance). [1301.11(a), 45 CFR Part 74.31]

___ ___ 8. All contracts/agreements are available, contain all applicable provisions under 45 CFR 92.36(I), appear to be in the best interest of the grantee, and are signed and dated. [45 CFR Parts 74.48, 92.36(i)]

Comments:

Area #7: USDA and Food Costs

Yes No

___ ___ 1. Head Start funds are used for only allowable meal service costs not covered by the USDA. [1304.23(b)(1)(I)]

___ ___ 2. The grantee was paid in advance or by reimbursement for USDA food costs, and there is a method used to establish the number of meals for which reimbursement was claimed. [ACYF PI 82-2, #IM-HS-95-29]

___ ___ 3. Budgeted food costs compare reasonably with the actual food costs recorded in the grantee's financial records. [ACYF PI 82-2, #IM-HS-95-29]

___ ___ 4. USDA income guidelines are used in preparing the documentation submitted to the USDA for application for Child Care Food Program participation. [ACYF PI 82-2, #IM-HS-95-29]

Comments:

Area #8: Fiscal Support of Program Services

Yes No

___ ___ 1. Fiscal resources support appropriate space, equipment, and materials for the conduct of program activities and a physical environment conducive to learning. [1304.53(a)(1)–(a)(2), 1304.53(b)(1)]

___ ___ 2. Facilities meet the licensing requirements of 45 CFR 1306.30. [1304.53(a)(7)]

___ ___ 3. The grantee or delegate agency provides for the maintenance, repair, safety, and security of all facilities, materials, and equipment through procedures including, but not limited to, an annual safety inspection. [1304.53(a)(7)]

___ ___ 4. Interagency agreements address resource sharing across agencies. [1308.4(l)(5)]

___ ___ 5. Budget requests and plans address implementation of the service plan, including the plan for serving children with disabilities, and there is documentation of a sufficient level of fiscal support to meet needs and to implement the objectives of the plan. [1304.51(a), 1308.4(m–o)]

___ ___ 6. When funds are used for medical or dental services, there is documentation of efforts to access other sources of funding. [1304.20(c)(5)]

___ ___ 7. Budgeted funds support parent activities. [1304.50(d)(2)(iii)]

Comments:

Bus Ride Checklist

Grantee Name ______________________________ **Date/Time** ______________

Reviewer ____

Other Sources of Information Used ______________________________

This form will help you, as a reviewer, to record your observations about the agency's transportation of children. Each boldface statement on the left side of the page names a service or system as described in the Framework matrix. Comments on the concept can be based on either observation or discussion with persons responsible for transportation for the agency.

WHAT'S NEW FOR 2004

Changes were made to the Bus Ride Checklist in the areas of Individualization and Disabilities Services; Prevention and Early Intervention; Facilities, Materials, Equipment, and Transportation; Communication; and Human Resources.

Changes in **Individualization and Disabilities Services** include the following:

- For item #1 (*adults support children's varying styles of communication*), a new standard was added: 1304.21(a)(3)(I)(E).
- For item #2 (*the environment supports and respects all children and families*), a new standard was added: 1304.53(b)(1)(ii) and standard 1304.52(h)(1)(i) replaces standard 1304.21(h)(1)(i).
- For item #4 (*transportation equipment is accessible to children with disabilities*), standard 1308.4(h)(6) replaces 1304.4(o)(5).

Under **Prevention and Early Intervention**, the following changes were made:

- For item #1 (*up-to-date family contact information is available*), a new standard was added: 1304.51(g).
- Item #3 (*procedures ensure that children are released to a parent, legal guardian, or other individual designated in writing by the parent or legal guardian*) was deleted from

this section and moved to Facilities, Materials, Equipment, and Transportation.

Changes in **Facilities, Materials, Equipment, and Transportation** include the following:

- Item #1 was moved from Prevention and Early Intervention (*procedures ensure that children are released to a parent, legal guardian, or other individual designated in writing by the parent or legal guardian*). Standards 1304.52(g) and 1306.32(a) were deleted. Standard 1304.52(h)(1)(ii) was added.

- Item #3, which covers communications systems and emergency safety equipment, was amended to include a mounted fire extinguisher as part of the required equipment. Also required are signs identifying the location of the fire extinguisher, first aid kit, and seat belt cutter. Standard 1310.10(d) replaces standard 1310.10(e).

- Item #4 was modified to clarify regulations related to auxiliary seating.

- A new item #7 was added (*at least one bus monitor is on board at all times [1310.15(c)]*). This becomes effective January 20, 2004.

- A new item #13 was added (*when an agency provides transportation through an arrangement with another organization or an individual, the agency must ensure compliance of the transportation provider with the Head Start regulations [1310.10(c)]*).

Under **Communication**, the following change was made:

- For item #1 (*each vehicle is equipped with a communication device*), standard 1310.10(d)(1) replaces 1310.10(e).

- For item #3, the following standard was eliminated: 1304.40.

Under **Human Resources**, the following changes were made:

- For item #2 (*the bus monitor is trained in child boarding and exiting procedures, use of child restraint systems, responses to emergencies, use of special equipment, and pre- and post-trip checks*), the following standards were eliminated: 1304.52(g), 1304.52(h)(1), and 1306.32(a).

- A new item #3 was added (*bus drivers receive refresher training at least once a year [1310.17(d)]*).

- A new item #4 was added (*bus drivers' road performances are evaluated annually [1310.17(f)(1)]*).

- A new item #5 was added (*children receive developmentally appropriate safety training within 30 days of the start of the program year on riding practices, boarding and leaving the vehicle, crossing streets, and danger zones around the vehicle [1310.21(b)(1)-(4)]*).

- A new item #6 was added (*at least three emergency evacuation drills are conducted in the program year [1310.21(b)(5)]*).

- A new item #7 was added (*parents receive safety training within 30 days of the start of the program year, which includes emphasis on escorting children to the vehicle stop [1310.21(c)]*).

- A new item #8 was added (*wherever possible, reasonable efforts are made to coordinate transportation resources with other agencies in the community [1310.23(a)]*).

- A new item #9 was added (*agencies have identified the true cost of providing transportation [1310.23(b)(1)]*).

BUS RIDE CHECKLIST

Curriculum

Yes **No**

___ ___ 1. Children engage in positive social behaviors. [1304.21(a)(3)(i)(D)]

___ ___ 2. Routines are timely, predictable, and unrushed. [1304.21(a)(3)(ii)]

___ ___ 3. Adults use positive methods of child guidance (e.g., clear, consistent rules exist). [1304.52(h)(1)(iv)]

Comments:

Individualization and Disabilities Services

Yes **No**

___ ___ 1. Adults support children's varying styles of communication. [1304.21(a)(3)(I)(E), 1304.21(a)(4)(iii), 1304.21(b)(2)(ii)]

___ ___ 2. The environment supports and respects all children and families. [1304.21(a)(1)(iii), 1304.52(h)(1)(i), 1304.53(b)(1)(ii)]

___ ___ 3. Parent interactions are respectful of each family's background. [1304.40(a)(5)]

___ ___ 4. Transportation equipment is accessible to children with disabilities. [1308.4(h)(6), 1310.22(b)]

Comments:

BUS RIDE CHECKLIST

Prevention and Early Intervention

Yes No

___ ___ 1. Up-to-date family contact information is available. [1304.22(a)(2), 1304.51(g)]

___ ___ 2. There is adequate storage of needed medication. [1304.22(c)]

Comments:

Facilities, Materials, Equipment, and Transportation

Yes No

___ ___ 1. Procedures ensure that children are released to a parent, legal guardian, or other individual designated in writing by the parent or legal guardian. [1310.10(g), 1304.52(h)(1)(ii)]

___ ___ 2. Each vehicle purchased after February 20, 2001 is a school bus or meets the structural safety features required for allowable alternate vehicles with age- and weight-appropriate child restraint systems and a reverse beeper. [1310.12(b)]

___ ___ 3. Each vehicle has a communication system to call for assistance, emergency safety equipment to include a mounted fire extinguisher, a first aid kit, and a seat belt cutter. Signs must be mounted to identify the location of the fire extinguisher, first aid kit, and seat belt cutter. [1310.10(d)]

___ ___ 4. Any auxiliary seating is built into the vehicle by the manufacturer as part of its standard design. It should also be properly maintained and inspected. [1310.10(e)]

___ ___ 5. The bus/allowable alternate vehicle is in safe operating condition, and there are procedures in place to ensure that it continues in working order (e.g., an annual safety inspection, regular maintenance checks, and a daily pre-trip inspection). [1304.53(a)(7), 1310.13]

Facilities, Materials, Equipment, and Transportation (cont.)

Yes No

___ ___ 6. All children and adults are seated in age- and weight-appropriate restraint systems while the vehicle is in motion. [1310.15(a), 1310.15(d)]

___ ___ 7. At least one bus monitor is on board at all times. [1310.15(c)] [Effective January 20, 2004]

___ ___ 8. Baggage is properly stored and secured, aisles remain clear, and doors and emergency exits are unobstructed. [1310.15(b)]

___ ___ 9. Trip length is minimized as much as possible. [1310.20(b)(1)]

___ ___ 10. Number of occupants does not exceed maximum passenger capacity. [1310.20(b)(2)]

___ ___ 11. Trip routing minimizes "U" turns; trip stops minimize traffic disruptions; when possible, children do not need to cross streets; and in case of need, children are escorted across the street by the bus monitor or an adult. [1310.20(b)(3)-(6)]

___ ___ 12. There are specific procedures for use of alternate routes in case of hazardous conditions. [1310.20(b)(7)]

___ ___ 13. When an agency provides transportation through an arrangement with another organization or an individual, the agency must ensure compliance of the transportation provider with the Head Start regulations. [1310.10(c)]

Comments:

BUS RIDE CHECKLIST

Communication

Yes No

___ ___ 1. Each vehicle is equipped with a communication device. [1310.10(d)(1)]

___ ___ 2. Communication is conducted in the parents' primary or preferred language, if possible. [1304.51(c)(2)]

___ ___ 3. Effective two-way communication between staff and parents is facilitated. [1304.51(c)(1)]

___ ___ 4. Interactions with parents help establish trust and ensure the provision of necessary services and support. [1304.40(a)(1)]

Comments:

Human Resources

Yes No

___ ___ 1. Where available in the State or jurisdiction, the driver has a valid CDL license and has been trained to operate the vehicle safely and efficiently, run a fixed route, administer basic first aid, handle emergency situations, operate any special equipment like chair lifts, conduct routine maintenance and safety checks, and maintain records. [1304.22(a), 1310.16(a), 1310.17(b)]

___ ___ 2. The bus monitor is trained in child boarding and exiting procedures, use of child restraint systems, responses to emergencies, use of special equipment, and pre-and post-trip checks. [1310.17(f)(2)] [Effective January 20, 2004]

___ ___ 3. Bus drivers receive refresher training at least once a year. [1310.17(d)]

___ ___ 4. Bus drivers' road performances are evaluated annually. [1310.17(f)(1)]

BUS RIDE CHECKLIST

Human Resources (cont.)

___ ___ 5. Children receive developmentally appropriate safety training within 30 days of the start of the program year on riding practices, boarding and leaving the vehicle, crossing streets, and danger zones around the vehicle. [1310.21(b)(1)-(4)]

___ ___ 6. At least three emergency evacuation drills are conducted in the program year. [1310.21(b)(5)]

___ ___ 7. Parents receive safety training within 30 days of the start of the program year, which includes emphasis on escorting children to the vehicle stop. [1310.21(c)]

___ ___ 8. Wherever possible, reasonable efforts are made to coordinate transportation resources with other agencies in the community. [1310.23(a)]

___ ___ 9. Agencies have identified the true cost of providing transportation. [1310.23(b)(1)]

Comments:

Classroom, Family Child Care, or Socialization Experience Observation Instrument

SETTING 1

Setting: ____________________

Teacher: ____________________

Date: ____________________

Start time: __________ End time: __________

Children's ages: ____________________

Focus child: ____________________

Number of children: ____________________

Number of staff: ____________________

Number of parents: ____________________

SETTING 2

Setting: ____________________

Teacher: ____________________

Date: ____________________

Start time: __________ End time: __________

Children's ages: ____________________

Focus child: ____________________

Number of children: ____________________

Number of staff: ____________________

Number of parents: ____________________

This instrument is designed to guide service reviewers' observations in each focus child's group setting (i.e., classroom, family child care home, or home-based socialization experience). The form contains a page for each of the concepts. Each concept highlights the Performance Standards and other regulations relevant to the concept.

The form provides space to write observations for two settings, one child per setting. Use the spaces labeled "Setting One" and "Setting Two" to take notes about what you see and hear in relation to each concept for your focus child. Make photocopies of these forms to record observations for additional focus children.

- What are the children doing, saying, and using?
- What are teachers and other staff doing, saying, and using?
- What is the environment like? How do the equipment and materials in the environment support each concept?

However, you will not be able to observe all of the concepts listed, so you may find it helpful to ask some additional questions of each teacher in whose classroom you observe. Before you begin your conversation, ask the teacher to show you the following:

- a copy of the curriculum specific to infants, toddlers, or preschoolers;
- examples of the tools used in the assessment system;
- the focus child's file (may include the developmental screening, assessment data, and individualization plans);
- planning documents.

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS	NOTES

We'd like to talk to you about your understanding of the curriculum, how you learn about children's progress, and how you plan for the children.

- How do you adapt the curriculum for use in your classroom? How do you connect what you learned about *(focus child)* to what you are teaching him/her?
- How do you integrate issues of health, nutrition, and mental health into the curriculum? How do you prepare children for transitions? Can you provide an example?
- What developmental screening tool do you use? Are you involved in the process of conducting the developmental screening? If you're not, how do you get the results? How does the program use the information from *(focus child's)* screening?
- When screening results in a child having an IEP or IFSP, how do you use that plan in your work with that child? How do you use the information from *(focus child's)* assessments to work with him/her individually? Can you show us an example of how you do that?
- How often do you assess children? How do you use the assessment information you have gathered for *(focus child)* to learn about his/her progress? How do you communicate this information to his/her parents?
- How are *(focus child's)* parents involved in the planning and implementation of the curriculum to individualize for their child?
- If the focus child is a child with disabilities, ask: How are *(focus child's)* parents involved in the planning for their child's IEP?
- For 3- to 5-year-old classrooms, ask: How does your curriculum respond to the Head Start Outcomes Framework?

REVIEWER	COMMENTS

At least one child development or disabilities services reviewer should read the written curriculum for the following:

- goals for children's development and learning;
- experiences through which children will achieve these goals;
- what staff and parents do to help children achieve these goals;
- the materials needed to support the implementation of the curriculum;
- consistency with the *Head Start Program Performance Standards* and other regulations;
- a base of sound child development principles about how children grow and learn;
- for preschool classrooms, inclusion of the eight domains of development and learning and the required domain elements and indicators (e.g., associates sounds with written words, recognizes a word as a unit of print, and phonological awareness).

Questions:

NOTES

ISSUES, QUESTIONS, AND FOLLOW-UP:

1. TEACHER INTERACTIONS AND STRATEGIES

- adults using a variety of intentional strategies that vary in complexity;
- supervision of all indoor and outdoor activities;
- positive child guidance and appropriate limits.

Observe: What are the children doing? What are the teachers and adults doing? What is the environment like?

Examples you might *Look For* include:	***Setting 1:***	***Setting 2:***
- child-initiated and adult-directed activities; - individual and small group experiences; - children exploring and making choices; - timely, predictable, and unrushed routines and transitions; - talking to babies, singing and playing with them during diaper changes, mealtimes, and other routines.		

ISSUES, QUESTIONS, AND FOLLOW-UP:

2. FACILITATING CHILDREN'S LANGUAGE AND LITERACY DEVELOPMENT

- language use and interaction among and between children and adults;
- adults fostering children's communication, including home language;
- experiences that develop auditory and visual discrimination;
- experiences that support creative expression;
- experiences that develop school-readiness skills in literacy.

Observe: What are the children doing? What are the teachers and adults doing? What is the environment like?

Examples you might *Look For* include:	***Setting 1:***	***Setting 2:***
- alphabet posters, puzzles, and books; - examples of functional print and other materials in appropriate places: mailboxes, sign-in charts, maps, helper charts, and schedules; - opportunities for children to write and dictate stories and messages; - art, music, rhyming songs, and movement; - learning activities such as games, puzzles, and books that promote knowledge of letters (alphabet) and sounds; - adults reading and discussing stories one-on-one and in small groups; - children choosing books to look at alone, to share with a friend, or to take home; - adults and children asking questions and engaged in meaningful conversations; - experiences, materials, conversation and activities that support the language used at home and English as a second language.		

ISSUES, QUESTIONS, AND FOLLOW-UP:

3. FACILITATING CHILDREN'S MATH AND SCIENCE DEVELOPMENT

- experiences that develop skills in mathematics and science;
- experiences that develop auditory and visual discrimination;
- opportunities for children to discover how numerical concepts relate to other concepts.

Observe: What are the children doing? What are the teachers and adults doing? What is the environment like?

Examples you might *Look For* include:	***Setting 1:***	***Setting 2:***
- puzzles, games, unit blocks, and manipulatives that range in complexity; - materials and experiences that develop counting, sequencing, and one-to-one correspondence; - materials and experiences that encourage understanding of cause and effect and spatial relationships, such as a map in the block area; - opportunities for children to discover how mathematical concepts relate to other concepts, for example measuring or weighing; - opportunities for children to count, classify, sequence, sort, and match; - children experimenting, describing, and making predictions; - children using recipes for making snacks; - children caring for plants and animals, and learning about science in their surroundings; - adults asking children questions in ways that extend their thinking.		

ISSUES, QUESTIONS, AND FOLLOW-UP:

4. FACILITATING CHILDREN'S SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- experiences that foster independence and trust;
- age-appropriate expectations of children;
- adults interacting in supportive ways;
- experiences that help children develop social skills, competence, respect for others, and positive attitudes towards learning.

Observe: What are the children doing? What are the teachers and adults doing? What is the environment like?

Examples you might *Look For* include:	***Setting 1:***	***Setting 2:***
- self-portraits and family pictures; - books, stories, puppets, and other dramatic play experiences; - interactive games and activities; - familiar routines and transitions; - clear, consistent age-appropriate rules developed with child input; - children accessing materials independently; - adults' timely response to children's cries and other cues; - adults encouraging and modeling problem solving, behaviors, and language; - adults reinforcing age-appropriate self-control behaviors; - singing or talking during routines and transitions.		

ISSUES, QUESTIONS, AND FOLLOW-UP:

5. FACILITATING CHILDREN'S PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

- experiences that develop sensory and motor skills;
- experiences that develop fine and gross motor skills;
- children using and coordinating small muscles, including eyes, hands, and eye-hand coordination;
- sufficient safe indoor and outdoor space with age-appropriate equipment and materials.

Observe: What are the children doing? What are the teachers and adults doing? What is the environment like?

Examples you might *Look For* include:	***Setting 1:***	***Setting 2:***
- tools such as blocks, beads, scissors, stapler, and writing or drawing tools, pencils and brushes, as appropriate; - opportunities and sufficient space for children to crawl, sit, walk, run, jump, and climb; - age- and ability-appropriate equipment and materials; - children using motor skills in daily routines such as pouring juice or milk, serving themselves, buttoning, and zipping; - children manipulating materials such as sand, water, and clay.		

ISSUES, QUESTIONS, AND FOLLOW-UP:

6. PREVENTION AND EARLY INTERVENTION INTEGRATING HEALTH, NUTRITION, MENTAL HEALTH, SAFETY, AND WELLNESS

- health, nutrition, and mental health integrated into routines and children's learning experiences.

Observe: What are the children doing? What are the teachers and adults doing? What is the environment like?

Examples you might *Look For* include:

- toothbrushing and handwashing;
- children using tissues and throwing them in the wastebasket after use;
- sufficient time for meals;
- adults, toddlers, and preschool children sharing family-style meals and pleasant conversations;
- infants held while being fed;
- children involved in food experiences;
- topical books, songs, games, and fingerplays;
- children role playing;
- adults and children talking about visits to the dentist and doctor;
- experiences representative of children's cultures.

Setting 1:

Setting 2:

ISSUES, QUESTIONS, AND FOLLOW-UP:

7. INDIVIDUALIZING AND DISABILITIES SERVICES

- respect for the culture, language, ethnicity, family, and ability of each child;
- facilities that ensure children's safety, comfort, and participation;
- environment and curriculum that reflect the IFSP or IEP;
- adults observing and assessing children's behavior and progress.

Observe: What are the children doing? What are the teachers and adults doing? What is the environment like?

Examples you might *Look For* include:	Setting 1:	Setting 2:
- books, music, posters, and games in different languages and representing different cultures; - dolls, posters, pictures, and books that represent children with disabilities; - special furniture, equipment, and materials, if needed, to accommodate a child with disabilities; - activities adapted to include children with disabilities; - experiences required in the IFSP or IEP; - adults working with individual children and with small groups of children; - self-stick notes, notebooks, folders, cameras, or other procedures used to record observations.		

Home Visit Observation Instrument

SETTING 1

Setting: ____________________

Teacher: ____________________

Date: ____________________

Start time: __________ End time: __________

Children's ages: ____________________

Focus child: ____________________

Number of children: ____________________

Number of staff: ____________________

Number of parents: ____________________

SETTING 2

Setting: ____________________

Teacher: ____________________

Date: ____________________

Start time: __________ End time: __________

Children's ages: ____________________

Focus child: ____________________

Number of children: ____________________

Number of staff: ____________________

Number of parents: ____________________

Instructions for Home Visit Observations

This observation instrument is designed to help Service Reviewers observe key early childhood concepts during a home visit observation in a focus child's home when the focus child is enrolled in a home-based option. Each concept highlights the Performance Standards and other regulations relevant to the concept. The work of home visitors is very different from the work of classroom teachers. Home visitors work primarily with and through parents to support their child's growth. Therefore, the observation asks you to focus on how home visitors support parents in working with their child, and on the partnership between parents and the home visitor.

The form provides space to write observations for two settings. Use the spaces labeled "Setting One" and "Setting Two" to take notes about what you see and hear in relation to each concept for your focus child. For each setting take specific notes about what you see and hear in order to answer the following questions:

- What are the children doing, saying, and using?
- What is the parent doing, saying, and using?
- What is the home visitor doing, saying, and using?

Remember that children in home-based options are exposed to the program's curriculum both through home visits and group socialization experiences. If you were to observe children in both environments, you would see many experiences that support school readiness. However, for the limited time you will be on a home visit you may see only a few specific activities carried out by the home visitor and parent. Among those you may see are the following:

- art, music, rhyming songs, and movement;
- learning activities and games that promote knowledge of letters and sounds;
- adults reading and discussing stories;
- adults and children asking questions and engaged in extended conversations;
- children's use of tools such as beads, scissors, paint brushes, and a variety of writing tools;
- materials, conversations, and activities that support language use in the home language and English as a second language;
- puzzles, games, blocks, and other manipulatives that range in complexity;
- materials and experiences to develop counting, sequencing, and one-to-one correspondence;
- opportunities for the children to count, classify, sequence, sort, and match;
- children using recipes for making snacks and involved in food experiences.

Use these and other similar activities to guide your observations.

Since you will not be able to observe all of the concepts listed, you will find it helpful to interview the home visitor as well. Before you begin your conversation, ask the home visitor to show you the following:

- a copy of the curriculum specific to infants, toddlers, or preschoolers;
- examples of the tools used in the assessment system;
- the focus child's file (may include the developmental screening, assessment data, and individualization plans);
- planning documents.

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS	NOTES

We'd like to talk to you about your understanding of the curriculum, how you learn about children's progress, and how you plan for the children.

- Tell us about the curriculum you are using. How do you connect what you learned about *(focus child)* to what you are teaching him/her?
- How do you integrate issues of health, nutrition, and mental health into the curriculum? How do you prepare children for transitions? Can you provide an example?
- What developmental screening tool do you use? Are you involved in the process of conducting the developmental screening? If you're not, how do you get the results? How does the program use the information from *(focus child's)* screening?
- When screening results in a child having an IEP or IFSP, how do you use that plan in your work with that child? Can you give us an example of how you do that?
- Describe your process for the ongoing assessment of children. How often do you assess children?
- How have you been using the results from the ongoing assessment? How do you use the results to help you in your planning? How do you use the information from *focus child's)* assessments to work with him/her individually? Can you show us an example of how you do that?
- How do you communicate with *(focus child's)* parents about their child's progress? How are *(focus child's)* parents involved in the planning, individualizing, and implementation of the curriculum?
- If the focus child is a child with disabilities, ask: How are *(focus child's)* parents involved in the planning for their child's IEP?
- For 3- to 5-year-old classrooms ask: How does your curriculum respond to the Head Start Outcomes Framework?

REVIEWER	COMMENTS

Child development and/or disabilities services reviewers should review the written curriculum for the following:

- goals for children's development and learning;
- experiences through which children will achieve these goals;
- what staff and parents do to help children achieve these goals;
- the materials needed to support the implementation of the curriculum;
- consistency with the *Head Start Program Performance Standards* and other regulations;
- a base of sound child development principles about how children grow and learn;
- For preschool programs, inclusion of the eight domains of development and learning and the required domain elements and indicators (e.g., associates sounds with written words, recognizes a word as a unit of print, and phonological awareness).

Questions:

1. HOME VISIT INTERACTIONS AND STRATEGIES

How does the home visitor:

- demonstrate a friendly, cooperative relationship with the family?
- encourage parents to take leadership of the home visit?
- communicate in the family's preferred language?
- use the home as a learning environment and as a resource for curriculum experiences?
- understand the link between home visits and socialization experiences?
- *(For preschool children)* help parents plan experiences that foster their child's development and learning in the eight domains?
- help parents improve their parenting skills?
- plan home visits with parents to incorporate all services of the Head Start program?
- evaluate the home visit with parents?

Observe: What are the adults doing? What is the child doing?

Setting 1:

Setting 2:

Issues, Questions, and Follow-up:

2. FACILITATING CHILDREN'S LANGUAGE AND LITERACY DEVELOPMENT

How does the home visitor help parents

- understand how children learn?
- provide age-appropriate experiences that support child language and literacy learning and development?
- provide school-readiness experiences through home visits and group socializations that reflect the program's curriculum?
- value creative expression?
- foster communication, including communication in the home language?
- develop auditory and visual discrimination?

Observe: What are the adults doing? What is the child doing?

Setting 1:

Setting 2:

Issues, Questions, and Follow-up:

3. FACILITATING CHILDREN'S MATH AND SCIENCE DEVELOPMENT

How does the home visitor help parents provide:

- experiences that develop skills in mathematics?
- experiences that develop skills in science?
- experiences that develop auditory and visual discrimination?
- opportunities for children to discover how numerical concepts relate to other concepts?

Observe: What are the adults doing? What is the child doing?

Setting 1:

Setting 2:

Issues, Questions, and Follow-up:

4. FACILITATING CHILDREN'S SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

How do the home visits help parents:

- provide experiences that foster independence?
- develop age-appropriate expectations of children?
- interact in supportive ways?
- help children develop social skills, respect for others, and friendships?
- help children feel successful, competent, and positive toward learning?

Observe: What are the adults doing? What is the child doing?

Setting 1:

Setting 2:

Issues, Questions, and Follow-up:

5. FACILITATING CHILDREN'S PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

How does the home visitor help parents:

- provide experiences that develop sensory and motor skills?
- provide experiences that develop fine and gross motor skills?
- assist children in using and coordinating small muscles including eyes, hands, and eye-hand coordination?
- provide sufficient safe age-appropriate equipment and materials?
- supervise their child during physical activities?

Observe: What are the adults doing? What is the child doing?

Setting 1:

Setting 2:

Issues, Questions, and Follow-up:

6. CURRICULUM: PREVENTION AND EARLY INTERVENTION INTEGRATING HEALTH, NUTRITION, MENTAL HEALTH, SAFETY, AND WELLNESS

How does the home visitor help parents:

- ensure a safe environment?
- promote health, nutrition, and wellness?
- understand and use health and hygiene practices?

Observe: What are the adults doing? What is the child doing?

Setting 1:

Setting 2:

Issues, Questions, and Follow-up:

7. CURRICULUM: INDIVIDUALIZING AND DISABILITIES SERVICES

How do the home visitor and the parent:

- plan and implement experiences that match the child's current developmental level?
- understand ways to adapt or change activities for the child?
- identify, select, and use toys, books, and other materials that match the child's interests and abilities?
- incorporate IFSP or IEP goals into daily activities?

Observe: What are the adults doing? What is the child doing?

Setting 1:

Setting 2:

Issues, Questions, and Follow-up:

8. FAMILY PARTNERSHIPS

How does the home visitor

- support positive relationships?
- respect the home language and culture?
- encourage parents to get involved in other areas of the Head Start program?
- support parents in progress towards their goals?

Observe: What are the adults doing? What is the child doing?

Setting 1:

Setting 2:

Issues, Questions, and Follow-up:

Forms
(Appendix II)

GRANTEE'S ADVANCE ACTIVITIES CHECKLIST

This checklist summarizes for you the activities that need to be completed during the Advance Activities phase of the review. Additional detail regarding each of the listed activities can be found in the *PRISM Guide*.

Record Team Leader Name and Review Dates

❍ Name of Team Leader: ____

❍ Dates of Review: ____

Provide Background Information

❍ Make available to the team leader materials as requested on the **PRISM Records Request Form**. The form specifies:

   – Documents to be delivered to the team leader;

   – Documents to be delivered to the hotel for advance review by the fiscal reviewer; and

   – Documents that you must make available to the review team while on site.

❍ No later than 30 days in advance of the Fiscal Reviewer's anticipated arrival date, provide to the team leader written certification that relevant fiscal documents will be delivered to the review team's hotel no later than the Saturday afternoon before the start of the On-Site Activities Phase of the review.

Prepare for the Entrance Meeting

❍ Work with the team leader to schedule and identify the location of the **Entrance Meeting**, which is the first event of the On-Site Activities Phase of the review. Invite any staff you believe should attend as well as your governing body chairperson, Executive Director, and Policy Council chairperson. Estimate no more than 1 hour for the meeting.

❍ You may **develop a brief presentation** for delivery at the Entrance Meeting that provides an overview of your agency's history, structure, and program design, as well as a demographic description of your community and families.

Prepare for Optional Group Interviews (conducted at the discretion of the team leader)

The following interviews are conducted at the sole discretion of the team leader. For each interview requested by the team leader, make respective preparations as described below.

- ❍ Work with the team leader to schedule, identify the location of, and identify participants for the **Management Team Interview**. Possible participants include you, a representative of the governing body, the Policy Council chair, the fiscal officer, and the individuals who manage early childhood development and health services and family and community partnerships. Ensure that the group is small enough to facilitate the involvement of all participants (i.e., generally no larger than 12 staff). Discuss the format and content of the interview with the team leader. Estimate 2 hours for the session.

  For grantees with delegates: Work with the team leader and delegate directors to schedule each **Delegate Agency Management Team Interview** to occur subsequent to the Delegate Agency Entrance Meeting. Estimate 2 hours for each session.

  For grantees with delegates: Work with the team leader and delegate directors to schedule the **Delegate Directors Interview** to occur after the Grantee Management Team Interview. Discuss with the team leader the group of delegate agency directors to be included, and ensure they represent a range of delegate agencies that will not be included in other aspects of the review. Discuss format and content of the interview with the team leader. Estimate 2 hours for the session.

- ❍ Work with the team leader to schedule and identify the location of the **Content Area Experts Interview**. Work with the team leader to identify appropriate participants (e.g., individuals who manage family and community partnerships, early childhood development and health services, disabilities services, nutrition services, and/or mental health services). Make sure that the group is small enough to facilitate the involvement of all participants (i.e., generally no larger than 12 staff). Some or all of the participants may also attend the Management Team Interview. Discuss the format and content of the interview. Estimate 1½ to 2 hours for the session.

  For grantees with delegates: Consult with the team leader regarding the potential need for **multiple Content Area Experts Interviews**. In general, if you agency has content area experts who oversee all delegate agency content staff, only one Content Area Experts Interview is needed. However, if a delegate agency selected for review has its own content area experts, the team leader may wish to schedule a Content Area Experts Interview specific to the delegate agency. Estimate 1½ to 2 hours for the sessions.

- ❍ Work with the team leader to schedule and identify the location(s) of the **Staff Group Interview(s)**. The team leader will randomly select from your staff roster the specific individuals who should attend. Typically, the team leader will ensure that each group will involve no more than approximately 10–12 staff members and will include a variety of direct services staff (e.g., classroom staff, home visitors, family child care providers, family service workers, cooks, bus drivers). Estimate no more than 2 hours for the session.

Assist in the Selection of Delegate Agencies, Centers, and Classrooms to Be Visited

Note: While the team leader may select the individual sites to be visited without your direct assistance, your help is still needed in the facilitation of that process.

- ❍ If you are a grantee with delegate agencies, provide the team leader with an updated list of names of all delegate agencies. Note the following information next to each agency: if it is a new Head Start center, has a new director, has had significant staff turnover, involves a child care partnership, or if it is one you would especially like the team to visit.

- ❍ Prepare an updated list of all centers and geographic areas. (If you are a grantee with delegate agencies, the team leader will tell you which delegate agencies will be included in this review. Make sure that the list is organized by delegate agency.) Note the following information next to each center or geographic area: if it is a new Head Start center, if it involves a child care partnership, if it has an Early Head Start program, how far it is from the grantee's administrative office, and its program options.

- ❍ Prepare an updated list, for each center or geographic area, of lead teachers in each classroom (a.m. and p.m., if there are double sessions), family child care providers in the area, and home visitors in the area. Make sure child care partnership centers are included.

Selection of Focus Children and Families

Note: While the team leader may select the individual focus children and families without your direct assistance, he or she needs your help in the facilitation of that process.

- ❍ Prepare class rosters and home visitor caseloads. Identify children with disabilities and make special note of children with more significant disabilities. Identify home-based families who will have regularly scheduled home visits on days when it would be convenient for reviewers to accompany home visitors.

- ❍ Provide the team leader with a list of potential home visits to be made during the review, and ask that staff check with families to be sure that it is acceptable for reviewers to come to their homes. Make substitutions, when necessary, and oversee logistics ensuring that reviewers accompany home visitors to and from these homes.

- ❍ Provide the team leader with information about child care partners selected for a visit. Verify hours of operation.

Prepare for Interviews

- ❍ Work with the team leader to schedule and identify the location(s) of the **Family Group Interview.** Once you know when the focus families will be available for an interview, talk to the team leader to arrange a date and time for the interview. The interview is generally held after reviewers have had the opportunity to observe their focus children and look at children and families' files. Also, take care of logistical arrangements such as transportation, child care, and translation, if needed. Estimate no more than 2 hours for the session.

- ❍ Work with the team leader to arrange for the review team to observe a **Policy Council or Policy Committee meeting.** This should be a meeting during which regular agenda topics are discussed. Make sure the Policy Council or Policy Committee plans to stay for about half an hour after the meeting to talk with the reviewers. Estimate no more than 30 minutes for the session.

- ❍ Work with the team leader to arrange for the review team to speak with as many members of the **governing body** as seems feasible. If possible, schedule a meeting between reviewers and some members of the governing body. Otherwise, ask representative members of the governing body when it would be convenient for a reviewer to call them or visit them for an individual interview. Estimate no more than 30 minutes for the session.

- ❍ Work with the team leader to schedule and identify the location(s) of the **Child Care Partner Interview(s)**. If a group interview is not possible, the appropriate reviewers may be able to speak to one or several of the partners either by phone or in person when they visit their child care program to observe a focus child. If you have only a small number of child care partners, consider adding them to the Community Partners group. Estimate 30 minutes to 1 hour for the session.

- ❍ Work with the team leader to arrange for reviewers to speak with key **community partners**, including a representative of the LEA or Part C agency. Provide the team leader with a list of these individuals and their phone numbers. Conversations with community partners may occur through individual meetings, individual phone call, or a group interview. Estimate about 30 minutes to 1 hour for the interview(s).

- ❍ Work with the team leader to arrange for at least one reviewer to accompany children on a **bus ride**.

Grantee Briefings and Summary Meeting

- ❍ Discuss with the team leader expectations regarding the frequency, timing, and circumstances of daily briefings.

- ❍ Work with the team leader to schedule and identify the location of the Summary Meeting.

TEAM LEADER'S ADVANCE ACTIVITIES CHECKLIST

This checklist summarizes for you the activities that need to be completed during the Advance Activities phase of the review. Note that ❑'s placed before an item mean that grantee staff need not be involved; ❍'s may require input from the grantee's Head Start director.

All forms referred to in this checklist are located in the Forms appendix of the *PRISM Guide.*

Record Identifying Information

Grantee Name: ______________________________

Grant Number: ______________________________

Name of Grantee Director: ______________________________

Set Dates for Review

❍ Dates: ______________________________

Contact the Grantee

❍ Contact the grantee early in the Advance Activities phase. During the initial contact, introduce yourself and advise the grantee of the review dates. (During this or subsequent calls, you will need to request background and other information and make logistical preparations. These items are addressed below.)

❍ Send letter to grantee confirming dates of review.

Request Background and Advance Review Documents

❍ Complete the **PRISM Records Request Form** and deliver to the grantee. Complete each section of the PRISM Records Request Form to specify:

- Documents to be delivered to you (i.e., documents to assist you in planning for the review as well as documents you will distribute for advance review by all review team members);

- Documents to be delivered to the hotel for advance review by the Fiscal Reviewer (work with the Fiscal Reviewer in identifying this information); and

  - Documents that the grantee must make available to you and your team while on site.

- ❍ Communicate to the grantee director that he or she must deliver to you, 30 days in advance of the Fiscal Reviewer's anticipated arrival date, written certification that relevant fiscal documents will be delivered to the review team's hotel no later than the Saturday afternoon before the start of the On-Site Activities Phase of the review.

- ❑ Contact the assigned Program Specialist to obtain copies of documents available from the Regional Office (see the **PRISM Records Request Form** for reference).

Select Review Team

- ❑ Complete **Review Team Request Form** online and send to the monitoring contractor at least 100 days prior to the review.

- ❑ Once the members of the review team have been identified by the Regional Review Coordinator and any change requests have been resolved, transmit the names of review team members to the grantee for review.

- ❑ Once the composition of the review team has been finalized, complete the **Team Assignment Worksheet** to assign Core Questions to each reviewer.

Arrange for Distribution of Advance Review Information

- ❑ Upon receipt of requested information from the grantee and Program Specialist, distribute to all reviewers copies of those materials that each must review in advance of the Review Team Planning Meeting.

- ❍ Work with the grantee to ensure timely delivery to the hotel of specified fiscal documents for advance review by the fiscal reviewer(s).

Schedule the Review Team Planning Meeting

- ❑ Schedule the **Review Team Planning Meeting** to occur (on-site or at the hotel) prior to the Entrance Meeting at the grantee's site.

Schedule the Entrance Meeting Interview

- ❍ Schedule the **Entrance Meeting** as the first grantee event of the review. The director may invite any staff he or she believes should attend. Estimate no more than 1 hour for the meeting.

For grantees with delegates: Work with the grantee director to determine whether separate entrance meetings are desirable, and if so, to schedule such meetings. The grantee's Entrance Meeting may occur in the month preceding the full review (if a sufficient number of review team members can attend).

Schedule Optional Group Interviews (as desired)

- ❍ Schedule the **Management Team Interview** to follow the grantee's Entrance Meeting. Work with the director to identify appropriate personnel to participate (e.g., agency director, representative of the governing body, Head Start director, Policy Council chair, fiscal officer, and the individuals who manage (a) early childhood development and health services and (b) family and community partnerships), and to ensure that the group is small enough to facilitate the involvement of all participants (i.e., generally no larger than 12 staff). Discuss the format and content of the interview with the director. Estimate 2 hours for the session.

  For grantees with delegate agencies: Schedule each **Delegate Agency Management Team Interview** to occur subsequent to the Delegate Agency Entrance Meeting. In general, these interviews are scheduled through the grantee director, who negotiates with the delegate director. Estimate 2 hours for each session.

  For grantees with delegate agencies: Schedule the **Delegate Directors Interview** to occur after the Grantee Management Team Interview. Discuss with the grantee director the group of delegate agency directors to be included. Ensure that they represent a range of delegate agencies that will not be included in other aspects of the review. Discuss the format and content of the interview with the grantee director. Estimate 2 hours for the session.

- ❍ Schedule the grantee's **Content Area Experts Interview** to follow its Management Team Interview. Work with the grantee director to identify appropriate participants (e.g., individuals who manage family and community partnerships, early childhood development and health services, disabilities services, nutrition services, and/or mental health services). Make sure that the group is small enough to facilitate the involvement of all participants (i.e., generally no larger than 12 staff), and that the director understands that some or all of these people may also attend the Management Team Interview. Discuss the format and content of the interview with the director. Estimate 1½ to 2 hours for the session.

  For grantees with delegate agencies: In consultation with the grantee director, decide if there will be **multiple Content Area Experts Interviews**. In general, if the grantee has content area experts who oversee all delegate agency content staff, only one Content Area Experts Interview is needed. However, if a delegate agency selected for review has its own content area experts, you should schedule a Content Area Experts Interview specific to the delegate agency. If the grantee does not have content area experts (i.e., all are hired by delegate agencies), schedule Content Area Experts Interviews for delegate agencies only. Estimate 1½ to 2 hours for the sessions.

- ❍ Determine the number and composition of **Staff Group Interviews** to be conducted. The number and composition of interviews should be sufficient to gather adequate information regarding relevant staff activities across sites in the agency.

  Talk with the director to select the staff to attend each group interview. Ensure that each group will involve no more than approximately 10–12 staff members and will include a variety of direct services staff (e.g., classroom staff, home visitors, family child care providers, family service workers, cooks, bus drivers).

  Schedule the Staff Group Interviews to occur as soon as possible after the Content Area Experts Interview. Note that, if necessary, a Staff Group Interview may occur at the same time as the Content Area Experts Interview. Estimate no more than 2 hours for each interview.

Select Delegate Agencies (skip if grantee has no delegate agencies)

- ❑ Complete Step 1 on the **Selection Process Form** to identify delegate agencies the review team will visit, ensuring an appropriate representation. Record choices on the **Selection Tree Form**.

Select Centers and Geographic Areas for Family Child Care or Home-Based Option

- ❑ Complete Step 2 on the **Selection Process Form** to select centers and geographic areas to visit. Record the names of the centers (including child care partners' centers) and areas on the **Selection Tree Form**.

Select Classrooms, Family Child Care Homes, and Home Visitors

- ❑ Complete Step 3 on the **Selection Process Form** to select classrooms and/or homes to visit and home visitors to accompany. Record the names of the lead teachers, home visitors, and family child care providers on the **Selection Tree Form**.

Select Focus Children and Families

- ❑ Complete Step 4 on the **Selection Process Form** to select focus children and their families.

Schedule the Family Group Interview

- ❍ Work with the grantee director to schedule the **Family Group Interview** at a time convenient for most parents to attend. Assign the facilitator and notetaker. All focus families should be invited to attend the interview. Reviewers should make every effort to talk to members of all focus families during the review, including those who are not able to attend the Family Group Interview, so that there is a broad representation of parents in the review process. Alternative ways to contact parents who are not able to join the interview include telephone calls in the evening, speaking with parents when they drop off or pick up their children, or going on a bus ride. Estimate no more than 2 hours for the session.

Schedule the Policy Council/Committee Meeting

- ❍ Arrange with the director, if possible, to observe a meeting of the policy group. Each meeting should include discussion of regular agenda topics. Assign the reviewers who will both attend the meeting and interview the policy group members at the end of the meeting. Estimate about 30 minutes for the interview.

  For grantees with delegate agencies: Observe the grantee's Policy Council and Policy Committee meetings of each of the delegates selected for review.

Schedule the Governing Body Interview(s)

- ❍ Arrange with the director to speak with as many members of the governing body as seems feasible, either as a group or individually (in person or by phone). Work with the grantee director to schedule a group interview or to identify times convenient for reviewers to call governing body members. Estimate about 30 minutes for the interview(s).

  For grantees with delegate agencies: Speak with the grantee's governing body and the governing body of each delegate selected for review.

Schedule the Child Care Partners Interview(s)

- ❍ Work with the director to make arrangements for interviewing child care partner staff. These interviews may be conducted as individual or small group interviews, and may take place either at the child care partner's site or at the Head Start site. If desired, these partners may join other community partners in their respective interviews. Estimate about 30 minutes to 1 hour for the interview(s).

Schedule the Community Partners Interview(s)

- ❍ Work with the director to identify and speak with individuals from key community partner agencies, including a representative of the Local Education Agency or Part C agency. If desired, request that the grantee director set up individual meetings or group meetings, or find out what times during the week would be convenient for a call or visit. Estimate about 30 minutes to 1 hour for the interview(s).

Schedule the Shadow Bus Ride (if transportation services are offered to children)

- ❍ Work with the director to arrange for a reviewer to accompany children on a bus ride. Record on the **Team Assignment Worksheet** the identify of the assigned reviewer and details regarding bus ride arrangements.

Discuss Grantee Briefings

- ❍ During initial discussions with the grantee, convey to the grantee director the importance of ongoing communication and discuss your expectations regarding probable frequency, timing, and circumstances of briefings during the on-site phase of the review.

Schedule the Summary Meeting

- ❍ Work with the grantee director to schedule and identify participants in the Summary Meeting.

  For grantees with delegate agencies: Work with the grantee director to determine whether separate Summary Meetings are desirable, and if so, to identify participants and schedule such meetings.

PRISM RECORDS REQUEST

Review team members need to have access to the following materials during the monitoring review. Some of these items can be sent in advance while others should be made available to reviewers during the On-Site Activities phase of the review. Please complete this request prior to the On-Site Activities phase. Specify those documents you wish the grantee to provide in advance and those documents to be made available for review during the On-Site Activities Phase. For those documents to be reviewed by the team while on site, have the grantee specify on this form the location of the files and grantee staff responsible for providing access to the information.

RECORD	LOCATION (if not in central location)	STAFF RESPONSIBLE
RECOMMENDED FOR ADVANCE REVIEW (REGIONAL OFFICE RECORDS)		
Background Information • Grantee "working" file[1] • Final Head Start Review Report and cover letter from most recent triennial and any follow-up reviews • Quality Improvement Plans (QIPs), if applicable • Program Information Reports (PIRs) from the past 2 years	N/A	Program Specialist
RECOMMENDED FOR ADVANCE REVIEW (GRANTEE RECORDS)		
ADVANCE REVIEW - FISCAL REVIEWERS		
Funding/Budget and Fiscal Documentation • Most recent audit report • Management letter (that accompanies the audit report) • Current and prior year Financial Assistance Award (FAA), including one-time funding for major purchases (e.g., buses, renovations, or facilities pur chase), and recent expansion information	To be delivered to the review team's hotel no later than the Saturday afternoon before the start of the On-Site Activities Phase of the review	Grantee Director

[1] Content of this file includes correspondence between the Regional Office and the grantee and relevant community and Head Start program information.

RECORD	*LOCATION (if not in central location)*	*STAFF RESPONSIBLE*
• Current financial statements, including the balance sheet for the agency and the financial statements from the Head Start program • Organizational chart or list of staff and function of each staff person, including any vacancies. • Policies and Procedures manual(s) covering fiscal operations • Indirect cost agreement/cost allocation plan • Most recent financial reports as delivered to the governing bodies • Lease agreements • Most recent SF-269 (Financial Status Report) with supporting documentation • PMS-272 (Federal Cash Transaction Report) with supporting documentation		
ADVANCE REVIEW - ALL REVIEWERS		
Program History • Head Start and/or Early Head Start grant applications from the past 2 years • Notice of grant award		
Program Plans • Community Assessment • Long-range program goals and short-term program and financial objectives • Written plan(s) for program services • Child Outcomes plan • Grantee Profile[2]		
Program Administration • Health Services Advisory Committee minutes • Grievance procedure for parent or community complaints		

[1] The Grantee Profile is available on the team leader Web site at www.headstartreviews.com

RECORD	LOCATION (if not in central location)	STAFF RESPONSIBLE
• Most recent self-assessment (including description of procedures, results, and actions in response to results) • Recruitment/enrollment information (including policies/procedures, attendance records, and enrollment/waiting list information) • Grantee/delegate contracts, if applicable· • Interagency and child care partnership agreements		
Policy Council Information • Bylaws • Membership list • Minutes for the last 12 months • Impasse procedure		
Governing Body Information • Bylaws • Membership list (including roles and responsibilities of members) • Minutes for the last 12 months • Information on policies/procedures related to governance not included elsewhere		
Personnel-Related Documents • Organizational chart or list of staff and function of each staff person, including any vacancies • Job descriptions		
Training-Related Documents • Staff development and training approach • Training and technical assistance (T/TA) plan		

RECORD	***LOCATION*** ***(if not in central location)***	***STAFF RESPONSIBLE***
Recommended for On-Site Review		
General Program Activity Information • Menus • Daily classroom schedule • Class rosters • General information supplied to parents • Information on use of volunteers • Schedules of parent meetings and topics		
Child Records • Ongoing assessment of progress • Screening and health care records • Emergency contact information • Individualized Education Program (IEP) and/or Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP), if applicable • Food and/or health allergies		
Family Records • Conversation or anecdotal notes • Description of family goals and progress • Documentation of home visits and parent/teacher conferences • Documentation of parent involvement • Enrollment/income eligibility forms		
Personnel-Related Documents • Personnel policies (including policies and procedures pertaining to confidentiality) • Salary schedule • Staff personnel files including staff health records • Staff performance evaluations		
Training-Related Documents • Records of all training provided		

RECORD	LOCATION (if not in central location)	STAFF RESPONSIBLE
Health- and Safety-Related Policies and Procedures • Medication administration • Short-term exclusion • Emergency procedures • Child abuse/neglect reporting procedures • Equipment maintenance logs • Results from environmental tests and/or safety inspections • Hazardous material (e.g., blood, human waste) disposal policies		
Licenses • Child care • Sanitation • Fire/safety • Food handlers • Other (as required under applicable State or local regulations)		
Fiscal Records • Detailed general ledger or accounts payable (AP) disbursements journal • Monthly trial balances • Bank reconciliation • Administrative costs documentation • Written accounting procedures • Program budget planning documents (e.g., forms, memorandums, work papers) • Chart of accounts • Property inventory and files for recent major purchases • Procurement policies • Payroll journal • Insurance policies (e.g., liability, vehicles, child accident) • Non-Federal share documentation		

RECORD	LOCATION (if not in central location)	STAFF RESPONSIBLE
• Department of Agriculture (USDA) accounting records and source documents (e.g., meal counts, etc.) • Vendor contracts • Grantee charter document		
Transportation Records • Bus routes • Bus logs • Driver licenses • Accident records • Maintenance logs		
Other • Maintenance logs for facility (if owned by grantee)		

TEAM ASSIGNMENT WORKSHEET

Grantee: ______________________________ Dates of Review: ______________________

Team Leader: __________________________

Activity	Who Leads	Who is Also Responsible
Core Questions 1. Program Governance		
2. Planning		
3. Communication		
4. Record-keeping and Reporting		
5. Ongoing Monitoring		
6. Self-Assessment		
7. Human Resources		
8. Fiscal Management		
9. Prevention and Early Intervention		
10. Individualization		
11. Disabilities Services		
12. Curriculum and Assessment		
13. Family Partnership Building		
14. Parent Involvement		
15. Community Partnerships		
16. ERSEA		
17. Facilities, Materials, Equipment, and Transportation		
18. Child Outcomes		

Activity	Who	When	Where
Review Team Planning Meeting			
Entrance Meeting			

TEAM ASSIGNMENT WORKSHEET (continued)

Activity	*Who*	*When*	*Where*
Management Team Interview *(optional)* (Facilitated by team leader) Notetaker:			
Content Area Experts Interview *(optional)* Facilitator: Notetaker:			
Staff Group Interviews *(optional)* #1 Facilitator: Notetaker: Attending: #2 Facilitator: Notetaker: Attending: #3 Facilitator: Notetaker: #4 Facilitator: Notetaker:			
Family Group Interview Facilitator: Notetaker:			
Government Body Interview(s)			
Policy Group Meeting			
Community Partnership Contacts			
Child Care Partnership Contacts			

TEAM ASSIGNMENT WORKSHEET (continued)

Activity	*Who*	*When*	*Where*
Classroom or Family Child Care Observations Setting: Teacher: Focus Child: Setting: Teacher: Focus Child: Setting: Teacher: Focus Child: Setting: Teacher: Focus Child: Setting: Teacher: Focus Child: Setting: Teacher: Focus Child: Setting: Teacher: Focus Child:			
Home Visit Observations Area: Visitor: Focus Child: Area: Visitor: Focus Child: Area: Visitor: Focus Child: Area: Visitor: Focus Child:			

TEAM ASSIGNMENT WORKSHEET (continued)

Activity	*Who*	*When*	*Where*
Health and Safety Checklist Setting #1 #2 #3 #4 #5 #6 #7 #8 #9 #10 #11 #12			
Bus Ride Checklist			
Grantee Briefings			
Team Meetings			
Summary Meeting			
Other			

THE SELECTION PROCESS

In the sections that follow, instructions are given for selection at four different levels: (1) delegate agencies; (2) centers or geographic areas; (3) classrooms, family child care homes, and home visitors; and (4) focus children and their families. Note that the second level, "centers or geographic areas," is meant to characterize locations of center-based classrooms, groupings of home-based services, or groupings of family child care homes. These four levels of selection will not be needed when reviewing all grantees. If the grantee has no delegate agencies, skip Step 1. If all centers or geographic areas will be visited, skip Step 2.

The discussion provides a step-by-step methodology to use in preparing for a review, using the Selection Tree form on page 37 of this chapter.

Step1: Select Delegate Agencies to Visit

(Skip this step if there are no delegate agencies.)

Several key guidelines are followed in the selection of delegate agencies to review when the grantee has delegate agencies:

- A comprehensive review entails assessing a grantee's overall operations, its level of oversight of and support to delegate agencies, and individual delegate agency performances.

- In order to determine the effectiveness of the grantee's systems, services, and partnerships, it is not necessary to visit all delegates. A subset, chosen carefully, holds the grantee accountable and ensures program quality.

- It is possible to select a subset of delegate agencies and complete a comprehensive and thorough PRISM review using good professional judgment. Simple random selection—giving every delegate, center, and child an equal chance of being included—is not as effective for Head Start reviews as a technique that gives more "weight" to some delegates over others.

- Planning for monitoring in each 3-year period is done by the Regional Office in consultation with the grantee. The Regional Office makes the final decision on which delegate agencies to visit.

- In grantees with 1 to 5 delegate agencies, the review involves 1 or 2 delegate agencies and is completed in a single year. If the Regional Office decides it is possible to conduct an accurate review of the grantee through visiting only 1 delegate, then 1 is included in the review.

- In grantees with 5 to 20 delegate agencies, the review includes 2 to 5 delegates and is conducted in a single year.

- In grantees with 20 to 50 delegate agencies, the review includes 5 to 8 delegate agencies. The review may be conducted in a single year or over multiple years.

- In grantees with more than 50 delegate agencies, the review includes 8 to 24 delegate agencies. The review may be conducted in a single year or over multiple years.

- For grantees with delegate agencies, the group of delegates selected for review in a 3-year period includes:

  1. A mix of auspices, urbanicity (i.e., urban, suburban, rural), and population served (i.e., cultural and ethnic groups);

  2. A mix of agencies with large, medium, and small enrollments;

  3. A representation of program options and special services (e.g., child care partnerships, family child care);

  4. At least one delegate that offers Early Head Start (if any delegates do);

  5. Agencies recommended for inclusion by the director because, for example, the grantee wishes to showcase services or is taking enforcement action.

- If a delegate is also a grantee in its own right and is scheduled for review as a grantee, consider including the delegate as a part of the review of the grantee with delegates and coordinating the two reviews.

- In selecting delegate agencies, team leaders may select the same or different delegates from those reviewed in the previous cycle. Agencies may be revisited, for example, if there are clear reasons why they must be included (e.g., many reports have come to the Regional Office from parents, or the grantee reports an excellent new program of services).

- Once a delegate agency is selected for review, it receives a comprehensive review of all systems, services, and partnerships.

- The duration of the review of a grantee with 5 to 20 delegates is 1 week to 1 year. The duration for a grantee with more than 20 delegates ranges from 1 week to 3 years. For example, delegates may all be reviewed in the same week, in consecutive weeks, or in weeks separated across time.

- The length of a review for grantees with five or more delegate agencies may exceed the usual week to accommodate (1) the need to work with and to conduct desired interviews with staff at both the grantee and delegate levels and (2) the need to integrate the results of multiple teams. For example, if conducted, the Management Team Interview for grantee staff and the Management Team Interview for a group of delegate directors may occur in the week prior to the reviews of delegate agencies. The Summary Meeting may be held the week after the fieldwork, allowing more time for analysis of data from multiple locations.

Use the Selection Tree (Step 1) on page 37 of this chapter to help plan the review. If the review team will be working with multiple agencies, simply write the names of all agencies to be visited in the Selection Tree (Step 1) under the name of the grantee. Use multiple copies of the Selection Tree chart if the team will be visiting more than two delegate agencies. If the grantee agency offers services to children and is one of the agencies to be reviewed, its name should appear at the top of the Selection Tree and also on the line designating "delegate agencies."

Step 2: Select Centers or Geographic Areas to Visit

(Skip this step if all centers and geographic areas will be visited.)

The goal of this step is to choose the centers, family child care homes, and home-based areas that one or more members of the review team will visit. If there are too many centers to visit (or if they are too far apart), the team leader needs to collect information on certain characteristics of each center and select those that will be visited. Because of their effects on the quality of services, the following characteristics of centers should be considered in the selection:

- The center is relatively new to Head Start and has not yet been reviewed,
- The center is part of a child care partnership,
- The grantee's Head Start director wants to showcase the center's excellence or has expressed concern about its performance.

A premise of the PRISM review is that reviewers will be thorough in investigating the experience of at least one child and his/her family in every center, family child care option, or home-based option in the group selected. So the number of centers (or areas) selected must be limited enough to allow for reviewer thoroughness, yet expansive enough to cover the range of services offered by the grantee. (If the number of centers that are automatically included exceeds the number that can be visited, the team leader may randomly select from new centers and those that are part of the child care partnerships.)

Taking into account the size of the team and the distances between centers, the team leader needs to decide how many additional centers can be selected. These additional centers should represent the variety of center-based services (e.g., part-day and full-day). If the grantee has delegate agencies, the selected centers must include at least one that is operated by each delegate agency that will be visited. In a morning (or an afternoon or evening), each reviewer can be assigned about three classrooms in a single center, one classroom in each of two different centers, or two different family child care homes (if these centers or homes are fairly close to each other). Each reviewer can accompany a home visitor on one home visit in a morning or an afternoon.

Home-based services and family child care homes are generally clustered in geographic areas. If it will not be possible to visit all family child care homes or accompany all home visitors, the team leader should select certain geographic areas for visits. For example, if the grantee's operations cover a five-county area and cluster home visitors by county, the team leader should choose the counties that will be visited. Selection can be random, taking into account the director's knowledge of services in the various counties. If services are very different (e.g., two counties provide home-based services to children with significant disabilities), the selection should reflect the differences.

Using the Selection Tree can be helpful in choosing the centers and geographic areas. To begin, record the names of all centers and areas that may potentially be visited. (The only ones initially excluded will be those operated by delegate agencies that will not be visited.) If the grantee has delegate agencies, be sure to list each center name under the correct delegate agency name. Also, list each geographic area in which the grantee manages family child care homes or home-based options. If the grantee has no delegates, list the centers and areas from left to right, beginning with (1). Then note any special features of each center or area next to its name (e.g., write "EHS" to show the centers operating Early Head Start, "FCC" for a geographic area that operates family child care homes, "CC" for a child care partnership, or "PROB" to indicate the director's concern).

When an initial decision has been made about the selection of centers, the team leader should circle all of these centers on the Selection Tree. It is then advisable to check that the selected group:

- Contains as many new centers as possible;
- Includes child care partnerships, if they exist;
- Represents all program options;
- Contains at least one center operated by each delegate agency that was selected.

Step 3: Select Classrooms, Family Child Care Homes, and Home Visitors

The next task is to identify the specific staff whose classes or family child care homes will be observed, or who will be accompanied on a home visit. In general, the team leader can randomly choose classes within selected centers or family child care homes in the geographic area selected for visits. For the home-based option, the team leader can randomly select home visitors. However, the team leader does need to keep in mind geographic constraints. A reviewer may be able to see multiple classrooms or homes in a day, but distances between locations should be taken into account when deciding just how many are reasonable.

Begin this step by recording the names of each lead teacher in a center and each family child care provider or home visitor in a geographic area on the Selection Tree. For example, check the name of the center numbered (1) in Step 2. Under number (1) in Step 3 are spaces for five names. Write the name of each relevant staff member, one per line, to indicate the groupings of children in the center's program. Following each name, note whether the person is a lead teacher (LT), a family child care provider (FCC), or a home visitor (HV). Then complete the list for all other centers and geographic areas to be visited.

Step 4: Select Focus Children and Their Families

The final step in the selection process is to choose the children and their families that will be the focus of the data-gathering efforts during the review. Generally, no more than one child per class, family child care home, or home visitor case load is included. It is important to select focus children and their families prior to the review so that grantee staff can schedule the Family Group Interview at times convenient for the adults in focus families. Choosing families in advance also allows the grantee to secure home-based families' permission to invite a reviewer into their home. Team leaders may select "alternates" in case a focus child has moved between the time of selection and the review, a family does not feel comfortable opening their home, or reviewers find concerns and wish to check on additional families. Team leaders need to have contingency plans in case of absent children and help reviewers think of alternate ways to contact parents who are not able to attend the Family Group Interview.

Prior to selection, it is suggested that the team leader obtain rosters, indicating each child's age and noting children with disabilities. Some team leaders prefer to have the grantee directors choose focus children. Usually they ask for a choice of more than one child per class or home visitor, and then the team leader makes the final selection. In general, the selection of children is random. However, the team leader may first want to choose children with disabilities from some of the classes or geographic areas, one per class. Inclusion of at least one child with more significant disabilities is recommended. Child care partnerships should also be included when selecting focus children. For the remaining groups, random selection can proceed. Ensure that some 4-year-olds are included so that child outcomes can be fully checked.

The actual number of families may vary due to the distance between sites included in the review and the grantee's program options. For example, if the grantee operates either a home-based or family child care option, a reviewer needs to be assigned families experiencing those options.

Focus children and families are key to data gathering for all Service Reviewers. Data from focus children and families also help systems reviewers understand how well systems support partnership building and delivery of services to children and families. Data gathering on focus children and families may be sufficient to allow reviewers to fully describe grantee services. If reviewers are satisfied that they have a good understanding of the program through the use of this group, they may end their work. However, if the focus children and families raise questions that can be answered only by reviewing additional files, talking with additional staff, or observing in other classes, reviewers should take these extra steps as well.

Note: When the Selection Tree is complete, the team leader records the classroom, home visit, and focus children assignments on the Team Assignment Worksheet.

Selection Tree

Grantee Name

Step 1: Delegate Names

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20

Step 2: Center Names or Geographic Areas

Step 3: Lead Teacher/ Home Visitor/ Family Child Care Provider Names

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20

Step 4: Child Names

Go to class lists for selection of one focus child per class or group. Make sure a sample of children with disabilities is chosen, that child care partnerships and all options are represented, and that all age groups are included.

September 2004, Version 1

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR HEAD START MONITORING REVIEWERS

The standards of performance listed below provide standard requirements and expectations for Head Start monitoring reviewers. Each reviewer must sign this document at the beginning of each review season prior to participating on any monitoring reviews. An electronic copy remains on file at Danya International, Inc. ("Danya"); the reviewers shall retain a copy for their records. The standards provided below are divided into the following categories: Preparation, Review Procedures and Guidelines, Conflict of Interest, and General Professional Standards.

Preparation

1. Reviewers must represent their education, experience, and skills accurately as described in the reviewer profile maintained and updated by Danya for the Head Start Bureau. Reviewers shall accept assignments only in content areas matching their expertise.

2. Reviewers shall remain knowledgeable of Head Start or Early Head Start Performance Standards and applicable regulations, and they must understand their role as a review team member.

3. Employees working for a Head Start and/or Early Head Start grantee must obtain the required prior approval from the grantee to participate on reviews. A staff member of a deficient grantee and its delegate will not be allowed to participate on reviews until the grantee has been removed from deficiency status. Reviewers must notify the Regional Review Coordinator (RRC) of any change of employment status with the grantee.

4. Reviewers must be prompt in all appointments. If unexpected events delay appearance for an appointment, notify those who are waiting—as well as the team leader—of the change or delay.

5. Reviewers must be prepared to participate in all meetings at the starting time of the meeting.

6. Reviewers should proactively download the PRISM Instrument and latest PRISM software (www.headstartreviews.com).

7. Reviewers must make a proactive effort to remain current on reviewer standards, special announcements, and policy changes by making regular (quarterly) visits to the Monitoring Reviewer Web site.

8. Reviewers are responsible for notifying the Regional Review Coordinator (RRC) as soon as possible when travel delays or other emergencies cause a delay or cancellation of the scheduled travel plans.

Review Procedures and Guidelines

9. The team leader is the primary responsible agent for the conduct of each review, throughout the review process, and in all interactions with the grantee. Reviewers should:

    a. Follow the schedules and procedures as outlined by the team leader using the current Head Start PRISM Instrument and requirements to complete the assignments.

    b. Gather and analyze critical information based solely on the *Head Start Program Performance Standards* and applicable regulations.

c. Coordinate with the team leader to request information and documentation only as required by the current PRISM Instrument and process. Provide ample opportunity for program staff members to provide information or documentation needed for the collection and analysis of data to complete the assignment.

d. Follow the grantee's chain of command and procedures for reviewing documentation. Return all program materials to the grantee (or as instructed by the team leader) as soon as possible, no later than the closing meeting with the grantee.

e. Prior to the final debriefing and exit meeting, prepare and submit to the team leader a written summary and a report of findings as assigned, in accordance with the current PRISM format. Note that responses and notes regarding the Core Questions should be provided in the corresponding sections for that question.

f. Confer with the team leader regarding interpretation of the Federal regulations.

g. Refer unusual questions (those that fall outside their area of expertise or outside of responsibilities as a review team member), sensitive issues, and program and community complaints to the team leader for response.

h. At the end of the review, all information is considered property of the Federal government and will be submitted to the team leader. All electronic files are to be deleted from reviewer laptop computers prior to the exit conference.

i. Protect the confidentiality of all child, family, and staff files by securing and returning them to proper custody.

j. Reviewers must initial and date all pages of documentation, such as notes, Core Questions, and other completed tools.

Conflict of Interest

10. Any potential conflict of interest or appearance of a conflict of interest must be disclosed at the time of request to serve as a team member on a review. This includes disclosing work as a previous reviewer, consultant, or potential consultant for the grantee being reviewed.

11. Reviewers must remove themselves from participation or discussion at any point that a perceived conflict of interest may arise, or if any other reason exists whereby objectivity or the review itself could be compromised.

12. Reviewers should have no contact with a grantee either prior to or after the review (except through the team leader).

General Professional Standards

13. Complete and strict confidentiality is required on all matters and information associated with the grantee being reviewed, including all files (individual, child, family, and staff) and documents reviewed. All discussions and findings pertaining to the grantee and review findings shall not be discussed in public places during the on-site visit. Do not discuss information about the substance and findings of the review with anyone except the team leader, team members, and persons expressly designated by the team leader.

14. Reviewers must adhere to Federal guidelines concerning acceptance and giving of gifts.

15. Reviewers must refrain from alcohol consumption during business hours, including evening meetings associated with the on-site review. Abuse of alcohol or any other drug, legal or illegal, will result in immediate dismissal from the current review by the team leader and permanent removal from the pool of eligible reviewers.

16. Sexual harassment (slurs, jokes, epithets, touching, impeding, body blocking, leering, suggestive gestures, or any other unsolicited, written, verbal, physical, or visual contact with sexual overtures) will result in immediate dismissal from the current review by the team leader and permanent removal from the pool of eligible reviewers.

17. Promotion of services (personal, other firms, or colleagues) in any way or provision of technical assistance to the grantee or any staff members, constituents, or parents during the review is strictly prohibited. Generally, reviewers should refrain from entering into any work assignments, paid or otherwise, pertaining to a grantee being reviewed for at least 12 months following completion of the review. Individual regions may have more strict policies regarding this matter.

18. Reviewers must behave in a professional manner during the review. Always be courteous, pleasant, and respectful in asking questions, taking part in discussions, or other interactions with the grantee. Respect the knowledge and experience of the grantee staff members, parents, contract staff members, and community partners. Do not engage in gossip or office politics during interactions with program staff members, parents, contract staff members, and community partners. Unprofessional conduct may result in immediate dismissal from a review by the team leader.

19. Reviewers must dress appropriately for work in the environment of the grantee. Reviewers should follow local agency work rules regarding smoking, safety, security, food on the premises, working hours, and other local requirements. Reviewers should request permission before using the grantee's telephone or other equipment for any purpose.

20. Do not offer advice or recommendations to any individual about the quality or operation of the program. Recognize the responsibility of the grantee managers and others to supervise their staff.

21. Always respect the language, culture, and ethnic identity of grantee staff members, parents, contract staff members, and community partners.

22. Reviewers should work collaboratively and cooperatively with other team members. This includes:

    a. Respecting the skills, experiences, and knowledge of fellow team members;

    b. Contributing information and analysis of assignments at each team meeting in a concise and orderly manner to facilitate efficient use of the meeting time;

    c. Sharing information, actively seeking informed agreement among team members, and fully supporting the final decisions of the team leader.

23. Reviewers must commit to performing and completing PRISM-related tasks ONLY while on assignment. Other distractions should be eliminated (for example, cell phones should be turned off during interviews, data collection, and team meetings).

24. These standards may be updated, modified, or otherwise revised from time to time by Danya and/or the Head Start Bureau. Any such revision will be in writing and will be provided to reviewers by posting to a Head Start Reviewer focused Web site prior to its effective date.

Acknowledgment and Acceptance

I have read, understand, and agree to the Standards for Head Start Monitoring Reviewers (September 2004, version 1) as set forth above. I understand that failure to comply with these standards may result in a decision for dismissal from the review, and the Head Start Regional Office may recommend to Danya that my name be removed from the pool of potential reviewers.

____

Reviewer's Signature and Date

____

Printed Name

Resources List
(Appendix III)

STANDARDS AND REGULATIONS

Americans with Disabilities Act and Child Care
http://www.usdoj.gov/crt/ada/childq%26a.htm
This site provides a list of frequently asked questions with regard to the application of the ADA to child care centers. The list was compiled by the Department of Justice.

Head Start Program Performance Standards
http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/hsb/performance/index.htm
The Head Start Regulations, Title 45 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Parts 1301 through 1311, state the required operating procedures and services that Head Start programs are to provide to the children and families they serve. Program Guidance for Parts 1304 and 1308 is included.

Information Memoranda (IMs) and Program Instructions (PIs)
http://www.headstartinfo.org/publications/im_cont.htm
These documents are provided by year of issue on the Head Start Information and Publication Center Web site. Some IMs and PIs that might be helpful during reviews include the following (see Web site for complete listing):

2003 Family Income Guidelines
http://www.headstartinfo.org/publications/im03/im03_03.htm

2002 Family Income Guidelines
http://www.headstartinfo.org/publications/im02/im02_03.htm

2001 Family Income Guidelines
http://www.headstartinfo.org/publications/im01/im01_03.htm

Services to Pregnant Women Participating in Early Head Start
http://www.headstartinfo.org/publications/im02/im02_04.htm

Final Rule on Head Start Transportation
http://www.headstartinfo.org/publications/im01/im01_01.htm

Services to Families with Limited English Proficiency
http://www.headstartinfo.org/publications/im01/im01_02.htm

Financial Management Issues in Head Start Programs Utilizing Other Sources of Funding
http://www.headstartinfo.org/publications/im01/im01_06.htm

Head Start Family Worker Training and Credentialing
http://www.headstartinfo.org/publications/im01/im01_08.htm

Applicability of the Fair Labor Standards Act to Head Start and EHS Grantees
http://www.headstartinfo.org/publications/im01/pi01_01.htm

Child Development Services During Home Visits and Socializations in the Early Head Start Home-Based Program Option
http://www.headstartinfo.org/publications/im00/im00_22.htm

Final Rule on Purchase of Head Start Facilities and Proposed Rule for Construction and Renovation of Head Start Facilities
http://www.headstartinfo.org/publications/im99/imcont99.htm

Guidance on the Interpretation of Federal Public Benefit
http://www.headstartinfo.org/publications/im98/im98_12.htm

National Highway Safety Traffic Administration (NHSTA) Bus Safety
http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov/people/injury/buses/
This site provides updates from the NHSTA on regulations regarding drivers, vehicle operation, and occupant safety for buses.

State Child Care Profiles and Licensing Regulations
http://www.nccic.org/statepro.html
The U.S. map at this site provides links to profiles for each state. Each state profile includes

demographic information about child care, as well as contact information for different state agencies, including licensing and regulatory agencies, involved in child care.

45 CFR 74 - Uniform Grants Administration Regulations
http://www.access.gpo.gov/nara/cfr/waisidx_99/45cfr74_99.html
This site provides uniform administrative requirements for awards and subawards to institutions of higher education, hospitals, other nonprofit organizations, and commercial organizations; and certain grants and agreements with States, local governments, and Indian tribal governments.

45 CFR 92 - Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements to State and Local Governments
http://www.access.gpo.gov/nara/cfr/waisidx_99/45cfr92_99.html

REVIEW-RELATED FORMS AND INFORMATION

Head Start Reviews Web site
http://www.headstartreviews.com/
From this page, team leaders and reviewers have access to the following forms, documents, and links, via Danya International Inc., the monitoring support contractor:

Reviewer Code of Conduct
http://www.headstartreviews.com/docs/CodeofConduct_Nov2002r3.pdf

Travel Expense Form
http://www.headstartreviews.com/docs/TER.pdf

Certificate of Performance
http://www.headstartreviews.com/docs/cop.pdf

Mileage Log
http://www.headstartreviews.com/docs/MileageLog.pdf

Policy Updates Affecting Head Start Reviewers
http://www.headstartreviews.com/policies.asp

Frequently Asked Questions about Head Start Reviews
http://www.headstartreviews.com/faqs.asp

Monitoring Toolkit
http://www.headstartreviews.com/mt.asp

Disabilities Toolkit
http://www.headstartreviews.com/dt.asp

Early Head Start Toolkit
http://www.headstartreviews.com/et.asp

Team Leader Web site
http://www.headstartreviews.com/
This URL also provides access to the password-protected **Team Leader Web site**. Click on FTL home and enter your ID and Password. Then, click on the PRISM Training and Support Contract to enter the PRISM Home Page. From the **PRISM Home Page**, you have access to PRISM training materials, manuals, minutes from National Monitoring Workgroup conference calls, and Head Start Monitoring reports.

Also, from the password-secure portion of the **Team Leader Web** site (http://www.headstartreviews.com/), you can click on the Monitoring Support Contract link to access the Regional Office/FTL Main Page provided by Danya, Inc., (also, see above at Head Start Reviews). This page provides links to **Head Start Review Tracking System** data, the **Grantee Profile**, the **Review Team Request Form**, **Incident Report Form**, and other reports, forms, and instructions.

Fiscal Assistant
http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/hsb/hsfa/
The Fiscal Assistant Web site provides authoritative information for Head Start managers and fiscal staff. Browse the site by fiscal topic. The site includes plain-language narratives that explain Head Start fiscal requirements, audit considerations, and related information, as well as answers to Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs),.

The site also features a Fiscal Assistant Library. Items in the Library include the Head Start Act, Office of Management and Budget circulars, Department of Health and Human Services regulations, Information Memoranda, Program Instructions, Departmental Appeals Board Decisions and more. The Fiscal Assistant Search Engine allows users to locate Library documents containing specific words, phrases, and regulation citations.

The Head Start Information and Publication Center
http://www.headstartinfo.org/infocenter/infocenter.htm
In addition to IMs and PIs, this Web site provides links to other useful documents, including program toolkits, a Federal Register Alert Archive, and an online request form to query their

Information Services team. For instance, Early Head Start tipsheets can be found at http://www.headstartinfo.org/infocenter/ehs_tipsheet/

Early Head Start National Resource Center Information Resources
http://www.ehsnrc.org/InformationResources/Index.htm
The information at this site includes print and video materials, research abstracts, and links to related Early Head Start World Wide Web resources. The material is organized according to the framework of the *Head Start Program Performance Standards*.

SOFTWARE

PRISM Head Start Monitoring Tracking System
http://www.air.org/hsware/prism/index.htm or, to access through ACF,
http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/hsb/grant/hsware/prism/index.htm
This site provides access to the PRISM software that assists team leaders and Head Start reviewers in organizing and recording their findings during reviews. Reviewers use PRISM to generate reports that summarize findings. PRISM software includes the text of the Performance Standards and allows users to search the standards by keyword. AIR provides technical support for reviewers and can be reached through their technical support hotline at 1-800-277-8552 or 202-944-5300 or via e-mail at hsware@air.org.

Grant Application Budget Instrument
http://www.air.org/hsware/gabi/index.htm
To access through ACF, http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/hsb/grant/hsware/gabi/index.htm
The Grant Application Budget Instrument (GABI) is a software application designed to simplify and expedite the grant application process.