



Administration for Children and Families
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services



FY 2016 Office of Head Start School Readiness Monitoring Protocol for Early Head Start Grantees with Successful HSKI-C Reviews



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INTRODUCTION

This Protocol monitors Grantee performance in promoting school readiness for children and families enrolled in Early Head Start (EHS). The School Readiness Protocol for EHS Programs is designed specifically for ***EHS Grantees that have had a successful HSKI-C review***; this Protocol is used only for EHS Grantees that are eligible to participate in the Differential Monitoring Process.

Head Start programs that have a successful HSKI-C Review Event and receive Differential Monitoring will be scheduled to receive an Environmental Health and Safety (EnvHS) Review Event and a CLASS® Review Event. Because EHS Grantees are not eligible for CLASS® Review Events, those that receive Differential Monitoring will receive an EnvHS Review Event and the School Readiness Protocol for EHS Programs.



The School Readiness Protocol for EHS Programs that have successfully completed the HSKI-C is a subset of the Comprehensive Services and School Readiness (CSSR)-EHS Protocol. The Protocol aligns with Key Performance Area (KPA) 3—*Providing High-Quality Caregiving, Teaching, and Learning*—in the CSSR-EHS Protocol.

	Identifying Child and Family Strengths and Needs
	Addressing Child and Family Needs
	Providing High-Quality Caregiving, Teaching, and Learning
	Planning for Transition

KPA 3, ***Providing High-Quality Caregiving, Teaching, and Learning***, focuses on teaching and responsive caregiving, use of the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework for Infants and Toddlers, and use and analysis of data that prepare children for kindergarten. Children enrolled in EHS center-based services benefit from ongoing learning experiences and responsive caregiving throughout the day provided by caregivers who are qualified to provide learning experiences that facilitate children’s development. Through this Protocol, information is collected from multiple sources to understand how the program uses assessment data to inform instruction. Specifically, the classroom observation focuses on curriculum implementation and high-quality instruction and caregiving. The review of school readiness data helps identify the program’s progress towards achieving goals related to achieving school readiness.

STRUCTURE OF THE PROTOCOL

Compliance Measures

The Protocol contains a series of Compliance Measures (CMs). CMs are the specific statements that individually and collectively assess the level of program performance for each KPA, focusing on one or more Federal regulations critical to the delivery of quality services and the development of strong management systems.

Targeted Questions

Targeted Questions (TQs) for each CM are designed to provide guidance to on-site Reviewers and ensure there is a standardized method for evidence collection. Reviewers are required to answer all TQs for each CM. The TQs indicate the people to interview, questions to ask, information to retrieve from documents, observations to conduct, and management systems to analyze in order to determine the level of Grantee performance. TQs related to CMs are identified by checkmarks in the Protocol.



Pilot of Quality Measures

The Fiscal Year (FY) 2016 CSSR-EHS Protocol also features a pilot to determine quality measures. The Office of Head Start (the OHS) is using this pilot to better understand the range of quality performance and collect information to establish a more accurate picture of Grantee performance. Historically, the OHS reviewed programs only to determine whether they met the requirements of the Head Start Program Performance Standards. As monitoring evolves, the OHS is incorporating more opportunities to observe the quality of program performance and provide Grantees with information to support ongoing program improvement. The goal of the OHS is to collect information to enable it to begin to build and test a continuum of quality. During the FY 2016 monitoring season, the OHS will collect information to support its understanding of the quality of practices across the Grantee community.

The quality measures are embedded throughout the Protocol and are represented as quality indicators by starred TQs.



Reviewer Analysis

The Protocol also includes analysis and follow-up questions to be used by Reviewers to understand how the data they have collected link together, identify patterns, and clarify information from data sources. Reviewers will assess answers to the TQs in each section to determine whether there are any patterns, discrepancies, or omissions in the data collected about the KPA. If needed, Reviewers will seek clarification about information and data and will follow up with program staff for clarification.

CSSR Protocol Legend	
Compliance	Compliance indicates those requirements reflective of a Head Start Program Performance Standard.
Quality	The pilot quality measures are used to understand and identify the range of quality.
Reviewer Analysis	The tool also includes analysis and follow-up questions to be used by the Reviewer to identify data patterns and clarify information from data sources.
(P)-Parent; (IST-M)-Integrated Service Team-Management; (D)-Director; (ECD)-Early Childhood Development Coordinator	

Key Performance Area #3

Providing High-Quality Teaching and Learning

Overview

Teachers must be qualified to provide high-quality teaching and learning strategies that are relationship-based, developmentally appropriate, and individualized to promote each child's learning and progress towards school readiness goals.

Providing High-Quality Caregiving, Teaching, and Learning means:

- Teaching staff understand how to use data to ensure that school readiness goals are met
- Teaching staff implement the curriculum with fidelity
- Teaching staff establish an engaging learning environment for children
- Teacher staff provide responsive caregiving to infants and toddlers

In this KPA, Reviewers will assess the program's effectiveness in aggregating and analyzing assessment data, implementing the curriculum with fidelity, hiring and supporting qualified teachers, and promoting learning through quality learning environments.

Key Performance Area 3.1

The program has taken steps to achieve the school readiness goals.

Compliance Measure 3.1.1

The program has a system and processes in place to:

Aggregate and Analyze the following:

- Aggregate child-level data at least three times a year using data from one or more valid and reliable assessment tools. (Programs operating fewer than 90 days are required to do so at least twice during their operating period.)
- Use the results to inform services.
- Analyze individual, ongoing child-level assessment data for all children birth to age 5.
- For programs serving dual-language learners (DLLs), determine status and progress in acquiring the knowledge and skills described in the Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework (demonstrated in any language, including the child's home language) and toward learning English.

Determine Progress by:

- Using aggregated child-level data in combination with other program data to determine the level of progress towards meeting goals
- Using individual child-level data in combination with input from parents and families to determine each child's status and progress in the five essential domains

Use School Readiness Data to:

- Individualize experiences, instructional strategies, and services to best support each child
- Assess fidelity of curriculum implementation
- Direct continuous improvement related to the effectiveness of the curriculum, instruction, professional development, and program design or other program decisions based on the analysis of school readiness outcomes data
- Inform parents and the community of the program's progress in achieving school readiness goals

Federal Regulations: 1307.3(b)(2)(i); 1307.3(b)(2)(ii)

✓ Compliance Measure 3.1.2

The program has engaged in a process to align its school readiness goals with the Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework, State Early Learning guidelines, and the requirements and expectations of the schools the children will attend to the extent that they apply to children participating in the EHS or Head Start program and has consulted with the parents of children participating in the program.

Federal Regulations: 1307.3(b)(1)(i); 1307.3(b)(1)(ii); 1307.3(b)(1)(iii)

Key Performance Area #3
Providing High-Quality Teaching and Learning (*continued*)

Key Performance Area 3.2
Teachers provide high-quality instruction and caregiving.

✓ **Compliance Measure 3.2.1**

The program hires teachers with the required qualifications, training, and experience.
Federal Regulation: 645A(h)(1-2)

✓ **Compliance Measure 3.2.2**

Each teacher's approach to Child Development and Education (CDE) is developmentally and linguistically appropriate and demonstrates an understanding that children have individual rates of development, interests, temperaments, languages, cultural backgrounds, and learning styles.
Federal Regulation: 1304.21(a)(1)(i)

✓ **Compliance Measure 3.2.3**

The program implements with fidelity a curriculum that:

- Promotes young children's school readiness in the areas of language and cognitive development, early reading and mathematics skills, socio-emotional development, physical development, and approaches to learning
- Is evidence-based and linked to ongoing assessment, with developmental and learning goals and measurable objectives
- Focuses on improving the learning environment, teaching practices, family involvement, and child outcomes across all areas of development

Federal Regulations: 642(f)(3)(A,C,D)

Key Performance Area 3.3
The classroom environment promotes high-quality instruction.

✓ **Compliance Measure 3.3.1**

The teacher provides a balanced daily program of child-initiated and adult-directed activities, including individual and small-group activities.
Federal Regulation: 1304.21 (a)(1)(iv)

✓ **Compliance Measure 3.3.2**

The learning space provided by the Grantee and its delegate agencies is organized into functional areas that can be recognized by the children and allow for individual activities and social interactions.
Federal Regulation: 1304.53 (a)(3)

Key Performance Area #3
Providing High-Quality Teaching and Learning
**Targeted Questions: Integrated Service Team
Management Interview**

Key Performance Area 3.1
The program has taken steps to achieve the school readiness goals.

STAFF SUPERVISION AND SCHOOL READINESS GOALS

- ✔ How do you provide effective training for staff on achieving school readiness goals?
- ✔ How do you supervise and monitor teachers/home visitors to ensure children and families are making progress towards their goals?

Key Performance Area #3
Providing High-Quality Teaching and Learning
Targeted Questions: Director and ECD Coordinator Interview

Overview

The Director and ECD Coordinator work together with teachers and home visitors to define, assess, and improve the program's progress towards meeting school readiness goals. This interview is designed to gather information about how the program plans and makes progress towards its school readiness goals. Discussions during the interview will center on how the curriculum, staff resources, ongoing support, and aggregated data analyses work together to help the program make progress towards its school readiness goals.

Key Performance Area 3.1
The program has taken steps to achieve the school readiness goals.

SCHOOL READINESS GOALS

- ✔ What are your school readiness goals?
- ✔ How did you develop these goals?
- ✔ Have they changed or been modified over time?

With the interview group, review the aggregated data analyses and the progress made towards achieving two selected school readiness goals.

AGGREGATE DATA ANALYSES

- ✔ When assessing the aggregated data, do you look at data for specific groups of children (e.g., DLLs)?
- ✔ How do you collect child-level school readiness data from each teacher?
- ✔ How often do you complete aggregated school readiness data analyses?

ONGOING IMPROVEMENT

- ✔ What improvements have you made in the following areas based on your analysis of school readiness outcomes (include specific examples and document them in notes):
 - Curriculum and instruction
 - Professional development
 - Program design
 - Other program decisions
- ✔ Based on the changes you've described, have you seen progress toward achieving your school readiness goals?
 - If yes, describe the progress made.
 - If no, what additional improvements or changes, if any, do you plan to make in order to achieve progress towards your goals?
- ★ Describe how your program tracks family participation in home-school connections (volunteering in the classroom, learning extensions, field trips, home activities that relate to the curriculum, parenting skills development, etc.) in concert with individual child-progress data to identify patterns and improve planning.

Key Performance Area #3
Providing High-Quality Teaching and Learning
Targeted Questions: Director and ECD Coordinator Interview (*continued*)

Key Performance Area 3.2
Teachers provide high-quality instruction and caregiving.

CURRICULUM SELECTION

- ✓ List the curricula the program utilizes for each program option and age group.
- ✓ Does each curriculum meet the following criteria:
 - Aligns with the program’s school readiness goals
 - Is appropriate for the program option and age group of the children
 - Links to ongoing assessment
 - Includes developmental and learning goals and measurable objectives

CURRICULUM IMPLEMENTATION

- ✓ Describe the type of training available to staff in implementing the curriculum as designed.
- ✓ Describe the process for evaluating the fidelity of curriculum implementation.
- ✓ How does the teacher/home visitor use the fidelity tools associated with the curriculum?
- ✓ Provide examples of how teaching staff implement the domains of the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework for Infants and Toddlers:
 - Approaches to Learning
 - Social and Emotional Development
 - Language and Communication
 - Cognition
 - Perceptual, Motor, and Physical Development

ONGOING SUPPORT

- ✓ Describe:
 - Methods of providing ongoing development and support to teachers/home visitors
 - How often you observe teachers/home visitors and what you do with the information from the observations
- ★ How has the program benefited as a result of professional development opportunities provided for teachers/home visitors?
- ★ What do you do if an infant or toddler does not exhibit signs of attachment to his or her teacher?
- ★ What do you do if a teacher does not exhibit signs of attachment to a child in his or her care?

TEACHER RECRUITING, HIRING, AND RETENTION

- ★ What does your program do to hire and retain competent, qualified teachers/home visitors?
- ★ Please describe your program’s promotion opportunities, pay incentives, and other benefits.
- ★ How does your program develop members of the community to become qualified as teachers/home visitors?

Key Performance Area 3.3
The classroom environment promotes high-quality instruction.

- ★ How do you ensure teachers promote quality interactions during transition periods such as eating, toileting, oral care, and hygiene?
- ✓ How do you ensure each classroom environment (e.g., the toys, materials, furniture, etc.) promotes developmentally appropriate practice and instruction?
- ✓ How do you ensure the classroom environment (e.g., the toys, materials, furniture, etc.) is responsive to the cultural and ethnic diversity of the children in each classroom?

Key Performance Area #3
Providing High-Quality Teaching and Learning
Targeted Questions: Parent Group Interview

Key Performance Area 3.1

The program has developed a system for establishing, tracking, and reporting on school readiness goals.

SCHOOL READINESS

- ✔ What do you know about the school readiness goals for your child?
- ✔ How do you know whether your child is making developmental progress?
- ✔ Do you think your child will be ready for kindergarten? Please explain.
- ✔ Describe how the program informs you and the community of its progress towards achieving school readiness goals.

Key Performance Area 3.2

Teachers provide high-quality instruction and caregiving.

- ★ Is your child attached to his or her teacher? Is your child's teacher attached to your child? How do you know?

CURRICULUM IMPLEMENTATION

- ✔ Do you think your child's teacher/home visitor offers learning experiences for your child based on your child's interests and learning needs?

TEACHER RECRUITING, HIRING, AND RETENTION

- ★ Have you, or has anyone that you know, expressed interest in working as a teacher or in other positions in the program?
- ★ What was the program's response?
- ★ What kinds of training opportunities does the program provide to enable parents to become teachers/home visitors?

 **Reviewer Analysis**

Analysis and Follow-Up Questions

- ▶ *Do parents understand school readiness goals, assessment, curriculum, and teaching strategies?*
- ▶ *Are teachers/home visitors allowing parents time and space to communicate concerns, and are those concerns being addressed?*
- ▶ *Does the program's management provide support for teachers/home visitors to connect with parents?*

Key Performance Area #3
Providing High-Quality Teaching and Learning
Classroom Observation

Overview

The purpose of the classroom observation is to supplement the information learned through child-file reviews and interviews. Through the classroom observation, the Reviewer will observe how the teacher individualizes learning experiences to meet the needs of each child, implements the curriculum with fidelity, and demonstrates flexibility in his or her response to any situation that may arise. As part of this process, the Reviewer will also review a portfolio of caregiving/classroom information, such as daily reports, lesson plans, and schedules, to support his or her observation. The classroom teacher will also participate in a brief interview following the observation.

Methodology

Reviewers will conduct an on-site document review for the classrooms selected for observation. The following documents will be reviewed:

- ✓ Lesson Plan
- ✓ Classroom Schedule
- ✓ Teacher Qualifications
- ✓ Daily Reports on Infants and Toddlers

Fidelity to curriculum implementation will be assessed based on:

- Document review
- Classroom observations

Each observation will last approximately 30 minutes. (The Reviewer will spend time before the observation reviewing classroom-specific documents.) Following the observation, the Reviewer will ask questions about professional development, child progress, and ongoing support. Questions may be asked to help the Reviewer understand instructional support for DLLs, if applicable. During this process, the Reviewer will also conduct a brief environmental scan and capture information that includes:

- Structure of the classroom (i.e., learning centers/interest areas)
- Diversity of materials
- Opportunities for individual and small- and large-group activities
- Overall health and safety

Key Performance Area 3.2
Teachers provide high-quality instruction and caregiving.

CLASSROOM OBSERVATION

- ✓ Is the environment aligned with the curriculum?
- ✓ Is the lesson plan aligned with the curriculum's scope and sequence?
- ✓ Is the schedule being followed, and does it allow for flexible responses based on the needs of each child and the group?
- ✓ Does the teacher implement the lesson plan?
- ✓ Does the teacher use the recommended materials?
- ✓ Are there written individual care plans for infants and toddlers?
- ✓ Is the environment rich with language so that children hear words and language describing experiences (e.g., talking during transitions)?
- ✓ Does the teacher use transition periods to promote quality interactions and learning?

Classroom Observation
Key Performance Area 3.2
Teachers provide high-quality instruction and caregiving. (continued)

PROVIDER DEBRIEF QUESTIONS

- ✔ As you implement your lesson plans, how do you consider each child's progress?
- ✔ Describe how the program uses your professional development plan (PDP) to encourage your growth as a teacher.
- ★ Do you feel supported by the program?

For Teachers Serving Dual Language Learners

LINGUISTIC RESPONSIVENESS

What do you do if you do not speak the language of the children in your classroom?

Key Performance Area 3.3
The classroom environment promotes high-quality instruction.

- ✔ Does the teacher adapt, as needed, to meet individual and group needs?
- ✔ Does the classroom environment provide opportunities for individual and small-group experiences to meet the needs of children?
- ✔ Does the teacher have a classroom schedule that includes time for child-initiated and adult-directed activities?
- ★ Describe how the classroom reflects the ethnic and cultural diversity of the teachers and children.

Key Performance Area #3
Providing High-Quality Teaching and Learning
Infant and Toddler Teacher Qualifications Review
(Document Review During the Director and ECD Coordinator Interviews)

Overview

The purpose of the teacher-qualification review is to verify that the teachers responsible for ensuring the provision of high-quality caregiving, teaching, and learning have the necessary education and experience to promote infant and toddler development. The Reviewer will review the qualifications of teachers and PDPs for teachers not meeting the qualifications.

Methodology

Reviewers will conduct the teacher-qualification review during the Director and ECD Coordinator interviews to determine the qualifications of providers. The following documents will be reviewed:

- ✔ Teacher Qualification Tracking Document
Copies of documentation confirming the qualifications of the teacher or the PDP for any teacher who does not meet the qualifications

Targeted Questions

TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS

Review the Tracking Document.

- ✔ Do all teachers have a minimum of a current Child Development Associate (CDA) credential and training (or equivalent coursework) in ECD, with a focus on infant and toddler development?
- ✔ *For staff who do not meet the minimum qualifications, are PDPs designed to ensure achievement of qualifications, or are such staff persons actively pursuing CDAs or enrolled in higher education programs?*

Key Performance Area #3
Providing High-Quality Instruction: Assessment Criteria

Key Performance Area 3.1
The program has taken steps to achieve the school readiness goals.

- ✔ *Assessment Criteria:*
 - Does the program:
 - Involve parents in the goal-setting process?
 - Consider each child’s baseline assessment?
 - Track and report each child’s progress?

Key Performance Area 3.2
Teachers provide high-quality instruction and caregiving.

- ✔ *Assessment Criteria:*
 - *Does the program:*
 - Select an evidence-based curriculum?
 - Implement the curriculum with fidelity?
 - Ensure that teachers meet the qualifications?
 - Have at least one teacher in the classroom with the ability to speak the language of the dominant culture?

Key Performance Area 3.3
The classroom environment promotes high-quality instruction.

- ✔ *Assessment Criteria:*
 - *Does the program:*
 - Have a room arrangement that facilitates learning?
 - Have diverse and engaging learning materials?
 - Have a structure that facilitates individual and small-group learning experiences?

Key Performance Area #3
Providing High-Quality Teaching and Learning
★ **Quality Measures**

QUALITY MEASURE FOR KPA 3.1

- ★ The program tracks family participation in home-school connections (e.g., volunteering in the classroom, learning extensions, field trips, home activities that relate to the curriculum, parenting skills development, etc.) in concert with individual child-progress data to identify patterns and improve planning.

QUALITY MEASURE FOR KPA 3.2

- ★ The program provides opportunities for teachers to enhance their ability to provide high-quality instruction and caregiving that include:
 - Developing and implementing an effective plan to hire and develop qualified staff
 - Providing opportunities for promotion, pay incentives, and other benefits
 - Offering training opportunities to members of the community to become qualified as Head Start teachers
 - Supporting teachers in forming meaningful relationships with children

QUALITY MEASURES FOR KPA 3.3

- ★ The program assesses the number of daily transitions and how much time children spend transitioning. The program works to promote quality interactions during transition periods (e.g., eating, toileting, and oral care). These moments offer great opportunities for quality interactions that promote teaching and learning.
- ★ The classroom environment reflects the ethnic and cultural diversity of the families and children.