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INFORMATION MEMORANDUM

TO: All Head Start and Early Head Start Recipients

SUBJECT: Fiscal Year (FY) 2023 Monitoring Process for Head Start and Early Head Start Recipients

INFORMATION:

[Section 641A](#) of the Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007 requires the Office of Head Start (OHS) to implement ongoing monitoring of all programs receiving federal funds. OHS recognizes that grant recipients are recovering from and continue to face multiple challenges as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. In FY 2023, OHS will conduct Focus Area 1 (FA1) and Focus Area 2 (FA2) reviews and Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS®) video pilot and CLASS tribal pilot.

This Information Memorandum outlines the OHS monitoring process for FY 2023 and introduces the CLASS pilots to be conducted. For the FY 2023 review only, OHS is suspending the use of CLASS scores for [Designation Renewal System \(DRS\)](#) determinations.

On-site review monitors will follow U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention health and safety guidelines. OHS is committed to partnering with grant recipients when preparing for on-site reviews to maintain a safe environment for children, families, and staff within the program.

FY 2023 Monitoring Reviews

Review Type	FY 2023 Implementation	Start Date
FA1	FA1 reviews will be conducted through a virtual format.	November 2022
FA2	FA2 reviews will be conducted using a hybrid model, which is a combination of on-site and virtual monitoring for the FY23.	October 2022
CLASS Video Pilot	CLASS reviews will be conducted as part of a video pilot for the FY23. Scores will not be used for DRS determinations.	October 2022

Review Type	FY 2023 Implementation	Start Date
CLASS American Indian and Alaska Native (AIAN) Self-review Pilot	AIAN CLASS reviews will be conducted in a self-review pilot for the FY23.	November 2022
Follow-up Reviews	Follow-up reviews will be conducted either in-person or virtually by the OHS regional office.	Start dates will coincide with the end of the corrective action period.
AIAN Reevaluations	AIAN reevaluation reviews will be conducted either in-person or virtually by the OHS Regional Office.	Start dates will coincide with the Tribal DRS Consultation process and Plan to Improve Quality.
Other	OHS reserves the right to conduct special off-site or on-site reviews	TBD, as needed

FA1 Reviews

The FA1 review is an opportunity for recipients to discuss their program design, management, and governance structure. This focus area develops OHS’s understanding of each recipient’s foundation for program services. Recipients describe approaches to staffing structure, program design and governance, health and family services, and fiscal infrastructure.

FA2 Reviews

The FA2 review is an opportunity for recipients to demonstrate their effectiveness in implementing a high-quality program to promote positive outcomes and school readiness for children and their families. This focus area broadens OHS’s understanding of each recipient’s performance. It also determines if programs are meeting the requirements of the Head Start Program Performance Standards, Uniform Guidance, and Head Start Act.

CLASS

In FY 2023, OHS is conducting CLASS video and tribal pilots. The pilots engage recipients in the CLASS review process, determine the viability of video reviews, ensure cultural sensitivity, and provide scores and information to support recipient professional development. They also allow OHS to better understand the experiences of Head Start programs during the pandemic in a way that is positive, proactive, and supportive. The CLASS video and tribal pilots offer additional insight into programs serving children, families, and communities that have been disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The CLASS video pilot allows recipients to upload videos for scoring through OHS-designated software. Recipients who would have been scheduled for an on-site CLASS review in FY 2023 are selected to participate in the pilot. They will receive a letter with detailed instructions on video submission, technology requirements, and other general participation instructions. Recipients who are not selected for the pilot but who would like to participate can be added to a waitlist in case a slot becomes available. The tribal pilot does not currently include video.

Scheduling

Each year, recipients are required to submit an accurate calendar of availability. The information is used to schedule monitoring reviews by OHS regional office staff. The availability calendar also gives recipients a way to inform OHS as to when their program is not operational and when children are not in session. Recipients should update their calendars as changes in program availability occur. Please note that OHS is unable to accommodate requests to reschedule reviews. OHS also reserves the right to conduct unannounced reviews at any time.

Recipients scheduled to receive a monitoring review in FY 2023 will receive a notification letter at least 45 days prior to the start of the event. Recipients can expect a planning call with their assigned review lead to discuss their FA2 review. During the initial call, recipients may share their program's current service delivery options and any changes as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Advancing Equity

As one of our top priorities, OHS is focused on advancing equity, supporting programs' pandemic response and recovery, investing in the workforce, and reaching more children and families. Head Start programs lead their communities in advancing equity by providing services that support the development of the whole child cognitively, physically, socially, and emotionally, and by implementing systems that promote an inclusive culture. OHS is committed to advancing equity for all eligible individuals to support historically underserved communities.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the FY 2023 monitoring season, please contact your regional office.

Thank you for the work you do on behalf of children and families.

/ Katie Hamm /

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