

HOUSEKEEPING ITEMS

- All participants are in listen-only mode.
- Participate in discussion via chat.
- Submit all questions via Q&A.

A screenshot of a meeting control bar with three icons: a speech bubble for 'Chat', a hand for 'Raise Hand', and a speech bubble with a question mark for 'Q&A'. Two blue callout boxes point to the 'Chat' and 'Q&A' icons.

Participate in discussion with the presenters here.

Ask your questions here.

Expectations for the 2022-2023 Program Year



Office of Head Start Priorities

Advancing
Equity

- Foster belonging by identifying and addressing barriers and promoting new pathways for family stability

Supporting Programs' Pandemic Response and Recovery

- Work to safely restore in-person programming in healthy environments

Investing in the Workforce

- Sustain highly effective and representative workforce to support all children and families

Reaching More Children and Families

- Focus Head Start services in places with greatest need



Today's Presenters

- Dr. Bernadine Futrell, director, Office of Head Start
- Heather Wanderski, director, Program Operations Division
- Adia Brown, supervisory social science analyst
- Kate Troy, senior program specialist
- Larissa Zoot, program operations manager



Session Overview

- Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS®)
- Full Enrollment Initiative
- Interim Final Rule with Comment Period (IFC) Updates
- Resources
- Q&A



Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS®)

The Office of Head Start (OHS) will conduct CLASS® reviews during the 2022-2023 program year (PY) but will not use the scores from these reviews to make competitive determinations under the Designation Renewal System (DRS).

The trauma that children, families, and staff have faced, the reduced time children have spent in group settings, and workforce challenges are among the many considerations for PY 2022-23.

Mental health supports and opportunities for social and emotional development are paramount to recovery, response, and renewal efforts.

As such, OHS will use the scores from CLASS® reviews to:

- Understand experiences of children in Head Start classrooms
- Offer training and technical assistance to build on existing program efforts to enhance teacher-child interactions



Supporting Social and Emotional Development

Head Start programs play a vital role in supporting the mental health and social and emotional wellness of children, families, and staff. Building relationships and creating supportive learning environments for children facilitate the development of social skills, emotional literacy, self-regulation, and problem-solving. Relationships are the foundation for children's learning and high-quality teacher-child interactions are essential to supporting children's social and emotional development.

For staff, feeling supported and experiencing successes in their work can aid in a positive relationship between staff and leadership, promote a successful work environment, and retain high-performing staff.



Support and Resources

[CLASS® Quality Improvement](#)

[Social and Emotional Learning](#)

[CLASS® QI for Emotional Support](#)

[Social and Emotional Development](#)

[CLASS® QI for Classroom Organization](#)

[Approaches to Learning](#)

[CLASS® QI for Instructional Support](#)

[Mental Health Resources](#)

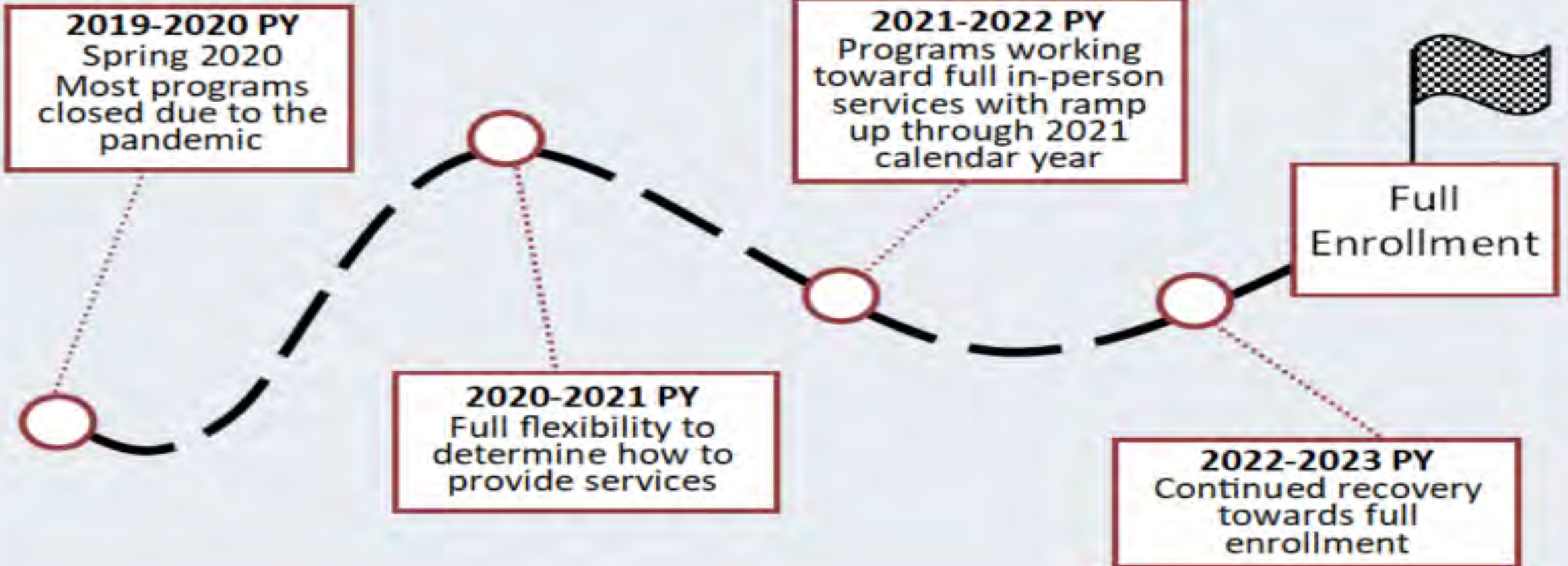
[CLASS® QI for Leaders](#)

[Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework \(ELOF\): Ages Birth to Five](#)

[Learn More About the CLASS®](#)



Road to Recovery



Preparing for the 2022-2023 Program Year

As Head Start programs continue to navigate the COVID-19 pandemic, OHS is approaching the 2022-2023 PY focused on the mission to provide high-quality services in safe and healthy settings that prepare children for school and life.

OHS recognizes that community needs may have changed. Therefore, it is important that programs regularly update their community assessment to reflect current needs, trends, and characteristics of the Head Start-eligible children and families in the service area. This data should then be used to inform programmatic decisions, including planning, service delivery, recruitment and selection criteria, program options, location of centers, staffing patterns, etc.



Full Enrollment Initiative

Beginning September 2022, OHS will resume pre-pandemic practices for tracking and monitoring enrollment. This includes evaluating monthly enrollment reports to determine which programs enter into the Full Enrollment Initiative.

- All instances of prior underenrollment will reset in September 2022. If a recipient was participating in the Full Enrollment Initiative prior to the pandemic, OHS will reset their enrollment status.
- Recipients previously designated as chronically underenrolled will no longer carry this designation and will also have their enrollment status reset
- Reported enrollment in September 2022 is the first month of enrollment OHS will evaluate as part of the Full Enrollment Initiative.
- Initial focus on recipients who are significantly underenrolled — serving less than half their funded enrollment.

Enrollment, 45 CFR §1302.15
Determining program structure, 45 CFR §1302.20(b)



Full Enrollment Initiative in MSHS Programs

Migrant and Seasonal Head Start (MSHS) program enrollment determinations are based on cumulative enrollment at the end of each budget period. As such, during this time of recovery, MSHS program enrollment reports for inclusion in the Full Enrollment Initiative will be evaluated from September 2023 through August 2024.



Full Enrollment Initiative and Staffing

The Head Start workforce has the immense responsibility of performing a job that supports young children's early learning, health, mental health, and family well-being. OHS is committed to promoting and prioritizing supports for staff. As programs continue to move toward comprehensive in-person services and address workforce challenges brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic, staff well-being is an essential component along with other available resources.

- Teacher qualification waiver for Head Start staff
- Active professional development plan
- Apprenticeship program
- Public Service Load Forgiveness (PSLF)
- Financial incentives for staff



Recruitment and Selection

As grant recipients look to summer programming and PY 2022-2023, OHS expects programs to prioritize recruiting eligible children and families. The number of children and families in poverty has grown significantly. All recipients should update their community assessment to guide recruitment efforts and ensure programs are reaching families most in need. OHS encourages programs to evaluate additional strategies, like:

- Review and revise strategic approach
- Ensure services are responsive to community need
- Communicate with families and encourage their input
- Update selection criteria
- Expand marketing
- Develop new partnerships



SNAP Eligibility for Head Start Services

As referenced in [ACF-IM-HS-22-03](#), the Office of Head Start is including receipt of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits in the interpretation of “public assistance” when determining Head Start eligibility.

- A program’s policies and procedures may need to be updated to ensure their eligibility determinations are meeting all the requirements under 45 CFR § 1302 Subpart A
- Programs may also examine community partnerships and outreach efforts for ways to encourage SNAP recipients to apply for Head Start services
- SNAP recipients are now eligible for Head Start services but are not guaranteed a spot. Programs must rely on their selection criteria to prioritize those most in need of services for enrollment
- To verify SNAP receipt or potential eligibility, programs must examine and maintain documentation from state, local, or tribal public assistance agency (45 CFR § 1302.12(i)(2))
 - A copy of SNAP notice of approval; or
 - Other documentation of eligibility or benefits from the SNAP agency; or
 - An Electronic Benefit Transfer card with SNAP ID number



Support and Resources

[Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment, and Attendance \(ERSEA\)](#)

[ERSEA Assessment Tool](#)

[ERSEA: Strategies During A Pandemic](#)

[#GetaHeadStart Recruitment Resources](#)

[Poverty Guidelines and Determining Eligibility](#)

[ERSEA: Maintaining Full Enrollment](#)

[Community Assessment: The Foundation for Program Planning in Head Start](#)

[Community Assessment Matrix](#)

[Foundations for Excellence](#)

[Head Start Parent, Family, and Community Engagement Framework](#)

[Promoting Staff Well-being](#)

[Creating a Staff Wellness Action Plan](#)



IFC: Mask Requirements Updates

- Wearing a mask continues to be a key strategy to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 in Head Start programs. Head Start programs serve children under 5 years of age, who are not yet eligible for vaccination.
- At this time, Head Start programs should continue to follow the requirements laid out in the IFC in all states not subject to preliminary injunctions.
- The pause on monitoring for compliance with the mask requirement remains.
 - OHS will receive at least two weeks' notice prior to implementing any changes.



IFC: General Updates

OHS received more than 2,700 comments on the Interim Final Rule with Comment Period. We appreciate receiving feedback on the IFC and value your input.

- We are currently drafting and clearing a final rule, which takes time.
- We do not yet have an estimated publication date.



OHS will not be using scores from CLASS[®] reviews to make competitive determinations. Will CLASS[®] quality thresholds be addressed?

No. The process for responding to CLASS[®] quality thresholds is paused as well. However, if there are general concerns around CLASS[®] scores, OHS will offer training and technical assistance intended to build on a program's quality improvement efforts.



When will OHS resume using scores from CLASS[®] reviews to make competitive determinations under the DRS?

OHS will provide ample notice to programs to allow for training and professional development in learning environments before resuming the use of CLASS[®] scores for the purpose of making competitive determinations under the DRS.



We are still experiencing outbreaks of COVID-19. How should we manage programming?

In cases where a program is experiencing high COVID-19 transmission in their service area, programs may temporarily use virtual and remote services. All programs are expected to have plans in place to adjust for changes in community conditions, such as high community transmission of COVID-19, that may result in temporary use of virtual and remote services for a short-term basis. These plans must be established within a program's policies and procedures.

Virtual and remote services can create instability and stress for children and families, as they disrupt children's opportunities for learning, socialization, nutrition, continuity, and routine. As such, programs must communicate with their Regional Office about any proposed short-term use of virtual or remote services in response to a surge or high transmission in COVID-19 cases. Further, programs would need to reassess with their program specialist should their virtual and remote services extend beyond two weeks.



Does the Office of Head Start have recommendations on how to best use Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations (CRRSA) and American Rescue Plan (ARP) funding?

- Incentives to Staff
- Staff Wellness and Mental Health Support
- Enrollment and Recruitment
- Family Supports
- Cleaning Supplies and Services
- Additional Classroom and/or Outdoor Space
- Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning (HVAC)
- Supplies
- Transportation



Does OHS expect full enrollment?

Yes. OHS is committed to preparing the most vulnerable children to succeed by providing grant recipients with resources needed to deliver services to children and families in core areas of early learning, health, and family well-being. To achieve this, Head Start programs must provide services to 100% of the children they are funded to serve. Section [642\(g\)](#) of the Head Start Act requires each Head Start agency to enroll 100% of its funded enrollment and maintain an active waiting list at all times with ongoing outreach to the community and activities to identify underserved populations.



If my program is underenrolled, when will I be placed on an underenrollment plan?

OHS will resume tracking and monitoring monthly enrollment beginning September 2022. Recipients with four or more consecutive months of underenrollment will receive an Underenrollment Letter from the Regional Office. This could be as soon as January 2023. During this 12-month period, recipients must develop a plan and timetable for reducing or eliminating underenrollment, in collaboration with the Regional Office. Successful completion of an underenrollment plan would conclude if a recipient is able to achieve and maintain at least 97% enrollment for six consecutive months following the 12-month period.



If my program is not significantly underenrolled, does the Full Enrollment Initiative apply to me?

Yes. The Full Enrollment Initiative applies to any program that is underenrolled. Beginning September 2022, OHS will resume tracking and monitoring monthly enrollment reports to determine which programs enter into the Full Enrollment Initiative. Engagement with programs with higher rates of enrollment will occur. However, the initial focus will be on recipients who are significantly underenrolled — serving less than half their funded enrollment. All recipients will be evaluated within a year.



Does the vaccine requirement apply to Part B/C providers (i.e., special education and related service providers for preschooler and infants and toddlers)?

No. These providers are not covered by the vaccine requirement. Part B/C providers are not considered staff of the Head Start program and there is no contractual relationship.



How should programs implement the vaccine requirement for partners, such as school districts or other partnerships in service delivery at this point in the year, understanding that contracts and memoranda of understanding (MOUs) are in place?

Early Head Start-Child Care Partnerships are covered to the same extent as standard Head Start and Early Head Start programs. For other provider relationships, programs should work to resolve issues with contracts or MOUs, including for staff working with enrolled children, that arise from the IFC in a manner that minimizes disruption of services to children and families for the balance of PY 2021-2022. Programs should make decisions that cause the least amount of disruption and also support ways to safely get through this program year.



