



A New Reality?
The Designation Renewal System in Year 4
Emmalie Dropkin
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NHSA Center for Policy, Data, and Research

A strong and sustainable future for Head Start will mean the success of generations of children who might otherwise struggle throughout their lives. Their future success rests on the knowledge, commitment and collaboration of families, programs, researchers, and policymakers.

To that end, the mission of the Center for Policy, Data, and Research is to **curate knowledge about Head Start to support Head Start programs as leaders** and to **share their wisdom and experience** widely; to **generate new analyses and reflections** on program and policy priorities; and to **strengthen dialogue and collaboration** between Head Start practitioners and researchers.

Agenda

- What is DRS?
- Who's competed?
- Why did they compete?
- What happened when they competed?
- DRS Advocacy
- Approaching Competition
- Conversation and Questions

What is DRS?

- When the Head Start Act was revised by Congress in 2007, it included a call for the Office of Head Start to develop a “Designation Renewal System” that would look at a program’s budget and spending, program reviews, classroom quality, and other information and then decide:
- Programs considered “high-quality” would be given a 5 year grant
- Programs considered “not to be delivering high-quality” would have to compete with other potential Head Start providers in their communities for their funding
- Tribal programs would go through a different process
- The plan for the system took several years to develop, and the first group of programs who competed under the “DRS” were told they would compete in December 2011
- This past December, the fourth group of programs were notified they would compete

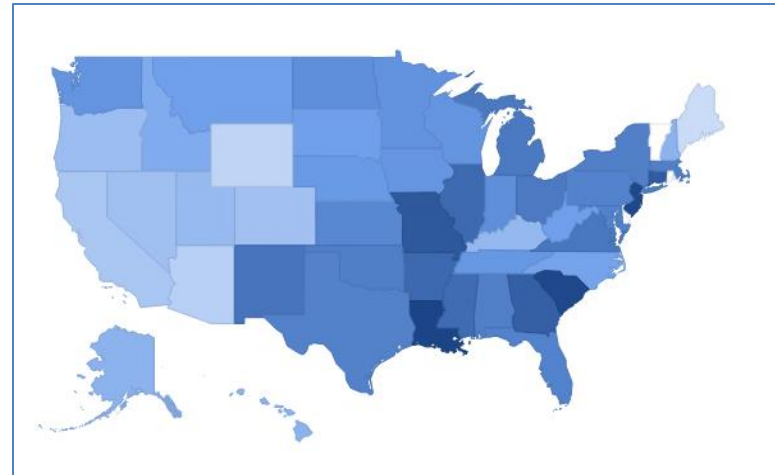
What is DRS?

The DRS has 7 “Triggers” that can cause a program to have to compete:

- A Deficiency on a Program Review
- Failure to create School Readiness goals or not taking steps to reach those school readiness goals
- Low CLASS scores, EITHER:
 - Below a set of thresholds (4 for Emotional Support, 3 for Classroom Organization, 2 for Instructional Support on a 7 point scale)
 - In the lowest 10% of all Head Start programs nationally (in 2013, 5.5417 for ES, 5.0556 for CS, 2.1061 for IS)
- License Revoked
- Suspension by the Office of Head Start
- Debarred from receiving state or federal funds or Disqualified from CACFP
- Audit finding of being at risk of failing to continue functioning as a Going Concern

Who's Competed?

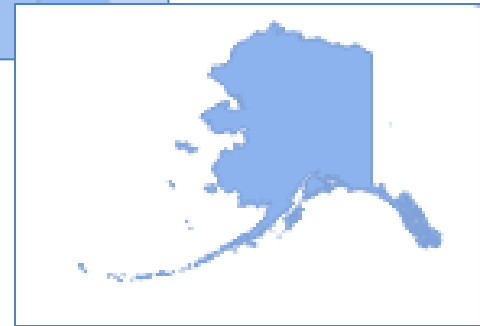
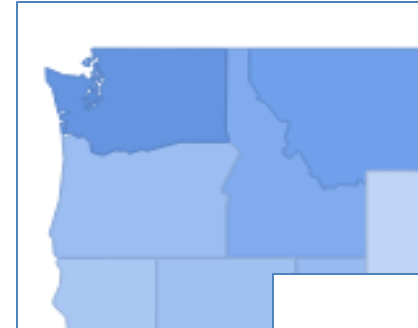
- 129 grantees competed in cohort 1
- 126 grantees competed in cohort 2
- 103 grantees are competing in cohort 3
- 87 grantees are competing in cohort 4
- Nationally, 31.1% of grantees have gone into competition (excluding AIAN)
- States range from 0% of grantees competed to 51%
- The map shows the percent of all non-AIAN grantees in each state who have competed. Migrant/Seasonal programs are counted toward the state where they are headquartered.



Geographic Region	Percent of Grantees Ever Competed
I (ME, NH, MA, RI, CT, VT)	25.6%
II (NY, NJ, VI, PR)	34.6%
III (PA, DE, MD, DC, VA, WV)	34.2%
IV (KY, TN, NC, SC, GA, AL, MS, FL)	32.3%
V (MN, WI, MI, IL, IN, OH)	33.9%
VI (NM, TX, OK, AR, LA)	39.2%
VII (NE, IA, KS, MO)	33.8%
VIII (MT, ND, SD, WY, UT, CO)	19.8%
IX (HI, NV, CA, AZ)	15.0%
X (AK, WA, OR, ID)	23.2%

Region X

- 5 grantees competed in cohort 1
- 3 grantees competed in cohort 2
- 4 grantees are competing in cohort 3
- 4 grantees are competing in cohort 4
- Regionally, 23.2% of grantees have gone into competition (excluding AIAN) – significantly below the national average of 31%
- States in region X range from 17% to 28% of programs having competed
- This year is the first time a program in AK has completed



State	Number of Grantees Ever Completed	Percent of Grantees Ever Completed
Alaska	1	20%
Idaho	2	22%
Oregon	4	17%
Washington	9	28%



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Demographics of Competed Programs

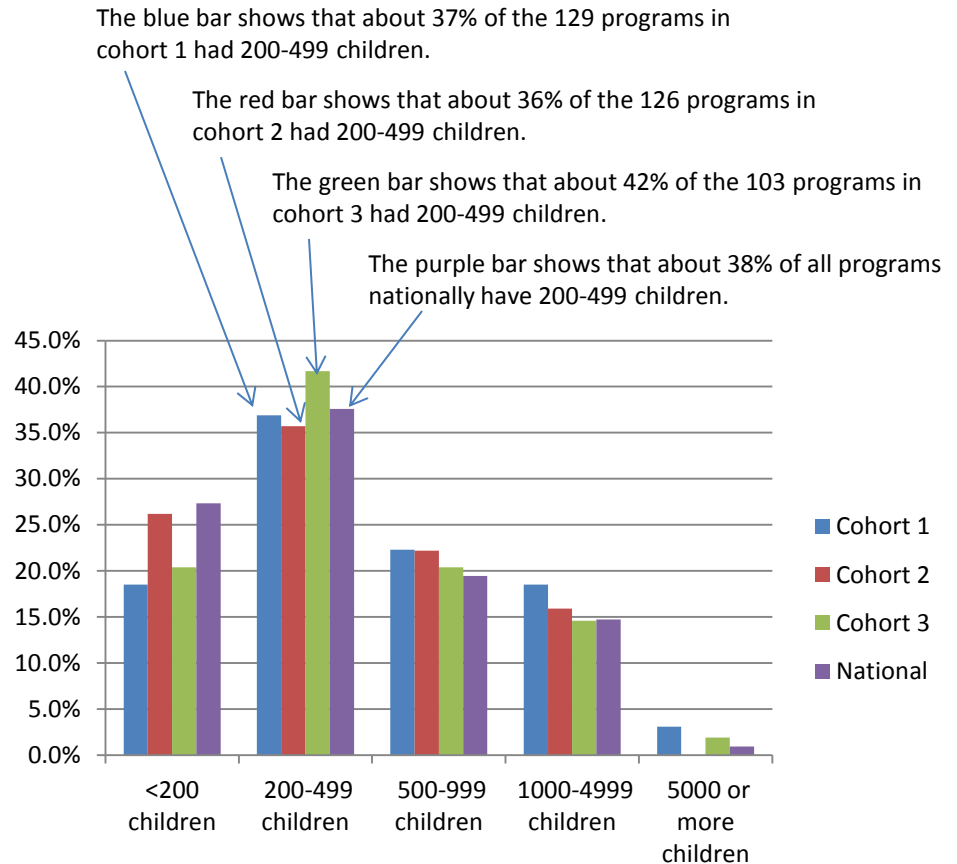
Demographics

How to read the demographics slides:

The first three bars in each group show data on cohorts 1, 2, and 3 are based on Program Information Report (PIR) data from the programs OHS posted that competed in each year.

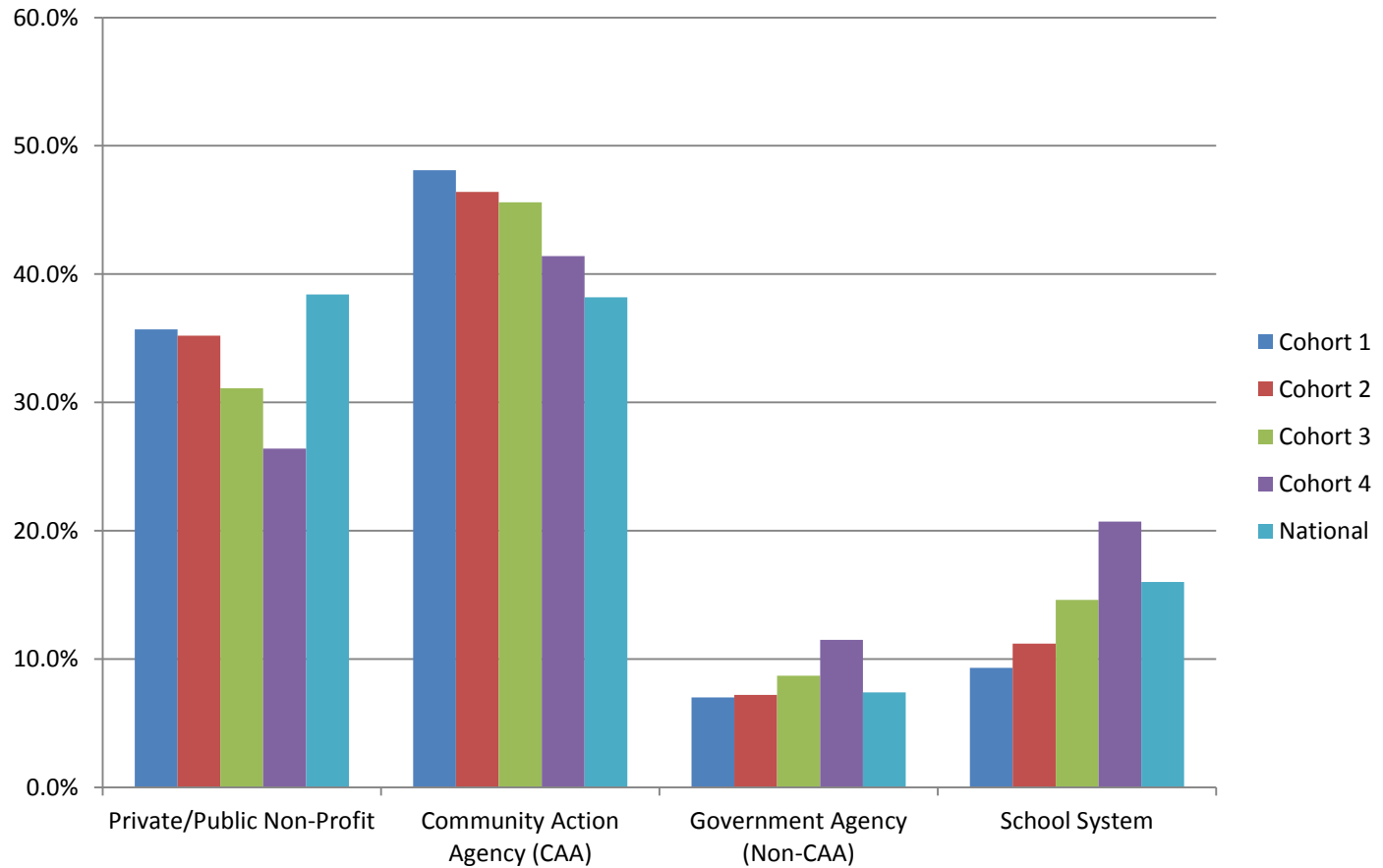
The fourth bar in each group shows national PIR data from 2012-2013.

Comparing percentages instead of numbers of programs allows us to compare cohorts of different sizes.



Demographics

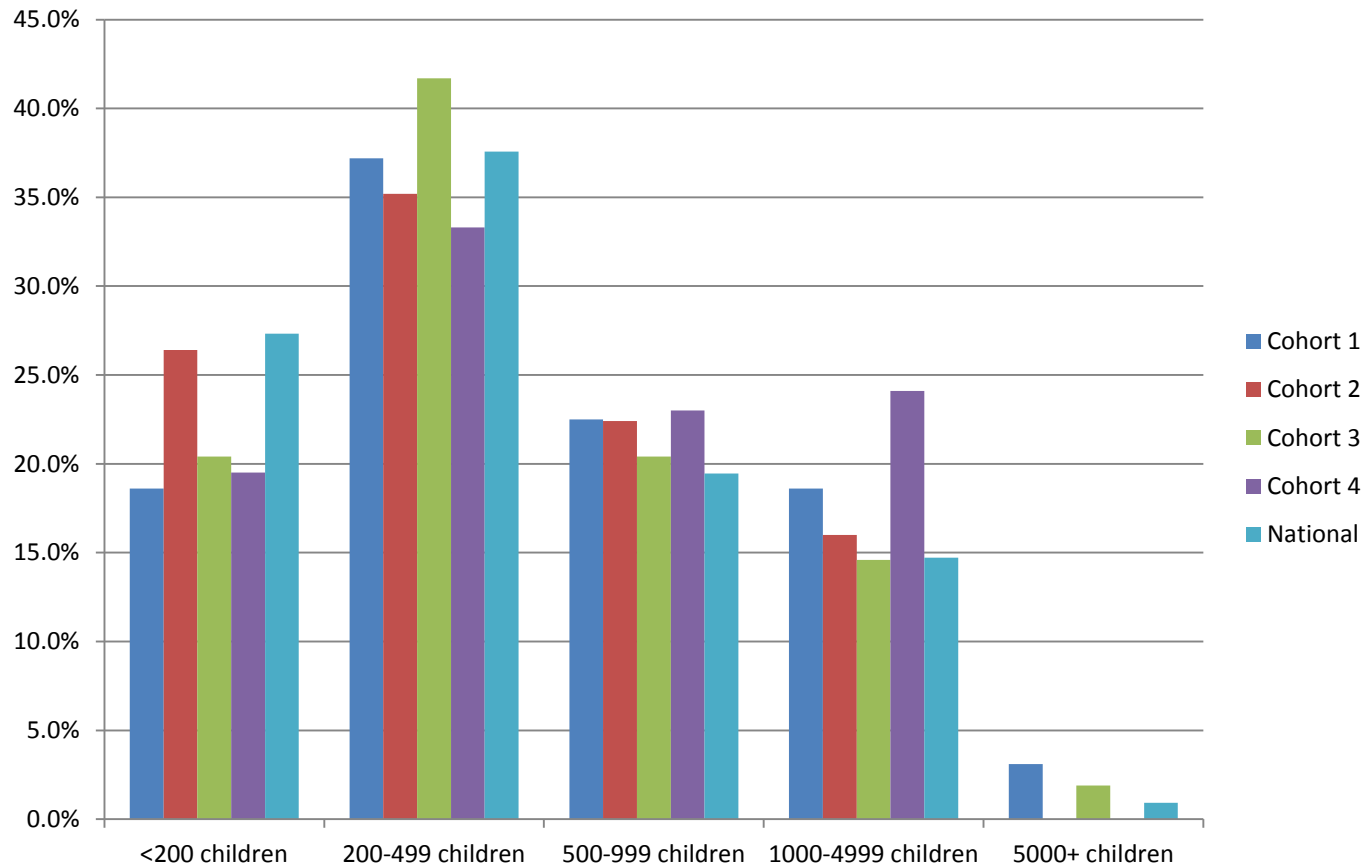
Competed Grantees by Grantee Type: Percent of Cohorts 1-3 v. National



What do we expect to see? If grantee type isn't related to who competes, the bars for each cohort should be about the same height as the light blue.

Demographics

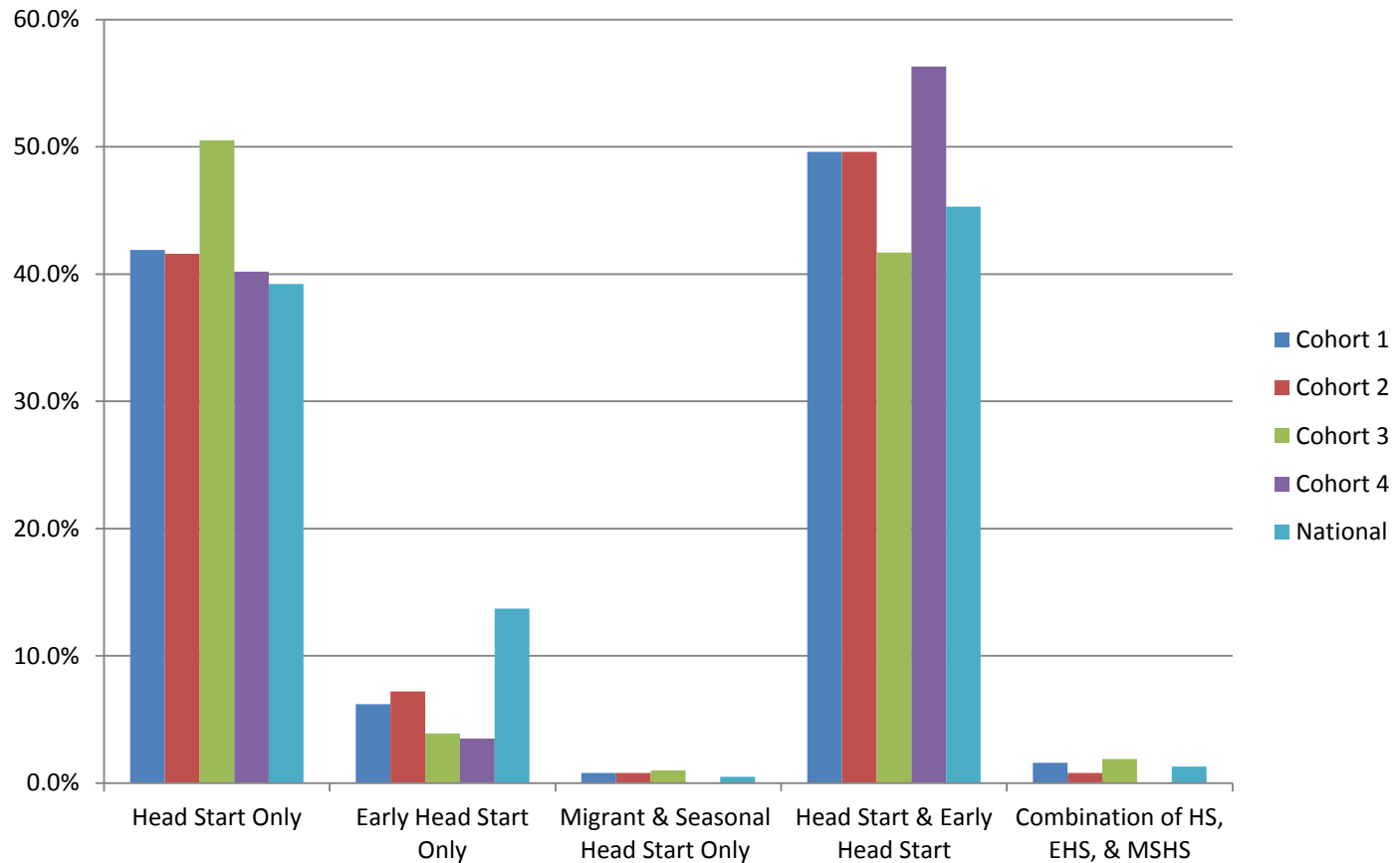
Competed Grantees by Grantee Size: Percent of Cohorts 1-3 v. National



What do we see? None of the groups of bars are consistently higher or lower than the national – suggesting none is being targeted for competition.

Demographics

Competed Grantees by Grants Held: Percent of Cohorts 1-3 v. National



What about Early Head Start Only grantees? They may compete at lower than expected rates because they don't have the CLASS trigger.

Demographics

- Programs in competition have the same rates of minority and dual language learner children as Head Start programs nationally.
- Programs with both high and low levels of teacher education have had to compete because of CLASS
- But the rate of teachers with BAs does seem to be related to DRS.
- Programs that have lower numbers of teachers with BAs (fewer than 50% of teachers) were more likely to compete than we would expect, and programs with higher numbers of teachers with BAs were less likely to compete than we would expect.
- This is especially true for the CLASS trigger.
- Programs with lower rates of teachers with BAs were more likely to have low Instructional Support scores than we would expect.



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Triggers of Competition

Triggers

All 7 triggers are now in effect:

- A deficiency on a review conducted under Section 641A
- Failure to establish program goals for improving the school readiness of children and taking steps to achieve those school readiness goals
- Low CLASS scores
- Revocation of a License to Operate
- Suspension by OHS
- Debarred from receiving state or federal funds or CACFP
- Audit finding of being at risk of failing to continue functioning as a Going Concern

Remember:

- Cohort 1 looked at a few years of retroactive deficiency data
- Cohort 1 had no CLASS trigger
- Monitoring protocols for deficiencies change every year

Trigger	Cohort 1	Cohort 2	Cohort 3	Cohort 4
Deficiency	129	81	51	36
School Readiness Goals	0	0	0	0
CLASS – Below Thresholds	0	8	17	8
CLASS – Lowest 10%	0	46	37	57
Revocation of License	0	1	0	0
Suspension by OHS	0	0	0	0
Debarment from Funds	0	0	0	0
Failure as a Going Concern	0	2	4	0
Total	129	125	103	87

Region X

National

Region X

Trigger	Cohort 1	Cohort 2	Cohort 3	Cohort 4
Deficiency	129	81	51	36
School Readiness Goals	0	0	0	0
CLASS – Below Thresholds	0	8	18	8
CLASS – Lowest 10%	0	46	50	57
Revocation of License	0	1	0	0
Suspension by OHS	0	0	0	0
Debarment from Funds	0	0	0	0
Failure as a Going Concern	0	2	4	0
Total	129	125	103	87

Trigger	Cohort 1	Cohort 2	Cohort 3	Cohort 4
Deficiency	5	1	2	3
School Readiness Goals	0	0	0	0
CLASS – Below Thresholds	0	0	0	0
CLASS – Lowest 10%	0	2	2	2
Revocation of License	0	0	0	0
Suspension by OHS	0	0	0	0
Debarment from Funds	0	0	0	0
Failure as a Going Concern	0	0	0	0
Total	5	3	4	4

Cohort 4 Triggers

Triggers

- Deficiency only - 24 programs (27.6% of cohort)
- Deficiency plus scores below CLASS thresholds – 2 programs (2.3%)
- Deficiency plus scores above threshold in lowest 10% - 9 programs (10.3%)
- Deficiency plus scores below threshold and others in lowest 10% - 1 program (1.1%)
- Score below CLASS threshold for Instructional Support – 3 programs (3.4%)
- Score below CLASS threshold for IS and others in lowest 10% - 2 programs (2.3%)
- Score(s) above threshold in lowest 10% - 45 programs (51.7%)

Triggers in Region X

- Deficiency only - 2 programs
- Deficiency plus scores in lowest 10% - 1 program
- Score(s) above threshold in lowest 10% - 1 program

Cohort 4 Deficiencies

Among the 36 programs with deficiencies:

- 23 had at least one deficiency for supervision (64%)
- 5 had other health and safety issues (screenings, discipline, etc.) (14%)
- 5 had staff issues (background checks, health records, credentials) (14%)
- the remainder were single instances of other problems

While there are many fewer programs with deficiencies than in previous years, the proportion with health, safety, and supervision problems continues to grow while staffing and other deficiencies have decreased significantly. The monitoring protocol does change from year to year, so it is hard to draw conclusions.

Deficiencies in Region X:

- 4 incidents of children unsupervised for 3-25 minutes

CLASS in Cohort 4

Cut-offs:

- 5.7167 for Emotional Support (programs with trigger: 4.8944-5.7167)
- 5.3646 for Classroom Organization (programs with trigger: 4.5370-5.3646)
- 2.2027 for Instructional Support (programs with trigger: 1.6667-2.2027)

Once again programs only fell below the thresholds in the area of Instructional Support.

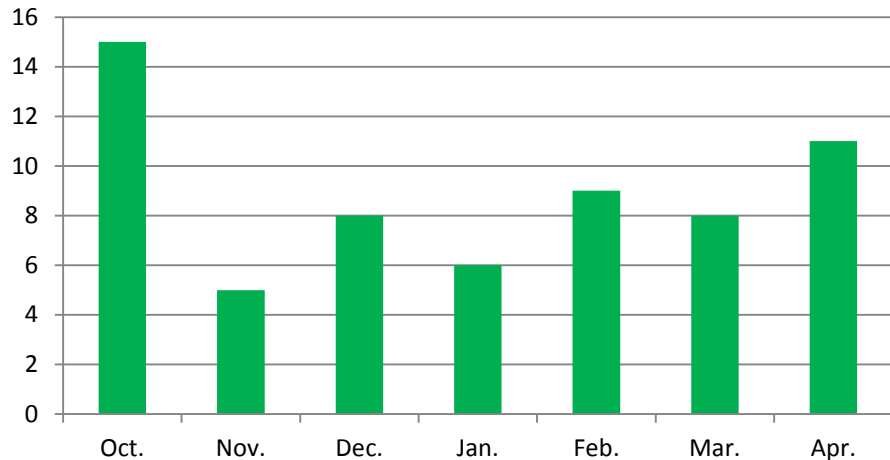
Among the 62 programs with some type of CLASS trigger, 26 fell into the lowest 10% in a single area and had no deficiencies.

Both the Region X programs in the lowest 10% for cohort 4 were in the area of Classroom Organization; for cohort 3, both were in the area of Instructional Support.

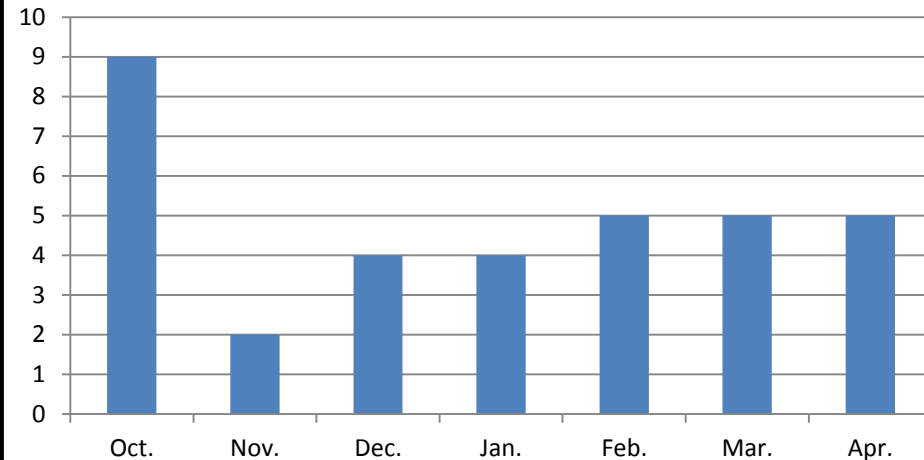
CLASS in Cohort 4

Question: did the timing of a CLASS review affect competition because of scores?

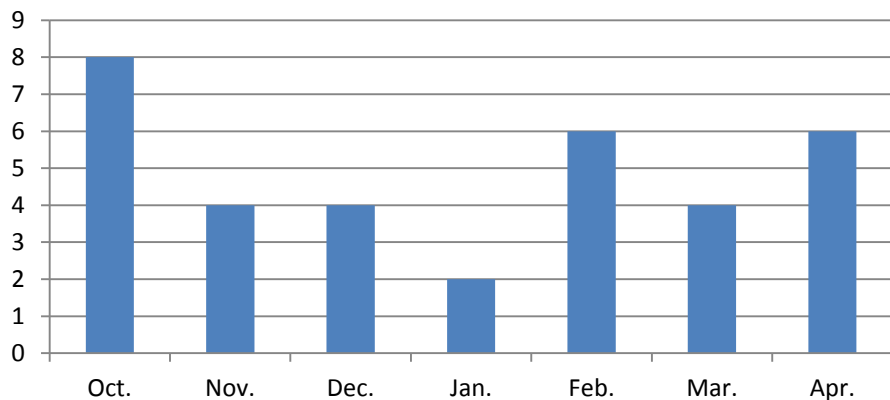
CLASS Trigger in One or More Areas



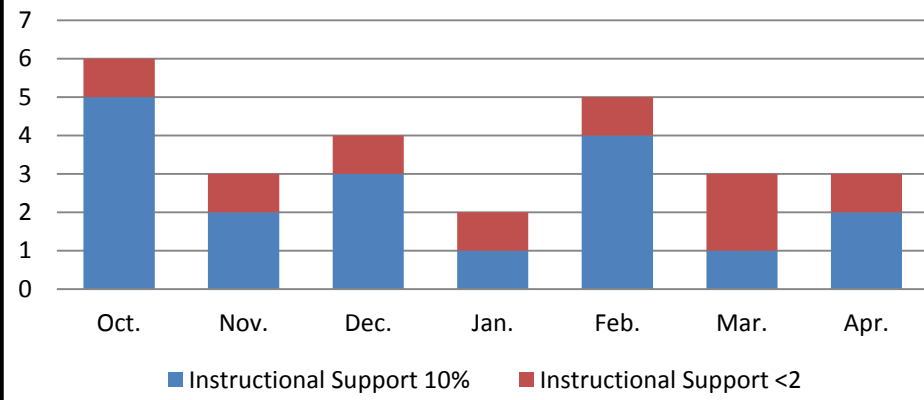
Emotional Support 10%



Classroom Organization 10%



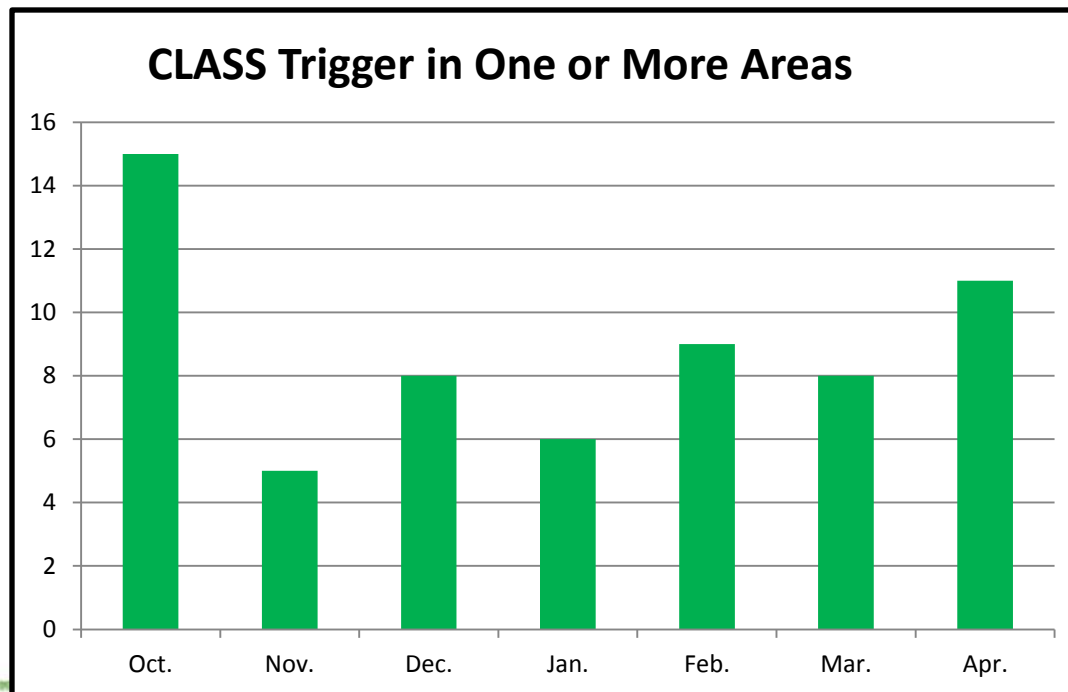
Instructional Support Triggers



CLASS in Cohort 4

What do those graphs mean?

- More programs went into competition for CLASS in October than any other month, particularly for Emotional Support
- We don't know the total number observed each month, so we can't draw conclusions about whether programs are more or less likely to go into competition because of CLASS in any given month





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Outcomes of Competitions

Outcomes for Grantees

Across the first two cohorts, approximately 72% of each cohort had grants restored in full or in part. Cohort 1 likely had more partial awards because of a greater number of large grantees in competition against delegates.

(Note: Birth to Five Pilot Competitions are not included in “Cohort 1” for the chart below)

	Grant Restored in Full		Grant Restored in Part		Grant Lost or Relinquished		Grant Reposted	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Cohort 1*	80	65.0%	9	7.3%	23	18.7%	11	8.9%
Cohort 2	87	69.6%	3	2.4%	25	20.0%	10	8.0%



Outcomes for Grantees

Across the first two cohorts, approximately 72% of each national cohort had grants restored in full or in part.

There were no AK or ID programs in cohorts one and two.

(Note: chart below includes cohorts 1 and 2 plus the birth to five pilots)

	Grant Restored in Full		Grant Restored in Part		Grant Lost or Relinquished		Grant Reposted	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Oregon	2	100%						
Washington	3	50%			3*	50%		

Grant Recipients

- Across cohorts 1 and 2, about 75-80% of awards went to an incumbent grantee or delegate and 15-20% of awards went to other established Head Start grantees or delegates.
- For the Birth to Five Pilot grant competitions, three of the five service areas had awards to groups of existing grantees.
- In Region X, all awards have gone to incumbent grantees or other established Head Start providers.

Note: Percentages represent the percentage of awards made for that cohort that went to each type of recipient.

	Incumbent Grantee		Incumbent Delegate		Other Established Grantee/Delegate		Transitional Grantee (CDI)		Provider New to Head Start	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Cohort 1*	91	59.1%	27	17.5%	29	18.8%			7	4.5%
Birth to Five Pilots	2	14.3%	2	14.3%	10	71.4%				
Reposted Cohort 1	4	36.4%			5	45.5%			2	18.2%
Cohort 2	90	76.9%	3	2.6%	17	14.5%	1	0.9%	5	4.3%

DRS Advocacy Issues

- Programs receive very late notice of negotiations and transitions; the timeline as a whole is problematic.
- The 10% cut-off for CLASS is arbitrary and causes unnecessary stress and distraction without any relation to quality.
- The DRS creates inappropriate stigma and stress for programs and their communities.
- Low CLASS scores during monitoring should be treated as non-compliances and addressed then conducted again.
- There should be greater transparency about the entire process.
- There should be a formal appeals process.

Future of DRS

- By the end of this year, all Head Start programs will have 5 year grants
- To match the 5 year period, the Office of Head Start has created a new monitoring system, with a different timeline and process than in the past
- This will change the timeline for when programs know they've hit a trigger and when they compete – though some of these details we won't know until the system develops further
- Opportunities for reform during reauthorization
- OPRE Evaluation will inform our understanding of how DRS changed programs' behavior and attitudes toward quality



Approaching Competition

- Opportunity to reorganize birth to five services
- Opportunity to change program models, cost per child, staffing patterns, and more
- Necessity to both protect staff from stress and engage them in moving forward
- Connect with other programs currently or previously in DRS through NHSA listserv
- Forecasts “soon” for cohort 4
- Negotiations “beginning in spring” for cohort 3

Approaching Competition

“Hang in there! It is very overwhelming, but it does get better.

- Participate in every webinar, etc. you can to get familiar with the process.
- Reach out through here and don't hesitate to recruit help with your grant writing. It takes a lot of pressure off.
- Try not to take it personally. It took me a long time to stop blaming myself and feeling like a failure as a Director. It was hard to balance being brave and confident for my staff, etc. when I was terrified, but we have to do it.
- Don't procrastinate once you develop a timeline. Start getting letters of support, etc. Work in sections with specific timelines. The deadline will be here before you know it.
- And finally, allow yourself to rest during the holiday season. Come back in January ready to rock!”

- Cohort 3 director



Approaching Competition

“We have just submitted our grant in Cohort 3. It is very stressful and as a Director I too blamed myself by barely missing the mark. But we finally just took a deep breath and went to work. This was probably some of the most intense work that we have ever done. We came together as a team and started gathering our information months before the announcement came out. It took many, many hours but we were happy with it when it was submitted. We are praying that this will be awarded.”

- Cohort 3 director

Questions and Conversation

Emmalie Dropkin edropkin@nhsa.org