

FY20 Monitoring Kickoff

Adia Brown: Good morning and good afternoon Head Start. I'm so happy to be here with you again. I'm Adia Brown, and I'm the Monitoring Lead at the Office of Head Start. And I'm here with somebody very special today.

Dr. Deborah Bergeron: Hello, Dr. Bergeron here. Very excited to be here with Adia. And, I think we have a great hour in store for you, to get you all ready for monitoring season. Almost as good as football season. Right?

Adia: Almost.

Dr. Bergeron: Almost.

Adia: Almost, almost. I shoulda worn my football, little jersey. I didn't get a chance to wear it today. Well, we always come to you around this time of the year to give you all the updates and highlights for what's happening with the FY20 monitoring season. And we're very excited to do that. This webinar is gonna be recorded, so you'll be able to see it again. Not again today, but it will be up on ECLKC, later on, maybe sometime next week. If you miss it, or if your friends miss it, because you're watching it right now, you can see it then. So, Dr. Bergeron, there are lots of things that grantees are gonna wanna know.

Dr. Bergeron: Yep.

Adia: And, I think that we should start off telling them a lot about just what Focus Area 1 and Focus Area 2 is. They need to remember it. Some grantees have had some of the reviews, not all of the reviews, and we're just gonna give them sort of some updates about what that looks like.

Dr. Bergeron: Yeah, and you've made some changes.

Adia: And we've made some changes.

Dr. Bergeron: So, we want to make sure if they've been talking to somebody who maybe had a review a year or two ago, they're not basing their information on that.

Adia: That's probably a good idea.

Dr. Bergeron: Yeah.

Adia: We're gonna talk about an unpopular topic today.

Dr. Bergeron: Uh oh.

Adia: Unannounced reviews.

Dr. Bergeron: Uh oh. Okay.

Adia: So, people always come up to me at conferences, and they ask, "Adia, are we gonna have unannounced reviews?" And we're gonna talk a little bit about that today, in our presentation. Also, gonna talk about some highlights from the protocol. Those new things you talked about?

Dr. Bergeron: Yep.

Adia: We're gonna let grantees know what they look like, and, we did some changes to the report structure that are pretty exciting, and we're gonna let the grantees know about that.

Dr. Bergeron: Excellent.

Adia: Okay. So, the first thing that we want to let you know is that, monitoring is starting very early this year. So, we are starting on time. We're starting on September the 30th. We already have all the grantees who are gonna start on that date, they have gotten their 60-day letter, and they know that next week they're gonna be up for monitoring. So, we have about 460 FA1's that we're gonna be doing this year, and Dr. Bergeron, those reviews are, they're really exciting.

Dr. Bergeron: Yeah?

Adia: Yeah, because they're really about giving the grantee the opportunity to talk about their plans.

Dr. Bergeron: Mm hmm.

Adia: So, FA1's are not when we come out to visit you. We call you on the phone, and we really give the grantee an opportunity to think about who they are, what they're doing, and what some of their goals are going to be for the next five years of the grant. So, have you heard anything about our FA1's?

Dr. Bergeron: I have, and I would say, you know, we've talked a lot over the last year about wanting to be more growth, rather than gotcha. I feel like this is a big part of that, right? So, this is about developing a relationship, kind of getting to know a grantee. Maybe even giving some feedback.

Adia: Yeah?

Dr. Bergeron: Yeah.

Adia: Yeah. It's a lot of that that happens in the Focus Area 1, and the grantees that we've done so far, they've actually enjoyed them.

Dr. Bergeron: Mm hmm.

Adia: So, if you're nervous out there, know that this is not something that you need to be nervous about. The grantees have enjoyed this. People have come and said, "I've gotten so many insights from my FA1." They always ask me, "Am I gonna have the same reviewer?"

Dr. Bergeron: Mm hmm.

Adia: "Will I have the same reviewer in my FA1?" They kind of fall in love with those reviewers, and they want them again at FA2. Have to break the bad news to them and tell them, that's not always possible. You might get someone different. But they usually get a strong relationship with that reviewer who calls them, who makes sure that they know what to do. They actually ask them, "Who are you gonna invite to your meeting?" Who would you recommend that they bring to a FA1 call?

Dr. Bergeron: Well, I think all of the key people in the organization are gonna be able to represent the different aspects of monitoring. So, I think some of that's gonna be dependent on the grantee, right? And there should be some mainstays. And you know, the fact that they

don't have the exact same reviewer might be disappointing, but the good news is, the notes that are being taken during that time are pretty thorough. So, they're leaving a nice trail for the FA2 reviewer to have.

Adia: Absolutely, absolutely. And FA2 reviewer goes back and reviews those notes.

Dr. Bergeron: Yeah.

Adia: And they really see what happened the last time.

Dr. Bergeron: Right.

Adia: So, everyone always asks me, Dr. Bergeron, "Well how long is this review?" And, "How long will it take?" And, "What's my commitment?" And the FA1 reviewer does have a little bit of a commitment, it lasts for five days.

Dr. Bergeron: Right.

Adia: So, they'll have a telephone call with somebody, each of those five days. And the calls are somewhere between 60 and 90 minutes. It really depends on the grantee. You know, you worked in the school board. When people would call you and ask you questions about your school, or, you would always want to brag, I'm sure.

Dr. Bergeron: Well I was gonna say, I'd use every minute that you're given, because it's your opportunity to really give insight into every detail about your program.

Adia: Right. And, people always ask me, "Who should I bring you?" Well, your governing body for Head Start is really important, you know, you might be from a school board, or a school district like Dr. Bergeron was. If you could get a school board member to come and talk and say how great your Head Start program is, and how involved they are in it, that would be fantastic. But if you can't, a policy council member is always great to have. But your management team, your staff, people who could really tell the story about your program, those are the people that you want to bring.

Dr. Bergeron: Right. Right.

Adia: Yeah. So let's talk a little bit about Focus Area 2.

Dr. Bergeron: Okay.

Adia: Well, this is, you know, not on the phone anymore. This is the one, Dr. Bergeron, that I have to say, makes people pretty nervous.

Dr. Bergeron: Yeah. Because there is an outcome.

Adia: There is an outcome for this one, yeah.

Dr. Bergeron: That's why. A little higher stakes.

Adia: Little bit, there's a little bit higher stakes for this one, and, people always want to, it's like having a guest come to your home. So, you wanna spruce everything up, you wanna paint, you wanna put the new curtains on. You know, you want to sort of put your best foot forward. And, many grantees this year have done that. They've had their Focus Area 2. It's a lot different than what the old monitoring system was like. You talked about the opportunities for growth,

and here, we do a lot of things with the grantee that we didn't do before. One very interesting thing is something called a data tour.

Dr. Bergeron: Okay.

Adia: So imagine, Dr. Bergeron if, I sent the reviewer into your office and I said, "Dr. Bergeron, show me all the data that you have about the progress that Head Start is making." What would you do?

Dr. Bergeron: Well, I would go into the system, and start showing them some good information. And, you know, depending on how broad my program is, if I've got Early Head Start and Head Start, I wanna make sure that I'm covering the breadth of the audience.

Adia: Okay.

Dr. Bergeron: And I think, you know, the really interesting thing about that is, kind of always being prepared to be able to do that. So, even though you're having a guest over, you kind of always want to make sure that a guest might stop by.

Adia: It's easier if your house is already clean.

Dr. Bergeron: Yeah. It's easier if your house is already clean.

Adia: It's easier if your house is already clean. So, data tours are a really nice feature, and, recently I went out, and I did a data tour with a lovely young woman, and she was nervous. She said, "I'm new here. I'm new to the program. I don't know what I'm doing." You know, and she brought a lot of people to the room. She said, "I have all my friends. They're gonna stay here with me, and help me through this." And I said, "Okay that's fine, you can do that." So, we let the grantee know that if you need people to support you during your data tour, that's fine.

Dr. Bergeron: Right.

Adia: But I told her, I said, "You know, what I want you to do is pretend like you just came in this morning, you're having a cup of coffee, and you do exactly what you do every day with the data." And this young woman was amazing. She was a family community engagement worker, and she showed me all the data she had in ChildPlus. And how that data actually helped her make decisions about what resources to provide for the parents. She also showed me what meetings they were involved in, and where they concentrated more of their effort, depending on what the parents needed. She was just fantastic at it.

Dr. Bergeron: Why do we even bother to ask for a data tour?

Adia: Well, you know, a data tour is really important to us because it helps us understand how the grantee is actually using their data. It's not that we just want to go in and see if you're using ChildPlus, or see whether or not you are using Promise, or one of those systems. We want to see that you have data, and you know how that data impacts your program.

Dr. Bergeron: Right.

Adia: So, it's really fun. It's a good tour. We also do classroom observations. And while we're there, we talk to teachers. And you know about talking to teachers.

Dr. Bergeron: Mm hmm. Mm hmm.

Adia: You know, I'm sure you've done plenty of classroom observations.

Dr. Bergeron: Sure.

Adia: And what's that like? How do you think?

Dr. Bergeron: Well you know, I think that just like having say, a FA2, teachers get nervous when they know someone's judging them, or evaluating, right? So, I think the best way to prepare for that is that within the program, there's always someone going into the classroom, giving feedback, making sure that teachers feel comfortable, and kids, feel comfortable with somebody coming in on a regular basis they might not know, and so that they're not reactive. And that's really the sign of a well-run school or educational environment, from an instructional standpoint, is that there's enough traffic in that classroom on a regular basis, so that nobody really responds. I love when I go to a visit, and I walk in, and the teacher might look up and say hello, but the whole thing doesn't stop. And I know that, you know, sometimes people feel obligated to do that, but there is sort of this sense of comfort with someone coming in, because they've got their routine. It could be today, it could be tomorrow. It's gonna look the same. We're not putting on a show for you. This is what we do. And that's really where you want to get people, to a place where they feel comfortable.

Adia: I bet you there's a lot of grantees who are out there saying, "Wow, that's a great tip." And I think you're right and, if you do that in your classroom when we come out to visit, your monitoring visit will be so smooth and wonderful.

Dr. Bergeron: Yep, regular visits.

Adia: Regular visits. So, I think that's good. The other thing that we do when we come out, is we talk to the management staff. So, we talk to the people who observe the teachers, who do the monitoring of the teachers. We talk to the people who make the program goals. So, we talk to the governing body. We talk to the policy council. Just like on the Focus Area 1 call, we try to make sure that all the stakeholders involved are a part of the review process.

Dr. Bergeron: Right. Right.

Adia: Now, a lot of times, I'll stop here a little bit because, a lot of times when I start talking about FA2's, and the reviewers coming onsite, people always ask me about class.

Dr. Bergeron: Of course.

Adia: They always ask me about class. They always ask me, "Adia, am I gonna get the class review at the same time that I'm getting my FA2 review?" And I'm here to tell you guys that you don't. So, Focus Area 2, and class are separate reviews. You don't get them at the same time. You get them in the same year, but you don't necessarily get those reviews at the same time. So, I want to make sure that grantees are really clear on when they get a Focus Area 2, and when they get a class, and they're not at the same time. And another question I get a lot from grantees is, "When am I gonna get my Focus Area 2?" A Focus Area 2 generally happens for a grantee at the end of their second year, and into their third year. That changes if you have multiple grants, which I'd align them together, and give you the Focus Area 2 when, when it makes sense for all the grants that you have. But for the most part, you get it at the end of your

second year, going into your third. Okay? So, Dr. Bergeron, I told you we had an unpleasant topic to talk about. And it's unannounced reviews.

Dr. Bergeron: Right.

Adia: Which of us should break the bad news?

Dr. Bergeron: I don't think it's bad news.

Adia: Okay, all right, well tell them a little bit about it.

Dr. Bergeron: Well, we've got a million children that show up every day.

Adia: Okay.

Dr. Bergeron: To Head Start classrooms. It has to be fantastic every day. It can't just be fantastic when we have a scheduled review. And, I think that, you know what we're gonna ask about. That's what this is. This is to help front-load things, right. Make sure we're not trying to surprise people. We're not trying to do a gotcha. But just like a teacher should be comfortable with someone coming in to his or her classroom on a regular basis because, I'm the best teacher I can be every day, a program should be prepared for someone to stop by because you're doing your job every day. And, I know that I'm not gonna pretend like that's not gonna make you a little nervous, I guess. But if you run your program so that somebody could drop by any day, then when they do, you're going to be in better shape. If everything is about preparing for that one week, when you're FA2 is gonna happen, your staff is gonna be so on edge, and your level of anxiety is gonna spread through the building, and frankly, the kids will feel it. But, if you treat your staff as if you expect that someone should be able to walk in any day and it's not a big deal, and that's what you expect from them, and you're going to expect that from yourself, then you'll create this sort of calmness about it. At first people will be shocked.

Adia: Right.

Dr. Bergeron: They might think, "You can't really be okay with that." But if that's how you present it, your staff will adjust to that, and then the expectations will be there. And if you feel like, "Well, but I hate being caught off guard, I want to make sure you know, someone's gonna come in and then we have to somehow get all these people together, and pull data, whatever." Do some unannounced reviews yourself.

Adia: Right.

Dr. Bergeron: Go into your program and say, "Hey. Pretend I'm Adia. Show me what you got."

Adia: Right.

Dr. Bergeron: And then you know, you can reflect on how did that go? Is that as prepared as we want to be? And so maybe you do have to do a little bit of thought behind that part. But I do think that, the business we do is too important to rely on some kind of big preparation moment for a monitoring review.

Adia: Mm hmm. I agree. So, you know what, it's not bad news, grantees. It really isn't. And you guys ask me this all the time. "Will there be unannounced reviews?" And the answer to that this

year is yes. So, yes there are gonna be unannounced reviews. There are programs who we don't do unannounced reviews. And that's tribal programs.

Dr. Bergeron: Okay.

Adia: So, because of our government to government relationship, we do not do unannounced reviews for tribal grantees. However, all other grantees can be subject to an unannounced review. One thing that's very interesting is that all grantees get what's called a 60-day global letter. I don't know if they always read all of the language in that global letter. But in the global letter, it tells you that if you do not submit your calendar, that you could be subject to an unannounced review. So, you'll see on the slide that all grantees who have not submitted their calendar for the FY20 season at this point, you will have an unannounced review. So, you can't go back and put in your calendar now. If you haven't put in your calendar, then you are a part of a group of people who will have an unannounced review.

Dr. Bergeron: So, you're saying, if, if I'm getting, if I'm having my monitoring during FY20, and I haven't submitted a calendar, I know that I'm unannounced.

Adia: You already know.

Dr. Bergeron: If I have submitted my calendar, could I still be unannounced?

Adia: Well, that's a good question Dr. Bergeron.

Dr. Bergeron: I sprung that on her.

Adia: You did.

Dr. Bergeron: Do you have an answer for that?

Adia: I do, that's right.

[Laughs]

Dr. Bergeron: Wasn't sure.

Adia: I have an answer for that. So, all grantees could be subject to an unannounced review. So, every grantee has the opportunity to have an unannounced review. It's just that for grantees who didn't submit their calendar, you now know you will have an unannounced review.

Dr. Bergeron: You start with those folks, okay.

Adia: We start with them first. But other grantees could be subject to an unannounced review.

Dr. Bergeron: Okay.

Adia: If you've already gotten your 60-day letter, you know that's not you. So, you will not have that. But other grantees, sure.

Dr. Bergeron: Okay.

Adia: Yeah, yeah. So, let's move on from unannounced reviews. Let's talk a little bit about ERSEA.

Dr. Bergeron: Okay.

Adia: ERSEA is something that we really decided to highlight in this FY20 protocol. It's always been there, it was in the protocol. But this year, we really decided to put some more emphasis on ERSEA. You know, we, over the years, for Head Start grantees, we always pick something at the beginning of a monitoring year that we tell the grantees we wanna focus on this. We want you to think about it, and we want you to do better. And so in this case, one thing that we really want grantees to work on, is eligibility.

Dr. Bergeron: Okay.

Adia: So, when we talk about eligibility, it all starts with how the staff actually validate when parents are coming into the program. So, their applicants, they really need to look at lots of things. Source documentations. W2s. They need to look at, statements of not having income, whether or not children are homeless. And so the grantee has to do a really good job of really showing that they used all the source documentation to ensure that the children who are enrolled in the program are actually eligible.

Dr. Bergeron: Right. Right. This is important. We're really designed to serve the most vulnerable children. And if we're not careful, you know, we can create a situation where slots aren't available for those families, and those are the families who are less likely to seek us out. So, it's important that we are mindful to make sure that every child enrolled with certain eligibility has the verification to back that up, I think. I think that's really important. And I would say, just as kind of an aside, we're in kind of an interesting time because, minimum wages have gone up so much, in some areas. In some cities, and then some states have even implemented some pretty significant minimum wage increases and, you know, it's a double-edged sword, because for some folks, it pushes them out of the eligibility frame, and, I can understand your frustration of wanting to figure out a solution to that. But that's not our job. Somebody else has to solve that problem. We have to implement the program the way it's designed, even if sometimes you wish you could be the master of that, in making those decisions. You do have to be kind of careful about that.

Adia: I think this is a good year, too, for people to think about sort of dusting off those training manuals first day.

Dr. Bergeron: Oh yeah.

Adia: Because as I go around the country, I'm hearing that, we talked to some staff that they don't really remember all the rules that relate to eligibility. And, you know how myths, they get built.

Dr. Bergeron: Yes, yes.

Adia: And people think, "Oh, well this is the way that we actually do eligibility. Like, we're allowed to enroll children who have a disability, regardless of what their income is."

Dr. Bergeron: Mm hmm.

Adia: I hear that all the time.

Dr. Bergeron: Yeah.

Adia: And they say, "We'll put those children at the top of our selection criteria." And, it doesn't matter how much money they make if they have a disability they can get, come to the program. And that's just not true.

Dr. Bergeron: Right. Right, good idea.

Adia: So, it's a good idea to really dust off sort of your training process for staff, and maybe take everybody through, at the beginning of the year again, what is eligibility? What is our selection criteria?

Dr. Bergeron: And what documentation do I need to have to back it up, in case somebody wants to pull those files, you know, during monitoring or whatever, and be able to verify that we're doing things the right way.

Adia: Right. The other thing that we're stressing in the new protocol is, sometimes when you're training staff, anybody, I get trained, everybody gets trained. Sometimes the training sticks, and you continue to do a good job, and sometimes it doesn't. So, we are focusing in the protocol, on making sure that once the staff has actually verified from the applicant that they're eligible for the program, that someone else in the program does a periodic check to make sure that that's being done right.

Dr. Bergeron: Yep. You know I think with training, the reason that you say, "Sometimes it sticks and sometimes it doesn't," I think it's all about what's relevant at the time. We tend to hang onto information that matters to us. And, you know, if we're not in the throes of enrollment at the time, we may not, you know, hang onto some of the detail.

Adia: Mm hmm.

Dr. Bergeron: And so coming up with some strategies to make sure that those big things are constantly a reminder. And you're right, spot checking, things like that. Coming up with some systems that make sense.

Adia: Yeah. So, it's good to let grantees know that this is something that reviewers are gonna really, so you're gonna be wondering this year, "Why are they asking me so many questions about eligibility?" But they're gonna ask you a lot more about them. It's a focus for the year, and we want to make sure that grantees are definitely prepared to understand that this is something that they need to maybe put a highlight, flash some attention to. The other thing is enrollment.

Dr. Bergeron: Yeah.

Adia: So, there was a big push, Dr. Bergeron, from the Office of Head Start for grantees to make sure that they were fully enrolled. I think there was a campaign, a full enrollment campaign that went out, and so, grantees really did work hard to try to make sure that children were enrolled. They tried to do a good job with making sure that that happened, and there was some creativity around enrollment. That sometimes works, and sometimes it doesn't work. And so one of the things that we saw in that creativity was really how grantees were handling children that attended the program. Previously in monitoring, we only looked at the 85%. And we only looked at whether or not children who hadn't attended for four consecutive days were getting a phone call, and that people were following up. Well this year we're looking at something very

different. Now we're looking to see if the children who the grantee has submitted as enrolled, have actually attended the program.

Dr. Bergeron: Right, right.

Adia: And that's a really important distinction that we're making for grantees that we haven't made in the past.

Dr. Bergeron: Yep.

Adia: So, children who are considered enrolled must have attended the program. And if those children haven't attended the program for 30 days, we're expecting that that slot would become vacant.

Dr. Bergeron: Right, and I know that a couple of things that come to mind that concern some grantees are things like, a serious health condition. So, I haven't been in attendance for 30 days, but I'm in the hospital, those kinds of sort of extreme examples, I think if they're reasonable and you have documentation, and you can show what's going on, we're not talking about kicking kids out because they have a dire situation. I think we're talking about children who just aren't showing up, and we're holding onto that slot, maybe in hopes that they return, but maybe also because it makes me look like I'm fully enrolled. And you know again, we'll go back to the very beginning of our conversation, and that is that our purpose is to reach our kids. And we don't just want to reach them on paper. We need to reach them for real. Right?

Adia: Yeah.

Dr. Bergeron: I know when I was a principal, we used to have to stop everything, and go count heads, physical, and then report that. And have somebody verify it. So, you couldn't even just turn in enrollment.

Adia: Right.

Dr. Bergeron: Because it's important. You know?

Adia: It is important, and I think that the example that you gave was a good one. And, typically when a child is in a dire situation, or they're in the hospital, the program is actually still providing services. They're generally calling that program, the family service worker is engaged, and they're generally still engaged somehow with that family.

Dr. Bergeron: Right.

Adia: And when a program is providing services to a child, we consider that child to still be enrolled. But, like as you say, when the child is just not coming to the program.

Dr. Bergeron: And you can't get them there.

Adia: And you can't get them there.

Dr. Bergeron: You've tried everything.

Adia: Yep.

Dr. Bergeron: I feel like I hit that.

Adia: But after that 30 days, you have to make that slot vacant. And once you make that slot vacant, it's really important that you have a wait list.

Dr. Bergeron: Yes.

Adia: So, what we're gonna start looking at is grantees wait list, and whether or not they have them, who's on the wait list, and, whether or not they're using those wait lists to actually fill enrollment. Okay? So, that's eligibility and enrollment. You know, I'm gonna go back one slide.

Dr. Bergeron: Can I talk about under enrollment for a minute?

Adia: You can talk about under enrollment.

Dr. Bergeron: And, I don't think this necessarily connects directly to monitoring, but while we're on the topic, because I've been very involved in the under enrollment appeals. And so I've talked to a lot, a lot of grantees, and, talked to, okay, this is what we're doing, this is the reason, and talking through, what should we really be doing? One of the things I want to just put out there as a general, not a warning, just something to pay attention to. If you're struggling with enrollment, and you're going on a plan, don't wait until the last minute to come up with a solution. I mean, I'm seeing a lot of grantees sort of wait, and then all the sudden it's a scramble.

Adia: Mm hmm.

Dr. Bergeron: So, make sure you're dealing with that very proactively from the get-go, regardless of whatever you think the solution is, so that under enrollment isn't something that you're hanging onto and it's that stressor in your program.

Adia: Okay. I think that's good advice. So, grantees are gonna have a lot of questions about background checks. Because, there is a lot of information that's coming out about background checks. There was some new things in the regulations that relate to background checks, and I know at the Office of Head Start we're still working on those things. And so, in monitoring, what we decided to do was to monitor background checks exactly the way we did last year.

Dr. Bergeron: Okay.

Adia: So we're only monitoring background checks based on the act, and based on the things that you see in 648AG3. So, that's what we monitor on. We're not monitoring on the new regulations, and we will do that throughout FY20.

Dr. Bergeron: Okay.

Adia: Okay?

Dr. Bergeron: Good to know.

Adia: All right. So, let's talk about some fun stuff.

Dr. Bergeron: This is the best.

Adia: This is some fun stuff. So, one thing that grantees are always wanting to have is their report. They can't wait to get their report. We've tried a lot of different things over the years to give grantees more information in their report. This year is no different. So, one thing that you

really stressed last year was highlights. You love them. You wanted us to make sure that everybody had them, can you talk a little bit about the highlights?

Dr. Bergeron: Well I think that when you're evaluating anything or anyone, you should be looking for what's working, and lifting that because, when folks know what's working, they do more of it. So, it's important to get feedback, not just on what we might need to, the areas of growth, or what might need to be addressed, but what's really working well. In particular, what are programs doing that are innovative, that are making a big difference for kids that they may not even be required to do, but they're doing anyway. And as I was reading some of those, I wanted more of that, so that I could get a better sense of what was happening on the ground, and then sort of out of this grew this feedback that I give grantees sometimes. If I see something really different, I want to point it out and make sure the staff know that it's impressive, and, it's exciting to see, and I think what that does is it inspires folks to just keep moving down that path of innovation. So, I know that I had given you a lot of positive feedback about, I love seeing these highlights. But of course, anytime something is good, we always try to make it even better.

Adia: We always try to make it even better. So, Dr. Bergeron, you did give us a big push around highlights, and it did turn out to be a very good thing. And grantees, I think were appreciative of all the innovations that we showed that they were doing, and the good work. So, we're gonna do more.

Dr. Bergeron: Yay.

Adia: So, this year highlights will show up for grantees in each section of their report. With one caveat. As long as that section of the report doesn't have an area that they need to correct.

Dr. Bergeron: Okay.

Adia: So if there's an area that you need to correct, or area where we think that you can improve, you'll see that in the section. But if there's not, then under health, under FCE, under PDM, you'll get a highlight. And that highlight will tell you a lot, something about the program area, or, it will tell you about an innovation, or something that the grantee's really doing stellar.

Dr. Bergeron: Right, right. So, you can look forward to that, the grantees can look forward to that, because that's something you share with your staff.

Adia: Or your board.

Dr. Bergeron: Yeah.

Adia: Or your policy council.

Dr. Bergeron: It's important to let folks know that they're doing good work.

Adia: It's an opportunity to celebrate.

Dr. Bergeron: It is.

Adia: So, the other thing that we did in the monitoring report was we created something that was called the opportunity for continuous improvement.

Dr. Bergeron: Okay.

Adia: And we really built that from conversations we hear from you that always talks about giving the grantee the opportunity for growth. We all need growth, we all can do, there's always things that we can actually just put a little bit more, I like to cook, so just put a little more spice on it, you know. And so in these areas, these are areas where the grantee is actually meeting the standard. They meet the standard. But, it doesn't sparkle. And it may be a place where they actually can improve or increase the quality of something. So, we let grantees know that right in the report now. And this is something that's very new. It's not a penalty. It's not a finding. It's not an area of noncompliance. But it is an area where the grantee can think about strategies, to really help them increase the level of quality for that particular performance measure.

Dr. Bergeron: Right. And, I love this of course. It's one of the things that I felt was missing is, it seemed like you were either struggling, or you might have this really high level work, and that would get raised, and written about in a highlight format. But we all know that there's sort of that in between where, there's no reason to ding you for it, right. It's fine. But, wouldn't it be great if it could be better than fine? And if we can give feedback like that, now, the reports, all of a sudden, can be a real tool for learning and growth for the whole staff.

Adia: And it's something that the grantee doesn't, grantees will ask, "Well do I have to respond to it?" Or, "Do I have to send back a corrective action?" And you do not. It's really something that's there to help the grantee think about new strategies, that will just make their program just that much better.

Dr. Bergeron: It's not a whole lot different than evaluating a teacher, right? You walk into the classroom, you might see a great lesson. But you want to give some constructive feedback, so that even somebody who's a really good teacher has an opportunity to grow. Because we all can.

Adia: Right. And these, we're training the folks who write this to make sure that they're all in the positive.

Dr. Bergeron: Mm hmm.

Adia: You know, we want this to be a positive experience for the grantees, we know that many grantees give these reports to their boards, and to their policy council, and to parents. So, we want opportunities for continuous improvement to really just feel that way, and not to feel as if it's something that is punitive for the grantee, that, there's nothing here like that.

Dr. Bergeron: Right. And there may be even some of these opportunities for continuous improvement that you read as a grantee, and you say, "Well, it's a good idea, that's not gonna work here." So, it could be that some of those suggestions may not even be relevant, but at least you can get some positive feedback, create some new ideas, and possibly avenues for growth.

Adia: Yep. So, the other thing that's been around, this has been around for a while, it's not necessarily new, but when we add opportunities for continuous improvement, people are gonna ask me, "Well, what happened to areas of concern?" You know, "And how are they different?" And so, an area of concern, the opportunity for improvement, for continuous

improvement is at the performance measure level. So, it will encompass maybe a lot of standards, or you know, a few standards all at once, and will give you something that says, in this area, you may want to think about some strategies. An area of concern is about a particular standard.

Dr. Bergeron: Okay.

Adia: And it's a particular standard that we think is at risk for being out of compliance. It's not out of compliance right now. But it's teetering right on the fence. And, left to its own device, it will be out of compliance. So, it's a little bit more here, it's more of a suggestion. It's more than a suggestion of improvement. It's saying, "Grantee, we really want you to pay attention to this. And we want you to think about things that can make this better." It's not out of compliance, but it will be, if you don't attend to it.

Dr. Bergeron: Got it.

Adia: Okay? So, I'm gonna go back to that just because, along with that, we still have all the things like, areas of noncompliance, which have a corrective action period. We have deficiencies, which also have a corrective action period. And in the report, they're all laid out, and all have labels to help the grantee understand that what they are, and how they need to respond. So, if you get a noncompliance, or if you get a deficiency, you'll have a clear time frame, it'll tell you that you need to respond to that. If you have an AOC, it'll tell you to work with your regional office. If you have an OCI, or an opportunity for continuous improvement, it'll also say you can work with your regional office, but that is up to you, how much you want to do that. So, it's clearly outlined in a report. Grantees should feel very comfortable with how they can deal with each one of those things, and we hope that this report is gonna give you a lot more information about your grantee, and something that will help you to improve on time. Okay? So, [Laughs] I just said a lot of this. [Laughs]

Dr. Bergeron: She's deciding this slide was repetitive.

Adia: I'm deciding that this slide was competitive. And, it just says a lot about, we give these slides to the grantees, so we want to make sure that everything that I say is pretty laid out here. And one thing that we make very clear on this slide is that, grantees will ask, "Well am I gonna get a highlight in every section? Even if I have a AOC, or even if I have a OCI, or even if I have a finding?" And the answer is no. If you have any of those things in the section, you won't have a highlight. It doesn't mean that your program did not do something well in that area, it just means that in this section, we want you to pay attention more.

Dr. Bergeron: That's right.

Adia: To the area where you need to grow. Okay. So, the protocols are already posted on ECLKC.

Dr. Bergeron: Okay.

Adia: This is something that grantees ask me all the time, "When will they be posted?" And they're there, so if you haven't looked at them, you don't know where they are, go to ECLKC, and they will be right there waiting for you. The Virtual Expo is also now open. Grantees love the Virtual Expo, Dr. Bergeron. It's like a little mini-conference that you go to at your computer.

Dr. Bergeron: Got it.

Adia: So, this video eventually winds up there. We have all kinds of tools, tip sheets, things to help the grantees, and that's open. And we also have something that's called office hours. So, a grantee can actually come into an office hour, and chat with experts about anything that has to do with monitoring, and there are people there to answer their questions.

Dr. Bergeron: Wow, that's great.

Adia: And finally, I just want to remind people that monitoring is an opportunity to celebrate their success, and to make the improvements that enhance program quality.

Dr. Bergeron: Yeah, there's no doubt. And I think my biggest piece of advice to you. If this is your season to be monitored, especially FA2, is that you communicate to your staff that that's what you expect. Is this is an opportunity to celebrate, and to grow as a staff, and to be as calm about it as you possibly can. Even if, inside, you might be nervous, fake it. You're the leader. You need to set the tone for calm and confidence, and if you do that, that'll get passed onto your staff, and they'll pass it onto the children. And then, when somebody is coming into your building, it'll feel fine. And you will be very well off I think.

Adia: Okay. Well, we have questions.

Dr. Bergeron: Okay.

Adia: We have a half an hour to breeze through them.

Dr. Bergeron: All right, let's do it.

Adia: So, we have some easy ones.

Dr. Bergeron: Okay.

Adia: The first one is, is there a list of acronyms that will be in the report? I say a lot of them. OCI. AOC. ANC. And the answer is yes. So, in the front of every monitoring report, there is a list of acronyms, and what they mean. So, there is a glossary there, that's right there for you. All right. You want to read another one?

Dr. Bergeron: Well.

Adia: Oh, now you got your glasses on, oh gosh, okay.

Dr. Bergeron: How can I prepare for my FA2 review? Well, this says, review the protocol, review the standards, familiarize staff with methodology, visit the Expo, all of those things, but, what we just talked about is, a lot of preparation, and setting the tone so that folks feel like, this is fine. We're a great organization. People can come in anytime, see what we're doing, and we feel really confident about the outcomes. That's how you want to set people up.

Adia: This is like a quiz, this is like a pop quiz for you.

Dr. Bergeron: Uh oh.

Adia: When will the FY20 protocols be available?

Dr. Bergeron: They already are.

Adia: Very good.

Dr. Bergeron: Whoop, whoop. [Laughs]

Adia: Yes, they're on ECLKC for you, and you can get them right now. Here's a good question. Is the ERSEA review a separate event or part of the FA2?

Dr. Bergeron: Is that a quiz for me? [Laughs]

Adia: No.

Dr. Bergeron: Part of the FA2.

Adia: Ding, ding, ding. All right, I feel like we're on a game show now. Like Jeopardy.

Dr. Bergeron: We are. I'm gonna quit while I'm ahead, though. Don't ask me any more trivia.

Adia: Okay, I will not. I will not. Yes, they are a part of the FA2. You don't have to worry about that, it's not a separate review. I won't make you put your glasses on, because I have mine on, okay?

Dr. Bergeron: Okay.

Adia: Okay. So, how will I know the classroom that will be visited during the FA2? That's not, I will not make you answer that pop quiz. So, during the FA2, the reviewer, they actually work with the grantee. They don't do it until they come onsite, but then they pull a random sample of your classrooms, and they let you know when they come onsite which classrooms they're actually gonna visit.

Dr. Bergeron: Do grantees have any say about classrooms, say, that have a brand new teacher in them, or a substitute?

Adia: Yes.

Dr. Bergeron: Okay.

Adia: So, if you have a brand new classroom with a teacher or a substitute, we can always do a skip, and go to another classroom.

Dr. Bergeron: Okay. So, it's important for grantees to pay attention to that part.

Adia: That's right, that's right. What happens after I receive my 60-day letter? Oh, that's a good question. So, after you receive your 60-day letter, a lot of people start to take care of you. So, you're contacted by your review lead, something called a Monitoring Event Coordinator also calls you, and they start to actually plan the logistics of your review. So, they plan when your meetings are going to happen, they let you know who's gonna come onsite. So, there's a lot of phone calls and conversations that you have that will get you to the 60th day, when your review is gonna happen.

Dr. Bergeron: Yeah. This is, a lot goes into this process. I think folks should know that. There's a lot of orchestration behind the scenes.

Adia: There is. So, all right Dr. Bergeron. Hmm. This one is a detailed question, too. It's, who will conduct my review? Well, all reviews differ. The size and the shape of a review differs. Who's

gonna be on that review differs, but for a general idea of what a review looks like, you always have a review lead. That's important. So, every review has a review lead. If it's a Focus Area 1, you only have a review lead. If it's a Focus Area 2, you get a review lead, you usually get a fiscal person, and you usually have two generalists, who can do things like ERSEA, FCE, education, so. But if you're a bigger program, you get more generalists, because they need to cover a lot of ground in your program.

Dr. Bergeron: Okay.

Adia: Okay? All right. Well we answered this one earlier, but should we do it again? I'll ask you, this is a pop quiz?

Dr. Bergeron: I get this all the time.

Adia: All right, so. Can I have a class review and a Focus Area review in the same year?

Dr. Bergeron: Yes.

Adia: Yes, you can have it in the same year.

Dr. Bergeron: How about on the same day?

Adia: Is that a pop quiz for me?

Dr. Bergeron: Uh huh.

Adia: No. Can't have it on the same day. So, you can have a class review in the same year, but not in the same week.

Dr. Bergeron: Yeah. They'll be spread out a little bit. We don't want to overwhelm the system, right?

Adia: Yes, we do not want to overwhelm the system. Hmm. Pop quiz.

Dr. Bergeron: Okay.

Adia: Will there be unannounced reviews?

Dr. Bergeron: Yes.

Adia: Yes.

Dr. Bergeron: Yes. There will be unannounced reviews.

Adia: All right, let's see if we got any new ones. What are the changes from FY19, FA2 to FA20, FA2? There are minor refinements, oh. There are minor refinements with emphasis on ERSEA. So if you had the FA2 protocol last year, it's generally the same. The things that we talked about today, are the things that you need to pay attention to, so, ERSEA, eligibility, and enrollment, they really have a lot of new nuances to them, so I would suggest that you pay attention there. There's also a few changes that happen in fiscal. They're not major, but you should look at that fiscal section, because they cleaned it up a little bit, so that it's easier for grantees to understand.

Dr. Bergeron: And the reporting's different.

Adia: And the report is different.

Dr. Bergeron: The reporting's really different.

Adia: Yeah, the report is very different. Where do delegates fall in the FA1 monitoring? Good question. So, delegate agencies are a part of your agency. So, we don't do a separate review for delegates. We monitor a grantee. So, when we monitor the grantee, it includes delegates, it includes partners, it includes anyone who's actually providing Head Start services for you. So, when you do a FA1 or a FA2, you want to make sure that you include your delegates, and that they are a part of the conversations, and that you have enough information to help us understand how you administer Head Start in that part of your program.

Dr. Bergeron: Mm hmm. Yeah. I think we got all the questions.

Adia: I think we got all the questions.

Dr. Bergeron: Will there be an exit interview? That's a good question.

Adia: Oh, well that is a good question. We didn't do that one. So, will there be an exit interview? There's always a final discussion with the director. We actually call them touch points. So, every day the grantee has an opportunity with their RL to do a touch point. Touch points let you know what happens during the day. They're there to make sure that you're not surprised, if there's more information that we need about something we let you know. We also let you know during the touch point if there's issues that we're finding. So, if there's something that we're seeing that we think might be a problem, we ask you for more information. We ask additional questions. So touch points are very important. And before the team leaves your FA2, they give you the opportunity to have a touch point. You can have it just as a director, you can have it with your staff. You can have it with the director, the staff, and the governing body, but there is one final touch point at the end of all FA2 reviews.

Dr. Bergeron: I have a question opposite of that. Prior to my monitoring, is there like a conversation up front?

Adia: Yes, there is. So, before you have your monitoring review, after you get your 60-day letter, you start talking with your review lead. That's gonna be a very important person in your life. Because up front, that's the person that actually talks to you about what your review's gonna look like. And additionally, they go to HSCS, and they get lots of information about your program. So, they look at your application. They look at your budget analysis. They look at a lot of things. They look at your PIR. They look at a lot of things, so they get to know who you are as a grantee. And they also ask you questions about who you are on the phone. So, for example, tribal programs. This is a great opportunity for you to talk about cultural nuances. Because that's the time when they start to learn what you're like as a grantee.

Dr. Bergeron: Right, I was thinking, that's an important thing to point out. Because, this is the opportunity where all of the things that probably give you a little bit of anxiety, you can clear up. You know, if I'm a grantee that serves a very particular kind of population, I would want folks to know that before they come in. So, that they can understand the context of what they're gonna see. So, I would very much encourage you to take advantage of those pre-conversations.

Adia: They're really important.

Dr. Bergeron: Really important.

Adia: And they're very helpful. They're very helpful. So, our next question is, is there a specific classroom observation that will be used for EHS that we will be able to review ahead of time? So, the classroom observation that's in the protocol is for both Head Start and Early Head Start programs. Okay. What do I search to find the monitoring protocol on ECLKC? So, you need to go to the Federal Monitoring tab on ECLKC, and then, I wonder if the picture is still a little guy with glasses? So, it's still a little guy with the glasses, and when you see him, he looks very smart -- probably like I do. And, click on him, and he'll lead you to the protocols.

Dr. Bergeron: That sounds good. Oh, here comes another one. Class and the FA2 both be unannounced? Oh, that's a good question.

Adia: Yeah, that is a good question.

[Laughs]

So, this year, only the FA2 will be an unannounced review.

Dr. Bergeron: A really good question. So, your class review, you'll always know about it.

Adia: Yes, yes.

Dr. Bergeron: Okay. Not that you wouldn't be prepared if someone just dropped by. We know you would be. Your teachers are awesome.

Adia: We know you will be.

Dr. Bergeron: That's it. I don't see any more questions.

Adia: It looks like it. You know, we think there's no more, and then.

Dr. Bergeron: I know.

Adia: Another one pops up, but.

Dr. Bergeron: Will they be able to ask questions after this webinar?

Adia: Sure, they will be able to ask questions after this webinar. And, when they go to the Virtual Expo, the Virtual Expo has their office hours, and it has places for them to ask questions.

Dr. Bergeron: So, there's no lack of information. Make sure you're prepared, feel really good about this. It's your chance to show off and shine, right?

Adia: Yep, this was our second year doing it together, Dr. Bergeron, you did the pop quizzes, you nailed them. You did a great job.

Dr. Bergeron: Amazing what a year will do, right?

Adia: Amazing, amazing.

Dr. Bergeron: I think, well last year, we tried to do like, Star Trek. [Laughs]

Adia: Well, that was my outfit, it was my dress up for you.

Dr. Bergeron: Oh, is that what it was? Okay, I remember something about Star Wars.

Adia: It was my dress, I looked like I had a little telecommunications, little pin on.

Dr. Bergeron: That's right.

Adia: I didn't wear it today, because, I was hoping to get out of that, but. Well, grantees, we are looking forward, I'm gonna be out on the road this year, so maybe I'll get to see some of you guys. We're looking forward to having a really exciting monitoring year, we want to celebrate your successes with you, and we want to help you make the improvements where you need. And, monitoring, as always, is an opportunity for you to learn, and grow. And we hope that we're giving you the tools to do that, and I'm just really excited.

Dr. Bergeron: Yeah, it's gonna be a good year.

Adia: All right, thank you very much. And have a great day.

Dr. Bergeron: Have a good day.