



STEPHANIE RAWLINGS-BLAKE

Mayor

100 N. Holliday Street, Room 250
Baltimore, Maryland 21202

May 4, 2012

Office of Inspector General
David N. McClintock, Inspector General
100 North Holliday Street, Suite 640
Baltimore, MD 21202

Dear Mr. McClintock:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the report issued by your office as a result of the investigation conducted of the St. Paul Community Outreach Head Start delegate agency. We appreciate the thoroughness of your review as well as the recommendations you propose for our department.

While it is important to note that the current administration became fully responsible for monitoring the Head Start fiscal and programmatic operations in January 2012, the outcomes from this review will assist us in improving our ongoing monitoring approach so as to ensure that grant funds from any source are spent according to grant mandates and that programs do not charge participants fees in cases when it is not for before and aftercare services.

We have communicated your findings to the Grant monitors at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the Maryland State Department of Education to determine their next steps in the recovery of the disallowed participant fees.

The Head Start Grantee office will embed, in the ongoing monitoring policy and procedures, the periodic and regular review of actual program enrollment at the beginning, midpoint and end of each program cycle. Program Compliance Officers will review monthly reports including enrollment and meal counts as well as conduct regular site visits to test the accuracy of actual enrollments into the program. Monitoring for compliance will occur both for the Head Start program year as well as any applicable summer programs beginning summer 2012.

In addition, the internal fiscal reviews conducted twice a year at each Delegate Agency will be coordinated in a way to ensure monitoring of the entire calendar year. The tool used by staff to conduct the audits will be updated with specific questions related to enrollment, staffing and fees and will cover all funding sources used to support the Head Start operations.

The Grantee will also develop, as recommended, critical checklists for delegate agencies noting basics related to contract compliance. In addition, the Grantee Executive Director will offer to meet with each Delegate agency upon full execution of each contract to review and discuss the terms and conditions of the agreement.

Mayor's Office of Human Services - Room 223 - 410.396.7370

May 4, 2012

David N. McClintock, Inspector General

Again thank you for the opportunity to comment on your recommendations and to improve the communication, reporting, controls and general accountability for the Head Start program.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "O. Farrow", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Olivia D. Farrow, Esq.
Director
Mayor's Office of Human Services