



Hawaii 3-5 Transition Task Force Report 2008

**Hawaii 3-5 Transition Task Force
Established by Act 289
of the Hawaii State Legislature, 2007**

*Prepared by:
Hawaii State Department of Health
Family Health Services Division
Children with Special Health Needs Branch*

May 2008

Executive Summary

Act 289 (H.B. 531, H.D.3, S.D.2, C.D.1) of the Hawaii State Legislature, 2007, established the Hawaii 3-5 Transition Task Force to study the feasibility of expanding Hawaii's Early Intervention Section to continue services for children ages 3-5 years.

The Department of Health (DOH) developed an agreement with the University of Hawaii Center on Disability Studies (CDS) for \$15,000 to support the work of the Task Force and to begin performing the tasks as outlined in Act 289, while awaiting the release of the \$120,000 funds appropriated by Act 289.

DOH convened the first Task Force meeting on August 23, 2007. A consensus of the Task Force was that within the available resources of \$15,000, the priority was to address Section 2(e)(7) of Act 289 "Conduct a needs assessment of families focusing on their experiences transitioning out of Part C programs, as well as transitioning into Part B programs."

A transition survey was developed to identify strengths and barriers in the transition of all young children into the Department of Education (DOE) 619 preschool special education programs from home and previous programs. The survey was conducted October-November 2007.

On January 3, 2008, the Task Force reviewed survey results and recommended the following:

1. Continue the Task Force work and request the Governor to release the \$120,000 to complete the Task Force activities.
2. Ask the Hawaii Early Intervention Coordinating Council (HEICC) to review the data and comments on how EI could be more responsive to family needs.
3. Ask the Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC) to review data and comments to see how Part B preschool services can be more responsive to family needs.
4. Ask the STEPS (Sequenced Transition to Education in Public Schools) team to work with all parties on the process of improving transition for families.

Further work on this initiative will depend upon available resources.

Hawaii 3-5 Transition Task Force

Act 289

Act 289 (H.B. 531, H.D.3, S.D.2, C.D.1) of the Hawaii State Legislature, 2007, established the Hawaii 3-5 Transition Task Force to study the feasibility of expanding Hawaii's Early Intervention Section to continue services for children ages 3-5 years.

Task Force members specified by Act 289 include representation from the neighbor islands, rural Oahu, and underserved populations, at least two parents of children who may require these services, and representatives from:

- Department of Health
- Department of Education
- Department of Human Services
- Office of the Governor
- Board of Education
- Hawaii Early Intervention Coordinating Council
- Special Education Advisory Council
- Hawaii State Council on Developmental Disabilities
- Department of Education's Section 619 state and district coordinator
- Good Beginnings Alliance
- Early intervention service providers
- Head Start providers
- American Academy of Pediatrics - Hawaii Chapter
- University of Hawaii, College of Education – personnel preparation faculty
- Hawaii Association for the Education of Young Children
- Kia'i ka 'Ike
- Early childhood special education professional development programs
- Hawaii State Legislature – Representative appointed by the Speaker of the House
- Hawaii State Legislature – Senator appointed by the President of the Senate

For the feasibility study, the Task Force was asked to:

- Identify the potential annual number of children who exit Part C programs, are eligible for programs under Part B Section 619 of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), but may benefit from a longer transition period and continued Part C program services in the child's natural environment or community-based settings.
- Identify the potential annual number of children who exit Part C programs, are not eligible for services under Part B of Section 619 of IDEA, but have developmental delays and may benefit from intervention (EI) services between ages 3 to 5 years.
- Identify the potential annual number of children who have not received services through Part C programs, but are identified as having developmental delays and who may benefit from intervention services between ages 3 to 5 years.
- Research evidence-based practices in order to define service models to meet the needs of children age 3-5 years.
- Define the array of services required for children age 3-5 years with developmental delays.

- Based upon the potential number of children to be served, derive resource and cost projections to implement services.
- Conduct a needs assessment of families focusing on their experiences transitioning out of Part C programs, as well as transitioning into Part B programs.
- Project the length of time required to develop the necessary resource pool to serve the targeted population.
- Develop indicators for evaluation to assess the outcomes of the early intervention system providing services to children age 3-5 years with developmental delays.

The Task Force was required to submit a report to the Legislature prior to the convening of the 2008 regular session, to include:

- Recommendations regarding the feasibility of expanding Hawaii's early intervention section to serve children age 3-5 years with developmental delays.
- If deemed feasible, recommendations as to eligibility and service models for the expansion of early intervention services, taking into consideration the identified needs, recommended best practices, resources and cost projections, service payment, and procedural safeguards without adversely affecting the implementation of Part C program services.
- If recommended, additional information, including eligibility criteria and programmatic, financing, and evaluation requirements to implement an array of appropriate service models for children age 3-5 years with developmental delays in natural and least restrictive environments.
- An implementation plan.
- A timeline to begin services.

Act 289 appropriated \$120,000 in general funds for fiscal year 2007-2008 to the Department of Health (DOH) for purposes of the Act, and specified that the University of Hawaii (UH) Center on Disability Studies (CDS) will serve as Task Force facilitator, provide the necessary research, and conduct the needs assessment for the feasibility study.

The Task Force ceases to exist upon the adjournment sine die of the 2008 regular session.

DOH Agreement with UH Center on Disability Studies

The DOH Children with Special Health Needs Branch (CSHNB) developed an agreement with CDS for \$15,000 to support the work of the Task Force and to begin performing the tasks as outlined in Act 289, while awaiting the release of the \$120,000 funds appropriated by Act 289.

First Task Force Meeting

The DOH convened the first Task Force meeting on August 23, 2007. Task Force members are listed in Attachment 1. Dr. Jean Johnson (CDS) provided a PowerPoint presentation identifying Task Force responsibilities and some issues presented by Act 289. A consensus of the Task Force was that within the available resources of \$15,000, the priority was to address Section 2, (7) of Act 289 “Conduct a needs assessment of families, focusing on their experiences transitioning out of Part C programs, as well as transitioning into Part B programs.” A Committee was established to develop a transition needs assessment survey.

CDS established a website for all materials, references, and other documents related to the Task Force: www.cds.hawaii.edu/3to5/.

Task Force Transition Survey

A Survey Committee meeting was held on September 13, 2007, to review past preschool surveys and outline in general what should be covered in each of two surveys: 1) a survey of families with children about to exit from Part C (pre-transition survey), and 2) a survey of families with children in DOE Special Education (619) preschools (transition survey). A subcommittee was delegated to design the survey instruments. This subcommittee used electronic review of their work to develop the survey.

The subcommittee developed a pre-transition survey for distribution to Part C families was created. However, because the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) Family Outcomes survey had just been distributed and because resources were insufficient for data entry and analysis, the decision was made not to distribute this survey.

The subcommittee developed a transition survey to identify strengths and barriers in the transition of all young children into the Department of Education (DOE) 619 preschool special education programs from home and previous programs. UH Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval was obtained for utilization of the survey instrument. Review of the instrument was expanded to include members of the Sequenced Transition to Education in the Public Schools (STEPS) team that has been involved in improving transition services for children from Part C to Part B and which had completed three previous preschool transition surveys. The final draft of the survey was submitted to the full Task Force for approval on October 15 with approval received on October 19. Surveys were specific for Oahu, Hawaii County, Maui County, and Kauai County, differing only in the item specifying names of early intervention programs (see survey sample in Attachment 2).

The process for statewide distribution of the survey was developed. DOH CSHNB Early Intervention Section staff photocopied and assembled over 2,600 surveys in packets, and mailed packets using CSHNB funds. Surveys were mailed to DOE preschool special education classroom teachers to send home with the students. Families returned surveys to CDS via DOH. CSHNB provided the postage for surveys returned to the DOH.

CDS developed the database and completed data entry by the end of November 2007. CDS completed the initial data analysis at the end of December 2007.

Second Task Force Meeting

The second Task Force meeting was held on January 3, 2008.

Dr. Johnson provided a PowerPoint presentation on the survey findings. Findings included:

- The response rate was excellent in terms of the number of surveys distributed. However, for reasons that are not clear, the responses probably represent less than one-fourth of the number of children enrolled in preschool special education.
- Families feel strongly about the issues as evidenced by the great many comments.

- What was counted:
 - Families are initially apprehensive about the transition to DOE Preschool.
 - However, at age three, less than one-fourth of the families wanted more early intervention services.
 - Then, after experiencing DOE preschool, a majority of families do not think further early intervention services would have been better for their child.
- What was not counted:
 - How the other three-fourths of families might feel.
 - Whether all families understand the importance of inclusion for young children with disabilities.
 - Data on the small percentage of families who felt their child would benefit from a longer transition period with continued Part C services – and how they would “benefit.”
- No data are available on the number of:
 - Part C/Part B-eligible children who may benefit from a longer transition period with continued early intervention services.
 - Part C/Part B non-eligible children who still may benefit from early intervention services.
 - Non-Part C children ages 3-5 who might benefit from early intervention services.
- Available data suggest significant areas for improvement in early intervention and preschool special education.

The Task Force reviewed survey results and recommended the following:

1. Continue the Task Force work and request the Governor to release the \$120,000 to complete the Task Force activities.
2. Ask the Hawaii Early Intervention Coordinating Council (HEICC) to review the data and comments on how EI could be more responsive to family needs.
3. Ask the Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC) to review data and comments to see how Part B can be more responsive to family needs.
4. Ask the Sequenced Transition to Education in the Public Schools (STEPS) team to work with all parties on the process of improving transition for families.

The Task Force asked that the updated Legislative Report mention that the full \$120,000 has not yet been released, and therefore most of the duties of the Task Force have not been carried out.

Transition Survey Report

The DOH CSHNB completed the data analyses and prepared the survey report, with review and comments from Task Force members.

The survey summary, description, and findings are in Attachment 3. The complete survey report with data tables is on the DOH CSHNB Early Intervention Section website www.state.hi.us/health/family-child-health/eis/index.html and the Hawaii 3-5 Task Force website www.cds.hawaii.edu/3to5/. As requested by the Task Force, the survey report and Task Force recommendations will be sent to the HEICC, SEAC, and STEPS team.

Attachment 1

HAWAII 3-5 TRANSITION TASK FORCE PARTICIPANTS

Name	Address
Parents of children who may require these services	
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Early Childhood Special Education Professional Development Programs	
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Name	Address
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Good Beginnings Alliance	
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Hawaii Association for the Education of Young Children	
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Hawaii Early Intervention Coordinating Council	
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Hawaii State Council on Developmental Disabilities	
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Head Start Providers	
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House of Representatives – State Legislature	
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Kia‘i ka ‘Ike	
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Special Education Advisory Council	
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NOTE: Home addresses of family members are not included.

Family Transition Survey

We would like to know about the services your child and family had before and after your child's third birthday. The answers you give may improve the services provided to children like yours and their families. When you are finished, place the survey in the envelope provided. You do not need a postage stamp. PLEASE MAIL BY

1. In what year was your child born? _____

2. Did your child receive services from any early intervention program?

_____ No → If you answered "no," go on to question 10 below.

_____ Yes → Please check ✓ the Early Intervention programs that served your child.

- | | |
|--------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Early Intervention Section _____ | Healthy Start _____ |
| Kailua Easter Seals _____ | Kapolei Easter Seals _____ |
| Sultan Easter Seals _____ | Waipahu Easter Seals _____ |
| KMC Early Intervention Services Program _____ | KMC Central _____ |
| Lanakila Early Childhood Services Program (ECSP) _____ | Leeward ECSP _____ |
| Windward ECSP _____ | Wahiawa ECSP _____ |
| Salvation Army Therapeutic Nursery _____ | Public Health Nursing (PHN) _____ |
| Waianae Parent Child Development Center _____ | United Cerebral Palsy _____ |
| Other Early Intervention Program _____ | → Program Name _____ |

3. Write the age when your child first received service from an early intervention program?

Years _____ Months _____

4. Which of the following best describes your child's needs before he or she was three years old? Check ✓ one

Speech-language problems _____

Health or medical problems _____

Developmental delays _____

Autism _____

Other _____ (describe) _____

5. Below is a list of some ways Early Intervention programs may help children and families.

Check ✓ how you felt about getting each kind of help:

	<u>liked</u>	<u>didn't like</u>	<u>didn't have</u>
Services provided in our home or in the home of a baby-sitter or care-provider.....	_____	_____	_____
Services provided at a center with other children with disabilities	_____	_____	_____
Therapists worked with my child and family....	_____	_____	_____
Having a care coordinator to talk with	_____	_____	_____
Learning about my child's disability	_____	_____	_____
Finding out how I can help my child	_____	_____	_____
Information on services my family needs (such as food stamps, Quest, etc.)	_____	_____	_____
Meeting families of children with disabilities ...	_____	_____	_____
Meeting families of children without disabilities ..	_____	_____	_____
Amount of services my child received	_____	_____	_____

PLEASE GO TO PAGE 2 for more questions.

6. **How did you feel when you learned your child could not have early intervention services after your child's third birthday?**

7. **When your child turned three years old, did you want your child to stay in early intervention longer instead of starting DOE preschool?** Yes _____ No _____

Why? _____

8. **Now, after your experiences, would you have wanted your child to stay in early intervention longer instead of starting preschool?** Yes _____ No _____

Why? _____

9. **Please tell us about the Part C Transition Conference** (*A transition conference is a meeting with your Care Coordinator and someone from the DOE and/or people from other preschools.*)
(Check one answer)

I did not go to a Part C Transition Conference meeting. _____

I went to a Part C Transition Conference meeting and
it helped me think about services for my child. _____

I went to a Part C Transition Conference meeting and it was not helpful. _____

10. **Before you enrolled your child in a DOE special education preschool, did you visit the preschool?**

Yes, I went to visit. _____

I did not know I could visit a preschool class. _____

I knew I could visit a preschool class, but I did not go. _____

11. **Were the DOE evaluation reports explained in a way that helped you?**

No-one explained the evaluation reports to me. _____

Yes, the explanation was helpful. _____

No, the explanation was not helpful. _____

12. **Please tell us about the IEP (Individualized Education Program) meeting for your child.**

I went to the meeting and people listened to my ideas. _____

I went to the meeting but people did not listen to my ideas. _____

I did not go to the IEP meeting. _____

Comment? _____

PLEASE GO TO PAGE 3 for more questions.

13. Did you feel welcomed by DOE staff? Yes _____ No _____

Comment? _____

14. How long has your child been in a DOE preschool? Years _____ Months _____

15. Where is your child getting DOE Preschool services now?

Please check the one place where your child is getting most of his or her services.

A DOE classroom for children with disabilities. _____

A Head Start or community preschool class. _____

Other (where?) _____

16. Below is a list of some ways DOE Preschool may help children and families.

Check how you feel about each kind of help.

	<u>like</u>	<u>don't like</u>	<u>do not have</u>
Being at a public school	_____	_____	_____
Being in a classroom with children with disabilities	_____	_____	_____
Being at a Head Start or community preschool ...	_____	_____	_____
Being around other children without disabilities	_____	_____	_____
Meeting families of children with disabilities	_____	_____	_____
Meeting families of children without disabilities	_____	_____	_____
Teachers and therapists providing services to the Child	_____	_____	_____
Having someone at school to talk with about needs	_____	_____	_____
Amount of services my child receives	_____	_____	_____

Comment? _____

17. Compared with your feelings when your child started DOE preschool, how do you feel now?

I am more satisfied. _____

I am less satisfied. _____

My feelings are unchanged. _____

Comment? _____

18. Is there anything else you want to share?

Please return this survey in the attached envelope by (date). Thank you.

*If you would like to talk to us about your experiences,
please call Jean Johnson at 956-2653.*

Attachment 3

Hawaii 3-5 Transition Survey Report

SUMMARY

A transition survey was developed to identify strengths and barriers in the transition of young children into the Department of Education (DOE) 619 preschool special education programs. This survey addressed a responsibility of the Hawaii 3-5 Transition Task Force to “Conduct a needs assessment of families focusing on their experiences transitioning out of Part C programs, as well as transitioning into Part B programs” [Section 2(e)(7) of Act 289]. The survey was conducted October-November 2007.

The survey provided information on family experiences in Early Intervention (EI), DOE Preschool, and the transition from EI to DOE Preschool. The majority of families felt positively about their EI, DOE Preschool, and transition experiences. Data indicated that while families may have been initially apprehensive, most families were satisfied with their child’s transition to DOE preschool services.

Data and comments suggested general areas for further work and improvement:

- Early intervention services being more responsive to family needs.
- DOE Preschool services being more inclusive and responsive to family needs.
- Making the transition process as seamless and supportive of families as possible.

Data suggested specific areas for further work and/or improvement:

- For EI:
 - Providing information to families on services that the family may need.
 - Opportunities for families to meet other families of children both with and without disabilities.
 - Identifying factors contributing to the late identification of children with developmental concerns (who did not have EI services prior to entering DOE Preschool).
- For DOE Preschool:
 - Opportunities for families to meet other families of children both with and without disabilities.

SURVEY DESCRIPTION

- Purpose:*** Describe family experiences in the transition of children from EI into the DOE 619 preschool special education programs at age 3 years, and their experiences in EI and DOE Preschool.
- Survey funding:*** State funding was provided by the Hawaii State Department of Health (DOH), Children with Special Health Needs Branch (CSHNB). DOH contracted the University of Hawaii Center on Disability Studies (CDS) to

conduct the study. DOH provided additional staff and funding resources for the survey dissemination, data analysis, and survey report.

Survey tools: The survey tools and methodology were developed by the Hawaii 3-5 Transition Task Force Survey Subcommittee, facilitated by CDS, in conjunction with the STEPS (Sequenced Transition to Education in the Public Schools) Team. The survey tools for Oahu, Hawaii County, Maui County, and Kauai County differ only for the question which lists early intervention programs for the island or county.

Target group: Families of children age 3-4 years, in DOE Preschool Special Education.

Survey dates: October-November 2007.

Survey distribution: Packets of surveys were mailed to DOE preschool special education classroom teachers for distribution to families. Teachers were asked to send a form back to CDS on the number of surveys that were sent home with students. Families returned surveys to CDS via CSHNB.

Survey return rates: 47.1% teachers responded that surveys were sent home with students.

County	# Teachers who were sent survey packets	# Teachers who sent surveys were sent home with students	Teacher response rates
Honolulu (Oahu)	215	109	50.7%
Hawaii	37	12	32.4%
Maui	31	13	41.9%
Kauai	8	3	37.5%
Total	291	137	47.1%

Of surveys distributed, 64.1% were returned.

County	# Surveys sent home	Surveys returned	Return rate
Honolulu (Oahu)	555	363	65.4%
Hawaii	81	32	39.5%
Maui	60	17	28.3%
Kauai	20	47	*
Total	716	459	64.1%

* More surveys were returned than the number that teachers reported distributing. Some teachers may have distributed surveys but did not report it.

Survey report: CDS developed the database and entered survey data. CDS initially analyzed survey data, with comments categorized by one individual. CSHNB completed the data analyses, including comparisons and statistical analyses, and the survey report. The final report was prepared with review and comments from Task Force members.

Data limitations: The extent to which the survey data represents all children in DOE Preschool (including their EI experience) is not known. The 459 surveys returned represent approximately 35% of the 1300 children in DOE Preschool.

This survey does not provide data on the number of:

- Part C children who chose not to have an eligibility evaluation for DOE Preschool.
- Part C/Part B-eligible children who had an eligibility evaluation, but family chose not to enroll their child DOE Preschool.
- Part C/Part B-eligible children who may benefit from a longer transition period with continued EI services, or how they would benefit.
- Part C/Part B non-eligible children who may benefit from continued EI services.
- Non-Part C children ages 3-5 who may benefit from EI services.

SURVEY FINDINGS

Interest in continuing EI services at age 3 years instead of starting preschool

- Before starting DOE Preschool, 30.6% families wanted to continue EI services at age 3 years.
- After experiencing DOE preschool, only 15.7% families wanted to continue EI services at age 3 years, while 77.7% families felt that they did not want to continue EI services.

Previous Early Intervention (EI) experience

- For families who had help in EI, most families (>90%) felt very positively about the help.
- Areas where most families had help included:
 - 74.2% children had EI services in the home of the family, baby-sitter, or care-provider (“natural environment”).
 - 91.4% had therapists working with child and family.
 - 92.9% had a care coordinator to talk with.
 - 87.8% learned about child’s disability.
 - 95.3% found out how the family can help child.
- Areas where fewer families had help included:
 - 51.9% got information on services that the families need.
 - 36.8% met other families of children with disabilities.
 - 25.8% met other families of children without disabilities.
- 73.4% of children in DOE Preschool had previous EI services, while 25.5% did not have EI services.

Transition experience

- 81.3% families of children who previously received EI services attended a Part C Transition Conference meeting and it helped the family think about services for child.
- 71.0% families visited DOE preschool before enrolling child.
- 92.6% families said that the explanation of DOE evaluation report was helpful.
- 85.6% families attended the IEP (Individualized Education Program) meeting and felt that people listened to the family’s ideas.
- 94.3% families felt welcomed by DOE staff.

Experience in DOE Preschool

- Compared to when their child started DOE preschool, 84.1% families felt more satisfied.
- For families who had help in DOE Preschool, most families (>90%) felt very positively about the help.
- Areas where most families received help included:
 - 93.0% children were at a public school.
 - 87.4% children were in a classroom with children with disabilities.
 - 78.5% were around other children without disabilities.
 - 94.8% had teachers and therapists providing services to the child.
 - 92.0% had someone at school to talk with about needs.
- Areas where fewer families received help included:
 - 40.5% children were at a Head Start or community preschool.
 - 63.0% met families of children with disabilities.
 - 52.3% met families of children without disabilities.

Comparison of children in DOE preschool by their having or not having previous EI Services

- More families of children without previous EI services did not know that they could visit a DOE Preschool classroom before enrolling their child (27.0%), compared to children who had EI services (15.9%)
- More children without previous EI services were enrolled in Head Start or a community preschool (63.3%), compared to children who had EI services (41.2%).

Comparison of children in DOE preschool, by the family interest in wanting or not wanting to continue EI Services at age 3 years

- More families who did not want to continue EI services at age 3 years attended a Part C Transition Conference meeting and felt that it helped the family think about services for child (86.6%), compared with families who wanted to continue (77.6%).
- More families who did not want to continue EI services at age 3 years said that the explanation of DOE evaluation report was helpful (96.2%), compared with families who wanted to continue EI services (86.5%).
- More families who did not want to continue EI services at age 3 years attended the IEP (Individualized Education Program) meeting and felt that people listened to the family's ideas (91.4%), compared with families who wanted to continue EI services (70.6%).

Comparison of children with developmental delays, speech-language problems, or autism

- After starting DOE Preschool, more families of children with developmental delays (83.8%) and speech-language problems (85.2%) did not want their children at age 3 to continue EI services, compare to families of children with autism (70.6%).
- More families of children with developmental delays (84.3%) and speech-language problems (89.5%) attended a Part C Transition Conference meeting and felt it helped the family think about services, compared to families of children with autism (74.3%).

Comparison of the early intervention experience of Oahu and Neighbor Island children now in DOE Preschool

- More Oahu children (79.2%) had services provided in natural environments (home of family, baby-sitter or care-provider), compared with Neighbor Island children (67.6%).
- Fewer Oahu children (39.4%) had services provided at a center with children with disabilities, compared with Neighbor Island children (66.2%).
- Fewer Oahu families met families of children with disabilities (34.8%), compared with Neighbor Island families (56.5%).
- Fewer Oahu families met families of children without disabilities (23.7%), compared with Neighbor Island families (46.2%).

Comparison of DOE Preschool experience of Oahu and Neighbor Island children:

- No significant differences were noted.