

June/July 2015 Monthly Newsletter



Parent Notice Non-Compliance Prominent in USED Monitoring Findings

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U.S. Department of Education Issues FAQs for the Uniform Grants Guidance

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New! TransACT® District Masters Your Documents • Your Languages • Your Way.

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Parent Notice Non-Compliance Prominent in USED Monitoring Findings

The U.S. Department of Education (USED) posts its monitoring reports for State visits on its web site. In a review of the most recent five years of monitoring reports available for Title I and Title III, there are a significant number of findings and recommendations related to parent notifications.

Here's what you need to know:

1. Parent notification requirements are extensive and one of the most frequent areas of non-compliance found in USED monitoring reports.
2. In reviewing five years of Title I and Title III monitoring reports, of the 47 Title I monitoring reports there were 77 findings or recommendations related to parent notices and of the 56 Title III monitoring reports there were 59 findings or recommendations related to parent notices.
3. TransACT's parent notices provide you with the letters and forms you need to meet those parent notice compliance requirements. TransACT's Compliance Collections are legally reviewed. We work hard to make sure that our parent notices are in compliance with federal laws. TransACT is constantly monitoring new legislation and guidance at the federal level. If there are changes that affect the parent notices, we review those notices and make changes to them if necessary.

USED looks at mountains of information when they monitor a State. Over the years, since the passage of the No Child Left Behind Act (the most recent iteration of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act), USED has shifted focus during monitoring cycles. The first monitoring cycle addressed the big issues that were out there related to implementing the law when it was new. Having addressed the big issues, more recent monitoring cycles have focused on some of the finer details of the law and guidance.

When an issue pops up time and again in monitoring reports, it tends to indicate an area that is often difficult or confusing for States and Districts. For instance, one of the most common fiscal findings relates to problems reporting grant funded personnel activities. These reports are often called Time and Effort or Personnel Activity Reports (PARs). The guidance and requirements around this can be confusing and unclear and we see monitoring findings related to this throughout all the monitoring reports reviewed.

The same can be said for parent notification requirements. Parent notification requirements are extensive and can often be confusing. In reviewing five years of Title I and Title III monitoring reports, of the 47 Title I monitoring reports there were 77 findings or recommendations related to parent notices and of the 56 Title III monitoring reports there were 59 findings or recommendations related to parent notices. That averages to about one and one third parent notification findings or recommendations per State visited per program. Under the Title I program alone it is more than one and two thirds findings/recommendations per State.

Helping States and Districts meet their compliance requirements related to parent notification is what we do here at TransACT. Our parent notices are legally reviewed to ensure compliance with federal requirements. In addition, we proactively monitor USED guidance as well as legislative activity that might affect parent notifications. If things change, we make changes to our notices to ensure that they remain compliant to the most recent laws and guidance.

If you're a TransACT subscriber, rest assured knowing that the parent notices you use will help you stay compliant to federal requirements. If not, consider requesting a presentation to see what TransACT has to offer. If you have any questions, please contact us at 425.977.2100 or email at support@transact.com.

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U.S. Department of Education Issues FAQs for the Uniform Grants Guidance

Last year the U.S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB) issued the Uniform Grants Guidance (UGG). This document replaced parts of EDGAR (the Education Department General Administrative Regulations) as well as some OMB circulars. TransACT has received some questions from customers wanting to know how this affects parent notices.

Here's what you need to know:

1. The UGG and EDGAR are part of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) that regulate how grant funds are spent and accounted for. The changes in the UGG are more fiscally oriented and relate to the grantees, not those served by the program (i.e. parents).
2. The changes established by the UGG do not affect parent notifications.
3. No need to worry! This has no impact on the TransACT parent notifications you use.

Background

The UGG was finalized in July 2014 with the changes outlined in the UGG taking effect on December 26, 2014. The UGG consolidated eight OMB circulars with the described purpose of reducing administrative burden and increasing flexibility. The changes purportedly have the intent to strengthen oversight by targeting fraud, waste, and abuse.

The changes found in the UGG affect various sectors of education, including higher education and K-12, public and non-public schools, and federal and non-federal agencies. The U.S. Department of Education (USED) issued FAQs for States and Districts, which were updated in March 2015. The USED also held a webinar in late May that was recorded and is available for the public to view. That webinar, the FAQs and other resources can be found at:

<http://www2.ed.gov/policy/fund/guid/uniform-guidance/index.html>

For now, rest assured knowing that the none of the changes established in the UGG will impact the TransACT parent notices you use. If you have any questions, please contact us at 425.977.2100 or email at support@transact.com.

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Contact Emily Passovoy, Marketing Manager, at 425.977.2118 or emily@transact.com.



USED/DOJ Webinar Series: OCR Issue #3: Providing ELs with a Language Assistance Program

Webinar series focusing on the recent guidance issued by USED and DOJ for serving English Learners. Presented by Dr. David Holbrook. Go to: www.transact.com

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