

# REGION VI HEAD START ASSOCIATION BOARD

## Quarterly Reporting Form



**Name: Crystal Pena**

**Position: President**

**Organization: New Mexico Head Start Association**

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**Date: October 23, 2023**

### Correspondence:

1.

**Content Topics:** Head Start Collaboration Director Position, Stabilization Grant Funding available for Head Start Grantees, Alignment of TS GOLD, and EPICS State Data Base

### Reporting Information:

Background checks have been a struggle in the State of New Mexico, taking up to 6-8 weeks for new hires to get approved. Many programs are already struggling with staff turnover and with the challenge of background checks taking too long and losing potential candidates due to the wait. Have seen an improvement in the last couple of weeks starting to process them faster, and we hope to see that it clears up and speeds up the process.

ECECD Department had Stabilization Grant Funding available for all Head Start Grantees to apply back in August, the application process was easy, and the state had a formula based on enrollment last year to determine how much funds would be distributed. Funds must be exhausted by June 2024 and can be used for salaries, incentive pay, playground & facility improvements, PPE supplies, and/or mental health.

The State is working with Head Start Grantees to align TS GOLD and EPICS Data Base System to help support teachers when entering data so as not to duplicate services. Pilot program with some head start grantees more to come once we get it off the ground.

Conducted interviews for the Head Start Collaboration Director position NMHSA was present during interviews and found a candidate hopefully soon will announce who they have hired and will have actively participate with Region VI.

Staff turnover and under-enrollment continues to be hot topic in New Mexico, trying to maintain current staff but hard to compete with school districts, and when salary increases continue to rise Head Start grantees find it impossible to keep up and will continue to lose staff once they obtain their degree.

**Report Attachments (if any):**

**Signature(s):** Crystal Peña

**Date:** 10/23/2023