



**REGION VI HEAD START ASSOCIATION
BOARD OF DIRECTORS VIRTUAL MEETING AGENDA**

**Monday, January 29, 2024
9:00 PT a.m. In-Person
Region VI Office in Dallas, TX**

Meeting Minutes

I. Opening Business Items

- A. Call to Order/Greetings/Welcome – Gloria Lopez, President
Gloria Lopez, President, called the meeting to order at 9:29 a.m. PT. She welcomed everyone in attendance and asked for a moment of silence for Joann Williams's passing.
- B. Presentation & Seating of New Members –Albert Black, Vice-President
–Albert Black, Vice-President—Tasha Woods-Parent New Mexico, Suzie Powers-Director, and Casey Lafferty-HS Collaboration Director.
- C. Roll Call & Establish Quorum—Crystal Pena took the roll call; 13 out of 20 votes were present; quorum was established.

<u>Representative</u>	<u>Alternate</u>	Vote ✓
<u>Arkansas</u>		
○ Susan Templeton, Director	○ Sarah Wilhite, Director	
○ Jacqueline Burton, Staff	○ Staff:	
○ Parent:	○ Parent:	
X Jackie Govan, Friend	○ Rhonda Ahrent, Friend	✓
<u>Louisiana</u>		
X Rhonda Tayler, Director	X Michelle Joubert, Director	✓
X Erika Arvie, Staff	○ Staff: Latissa Fredericks	✓
○ Parent:	○ Parent:	
○ Kahree Wahid, Friend	○ Friend:	
<u>New Mexico</u>		
X Gloria Lopez, Director	○ Director:	✓
X Crystal Pena, Staff	○ Staff:	✓
X Tasha Woods, Parent	○ Parent:	✓
X Luis Quinones, Friend	○ Friend:	✓
<u>Oklahoma</u>		
○ Kathy Castleberry, Director	X Anthony Stafford, Director	✓
X Susie Powers, Staff	X Laurie Gassaway, Staff	✓
X Sarah Scott, Parent	○ Parent:	✓
X Paula Brown, Friend	○ Friend:	✓
<u>Texas</u>		
X Weldon T. Beard, Director	○ Venetia Peacock, Director	✓
○ Staff:	○ Staff:	
○ Parent:	○ Parent:	
X Albert L. Black, Friend	○ Friend:	✓
		13 /20 (11 or more)

Board Advisors in attendance were State Presidents Michelle Joubert (LA), Crystal Pena (NM), Christin Bolinger (OK), and Weldon Beard (TX). Collaboration Directors: Jackie Govan (AR), Paula Brown (OK), and Alferma Giles (TX).

II. Approval of Agenda – Gloria Lopez, President

Albert Black makes a motion to approve the agenda as presented, seconded by Laurie Gassaway. All in favor, motion carried.

III. Approval of Minutes: October 23, 2023, minutes by Crystal Pena, Secretary.

Albert Black makes a motion to approve the meeting minutes on October 23, 2023, as presented; Jackie Govan seconds it. All in favor, motion carried.

IV. Treasurer's Report – Paula Brown

Paula Brown reported a balance of \$148,734.00 as of October 2023, earned interest of \$18.66, Texas dues of \$1,000, and expenses: Online Bill Pay of \$17.85. The bank balance is \$149,734.81, 2024 dues to be invoiced are \$2500, LA Conference proceeds are \$67,272.64, LA Conference Seed money is to be invoiced at \$5,000, and NM Dollar Per Child from Region VI is \$600.50, for a total balance of \$225,107.95.

Gloria suggested writing a check to NHSA Dollar per Child and will present at the Region VI conference in Portland, Oregon, on behalf of Region VI.

Jacqueline Burton makes a motion to approve the treasurer's report as presented by Crystal Pena seconds it. All in favor, motion carried.

V. Regional Office Presentation-Kenneth Gilbert, Region VI Program Manager

It is a pleasure to host the Region VI Board Meeting here in Dallas, TX, at the Regional Office. Leadership at the Region VI Board is critical as we continue to offer high-quality services.

Joseph, March 2024 will be four years since the pandemic was declared. Funding increased by 22% with the Region 2023 100-million-dollar opportunity for HS to apply for increasing enrollment. Enrollment numbers from 2022 have been reduced by 11,600 children, decreasing from 2020 enrollment numbers, and the EHS has increased 5000 slots in Region VI. Change of Scope submissions are coming in from recipients. Increase from 2020 of 250 million and 2023 increase in funding of 111 million. Provided COVID funds and quality improvement, many recipients utilize funds in the workforce.

The number of recipients and grants has reduced, allowing the consolidation of grants.

Tasha Long reported on child health and safety. National initiatives and Regional Offices are taking this seriously. There are four priority areas: lack of supervision, unauthorized release, inappropriate discipline, and neglect cases. The last child receiving medical or dental attention must be reported to OHS. Medical and Dental reports programs must report to their assigned program specialists. From 1999 to FY2022, the most frequent deficiencies in Region VI was inappropriate discipline. TA rolled out an incident form template, which many programs are unaware of; it has been available to programs since October

2023. FY2022 and the current year, inappropriate discipline is still leading to deficiencies. Many of it can be attributed to COVID-19; prior recipients were not reporting as you see now. We have to work together to address this concern. The Regional Office reports incidents within seven business days or sooner following the National Office. Communicating with HS grantees to ensure they follow protocol in reporting. When child, health, and safety reports come in, the TA will provide support to grant recipients prior to the report being released. We are the only Region that has rolled out the tool kit focused on Child Health & Safety. Due to the most prominent reports, I rolled it out in Texas and Louisiana, focusing on those two states. We will focus on the other states, Oklahoma and Arkansas, and they will head to New Mexico in April.

Programs are reporting challenging behaviors. The regional office is trying to see what supports are available to help and focus on mental health. We ask programs to help support and follow protocols and understand how prominent programs report significant incidents and must be aware of what needs to be reported and the timeline of when it must be reported. We want Region VI to take on the initiative and help reach out to programs to understand the process.

Full Enrollment Initiative, we are on our sixth cadence. Many grant recipients are under the 97% under-enrollment. They grouped each program so as not to roll out as a whole; the first group launched in January 2023 and is about to end in February 2024. We are looking at the root cause analysis: service areas are saturated by others providing care, families have relocated, and the workforce has. The slightest root cause is transportation. As each group comes on board, the Regional office tracks conversations and tries to find remedies. Continue to share struggles and factors with Program Specialists. The 12-month plan required to submit is not chronically under-enrolled, which means you are on a plan.

Share with the Regional Office of conferences in your state; if TA can help, they can support programs. We plan to work with state collaboration directors; two of them serve on the apprenticeship group. We have two Program Specialists who retired in 2023, and they are working on hiring for those positions. Bare with the Regional Office with the changes.

Kahree asked about reducing enrollment to increase staff salaries, what we can look forward to, and if they see a trend. Tasha commented that if the program is underenrolled, they cannot take the funding and shift to salaries. A retention and recruitment strategy is feasible if you have evidence that it will solve the workforce problem. We need to talk with the Regional Office before programs make that decision.

Kenneth Gilbert commented on the NPRM; it has closed for comments from grant recipients, associations, and parents, and we will proceed with the next steps. The NPRM proposes changes to the workforce, better integration of mental health, and enhanced standards to improve quality. The current Head Start Performance Standards will remain in effect until the proposed changes occur. Continue to strive in Head Start and work for children and families.

VI. Standing Committee Reports – Committee Chairs

- A. Audit/Budget/Finance –Paula Brown- Paul reported information about back taxes, which is now with an accountant.
- B. Scholarship/Awards/Recognition –Alferma Giles (see attached)

Ms. Giles reported that we do not have a report at this time, and once we confirm a date for New Mexico, we will send out the scholarship schedule.

C. Communication/Public Relations –Albert Black

No report was given.

D. Policy & Procedures –

No report was given.

E. By-Laws –Jackie Govan

Jackie Govan reported that the bylaws currently remain the same, looking forward to working with the Policies & Procedures group to align with the bylaws.

Jackie Govan makes a motion to approve the committee reports as presented, and Albert Black seconds it. All in favor, motion carried.

VII. General Standard Reports ---Brief Highlights Only

A. State Collaboration Reports (AR-LA-NM-OK-TX) – Collaboration Directors

Arkansas- Jackie Govan reported new partnerships with CSBG-Community Services Block Grant and ACAAA-Arkansas Community Action Agency. The LEARN Act is underway and will move the position of HS Collaboration Director to the State Offices. The new name, “Office of Early Childhood, has 12 LEADS, and the Act will identify more LEADS. To support staff working on books focused on burnout and wellness. I will visit all HS grantees in February to hear them about their challenges and issues and how the HS Collaboration Director can help.

Working with PDG focus on Trauma Informed Care, increasing infants and toddlers.

State Arkansas Conference is scheduled for April 30- May 3, 2024. We invited Tommy Sheridan and Director Khari Garvin to the conference. The theme is “Come as you Wish” and will have entertainment for staff to help unwind and relax.

Arkansas meets with Directors and Staff every other month. Region VI website, we are still missing. Need pictures from all Region VI board members.

Louisiana- Kahree Wahid reported he serves on the Governor’s Early Childhood Care & Education Commission. The State has submitted recommendations to Legislatures to invest \$98 million of additional state funds in high-quality early care and education. Requesting they match the funding and incentivize ongoing and increasing local investment. Lastly, continue to review state and local revenue and resources to identify potential sustainable funding for early care and education.

HS Collaboration office continues to work with HS grantees enrolled in Edlink, which is a state system that has licensing, child care information, support, and logistics.

State Coordinating Council-Early Steps will revisit the MOU on coordination and transitions across programs with Part C and Part B providers.

Department of Health, focusing on childhood lead poisoning prevention programs, helps increase the awareness, particularly on the impact of lead in early care and education settings.

Workforce development is the highest priority, and a comprehensive initiative is being worked on to develop and sustain an early care and education workforce. Working with the Regional Office and Office of HS. Reaching out to Charter and High Schools to offer CDA training for students and other vocational training. Louisiana Policy Institute is a steering committee retreat that involves parents, childcare providers, and early care and education collaborative partners to address the needs in the state from a parental, provider, and program administrator's point of view.

New Mexico- No report given.

Oklahoma- Paula Brown reported planning for a hybrid spring conference, which will have limited in-person slots and will have the virtual option available. The advisory board meeting held in November highlights the Happy Teacher Project funded by ACF. It has been well received; teachers who participate can get away. Focus on staff wellness and give away items to help track their wellness and fitness.

The collaboration office has drafted a template for states to use when exploring registered apprenticeships.

Texas- Alferma Giles reported that THSSCO participated in a December virtual 2023 Winter Texas Learning Collaborative Symposium. Alferma did an overview of the HS Collaboration Office and National and Regional Priorities and presented a video recording on "The Day in the Life of a Head Start Program."

The Texas Early Learning Council still serves as a governor-appointed member. Continue the work of the current Texas Early Learning Strategic Plan and the work of the PDG-B5 grant.

Work with state efforts to collect and use data on early childhood programs to guide decision-making in improving child and family outcomes.

Texas has been recognized as the best online professional development course for early childhood teachers, administrators, coaches, and others. The T.E.A.C.H Advisory Committee is a Texas Scholarship Program that helps pay for compensation to early childhood educators.

All Head Start Collaboration Directors have a report that is due at the end of January that includes all the work completed in the prior year.

The THSSCO supported recruiting HS and EHS programs to apply for the Supporting Mental Health and Resiliency in Texans (SMART) Innovation Grant Program.

B. State Advisory Reports – (AR-LA-NM-OK-TX) – State Presidents

Arkansas- Jackie Govan reported the new collaborative partners with the HSSCO, ACAA, and CSBG have completed a triad Inter-agency Agreement between the HSSCO, ACAA, and CSBG. We have also implemented an action plan to keep us grounded in our responsibilities to the state and the local grantees. Implementation will begin in January 2024. The new name, "Office of Early Childhood, is now the active new name for early childhood education in Arkansas. The state continues to work on changes listed in this Act. However, the first round of Early Childhood LEADS (12) is currently in place, with more LEADS to be identified. (See Report)

Louisiana- Michelle Joubert reported that the 2024 Conference will be held in July in Shreveport, LA. Working on details and establishing a proposal. Working on website and logo committee chairperson. Signed off on the NPRM as an association. Directors want to push for aligning a quarterly meeting with program directors with the association meetings. This is an opportunity to discuss the needs, challenges, and support they want. Mental health and challenging behaviors came up as a priority. Limited qualified teachers in Louisiana, finding recruitment ideas, whether job fairs or contacting individuals. Serves on the Early Childhood Care and Education Advisory Council and submitted three nominations of Directors from HS. Hopefully, we will have representation on the Council. (See Report)

New Mexico- Crystal Pena reported The State of New Mexico hired a new Head Start Collaboration Director, Casey Lafferty, who began with ECECD on January 16, 2024. NMHSA and ECECD Department met on January 16, 2024, for a strategic planning session to discuss priorities in NM and collaboration efforts amongst the entities. Discuss innovative ideas to utilize the PDG funding to support Head Start children with a diagnosis disability. Head Start Collaboration Funding, budgeted amount of \$23,000
-Discussed utilizing funding for a 2-day retreat (May 13-14, 2024, in Albuquerque) that will include (HS/EHS/Tribal Head Starts in NM, ECECD, PED, SPED, and Home Visiting)
(See Report)

Oklahoma- Suzie Powers reported was elected as the new Director Representative for the Oklahoma Association and will have a full report at the next meeting. Paula commented on recruiting more association members and will update the by-laws. (See Report)

Texas- Weldon Beard reported being impacted by COVID, the process to update by-laws, and the two-day workshop, which wants to include migrant and tribal head starts—a brief discussion on artificial intelligence and how that will affect. (See Report)

- C. NHSA Report – NHSA Representatives: Jackie Govan reported the first meeting for the year on January 21st in Washington, D.C., focusing on the NPRM—tied meeting with the Winter Leadership Institute.

Jackie Govan makes a motion to approve the reports as presented, and Albert Black seconds. All in favor, motion carried.

VIII. Conference Planning Reports – Conference Chairs

- A. 2023 Conference-Louisiana- 7/17/23-7/21/23-Rhonda Taylor reported closing out the Region VI conference, pending invoice from Paula that will include the \$5000 seed money. Crystal has requested the attendee's breakdown. We had 1081 participants total, not including vendors and entities.

2024 Conference-New Mexico-Crystal Pena reported Region VI Conference Update:

- Hotel Dates still pending- November 4-8, 2024, conflict in scheduling
- Theme: Head Start Rising Above the Rest
- Request for Seed Money from Region VI
- Entertainment

- Vendors and Exhibitors-seeking sponsorships
- Estimate head count from each state

B. 2025 Conference-Texas reported at this time.

Jackie Govan motions to approve the presented conference reports: Laurie Gassaway seconds. All in favor, motion carried.

IX. Old Business

A. No old business to report

X. New Business

- A. Region VI Strategic Planning Proposal: Gloria reported is still working on the presenter (Bernadine Martinez) and a proposal for the cost, requesting to have strategic planning at the next meeting in April. Jackie suggested building in time for committee meetings.
- B. Presentation of Nominating Slate of Officers:
- Committee members: Jacqueline Burton, Luis Quinones, Weldon Beard, Alferma Giles,
 - President: Albert Black
 - Vice-President: Crystal Pena
 - Secretary: Rhonda Taylor
 - Treasurer: Paula Brown
 - Parliamentarian: Jackie Govan
 - Historian: Laurie Gassaway

Jackie Govan motions to approve the nominating slate of officers: Erika Arvie seconds. All in favor, motion carried.

XI. Announcements –

Next Region VI Board Meeting: April 2-4, 2024 (Pending Confirmation)

XII. Adjournment – Gloria Lopez, President, adjourned the meeting since there was no further business.

Gloria Lopez adjourned the meeting at 12:32 p.m. PT.

Meeting minutes respectfully submitted by Crystal Pena, Secretary.