

***Approval of
Head Start Policy Council
December 12, 2023
Meeting Minutes***



MEETING MINUTES



HEAD START POLICY COUNCIL MEETING

December 12, 2023

6:15 P.M.

Members Present	Edgewood Independent School District (EISD): Jessica Garcia San Antonio Independent School District (SAISD): Jessie Rios, Ashley Trevino, Ruben Garcia EHS-EISD: none EHS-EISD HB: none EHS-CCP: Anna Rios, Krizia Franklin Community Representative: Ramiro Lopez, Yenter Tu
Members Absent	Edgewood Independent School District (EISD): Jasmine Gomez San Antonio Independent School District (SAISD): Esmeralda Rodriguez-Hernandez EHS EISD: Wilmarys Vazquez EHS-CCP: none EHS-EISD HB: Erika Lara Community Representative: None
Alternate Members Present	Edgewood Independent School District (EISD): None San Antonio Independent School District (SAISD): Magaly Olguin, Lillian Dotson EHS-EISD: Kanisha Thomas EHS-CCP: Claudia Zuniga, Keyonna Hughes Community Representative: Lisa Rosales, John Bonillas
Alternate Members Absent	Edgewood Independent School District (EISD): Erika Fuentes, Katherine Carvallo San Antonio Independent School District (SAISD): Monica Duran EHS-EISD: none EHS-CCP: none Community Representative: none

I. CALL TO ORDER

2023-2024 Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership (EHS-CCP) HSPC Chair, Krizia Franklin, called the meeting to order at 6:27 p.m.

II. MEETING MINUTES

Motion: Ms. Ashley Trevino moved to approve the November 14, 2023 meeting minutes.

Seconded (2nd): Mr. Ruben Garcia

Vote: All in favor (unanimous)- The motion carried.

III. PUBLIC COMMENTS

None to report

IV. BRIEFING AND POSSIBLE ACTION (a-l)

a. Correspondence

HSPC Chair, Krizia Franklin, introduced Ms. Audrey Jackson, Head Start Administrator, to present on Correspondence ACF-PI-OHS-23-04 Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) on Supporting the Head Start Workforce and Consistent Quality Programming-Public Comment Period. Ms. Jackson reported that the Office of Head Start is making recommended changes to the Performance Standards for Head Start and furthermore, we have an opportunity to make comments on these rules. The deadline to submit statements is January 12, 2024. Ms. Jackson also provided a recap of the recommendations to the Policy Council representatives. No questions were asked.

b. Correspondence

HSPC Chair, Krizia Franklin, introduced Ms. Audrey Jackson, Head Start Administrator, to present on Correspondence HSES Enrollment 06CH010821 EHS Under-enrollment Letter. Ms. Jackson reported that a letter was sent to our program called an under-enrollment letter. This is a letter that the Office of Head Start sends out to programs that are not at least 97% enrolled. Ms. Jackson stated that we have met that requirement with our Head Start Pre-K program but unfortunately we have struggled with our Early Head Start program in which we serve 128 children. Ms. Jackson described the reasons for the under-enrollment and stated we have plans for improving and ensuring that we are fully enrolled. The letter that was received formalizes that we must submit a plan to the Federal Government by January 12, 2024.

HSPC member, Ruben Garcia, asked when was the last time Head Start received this deficiency. Ms. Jackson reported this was the first time we have received this letter. Ms. Jackson added that the timeline to meet the enrollment requirement is until December 2024.

HSPC member, Ashley Trevino, inquired if any surveys had been provided to teachers due to retention issues. Ms. Trevino also discussed a possible issue with the Head Start program being on a school campus where there are two groups of teachers (i.e., school campus teachers and Head Start teachers) and each group is sectioned off at different areas of the school. Ms. Jackson reported that in this circumstance, we serve 10 classrooms located at Stafford Early Childhood Center at Edgewood Independent School District, in which we have a whole wing and there is a Center Director on site. The difference with this site is that the school principal does not oversee this program; the Center Director oversees the program. Ms. Jackson reported on some issues that were being discussed that include staff payment schedule, structure of the program, and equivalency of teacher pay.

HSPC member, Jessica Garcia, inquired about the enrollment process for the newcomer families to the City of San Antonio into the Head Start program. Ms. Jackson introduced Melissa Benavidez, Senior Management Analyst, who discussed the outcome of a meeting that she had with the American Muslim Community Center. Head Start was contacted by this center because there were members that had concerns with some barriers in getting children enrolled with the Head Start program. The meeting was productive and information was exchanged with the Center. A meeting was also held with the Office of Refugee Services. No further questions were asked.

c. Election of Officers

HSPC Chair, Krizia Franklin, provided information on the available positions of Head Start Policy Council Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary and explained the nomination, voting, and election process, prior to the open voting process.

Head Start Policy Council Chair

Ms. Krizia Franklin and Ms. Jessie Rios were the nominees for the position of Chairperson. An open vote took place and Ms. Franklin was selected for the position of Policy Council Chair.

Motion: Mr. Ruben Garcia moved to approve Ms. Franklin for the position of Chairperson on the 2023-2024 Head Start Policy Council.

Seconded (2nd): Ms. Keyonna Hughes

Vote: All in favor (unanimous) – The motion carried.

Head Start Policy Council Vice Chair

Mr. Ruben Garcia and Ms. Ashley Trevino were the nominees for the position of Vice Chairperson. An open vote took place and Ms. Ashley Trevino was selected for the position of Vice Chairperson.

Motion: Mr. Ruben Garcia moved to approve Ms. Ashley Trevino for the position of Vice Chairperson on the 2023-2024 Head Start Policy Council.

Seconded (2nd): Ms. Jessica Garcia

Vote: All in favor (unanimous)

Head Start Policy Council Secretary

Ms. Jessica Garcia was the nominee for the position of Secretary.

Motion: Ms. Ashley Trevino moved to approve Ms. Jessica Garcia for the position of Secretary on the 2023-2024 Head Start Policy Council.

Seconded (2nd): Ms. Keyonna Hughes

Vote: All in favor (unanimous)

Ms. Krizia Franklin, newly elected for Policy Council Chairperson, continued with her duties to the 2023-2024 Policy Council.

d. Election of Community Representatives

HSPC Chair, Krizia Franklin, reviewed the HSPC Community Representative voting process. The candidates that were present included Mr. Ramiro Lopez, Mr. Yenter Tu, Ms. Lisa Rosales, Mr. John Bonillas, and Ms. Diana Rodriguez-Ruiz. All candidates spoke to the Policy Council for three minutes each about their qualifications and why they wanted to be elected for the Community Representative position. Two e-mail messages were read by Ms. Priscilla Garcia, Senior Management Analyst, that contained statements from Mr. Richard Alcorta and Ms. Anna Draker about their qualifications and why they wanted to be elected for the Community Representative position. Ms. Priscilla Garcia, Senior Management Analyst, encouraged the Policy Council parents to review all applications and resumes of the seventeen (17) applicants for Community Representative. An open vote was held, and Ms. Garcia recorded the votes for the four Community Representative

positions. After reviewing the voting data, Ms. Krizia Franklin, Chair, announced the two primary representatives elected were Mr. Ramiro Lopez and Mr. Yenter Tu. Also, elected were two alternate Community Representatives: Ms. Lisa Rosales and Mr. John Bonillas. All of the newly elected Community Representatives were invited to join the Policy Council meeting.

Motion: Ms. Anna Rios moved to approve the 2023-2024 Head Start Policy Council Community Representatives.

Seconded (2nd): Ms. Kanisha Thomas

Vote: All in favor (unanimous)

e. Election of Committee Members

HSPC Chair, Krizia Franklin, reviewed the Policy Council Standing Committees and provided information on the Special Committees. Head Start Policy Council parents were informed that the size of each committee can have no less than three (3) and no more than five (5) Head Start Policy Council members. All members, including alternates and community representatives, can sit on a committee. A question was asked if members can sit on more than one committee. Members were informed that they could sit on more than one committee. Ms. Franklin asked for volunteers after reading the responsibilities for each committee.

Volunteers for the Assessment and Planning Committee were Keyonna Hughes, Ashley Trevino, Ramiro Lopez, Jessica Garcia, and Krizia Franklin.

Volunteers for the Parent Engagement Committee were Lisa Rosales, Lillian Dotson, Claudia Zuniga, Yenter Tu and Kanisha Thomas.

Volunteers for Special Committee, as per City of San Antonio, Assistance City Attorney, Kristine Duff, did not need to be recruited at this time.

f. Approval of the Policy Council Meeting Days and Time

HSPC Chair, Krizia Franklin, asked Ms. Priscilla Garcia, Senior Management Analyst, to present the Approval of the Policy Council Meeting Days and Time. Ms. Garcia reviewed the current HSPC Meeting days and time. Currently the HSPC meets monthly, every fourth Tuesday of the month at 6:15pm. Ms. Garcia asked if the current meeting days and time worked for the group. There were no opposing votes to change the days and time.

Motion: Ms. Kanisha Thomas moved to approve the fourth Tuesday of each month at 6:15pm as this Policy Council's meeting days and time.

Seconded (2nd): Ms. Keyonna Hughes

Vote: All in favor (unanimous)

g. Review of Determining, Verifying and Documenting Eligibility

HSPC Chair, Krizia Franklin, introduced Ms. Melissa Benavidez, Senior Management Analyst, and Ms. Rachel Pearce, Senior Management Analyst, to present the Review of Determining, Verifying and Documenting Eligibility. Ms. Benavidez reported this was a short training piece for the Policy Council members on how a child is determined eligible for this program. Ms. Benavidez and Ms. Pearce

reported, in detail, the requirements for eligibility that included the following items: age eligible, income eligible and residency requirement. Ms. Benavidez provided information from the Head Start Program Performance Standards regarding the establishment of written policies and procedures that describe actions taken against staff who intentionally violate federal and program eligibility determinations and who enroll children that are not eligible to receive Early Head Start or Head Start Services. Further review was provided from Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment and Attendance (ERSEA) Policy 7 Violation of Eligibility Determination Regulations. Lastly, Ms. Pearce discussed the stigma that can be associated with the Head Start Program along with the privacy and respect provided to families that apply for the Head Start program.

HSPC member, John Bonillas, inquired about the enrollment of families who reside outside the boundaries of the San Antonio Independent School District (SAISD) and Edgewood Independent School District (EISD). Ms. Benavidez confirmed those selections and stated that we utilize a priority selection point system that will document what is happening in the home and provided examples of different factors like having a child with a disability, homelessness or issues related to a family's area of residency. Mr. Bonillas also inquired about having heard about the difficulty in recruiting for the Early Head Start program and could the area be expanded outside of EISD. Ms. Pearce reported that we have a healthy waitlist for the Early Head Start program and confirmed that it was more of a staffing issue than a recruitment issue. No further questions were asked.

h. Feedback on Head Start Parent Handbook

HSPC Chair, Krizia Franklin introduced Ms. Cassandra Farias-Ybarra, Special Projects Manager, to present on Feedback on the Head Start Parent Handbook. Ms. Farias-Ybarra reported that an email had been sent out to all of our Policy Council members about two weeks ago requesting their review of the Head Start Parent Handbook and to bring any input or suggestions for any changes or updates to the parent handbook. Ms. Farias-Ybarra then asked the Policy Council members if they had any input.

HSPC member, Ruben Garcia, inquired if Head Start had an initiative for starting a "stand-alone" Head Start application for interaction between the teachers and the students. Ms. Farias-Ybarra reported that we did not have a Head Start application with the Early Head Start Program for communication, but we do have Family Support Workers on-site and teachers that interact with the students daily. Ms. Audrey Jackson, Head Start Administrator, reported that to her knowledge, we do not have a Head Start specific application but that teachers use applications that include Remind and Brightwheel. Ms. Dianne Mendez, Management Analyst, reported that the childcare centers in the EHS-CCP program use an application for communication but it is maintained by each individual facility. Ms. Jackson reported that communication information is sent through Head Start's ChildPlus system, but reported that it was only a one-way communication system.

HSPC member, Ramiro Lopez, inquired how often Head Start uses the one-way communication with the ChildPlus system. Ms. Farias-Ybarra explained how the ChildPlus system is utilized and how there is a system within ChildPlus that allows us to type up an announcement or attach a flyer and then it is sent out to all of our enrolled families. In addition, there is also communication with e-mail and text messages.

HSPC member, Jessica Garcia, inquired about obtaining a better description of the Ready Rosie Program and instructions on how to download the application. Ms. Farias-Ybarra stated she will make a note of adding a better description of Ready Rosie and provided an explanation of the Ready Rosie program to Ms. Garcia and the Policy Council members.

HSPC member, Ashley Trevino, inquired about the family-style meals that are being served to the children. Ms. Trevino stated she was informed from the school principal that it was mandated that the children eat family-style meals and they are not allowed to have parents visit or eat with them. Ms. Trevino asked if this was mandatory because she had read in the manual that family-style meals were suggested and not mandated. Furthermore, parents have informed her that they find it unfair that they are not able to join their children for holiday lunches. Ms. Farias-Ybarra reported for Early Head Start and stated that the children in this program are between six weeks to three years of age. Knowing that routines are very important for children, we want parents to be involved in their children's education and there are usually and typically volunteer opportunities on-site. With our younger children they are experiencing separation and the care for the very first time and it may not be the best idea for parents in those lunch experiences with the younger children. Parent engagement is encouraged with parents with other opportunities offered at the centers.

Ms. Jackson stated this was a good question because we actually made a change this year. With Head Start, it used to be required that we have family-style meals. There has been a shift to where it is now recommended. In addition, there was also a moment when no outside food was allowed. So, it went from pretty stringent, must be family-style and no outside food, to where it has been loosened up a little bit and, Ms. Jackson confirmed, we have been hearing from parents saying the same comments. So, actually, this school year, we did decide that we are going to allow parents to bring in a meal for their child and to come in. We also said it was going to be at the pace of the principal to implement it. We, as the grant recipient of the grant, at the policy level, have backed off of that.

Ms. Trevino also discussed outdoor play and stated the kids were not getting that opportunity. Ms. Jackson stated that not getting outdoor play was not aligned with what we would want. Ms. Trevino inquired if the outdoor play could be enforced because they are being kept in a room all day. Ms. Jackson encouraged Ms. Trevino to provide her with the name of the campus so that we can work specifically with that administrator.

HSPC member, Lisa Rosales, asked why the decision of the type of technology that is being used to communicate with parents, rests with each campus. Ms. Jackson reported that we, as the grant recipient, contract with education providers that include SAISD, EISD and six childcare providers. Because the school districts are very large systems and they have many classrooms, our children are co-enrolled State Pre-K and Head Start and the rest of the Pre-K children are only enrolled in the State Pre-K, and so their systems are utilized. Ms. Jackson stated she could not speak as to why the district would choose to allow decisions to be made by a campus but we, at the Head Start level, do not have control over that, nor at the City of San Antonio (City) level. No further questions were asked.

i. Review of Head Start, EHS, and EHS-CCP Fiscal Report

HSPC Chair, Krizia Franklin, introduced Mr. Stephen Gonzalez, Fiscal Manager, to present the Review of the Head Start, EHS, and EHS-CCP Fiscal Reports. Mr. Gonzalez reported on the Head Start and Early Head Start consolidated grant for the 2023-2024 fiscal year and stated this grant period is from February 1, 2023 through January 31, 2024. As of November 30, 2023, the total budget was reported at \$37,810,619.00. The year-to-date budget is \$25,063,677.00 and the year-to-date actual is \$23,193,506.00 with a variance of \$1,870,171.00. Mr. Garza provided detailed information on variances related to Personnel Salaries/Fringe Benefits, Travel, Supplies, Contractual, Other, and Non Federal/In Kind categories.

Mr. Gonzales reported on the Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership (EHS-CCP) Grant. The following information was provided from the 2023-2024 Fiscal Report as of November 30, 2023. The budget period for this grant is from August 1, 2023 through July 31, 2024. Mr. Gonzalez reported the total budget for this grant is \$4,139,106.00. The Year-to-date budget is \$1,105,479.00 and the Year-to-date Actual amount is \$ 1,097,964.00 with a positive variance amount of \$7,515.00. Mr. Gonzalez provided variance explanations for Personnel Services and Fringe Benefits, Travel, Supplies, Contractual, Other, and Non Federal Share/In Kind categories.

HSPC member, Lisa Rosales, inquired if the goal was to be at 0% variance. Mr. Gonzalez reported that our goal, ultimately, is that this program be self-sufficient so that we are not spending more than what we actually have budgeted and we also want to spend everything that we have. In addition, Mr. Gonzalez provided a detailed description of variances.

HSPC member, Ruben Garcia, asked if Mr. Gonzalez could provide examples from the In Kind Category. Mr. Gonzalez referred to the Contractual category and more specifically to the amounts in the total budget for SAISD and EISD and stated this was where the teachers' salaries could be seen. In our contractual agreements with the school districts, in addition to the funding that we are providing, they provide a match that is also payment to the teachers. There are additional costs related to personnel that are also working in this program and is not covered in our base funding and so the school districts pay for it out of their general fund and that is recognized as a cash match for our program.

HSPC member, Ramiro Lopez, inquired about the four percent (4%) increase in salaries for the teachers. Mr. Gonzalez clarified that the four percent (4%) increase was related to the City of San Antonio (City) personnel. Furthermore, Mr. Gonzalez added that the school districts have their own separate process for determining how they are going to do pay increases.

Mr. Lopez also inquired about the different calendar year for the EHS-CCP program. Mr. Gonzalez explained that when the Office of Head Start puts out grants available for competition, those calendar dates are already set.

HSPC member, Yenter Tu, inquired if there was any spending that included Interpreters and if that amount was budgeted, or was that expenditure located as a separate line item. Mr. Gonzalez reported that we have funding within our existing budget that we can allocate for that purpose. In addition, Mr. Gonzalez confirmed that the funding was from the Federal side. No further questions were asked.

j. Review of Head Start, EHS, and EHS-CCP Monthly Reports

HSPC Chair, Krizia Franklin, introduced Ms. Audrey Jackson, Head Start Administrator, to present the Review of Head Start, EHS, and EHS-CCP Monthly Reports. Ms. Jackson informed the Policy Council members that these monthly reports would be presented every month and the reports that will be presented today would cover information through the end of November 2023. The three separate reports included the Head Start Pre-K program, the Early Head Start Program with EISD and the EHS-CCP Program. Regarding the Head Start Monthly Report, Ms. Jackson provided the funded enrollment number of 3,020 children. The enrollment number at the end of November was at 2,842 children or 94%. Earlier, it was mentioned we were at 97% for enrollment and this was due to being allowed a setback of three percent (3%) of our slots in case we had an emergency situation where we would need to bring in children fairly quickly. Ms. Jackson reported on the additional data for enrollment, disability enrollment, food reports, Education Services, Family Engagement Services, Mental Health Services, Education Screenings and Health Screenings.

Ms. Jackson reported on the Early Head Start monthly report for November 2023 and highlighted the data in the Enrollment, Disability, Education and Mental Health Services sections of the report. Ms. Jackson commented that this was the program in which we received the under enrollment letter. The enrollment number at the end of the month was at 104 children or 81% of the slots for this program. Ms. Jackson stated that the Office of Head Start sends out letters to programs that are 80% or below for enrollment for their program and since we were at 81%, the decision was made to send us the under enrollment letter.

Lastly, Ms. Jackson reported on the November Monthly Program Report for the EHS-CCP program. Ms. Jackson stated this report was more detailed due to the program having six (6) non-profit childcare providers and the services for each of the centers was detailed. Ms. Jackson informed that we are 100% enrolled for this program with a funded enrollment of 216 children. The daily attendance was reported at 89% and the disability enrollment percentage was at 9%. Ms. Jackson also informed that this was a full year program and that is why the benchmark dates are a little later for this Childcare Partnership program. The Policy Council members were encouraged to review the reports and if they had any additional indicators they wanted to start tracking, Ms. Jackson stated that could be discussed.

HSPC member, John Bonillas, inquired about the attendance requirement regarding absences from school. Ms. Jackson reported that Head Start has a mindset of helping families to remove any barriers from attendance. We put into place improvement plans and work with the families. Because the school district works with us in this program, the expectation of children to attend school 90% of the time, our families do not receive the truancy letters. We do define chronic absenteeism as any child that has missed ten percent (10%) or more of school.

HSPC member, Ashley Trevino, asked if medical documents are recognized by Head Start. Ms. Jackson reported that we tap into the school district system, and that this was true of any Head Start program. Furthermore, Ms. Jackson reported that even if we were a non-profit running a Head Start program and had a childcare licensed facility, our definition of a child with a disability is always through a school district's documentation. In addition, because we are integrated with the school district, all of the disability services are provided by the school district just as if they were any child with the school district. No further questions were asked.

k. Review of Head Start Quality Assurance Report

HSPC Chair, Krizia Franklin introduced Ms. Cassy Bentley, Senior Management Analyst, to present the Review of the Head Start Quality Assurance Report. Ms. Bentley introduced herself and explained that she would be presenting the November 2023 monthly quality assurance report. It was reported that the projects conducted included a 45 Day Education Screening, Governance Review, and ERSEA Attendance Review. Ms. Bentley informed and discussed the projects that were completed, which included a Nutrition Review, Critical Health Concerns, and 45 Day Health Screenings. Ms. Bentley discussed one area of non-compliance with the Critical Health Concerns project and also discussed areas of concern with the Nutrition Review, Critical Health Concerns and 45 Day Health Screenings.

HSPC member, Yenter Tu, inquired about the ChildPlus system and how often the Family Support Workers are required to update documentation. Ms. Bentley reported that there are timelines, depending on the content areas and provided some examples. Ms. Bentley also reported that we have a ChildPlus data entry benchmark system and that this information is also submitted to the providers.

HSPC member, David Garcia, inquired if the non-compliances and areas of concern come from one single school or several schools. Ms. Bentley reported that it depends on the content area that is being reviewed. We could have one single finding or we can find a whole systemic issue. When a determination is made whether it is a non-compliance or a concern, we base our decision on, if it is a single event happening in multiple classrooms or across campuses. No further questions were asked.

l. Review of EHS and EHS-CCP Quality Assurance Report

HSPC Chair, Krizia Franklin, introduced Ms. Wanda McMillan, Management Analyst, to present the Review of EHS and EHS-CCP Quality Assurance Report. Ms. McMillan introduced herself and her co-partner, Ms. Dianne Mendez. Ms. McMillan reported that she was presenting information from the November 2023 monthly program report. The Policy Council members were informed that the projects conducted included a 45 Day Sensory Review and Unannounced Safe Environment Visits conducted at Blessed Sacrament Child Care Center, Ella Austin Child Care Center and Inman Christian Child Care Center. Non-compliances were discussed concerning the Unannounced Safe Environment Visits. Ms. McMillan also discussed the areas of concern related to the 45 Day Sensory Review and Unannounced Safe Environment Visits. No questions were asked.

V. GOVERNING BODY

HSPC Chair, Krizia Franklin asked Ms. Priscilla Garcia, Senior Management Analyst, to present items for the Governing Body and Advisory Committee. Ms. Garcia highlighted a photo of the City of San Antonio City Council (City Council) as the program's Governing Board.

A picture of the Community Action Advisory Board (CAAB) was presented, our current advisory committee that meets monthly. Ms. Garcia reported that the items discussed at the Policy Council meetings were shared with the CAAB committee, and in turn, the items were then shared with the City Council. Policy Council members were informed that the next Policy Council meeting was scheduled for Tuesday, January 23, 2024. No questions were asked.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Motion: Mr. Ramiro Lopez moved to adjourn the meeting.

Seconded (2nd): Mr. John Bonillas

Vote: All in favor (unanimous) – The motion carried.

HSPC member for Chair, Krizia Franklin, adjourned the meeting at 9:16 pm.

Chair

Date