

2026



Minutes Board of Directors Meeting

February 12 and 13, 2026

Universidad Ana G. Méndez, Carolina Campus

Hybrid Modality

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List of Attendees

Executive Committee:

1. Eng. Gladys Nieves, President, EDP University, Puerto Rico – In Person
HETS Chair
2. Dr. Tomás Morales, President, California State University, San Bernardino – Virtual
HETS Secretary
3. Dr. Olga E. Rivera, President & CEO, ICPR Junior College, Puerto Rico – In Person
HETS Treasurer
4. Dr. Maritza Rondón Rangel, Chancellor, Universidad Cooperativa de Colombia – In Person
HETS International Representative

Board Members - In Person:

5. Dr. Edgardo Rosaly, **Host**, Vice President, Ana G. Méndez University, Puerto Rico
6. Dr. María Hernández Núñez, President, Atenas University Dr. María Luisa Hernández, Puerto Rico
7. Dr. Nelson Soto, President, Albizu University, Puerto Rico
8. Dr. Ramón Edecio Pineda Varela, Chancellor, *Instituto Superior Tecnológico* Consulting Group, Ecuador
9. Dr. Sanjay Ramdath, Vice President of Enrollment Management, Borough of Manhattan Community College, CUNY (Designated Representative)
10. Dr. Jacqueline Álvarez Peña, *Vicepresidenta de Asuntos Académicos y Estudiantiles, Universidad Interamericana*, Puerto Rico (Designated Representative)
11. Mr. Sunil Gupta, Vice President Adult Continuing Education & Workforce Development LaGuardia Community College, CUNY, (Designated Representative)
12. Dr. Francisco García, Director for Center for Online Learning and Teaching Technology, University of Texas Rio Grande Valley, (Designated Representative)
13. Dr. Mary Jo Parker, Executive Director Scholars Academy, University of Houston Downtown (Designated Representative)
14. Ms. Claudia Hernández, Chief of the Staff, Office of the President, University at Albany, SUNY (Designated Representative)
15. Dr. Xiomara Giordano, Assistant Vice President and Chief Diversity Officer, SUNY Empire State University, New York, (Designated Representative)
16. Dr. Kristina Harb, Title V Program Assistant, On PACE for STEM Success, New Jersey City University (Designated Representative)
17. Arq. Wilma Santiago, Executive Vice President, University of Puerto Rico (Designated Representative)

Board Members - Virtual:

18. Dr. Carlos Guevara, Co-Director, Office of Educational Technology, Hostos Community College, CUNY (Designated Representative)
19. Dr. Carmen V. Lidz, MS – Vice Chancellor & CIO, Los Angeles Community College District, California (Designated Representative)
20. Ms. Theresa Arias, Director of Learning Innovation, Hill College, Texas (Designated Representative)
21. Dr. Elizabeth Rodríguez, Dean of Academic Innovation & Technology, Laredo College, Texas (Designated Representative)
22. Dr. Brenda Méndez, Director of Career Development, California State University, Dominguez Hills (Designated Representative)

23. Dr. Naydeen González, Vice President, Lawrence Campus & Community Relations, Northern Essex Community College, Massachusetts, (Designated Representative)
24. Dr. Irving Maldonado, Dean of Academic Affairs, San Juan Bautista School of Medicine, Puerto Rico (Designated Representative)
25. Mr. Denis Bejar, Academic Applications Director, Instructional Support, Queensborough Community College (CUNY), (Designated Representative)
26. Dr. Miriam Osborne, Vice President, Student Success & Enrollment Management, Chesapeake College, Maryland, (Designated Representative)

HETS New Members

27. Ms. Cynthia Vázquez Jara, Founder & Chancellor, *Instituto Tecnológico San Antonio, TESA*, Ecuador – **In Person**
28. Dr. Ivette Torres Vera, *Directora del Instituto de Educación Virtual*, Pontifical Catholic University of Puerto Rico – **In Person**
29. Dr. Milton Santiago, Interim President, New York City College of Technology (CUNY) – **Virtual**

Special Guests

30. Ms. Priscila Barrera, Promoter, Instituto Superior Tecnológico Consulting Group Ecuador – **In Person**
31. Mr. Milton Wladimir Paredes, Counselor, Consejo de Aseguramiento Calidad de la Educación, Ecuador – **In Person**

Corporate Partners & Members

32. Mr. Carlos Crespo, Executive Director, **COBIMET** – **In person**
33. Ms. Yarice Hidalgo, Executive Director, **Raices Cyber Org** – **In person**
34. Mr. Juan Mayr, Marketing Manager Latin America & Caribbean, **Symplicity** – **In person**
35. Mr. Gabriel Hernández, Regional Director - Latin America & Caribbean, **Symplicity** – **In person**
36. Mr. Rolando Mendez, Director of Education, **Teach Access** – **In person**
37. Dr. Charlene Walton, **American Heart Association** - **In person**
38. Ms. Jessica Rassmussen, Senior Account Manager, **D2L Brightspace** – **In Person**
39. Ms. Brenda Weiss-Pesta, AVP Membership & Sponsorship, **Online Learning Consortium** – **Virtual**

HETS Staff

40. Dr. Yubelkys Montalvo, HETS Executive Director – **In Person**
41. Ms. Izarys Gutiérrez, HETS Executive Assistant – **In Person**
42. Ms. Stephanie Pérez, HETS Marketing and Communications Consultant – **In Person**

**First Day: Agenda Board of Directors Meeting (Afternoon Session)
Thursday, February 12, 2026**

The Board Meeting was convened at 12:40 PM.

Welcome, Greetings, and Introductions of HETS Board Members

HETS Chair Eng. Gladys Nieves, President of EDP University, welcomed meeting participants, thanked everyone for their time, and requested all Board members to present themselves to call attendance., Eng. Nieves and Dr. Yubelkys Montalvo, HETS Executive Director, recognized the presence of online attendees, thanked them for their time, and recorded their attendance.

Review of the Agenda and June 2026 Meeting Minutes Approval

HETS Chair Nieves requested Board participants to review the agenda. President Olga Rivera from ICPR Junior College presented a motion to approve the meeting agenda, the motion was seconded by Ms. Claudia Hernandez from University at Albany.

HETS Chair Eng. Nieves proceeded to the approval of the minutes from the Summer Meeting held on June 26 and 27, 2025, at *Borough of Manhattan Community College* in New York. Dr. Xiomara Giordano from SUNY Empire State University presented a motion to approve the minutes, and the motion was seconded by Ms. Claudia Hernandez from University at Albany. The Meeting Agenda and the June 2026 Meeting Minutes were approved with no objections.

Presentation of New Members

HETS Treasurer, Dr. Olga Rivera, introduced two new institutional members, starting with *Instituto Superior Tecnológico San Antonio TESA* and its Founder & Chancellor, Ms. Cynthia Vázquez Jara. She made a brief presentation of her institution. Dr. Rivera welcomed Chancellor Vázquez and introduced a second new member, Pontifical Catholic University of Puerto Rico, and its Director of the Institute of Virtual Education, Dr. Ivette Torres Vera, who gave a brief presentation about his institution. Dr. Rivera welcomed Director Torres and introduced a third new member, New York City College of Technology (CUNY) and its Interim President, Dr. Milton Santiago

HETS Chair thanked representatives of the new member institutions and invited Ms. Vázquez Jara, Founder and Chancellor of *Instituto Superior Tecnológico San Antonio TESA* and Director Torres from the Pontifical Catholic University of Puerto Rico, to receive a certificate acknowledging their institution's official incorporation as a new member.

Executive Director's Status Report Fall Semester based on the HETS Strategic Plan 2025-2028

Continuing with the agenda, the HETS Chair, Eng. Gladys Nieves, introduced Dr. Montalvo, Executive Director, to discuss the 2025-2026 Fall Semester Status Report. Dr. Montalvo initiated emphasizing both semesters' achievements, while going through the presentation of the first year of the Strategic Plan 2025-2028, informing the Board of the progress made vis a vis the activities proposed in the Plan. Dr. Montalvo presented the three board-approved strategic core areas and major goals established in the plan: access, retention and successful completion, as well as online learning and technology integration.

Dr. Montalvo explained that, as part of the first core area, Access, one of the objectives is publishing at least four (4) articles annually (two per issue) on Hispanic access to Higher Education in the HETS Online Journal (HOJ), the organization's peer-reviewed journal. During fall 2025, HETS was able to publish two (2) articles from two members, versus three (3) articles from 2 Member Institutions during 2024-2025.

Dr. Montalvo moved on towards the discussion of the projects presented under the Access Core Strategic Area for the Virtual Best Practices Showcase (BPS). The annual objective was to share at least three best practices on the use of technology to help overcome barriers to Hispanic Access to Higher Education. During this 2026 BPS, six (6) of the projects presented were related to the "Access" core area vs. fourth (4) presentations in 2025, both years exceeding the goal. In addition, 16 presentations by 21 students from nine (9) member Institutions were showcased versus ten (10) presentations by 15 students from six (6) member Institutions.

The Executive Director added that another objective within the Strategic Plan was to increase by 25% the number of institutions participating in the Academic Fair, which usually took place when the Best Practices Showcase was face-to-face. Dr. Montalvo pointed out that the Academic Fair was held on August 27 and 28, 2025, as part of The SUMM: Student Experience Summit event endorsed by the Department of Education in the Island. Also, HETS member institutions from the U.S. and Latin America were invited to participate as part of the collaboration with The SUMM. During this event, more than 17,000 high schools and undergraduate students participated. Five (5) member institutions from the U.S. and *Universidad Cooperativa de Colombia* took advantage of this opportunity. Dr. Montalvo shared photos and a brief video of the two-day event held in San Juan, Puerto Rico's Convention Center and shared the dates for the 2026 SUMM in August 27 and 28.

Another objective for this year was to increase the number of students who were impacted through the Student Leadership Showcase and Graduate Fairs at member institutions, by 25% participation. On September 2025, one hybrid edition of the Student Leadership Showcase was organized for students in the United States, PR, and LA, which benefited more than 500 students vs. 703 students in 2024-2025. Also, Dr. Montalvo mentioned that in October 2025, HETS staff participated in the IAUPR Law School Open House, impacting 85 students. In addition, she mentioned that the usage of the Peterson's Test and Career Prep databases on this academic year increased by 13% with more than 16,000 hits reported vs. 14,524 in 2024-2025.

The Executive Director continued to discuss the objectives and accomplishments within the Retention and Successful Completion, second core strategic area. She pointed out that one of the annual objectives was to publish at least six (6) articles (three per issue) related to student support and retention in the HETS Online Journal. During fall 2025, four (4) articles from three (3) members and one (2) non-member institutions were published versus four (4) articles from three (3) members and one (1) non-member institution in 2024-2025.

According to Dr. Montalvo, within this core strategic area, the goal is to share at least three (3) best practices annually on the use of technology to improve student retention during this year's Showcase Conference. During February 2026, ten (10) presentations were presented under a new track about Innovation vs. fifteen (15) presentations in 2025.

Dr. Montalvo explained that the objective was to make at least 5,000 unique visits to the access-related sections of the Student Placita. During fall 2025, the total page visits were 35,994 for the Student Placita

and 13,829 for the Faculty Placita. During 2025-2026, the objective was to increase the number of unique visits to the Virtual Plaza by 25%, and the total unique visits during this academic year was 49,823, compared with 111,524 for the academic year 2024-2025, representing 45% of last year's total.

The Executive Director moved on to discuss the efforts to develop mini workshops focused on specific student support skills. Dr. Montalvo showcased the efforts under this core area to support retention and student success through training opportunities. One (1) Student Leadership Showcase (SLS) and seven (7) webinars were coordinated and executed for students during fall 2025, resulting in 2,987 registrants vs. one (1) SLS and twelve (12) webinars with 5,272 registrants in 2024-2025.

Dr. Montalvo shared the fact that this spring 2026, HETS offered its first Student Passport: Connect, Learn, and Lead (Puerto Rico Edition) in February 2026. She explained that this initiative's main objective is to promote student mobility through academic and cultural experiences. She reported that 17 students from five (5) member institutions in the US and LA participated in this edition, including 15 student presentations of their innovative projects in different academic fields. The initiative included visits to 5 campuses around the Island, one workshop, two cultural visits to historic venues, and participation at the Best Practices Showcase. Dr. Montalvo shared pictures and videos of the activities and some of the students and staff feedback about the initiative.

In addition, Dr. Montalvo shared that two (2) successful editions of the Student Passport: Connect, Learn, and Lead, have been held in September 2024 and in June 2025 to explore member institutions in Puerto Rico and New York City accordingly. She reported that more than 100 students the US, PR, and Colombia participated in these editions and visited twenty-three (23) member institutions and shared photos and social media posts by the institutions and participants about their experiences in the Student Passport editions.

Also, Dr. Montalvo shared out that during fall 2025 HETS staff trained a total of 26 key staff from 12 members institutions: six (6) in the US, four (4) in Puerto Rico, and (1) one in Latin América, versus 76 student support staff from 29 member institutions in Puerto Rico, the US, and Latin América in 2024-2025.

To benefit new members, Dr. Montalvo added that, in 2019 (Year 1), the organization started the Student Ambassadors Program, with the goal of recruiting and training 30 student ambassadors from member institutions in P.R. and, during Year 2, the goal was 20 student ambassadors from member institutions in the U.S. Dr. Montalvo mentioned that this number decreased mostly during the Covid, impacting the number of students on the campus. As of February 2026, HETS maintains a total of 18 (14) active ambassadors in P.R., three (3) in the US and one (1) in Colombia vs. two (2) in 2024-2025. The Executive Director expressed her gratitude to these committed students and their institutions for their support. Also, Montalvo indicated that these efforts are vital to promote access to HETS services and mentioned that the webinars evaluations surveys show that 67% of the students did not know the access code to the Student Placita databases versus 55% in June 2024. Likewise, the survey's results showed that the main needs for students were training on the use of new technologies, search for jobs, and scholarships.

The third strategic core area discussed by the Executive Director was Online Learning and Technology Integration. Under this core area, the plan established the objective of publishing at least six (6) articles annually (three per issue) on this topic. In fall 2025, a total of three (3) related articles were published in the HOJ versus five (5) articles during 2024-2025.

The Executive Director continued her presentation by reporting on the accomplishments of sharing best practices related to the third core area. As she explained, the objective was to share at least three (3) best practices related to online learning annually. The HETS Best Practices Showcase included 9 presentations about online learning and technology integration projects vs. 11 out of the 30 presentations in 2025. In addition, Dr. Montalvo informed board members that, as of February 11, 2025, 143 participants registered for the 2026 Best Practices Showcase vs. 225 participants in January 2025.

About the objective of increasing the number of articles submitted for publication in the HOJ by 20% annually, Dr. Montalvo explained that, on fall 2025, a total of 10 articles were submitted for publication, compared to 12 as of June 2025. Of these totals, 9 of these articles were approved and published as of fall 2025, compared to 11 as of June 2025. Regarding Google Analytics views of the HOJ, during fall 2025, the Journal achieved more than 4,000 views versus more than 14,300 on June 2025, representing 29% of last year's total. An additional 1,339 reported from the EBSCO databases as of fall 2025 vs. 8,346 in June 2025, representing 16% of last year's total.

Other strategies within this core area include the development and delivery of training in online learning and technology integration. A series of webinars for faculty members, developed with the support of our expert resources within our member institutions. This series resulted in 8 free of charge webinars offered in both English and Spanish, in Fall 2025, to more than 2,700 participants from 17 member institutions, 18 non-member institutions, 4 international institutions, and 7 organizations vs. a total of 19 in 2024-2025 reaching more than 4,700 participants from 36 member institutions participants, 37 non-member institutions, 3 international institutions, and 15 organizations. Dr. Montalvo emphasized the added value of the expert resources that were able to support HETS during the webinars.

As well, Dr. Montalvo pointed out that the objective before the pandemic was to develop a total of eight (8) training sessions, including four (4) face-to-face opportunities and four (4) online sessions, six (6) in Spanish and two (2) in English. Dr. Montalvo discussed the HETS Learning Technologies Leadership Academy (H-LTLA), an initiative proposed by our former chair, Dr. Carlos Morales. She explained that this is a professional development program focused on developing the next generation of leaders to promote and facilitate the adoption of teaching and learning technologies. One edition with concurrent sessions in English and in Spanish is proposed to be offered in April 2026. In addition, she mentioned that more than 3,500 participants registered in fall 2025, vs. 5,600 registered at events, webinars, workshops and the HETS Academy sessions 2024-2025.

The Executive Director continued presenting the publication of research reports on distance and online education. As she explained, four (4) research reports have been published and made available online: "*Educación virtual y a distancia en Puerto Rico*", which had one (1) download during fall 2025; "*Documento de trabajo: teoría y práctica de la educación a distancia en Puerto Rico*", with a total of two (2) downloads; "*Lo obvio y lo escondido de la educación a distancia en Puerto Rico*", which had four (4) downloads and, "*El futuro de la educación a distancia en Puerto Rico*", has been downloaded seven (7) times. New downloads in fall 2025 were 14 vs. 43 as June 2024-2025, for a total of 2,886 downloads.

Following the report, the Executive Director presented a summary of HETS investments in direct services for fall 2025, for a total of \$170,582 distributed as follows: 32% in Online Resources; 26% in Best Practices and Student Leadership Showcases and event coordination; 19% in Professional Development Events; 14% in the HETS Online Journal; and 9% in activities related to Grants and Outreach efforts. Dr. Montalvo added

that total expenses amounted to \$268,936 out of which 63% were related to direct services; 28% to operational activities; and 9% to administrative expenses.

Succeeding, Dr. Montalvo reported on the organization's growth and development status and efforts. She informed that the organization added three (3) new members institutions: *Pontificia Universidad Católica de PR*, New York City College of Technology (CUNY), *Instituto Tecnológico San Antonio*, in Ecuador. Dr. Montalvo also presented a summary of the outreach efforts, focusing on a new strategy in which the Executive Committee members actively participated contacting directly and referring HETS services and membership to colleagues. As a result of the Member Referral Initiative, 94 institutions were contacted, including former members and prospects in PR, the US, and International. The HETS Office followed up letters from HETS officers and corporate member referrals.

Dr. Montalvo reported that an 80% retention rate has been achieved, reaching our goal. However, eight (8) members could not renew their membership (Ponce Health Science University, *Universidad Central del Caribe*, Atlantic University, Chemeketa College, California State University Bakersfield, Louisiana Community & Technical College System, John Jay College of Criminal Justice, and Houston Community College). As a strategy to promote the value of the members' benefits, email campaigns are sent to key staff promoting the benefits and Membership Services Reports have been prepared to share the services, events and initiatives offered by HETS during the academic year.

In terms of outreach, the Executive Committee was engaged in an initiative to endure these efforts. Dr. Montalvo visited Lone Star College, New York City College of Technology (CUNY), and met with members like SUNY Empire State University, University at Albany, and Bronx Community College at different events in Puerto Rico.

The Executive Director also reported that, HETS has been able to maintain adequate controls over costs and expenditures due to the following strategies: in-kind promotion support from members such as the expert resources for webinars and events; promotional designs for HETS events and SLS are done in-house; sponsorships on the raffle prizes for the SLS in exchange for the promotion of their products and services; Bb Collaborate license and hosting for our webinars and workshops; and host Institution office space and utilities as part of the in-kind agreement. The organization also made efforts to continue controlling costs and expenditures, as established in its Strategic Plan.

Continuing with internal and external visibility efforts, Dr. Montalvo continues capitalizing on the potential of the Online Journal as a public relations strategy for HETS and its members. As a result, a fifth edition was published on the Open Editorial platform providing better browsing experience to its users and agile process for authors and reviewers. During fall 2025, a total of 9 articles were published. Also, highlighted that a new Co-editor and two reviewers joined the Editorial Board.

Dr. Montalvo shared a summary of the use of the web and social media during fall 2025, to increase the visibility of the organization, including social media presence enhanced due to the high number of online webinars held. She indicated that a total of 53 email campaigns were sent, and 4 news articles were published at the HETS website. In addition, Dr. Montalvo indicated the HETS social accounts (LinkedIn, Facebook, Instagram and YouTube) results during fall 2025 in comparison with the academic year 2024-2025. All of them increased the posts published on each media and the number of impressions which measured the reach of each post. However, she shared a decrease in the metrics of the HETS website page

views from 123,384 in 2024-2025 to 57,943 during fall 2025, and the unique page views in the same period were 54,007 to 22,830 this fall 2025.

Dr. Montalvo mentioned that internal alliances and liaisons continue with ICANN (HETS is an At-Large certified organization); Internet Society of Puerto Rico; The SUMM; Every Learner Everywhere; *Excelencia* in Education; American Heart Association Community Health Committee in PR; and Symplicity. Also, Montalvo mentioned a new workshop with Teach Access for Spring 2026, and the result of the \$100,000 grant award from Every Learner Everywhere resulting in a collaboration with five (5) expert resources member institutions.

Also, Montalvo shared the outreach efforts made to corporate partners resulting in two new corporate members in fall 2025: D2L Brightspace and Raíces Cyber.

Dr. Montalvo proceeded with her presentation by reporting revenues collected during fall 2025, through its multiple efforts. Overall, the organization's revenues for this semester totaled \$207,480. Most of the revenues (74%) were collected through membership dues; followed by 10% from corporate sponsorships and donations; 10% from workshop registrations; and 6% related to the Best Practices and Student Leadership Showcases.

Dr. Montalvo concluded her presentation presenting the new initiatives for spring 2026, including HETS Academy editions, a call for new student ambassadors, opportunity for expert resources, and outreach new members and partners.

Questions and Board recommendations

Following the Executive Director's Status Report, HETS Chair, Eng. Gladys Nieves, thanked Dr. Yubelkys Montalvo for her presentation and invited Board Members to share questions, comments, and recommendations regarding the organization's strategic priorities and services. Board members discussed the importance of continuing to strengthen outreach efforts to students and institutions, particularly in areas related to workforce development, student success, and access to educational opportunities.

Board members discussed the importance of developing more accurate measures to reflect the realities of higher education in Puerto Rico, particularly regarding gainful employment, workforce outcomes, and student persistence. Participants noted that traditional federal metrics do not always capture the unique circumstances of Puerto Rican institutions and students. **Recommendations included exploring collaborative research initiatives, improving the collection and disaggregation of student data, and identifying indicators that better reflect institutional contributions to workforce development and community impact.**

Additional discussion focused on the growing demand for healthcare professionals, educators, bilingual workers, and STEM graduates. **Board members encouraged the exploration of apprenticeship opportunities, workforce-aligned academic programs, and collaborative efforts among member institutions to address current and future labor market needs. Participants also recognized the importance of continuing to provide transformational experiences for students through leadership, mobility, and professional development initiatives.**

HETS Chair thanked board members for their recommendations and adjourned the meeting at 3:06pm. for a break until 3:15pm.

HETS 2025-2026 First Semester, Financial Status Report

After the break, HETS Chair, Dr. Nieves moved forward and presented Dr. Olga Rivera, HETS Treasurer, to proceed with the HETS Financial Report, who mentioned that these financial statements correspond to the six-month period from July 1, 2025, to December 31, 2025. This narrative presents HETS Financial Position and the Changes in Net Assets. In addition, a comparative statement of Budget versus Actual results is being analyzed for further review and analysis of this period's HETS financial accomplishments.

Statement of Financial Position

HETS Treasurer informed that HETS total assets amounted to \$233,049 and to \$280,389 as of December 31, 2025, and 2024, respectively or a 16.88% decrease. Decrease is mostly due to decrease in Accounts Receivable because eight member institutions could not renew for this academic year due to budget constraints.

Accounts receivable on December 31, 2025, consist of the following:

Membership Dues	\$24,050
Less allowance for doubtful accounts	<u>542</u>
Accounts receivable, net	<u>\$23,508</u>

Dr. Olga Rivera added that total current liabilities amounted to \$39,794 and to \$82,574 as of December 31, 2025, and 2024, respectively, or a decrease of 51.81%. Decrease is mostly due to the deferred revenue balance on Every Learner Everywhere award as of December 31, 2024, already expired as of December 31, 2025. Accounts payable correspond to HETS' personnel salaries and fringe benefits from October to December 2025 (\$27k) that will be reimbursed to the Inter American University of PR in February 2026 and other accounts payable (\$12k).

Statement of Activities

Dr. Olga Rivera continued the report sharing that HETS' revenues from its educational activities, memberships, sponsorships, Best Practices Showcase/Event coordination and Workshop Registrations amounted to \$208,480 and \$257,798 for the six months period ending on December 31, 2025, and 2024, respectively for a decrease of 19.52%. The decrease is mostly attributable to a decrease in Membership revenues of \$37k due to eight member institutions which could not renew for this academic year due to budget constraints.

Dr. Olga Rivera mentioned that:

- HETS' expenses comprised of administrative, direct services and operational expenses amounted to \$100,309 and to \$132,737 for the six-month period ending on December 31, 2025, and 2024, respectively, or a decrease of 24.43%, mainly on the Direct and Operational expenses not incurred in this year six months period.
- Change in Net Assets for the six-months period decreased by 14.31% from \$125,061 as of December 31, 2024, to \$107,171 as of December 31, 2025.

Budget versus Actual Analysis

HETS Treasurer informed Board members that HETS current six-month period operations results are also presented in comparison to the approved 2025-2026 budget. Both revenues and expenses achievement were 80% and 73%, respectively.

Conclusion

Dr. Olga Rivera concluded her report indicating that it's important to highlight that those expenses continue to be within approved HETS Budget. The report also shows HETS' efforts to maintain its members, provide the educational services and initiatives programed for the academic year, and maintain adequate controls over costs and expenditures.

A motion to accept the financial status report was presented by Dr. Krsitina Hard from New Jersey City University and were accepted with no objections.

Collaboration Opportunities Session

HETS Chair, Eng. Gladys Nieves, proceeded with the Collaboration Opportunities Session and introduced Dr. Deborah Santiago, Co-Founder and CEO of Excelencia in Education, as a special guest presenter.

During the session, Dr. Debora Santiago, Chief Executive Officer of Excelencia in Education, presented opportunities for collaboration between HETS member institutions and Excelencia. She described the Examples of Excelencia program as a national platform designed to recognize and elevate evidence-based practices that improve outcomes for Latino students. Dr. Santiago explained that participating institutions gain access to technical assistance, professional networks, visibility opportunities, and resources that can support fundraising and institutional advancement efforts.

Dr. Santiago also outlined potential collaborative projects related to workforce development, programs of value, and the development of more appropriate measures for evaluating educational outcomes in Puerto Rico. She noted that these initiatives could help position Puerto Rican institutions within national policy discussions while highlighting their contributions to student achievement and workforce preparation.

Board members expressed interest in continuing conversations regarding collaborative grant opportunities, workforce-focused initiatives, student mobility programs, and partnerships that expand educational and professional opportunities for students. The session concluded with an invitation for interested institutions to explore future collaborations with Excelencia in Education and other HETS partners to advance student success and institutional innovation.

Designation of HETS Vice Chair and Nomination Committee

Chair Nieves informed the Board that, following the retirement of Dr. Carlos Vargas from Southeast Missouri State University, a vacancy existed in the position of HETS Vice Chair. Dr. Tomás Morales reviewed the process established in the HETS Bylaws and informed the Board that Dr. Milton Santiago, Interim President of New York City College of Technology (CUNY), had agreed to serve as HETS Vice Chair for the remainder of the term. Board members expressed their appreciation to Dr. Santiago for his willingness to serve the organization in this leadership capacity.

Dr. Morales then initiated the process of establishing a Nomination Committee in preparation for the June 2026 Board elections and reminded members that individuals serving on the committee would not be

eligible for nomination to open officer positions. Following discussion, Dr. Morales agreed to chair the Nomination Committee. Ms. Claudia Hernández of the University at Albany and Dr. Xiomara Giordano of SUNY Empire State University volunteered to serve as committee members. Dr. Yubelkys Montalvo agreed to support the committee's coordination efforts.

The Board thanked the volunteers for their willingness to serve and agreed to proceed with the nomination process in accordance with the HETS Bylaws.

Institutional Announcements, New Items, and next meeting dates & host

Chair Nieves opened the floor for discussion regarding future Board meeting locations and scheduling. Board members reviewed alternatives for the Summer 2026 Board Meeting, including potential host sites in New York and California. During the discussion, members noted logistical challenges affecting those locations, including facility availability, institutional transitions, and scheduling conflicts.

Dr. Tomás Morales suggested that the Board consider returning to Puerto Rico as the host location for the Summer 2026 meeting. Several members expressed support for exploring this option, while others noted that additional information regarding facilities and logistics would be required before a final decision could be made. Following discussion, the Board agreed to continue evaluating alternatives and deferring the final decision until the following day's session. Proposed meeting dates discussed included June 25 and 26, 2026.

Chair Nieves then invited members to share institutional announcements and additional items of interest. She reminded participants of the group photograph scheduled following the meeting and shared logistical information regarding activities planned for the remainder of the conference and the following day's program.

Closing remarks

Prior to adjournment, Chair Nieves reminded Board members of the activities scheduled for the following day, including the Best Practices Showcase, the Student Passport recognition activities, and the continuation of Board discussions. She encouraged all members to participate in the student recognition events and highlighted the importance of acknowledging student accomplishments and engagement within the HETS community.

Dr. Milton Santiago expressed his appreciation for the opportunity to continue serving HETS and reflected on his longstanding involvement with the organization. He recognized the contributions of past and present HETS leadership and reaffirmed his commitment to supporting initiatives that expand opportunities for students and member institutions. Dr. Santiago also acknowledged the organization's growth and the positive impact of its programs and services throughout the years.

Chair Nieves thanked all Board members, guests, and HETS staff for their participation, support, and recommendations throughout the meeting. She expressed appreciation to Universidad Ana G. Méndez for hosting the event and encouraged members to continue collaborating on initiatives that advance student success and institutional excellence. The meeting was then adjourned at 4:30 PM.

**Second Day: Agenda Board of Directors Corporate Session (Morning Session)
Friday, February 13, 2026**

The Board Meeting was convened at 10:40 a.m. (AST).

Welcome Remarks and Introductions of HETS Board Members and Corporate Partners

HETS Chair Eng. Gladys Nieves welcomed all Corporate Partners and Board Members and requested all participants to introduce themselves for the record. Chair Nieves acknowledged and thanked the representatives of member institutions, guests, and corporate partners for their participation and invited Dr. Yubelkys Montalvo, HETS Executive Director, to present the HETS Services and initiatives Summary Report.

HETS Services and Initiatives Summary Report

Dr. Yubelkys Montalvo presented a summary of the accomplishments, services, and initiatives discussed during the Board Session, highlighting activities aligned with the HETS Strategic Plan 2025–2028 and recognizing the support of corporate members during the 2025 fall semester. Dr. Montalvo emphasized member services, student-centered initiatives, professional development opportunities, outreach efforts, strategic partnerships, and membership growth. She thanked the corporate partners for their collaboration and support of HETS programs.

Partners' Presentations and interests to collaborate with HETS

HETS Chair Nieves thanked Dr. Montalvo and invited the corporate partners to present collaboration opportunities for HETS member institutions.

Dr. Charlene Walton of the American Heart Association presented the American Heart Association Scholars Program and opportunities available to Hispanic-Serving Institutions. Dr. Walton discussed student mentorship opportunities, research experiences, professional development activities, and pathways designed to encourage students to pursue careers in healthcare, STEM disciplines, and biomedical fields.

Representatives from Symplicity, including Mr. Juan Mayr and Mr. Gabriel Hernández, presented an overview of the organization's student success and employability solutions. The presentation highlighted career services management, internship coordination, employer engagement, accessibility services, workforce readiness initiatives, analytics capabilities, and emerging artificial intelligence tools designed to help institutions align student skills with workforce needs and improve career outcomes.

Mr. Carlos Crespo, Executive Director of COBIMET, presented information regarding a grant-funded initiative focused on information literacy, learning strategies, and professional development opportunities. Mr. Crespo described the objectives of the project, highlighted opportunities for faculty and student participation, and invited HETS member institutions to collaborate in future workshops, pilot activities, and related initiatives.

Ms. Jessica Rasmussen of D2L Brightspace presented recent innovations within the Brightspace learning management platform. Her presentation highlighted artificial intelligence-enabled learning tools, analytics and reporting capabilities, personalized learning experiences, accessibility enhancements, multilingual support, and technologies intended to strengthen student engagement and success.

Mr. Rolando Méndez of Teach Access presented resources and initiatives designed to advance accessibility and inclusive educational practices in higher education. He discussed faculty training opportunities, accessibility toolkits, professional development programs, and collaborative initiatives available to HETS member institutions.

Ms. Yarice Hidalgo, representative of the Puerto Rico Cybersecurity & AI Center of Excellence, presented an overview of the initiative to establish a Puerto Rico Cybersecurity Center of Excellence. Ms. Hidalgo discussed the growing demand for cybersecurity professionals across all industry sectors and emphasized the importance of developing educational pathways, workforce development opportunities, and practical training experiences for students. She explained that the initiative seeks to bring together government, industry, and educational institutions to create a collaborative ecosystem that supports cybersecurity education and career preparation. The presentation highlighted plans to develop shared laboratory resources, virtual training opportunities, partnerships with cybersecurity centers in other countries, and a future Security Operations Center (SOC).

Ms. Brenda Weiss-Pesta and Ms. Sandra Fyffe of the Online Learning Consortium (OLC) presented programs and services supporting quality online education, faculty development, instructional innovation, and institutional effectiveness. The presenters discussed opportunities for professional development, networking, certification programs, and collaboration with HETS member institutions.

Following the presentations, Chair Nieves thanked all corporate partners for their continued support of HETS and invited questions and comments from Board members.

Final Discussion and Closing Remarks

Board members expressed appreciation for the opportunities presented by the corporate partners and discussed ways to strengthen collaboration among HETS, its member institutions, and corporate organizations. Presenters encouraged member institutions to participate in future projects, professional development opportunities, accessibility initiatives, student programs, and research activities.

Chair Gladys Nieves discussed potential dates for the next HETS Corporate Session and proposed that it be held on June 25–26, 2026, in Puerto Rico. The proposed dates were reviewed with the corporate partners and Board members present. Following discussion, all participants expressed their agreement with the proposed dates and location, and consensus was reached to schedule the next Corporate Session for June 25 and 26, 2026, at the University of Puerto Rico, Central Administration in San Juan, PR.

Chair Nieves apologized for the limited time available for questions and discussion during the session. She invited corporate partners and Board members to submit any additional questions following the meeting and encouraged participants to continue conversations and share comments, recommendations, and questions during the luncheon session.

Dr. Tomás Morales moved to adjourn the meeting. Following a second, the motion carried unanimously.

Chair Nieves thanked all Board members, corporate partners, guests, and HETS staff for their participation, support, and recommendations.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:00 p.m.