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## HEAD START POLICY COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES

Parents play a very important part in decision making for SUU Head Start. The Head Start Policy Council shares responsibility for making and approving policies concerning Head Start program design and implementation (governing) with the SUU Board of Trustees. This year's Policy Council will be very involved with planning for SUU Head Start's future and helping with the Self Assessment.

Each SUU Head Start class will elect a Representative and an Alternate Representative to the SUU Head Start Policy Council. Parents elected to serve on the Policy Council will attend one meeting per month in the Cedar City Central Office **until September 2005**. It will be up to the new council to determine what week night and time works best for the members (Such as the first Tuesday at 6 p.m.). Most meetings last two hours while others may go as long as three hours. It depends on the decisions that the Policy Council has to make. Head Start reimburses travel and child care expenses to eligible families. Motel rooms could also be covered for parents who travel two or more hours during winter months.

The SUU Head Start Policy Council bylaws tell us that: "the purpose of the Policy Council shall be to develop proper and effective parent participation and involvement in the SUU Head Start program as described in federal regulations." Being on the Policy Council is an important responsibility. It is an opportunity to grow, learn and 'give back' to Head Start.

Policy Council members may also be involved in program planning, self-assessments, staff hiring interviews, and subcommittees. Policy Council Representatives attend the monthly Parent Committee meetings to learn what the other parents in their class are thinking and report news from the Policy Council. Representatives take their classroom and community news, concerns and suggestions to Policy Council meetings.

If this sounds interesting to you, consider having your name nominated at the first Parent Meeting as a Policy Council Representative or Alternate. The Alternate receives all Policy Council information and attends meetings when the Representative cannot be there. We need Representatives **who are willing to participate and can attend the meetings**. Last year, some of our most consistent Policy Council Representatives were Dads!

Training for this year's Policy Council members, alternates and Family Advocates is set for Saturday, September 25, 2004, from 10:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Those elected will receive further information about training. If you have questions, please call Head Start Director, Virginia B. Higbee at 1 800 796 6070 ext. 201 or 586 6070 ext. 201.

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August 2004

Dear Head Start parents,

We're writing this letter to tell you as incoming Head Start parents about how important we feel your participation in the Head Start Policy Council really is. In a few weeks, a parent and an alternate from your child's class will be elected to serve as Policy Council representatives. This is a great opportunity for you to learn all about how the Head Start program operates as you represent the other parents in your class on the Policy Council.

Serving as a Head Start Policy Council representative can be both challenging and rewarding. As a representative, you will attend Policy Council meetings in Cedar City one day each month. You will also need to take additional time and study to understand all of the issues presented at Policy Council and other meetings. Mileage and child care expenses for eligible families are covered by Head Start for all Policy Council related meetings.

Parents on the Policy Council represent the parents in their classroom and every Head Start classroom in the SUU Head Start program. The Policy Council is responsible for reviewing and approving all Head Start program areas--finances, funding requests and budgets, and all personnel actions--including approval of hiring and terminating of all Head Start employees. Policy Council members also review and approve plans for child development services, family and community partnership programs, health and nutrition, mental health and other areas of the SUU Head Start program. One member will represent our program on the Utah Head Start Association Board.

We encourage those of you who would like to be an important part of Head Start to consider serving on the Head Start Policy Council as a representative or alternate. Please be a part of what your child gets from Head Start.

As former members of the Policy Council, we appreciate your participation in your child's Head Start experience. Please feel free to call last year's Policy Council representatives for more information. You can get their names from your Head Start Family Advocate.

Sincerely,

Sunia Spencer, President  
2003-2004 Policy Council