**Minnesota Head Start Association**

Letter to the editor toolkit

**DRAFT** | July 21, 2025

Each unique voice speaking up to support the value Head Start programs brings to local communities helps us better reflect how Head Start is empowering and improving the lives of millions of children and their families each year.

One effective way to use your voice is by submitting a letter to the editor of your local newspaper. Check out our tips for writing a letter to the editor, customize any of the templates we’ve provided to fit your story and your community, and submit what you write for publication.

Letter to the editor submission basics

* Newspapers have maximum word counts for letter to the editor submissions. These can typically be found by searching for submission guidelines on the newspaper website. Generally, letters to the editor should be 250 words or fewer.
* Newspapers accept letters to the editor in different ways. Be sure to check the submission guidelines for your newspaper to ensure you’re sharing your draft with the right contact.
* Include your name and the name of the city or town where you live with your submission. Some newspapers may ask for a few more individual details, but all will require a name and a location.
* If you have questions about submitting a letter to the editor in your hometown, please contact NAME at EMAIL.

Effective letter to the editor writing

* Clearly state the problem and present your opinion and/or a solution.
* Get to your main point quickly.
* Keep your focus local to your community.
* Provide facts, statistics, or personal examples to support your point.
* Use simple, direct language.
* Suggest an action those reading can take.

Letter to the editor templates

**Head Start Staff**

I work for Head Start in [community], where our kids are learning reading and math, strengthening their social skills for kindergarten, eating healthy meals, and receiving needed health and dental care. Our locally designed programs are customized to what [community] and our families need to raise healthy and happy children who are more likely to graduate high school and achieve increased lifetime earnings.

Despite this obvious and positive impact on local communities, federal and state funds that make Head Start possible are not guaranteed, with potentially devastating cuts discussed as recently as last spring.

We already stretch every dollar as far as it can go, and most of that money ends up right back in [community]. I’m raising my family here – my kids and your kids may [play sports/go to school] together, or you and I might see each other at [local park, store]. My co-workers are all locals, too. Whether paying for staff or locally provided services, public funding stays right here, doing good for [community].

Kids from [community] depend on us to help them grow. Their parents depend on us so they can go to school or stay in the workforce. [Community] depends on us because Head Start is a catalyst for stronger communities, helping children and families from all backgrounds – our neighbors – become lifelong learners who are self-reliant and economically stable. I urge our elected leaders to remember this incredible value and protect our local communities by standing up for Head Start.

**Head Start Parent**

I’m a [father/mother] to [x] kids. We’re raising our family in [community] because it’s a wonderful community and because our kids have access to [local Head Start organization], which provides locally designed Head Start programs for local kids. Our elected leaders have considered major cuts to Head Start funding. Many families in [community], including mine, would be crushed to lose our connection to Head Start.

At a time when finding reliable and affordable childcare has become incredibly challenging, Head Start provides that right here in [community]. But Head Start is so much more than that. It brings together the best of many important services under one roof—childcare, education in core subjects like reading and math, access to health care and healthy meals, and social development to prepare kids for kindergarten.

I can speak from my own experience when I tell you that Head Start changes lives. It also changes communities. Head Start makes it possible for parents to work, for kids to grow and learn and stay healthy, and for the next generation of [community] to thrive.

We need Head Start in [community]. I hope you’ll join me in reminding our elected leaders that Head Start makes [community] stronger and investing in Head Start is an investment in all of us.

**Head Start Alum**

I was fortunate enough to attend Head Start when I was a kid. I attended Head Start in [community] for [x] years. I’ve gone on to [graduate high school/college, build a successful career, start a family, own a home/business]. I look at where I am today and I know that Head Start helped me get here.

I’m not alone – Head Start alumni go to become doctors, nurses, engineers, small business owners, teachers and contributing members of many Minnesota communities. Statistics show that kids in Head Start are more likely to go on to graduate high school, attend college and secure steady employment throughout their lifetime.

These are real human success stories, the American Dream in action, but these success stories add up. Statistics show that every dollar invested in Head Start programs delivers a 13% return on investment, with most of that staying in local communities and building our economies.

Head Start changed my life and so I can’t sit quietly as our elected officials consider cutting its funding. Right now, Head Start is empowering more than 12,500 kids in Minnesota and more than one million kids around the country. Every dollar removed from Head Start’s budget will take away opportunities from kids, their families and the local communities. I know how valuable those opportunities can be. I hope you’ll join me in standing up to say our community cannot afford a future without Head Start.

**Head Start Advocate**

Kids and families in our communities are facing many challenges: childcare costs continue to soar, access to local and affordable healthcare is shrinking, and resources to prepare young children to enter kindergarten are fewer and far between.

Against this backdrop, Head Start provides all of this and more. Here in [community], locally designed programs at [Head Start location] provide childcare to keep parents working, health and nutrition programs to keep kids healthy and happy, and rigorous school readiness programs to keep children on track for bright futures in the classroom.

Head Start is a vital lifeline for so many families, here in [community]. But the value of Head Start isn’t limited to those who participate. Perhaps you’re like me — I’ve never worked at Head Start nor had a child attend — but statistics clearly show that everyone in our community benefits from having Head Start in town. Head Start means more kids in [community] will graduate high school and secure steady employment throughout their lifetime, while more parents continue their education or stay in the local workforce. On top of that, federal and state funding for Head Start programs flows directly into [community] by paying local staff members or purchasing goods and services locally.

You don’t have to be in a Head Start classroom to know funding for Head Start is a wise investment to build stronger local communities. All of our futures are brighter if Head Start is funded to continue its valuable work.