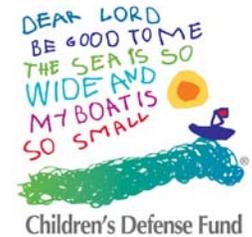


# Children's Defense Fund

## Full-Day Kindergarten in Alaska



January 2012

Full-day kindergarten (Full-Day K) is a necessary component of a comprehensive early learning continuum and boosts children's cognitive learning, creative problem-solving and social competence. However, Full-Day K is not part of the K-12 publicly funded school system in most states. Nationally, only 10 states and the District of Columbia require school districts to provide publicly funded Full-Day K through statute. Thirty-four states require school districts to provide at least half-day kindergarten and six have no requirement.

Are Alaska school districts required by statute to fund Full-Day K for all eligible students? \_\_\_Yes X\_\_\_No

During the 2010-2011 school year, 10,120 children were enrolled in kindergarten across 54 districts.<sup>ii</sup>

### Statutory Provisions

- Compulsory school age is 7.<sup>iii</sup>
- Children may enter kindergarten if they reach the age of 5 by September 1<sup>st</sup> of the school year.<sup>iv</sup>
- A school term cannot be less than 180 days.<sup>v</sup>
- Kindergarten students should not receive less than 740 hours of instruction per school year.<sup>vi</sup>

### Funding

- A weighted formula is used to allocate funding for half-day kindergarten, Full-Day K and grades 1<sup>st</sup>-12<sup>th</sup>.<sup>vii</sup>
- More funding is provided for Full-Day K than for half-day kindergarten.<sup>viii</sup>

### Standards

- The Department of Education and Early Development has developed content standards for students in kindergarten. The standards cover the subjects of reading, writing, and mathematics.<sup>ix</sup>
- State statutes mandate that districts provide health education for children in K-12<sup>th</sup> grades.<sup>x</sup>

### Assessment

- State Statute mandates the Department of Education develop a developmental profile for students entering kindergarten.<sup>xi</sup>
- The developmental profile is administered to incoming kindergartners to measure kindergarten readiness.

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<sup>i</sup> National Center for Education Statistics, 2010. "Kindergarten Requirements, By State: 2010."

[http://nces.ed.gov/programs/statereform/tab5\\_3.asp](http://nces.ed.gov/programs/statereform/tab5_3.asp)

<sup>ii</sup> Alaska Department of Education and Early Development Assessment and Accountability. 2010. "Enrollment by School and Grade as of Oct. 1, 2010." <http://www.eed.state.ak.us/stats/SchoolEnrollment/2011SchoolEnrollment.pdf>

<sup>iii</sup> When Attendance Compulsory. *Alaska Statutes* § 14.30.010.

<sup>iv</sup> Right to Attend School. *Alaska Statutes* § 14.03.080

<sup>v</sup> School Term. *Alaska Statutes* § 14.03.030

<sup>vi</sup> Ibid

<sup>vii</sup> National Education Association. "Great Public Schools Criteria for Alaska."

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[http://www.nea.org/home/achievement\\_Alaska.html](http://www.nea.org/home/achievement_Alaska.html)

<sup>viii</sup> Ibid

<sup>ix</sup> Alaska Department of Education and Early Development. "Alaska Content Standards"

<http://www.eed.state.ak.us/ContentStandards/>

<sup>x</sup> Curriculum. *Alaska Statutes* § 14.30.360

<sup>xi</sup> Duties of the Department. *Alaska Statutes* § 14.07.020