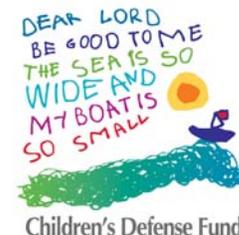


Children's Defense Fund

Full-Day Kindergarten in Arkansas



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 Arkansas school districts required by statute to fund Full-Day K for all eligible students? Xⁱ Yes ___ No

Statutory Provisions

- **Kindergarten attendance is compulsory.**ⁱⁱ Parents can apply for a kindergarten waiver that would exempt students from participating.
- **Compulsory school age is 5 years on or before August 1st of the school year.**ⁱⁱⁱ
- **Full-Day K provided for six hours of instruction per day or 30 hours per week.**^{iv}
- **The teacher to student ratio for kindergarten classrooms is 1-to-20 or 1-to-22 with an instructional aide.**^v

Funding

- The same level of funding is provided for grades K-12.^{vi}

Standards

- The Common Core State Standards were adopted in July 2010.^{vii}
- Kindergarten learning expectations are aligned with elementary and secondary standards.^{viii}

Assessment

- The Arkansas School Readiness Committee has identified 38 indicators that will help get children in Arkansas off to a good start. They have created an indicator checklist for parents and teachers, a calendar and a readiness guide.^{ix}

ⁱ National Center for Education Statistics, 2010. "Kindergarten requirements, by State: 2010."

http://nces.ed.gov/programs/statereform/tab5_3.asp

ⁱⁱ Compulsory Attendance. *Arkansas Code Annotated* § 6-18-201

ⁱⁱⁱ Compulsory Attendance. *Arkansas Code Annotated* § 6-18-207

^{iv} Required Time For Instruction And School Calendar. *Rules And Regulations Governing Standards For Accreditation of Arkansas Public Schools* § 10.01.3

^v Arkansas Department Of Education. *Rules And Regulations Governing Standards For Accreditation Of Arkansas Public Schools*. Retrieved from http://arkansased.org/about/pdf/current/ade_087_compulsory.pdf

^{vi} National Education Association. "Great Public Schools Criteria for Arkansas."

http://www.nea.org/home/achievement_Arkansas.html

^{vii} Common Core State Standard Initiative. "In The States" <http://www.corestandards.org/in-the-states>

^{viii} Transitions and Alignments. (2011, January). Education Week, Quality Counts. 30 (16) pg 50.

^{ix} Arkansas Department of Education. "Parents and Students." <http://arkansased.org/parents/preschool.html>