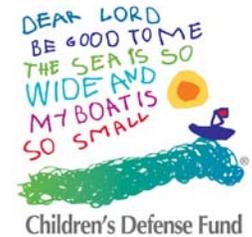


Children's Defense Fund

Full-Day Kindergarten in Colorado



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

In 2010, there were 65,182 children enrolled in kindergarten across the state.ⁱⁱ

Statutory Provisions

- Any child that reaches 6 years old by August 1st is required to attend public school.ⁱⁱⁱ
- Half-day kindergarten is defined as 450 hours of instruction per academic year. Full-Day K is defined as 900 hours of instruction per academic year.^{iv}
- The school year cannot be less than 160 days.^v

Funding

- Full-Day K funding sources include:^{vi}
 - **Supplemental funding:** Distributed to districts based on the number of students enrolled in kindergarten in a school district, kindergarteners enroll as a 0.5 student, but a factor of 0.58 is used for funding purposes in the School Finance Formula.^{vii}
 - **Hold-harmless funding**
 - **Parent tuition**
 - **School district general fund operating dollars**
 - **Title I funds**
 - **Voter-approved mill levy increases for override funding to cover excess Full-Day K costs and other voter approved initiatives.**^{viii}

Standards

- The Common Core State Standards were adopted in August 2010.^{ix}
- Kindergarten standards are aligned with elementary and secondary expectations.^x

Assessment

- Students are required to be assessed in reading, writing, mathematics, and science.^{xi}
- The Colorado Basic Literacy Act (CBLA) was passed in 1997 to ensure that all children are reading on grade level by 3rd grade. Under CBLA, end of the year assessments take place in kindergarten to ensure that children are reading well enough to be promoted into 1st grade.^{xii}

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- ⁱ National Center for Education Statistics, 2010. "Kindergarten requirements, by State: 2010." http://nces.ed.gov/programs/statereform/tab5_3.asp
- ⁱⁱ Colorado Department of Education. "Fall Membership Comparisons from 1990-2010. 2010." http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdereval/download/PDF/2010PM/ST1_pupilcountsbygrade1990_2010.pdf
- ⁱⁱⁱ Compulsory School Attendance. *Colorado Revised Statutes* § 22-33-104
- ^{iv} Ibid
- ^v Ibid
- ^{vi} Personal Communicatio – Lori Bowers
- ^{vii} Definitions. *Colorado Revised Statutes* § 22-54-103 (7) (e)
- ^{viii} Authorization of additional local revenues for full-day kindergarten *Colorado Revised Statutes* § 22-54-108.5 (1) (a)
- ^{ix} Common Core State Standards Initiative. "In the States." <http://www.corestandards.org/in-the-states>
- ^x Transitions and Alignments. (2011, January). Education Week, Quality Counts. 30 (16) pg 50.
- ^{xi} Assessments. *Colorado Revised Statutes* § 22-7-409
- ^{xii} Colorado Department of Education. *Colorado CBLA End-of-Year Assessment Scoring & Reporting Guidelines*. http://www.cde.state.co.us/coloradoliteracy/cbla/download/CBLA_EOY_Assmt_Scoring_Reporting.pdf