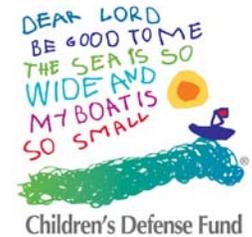


# Children's Defense Fund

## Full-Day Kindergarten in North Carolina



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 North Carolina school districts required by statute to fund Full-Day K for all eligible students?  Yes  No

### Statutory Provisions

- Kindergarten attendance is permitted but not required.<sup>ii</sup>
- Children must be 5 years old on or before August 31<sup>st</sup> of the school year.<sup>iii</sup>
- The minimum required class hours for kindergarten in North Carolina is the same as other grades.<sup>iv</sup>
- The teacher to student ratio for kindergarten in North Carolina is 1-to-18. After the first 40 days of school kindergarten class size cannot be higher than 21.<sup>v</sup>

### Funding

- Kindergarten is a part of the state funding formula and is funded on the same level as grades 1-3.<sup>vi</sup>

### Standards

- The Common Core State Standards were adopted in June 2010.<sup>vii</sup>
- North Carolina has kindergarten learning expectations that are aligned with elementary and secondary standards.<sup>viii</sup>

### Assessment

- The State Board of Education requires that schools and school districts implement assessments in grades K-2 that include documented, on-going individualized assessments and a summative evaluation at the end of the year. These assessments are used to monitor achievement of benchmarks in the *North Carolina Standard Course of Study*. Assessments may be state-developed or unique assessments adopted by the local school board.<sup>ix</sup>

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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> North Carolina Public Schools. "School Entry Age." <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/stateboard/legal/schoolentry>

<sup>iii</sup> ibid

<sup>iv</sup> Education Commission of the States. "State Kindergarten Statutes: North Carolina."

<http://mb2.ecs.org/reports/Report.aspx?id=8>

<sup>v</sup> Public Schools of North Carolina. "Curriculum and Instruction." [http://prim.ncwiseowl.org/policy\\_legislation/class\\_size/](http://prim.ncwiseowl.org/policy_legislation/class_size/)

<sup>vi</sup> North Carolina Department of Public Instruction. (2011). "Highlights of the North Carolina Public School Budget."

<http://www.dpi.state.nc.us/docs/fbs/resources/data/highlights/2011highlights.pdf>

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

<sup>viii</sup> Transitions and Alignments 2011. "Education Week, Quality Counts." 30 (16) pg 50.

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<sup>ix</sup> North Carolina State Board of Education 1999. "Policy Manual." <http://sbepolicy.dpi.state.nc.us/policies/GCS-C-016.asp?pri=01&cat=C&pol=016&acr=GCS>