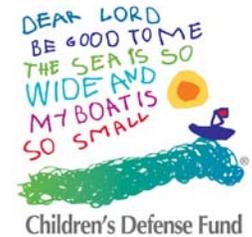


Children's Defense Fund

Full-Day Kindergarten in Arizona



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

In the 2010-2011 school year, all state funds to support Full-Day K were rescinded by the state legislature. Tuition or local funds will be assessed if local districts continue to offer Full-Day K. ⁱⁱ

Statutory Provisions

- **A school district or charter school may offer Full-Day K instruction to all pupils who meet the enrollment requirements for kindergarten programs.** Parents of pupils who meet the enrollment requirements for voluntary kindergarten programs in a school district or charter school that offers Full-Day K instruction may choose either half-day kindergarten or Full-Day K instruction. ⁱⁱⁱ
- **Kindergarten attendance is optional at age five.** ^{iv}
- **Students are required to be 5 years old on or before September 1st of the school year in order to attend kindergarten.** ^v
- **Districts that offer kindergarten must provide at least 356 hours of instruction for 180 academic days of the school year.** ^{vi}
- **There are no guidelines for teacher to student ratio or class size in statute.**

Funding

- A school district or charter school that chooses to offer Full-Day K cannot charge tuition to students for the Full-Day K program. However, a school district or charter school that does not offer Full-Day K may offer an optional supplemental or extended-day program to its students to supplement the school's half-day kindergarten program and may charge a fee. ^{vii}

Standards

- The national Common Core State Standards were signed in June 2010. ^{viii}
- Kindergarten expectations are aligned with elementary and secondary standards. ^{ix}

Assessment

- "A child who enrolls in a kindergarten program or grades 1-12 after receiving instruction in a home school program shall be tested...in order to determine the appropriate grade level for the educational placement of the child." ^x
- Districts providing instruction in grades K-3 must select and administer "screening, ongoing diagnostic and classroom based instructional reading assessments" to monitor student progress. ^{xi}

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

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

ⁱⁱ Kossan, P., 2010. "Cuts To All-Day Kindergarten Big Problem For Schools, Parents." The Arizona Republic.

<http://www.azcentral.com/arizonarepublic/news/articles/2010/03/19/20100319arizona-cuts-to-all-daykindergarten.html>

ⁱⁱⁱ Voluntary Full-Day Kindergarten. *Arizona Revised Statutes* § 15-901.02

^{iv} Admission Of Children; Required Age. *Arizona Revised Statutes* §15-821

^v Ibid

^{vi} One Hundred Eighty Day School Year; Definition. *Arizona Revised Statutes* § 15-341.01

^{vii} Office of the Attorney General, 2006. Memo; "Whether A School District Or Charter School May Charge Tuition For Full-Day Kindergarten." <http://www.azed.gov/wp-content/uploads/PDF/FDKMemofromAGrecharging.pdf>

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

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

^x Education Commission of the States. "Kindergarten Screening and Assessment Requirements".

<http://mb2.ecs.org/reports/Report.aspx?id=31>

^{xi} Ibid