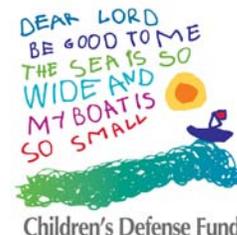


Children's Defense Fund

Full-Day Kindergarten in Idaho



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

During the 2010-2011 school year, 21,998 students were enrolled in kindergarten across 132 districts.ⁱⁱ

Statutory Provisions

- Districts are not required to offer kindergarten programs.ⁱⁱⁱ
- Children are not required to attend kindergarten.^{iv}
- A child must reach age 5 by September 1st to enroll in kindergarten.^v
- The compulsory age of education is 7 years old.^{vi}
- The minimum number of instructional hours for kindergarten is 450 per school year. In 1st grade, the minimum is 810 hours per school year.^{vii}
- There are no statutory provisions regarding class size. However, the state does recommend that a goal of 20 students be set for kindergarten classrooms.^{viii}

Funding

- Currently, kindergarten is funded between 0.5 and 1.0 Full-time Equivalent (FTE), depending on the average daily enrollment of the district.^{ix}

Standards

- The Common Core State Standards were adopted in January 2011.^x
- Kindergarten standards are aligned with elementary and secondary expectations.^{xi}
- All curricular materials used in public K-3rd grade classroom must also be aligned with the Idaho Comprehensive Literacy Plan.^{xii}

Assessment

- All students in kindergarten will have their reading skills assessed. This assessment includes reading readiness and phonological awareness.^{xiii}
- The assessment results are to be reviewed by school personnel in order to maintain a curriculum that sustains or improves the reading skills of the students. The results are also used in order to provide interventions where needed.^{xiv} School districts receive funding from the state to support interventions.

ⁱ National Center for Education Statistics, 2010. "Kindergarten requirements, by State: 2010."
http://nces.ed.gov/programs/statereform/tab5_3.asp

ⁱⁱ Idaho State Department of Education. Public School Membership 2010-2011 School Year.

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- ⁱⁱⁱ Kindergarten and Child Attendance Not Compulsory. *Idaho Code* § 33-208
- ^{iv} Ibid
- ^v School Age. *Idaho Code* § 33-201
- ^{vi} School Attendance Compulsory. *Idaho Code* § 33-202
- ^{vii} Governance of Schools. *Idaho Code* § 33-512
- ^{viii} Class Size Ratio Goals. *Idaho Administrative Code* § 08.02.02.110.
- ^{ix} Educational Support Program. *Idaho Code* § 33-1002
- ^x "In the States." Map. *Common Core Standards Initiative*. 2011. Web. 19 Oct 2011.
- ^{xi} Chance for Success. (2011, January). Education Week, Quality Counts. 30 (16) pg 44.
- ^{xii} Reading Assessment. *Idaho Code* § 33-1614
- ^{xiii} Ibid
- ^{xiv} Ibid