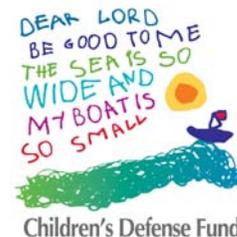


Children's Defense Fund

Full-Day Kindergarten in Indiana



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

School corporationsⁱⁱ are required to provide a kindergarten program and this requirement may be satisfied by:

- Offering a half-day of kindergarten, a full-day of kindergarten, or both.
- Assessing fees to any parent who chooses to enroll their child in optional Full-Day K.ⁱⁱⁱ

Statutory Provisions

- **Kindergarten attendance is not mandatory.** A child is not required to attend school until the school year in which the child becomes 7 years old.^{iv,v}
- **Students may enter kindergarten if they are 5 on or before August 1st of the school year.**^{vi, vii}
- **Full-Day K consists of five hours of instructional time per day.**^{viii}
- **The kindergarten teacher to pupil ratio is 1-to-18.**^{ix}

Funding

- Kindergarten is funded through the Full-Day Kindergarten Grant Program and supplemental funds.
- Public Law 229-2011 provides \$81.9 million in funding for the Full-Day Kindergarten Grant Program in 2011-2012. School corporations and charter schools are eligible for grants.
- To be eligible for funding, programs must provide five hours of daily instructional time for 180 days during the school year and must meet the academic standards and other applicable state statutes and rules.
- Schools may charge a fee for participation in the full-day program only if the school also offers a free half-day program.^x

Standards

- Common Core State Standards were adopted in August 2010^{xi}.
- Kindergarten learning expectations are aligned with elementary and secondary standards.^{xii}

Assessment

- The Indiana Standards Tool for Alternate Reporting of Kindergarten Readiness (ISTAR-KR) can be used to assess kindergarten readiness.
- ISTAR is aligned to the Indiana Standards for Kindergarten in the areas of English/language arts and mathematics and includes three functional areas: physical, personal care and social-emotional skills. Assessment results can be used to determine what skills a child has mastered and what skills a student needs to learn next.^{xiii}

-
- ⁱ National Center for Education Statistics. (2010). "Table 5.3. Kindergarten Requirements, By State: 2010." http://nces.ed.gov/programs/statereform/tab5_3.asp
- ⁱⁱ The state of Indiana refers to school districts as school corporations.
- ⁱⁱⁱ Indiana Department of Education. "Frequently Asked Questions about Kindergarten Programs." http://www.doe.in.gov/primetime/docs/FAQ_FDK.pdf
- ^{iv} Ibid
- ^v Compulsory Attendance; Exit Interviews; Withdrawal From School (1973). 2001. *Indiana Code*. § 20-8.1-3-17
- ^{vi} Indiana Department of Education. "Frequently Asked Questions about Kindergarten Programs." http://www.doe.in.gov/primetime/docs/FAQ_FDK.pdf
- ^{vii} Compulsory Attendance; Exit Interviews; Withdrawal From School (1973). 2001. *Indiana Code*. § 20-8.1-3-17
- ^{viii} Curriculum (1992). 2007. *Indiana Administrative Code* § 511 IAC 6.1-9-9
- ^{ix} Accreditation Requirements (1989). 2010. *Indiana Administrative Code* §511 IAC 6.1-1-4
- ^x Indiana Department of Education. "Memo from Dana Jones: To School Superintendents." http://www.doe.in.gov/super/2011/05-May/27/documents/memo_fdk.pdf
- ^{xi} Common Core State Standard Initiative. "In The States." <http://www.corestandards.org/in-the-states>
- ^{xii} Transitions and Alignments. (2011, January). Education Week, Quality Counts. 30 (16) pg 50.
- ^{xiii} Indiana Department of Education. "Purpose of Assessments." <http://www.doe.in.gov/assessment/purpose.html>