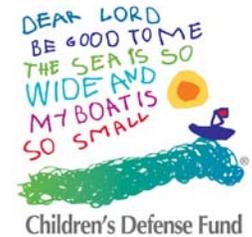


Children's Defense Fund

Full-Day Kindergarten in Mississippi



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 Mississippi 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.ⁱⁱ
- Children must be 5 years old on or before September 1st of the school year to be enrolled in kindergarten.ⁱⁱⁱ
- The length of the school day shall be the same as that of the other grades of the elementary school.^{iv}
- Teacher to student ratios should not exceed 1-to-22 in kindergarten, except in instances in which a full-time assistant teacher is in the classroom. If a full-time assistant teacher is in the classroom, 27 students may be enrolled.^v

Funding

- Kindergarten is included in the minimum education program in Section 8 of the Mississippi Code, which funds grades K-12 at the same level.^{vi}

Standards

- The Common Core State Standards were adopted in August 2010.^{vii}
- Mississippi has kindergarten learning expectations that are aligned with elementary and secondary standards.^{viii}

Assessment

- Assessment of kindergarten skills should be documented through a variety of techniques and procedures to include: checklists, performance scales, portfolios of children's work, anecdotal records, observational reports, video and audio tape recordings, experience charts, photographs, and informal tests.^{ix}
- Continuous evaluation through these varied techniques, procedures, and tools will be used to determine individual needs.^x

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

ⁱⁱ Ibid

ⁱⁱⁱ Mississippi Department of Education 1998. "Mississippi Kindergarten Guidelines."
<http://www.mde.k12.ms.us/ACAD/Kguide.htm#>

^{iv} Ibid

^v Mississippi Department of Education 2010. "Mississippi Public School Accountability Standards."
http://www.mde.k12.ms.us/accred/Final_2010_11-30-10_manual.pdf

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- ^{vi} Mississippi Department of Education. "Mississippi Kindergarten Guidelines." <http://www.mde.k12.ms.us/ACAD/Kguide.htm>
- ^{vii} Common Core State Standards Initiative. "In the States." <http://www.corestandards.org/in-the-states>
- ^{viii} Transitions and Alignments. (2011, January). Education Week, Quality Counts. 30 (16) pg 50.
- ^{ix} Mississippi Department of Education. "Mississippi Kindergarten Guidelines." <http://www.mde.k12.ms.us/ACAD/Kguide.htm>
- ^x Ibid