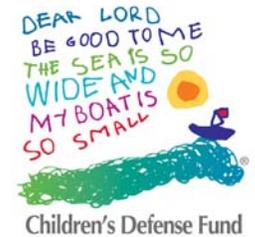


# Children's Defense Fund

## Full-Day Kindergarten in Utah



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 Utah school districts required by statute to fund Full-Day K for all eligible students? \_\_\_ Yes X No

During Fiscal Year 2010, there were 46,571 children enrolled in kindergarten,<sup>ii</sup> with an average of 22 students per classroom.<sup>iii</sup>

### Statutory Provisions

- Districts are required to offer kindergarten to all eligible children.<sup>iv</sup>
- The compulsory age of education is 6 years old.<sup>v</sup>
- Children must be 5 by September 2<sup>nd</sup> of the current year to enroll in school.<sup>vi</sup>
- Kindergarten is defined as a minimum of two hours of instruction. First grade is defined as no less than four hours.<sup>vii</sup>
- In order to offer a full day of kindergarten, school districts must submit an application to the State Board of Education.<sup>viii</sup>
- Extended-day kindergarten must be offered for the same amount of hours as 1<sup>st</sup> grade.<sup>ix</sup>

### Funding

- A kindergarten class is given a weight of 0.55 in the funding formula for the state of Utah.<sup>x</sup>
- Districts can opt to apply for extended-day kindergarten, in which case the state uses a separate formula to allocate additional funding.<sup>xi</sup>

### Standards

- The Common Core State Standards were adopted in August 2010.<sup>xii</sup>
- Kindergarten standards are aligned with elementary and secondary expectations.<sup>xiii</sup>

### Assessment

- Districts must choose a kindergarten readiness assessment tool to assess every kindergarten student at the beginning of the year.<sup>xiv</sup>
- Post assessments must be completed prior to the completion of the school year.<sup>xv</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> Utah State Office of Education. "Average Daily Membership by District, FY 2010."

<http://www.schools.utah.gov/data/Educational-Data/Student-Enrollment-and-Membership.aspx>

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- <sup>iii</sup> Utah State Office of Education. "Median Class Size-Elementary Schools 2009-2010."
- <sup>iv</sup> Kindergartens -- Establishment – Funding. *Utah Code*, § 53A-3-402.
- <sup>v</sup> Compulsory Education. *Utah Code*, § 53A-11-101.5.
- <sup>vi</sup> Powers and duties generally. *Utah Code*. § 53A-3-402.
- <sup>vii</sup> Definitions *Utah Administrative Code*. § R277-419-1.
- <sup>viii</sup> School District Responsibilities. *Utah Administrative Code*. § R277-489-3.
- <sup>ix</sup> Definitions. *Utah Administrative Code*. §R277-489-1
- <sup>x</sup> Determination of Weighted Pupil Units. *Utah Administrative Code*. § 53A-17a-106
- <sup>xi</sup> Voluntary Extended-Day Kindergarten Program Funding. *Utah Administrative Code* § 53A-1a-903
- <sup>xii</sup> Common Core State Standards Initiative. "In the States." <http://www.corestandards.org/in-the-states>
- <sup>xiii</sup> Transitions and Alignments. (2011, January). Education Week, Quality Counts. 30 (16) pg 50.
- <sup>xiv</sup> Optional Extended-Day Kindergarten - Responsibilities, Timelines, and Funding. *Utah Administrative Code* § R277-489-6
- <sup>xv</sup> Ibid