



Children's Defense Fund

Full-Day Kindergarten in Alaska

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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 a part of the K-12 publicly funded school system in most states. Nationally, only ten states and the District of Columbia require school districts to provide publicly funded Full-Day K through statute. Thirty-four other states require school districts to provide at least half-day kindergarten and six have no requirement.

Are Alaska school districts required by statute to fund Full-Day K for all eligible students? ___ Yes Xⁱ No
During the 2010-2011 school year, 10,120 children were enrolled in kindergarten across 54 districts.ⁱⁱ

Statutory Provisions

- The compulsory school age is 7.ⁱⁱⁱ
- Children may enter kindergarten if they reach the age of 5 by September 1st of the school year.^{iv}
- A school term cannot be less than 180 days.^v
- Kindergarten students should not receive less than 740 hours of instruction.^{vi}
- There is no data currently available on teacher to student ratio requirements.

Funding

- A weighted formula is used to allocate funding for half-day kindergarten, Full-Day K and grades 1-12.^{vii}
- More funding is provided for Full-Day K than for half-day kindergarten.^{viii}

Standards

- The Department of Education and Early Development has developed content standards for students in kindergarten. The standards cover the subjects of reading, writing, and mathematics.^{ix}
- State statute mandates that districts provide health education for children in grades K-12.^x

Assessment

- The Department of Education shall develop a developmental profile for students entering kindergarten.^{xi}
- The developmental profile is administered to incoming kindergarteners to measure kindergarten readiness.

ⁱ School Term. *Alaska Statutes* § 14.03.030.

ⁱⁱ Alaska Department of Education and Early Development Assessment and Accountability. 2010. "Enrollment by School and Grade as of Oct. 1, 2010." <http://www.eed.state.ak.us/stats/SchoolEnrollment/2011SchoolEnrollment.pdf>

ⁱⁱⁱ When Attendance Compulsory. *Alaska Statutes* § 14.30.010.

^{iv} Right to Attend School. *Alaska Statutes* § 14.03.080.

^v School Term. *Alaska Statutes* § 14.03.030.

^{vi} Ibid

^{vii} Counting of correspondence students and part-time public school students. *Alaska Administrative Code* Title 4 § 09.040. <http://www.legis.state.ak.us/basis/aac.asp?title=4#4.09.040>

^{viii} Ibid

^{ix} Alaska Department of Education and Early Development. "Alaska Content Standards"
<http://www.eed.state.ak.us/ContentStandards/>

^xCurriculum. *Alaska Statutes* § 14.30.360

^{xi} Duties of the Department. *Alaska Statutes* § 14.07.020