



Children's Defense Fund Full-Day Kindergarten in Delaware

January 2013

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 Delaware school districts required by statute to fund Full-Day K for all eligible students? Yes No
Districts must also offer a half-day option for parents who do not choose to enroll their children in Full-Day K.ⁱⁱ

Statutory Provisions

- Kindergarten attendance is mandatory.ⁱⁱⁱ
- Children must be 5 years old on or before August 31st of the school year in order to enroll in kindergarten.^{iv}
- School districts are required to provide at least 1,060 school hours for grades K-11.^v
- The teacher to student in any class grades K-3 shall not exceed 1 to 22 as of the last school day of October.^{vi}

Funding

- Full-Day K is funded at the same rate as grades 1-3. Half-day kindergarten is funded at half the rate of Full-Day K.^{vii}

Standards

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

Assessment

- All school districts are required to follow the state standards to assess the progress of all students, including kindergarteners, toward meeting the standards and to report such progress to parents.^x
- The Delaware Department of Education shall adopt rules and regulations to implement a common statewide readiness tool that will review a child's readiness for learning when they enter kindergarten. The readiness tool shall serve as the basis for an objective readiness review conducted by the child's teacher or other members of the child's school team. The readiness tool shall review, but not be limited to, the following 5 domains: language and literacy development, cognition and general knowledge, approaches toward learning, physical well-being and motor development, and social and emotional development. This assessment tool was due to be phased in starting in fall 2012 and implemented statewide no later than fall 2015.^{xi}

ⁱ Compulsory attendance requirements. 14 *Delaware Code* § 2702.

ⁱⁱ An Act To Amend Title 14 Of The Delaware Code Relating To Full-Day Kindergarten. *Delaware Code*
<http://delcode.delaware.gov/sessionlaws/ga143/chp440.shtml#TopOfPage>

ⁱⁱⁱ Compulsory attendance requirements. 14 *Delaware Code* § 2702.

^{iv} Ibid.

^v Policy making. 14 *Delaware Code* § 1049.

^{vi} Maximum student-instructor ratio requirements. 14 *Delaware Code* § 1705A.

^{vii} Divisions of school appropriations. 14 *Delaware Code* §1702.

^{viii} Common Core State Standard Initiative. *In The States*. <http://www.corestandards.org/in-the-states>

^{ix} Transitions and Alignments. (2011, January). Education Week, Quality Counts. 30 (16) pg 50.

^x State assessment system; rules and regulations. 14 *Delaware Code* § 151

^{xi} Ibid.