



Children's Defense Fund

Full-Day Kindergarten in Georgia

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

Statutory Provisions

- Kindergarten attendance is permissive.ⁱⁱ
- Children must be 5 years old on or before September 1st of the school year in order to attend kindergarten.ⁱⁱⁱ
- A Full-Day K program should be a minimum of four and a half hours of instruction per day.^{iv}
- The teacher to student ratio is 1 to 15 with a maximum class size of 18. Kindergarten classes with a paraprofessional in addition to a teacher may have up to 20 students.^v

Funding

- Kindergarten is a part of Georgia's state funding formula and is weighted more than primary grades 1-3.^{vi}

Standards

- The Common Core State Standards were adopted in July 2010.^{vii}
- Kindergarten learning expectations are aligned with elementary and secondary standards.^{viii}
- Kindergarten-High School English Language Arts and Mathematics have Common Core Georgia Performance Standards. All other core content areas have Georgia Performance Standards.^{ix}

Assessment

- Georgia kindergarten students participate in Georgia Kindergarten Inventory of Developing Skills in order to provide cumulative evidence of a student's readiness for first grade.^x
- Students are assessed in the domains of literacy, mathematics, and social/emotional development in a variety of one-on-one, small group and large group instructional settings throughout the kindergarten year.^{xi}

ⁱ General and career education programs. *Official Code of Georgia Annotated* § 20-2-151

ⁱⁱ Ibid.

ⁱⁱⁱ Eligibility for Enrollment. *Code of Georgia Annotated* § 20-2-150.

^{iv} General and career education programs. *Official Code of Georgia Annotated* § 20-2-151

^v Quality basic education formula. *Official Code of Georgia Annotated* § 20-2-161

^{vi} Ibid

^{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} Smith, Pamela. June 2012. E-mail Correspondence. June 26.

^x Georgia Department of Education. “Georgia Kindergarten Inventory of Developing Skills (GKIDS).”
<http://www.doe.k12.ga.us/Curriculum-Instruction-and-Assessment/Assessment/Pages/GKIDS.aspx>

^{xi} Ibid.