



Children's Defense Fund Full-Day Kindergarten in Maine

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 10 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 Maine school districts required by statute to fund Full-Day K for all eligible students? ___ Yes Xⁱ No
In the 2010-2011 school year, 13,783 children were enrolled in public kindergartens across the state.ⁱⁱ

Statutory Provisions

- **Districts are required to provide a K-12 education for all students.**ⁱⁱⁱ
- **The compulsory age for attending school is 7 years old.**^{iv}
- **Children must be 5 years old by October 15 of the school year to enroll in kindergarten.**^v
- **Kindergarten instruction is defined as a minimum of two and a half hours per day for 175 days per academic year.** A school administrator has the option of filing for approval to reduce this number.^{vi}
 - School administrators can also increase the number of instructional hours in kindergarten in order to "improve student performance and to reduce the risk of later school failure."^{vii}
- **The maximum teacher to student ratio is 1 to 20.**^{viii}

Funding

- Districts receive funding through the Essential and Services School Funding Formula. Allocations are based on the previous October and April calendar year pupil counts.
- Districts receive a full per-pupil allocation for kindergarten students.
- There are additional weights to the basic per-pupil allocation which include:
 - economically disadvantaged populations;
 - limited English proficiency;
 - and prekindergarten through second grade targeted weight.

Standards

- The Common Core State Standards were adopted in April 2011.^{ix}
- Kindergarten standards are aligned with elementary and secondary expectations.^x

Assessment

- By the school year that begins in the fall of 2012 all school administrative units shall develop and implement general education interventions kindergarten to grade 12 that provide each child who is not progressing toward meeting the content standards of the parameters for essential instruction and graduation requirements with different learning experiences or assistance to achieve the standard. The interventions must be specific, timely and based upon ongoing formative assessments that continuously monitor student progress.^{xi}

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- ⁱ Kindergarten Instructional Time. *Code of Maine Rules* 05-071-125 § 6.03.
- ⁱⁱ Maine Department of Education. "2010/2011 Public Schools Fall Enrollment by Grade & County." <http://www.maine.gov/education/enroll/attending/2011/pub/fenpbcg10.htm>
- ⁱⁱⁱ Program. 20-A Maine Revised Statute § 1258
- ^{iv} Compulsory Attendance. 20-A Maine Revised Statute. § 5001-A
- ^v Minimum Ages. 20-A Maine Revised Statute § 5201
- ^{vi} Kindergarten Instructional Time. *Code of Maine Rules* 05-071-125 § 6.03.
- ^{vii} Ibid.
- ^{viii} Personnel Ratios. *Code of Maine Rules* 05-071-125 § 7.02.
- ^{ix} "In the States." Map. *Common Core Standards Initiative*. 2011. Web. 19 Oct 2011.
- ^x Chance for Success. (2011, January). *Education Week, Quality Counts*. 30 (16) pg 44.
- ^{xi} General Education Intervention. *Code of Maine Rules* 05-071-101.