



## Children's Defense Fund

### Full-Day Kindergarten in North Carolina

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 North Carolina school districts required by statute to fund Full-Day K for all eligible students?  Yes  No

#### Statutory Provisions

- Kindergarten attendance is permissive.<sup>iii</sup>
- Children must be 5 years old on or before August 31<sup>st</sup> of the school year to enroll in kindergarten.<sup>iv</sup>
- The minimum required class hours for kindergarten in North Carolina is the same as other grades.<sup>v</sup>
- The teacher to student ratio for kindergarten in North Carolina is 1 to 18. After the first 40 days of school kindergarten class size cannot be higher than 21.<sup>vi</sup>

#### Funding

- Kindergarten is a part of the state funding formula and is funded on the same level as grades 1-3.<sup>vii</sup>

#### Standards

- The Common Core State Standards were adopted in June 2010.<sup>viii</sup>
- North Carolina has kindergarten learning expectations that are aligned with elementary and secondary standards.<sup>ix</sup>

#### Assessment

- Kindergarten, first, second, and third grade students shall be assessed with valid, reliable, formative, and diagnostic reading assessments made available to local school administrative units by the State Board of Education. Difficulty with reading development identified through administration of formative and diagnostic assessments shall be addressed with instructional supports and services. To the greatest extent possible, kindergarten through third grade reading assessments shall yield data that can be used with the Education Value-Added Assessment System (EVAAS), or a compatible and comparable system approved by the State Board of Education, to analyze student data to identify root causes for difficulty with reading development and to determine actions to address them.<sup>x</sup>
- Formative and diagnostic assessments and resultant instructional supports and services shall address oral language, phonological and phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension using developmentally appropriate practices.<sup>xi</sup>
- The State Board of Education shall develop, adopt, and provide to the local school administrative units developmentally appropriate individualized assessment instruments consistent with the Basic Education Program for the kindergarten, first, second, and third grades. Local school administrative units shall use these assessment instruments provided to them by the State Board for kindergarten, first, second, and third grade students to assess progress, diagnose difficulties, and inform instruction and remediation needs. Local school

administrative units shall not use standardized tests for summative assessment of kindergarten, first, and second grade students except as required as a condition of receiving federal grants<sup>xii</sup>.

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<sup>i</sup> Basic education program. *North Carolina General Statute* §115C-81.

<sup>ii</sup> Children required to attend. *North Carolina General Statute* § 115C-378

<sup>iii</sup> Ibid.

<sup>iv</sup> Admission requirements. *North Carolina General Statute* § 115C-364.

<sup>v</sup> Education Commission of the States." State Kindergarten Statutes: North Carolina."

<http://mb2.ecs.org/reports/Report.aspx?id=8>

<sup>vi</sup> Public Schools of North Carolina. "Curriculum and Instruction." [http://prim.ncwiseowl.org/policy\\_legislation/class\\_size/](http://prim.ncwiseowl.org/policy_legislation/class_size/)

<sup>vii</sup> North Carolina Department of Public Instruction. (2011) ."Highlights of the North Carolina Public School Budget."

<http://www.dpi.state.nc.us/docs/fbs/resources/data/highlights/2011highlights.pdf>

<sup>viii</sup> Common Core State Standard Initiative. "In The States." <http://www.corestandards.org/in-the-states>

<sup>ix</sup> Transitions and Alignments 2011. "Education Week, Quality Counts." 30 (16) pg 50.

<sup>x</sup> Facilitating Early Grade Reading Proficiency. *North Carolina General Statute* §115C-83.6.

<sup>xi</sup> Ibid.

<sup>xii</sup> Components of the testing program. *North Carolina General Statute* §115C-174.11.