

Full-Day Kindergarten and Early Learning Work Group: Recommendations Report



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Confederation of Oregon School
Administrators/Oregon
Association of School Executives

Executive Summary

The Confederation of Oregon School Administrators (COSA) and the Oregon Association of School Executives (OASE) designated a Full-Day Kindergarten and Early Learning Work Group as part of its vision policy work beginning in the fall of 2013. The group was formed in response to K-12 superintendent work relative to P-20 education, program and budgetary implications tied to expected SB 44 implementation of full-day kindergarten, and a commitment to improved learning outcomes for Oregon students.



Full-Day Kindergarten and Early Learning Work Group Recommendations:

- 1) To ensure equity for Oregon students, all Oregon School Districts should implement full-day kindergarten beginning in the 2015/16 school year.
- 2) An additional \$218.5 million, above 2013-15 State School Fund rollup costs, should be appropriated to Full-Day Kindergarten implementation in the 2015-17 State School Fund.
- 3) An additional fund should be established immediately to assist districts with one-time costs associated with full-day kindergarten implementation, such as capital construction and improvement, classroom furnishings, curriculum and materials, which are conservatively estimated to be in excess of \$14 million.
- 4) Funding should be provided to the Confederation of Oregon School Administrators, in partnership with early childhood organizations and the Early Learning Council, to deliver professional development to kindergarten teachers, educational assistants, and community-based early learning providers.

Enabling Legislation

Senate Bill 44 established a Full-Day Kindergarten Implementation Committee tasked with submitting a report and providing proposed legislation to the interim legislative committee related to education no later than October 1, 2010. Within the report and proposed legislation, the committee:

- ❑ *Shall establish a method for providing funding for full-day kindergarten programs to school districts and public charter schools that offer full-day kindergarten programs.*
- ❑ *Shall provide school districts and public charter schools with resources to determine whether to implement full-day kindergarten programs and how to implement full-day kindergarten programs. The resources may include technical expertise related to capital needs, enrollment trends, funding requirements, best practices for providing full-day kindergarten, and other information a school district or public charter school may require.*

The SB 44 Committee recommended full-day kindergarten beginning in the 2015/16 school year and full funding for kindergarten students.

COSA/OASE Full Day Kindergarten and Early Learning Work Group Members		
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Rationale for Full-Day Kindergarten and Public Investment in Early Learning

Fifty-percent (50%) of Oregon children are born into economically disadvantaged families and 40% of Oregon children have additional factors that put them at risk of academic failure and under-education. Approximately 40% of children enter kindergarten with development typical of three- and four-year-olds. These children will have to make two years of academic growth for three consecutive years to meet reading standard by the end of 3rd grade, a key predictor of academic and life success. Nationally, only 15% of students who require remediation beyond 3rd grade ever reach proficiency. School districts spend, on average, \$64,000 more per student over thirteen years of schooling for remediation that most often fails to achieve its objective.

As Oregon school districts focus on closing the achievement gap between different socioeconomic and ethnic groups, a breadth of research documents that early childhood is a potent time to prevent achievement gaps from developing or becoming entrenched. Numerous studies indicate that full-day kindergarten can lead to improved academic achievement and may help close the achievement gap among disadvantaged children. By reducing the need for future remediation and/or retention, the investment in full-day kindergarten can also lower subsequent schooling costs.

The weight of evidence shows that full-day kindergarten benefits children in the following ways.

- ❑ **Contributes to increased school readiness** - Students in full-day kindergarten are better prepared for primary grade learning, do better with the transition to 1st grade, show significant gains in school socialization, and are equipped with stronger learning skills
- ❑ **Leads to higher academic achievement** - Full-day kindergarten students show a trend toward higher achievement, and achievement gains appear to persist over time. Research findings include higher achievement on standardized assessments as well as better grades.
- ❑ **Improves student attendance** - Students in full-day kindergarten show better attendance through the primary grades, which translates to increased learning time.
- ❑ **Supports literacy and language development** - Full-day kindergarten students show faster gains on literacy and language measures, including 3rd grade reading assessment.

High-Quality Full-Day Kindergarten

A full-day kindergarten program features:

- Breakfast, snack, and lunch, with emphasis on teaching manners and social skills
- Vocabulary development
- Literacy block
- Math block
- Content time (science, social studies, fine arts, hands-on learning, etc.)
- Morning and afternoon guided and/or structured play
- In-depth experiential learning
- Chunked instruction during literacy and math blocks, so that young students can manage the cognitive load, stay motivated, and organize knowledge
- Physical education, music, library, technology
- Health services
- Counseling and family services
- Social skill development through active play
- Strong teacher/parent communication, including home visits
- Access to the 1st-5th infrastructure

Comparison of Full-Day vs. Half-Day Kindergarten Schedule	
Full-Day Kindergarten	Half-Day Kindergarten
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 8:00 - Breakfast (teaching manners and social skills) ○ 8:15 - Morning Circle (literacy, counting, and cooperative learning) ○ 8:30 - Literacy Block (90 minutes) ○ 10:00 - Guided/structured play ○ Literacy Block continued (shared, interactive, and individual writing) ○ 11:15 - Lunch and structured play ○ 12:00 - Shared and interactive read aloud ○ 12:15 - Math Block (60 minutes) ○ 1:15 - PE/Music/Library ○ 1:40 - Snack ○ 1:45 - Content time (science, social studies, technology, etc.) ○ 2:20 - Wrap-up and dismissal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 8:00 - Morning Circle (meeting, message, calendar) ○ 8:15 - Literacy Block (45 minutes) ○ 9:00 - Math Block (20 minutes) ○ 9:20 - Recess ○ 9:35 - Library ○ 10:00 - Snack and choice activity ○ 10:20 - Pack up ○ 10:25 - Dismissal

Staffing Costs and Funding Considerations for Full-Day Kindergarten

The projected staffing cost to implement state-wide full-day kindergarten is projected to be \$218.5 million, according to Brian Reeder, Office of Research and Data Analysis, Oregon Department of Education. Beyond doubling the number of kindergarten teachers and adding educational assistants, full-day kindergarten will require additional licensed FTE (Full Time Equivalent) in other areas. For example, additional FTE in music, library, and physical education will be needed because these activities, in addition to supporting healthy child development, also enable kindergarten teachers to get the required preparation time within the contract day. There will also be increased demand for licensed specialists to support students with disabilities and English learners. Further, many Oregon school districts anticipate that implementation of full-day kindergarten will increase overall enrollment, as families who typically opt for private kindergarten, in order to have a full-day program, will now have a public school option.



The Full-Day Kindergarten and Early Learning Work Group believes it is essential that the additional funds needed to double kindergarten FTE for teachers, educational assistants, and specialists be above the 2013-15 biennium rollup costs and that kindergarten students be counted as 1.0 weight per student in the 2015-17 biennium and subsequent years. Districts currently using general funds or Title I funds to support full-day kindergarten also need the additional funding weight. Districts may use general fund and Title I funds to add needed remediation services to kindergarten and other grade levels and to address some of the needs related to pre-kindergarten and help students get ready for kindergarten, on a district by district basis.

Facilities, Furnishings, Curriculum, Materials, and Other One-Time Costs



As identified by a COSA/OASE survey of Oregon school superintendents, in order to implement full-day kindergarten, many districts will have to add classrooms, expand or upgrade infrastructure and facilities, move existing programs to free-up classroom space, purchase classroom furnishings, curriculum, and instructional materials, and provide professional development to teachers and educational assistants.

The COSA/OASE survey, conducted December 2013 through January 2014, indicates that:

- ❑ 20% of the one-hundred districts responding to the survey reported that they will need to add classrooms (from a low of 1 classroom to a high of 21 classrooms)
- ❑ Superintendents are concerned that there may be a possible shortage in the portable classroom market due to increased demand
- ❑ 17% of responding districts reported that they will need other additional facility expansions or upgrades, such as gym, lunchroom, playground, etc.
- ❑ Given that full-day kindergarten will result in the addition of approximately 800-1,000 new teachers in 2015/16, districts are concerned about the cost they may incur related to teacher recruitment, mentoring, and training.

Preliminary cost estimates to implement full-day kindergarten from a variety of districts with varying levels of need are documented on page 4 of this report.

Recommendation

To ensure equity for all Oregon children, the Full-Day Kindergarten and Early Learning Work Group recommend state funding for one-time start-up capital assistance. Without this additional funding, some districts will be disadvantaged over others, resulting in an unequal ability to implement full-day kindergarten programs throughout the state.

Full-day kindergarten as a strategy to reach the state's 40-40-20 goal should be a priority for all Oregon districts, whether rural or urban, large or small. The ability to implement full-day kindergarten should not be dependent on a district's ability to pass a capital construction bond.

Preliminary Cost Estimates for Staffing and One-Time Expenditures

Springfield School District 11,018 Enrollment	Medford School District 13,187 Enrollment	McMinnville School District 6,465 Enrollment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ \$5,800,000 - Facilities ○ \$2,035,000 - Teachers and Assistants ○ \$210,000 - Furnishings and equipment ○ \$69,000 - Curriculum and materials ○ \$120,000 - Professional development ○ \$127,500 - Teacher on Special Assignment to develop the new full-day kindergarten program ○ \$50,000 - Increased nursing and Special Education services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ \$1,575,000 - Teachers ○ \$378,000 - Educational Assistants ○ \$80,538 - Furnishings and equipment ○ \$330,200 - Curriculum and materials ○ \$20,000 - Cost to relocate other programs to free-up classroom space 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$1,180,850 - Kindergarten teachers \$141,702 - P.E., Music, Library specialists \$25,000 - Furnishings and equipment \$20,000 - Curriculum and materials
Grant School District 611 Enrollment	Jefferson School District 885 Enrollment	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ \$68,903 - Teachers ○ \$34,513 - Educational Assistants ○ \$6,902 - Specialists ○ \$12,000 - Furnishings and equipment ○ \$2,500 - Curriculum and materials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ \$118,500 - Teachers ○ \$7,900 Furnishings and equipment ○ \$1,500 - Curriculum and materials ○ \$500 - Staff development 	

Recommendation

The Full-Day Kindergarten and Early Learning Work Group recommend that districts be given flexibility regarding total instructional hours for full-day kindergarten, within a range of 710 to 810 hours, in order to address transportation challenges, especially in rural communities in which students must travel long distances to and from school. Included within the total instructional hours should be 30 non-student hours for kindergarten teacher and assistant professional development and at least 3 hours per kindergarten student for the kindergarten teacher to make home visits to provide parent support and education.

Next Steps Following Full-Day Kindergarten Implementation

The research is compelling: Kindergarten readiness is a key predictor of later school success. The most effective strategy to increase achievement, accelerate learning, and prevent achievement gaps from developing and becoming entrenched is to provide a continuum of high-quality early learning that includes:

- ❑ Birth to five parent education, coaching, support, and resources
- ❑ Universal pre-kindergarten for three- and four-year-olds
- ❑ Full-day kindergarten for five-year-olds

Recommendation

In addition to full-day kindergarten, the Full-Day Kindergarten and Early Learning Work Group recommend public investment in a high-quality early learning continuum that includes:

- Universal pre-kindergarten for three- and/or four-year-olds
- Pre-k/kindergarten transition services
- Child development education and resources to parents and families of children birth to age five

Oregon Department of Education, school districts, early learning providers, early learning hubs, and the State of Oregon should work toward providing state-wide quality pre-k programs for all three- and four-year-olds. Implementation may be staggered due to funding:

- 2017-19 Biennium - Universal pre-k for four-year-olds
- 2019-21 Biennium - Universal pre-k for three-year-olds

Rate of Return on Investment in Early Learning

The benefits of early childhood programs are not just short-term in nature. Careful studies demonstrate that early interventions can have a positive effect on young children, especially those from low-income families, which often last well into adulthood. For example, analysis of one program showed that children who attended a high-quality half-day preschool program at ages 3 and 4 were, at age 40, more economically successful—such as, more likely to own their own homes—than nonparticipants in a control group. Economically speaking, early childhood programs are a good investment, with inflation-adjusted annual rates of return on the funds dedicated to these programs estimated to reach 10% or higher. Very few alternative investments can promise that kind of return. — Ben Bernanke, former Chairman of the Federal Reserve

Preschool programs generate a significant return on investment for society; numerous economic studies have documented a rate of return of \$7 or more on each dollar invested through a reduced need for spending on other services, such as remedial education, grade repletion, and special education, as well as increased productivity and earnings for these children as adults. — President Barack Obama

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A. OASE Full-Day Kindergarten Survey Summary

- 20% of districts report that they will need to add classrooms (from a low of 1 to a high of 21 classrooms) in order to offer full-day kindergarten in 2015/16
- 17% say they will need other, additional facilities, as well
- The approximately 100 districts responding to the survey report that they will need to hire 168 new kindergarten teachers for full-day kindergarten programs in 2015/16
- The open-ended response provide good information about additional facilities, length of school day, future use of Title I funds, etc.

What other licensed staff, if any, do you expect to add to support full-day kindergarten students?

- Staff teachers, Reading Specialists, Music, PE, Library Media, Special Education, English Learners, Counselors
- Full-day kindergarten will also require hiring additional classified staff

Currently, the State Board requires that first-grade students receive a minimum of 810 hours of instruction annually. Do you think the same number of hours should apply to full-day kindergarten?

- There needs to be further research completed on kindergarten aged students and cognitive development to determine whether or how 810 hours in a 170-180 instructional calendar correlates to maximizing student learning.
- Perhaps re-defining the kindergarten experience by offering half-day four-year-old kindergarten AND half-day five-year-old kindergarten, as a significant research base has suggested the power of earlier intervention with four-year-olds
- We need to get away from seat time and focus our attention on standards and growth
- 810 hours is too long (9 respondents)
- Need more research (4 respondents)
- The same instructional hours would create problems with bus schedules (4 respondents)
- Hours should be the same as 1st grade (3 respondents)

B. Oregon Kindergarten Assessment Results (2013)

Kindergarten Readiness Assessment

Average Correct Responses by Subgroup

Subgroup		Approaches to Learning			Early Mathematics	Early Literacy	
		Self-Regulation	Interpersonal Skills	Total	Numbers & Operations	Letter Names	Letter Sounds
		(1-5)	(1-5)	(1-5)	(0-16)	(0-100)	(0-110)
State - All Students	Total	3.5	3.9	3.6	8.0	18.5	6.7
	Hispanic	3.4	3.9	3.6	6.8	9.8	2.9
	Female	3.7	4.1	3.8	8.0	19.2	7.1
	Male	3.3	3.7	3.5	8.0	17.8	6.4

