

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_

2/23

Date

## MINUTES OF THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Barbara Lawrence at 9:00 a.m. on February 4, 1998 in Room 123-S of the Capitol.

All members were present except: Senator Hensley  
Senator Oleen

Committee staff present: Ben Barrett, Legislative Research Department  
Carolyn Rampey, Legislative Research Department  
Avis Swartzman, Revisor of Statutes  
Jackie Breymeyer, Committee Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee: Bill Medley, South Central Kansas Education Service Center  
David L. Hough, Ph.D., Southwest Missouri State University  
Christopher Smith, Winfield  
Lorna Brown, Syracuse  
Michael O. Rooney, Ph.D. USD Piper  
Fred Kaufman, USD 489 Hays  
John Morton, Ph.D. Winfield

Others attending: See attached list

Chairperson Lawrence called the meeting to order and welcomed all conferees on:

### SB 498--full day kindergarten pupils counted as one pupil

Bill Medley, South Central Kansas Education Service Center, was first to address the bill. He stated that when it was suggested that SCKESC include increased funding of full day/every day kindergarten classes in the statement of legislative priorities, there was unanimous agreement. Research supports this would provide many educational benefits for children. Full day kindergarten should be optional for parents and school districts, but those districts that provide these programs should have increased funding. (Attachment 1)

David L. Hough, Ph.D., Southwest Missouri State University, appeared as a proponent of the bill and spoke of the longitudinal study of full-day kindergarten three years ago. The study indicated that the vast majority of children benefit from full-day kindergarten when compared to half-day and/or extended-day programs.

Dr. Hough stated that full-day kindergarten programs are much more than extended day care; they help children acquire first-grade readiness skills. He cited data from studies, research, reports and other data that, when analyzed, supports that children will be better served in full-day than in half-day or extended-day programs. He ended by thanking the Committee for the opportunity to present his research. (Attachment 2)

Christopher Smith, Winfield parent, spoke as a proponent of the bill, stating that the full-day kindergarten program has helped both his children achieve academic success. Another strength of the program is that it allows students to assimilate into and interact with the total school community. He believes that with an all day kindergarten program, kindergarten would seem less like day care of a baby sitter.

The last point Mr. Smith made was that he did not foresee any stamina problems as children go to preschool and babysitters and have to withstand the rigors of a full day. It is the parents responsibility to see the child gets the rest needed to maintain the energy a full school day. (Attachment 3)

Lorna Brown, former all-day kindergarten teacher, told of the all-day kindergarten in Syracuse, Kansas and the positive response it has been given by the community. The all-day format allows the children more time to interact with materials and people. With a full-day kindergarten program the teacher has only one set of children to plan for. A recent report came to the conclusion that full-day programs improve the degree to which at-risk students are prepared for first grade. She has personally seen the increased socialization the children have. Ms. Brown said the students get some type of nourishment about every two hours. The length of day becomes a plus once the child becomes accustomed to the classroom routine.

## CONTINUATION SHEET

MINUTES OF THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, ROOM 123-S-Statehouse, at 9:00 a.m. on February 4, 1998.

Ms. Brown ended her testimony by stating how family friendly it is for both the single parent family and families where both parents work outside the home. (Attachment 4)

Michael O. Rooney, Ph.D., USD 203, Piper, Kansas spoke in support of the bill, stating that the purpose of the bill is to provide the same funding for five and six year old students who attend school on an all-day basis as that provided for six and seven year old students. Kansas presently funds kindergarten students at one half the rate of first grade students. The national pattern is changing as almost half the students enrolled in kindergartens across the country are attending on a full-day basis. This past summer, Dr. Rooney assumed the superintendency of the Piper School District; his board is committed to early intervention and prevention of later learning problems and see all-day kindergarten as an investment in the students' success in school. In order to make the investment, other expenditures will not be able to be made. This is indicative of the kinds of choices which are made when there are various, worthy claims on limited financial resources.

Dr. Rooney gave three different perspectives on all-day kindergarten from three different school districts and ended his testimony by urging the Committee to consider the well-documented merits of all-day kindergarten and to provide more of the state's five and six year old students with this opportunity. (Attachment 5)

Fred Kaufman, USD 489 Hays, spoke for the bill, stating that his district started its first all day kindergarten in the fall of 1990. The initial reaction was lukewarm, but now as the success of the program has been seen, it is popular with parents and teachers. The district has a full 25% local option budget, and the 21 mills levied to fund this budget this year will be used in part to fund 13 all day kindergartens. (Attachment 6)

The last conferee and proponent of the bill was Dr. John Morton, Winfield. He distributed a packet that came off the INTERNET entitled "The Edutainment Catalog-Tons of Software" that is on line under 'Kid Source'. (Attachment 7)

Dr. John Morton stated that for the first time, the right end of the education spectrum is being observed. It is a sacrifice to fund an all day kindergarten program when funds are tight. It has been maintained in his district because it is a program that makes a difference. Many two-income parents would like to see their children in a structured educational environment for the full day than an up-for-grabs day care or baby sitter situation. There is a real opportunity here. He ended with a poem and stated that funding of full-day kindergarten would make children's dreams a reality.

As there were other conferees that did not get to testify because of time constraints, the Chairperson stated that she would schedule a meeting upon adjournment of the Senate, Friday, February 6.

The meeting was adjourned.

The next meeting is scheduled for February 5, 1998.

# SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE GUEST LIST

DATE: February 4, 1998

| NAME             | REPRESENTING                           |
|------------------|--|
| Gloria Timmer    | Division of Budget                     |
| Jerry Burch      | Supt USD 494 Syracuse                  |
| Fred Kaufman     | Supt. U.S.D. 489, Doyers               |
| Bill Melby       | SLK Educ Service Center                |
| Mike Korman      | Pipe USD 503                           |
| Jeri Yachler     | Southwestern College - Winfield        |
| Garece Sellenes  | USD 501 Topeka                         |
| Louise Brown     | Syracuse School District               |
| David Bork       | Southwest Missouri State Univ.         |
| John Motter      | Supt, Winfield Public Schools, USD 465 |
| Mark Richardson  | Principal USD 465 Winfield             |
| Job Milner       | Supt. Rose Hill Public Schools #594    |
| Kay Larsen       | Principal, USD 465, Winfield           |
| Shirley G. Olson | BOE USD 465 Winfield                   |
| Yvonne McMerlin  | USD 465 Winfield                       |
| Cheryl Smith     | 920 Ave Winfield, KS                   |
| Keith Angemyer   | Kansas Kindergarten Coalition          |
| Doug Bowman      | KS Interagency Coordinating Council    |
| Ken Ecker        | Supt, USD #489                         |

# SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE GUEST LIST

DATE: 2/4/98

| NAME                    | REPRESENTING          |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| Howard L. Shuster       | USD 437               |
| TERRY Schmitt           | USD 434               |
| SHERRY Smith            | USA                   |
| GERRY HENDERSON         | USA of KS             |
| Courtney Wyrill         | Intern                |
| Roger Teelker           | Senator Henley office |
| Diane Gjerstad          | USD 259               |
| Bob Vancrum             | USD 22/9              |
| Stacey Farmer           | KASB                  |
| Sue Chase               | KNEA                  |
| Jacque Dokes            | SPE                   |
| Donna Wellshear Johnson | KCSB                  |
| Robin Lehman            | Olathe USD 233        |
| Pat Lehman              | Olathe USD 233        |
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**STATEMENT IN SUPPORT OF SB498-Senate Education Committee  
February 4, 1998-For South Central Kansas Education Service Center**

Chairman Lawrence and Members of the Education Committee of the 1998 Kansas Legislature, I appreciate very much the opportunity to appear before you this morning in support of Senate Bill 498.

I am Bill Medley. I retired as a superintendent in 1994 and, since then, have volunteered my time to the members of the South Central Kansas Education Service Center as a legislative liaison. The SCKESC provides services to thirty- seven Unified School Districts ranging in size from Dexter and South Haven to Derby and Goddard.

Each year, the representatives of these USD's discuss possible legislation and develop a statement of legislative priorities. As you can expect, on many issues, members who represent USD's with such a diversity of enrollment will have to make some concessions to reach agreement. When it was suggested that SCKESC include increased funding of full day/every day kindergarten classes in the statement of legislative priorities, there was unanimous agreement.

Research supports that full day/every day kindergarten classes provide many educational benefits for children. We believe that full day/everyday kindergarten should be optional for UDS's and for parents, but that those USD's that provide these programs should have increased funding. We realize that there are many needs for funding of the schools of Kansas and we would support the " phasing in " of this funding over a two year period, if necessary.

We believe that Senate Bill 498 will provide significant opportunities for an enhanced education of children and we urge your approval.

We appreciate your time and your consideration of legislation that will improve the educational programs available for the children of Kansas.

Bill Medley, Legislative Liaison  
South Central Kansas Education Service Center  
PO Box 158  
Clearwater, KS 67026

Home Telephone 316-221 9180

*Senate Education  
Attachment 1  
2-4-98*

Testimony Presented

to

The Honorable Senator Barbara Lawrence  
and the  
Senate Education Committee

Regarding

Full-Day Kindergarten

Testimony Presented

by

David L. Hough, Ph.D.  
Southwest Missouri State University

Kansas State Capitol  
Topeka, Kansas  
February 4, 1998; 9:00 AM

*Senate Education  
Attachment 2  
2-4-98*

Senator Lawrence and the Senate Education Committee, it is indeed a pleasure for me to have this opportunity to speak to you regarding the research base associated with full-day kindergarten. Having recently completed a three-year longitudinal study of full-day kindergarten, perhaps the most comprehensive effort of its kind, our research team agrees that the real question is how to make full-day kindergarten programs available to every child.

Whenever I agreed to undertake a longitudinal study of kindergarten three years ago, I did so with an expectation and research hypothesis that some children would benefit from a full-day experience while others would not, depending on certain descriptive criteria. This hypothesis was not supported by any of the data collected; instead, the data indicated that the vast majority of children, even when divided into any number of subgroups identified for analysis, benefit from full-day kindergarten, when compared to half-day and/or extended-day programs.

My research team studied three cohorts of kindergarten students in the Springfield, Missouri, Public Schools: 230 students enrolled in full-day, 238 students enrolled in half-day, and 79 students enrolled in extended-day (i.e., after school programs of some 2-3 hours for students in schools identified as Chapter I sites). These 547 students were studied from the fall of 1994 through the spring of 1997, the end of their second-grade experience. Even though attrition was a major threat to internal validity (as students moved into and out of the district, making classroom demographics different from one year to the next) the data we analyzed overwhelmingly supported full-day kindergarten. In fact, we concluded in one of our six research briefs that the evidence was so compelling that we could say with a level of confidence that is rare in social science research that full-day kindergarten should be an opportunity afforded every child.

This recommendation led the Springfield Public Schools to initiate policies leading to the eventual expansion of full-day kindergarten from the six pilot schools we studied to all 39 elementary schools in that district. Following are our findings:

Full-day kindergarten programs are much more than extended day care; they are redesigned programs that devote more time to individual needs and personal exploration that help children acquire first-grade readiness skills. These program goals were found to promote academic learning measured and sustained at higher levels than for half-day students even throughout the second-grade.

Attendance was significantly higher among students who attended full-day than those who attended half- and/or extended-day. This trend continued into first- and second-grades. Fatigue was not a statistically significant factor; in fact, less than 8% of all full-day students studied expressed feelings or demonstrated behaviors associated with being tired as a result of the extra time at school. Often, as many as 5% of half-day students expressed feelings or demonstrated behaviors associated with being tired.

Ninety-nine percent of teachers and 98% of parents in our study favored full-day kindergarten over half- or extended-day. Teachers and parents who were opposed to full-day kindergarten generally cited intrusion of family time as the primary detriment. Some parents noted that they could not provide as many "enrichment" activities for their children in full-day programs. I found this to be a legitimate concern, albeit rare (perhaps among 20% of the 2% of parents opposed to full-day kindergarten). In many instances throughout the United States, similar groups of parents have voiced prejudice against full-day kindergarten, and for them, it is common to allow full-day kindergarten to be an option, not a mandate. As noted here, this usually represents a very small minority, given a choice between full- and half-day kindergarten programs.

While early childhood specialists consistently agree that full-day kindergarten should not be a rigorous academic experience designed to prematurely "push" students toward learning experiences for which they may not be prepared, full-day students consistently out-performed

their half- and extended-day counterparts on virtually every criterion used to assess learning in our study. This included standardized tests and controlled for the relatively low level of reliability often found in such examinations developed for young children. In short, while admitting early childhood standardized testing is inappropriate and acknowledging the many shortcomings of same, the data indicate significantly higher scores for students enrolled in full-day kindergarten than for students enrolled in either half- and/or extended-day kindergarten.

Finally, the research literature regarding early childhood education when taken in total and analyzed objectively by professionals, reveals many more positive reasons for implementing full-day kindergarten. Among these are: high quality professional instruction as opposed to less professionally supervised out of school care; more structured learning, exploring, and "play" environments; more supervision during interactions with peers; better "readiness" skill development, especially in the area of reading which is one of the most critical characteristics of future success in school; higher academic achievement, even though net gains usually become difficult to measure past grade three; expanded curriculum to meet individual student needs; and "leveling the playing field" for disadvantaged youth, including those identified as coming from low socio-economic status environments.

As I have mentioned, here, many of these same benefits were documented in my three-year study. That study incorporated a number of methodologies including over 280 hours of classroom observations; focus groups held separately with students, parents, and teachers; report card data; demographic data collected unobtrusively; parent and teacher survey questionnaires; learning readiness tests; and achievement tests. These data were subjected to a number of statistical tests including but not limited to analysis of variance, multiple regression, and structural equation modeling.

I must admit as a university researcher, a teacher, a parent, and as an administrator over a variety of educational professional development programs for teachers, I had not considered and was not convinced of the merits of full-day kindergarten until I studied the issue for three years, relying heavily upon the expertise of early childhood specialists. I am a research methodologist, not an expert kindergarten teacher. I know how to design studies, analyze data, and report findings; but I have no particular bias toward any kindergarten program. My comments to you this day are based on solid research from an objective point of view. If the results of my research had favored half-day kindergarten, I would be reporting those results to you. However, the data do not favor half-day; they favor full-day kindergarten. And the data are unequivocal, in my opinion. The children I studied were better served in full-day kindergarten than in half- or extended-day programs.

Thank you for the opportunity to present this research.

**Biographical Information:** Dr. David Hough received a Ph.D. in Educational Policy Analysis from the University of California, Riverside, in 1991. He is currently Associate Professor and Director of the Southwest Professional Development Center, Southwest Missouri State University, Springfield. Dr. Hough is also editor of *Research in Middle Level Education Quarterly*, published by the National Middle School Association, Columbus, Ohio. Dr. Hough has conducted a number of major research studies and program evaluations over the past ten years, twelve of which have been published nationally or internationally with more than sixty other publications, books, and papers presented to national and international professional education organizations.



Testimony before the Kansas Senate Education Committee  
Christopher Smith  
February 4, 1998

Senator Lawrence and the members of the Senate Education Committee:

I have been fortunate to have had both of my children enrolled in an all day Kindergarten program. I feel that this experience has helped both of my children achieve academic success in their educational careers to this point.

This may seem like an awfully broad statement, but I believe that the strengths of an all day Kindergarten program support my statement. The strengths of an all day Kindergarten program, as explained in this statement, far outweigh any weaknesses that may be inherent in such a program.

One of the strengths of an all day Kindergarten program is that it allows the student greater exposure to the curriculum. Arguably, if a student is exposed to the curriculum for a greater amount of time, he/she has a much better chance of learning a particular concept initially, retaining the concept, and applying the concept, once learned, to new areas of the curriculum. Along these same lines, there is more time for a teacher to engage in remedial teaching for those students who may be struggling with certain areas of the curriculum. Clearly, if a teacher has seven hours a day of contact with students, versus three and a half hours a day, there is more opportunity for individualized remediation.

Another strength of an all day Kindergarten program is that it allows students to assimilate into and interact with the total school community. As Kindergartners, my children would come home excited about school and full of stories when they were allowed to participate in activities, programs, assemblies, and/or events with the "older" kids. Also, at the elementary school my children attended, the school utilized a "peer tutoring" program where Fourth and Fifth Graders would come into the classroom to "tutor" the Kindergarten

*Senate Education  
Attachment 3  
2-4-98*

students in reading, math, and other subjects. Programs like this thrive in schools where the teacher has the time to devote to these activities. Again, if a teacher has seven hours in a school day, this type of program could be utilized on a greater scale.

A third strength of an all day Kindergarten program is that it allows the students to have more participation in school activities. It is no great revelation that schools structure their days around a seven hour schedule. Most "special" activities take place at or near the end of a school day. With the addition of an all day Kindergarten program, the Kindergarten students would be allowed to attend and participate in these "special" activities. This would help to build the school's sense of community.

In addition, with an all day Kindergarten program, Kindergarten would seem more like school and less like day care or a baby-sitter. If we begin our children's educational careers by treating Kindergarten as we treat all other levels of the school structure, we alleviate the stresses associated with the change from a half day of school to a full day of school between Kindergarten and First Grade. To illustrate this point, I am reminded of a story often told by my mother, a First Grade teacher:

"Joseph" was attending his first day of First Grade. As the clock approached 12:00 noon, he began to gather his papers and put on his coat. He got out of his desk, walked to the door, and stopped. The teacher asked him what he was doing. He said that he was getting ready to go home. The teacher then explained to Joseph that he was in First Grade now, and that in First Grade, the students attended school all day. At this, Joseph loudly replied, "Well, who the heck signed me up for this?!"

Lastly, I do not foresee any "stamina" problems related to an all day Kindergarten program. We send our kids to day care centers, we send them to

preschools and baby-sitters, without ever questioning the child's ability to withstand the rigors of a full day of such activity. As parents, it is our responsibility to make sure that our children get the rest needed to maintain the energy a full school day requires. At my own home, this included an early bedtime of 8:00 p.m., with a morning routine that began at 6:00 a.m. There were no problems with my children not being able to meet the minimal physical demands of an all day Kindergarten program.

I would respectfully ask this committee to vote to fund the all day Kindergarten programs throughout the State. It is the best thing to do for our children. It is the right thing to do for our children.

Thank you.

February 4, 1998

To: The Honorable Senator Barbara Lawrence and Honorable Senate Education Committee Members

From: Lorna Brown Early Childhood Specialist and Former All-Day Kindergarten Teacher

Re: SB 498 Funding for All-Day Kindergarten

### **All-Day Kindergarten in Syracuse, Kansas**

Syracuse has had all-day, everyday kindergarten since 1987. Our community has responded positively towards the early education program that serves our children. It is recognized that children learn best through direct experience. Young children view the world concretely, and as they mature, their view changes. What they know at any given point will depend on the first-hand experiences they have had. By interacting with their physical environment (indoor and outdoor) and their social environment (other children and adults), they continually broaden their frame of reference. The all-day format allows children more time to interact with materials and people. The teacher's role is to create an environment that invites children to observe, to be active, to make choices, and to experiment.

### **Not a Mini-First Grade**

Whether a child is in a half-day or full-day program, kindergarten should be developmentally appropriate. To turn kindergarten into "a mini-first grade" would not be developmentally appropriate. Instead, children need the opportunity to interact with other children and adults. They need materials they can manipulate, time to explore and play, as well as direct instruction.

A full day program allows the teacher and children more time to undertake creative and enriching experiences such as science, cooking, art, music, physical education, dramatics, and field trips. The pace of the program is comfortable and productive. An all-day program gives the teacher and children longer blocks of uninterrupted time for learning experiences.

### **Individualized Instruction**

All-day kindergartens have children with a wide variety of background experiences and abilities, just as every other program does. Half-day kindergarten teachers have a tremendous job of planning instruction for two separate classes. With a full-day program the teacher only has one set of children to plan for. By not having so many children, the teacher is able to get to know the students better. The teacher must have time to find out about their interests. If a student needs remedial help, a teacher in an all day program has time to give extra assistance. By having only one class it is easier to plan and teach to where the child is. This makes the program developmentally appropriate for the child and helps rather than harms the student.

### **Students at Risk**

A recent report entitled, "Effective Programs for Students at Risk: A Source book" (CREMS, 1989) looks at previous Center for Research on Elementary and Middle School findings on the effects of full-day kindergarten programs. The major conclusion of the review is that full-day programs improve the degree to which at-risk students are prepared for first grade. Some advantages that I have personally seen include the increased socialization that the children have. With their new friends, they have time to talk, listen, plan and explore. All of the children benefit from enriching experiences but for at-risk children it may be their first trip to the library or first try at cooking. This year of exploration gives them time to soak up information like a sponge. Another important component for at-risk children is the good nutrition that all-day kindergarten provides. Our school has a breakfast program as well as hot lunch. Add to this a mid-morning milk break and a nutritious afternoon snack and you find that the children are getting nourishment about every two hours. This helps little bodies grow and minds to focus.

### **ESL Students**

The ESL students who enter our program also benefit from an all-day program. A kindergarten classroom is full of items to label and concepts to learn. Language acquisition years are during this important time. In an all-day kindergarten classroom children have more time to hear language, and to talk about their observations and experiences as they explore their world.

*Senate Education  
Attachment 4  
2-4-98*

### **Length of Day**

Initially, many people worried that a full-day of school would be too long for five and six year old children. I recognize this as a valid concern. When school starts in August the children are tired at the end of the day but so are children in other grades, as well as the teachers. When anyone starts a new schedule, fatigue is part of the process of getting used to the program. My experience as both a teacher and parent has been that once the child becomes accustomed to the classroom routine the length of day is not a negative but instead a plus.

The days' activities are scheduled to alternate between active and restful activities. Recess periods, milk breaks, and nutritious snacks also help provide energy. We have a rest period scheduled everyday after lunch. At the beginning of the year it is a longer period of 30-40 minutes, but by Spring it is down to around 20 minutes. Most of the children do not sleep during this period but instead listen to music or do quiet activities such as coloring, puzzles, or looking at books.

### **Family Friendly**

All-day kindergarten is a plus for single parent families and families where both parents work outside the home. All-day kindergarten provides a structured and well balanced program for children. Children who attend school for just a half-day and then have to go to a daycare center or baby-sitter have many starts and stops in their day. As a parent of children who have experienced all-day kindergarten, I feel that my children have had a wonderful educational experience.

### **Conclusion**

I feel that the all-day kindergarten format has many benefits. The funding of all-day kindergarten is now an issue. I hope that you will thoughtfully consider these benefits as you make these decisions.

### **References**

Center for Research on Elementary and Middle Schools (1989) Effective programs for students at risk: A source book. Identifies programs that have improved the academic performance of at-risk students. Research from The John Hopkins University in Baltimore, with help from a grant by the U.S. Department of Education Research and Improvement.

**Testimony by Michael O. Rooney,  
Superintendent of Schools, Piper USD 203,  
Before the Senate Education Committee  
Concerning Senate Bill 498**

**February 4, 1998**

Senator Lawrence and members of the Senate Education Committee:

Thank you very much for this opportunity to address the committee regarding SB 498. The very clear and singular purpose of this bill is to provide the same funding for five and six year old students who attend school on an all-day basis as that provided for six and seven year old students. As you know, the State of Kansas presently funds kindergarten students at one half the rate that of first grade students. This may or may not be due to the fact that most kindergarten students have, in recent memory, attended school on a half-day basis.

However, this pattern is changing. Nationally, almost half the students enrolled in kindergartens across the United States now attend on a full-day basis. And this percentage is rising each school year.

The reason for this changing pattern is very much anchored in the body of research concerning the benefits of all-day kindergarten for five and six year olds. Overwhelmingly, this research indicates that all-day kindergarten students are better prepared to be successful in first grade and in subsequent grades; that they score higher on reading, mathematics, and language assessments; and that they are less likely to be retained in

*Senate Education  
Attachment 5  
2-4-98*

later grades. Parents whose students attend or attended all-day kindergarten programs are nearly unanimous in their support for such programs.

Personally, I bring three perspectives to this issue, as I have been involved in three different school districts over the past 13 years and each of the three districts has approached all-day kindergarten somewhat differently. While I was associate superintendent in Derby, I received authorization from the Board of Education to conduct a pilot study involving two elementary schools which served the same community population. Previously, each school had had half-day kindergarten programs; but one was allowed to pilot an all-day kindergarten while the other maintained its half-day program. Using a pre-test/post-test model, student progress was compared after only six to seven months. The results of this comparison were so dramatically in favor of the all-day kindergarten students that the board quickly authorized all-day kindergarten programs for all the district's Chapter 1 schools. Today, ten years later, those schools -- plus one more -- still provide all-day kindergarten.

Incidentally, the next year, the district went from four sections of what was called "transitional first grade" to only one section because the need to remediate kindergarten students was reduced so significantly. (It is somewhat ironic to note that the students in those transitional first grade classes were funded at the rate of 1.0 FTE though they would enter first grade the following year with the same students as were in kindergarten and were funded at half that rate.)

When I assumed the superintendency of the Rose Hill School District in 1992, all-day kindergarten was greatly desired by the community. But, with extreme General Fund budget limitations, implementing all-day kindergarten was financially impossible. However, this continues to be a topic of consideration and has wide-spread support in Rose Hill, should adequate funding become available.

This past summer, I assumed the superintendency of the Piper School District in Kansas City. Due to the interest of our primary school's site council last year, all-day kindergarten had already been studied for a full year and had been recommended last spring to the Board of Education for further consideration. On Tuesday evening last week, at a special meeting of the board, a pilot all-day kindergarten program was approved by the board; it will be implemented on an optional basis this coming August.

At present, our estimate is that about half of next year's kindergarten parents will choose the all-day program. If that proves to be the case, the additional cost to the district will be approximately \$40,500 in salaries, furniture, and materials. This figure could increase to \$63,000 if three-quarters of the parents choose the all-day option. Our board is committed to early intervention and to prevention of later learning problems; they see all-day kindergarten as an investment in our students' future success in school.

In order to make this investment, however, there are other expenditures which will not be able to be made. If the governor's school finance proposal is enacted in its most general terms, school districts of Piper's



size will receive a little less than 1% of additional budget authority for the coming year. For Piper, specifically, that will amount to a total of approximately \$60,000.

The investment which the Piper Board of Education has chosen to make in our kindergarten students will inevitably reduce the number of dollars available for teachers' and other staff members' salaries. It also restricts or even precludes the district's ability to provide staff members with the benefit of fully paid medical insurance. However, these are indicative of the kinds of choices which sometimes need to be made when there are various, worthy claims made on limited financial resources.

While those are three different perspectives on all-day kindergarten from three different school districts, they have a common theme. They all affirm the importance of all-day kindergarten as an opportunity for the youngest students in our state. All that is preventing more of these five and six year olds from having this opportunity is the funding problem.

I urge you to consider the well-documented merits of all-day kindergarten and to provide more of the state's five and six year old students with this opportunity. SB 498 is **permissive** legislation; it requires nothing of any school district or any parent. However, it opens wider the door to success for so many of the state's five and six year old students by providing them with the same level of funding as students just six months to one year their elders.

Thank you very much for your consideration in this matter.

# Testimony in Support of Senate Bill 498 for Senate Education Committee

Wednesday, February 4, 1998, 0900  
Fred Kaufman, Superintendent  
Unified School District No. 489, Hays

## All Day Kindergarten

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Unified School District No. 489 started its first all day kindergarten in the fall of 1990. The all day kindergarten was started at O'Loughlin Elementary. The school was new, and probably could properly be called an experimental school.

The initial reaction from teachers to all day kindergarten was at best lukewarm. The reaction from parents in the beginning was an enthusiastic endorsement.

By the fall of 1992-93 teachers had observed the success of all day kindergarten and approximately 3/4 of our students were in all day kindergarten. In the fall of 1993 virtually all of our kindergarten students were in all day kindergarten, and they remain in all day kindergartens today. The program is popular with parents and with teachers.

We recognize that there is a real danger in assuming cause and effect relationships from test scores. However, we do know that our students who have been in all day kindergarten have high test scores, and their scores remain high throughout their educational career. Whatever the cause, our scores are lower at the grade levels where students did not have the benefit of all day kindergarten. Perhaps most encouraging is the fact that on our Iowa Test of Basic Skills scores it is clear that, at those grade levels where we have had all day kindergarten, we have sharply fewer students scoring in the lower quartile of tested students.

If we want to teach more we must have more time. All day kindergarten increases K-12 instructional time by 1/2 year.

Unified School District No. 489 has a full 25% local option budget, and the 21 mills levied to fund this budget this year will be used in part to fund 13 all day kindergartens.

*Senate Education  
Attachment 6  
2-4-98*



## Full-Day or Half-Day Kindergarten?

Author: Dianne Rothenberg

### Credits

The majority of five-year-olds in the United States today are more accustomed to being away from home much of the day, more aware of the world around them, and more likely to spend much of the day with peers than were children of previous generations (Herman 1984). These factors, plus the demonstrated ability of children to cope with a longer day away from home, have created a demand in many communities for full-day kindergarten programs.

### Source

ERIC  
Clearinghouse on  
Elementary and  
Early Childhood  
Education, Urbana,  
Ill.

This Digest examines how changing family patterns have affected the full-day/half-day kindergarten issue, discusses why schools are currently considering alternative scheduling, and describes the advantages and disadvantages of each type of program.

[Back to the Table of Contents](#)

### Contents

#### **Changes In Family Patterns**

Among the changes that make full-day kindergarten attractive to many families are the following:

[Changes In Family Patterns](#)

- An increase in the number of working parents. The number of mothers of children under six who work outside the home increased 34 percent from 1970 to 1980 (Evans and Marken 1983). In 1984, 48 percent of children under six had mothers in the labor force (The National Commission on Working Women 1985)

[Schools and Full-Day Kindergarten](#)

- An increase in the number of children with preschool or day care experience. Since the mid-1970s most children have had some kind of preschool experience in Head Start, day care, private preschools, or in early childhood programs in the public schools. These experiences have provided children's first encounters with daily organized instructional and social activities before kindergarten (Herman 1984)

[Advantages of Full-Day Programs](#)

- An increase in the influence of television and family mobility. These two factors have produced 5-year-olds who seem more knowledgeable about their world and are apparently more ready for a full-day school experience than the children of previous generations

[Disadvantages of Full-Day Program](#)

- Renewed interest in academic preparation for later school success. Even when both do not work outside the home, parents are interested in the contribution of early childhood programs (including full-day kindergarten) to later school success.

[Advantages of Half-Day Programs](#)

[Disadvantages of Half-Day Programs](#)

[Conclusion](#)

[Back to the Table of Contents](#)

[For More Information](#)

#### **Schools and Full-Day Kindergarten**

School systems are interested in alternative scheduling partly for the reasons listed above and partly for reasons related to finances and school space availability. Among the reasons considered:

### Forums

- State school funding formulas. Some states provide more state aid for all-day students, although seldom enough to completely pay the extra costs of full-day kindergarten programs. Other states allow only half-day state aid. Funding formulas would have to change in order for these schools to benefit financially from all-day kindergarten

[Education and Kids](#)

### Related

*Senate Education  
Attachment 7  
2-4-98*

## Articles

[What Should Be Learned In Kindergarten?](#)

[Readiness For Kindergarten](#)

- Busing and other transportation costs. Eliminating the need for noon bus trips and crossing guards saves the school system money
- Availability of classroom space and teachers. As school enrollment declines, many districts have the extra classroom space and enough qualified teachers to offer full-day kindergarten

In addition, school districts are interested in responding to parents' requests for full-day kindergarten. In New York City, for example, parents offered this option were overwhelmingly in favor of the plan, initially creating waiting lists of thousands of children ("Woes Plague New York's All-Day Kindergartens" 1983).

[Back to the Table of Contents](#)

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## Advantages of Full-Day Programs

Herman (1984) believes full-day programs provide a relaxed, unhurried school day with more time for a variety of experiences, for screening and assessment opportunities, and for quality interaction between adults and students.

While the long-term effects of full-day kindergarten are inconclusive, Stinard's review of 10 research studies indicates that students taking part in full-day programs demonstrate strong academic advantages as much as a year later (1982). Stinard found that full-day students performed as well or better than half-day students in every study with no significant adverse effects.

A recent longitudinal study of full-day kindergarten in the Evansville-Vanderberg, Ohio, School District indicates that fourth graders maintained the academic advantage gained during full-day kindergarten (Humphrey 1983).

School districts that have planned a developmentally appropriate, non-academic curriculum with well-paced activities have reported few problems with full-day scheduling (Evans 1984; Stinard 1982).

[Back to the Table of Contents](#)

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## Disadvantages of Full-Day Programs

Critics point out that full-day programs are expensive because they require additional teaching staff and aides to maintain an acceptable child-adult ratio. These costs may or may not be offset by transportation savings and, in some cases, additional state aid.

Other requirements of full-day kindergarten, including the use of more classroom space, may be difficult to satisfy in districts where kindergarten or primary grade enrollment is increasing and school buildings have been sold.

In addition to citing added expense and space requirements as problems, opponents argue that full-day programs may become too academic, concentrating on basic skills before children are ready. In addition, they are concerned that one half-day of an all-day program may become merely child care.

[Back to the Table of Contents](#)

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## Advantages of Half-Day Programs

Many educators still prefer half-day, everyday kindergarten. They argue that a half-day program can provide high quality educational and social experience for young children while orienting them adequately to school.

Specifically, half-day programs are viewed as providing continuity and systematic experience with less probability of stress than full-day programs. Proponents of the half-day approach believe that, given the 5-year-old's attention span, level of interest, and home ties, a half day offers ample time in school and allows more time for the young child to play and interact with adults and other children in less-structured home or child care settings (Finkelstein 1983).

[Back to the Table of Contents](#)

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## Disadvantages of Half-Day Programs

Disadvantages of half-day programs include disrupting children midday to move them from one program to another and inconveniencing parents who must arrange transportation if busing is not provided by the school. Even if provided, schools may find the extra trip expensive. In addition, the half-day kindergartner may have little opportunity to benefit from activities such as assemblies or field trips.

[Back to the Table of Contents](#)

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## Conclusion

The length of the school day is only one dimension of the kindergarten experience. Other important issues include the nature of the kindergarten curriculum and the quality of teaching. In general, research suggests that, as long as the curriculum is developmentally appropriate and intellectually stimulating, either full- or half-day scheduling can provide an adequate introduction to school.

[Back to the Table of Contents](#)

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This Digest was prepared for the ERIC Clearinghouse on Elementary and Early Childhood Education, 1984.

[Back to the Table of Contents](#)

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[Back to the Top](#)

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## Top 10 Signs of a Good Kindergarten Classroom

### Source

NAEYC

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[Encouraging Creativity in Early Childhood Classrooms](#)

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Kindergarten is a time for children to expand their love of learning, their general knowledge, their ability to get along with others, and their interest in reaching out to the world. While kindergarten marks an important transition from preschool to the primary grades, it is important that children still get to be children -- getting kindergarteners ready for elementary school does not mean substituting academics for play time, forcing children to master first grade "skills," or relying on standardized tests to assess children's success. Kindergarten "curriculum" actually includes such events as snack time, recess, and individual and group activities in addition to those activities we think of as traditionally educational. Developmentally appropriate kindergarten classrooms encourage the growth of children's self-esteem, their cultural identities, their independence and their individual strengths. Kindergarten children will continue to develop control of their own behavior through the guidance and support of warm, caring adults. At this stage, children are already eager to learn and possess an innate curiosity. Teachers with a strong background in early childhood education and child development can best provide for children what they need to grow physically, emotionally, and intellectually. Here are 10 signs of a good kindergarten classroom:

1. Children are playing and working with materials or other children. They are not aimlessly wandering or forced to sit quietly for long periods of time.
2. Children have access to various activities throughout the day, such as block building, pretend play, picture books, paints and other art materials, and table toys such as legos, pegboards, and puzzles. Children are not all doing the same things at the same time.
3. Teachers work with individual children, small groups, and the whole group at different times during the day. They do not spend time only with the entire group.
4. The classroom is decorated with children's original artwork, their own writing with invented spelling, and dictated stories.
5. Children learn numbers and the alphabet in the context of their everyday experiences. Exploring the natural world of plants and animals, cooking, taking attendance, and serving snack are all meaningful activities to children.
6. Children work on projects and have long periods of time (at least one hour) to play and explore. Filling out worksheets should not be their primary activity.
7. Children have an opportunity to play outside every day that weather permits. This play is never sacrificed for more instructional time.
8. Teachers read books to children throughout the day, not just at group story time.
9. Curriculum is adapted for those who are ahead as well as those who need additional help. Because children differ in experiences and background, they do not learn the same things at the same time in the same way.
10. Children and their parents look forward to school. Parents feel safe sending their child to kindergarten. Children are happy; they are not crying or regularly sick.

Individual kindergarten classrooms will vary, and curriculum will vary according to the interests and backgrounds of the children. But all developmentally appropriate kindergarten classrooms will have one thing in common: the focus will be on the development of the child as a whole.

## Additional Resources:

Good teaching practices for older preschoolers and kindergarteners. 1990. Washington, DC: NAEYC #522. 50¢ each/100 for \$10. Spanish edition, Prácticas de enseñanza apropiadas para niños mayores en preescolar y kinder, #523.

Peck, J., G. McCaig & M.E. Sapp, Kindergarten policies: What is best for children? Washington, DC: NAEYC. #141/\$6.

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[Back to the Top](#)

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## What Should Parents Know About Full-Day Kindergarten?

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Increases in the number of single-parent and dual-employment households and the fact that most children spend a large part of the day away from home signal significant changes in American family life compared to a generation ago. These changes in American society and in education over the last 20 years have contributed to the popularity of all-day, every-day kindergarten programs in many communities. Studies show that parents favor a full-day program that reduces the number of transitions kindergartners experience in a typical day. Research also suggests that many children benefit academically and socially during the primary years from participation in full-day, compared to half-day, kindergarten programs. This brochure discusses the trend in full-day kindergarten and provides an overview of full-day versus half-day programs.

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### Source

Office of Educational Research and Improvement

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### **Why Is There a Trend Toward Full-Day Kindergarten?**

Families who find it difficult to schedule kindergarten and a child care program during the day are especially attracted to a full-day program. Full-day kindergarten is also popular with schools because it eliminates the need to provide buses and crossing guards at midday. In many areas, both public and private preschool programs offer full-day kindergarten. Still, some educators, policymakers, and parents prefer half-day, every-day kindergarten. They argue that a half-day program is less expensive and provides an adequate educational and social experience for young children while orienting them to school, especially if they have attended preschool. Many districts thus offer both half-day and full-day kindergarten programs when possible, but the trend is clearly in the direction of full-day kindergarten.

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### Contents

[Why Is There a Trend Toward Full-Day Kindergarten?](#)

[What Does the Research Show?](#)

[What Makes a Full-Day Program Effective?](#)

[Conclusion](#)

[Where Can I Get More Information?](#)

[Sources](#)

---

### Forums

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---

[Back to the Table of Contents](#)

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### **What Does the Research Show?**

Research studies confirm that attendance in full-day kindergarten results in academic and social benefits for students, at least in the primary grades. Early studies seemed to offer little reliable evidence one way or the other because they used small samples or unique populations, failed to use rigorous standards, or concentrated almost exclusively on academic outcomes (as opposed to children's attitudes toward school, for example).

Some researchers have found a broad range of effects, including a positive relationship between participation in full-day kindergarten and later school performance. After comparing similar half-day and full-day programs in a statewide longitudinal study, Cryan and others (1992) found that full-day kindergartners exhibited more independent learning, classroom involvement, productivity in work with peers, and reflectiveness than half-day kindergartners. They were also more likely to approach the teacher, and they expressed less withdrawal, anger, shyness, and blaming behavior than half-day kindergartners. In general, children in full-day programs exhibited more positive behaviors than did pupils in half-day or alternate-day programs. Similar results have been found in other studies as well.

[Back to the Table of Contents](#)

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### Related Articles

[What Should Be Learned In Kindergarten?](#)

### **What Makes a Full-Day Program Effective?**

Full-day kindergarten allows children and teachers time to explore topics indepth, reduces the ratio of transition time to class time, provides for greater continuity of day-to-day activities, and provides an

7-7

Readiness For  
Kindergarten

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environment that favors a child-centered, developmentally appropriate approach.

Many experts feel that seat work, worksheets, and early instruction in reading or other academic subjects are largely inappropriate in kindergarten. By contrast, developmentally appropriate, child-centered all-day kindergarten programs:

- Integrate new learning with past experiences through project work and through mixed-ability and mixed-age grouping in an unhurried setting.
- Involve children in firsthand experience and informal interaction with objects, other children, and adults.
- Emphasize language development and appropriate preliteracy experiences.
- Work with parents to share information about their children, build an understanding of parent and teacher roles, emphasize reading to children in school and at home, and set the stage for later parent-teacher partnerships.
- Offer a balance of small group, large group, and individual activities.
- Assess students' progress through close teacher observation and systematic collection and examination of students' work, often using portfolios.
- Develop children's social skills, including conflict resolution strategies.

[Back to the Table of Contents](#)

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## Conclusion

Observers of trends in kindergarten scheduling argue that changing the length of the kindergarten day is not as important as making sure that all kindergartners are provided with developmentally and individually appropriate learning environments, regardless of whether these programs are full day or half day.

Recent research supports the effectiveness of full-day kindergarten programs that are developmentally appropriate, indicating that they have academic and behavioral benefits for young children. In full-day programs, less hectic instruction geared to student needs and appropriate assessment of student progress contributes to the effectiveness of the program. While these can also be characteristics of high-quality half-day programs, many children seem to benefit academically and behaviorally from all-day kindergarten. Of course, the length of the school day is only one dimension of the kindergarten experience. Other important issues include the nature of the kindergarten curriculum and the quality of teaching.

[Back to the Table of Contents](#)

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## Where Can I Get More Information?

The following organizations offer information on the topic of kindergarten, as well as other information about early childhood education:

**ERIC Clearinghouse on Elementary  
and Early Childhood Education**  
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[Back to the Table of Contents](#)

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[Back to the Table of Contents](#)

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[Back to the Top](#)

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7-10