

Extended/Full Day Kindergarten Procedures

In alliance with the “Ready for School” initiative for young children in Oregon, the Board supports an extended/full day program which includes two elements: promoting full-day kindergarten for Title 1 schools, and enhancing early childhood content standards and observational assessments.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide opportunities to students to allow them to participate in a extended/full day kindergarten experience. This policy allows the district to design extended/full-day kindergarten programs by utilizing Title 1 funds, grants, donations and parent tuition.

Full-day kindergarten programs will increase learning time for young students by lengthening the time that students attend school, in comparison the traditional half-day program. The district will select to offer extended or full-day kindergarten for a variety of reasons and may extend that time in various ways:

1. Extend learning time by a desired increment each day for identified students attending a half-day program;
2. Extend learning time by increasing days for identified students attending an all-day-every-other-day model;
3. Extend the school day for all or some kindergarten students to a length consistent with other primary grades;
4. Extend the school day five days a week;
5. Extend the school day four days a week;
6. Extend the school day four and one-half days per week;
7. Extend the school day half-days September through December; full-days January to June.

The district will use any of the following methods for funding full day kindergarten.

1. General funds;
2. Blending federal and general funds or special grants;
3. Special grants (community, state, federal)Tuition charges (with scholarships available);

4. Funds saved from reduced transportation costs;
5. Tuition based on community rates for child care;
6. Tuition on a sliding scale for the non required half day;

In order to contain costs the district may:

1. Offer half day programs first semester and increase to full day second semester;
2. Increase/extend the time less than a half day (one hour or so);
3. Offer volunteer work to parents who cannot afford tuition;
4. Offer fewer free full-day programs (not in all schools);
5. Focus on special areas where extra funding may be available (e.g. English Language Learners, low performance schools);
6. Offer both full day and half day programs.

The district will determine a selection process that may include:

1. First come, first served in each residence area (Ferndale and Other);
2. Low achieving students.

Instructional Focus

The district's instructional focus will be a combination of developmental and academic experiences for students with an emphasis on projects, centers, and socialization as well as reading, writing and mathematics. The focus may also be literacy, language development with specialized subjects such as physical education and music added to the curriculum.

The district's goal is that 90 percent of the students who attend the program will meet grade level benchmarks on the Oregon statewide assessments.

Implementation Plan

The district will include planning and development time for program design since research is clear that extended time needs to be quality time in order to impact student achievement. Articulated curriculum, schedules, and instructional approaches will make effective use of any additional time. Decisions about curriculum and curriculum models should be based on the goals of the existing district kindergarten programs and any additional goals identified for an extended-day or full-day program. The district's reason for implementing a full-day kindergarten is to provide more in-depth instruction in content areas, specifically language development, literacy, and math. Another reason is to allow time for a broadened curriculum, incorporating other content areas such as science, social science, and the arts, all of which can

further support language development, literacy, and math learning goals. The longer day allows the teacher to plan more intentionally for teaching students social skills such as problem solving and group process. In addition, other specialists within the school may be available to the kindergarten class.

Kindergarten teachers may need support (professional development) in transitioning to an extended-day or a full-day program. Planning time, scheduling, grouping, use of instructional assistants or volunteers, and time for specialists are all examples of program elements that will significantly change when implementing the new program. Offering professional development and opportunities to visit existing programs might be considerations in supporting the kindergarten staff.

Attendance

Current attendance policy for kindergarten will be consistent with the policy for the rest of the school.

Criteria

The program model will have clearly stated desired outcomes which assure program focus and direction. The determination of elements to measure may include such things as:

1. Student performance (test scores, work samples, readiness benchmarks)
2. Student behavior (socialization skills, attendance)
3. Program impact (referrals to special education and other support programs).

The district realizes the impact of a full-day or extended-day kindergarten program on statewide assessment results will not be apparent for several years. Schools may want to take this into consideration and review data, plan strategically, and apply research to any funding and program decisions as a way to balance long range and short-term goals and strategies.