

AMSD Position on Full-Day Kindergarten

The Association of Metropolitan School Districts supports state funding for full-day kindergarten for all of Minnesota's children. In addition, the state should provide financial assistance to school districts lacking the necessary classroom space to implement full day kindergarten.

AMSD BELIEVES

- All children in Minnesota should have access to a high quality, full-day kindergarten program in their local school district.
- Full-day kindergarten has been shown to improve student achievement across all racial and ethnic groups.
- Full-day kindergarten reduces the need for more expensive intervention services.
- The state should either fund full-day kindergarten or grant levy authority to locally elected school boards so they can implement full-day kindergarten, and meet the need for additional space for this instruction.

Several recent studies have shown significant academic benefits for full-day kindergarten students compared to their half-day peers:

- A 2005 U of M study found that full-day kindergarten students in District 191 (Burnsville/ Savage/ Eagan) had higher scores than their half-day counterparts in all three measures monitored. The three measures used were recognition of upper case letters, recognition of lower case letters, and counting to 100.
- A 2005 study by researchers at the University of Michigan examined 8,000 children in public kindergarten programs across the country. The study found that full-day kindergarteners learn more over the course of the year than their half-day counterparts – the equivalent of about an extra month of schooling.
- A 2002 study by the Minneapolis Public Schools showed significant gains in fundamental reading skills for students of all ethnic backgrounds enrolled in full-day kindergarten compared to their half-day peers. The study also showed the advantages of providing intervention along with full-day kindergarten to students from diverse backgrounds.
- A 2002 study of Philadelphia school children showed that full-day kindergarten students were twice as likely to reach third and fourth grade on time compared to students with no kindergarten

experience and 26 percent more likely than students who graduated from half-day programs.

- The study calculated that the higher retention rates for Philadelphia's full-day classes reduced the cost of educating these students by 19 percent. The researchers calculated that in 1999 dollars the higher retention rates saved approximately \$2 million for every 1,000 kindergartners.
- The full-day graduates were more likely to score better on standardized reading and math tests, receive better grades, and attend school more often than students who hadn't attended full-day kindergarten programs.
- A 2001 study conducted by the Montgomery County Maryland Public Schools showed significant improvement in students enrolled in full-day kindergarten on four different measures of early childhood reading skills compared to their half-day peers. The areas measured by the study were letter knowledge, knowledge about print concepts, sight word knowledge, and knowledge of letter-sound relationships. The study showed that full-day kindergarten benefits students regardless of their risk factors.



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