

# MICROFILM DIVIDER

OMB/RECORDS MANAGEMENT DIVISION  
SFN 2053 (2/85) 5M



ROLL NUMBER

DESCRIPTION

1230

2005 HOUSE EDUCATION

HB 1230

2005 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

BILL/RESOLUTION NO. **HB 1230**

House Education Committee

Conference Committee

Hearing Date **24 January 05**

Tape Number	Side A	Side B	Meter #
1	x		0 - 1254
2	x		4400 - 5500

Committee Clerk Signature



Minutes:

**Chairman Kelsch opened the hearing on HB 1230. All committee members were present.**

**Rep. Mueller, District 24,** introduced the bill he sponsored. The growing importance of kindergarten has taken on a different atmosphere than the kindergarten of 20 years ago. They are accountable for more than they have been before. Research shows that it is exceedingly important. We need to make it available to every kindergarten-aged student in our state who would choose to be involved in it. That's what the bill does require that kindergarten be made available through a parent's request of their local school district. Forty-two other states require kindergarten. ND is one of eight that does not. We ought not be on that list. This is a companion to other kindergarten bills that we will be hearing and talking about after this one. This bill doesn't require the child to be in kindergarten but it does require that kindergarten be offered if requested.

**Rep. Solberg:** There's a number of school district in the remote areas of our state that do not have high school, would this bill require those school districts without high school have kindergarten?

**Rep. Mueller:** Yes, the fact that you don't have a high school has no impact on what this bill would do.

**Rep. Hunsakor:** Are there any schools in ND that do not offer kindergarten? How many?

**Rep. Mueller:** Yes, there are. Two. There are 8 in total, but 6 of those are non-public schools and this bill does not speak to them.

**Tricia Lang, assistant director of School Approval and Accreditation** testified in favor of HB 1230. **(Testimony attached.)**

**Rep. Meier.** Are there any school districts paying tuition to other districts for kindergarten students to attend.

**Lang:** Yes, there are two schools not organized for kindergarten who pay other districts to educate their kindergartners.

**Barb Arnold Tengesdal, Voices for ND Children,** testified on behalf of the bill. **(Testimony attached.)** She later provided some research data showing the benefits of kindergarten. **(Two items attached to her testimony.)**

**Gloria Lokken, president of NDEA,** testified in support of the bill.

**Chairman Kelsch** closed the hearing on HB 1230.

At 11:05 a.m. **Chairman Kelsch** again opened **HB 1230.**

**Rep. Herbel:** How does this tie in with other bills we have on kindergarten?

**Chairman Kelsch:** Do we want to tie them all together or should we vote on this separately.

Page 3  
House Education Committee  
Bill/Resolution Number **HB 1230**  
Hearing Date **24 Jan 05**

**Rep. Haas:** This simply assures that kindergarten be made available.

**Rep. Sitte:** From the testimony we have heard, none are denied. This bill is superficial.

**Rep. Hunskor:** I move **Do Pass**.

**Rep. Norland:** I second.

**The question was called:**

**Yes:**   13        **No:**   1        **Absent:**   0        **The motion passed.**

**Rep. Hunskor will carry the bill.**

2005 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

BILL/RESOLUTION NO. **HB 1230**

House Education Committee

Conference Committee

Hearing Date **14 March 2005**

Tape Number	Side A	Side B	Meter #
2	X		8 - 350

Committee Clerk Signature



Minutes:

**Chairman Kelsch opened discussion of HB 1230, relating to full day kindergarten.** The bill was amended by the Senate and she read the amendment to the Committee. The Senate added a new section 2 asking for each school district to develop and file with the superintendent of public instruction a plan to provide a full-day kindergarten program beginning with the 2007-08 school year. **(Attached.)**

**Rep. Sitte:** This "shall develop a plan" would be the opt out that Rep. Mueller talked about.

We don't make decisions on funding until April of 2007. They don't know if they have funding for their kindergarten. It will probably be one of the last decisions made next session and so they have gone through all this work and in many cases if they put a lot of time and effort into the plan they are going to be really upset with us for not funding it. Who knows what's going to be happening down the road. It's like committing a future session against something we have no idea about. If next session all day kindergarten gets voted in, I'm sure it will implemented with

maybe a year's lead time. We have talked to Paul Johnson. We do not have space in Bismarck. It is an enormous cost to the taxpayers of Bismarck to come up with all that classroom space that we don't have. We're going to have to add a bunch of portables and do a whole lot of shifting that will increase our class sizes. I think it is the wrong way to do it.

**Rep. Hawken:** In response to that, I think their plans would actually be what Rep. Mueller and I suggested that they are going to deal with at this point in time their "at risk" students. I don't think it has to be because there are going to be parents who don't choose to have all day kindergarten. It's a plan and I do think we need to move forward on something. We suggested they do a pilot so we would have research based data on how it works. This was what they came up with. This was not our suggestion and since there may not be funding all we are saying is "would you please look at this and how it fits your district?"

**Rep. Mueller:** In reference to the pilot that Rep. Hawken talked about in presentation of the bill on the Senate side, maybe it's the precursor to that. Maybe from that information they pick out five places. The pilot thing is certainly not off the table and may be facilitated by this.

**Rep. Sitte:** Bismarck does have kindergarten in a couple of schools that were at high risk. Fargo has some. Grand Forks has all of theirs. We have enough schools that if you want to do a pilot study, do a pilot study of those who currently have it. I will separate debate this on the floor if I have to. I think there are going to be enough people on the floor who will be very upset with this.

**Chairman Kelsch:** You can't separate it because it's been amended in the Senate, it's not an amendment from the house. You either concur or not concur. It's just that they (districts) have to study it and present a plan. Nothing different from that. We see it all the time. We see bills

Page 3

House Education Committee

Bill/Resolution Number **HB 1230**

Hearing Date **14 Mar 05**

that are killed that are resurrected. We don't have to concur. We can put it into a conference committee. I was more or less concerned about the bill sponsors and their comfort. You can think about it I don't have to do anything with it right now but I just wanted everyone to be aware of what the bill read. It's a study for school districts to do.

Discussion closed.



Date: *24 Jan*  
Roll Call Vote #:

**2005 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE ROLL CALL VOTES**  
**BILL/RESOLUTION NO. *1230***

House **Education Committee**

Check here for Conference Committee

Legislative Council Amendment Number

Action Taken

*No Pass*

Motion Made By

*Hunskor*

Seconded By

*Norland*

Representatives	Yes	No	Representatives	Yes	No
Chairman Kelsch	✓		Rep. Hanson	✓	
Vice Chairman Johnson	✓		Rep. Hunskor	✓	
Rep. Haas	✓		Rep. Mueller	✓	
Rep. Hawken	✓		Rep. Solberg	✓	
Rep. Herbel	✓				
Rep. Horter	✓				
Rep. Meier	✓				
Rep. Norland	✓				
Rep. Sitte					
Rep. Wall	✓	✓			

Total (Yes) *13* No *1*

Absent *0*

Floor Assignment

*Hunskor*

If the vote is on an amendment, briefly indicate intent:

**REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE (410)**  
January 24, 2005 12:53 p.m.

**Module No: HR-15-0915**  
**Carrier: Hunskor**  
**Insert LC: . Title: .**

**REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE**

**HB 1230: Education Committee (Rep. R. Kelsch, Chairman) recommends DO PASS**  
**(13 YEAS, 1 NAY, 0 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING). HB 1230 was placed on the**  
**Eleventh order on the calendar.**

2005 SENATE EDUCATION

HB 1230

2005 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

BILL/RESOLUTION NO. HB 1230

Senate Education Committee

Conference Committee

Hearing Date 03/01/05

Tape Number	Side A	Side B	Meter #
1	x		4860-end
1		x	0-760
2	x		50-1479

Committee Clerk Signature

*Patty Wilkens*

**Minutes: Relating to the provision of kindergarten programs.**

**Senator Freborg :** Call the meeting to order on **HB 1230**

**Testimony in favor:**

**Representative Mueller :** Introduced the bill, He indicated that Kindergarten is a German word for Children's' Garden. I have not taught kindergarten, I was a high school teacher for a while but I have four grandchildren under the age of four. I can very well imagine what it is like for a teacher or parent or for that kindergarten student to begin their first time of counting to 100. I think this is a wonderful time in a child's life. Every young person I firmly believe deserves the opportunity to experience that kind of thing, that has to do with learning and becoming a student. The information is talking about the growing importance of early childhood development and education. Research indicates very plainly that it works it is the right thing to be doing for our young people. This bill tells all in ND that kindergarten is available this is simply what this does, we do not require that they be in kindergarten the parents still have the right to choose. It does

say that every school in ND will make Kindergarten available. If a parent request for kindergarten they would have to provide it, when they put it in a written request. This is important from the standpoint of NCLB, we are somewhat obligated to fall through with, we don't want to leave any of these children behind.

**Senator Freborg :** How many schools do we have now that are not offering Kindergarten?

**Rep Mueller :** We have approximately 10 only two of them are public schools. This bill would not require the private schools to have kindergarten.

**Senator Freborg :** Should we possible consider mandating kindergarten?

**Rep. Mueller :** That is worthy of further discussion.

**Representative Hawken :** District 46 of Fargo, is in support of this bill as well. I was one of the first persons that was able to go to kindergarten in ND. Said if parents were smart enough they enrolled you. We are getting HB 1234 e-mail's some don't believe it even exists that was the bill that would have funded all the kindergarten for those schools that would go that route. The fiscal note on it was significant, I believe it is correct, we have faith in our schools and I feel that the schools districts that have taken it upon themselves to it with their at risk students have seen an amazing outcome and their ability to go into school and be successful, saves a lot of money down the line. If this committee in deliberation want to consider doing a pilot program, so as we move into the next session, we might have a little more ammunition on why all the kindergarten is very good, we know ½ day is.

**Tricia Lang :** Assistant Director of DPI, 98 % of the children in the nation are attending at least ½ day kindergarten program. She indicated how important early education is, DPI would like to

support and provide kindergarten to all ND students, to provide funding for at least a ½ day program.

**Barb Arnold Tengesdal** : Voices for ND Children, the public policy and collaborative between ND Head start association, the ND association for the education of young children, child care resource referral, children's caucus and other groups that support children birth through age 8. Bill in simplest form gives parents the right to have a public kindergarten available for their child. Time to look at accountability and student readiness and achievement we are challenged to find ways to deliver an educational program that help children learn in a developmentally appropriate way, and also in culturally sensitive way. Needing parent participation as a part of that, we believe parents want to give their child the best education start available and that the state should see that there are economic benefits and educational benefits by offering an early childhood education to all children in ND. Research on the benefit of early childhood development in education are numerous and I did give you several pieces of background information, that we have seen the positive gain especially with children that have some disparities that are part of their life's whether it is socioeconomic or whether it be cultural. They have significant gain in children that have some hurdles in their life to move through. Gave members information on full day kindergarten, explained the huge gain of the test scores of children. Forty yr. study of following a group of children, who were in a high quality program, the benefits have been amazing, academic gain, they have committed fewer crimes, they hold more jobs, as they graduated from high school, 40 yr. study shows that they actually own homes and have higher income potential than those children who didn't have those kinds of experiences. Nationwide the benefits of starting children in kindergarten are understood by parents, they want

the opportunity to have that available to them and the growth in the % of five yr. olds that were enrolled in full day kindergarten grew 12 % from 1970- to 55 % in 1997 in one study. Parents want it and they are using it. A question from the House is will this affect the childcare industry? In GF and Fargo yes they did see those issues affecting the childcare community, but found that they began to offer different types of programs, more enrichment programs when schools were off of school, they just adjusted their program so they wouldn't having to deal with the every other day or the ½ day. We don't think this will negatively affect us, this is a vision in long term for our state.

**Senator Taylor :** If you were to design a pilot program that could take place over the next two years, what areas or population, what do you think would do the most good in terms of showing us some of the gains?

**Barb Tengesdal :** School districts can decide that piece, there are some school districts who are already doing that. They are using reading first grants, other kinds of grants, let them have the opportunity, maybe provide some support but I think some issues are space. It will be phased in as they can figure that out for their own districts, so I would almost like to see it be self selected not a certain area not a certain population but how a school district can support those pieces. Sometimes it will require them to bring in more community support, if it is space issues maybe it won't be district property, maybe they would link with a head start program. Maybe a church related program or a church has space to help start it until they figure that out, I'd like to see the districts have the option.

**Nancy Sand** : NDEA, are in support of this as well, w/kids who progress through the education system, I think school districts recognize that. The kids need a good sound beginning in their educational lives.

**No Opposition**

**Closed the hearing on HB 1230**

**Senator Freborg opened hearing on HB 1230**

**Senator Flakoll** : I have amendments.

**Senator Freborg** : OK

**Senator Flakoll** : The crux of this was I thought we had, HB 1234 that dealt with allowable language for a full day kindergarten, for payments from the state of ND, the truth of the matter is if that bill were to pass there are a lot of schools that wouldn't be able to offer it this fall b/c they aren't ramped up and ready to roll. Concerns in terms of classroom space, hiring, the whole like, even if we were to supply some money to make that happen. The genesis of this amendment wherein to do their strategic planning for schools to put thought process in plan together, in terms of a variety of components whether it is classroom consideration they need, teacher recruitment, transportation, optional shared learning actives, so they have a plan in place that they can that in the event we come back next session and have the money. My only concern with this is that originally when I talked to the LC about drafting we looked at maybe Jan, 1, 2007, is that a better date than the 2009 school yr. too far out. Should it be 2007, should they have the plan in place, there will be a debate then whether it should be optional or mandatory, maybe the first two yrs.



optional and then mandatory after that. It says that the board shall put a plan together by July 1, 2007.

**Senator Freborg :** Four years out?

**Senator Flakoll :** Yes, if you think that is too far out we may want to have something into place essentially about two yrs from now.

**Senator Freborg :** Four years is a long way out if it is a program that we think should be established. I know that we need to give them time but not sure it needs to be four yrs. and if we pass this we will fund it. I would not agree that it should be optional b/c we could get into trouble. If we pay it and make it mandatory, they'll do it.

**Senator Flakoll :** It's all about the plan, whether it be Jan. 1 or July 1st. I think there are some who have this in place or in mind right now. While these were drafted, I would lean more towards, b/c if we are going to have discussions next session they will have already submitted their plans for how they can carry out that program.

**Senator Freborg :** When would the plan be implemented?

**Senator Flakoll :** I think we would be better served of having a night to think on this if we would look at this from changing it from 2009 to 2007.

**Senator Freborg :** Would you want to move the plan up to 2006?

**Senator Flakoll :** Those who are not doing it now, is b/c money, that is my guess. When we go to the all day kindergarten, mandatory that the state would be participating it financially.

**Senator Freborg :** Do you believe that we would have to appropriate the money in the 07 session?

**Senator Flakoll :** This would be after the deadline for the plan, if we are looking at Jan 1st 2007.

**Senator Freborg :** If we are looking at July 1 st 2007 for the plan and it would be in effect for that school yr. that is about a month later.

**Senator Flakoll :** I am pass that, we are looking at Jan, 1st 2007. I will look at re amending, with earliest possible date, of the fall of 07.

**Senator Freborg :** Would you also amend the 09-10 to the 07-08.?

**Senator Flakoll :** That would be my intentions.

**Senator Flakoll** moved to make a motion on the corrected amendment.

**Senator G. Lee** second the motion.

**Senator G. Lee :** Would this be for all schools?

**Senator Flakoll :** Yes, so that every district would have to have a plan in place. Not mandatory for those who attend but to provide it for them.

**Senator G. Lee :** All students?

**Senator Flakoll :** Yes.

**Senator G. Lee :** Just because they have a plan doesn't mean that they will have the funding there, will the timing be right for the \$'s to be there to provide those kinds so services? We are telling them they will have to do it but they don't have the space, I am concerned about the timing.

**Senator Freborg :** They have two yrs. to implement the plan. Do you think that the districts won't know.

**Senator G. Lee :** This is just showing a plan, doesn't have funding with it. What if they only have 6 months to put a building up?

**Senator Freborg :** That's true.

**Senator Flakoll :** That's under the assumption that we are mandating if that happens the first yr. of that biennium. Just to put the plan into place so they can be prepared. If we want to have good discussion on it during 2007 session, what will we base that discussion on, we don't know their needs until they put it together it will be better discussion.

**Senator Erbele :** There are only four schools that aren't offering at least ½ day kindergarten, are there some offering full day now?

**Senator Freborg :** Oh yes, quite a few.

**Senator Flakoll :** This doesn't encroach on whether the parents want their children to go or not. That is not in this bill, that is something that would have to take place in 2007.

**Senator Freborg :** Do we want that in 2007. Discussion in 2007 and then don't fund it.

**Senator Flakoll :** That could happen.

**Senator Freborg :** Don't you think they would put that into the budget if this were to pass and were mandated.

**Senator Flakoll :** I like kindergarten, it was the best three years of my life (laughter) and this moves the issue forward.

**Senator Freborg :** If this should pass and bill passes it will be in conference committee.

**Senator Flakoll :** They may like it so much that they may concur.

**Senator Freborg :** That's true, I am sorry I said that now.

**No further discussion**

**Hearing None, Clerk took roll on 50318.0101, Vote : 5 Yea 1 Nay 0 Absent**

**Senator Flakoll** made a motion for a Do Pass on HB 1230 as amended.

**Senator Taylor** second the motion.

Page 9

Senate Education Committee

Bill/Resolution Number HB 1230

Hearing Date 03/01/05

**Hearing None, Clerk took roll on 50318.0101, Vote : 5 Yea 1 Nay 0 Absent**

March 1, 2005

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO HOUSE BILL NO. 1230

Page 1, line 2, after "programs" insert "; and to develop a plan for the provision of full-day kindergarten"

Page 1, after line 21, insert:

**"SECTION 2. FULL-DAY KINDERGARTEN - PLAN.** Before <sup>Jan</sup> July 1, 2007, the board of each school district shall develop and file with the superintendent of public instruction a plan to provide a full-day kindergarten program beginning with the 2009-10 <sup>7-08</sup> school year. The plan must address classroom space for the full-day kindergarten program, kindergarten curriculum development, kindergarten teacher recruitment, transportation of kindergarten students, options for cooperative delivery of a full-day kindergarten program by and among school districts, program cost factors, and any other issues related to the provision of a full-day kindergarten program beginning with the 2009-10 school year."

<sup>7.08</sup>  
Renumber accordingly

Date: 3/1/05  
Roll Call Vote #: /

2005 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ROLL CALL VOTES  
BILL/RESOLUTION NO. 1230

Senate SENATE EDUCATION

Committee

Check here for Conference Committee

Legislative Council Amendment Number

Action Taken *adopt revised amendment 50318.0101*

Motion Made By *Sen. FL* Seconded By *Sen. Lee*

**Senators**  
CH- SENATOR FREBORG  
V-CH- SENATOR G. LEE  
SENATOR ERBELE  
SENATOR FLAKOLL

**Yes** **No**  
✓  
✓  
✓

**Senators**  
SENATOR SEYMOUR  
SENATOR TAYLOR

**Yes** **No**  
✓  
✓

Total (Yes) *5* No *1*

Absent

Floor Assignment

If the vote is on an amendment, briefly indicate intent:

Date: 8/1/05  
Roll Call Vote #: 2

2005 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ROLL CALL VOTES  
BILL/RESOLUTION NO. 230

Senate SENATE EDUCATION

Committee

Check here for Conference Committee

Legislative Council Amendment Number

Action Taken *Do Pass as amended.*

Motion Made By *Flakoll* Seconded By *Taylor*

Senators	Yes	No	Senators	Yes	No
CH- SENATOR FREBORG	✓		SENATOR SEYMOUR	✓	
V-CH- SENATOR G. LEE	✓		SENATOR TAYLOR	✓	
SENATOR ERBELE		✓			
SENATOR FLAKOLL	✓				

Total (Yes) *5* No *1*

Absent

Floor Assignment *Flakoll*

If the vote is on an amendment, briefly indicate intent:

**REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE**

**HB 1230: Education Committee (Sen. Freborg, Chairman) recommends AMENDMENTS AS FOLLOWS and when so amended, recommends DO PASS (5 YEAS, 1 NAY, 0 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING). HB 1230 was placed on the Sixth order on the calendar.**

Page 1, line 2, after "programs" insert "; and to develop a plan for the provision of full-day kindergarten"

Page 1, after line 21, insert:

**"SECTION 2. FULL-DAY KINDERGARTEN - PLAN.** Before January 1, 2007, the board of each school district shall develop and file with the superintendent of public instruction a plan to provide a full-day kindergarten program beginning with the 2007-08 school year. The plan must address classroom space for the full-day kindergarten program, kindergarten curriculum development, kindergarten teacher recruitment, transportation of kindergarten students, options for cooperative delivery of a full-day kindergarten program by and among school districts, program cost factors, and any other issues related to the provision of a full-day kindergarten program beginning with the 2007-08 school year."

Renumber accordingly



2005 HOUSE EDUCATION

CONFERENCE COMMITTEE

HB 1230

2005 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

BILL/RESOLUTION NO. **HB 1230**

House Education Committee

Conference Committee

Hearing Date **6 April 2005**

Tape Number	Side A	Side B	Meter #
1	X		980 - 4438

Committee Clerk Signature



Minutes:

**Chairman Haas opened the Conference Committee's discussion of HB 1230.**

**All members were present.**

**For the House: C Haas, Chair, K. Hawken, P. Mueller**

**For the Senate: T. Flakoll, L. Freborg, R. Taylor**

**Chairman Haas:** A couple of introductory remarks before we get started on this. The Education Committee did not have a problem with the original amendment that the Senate put on. Rep. Kelsch concurred with the amendment and we took it to the House floor and there was a lot of question marks raised about the meaning, what it meant, etc. We actually passed the bill on the floor and then it was reconsidered and upon reconsider we reconsidered the "do concur" and decided to not concur and put it into a conference committee and that's where we are. There's no argument on our part with regard to the content. We wanted to have the conference committee to clarify it a bit more for the House members. Following a conversation that I had

with Senator Flakoll a couple of days ago, I went to see Anita (Thomas) and had her draft this amendment, this change. With that, the floor is open is open for discussion.

**Sen. Freborg:** Was reconsideration solely for the purpose of Conference Committee?

**Chair Haas:** We thought the amendment was important and we didn't want the bill to pass without the amendment, but it was pretty obvious to us that we weren't going to get it through with the amendment the way the amendment is now.

**Sen. Flakoll:** So the bill passed and the amendments were on the bill?

**Rep. Hawken:** Here is the deal. We got it passed by like 2 votes, we just made it. Then there were some people who were actively working the floor saying the people didn't understand what they had voted on. Had we allowed for a vote after the reconsideration, the bill would have been gone. Instead of having that happen, we decided to not concur so that we could get it here to conference. My guess is that the biggest concern was on line 2 "each school district shall develop" and then there was problem with the fact that the way this was written it would mandate all day kindergarten in 2007. Those were the two things that we felt if we could make them a little less mandated we probably could get this bill back. We have talked more about this more on the floor than we have employees' pay raises. So that's why we're here.

**Chairman Haas:** Unfortunately I think the debate on the House floor took a turn that was not directly related to the amendment. It was more of a debate on should there be or should there not be full day kindergarten. That really wasn't the intent of the amendment.

**Sen. Flakoll:** I did listen to some of the debate on the floor and it did gravitate far away from the intent of the amendments that were on the bill. There was a lot of witch hunt, boogie men stuff going on. The intents of the amendments were with the thought that there will probably be a bill

next session that will look at kindergarten again. It would seem right for us to have more information to make as much of an intelligent meeting as possible on that. By the schools providing us that information on their needs, their hang ups, where are the problems, what do they need to do, what are the obstacles, we as body might help them overcome if they want to pursue this. Unless they provide that information, we will have nothing to base our decision upon. Some of this may already be included in some of the school districts with their 3 and 5 year plans that they have been working on.

**Rep. Mueller:** I think you are right in your analysis of the whole thing. I think the problem comes in the wording of the amendment. It makes some on the outside think we're going to force everybody to be in kindergarten next year. I don't think that was ever the intent. You might make the argument in looking and reading through the amendment that you could interpret it that way. There were a few folks who chose to interpret it that way. That's our challenge. We need to make it clear with the language that that's not the intent. It's looking at what may happen if you as a school district chooses to have it happen. We're not changing the mandatory laws about when you have to be in school or any of that. We're not changing the mandatory laws about making you be in kindergarten. That seems to be the hang-up with a number of folks on our side.

**Sen. Flakoll:** Even though we have half-day kindergarten and full-day kindergarten, the schools may offer it and it's available but the parents still have the option to send their students there or to not send their students there. That's probably where some of the disconnect for those outside of the Education Committee they didn't understand that portion of it. We haven't change that. I haven't heard of any appetite to mandate that they attend.

**Rep. Mueller:** We are on pretty common ground on what we wanted the amendment to do.

The challenge and the concern here has to do with the wording of it. I suspect there are some folks that are not going to like it no matter what we do. I do think it could be fixed to the point where we can get it through the house.

**Chairman Haas:** That brings up the question: Does this do what we want it do?

**Sen. Flakoll:** Part of me wishes that we would only say if you extend your half days to if you go three days a week or something like that only way you can there is if you do one of these. Part of me wants to go down that road. I question if some school districts offer full day kindergarten for high risk children but don't across all situations would they be exempt from this because they offer it in some cases and not others. That's not clear.

**Rep. Mueller:** I brought a suggestion for an amendment that follows what you have in your version. **(Attached.)** It differs somewhat from the official amendment before you in that #3 isn't there. I'm not so sure that we have to tell our school district people what they need to do. It's my sense that know that if they're going to do this, they've figured that out. We don't have to tell them how to do their business. The one thing we don't have is numbers. If we are going to take a serious look at funding this in another biennium, we're going to need numbers. I don't see that this "official" amendment speaks to that.

**Chairman Haas:** I think those numbers are available through the school census. Every odd-numbered year the schools do their census and they go 0 - 17 years old.

**Sen. Flakoll:** I concur with Rep. Mueller's line of thinking in that while we know the census number we may not have a firm grasp on how many of those who may wish to attend. Another consideration is I've heard people talking about going from half-day kindergarten to maybe

having it full days on Monday, Wednesday and Friday or Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday so 60% creeps up. That lends itself to more things such as day care situations, transportation, so there are some benefits from having other options rather than making the jump from half-day to full-day possibly too. I think what we want to get is a sense of what are their needs, where do they want to go, what do they need to get there, what's a realistic start date for that. In our amendment we have a short start date. Whether we're coming down too much on it, I'm not sure but could anyone start fall of '07. No. We wanted to look at that with our amendments just so that they had a date they could target. We may want to add a caveat to this such as what's a realistic date of whatever you envision for your needs. We had a kindergarten bill and you had a kindergarten bill. They are different in some respects but we don't really get a good semblance of how much it may cost the state in terms of a fiscal note because we have no data to back it up with.

**Chairman Haas:** That was part of the argument against the bills that we had this time. We didn't have the right data in order to make the decision. It's kind of a catch-22 deal. So what are your wishes?

**Sen. Freborg:** Rep. Mueller's amendment does not speak any preparation prior to a legislative mandate. I don't ever know what Sen. Flakoll's real concern is but mine was that a bill such as we have this session, one to mandate kindergarten by a certain date. Perhaps the mandate would not go into effect for a couple of school years at least. This was only that we know if they are prepared if that should happen. It could very well happen. We may get some trouble the way it is when we pay for kindergarten for those that choose to have it and are excluding those students that may want it and don't have it. If we weren't funding it, it may be a different story. When

we're paying for it we ought to either pay all of them and say that they must provide kindergarten or I'm not sure we should pay any of them. That didn't mean that I'm saying let's mandate kindergarten. We're paying some and not others.

**Sen. Taylor:** That gravitates towards the official amendment. Maybe delineating classroom space, curriculum development, etc., does provide a framework. I don't know if it will make a difference in passage if we leave that in there. We need to make sure that understand what we have done here is a report, submission of report, a plan, so it doesn't lead people to believe people to believe that we are planning for something inevitable. Maybe to address Senator Flakoll's concern on subsection 2, we ought to add a few words that "the board of a school district that offers a full-day kindergarten program to all students" or "across all schools."

Maybe throw some other language in there "students whose parents wish to enroll them" so they know that it is still a option of enrollment for those children.

**Rep. Mueller:** Senator Freborg speaks one of the boogie men, if you will, that came from the House floor discussion and that's the mandate about kindergarten. I think NCLB may at some point say you better be doing this you don't have any options. Right now if we talk about any mandates with kindergarten, she's gone on our side. I think we best be careful about doing that. Why do we need subsection 3 at all?

**Rep. Hawken:** If the school already has full-day kindergarten, they are turning that in on their reports that they do.

**Chairman Haas:** They would be getting paid for a half day.

**Rep. Hawken:** Because of the way this is written, "the board shall address issues such as. . ." it doesn't say they have to address all those, but it does give them some idea of the kind of information we're looking for. If we really do want it from each school district then I guess we have to leave this "shall" in there. We could add "shall, as part of their 3 - 5 year plan" would that make it more palatable. It was enlightening, or depressing may be a better word, to me to realize how many people didn't realize we didn't require kindergarten and that you didn't have to children to school until they were seven. I'm not sure why this is such a scary thing. We ask people to do this all the time and the main people who were fighting are the ones who created a bill that would require every agency in state government to report back to them.

**Sen. Flakoll:** The only thing I'm not certain about is if the 3 - 5 year plans would sequence properly.

**Rep. Mueller:** The other part of that 3-year/5-year/10-year plan, I don't think we require that be submitted to DPI. So I don't think that would serve our purposes.

**Rep. Hawken:** We don't. Is there some way to write it up "this is what we're looking for is looking into the future if, in fact, we are going to have all-day kindergarten in some school districts, we'd like to know how many students there are." The board needs to contact parents to determine how many would even be interested. That's a key piece. They do that anyway because they talk to them anyway about preregistration so that's not an add-on since they do it already.

**Sen. Freborg:** Before someone makes a motion, perhaps we could take this all back with us and think about it.



**Chairman Haas:** Absolutely. We can do that. In the meantime, if there is something you would like to have changed on this, we can do that and have some alternatives by the time we meet again.

**Sen. Flakoll:** I don't think we would be stalling because this is not an issue we can't settle.

**Chairman Haas:** You're correct. It's a matter of thinking about it and coming up with the wording that we want to be there.

**Rep. Mueller:** What are the issues we may want to examine this in more depth. One comes to mind, is we do need to talk about numbers. Having the number in there is critical.

**Sen. Flakoll:** Along those lines on under subsection 1, line 2, insert two words, "anticipated enrollment." Parents support of full-day kindergarten could be vastly different if they say they support it but are not going to send their kids to it. Maybe strike out subsection 3 because it seems like we have . . . The other one is do we something along the lines of a realistic start date and that could go under the second line of subsection 1.

**Chairman Haas:** That could also fit in subsection 2.

**Sen. Taylor:** I think I'd stay clear away from that because we are just putting data together. If there is a start date that's going to be decided in the next session or the session after that, or after that.

(Several members spoke their agreement.)

**Sen. Flakoll:** I was thinking more of those schools that say we have to do this, build this, the earliest we'd be thinking about it would be '09 or something like that.

**Rep. Hawken:** Would it be feasible since we would have legislative intent for that kind of a directive to come from DPI. They ask the school districts if and when they might do it as opposed to putting it in here.

**Chairman Haas:** Our goal here is to have adequate information for either deciding to do something or not to do something. If that's our goal, this pretty much does that. It doesn't allow DPI to add reporting requirements. It simply says the report shall be submitted to and compiled by the Department. That's what we want to do and have it as information for discussion and basis for decision making.

**Rep. Mueller:** I agree with that but sympathize with Sen. Flakoll's concern because I think part of that plan and information that's of value to use probably would and should reflect some type of start up time because it may not happen this time, but may in the next biennium. One of the problems on the House side was that start up date so let's don't put anything here that will derail the train.

**Sen. Flakoll:** This will not dissuade that because they could go to full-day kindergarten without our blessing if they want to. How many could realistically start by fall of '07. Few, if any.

**Sen. Freborg:** It sounds to me that we have two goals. I'm hearing on one hand even if it their decision to have kindergarten we want them to have a plan. I'm not sure that's necessary. If they decide to have kindergarten certainly they know they can handle it. I assumed our goal is if the legislature should decide that they're going to have full-time kindergarten, I'm not sure they need that there is any concern if they are ready or not. They can do that today. I'm wondering what our goal is?

**Chairman Haas:** I go back to Sen. Flakoll's plan saying there more than likely will be another kindergarten funding bill in the next session. If we are going to have adequate and accurate information to use as a basis for that decision making, this is appropriate. We are just saying we want the information to be available. Some of the argument against it was we don't know anything about it. This addresses that. That is what our goal is.

**Rep. Hawken:** The immediate response to kindergarten was the fiscal note.

**Rep. Freborg:** We have the numbers.

**Chairman Haas:** We could decide to fund full-day kindergarten and not mandate anything.

**Sen. Freborg:** We could, but we should not. We should not continue to fund for part of the students in the state. We worry about going to court for a hundred reasons. That could be one of them. I think if we fund it, it should be mandated.

**Rep. Mueller.** If that's going to part of the amendment, we should slip it away from HB 1230 and let it ride its own wave because that's a whole new issue. The conversation on the House side, that group isn't ready to do that yet. It might be the right thing to do but it isn't going to pass the house.

**Sen. Freborg:** Everyone is misunderstanding me. I'm not saying we should mandate kindergarten. I'm saying if we're going to pay for it, if we are going to fund full-day kindergarten, then we should mandate it. I believe 90% or more children in the state have part-time kindergarten. We should mandate part-time kindergarten and fully fund it.

**Chairman Haas:** A suggestion from Legal Counsel is to have DPI or an interim committee conduct a survey of all school districts to determine readiness to offer kindergarten and when. That's another something for us to think about. We will have one more meeting.

**Sen. Flakoll:** We just want information. If there are schools that want to change what they are offering now, we are the partner to help them do that.

**Chairman Haas:** We just need to know what's realistic.

**Adjourned.**

2005 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

BILL/RESOLUTION NO. **HB 1230**

House Education Committee

Conference Committee

Hearing Date **8 April 2005**

Tape Number	Side A	Side B	Meter #
1	X		0 - 739

Committee Clerk Signature



Minutes:

**Chairman Haas opened the Conference Committee's second discussion of HB 1230.**

**All members were present.**

**For the House: C Haas, Chair, K. Hawken, P. Mueller**

**For the Senate: T. Flakoll, L. Freborg, R. Taylor**

**Chairman Haas:** Following our last meeting we did a few things. I had a couple of conversations with Sen. Flakoll and with Rep. Hawken and Rep. Mueller. Sen. Flakoll would you please begin.

**Sen. Flakoll:** I have put before you amendments .0104 for HB 1230. I'll walk you through it and explain it as best as I can. Essentially the intent is that Legislation Council will draft something in conjunction with DPI in terms of a survey. I think the survey language will be less onerous for some that expressed concerns earlier, not necessarily in this Committee, but elsewhere. That survey would go to the interim committee designated by the Legislative

Council whether that's the Finance Committee, or the NCLB Committee. Those would be the two logical committee. He discussed the subsections a through f. (Proposed amendment is attached). One of the advantages of a survey versus what we had before that I think will be a selling point is that we will be more uniform in terms of the data we heard and the information we generate. Someone won't necessarily write four pages on transportation issues. It think it will be easier for DPI to compile and we will have a more uniform set of data. With that

**I move that the Senate Recede from the Senate Amend and amend with amendments titled 50318.0104.**

**Senator Freborg: I second.**

**Rep. Haas:** One thing that I particularly like about this is the fact is that the whole thing will gain its impetus from an interim committee and I think that will give the legislature the control of the survey and the survey contents and the format and we will truly get the type of information that we think is necessary.

**Sen. Taylor:** We are probably going to build more into subsection e, the direct and indirect cost because we're not mentioning the availability of teachers, recruitment, transportation. I'm hoping to do a survey that will get more information than is laid out there in that section.

**Rep. Haas:** That could be a natural outcome of developing the survey instrument.

**Sen. Flakoll:** Anita Thomas, from Legislative Council, she reminded me that we want to careful so we don't start the survey with bill.

**Rep. Mueller:** I think this is a good plan. The only concern I might have is, who does this. Will, in fact, DPI put this little thing together and bring it to us?

**Sen. Flakoll:** I think two trains will be going side by side. One, Legislative Council, likely Anita, will be drafting the survey in conjunction with the DPI. At the same time the legislators will assign this to a specific committee. The someone from the DPI or Anita would present the proposed survey to that committee and we would wordsmith it and DPI would send them out with a date when they want them back so we can have this put together in a timely fashion and then have the for the Interim Committee if necessary.

**Rep. Haas:** I believe the way Sen. Flakoll describes that process would also take care of Sen. Taylor's concern about the specific elements of the survey. We would be able to review and edit and make suggestions on that survey prior to it actually being issued.

**A roll call vote on the motion was taken.**

**Yes: 6 No: 0 Absent: 0**

**The motion passed unanimously.**

*from  
Mueller*

For 1230 Amendment

School boards that are considering or plan to have full day kindergarten in the '07-'08 school year are required to submit the District's intentions including the number of kindergarten students affected and any other provisions of a full-day kindergarten program that the District deems as necessary information to the DPI to the Superintendent of Public Instruction before July 1, 2007.



April 5, 2005

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO HOUSE BILL NO. 1230

That the Senate recede from its amendments as printed on page 917 of the House Journal and page 688 of the Senate Journal and that House Bill. No. 1230 be amended as follows:

Page 1, line 2, after "programs" insert "; and to determine the feasibility and desirability of providing a full-day kindergarten program"

Page 1, after line 21, insert:

**"SECTION 2. FULL-DAY KINDERGARTEN - SUBMISSION OF REPORT.**

1. The board of each school district shall determine the feasibility and desirability of providing a full-day kindergarten program. The board shall address issues such as the availability of classroom space, kindergarten curriculum development, kindergarten teacher recruitment, transportation options for kindergarten students, options for cooperative delivery of a full-day kindergarten program by and among school districts, and program cost factors. The board shall also contact parents of prekindergarten students to determine the parents' level of support for a full-day kindergarten program.
2. The board of each school district shall submit a written report of its findings under subsection 1 to the superintendent of public instruction on or before January 1, 2007. The superintendent shall compile all information received under this section and shall make the information available to members of the legislative assembly and to the public, upon request.
3. ~~The requirements of this section do not apply to the board of a school district that offers a full-day kindergarten program.~~

Renumber accordingly

April 7, 2005

**Conference Committee Amendments to HB 1230 (50318.0104) - 04/08/2005**

That the Senate recede from its amendments as printed on page 917 of the House Journal and page 688 of the Senate Journal and that House Bill No. 1230 be amended as follows:

Page 1, line 2, after "programs" insert "; and to provide for a legislative council survey"

Page 1, after line 21, insert:

**"SECTION 2. LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL - KINDERGARTEN SURVEY.**

1. An interim committee designated by the legislative council shall conduct a survey of all school districts in the state to determine:
  - a. The number of school districts that make available a kindergarten program having a duration of more than five half days per week;
  - b. The number of school districts that will by a date certain make available a kindergarten program having a duration of more than five half days per week;
  - c. The number of students in each district who would be eligible to enroll in a kindergarten program during each of the ensuing five years;
  - d. The estimated enrollment in a kindergarten program having a duration of more than five half days per week;
  - e. The direct and indirect costs that a school district might incur if it made available a kindergarten program having a duration of more than five half days per week; and
  - f. The number of school districts that would make available a kindergarten program having a duration of more than five half days per week if moneys were appropriated for that purpose.
2. The superintendent of public instruction shall assist the interim committee in conducting the survey and in reviewing the results of the survey."

Renumber accordingly

REPORT OF CONFERENCE COMMITTEE  
(ACCEDE/RECEDE)

Bill Number 1230 (, as (re)engrossed):

Date: 8 Apr 05

Your Conference Committee

Education

Attend the Senate:

YES / NO

Attend For the House:

YES / NO

Sen Flakoll ✓  
Sen Treborg ✓  
Sen Taylor ✓

Rep Wass, (Chair) ✓  
Rep Hawton ✓  
Rep Mueller ✓

recommends that the (SENATE/HOUSE) (ACCEDE to) (RECEDE from)

the (Senate/House) amendments on (S)(H) page(s) 917 -

ST

and place on the Seventh order.

X, adopt (further) amendments as follows, and place 1230 on the Seventh order:

having been unable to agree, recommends that the committee be discharged and a new committee be appointed.

((Re)Engrossed) HB 1230 was placed on the Seventh order of business on the calendar.

DATE: 8 April 05

CARRIER: Wass

LC NO. 50312-0104 of amendment

LC NO. of engrossment

Emergency clause added or deleted

Statement of purpose of amendment Clarify that 1230 is survey only.

MOTION MADE BY: Flakoll

SECONDED BY: Treborg

VOTE COUNT 6 YES 0 NO 0 ABSENT

**REPORT OF CONFERENCE COMMITTEE**

**HB 1230:** Your conference committee (Sens. Flakoll, Freborg, Taylor and Reps. Haas, Hawken, Mueller) recommends that the **SENATE RECEDE** from the Senate amendments on HJ page 917, adopt amendments as follows, and place HB 1230 on the Seventh order:

That the Senate recede from its amendments as printed on page 917 of the House Journal and page 688 of the Senate Journal and that House Bill No. 1230 be amended as follows:

Page 1, line 2, after "programs" insert "; and to provide for a legislative council survey"

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  - e. The direct and indirect costs that a school district might incur if it made available a kindergarten program having a duration of more than five half days per week; and
  - f. The number of school districts that would make available a kindergarten program having a duration of more than five half days per week if moneys were appropriated for that purpose.
2. The superintendent of public instruction shall assist the interim committee in conducting the survey and in reviewing the results of the survey."

Renumber accordingly

HB 1230 was placed on the Seventh order of business on the calendar.

2005 TESTIMONY

HB 1230

HB 1230  
24 Jan 05

**TESTIMONY ON HB 1230  
EDUCATION COMMITTEE**

**January 24, 2005**

**by Tricia R. Lang, Assistant Director**

**328-2295**

**Department of Public Instruction**

---

Chairwoman Kelsch and members of the committee:

My name is Tricia Lang and I am the assistant director of School Approval and Accreditation for the Department of Public Instruction. I am here to speak in favor to HB 1230 regarding the provision of kindergarten programs within North Dakota.

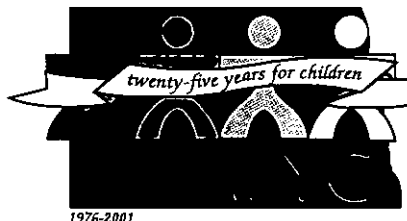
According to the Education Commission of the State (2000), nearly 98% of youngsters in the nation are attending at least a half-day kindergarten program. Kindergarten is an important developmental year for children and a successful program meets the various developmental needs of children at this age. Although North Dakota does not require kindergarten, forty-two states mandate that districts offer at least a half-day of kindergarten.

The Department of Public Instruction supports the offering of kindergarten to all North Dakota children. This proposed legislation provides a much simplified process to assure that every parent wanting a kindergarten education for his or her child can access a program with the resident school district either providing the program or at least providing funding for a half-day program in another school district. Through this proposal, we can assure every child in North Dakota has access to at least a half-day kindergarten program.

We support a DO PASS on HB 1230. Thank you for your time and I would be happy to answer any questions.

VOICES FOR NORTH DAKOTA'S CHILDREN

HB 1230  
24 Jan 05



CENTER FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD LEADERSHIP & ADVOCACY

January 24, 2005

To: RaeAnn Kelsch, Chairperson, House Education Committee

From: Barb Arnold-Tengesdal  
Voices for North Dakota's Children

Re: Testimony ~~opposed~~ to HB 1230

*Voices for North Dakota's Children* is a collaborative advocacy effort of early childhood education professional organizations. It is made up of the North Dakota Head Start Association, North Dakota Association for the Education of Young Children, Child Care Resource & Referral Network and Children's Caucus.

We urge your support of HB 1230.

This bill allows parents the right to have a public kindergarten education available for their child. At a time when the emphasis is on school accountability and increased student achievement, we are challenged to find ways to deliver educational programs that will help children learn in a developmentally appropriate and culturally sensitive way (*Young Children*, Nov. 2003, pg. 54). We believe parents want to give their child the best educational start available and the state should see the economic, social and educational benefits in offering early childhood education to all children.

The research on the benefits of early childhood education is overwhelmingly positive. The most significant gains are seen in children of low-income families. The academic gains when in higher quality child care settings, better prepare children for K-12 education (*Children of the Cost, Quality, & Outcomes Study Go to School*, 2000). The High/Scope Perry Preschool Project recently reported findings showing participants have higher income earnings, are more likely to hold a job, commit fewer crimes, and graduate from high school (*High/Scope Educational Research Foundation*, Nov. 2004). Statistics on academic gains have been reported locally around the state. Fargo, Bismarck and Devils Lake have seen significant gains in reading and math in populations that attend full-day kindergarten programs.

Nationwide, the benefits of starting children in kindergarten are understood by parents, and thus the growth in the percentage of five-year-olds enrolled in full-day kindergarten grew from 12 percent in 1970 to 55 percent in 1997 as reported by Elicker (*Full-day kindergarten: Exploring the research. Phi-Delta Kappa International* 2000).

Will this decision affect the child care industry? It might at the beginning of implementing this type of option for all children in North Dakota. Most districts already provide kindergarten, would this bill make much change in our current system? We think not.

**Park River Elementary School  
Goal for  
All-Day Every Day  
Kindergarten:**

**To provide an intellectually stimulating,  
developmentally appropriate,  
comfortable learning environment  
for our kindergarten students**

**Recent Research Indicates:**

- ❖ As of 1998, 55% of American children were attending all-day every day kindergarten.
- ❖ Research reported in the 1990s shows more consistent, positive academic outcomes for all children enrolled in all-day kindergarten.
- ❖ Research has also reported that students in all-day kindergarten programs made greater progress in learning social skills.



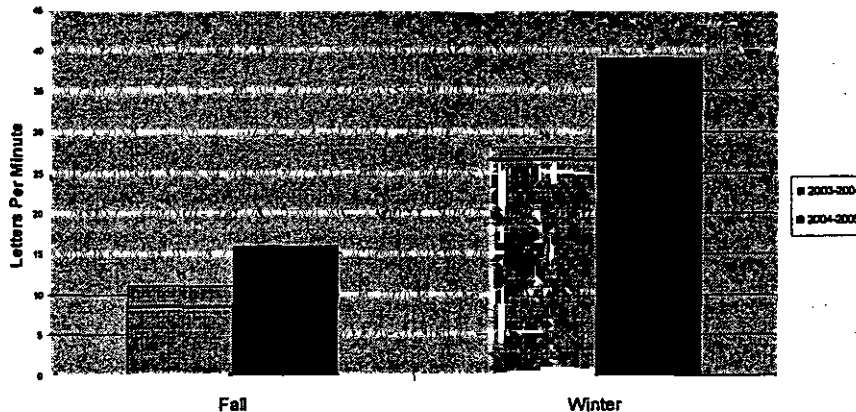
*Wanda  
Wilson  
284-6550*



# Assessment Results Comparing 2003-2004 to 2004-2005

- DIBELS (Dynamic Indicator of Basic Early Literacy Skills)
  - Letter Naming Fluency: Risk Indicator
  - Initial Sound Fluency
  - Phoneme Segmenting Fluency
  - Nonsense Word Fluency

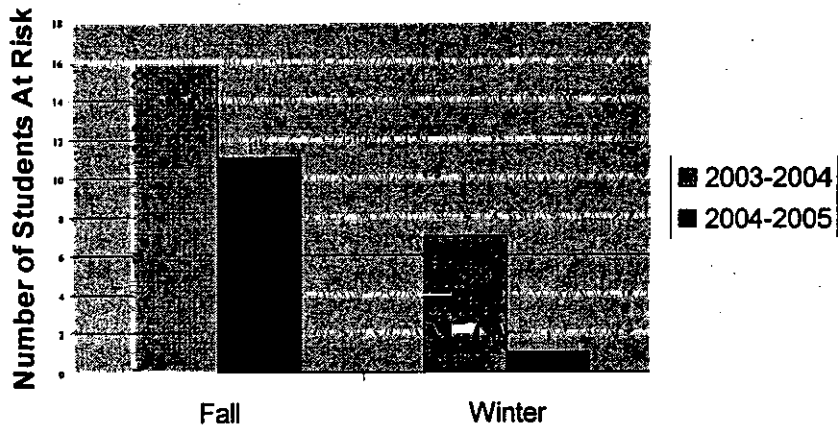
## Letter Naming Fluency



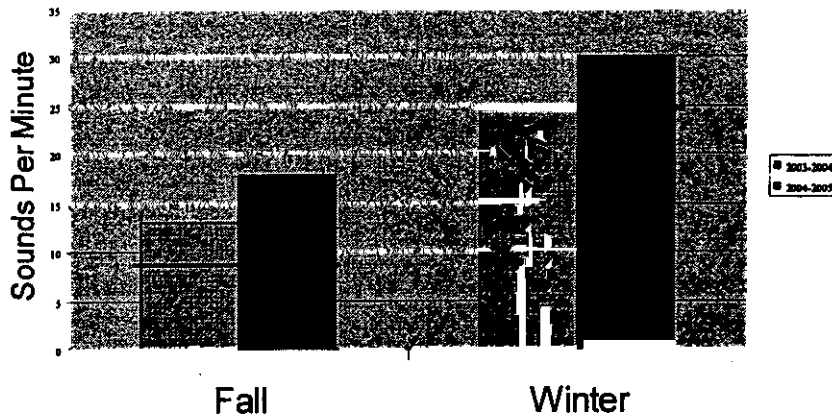
**Letter Naming Fluency: (Risk-Indicator) Used to determine who will have difficulty meeting later benchmarks.**

**Fall Benchmark: 8 Letter Names      Winter Benchmark: 27 Letter Names**

# At Risk Population LNF



# Initial Sound Fluency

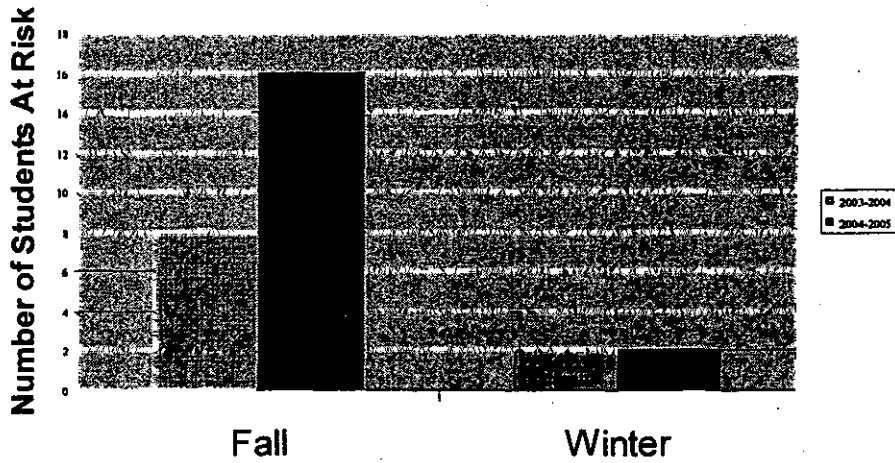


**Initial Sound Fluency measures a student's ability to identify a picture with a given beginning sound.**

**Fall Benchmark: 8 Sounds**

**Winter Benchmark: 25 Sounds**

## At Risk Population ISF



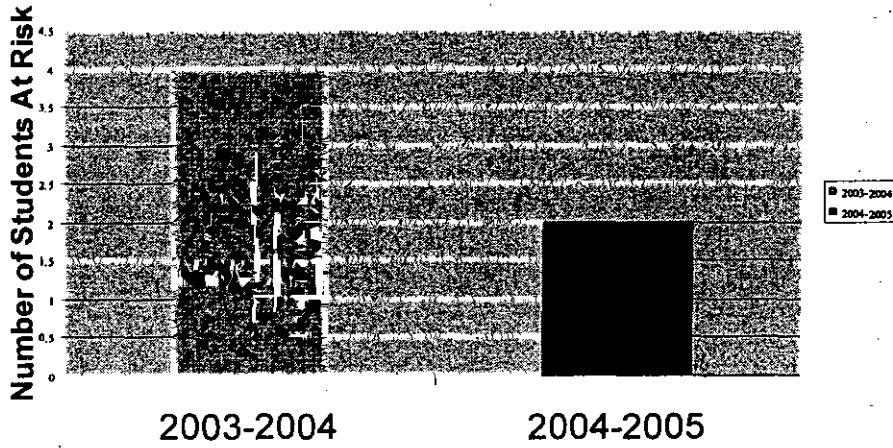
## Phoneme Segmenting Fluency



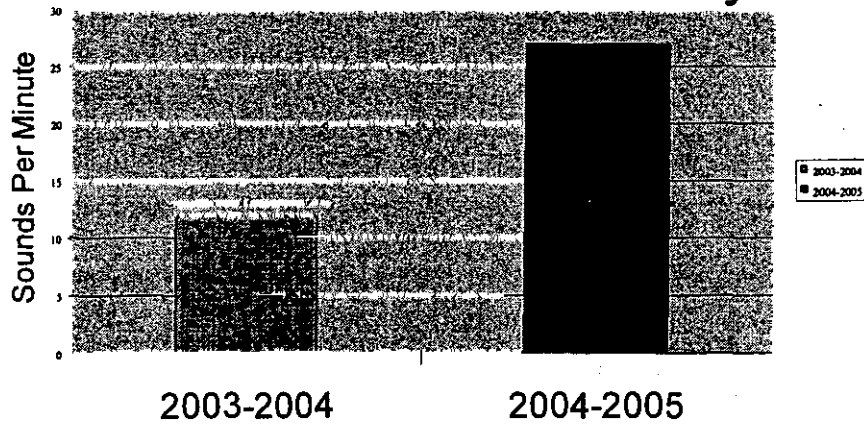
**Phoneme Segmenting Fluency measures a student's ability to break a word into individual sounds. Kindergarten students are first assessed on this skill in January.**

**Winter Benchmark: 18 Sounds**

## At Risk Population PSF



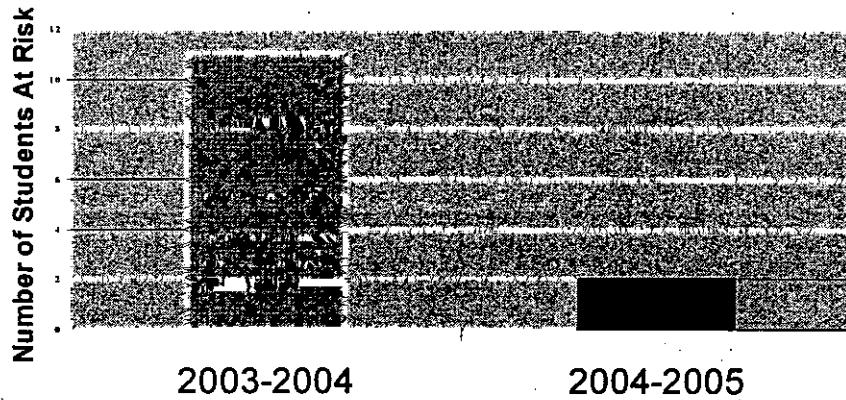
## Nonsense Word Fluency



**Nonsense Word Fluency measures a student's ability to sound out make-believe words. Kindergarten students are first assessed on this skill in January.**

**Winter Benchmark: 13 sounds**

## At Risk Population NWF



## What do the results mean?

- Teachers have the time to provide early interventions.
- Intervention is instruction that takes place in addition to whole group reading instruction.
- For our kindergarten teachers, that means using center time, rest time, and transition time to practice skills.
- The aim of early intervention is to decrease the likelihood that additional services such as Title I or Special Education will be needed.

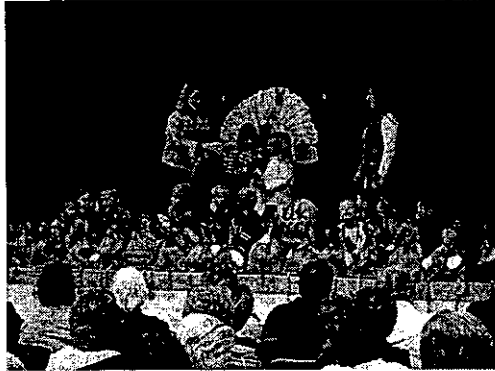


**In Kindergarten and First Grade students learn to read.**

**In Second and Third Grades students read to learn.**

## All Day Every Day Kindergarten is Brain Compatible

- More opportunities for students to apply new learning within 24 hours.
- Multiple repetitions increases likelihood of memory.
- More time to provide a wide variety of activities appealing to multiple intelligences.
- Provides more purposeful and meaningful educational opportunities.



More contact days at school would create a more relaxed pace/atmosphere and would give teachers time to include additional:

- o Creative activities
- o Enrichment activities
- o Hands-on activities
- o Opportunities for students to develop their own interest
- o One-on-one time with students
- o Time to integrate new learning with past experiences

# Full-Day Kindergarten

## A Story of Successful Adoption and Initial Implementation

Dixie L. Winters, Carol H. Saylor,  
and Carol Y. Phillips

In these days of conflicting messages from state legislatures, the decision to adopt and implement any new initiative, particularly one that requires significant additional funds, can be fraught with controversy. Yet given the emphasis today on accountability and increasing student achievement, our schools are challenged to seek approaches to the delivery of educational programs that will help all children learn in developmentally appropriate and child-sensitive ways. After a thorough analysis of the existing

**Dixie L. Winters, Ed.D.**, is an instructor of education in the Focused Master's Degree in Teaching and Curriculum Program at Penn State University. Dixie serves as vice president of the Manheim Central School Board and chair of the Education Committee.

**Carol H. Saylor, Ed.D.**, is superintendent of the Manheim Central School District in Manheim, Pennsylvania. Carol has been a classroom teacher, assistant principal, principal, school social worker, and superintendent. She is president of the state superintendents' organization, Pennsylvania Association of School Administrators.

**Carol Y. Phillips, Ph.D., R.N.**, is executive assistant to the president at Millersville University in Millersville, Pennsylvania. In her roles as school board member and chairperson of the United Way of Lancaster County's Success by Six Early Learning Team, she has worked on implementation of full-day kindergarten and advocated for childhood learning efforts in Manheim Central School District and in Lancaster County.



© Lois Main

research on the advantages of full-day versus half-day kindergarten, Manheim Central School District embarked on an aggressive process to implement full-day kindergarten district-wide. We share our story with you to provide some practical insights for implementing such a program.

The Manheim Central School District is located just 30 miles east of Harrisburg in rural south central Pennsylvania. It is one of 16 districts in

Lancaster County and 501 public school districts in the state. It could be considered the typical Pennsylvania school district, with enrollment just over 3,000 and a professional and support staff of 400.

The district has been experiencing declining enrollments and resulting budget constraints. During strategic planning in 1996, Manheim Central selected "increasing achievement for all students" as a primary goal. Implementation of full-day kindergarten is an important vehicle in reaching that goal.

### Research on full-versus half-day kindergarten

Elicker (2000) notes the growth in the percentage of five-year-olds enrolled in full-day kindergarten from 12 percent in 1970 to 55 percent in 1997. He adds that

discussions about whether to offer full-day programs continue to spark controversy in many communities. Debate centers on whether the benefits to student learning offset the additional expense of hiring more teachers and adding classroom space.

Research on the effects of full-day kindergarten is positive, with studies documenting improved language skills, social development, and academic achievement, particularly for children from low-income backgrounds (Nelson 2000). Cryan, Sheehan, Wiechel, and Bandy-Hedden (1992) found a positive relationship between children's participation in full-day kindergarten and their later school performance, with these kindergartners exhibiting more independent learning and classroom involvement. When implemented with a high-quality curriculum and appropriate teaching practices, full-day programs allow for a more relaxed instructional pace, with time for children to reflect on their learning and time for more classroom involvement and increased productivity. The result is greater academic gains for children. Additionally, full-day programs are family friendly, minimizing the need to make numerous child care arrangements and decreasing the need for children to make difficult transitions and adjustments during school hours (Rothenberg 1995).

### The charge

Manheim Central's move toward full-day kindergarten was fueled by the school board's commitment to raise academic achievement for *all* children in the district. Upon being commissioned as superintendent in 1996, Carol Saylor developed specific goals for elementary, middle, and high school. The target for the elementary program was to have every child reading on grade level

by the end of third grade.

The curricular initiatives put in place to support this goal were a review and revision of the language arts curriculum and the implementation of Reading Recovery (Clay 1990) and Kid Writing (Feldgus & Cardonick 1999). While fully embracing these changes, teachers in the school district felt they were not enough.

**Full-day programs allow for a more relaxed instructional pace, with time for children to reflect on their learning and time for more classroom involvement and increased productivity.**

## Definitions of Terms

**Reading Recovery** is an early intervention program to help six-year-olds learn to read (Clay 1993). Children with the lowest achievement in reading receive 30 minutes of daily one-on-one instruction for up to 20 weeks.

**DRA**, the Developmental Reading Assessment (Beaver 1997), is a method for assessing and documenting elementary students' development as readers over time within a literature-based instructional reading program. It is designed to be used in K-3 classrooms with rich literacy environments. Assessments are conducted in one-on-one reading conferences as children read specially selected assessment texts from a set of 20 stories with increasing difficulty. DRA evaluates two major aspects of reading: accuracy of oral reading and comprehension through reading and retelling of narrative stories.

**Kid Writing** (Feldgus & Cardonick 1999) uses children's daily journal writing as a tool for developing phonics skills in the context of writing. Kid Writing is based on the premise that literacy emerges in most children from early writing success and that writing is the key to how reading works. Through individualized instruction children systematically develop the skills to sound out words.

### Impetus for a full-day kindergarten program

A group of talented and committed kindergarten teachers, with the support of their principals, embarked on a campaign to make their case for a full-day program to the school board's Education Committee. Using the district's strategic plan as their guide, they analyzed research on full-day versus half-day programs and made on-site visits to a nearby urban school district where a full-day kindergarten program had been implemented the year before.

Four primary teachers from Manheim Central spent a day observing these kindergarten classrooms. In their meeting to review observations and impressions from the visit, they supported the following conclusions:

- Full-day kindergartners were significantly more advanced in literacy skills compared to the half-day children in Manheim Central. Most of the full-day children were as far advanced by midyear as the half-day children were by the end of year. The full-day program seemed to yield significant academic gains.
- The pace of the full-day program was more relaxed and less tiring for kindergartners. Children did not ask



for breaks during the day because the instruction was appropriately paced for the age level. The full-day format seemed less stressful than the half-day format.

- Teachers in the full-day kindergarten felt a greater sense of accomplishment than those in the half-day program because early literacy skills emerged at a more accelerated rate for *all* children.
- Full-day kindergarten greatly eased children's transition to first grade in terms of adjustment to a full-day program and readiness for first grade academic expectations.

The visiting teachers noted the strong teacher support for the full-day program. The full-day teachers reported measurable gains in academic achievement among children of varied socioeconomic status and culturally diverse backgrounds. They said that family support of the program exceeded expectations, and the children experienced minimal difficulty in transitioning to full-day kindergarten.

Using both the research and their observations of program implementation in action, the committee of kindergarten teachers proposed a pilot program in one kindergarten classroom to minimize costs to the school district. Given that research indicates full-day kindergarten works best for children who need it most, particularly those in schools in racially isolated communities with high poverty (Pennsylvania Partnerships for Education, 2000), the pilot program would provide data to aid in determining if the successes of an urban school with culturally diverse students from families with low incomes would translate to a rural, small town setting with a more homogeneous population.

The suggestion to pilot a small implementation project appealed to both the education committee and the school board, which approved the recommendation in spring 2001.



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### The pilot: Implementation and results

A seasoned and highly qualified teacher, Jo Vargo, was selected to teach in the pilot classroom. She prepared for implementing the full-day program by

- establishing a daily schedule to meet the needs of five- and six-year-olds in a developmentally appropriate way. At the beginning of the year, she allotted shorter periods of time for activities, emphasizing smooth transitions from one activity to another. She prepared the children to move to longer time periods as the class developed the ability to spend more time on task.
- organizing materials for shared reading, guided reading, literacy centers, self-selected reading, working with words, Kid Writing, and shared writing—fruits of her Strategies for Early Literacy training.
- locating big books to use for math, science, and social studies to provide continuity across the curriculum. These stories would offer the basis for continuing shared reading and interactive writing in the afternoon, enabling the children to practice literacy strategies they had worked on in the morning.
- sharing literacy ideas with the librarian so that the full-day children could make meaningful connections during their afternoon library time.
- soliciting family volunteers to help on a consistent basis during the guided reading block.
- requesting a physical education block for the full-day group during the second semester.

The elementary principals sent letters to all parents of entering kindergartners in the district sharing the new program and inviting those who were interested to enroll their children, even if it was not their school. A

### States and Kindergarten Mandates

According to the Educational Commission of the States' analysis of full-day versus half-day kindergarten (Griffith-Kauerz & McMaker, 2003), 10 states mandate full-day kindergarten, 9 states do not mandate any kindergarten, and the remaining 31 states (not listed here) mandate half-day kindergarten.

#### States with Full-Day Kindergarten Mandate:

Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, West Virginia.

#### States with No Kindergarten Mandate:

Alaska, Colorado, Idaho, New Hampshire, New York, North Dakota, Pennsylvania, South Dakota, Washington.

districtwide meeting was held for all kindergarten children and their families to inform them of the full-day kindergarten program. It included bus orientation and school tours. We were nicely surprised to find that we had more interested families than slots; family support was evident. The district used a lottery system to select the 18 lucky children!

### Early findings

The results of the pilot program, while preliminary, were exciting. To evaluate early outcomes of the full-day experience, the district matched a group of half-day kindergartners comparable in age (in months), gender, and entering pretest data (on two indicators, letter identification and vocabulary recognition, as measured by the district's language arts assessment) with the children in the full-day program. At the end of May, children in the full-day program demonstrated higher levels of letter identification, written vocabulary skills, and reading readiness than the group in the half-day program. In addition, the full-day chil-

dren missed only 47 days of school, as compared to the 73 days of absence of their half-day counterparts.

Families spoke glowingly of the full-day program. Teacher Jo Vargo identified additional benefits:

- greater teacher knowledge of each child by fall conference time than in half-day programs
- children's feelings of security in the building
- voluntary reading and writing during free choice time by more than two-thirds of the class
- children's more consistent use of reading and writing strategies across the curriculum

- fewer medical/dental appointments scheduled during school hours, minimizing student absence from school
- most important, *all* children exited kindergarten with the reading and writing skills needed for success in first grade

At year's end, the report to the education committee and the board was met with overwhelming enthusiasm. All involved felt that the commitment of time and resources to the pilot program had been very worthwhile!

**The full-day teachers reported measurable gains in academic achievement among children of varied socioeconomic status and culturally diverse backgrounds.**



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## Next steps

Everyone at Manheim Central—board, administration, and teachers—was fully committed to moving forward with the program. Resources were reallocated in the 2001–2002 fiscal year to add three additional full-day kindergarten classes. The district put in place data collection efforts, including longitudinal data collection on first-, second-, and third-graders to evaluate Developmental Reading Assessment levels (see “Definitions of Terms” on p. 55 for explanation) (Beaver 1997), district writing assessment scores, Kid Writing levels, and sight word vocabulary. Full implementation of full-day kindergarten district-wide became a reality this fall.

Particularly important in the coming years is ongoing curriculum development to ensure that the rest of the elementary program is adapted to build on the work begun in full-day kindergarten. A new language arts curriculum, with an emphasis on literacy, was recently adopted by the district. The curriculum will facilitate the development of literacy skills because of its focus on shared reading and writing, guided reading, independent reading, working with words, concepts of print, and phonemic awareness.

## Conclusion

The implementation of a pilot full-day kindergarten program in the Manheim Central School District yielded preliminary results consistent with the research on such programs (Rothenberg 1995; Elicker & Mathur 1997; Elicker 2000). The children who participated not only made significant academic gains, but also voluntarily sought additional learning opportunities, attended school more regularly, and were socially more adept than their half-day counterparts. Our teachers were



energized to seek fresh approaches to raising student achievement, and our community expressed support. All of this was done with local resources, because Pennsylvania still doesn't require any kindergarten experience, much less a full-day one!

Knowledge of the success of the program has spread among parents to the point where, when offered a half-day program this year, only nine of 200 families chose that option for their entering kindergarten children. The district looks forward to following the full-day children to see how long they maintain their gains from the full-day program and especially how well they do on the new state-mandated grade three tests.

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## Some Online Resources about Kindergarten

<http://ericcece.org/faq/fullday.html> Amanda Miller answers frequently asked questions about full-day kindergarten and provides an annotated list of resources on this ERIC Clearinghouse on Elementary and Early Childhood Education Website (2001, updated June 2003)

[www.sme.edu/~snall/kdtn/biblio.htm](http://www.sme.edu/~snall/kdtn/biblio.htm) Susan W. Nall has compiled a comprehensive bibliography on kindergarten education for National All-Day Kindergarten Network. The listing is organized by topic—curriculum, entrance age, length of day, literacy, transition/retention, and more. Updated summer 2001. Also found here is a brief list of useful Websites.

[www.sme.edu/~snall/ChildResources.html](http://www.sme.edu/~snall/ChildResources.html) National All-Day Kindergarten Network also offers a brief list of useful Websites.

**TESTIMONY ON HB 1230  
EDUCATION COMMITTEE**

**March 1, 2005**

**by Tricia R. Lang, Assistant Director**

**328-2295**

**Department of Public Instruction**

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Chairman Freborg and Senate Education Committee:

My name is Tricia Lang and I am the assistant director of School Approval and Accreditation for the Department of Public Instruction. I am here to speak in favor to HB 1230 regarding the provision of kindergarten programs within North Dakota.

According to the Education Commission of the State (2000), nearly 98% of children in the nation are attending at least a half-day kindergarten program. Kindergarten is an important developmental year for children and a successful program meets the various developmental needs of children at this age.

The Department of Public Instruction supports the offering of kindergarten to all North Dakota children. This proposed legislation provides a much simplified process to assure that every parent wanting a kindergarten education for his or her child can access a program with the resident school district either providing the program or at least providing funding for a half-day program in another school district. Through this proposal, we can assure every child in North Dakota has access to at least a half-day kindergarten program.

We support a DO PASS on HB 1230. Thank you for your time and I would be happy to answer any questions.

***School Readiness:  
Closing Racial and Ethnic Gaps***  
*The Future of Children*, vol. 15, no. 1, Spring 2005

The Future  
of Children  
PRINCETON - BROOKINGS

Although racial and ethnic gaps in educational achievement have narrowed over the past thirty years, test score disparities among students in the United States remain significant. In the 2002 National Assessment of Educational Progress, 16 percent of black and 22 percent of Hispanic twelfth-grade students displayed "solid academic performance" in reading, as against 42 percent of their white classmates. Similar gaps exist in mathematics, science, and writing.

To date, policymakers and practitioners have focused most of their attention on the gaps in achievement among school-aged children. And yet by many estimates, sizable racial and ethnic gaps already exist by the time children enter kindergarten. Indeed, according to one report, about half of the test score gap between black and white high school students is evident when children start school.

**Why Gaps in School Readiness Matter**

Research findings suggest that what happens to children early in life has a profound impact on their later achievement. Children who enter school not yet ready to learn continue to have difficulty later in life. They perform less well in elementary and high school than their higher-performing peers and are more likely to become teen parents, engage in criminal activities, and suffer from depression. Ultimately, these children attain less education and are more likely to be unemployed as adults.

**Focus of the Issue**

This issue of *The Future of Children* focuses on children's lives before they get to school in an effort to understand how to close the racial and ethnic gaps in educational outcomes.

The issue addresses the following questions:

- How large are the racial and ethnic gaps in school readiness?
- How much of the gap is due to differences in children's socioeconomic background or to genetics?
- How much do disadvantages like poor health, poor parenting, low-quality preschool childcare, and low birth weight contribute to the gaps?
- What lessons can we learn from new research on brain development?
- What do we know about what works and what does not work in closing the gap?

The questions elicit complex answers from the authors of the eight articles in the issue, but the message of this volume is that, taken together, family socioeconomic status, parenting, child health, maternal health and behaviors, and preschool experiences likely account for most of the racial and ethnic gaps in school readiness.

**Closing the Gap: What Works and What Doesn't**

Some strategies for closing the gaps that might seem obvious turn out to be less promising than expected. Although child health, for example, is an important determinant of school readiness and of the racial and ethnic gaps in school readiness, increasing poor children's eligibility for public health insurance is unlikely to narrow these gaps because poor and near-poor children are already eligible.

Similarly, given the importance of socioeconomic factors, it might appear that the best way to close the gaps in school readiness would be to reduce racial and ethnic disparities in parents' economic resources. Programs such as the earned income tax credit (which supplements the earnings of low-income parents), and the minimum wage increase low-income families' economic well-being. To date, however, there is no strong evidence that increasing parental income using these approaches positively affects the school

readiness of children. Helping parents further their education might also appear to be an effective strategy. Increasing the schooling of all black and Hispanic mothers by one or two years, for example, would significantly narrow the school readiness gap of their children. But to date few interventions have been able to produce such gains in maternal schooling. In sum, although programs that increase the socioeconomic status of families could make a modest impact on racial gaps, approaches that directly address the child and parental behaviors that contribute to school readiness are likely to prove more effective.

One such strategy that holds long-term promise comes from the field of neuroscience. Researchers are making great strides in understanding how the brain develops and what aspects of experience help or hinder the process. It is already known that educational interventions can both raise children's scores on reading tests and increase activity in the brain regions most closely linked with reading. Although this field is in its infancy, these interventions may prove effective in closing racial and socioeconomic gaps in achievement.

For the present, however, the most promising strategy is increasing access to high-quality center-based early childhood education programs for all poor three- and four-year-olds. Such a step would measurably boost the achievement of black and Hispanic children and narrow the school readiness gap.

What should these programs look like?

**High-quality Learning Environment:** The education component must be high-quality, with small class sizes, a low teacher-pupil ratio, and teachers with bachelor degrees and training in early childhood education, using a curriculum that is cognitively stimulating. Few of the child care centers and Head Start programs that now serve low-income children meet these standards.

**Teacher Training:** Teachers should be trained to identify children with moderate to severe behavioral problems and to work with these children to improve their emotional and social skills. Although such training is now being provided by some Head Start and some preschool programs, it is not available in most child care programs.

**Parent Training:** Parent training reinforces what teachers are doing in school to enhance children's development. Examples include encouraging parents to read to children on a daily basis and teaching parents how to deal with behavior problems.

**Home Visits:** Staff should be available to identify health problems in children and to help parents get ongoing health care for their children. Including optional home visits would allow staff to further screen for serious mental health problems among parents or other behaviors that are not conducive to good child development. Although some Head Start programs and child care centers in low-income communities do link parents with health care services for their children, these programs do not include a home visit.

**Integration:** Finally, the new programs should be well aligned with the kindergarten programs that their children will eventually attend so that the transition from preschool to kindergarten is successful for children, parents, and teachers.

High-quality early childhood programs such as these exist. The challenge for policymakers and practitioners is to extend the reach of these programs and make them available to all low-income children.





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 Kathleen Woodard (734) 485-2000, ext. 255  
*kathleen\_woodard@highscope.org*

### Long-Term Study of Adults Who Received High-Quality Early Childhood Care and Education Shows Economic and Social Gains, Less Crime

WASHINGTON, DC—A landmark, long-term study of the effects of high-quality early care and education on low-income three- and four-year-olds shows that adults at age 40 who participated in a preschool program in their early years have higher earnings, are more likely to hold a job, have committed fewer crimes, and are more likely to have graduated from high school. The High/Scope Perry Preschool study was conducted by the High/Scope Educational Research Foundation. Overall, the study documented a return to society of more than a \$17 for every tax dollar invested in the early care and education program.

"These findings can be expected of any Head Start, state preschool, or child care program similar to the program High/Scope coordinated and then studied," said Larry Schweinhart, president of the High/Scope Educational Research Foundation. "Our teachers were well-qualified, they served no more than eight children from low-income families at a time, they visited these families as part of the program to discuss their child's development, and the classes operated daily for children three and four years old."

What makes the study unique is that the children in the study were randomly assigned either to receive the High/Scope Perry Preschool program or to receive no comparable program and were then tracked throughout their lives to age 40. At earlier stages, High/Scope Educational Research Foundation staff studied these same groups of children every year from age 3 to age 11, and again at ages 14, 15, 19, and 27.

Among the study's major findings in the educational area are

- More of the group who received high-quality early education graduated from high school than the non-program group (65% vs. 45%), particularly females (84% vs. 32%);
- Fewer females who received high-quality early education than non-program females required treatment for mental impairment (8% vs. 36%) or had to repeat a grade (21% vs. 41%); and
- The group who received high-quality early education on average outperformed the non-program group on various intellectual and language tests during their early childhood years, on school achievement tests between ages 9 and 14, and on literacy tests at ages 19 and 27.

"The preschool program's long-term effects were due to its shorter-term effects on children's educational commitment and success," said report coauthor Jeanne Montie, senior research associate at the High/Scope Educational Research Foundation.

The study, begun in 1962, identified 123 young African American children living in poverty and assessed to be at high risk of school failure in Ypsilanti, Michigan. The researchers randomly assigned 58 of the children to a high-quality early care and education setting; the rest received no preschool program.

Among the study's major findings in the economic area are

- More of the group who received high-quality early education than the non-program group were employed at age 40 (76% vs. 62%);
- The group who received high-quality early education had median annual earnings more than \$5,000 higher than the non-program group (\$20,800 vs. \$15,300);
- More of the group who received high-quality early education owned their own homes; and
- More of the group who received high-quality early education had a savings account than the non-program group (76% vs. 50%).

In the High/Scope Perry Preschool program, children participated in their own education, by planning, carrying out, and reviewing their own activities as part of their learning experience.

One of the reviewers of the study, Nobel-Prize-winning University of Chicago economist James J. Heckman, said, "This report substantially bolsters the case for early interventions in disadvantaged populations. More than 35 years after they received an enriched preschool program, the Perry Preschool participants achieve much greater success in social and economic life than their counterparts who are randomly denied treatment."

Among the study's major findings in the crime prevention area are

- The group who received high-quality early education had significantly fewer arrests than the non-program group (36% vs. 55% arrested five times or more); and
- Significantly fewer members of the group who received high-quality early care than the non-program group were ever arrested for violent crimes (32% vs. 48%), property crimes (36% vs. 58%), or drug crimes (14% vs. 34%).

"This study proves that investing in high quality pre-kindergarten can make every family in America safer from crime and violence. Law enforcement leaders know that to win the war on crime, we need to be as willing to guarantee our kids space in a pre-kindergarten program as we are to guarantee a criminal a prison cell," said Sanford Newman, president of Fight Crime: Invest in Kids, an anti-crime organization made up of 2,000 police chiefs, sheriffs, prosecutors and victims of violence.

A copy (PDF format) of "The High/Scope Perry Preschool Study Through Age 40: Summary, Conclusions, and Frequently Asked Questions" is available at [www.highscope.org/Research/PerryProject/perrymain.htm](http://www.highscope.org/Research/PerryProject/perrymain.htm). A transcript of an audio press briefing on the study results is available at [www.highscope.org/PressRoom/PerryTranscript.htm](http://www.highscope.org/PressRoom/PerryTranscript.htm). Fifty-state data on state support for preschool programs can be found at <http://www.nieer.org/yearbook/>.

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# The Future of Children

PRINCETON-BROOKINGS



## Closing Achievement Gaps

*Ron Haskins and Cecilia Rouse*

By the time black and Hispanic children reach kindergarten, they are on average already far behind their more advantaged peers in reading and math readiness. Such disparities in achievement persist or even increase during the school years. Educational programs for parents and preschool education programs for children have the potential to narrow these disparities by at least half.

Test score disparities among racial and ethnic groups are a prominent feature of today's educational landscape, with black and Hispanic children regularly falling far behind white children. Although the achievement gaps narrowed somewhat during the 1970s and 1980s, they have since proved stubbornly resistant to closing further. If the nation is to achieve the goal of equal education as "a fact and a result," to borrow President Lyn-

don Johnson's words, we must commit ourselves to overcoming the substantial racial and ethnic differences in educational achievement that remain.

Although the achievement gap is normally seen as a problem affecting school-age children, in fact the gap first opens during the preschool years. The Early Childhood Education Longitudinal Study, Kindergarten Cohort (ECLS-K), a nationally representative sample of nearly 23,000 kindergartners, shows that black and Hispanic children score substantially (more than half a standard deviation, or the equivalent of 8 points on an IQ test with a standard deviation of 15) below white children at the beginning of kindergarten on math and reading achievement. The Family and Child Experiences Survey (FACES), an assessment administered to children entering Head Start, shows that the program's children, disproportionately minorities from low-income families, already fall well short (up to a standard deviation, or 15 points on an IQ test) in vocabulary, early reading, letter recognition, and early math by ages three and four.

**ABOUT THE AUTHORS:** Ron Haskins is a senior fellow in the Economic Studies program and co-director of the Initiative on Children and Families at the Brookings Institution. Cecilia Rouse is a professor of economics and public affairs and the director of the Princeton University Education Research Section. Both are senior editors of *The Future of Children*.

To read the full report on school readiness, go to [www.futureofchildren.org](http://www.futureofchildren.org).

Finally, Christopher Jencks of Harvard and Meredith Phillips of UCLA, using nationally representative data from the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth-Child Data, found that about 85 percent of black three- and four-year-olds scored lower on a vocabulary test than did the average white child of the same age.

*Such disparities are a serious breach in the nation's commitment to equality of opportunity because children who score poorly on tests of intellectual skills during the preschool years do less well in elementary and high school.*

### Preschool Gaps Signal Poor Outcomes Later in Life

These studies consistently show that poor and minority children have already fallen behind well before they enter the public schools. Such disparities are a serious breach in the nation's commitment to equality of opportunity because children who score poorly on tests of intellectual skills during the preschool years do less well in elementary and high school and are more likely to become teen parents, engage in criminal activities, suffer from unemployment, and become clinically depressed as adults.

The latest issue of *The Future of Children*, a scholarly journal devoted to research on programs and policies related to child well-being, examines the preschool origins of these racial and ethnic achievement gaps. Edited by Cecilia Rouse, Jeanne Brooks-Gunn, and Sara McLanahan, the issue features comprehensive reviews of research on how differences in children's socioeconomic background, parenting, brain development, and health contribute to racial and ethnic disparities in school

readiness and also considers strategies for closing the gap. Three strategies hold special promise.

In the long run, research on brain development may prove to be important. Researchers are now making great strides in understanding how the brain develops and what aspects of experience help or hinder development. Educational interventions are already able both to raise children's scores on tests of reading and to increase activity in the brain regions most closely linked with reading. The areas of the brain that are most critical for school readiness may thus prove responsive to therapeutic interventions. Because the field of neuroscience is still in its infancy, however, we think it wise to temper grandiose predictions until large-scale studies confirm the success of brain-related interventions in boosting school readiness.

The two remaining strategies emerge from the consistent finding that poor and minority children as young as three years already perform far below average on tests of school readiness. Unless one believes that this poor performance is due entirely or primarily to genetic factors, it follows that the preschool environments of poor and minority children are deficient in supplying the types of experiences that promote school readiness. And as a careful examination of evidence on behavioral genetics in the journal's current issue, by William Dickens of the Brookings Institution, concludes, "the evidence argues against a significant genetic role in explaining the gap." Thus, the search for ways to alter children's preschool environment to improve school readiness is well justified.

### Teaching Both Parents and Children

Two types of programs seem most promising—those that help parents learn the behaviors that promote child development and school readiness and those that directly teach poor and low-income children school readiness skills, both intellectual and behavioral.

Another article in the issue, by Jeanne Brooks-Gunn of Columbia and Lisa Markman of Princeton, reviews extensive research showing that black and Hispanic mothers engage less often in important parenting behaviors than do white mothers and that these parenting differences parallel racial and ethnic differences in school readiness. Brooks-Gunn and Markman attribute as much as half the gap in school readiness to differences in parenting. Most strikingly, black and Hispanic parents have been found to be less likely to talk responsively and to read to their infants and young children and to have fewer books and other educational materials in their homes—important dimensions of parenting that contribute to child development.

### A Long History

Interventions to help parents alter their behavior to improve children's development and school readiness have a long history. Many have failed to affect materially either parenting behavior or children's development. But some large-scale and well-designed studies have both changed parental behavior and, through the reshaped behavior, improved children's achievement. A family literacy program designed by Grover Whitehurst, now the director of the Institute for Education Studies, taught parents to read with their children, ask probing questions, and initiate discussions that went beyond the reading material itself. Parents receiving the training changed their reading practices, and their children had higher language scores than children in a control group whose parents had no such training. The Infant Health and Development Program, an eight-site randomized experiment involving nearly 1,000 families with low birth weight babies, provided parents in the treatment group with both center-based care and home visits from their child's birth through age three. At the end of the study black children and their mothers showed more learning and less punitive discipline than comparable children in a control group. Similarly, the seventeen-site national

evaluation of the Early Head Start Demonstration, another randomized study, found that black mothers in a home-based and center-based intervention program were more likely than black mothers in the control group to read to their children, were more emotionally supportive, provided more support for language and learning, and were less likely to spank their children.

*Two types of programs seem most promising—those that help parents learn the behaviors that promote child development and school readiness and those that directly teach poor and low-income children school readiness skills, both intellectual and behavioral.*

Preschool programs, with or without associated parent programs, have also directly improved children's development and school readiness. The Perry Preschool program in Ypsilanti, Michigan, and the Abecedarian program in Chapel Hill, North Carolina, have been arguably the nation's best model programs. Perry included a home-visiting program during the preschool years; Abecedarian did not. Both produced long-lasting gains in school performance and a host of other outcomes. Although both featured random assignment, multiple measures of outcomes, and long-term designs (meaning that the children were followed for many years)—all marks of high-quality evaluations—most observers agree that their small size calls into question whether large-scale programs could attain similar success.

This problem is overcome to some degree by the Chicago Child-Parent Centers, a long-term study of more than 550 children in the Chicago school system. The children participated in up to six years

of intervention, from preschool through grade 3. Participants scored higher in reading achievement through seventh grade and had lower rates of grade retention and special education placement than comparable children who had not received the intervention. The Chicago study is notable because of its large-scale, long-term follow-up and because it was implemented in regular public school classrooms. It was not based on random assignment, raising some concern about the validity of its findings. Even so, this study suggests that big gains are possible in large-scale programs implemented in regular classrooms by teachers with a minimum of special training.

### Preschool's Growing Enrollment

The finding that preschool programs can boost development and school readiness has prompted a steady increase both in the number of such programs and in enrollment. In addition to Head Start, which now enrolls almost a million three- and four-year-olds predominantly from poor families, more than forty states have initiated their own preschool programs. At the same time, steadily increasing pressure from the federal government to move poor mothers off welfare and into jobs and the resulting increase in employment by low-income and never-married single mothers have driven up funding and demand for child care. Child care facilities, however, vary widely in quality. The best reach the moderately high quality of Head Start and the state preschool programs, but many and perhaps most are worse and are, like the home environments of many poor and minority children, inadequate in promoting development and school readiness.

Despite the unevenness of quality, a recent study by Katherine Magnuson of the University of Wisconsin at Madison and her colleagues seems to demonstrate that, taken as a whole for the nation, center-based programs are helping prepare children for school. Using data from the Early Child-

hood Longitudinal Study and controlling for differences in family background and other factors, Magnuson found that children who had attended a center- or school-based preschool program the year before entering kindergarten scored higher on tests of reading and math skills at kindergarten entry than children who had not attended such programs. The differences remained at the end of kindergarten and first grade. In addition, children who attended a center-based program were less likely to be retained in kindergarten.

Both parenting and preschool programs, then, can contribute to closing the achievement gap. The nation has been gradually moving toward universal enrollment of all low-income and minority children in at least one year of preschool. Although there is widespread agreement that high-quality programs that emphasize school readiness and parent involvement can reduce the achievement gap, expanding most existing programs is by no means certain to close the gap appreciably because their average quality is not high enough to produce lasting gains. The FACES study shows, for example, that even after completing the Head Start program, the average poor child still falls short in reading and math. If Head Start and other preschool programs could be improved to achieve the quality of the Perry or Abecedarian program, they could reduce the gap by as much as half. If they could improve to match the quality of the Chicago Parent-Child Centers, an intervention that demonstrates that high-quality programs can be implemented on a much broader scale than Perry or Abecedarian, they would also substantially narrow the gap. If the programs were no better than Head Start or the current state preschool programs, however, the impact on the gap would be modest.

### Increasing Enrollment and Quality

In our view, there are two keys to using preschool programs to reduce the achievement gap. The first is to enroll all children from low-income families,

which are disproportionately minority, in a preschool program; the second is to provide high-quality programs, including well-qualified teachers and systematic school readiness activities that develop appropriate reading, math, and social-emotional skills. An article in the current issue of *The Future of Children* by Magnuson and Jane Waldfogel estimates the effects of various combinations of increased enrollment and increased preschool quality on the gap in school readiness for black and Hispanic children. The authors estimate that if all low-income children (those with family income below 200 percent of poverty) were enrolled in high-quality programs, the black-white gap could narrow by as much as one-quarter; the Hispanic-white gap, by as much as 36 percent. The effect would be greater for Hispanic children primarily because fewer Hispanic than black children are now enrolled in center-based programs.

We estimate that a quality preschool program costs around \$8,000 per child. We also estimate, based on numbers from the Census Bureau and from the Magnuson and Waldfogel article, that a little more than 800,000 low-income four-year-olds are not now in a center-based program. Thus, it would cost around \$6.5 billion a year to provide a high-quality program for all low-income four-year-olds not now in a center-based program. Placing all low-income four-year-olds in a high-quality program would add to the overall cost because many of those now in preschool programs are in lower-quality programs costing less than \$8,000 a year. Improving these programs would require additional money.

### Steps toward Progress

Given the federal government's large budget deficit, such funding is unlikely to be forthcoming soon. But it does not follow that no action is possible. We recommend that the federal government sponsor statewide demonstration programs in several states that agree to enroll all or nearly all low-income four-year-olds or three- and four-year olds

in high-quality programs. To participate, states would have to agree to meet a series of conditions. These include:

- involving the parents to the maximum degree possible,
- coordinating the preschool program with the kindergarten program in the public schools,

*We estimate that a quality preschool program costs around \$8,000 per child. We also estimate . . . that a little more than 800,000 low-income four-year-olds are not now in a center-based program.*

- maintaining standards at least as strong as Head Start standards,
- providing professional development to all teachers in the program,
- outlining a plan for coordinating all state and federal resources for providing quality preschool programs, including Head Start, Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, the Child Care and Development Block Grant (at state option), and state spending on preschool programs,
- maintaining at least current state spending on preschool programs,
- participating in a third-party evaluation of program impacts.

Clearly such an expansion and improvement of preschool is expensive. But a large portion of the money to pay for such high-quality programs could come from the approximately \$25 billion that the states and the federal government now spend on child care and preschool programs. Under current policies, preschool children are in programs that are paid for by separate funding streams and are operated under separate authorities. Some children are in Head Start, some in a state-sponsored preschool program, some in programs paid for by

Title I, and some in facilities paid for by federal or state child care funds, especially funds from the Child Care and Development Block Grant. A first step toward building expanded and higher-quality programs for all low-income four-year-olds would be to use all these funds to create a single coordinated program. The major goal of the state demonstration programs would be to determine whether it is possible to create and implement a statewide program that effectively increases access and improves quality while efficiently coordinating all sources of funding. Answering the numerous questions encompassed by this goal will require well-designed third-party evaluations. There is simply no way to know whether programs work unless they are subjected to carefully designed evaluations that follow children over a period of years after they leave the program. Only quality evaluations will prevent excessive claims about program effects and administrative efficiency and allow policymakers to make wise decisions about future directions.

Congress should provide the secretary of health and human services with modest additional funding for five years to help participating states implement the demonstrations. The secretary must also have the authority and the funding to hire third-party evaluators to test the effectiveness of the state programs. In addition, Congress should urge the secretary to negotiate with at least one state to provide two years of preschool to a substantial group of children and to evaluate that program as well. The research literature does not permit the confident conclusion that one year of preschool will sufficiently boost school readiness. A comparison of one-year with two-year programs would therefore be wise.

In participating states, the secretary should also have the authority to provide funding for all Head Start programs directly to state officials. Any state that wants to exercise this option, however, must

show that it has negotiated with state Head Start officials. The most important argument against our proposal is that it might damage Head Start without putting a better program in place. For this reason we recommend giving only a few states power over Head Start spending. Before more states can be given the opportunity to coordinate all funds for preschool in their state, it must be demonstrated that coordinated funding improves preschools and boosts the school readiness of children from low-income families. As the FACES data show quite clearly, the current Head Start program is not fully preparing poor and minority children for the rigors of schooling.

### Making a Vision a Reality

Justice Sandra Day O'Connor has recently predicted, referring to university-based affirmative action programs, that "25 years from now, the use of racial preferences will no longer be necessary." Although Justice O'Connor did not reveal the evidence or reasoning behind her claim, the implication is that the nation will have achieved equality of educational opportunity within a quarter-century and that affirmative action will no longer be necessary. But such optimism defies the evidence on the preschool and school-age gaps in achievement. We now know, more than four decades into the nation's vigorous pursuit of President Johnson's goal of equal education as "a fact and a result," that there is nothing inevitable about achieving that goal. If the United States is truly committed to equal opportunity, its leaders must find ways to coordinate all preschool funding streams, raise the average quality of preschool programs by training effective teachers, create curriculum activities for reading, math, and social-emotional development, and achieve greater coordination between the preschools and schools. Expanding enrollment in, and raising the quality of, its preschool programs will give the nation the best chance to make Justice O'Connor's—and President Johnson's—vision a reality.

## Additional Reading

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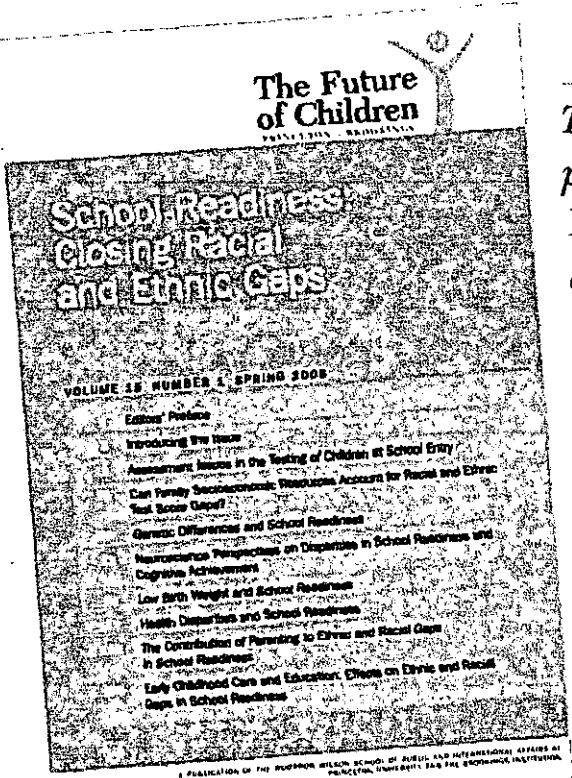
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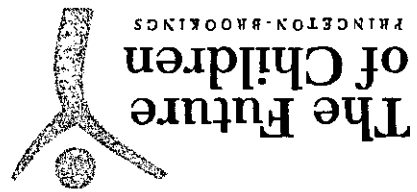
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*This policy brief is a companion piece to School Readiness: Closing Racial and Ethnic Gaps, which can be found on our website, [www.futureofchildren.org](http://www.futureofchildren.org). Paid subscriptions for print copies are also available on our website. While visiting the site, please sign up for our e-newsletter to be notified about our next volume, Marriage and Child Well-being, as well as other future products.*

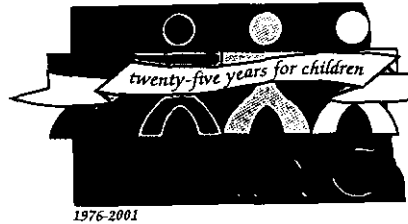
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# VOICES FOR NORTH DAKOTA'S CHILDREN



CENTER FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD LEADERSHIP & ADVOCACY

March 1, 2005

To: Layton Freeborg, Chairperson, Senate Education Committee

From: Barb Arnold-Tengesdal  
Voices for North Dakota's Children

Re: Testimony supporting HB 1230

*Voices for North Dakota's Children* is a collaborative advocacy effort of early childhood education professional organizations. It is made up of the North Dakota Head Start Association, North Dakota Association for the Education of Young Children, Child Care Resource & Referral Network and Children's Caucus.

We urge your support of HB 1230.

This bill allows parents the right to have a public kindergarten education available for their child. At a time when the emphasis is on school accountability and increased student achievement, we are challenged to find ways to deliver educational programs that will help children learn in a developmentally appropriate and culturally sensitive way (*Young Children, Nov. 2003, pg. 54*). We believe parents want to give their child the best educational start available and the state should see the economic, social and educational benefits in offering early childhood education to all children.

The research on the benefits of early childhood education is overwhelmingly positive. The most significant gains are seen in children of low-income families. The academic gains when in higher quality child care settings, better prepare children for K-12 education (*Children of the Cost, Quality, & Outcomes Study Go to School, 2000*). The High/Scope Perry Preschool Project recently reported findings showing participants have higher income earnings, are more likely to hold a job, commit fewer crimes, and graduate from high school (*High/Scope Educational Research Foundation, Nov. 2004*). Statistics on academic gains have been reported locally around the state. Fargo, Bismarck and Devils Lake have seen significant gains in reading and math in populations that attend full-day kindergarten programs.

Nationwide, the benefits of starting children in kindergarten are understood by parents, and thus the growth in the percentage of five-year-olds enrolled in full-day kindergarten grew from 12 percent in 1970 to 55 percent in 1997 as reported by Elicker (*Full-day kindergarten: Exploring the research. Phi Delta Kappa International 2000*).

Will this decision affect the child care industry? It might at the beginning of implementing this type of option for all children in North Dakota. Most districts already provide kindergarten, would this bill make much change in our current system? We think not.