Full-Day Kindergarten and School Improvement Grants

Under the School Improvement Grant (SIG) program, states have the ability to competitively award funds from the federal Department of Education to local school districts to improve the lowest-performing schools. While past grantees incorporated early learning into school turnaround efforts, SIG requirements did not formally sanction using funds to support early learning efforts (Connors-Tadros, Dunn, Martella, & McCauley, 2014). However, the new SIG requirements effective on March 11, 2015, support early learning by formally allowing school districts to implement early learning intervention models in elementary schools (Proposed Requirements, 2014). The new requirements stipulate that if an early learning intervention model is adopted, it must include full-day kindergarten, though the number of hours that constitute a full-day program is not specified. A recent webinar from two Department of Education-funded centers, the Center on Enhancing Early Learning Outcomes and the Center on School Turnaround, discussed key requirements of the model, including expanding full-day kindergarten (Martella, Delisle, McCauley, Connors-Tadros, Dunn, & Geier, 2015).

Since the new SIG requirements have brought more attention to full-day kindergarten, this Topic of Interest highlights data sets, reports, and journal articles published since 2010 in the Research Connections collection on policies, student enrollment, and child outcomes of full-day kindergarten in the United States.
**Full-Day Kindergarten Policies and Enrollment**

Several sources of national- and state-level data on full-day kindergarten policies and enrollment are available. The Education Commission of the States (ECS) repeatedly examined whether states require school districts to offer kindergarten, and if so, whether full-day programs are required. Child Trends maintains a database of indicators on child well-being, including trends in full-day kindergarten enrollment in the United States. Data for the full-day kindergarten enrollment indicator come from the U.S. Census Bureau's Current Population Survey (CPS), October Supplement, which focuses on school enrollment; these data are available from Research Connections.

Definitions and measures of full-day kindergarten vary across these datasets. According to ECS, state definitions of full-day programs range from four to seven hours, while enrollment data in the CPS come from parent reports of whether programs are full- or part-day.

Access resources:


**Full-Day Kindergarten Outcomes**

A number of systematic reviews explore the role of full-day kindergarten in supporting children's development. Recently published studies on the topic are also available through Research Connections.

Read systematic reviews:


Read selected recent studies:


**Additional Resources**

Explore additional resources in the *Research Connections* collection on a range of topics of related to full-day kindergarten.
References


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*Last updated: May 2015*

*Research Connections* is a partnership between the National Center for Children in Poverty at the Mailman School of Public Health, Columbia University, and the Interuniversity Consortium for Political and Social Research at the Institute for Social Research, the University of Michigan, supported by a grant from the Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation in the Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of the Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation, the Administration for Children and Families, or the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.