



200 W. Baltimore Street  
Baltimore, MD 21201  
Nancy S. Grasmick  
State Superintendent of Schools

# FULL-DAY KINDERGARTEN

Fact Sheet  
**65**

October 2003

---

## ***What is full-day kindergarten?***

Full-day kindergarten provides a full school day program, 6.5 hours a day, for young children to support their academic, social, physical, and emotional development.

---

## ***How many children are already in full-day kindergarten?***

For the 2002-03 school year, more than 56,000 children were enrolled in public kindergarten and 16,000 enrolled in private kindergarten in Maryland. For that same year, 50% of all kindergartners in public schools attended full-day kindergarten.

---

## ***Which jurisdictions now provide full-day kindergarten county-wide?***

Five jurisdictions provided full-day kindergarten in *every* school during 2002-03. They were: Allegany, Caroline, Garrett, and Prince George's counties and Baltimore City. Some type of all-day kindergarten is currently available in all 24 local school systems.

In 2002-03 there were 1,359 full-day kindergarten classes in 475 schools. The numbers have more than doubled since 1997-98 when 191 schools offered full-day kindergarten.

In October 2003, each of the 24 local school systems submitted to the Maryland State Department of Education a local school system master plan, which included strategies for implementing full-day kindergarten systemwide by 2007-08 as required by the Bridge to Excellence in Public Schools Act.

---

## ***Is full-day kindergarten effective?***

The positive effects of full-day kindergarten have been identified by numerous research studies including the U.S. Department of Education, many academic researchers, and local school system evaluations such as Montgomery County Public Schools.

- ◆ A national longitudinal study, conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics, demonstrated consistent positive effects on children's cognitive growth over the kindergarten year for full-day kindergarten.

- ◆ A study published in the *Early Childhood Research Quarterly* (1992) found that full-day kindergarten allowed teachers to more effectively pace instruction according to the children's individual needs, explore instructional topics in depth, develop close parent-teacher relationships, and accommodate more teacher-directed individual work with students.

---

---

***Is full-day kindergarten effective? (continued)***

♦ A Montgomery County Public Schools (2001) study found that full-day kindergarten has a significant positive effect on the progression of kindergarten students from poverty-level families and those students with second language learning needs.

---

***What are the benefits of full-day kindergarten?***

Full-day kindergarten provides young children with the opportunity for more in-depth learning experiences together with teaching and learning continuity. This is of particular importance as local schools systems are implementing school reform initiatives in accordance with the federal No Child Left Behind mandates.

Research studies show greater improvement in academic and social skills especially for at-risk students including low-income students and students with second language learning needs.

Studies also indicate that all children, regardless of economic backgrounds benefit academically and socially from quality full-day kindergarten experiences. In addition, with the increase of working mothers (over 60% of mothers with children under the age of six work), most children have previously been in early childhood programs all day and, therefore, are ready for a full-day challenging curriculum.

---

***What are the Bridge to Excellence (Thornton) provisions?***

In the past, state aid for kindergarten only provided 50% reimbursement for kindergarten students regardless of whether they attended half-day or full-day sessions.

The Bridge to Excellence in Public Schools Act includes gradual increases in state aid. By 2007-08, state aid will increase to full reimbursement for kindergarten. Reimbursement will be phased-in according to the following schedule:

- 0.60 of the full-time equivalent students (FTE) in fiscal year 2004
- 0.70 FTE in fiscal year 2005
- 0.80 FTE in fiscal year 2006
- 0.90 FTE in fiscal year 2007
- 1.00 FTE in fiscal year 2008 and each fiscal year thereafter.