

WAYLAND • PUBLIC • SCHOOLS

WAYLAND, MASSACHUSETTS

Phone: (508) 358-7728

FAX: (508) 358-7708

Gary A. Burton, Ph.D.
Superintendent of Schools
(508) 358-3774

Brad J. Crozier
Assistant Superintendent
(508) 358-3772

Marlene M. Dodyk, Ph.D.
Director of Student Services
(508) 358-3756

Joy E. Buhler
Business Administrator
(508) 358-3750

DATE: June 12, 2009
TO: Gary Burton
FROM: Brad Crozier, Assistant Superintendent *BC*
RE: Full Day Kindergarten Summary

This memo will serve as an executive summary for the Full Day Kindergarten Study Group (FDK). It will provide information related to the group's structure, progress to date, next steps, and target date for a recommendation to Dr. Burton for the future of the kindergarten program including supporting documents, survey results, and a rationale.

As you know, in response to Dr. Burton's email dated August 15, 2007, a group of administrators met to examine the possibility of the Wayland school district moving to a full-day kindergarten program. The impetus for this investigation came from possible grant funds available from the state and our interest in providing the best educational experience for our younger students. The administrative study group consisted of the elementary principals, Sue Abrams, Debbie Bearse, and Jim Lee; the Assistant Superintendent, Brad Crozier; the Early Childhood Coordinator, Marlene Moskowitz-Dodyk; the WSCP Program Coordinator, Christine Robinson; and the WSCP Director, Cheryl Fertig. The group met seven times between September 18, 2007 and April 15, 2008, with numerous individual communications between meetings. The main recommendation to Dr. Burton from the administrative study group was to expand the study group to include more constituencies (parents, teacher, and community members).

In September 2008, a press release was sent the Town Crier and to several community listservs to invite interested community members to volunteer their time to investigate transitioning Wayland to a full-day kindergarten model. More than thirty-five applications were submitted to join the group and based on interest, composition of the group, and availability, the final study group was limited to twenty-five. The composition of the group was critical to meet the criteria set by the State to qualify for grant funds for FDK. For example, the State required a representative associated with both public and private early childhood programs, a parent with a child in each designated grade level (pre-k, grades K, 1, 2, & 3), teachers from pre-k, grades K, 1, 2, & 3, a special education teacher, curriculum coordinators, etc. All of the state designated "slots" were filled by volunteers from the application pool and the first meeting of the entire group was October 15, 2008.

Volunteers at the October 15th meeting self selected a sub-group to join to work on deliverables. The four subgroups were: Grant Writing, Research Summary, Models and Costs, and Survey. Each sub-group met many times to complete tasks, research topics, prepare information, and share ideas for the next large group meeting in December.

Late in October, we learned that the Governor’s reductions in the State budget removed all funding for new school districts considering transitioning to a full-day kindergarten program. The Wayland FDK Study Group continued to review the research, consider different kindergarten models and create a survey.

On December 17, 2008, all members of the FDK Study group were invited to a meeting at which each of the sub-groups shared their findings (see attachment for presentation slides from the meeting). The information the sub-groups provided to the FDK Study Group was rich with valuable information and insights. The consensus of the group was to: research and consider qualitative and anecdotal information from “peer” districts who have started full-day programs in Massachusetts in the last several years; create a survey to ascertain the broader communities’ perceptions of full-day kindergarten; refine the possible Wayland models for transitioning to a full-day program; and use this information to create a recommendation for Dr. Burton targeting the 2010-2011 school year for a possible recommended transition year.


The following would be next steps in the process:

Tasks	Target Date
Review State budget for possible grant funding	Summer 2009
Create survey for staff and community to establish parameters of need	Summer 2009
Survey community and staff	Fall 2009
Review and consider qualitative and anecdotal information from “peer” districts	Fall 2009
Establish a preferred Wayland FDK Model	Winter 2010
Make recommendation to Dr. Burton	Winter 2010
If Full Day Kindergarten is recommended:	
Provide staff development to Wayland staff	Spring 2010
Determine and develop Full-day Kindergarten Curriculum	Spring 2010
Create assessments to evaluate new model	Spring 2010
Purchase materials to support expanded model	Spring 2010
Collaborate with public and private pre-schools on transition to new model	Spring 2010
Implement new model	Fall 2010
Evaluate model	Summer 2011

**Wayland Kindergarten
Study Group**

Sub-Group Presentations
December 17, 2008

Research Sub-Group



Research Sub-Group

- Methodology
- Bibliography
- Findings

Full Day Kindergarten Research

Bibliography

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Research Sub-Group

- Research Summary
- Curriculum
- The research showed that full-day kindergarten programs enabled teachers to present a more extensive curriculum and to align policies and practices to those of subsequent grades. There was time for more active, child-centered, small-group activities. These formal and informal small-group activities provided more time for skill reinforcement and took core curriculum content to a deeper level. Several studies showed that full-day kindergarten students spent 46% more time on math and 30% more time on reading and language arts than students in half-day kindergarten programs. It was found that full-day kindergarten students produced a greater amount and better quality of unstructured writing as well. A full-day kindergarten program allowed enough time for additional focus on non-academic readiness skills as well as academic skills - thus providing a developmentally appropriate curriculum.

Research Sub-Group

- Achievement
- In the area of academic achievement, studies reported that children in full day kindergarten programs showed significant improvement in reading and some improvement in math achievement. It was also suggested that these gains would be the equivalent to an additional month of schooling. This was most evident in less affluent areas with a high minority population. The minority students and those with limited English proficiency who attended full day kindergartens showed more improvement in reading scores in grade one as compared with students who attended half day kindergarten. Additionally, these students scored higher than the national norms in the fall and spring of grade one. Children's writing skills were better in grade 1 but no evidence was found to suggest increased gains in later grades. There was much evidence that full day kindergarten programs may help to close the Achievement Gap with inner city students. Similarly there was some evidence to support the increased achievement of middle class students.

Research Sub-Group

- Classroom Management
- Research on classroom management techniques in a FDK cited that teachers knew their students better and had more time for small group instruction. Teachers were able to differentiate their instruction based on student's needs. Studies reported an increase in student initiated instruction, cognitively guided learning, thoughtful play and increased opportunities for learning centers. Children in FDK also had more time for social opportunities throughout the school day. The longer school day allowed for parents to volunteer in the classroom and to enhance communication between home and school. One study noted a decrease in teacher reported stress caused by time constraints.

Research Sub-Group

- Behavioral/Social Skills

In looking at the behavioral and social development of children, research suggested that children enrolled in full day kindergarten programs experienced less transitions during the course of the day, thus reducing stress. Children had increased opportunities for broadening social experiences and creating more positive social/emotional balance, more independent learning, more classroom involvement and productivity with peers and time for reflectiveness. Some studies showed increased originality and found children less likely to be shy or withdrawn. On the other hand, one study reported that children enrolled in a full day didactic curriculum evidenced a higher level of anxiety and teacher dependence. They also reported less pro-social behavior from these children.

Research Sub-Group

- Quality vs. Quantity

In reviewing the quality vs. quantity issue, many studies caution that the quantity of time spent in a kindergarten program did not insure as much success as the quality of the kindergarten program. Non-academic readiness skills (disposition towards learning, self control, interpersonal skills, internalizing behaviors (anxiety, loneliness, low self-esteem, sadness) and externalizing behaviors (acting out, anger, fighting, arguing)) had more of an impact on reading and math achievement in Grade 5 than time spent in a full or half-day program. It was noted that a full-day kindergarten program allowed time for the development of both academic and nonacademic readiness skills.

Research Sub-Group

- Long Term Benefits

Full day kindergarten studies have highlighted potential long term benefits. Much of the research showed that children from low income families benefited greatly from a longer kindergarten day. All children are better prepared for first grade after a full day experience but mixed were reported regarding the long term benefits. One longitudinal study conducted in Indiana noted higher test scores in third, fifth, and seventh grade for children enrolled in full day programs. The success seemed to be most evident in low income areas where children were less likely to be immersed in early literacy experiences in the home. It was also noted that children who attended full day programs had better attendance records than those who did not.

Research Sub-Group

- Possible Negative Impact**
 Many studies pointed to the possible negative impacts of the full day kindergarten model. An increase in didactic instruction was found to be inappropriate for young children. Children feeling anxious, over loaded and fatigued were unfavorable outcomes of increased programming. Increased academic expectations for students were found to be problematic for some children. Caution was raised regarding the need for an appropriate balance between the structured and unstructured parts of the school day as well as the temptation to include more academic instruction. The alternate day model of programming was discouraged due to lack of continuity for teachers and parents. In fact, lower achievement was reported in the alternate day model vs. the half day model of kindergarten programming. Additionally, it was noted that full day kindergarten programming should not be the only option for children. Parents should be able to choose a kindergarten option based on their child's needs.

Research Sub-Group

References	Findings
2	• Higher anxiety in FD with FD didactic Curriculum
2	• Less pro-social behavior
2	• Higher on teacher dependency
4, 23, 20	• Additional time to broaden social experiences
1, 35, 26, 21	• Independent learning/learning environment/productivity with peer relationships
7	• FD kids more involved, shared responsibility, independent learning, less likely to be absent, shy withdrawn
10, 11, 23, 26, 27, 21	• Limits problems child must make during key learning times
11	• Continuity for children from preschool on 67% of children go to preschool
13, 24, 25, 30, 21	• More positive social/emotional behavior

Teacher-Student Interaction
Curriculum

Research Sub-Group

References	Findings
1, 11, 17, 23, 27, 20	• More active child interest in small group activities - formal and informal
1	• Developmentally appropriate curriculum
4, 7, 23, 27	• 30% more time on reading and language arts
4, 7, 27	• 46% more time on math
11, 24	• High positive and practices in grades to follow
29	• Use of more extensive curriculum
29	• Inclusion of activities that took care content to a deeper level
29	• Greater amount and quality of unstructured writing

References	Findings
3	• Teachers know children better

Research Sub-Group

References	Findings
7, 21	• Anxiety - overhead
7, 21	• More didactic instruction - inappropriate for children
7, 1, 20	• Alternate day model - lack of consistency for teachers and parents - lower achievement than half day
8, 21	• School implications to include more academic activities for day
26	• Some LDC get tired, allowances need to be made for them
26	• More academic work is required of students, may be a challenge for some
26	• More balance is needed between the structured part of the day and the "loosey open" day
26	• Full day kindergarten should not be the only option for children. Parents should be able to choose a kindergarten option based on their children's needs.
18	• Attending FDK unrelated to grade two reading performance, may have negative impact on grade five math performance
18	• Some of the above findings have not accounted for potential self-selection bias or unobservable factors

Research Sub-Group

References	Findings
9, 23, 24, 26	• Longer testing benefits Down low income families
9, 11, 23, 26	• No differences effects
10, 26, 27, 20	• Better prepared for grade 1
11	• Align policies and practices of grades to follow
11, 23	• Gains in reading and math - yet research mixed on long term benefits
16, 27	• Higher reading and math scores and less stressors in grade 2
16	• No differences in Special Education referrals
23	• Better attendance record
25	• In Indiana full day kindergarten children performed significantly better in the 4. CCR and seventh grade in the CTBS tests (equivalent of the MCAS)
26	• Studies showing that Native American, Hispanic and African American full day kindergarten students had accelerated performance in vocabulary, spelling, sound phonemes, and comprehension, letter sounds and grapheme-phoneme gaps in lower sounds were thirty percent higher than that for half day students.
19	• Fewer special education referrals in kindergarten repeats

Research Sub-Group

References	Findings
7, 18	• No significant differences in math and writing
1, 2, 7, 20	• Significant increase in reading achievement
4, 14, 15, 23	• Children learn more - large class/low effort and more mastery
7	• Gains attributed to an additional one month of schooling
11, 15, 17	• Increased achievement (middle class students)
13	• Gains in oral language, emergent literacy skills, math, behavior
14, 23	• Disadvantaged students - impacts more
1, 7	• Affects oral achievement in math
24	• May close the achievement gap
28	• Better writing skills in grade one
20	• All ethnic groups and ELL's showed more improvement in reading scores in grade one from fall to spring if than FDK when compared to KDK.
20	• FDK's showed reading scores higher than the national norms in fall and spring of grade one.
22	• Positively impacts 1-12 working and learning

Research Sub-Group

References	Findings
7, 27, 30, 31	• More small group instruction
7, 25, 27, 30, 31	• More individualized instruction
2, 8, 30, 31	• More student centered instruction
26	• More time for cooperatively guided learning
26	• More time for thoughtful play
25	• More time in teacher directed, individual work and learning centers
26	• Allows for flexibility for parents to volunteer
25	• Better communication between home and school
3	• Less stress on teacher by time constraints

Research Sub-Group

References	Findings
1, 5, 6, 26, 27	• Quality does not ensure success equal by making the difference
18	• Academic and non-academic readiness skills at Kindergarten more significantly related to reading and math achievement in grade 3 than time spent in FDK.
18	• Some overall achievement by development of non-academic school readiness skills in FDK programs (expectations towards learning, self control, interpersonal skills, sharing and cooperating behaviors)

References	Findings
11, 27	• 60% FD - across country (1998)
7, 23	• South (mean)
7, 23	• Not in North New England and West
7, 23	• Midwest - equal

Models Sub-Group

Models Sub Group

Report to Full Day
Kindergarten Study
Group

Data Collection

- | | |
|------------|----------------------|
| ☞Newton | By phone interview |
| ☞Wellesley | ☞# of full days |
| ☞Concord | ☞Hours/day |
| ☞Lexington | ☞Class size |
| ☞Weston | ☞Teaching Assistants |
| ☞Lincoln | ☞Schedule specifics |
| ☞Brookline | ☞Transition |
| | ☞# of years |

General Trends

- ☞We found no fee based kindergarten program in schools surveyed.
- ☞All have one early release day with Wayland's being the longest.
- ☞All have full day programs.

Basic Models

- 2 full days
- 3 full days
- 4 full days with one noon release
- 5 full days with one early (1:50) release
- Specialized-fulltime staffing with small groups attending in the afternoons

Specialized Models

- Newton
- ☞ 30 days of half days in fall
 - ☞ 2 full days/week starting in October
 - ☞ Full time staffing with each class split in half, and each half attending 2 additional afternoons a week

Specialized Models

- Wellesley
- ☞ 30 days of half days in fall
 - ☞ Students in 4 small groups
 - ☞ Each small group goes 1 full day then increases # of afternoons/week until all attend full time in April
 - ☞ Full time staffing all year

Specialized Model

Concord

- ⊗ 3 Full days/week and 1 half day
- ⊗ Each small group of 15 attends one afternoon per week on a 6-7 week rotation
- ⊗ That afternoon used for screening, intervention, acceleration, special interests, etc.
- ⊗ Staffed full time

Cost Estimate

Based on 08/09 figures for salary, # of classes, hours of operation, BASE fees, etc.

Includes pro-rated assistant principal, secretary, specialists, and special educators

Assumptions

If 5 day fulltime K adopted:

- ⊗ Increase 3.15 FTE's for 9 classrooms with a teacher and teaching assistant in each
- ⊗ Increase .5 assistant principal, .5 additional secretary, additional guidance
- ⊗ Increase Special Education and Specialists as needed

Teacher survey

Methodology

- Qualitative in nature
- Online survey

Teacher Survey Questions

1. Which of these positions do you hold in the Wayland Public Schools? Please check:
 Kindergarten Teacher Kindergarten Assistant
 Curriculum Specialist First Grade Teacher

2. Do you think that the Wayland Public Schools should institute Full Day Kindergarten? Yes No Unsure

If yes:
- What do you think would be the key benefits of a full day kindergarten program?
- What areas of our existing curriculum and/or children's development would you give more time?
If no, please comment on the reasons you do not support full-day kindergarten.

Teacher Survey Questions

First Grade Teachers: Please comment on your views with regard to a full day kindergarten program may or may not impact incoming first graders.

Please use this space to add any input you wish to share with regard to your views of a full-day kindergarten model for Wayland.
