



NORTH SLOPE BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

M E M O R A N D U M

TO: Qaiyaan Harcharek, Board President
Members of the School Board

THROUGH: Pauline Harvey, Superintendent DS
PH

THROUGH: David Jones, Assistant Superintendent DS
DJ

DATE: May 15, 2021

SUBJECT: Full Day Kindergarten Pilot

Memo No. SB21-180
(Informational Item)

NSBSD Strategic Plan Goal:

1.0 ACADEMIC SUCCESS/WHOLE CHILD: All students will reach their intellectual potential and achieve academic success through integrating Iñupiaq knowledge systems into the core content areas and focusing on the development of the Whole Child.

1.1 EARLY CHILDHOOD SUCCESS: Support all students to read at grade level by the end of third grade.

Background:

Currently all NSBSD K-12 sites provide a half-day kindergarten. The percentage of students who attend a full day of kindergarten has grown dramatically from just 10% of students in the classroom for a full day in the 1970's. By 2016, that number had grown to over 80%.

Why the push for more schooling, and is it necessary? Studies have shown the early years in education are critical. [Education Week](#) reported on a study by the American Education Research Association which found that students who are not reading proficiently by third grade are four times less like to graduate high school by age 19.

WHY FULL DAY?

WHY HALF DAY?

Many kids have already transitioned to a full day via pre-K

Some kids aren't developmentally ready for a full day

May give students an academic advantage

More time for other enriching activities outside of school

Less of a financial burden on families (if school is free)

Less cost to the school district and taxpayers

Recommendation:

The Assistant Superintendent recommends the following:

SY 21-22 will include North Slope Borough Schools that are able to support a Full-Day Kindergarten with specific focus on staff and budget.

Issue Summary:

While having children in all-day kindergarten is clearly more convenient, is it actually the best thing for them?

Results are mixed. A study from Duke University found that whatever benefits gained by students attending full-day kindergarten disappeared by 3rd grade. Other studies, including one from the University of Virginia, indicate sizable learning advantages for students who attend full-day kindergarten.

A child's background is also crucial in determining their particular need for kindergarten. "For children who grow up with less exposure to a rich language environment and or have early language deprivation, a full day of kindergarten is helpful," says Dr. Horowitz. He adds that such language skills are hard to remediate. If done earlier, chances for success improve.

A study by Colorado State University shows that full-day students perform significantly higher on achievement assessments than their half-day peers, even when controlling for initial abilities (Wolgemuth et al., 2006). However, the same study shows that the advantage quickly disappears.

Full-Day Kindergarten Schedule Example

8:35-9:00 – arrival, breakfast, morning work

Morning work may consist of unpacking, signing in, fine motor tasks, and play.

9:15-9:30 – number corner, calendar

I recently made the switch to number corner and calendar in the morning and I LOVE it – I really feel like for my class and preferences, this flows better in the morning vs. later in the day during math.

9:30 – 11:00 – literacy (Science/SS integration)

Literacy block may focus on mini lessons, writing time, a LOT of reading and read alouds, and free-flowing centers, where students are moving through their choices and teachers are meeting with small groups.

11:00-11:45 – lunch/recess

11:50-12:10 – rest/story

12:15-1:00 – classroom play/centers (kitchen, sensory, blocks, etc.)

This is when kids make their plan to play in their classroom. E.g. Kitchen area, blocks, cars, LEGOS, puzzles, and more.

For instance, if we have a student who is not able to count with one to one correspondence, Teacher may build a LEGO tower with him/her and count the blocks. If a student cannot read CVC words, you may do word puzzles together or read books. This would be a time that they are continually learning and is SO important for their development.

1:00-1:50 – math

Math is a similar structure to literacy. Routine is VERY important at this age and they thrive when they have similar systems in place throughout the day. E.g. mini lessons, number talks, and free-flowing math centers (similar to literacy) where students are freely moving through their choices as teacher meets with small groups.

1:50-2:05 – recess

2:05-2:20 – snack

2:30 – dismissal

Background:

BP 6112 SCHOOL DAY

Note: Pursuant to AS 14.03.040, the school board may approve Saturday as a day in session. The School Board shall fix the length of the school day subject to the provisions of law. The school day shall be arranged and scheduled by the administration so as to offer the greatest return educationally for the time spent, within the limitations of school facilities and requirements of state law and regulations.

The minimum day for students is defined in state law as follows:

- Grades K-3 - four hours of instructional time; lunch and recess not included in the four hours;
- Grades 4-12 - five hours of instructional time; lunch and recess not included in the five hours.