



NEWS RELEASE

Utah State Board of Education

250 EAST 500 SOUTH P.O. BOX 144200 SALT LAKE CITY, UT 84114-4200
www.schools.utah.gov

November 6, 2023

For Immediate Release

Contacts: Sara Wiebke, early learning coordinator
801-538-7893 · sara.wiebke@schools.utah.gov
Christine Elegante, K-3 literacy specialist
801-538-7782 · christine.elegante@schools.utah.gov

Full-Day Kindergarten Sees Strong Enrollment Increase Across the State

SALT LAKE CITY – Data recently released by the Utah State Board of Education (USBE) indicates that an incredible 77% of enrolled Utah kindergartners have decided to take advantage of full-day kindergarten options. As of October 1, 2023, 34,911 Utah families have opted for full-day for their students, with only 23% of students enrolled in the half-day option.

“It is exciting to see how many families now have the opportunity to choose half-day or full-day kindergarten in almost every area of the state,” said Early Learning Coordinator Sara Wiebke. Full-day kindergarten has been one of USBE’s top priorities and was established by the passage of H.B. 477 in the most recent legislative session. Prior to H.B. 477, only 34% of Utah’s kindergarteners were enrolled in full-day or extended-day kindergarten, which was in part due to lack of opportunities for full-day Kindergarten across the state.

The increase in full-day kindergarten enrollment has the potential to jumpstart student academic success. Studies have shown that students in full-day kindergarten are less likely to need academic intervention in later grades. Students enrolled in full-day kindergarten also tend to progress in mathematics and reading at higher rates than their half-day kindergarten peers. The extra hours afforded in a full-day model also allow more time for learning science, social studies, art, health, physical education, and more.

Additionally, full-day kindergarten provides an opportunity to identify learning challenges early on. If a student is struggling with a specific skill or concept, a teacher has the time to provide extra

support. It takes 15-30 minutes over a short amount of time to close a learning gap in kindergarten, compared to 90 minutes - 3 hours a day over a long period of time to close a learning gap in third grade.

"We have seen a great demand for full-day kindergarten in Utah and we are glad that the state has invested in providing this option for Utah families," said State Superintendent of Public Instruction Sydnee Dickson. In several districts, including Grand, Emery, and Daggett, 100% of kindergarten students are participating in the full-day option. A more comprehensive list of kindergarten counts can be found [here](#).

www.schools.utah.gov