

HOUSE RESEARCH

Bill Summary

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Subject: Funding for Voluntary Full-Day Kindergarten

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Overview

Minnesota provides half-day funding for most school district kindergarten programs. This is accomplished by setting the pupil weighting for kindergarten students at .557.

The state also provides \$7 million a year for full-day kindergarten through the first grade preparedness program. School districts are sorted into four different regions (Minneapolis, St. Paul, suburban districts, and greater Minnesota districts). Each region gets one-fourth of the total annual revenue. These funds are distributed to school buildings in each region based on each building's relative percent of students eligible for free and reduced price meals.

HF 311 funds voluntary full-day kindergarten to all school districts in the state by increasing the pupil weight for elementary pupils from .557 to 1.115 for kindergarten pupils who attend school on an all-day, every-day basis (assuming 875 hours of instruction). According to November forecast data, there are about 55,000 kindergarten students being served by Minnesota's school districts and charter schools. The fiscal implications of this bill depend on the percentage of children who choose to attend kindergarten on a full-time basis. The annual aid entitlement costs assuming a 75% attendance rate would be approximately \$120 million.

- 1 Pupil unit weights.** Increases the pupil weight for elementary pupils from .557 to 1.115 for kindergarten pupils who attend school on an all-day, every-day basis beginning in fiscal year 2002.
- 2 Appropriation.** Appropriates \$120 million in fiscal year 2002 from the general fund to the commissioner of children, families, and learning for full-day kindergarten.