

# Children Enrolled in Full-Day Kindergarten

## DEFINITION

*Children enrolled in full-day kindergarten* is the percentage of public school children enrolled in full-day kindergarten programs on October 1. Children enrolled in private kindergarten programs or in half-day kindergarten programs that offer after-school child care are not included.

## SIGNIFICANCE

Children benefit academically from participating in full-day kindergarten. Children in full-day kindergarten make significant gains in early reading, math, and social skills when compared with children in half-day kindergarten. Full-day kindergarten can reduce grade retention and remediation rates. One study found that participation in full-day, high-quality kindergarten can close the achievement gap between the highest and lowest performing students by nearly one-third in reading and one-fourth in math.<sup>1,2</sup> Full-day kindergarten benefits all students, but it has a particularly strong impact for disadvantaged children.<sup>3</sup>

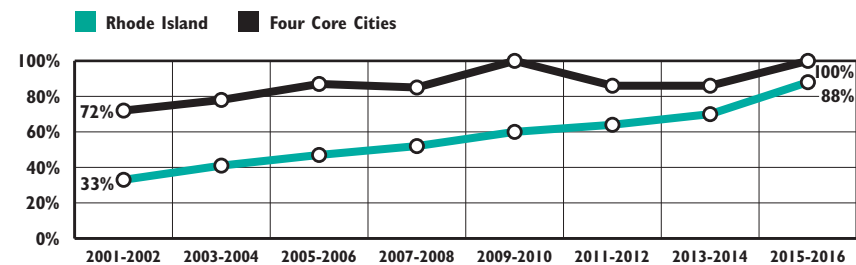
With an estimated 75% of four-year-olds in the U.S. enrolled in some type of preschool program, kindergarten no longer serves as the entry-point to formal, full-day school for most young children.<sup>4</sup> Also, teachers in full-day kindergarten programs have

more time to provide meaningful learning opportunities that encourage cognitive, physical, and social-emotional development.<sup>5,6</sup>

Nationally, enrollment in full-day kindergarten has been increasing steadily over the past 30 years. In 1979, 25% of U.S. kindergartners were in full-day programs, compared with 81% in 2014.<sup>7,8</sup> Enrollment in high-quality kindergarten is associated with immediate academic gains and long-term improved outcomes, including attending college, owning a house, and earning more as an adult.<sup>9</sup> High-quality kindergarten can also improve social and emotional skills. Kindergartners with strong social and emotional skills are more likely to be successful as adults—including having better high school and college completion rates, improved employment stability, and reduced criminal activity.<sup>10,11</sup>

In the 2015-2016 school year, 88% of the Rhode Island children who attended public kindergarten were in a full-day program, with 100% of students in the four core cities and 81% of students in the remainder of the state attending full-day kindergarten.<sup>12</sup>

Children in Full-Day Public Kindergarten Programs, Rhode Island, 2001-2002 through 2015-2016 School Years



Source: Rhode Island Department of Education, kindergarten enrollment October 1, 2001–October 1, 2015.

- ◆ In the 2015-2016 school year, 88% of Rhode Island kindergartners statewide and 100% of kindergartners in the four core cities were in full-day kindergarten. As of the 2015-2016 school year, 31 of the 35 elementary school districts and all of the public charter elementary schools in Rhode Island offer universal access to full-day kindergarten programs.<sup>13</sup>
- ◆ Three school districts are operating universal full-day kindergarten for the first time in the 2015-2016 school year (Johnston, North Kingstown, and Tiverton).
- ◆ As of the 2015-2016 school year, there are only four districts in Rhode Island that do not offer full-day kindergarten for all students: Coventry, Cranston, East Greenwich, and Warwick. Cranston, East Greenwich, and Warwick expanded enrollment in full-day kindergarten classrooms, but do not yet have universal access.<sup>14</sup> State legislation enacted in 2015 requires all districts to implement full-day kindergarten by August 2016.<sup>15</sup>

## Kindergarten Entry Profile

- ◆ Kindergarten Entry Assessments are an organized way to learn what children know and are able to do across all domains of development. The information is used to improve the transition to kindergarten, guide instruction for individual children, and inform policymakers.<sup>16,17</sup> Rhode Island is working with several other states and national experts to develop a new, comprehensive Kindergarten Entry Profile that incorporates best practices for young children. The new tool is being piloted in several districts in Rhode Island in the 2015-2016 school year.<sup>18</sup>

# Children Enrolled in Full-Day Kindergarten

Table 40. Children Enrolled in Full-Day Kindergarten Programs, Rhode Island, 2014-2015 and 2015-2016

SCHOOL DISTRICT	2014-2015 SCHOOL YEAR			2015-2016 SCHOOL YEAR		
	TOTAL CHILDREN IN K PROGRAMS	CHILDREN IN FULL-DAY K	% OF CHILDREN IN FULL-DAY K	TOTAL CHILDREN IN K PROGRAMS	CHILDREN IN FULL-DAY K	% OF CHILDREN IN FULL-DAY K
Barrington	170	170	100%	183	183	100%
Bristol Warren	253	253	100%	244	244	100%
Burrillville	145	145	100%	146	146	100%
Central Falls	222	222	100%	197	197	100%
Chariho	188	188	100%	173	173	100%
Coventry	292	1	<1%	256	0	0%
Cranston	598	3	<1%	623	93	15%
Cumberland	317	317	100%	285	285	100%
East Greenwich	140	34	24%	124	41	33%
East Providence	386	386	100%	411	411	100%
Exeter-West Greenwich	101	101	100%	112	112	100%
Foster	31	31	100%	39	39	100%
Glocester	82	82	100%	82	82	100%
Jamestown	46	46	100%	44	44	100%
Johnston	231	4	2%	220	220	100%
Lincoln	191	191	100%	199	199	100%
Little Compton	22	22	100%	17	17	100%
Middletown	174	174	100%	187	187	100%
Narragansett	75	75	100%	74	74	100%
New Shoreham	8	8	100%	9	9	100%
Newport	195	195	100%	181	181	100%
North Kingstown	205	64	31%	217	217	100%
North Providence	249	249	100%	245	245	100%
North Smithfield	112	112	100%	104	104	100%
Pawtucket	764	764	100%	719	719	100%
Portsmouth	148	148	100%	153	153	100%
Providence	1,838	1,838	100%	1,767	1,767	100%
Scituate	69	69	100%	73	73	100%
Smithfield	120	120	100%	157	157	100%
South Kingstown	203	203	100%	197	197	100%
Tiverton	108	0	0%	142	142	100%
Warwick	581	162	28%	607	322	53%
West Warwick	295	295	100%	273	273	100%
Westerly	217	217	100%	190	190	100%
Woonsocket	523	523	100%	476	476	100%
Charter Schools	583	583	100%	769	769	100%
State-Operated Schools	3	3	100%	2	2	100%
Four Core Cities	3,347	3,347	100%	3,159	3,159	100%
Remainder of State	5,952	4,065	68%	5,967	4,813	81%
Rhode Island	9,885	7,998	81%	9,897	8,743	88%

## Source of Data for Table/Methodology

Rhode Island Department of Education, October 1, 2014 and October 1, 2015.

Core cities are Central Falls, Pawtucket, Providence, and Woonsocket.

Charter schools included in this indicator are Achievement First Rhode Island, Blackstone Valley Prep Mayoral Academy, Highlander Charter School, International Charter School, Kingston Hill Academy, Paul Cuffee Charter School, RISE Prep Mayoral Academy, Southside Elementary Charter School, The Compass School, The Hope Academy, and The Learning Community. The state-operated school is the Rhode Island School for the Deaf.

## References

- <sup>15</sup> Kauerz, K. (2010). *PreK-3rd: Putting full-day kindergarten in the middle*. Washington, DC: Foundation for Child Development.
- <sup>26</sup> Strategies for Children. (2013). *Investing in full-day kindergarten is essential*. Retrieved January 9, 2015, from www.strategiesforchildren.org
- <sup>3</sup> Gibbs, C. R. (2014). *Experimental evidence on early intervention: The impact of full-day kindergarten*. University of Virginia Batten School of Leadership and Public Policy Faculty Working Paper. Retrieved December 15, 2014, from www.batten.virginia.edu
- <sup>4</sup> Barnett, W. S., Carolan, M. E., Fitzgerald, J., & Squires, J. H. (2011). *The state of preschool 2011: State preschool yearbook*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University, National Institute for Early Education Research.
- <sup>7</sup> Kauerz, K. (2005). *Full-day kindergarten: A study of state policies in the United States*. Denver, CO: Education Commission of the States.
- <sup>8</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, 2014. Table 3: Nursery and primary school enrollment of people 3 to 6 years old, by control of school, attendance status, age, race, Hispanic origin, mother's labor force status and education, and family income: October 2014.
- <sup>9</sup> Chetty, R., et al. (2010). \$320,000 kindergarten teachers. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 92(3), 22-25.

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