

**MEMO TO: BOARD MEMBERS**

**FROM: JOHN SIMPSON**

**DATE: JANUARY 19, 2017**

**RE: Half-Day Kindergarten in 2017-2018**

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Currently 97% of the children enrolled in kindergarten in the Webster Groves School District attend full-day kindergarten. Despite the low enrollment this year and in recent years, Kindergarten schedules across the district have been designed in order to ensure the half-day children experience the same core learning opportunities as the children who attend full-day. **(We do not have any strictly half-day kindergarten classes anymore.)** While the teachers do their best to fit math, reading, writing, science, social studies, health, guidance, pe, art, music, recess, etc. into the half-day experience, there are very real limitations to the experiences children have simply due to time. In addition, each elementary school's schedule has been influenced by the fact that kindergarten art, music, and pe had to take place in the morning.

Since the economic barrier to attend full-day kindergarten at no cost has been removed, I am recommending the following changes to our kindergarten programming:

- Kindergarten teachers be allowed to design their day based on the children who attend full-day kindergarten which currently would be 97% of the students.
- Parents/Guardians could still elect to have their children participate in a half-day of kindergarten at their home school.

Allowing the kindergarten teachers to design their day around a full-day schedule would allow teachers the opportunity to provide children with deeper and more experiential-based learning opportunities in all curricular areas. Among other benefits, they could maximize their use of the morning which for most children is the time of day they are most ready to learn.

Continuing to provide a half-day option in 2017-18 at students' home schools will allow children to attend kindergarten close to home with their friends and offer the opportunity to seamlessly transition to the full-day program later if desired and eventually first grade.

A community committed to academic  
and personal success for every student



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RECOMMENDED BOARD ACTION....report only, no action required.