

**RECOMMENDATIONS BY THE MARYLAND
KINDERGARTEN COMMITTEE
November 2001**

**PROVIDING UNIVERSAL ACCESS TO ALL-DAY KINDERGARTEN
PROGRAMS**

Recommendation: Students attending all-day kindergarten programs should be funded at full time equivalency (1.0) FTE by the state aid program and its formula. All-day kindergarten should be universally provided to all students eligible for kindergarten according to age.

Rationale: Local school systems maintain the responsibility for the needs of all learners. Toward that end, all students must be provided with the opportunity to advance to their highest level within the kindergarten experience. Recent research by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) and locally, by Montgomery and Prince George's County Public Schools, suggests that all-day kindergarten accelerates learning, primarily among at-risk children. As a result, the Committee maintained that schools should serve all students equally. Thus, it considers all-day kindergarten an essential strategy to improving school success statewide. An incremental expansion of all-day kindergarten programs allows for local school systems to address the facilities, staffing, and budgetary constraints associated with the expansion. Since the summer of 2000, the Maryland Board of Education is already on record for endorsing an incremental expansion of all-day kindergarten classrooms.

Impact: Two large local school systems briefed the Committee regarding how facilities, staffing, and other resource issues have been overcome in expanding all-day kindergarten in their jurisdictions. Concerning facilities, the Maryland Interagency Committee on School Construction provides guidelines for including kindergarten space in school renovation or construction projects. The Committee also stressed that local school systems, during the expansion of the programs, must consider curricular revisions for kindergarten and, possibly, first grade. MSDE should provide guidance regarding how Maryland's Content Standards are implemented in kindergarten.