

Q&A: All-Day/Every Day Kindergarten

Q: Why did the Board vote to move to an all-day/every day kindergarten program?

A: The Beaver Creek City School District is committed to providing the highest quality educational program to all its students. Numerous states and school districts—including 78 percent of school districts and community schools in Ohio—now offer all-day/every day programs. Beaver Creek’s decision to move forward with an all-day/every day program was based on two factors:

- **The lack of all-day/every day kindergarten places Beaver Creek’s students at a disadvantage.** All-day/every day programs provide students with more classroom instruction, more time devoted to one-on-one instruction, and greater growth opportunities.
- **Districts with half-day or all day/alternating day programs are responsible for reaching the same benchmarks for student growth and achievement over time as districts with all-day/every day programs.** Those that do not offer all-day/every day kindergarten are ultimately at a disadvantage because they have less instructional time with students.

Q: When will the change occur?

A: Beaver Creek’s all-day/every day kindergarten program will be launched this August, at the beginning of the 2014-15 school year.

Q: What are the chief benefits of all-day/every day Kindergarten?

A: In half-day programs, students only receive approximately 15 hours of instruction over a two-week period, while all-day/alternating day students only receive 22.5 hours. These brief periods do not provide sufficient time for students and teachers to explore core subjects such as English Language arts and mathematics in depth, much less science or social studies. The abbreviated days also make it difficult for teachers to work one-on-one with individual students

In an all-day/every day program, students receive approximately 45 hours of instruction during each two week period. Advantages include:

- Teachers can provide more in-depth instruction in core subjects (English Language Arts and Math).
- Classes have more time for social studies, science, art, music and physical education.
- Teachers have more time to work one-on-one with students and understand their academic needs.
- At-risk students have more opportunities for services.
- Teachers have expanded opportunities to introduce and revisit curriculum and offer activities that help children extend their learning.
- All-day/every day kindergarten will better prepare students for the demands of today’s curriculum, and offers districts more tools to address Ohio’s Third Grade Reading Guarantee requirement.

Q: Did the district survey parents to see if they would support an all-day/every day program?

A: Yes. Several years ago, the district surveyed kindergarten parents to determine whether they were interested in moving to an all-day/every day offering. Parents were overwhelmingly in favor of such a change.

Q: Were the district's half day and all-day/alternating day kindergarten programs not delivering the desired results?

A: No. Again, our decision to move forward with an all-day/every day program was based on the following facts:

- **The lack of an all-day/every day program places Beaver Creek's students at a disadvantage.** Nearly 78 percent of school districts in Ohio in FY 2013 offered all-day/every day programs—programs that provided students with more classroom instruction, one-on-one instruction, and growth opportunities than Beaver Creek students were receiving.
- **Districts are responsible for the reaching the same benchmarks for student growth and achievement over time as districts with all-day/every day programs.** Those that do not offer all-day/every day Kindergarten are ultimately at a disadvantage because they have less instructional time.

Q: What kind of research did the district conduct before deciding to move forward with an all-day/every day program?

District administrators evaluated all-day/every day kindergarten programs for at least 10 years. They also reviewed a wide variety of literature about all-day/every day, all-day/alternating day and half-day kindergarten programs, and spoke with administrators of other districts about their all-day/every day programs to inquire about their costs and benefits.

The district also asked its kindergarten teachers to provide input as to whether such a program would be beneficial in providing students with additional instructional and growth opportunities. Teachers prepared a document that detailed the benefits and drawbacks of all-day/every day, all-day/alternating day and half-day kindergarten programs. The benefits of all-day/every day were overwhelmingly evident.

Q: How much is the district looking at in terms of additional costs with all-day/every day kindergarten?

A: Beaver Creek will need to hire additional kindergarten teachers to support an all-day/every day program. U.S. Census data shows that approximately 530 students living within the Beaver Creek City School District will be eligible for kindergarten in August 2014. Historical precedent indicates that approximately 70 percent will attend Beaver Creek Schools, though the possibility of increased attendance exists. Given the historical data, it is likely that the district will need to hire eight to 10 additional teachers. Furniture and supplies will also be needed for kindergarten classrooms.

Q: If the state will only cover a portion of the cost of all-day/every day kindergarten for “wealthy” districts like Beaver Creek, where will our district get the money to cover the balance?

A: The remainder of funds will be drawn from the district’s operating budget.

Q: Is the district planning to charge for all-day/every day Kindergarten?

A: District leaders are NOT planning to charge families for all-day/every day kindergarten, as such instruction is consistent with our country’s mission of providing accessible and public education for all.

Q: Some school districts have rolled out all-day/every day programs but kept their half day programs as well. Why isn’t Beaver Creek doing the same?

Half-day and all-day/every day programs do not provide the opportunities for instruction, intervention and enrichment that Beaver Creek seeks in beginning literacy instruction, nor do they offer the consistency we strive to provide. We want all children to begin first grade on as level a playing field as possible. All-day instruction helps ensure that opportunities for growth exist for all learners.

Q: Will the district do any sort of study to evaluate the effectiveness of an all-day/every day program?

A: The district will review the program annually to ensure its effectiveness.

Q: What type of kindergarten program does Beaver Creek currently offer?

A: Beaver Creek currently offers an all-day/alternating day kindergarten program. Students attend two days each week, and a third day every other week. Prior to 2011-12, the district offered half-day kindergarten exclusively.

Q: At what age are students eligible for kindergarten in Beaver Creek?

A: Students must be 5 years of age on or before September 30 of the year they enter.