

1 (5) While this act does not mandate school districts to operate a full-day kindergarten
2 program, it provides limited one-time, start-up funding for school districts that move to provide
3 students with access to full-day kindergarten programs, distributed on a competitive basis.

4 **16-99-3. Full-day kindergarten. --** (a) For the purpose of this chapter, the term “full-day
5 kindergarten” means a kindergarten program that operates a minimum of five and one-half (5
6 1/2) hours or three hundred thirty (330) minutes of actual school work, excluding lunch, recess
7 periods, common planning time, pre- and post-school teacher time, study halls, homeroom
8 periods, student passing time and any other time that is not actual instructional time.

9 (b) The commissioner of elementary and secondary education has discretion to further
10 define and approve full-day kindergarten programs consistent with this section.

11 **16-99-4. Eligible school districts; funding. --** (a) A school district shall be eligible to
12 receive funding pursuant to subsection 16-96-4(b), if:

13 (1) The school district is a public school district; and

14 (2) The school district operates a half-day kindergarten program as of September 1, 2011,
15 but not a full-day kindergarten, as defined herein, serving more than one-half of the kindergarten
16 students in the district as determined on a headcount basis.

17 (b) Subject to appropriation, beginning with school year 2013-2014, the commissioner of
18 elementary and secondary education shall approve up to four (4) eligible public school districts
19 per year to voluntarily implement a full-day kindergarten program as defined herein. The
20 mentioned schools shall receive funding to offset a portion of the reasonable one-time, start-
21 up costs including, but not limited to, desks, books, facility upgrades and any other necessary
22 expenses associated with each school’s implementation of a full-day kindergarten program.
23 Funds will be appropriated based upon criteria established by the commissioner of elementary
24 and secondary education to ensure the quality and sustainability of the full-day kindergarten
25 programs implemented.

26 (c) If more than four (4) eligible school districts apply in one year, or if the appropriation
27 does not support four (4) eligible districts, the commissioner of elementary and secondary
28 education shall determine which districts shall access the available funds for start-up costs. The
29 commissioner’s decision may consider the ability of the district to house the kindergarten
30 enrollment, implement a quality full-day program and sustain the program once implemented, and
31 the decision should maximize the number of students that can enter full-day kindergarten
32 program for that year.

33 (d) School districts receiving funds pursuant to this chapter must operate only a full-day
34 program, no half-day programs. The full-day kindergarten program must continue to operate for

1 five (5) years.

2 (e) All funding provided under this section is subject to appropriation.

3 **16-99-5. Reporting. --** The Rhode Island department of elementary and secondary
4 education shall report to the senate president, speaker of the house, and the governor on the
5 progress of this initiative on or before May 1st, 2013, and on an annual basis by May 1st of each
6 year thereafter.

7 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF
A N A C T
RELATING TO EDUCATION - KINDERGARTEN

- 1 This act would provide for the funding of up to four (4) districts for full-day kindergarten.
2 The commissioner of elementary and secondary education would determine which districts would
3 receive these funds. The department of elementary and secondary education would report on the
4 progress of the program annually by May 1st of each year.
5 This act would take effect upon passage.

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