In the state of New Hampshire it is mandatory for all school districts to offer at least a half day kindergarten program with full day kindergarten programs as an option based on individual districts (Ewen, P., 2012). The current initiative to implement full day kindergarten (FDK) includes the formation of State Bill 191-FN drawn up by Governor Sununu along with his budget that would allocate $9 million yearly to schools offering FDK (Beimler, N., 2017). There are currently 104 school districts that choose to offer FDK programs. Of the total 168 school districts in New Hampshire there are 64 that still only offer a half day kindergarten program.

On a national scale, there are merely 13 states plus the District of Columbia that require FDK (Parker et al., 2016). New Hampshire could be the next addition to the small margin of the 13 states requiring FDK.
WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

The early years of life are determined to be the most formative and important years for growth and development in children. Regarded as a serious and important initiative, districts have taken it upon themselves in the state of New Hampshire to implement FDK programs without additional federal funding, beyond the half day funding already in place. Studies indicate that FDK can lead to increased school readiness, supports development for later academic success, and can lead to higher academic achievement. Providing funding for FDK in New Hampshire will allow the programs in place to be awarded the funding they are missing out on, as well as helping to provide the funding for the additional districts to begin FDK programs that currently run on a half day schedule.

Recommendations

OFFER YOUR SUPPORT FOR THE BILL TO PASS THAT WILL PROVIDE FUNDING FOR FDK IN NEW HAMPSHIRE BY CONTACTING LOCAL AND STATE OFFICIALS.

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REASSIGN MONEY IN THE LOCAL SCHOOL BUDGETS TO SUPPORT THE IMPLEMENTATION OF FDK SHOULD THE BILL BE TABLED.

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MAKING ACCESS UNIVERSAL WITH PARTICIPATION OPTIONAL, RATHER THAN ONLY PROVIDING ACCESS TO DISTRICTS WHO HAVE A HIGH VOLUME OF FAMILIES IN NEED.

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DRAW UP A KINDERGARTEN GRANT PROGRAM TO OFFER FUNDING TO DISTRICTS BASED ON THEIR SIZE, DEMOGRAPHIC SERVED, AND COST OF LIVING.