



Full-Day Kindergarten FAQ

Q. Does Palos 118 want to provide students with a full-day kindergarten program?

A. Yes. The Board of Education and Administration supports full-day kindergarten.

Q. If the Board of Education and Administration supports a full-day kindergarten program, why doesn't Palos 118 have full-day kindergarten?

A. A full-day kindergarten program would require hiring five additional kindergarten teachers at an initial projected cost of approximately \$322,000. At this time, Palos 118 cannot afford an additional \$322,000 in annual operating costs without cutting existing services and programs, increasing class sizes in first through fifth grades, and/or running unsustainable budget deficits.

Q. I thought the Board of Education and Administration promised to implement a full-day kindergarten program if the 2016 building bond referendum passed?

A. The 2016 building bond referendum allowed the school district to issue construction bonds for capital projects including renovations to Palos West and Palos East to create additional classrooms needed for a full-day kindergarten program. Proceeds from construction bonds cannot be used to finance the additional operating costs associated with hiring five additional teachers.

Renovations at Palos West are underway and additional kindergarten classrooms will be complete in January 2018. Renovations at Palos East are tentatively planned for next summer. Once renovations are complete, both school buildings will be able to accommodate full-day kindergarten programs.



Q. How do other school districts pay for full-day kindergarten?

A. Each school district has a unique set of financial circumstances. Some school districts have larger tax bases that include commercial property and/or passed referendums to finance full-day programs. Some school districts receive more funding from the state to offset the cost of providing full-day kindergarten. Other school districts have made the decision to cut existing services and reallocate funds to pay for full-day kindergarten. There are a variety of reasons why other school districts can afford to offer a full-day program.

Palos 118 receives the majority of its funding from local taxpayers through property taxes. The annual increase in the amount of property taxes received by the school district is limited to the rate of inflation, which has been extremely low for nearly a decade. The recent passage of school funding reform in Illinois has frozen state aid to Palos 118 now and into the future. Federal revenue is also projected to remain flat. With little to no increase in our annual operating revenues, adding \$322,000 to our budget without additional revenue would result in unsustainable budget deficits that would threaten the financial sustainability of all other Palos 118 programs.

Q. Why can't the Board of Education offer a tuition based full-day kindergarten program?

A. The Board of Education is studying all options for full-day kindergarten and has set a deadline of spring 2018 for communicating its findings to the community.

Q. Palos 118 kindergarten registration for the 2018-2019 school year opens in January 2018. How am I supposed to plan if the Board won't communicate its findings to the community until spring?

A. When registration opens in January, only a half-day program will be offered. Parents desiring full-day programming are encouraged to consider alternative placements for their children, including the district's partnership with the Palos Park Recreation Department for a full day program. If the Board of Education determines it is financially feasible to offer a full-day program next school year,



parents will have the opportunity to elect to participate in the full-day program at that time.

Q. What is the district's partnership with the Palos Park Recreation Department?

A. The Palos Park Recreation Department offers a paid program called Kids Zone. It is available for all Palos 118 kindergarten students and allows them to attend morning enrichment at the Palos Park Recreation Center. Palos 118 busses will pick the students up after lunch and take them to Palos East or Palos West for afternoon kindergarten. Students must be dropped off at the Rec Center in the morning but may take the school bus home after school. More information is available at <https://www.palospark.org/204/Kids-Zone>.

Q. Is Palos 118 doing an academic disservice to students by not offering a full-day kindergarten program?

A. Our data clearly shows that Palos 118 students perform at or above their peers nationally in reading and math by third grade; a pivotal benchmark set by the Illinois State Board of Education. Students score well above the state average on the annual PARCC test in grades three through eight. Our students graduate from Palos South and go on to achieve great success at some of the finest high schools in the south suburbs.