



Full-day Kindergarten (FDK) in Alternative Learning Experience (ALE) Frequently Asked Questions

Is full-day kindergarten mandatory in Alternative Learning Experience classrooms?

"Full-day kindergarten" (FDK) means a program that is eligible for state-funded FDK, as provided for in [RCW 28A.150.315](#), in which any student's alternative learning experience (ALE) enrollment is claimed at greater than 0.50 full-time equivalent (FTE).

ALE schools/programs do not have to offer FDK. Schools/programs choosing to remain as part-time can claim enrollment up to 0.50 FTE.

How many hours of instruction are required for full-day kindergarten?

ALE schools/programs providing FDK must provide at least a 1,000 annual hour instructional program. In order to reach the 1,000 annual hour requirement, a school/program offering FDK must provide at least 27.75 instructional hours per week through the written student learning plan over the course of a 180 day school year. A program cannot begin mid-year.

What are the curriculum requirements of full-day kindergarten?

The Written Student Learning Plan (WSLP) for each student claimed at greater than 0.50 ALE FTE must include all of the following:

- Curriculum activities that assist students in developing initial skills in the academic areas of reading, mathematics, and writing;
- Experiences in science, social studies, arts, health, physical education, and a world language other than English;
- Instruction that assists students in acquiring communication skills, large and small motor skills, and social and emotional skills including successful participation in learning activities as an individual and as part of a group; and
- Learning through hands-on experiences in environments that are developmentally appropriate and promote creativity.

What are the other requirements of full-day kindergarten?

In addition to curricular and assessment requirements, schools/programs offering FDK must demonstrate strong connections and communication with early learning community providers and participate in kindergarten program readiness activities with early learning providers and parents.

Early learning providers may be defined as those involved in the growth and development of the young children and families in their community. This includes child care and preschool providers, as well as local early learning coalitions, libraries, play group facilitators, parent educators and others who share a role in helping children and families prepare for success in kindergarten.



What about WaKIDS?

Schools/programs offering ALE courses or coursework to students enrolled in FDK must administer the Washington Kindergarten Inventory of Developing Skills (WaKIDS), with fidelity. WaKIDS is intended to identify the skills, knowledge, and characteristics of kindergarten students at the beginning of the school year in order to inform instruction and support social-emotional, physical, and cognitive growth and development of individual children.

What does it mean to implement WaKIDS with fidelity?

To maintain fidelity to the state assessment protocol, WaKIDS requires multiple weekly, in-person, and on-site observations of students by certificated, WaKIDS-trained teachers each week during the eight-week assessment window. While families may help contribute evidence for assessment, the levels of development and learning must be established by a certificated, WaKIDS-trained teacher.

The school/program and the WaKIDS-trained teacher(s) should decide how much on-site time is needed to have multiple weekly observations. If you are attempting to determine whether your school/program is implementing with fidelity, ask yourself these questions:

- Are you providing multiple weekly, in-person, and on-site opportunities for observation by a certificated teacher?
- Does the student have the opportunity for prolonged engagement in an activity that the certificated teacher can observe?
- If a student does not demonstrate an indicator of development during the allotted time, will he/she have another opportunity? When?

If the answer to any of these questions is *no*, it is unlikely that your school/program is implementing with fidelity. If this is the case, you may need to increase the opportunity for on-site observation.

What if families opt out of WaKIDS?

Families may choose to opt out of the WaKIDS assessment, just as they may with other state-mandated assessments. However, they should be made aware of the assessment benefits including the developmental information provided by WaKIDS and how results can inform plans for growth and achievement based on their child's present level of development in the six areas assessed. Most families, especially those who plan to take such a direct role in their child's education, find the information provided by the WaKIDS assessment to be worthwhile.

ALE schools/programs should keep a written record if a family opts out of WaKIDS.

Students who opt out of WaKIDS must still attend the multiple weekly, in-person, and on-site observations of students by certificated teachers each week during the eight-week assessment window.



What are the reporting requirements for full-day kindergarten funding?

ALE schools/programs must report the number of students enrolled in FDK at any time during the school year and the number of students enrolled in FDK who participated in the WaKIDS assessment prior to the assessment deadline. This information should be included in the ALE year-end report.

What about late enrollments or if a kindergarten student starts mid-year?

Students who enroll in ALE schools/programs after October 15th are not required to participate in the WaKIDS assessment but must participate in all other elements of FDK.

Because the developmental information provided by the WaKIDS assessment provides such valuable developmental information, kindergarten teachers are encouraged to utilize the WaKIDS assessment tool beyond just the mandated fall assessment window. The WaKIDS assessment tool may be voluntarily used over the course of the year to guide instruction, track growth and report progress.

Who can administer WaKIDS?

There are two requirements to administer WaKIDS. The individual administering the WaKIDS assessment must:

- Be a Washington state certificated teacher, and
- Have successfully completed a WaKIDS 101 training.

WaKIDS 101 trainings occur between July and September each year. For a list of training dates and locations visit: <http://www.k12.wa.us/WaKIDS/Events>.

Is my school/program set up to conduct WaKIDS?

If your school/program has never participated in WaKIDS your district's Assessment Coordinator will need to contact Amber Havens, WaKIDS Coordinator, by August 1st at Amber.Havens@k12.was.us. Amber will work with your District Assessment Coordinator to create an account in the online assessment platform.

How are other programs using the enhanced full-day kindergarten funding?

The flexibility of ALE allows for unique implementation of FDK. ALE schools/programs receiving FDK funding have the opportunity to be creative in how they utilize those enhanced funds providing it meets substantially similar and acceptable expenditures per [WAC 392-121-182](#). OSPI will be collaborating with schools/programs over the coming year to learn more about promising practices.

Questions

If you have additional questions, please contact the Early Learning Department at (360) 725-6161 or the Alternative Learning Department at (360) 725-6058.