FULL DAY KINDERGARTEN COMMITTEE REPORT

PRESENTED TO THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

AUGUST 12, 2002

Full Day Kindergarten Committee Report
August 12, 2002

As part of the budget for the 2002 – 2003 school year the Board Of Trustees included the addition of full day kindergarten. A committee composed of teachers, administrators and parents worked during May, June and July to prepare for the many changes resulting from this decision. The members of the committee are as follows:

Teachers
Kim Evans L&C
Bromley Rittel– ML
Deb Kelly – WH
Rebecca Ramsey – MV
Cindy Clark – VV
~~Fran Combs – LN~~ Lisa Hennig
Kristin Winder – WT
Anna Horton – SS
Melody Stevens – MS
*Robin Allen – CJ
*Cheryl Laveson – RV
*Rae Graham – RS
Verna Copeland – LF
Shannon Yoshioka – LY
Debbie Hartman – SC
Jim Vennes – Reading Coach
LISA RHONDA "2"

Administrators
*Carole McKittrick – MV Principal
*Rhonda McCarty – VV Principal
*Lonnie Yingst – Asst. Sup. K-5

Parents
Suzanne Houseman, Parent MV
Amber Rausch,Parent SS
Beth Thomas, Parent CJ
Monica Rudio, Parent ML
Peggy Manning, Parent LN
~~Ashby Burchard, Parent MS~~
Lori Eckhardt, Parent ML
Trudy Walker, Parent ML
~~Jessica McDonald, Parent LN~~ DECEASED
Karole Potts, Parent RV
~~Amy Thomas, Parent MV~~
DEBRA LEWIS, PARENT
*Steering Committee

The report that follows discusses [illegible] topics related to the charge given to the committee. [illegible] recommendations as to what a typical day may look like, how the program could be organized to accommodate a half-day option for those families who choose, guidelines for a variety of topics as well as instructional goals. Parents will receive information resulting from this report during the first day orientation on August 29, 2002.

PURPOSE AND GOALS

The Great Falls Public Schools are continuously striving to improve the achievement level of its students. The full day kindergarten approved by the Board of Trustees as part of the budget process for the 2002 – 03 school year is a continuation of that effort. It is a value added program in line with "Keeping the main thing the main thing." The expanded schedule is intended to provide experiences that enhance each

child's cognitive, physical, social, emotional and fine and gross motor skills. The goals of the full day kindergarten program are as follows:

- Increase student achievement in the core academic areas
- Decrease placements in remedial programs
- Decrease retentions
- Improve attendance rates
- Teach and improve classroom behavior and social skills
- Better prepare students for first grade
- Provide more individualized activities
- Provide more time for self-directed activities
- Provide a half - day option for those families who prefer half – day
- Provide for the students who would have qualified for extended kindergarten

With these goals in mind, the committee began its work with the confidence that the many questions and issues as well as the goals of the program could be addressed in a manner that would benefit the students of the Great Falls Public Schools.

PROCESS

The following outlines the process followed to implement the full day kindergarten program:

- Sept. – April, 2001- 02 discussed with and sought input from principals, teachers and the 15 elementary PTA Boards
- March, 2002 – Board of Trustees approved 2002 – 03 budget including full day kindergarten
- May 7, 2002 – Voters approved mill levies
- May, 2002 – Full Day Kindergarten Committee assigned including 16 teachers, 3 administrators and 11 parents
- May, 2002 – Steering committee developed plan for first committee meeting designed to gain ideas for the full day program
- May 28, 2002 – Full committee meeting held 3:30 – 6:00 pm
- June, 2002 – Steering committee met and used notes to develop first draft of the program report
- July 18, 2002 – Full committee met to react to the first draft of the committee report
- July, 2002 - Steering committee met and used input to develop second draft of the program report
- August 1, 2002 - Full committee met to react to the second draft of the committee report
- August, 2002 - Steering committee met and used input to develop final draft of the program report
- August, 2002 – Final draft of program report mailed to full committee
- August 12, 2002 – Final draft of program report presented to the Board of Trustees
- August 20 & 23, 2002 – Orientation for all kindergarten teachers

• First quarter 2002 – 2003 school year – Begin implementation, gain input through kindergarten staff meetings, surveys etc. as to needed revisions
• Second quarter 2002 – 2003 school year – Continue implementation, gain input through kindergarten staff meetings, surveys etc. as to needed revisions
• Third quarter 2002 – 2003 school year – Begin implementation, gain input through kindergarten staff meetings, surveys etc. as to needed revisions
• Fourth quarter 2002 – 2003 school year – Begin implementation, gain input through kindergarten staff meetings, surveys etc. as to needed revisions
• Summer/Fall 2002 – 2003 – Report to Board of Trustees
• Summer, 2003 – Committee reviews first year and makes needed adjustments for the second year

QUESTIONS THAT NEED TO BE ADDRESSED

A group of parents supporting a half-day option for their children submitted questions for the committee's consideration. A copy of those questions can be found in the addendum.

Other concerns coming from our first meeting to be considered by the committee are as follows:

See Pg 15

• How do we balance the needs of full day vs. half-day students?
• How will the District address the disparity between lower achieving students and higher achieving students when all students attend full day?
• How will we keep it developmentally appropriate?
• How do we provide teachers support, training and information for full day program?
• How could the District manage a workable half-day advantage?
• How to manage the 1/2 day option?

HALF-DAY OPTIONS

At the annual spring kindergarten registration parents were asked if they preferred half day, full day kindergarten or undecided as to which. The results of that survey can be found in the addendum. Following the passage of the mill levy, principals were asked to call those parents who preferred a half-day option. Principals asked if parents preferred to travel to an alternate site so that their student could be in a half-day program or if they preferred to remain in their home school and participate in a half-day program within the full day.

The results of the telephone survey are as follows:

Sch	1/2 Alternate School	1/2 Home School	Changed to full day
CJ	100% full day		1
LC	2?	2	
LN	100% full day		3
LF	100% full day		
LY	100% full day		4
MS		1?	4?
ML		7?	2

MV		3	4?
RS		4?	1
RV	2	6?	
SC	1 prvt sch		3
SS		3?	3
VV	1	2	8
WH	100% full day		3
WT	100% full day		7
Total	6	28	41

Attempts to reach 4 families were unsuccessful

In order to make certain the best decision is made all parents who have registered for kindergarten will be contacted on August 19 and asked if they would transport their child to a half day session at an alternate site most likely Sunnyside School. The independent half day option will be offered if there are enough families willing or able to attend at an alternate site.

GUIDELINES

The following guidelines were developed with input gained from the committee. They were developed to accomodate the half-day within the full day option.

LUNCH	40 Minutes total (lunch & recess) Adults need to facilitate transition until students are independent (10-15 days)
SESSION LENGTH	3 hours for AM session (minimum) 40 minutes for lunch 2 hours and 40 minutes PM session 6 hours and 20 minutes total
SPECIALS	2 Health Enhancement (1 in AM and 1 in PM) 1 Music in AM 1 Library in AM If schedule allows
RECESS	8 Recesses/week (no recess on gym half day) Counselors and HE teachers teach games weekly @ recess time
CONCEPT GROUPS	Concept groups will continue for students who would have qualified for extended kindergarten. Delivery method is a building level decision.
SNACKS	Suggest snacks be served daily in kindergarten AM sessions

REST TIME	If needed, 15 minutes of afternoon quiet time will be provided daily.
FIRST DAY	Parents attend an approximately ninety minute orientation session day 1 with child. Students will stay at school for the day.
PARENT COMM-UNICATION	Kindergarten teachers will conference with parents two times a year during District parent teacher conference days. Kindergarten teachers will provide report cards at the end of each semester.
CCC	CCC will be used with targeted students.
ASSESSMENT	Kindergarten teachers will follow the District implementation and assessment guide.
INSTRUCTION	The Kindergarten Academic Program outline will serve as a general guide for instructional goals for the year. Whenever possible new concepts and topics in math and communication arts will be introduced during the first half of the day.
TRAINING	Time needs to be provided quarterly for district kindergarten staff to meet for discussion of goals, yearly plan, program, etc.. Kindergarten staff will be provided staff development in Differentiated Instruction, Read Well, and Zoo Phonics.
FLEXIBLE GROUPING	Use data to make instructional decisions Organize flexible groups to meet students' needs
SCHEDULE	In order to meet individual student needs a parent may change their child's schedule from full day to half day or from half day to full day. The decision to move must be made by the parent, teacher and principal in conference.
SPECIAL EVENTS	Students attending the half day session will be included in special events held in the afternoon.

SAMPLE DAILY CLASS SCHEDULE

8:40	Morning Bell
8:40 – 8:45	Attendance, Lunch Count, Announcements

8:45 – 9:00	Opening Activities (Calendar, Every Day Counts, Problem Of Day, Morning Message, Music, Social Skill etc.)
9:00 – 10:00	Communication Arts (Guided Reading, Writing, Zoo-phonics, Read Well, Literacy Place, etc.)
9:50	Snack
10:00 – 10:30	Specials (4 Periods Per Week Only)
10:30 – 10:45	Recess
10:45 – 11:30	Math "I Can" (Start at10:30 2 days per week)
11:30 – 11:40	Prep For Lunch
11:40 – 12:20	Lunch
12:20 – 1:15	Communication Arts, Flexible Grouping (Additional Guided Reading, Writing, Zoo-phonics, Read Well, Literacy Place, SSR, Story, Concept Groups, etc.)
1:15 – 1:30	Recess
1:30 – 2:00	Math(Skill Builders, Centers, "I Can")
2:00 – 2:55	Center Time (Science, Social Studies, Writing, Listening, CCC, Dramatic Play, Art, Music, Social Skills, etc.)
2:55 – 3:00	Prepare For Home
3:00	Dismissal

ACADEMIC PROGRAM FOR KINDERGARTEN

The following description of the kindergarten academic program is intended as a guide. **In the interest of the individual child all efforts must be made to take each child as far as possible with an emphasis on communication arts and math.**

Child Development

The Kindergarten program in the Great Falls Public Schools provides experiences appropriate for children at this point in their lives. Consideration is given to all aspects of their individual development. These include:

1. Physical
   a. Developing motor skills and muscle coordination.
   b. Increasing visual, auditory, and language facility.
   c. Growing in awareness of health, nutrition, safety, and fitness.
2. Social
   a. Participating cooperatively in group activities.
   b. Completing assigned tasks responsibly.
   c. Sharing ideas as well as materials.
   d. Assuming increased control of own behavior.
   e. Learn school procedures, routines, manners.
3. Emotional
   a. Developing positive self-image.
   b. Solving problems constructively.
   c. Growing in awareness of own emotions.
4. Intellectual
   a. Increasing desire for learning.
   b. Cultivating appropriate work habits.
   c. Developing thinking skills.

Discuss Pacing Com Arts + Math

12 weeks adv.

Communication Arts

Kindergartners spend a major portion of their day involved in communication arts experiences. Emphasis is placed on developing reading, writing and language skills, understanding and practice in the following four areas:

1. Listening (enjoying literature, interacting with others, following directions):
   Recall numbers, names, messages
   Follow spoken directions

2. Speaking (using speech effectively, contributing to group situations, expressing needs, communicating ideas):
   Develop vocabulary
   Express feelings and imagination
   Use standard English
   Introduce retelling of stories
   Make contributions during discussion
3. Reading (becoming aware of the significance of printed language, refining skills related to learning to read, letter-sound relationships):

Identify letters of the alphabet (upper and lower case)
Introduce and increase the use of consonant letters and sounds
Introduce and increase the use of consonant digraphs (th, sh, ch)
Introduce and increase the use of consonant blends
Introduce and increase the use of the concept of word
Introduce and increase the use of simple sentences
Introduce and increase the use of high frequency words and color words
Understand parts of a book
Understand author/illustrator
Introduce and increase the use of retelling stories
Recognize characters and setting
Introduce and increase the use of rhyme, repetitive words, and phrases
Introduce and increase the use of visual reference aids (graphs and charts)
Recognize nonfiction literature
Enjoy and read (wordless books, pattern books, rhyming books, beginning readers) fiction literature

4. Writing (expressing ideas in written form--dictating to teacher, acquiring muscle control necessary for basic writing skills).
Convey a message by writing – random letters, shapes, pictures, left to right
Introduce and increase the use of correct letter formations
Recognize and copy words around them
Label pictures
Write messages and lists
Introduce and increase the use of prewriting, drafting, and publishing through class stories
Introduce and increase the use of journals, free writing, listing, and brainstorming

Mathematics

Building an understanding of basic concepts and laying the foundation for the development of basic skills is the focus of the mathematics program at the kindergarten level. The activity-based program includes number awareness; classifying and sequencing; number operations; and developing an understanding of measuring, comparing distance, mass, capacity, time and money.

Problem Solving
- Identify classification and attributes
- Identify and extend patterns
- Gather, graph and describe data

Number Sense
- Count to 100, recognize numbers to 50, write to 31 (calendar)
- Introduce counting by 2's and 5's
- Count by 10's to 100
- One to one correspondence to 10
- Introduce addition and subtraction facts to 10

Number Operations
- Solve simple verbal problems (addition and subtraction)
- Read, write, and solve simple number sentences (addition and subtraction)

Measurement Concepts

Compare more/less and heavier/lighter

Work with calendars (days of week, number sequence, counting patterns, money)

Estimate length, weight, capacity

Spatial/Geometric Awareness

Identify shapes (circle, square, triangle, rectangle, oval)

Social Studies

Children develop social skills through experiences centered around the following required unit topics: Community Helpers, My Family, Safety, American Indian culture. In addition, other units used may include Circus, Farm, Pets, Zoo, Seasons, Holidays, and The Five Senses.

Science

Children use their five senses to explore the environment as they learn about plants, animals, seasons, food groups, life cycles, environments, weather, recycling, and magnets.

Art

The art program focuses on the development of individual creativity through visual means. Pupils are provided opportunities for self-expression through a variety of art media and techniques. Emphasis is placed on knowing and using art materials and resources; creating works of art; responding to and analyzing works of art; and understanding historical and cultural influences.

Music

An important aim of the music program is to foster a joyful response in children by providing opportunities for them to participate frequently in singing, rhythmic dramatization, and listening activities.

Health Enhancement

Topics covered in the Health Enhancement Curriculum are as follows:

Nutrition	Personal fitness	Disease/disorders
Safety	Consumer Health	Conditioning
Substance Use and Abuse	Family Relationship Skills	Mental Health
Growth and Development	Locomotor Skills	Non Locomotor Skills
Manipulative Skills	Combined Movement Skills	Effort
Body and Space Awareness	Spatial Relationships	Endurance
Flexibility		

Play/Discovery Opportunities

Exploration within a prepared environment is recognized as a means of learning for young children. Daily structured play enables them to interact with others and with a variety of materials. Opportunities for play serve to expand children's conceptual base and social/emotional growth.

YEARLY INSTRUCTIONAL GUIDE

Communication Arts

The following instructional plan is intended as a guide. **In the interest of the individual child and class all efforts must be made to take each child and class as far as possible in each unit.**

August/September
- Literacy Place Unit 1
- Introduce Zoo-phonics
- Introduce Writing Process

October
- Continue Literacy Place Unit 1
- Introduce Literacy Place Unit 2
- Continue Zoo-phonics
- Writing Process
- Introduce Read Well (process, techniques, vocabulary etc.)

November
- Continue Literacy Place Unit 2
- Continue Zoo-phonics
- Continue Read Well
- Continue Writing Process

December
- Introduce Literacy Place Unit 3
- Continue Zoo-phonics
- Continue Read Well I
- Continue Writing Process

January
- Continue Literacy Place Unit 3
- Continue Zoo-phonics
- Continue Read Well
- Continue Writing Process

February
- Introduce Literacy Place Unit 4
- Continue Zoo-phonics
- Continue Read Well
- Continue Writing Process

March
- Continue Literacy Place Unit 4
- Introduce Literacy Place Unit 5
- Continue Zoo-phonics
- Continue Read Well
- Continue Writing Process

April
- Continue Literacy Place Unit 5
- IntroduceLiteracy Place Unit 6
- Continue Zoo-phonics
- Continue Read Well

Drawing
Poetry
Lang Arts
Math
12 units

Continue Writing Process

May/June

Continue Literacy Place Unit 6
Continue Zoo-phonics
Continue Read Well
Continue Writing Process

Math

The following instructional plan is intended as a guide. **In the interest of the individual child and class all efforts must be made to take each child and class as far as possible in each unit.**

August/September

I Can Program Chapter 1- Exploring Position
I Can Program Chapter 2 – Classification
Introduce Every Day Counts
Introduce Skill Builders

October

I Can Program Chapter 2 – Classification
I Can Program Chapter 3 – Patterns and Comparison
Continue Every Day Counts
Continue Skill Builders

November

I Can Program Chapter 4 – Numbers 0 - 5
Continue Every Day Counts
Continue Skill Builders

December

I Can Program Chapter 6 – Numbers 6 - 12
Continue Every Day Counts
Continue Skill Builders

January

I Can Program Chapter 7 – Geometry and Fractions
Continue Every Day Counts
Continue Skill Builders

February

I Can Program Chapter 8 – Time and Money
Continue Every Day Counts
Continue Skill Builders

March

I Can Program Chapter 9 – Adding and Subtracting
Continue Every Day Counts
Continue Skill Builders

April

I Can Program Chapter 10 – Exploring larger Numbers
Continue Every Day Counts
Continue Skill Builders

May/June

I Can Program Chapter 5 – Comparing and Measuring

Continue Every Day Counts
Continue Skill Builders

PROGRAM EVALUATION

In order to evaluate the success of the first year of the full day kindergarten program a variety of data will be analyzed. The steering committee along with the elementary principals and assessment specialist will collect, analyze and prepare a report from the data for the Board of Trustees. The following are some of the possible sources from which data may be collected.

Communication Arts
- Boehm – pre and post
- One word expressive for targeted students – pre and post
- District Writing assessment – 2002 compared to 2003
- Zoo-phonics - 2002 compared to 2003
- Read Well first grade - 2002 compared to 2003
- CAP Assessment first grade – 2002 compared to 2003 screening test
- ITBS first grade – 2003 compared to 2004
- CCC - 2002 compared to 2003

Math
- Teacher Input comparing 2001-2002 to 2002- 2003
- Unit tests - 2002 compared to 2003
- ITBS first grade – 2003 compared to 2004
- CCC - 2002 compared to 2003

Attendance - 2002 compared to 2003

Program referrals
- Special Education Program - 2002 compared to 2003
- Title I/District Literacy Program - 2002 compared to 2003
- Gifted Education Program - 2002 compared to 2003

Other areas (science, social studies etc.)
- Teacher Input comparing 2001-2002 to 2002- 2003

Possible 12 weeks improvement ITBS Ext K

R L M
03 72 71 73
04 80 81 83

CLOSING

The Full Day Kindergarten committee has devoted many hours to this process. Both teacher and parent participation were strong with the parent participation particularly strong when compared to other committee work. The Full Day Kindergarten Committee supports the implementation recommendations contained in this report. They are to be commended for their efforts.

ADDENDUM

PARENT QUESTIONS

Parents who prefer half-day kindergarten support our teachers and principals and want very much to remain active participants and useful resources for our respective local schools.

If half-day kindergarten is held at just a few schools in the district, then these are our primary concerns:

1. Children must transition into a new school all over again for first grade.
2. Parents must transfer their support away from their local school.

If half-day kindergarten is simply picking up our children from our local school part way through the school day, then our primary concerns fall into three areas: content/curriculum, logistics and expectations:

Content/Curriculum Concerns

1. What will be taught in the morning session?
2. What will be taught in the afternoon session?
3. How will the instruction be blended to accommodate all students (half-day/full-day/other special needs)?
4. Will half-day students receive the necessary instruction to prepare them for first grade?
5. How will the academic needs of the lowest testing students be met (those who are currently in extended day kindergarten)?
6. Will parents who prefer half day and full day be included throughout the planning process this summer?
7. When/where will meetings be held?

Logistics Concerns

1. When will be the half-day pick-up time?
2. What time is lunch and how many minutes are allotted?
3. With what grades will kindergartners eat lunch?
4. When are recess times and how many minutes are allotted?
5. What grade levels will play with kindergartners at recess?
6. Will kindergartners share buses with older children? If so, how much older?
7. Does space exist on current buses to accommodate all kindergartners? If not, what routes and schools will need more buses?
8. Which schools have space and which will require students to be bused to another school? To what school will they be bused?
9. Are rooms already available in each school? If not, how is class space being created?
10. Will any kindergarten rooms be located within upper elementary wings? If so, with what grade level?
11. Are additional student desks/tables available or will they need to be purchased? If purchased, how many and at what cost?

Can they handle a full day

Expectations Concerns

1. Will half-day be presented in an equally positive light as full-day by teachers to students?
2. Will instruction be dependent on lessons taught the prior afternoon; if so, will this cause half-day students to feel that they missed out on something the prior afternoon?
3. Will children who are over stimulated by the longer day, or who are overtired in the afternoon, be described as having behavior problems? How will their needs be met?
4. What is the expected commitment to half-day or full-day? Can parents who signed up for full-day switch to half-day if the day proves too long? Can half-day students, especially the younger kindergartners, attend full-day the second semester when they are older and more mature?
5. How and when will the new kindergarten plan be presented to parents and to the public?