

# HOUSE BILL ANALYSIS

## HB 2329

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**Title:** *An act relating to kindergarten.*

**Brief Description:** *Funding full-day kindergarten programs.*

**Sponsors:** *Representatives Hickel, Johnson, Linville, Wolfe, Ogden, Appelwick, Kessler, Costa, Anderson, Constantine, Mason and Sullivan.*

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### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

**Meeting Date:** *January 15, 1998.*

**Bill Analysis Prepared by:** *Suz Morrissey (786-7111).*

**Background:** *By law, school districts are required to provide a basic education program of at least 450 hours to students in kindergarten. The basic education allocation distributed to school districts by the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) funds kindergarten students based on 180 half-days of instruction or the equivalent. Each kindergarten student can be counted at a maximum of .5 Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) even if the school district provides a full day kindergarten. For the 1997-98 school year, there are an estimated 36,468 FTE students enrolled in kindergarten in the public schools.*

*During the fall of 1997, the Washington Association of School Administrators (WASA) surveyed the school districts on a variety of issues. Two-hundred sixty school districts, or 88% of the total, responded to the survey. The survey included a series of questions about kindergarten. About 41 districts, or 16% of the respondents, offer a full-day kindergarten. Tuition for the additional half-day ranges from \$120 to \$240 per month. The association asked whether districts would add or expand all day kindergarten if funding was provided through competitive grants. One-hundred twenty-seven respondents, 49% of the total, said yes. Forty respondents said no, and 84 were undecided. When asked why districts would not expand to a full day kindergarten program, 40 respondents cited lack of classroom space. Twenty-one respondents mentioned too little demand. There were other responses as well, suggesting that some respondents found competitive grants onerous, and some questioned whether full day kindergarten classes were developmentally appropriate. The statistics described above were included in a preliminary draft of WASA's survey results. The responses of additional districts will be included in the final survey report.*

**Summary of Bill:** *Beginning in the 1998-99 school year, school districts may expand their basic education kindergarten programs from one-half day or its equivalent to a full day. The basic education kindergarten program could then*

*expand from 450 hours to 900 hours each year. The OSPI will adopt notification requirements to ensure that districts that plan to expand kindergarten programs to a full day notify the Superintendent in time to allow the appropriate allocation of funds.*

**Appropriation:** *None.*

**Fiscal Note:** *Requested on January 12, 1998.*

**Effective Date:** *Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed. However, section 3 of this act shall take effect September 1, 2000, unless if by that date a law is enacted stating that a school accountability and academic assessment system is not in place.*