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**LARGEST STUDY OF ITS KIND IN IDAHO LOOKS AT IMPACT OF ALL-DAY
KINDERGARTEN ON EARLY YEARS LITERACY**

We know from research that students who are not reading proficiently by the end of 3rd-grade are four times more likely to drop out or fail to graduate from high school. For poor black and Hispanic students, that likelihood doubles.¹

Based on evidence from across the nation all-day kindergarten is an important strategy for closing literacy gaps. All-day kindergarten, however, is not a magic bullet. But, it can be fundamental in setting the conditions for better learning outcomes if it is done in tandem with smart improvements to what happens for our children in first, second and third grades.

But what does Idaho's early literacy data tell us? The expert research team at Public Impact in North Carolina helped tease out the answer. Public Impact, with support from the Idaho State Board of Education, accessed Idaho Reading Indicator (IRI) data from 2018-19 through 2020-21 to evaluate the effectiveness and impact of all-day kindergarten on our children's literacy results.

In 2020-21, there were 19,043 Idaho kindergartners in partial-day kindergarten and 14,832 Idaho children in full-day kindergarten; with larger percentages of economically disadvantaged, special education and English Language Learners in all-day programs than partial-day. A number of Idaho school districts have used their local funds and/or state literacy funds to provide all-day kindergarten for their students in recent years.

Key findings from the study include:

¹ https://excelined.org/policy-playbook/early-literacy/?gclid=CjwKCAiAnO2MBhApEiwA8q0HYQML3d95WzOuCkPjvV95N-j8-_RDAUegqZntGPwVhGnbsoc-2Z5cDRoCuR8QAvD_BwE





- From fall 2020 to spring 2021, Full-day kindergartners made more progress than partial-day, including economically disadvantaged (ED) students, though ED students remain far behind.
 - Students participating in full-day kindergarten **improved** their IRI scores and **outpaced** partial-day kindergarten students.
 - Full-day kindergarten students' scores made **statistically significant** improvements compared to partial-day kindergarten students
- After closing during the kindergarten year, the gap between full-day and partial-day kindergartners re-widens in 1st and 2nd grade. For non-ED students, the gap only partially re-widens, but for ED students the gap becomes larger in 2nd grade than at the beginning of kindergarten.

Bluum, with support from the J.A. and Kathryn Albertson Family Foundation, will support this analysis of IRI data every year for the next three years in order to garner stronger longitudinal data around the impact of all-day kindergarten on both of what Public Impact describes as “kindergarten outcomes” and “kindergarten preparedness.”

By demonstrating the effectiveness and impact of all-day kindergarten, Bluum hopes to better inform the critical and ongoing discussion around strategies to improve literacy in the Gem State. “Our children and families deserve nothing less,” said Bluum CEO, Terry Ryan.

About Bluum

Bluum is a Boise-based education nonprofit committed to ensuring Idaho’s children reach their fullest potential by cultivating great leaders, replicating high-performing school models and taking risks to develop new approaches so all Idaho students have access to great education. We believe a robust choice of learning opportunities helps children, families and educators achieve more and do better. For more information visit [Bluum.org](https://bluum.org).

