

***For more information: Jan. 13, 2022***

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**D91 Planning All Day Kindergarten**

**After extensive research over the last few months, Idaho Falls School District 91 is planning to offer all day kindergarten in all its elementary schools beginning Fall 2022.**

“Our experience shows all day kindergarten helps prepare children to be successful in school,” said Dr. Jim Shank. “All day kindergarten programs close learning gaps, and give children the academic, social and emotional foundation they need to be confident learners in elementary school.”

The district already offers all day kindergarten programs at four elementary schools, but this initiative would expand all day kindergarten to all D91 elementary schools. The district would use general fund, K-3 literacy funds, special education funds, title funds, ESSER and federal grants to make all day kindergarten available districtwide. The district is also hopeful state monies for all day kindergarten will be available as outlined in Gov. Little’s State of the State address.

“This is an investment to ensure our children start school with a strong foundation, and that they have all the support they need to be successful,” Dr. Shank said.

In recent years, the numbers of students entering kindergarten ready to learn in Idaho Falls School District 91 has declined. This year, only 31 percent of D91’s kindergarteners were at grade level on the fall Idaho Reading Indicator (IRI), compared to 41 percent of kindergarteners statewide.

D91 schools with all day kindergarten programs such as Temple View Elementary School have been successful in closing those learning gaps. In 2020-21, only 27 percent of Temple View’s Elementary School’s kindergartners were at grade level on the fall IRI, but 74% were at grade level on the spring IRI.

Over the last few months, district administrators, elementary school principals and a committee of kindergarten teachers have been looking at how to make all day kindergarten available districtwide. They have identified space in their schools for all day kindergarten, analyzed staffing and curriculum needs and researched furniture and technology needs.

The Board of Trustees will take formal action on all day kindergarten during its Jan. 25 work session. Watch for more information about D91’s all day kindergarten opportunities during spring registration.

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