



Greater Dover Chamber of Commerce & Visitor Center

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Dear Legislators;

On behalf of the Greater Dover Chamber of Commerce, I am writing today to express our support for full day kindergarten. Dover already has full day kindergarten and we've seen the benefits directly; higher graduation rates, reduced crime and a stronger economy. It also allows more parents to work, which attracts more families to our community.

Our businesses understand the importance of universal full-day kindergarten in New Hampshire. Research shows participation in early childhood education has a strong return on investment and benefits society as a whole in the long run. As we currently struggle to develop a labor pool that has the necessary skills for 21st century jobs, full-day kindergarten is a long-term investment in workforce development.

The absence of universal full-day kindergarten is bad for business growth, retention, and recruitment. We're the only state without universal full-day kindergarten. Parents of young children being recruited by New Hampshire companies are increasingly reluctant to stay in or relocate to a state that does not offer early childhood education. Lack of universal full-day kindergarten is hampering the state's efforts to attract business to New Hampshire.

As mentioned above, full-day kindergarten also removes a barrier for potential employees from entering, or re-entering, the workforce. In the absence of full-day kindergarten, many parents have limited employment options available because their children are in half-day programs. Having full-day kindergarten will enable more qualified, talented parents to get back into our workforce where they are desperately needed.

The benefits of increased access to full-day kindergarten will boost New Hampshire's economy and improve our overall quality of life. It is time New Hampshire lawmakers make a smart investment in its most important economic resource – our kids – and put our state on a path to greater growth and prosperity.

Sincerely,

Molly Hodgson
President
GDCC

Christine Sieks
Chairman of the Board
GDCC