

**Two Year Kindergarten Sequence: Retentive Kindergarten
(AKA, Developmental Kindergarten, Begindergarten, Young 5's, etc.)**

The Great Start Readiness Program (GSRP) exists to ensure that enrolled children have a successful transition into and experience with kindergarten. Michigan law states that children are entitled to kindergarten when they are 5 on or before December 1st. Kindergarten is designed to be a one-school-year program before first grade. There is no grade in Michigan called Developmental Kindergarten.

When staff or families are concerned with the transition into kindergarten, please address:

1. Has the program reviewed the research history showing that generally delay of school entry, placement in extra-year programs, and retention have been shown to be detrimental to children's overall school success?
2. Are there portions of the local GSRP which require strengthening to high-quality so that children are making strongest possible developmental gains before kindergarten?
3. Are parents objectively educated as to their rights when enrolling children into kindergarten? Are parents aware of the research related to child outcomes for children participating in retentive kindergarten?
4. Has the program gathered local longitudinal data to determine school outcomes for children participating in retentive kindergarten?
5. Are there portions of the local kindergarten which require attention to developmentally appropriate programming, to ensure that all children are welcomed to participate and instruction is differentiated for each one?

A valuable collaborative effort would include a vertical alignment review for preK and kindergarten:

1. standards of quality (program and child expectations),
2. systematic program evaluation,
3. programming options (part-day vs full-day),
4. adult-child ratio,
5. comprehensive/research-validated curriculum,
6. comprehensive/research-validated and authentic child assessment tool,
7. parent engagement, and
8. meaningful professional development for staff.

Related Citations:

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