

# Why Full Day Kindergarten is needed in Pittsford

Pittsford is currently one of only FIVE school districts in the entire state of New York that does not offer full-day kindergarten. All other NYS children have access to full-day kindergarten, creating a significant disparity in early childhood education programs across NYS. In order to remain among the top school districts in the nation, full-day kindergarten is pivotal to maintaining the overall quality of our programs and the success our students experience, and one that our community has come to expect from the Pittsford Central School District.

## Expectations exceed current time allocated

- In 2011 New York State implemented new, more rigorous learning standards. The standards, as they are written, are intended to be implemented in a full-day kindergarten program and expect kindergarten students to be able to perform tasks previously expected of first grade students.
- PCSD half-day kindergarten students often require more intervention services for several years compared to those that attended a full-day kindergarten program outside of PCSD.

## Meeting developmental needs

A full-day kindergarten program would allow us to provide our students with a learning experience that is appropriately paced and aligned to their **academic, social, and emotional** needs, including:

- Developmentally appropriate, child-centered learning experiences
- Daily center-based instruction in reading, writing, and math
- Expanded opportunities for fine and gross motor skill development
- Increased opportunities to develop friendships, independence and confidence
- Full inclusion in the school community without multiple transitions to supplemental programs
- Development of positive self-worth and personal perception as a learner

## WHAT are we asking for?

We are asking our State legislators and Governor Cuomo to follow through on the promise they made in July 2017 to provide funding to support the implementation of full-day kindergarten for ALL students in New York State. See an article about this pledge in a *Democrat and Chronicle* article, "**Gov. Andrew Cuomo, leaders pledge to pay for full-day kindergarten,**" by Jon Campbell, published on July 6, 2017.

Since the NYS Foundation Aid formula was frozen in 2008, there is inadequate State support to transition from half-day kindergarten to full-day kindergarten. In other words, under the current law, we would receive the same ½ time aid for kindergarten even if we move to a full day. This forces Pittsford to choose between providing full-day kindergarten for our youngest learners OR maintaining the depth and breadth of programming provided to all other students in Pittsford. This is a not a choice that aligns with what we know is best for all of our students. ALL Pittsford students DESERVE a high quality educational experience and one that is equally provided across New York State.

80% of our school budget is funded by our taxpayers; we need our representatives in Albany to take action that will allow us to present budgets that are within our tax cap, give our five-year-olds access to the same educational experiences as 99% of kindergarteners across New York State, while also maintaining our comprehensive and outstanding program for all students.

## By signing this petition, you are asking legislators to:

***Provide a sufficient amount of start-up funding, and predictable and fair long-term financial support for purposes of full-day kindergarten sustainability at PCSD.*** Find this petition at [Pittsfordschools.org](http://Pittsfordschools.org) or [Change.org](http://Change.org).