



What is Gearing Up for Kindergarten?

The 2011 and 2013 Legislature's education bills included funding to expand the Gearing Up for Kindergarten program in North Dakota. The Gearing Up for Kindergarten program was developed by NDSU Extension Service Specialists and Parent Resource Center Coordinators to assist parents and their children in preparing for the transition to kindergarten.

Entering kindergarten is a major transition in the life of a child and his or her parents. Kids need to be ready for school, and schools need to be ready for kids. That's why Gearing Up for Kindergarten offers educational classes that prepare parents and their children for success in school.

How is the Class Organized?

- Parents and their child attend the year prior to entering kindergarten.
- Parents receive the maximum benefit by attending a total of 16 weekly sessions. Some schools offer eight sessions in the fall and 8 sessions in the spring. Others run 16 sessions consecutively. A second approach with good quality results is offering 10 weekly sessions. Fewer than 10 sessions did not produce maximum benefits.

How Does the Legislated Reimbursement Program Work?

To qualify for reimbursement, your school district must:

1. Have a representative (kindergarten teacher, school principal, program coordinator, etc.) trained in the Gearing Up for Kindergarten program
2. Offer the 10-week or 16-week program
3. Complete the evaluation forms provided

Maximum Reimbursement for a School District Based on Kindergarten Enrollment

| Projected school kindergarten enrollment fall 2013 | Number of classes eligible for reimbursement | Maximum dollars available | |
|--|--|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| | | 16 Sessions per class | 10 Sessions per class |
| 1-30 | 1 | \$5,438 | \$3,430 |
| 31-70 | 2 | \$10,876 | \$6,860 |
| 71-110 | 3 | \$16,314 | \$10,290 |
| 111-160 | 4 | \$21,752 | \$13,720 |
| 161-300 | 5 | \$27,190 | \$17,150 |
| 301-600 | 6 | \$32,628 | \$20,580 |
| 601-1000 | 7 | \$38,066 | \$24,010 |

Research results recommends 12 to 15 students per class. Additional funding options listed on website.

gearing up for
Kindergarten

How Does Our School District Get Involved?

- Complete the application form at www.gearingupnd.org.
- Schedule a training session with the Gearing Up for Kindergarten coordinator (judith.konerza@gfschools.org).
- Plan the number of classes based on 10 to 15 children per class and their parents.
- Reimbursement is intended to cover teacher/facilitator costs. School districts should plan to cover the remaining costs. Additional options for funding can be found online at www.gearingupnd.org/Administration.
- Smaller school districts with fewer than 10 incoming kindergartners should contact the Gearing Up for Kindergarten state coordinator to discuss methods to adapt to your school size.
- School districts will be selected based on the order of applications received until funds are expended. Notification of successfully funded applicants will be made within two weeks of submission to the designated contact person.

Who Should Be Trained?

Kindergarten teachers, program coordinators and parent educators are all recommended to attend the training.



Why Should Our District Offer Gearing Up for Kindergarten?

Control group studies indicate that:

- On both social skills and pre-academic skills, children in the Gearing Up group had an increase in ability three times higher than children who did not participate.
- Participants rated Gearing Up as a significantly more valuable source of information on parenting and school readiness than any other source.
- 96 percent of parents indicated the program was very or extremely useful to them in their parenting.

What One Superintendent Has to Say

"I was fortunate to be involved at the ground level with Gearing Up for Kindergarten. It has had a significant impact on how strongly I feel about early education and the power of parent involvement at the primary level. There is a common misconception that Gearing Up for Kindergarten is a pre-k program, but it's really a stand-alone program for kindergarten readiness and parent involvement. It works well in partnership with other programs.

One of the biggest concerns among kindergarten teachers is that incoming students have such varying levels of readiness, but Gearing Up for Kindergarten can be a significant benefit in helping to even out those levels and make the kindergarten experience much better for the child and the parent.

This is a research-based program designed and piloted in North Dakota. This is also an important factor for superintendents and school decision-makers to understand. The program's research is solid and it works in North Dakota."

Rob Lech, Superintendent of Schools, Jamestown, N.D.



"As First Lady, I strongly encourage you to enroll your child into Gearing Up for Kindergarten. This wonderful program makes sure your child is ready for kindergarten. Parents and children attend the program together, which helps the children get comfortable in a school setting and builds relationships with the parents and the school."

North Dakota First Lady Betsy Dalrymple

For more information, contact:

Judith Konerza, Ph.D., Coordinator
Gearing Up for Kindergarten
Phone: (701) 787-4216
judith.konerza@gfschools.org
www.gearingupnd.org

County commissions, North Dakota State University and U.S. Department of Agriculture cooperating. North Dakota State University does not discriminate on the basis of age, color, disability, gender expression/identity, genetic information, marital status, national origin, public assistance status, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or status as a U.S. veteran. Direct inquiries to the Vice President for Equity, Diversity and Global Outreach, 205 Old Main, (701) 231-7708. This publication will be made available in alternative formats for people with disabilities upon request, (701) 231-7881.

gearing up for
Kindergarten



A Research-based School Readiness and Parent Involvement Program

Research indicates nearly half of all children entering school deal with some struggles that can interfere with school success.

NDSU EXTENSION SERVICE