

## Half-day kindergarten to be deleted next year

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### **NOSD officials say option fails to meet rigors of academic expectations**

Citing increasingly rigorous academic standards that reach to the youngest students, the Northern Ozaukee School Board agreed Monday to discontinue half-day kindergarten starting next school year.

Supt. Blake Peuse said half-day kindergarten has become an underutilized approach to teach youngsters.

“Half-day kindergarten has been an option for many years, however we have had only a handful of families take advantage of this in the last 10 years,” Peuse said in a report to the board.

In recent years, he said as few as three or four children have been enrolled in the half-day program.

Peuse said the importance of full-day kindergarten is mounting as the district embraces the Common Core Standards for learning, which sets benchmarks of for mastering core subjects.

“When students are engaged in half-day kindergarten, they accumulate approximately 540 hours of instruction for the school year,” he said. That is half the classroom time students in full-day kindergarten receive.

“We need to focus on readying our students to enter the first grade with grade-level-appropriate skills, especially in the area of reading, literacy and basic math skills,” Peuse said.

That preparedness follows students throughout their school careers, he said.

Peuse said full-day kindergarten allows teachers to provide a better balance of time for academics and socializing skills.

Although not advocated as a financial move, Peuse also noted that the district receives 40% less state aid for students enrolled in half-day kindergarten compared to full-day kindergartners.