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## District officials look at pay kindergarten [CA-BC]

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AVAILABILITY See text below.

## EXCERPTS

Howe Sound School District trustees have authorized local schools to explore a number of options for kindergarten classes for the 2004-'05 school year, including a full-day kindergarten with parents paying for the extra time.

But area teachers are decrying the latter option as "elitist," and as something that "undermines the basic foundations of public education."

Currently, kindergarten students attend classes each school day, either in the morning or the afternoon. According to Dr. Rick Erickson, Howe Sound Schools superintendent, there is no major concern involving the current schedule, and different options are being looked at simply to provide a greater awareness that there is a possibility of different scheduling options for kindergarten.

An official with the Howe Sound Teachers Association (HSTA), though, said the pay-kindergarten option amounts to "two-tiered" education.

Three different options have been looked at, each with different changes and/or suggestions to the current schedule.

Option 1 & emdash; All-day kindergarten, scheduled two full days one week and three full days the following week; or a variation of this rotating schedule. Over a two-week period, the instructional time in this option would equal the current two-week daily/day program;

Option 2 & emdash; The current day/morning program each weekday, plus three afternoon sessions per week. Fees would be set at about \$320 per student, per month;

Option 3 & emdash; The current day/ morning program each weekday, plus five afternoon sessions each week. Fees would be set at approximately \$400 per student, per month.

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