

STATE SENATOR • IRMA CLARK-COLEMAN • 3RD DISTRICT
Clark-Coleman Press Release

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**SEN. CLARK-COLEMAN CALLS FOR MANDATORY ALL-DAY
KINDERGARTEN**

Leaders join Senator in urging legislative action

LANSING- Surrounded by all-day Kindergarten students and education leaders, Sen. Irma Clark-Coleman (D-Detroit) today urged parents and educators to let legislators know the benefits of mandatory all-day Kindergarten proposed by Clark-Coleman's Senate Bill 162 and endorsed by Governor Granholm in her 2008 State of the State address.

"The goals of kindergarten education have not changed in more than 170 years," Sen. Clark-Coleman said. "What has changed is the environment. International competition, a finance-driven economy, two-parent working families, and changing demographics have rendered half-day Kindergarten less effective. We need to take action to maximize learning opportunities for the next generation, Michigan's 21st century workers."

SB 162 would require school districts to provide a kindergarten program equal in length to other elementary grades provided by the school district.

Clark-Coleman was joined by Sue Carnell, Detroit Public Schools Deputy Superintendent and Detroit Federation of Teachers President Virginia Cantrell. Sen. Clark-Coleman also read a supportive statement from State Board of Education President Kathleen Straus who is currently at home recovering from recent surgery.

"The State Board of Education's overarching goal is to raise achievement for all students and close the gap between high and low achieving students and one of our main strategies has been to strengthen and expand early childhood education, making it available to all students," Straus said in her statement.

"SB 162 not only deserves a hearing and support in the Senate Education Committee, but also should be passed by the full Senate and House."

Also present in support of SB 162 were John R. King Principal Vivian Hughes and Women's Foundation President Emma Bell.

The public call to action came on 2008 National Kindergarten Day, a day set aside to honor of Friedrich Froebel, who established the first Kindergarten in Germany in 1837.

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State Sen. Irma Clark-Coleman represents the 3rd Senate District. She sits on the Banking & Financial Institutions, Education, Families & Human Services, and Senior Citizens & Veterans Affairs committees.