

# California Department of Education

## Transitional Kindergarten FAQs

Frequently asked questions regarding California state law relating to kindergarten.

- 1. What is the Kindergarten Readiness Act of 2010?**  
Senate Bill (SB) 1381 (Chapter 705, Statutes of 2010) amended California Education Code (Section 46300, 48000, and 48010) to change the required birthday for admission to kindergarten and first grade and established a transitional kindergarten program beginning in the 2012–2013 school year.
- 2. What is the minimum age for admittance to kindergarten in California?**  
A child shall be admitted to a kindergarten maintained by the school district at the beginning of a school year, or at a later time in the same year if the child will have his or her fifth birthday on or before one of the following dates (EC 48000[a]):  
  
For the 2010–11 school year the date is December 2  
For the 2011–12 school year the date is December 2  
For the 2012–13 school year the date is November 1  
For the 2013–14 school year the date is October 1  
For the 2014–15 school year and each school year thereafter the date is September 1.
- 3. What is transitional kindergarten?**  
A transitional kindergarten is the first year of a two-year kindergarten program that uses a modified kindergarten curriculum that is age and developmentally appropriate. Pursuant to law, (EC 48000[c]), a child is eligible for transitional kindergarten if a child will have his or her fifth birthday between:  
  
For the 2012–13 school year November 2 and December 2  
For the 2013–14 school year October 2 and December 2  
For the 2014–15 school year and each school year thereafter September 2 and December 2.
- 4. Will transitional kindergarten continue after 2014?**  
Yes.
- 5. Must children attend transitional kindergarten or kindergarten?**  
Parents and guardians are currently not required to enroll children in transitional kindergarten or kindergarten (EC Section 48200).
- 6. Is a district required to offer transitional kindergarten and kindergarten programs?**  
Each elementary or unified school district must offer transitional kindergarten and kindergarten classes for all children eligible to attend.
- 7. Can transitional kindergarten and kindergarten students be enrolled in the same classrooms?**  
Although the intent of the law is to provide separate and unique experiences for transitional kindergarten and kindergarten students, districts have flexibility to determine how best to meet the curricular needs of each child.
- 8. How many years can a district claim apportionment for transitional kindergarten and kindergarten?**  
Pursuant to law (EC 46300[g]), districts may claim apportionment for a child for not more than two years in kindergarten or two years in a combination of transitional kindergarten and kindergarten.
- 9. Can a district claim apportionment for transitional kindergarten if it does not use a modified curriculum that is age and developmentally appropriate?**  
In order to claim apportionment for transitional kindergarten, districts must use a modified curriculum that is age and developmentally appropriate. California law (EC 48000) defines transitional

kindergarten as “the first year of a two-year kindergarten program that uses a modified kindergarten curriculum that is age and developmentally appropriate.”

10. **How does transitional kindergarten affect basic aid districts?**  
The laws apply equally to all districts, whether they receive State revenue limit funding or are basic aid.
11. **How many minutes does a transitional kindergarten program have to offer?**  
The number of required instructional minutes for transitional kindergarten is 36,000 minutes per year. The minimum length of instructional time that must be offered to constitute a school day is 180 minutes. (*Education Code sections 46117 and 46201*)
12. **How long is the transitional kindergarten day?**  
Pursuant to law (EC 48000), a transitional kindergarten shall not be construed as a new program or higher level of service. By statute, the maximum school day in kindergarten is four hours (EC 46110). An exception to this statute allows schools that have adopted an early primary program (extended-day kindergarten) to exceed four hours (EC 8973).
13. **Is there a parental permission form to continue a child from transitional kindergarten into kindergarten?**  
Children enrolled in transitional kindergarten do not need a signed parental permission form to continue in kindergarten.
14. **Are standards available for transitional kindergarten?**  
While recommended standards at all grade levels are not mandatory but voluntary. Local Education Agencies will make the decision of what standards or learning foundations are to be part of the local course of study. For guidance in creating a transitional kindergarten course, local education agencies may look at California’s Preschool Learning Foundations (<http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/cd/re/psfoundations.asp>) California Academic Content Standards (<http://www.cde.ca.gov/be/st/ss/>), and the Common Core State Standards for English Language Art and Mathematics (<http://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/cc/>).
15. **What is the curriculum for transitional kindergarten?**  
California law (EC 48000) defines transitional kindergarten as “the first year of a two-year kindergarten program that uses a modified kindergarten curriculum that is age and developmentally appropriate.” While no state curriculum is mandated, local education agencies must modify the local course of study in order to provide age and developmentally appropriate curriculum for transitional kindergarten.
16. **How will the needs of English learners be addressed in transitional kindergarten?**  
Local educational agencies will provide a Home Language Survey to be completed by the parent or guardian which will aid the school in determining whether or not the student should be administered the California English Language Development Test (CELDT). Students who are English learners in a transitional kindergarten will have the same level of services as those in kindergarten.
17. **How will the needs of parents of English learners be addressed in transitional kindergarten?**  
California law (EC 48985) requires that “all notices, reports, statements, or records sent to the parent or guardian of any such pupil by the school or school district shall, in addition to being written in English, be written in the primary language, and maybe responded to either in English or the primary language.” This applies to parents of English learners in transitional kindergarten.
18. **What are the William’s requirements for students in transitional kindergarten?**  
While instructional materials must be provided to all pupils, the governing board of a school district determines standards-aligned instructional materials and how those materials are to be modified and age-appropriate for transitional kindergarten. Education Code 60119 states “sufficient textbooks or instructional materials’ means that each pupil, including English learners, has a standards-aligned textbook, instructional materials, or both, to use in class and to take home. This paragraph does not require two sets of textbooks or instructional materials for each pupil. The materials may be in a digital format as long as each pupil, at a minimum, has and can access the same materials in the class and to take home, as all other pupils in the same class or course in the district and has the ability to use and access them at home.”

19. **Can students who are age eligible for kindergarten attend transitional kindergarten?**  
The Kindergarten Readiness Act of 2010 does not change the established procedures of early admittance for students who do not meet the age eligibility requirement (EC 48000[b]).
20. **What type of facility should be used for transitional kindergarten?**  
Facility requirements will be the same as they presently are for kindergarten.
21. **Will transitional kindergarten enrollment generate eligibility under the State School Facility Program (changes in kindergarten enrollment have a dramatic impact on the 5 year enrollment projections for calculating new construction eligibility)?**  
Eligibility for this program should remain unchanged because transitional kindergarten ADA would be included in the kindergarten ADA that is currently used to calculate eligibility.
22. **Will transitional kindergarten have the same statutory class size limits as regular kindergarten (33 maximum/31 average)? What about Class Size Reduction for transitional kindergarten?**  
The same requirements that apply to kindergarten also apply to transitional kindergarten.
23. **What is the teacher-student ratio for transitional kindergarten?**  
This is a local district decision and will most likely be impacted by budget and contract agreements.
24. **Does the transitional kindergarten teacher need a teaching credential?**  
The teacher must be properly credentialed as is currently required of kindergarten teachers.
25. **Does the Kindergarten Readiness Act of 2010 provide funding for any other staffing?**  
No, although other available funding may be used.
26. **Are districts required to use DataQuest to report information about transitional kindergarten?**  
Yes, districts are required to use DataQuest to report data and statistics in order to identify trends and educational needs of transitional kindergarten students.
27. **Does the Kindergarten Readiness Act of 2010 provide funding for professional development?**  
No, although other available funding may be used.
28. **Can a transitional kindergarten teacher “loop” with his/her students to kindergarten?**  
The decision to “loop” a teacher with their students from the transitional kindergarten to the kindergarten year would be a local decision.
29. **Can the same federal funds used to fund kindergarten be used to fund transitional kindergarten (for example Title 1, Title III, EIA, etc.)?**  
Yes. The same funds and compliance requirements associated with the use of the funds apply.

