

Transitional Kindergarten



What is Transitional Kindergarten?

Transitional kindergarten is a bridge between preschool and kindergarten for children turning 5 years old between September and December. It gives young learners a head start and provides them with an opportunity to learn and grow in an environment that is tailored to meet their academic and social needs.

Transitional Kindergarten:

- Is part of the public school system and is free for families
- Uses a unique, specialized curriculum that is based on the kindergarten standards and is designed to support young 5 year olds
- Is taught by credentialed teachers with extra training to teach young kindergarteners

Starting school is a very exciting time for children and their families! It begins a new chapter in their lives and sets the tone for children's future. But California's kindergarten standards and curriculum have changed over the years, and many of the skills children were once taught in first grade are now expected in kindergarten. This can make the transition into kindergarten difficult for some children, and the youngest children entering the kindergarten classroom often struggle to adjust.

The good news is that California recently passed a law to create transitional kindergarten, giving children an opportunity to learn in a hands-on, interactive way that supports their development, while still maintaining the rigor and high standards of kindergarten.

Who attends Transitional Kindergarten?

While this new law may be phased in over three years, in our district, transitional kindergarten will be offered to children turning 5 years old between September 2 and December 2 to give them an opportunity to develop the social and academic skills and the confidence that will help them succeed in kindergarten and beyond.

Who attends Kindergarten?

Previously, children could be enrolled in kindergarten if they turned 5 years old by December 2. Beginning with the 2012-13 school year, children must turn five by November 1. In 2013-14, children must turn five years old by October 1 and in 2014-15, they must turn five years old by September 1.

Why is Transitional Kindergarten good for kids?

Transitional kindergarten provides children with an opportunity to learn in an enriching and academically challenging environment that nurtures their growth. Research shows that children who attend kindergarten readiness programs like transitional kindergarten are more likely to do well in school and attend college.

Parents all over California recognize the benefits of transitional kindergarten, and many parents have already been enrolling their children in similar programs, public and private, for years. Offering transitional kindergarten will help all of our kids get the best start possible, with curriculum that is designed just for them.

What happens in a Transitional Kindergarten Classroom?

In transitional kindergarten, teachers help children develop social skills through activities that build confidence and communication. They also expose children to reading and math in an exciting, interactive way by using educational games to teach children about words and sentences and help them understand mathematical concepts like counting and patterns.

- **Classroom facility and teacher:** Transitional kindergarteners have their own classroom with their own teacher or may be integrated with a kindergarten class.
- **Length of school day:** The length of day is the same as the kindergarten class at your school.
- **Shared activities:** They participate in all kindergarten activities such as music and art throughout the year.
- **Curriculum and learning:** They learn important new skills like hands on learning in math concepts, emergent literacy and positive socialization skills that build on what they may have learned in preschool and help them adjust to the elementary school environment.
- **Learning environment:** They learn by working with the teacher in small and large groups and also have opportunities for independent exploration.

How can I learn more?

To learn more about transitional kindergarten in your area call the school your child will be attending or visit www.sbsdk12.org/TK for frequently asked questions and other resources.