

# Lake Tahoe Unified School District

## Transitional Kindergarten



Children who will have their fifth birthday between September 2, 2015 and December 2, 2015 are eligible to enroll in a transitional kindergarten program. Lake Tahoe Unified School District's transitional kindergarten program is located at Tahoe Valley Elementary School, 943 Tahoe Island Drive, South Lake Tahoe, CA. Phone: (530) 543-2350

**REGISTRATION FOR ALL ELIGIBLE TRANSITIONAL KINDERGARTEN STUDENTS IS BEING HELD**

**May 4, 2015 through May 8, 2015**

**AT TAHOE VALLEY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL  
943 Tahoe Island Drive, South Lake Tahoe, CA  
(530) 543-2350**

California Law requires that:

1. You bring child's birth certificate.
2. You bring proof of immunizations, which includes the Varicella (Chicken Pox), Hepatitis B and for most children - the last booster shot. ***Children will not be enrolled in school without presenting an up-to-date immunization record.***
3. Your child has a health examination upon entry to school (schedule with your family Physician).
4. Your child has an oral health examination upon entry to school (dental examinations that have occurred in the last 12 months meet this requirement).
5. You bring proof of California residency.

For questions regarding the district's immunization requirements, please see the Enrollment Requirements for All Students or contact Debbie Amacker in Special Services at [damacker@ltsud.org](mailto:damacker@ltsud.org). For more information about immunization requirements and availability of vaccinations, see the Shots for School website:

<http://www.shotsforschool.org/>.

### **A Strong Start for Young Learners**

The California Kindergarten Readiness Act established a transitional kindergarten program for children who miss the cutoff birth date to enroll in kindergarten.

Transitional kindergarten is designed to build a bridge between early learning and kindergarten. This program provides time for younger students to engage in early academic learning experiences designed to promote success in kindergarten and beyond.

Transitional kindergarten is a part of the public school system and is free for families.

# Enrollment Requirements for All Students

All students must be registered by a parent and provide the documents outlined below. According to the district's No Shots, No School policy, students are not allowed to attend class until the school has received all required documents.

- **All students (Pre K–12)**
  - Proof of residency can include items such as a property tax payment receipt; rental property contract, lease, or payment receipt; utility service contract, statement, or payment receipt; pay stub; voter registration or correspondence from a government agency (AR 5111.1).
  - Proof of immunizations against polio, measles, mumps and rubella (MMR), diphtheria, tetanus and whooping cough (DTaP), hepatitis B (Hep B) and chickenpox (Varicella or proof of having had chickenpox). (See age specific requirements for immunizations below.)
- **Transitional Kindergarten**
  - Required for all students who turn five (5) years between Sept. 2 and Dec. 2, 2015.
  - Copy of a birth certificate, baptismal certificate or passport.
  - See Immunization requirements below for Kindergarten. **All transitional kindergarten students must meet these immunization requirements.**
- **Kindergarten (*New to the district or attendance area*)**
  - Children must be five (5) years or older on or before Sept. 1, 2015 in order to be eligible to attend kindergarten.
  - Copy of a birth certificate, baptismal certificate or passport.
  - Children entering kindergarten and transitional kindergarten should have:
    - 5 DTaP - 4 doses meet requirement if at least one was given on or after the 4th birthday
    - 4 Polio - 3 doses meet requirement if at least one was given on or after the 4th birthday
    - 3 Hep B
    - 2 MMR (1st dose on or after 1st birthday)
    - 1 Varicella
  - **Physical Exam**  
California's Child Health and Disability Prevention (CHDP) program mandates that every child have a physical examination on file. This must be completed during the kindergarten year. You are encouraged to complete this exam at kindergarten entry to make sure your child is healthy and ready to learn.
  - **K-1 Dental Exam (OHA)**  
Effective January 1, 2007, an Oral Health Assessment (dental examination) by a licensed California dental health professional is required for children entering public school for the first time (at kindergarten or first grade). The Oral Health Assessment must be completed and returned to the school by May 31 of that first school year. Assessments done 12 months prior to school entry also meet this requirement. Obtain the form from the school or your dental health provider to complete. Parents/guardians may sign a waiver of this requirement, which is found on the OHA form available at the school.
- **All Grade 1 students**
  - Must be at least 6 years old by Sept. 1 unless they have completed a year of public school kindergarten.
- **All Grade 7-12 students**
  - **Children entering grade 7 should have:**
    - 3 DTaP and 1 Tdap given on or after 7th birthday
    - 4 Polio 3 doses meet requirement if at least one was given on or after the 2nd birthday
    - 2 MMR 1st dose on or after 1st birthday
    - 1 Varicella
  - **Children entering grades 7-12 should have:**
    - 1 TDaP booster shot (New state immunization law - AB 354 - effective July 1, 2011). An immunization with a pertussis-containing vaccine (Dtap or TDaP) given on or after the 7th birthday meets this requirement.

# Transitional Kindergarten - Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

## **Why has California changed the Kindergarten cutoff date?**

In 2010, California enacted the Kindergarten Readiness Act (SB 1381). Prior to that time, California's cutoff date of Dec. 2 for Kindergarten entry was one of the latest in the nation. In most states, children must turn five by Sept. 1 in order to start Kindergarten. California's late Kindergarten cutoff allowed children as young as 4 years and 9 months to be in classes with children more than one year older. Rolling back the Kindergarten entry date a few months can make an enormous difference in the early years when children are rapidly growing and developing.

## **What is Transitional Kindergarten?**

Transitional Kindergarten, often referred to as TK, is an exciting educational opportunity for children who turn five between Sept. 2 and Dec. 2. It is the first phase of a two-year Kindergarten program that uses age-appropriate curricula aligned to the Common Core State Standards. Transitional Kindergarten acts as a bridge between preschool and Kindergarten and is designed to provide our youngest learners with the pivotal skills and experiences needed for success in Kindergarten.

## **What are the benefits of Transitional Kindergarten?**

Transitional Kindergarten offers an additional year of school to our younger students. It provides opportunities to learn in an academically challenging and enriching environment. Children who attend Transitional Kindergarten are more likely to acquire the academic skills, confidence and maturity they need to succeed in school.

## **What does the research say about Transitional Kindergarten?**

Research is clear that high-quality education for young learners is vitally important in assuring school success and plays a key role in closing the present achievement gap among groups of students. According to a study conducted by the RAND Corporation in 2007, the readiness gap mirrors the achievement gap of students in the primary grades. The RAND report demonstrates "that there are sizable gaps in the extent to which children in California enter school ready to learn, gaps that persist when student performance is measured in Kindergarten through the third grade (Cannon & Karoly, 2007, p. 59).

Data synthesized by long-term preschool studies found that children who participated in high-quality early childhood programs tended to have higher scores on math and reading achievement tests, greater language abilities, and less grade retentions. These data show that there was less need for special education intervention, remedial support, and there were lower dropout rates (Lynch, 2005).

Entering Kindergarten at an older age is an important early predictor for student success. Some studies indicate that students who are older when they enter Kindergarten demonstrate a significant boost in academic achievement, self-confidence, and healthful attitudes about school and learning (RAND, 2007).

## **When was the Transitional Kindergarten introduced in Lake Tahoe Unified School District?**

Transitional Kindergarten classes and curriculum were established in the 2012/13 school year at all elementary schools.

## **If my child attends Transitional Kindergarten, is he/she being held back?**

No, Transitional Kindergarten is not a remedial program. It is designed as the first of a two-year Kindergarten program.

## **What are the eligibility requirements for Transitional Kindergarten?**

Children who have their fifth birthday between Sept. 2 and Dec. 2 are eligible for Transitional Kindergarten.

## **Is Transitional Kindergarten mandatory?**

While schools must offer a Transitional Kindergarten program for all children eligible to attend, student enrollment is voluntary though strongly encouraged.

## **Is Transitional Kindergarten free or fee-based?**

Transitional Kindergarten is part of California's K-12 public school system and is free to all age-eligible children.

**How is Transitional Kindergarten different from preschool?**

The standards, curricula and teacher credentialing requirements in Transitional Kindergarten are different than those in preschool. Transitional Kindergarten is aligned to the Common Core State Standards, is an academic program, and is taught by fully credentialed teachers. Transitional Kindergarten builds on the skills children may have learned in preschool and serves as the first of a two-year Kindergarten program.

**How is Transitional Kindergarten different from Kindergarten?**

The curricula in Transitional Kindergarten is modified to meet the needs of younger students. Transitional Kindergarten includes an emphasis in oral language development, literacy immersion, number sense, and it provides collaborative experiences that promote cooperation, self-confidence, self-regulation and healthy attitudes about school and learning.

**Are there academic standards for Transitional Kindergarten?**

The Common Core State Standards provide end-of-year standards for Kindergarten. Lake Tahoe Unified has used the Common Core Standards to design end-of-year expectations for Transitional Kindergarten that are appropriately modified to reflect the first of a two-year Kindergarten program.

**What is the curriculum for Transitional Kindergarten?**

While no state curriculum is mandated, Lake Tahoe Unified provides curricula and resources that are aligned to the Common Core State Standards.

**Can Transitional Kindergarten and Kindergarten students be enrolled in the same classroom?**

Districts have the flexibility to determine how best to meet the academic needs of students. During the 2012/13 and 2013/14 school years, Lake Tahoe Unified had combination classes at all elementary schools. Beginning in the 2014/15, an Early Childhood Learning Center (ECLC) was established at Tahoe Valley Elementary School to house stand-alone Transitional Kindergarten classes catering to all TK students across the District.

**Are the attendance requirements in Transitional Kindergarten the same as in grades K - 5?**

Yes, regular attendance is required at all grade levels.

**Do students in a Transitional Kindergarten program receive a report card?**

Transitional Kindergarten students receive a report card three times a year.

**Can students who turn five years old after December 2 start Transitional Kindergarten at the beginning of the school year?**

No, pursuant to law (EC 48000[c]), a child is eligible for Transitional Kindergarten if he/she will have his/her fifth birthday between Sept. 2 and Dec. 2.

**Can students who are age-eligible for Kindergarten attend Transitional Kindergarten?**

Parents of Kindergarten age-eligible students, in consultation with the school principal and/or staff, may request enrollment in a Transitional Kindergarten program. Parents must sign a Kindergarten Continuance Form verifying their understanding that they are enrolling their child in a two-year Kindergarten program.

**Can students enroll in grade 1 upon completion of Transitional Kindergarten?**

Transitional Kindergarten is the first of a two-year Kindergarten program. A student who participates in Transitional Kindergarten is expected to complete the second year of the program in Kindergarten before attending first grade. Pursuant to District Administrative Procedure 5123, early promotion to grade 1 may be considered on a case-by-case basis in collaboration with the parents, teacher(s), and principal.

**Can children with fall birthdays be enrolled in Kindergarten instead of Transitional Kindergarten?**

Early Admission to Kindergarten is rare, but may be considered on a case-by-case basis. This decision is made collaboratively with the parents, teacher(s) and principal and must reflect the best interests of the child. Contact the site principal for more information.

**Can students be retained in Transitional Kindergarten?**

Students will not be retained in Transitional Kindergarten.

**What is the class size of a Transitional Kindergarten classroom?**

Transitional Kindergarten mirrors the class size of a Kindergarten classroom.

**Will Transitional Kindergarten provide support for children who are learning English as an additional language?**

Yes, English Learners in Transitional Kindergarten have access to appropriate supports and services.

**How will Transitional Kindergarten impact students with an Individualized Education Plan (IEP)?**

All services identified in the student's IEP will be provided.

**Are there childcare/extended day opportunities for children attending Transitional Kindergarten?**

A fee-based extended day program is available on-site from 1:15-3:20 p.m. Scholarships may be available on a case-by-case basis. In addition, parents are urged to consider private daycare options that will best fit their needs.

**How do I enroll my child in a Transitional Kindergarten program?**

To enroll your child in a Transitional Kindergarten program, contact Tahoe Valley Elementary directly for enrollment information.

**How do I enroll my children in a Transitional Kindergarten program at my neighborhood school?**

All age-eligible students across the District attend the Transitional Kindergarten Program at the Early Childhood Learning Center. None of the neighborhood schools have TK classes.

**Will transportation be provided to the Transitional Kindergarten program at the ECLC?**

Transitional Kindergarten students are eligible for the same transportation services as all other students at the school.

**Are students in Transitional Kindergarten required to meet Kindergarten immunization requirements?**

All children are required to provide proof of immunizations before admission to Transitional Kindergarten.

**How is Transitional Kindergarten funded?**

California views Transitional Kindergarten as the first of a two-year Kindergarten program, and as such funds Transitional Kindergarten in the same way and at the same amount as traditional Kindergarten, which is determined through Average Daily Attendance (ADA). There is no special funding dedicated to Transitional Kindergarten.

**Are there specified funds for Transitional Kindergarten, like Title I funds--and can they be used for other purposes?**

Transitional Kindergarten is funded just as Kindergarten and other grades are. Therefore, there are no specified funds or funding sources, nor are there additional costs unique to this grade level. Additionally, there are no Title I funds dedicated to Transitional Kindergarten. Transitional Kindergarten students enrolled at the Tahoe Valley Elementary School, which is a Title I school, are included in the school's Title I student count used to determine allocation, school-based supports and services funded with Title I.

**If Transitional Kindergarten is a modified day, will we receive less money from the state?**

No, students in a modified-day program will continue to be fully funded just as Kindergarten students are. Our current extended-day Kindergarten program exceeds the length of day required by the state. A modified-day Transitional Kindergarten program follows state guidelines for length of day for Kindergarten and we will receive full funding for a modified-day program.

**What are budget impacts of full day versus a modified day Transitional Kindergarten program?**

There are no budget impacts. The fixed costs are the same with either scenario, and the state funding for students is the same with either scenario.