

How California's new universal transitional kindergarten program will be rolled out ^[1]

Author: D'Souza, Karen

Source: EdSource

Format: Article

Publication Date: 12 Jul 2021

AVAILABILITY

Access online ^[2]

EXCERPTS

With a pandemic that spotlights the essence of early childhood education and care, a universal transition kindergarten is ready to become a reality in California.

The \$ 2.7 billion Universal Transition Kindergarten program, backed by Governor Gavin Newsom and several lawmakers, will be phased over the next five years until all four-year-olds in the state are included by the 2025-26 school year. Will be introduced.

the current, Transitional kindergarten, Or TK serves approximately 100,000 children, primarily those who are 5 years old between September 2nd and December 2nd. SB 130The TK-12 Education Trailer Bill, signed by Newsom on Friday, State budget for 2021-22..

While some of the state's largest districts already offer expanded transition kindergartens, experts say that making the pre-kindergarten year available to everyone is the result of an early education watershed. Say there is.

Bruce Fuller, a professor of education and public policy at the University of California, Berkeley, said:

To suit Master plan for early learning and care Experts say that the expansion of this program, which is President Joe Biden's universal kindergarten vision, will increase the fairness of early education. They are supporting increased access to early education. 90% of brain growth It happens before kindergarten.

"With this budget, Governor Newsom and lawmakers have transformed the lives of toddlers, their families and teachers," said Scott, head of Kidango, a nonprofit organization that runs many childcare centers in the Bay Area. Moore says. "Simply put, California will be the best state in the country to raise children. All children get a one-year pre-kindergarten, and most low-income children get a pre-kindergarten for at least two years. Acquired and further increased infant care historically. "

Currently in California Almost 3 million children Under the age of five, they lag behind other states in terms of access to early education. Only 37% are enrolled in transitional kindergarten and state-funded preschool programs.

That's a concern for supporters of early education. the study Indicates that preschool children are more likely to take honor student classes and less likely to repeat grades.

"California is one of the largest achievement gaps in the country, and research shows that these gaps exist before children enter kindergarten, which gives them quality early learning opportunities. It's imperative to provide, "says senior managing Samantha Trang. Education Policy Director of Children Now, an advocacy group. "These options must be of high quality in order to have the intended impact and not create large disparities, so effective planning, teacher training and recruitment, appropriate ratios and curriculum for development, etc. The issue should be at the center of the deployment. "

Currently, transitional kindergartens are primarily aimed at children who have slightly missed the traditional kindergarten cutoffs. The bill outlines plans to add children every two or three months over the next few years until all four-year-olds are eligible for the program.

Proponents said that transitional kindergartens best nurture young minds with a small teacher-student ratio, a developmentally appropriate curriculum, and more than the three-hour teaching time of the program before school. Emphasize that after-school services need to be available. The bill will start with a ratio of 1 adult for every 12 children in grades 2022-23 and will pass on to 1 adult for every 10 children by grade 2023-24. Offer a lot.

"Wow, it would be great if we could achieve these ratios," said Jenny Goback, president of the California Kindergarten Association and former TK teacher. "It is very important to reduce the ratio of teachers to students who can pay individual attention. Many of the jobs of TK teachers require teachers to personalize the education of each student. The personality of each child. And get a deeper understanding of developmental needs. "

Advocates say it is important to ensure that the program provides children with a quality educational experience. After all, TK says

Preschool yearbook statusAn annual report on state-sponsored early learning, published by the National Institute for Early Education (NIEER), based at Rutgers University. California's State Kindergarten Program met six of the ten quality criteria in the survey, while the Transitional Kindergarten Program met only three of them. Class size and professional teacher training were important concerns. According to experts, improving program consistency and quality needs to be closely linked to increased access to meet the needs of children.

"Quality is an important aspect that determines effectiveness over time," said W. Stephen Burnett, Senior Co-Director of NIEER. "Exact evidence of a powerful effect has only been obtained in very high quality studies."

According to some experts, poor quality programs can actually have a negative impact on children.

"Universal program research can find harm, years of negative effects when quality is low," Burnett said. "The most obvious way a universal program can have a negative impact is for parents of children who should have had a quality experience at home or in the care of non-parents to a low quality free universal program due to poor quality. When switching children. Quality has declined due to funding or rapid expansion without high standards that exceed existing capabilities to maintain quality."

Another important aspect of transitional kindergarten planning is the choice of parents to attend TK or other preschool or childcare options. This is a great relief for many subsidized child care providers who feared that TK would undermine their business model by removing all four-year-olds in the aftermath of a pandemic, putting a heavy burden on the child care sector. I did.

However, many anticipate ongoing challenges in the future. One area of concern is teacher recruitment and training in the face of teacher shortages. Teacher training is important for young children, as it is essential to maintain the enjoyable nature of learning, according to experts.

"Standards and accountability are valuable, but they need to be out of the way of child-centered, developmentally appropriate and playful learning," said Stanford Graduate School of Education professor and early childhood education expert. Deborah Stipek said. "All learning, including content learning, must be playful."

According to experts, learning through play is a sweet spot for early education. Teachers need to have the skills to take advantage of the natural curiosity of childhood.

"Playtime is the most important part of TK's Student Day," Goback said. "They should have ample opportunities to play in free form, both in the classroom and outdoors. Good TK teachers plan deliberate play opportunities to meet

the specific needs of their students. There is no such thing as "just playing" in the TK classroom. Play is the place where learning takes place."

TK teachers currently need 24 credits of early childhood education, but some say they need more specialized training to be truly effective in the classroom. There are \$ 300 million in bills tagged for planning and implementing transitional kindergartens, including teacher recruitment and training.

"Currently, TK teachers need multiple credentials, so there are concerns about teacher preparation. This usually does not prepare teachers to work with their toddlers," says Stipek. "Some of us are looking for new P-3 credentials that focus on toddlers, but that's far from that."

Region: United States [3]

Tags: kindergarten [4]

Source URL (modified on 14 Jul 2021): <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/21/07/how-california%E2%80%99s-new-universal-transitional-kindergarten-program-will-be-rolled-out>

Links

[1] <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/21/07/how-california%E2%80%99s-new-universal-transitional-kindergarten-program-will-be-rolled-out> [2]

<https://edsources.org/2021/how-californias-new-universal-transitional-kindergarten-program-will-be-rolled-out/657818> [3]

<https://childcarecanada.org/taxonomy/term/7865> [4] <https://childcarecanada.org/category/tags/kindergarten>