

California Educators Support Transitional Kindergarten



"I love it, I love it, I've been waiting for years... transitional kindergarten will allow children to be better prepared to succeed in kindergarten and beyond." – **Pam Johnson, Teacher, Fresno Unified School District [CBS 47]**

"I think it's amazing...kids will learn to raise their hands, stand in line, relate to their peers and use words appropriately, among other things." – **Heather Wright, teacher, Elk Grove Unified School District [Sacramento Bee]**

"TK has been proven to be valuable to the school districts in lowering retention, special ed placement, and we predict dropout rates will go down." – **Cathy Wietstock, Administrator, Orange County Department of Education [ABC7 News]**

"I can take a little bit of time to teach pre-literacy skills. I have more flexibility to meet individual needs. That's what I like most about the program." – **Shirley Esau, Principal, Washington Elementary School, Kingsburg Elementary Charter School District [Kingsburg Recorder]**

"Developmentally, there's an enormous difference between a 4-year-old and a 5-year-old...Younger children may have less-developed fine motor control, the kind needed to grasp a pencil properly." – **Leslie Heilbron, Assistant Superintendent, Oak Park Unified School District [The Acorn]**

"We want to provide our young fives the gift of time...We want to provide students who may not have had the opportunity of preschool a year to become school ready." – **Jud Kempson, Assistant Superintendent, Burlingame Elementary School District [Patch]**

"I think it's a really great idea...I have thirteen children in my classroom right now that started as four year olds, and I feel like it would be a huge service to them to be able to have that extra time to mature a little and be ready for the academics of kindergarten." – **Ann Villegas, teacher, San Lorenzo Unified School District [Thoughts on Public Education Blog]**

"I feel that all the parents who chose to put their child in transitional kindergarten are very knowledgeable and they understand that their child will have a much easier journey through school." – **Jeanne Berry, teacher, Morgan Hill Unified School District [Morgan Hill Times]**

"I think this is long overdue...Those three months make such a difference. Moving it back will give kids... more time to be successful in school." – **Gary Dei Rossi, Deputy Superintendent, San Joaquin County Office of Education [Stockton Record]**

"Teachers say they do see differences in school readiness... There needs to be a bridge that gives them more time for developmental purposes but also has the academic component." – **Gail McWilliams, Superintendent, Gustine Unified School District [Gustine Press-Standard]**

"This program benefits children who need time to develop socially, emotionally, physically, and/or intellectually. The new Transition Kindergarten classes provide children high-quality instruction focused on helping them develop their language, literacy and pre-math skills, while supporting their social and emotional development."

– **Ruth Yoon, Administrator, Early Childhood Education Division, Los Angeles Unified School District [Examiner.com]**

Superintendents, Administrators and Educators Support Transitional Kindergarten

“To me, it’s what kindergarten used to be: fun and exciting...You don’t see all this anymore.” – **Paulie Esquivel, teacher, Planada Elementary School District** [*Thoughts on Public Education Blog*]

“It’s very rigorous for a four year old to be successful in a regular kindergarten room so this gets them ready.” – **Gayle Frediani, Principal, Fresno Unified School District** [*CBS 47*]

“We just believe that this program is so educationally sound...We’re so excited because it’s good for students with the developmental pacing, and it’s also good with the gift of time to make sure when they hit the middle school years they’re ready.”

– **Candy Plahy, Assistant Superintendent, Placentia-Yorba Linda Unified School District** [*Orange County Register*]

“I do believe that this is a great opportunity for our community and our students...We are really looking at it as a gift of time.”

– **Robin Hopper, Assistant Superintendent for Educational Services, Livingston Unified School District** [*Merced Sun-Star*]

“I’ve seen this be an early, wonderful school experience for children and I am excited to see it impact even more students and get them off to a great start...I think this will have long-reaching effects.”

– **Kris Damon, Teacher, Long Beach Unified School District** [*Long Beach Gazette*]

“We want to build those kindergarten readiness skills for our young fives so they’re ready for kindergarten.”

– **Katie Filzenger, Assistant Superintendent of Educational Services, National School District** [*Sign on San Diego*]

“The idea is to make sure that students can achieve at the same level as their peers...When they walk out the door of kindergarten, they have to be ready for first grade just like everybody else.”

– **Kim Bettencourt, Instructional Specialist, Newman-Crows Landing District** [*Gustine Press-Standard*]

“Research shows that if a student starts already behind, they stay behind...This is a perfect opportunity to really help the child who might not be ready socially or academically.”

– **Ramona Soto, Principal, South/West Park Elementary** [*Stockton Record*]

“I think it has incredible benefits...Children who enter kindergarten before they are ready may have trouble adjusting and risk falling behind. Transitional kindergarten programs allow for a smoother transition from preschool or home into the elementary school setting.”

– **Mary Lairon, Assistant Superintendent, Mountain View Whisman School District** [*Mountain View Voice*]

“This is a 2-year kindergarten program that focuses on supporting children in their development to get them ready for kindergarten. We’ve seen a great amount of success with our students, especially students who participated last year. We’re watching them in kindergarten now and they’re just ready for learning and they’re excited and having a great deal of success.”

– **Corrie Buckmaster Celeste, Principal, Sacramento City Unified School District** [*KCRA*]

