



fresno county office of education

January 27, 2012

Dear District Superintendent,

The passage of SB 1381 created a new avenue for academic success for our youngest learners. This bill establishes transitional kindergarten (TK) as a new grade level, our 'young fives' will be given the gift of quality time spent in a classroom with a developmentally appropriate curriculum. This opportunity will facilitate their academic and social emotional readiness for the rigors of their academic experiences through high school graduation.

Earlier this month, Governor Brown's proposed defunding transitional kindergarten in his 2012-13 budget, and if passed by the legislature, funding will cease effective January 2013. While the change to the entry date appears to be unchallenged, we are hearing that TK is now considered "voluntary" for school districts. In the upcoming months, we can expect more debate about TK; however, I encourage Fresno County school districts to proceed with plans to implement high-quality TK programs for students. A practical approach is to simply state in writing to parents that your district will provide TK classes as long as the state provides funding.

The Fresno County Office of Education (FCOE) will continue to offer professional development opportunities on TK and on February 28, 2012, FCOE will host the 2012 Summit: LEAP into TK. FCOE will also continue to convene the monthly TK Professional Learning Community and the www.tkcalifornia.org website is an invaluable resource as well.

As you strategize within your respective districts on how to effectively launch transitional kindergarten to meet the unique needs of your school community, we believe you will find the enclosed documents to be helpful resources:

- Implementing California's Kindergarten Readiness Act Guide and supporting PowerPoint
- FAQs About TK
- Easy-to-Read Age Program Entry Age Chart
- Parent tool kit
- CSBA Policy Brief and Sample Board Policy

Because TK is the step between preschool and traditional kindergarten, enclosed are materials pertaining to the Fresno County Voluntary Preschool Master Plan for four year-olds in Fresno County. Implementation of TK builds upon the successes of the Plan, and it is a valuable tool that links preschool with TK. These materials may be useful in your effort to design a system of preschool program delivery in your community that will assist in closing the achievement gap, and ultimately ensure a brighter future for the County's youngest learners. Enclosed are the following resources that pertain to high-quality preschool programs:

- Master Plan Executive Summary (English & Spanish)
- Fresno County Quality Rating Improvement System, Scoring Matrix

- Articulation and Coordination Resource Guide
- English Language Learner Support Resource Guide
- Parent and Community Engagement Resource Guide
- Workforce and Professional Development Resource Guide

As always, the Fresno County Office of Education is available should you need professional assistance or have questions about the 2012 TK Summit or Professional Learning Community. Please contact Wilma Hashimoto, Associate Director of Early Care and Education at (559) 497-3808.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Larry L. Powell".

Larry L. Powell
Superintendent of Schools

CC: Early Care and Education Director
Site Principal
TK Classroom Teacher
Curriculum and Instruction Administrator