

Universal Pre Kindergarten (UPK)/Transitional Kindergarten (TK) Fact Sheet

- UPK is the broader term referring to all universal programs available to 3-4-year-olds in California. For example, Head Start and private pay preschool are part of the UPK framework.
- TK is one of the options under this umbrella of UPK and is the only option within the UPK framework available within the public school system.

California Department of Education (CDE) intends for TK to be an available option for all children who turn 4 before September 1 of the 2025-2026 school year.

Kindergarten and Curriculum

Kinder is available for children who turn 5 on or before September 1 of a given school year. Kinder curriculum is designed to be more challenging for children than that in TK.

Kindergarten remains optional in California unless a child is 6 years old when enrollment is mandatory. And, a parent of a first enrolling 6-year-old MAY choose kindergarten.

TK children are obviously younger than those in kindergarten and therefore, the TK curriculum and activities must be age and developmentally appropriate.

TK Eligibility

School Year	Turning 5
2023-2024	9/2-4/2
2024-2025	9/2-6/2
2025-2026	Turning 4 before Spet. 1 of this school year and each school year after.