

TK EXPANSION PLAN

The Transitional Kindergarten Expansion Plan is intended to provide an alternate program in schools with closed School Readiness Language Development Program (SRLDP) classrooms. \$14.3M has been allocated to the program this year to serve the students who otherwise might be enrolled in SRLDP. The remaining 173 Schools with SRLDP in 2015-16 will transition to this program in the 2016-17 school year. The creation of this new program will provide additional seats for low income preschool children and teaching positions for certificated and classified staff. The implementation of this program will be an ongoing process over the next two years which will be under the purview of the Early Childhood Education Division in close collaboration with the Local District Instructional Directors.

GOALS

The short and long-term goals of the TK Expansion Project are to:

- provide quality preschool seats for low income children who turn 5 after December 2
- provide structured and unstructured opportunities for children to build socialization and communication skills with other children and with adults
- lower the dropout rate and increase high school graduation rates by cultivating at a very young age, personal qualities that improve children's resilience, confidence and persistence to a task
- improve student success in A-G requirements by setting a strong language and literacy foundation for our youngest students

PROGRAM COMPONENTS

Structure

- The TK Expansion program is a 6 hour, 180 school day program following the same time schedule as other elementary classrooms. The class size will be limited to 24 children. Students will participate in Breakfast in the Classroom and will have lunch with peers in a location selected by the Principal.
- Report card grading will not be in place for this group of children. Parent Conferences will be conducted, following the elementary school schedule.

Instruction

- The program will be grounded in the *California Preschool Curriculum Framework* and will follow the standards included in the *Preschool Learning Foundations*, not the Kindergarten *Common Core State Standards*. The program is a preschool program that

prepares children for Kindergarten. Kindergarten skills and benchmarks are inappropriate measures in this program.

- The structure of the school day will revolve around many and varied opportunities for students to gain foundational language and literacy skills appropriate to a preschool program. Learning Centers that provide opportunities for play and discovery are an integral part of the instructional day. Hands on play that allows children to explore and discover provides experiences that foster curiosity, the ability to raise questions, and practice in solving problems.
- An extremely important component of a quality preschool program involves the outdoor learning environment. The TK Expansion classroom schedule will mandate a minimum of two hours per day in the outdoor environment. This outdoor learning time is not recess. The outdoor learning time must include planned learning activities led by the teacher and aide. In a high quality preschool program the outdoor activities mirror the classroom activities and centers.

Assessment

- The students will be assessed on the *Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP2015)* and the results reported onto the online platform. Training in this instrument will be provided over the summer and into the fall months.

TIMELINE for training: 2 sessions in August and September; monthly through December

Curriculum

- Schools should use curricular programs and tools that are aligned to the developmental levels of preschool students. The newly adopted math curriculum for TK should be used in all classrooms. As there is currently no District-wide curriculum for all preschool programs, schools have a few options. A school may choose to continue to use the *Developmental Learning Materials (DLM)* curriculum or, if funds are available, purchase either the *We Can Curriculum* or the *Creative Curriculum*. TK Expansion classrooms **should not** use Kindergarten *Treasures*.

Space/ Room Environment

- Since the program is being opened in schools that formerly housed SRLDP classrooms, there is no increase in the number of classrooms already allocated to the school. This program is similar to SRLDP as it is a preschool program. Therefore, preschool materials are already available at these sites. As with other Transitional Kindergarten programs, there is no naptime routine in place. Quiet games, story time and music are appropriate transition activities.

ENROLLMENT REQUIREMENTS

As the goal is to provide the TK Expansion Program for low income children, the Meal Application will be used as the first criteria for enrollment. Only students who legitimately qualify for the Free/ Reduced Meal program are eligible to enroll in the program.

After that criterion is met, priority order for enrollment is based on the order of ADA reimbursement as follows:

- December birthdays (after December 2, 2010 birthdates for the 2015-16 school year)
- January birthdays (January, 2011 birthdates for the 2015-16 school year)
- February birthdays (February, 2011 birthdates for the 2015-16 school year)
- March birthdays (March, 2011 birthdates for the 2015-16 school year)
- April, May, June birthdays (April – June 2011 birthdates for the 2015-16 school year)

Family residency within the school boundary is a priority. After all neighborhood children have been offered enrollment, schools may enroll students outside of the residential boundary. A one year, no extension TK permit will be made available to facilitate this process.

TIMELINE for development of permit: July 15, 2015

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Principals

A one day mandatory professional development session on the programmatic and operational issues related to Transitional Kindergarten will be conducted for all Principals instituting the TK Expansion program. The respective Instructional Directors will also be required to attend in order to build their understanding of appropriate TK learning activities. This one day session will occur in July, when Principals return on E-Basis. A follow up one day session will be conducted mid-year. The follow up session will introduce Principals to the *Classroom Assessment Scoring System* (CLASS), a tool that will assist Principals in evaluating the quality of all preschool programs on their campus.

TIMELINE for Session One: between July 15 – August 1, 2015

TIMELINE for Session Two: January 2016

Local District Instructional Directors

Quarterly professional development sessions for Instructional Directors will be conducted in order to ensure that those who supervise Principals and school instructional programs know and can recognize the components of a high quality preschool program. The sessions will include study and practice with *Classroom Assessment Scoring System* (CLASS), a tool that will assist Directors in evaluating the quality of all preschool programs and providing support to Principals with regard to not only the TK Expansion Program, but also TK and State Preschool programs.

TIMELINE for Professional Development: August, October, February and April

Teachers

TK Expansion teachers will be encouraged to participate in the LA County Office of Childcare stipend program which rewards teachers who enroll in a TK certificate program being offered at several local Institutes of Higher Learning. The inset below provides detail on recent legislation with regard to teachers of TK in California.

SB 876 added additional requirements for TK teachers. Pursuant to EC 48000(g), a school district or charter school shall ensure that credentialed teachers who are first assigned to a TK classroom after July 1, 2015, have, by August 1, 2020, one of the following:

1. At least 24 units in early childhood education, or childhood development, or both.
2. As determined by the LEA employing the teacher, professional experience in a classroom setting with preschool age children that is comparable to the 24 units of education described in bullet 1.
3. A child development teacher permit issued by the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC).

Additionally, the Early Childhood Education Division, in conjunction with the Office of Curriculum, Instruction and School Support will provide professional learning opportunities for teachers throughout the school year.

TIMELINE for Communication with Principals for dissemination to teachers: July 30, 2015

TIMELINE for professional development sessions: Saturdays monthly beginning in September

Teacher Assistants

The Early Childhood Education Division, in conjunction with the Office of Curriculum, Instruction and School Support will provide professional learning opportunities for teacher assistants on Saturdays during the school year. These sessions will focus on adult child interactions, outdoor learning activities and concept development for preschoolers.

TIMELINE for professional development sessions: monthly beginning in October 2015

ROLE OF PRINCIPAL

The elementary school Principal is ultimately responsible for the appropriate identification, recruitment, and enrollment of TK Expansion students. The Elementary Principal is also responsible for ongoing supervision, monitoring and support of the instructional aspects of the TK Program as aligned to the *Preschool Learning Foundations*. It is crucial that the TK

Expansion program be considered an integral component in the elementary school and the teachers held to the same rigorous professional standards as their K-5/6 colleagues.

ROLE OF LOCAL DISTRICT INSTRUCTIONAL DIRECTORS

Each Local District will identify one or two Instructional Directors who will assist the Early Childhood Education Division with the planning and implementation of this program prior to the beginning of the school year.

During the school year, the expectation is that Instructional Directors assigned to each of these schools will closely monitor the instructional program and provide assistance as necessary to the Principal, teacher and parents.

STAFFING OF TEACHERS

Teachers will be assigned to the TK Expansion classroom as outlined in the *LAUSD/UTLA Collective Bargaining Agreement*. Teachers of this program should be interested in preschool children, able to develop curriculum based on the *CA Preschool Learning Foundations*, and have the energy and stamina to interact with our youngest elementary students. The teachers should understand the importance of language and literacy skills appropriate to preschool that prepare children for Kindergarten.

The Early Childhood Education Division will work with Human Resources to implement a teacher hiring/selection process that occurs as enrollment warrants.

TIMELINE for Hiring Process to be in place: July 1, 2015

PARENT EDUCATION COMPONENT

Parents are the child's first teachers. A parent education program that is focused on Child Growth and Development is an integral component of this program. During the first year of the program a Task Force including Principals, teachers, parents and representatives from the Parent Community and Student Services Branch will meet to devise a parent education component that builds on the highly regarded SRLDP parent education model and meets the needs of the District's diverse school communities

TIMELINE to begin development of parent engagement program: January, 2016

COMMUNICATION PLAN

A targeted communication plan will be created in consultation with the Chief Information Officer. Marketing efforts in the specific school communities and across LAUSD will inform

parents, given a very short timeline, of the opportunity to enroll their child in this program. Specific efforts that effectively reach low income families will be necessary.

TIMELINE for development of communication plan: by July 10, 2015

MISCELLANEOUS POLICY AGREEMENTS

TK Expansion students will not be able to accelerate to grade one at the end of the TK Expansion year under any circumstances as these children are very young.

Students who qualify for and are enrolled in Early Education Centers will remain in EECs as the foundation of enrollment in an EEC is the family's need for child care. The Early Childhood Education Division will place a programmatic emphasis on raising the quality of the 4 year old program in the EECs to align it with the TK Expansion Program and more effectively transition students to the elementary school.

The TK Expansion Program will not have children in combination classrooms with Kindergarten students.

TIMELINE for development of policy guide: by July 10, 2015

MISCELLANEOUS POLICY QUESTIONS

- As a District we must ensure that the CA State Preschool Program (CSPP) remains viable at the sites identified for the TK Expansion Program. The CA State Preschool Program (CSPP) is part of the LAUSD contract with the California Department of Education so capacity enrollment is required. The Early Childhood Education Division will work specifically with the 13 schools that have CSPP to enroll **three year olds** in the three hour CSPP program.
- The District is reimbursed for students who are enrolled prior to April in any given year. The birthdates that are eligible for priority enrollment in the TK Expansion program are December 3 through March 31.
- A decision needs to be made by Human Resources and the Early Childhood Education Division regarding the number of enrolled TK Expansion students required to hire the teacher and teacher assistant.
- MiSiS should code the TK Expansion students as preschool students. It needs to be determined whether MiSiS has the ability to distinguish resident and non-resident TK Expansion students.