

Things to consider:

Deciding on the best placement for your child may be challenging. The questions below can be considered as you make this important decision for your child:

- ◆ Have they had preschool experiences?
- ◆ Does your child communicate personal needs (e.g. bathroom needs, etc.)?
- ◆ Do they separate from you easily when you leave them in the care of another adult?
- ◆ Does your child still need a nap/rest in the afternoon? If so, is the Transitional Kindergarten program a full day and include a rest time?
- ◆ Has your child had social experiences such as play groups?
- ◆ Since TK is not always a full day program, would you need care before or after a Transitional Kindergarten program?
- ◆ Will your child need to be transported to or from school?

Questions you can ask a Preschool or Transitional Kindergarten program:

- ◆ What does the day's schedule include? Play time, rest time, etc.
- ◆ How many children will be in the classroom?
- ◆ What are the learning expectations for the children throughout the year?
- ◆ What is the length of the school day?
- ◆ What are the ages of the children in the classroom? If TK—will it be a Transitional Kindergarten only class or combined with Kindergarteners?
- ◆ If your child will be attending a TK program and you need afterschool care, what are the ages of children that will be included in your child's afterschool group?
- ◆ What is the School District's policy on Teacher education/qualifications? Has the TK teacher completed any early childhood development coursework?
- ◆ Are the children expected to sit at tables or desks?
- ◆ How many adults/teachers will be in the classroom throughout the day?
- ◆ What are the policies for parent participation?

Early Childhood Council of Kern

Planning for quality early care and education.

2000 K Street
Bakersfield, CA 93301
Phone: 661-861-5274
E-mail: taburns@kern.org
www.earlychildhoodkern.org

2/2017

Preschool ~OR~ Transitional Kindergarten



Making the best choice
for your child

Parents know their child best.
This brochure may provide information
to help parents make the most
appropriate placement for their child.

Early Childhood Council of Kern

Planning for quality early care and education.

Options for parents:

Center-based preschools and TK programs differ from site to site. It is very important that parents visit any program they are considering for their child to ensure the best placement for educational success.

Parents of 4 year olds have options for the care and education of their child. Traditional center-based preschools and Transitional Kindergarten programs offer children a variety of educational experiences.

Transitional Kindergarten (TK)

The first year of a two-year kindergarten for school districts to serve children turning 5 between September 1 and December 1. This may vary by school district.

Preschool

Full or part day center-based preschools providing early childhood education typically for children ages 3 to 5 years.

FACTS ABOUT TRANSITIONAL KINDERGARTEN

- ◆ TK is designed to be the first year of a two-year kindergarten experience that uses a modified kindergarten curriculum;
- ◆ TK is to be based on the California Preschool Learning Foundations;
- ◆ TK students receive all services provided by the school district to Kindergarten students;
- ◆ Considered to be a “gift of time” to provide children the opportunity to be more ready socially and/or academically for today’s kindergarten;
- ◆ Not a “required” grade within the school system – it is one option for parents;
- ◆ Maintains credentialed K-12 teachers. Teachers who are new to TK are required to complete 24 early childhood education units or have equivalent education or experience;
- ◆ Full or part day classrooms that provide an academic program;
- ◆ Classroom sizes vary: one teacher for every 10 to 30 children*;
- ◆ No income requirements for families whose children qualify for Transitional Kindergarten.

**Class size is a local decision. Please check with your school district for specific information.*

FACTS ABOUT CENTER-BASED PRESCHOOL

- ◆ Centers designed to serve children approximately 3 to 5 years of age;
- ◆ Intended to help prepare children for kindergarten;
- ◆ Are operated by school districts, community agencies or private owners;
- ◆ Full or part day centers that provide early childhood education;
- ◆ Must comply with, and are monitored by Community Care Licensing with health and safety standards;
- ◆ Have minimum educational requirements for teachers—12 to 24 early childhood education units however will vary by center;
- ◆ Classroom sizes vary: one teacher for every 8 to 12 children*;
- ◆ State or federally funded centers will have family income and other eligibility requirements and are to be based on the California Preschool Learning Foundations;
- ◆ Help children gain the ability to listen, play well with others, build strong fine-motor skills, learn basic letter and number recognition.

**Class size is a local decision. Please check with each center for specific information.*



Website resources:

For more information on Transitional Kindergarten go to:
<http://www.tkcalifornia.org/tk-info/parents.html>

For more information on choosing an early childhood center go to:
<http://childcareaware.org/families/choosing-quality-child-care/selecting-a-child-care-program/>