

Model(s) of Service Delivery for Universal Prekindergarten for all Four-year-old Children

Universal prekindergarten (UPK) refers to universal transitional kindergarten (UTK) as well as the California State Preschool Program (CSPP), Head Start, and early childhood special education programs and providers that families can choose from to create rich early learning opportunities for many three- and all four-year-old children during the year or two years before kindergarten.

The intent of California's UPK model of implementation is to build local capacity to provide high-quality programs that best serve children and their families. To ensure that program models are high quality, the California Department of Education (CDE) encourages local educational agencies (LEAs) to collaborate across program areas to promote equity in access, multilingualism as an asset, and inclusion of children with disabilities as a benefit for all children. In high-need neighborhoods, the CDE strongly encourages LEAs to consider pairing transitional kindergarten (TK) programs with access to CSPP and Head Start for age- and income-eligible three- and four-year-old children to further bolster program quality, either through the LEA's own CSPP or Head Start program or via a contract partnership with a community-based organization (CBO) that administers a CSPP or Head Start. Additionally, with coordination between Head Start grantees and the Office of Head Start Region IX, a Head Start and TK combination class and the layering of Head Start services can be a working model that provides a full-day of education and comprehensive services for age- and income-eligible children. UTK expansion is also an opportunity for LEAs to think more broadly about how they are serving children with disabilities and planning for placement in the least restrictive environment as the foundation of each student's Individualized Education Program.

In addition to considering early education settings for young children, funding is also a key component to successful implementation. For example, children in TK programs will be eligible for average daily attendance (ADA), as well as special education, English learner, and other program funding that can be utilized to support inclusive programs.

The table below is meant to provide sample models that LEAs or groups of LEAs could implement to provide UPK. LEAs may select one, or a combination of models to meet the needs of the children and families in their attendance area. The models in the table below are not meant to be exhaustive. TK age eligibility by expansion year is included below this table for reference.

Transitional Kindergarten Stand-Alone Classes

Description	Considerations
The TK classroom consists of only TK-age-eligible students. Class Size: A TK maximum class size is 33 students, but each TK school site is required to have an average class size of no more than 24 students.¹ Ratios: • In school year (SY) 2021–22, maximum ratio of one teacher to 33 pupils • Beginning in SY 2022–23, average ratio of at least one adult for every 12 pupils • Beginning with SY 2023–24, and for each year thereafter, an average of at least one adult for every 10 pupils for TK classrooms, contingent upon an appropriation of funds Teacher qualification: The TK classroom teacher must meet the same requirements as kindergarten teachers, which are to have a bachelor's degree and either a Multiple Subject Teaching Credential, General Kindergarten-Primary Teaching Credential, General Elementary Teaching Credential, Standard Early Childhood Credential, Standard Elementary Credential, or Specialist Instruction Credential in Early Childhood Education (ECE). Additionally, California <i>Education Code</i> (EC) Section 48000(g)(4) specifies that teachers first assigned to teach TK after	TK is universally available to age-eligible children irrespective of family income and TK students meeting the age eligibility requirements generate ADA funding through the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF). This option could be used by LEAs that have enough TK-eligible children to fill a TK classroom. For some LEAs, this may only be feasible at some school sites, which may be a more developmentally-informed option than blending classrooms with children of different ages. If an LEA only offers TK at some sites, it will need to consider transportation and extended learning and care options. This option ensures that similarly-aged children are in the same classroom, which may make it easier to ensure that children have learning experiences that are appropriate to their stage of development. LEAs need to ensure that developmentally-informed practices, curricula, and assessments are used in these classrooms. Each year of a two-year kindergarten program should have clearly articulated learning outcomes which build from one year to the next. TK curriculum should be aligned with the <i>California Preschool Learning Foundations</i> and the <i>California Preschool Curriculum Frameworks</i>. The <i>California Preschool Learning Foundations</i> will be revised in 2025 to include updates in the research for child development, as well as feedback from the field on teacher

¹ Class sizes and ratios may be impacted by local collective bargaining agreements.

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July 1, 2015, must ensure that credentialed teachers who are first assigned to a TK classroom after July 1, 2015, have, by August 1, 2023, one of the following: • At least 24 units in ECE, or childhood development, or both. • 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 above. • A Child Development Teacher Permit issued by the Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC).	usability. The CDE is also working on extending the <i>California Preschool Learning Foundations</i> up through second grade. A new version of the <i>California Preschool Learning Foundations</i> and kindergarten through second grade-frameworks will be released in 2025. The Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP) is not currently required for TK.

Early Admittance Transitional Kindergarten Stand-alone Classes

Description	Considerations
Early admittance transitional kindergarten (ETK) students are those students who the district is not required to serve in TK, but chooses to serve. An ETK stand-alone classroom consists of only ETK-age-eligible students. During the 2021–22 school year, an ETK stand-alone classroom is one in which a school district or charter school serves four-year-old children who turn five years old between December 3, inclusive, and June 30. Class size, ratios and teacher qualifications: Requirements are identical to TK stand-alone classrooms.	This option could be used by LEAs that want to fully implement UPK earlier than the state timeline and have enough children to fill TK classes for age-eligible students. ETK students do not generate ADA funding through the LCFF until their fifth birthday. This option simplifies communication with parents about who is eligible for TK enrollment because all four-year-old children are eligible if the LEA is implementing ETK, rather than eligibility for different children based on birth month and implementation year. Serving ETK students in stand-alone classrooms helps ensure that similarly-aged children are in the same classroom, which may make it

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	easier to provide children with learning experiences appropriate to their stage of development. LEAs need to ensure that developmentally-informed practices, curricula, and assessments are used in these classrooms and ensure appropriate staffing, especially when considering that ETK students are younger prekindergartners. The DRDP is not currently required for use with ETK students. Implementing this option may be impacted by local collective bargaining agreements.

California State Preschool Program and Transitional Kindergarten combination classes (California State Preschool Program funding and Local Control Funding Formula Funding)

Description	Considerations
CSPP and TK students are served in the same classroom. A school district or charter school may place four-year-old children enrolled in a CSPP into a TK program classroom. A school district or charter school that commingles children from both programs in the same classroom must meet all of the requirements of the respective programs in which the children are enrolled. The school district or charter school must adhere to all of the following requirements, irrespective of the program in which the child is enrolled:	This option allows LEAs to braid CSPP contract funds with ADA LCFF funding. It allows LEAs to collect CSPP funding for children not age-eligible for TK (but who are eligible for CSPP). Once the children have turned five, the LEA can transfer them to ETK and generate ADA through the LCFF. This option can be used by LEAs that have a significant number of CSPP-eligible children whose families choose CSPP rather than TK. This option can also support LEAs who wish to implement UPK faster than the state timeline and are looking for a way to receive funding for ETK students before their fifth birthday. Additionally, this option

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1. An Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale (ECERS) shall be completed for the classroom as specified in Title 5 of the <i>California Code of Regulations (5 CCR)</i> Section 18281. 2. All children enrolled for 10 or more hours per week must be evaluated using the DRDP-2015. 3. The classroom shall be taught by a teacher that holds a credential issued by the CTC, and credentialed teachers who are first assigned to a TK classroom after July 1, 2015, must have, by August 1, 2023, one of the following: a. At least 24 units in ECE, or childhood development, or both; b. 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 as described above; or c. A Child Development Teacher Permit issued by the CTC. 4. The classroom shall be in compliance with the one adult to eight children ratio and one teacher to 24 children ratio as provided by <i>EC 8241</i>.	may allow LEAs with small numbers of age-eligible TK students to fill a full class. This option can help create consistency for CSPP-eligible children and families. Children of mixed ages benefit academically and socially from learning together in the same classroom, although special attention will need to be paid to ensure developmentally-informed practices, curricula, and assessments are used in these classrooms. Under this option, the LEA must ensure the staffing qualifications and ratios provided in items three and four on the left-hand side of this table are met. Braiding these programs helps avoid the income segregation that can accompany stand-alone CSPP classes.

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5. Contractors of a school district or charter school commingling children enrolled in the CSPP with children enrolled in a TK program classroom must report the services, revenues, and expenditures for the CSPP children in accordance with 5 CCR Section 18068. Those contractors are not required to report services, revenues, and expenditures for the children enrolled in the TK program.	

Locally-Funded Preschool and Transitional Kindergarten Combination Classes

Description	Considerations
Locally-funded preschools are those programs funded by local revenue sources or private sources. Locally-funded preschool programs that are blended with TK classrooms must meet the local preschool requirements along with all TK requirements.	This option is only applicable to LEAs that have alternative preschool funding.

California State Preschool Program Stand-alone Classes

Description	Considerations
CSPP age-eligible children are served in the same classroom. The CSPP offers age- and developmentally-informed programs designed to facilitate the transition to kindergarten for three- and four-year-old children. The CSPP provides both part-day and full-day services for eligible children and families that offer developmentally, culturally, and linguistically informed activities for the children served. The program also provides meals and snacks to children,	This is an option for LEAs that operate CSPP programs or are in communities with strong existing CSPP programs. This option is appropriate in places where families choose CSPP enrollment over TK enrollment. To be income-eligible for CSPP, families must generally have incomes below 85 percent of the state median income, adjusted for family size. For a family of three in 2021–22, this is \$78,135 per

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parent education, referrals to health and social services for families, and staff development opportunities for programs and support staff. The program is offered statewide through LEAs, including school districts, county offices of education, community colleges, and direct funded charter schools, and through private, nonprofit and for-profit CBOs, and family child care home education networks. All CSPP requirements must be met (See General Overview of CSPP Standards).	year. As such, this option can lead to income-based segregation of children. Use of the DRDP-2015 is required and curriculum must be aligned with the <i>California Preschool Learning Foundations and Frameworks</i>. Additionally, classrooms must earn an average score of good on the ECERS Assessment

Head Start and Transitional Kindergarten Combination Classes

Description	Considerations
TK and Head Start students are served in the same classroom. TK students can be served in the classroom based on TK eligibility. Head Start students can be served in the classroom if they meet Head Start eligibility requirements. This includes family incomes below the poverty guidelines, children from homeless families, and children from families receiving public assistance such as Temporary Assistance to Needy Families or Supplemental Security Income. Foster children are eligible regardless of their foster family's income. Program staff members may refer to Section 645 (Sec. 645) of the federal Head Start Act or Title 42 United States Code Section 9840A (42 U.S.C. 9840A) to further understand eligibility for Head Start and Early Head Start: For more information on Head Start, visit the Head Start Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center website at https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/.	The combination classroom offers a number of benefits including staffing. With the requirements for both TK and Head Start, there will be a fully qualified TK teacher and a Head Start qualified teacher with an associate's degree or higher at all times in the classroom during the duration of the day. Head Start grants also include funding for staff professional development that can be used to benefit the TK teacher as well. Following the Head Start Performance Standards, all children in the Head Start TK classroom, will have the benefit of the comprehensive services that will occur naturally with Head Start as a partner in the classroom. The Head Start staff (for example, the Education Coordinator, the Family Service Coordinators, and the Health and Disabilities Coordinator) will provide a wealth of developmentally-informed support. The Head Start training

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As an option, a site can propose to the federal Office of Head Start Region IX (as the funder) a Locally Designed Option model of a co-location model where the Head Start children are located in several different TK classrooms with non-Head Start children (if there are multiple classrooms). Head Start promotes school readiness of young children providing comprehensive services that support early learning, health, and family well-being.	opportunities will be naturally shared with the TK teacher, staff and parents, as well. Curriculum and assessment can be determined collaboratively between the LEA and Head Start, possibly with a memorandum of understanding or agreement of how to support what is best for the classroom, the children, and their families. The Head Start TK model must follow the requirements for observations and assessments as detailed in the Head Start Performance Standards.

Head Start Stand-Alone Classes

Description	Considerations
Head Start students are served in a classroom with only other Head Start students. Head Start promotes school readiness of young children providing comprehensive services that support early learning, health, and family well-being. Head Start includes specific eligibility requirements. For more information on Head Start, visit the Head Start Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center website at https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/	This is an option for LEAs that operate Head Start programs or are in communities with strong existing Head Start programs. This option is appropriate in places where families choose enrolling in Head Start in addition to or instead of TK. Head Start primarily serves young children from low-income families. As such, this option can lead to income-based segregation of children. Many Head Start programs in California use the DRDP. Most of the Head Start programs that use the DRDP are also state-funded programs, and as a state-funded program, are required to do so.

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The table below illustrates the UTK implementation timeline, including eligibility and ratios.

Year	2021–22	2022–23	2023–24	2024–25	2025–26
Eligibility	Turn five between September 2 and December 2; at district discretion, turn five between December 3 and the end of the school year (ETK)	Turn five between September 2 and February 2; at district discretion, turn five between February 3 and the end of the school year (ETK)	Turn five between September 2 and April 2; at district discretion, turn five between April 3 and the end of the school year (ETK)	Turn five between September 2 and June 2; at district discretion, turn five between June 3 and the end of the school year (ETK)	Turn four by September 1
Class Size	24*	24*	24*	24*	24*
Ratios	Not specified	1:12	1:10**	1:10**	1:10**

* average class size across the school site

** Subject to future legislative appropriations