



Transitional Kindergarten

Summary of Educator Workforce Requirements & Sample Pathways

This document serves as a resource summarizing workforce requirements and sample pathways for Transitional Kindergarten (TK) educators. It is intended to complement, but not replace, state guidance and statute.



ccee
California Collaborative
for Educational Excellence



Transitional Kindergarten (TK) Workforce Requirements

TK is part of California's TK-12 public school system and is the first year of a two-year Kindergarten program that uses an age- and developmentally-appropriate modified Kindergarten curriculum, as defined by California *Education Code (EC)* Section 48000(g). This document summarizes two primary types of requirements: A) Credentialing requirements for teachers in TK classrooms, and B) Apportionment (funding) requirements for employers seeking state funding for TK classrooms.

Credentialing Requirements For TK Teachers¹

TK must be taught by an educator who holds one of the following full, provisional, or limited term credentials:²

- Multiple Subject Credentials
 - [Preliminary or Clear Multiple Subject Teaching Credential](#)
 - [University Intern Credential](#)
 - [General Education Limited Assignment Permit](#)
 - [Short-Term Staff Permit](#)
 - [Provisional Internship Permit](#)
- [PK-3 ECE Specialist Instruction Credential](#) once available³
- General K-Primary (K-3)
- General Elementary (K-8)
- Standard Early Childhood (P-3)
- Standard Elementary (K-9)
- Emergency Specialist Teaching Permit in Early Childhood Education (see below)

Emergency Specialist Teaching Permit in Early Childhood Education

Local Educational Agencies (LEAs) that are unable to recruit a fully credentialed teacher to serve in a TK assignment may request an [Emergency Specialist Teaching Permit in Early Childhood Education](#), also referred to as the Emergency TK Permit. Effective July 1, 2022, *EC* Section 44300(j) provides the Commission on Teacher Credentialing (the Commission) the authority to issue the Emergency TK Permit. The Emergency TK Permit authorizes the holder to teach all subjects in a self-contained TK class in a general education setting.

¹ [CTC Transitional Kindergarten Leaflet](#)

² General K-Primary (K-3), General Elementary (K-8), Standard Early Childhood (P-3), and Standard Elementary (K-9) are no longer being offered, but educators who hold these credentials are eligible to teach.

³ The PK-3 Early Childhood Education (ECE) Specialist Instruction Credential focuses on developmentally appropriate practices for young children in grades PK through 3. This credential is currently in a regulatory process and is not yet available.

The requirements for initial issuance of an Emergency TK Permit include:

- Possession of a baccalaureate degree or higher
- Possession of a Child Development Teacher Permit or higher
- Satisfaction of one of the following:
 - 24 semester units of coursework in the field of Child Development or Early Childhood Education from a regionally-accredited college or university
 - Possession of a baccalaureate or higher degree in Child Development, Early Childhood Education, or a similar major
 - Beginning 7/1/2023, have three or more years of full-time teaching experience in a TK setting, preschool age early childhood or child development program, or a combination of these experiences
- The employing agency must have an annual Declaration of Need for Fully Qualified Educators (form CL-500) on file with the Commission
- Verification of meeting the initial requirements by submission of a completed form [CL-908](#)
- Submission of a completed application ([form 41-4](#)) and [processing fee](#)

The Emergency TK Permit is available for one year, with an option to renew one time for one additional year.⁴

Apportionment (Funding) Requirements for Transitional Kindergarten Teachers Whose Employers are Requesting State Funding for TK Classes

California *EC* Section 48000(g)(4) adds an apportionment requirement for LEA employers to receive state funding for a TK classroom. Specifically, *EC* Section 48000(g)(4) states that a TK teacher first assigned to teach TK after July 1, 2015 must have met one of the following options by August 1, 2025:

Option A	Option B	Option C
At least 24 units in Early Childhood Education (ECE), or Child Development, or both ⁵	As determined and documented by the LEA employing the teacher, professional experience in a classroom setting with preschool age children meeting the criteria established by the governing board or body of the LEA that is comparable to the 24 units of education described in option A	A Child Development Teacher Permit, or an Early Childhood Education Specialist Credential, issued by the Commission

Note: any teacher who was first assigned to teach TK, or a combination of Kindergarten and TK, on or before July 1, 2015, is not subject to meeting the apportionment requirement under *EC* Section 48000 (g)(4).

⁴ Requirements for one time renewal are outlined in the [CTC Emergency Specialist Teaching Permit in ECE Leaflet](#).

⁵ The unit requirements for the purposes of Apportionment are under the purview of the California Department of Education (CDE). As described in CDE's [UPK Frequently Asked Questions](#), "it is the intent of the Legislature to ensure transitional kindergarten (TK) teachers have the knowledge in early education and child development to effectively teach 4-year-old children. [...] For purposes of meeting the 24-units in early education or child development, or both, set forth in *EC* Section 48000(g)(4)(A), 'units' means semester units, or their quarterly equivalent, as used for the purposes of a degree program at the University of California, California State University, California Community Colleges, or independent institutions of higher education, as defined in *EC* Section 66010. 'Continuing education' units are only applicable if they are issued by an accredited institution of higher education as semester- or quarter-equivalent units. LEAs must monitor and document the completion of units." ECE and Child Development coursework is primarily related to children ages five years or younger and is completed at a regionally-accredited college or university, as described in the [CTC Child Development Permit Leaflet](#).



Educator Scenarios and Preparation Program Pathways to Fulfill TK Teaching Requirements

The table below provides sample scenarios of educators that do not yet meet all of the requirements for teaching TK and what they additionally need to meet TK teaching requirements and/or to meet apportionment requirements under EC Section 48000 (g)(4). This table is for example only and is not intended to be exhaustive.

Sample Educator	What The Educator Currently Has	What is Additionally Needed for Credential Requirements	What is Additionally Needed for Apportionment Requirements (IN ADDITION TO AN ELIGIBLE CREDENTIAL)
A. Anita, a second grade teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bachelor’s degree Multiple Subject Credential 	Anita will not need anything additional for credentialing requirements because Anita already holds a Multiple Subject Credential	24 units in ECE/child development -OR- Professional experience with preschool teaching equivalent to 24 units as determined by the LEA -OR- A Child Development Teacher Permit or higher -OR- A PK-3 ECE Specialist Instruction Credential
B. Benjamin, an ECE educator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bachelor’s degree Child Development Teacher Permit 	A PK-3 ECE Specialist Instruction Credential -OR- A Multiple Subject Credential -OR- Emergency TK Permit (short term only)	Benjamin will not need anything additional for apportionment requirements because Benjamin already holds a Child Development Teacher Permit
C. Carmen, an ECE educator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Associate’s degree Child Development Teacher Permit 	Bachelor’s degree -AND- PK-3 ECE Specialist Instruction Credential -OR- A Multiple Subject Credential	Carmen will not need anything additional for apportionment requirements because Carmen already holds a Child Development Teacher Permit

Sample Educator	What The Educator Currently Has	What is Additionally Needed for Credential Requirements	What is Additionally Needed for Apportionment Requirements (IN ADDITION TO AN ELIGIBLE CREDENTIAL)
D. David, an ECE educator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child Development Associate Teacher Permit Professional experience in preschool classroom setting 	Bachelor's degree -AND- PK-3 ECE Specialist Instruction Credential -OR- A Multiple Subject Credential	If David earns a PK-3 ECE Specialist Instruction Credential then David will not need anything additional for apportionment requirements If David earns a Multiple Subject teaching credential: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the LEA that is looking to hire David may determine that David's professional experience was comparable to 24 units of ECE or Child Development -OR- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> David will need to earn an additional 12 units to complement the 12 units earned for David's Associate Teacher Permit
E. Elaine, a classified staff person	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Associate's degree 	Bachelor's degree -AND- PK-3 ECE Specialist Instruction Credential -OR- A Multiple Subject Credential	If Elaine earns a PK-3 ECE Specialist Instruction Credential then Elaine will not need anything additional for apportionment requirements If Elaine earns a Multiple Subject Credential, Elaine will need: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 24 units in ECE/child development -OR- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Professional experience with preschool teaching equivalent to 24 units -OR- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Child Development Teacher Permit or higher
F. Fernanda, a teacher previously assigned to TK in 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bachelor's degree Multiple Subject Teaching Credential 	Fernanda will not need anything additional for credentialing requirements because Fernanda already holds a Multiple Subject Credential	Fernanda will not need anything additional for apportionment requirements since Fernanda was previously assigned to teach TK prior to 2015
G. Gabriela, an expanded learning educator working for an LEA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bachelor's degree expected in 2024 Passed the Instructional Aide Exam 	Bachelor's degree -AND- PK-3 ECE Specialist Instruction Credential -OR- A Multiple Subject Credential	If Gabriela earns a PK-3 ECE Specialist Instruction Credential then Gabriela will not need anything additional for apportionment requirements If Gabriela earns a Multiple Subject Credential, Gabriela will need: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 24 units in ECE/Child Development -OR- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Professional experience with preschool teaching equivalent to 24 units -OR- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Child Development Teacher Permit or higher

How Candidates Can Attain Additionally Needed Credential Requirements

Earning 24 Units in ECE / Child Development to Meet Apportionment Requirements

Candidates may earn units in ECE/Child Development from any regionally accredited California community college, as well as any regionally accredited public and/or private 4-year institution of higher education. The units must be degree-applicable and credit-bearing. The units may be upper or lower division.

Earning a Teaching Credential: Educator Preparation Program Models

The Commission sets requirements for earning credentials. As part of these requirements, educators must complete a Commission-approved educator preparation program.⁶ There are several educator preparation program models, including those summarized in the table below.

Model	Leads to Earning a Bachelor's Degree	Leads to Earning a Teaching Credential	Commission Competitive Grant Funding Available
5th Year Program: Traditional 5th year educator preparation programs prepare candidates to earn a preliminary teaching credential. They are typically completed as a "5th year" following earning a bachelor's degree. This pathway includes foundational and subject-specific pedagogy course work and clinical practice including student teaching. The course work can be completed as a full-time or part-time student.		X	
Integrated Undergraduate Teacher Preparation: Regionally accredited institutions of higher education (IHEs) may offer integrated teacher preparation programs that allow a student to concurrently earn a preliminary teaching credential and a bachelor's degree, in four or four and one half years. The Commission administers the Integrated Teacher Preparation Grant Program that provides planning and implementation grants to IHEs to develop these programs. ⁷	X	X	X For Program Sponsors
Teacher Residency: A Teacher Residency Program partners an eligible LEA or consortium with one or more Commission-approved teacher preparation programs offered by a regionally accredited institution of higher education in which a resident teaches at least one-half time alongside a teacher of record, who is designated as the experienced mentor teacher, for at least one full school year while engaging in initial preparation coursework. The Commission administers the Teacher Residency Grant Program to support collaborative partnerships between LEAs and IHEs to expand, strengthen, improve access to, or create teacher residency programs. ⁸ Teacher residents may receive a stipend during their residency program participation.		X	X For LEAs
Intern Teacher Preparation: University intern programs are one-to-two-year programs approved by the Commission and administered by regionally accredited colleges and universities in partnership with local employing agencies. ⁹ District Intern programs are similar to University intern programs but are administered by school districts and county offices of education. Intern program participants serve as the teacher of record and earn a teacher's salary while they are being mentored and completing their teacher preparation coursework.		X	

⁶ Information about Commission-approved institutions offering preparation programs in California is available on [the Commission's Website](#)

⁷ CTC, [Integrated Teacher Preparation Grants](#)

⁸ CTC, [Teacher Residency Grant Program](#)

⁹ CTC, [University Internship Credential](#). A list of institutions that are approved to provide internship programs is available at on [the Commission's Website](#)

Additional Pathways for Classified Employees with an Associate’s Degree

The Commission administers the California Classified School Employee Teacher Credentialing Program which supports LEAs to recruit classified school employees¹¹ into teaching careers and support their undergraduate education, professional teacher preparation, and certification as credentialed California teachers. Eligible classified school employees must hold an associate’s degree prior to program entry. This grant program enables grantee LEAs to provide financial assistance for degree and credentialing-related expenses such as tuition, fees, books, and examination costs; academic guidance; and other forms of individualized support to help them complete their undergraduate education, teacher preparation program, and transition to becoming credentialed teachers.¹²

Available Funding to Support the Educator Workforce to Earn Degrees & Credentials

The Commission and California Department of Education jointly prepared [the Universal PreKindergarten Teacher Pipeline Resource Compendium](#) which provides additional information about grant programs and other resources that are available to support preparation and professional development for Universal PreKindergarten educators, including TK teachers.

State Superintendent of Public Instruction’s Teacher Workforce Initiative

State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tony Thurmond is working with his team at the CDE and other partners to address California’s teacher shortage and offer resources to assist school districts in their efforts to recruit teachers. This effort includes [a one-stop recruitment portal](#) that allows teacher candidates to get information in one place, including information on how to pursue a teaching credential, how to find vacancies at districts, and ways to access resources to support their education and credentialing. In support of new statewide teacher recruitment efforts, State Superintendent Thurmond and the CDE have developed a Public Service Announcement campaign to inspire future teacher candidates and hosted numerous teacher recruitment hiring fairs with California Volunteers, the State Service Commission that selects 3,000 undergraduate “College Corps” service members annually to serve as civic leaders, including as tutors and mentors in schools. State Superintendent Thurmond has also developed and sponsored legislation in recent years that has resulted in additional supports for teachers. Additional information about State Superintendent Thurmond’s efforts is available [here](#).

Additional Resources

The CTC Transitional Kindergarten Leaflet provides additional information:

<https://www.ctc.ca.gov/credentials/assignment-resources/transitional-kindergarten>

The CDE has compiled frequently asked questions regarding TK and Universal PreKindergarten workforce:

<https://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/gs/em/kinderfaq.asp#workforce>

¹¹ EC Section 44392 defines “Classified school employee” as a non certificated school employee currently working in a public school.

¹² CTC, [Classified School Employee Teacher Credentialing Program](#)