How do I Know if Transitional Kindergarten or Kindergarten is Right For my Child?

Since birth, you have watched your child grow and develop. You have noted your child’s height and weight and kept track of when he/she crawled, stood, walked, and spoke those first words. We know that every child develops at his/her own pace. Think about your child now in the areas of language, social, cognitive, and motor skills development. Schedule your incoming kindergarten student for the assessment, consider the recommendations of the school staff, and decide what program will best meet his/her needs.

How Can Parents Prepare Their Child?

- Talk with your child about starting school.
- Label personal belongings with your child’s first and last name.
- Be sure your child knows how he/she will get home from school.
- Make sure your child has a good night’s sleep the night before school starts.
- Be sure your child eats a good breakfast or lunch.
- Know the hours your child will attend school.
- Give the school accurate emergency telephone numbers.
- Read with your child every day!
- Talk with your child about daily activities and special events.
- Display your child’s work in a prominent place.
- Provide learning materials for your child to explore.
- Encourage your child to wash, dress and take care of him/herself.
- Provide opportunities for your child to play with other children.
- Provide rules that are consistent, reasonable and easy to understand.
- Limit television time.

The First Big Step

The first day of school is an exciting day. Your child will feel more at ease if he/she believes that there are friendly, caring people at school. The teachers, principal, secretaries and other staff are your child’s new friends. Discuss these new friends with your child and encourage him/her to ask for help when needed.

This may be the first formal separation between you and your child. It may be an emotional day for both of you. As difficult as it may be, you must strive to give your child the confidence and encouragement to "soar" alone at this time in his/her life. Your reactions and attitudes will make a difference in determining how your child adjusts to school.

Attendance

Your child's teacher provides learning activities that build on the previous day's instruction and student involvement. To be successful in school it is critical that your child attends class every day and arrives on time.

On those few occasions when your child is absent, please telephone the school office. If you are unable to telephone the school office, please send a note with your child when he/she returns to school explaining the reason for the absence.

If your child comes to school late or needs to leave before the regular dismissal time, you must go to the school office to check him or her in and out.

It is important that sick children stay at home. If your child has a fever, headache, sore throat, cough, earache, skin rash, etc., please allow adequate recovery time.

Bus schedules, clothing, visitation, birthdays, report cards, etc. are all outlined on the District’s website at www.pbvsud.net.
Welcome to Transitional Kindergarten & Kindergarten

A big day is approaching for your child . . . the first day of either Transitional Kindergarten (TK) or Kindergarten. The Panama-Buena Vista Union School District is pleased to welcome your child. This new beginning is a milestone in your child’s life. It is not only the beginning of his or her first formal education, but will be the first step toward life-long learning and social participation. This should be an adventure for your child and for the entire family. Our school system considers parents as partners in your child’s education. By working together, we can be assured that your child receives the best possible learning experience. This booklet contains information to help you and your child prepare for your school’s TK or kindergarten program.

Transitional Kindergarten:
- Is part of the public school system, is free and available to young learners the year before they enter kindergarten. TK is a bridge between the preschool years and kindergarten and gives young students an opportunity to learn and grow in a classroom that is designed to meet their academic and social needs.
- Uses a unique, specialized curriculum that is designed to meet the developmental needs of young five year olds.
- Is taught by credentialed teachers with extra training to teach young students.

Starting school is a very exciting time for children and their families! It begins a new chapter in their lives and sets the tone for children’s future. However, California’s kindergarten standards and curriculum have changed over the years, and many of the skills children were once taught in first grade are now expected to be mastered in kindergarten.

This can make the transition into kindergarten difficult for some children, and the youngest children entering the kindergarten classroom often struggle to adjust.

The good news is that California passed a law to create TK, giving children an opportunity to learn in a hands-on, interactive way that supports their development, and prepares them for the challenging standards of kindergarten and beyond.

Who Attends Transitional Kindergarten?

In our district, the TK program will serve children born in September, October and November (through December 2) and will be offered to older children who can benefit from the educational program provided in the TK setting.

Children turning five on or after December 3, will be eligible for TK/kindergarten beginning in the following school year.

Who Attends Kindergarten?

Per Ed Code, children entering kindergarten must be five years of age on or before September 1. Proof of age will be required for all enrolling students. The legal evidences of age, in order of desirability, are a birth certificate, baptismal or immigration certificate, passport, or notarized affidavit from the parent/guardian. Proof of age documents must be originals. Copies will not be accepted.

Where do I Register my Child for Transitional Kindergarten/Kindergarten? Whom do I Call if I Have Questions?

You will register your child at your resident school* on the dates and times listed on the District website – www.pbvusd.net. If you have questions regarding the TK/kindergarten programs, contact the principal at your neighborhood school, visit the District’s website at www.pbvusd.net, or (telephone the Department of Curriculum and Instruction at (661) 831-8332.

Incoming kindergarten students will be assessed on a case by case basis and recommendations will be made a student’s suitability for placement in TK or kindergarten. Your school site will arrange the assessment. TK/kindergarten Day Care Registration can be done after completing the TK/kindergarten registration process.

Time Schedule for Transitional Kindergarten & Kindergarten

TK and kindergarten programs are full day in length and follow the same schedule as grades 1-3. At the time of registration, please check your school of attendance for the appropriate time schedule.

*To determine your resident school, or for additional information to help prepare your child for TK/K, please visit the District’s website at www.pbvusd.net.

Health Record & Physical Exam Requirements

A physical examination or statement from your family health advisor is required for school attendance. It must be completed no earlier than 6 months, before the first day of school, of the year expected TK and/or kindergarten enrollment. State law requires that the child have:

- 4 doses of polio vaccine
- 5 doses of D.P.T. (diphtheria, whooping cough and tetanus) vaccine
- 3 doses of Hepatitis B vaccine
- 2 measles (rubeola), rubella, mumps (MMR) immunizations
- 1 dose of varicella (chickenpox) immunization or documentation of immunity before entering school.

Health records should include information on any special health problems. California law, Ed Code Section 49452.8, requires that your child have an oral health assessment by May 31 in TK, kindergarten, or first grade, whichever is his or her first year of public school. The law specifies that the assessment must be performed by a licensed dentist or other licensed or registered dental health professional.