

Transitional Kindergarten vs. Kindergarten



What is Transitional Kindergarten and its benefits?

Transitional Kindergarten is designed for children who may not be socially, emotionally and/or academically ready for entry into a traditional kindergarten program, although they are age-eligible. Many parents feel their children may not be quite ready for the academic rigor of today's kindergarten. These students often have birthdays in the summer/ fall and may still be developing the skills they need for academic success. Just as children learn to walk and talk at various rates of developmental growth, academic readiness occurs at different rates and times for different children. Transitional Kindergarten gives children additional time to develop the necessary social and academic skills for success throughout their school experience.

Students in Transitional Kindergarten attend school five full days a week. They are introduced to essential Kindergarten standards while also adding a developmental focus that will be taught at a pace designed to meet the children's individual social and emotional needs. This program provides students with a strong educational foundation by giving children a stimulating environment that fosters physical, social-emotional and intellectual development. The Transitional Kindergarten curriculum, daily schedules & progress reporting will be similar in structure, but different in delivery than those students will experience in the Kindergarten program. We all know children develop and learn at different rates. The Transitional Kindergarten program allows students more time to be ready for the rigor and academic pace of Kindergarten.

- TK builds confidence, independence, and self-esteem
- TK helps develop small motor skills needed for writing
- TK fosters large muscle skills needed for balance
- TK enhances skills such as sitting, listening, and following directions
- TK increases vocabulary enrichment and memory skills
- TK helps facilitate social interaction and encourages problem solving
- TK serves as a bridge between preschool and kindergarten

Children experience school success from the beginning. Transitional Kindergarten has nothing to do with intelligence; it's about being ready. Students leave the Transitional Kindergarten Program prepared to enter academic kindergarten successfully.

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Since birth, parents have watched their child grow and develop. They have noted their child's height and weight and kept track of when he/she crawled, stood, walked, and spoke those first words. We know each child develops at his/her own pace. Think about your child in the areas of language, social, cognitive, and motor skills development and consider what program(s) will best meet his/her needs. Parents know their child best and will ultimately decide if Transitional Kindergarten makes sense for their child at this point in time. If you have additional questions please contact Rick Varney, Elementary Principal, at 563-382-3125.

How do I know if TK is right for my child?

Many parents are unsure if they should enroll their child in TK or kindergarten. If you answer no to the following questions, TK may be a good program for your child.

- Does my child like to play with other children?
- Does my child initiate conversations with others?
- Is my child willing to share materials?
- Is my child unafraid of new situations and environments?
- Can my child easily accept "no" for an answer?
- Can my child keep his or her hands to self?
- Does my child show an interest in learning letters and numbers?
- Can my child sit attentively when being read to?
- Does my child show good self-control?

If you answer yes to the above questions, Kindergarten may be a better option for your child.