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Los Angeles Unified School District Announces Plans to Expand Transitional Kindergarten to Every Elementary School

State's Largest School District Expands TK to All 400 Elementary Schools

Los Angeles, CA – May 17, 2012– The Los Angeles Unified School District has announced new plans to continue operating its existing 109 transitional kindergarten classrooms and also to expand transitional kindergarten to all 400 elementary schools in the district.

“With the success of our transitional kindergarten pilot program, we have seen firsthand the impact of giving our students the gift of time,” said John Deasy, Superintendent of Los Angeles Unified School District. “Our students are making strong gains, especially in early literacy and math, and our English language learners are making dramatic progress. We’re expanding transitional kindergarten to every elementary school in the district, as all students deserve the opportunity to enter kindergarten ready to learn and prepared to succeed.”

LAUSD, California’s largest district, is among the more than 200 districts that are registering students for transitional kindergarten this fall. LAUSD is expanding on its current 109 transitional kindergarten classrooms to all 400 elementary schools in the district.

A map of California school districts implementing transitional kindergarten is available at www.preschoolcalifornia.org/tkmap.

“Transitional kindergarten is a win for everyone – students, families and the district. With our decision to expand transitional kindergarten we are eagerly gearing up to register students for the opening of school,” said Nora Armenta, Executive Director of Early Childhood Education for the Los Angeles Unified School District. “We encourage parents to contact their schools in June and enroll their children in transitional kindergarten. We’ll be launching a parent information campaign to help families know about this valuable opportunity.”

Preschool California is convening a series of May webinars to help teachers and principals prepare for transitional kindergarten implementation, covering topics including classroom environment, student assessment and classroom observation and transitional kindergarten/ kindergarten combo classrooms. Sign up for more information at: www.preschoolcalifornia.org/tksignup.

Legislators, school districts, teachers and parents reaffirmed their strong support for transitional kindergarten this week in reaction to Gov. Brown's proposal to eliminate transitional kindergarten as part of his budget proposal released on Monday. Both houses of the California state legislature already rejected the governor's similar January proposal earlier this year.

The Save Kindergarten Coalition of school districts, superintendents, educators, parents, business and civic leaders and child advocates reject the governor's proposal and applauds the California state legislature's vote to follow the Kindergarten Readiness Act that established transitional kindergarten and remains state law. Learn more about the Save Kindergarten Campaign at: www.preschoolcalifornia.org/savekindergarten.

Fully implementing transitional kindergarten is in accordance with The Kindergarten Readiness Act – the California law that changed the kindergarten entry date so that children enter school at age 5 and establishing transitional kindergarten, a developmentally-appropriate grade to serve those younger students with birthdays between September and December.

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About Preschool California

Preschool California is a nonprofit advocacy organization working to increase access to high-quality early learning for all of California's children, starting with those who need it most. Learn more at: www.preschoolcalifornia.org/savekindergarten.

California State Assembly and Senate district maps illustrating the number of kids who could lose their right to kindergarten this fall in each legislative district are available at: <http://www.preschoolcalifornia.org/resources/resource-files/tk-assembly-map.pdf> and <http://www.preschoolcalifornia.org/resources/resource-files/tk-senate-map.pdf>.

A map of California school districts implementing transitional kindergarten is available at www.preschoolcalifornia.org/tkmap.

Impacted parent profiles and photos are available at: www.preschoolcalifornia.org/tkparents.