

Frequently Asked Questions

Kindergarten

1. **How will I know if my child is ready for kindergarten?**

A child who is ready for kindergarten can:

- a. listen to directions
- b. hear words that rhyme
- c. see letters and words match
- d. speak clearly and retell a story
- e. adjust to changes in routine
- f. follow classroom and playground rules
- g. play cooperatively with other children
- h. work without being easily distracted
- i. understand the relationship of words such as up and down, top and bottom, over and under, little and big

2. **What can I do at home to help prepare my child for kindergarten?**

A parent can:

- a. Read to your child regularly.
- b. Talk to your child about everyday things.
- c. Listen to your child and answer his/her questions.
- d. Ask you child questions and have them explain things to you.
- e. Have your child complete small tasks around the home.
- f. Give your child opportunities to run, hop, skip, jump, color, cut, button and zip to develop their muscles.

3. **Must children attend kindergarten?**

Each elementary or unified school district must offer kindergarten classes for all children eligible to attend; children are not required to enroll in kindergarten. Once enrolled, children in kindergarten must attend on the same basis as children ages six through eighteen.

4. **What is the minimum age for admittance to kindergarten in California?**

To be admitted to kindergarten, a child must reach the age of five on or before December 2 of the current school year according to *Education Code* 48000[a].

5. **What documentation is required to enroll a student in kindergarten?**

To be admitted to kindergarten, the following is needed

- a. Proof of age – birth certificate, baptismal certificate, or passport
- b. Immunization record
- c. Proof of residency – property tax receipts, rent payment receipts, gas or electric bill

6. **What are the eligibility criteria for kindergarten enrollment?**

Eligibility for kindergarten is on the basis of age only. Once a child has entered kindergarten, districts or schools may administer tests to determine a child's readiness for specific aspects of the curriculum.

7. **How long is the kindergarten school day?**

By statute, the maximum school day in kindergarten is four hours. An exception to this statute allows schools that have adopted an early primary program (extended-day kindergarten) to exceed four hours.

8. Is regular attendance required for students enrolled in kindergarten?

Regular attendance is expected of students enrolled in kindergarten.

9. Do the subject-matter standards apply to kindergarten?

California's content standards, which are designed to encourage the highest achievement of every student by defining the knowledge, concepts, and skills that students should acquire at each grade level, are available for the core subjects at all grade levels, including kindergarten.

10. Are kindergarten students given standardized tests such as the California Standards Test (CST)?

The only state-adopted test used at the kindergarten level is the California English Language Development Test (also known as the CELDT), administered to students whose primary language is other than English.

11. Do parents have the right to hold back their child in kindergarten even if the child has met the school's criteria, and does the school have to agree?

Under *Education Code* sections 48010 and 48011, a child who has been admitted to kindergarten in a private or public school in California or any other state and who has completed one year in that school shall be admitted to the first grade of an elementary school unless the parent or guardian and the school agree that the child should continue in kindergarten (for not more than an additional school year).

12. I am a parent of a kindergartener, and my child's teacher has suggested retention on the basis of social adaptability. I feel that my child can adapt easily to the first grade. What are my rights as a parent?

School districts may not retain a child in kindergarten without the consent of a parent or guardian. Parents must sign a form consenting to the retention.