

PRESCHOOL/EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

When approved by the California Department of Education (CDE) under the California State Preschool Program, the district may operate one or more part-day preschool programs in accordance with law and the terms of its contract with the CDE.

(cf. 5148 - Child Care and Development)

The district's state-funded preschool program shall include all required program components, as described in 5 CCR 18272-18281 and AR 5148 - Child Care and Development, for the educational program, the creation of a developmental profile for each child, staff development, parent involvement and education, community involvement, health and social services, nutrition, and program evaluation. (5 CCR 18271-28281)

Minimum Hours/Days of Operation

The district's part-day preschool program shall operate a minimum of three hours per day, excluding time for home-to-school transportation, and for a minimum of 175 days per year unless otherwise specified in the program's contract. (Education Code 8235; 5 CCR 18136)

Staffing

The preschool program shall maintain an adult-child ratio of at least one adult for every eight children and a teacher-child ratio of at least one teacher for every 24 children. If the district cannot recruit a sufficient number of parents/guardians or volunteers to meet the required adult-child ratio, teacher aides shall be hired as necessary. One parent volunteer can be included in adult-child ratio. (5 CCR 18135, 18290)

(cf. 1240 - Volunteer Assistance)

(cf. 6020 - Parent Involvement)

Any person employed at a district preschool and any volunteer who provides care and supervision to children at a preschool shall, unless exempted by law, be immunized against influenza, pertussis, and measles in accordance with Health and Safety Code 1596.7995 and AR 5148 - Child Care and Development. Documentation of required immunizations, or applicable exemptions, shall be maintained in the employee's personnel file. (Health and Safety Code 1596.7995)

(cf. 4112.4/4212.4/4312.4 - Health Examinations)

(cf. 4112.6/4212.6/4312.6 - Personnel Files)

In addition, preschool teachers shall present evidence of a current tuberculosis clearance and meet other requirements as specified in Health and Safety Code 1597.055.

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Eligibility and Enrollment

Children eligible for the district's preschool program include those who will have their third or fourth birthday on or before September 1 of the fiscal year that they are being served. (Education Code 8208, 8235, 8236)

When a child is eligible for both the preschool program and the district's transitional kindergarten program, the family may choose the most appropriate program for the child. In accordance with the enrollment priorities described below, the child may be enrolled in both programs provided that the child is not enrolled in both programs for the same time period on the same day.

(cf. 5111 - Admission)

(cf. 6170.1 - Transitional Kindergarten)

Eligibility for subsidized preschool shall be as follows:

1. Children shall be eligible for subsidized preschool services if their family is a current aid recipient, income eligible, or homeless and/or the family's children are recipients of protective services or have been identified as being, or at risk of being, abused, neglected, or exploited. (Education Code 8235, 8263, 8263.1; 5 CCR 18131, 18134)
2. The Superintendent or designee shall consult the county's centralized eligibility list, when available, or shall maintain a district waiting list in accordance with admission priorities. As vacancies occur, applicants shall be contacted in order of their priority. (5 CCR 18106)
3. First priority for enrollment in a preschool program shall be given to neglected or abused children age 3 or 4 years who are recipients of child protective services or who, based upon written referral from a legal, medical, or social service agency, are at risk of being neglected, abused, or exploited. If unable to enroll a child in this category, the district shall refer the child's parent/guardian to local resource and referral services so that services for the child can be located. (Education Code 8236; 5 CCR 18131)

(cf. 1020 - Youth Services)

(cf. 1400 - Relations Between Other Governmental Agencies and the Schools)

(cf. 1700 - Relations Between Private Industry and the Schools)

4. After all children with first priority are enrolled, the district shall give second priority to eligible children age 4 years who are not enrolled in a transitional kindergarten program prior to enrolling eligible children age 3 years. (Education Code 8236)

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5. After enrolling all eligible children who meet the criteria for subsidized services, up to 10 percent of the program's enrollment, calculated throughout the entire contract, may be filled with children who exceed the age limitations and children whose family income is no more than 15 percent above the income eligibility threshold. (Education Code 8235; 5 CCR 18133)
6. The district may certify eligibility and enrollment up to 120 calendar days prior to the first day of the beginning of the preschool year. After establishing eligibility at the time of initial enrollment, a child shall remain eligible for the remainder of the program year. (Education Code 8237; 5 CCR 18082)
7. The district's decision to approve or deny a child's enrollment shall be communicated to the family through a written Notice of Action mailed or delivered within 30 days from the date the application is signed by the parent/guardian. (5 CCR 18094, 18095, 18118)

(cf. 5145.6 - Parental Notifications)

8. Subsequently, the Superintendent or designee shall mail or deliver a Notice of Action to a parent/guardian at least 14 calendar days before any intended change in services, including, but not limited to, an increase or decrease in fees, an increase or decrease in the amount of services, or termination of services, due to any of the following circumstances: (5 CCR 18095, 18119)
 - a. A determination during recertification or update of the application that the need or eligibility requirements are no longer being met or the fee or amount of service needs to be modified
 - b. Failure of the parent/guardian to document the family's need or eligibility after the district requested such documentation in writing
 - c. An indication by the parent/guardian that he/she no longer wants the service
 - d. The death of a parent/guardian or child
 - e. The conclusion of a limited-term agreement, provided that the parent/guardian has been informed in writing of the date that the services would terminate
9. For each child enrolled in the district's preschool program, the Superintendent or designee shall maintain a family data file containing a completed and signed application for services, documentation of income eligibility, and a copy of all Notices of Action. For each child not receiving subsidized services, the family data file shall also include records of the specific reason(s) for enrolling each child, the child's family income

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and evidence that the district has made a diligent search for children eligible for subsidized services. (5 CCR 18130, 18133, 18081, 18084)

(cf. 1340 - Access to District Records)

(cf. 3580 - District Records)

(cf. 5125 - Student Records)

Fees and Charges

10. The Superintendent or designee shall establish a process which involves parents/guardians in the state-funded program determining whether and how much to charge parents/guardians for field trip expenses, within the limit specified in law. A child shall not be denied participation in a field trip due to the parent/guardian's inability or refusal to pay the fee, and no adverse action shall be taken against a parent/guardian for that inability or refusal. (Education Code 8273.3)

Disenrollment

11. When necessary due to a reduction in state reimbursements, families shall be disenrolled in the following order: (Education Code 8236, 8263.3)
 - a. Children age 3 years whose families have the highest income in relation to family size shall be disenrolled first, followed by children age 4 years whose families have the highest income in relation to family size.

At each age level, if two or more families have the same income ranking, the child with disabilities shall be disenrolled last. If there are no families that have a child with disabilities, the child who has received services the longest shall be disenrolled first.
 - b. Families of children age 3 or 4 years who are receiving child protective services or who have been documented to be at risk of being neglected, abused, or exploited, regardless of income, shall be disenrolled last.