

Frequently Asked Questions

California Preschool, Transitional Kindergarten and Full-Day Kindergarten Facilities Grant Program

Office of Public School Construction - California Department of Education – Division of the State Architect

GENERAL QUESTIONS

Q. What are the square footage requirements for classrooms funded under the program?

Newly constructed license-exempt preschool classrooms, transitional kindergarten and full-day kindergarten classrooms must be 1,350 square feet. This meets Title 5 Regulations, Section 14030 (h)(2) requirements, which is inclusive of restrooms, storage, teacher prep area and wet/dry area.

For classrooms that are retrofitted, the minimum square footage is 1,250 square feet.

Q. Is there a specific formula per Title 5 as it relates to play areas students to outdoor square foot space?

Title 5 does not provide a formula for outdoor space; however, Local Educational Areas should ensure that the play area for these students is adequate. For more information please see the Guide to School Site Analysis and Development (2000 Edition) for square footage allowances for turfed, paved, and apparatus areas at:

<https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/fa/guideschoolsite.asp>

Q. What are things to consider when planning a play area?

The school site should evaluate current usage, scheduling of existing play area, and they must ensure supervision. The school site must provide playground apparatuses that are developmentally appropriate.

Q. When submitting projects for California Department of Education (CDE) approval, what is required?

School districts must submit the following items for CDE plan approval: SFPD 4.07/4.08 application, SFPD Plan Summary (if applicable), Architectural Plans (site, floor, interiors, exteriors). Documents may be uploaded onto CDE Box or send the paper project to CDE. Please contact your CDE field representative if you have questions found using the following link: <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/fa/sf/fieldstaff.asp>

Q. What are the Title 5 Requirements* for Kindergarten classrooms?

- A. Kindergarten classroom size for permanent structures is not less than 1350 square feet, including restrooms, storage, teacher preparation, wet and dry areas.
- B. Kindergarten classrooms are designed to allow supervision of play yards (unless prevented by site shape or size) and all areas of the classroom.
- C. Play yard design provides a variety of activities for development of large motor skills.
- D. Classrooms are located close to parent drop-off and bus loading areas.
- E. Storage, casework, and learning stations are functionally designed for use in free play and structured activities, e.g., shelves are deep and open for frequent use of manipulative materials.
- F. Windows, marking boards, sinks, drinking fountains, and furniture are appropriate heights for kindergarten-age students.
- G. Restrooms are self-contained within the classroom or within the kindergarten complex.

* Key requirements, list is not all-inclusive

Q. What is the California Preschool, Transitional Kindergarten and Full-Day Kindergarten Facilities Grant Program (Program)?

In a 2018 survey performed by the California Department Education (CDE), school districts cited lack of facilities as the main reason for not offering full-day kindergarten instruction. In 2018/2019, this program was allocated \$100,000,000 from the General Fund to provide one-time grants to school districts that would like to construct new school facilities or retrofit existing school facilities in order to provide full-day kindergarten instruction.

The program was extended in the 2021-2022 Budget Act with an additional \$490,000,000 and expanded eligibility to include full-day California Preschool and Transitional Kindergarten programs.

For the 2022-23 fiscal year, the Program was allocated an additional \$100 million from the General Fund of the 2021-22 fiscal year to provide one-time grants to school districts to construct new school facilities or retrofit existing school facilities for the purpose of providing California preschool, transitional kindergarten and full-day kindergarten programs.

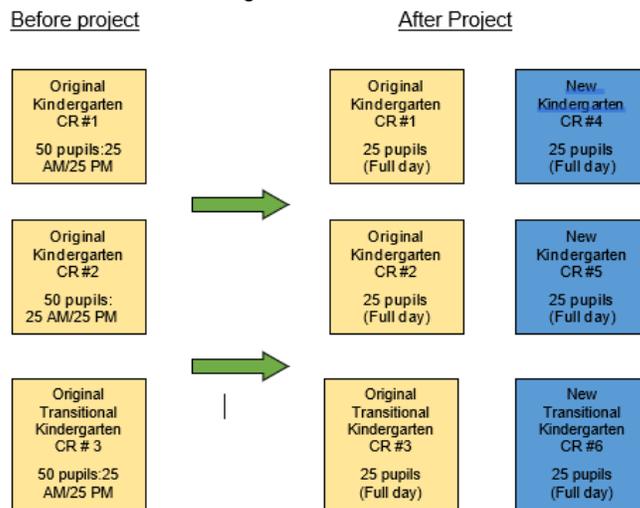
Q. Can School district use a centralized site for all its preschool and transitional kindergarteners?

Yes. A district may choose to house its preschool and transitional kindergarten classrooms on one site. School districts will be capped for funding at four classrooms for preschool and four classrooms for transitional kindergarten at each project site.

LEAs should ensure that all school site meet Title 5 Regulations Section 14010.

Q. What are examples of projects eligible for Program funding?

Here is an example of a project involving the retrofit of an existing facility in order to provide a classroom (CR) needed for full-day kindergarten and transitional kindergarten instruction:



Q. New portable classrooms are not eligible for this grant. What about modular buildings? Are modular buildings eligible?

Yes, modular buildings may be constructed or retrofitted to house full-day Preschool, Transitional Kindergarten, and Kindergarten programs.

Q. Research supports the importance of natural light for children's learning and mental/physical health. Does the Division of the State Architect (DSA) encourage LEAs to increase windows in portables or other new construction?

Adding windows to an existing relocatable classroom would require structural evaluation and possibly seismic retrofit/rehabilitation of the building. For a new relocatable or modular classroom building, windows could be added provided structural calculations support the added wall openings. This would need to be addressed with the manufacturer prior to submittal to DSA.

Q. My school district is already operating full-day kindergarten classes, but they are held in classrooms that do not meet kindergarten design requirements. Is the school district still able to apply for Program funding?

When applying for Program funding, school districts must certify if any facility at the school site did meet kindergarten design standards when it was built or that it was previously retrofitted in order to meet kindergarten design standards.

If all other Program eligibility criteria are met, school districts that already offer full-day kindergarten instruction are eligible to apply for Program funds to either retrofit the classroom(s) they currently house those students in to meet kindergarten design requirements or to build a new kindergarten compliant classroom(s).

Q. Can School district use a centralized site for all its preschool and transitional kindergarteners?

Yes. A district may choose to house its preschool and transitional kindergarten classrooms on one site. School districts will be capped for funding at four classrooms for preschool and four classrooms for transitional kindergarten at each project site.

LEAs should ensure that all school site meet Title 5 Regulations Section 14010.

Q. What entities may apply to the program?

School districts may apply to the Program for funding for Full-Day Kindergarten, Transitional Kindergarten, and Preschool projects. School districts may apply to the Program on behalf of a Charter School that is located in District-owned facilities. County Offices of Education and California Community Colleges may only apply to the Program for funding for Preschool projects.

Q. What other criteria do school districts have to meet to be eligible for Program funding?

Program funding will be open to all school districts that do not have the facilities to adequately house preschool, transitional kindergarten and kindergarten students, and want to provide full-day programs for all three programs.

School districts may apply for Program funding for full-day kindergarten projects that have awarded construction contracts on or after the inception of Program on July 1, 2018, if all other eligibility criteria are met.

Additionally, school districts may apply for Program funding for preschool or transitional kindergarten projects that have awarded construction contracts on or after the inception of Program on July 1, 2021, if all other eligibility criteria are met.

Q. What does the consultation between the Office of Public School Construction and the State Department of Education look like and how shall OPSC determine if the school site's need for funding shall be limited to retrofit projects?

OPSC and CDE have identified the following considerations when evaluating a possible limit to retrofit (although agreeably not all inclusive):

- Type of application i.e., already requesting retrofit, starting, or expanding a preschool or transitional kindergarten program
- Current enrollment and enrollment trends
- Current capacity
 - Vacant space (based on enrollment vs capacity)
- Location of current/existing (if applicable) kindergarten complex/area and the proximity to
 - Parking, pick-up/drop-off
 - Playground
 - Other kindergarten classrooms
 - Other classrooms of different grade level(s)
- Proximity of available space for possible NC
- Educational program(s) impact from current/existing kindergarten and/or potential location(s) for additional classrooms (NC or Retrofit)

Q. How will OPSC determine the number of classrooms a school district is eligible for Transitional Kindergarten and Preschool pupils? What will need to be provided to substantiate the enrollment?

An average based on actual enrollment data would be the most accurate.

Transitional Kindergarten - 1st, 2nd, and 3rd grade enrollment on the school site may be used to help indicate the number of classrooms necessary to house Transitional Kindergarten enrollment for new programs. Three years of actual enrollment will be averaged to indicate the number of classrooms needed at the site. This assumes that all current 1st graders were eligible for Transitional Kindergarten two years prior, 2nd Graders = three years prior, and 3rd graders = four years prior. Averaging the three current years of actual enrollment helps to address the current phased implementation of Transitional Kindergarten based on birth month.

Alternatively, school districts can use three years of actual Transitional Kindergarten enrollment in lieu of higher grade levels if available.

This same methodology will be used to determine Preschool enrollment.

Example:

1 st Grade	2 nd Grade	3 rd Grade	3-Year Average
70 pupils	65 pupils	75 pupils	70 pupils/year

If a school district does not have preschool and/or transitional kindergarten at every school site, OPSC would request enrollment information for 1st through 3rd grade for sites that will receive the students (similar to a feeder school concept).

Q. Can Program funds be used on leased land?

No. Since Education Code (EC) 17375 does not expressly allow the use of leased land for Program projects, school districts may not use funds on leased land. As defined in Program Regulation Section 1860.8, school districts must hold the title to the real property where the project facilities will be located.

Q. Does my project need to be for a full-day facility, or can it be part-day if it's for preschool or transitional kindergarten?

Education Code Section 17375(m)(1) states that "Kindergarten' included transitional kindergarten as defined in EC Section 48000". EC Section 17375(m)(3) defined a preschool program as "means a *full-day* [emphasis added] California state preschool program...." OPSC interprets the statute to require preschool, transitional kindergarten, and kindergarten to be full-day programs. Looking at the grade level progression, it is logical to conclude that if preschool and kindergarten are required to be full-day programs, then the year in a transitional kindergarten program was also intended to require a full-day program.

Q. How do I calculate my matching share?

For projects that are expanding from part-day to full-day kindergarten and qualify for the 75/25 state and school district matching share requirement, the methodology for calculating the Program grant will be executed in two steps.

Step one will be calculated using the School Facility Program per-pupil grant amount for K-6 pupils for the calendar year in which the application is being processed.

Step two will then take the total project cost calculated in step one and multiply this amount by 75 percent to determine the Total State Share and 25 percent to determine the Total District Share of the project cost.

Q. Does the school district have to pay for a portion of a Program project?

Except for school districts receiving financial hardship funding, school districts required matching share will be equal to the following:

Program	Program Status	New Construction or Retrofit Project?	State Share	District Share*
Full Day Kindergarten	Existing	New Construction	50%	50%
Transitional Kindergarten Preschool Part-Day to Full Day Kindergarten	New/Existing New/Existing Converting	New Construction	75%	25%
Full Day Kindergarten	Existing	Retrofit	60%	40%
Transitional Kindergarten Preschool Part-Day to Full Day Kindergarten	New/Existing New/Existing Converting	Retrofit	75%	25%

Q. What is OPSC using three years of prior enrollment for?

OPSC, in collaboration with the California Department of Education (CDE), will use the enrollment pattern in conjunction with the facility usage information to determine if the project funding should be limited to retrofit funding. An example of this would be if a school site has declining enrollment, has the equivalent of two empty classrooms available, and has classrooms that are near or adjacent to the kindergarten complex, the project funding may be limited to retrofit funding.

Q. Would a district be able to use Program funds to retrofit an existing playground?

If the retrofit project includes the retrofit of an existing classroom a district could use funds to retrofit a playground.

However, a project that is only retrofitting a playground would not be eligible for funding.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Q. When does my school district need to turn in the application for Program funding?

At the January 28, 2026 meeting, the State Allocation Board (SAB) approved the opening of a new filing round for the California Preschool, Transitional Kindergarten and Full-Day Kindergarten Facilities Grant Program (Program) using approximately \$31.6 million in funds that have returned to the Program. A completed *Application for Funding* (Form SAB 70-01) will be accepted by the Office of Public School Construction (OPSC) during the following filing dates:

April 1, 2026 – April 30, 2026

Q. What documents are needed to apply for Program funding?

When applying for funding through Program, all school districts must provide OPSC, at a minimum, a completed *Application for Funding* (Form SAB 70-01), a detailed site map, California Longitudinal Pupil Achievement Data System (CALPADS) enrollment of the entire site for the current enrollment year and the three immediately preceding years, a detailed written description of the proposed project and school board approved resolution to provide full-day kindergarten, transitional kindergarten and preschool instruction, as listed on the Form.

School districts requesting Financial Hardship assistance on the Form SAB 70-01 must submit a complete and valid Phase 1 Financial Hardship Checklist, and all required supporting documentation, with their Form SAB 70-01. For more information regarding financial hardship assistance, please visit the OPSC Financial Hardship webpage: <https://www.dgs.ca.gov/OPSC/Services/Page-Content/Office-of-Public-School-Construction-Services-List-Folder/Access-Financial-Hardship-Assistance-for-School-Construction>. All applicants of the Program must be levying the maximum Level I Developer Fees by April 30, 2026 in order to be considered for financial hardship funding and Program

preference points. This includes having an up-to-date Justification Study in place which justifies the 2026 Level 1 Developer Fees. No exceptions will be allowed in order to allow for timely processing of the applications.

School districts applying for full funding must provide all required supporting documents, including the Division of the State Architect (DSA) plan approval and CDE plan approval. School districts that have none or only a portion of the required supporting documents may request advance funding for design and/or site costs. For a detailed description of the different types of funding a district may request, please visit our website at

<https://www.dgs.ca.gov/OPSC/Services/Page-Content/Office-of-Public-School-Construction-Services-List-Folder/Access-Full-Day-Kindergarten-Facilities-Grant-Program-Funding>

The Form SAB 70-01 may be completed and submitted electronically via OPSC Online and all supporting documentation may be uploaded.

Q. May a school district submit multiple applications for Program funding?

Yes, a school district may apply for funds for one or more projects, but each project must be a separate application. OPSC will need to evaluate each project application on a case-by-case basis to determine if the proposed project(s) is eligible.

Q. Can Special Day Class (SDC) designated pupils be included in kindergarten enrollment when applying for Program funding?

Yes, SDC pupils housed in Kindergarten classrooms may be included in the total kindergarten enrollment count for the purposes of applying for Program funding. However, funding is based on the current K-6 pupil grant amounts for the type of project, i.e. New Construction or Retrofit, at the 25 pupils per classroom loading standard. Pupil grant amounts are not differentiated between K-6 and SDC pupils.

Q. What is the timeline of the process once a request for funding has been deemed eligible by OPSC and received the approval of the State Allocation Board?

All applicants that received approval from the State Allocation Board must submit a valid *Fund Release Authorization* (Form sab 70-02) within 18 months of the apportionment date. For a list for all approvals required for each grant type, refer to the “Special Instructions” section of the Application for Funding (Form SAB 70-01).

Q. What if the district cannot meet the 18 month deadline for a full fund release?

The district may submit in writing other evidence of circumstances beyond the control of the district that precludes the district from submitting a valid *Fund Release Authorization* (Form SAB 70-02) with all required approvals within 18 months of the first apportionment. OPSC will review the submitted information and present it to the State Allocation Board for consideration.

If approved, districts apportioned at the October 2026 SAB meeting shall have up to a maximum 12-month extension, until April 28, 2029, to submit the required approvals and a complete Form SAB 70-02.

If additional funds return to the Program following the initial round of apportionments from the fifth funding round, grantees receiving these later apportionments will have a shorter period of time for any potential extension to the 18-month fund release deadline. Districts may request a fund release extension, however, the final deadline for fund release submittal is May 1, 2030. Extension requests beyond May 1, 2030 will not be granted.

If the district is unable to meet the 18-month deadline to submit a Form SAB 70-02 and would like to request an extension, the district must submit a narrative to OPSC containing the following information:

- Dates and/or events pertinent to the project that have taken place since the SAB apportionment

- Background information on project
- Factors that have contributed to delays in the project
- Expected dates of approval, completion, bids, etc.
- Amount of extension time being requested

All districts whether requesting additional time for submittal of the Form SAB 70-02 or not, have up to three years from the date of apportionment to complete the project and submit a *Final Expenditure Report* (Form SAB 70-03) along with the Detailed Listing of Project Expenditure Report. Both documents can be found on the Program website at:

<https://www.dgs.ca.gov/OPSC/Services/Page-Content/Office-of-Public-School-Construction-Services-List-Folder/Access-Full-Day-Kindergarten-Facilities-Grant-Program-Funding>

Q. Can a Program project be combined with a School Facilities Program (SFP) modernization and/or new construction project at the same site?

Statute does not prevent a Program project from being combined with an SFP modernization and/or new construction project at the same site. However, EC Section 17375(k) does state that Program funds may only supplement, not supplant, existing funds available for school facilities construction. The district would need to clearly delineate what is part of the Program project and what is part of the SFP project on the approved project plans and keep the scope and expenditures for the project separated to ensure no aspect of the projects were double funded.

Q. Can Community Colleges apply for Transitional or Full-day Kindergarten program grants?

No, pursuant EC 17375(m)(5)(A), only School Districts may apply for transitional kindergarten and full day kindergarten facilities grants.

Q. What do community colleges need to be eligible for preschool funding?

Community college applicants must currently or plan to run a full-day preschool program on behalf of or in lieu of a school district. They must demonstrate a lack of facilities to adequately house their preschool program.

FUNDING

Q. How are the Program base grant amounts for either new construction or a retrofit project being determined?

Calculating the Program grant is similar to existing SFP criteria for new construction and modernization projects, as applicable. Per EC Section 17375(d), the SFP grade level K-6 new construction pupil grant is used to calculate the new construction base grant and the SFP modernization grade level K-6 pupil grant issued to calculate the retrofit base grant. The SFP loading standard of 25 pupil grants per K-6 classroom is applied to all classrooms funded, even if they will not be fully loaded with Preschool, TK or Kindergarten pupils.

Example #1: 2

Classroom new construction project using 2026 pupil grant amounts

2 CRs X 25 pupil grants		50
(K-6) new construction pupil grant	X	\$16,411
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New construction base grant (state share)		\$820,550

Example #2: 2

Classroom retrofit project using 2026 pupil grant amounts

2 CRs X 25 pupil grants		50
(K-6) modernization pupil grant	X	\$6,249
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Retrofit base grant (state share)		\$312,450

Q. What are the different types of funding that can be requested through the Program?

School districts may apply for funding for new construction projects with or without an advance release of funds. Districts may also apply for funding a retrofit project with or without an advance. The base grant may be increased by the following additional grants:

New Construction	Retrofit
Site Acquisition	Automatic Fire Detection/Alarm System
Hazardous Waste Removal	Site Development
Automatic Fire Detection/Alarm System	50-Year-Old Utilities
Automatic Sprinkler System	Project Assistance
Site Development	
Multi-level Classroom Construction	
Project Assistance	

Q. The school district applied for additional grants in the initial form 70-01 submission and received extra funding for those requests. However, after the district finalized its plans and received approval from the DSA, the additional grants were not included. What steps should the district take next?

If the district receives additional grant funding that was not included in the DSA-approved plans and specifications, the project must return to the SAB for amendments to the funding. This situation may lead to delays in the release of funds for the project. The same process applies to projects that are reducing the number of classrooms for which they were initially funded.

In earlier funding rounds, many projects had to return to the SAB to get the Automatic Fire Sprinkler system removed, which caused delays for several districts in receiving their funds. OPSC advises districts to only request additional grants if they expect these to be part of the approved plans. If any amendments are necessary, school districts should submit a revised form 70-01 to OPSC well in advance of the fund release deadline to ensure sufficient processing time.

Q. When is a school district eligible for Financial Hardship funding?

To be considered eligible for Financial Hardship funding, a district must be financially unable to provide a portion or all of necessary matching funds for an eligible Program project, be currently levying the maximum allowable developer fee, AND meet at least one of the following conditions:

- Have a current bonded debt that is 60% or more of district debt capacity, or
- Have had a successful registered voter bond election for at least the maximum amount allowed under Proposition 39 within the previous two years from the date of request for financial hardship status, or
- Have a debt capacity of \$5 million or less at the time of the request for financial hardship status. It is a County Superintendent of Schools.

Q. My school district qualifies for financial hardship assistance. When the project is completed, what should we do with our unexpended funds?

For funding provided from the 2018-2019 Budget Act, school districts that receive Financial Hardship funding may not retain or expend the savings. For funding provided from the 2021-2022 and 2023-2024 Budget Acts, all school districts, even those receiving Financial Hardship funding, may retain the savings and expend them on other high priority needs of the school district as well as professional development and instructional material needed to build capacity for a full-day kindergarten program.

FUNDING ORDER

Q. How will the funding order for approved Program projects be determined?

If a funding round is oversubscribed, funding order for approved projects will be determined by preference points. Preference points are determined by the district's financial hardship eligibility and the number of pupils in the district that are eligible for Free and Reduced-Price School Meals (FRPM), up to 80 points, as follows:

School district meets financial hardship requirements.	40 points
Percentage of school district's pupil population that is eligible for FRPM.	Up to 40 points, based on the sliding scale in Regulation Section 1860.15.

If school districts submit multiple applications in the same funding round, OPSC will use the priority order assigned to each application by the school districts on Section 3 of the *Application for Funding* (Form SAB 70-01).

Q. Where does a school district obtain its Free and Reduced-Price School Meals (FRPM) percentage to be used on the Program application?

The Free and Reduced-Price School Meals (FRPM) percentage can be found on DataQuest, which is part of the California Department of Education's website. If the current enrollment year is not available on DataQuest at the time of the Program application submittal, the district must use the California Longitudinal Pupil Achievement Data System (CALPADS) 1.1 report as it directly reflects the data found in DataQuest and only includes the pupils eligible for free and reduced-priced lunch.

Q. Will I receive 40 preference points for Financial Hardship if I am able to contribute my applicable matching share?

No. EC Section 17375(b)(2)(A) states that preference is given to school districts that cannot provide a

portion of, or all of, the local matching share required for a project. Therefore, a school district that is able to provide the required local match is not eligible for the 40 preference points for Financial Hardship.

Please note that a school district still can receive up to 40 preference points based on the percentage of the district's pupils that are eligible for FRPM.

Q. How are preference points determined for community college applications?

Community college applicants will use the FRPM of the school district's bounds they fall within.

If requesting Financial Hardship consideration, they will submit their own financial hardship information, not the financials of the district to which they will offer preschool.

REPORTING AND AUDITS

Q. Do school districts have to report project expenditures to OPSC? If so, how long will school districts have to report project expenditures?

Yes. School districts are required to report project expenditures through the submittal of a *Final Expenditure Report* (Form SAB 70-03) and a Detailed Listing of Project Expenditure Report (DLOPE). Pursuant to Program Regulation Section 1860.18, school districts must complete the project and submit a Form SAB 70-03 when the Notice of Completion has been filed or three years from the date of apportionment, whichever comes first.

Q. Why does my school district need to submit two *Expenditure Report Forms SAB 70-03*?

Districts will report all costs the district expended on the project through the submittal of a *Final Expenditure Report* (Form SAB 70-03). This is to ensure that the Program grant was used in accordance with the Education Code and Program Regulations. If the school districts reported savings on the Form SAB 70-03, it will submit a *Final Savings Expenditure Report* on a second Form SAB 70-03 in order to ensure that savings expenditures were in compliance with Education Code and Regulations. Savings must be spent within one year from the submittal of the *Final Expenditure Report*. Any remaining funds after the *Final Expenditure Report* must be returned with any gained interest.

Q. Are Program projects subject to audits?

Yes. Projects will be subject to audit conducted pursuant to Education Code Section 41024 in order to assure that the expenditures incurred by the district were made in accordance with the Education Code and Program Regulations. To be prepared for an audit, school districts must retain all financial accounts, documents, and records necessary for an audit of completed projects pursuant to EC Section 41024(a)(4) and provide project documentation if requested by the local auditor.

Q. What happens if, during an audit, ineligible expenditures are discovered in the project?

If ineligible expenditures are discovered, CDE will ensure that the school district has corrected the audit exception by implementing a required penalty payment of funds equal to the amount of funds disallowed in the audit exception.