A Sample Day in Transitional Kindergarten (TK) - Full Day

Time	Activity	Description	Examples & Notes
8:30-8:40 California Preschool/ Transitional Kindergarten Learning Foundations Any Domain	"Soft Start" Activities 	To promote a "soft start" to the school day, when children enter the classroom they can have a choice of a few engaging activities that require little adult support. This soft start gives the teacher time to check in with students and speak with families as needed before the day's activities begin.	-Coloring/drawing -Sensory trays (Play dough, sand) -Blocks and building -Books -Puzzles
		5 MIN Five-minute transition times are included in this schedule which may decrease as TK students learn and practice daily routines. Transition times will also vary depending on your school site and its proximity to outdoor play areas and mealtime locations.	
8:45-9:00 Social and Emotional Development Language and Literacy Development	Community Building (Whole Group) 	A time to build connections and share thoughts, experiences, and feelings at the start of the day. Last 5 minutes of time can be used to preview and model activities at Centers so children engage in more meaningful play and learning. Pro Tip: Center time can be extended to accommodate small group rotations. Teachers can also pull children aside for individual assessments or to offer targeted support in math and literacy.	-Whole group activity from Social and Emotional Development curriculum -Write a morning message setting intentions for the day -Choose classroom leadership roles -Preview of Centers that are open for the day
9:05-9:50 California Preschool/ Transitional Kindergarten Learning Foundations Any Domain	Centers 	Children can go to a center of their choice that has an identified learning goal aligned to any domain of the Preschool/ Transitional Kindergarten Learning Foundations (PTKLF) and is integrated with the current curriculum theme or unit of study. Play at Centers should be primarily child-led. However teachers can provide scaffolding to support learning goals, and some centers may require more teacher direction or oversight (e.g., using specific art materials).	-Dramatic play -Blocks -STEM materials and manipulatives -Science exploration -Art -Puzzles and games -Sensory tables -Reading/listening nook with books

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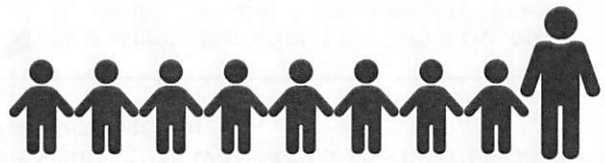
9:55-10:30 Physical Development California Preschool/ Transitional Kindergarten Learning Foundations Any Domain	Snack and Outdoor Exploration 	Outdoor activities for children to engage in both big body play and fine motor play aligned to the learning domains in the PTKLF. **Pro Tip** If your school does not have the TK outdoor area set up with different activities and options for exploration aligned to the PTKLF (e.g., if your TK program only has a play structure), then you can decrease morning and afternoon recess time and add more time to Centers to ensure meaningful learning across PTKLF learning domains.	-Tricycles -Play structure -Balls -Hopscotch -Sensory experiences (sand/water) -Outdoor paint/art -Science exploration -Puzzles and blocks -Rest area/book bin -Balancing activities and obstacle courses
10:40-11:00 Mathematics Language and Literacy Development California Preschool/ Transitional Kindergarten Learning Foundations Any Domain	Small Group Rotations 	Teacher-facilitated instruction in Mathematics or Language & Literacy (including home language support and English Language Development) that can be integrated with other PTKLF domains (e.g., Art, Science). Small groups are eight or fewer children (three groups in total; two are teacher- facilitated, one requires minimal teacher support*)  *If there are three teachers in the TK program, then all three groups can be teacher-facilitated	-Phonological Awareness (e.g., isolating initial sounds of words) -Alphabetic and Print Knowledge (e.g., sounds letters make) -Name writing -Patterning -Adding and Subtracting game -Sorting objects -Shape building and recognition -Numeral recognition -Counting collections
11:05-11:40	Handwashing and Lunch	Handwashing should occur before and after snack/lunch and when children return from outdoor exploration.	

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Time	Activity	Description	Examples & Notes
11:45-11:55 Visual and Performing Arts Physical Development Approaches to Learning	Music, Movement, or Mindfulness (Whole Group) 	A whole group activity to promote PTKLF goals in the Visual and Performing Arts, Physical Development, and Approaches to Learning Domains. California Preschool/ Transitional Kindergarten Learning Foundations Any Domain Adjust your curriculum to integrate learning across domains in the PTKLF as much as possible to minimize large blocks of time devoted to separate content areas (e.g., literacy block). Ideally each learning activity in this schedule targets multiple learning goals in the PTKLF.	-Musical instruments -Sing-alongs -Follow-along movement -Self-regulation games -Breathing exercises -Stretching or yoga
11:55-12:10 Language and Literacy Development California Preschool/ Transitional Kindergarten Learning Foundations Any Domain	Read Aloud (Whole Group) 	Teacher reads a book or other text to promote learning goals in the Language & Literacy Development domain in the PTKLF, such as reading comprehension and vocabulary through engaging back and forth conversation about the book or text. 15 MIN It's best to keep whole group sessions to 15 minutes or less if possible.	Read aloud books should be aligned to PTKLF domains of Social and Emotional Development, Science, or History - Social Science, and should be tied to the curriculum unit of study to foster meaningful learning.
12:15-12:30 California Preschool/ Transitional Kindergarten Learning Foundations Any Domain	Activity Post Read-Aloud (Small Group) 	Following the read aloud, reinforce learning goals aligned to learning domains in the PTKLF in a small-group activity related to the book or text.	-Art project -Pre-writing skills -Science inquiry -Building/ engineering -Story telling/ story acting

A Sample Day in Transitional Kindergarten (TK) - Full Day

Time	Activity	Description	Examples & Notes
12:35-1:15 Physical Development California Preschool/ Transitional Kindergarten Learning Foundations Any Domain	Outdoor Exploration 	Same as outdoor exploration above. Ideally, children should have two opportunities to go outdoors, once in the morning and once in the afternoon.	
1:20-1:35 California Preschool/ Transitional Kindergarten Learning Foundations Any Domain	Quiet Time 	A quiet time where some children may nap or engage in quiet activities. The lights are turned down lower and soft music can be played. While children should be able to use the bathroom when they need to (ideally, the bathroom is in the TK classroom), bathroom breaks should also be offered during transitions to and from lunch and outdoor time.	-Opportunity to nap -Book bins -Teacher-guided yoga, breathing, or meditation
1:40-2:30 California Preschool/ Transitional Kindergarten Learning Foundations Any Domain	Centers 	Same as Centers from above. Children who are still napping or resting can continue if needed. Pro Tip 50% of the required 180 instructional minutes should occur in Centers. In this schedule, a total of 95 minutes is spent in Centers and a total of 85 minutes is spent in whole-group or small-group instruction.	

A Sample Day in Transitional Kindergarten (TK) - Full Day

Time	Activity	Description	Examples & Notes
2:25-2:45 Social and Emotional Development Language and Literacy Development	Community Building (Whole Group) 	A time for connection to reflect on the school day	-Children share experiences or products from Centers (e.g., artwork, what they built) -Check in about feelings -Preview schedule for tomorrow

Considerations

This sample full day in Transitional Kindergarten (TK) is meant to serve as a flexible guide rather than a one-size-fits-all model. Each classroom and school community is unique, so teachers will need to collaborate with their colleagues and work within their specific school context to design a schedule that makes the half day feel rich and engaging. By tailoring activities and routines to their students' needs, educators can create meaningful learning experiences that maximize every moment.

Instructional Minute Requirements in TK

The annual instructional minutes requirement for TK is 36,000 minutes per year (*Education Code* [*EC*] sections 46207 and 47612.5)

For school districts, the maximum school day in Kindergarten is 4 hours (*EC* Section 46111). There are two exceptions to this statute which allow schools that have adopted an early primary program (extended-day kindergarten) (*EC* Section 8973), and schools in which students are participating in an Expanded Learning Opportunity Program (*EC* Section 46120), to exceed 4 hours. In general, the minimum length of instructional time that must be offered to constitute a school-day is 180 minutes (*EC* sections 46114 and 46117). Pursuant to *EC* Section 46208, school districts must offer 180 or more days of instruction per school-year unless a school operates on a multitrack year-round schedule, in which case it must offer at least 163 days.

With the exception of instances of school closures prompted by an emergency, *EC* Section 37202(a) requires that elementary school programs operated by a school district must be of equal length of time during the school year, and this would include any TK and Kindergarten programs operated by the school district. *EC* Section 37202(b) provides an exception to this rule whereby a school district may operate TK and Kindergarten classes, either within the district or at the same schoolsite, for different lengths of time without a waiver if the school district is operating an Early Primary Program pursuant to *EC* Section 8973.

Charter schools do not have a minimum number of minutes that must be offered each schoolday, although they do have to offer 175 days and a total of 36,000 instructional minutes to meet the annual days and minutes requirements for TK and Kindergarten pursuant to *EC* sections 47612(d)(3), 47612.5, and *California Code of Regulations*, Title 5, Section 11960.

RECESS TO THE CLASSROOM

Strategies for a smooth transition

TIMING



- Give a 5-minute warning
- Then give a 2-minute warning
- Use consistent phrase like:

"Two more minutes of play, then line up."

Predictability reduces resistance.

VISUALS



- First/then board (ex: First line up, then drawing time)
- Mini visual schedule in pocket or on lanyard
- Transition card or small "job" to carry inside

Visuals=clarity=less arguing

REGULATION



- Wall push-ups before entering
- Carrying items from the playground
- Delivering attendance folder to office
- 2-mintue calm-down breathing routine

Regulate - then expect performance

MOTIVATION



- "First line up, then 3 minutes of drawing"
- Use a picture to show the motivating activity they can do when they return
- Highly reward the student for making the transition

The goal is success, not compliance battles

MINIMAL LANGUAGE



- **Reduce words**
- **Avoid lectures**
- **Avoid "Why are you doing this?"**
- **Use calm, neutral tone**

TRANSITION BUDDY



- Pair with a supportive classmate
- Practice walking together
- Model expected behavior

Structure peer support - don't leave it to chance.

SOFT LANDING



- Quiet drawing for 3 minutes
- Read-aloud time
- Table bins with calming activities
- Journal prompt

Think: landing zone, not crash landing

TRACKING



- Is it daily?
- Only on hot days?
- Only after competitive games?
- Does it happen with certain staff?

Patterns guide solutions

BIG PICTURE REMINDER

Recess to classroom is a regulation shift, not just a location change.

When we support:

- **Predictability**
- **Sensory needs**
- **Clear expectations**
- **Motivation**

Transitions become smoother - and instruction time increases.



TK Schedule
