



# Kindergarten and Transitional Kindergarten Policy

The Board of Directors of the Cottonwood School (“Cottonwood” or the “Charter School”) is committed to providing educational instruction to all students. The Executive Director or designee shall ensure that the Charter School provides a non-discriminatory and equal enrollment process for students of Transitional Kindergarten and Kindergarten age, in compliance with current state requirements.

## Eligibility

**1. Enrollment in Kindergarten for 2023-24:** a child is eligible for kindergarten if the child will have their fifth birthday by **September 1** of the school year in which they are enrolling. The Charter School *may*, on a case-by-case basis, admit to kindergarten a child who will attain the age of five years at any time during the school year with the approval of the parent or guardian, subject to the following conditions:

- The governing board determines that the admittance is in the best interests of the child. Determination shall be based on standard criteria set by Charter School administration and is based on standardized guidelines for academic and developmental readiness for kindergarten. Staff determination of grade-level placement will be made based on multiple measures including grade-level appropriate formal assessments and student observations.
- The parent or guardian is given information regarding the advantages and disadvantages and any other explanatory information about the effect of this early admittance.

**2. Enrollment in Transitional Kindergarten for 2023-24:** a child is eligible for transitional kindergarten if the child will have their fifth birthday **between September 2 and June 2<sup>1</sup>**

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- <sup>1</sup> In 2025–26, TK may be available to all children who will have their fourth birthday by September 1 of the school year.

in the school year for which they are enrolling. Charter School *may* at any time during a school year, admit a child to a transitional kindergarten program who will have their fifth birthday **after June 2 (but during that same school year)**, with the approval of the parent/guardian, subject to the following conditions:

- The governing board of the school district or the governing body of the charter school determines that the admittance is in the best interests of the child. Determination shall be based on standard criteria set by Charter School administration and is based on standardized guidelines for academic and developmental readiness for kindergarten. Staff determination of grade-level placement will be made based on multiple measures including grade-level appropriate formal assessments and student observations.
- The parent or guardian is given information regarding the advantages and disadvantages and any other explanatory information about the effect of this early admittance.

### **3. Public Random Drawing**

The Charter School will follow its standard admissions and enrollment procedures, including a public random lottery as applicable. Enrollment in the transitional kindergarten program shall be voluntary.

Applications will be accepted during a publicly advertised open enrollment period each year for enrollment for the following school year. Following the open enrollment period each year, and after all application forms have been received, applications shall be counted to determine whether the number of students exceeds the available space in the program. If the number of applications exceeds the capacity of the Kindergarten/Transitional kindergarten program the Charter School will hold a public random drawing pursuant to the Public Random Drawing procedure in the Charter School charter petition.

### **Curriculum and Instruction**

The Charter School's transitional kindergarten program shall use a modified kindergarten curriculum that is age and developmentally appropriate. This curriculum shall be aligned to the California Preschool Learning Foundation developed by the Department of Education.

Upon recommendation by the Executive Director or designee, the Charter School shall approve academic standards for transitional kindergarten that bridge preschool learning foundations and kindergarten standards. Such standards shall be designed to facilitate students' development in

essential skills which may include, as appropriate, language and literacy, mathematics, physical development, the arts, science, social sciences, English language development, and social-emotional development.

The number of instructional minutes offered in transitional kindergarten shall meet the requirements of Education Code Section 47612.5.

Transitional kindergarten students may be placed in the same classrooms as kindergarten students when necessary, provided that the instructional program is differentiated to meet transitional kindergarten student needs and meets the adult to student ratio.

### **Staffing**

Teachers assigned to teach in transitional kindergarten classes shall possess a teaching credential or permit that authorizes instruction at the kindergarten grade level. Additionally, teachers who are first assigned to a transitional kindergarten classroom shall hold a teaching credential and by August 1, 2023<sup>2</sup>, have one of the following:

1. At least twenty-four (24) units in early childhood education, or childhood development, or both.
2. As determined by the Charter School, professional experience in a classroom setting with preschool age children that is comparable to the twenty-four (24) units in early childhood education, or childhood development, or both.
3. A child development teacher permit issued by the Commission on Teacher Credentialing.

The Executive Director or designee may provide professional development as needed to ensure that transitional kindergarten teachers have knowledge of school standards and effective instructional methods for teaching young children.

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<sup>2</sup> Note, any teacher who is or was assigned to teach TK, or a combination of kindergarten and TK, **on or before July 1, 2015**, is "grandfathered in" to teach transitional kindergarten without having to meet the additional unit requirement for transitional kindergarten teachers set forth in Education Code section 48000(g).

Board Policy #:  
Adopted/Ratified: 3/23/2021  
Revision Date: 6/20/2023

### **Continuation to Kindergarten**

Students who complete the transitional kindergarten program shall continue to kindergarten the following school year. The Executive Director shall obtain a Kindergarten Continuance Form signed by the parents/guardians near the end of the Transitional Kindergarten year consenting to the child's enrollment in kindergarten the following year.

In order to accommodate as many students as possible, the Charter School requests that parents/guardians of students who choose not to continue into the Charter School kindergarten program the following school year provide notice to the Executive Director or designee as soon as that decision is made.

No student may attend more than two (2) years in a combination of transitional kindergarten and kindergarten unless required as part of a student's Individualized Education Program ("IEP") or otherwise required by law.

### **Program Evaluation**

The Executive Director or designee shall develop or identify appropriate assessments of transitional kindergarten students' development and progress. The Executive Director or designee shall monitor and regularly report to the Cottonwood Board of Directors regarding program implementation and the progress of students in meeting related academic standards.

### **Immunizations**

Students entering transitional kindergarten shall be subject to the Charter School Immunization Policy similar to students entering kindergarten.

### **Adherence to All Non-Discrimination Laws**

This policy adheres to all non-discrimination laws and is subject to the same enrollment processes as all otherwise qualified students. Enrollment into the charter school will be consistent with all other enrollment guidelines. In the event that a parent or guardian disagrees with the enrollment or grade level placement recommendations of staff, they may appeal the decision in accordance with the school's complaint procedures.