

California Transitional Kindergarten

Case Study Questions

History and context of California's transitional kindergarten

- Describe publicly supported early childhood education in California: funding, administration, and policy trends.
- What are the core features of transitional kindergarten in California? Who and how many children is it expected to serve, and what problems does it address?
- Discuss the 2021 legislation to expand TK, the history of the measure, and the political forces that supported and opposed its passage.
- What is the timeline for universal TK implementation? Who and which public agencies will guide the process?

Unintended consequences

- What pressures could universal TK put on California's public schools?
- What could be the unintended consequences of universal TK in California's public schools? How can they be avoided?

Policy design, implementation, and evaluation

- What are the most significant challenges of serving the needs of young children through California's public school system?
- What are the key implementation challenges of universal TK, and how can public policies address them?
- Once TK is fully implemented, what outcomes will the state measure to determine its impact on school readiness and over-all success?
- If the state were to introduce large scale funding specifically for 0–3, what would be key factors to initially consider and how might this funding solve some of the current TK tensions?
- How do TK's major players and implementers (state, governor, districts, researchers) offer to engage or not engage families in the policy design and decision-making process? What implications does this have for families? How could family voice be more present in educational policies that affect children and families?

Equity

- Who is being served by California's universal TK program and who is left out?
- What policy action can be taken to increase the likelihood of equitable access and outcomes?
- How does the history of ECE help predict likely outcomes for universal TK?
- How will TK affect Section 619 Part B services?

Leadership

- Who are the key players — individuals, organizations, and agencies — working for universal TK?
- How did they shape eventual policy?

Funding

- How will California finance universal TK?
- How did funding play a role in the passing, rollout, and expansion of TK?

National level

- How did TK compare to other universal pre-k initiatives across the nation?
- What can other states learn from California TK, and what could California learn from other states?