

History and Development of Kindergarten in California

By Patricia L. de Cos

*Prepared for the Joint Legislative Committee to
Develop a Master Plan for
Education – Kindergarten Through University*

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Samples of Kindergarten Art in California

Four samples of kindergarten art are included in this report. They are:

1. *Ladybugs in the Spring: Multi-Media Art Experience.* A mural by the class of Linda Becker, West Contra Costa Unified School District; Richmond, California. This project was adapted from a mural by the kindergarten class of Helen Faul-Ocean View School District; Oxnard, California.

The kindergarten children studied insects and incorporated their learning of ladybugs to create this class mural. Brayers were used to spread the paint for the sky and grass, cotton to represent clouds. The border of flowers was created from floral wrapping paper and scraps of brayer painted grass.

2. *A Sunny Day: Environment Related Art Experience.* An original watercolor from the classroom of Denise Lavardera and Rebecca Lewis--South San Francisco Unified School District; South San Francisco, California.

After taking a spring walk observing the birds, trees, sky and wind, the children of this kindergarten class drew a picture of their experience with black crayons. Next they used watercolors to add color and detail to their pictures.

This activity helps develop visual awareness and eye-hand coordination.

3. *Elmer the Elephant: Literature Related Art Experience.* An original collage from the class of Carla Farren--Archdiocese of South San Francisco; Pacifica, California.

After hearing the book Elmer by David McKee, the kindergarten children designed their elephants using black markers. The decorative collage was created by cutting pieces from gift wrap.

This activity helps develop spatial relationships and eye-hand coordination.

4. *Tissue Shadows: Abstract Art Experience.* An original design from the class of Zelda Le Frak--Pittsburg Unified School District; Pittsburg, California.

The kindergarten children placed tissue shapes on white paper, then squirted the tissues with a mixture prepared by the teacher of $\frac{1}{2}$ alcohol and $\frac{1}{2}$ water. The next day they lifted the tissue and discovered the color remained on the white paper. Next, they placed their beautiful papers inside a shallow box, dipped a marble into black paint and rolled it over the surface of their papers.

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Executive Summary

This report reviews the history of kindergarten in California. It is an interesting story in its own right, one in which several women in California pioneered the kindergarten concept and contributed to a nationwide movement. The report puts current policy disputes over kindergarten into enlightening historical context. For example, kindergarten, inspired by precursor early childhood education concepts, included children from ages six and seven to as young as two and three. It sought to lead children gently “over the threshold of learning by the seductive charm of music, flowers, games, pictures, and curious objects.” Later, kindergarten was integrated into the first to 12th grade system, gradually and subtly changing its focus to emphasize emergent literacy and early academic skills. An apparent consequence was that the minimum entry age was raised several times to its current level. This philosophical divergence is still not fully resolved.

Kindergartens in California began modestly with a few private endeavors in the late 1860s. The private kindergartens were based on ideas developed by Frederick Froebel, who founded the first kindergarten in 1837 in Germany. Froebel’s concept of kindergarten was grounded in religion that believed in the oneness of God, man, and nature. Froebel’s emphasis of the divine origin of man propelled his beliefs of the innate goodness of the child. His ideal of a kindergarten was a place for free and joyful children to learn through their own discoveries as naturally as gardens grow. His spiritually inspired theories influenced educators to focus on the education and development of children. The early private kindergartens enrolled children aged three to six.

The popularity of kindergartens in California increased in the late 1870s, when prominent society members in San Francisco pledged to support the social cause of helping “poor and wretched” children. They established associations to finance “charity” kindergartens as a productive alternative for children growing up in the streets. Manual training and early exposure to learning were goals of the kindergartens. As the charity kindergartens grew, they also modified the original purpose of the Froebelian methods. These charity kindergartens were used to socialize and “Americanize” large numbers of immigrants, by guiding young children’s behavior and assisting in parenting education. By the 1890s, the charity kindergartens in San Francisco had become the most successful charity kindergarten system in the country.

Efforts in Southern California to establish charity kindergartens began in the late 1880s. They soon expanded to the public schools, beginning in 1891 in Los Angeles. California enacted its first law regarding kindergarten in that same year, allowing children to attend public kindergartens at the age of four in cities and towns where local districts offered them. It is interesting to note that over one hundred years ago there was political consensus to allow children as young as four to attend public kindergarten, which is comparable to what we consider preschool today.

The 1891 law further modified the original kindergarten, as younger children (ages two and three) were not allowed to participate in these early childhood experiences. Not

surprisingly, other institutions were created or expanded to address the educational and developmental needs of the younger children. These included day nurseries, now known as child care centers or homes, and nursery schools, now known as preschools.

Kindergarten advocates in the 1890s began a long struggle to include and fund kindergarten as part of the public school system in California. This inclusion was slow in coming, in part because of different expectations among the emerging nursery school, kindergarten and primary grade teachers. A constitutional amendment enacted in 1920 permitted kindergartens *to be eligible* for funding. In 1946, another constitutional amendment was enacted to mandate State funding for kindergarten.

Over time, California's laws slowly raised the minimum age requirement for entrance into public kindergarten. Today's law requires children to be five years of age by December 2 to enter public kindergarten. Debates in recent years have examined whether California's policy should be further modified to raise the minimum age, continuing the national trend of the past quarter century.

Since the 1960s, researchers have noted that kindergarten education has increasingly focused on the development of academic skills and less on socialization of children. The contemporary literature has identified a variety of factors that have contributed to this trend, including:

- Higher child participation rates in preschool programs and child care homes and centers. According to the October 1999 Current Population Survey, 47 percent of three- and four-year-olds in California attend either a public or private preschool program. This is in large part due to the increased proportion of mothers who have worked outside of their homes in the past 40 years.
- Exposure to educational television programs initiated with *Sesame Street*.
- Exposure to and use of computers, including instructional software available for young children.
- A common practice of keeping younger children out of kindergarten for an additional year (known as “redshirting”).
- Increased attention on accountability measures, including academic content and performance standards and assessments for public schools.
- A shift from a manufacturing base to a service oriented economy that has increased the need for “knowledge workers” with strong literacy skills. This, in part, has prompted attention of kindergarten educators to focus on developing emergent literacy skills in kindergarten.
- Recent discoveries emanating from brain research, which has given early childhood educators a better understanding of brain development and young children's abilities to learn at earlier ages.

In addition, some early childhood researchers have raised concerns regarding testing, placement, and retention practices in kindergarten. For example, researchers suggest that the practice of testing (using school readiness and/or developmental screening tests) for

children prior to entering or while in kindergarten may be inappropriate. As testing practices have increasingly reflected the academic aims of kindergarten, in some cases these practices have resulted in identifying children as “not ready,” and in turn retaining them in grade or placing them into transitional kindergarten classes. These testing practices may also affect parental decisions to hold children out of kindergarten (“redshirting”) for an additional year until parents perceive that their child will “do well” in the academic setting as characterized by kindergarten today. The result of these practices is a widening of the age span of children served in the kindergarten classroom. This age range makes it more difficult for kindergarten teachers to respond to the different intellectual and social needs and expectations of older and younger children and their parents.

While the literature identifies and raises concerns regarding these practices (that is, the use of testing, retention practices, the use of transitional kindergarten classes, and the extent to which children are “redshirted”), California does not collect any statewide data with respect to these practices. Therefore, the state is limited in developing appropriate policy options to determine:

1. Whether these issues are problematic for California as a whole or for certain communities; and
2. The pervasiveness of these practices in kindergarten classrooms in California.

The emphasis on academic goals in kindergarten has been reinforced by California’s response to the nationwide standards reform movement as established by the federal Goals 2000 law. Recently, the State Board of Education adopted content standards for kindergarten even though kindergarten attendance is not mandatory. Some kindergarten experts have raised concerns regarding the appropriateness of some of the content standards. For example, under the “Writing Strategies” for English-Language Arts Content Standards, kindergarten “students write words and brief sentences that are legible.” Achieving some of the content standards may not be realistic given that preschool attendance is not yet universal in this state and that more than one-third of today’s kindergarten children are English language learners. Is it possible that California has set the standards such that children can fail to pass kindergarten?

The State Board adopted content standards for kindergarten because there is nearly universal attendance in kindergarten. Estimates range from 91 to 95 percent of all children aged five attend a public or private kindergarten in California. This is an increase from the 85 percent of five-year olds estimated to attend kindergarten about 30 years ago.

California only has five schools offering teacher preparation that result in a Multiple Subject credential and an emphasis in early childhood education for teaching children in kindergarten and the primary grades. Although prospective elementary teachers may take courses in early childhood growth and development, they are not required to in order to obtain a Multiple Subject credential. This may result in having many teachers in kindergarten classrooms who do not fully understand the developmental needs of young

children. The existence of academic content standards for kindergarten classrooms accentuates the need for kindergarten educators to understand how to work toward achieving the standards in a manner that is appropriate to each young child's development. The California Kindergarten Association (CKA) has responded by publishing a series of "Strategies" for each of the academic subject areas for which content standards have been adopted.

Furthermore, the ethnic designation of kindergartners is 0.7 percent Native Americans; 7.0 percent Asian; 0.6 percent Pacific Islander; 2.0 percent Filipino; 49 percent Latino; 7.8 percent African American; and 32.2 percent Caucasian. This demographic profile of kindergarten children further suggests the need to strengthen teaching standards for early childhood educators so that they can effectively serve an increasingly diverse group of young children entering California public schools. The minimum requirements for a preliminary single or multiple subject credential issued by the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing includes a study of alternative methods of developing English language skills, including reading, among pupils, including those for English language learners. However, these requirements are not tailored specifically for young children in kindergarten.

Issues affecting California's kindergarten classrooms today include:

- The extent of participation of kindergarten classes in the class size reduction (CSR) program is not known. This program gave priority to grades one and two for implementation within participating districts, leaving options to districts whether to include either kindergarten or grade three. The California Department of Education does not collect information regarding the involvement of kindergarten classes in the CSR program statewide.
- Teaching schedules may affect kindergarten teachers' abilities to participate in professional development opportunities (that is, they may teach in the morning and then have other assignments or another kindergarten class in the afternoon).
- The proportion of fully credentialed teachers in California's kindergartens is not known. The California Department of Education reports that only 86.1 percent of teachers in public schools are fully credentialed (thus, 14.9 percent are underqualified). A recent study found an average 27 percent of underqualified teachers on staff in schools had more than 90 percent of minority students. Similarly, the same study found that schools in which more than three-fourths of the students qualified for a free or reduced lunch had on average 22 percent underqualified teachers on staff.

This report concludes with summary thoughts given the history and discussion of current issues facing kindergarten classrooms. The author suggests that a more fundamental conversation may be warranted regarding the purpose of kindergarten in California. Kindergarten has throughout time reflected the values and needs of society, beginning with its strong religious foundation, the emphasis of manual training, the Americanization of immigrant children, the emphasis of child-centered education, the socialization of children in a classroom setting, the emergent or pre-literacy skills to the

development of literacy skills themselves as delineated in adopted content standards. In earlier times, California's society was relatively more homogeneous than what we find today, which facilitated the establishment of a general consensus regarding practices in the kindergarten classroom.

As academic and literacy skills are emphasized for kindergarten classrooms, policymakers have responded by proposing to raise the age of entrance into kindergarten, to make kindergarten attendance mandatory, and to mandate a full day program. These policies are proposed in the absence of defining what it means to be ready for kindergarten. There is an implied assumption that the onus of "readiness" is on prospective kindergarten children as opposed to the public school admitting children at whatever stage of development they may be.

The Beginning of Kindergartens in California

PRIVATE KINDERGARTENS

The initial concept of a kindergarten for children ages three to six was developed in Germany in 1837, based on the theories of Frederick Froebel, a distinguished German educator who had developed a specialized curriculum for young children.¹ California's first kindergarten was established in 1863, seven years after Mrs. Carl Schurz founded the first American kindergarten in Watertown, Wisconsin for German-speaking children, and three years after Miss Elizabeth Palmer Peabody opened a kindergarten in Boston for English-speaking children.

California's first private kindergarten began on September 10, 1863, in San Francisco.² An advertisement for the kindergarten appeared in two leading newspapers for that day, and proclaimed that, "French is regularly taught with English in the school, and all the methods are such as to combine pleasure and exercise with instruction."³ One noted advantage that the San Francisco kindergarten had "over all other kindred institutions was that it enabled children when their vocal organs were most plastic to learn to speak and read equally well English and French."⁴ Miss Elizabeth Peabody was quoted in *The Californian* in December 1863, describing the kindergarten children as being "gently led over the threshold of learning by the seductive charm of music, flowers, games, pictures, and curious objects."⁵ The following year, the *California Teacher* described the kindergarten:

In the San Francisco Kindergarten, Froebel's idea, with such modifications as change of country and nation necessitate, has thus far been carried out with a success that renders it certain that playing set to music, and made to mean something, is nature's method of tuition for little children.⁶

Other early pioneer efforts to establish private kindergartens in California occurred in Auburn in 1864, Oakland in 1870, Sacramento in 1875, and Los Angeles in 1876. Local newspapers announced the opening of a kindergarten in these settlements. However, these early efforts were a bright flicker of activity that was not sustained over time. The San Francisco kindergarten was the only kindergarten on the West Coast that endured for more than four years, during a period when there were only a few kindergartens in the United States.⁷

FREE CHARITY KINDERGARTENS

In 1876, Miss Emma Marwedel, who was born in Germany and trained in the Froebel school in Hamburg, moved to Los Angeles from Washington, D.C., where she had opened a kindergarten six years earlier.⁸ Miss Marwedel was instrumental in advancing the importance of kindergarten in her adopted state. In December 1876, she established a

kindergarten for 20 children aged four to seven in Los Angeles, as well as a teacher training institution. Among her first three pupils for teaching was Katherine Douglas Smith (later known as Mrs. Kate Douglas Wiggin).⁹

Disappointed in the response to her work, Miss Marwedel left Los Angeles for Oakland and a year later for San Francisco. On July 23, 1878, Miss Marwedel helped to form, along with Professor Felix Alder, the San Francisco Public Kindergarten Society.¹⁰ This association generated sufficient interest and contributions among its members to establish the Silver Street Kindergarten. Miss Marwedel called upon her stellar teaching student, Kate Douglas Wiggin, to assist in this new effort and named her the “Kindergartner” (the teacher as they were called then) for the new school. This was the first free charity kindergarten opened west of the Rocky Mountains. It offered a place of learning for poor and neglected children in the dismal locality in San Francisco known as Tar Flat.



Kate Douglas Wiggin in her early kindergarten days

In her autobiography, Kate Douglas Wiggin describes her strategy for creating interest among the local residents for the kindergarten. She bought her “luncheon” at a different bakery each day, and her glass of milk from a different dairy, thus exposing herself broadly. During her visits, she would talk casually about the new kindergarten, but she never directly solicited pupils. She purchased pencils, crayons, and “mucilage” (glue) at the local stationers; brown paper and soap at the grocer’s; and hammers and tacks at the hardware store. She demonstrated to each craftsman in the vicinity the different types of handiwork that might appeal and be useful to him, such as “laying of patterns in sticks and tablets; weaving; drawing; rudimentary efforts at designing, folding and cutting of paper, or clay modeling.”¹¹ In this way, Kate Douglas Wiggin marketed

the products and training of her prospective class of kindergarten pupils.

When the fateful opening day arrived, Kate Douglas Wiggin inspected and carefully selected forty children that seemed “best calculated to demonstrate to the amazed public the regenerating effects of the kindergarten method.”¹² After classifying them by age, she sent them down to the yard to wash up, before beginning the day’s program. After six weeks had passed, she noted that when various members of the Board of Trustees would drop by, their surprise regarding the children’s attractive appearance would elicit the following comment, “The subscribers will think the children come from Nob Hill Are you *sure* you took the most needy in every way?”¹³

Another prominent figure in the free kindergarten movement was Mrs. Sarah B. Cooper, who established the Jackson Street Kindergarten Association after being inspired by her first visit to Mrs. Wiggin’s Silver Street Kindergarten.¹⁴ On October 6, 1879, Mrs. Cooper opened a second free kindergarten on Jackson Street in the notorious section of

the city known as “Barbary Coast.” At the close of the fifth year, Mrs. Cooper reported a total number of 342 scholars enrolled in the eight classes offering kindergarten. Mrs. Cooper also described a large proportion of the children as under the age of five, many of whom were from two and a half to four years old.¹⁵

Out of Mrs. Cooper’s efforts grew the famous Golden Gate Kindergarten Association, which fostered an interest in the kindergarten movement in neighboring towns and cities of San Francisco.¹⁶ Mrs. Cooper was able to secure the interest and support of numerous people for the Golden Gate Kindergarten Association, including Mrs. Leland Stanford, Mrs. Phoebe Hearst, and Mrs. Miranda Lux.

The San Francisco Public Kindergarten Society decided to move to the corner of Seventh and Market Streets, leaving the impoverished neighborhood south of Mission and east of Fifth Streets. However, Mrs. Wiggin was determined to continue her work in that area. After buying furniture and supplies on credit, she solicited support from the daughter of one of the wealthiest local families, Miss Hattie Crocker, who immediately provided a generous donation to support the first class of the New Silver Street Kindergarten. The New Silver Street Kindergarten opened on January 1, 1882. This kindergarten enrolled 80 children, with Miss Nora A. Smith as the principal.¹⁷ The second class began on April 1, 1882. The generous support of Mr. Adolph Sutro enabled the purchase of furniture and “apparatus” (supplies), and allowed for nine months of operations. The second class also enrolled 80 children, aged three to six years, taught by Mrs. Mary E. Arnold.¹⁸ A third kindergarten opened on October 1, 1883, named the Peabody Kindergarten (New Silver Street, No. 3) with Miss Sanderson as the principal. Thus, the free kindergarten movement, supported by private benefactors, was born in California.

These early charity kindergartens followed Froebel’s methods. In his theory of child development, a young child has an undeveloped divine inner spirit or consciousness. With proper nurturing, each child’s inner spirit develops into a higher state of consciousness and understanding. Froebel’s philosophy encompassed a mystical unity of the three facets of the human being: the mental, physical, and spiritual, and between each individual, community, and oneness with God. While Froebel’s developmental theories were romantically mystical and broadly spiritual, he developed a program that was clear, systematic and practical. It was based on children’s learning by doing. In his view, children’s play promotes learning the value of purposeful activity, self-restraint and moderation, which Froebel considered essential for human happiness, creativity, and spiritual growth.¹⁹ The combination of the mystical and practical appealed to the early supporters of the kindergarten movement. An emphasis on Christian morality, ethics and character was prominent in society and fit a natural desire to ameliorate the suffering of young children living in poverty conditions.

Based on his own educational experiments, Froebel designed a set of “gifts” (a set of cubes and spheres made from various materials), “occupations” (various activities including weaving, building with sticks, and modeling with clay), and “plays” (marching, clapping, and circle games to the accompaniment of music). The combination of these

gifts, occupations, and plays in an instructional program was designed to progressively lead to a child's higher levels of physical, mental, and spiritual maturation.

The instructional program for the Silver Street charity kindergartens in San Francisco began promptly at nine o'clock every morning with a half an hour of songs and familiar conversation. The early morning discussion was designed to lead the children's thoughts to "the beauty of the world about them, the pleasure of right doing, the sweetness of kind thoughts and actions, the loveliness of truth, patience and helpfulness, and the goodness of God to all His living things."²⁰ A period of kindergarten "games" followed, with the children organized in circles. The organized play was led by the "Kindergartner" (the teacher), and was then followed by a variety of "gifts and occupations" as outlined in the table below.

SILVER STREET KINDERGARTEN PROGRAMME (1883)²¹

Prepared by Mrs. Wiggin, and followed by the Free Kindergartens in California. Conversation and Singing from 9 to 9:30. First Period, 9:30 to 10:05. Second, 11 to 11:45. Games at 10:30. This programme has no provision for Songs, Games, Marching and Gymnastics.

MORNING.	FIRST DIVISION.*	SECOND DIVISION.*	THIRD DIVISION.*	FOURTH DIVISION.*
MONDAY.....}	Gift Lesson. — Group Work.	Pricking or Tablets. — Drawing Books.	Gift Lesson. — Drawing Books.	Dictation in Sticks, with Objects. — Weaving.
TUESDAY.....}	Dictation in Sticks. — Paper Cutting, or Modelling.	Gift Lesson. — Weaving.	Pricking. — Sewing.	Drawing. — Sewing.
WEDNESDAY.}	Dictation in Drawing. — Paper Folding.	Dictation in Sticks. — Sewing.	Stick Dictation. — Slate Drawing.	Gift Lesson. — Color or Modelling.
THURSDAY...}	Number. — Weaving.	Drawing Dictation. — Paper Folding.	Number. — Weaving.	Pricking. — Paper Folding.
FRIDAY.....}	Pricking or Sewing. — Drawing Books.	Number. — Modelling Paper or Cutting.	Color or Tablets. — Paper Folding.	Number. — Weaving.
AFTERNOON		[LUNCH].		
MONDAY.....}	Intervention.	Pricking or Tablets.	Ball Exercises.	Thread Game.
TUESDAY.....}	Story, for all Divisions.			
WEDNESDAY.}	Ball Exercises.	Group Work.	Chain Making. Modelling or Sewing.	Outline Drawing.
THURSDAY...}	Thread Game.	Gymnastics.	Group Work.	Group Work.
FRIDAY.....}	Week's Work Completed.	Slates.	Thought Game; or Shells, Chains or Beans.	Picture Books or Sewing.

*Children from 5 to 6 years occupy First Division, and those of 3 or 4 years the Fourth. [This programme is, of course, not in the least arbitrary, but is changed to meet the wishes of the various teachers. It merely offers a suggestion as to the classification of our different plays, exercises and occupations.]

These first charity kindergartens in San Francisco were established to serve families that had no means for providing their children with supportive learning experiences. Mrs. Wiggin described her clientele in detail:

Our children come from three different classes of homes. First, there is a small proportion of the children of petty trades-people, such as old-clothes men, small saloon-keepers, rag-dealers, tailors, etc.

In these homes, the whole time and attention of both father and mother are devoted to their business, and the children, in consequence, are left almost entirely to themselves. These people, though in rather better circumstances than most of the parents, need our help as much as those in a more wretched condition. Their children are more decently fed and clothed perhaps, but the street is their school from the time they can walk, and the woefully apt pupils learn well and thoroughly, the lessons taught there.

The second class of homes are those in which the father is employed as a peddler, tin-mender, etc., or as a day-laborer, and the mother remains at home, making more or less successful attempts to care for her children, and often assisting somewhat in the support of the household, by taking in sewing or washing. These are, some of them, tidy careful women, who do as well as they can, and struggle for better things against heavy odds.

The great majority, however, who perhaps have lost courage early in life's battle, or have never had ideals and ambitions for themselves or their children, are neglectful stewards even of the few things committed to their charge, and waste their small means, while they mismanage themselves and their families.

The third class reaches still a lower depth and comprises the children of absolute criminals. In these homes (what a travesty on the name!) the fathers, and perhaps the mothers, make frequent visits to the jail; sometimes even, the mothers have sunk deeper in degradation and are in houses of vice and ill-fame; or, if at home, make their quarters a kennel in point of cleanliness and a very Bedlam as regards harmony and peace

. . . In all three classes, drink is the worst and most unconquerable foe of parents and children.

It is beer and whiskey, whiskey and beer, glasses of whisky and mugs of beer for mother and father, from Monday morning till Sunday night, from sunrise till midnight

. . . The children are sent to the groceries and saloons for the beer and spirits; they naturally grow to look upon them as life's chiefest luxuries, and they are given the last drops in the glass as a reward for obedience and good behavior. One little girl

smacked her lips the other day, when she told me how nice the whisky was that her father gave her when she was good

. . . In our “play-lessons,” when, perhaps, the children build tables with blocks or sticks and hold miniature banquets thereon, they inevitably and invariably mention beer and whisky first among the refreshments they desire to have at their imaginary “parties.”²²

In 1884, Mrs. Sarah B. Cooper described the kindergarten as “child-saving work:”

The Kindergarten cultivates head, heart and hand. It is the best preparation for the arts and trades. Its gifts and occupations represent every kind of technical activity. The senses are sharpened, the hands are trained, and the body is made lithe and active. The children in the Kindergarten must work for what they get. They learn through doing. They thus develop patience, perseverance, skill and will-power. They are encouraged by every fresh achievement. What they know they must know thoroughly and accurately. Every element of knowledge is transformed into an element of creation. The mind assimilates what it receives, just as a health organism assimilates its food, and is nourished thereby. In his occupation in the Kindergarten the child is required to handle, reconstruct, combine and create. Even play is utilized and has its educative function. What is aimed at, is, to give the child *ideas* . . . The aim of the Kindergarten is to make the mind creative, to stimulate thought, to beget ideas



*Mrs. Sarah B. Cooper
Founder of the Golden Gate
Kindergarten Association*

One thing is certain, the State begins too late, when it permits these children to enter the public school at six years of age . . . We repeat it again, primal work is the most important of all; it is foundation work . . . In view of this fact, it seems to me, the most valuable period of childhood for formative purposes, is yet unclaimed by the state. The richest soil lies unpre-empted and uncultivated. But it does not lie idle . . . Would that the educational guardians of this country could provide a vicarious motherhood, through the Kindergarten, for those hapless little ones whose home lack this divine nurturing . . . If the State does not attend to this work, then Christian philanthropy must do it . . .²³

In 1884, California’s kindergartens had grown to 34, the majority of which were in San Francisco, and enrollments were up to 1,579 pupils.²⁴ By 1888, approximately 4,500

children attended 40 established kindergartens in San Francisco.²⁵ In 1891, Miss Nora A. Smith reported that there were 65 charity kindergartens in San Francisco and Oakland.

In the decades of the 1880s and 1890s numerous kindergartens were established in other parts of the State including Los Angeles, National City, Pasadena, Pomona, Sacramento, San Diego, and Santa Barbara.²⁶ Efforts to establish free kindergartens in Southern California followed San Francisco's lead. In 1885, Mrs. Caroline Severence led a group of prominent women to establish the Los Angeles Free Kindergarten Association.²⁷ The Kindergarten Association in Santa Barbara established a school in 1887 that was supported by charity support and a nominal tuition fee.²⁸

During this time, the original mystical purpose of kindergarten, advocated by Froebel, began to fade. Kindergarten increasingly became an institution that socialized and Americanized young immigrant children and their parents.²⁹ Kindergarten was also seen as a means to improving the living conditions of impoverished children by providing food and clothing, in addition to an education and recreational activities. The charity kindergartens were part of a movement to socially transform the slums and their inhabitants by building moral character, teaching the values of citizenship and patriotism, and developing practical manual skills. The kindergartens provided a model for self-control as seen in temperance and frugality, and other virtues as demonstrated by neatness, order, cleanliness, and punctuality.

The charity kindergartens also saw their role as strengthening family relationships. Specifically, the teachers (kindergartners) sought to influence parents during home "visitations."³⁰ Afternoon calls were made to families up to four times per year and served several goals. They allowed the kindergartner to gain more familiarity with a child's home environment and heredity, and permitted the teacher to advise the family in improving home conditions. In addition, these personal home visits permitted the kindergartner to sift out the truly needy from the "imposters" who tried to take advantage of the generosity of the wealthier classes who supported the schools.³¹

Furthermore, the charity kindergartens organized mothers' clubs to encourage their interest and attention to their children's development and education. These mothers' clubs fulfilled social and educational purposes. The meetings exposed the mothers to the "proper use" of language, modesty, and social graces, familiarized them with the methods of instruction in the kindergarten, and modeled instruction on personal hygiene and home care.³²

KINDERGARTENS IN CHURCHES AND ORPHANAGES

San Francisco's churches and orphanages also supported the kindergarten movement in the 1880s. According to Mrs. Wiggin, there were three distinct Church Kindergartens (excluding the one at the YMCA or Mrs. Cooper's Bible class) and two in Homes and Asylums by 1883.³³ Unfortunately many records were lost in the 1906 earthquake and resulting fire in San Francisco, so we are unable to fully appreciate the extent and role that churches played in developing kindergartens in that city.

In San Francisco, the socially and philanthropically prominent residents were generally affiliated with Protestant churches, (for example, Presbyterians, Congregationalists and Methodists).³⁴ The Catholic Orders established day nurseries in the industrial sections of the Bay cities. The Sisters of the Holy Family established the Children's Day Home in San Francisco in 1878, and provided shelter and care for small children whose mothers worked. Four more day homes were established in the 1880s, including the St. Francis Day Home, the Sacred Heart Day Home, and the Little Sisters Infant Shelter.³⁵

The Beginning of Kindergarten Teacher Training Schools and Professional Associations

After establishing a small private kindergarten teacher training school in Los Angeles in December 1876, Miss Emma Marwedel moved to Oakland, the seat of the University of California. There, she organized the California Kindergarten Union in Berkeley on November 8, 1879, from which the California Froebel Society was organized on November 17, 1883.³⁶

In the midst of her own kindergarten work in San Francisco, Kate Douglas Wiggin also established a teacher training school in the latter part of 1879.³⁷ The following summer, she spent three months in the East, working with Susan Blow and Elizabeth Peabody, and consulting with other pioneer kindergartners (teachers).³⁸ Upon her return, she established the California Kindergarten Training School in the fall of 1880. In the first decade of operation, the training school graduated 238 kindergarten teachers, who staffed the new kindergartens along the Pacific coast.³⁹

In 1891, Mrs. Sarah B. Cooper established a training school for teachers under the auspices of the Golden Gate Kindergarten Association. It was a two-year kindergarten teacher-training program from which the graduates received a diploma.⁴⁰ Following Mrs. Cooper's death in 1896, Anna M. Stovall took over as principal of the Golden Gate Kindergarten Association's training school until her death in 1925, at which time the training school was discontinued.⁴¹

In 1892, the International Kindergarten Union was organized, and Mrs. Sarah Cooper was named President in recognition of her long dedication to the kindergarten cause. The purpose of this organization was multifold: 1) To gather and disseminate knowledge of the kindergarten movement; 2) To bring kindergarten interests into active cooperation; 3) To promote the establishment of kindergartens; and 4) To elevate the standards of the professional training of kindergartners (teachers).⁴²

In 1896, a department to train kindergarten teachers was established in the State Normal School at Los Angeles (which later became the University of California at Los Angeles).⁴³

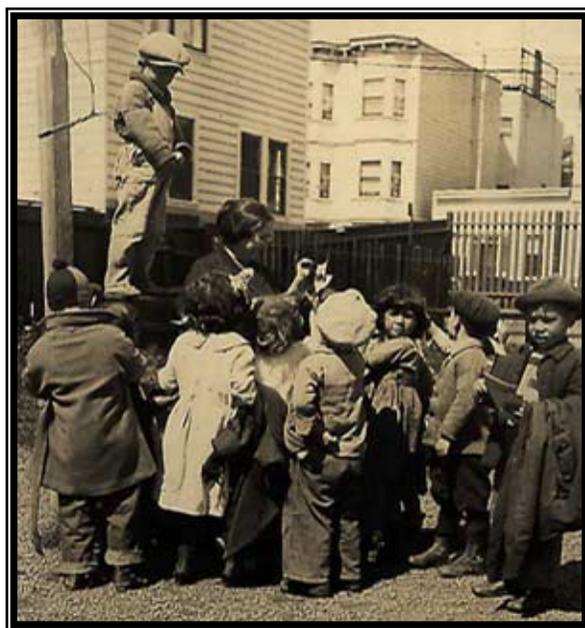
During the 1900-01 legislative session, California enacted a law regarding teacher certification. The law provided a kindergarten primary certificate to: 1) holders of diplomas of graduation from the Kindergarten Department of the California State Normal Schools, and 2) the holders of diplomas of graduation from kindergarten institutions approved by the State Board of Education.⁴⁴ Following this legislative action, on June 8, 1903, the State Board of Education adopted the following policy:

Graduates of accredited Kindergarten-Training Schools may be granted the kindergarten-primary certificates by County or City and County Boards of

Education; provided, such graduates furnish said boards with (a) evidence of twenty-seven months' experience in well-equipped kindergartens; (b) a recommendation from the school from which they received their diploma of graduation dated not more than six months prior to the date of application for such certificate.⁴⁵

In 1920, the Normal Schools in California offered a unified training of teachers for kindergarten and primary schools. Teachers trained in these programs received certificates for teaching in the kindergarten or the primary grades. This unification of training furthered the agenda of the leaders of the kindergarten movement by solidifying their position in the public schools.⁴⁶

The California Kindergarten-Primary Association was organized in November 1923. Its main intent was to coordinate the field of kindergarten-primary education throughout the State, to seek legislation that would enhance kindergarten-primary conditions, and to promote the best type of teacher training programs for kindergarten-primary education.⁴⁷



Peoples Place, a Kindergarten Teacher Training site in North Beach, San Francisco in April 1926⁴⁸

In April 1930, after nearly 40 years of existence, the International Kindergarten Union voted to change its name to the Association for Childhood Education. Agnes Snyder described the mixed feelings among the participants of the International Kindergarten Union's decision to merge with the Association for Childhood Education:

The idea was not new. It had long been in the minds of members of IKU. Alice Temple, Patty Smith Hill and Lucy Gage, engrossed entirely in the kindergarten at the beginning of their careers, soon realized that its basic principles were equally applicable in the primary school. It was all wrong to have children on entering the first grade subjected to procedures that violated the kindergarten principles.

Ella Victoria Dobbs, at no time a kindergartner but interested primarily in the grades, was equally convinced that the principles governing growth and learning were essentially the same at all stages, and that continuity of the educational process was of prime importance

The report of IKU Conferring Committee . . . gave in detail five reasons for the merger. In summary these were:

1. The psychological needs of the child from two to eight can best be met by a unified education approach.
2. Teacher training is moving into a unified kindergarten program.
3. The enlarged organization would be more influential in the spread of progressive educational practices.
4. The enlarged organization would bring more financial support.
5. The organization has already gone beyond the kindergarten in its scope.

. . . There had been, however, among the early Froebelians those who looked with considerable doubt at attempts to articulate the kindergarten and the grades. Even Susan Blow, who directed the first public school kindergarten in the United States, insisted on its separateness, fearing that otherwise, instead of influencing the grades, its uniqueness would be lost under the pressures of the entrenched traditional elementary education

That the concepts of unity and continuity had won out over those of concentration and specialization, and the consequent willingness of the Council to give up its identity, is tellingly expressed:

A common interest in children and increasing realization of continuity of growth and education and our willingness to subordinate the purposes and forms of separate organization to these major ends combined to bring about the unification In this fusion full confidence is placed in our membership to sustain and promote the ideals which have guided us and to develop to the full out potential strength.⁴⁹

The following year, in 1931, the National Council of Primary Education voted at its annual meeting to merge with the Association for Childhood Education. In this way the professional organizations reinforced the importance of the unity between kindergarten and the primary grades.

More than half a century had passed when California educators working with and for kindergarten children began considering the establishment of a professional organization focused on the specific needs of kindergarten. Beginning in 1988, organizers made arrangements for this new organization, initially referred to as the California Kindergarten Connection. On December 29, 1988, the organization changed its name to the California Kindergarten Association⁵⁰ and established its legal status.⁵¹ This

association includes among its members public and private schools, researchers, and parents, in addition to teachers in kindergarten classrooms.

On February 26, 2001, the National Kindergarten Alliance was officially formed. This national organization, in part, was established to provide more focus on issues related to kindergarten in the spectrum of early childhood development and education. This is reflected in the NKA's stated goals and purposes, and priorities.⁵²

The Beginning of Publicly Supported Kindergartens in California

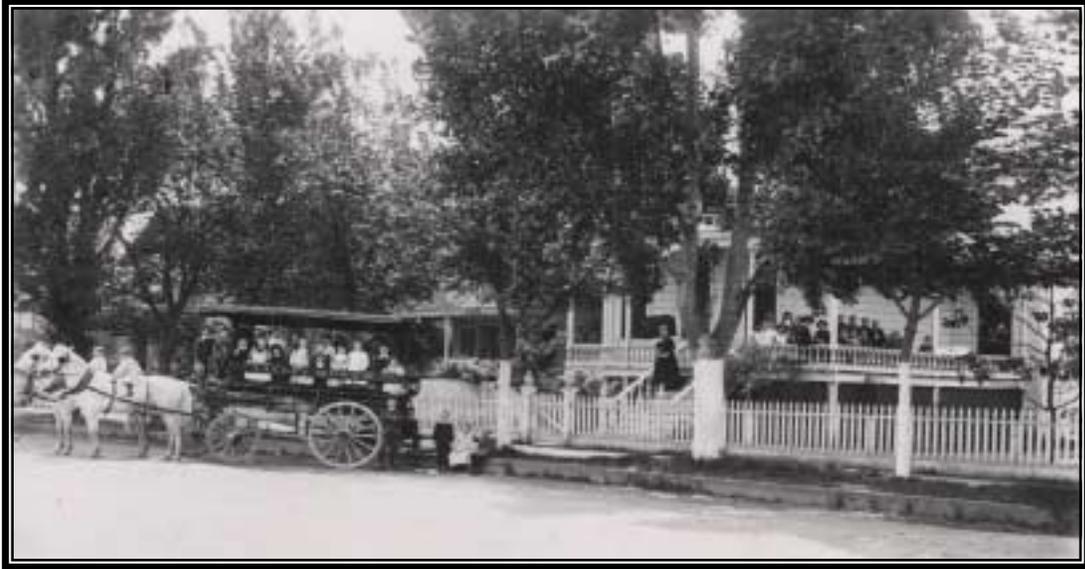
For the last years of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century, various organizations (including churches, settlement houses, factories, and trade unions) sponsored kindergartens in California as well as in the rest of the country. Increased numbers of private kindergartens were also established.⁵³ Largely as a result of their dependence on collection of tuition, many of these early pioneer efforts neither endured for many years nor were widely available. The few shining successes, however, sparked public interest to provide for kindergarten using public funds.

As early as 1875, the President of the San Francisco's Board of Education, Andrew McF. Davis, discussed his views about kindergarten as part of a larger address on the status of that city's schools:

Experience has established, and the law has defined, the proper minimum age for beginning our regular studies in the public schools to be six years, and we all know that practically this is young enough according to our present methods.

But modern German thought has developed a system of amusing children which at the same time prepares their minds for future training, and enables parents to avail themselves of the system while their children are still very young.

If it were possible to erect a few buildings around the city, in those portions where the very young abound so thickly, and gather in the little children between the ages of three and six years, for five or six hours daily, during which time they should be amused and interested; thus removing them from the dangers and temptations of the streets; comforting their mothers with the knowledge of their safety; teaching them little or nothing except methods of thought; I say, if one, two or three such schools could be tried, something could be done for the boy of twelve or fifteen years hence. From the Kindergarten these boys would enter the Primary School upon par with the boys with whom I have heretofore placed them in contrast; with habits of obedience and methods of thought already acquired. Truancy, that terror of Principals, would be reduced, for school by this system is a synonym for pleasure. The little fellows look forward with delight to the hours to be spent there, and leave for home with regret. The wild charms of a nomadic life, the comforts of nights in a dry-goods box or a sugar hogshead—all these can and would be dispelled by continuous kindly effort. The hold that this wild, irresponsible sort of life has upon the unkempt natures of these little fellows is almost incomprehensible, and the necessity for capturing them while young—very young—and molding them to conform more nearly to some recognized social type, is evident to the reflective mind. Further, our knowledge of our pupils and their ways of life would begin earlier, and we should know better what it was essential to do to aid them in the rugged pathways of life.⁵⁴



*Van Tillow (Madame's) School Kindergarten near San Francisco circa 1898.
Photograph courtesy of the California State Library.*

By 1895, the combined efforts of the Silver Street and the Golden Gate Associations had become the largest privately funded kindergarten system in the country. However, several factors prompted a shift in thinking. The economic downturn in 1893 caused a waning in philanthropic contributions to the charity kindergartens, and prompted a more serious consideration of the public schools as a possible alternative for continued growth. Furthermore, the death of Mrs. Sarah Cooper in 1896 left the charity kindergarten movement in San Francisco without a passionate leader.⁵⁵

Meanwhile, the expansion of the kindergarten movement and transition from privately funded to public schools had occurred in other states, including Vermont, Indiana, and Connecticut during the decade between 1880 and 1890.⁵⁶ Other American cities had adopted kindergartens as part of their public school systems, including St. Louis, Missouri, in 1873, and Boston in 1887.⁵⁷

The earliest experiment to join kindergarten with the public school system in California was at the Jackson Street Kindergarten in San Francisco in 1880. A Committee was appointed to investigate the feasibility of integrating kindergartens in the public schools. The Committee reported in favor of adopting a second kindergarten as an experimental class. These two efforts continued for six years, after which time the kindergarten methods were integrated into the San Francisco public school system.⁵⁸

Another effort occurred in San Jose, where the school authorities appropriated \$1,000 to thoroughly test a kindergarten system in 1884 - 1885.⁵⁹ The first Woman's Christian Temperance Union kindergarten was established in San Jose, which became a public school kindergarten in 1886. Twelve years later, San Jose had seven public school kindergartens.⁶⁰

In December 1888, Mrs. Sarah Cooper, of the Golden Gate Kindergarten Association, presented a paper at the annual meeting of the California Teacher's Association entitled "The Kindergarten in the Public School." Her presentation left a lasting impression on the attendees. As a result, the Association passed a resolution declaring, "the sense of the Association that the best interests of the schools of California demand that kindergarten instruction be made part of the common school course, and to that end we recommend that children be admitted to the schools at the age of five years."⁶¹

The following month, in January 1889, State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Ira G. Hoitt, stated in a report, "After careful observation of the private kindergartens in San Francisco, of those connected with some of our orphan asylums, and with a few of the public schools, I am fully convinced that the kindergarten should be firmly established, and be made an integral part of the public school system of the State, especially in the cities and towns."⁶² Superintendent Hoitt then submitted the recommendation to the Governor and the Legislature for their consideration.

In contrast to those in San Francisco, the charity kindergartens in Los Angeles and Santa Barbara were less successful in obtaining donations from their prominent residents. On January 23, 1895, Mrs. Caroline B. Severence wrote from Los Angeles to Mrs. Sarah Cooper in San Francisco lamenting the paucity of such endowments.⁶³ One reason cited for the lack of dedication to the social reform ethos was the demographic differences of immigrants settling in the State. The south attracted middle class families from the Midwest and Northeast and fewer foreigners with working class backgrounds.⁶⁴ Charity kindergartens in the south were established after those in San Francisco, but early on their kindergarten leaders envisioned an expansion to the public school system as a way to broaden early childhood education experiences for more children.⁶⁵



*Froebel Institute (Casa de Rosas) in Los Angeles circa 1893.
Photograph courtesy of the California State Library.*

In 1890, the Los Angeles school board preempted state action by sponsoring an amendment to the city's charter to authorize the establishment and maintenance of kindergarten schools. The same year, the board took over three private charity kindergartens that had been created in the previous five years by the Los Angeles Association, and it established five new kindergartens in existing primary schools.⁶⁶ In 1891, a position for "Principal of Kindertartens" was created along with a separate kindergarten department. By 1892, there were 17 public kindertartens, and by 1900, every district in Los Angeles had a kindergarten class of at least 30 pupils.⁶⁷

In 1896 the Santa Barbara Association solicited support from the local school board in successfully securing a special district election in which the electorate approved an additional property tax to support kindergarten offering through the public schools. As a result of this stable revenue source, four public kindergarten classes opened in 1898 and the local board appointed a Supervisor of Kindertartens.⁶⁸

California's First Law Regarding Kindergarten

In 1891, the State of California enacted its first law regarding kindergarten. Political Code §1617 allowed children's admission to school *at the age of four* in cities and towns in which kindergarten had been adopted as part of the public primary schools.⁶⁹ To the extent that younger children were not allowed to attend the public schools until the age of six, private and charity kindergartens continued.⁷⁰ It is interesting to note that political consensus existed more than one hundred years ago to allow children as young as four to attend public kindergarten, which is comparable to current preschool experiences.



*"Babies' Room on First Floor, Hearst Kindergarten"
San Francisco, 1900*

As this law gradually was enacted by public school systems across the state, it modified the original intent of California's kindergartens. Children could be enrolled in public kindergarten for more than one year, until they enrolled in a primary grade, and the minimal age for public kindergarten was now set at four. This policy excluded the youngest children (two- and three-year olds) from exposure to kindergarten experiences, as they had been allowed under the private and charity kindergartens. Not surprisingly, other institutions were created or expanded to fill the needs of the younger children, including day nurseries (now known as child care homes or centers) and nursery schools (now known as pre-schools).

As kindergartens became part of elementary schools at the turn of the century, they increasingly served as a transition for children from living at home to going to elementary school. In this way, kindergartens provided the necessary "socialization" for adjusting young children gradually to the academic rigors of the primary grades. Nonetheless, kindergarten in these early days was still philosophically distinct from the primary grades. It stressed a child-centered approach to learning using manipulative activities, rather than formal structured lessons and recitations.⁷¹ Classes focussed on music, art, and nature study, as opposed to academic teaching of the "Three Rs."⁷²



“Clay Modeling Room – First Floor
Hearst Kindergarten”
San Francisco, 1900

“Kindergarten Children
at Work”
San Francisco, 1900



Advocates for kindergarten soon found out that they needed to argue for the educational value and methodological merits of the Froebelian philosophy as they sought access to public funds. Their strategy was to emphasize the advantages of an early acquisition of skills and learning, rather than social reform objectives (i.e., crime prevention and saving of children’s lives from abuse or neglect).⁷³ It took many years to convince local school boards that their investment in kindergarten classes was worthwhile, because of the relatively costly small pupil-to-teacher ratios, the half-day classes, and the use of expensive specialized materials.⁷⁴

To this point, Mrs. Sarah B. Cooper argued, in 1895, that the kindergarten was more cost-effective than public schools:

The question is often asked: “What is the relative cost of the Kindergarten and the Primary School?” A careful perusal of our Treasurer’s Report, with due reference to our enrollment, will answer the question . . . Every dollar donated goes directly to the work, and is made to go *just as far as possible*. For \$1,000 the Board pledges itself to sustain a Kindergarten, with an enrollment of sixty children, for one year, and keep them under the most careful training. This is less than the *per capita* of the public schools, and in addition we have our rents to pay. The kind and generous supporters of our Kindergartens can thus see for themselves the care and painstaking that are used to make every dollar do its utmost for the needy little children, for whose benefit it is bestowed. The Public Schools cannot show a financial record like this, and we should pay our Public School Teachers

liberally. Our funds are contributed by benevolence and must be used with great economy.⁷⁵

Issues related to curriculum modification received much attention in Santa Barbara. Superintendent Frederick Burk organized a Kindergarten Seminary, which included members of the Kindergarten Association, school officials, and kindergarten and primary teachers. The primary purpose of this group was to examine and discuss recent theories resulting from the child-study movement and explore ways of incorporating new methods in both kindergarten and the primary grades.⁷⁶ This effort resulted in the publishing of a book, which stated that the “modern kindergarten had outgrown many of the encrusted interpretations of Froebel’s thought,”⁷⁷ and suggested changes, considered radical in that day, in the traditional kindergarten.⁷⁸

By 1901, there were public school kindergartens in Los Angeles, Pasadena, Pomona, San Diego, and San Jose.⁷⁹

Following the fire that resulted from the 1906 earthquake in San Francisco, all but four of that city’s kindergartens and their records were destroyed. Makeshift accommodations were created in Golden Gate Park, as seen in the photo below.



*“Camp Kindergarten –
Golden Gate Park”
June 4 to November 16, 1906*

Numerous developments around the world at the turn of the century also influenced America’s kindergartens. They include Maria Montessori’s research and work for poor and mentally retarded children in Italy,⁸⁰ and Sigmund Freud’s theories of psychoanalysis as applied by the British educator Susan Isaacs. American influences in reforming kindergartens included John Dewey’s philosophy of education,⁸¹ Stanley Hall’s developmental psychology theory,⁸² Edward Lee Thorndike’s theory of learning,⁸³ and most importantly Patty Smith Hill’s contributions “modernizing” Froebel’s initial conceptions of kindergarten. Hill substituted selected arts and crafts, used building blocks and dramatic play areas, and included American songs and games in her curriculum. This progressive kindergarten was child-focused, and its activities helped children build their reasoning capacity to higher levels. Hill also advocated the

combination of kindergarten and first grade in order to *lessen* the academic emphasis of first grade, *not* to increase the academic focus of kindergarten.⁸⁴

Gradually, the kindergarten curriculum was modified. As the child study movement and the progressive education movement gained popularity after the turn of the century, kindergarten classes abandoned the “occupations” whose aim was the development of manual skills through tedious and minute handiwork.⁸⁵ Instead it included more outdoor activities, and a greater emphasis on group work. Scientific approaches also increased in popularity, and the increased emphasis on the study of young children revealed that kindergarten and first grade children were very closely related in the span of development. As a result it did not make sense to draw so many distinctions between them. This was also reinforced by the mental testing movement, which proved a great overlapping between kindergarten and first grade children. These discoveries led to a more open approach in questioning teaching methods: why should reading be forbidden in the one and forced on the other?⁸⁶



*“The Florence Frank Hall, Pop and Emily P. Walker Memorial Free Kindergarten”
San Francisco, 1908*



*“Celebration of Washington’s Birthday”
Mission Park Kindergarten, San Francisco, 1910*

Out of the distinctions between kindergarten and primary teachers, the curriculum was coordinated and in some cases “connecting classes” established. The kindergarten

movements in Los Angeles and Santa Barbara were pioneers in this integration of curriculum. There was a willingness of the part of the kindergartners to modify the Froebelian practices that seemed outmoded, and by the primary grade educators to incorporate kindergarten principles.⁸⁷ These efforts for curriculum integration provided the foundation for expanding kindergartens statewide.



“Outdoor Work” Miranda Lux Kindergarten, San Francisco, 1910

Isle Forest compared the old and “new” kindergarten in 1935:

The Froebelian kindergarten was developed through the blind faith of a group of individuals in one philosophy, consistent but rather fantastic. The new kindergarten evolved with respect to the demands of modern educational psychology. The older kindergarten was a highly specialized activity with no relation, either theoretical or practical, to the work of the primary grades. The new kindergarten is an integral part of a modern primary school, closely related in all its work to the activities of the primary grades. The early kindergartners were conscious of belonging to a special clique; the modern kindergartner is a member of a school staff, with a particular piece of work to do. Where children once sat at squared-surfaced tables and followed the minute directions of a teacher, they now move about freely from sand table to workbench and from block-building to a vigorous turn on the swing. Where once they played elaborate ring games, they now move rhythmically and freely to the accompaniment of good music. Instead of spending a year at work and play unrelated to either their own spontaneous interests or the work of the primary grades, they now have the experience of a preprimary year of wholesome group play leading directly into the work of the first grade. But the activities in the new kindergarten exact more of the teacher rather than less in comparison with the demands of the old.⁸⁸

The Beginning of State Funding for Public Kindergartens

In 1895, the California Supreme Court ruled, on the basis of an 1893 law, that city boards of education were authorized to establish kindergartens as part of a system of primary education and to use common school funds for that purpose.⁸⁹ The same decision held that teachers who had obtained a certificate for teaching kindergarten were not required to also obtain a primary credential.⁹⁰ As a result of this ruling, kindergarten classrooms became legally recognized as an integral part of the common school system. In 1905, the California Supreme Court reversed its previous ruling and opined that kindergartens could *not* be considered part of the common school system for the purpose of providing State funding. However, the court allowed cities to support kindergartens as part of local primary schools, with the condition that sources of funding other than the State were used.⁹¹

The 1909 School Law specified a two-year limit on kindergarten attendance, and established the age of admission:

. . . [public schools] may allot not more than two years for kindergarten instruction . . . where kindergarten instruction is given in the schools of a district, such school shall admit children to the kindergarten classes at four years of age; and the reports for the kindergarten classes shall be kept and shall be made separate from other school reports . . .⁹²

In 1911, at the height of the woman suffrage movement, the California Congress of Mothers initiated a successful campaign to establish and maintain kindergarten as part of the public school system when supported by petition and a local tax. This law was enacted in 1913.⁹³ It permitted the establishment of a kindergarten class through a petition of parents or guardians of 25 or more children residing within one mile of an elementary school building, and provided that the school district could ensure and account for at least ten children in average daily attendance. In 1915, the State amended the law by permitting school districts to levy a district tax to support the establishment and maintenance of kindergartens. Between 1914 and 1918, 45 California cities and towns embraced these laws. By 1918, California was ranked ninth nationwide in the number of children aged four to six enrolled in public kindergartens.⁹⁴

In 1913, amendments to §1617 of the Political Code also raised the minimum age for children entering kindergarten to four and a half years.⁹⁵ In this same year, the school board in San Francisco took over full responsibility for maintaining that city's kindergarten classes.⁹⁶



“In the Garden” San Francisco Kindergarten, circa 1915

On November 2, 1920, a constitutional amendment was enacted, known as Proposition 16. It redefined the state school system by including kindergarten schools as *eligible for State funding*.⁹⁷ This constitutional amendment provided a substantial impetus to the kindergarten movement in California’s public schools. Increasingly, kindergartens became part of the public education mainstream.

At the April 1928 annual California Teachers Association (CTA) meeting in Oakland, it was proposed that the maximum kindergarten local tax be increased from 15 to 20 cents per \$100 valuation of the district, and that the law requiring kindergarten pupils to live within a “one mile distance” be repealed.⁹⁸ However, it was not until 1939 that the one-mile restriction for forming kindergartens was eliminated by law.⁹⁹

In 1930, the State Superintendent of Public Instruction Vierling Kersey stated:

Legislation, and if necessary, constitutional amendment, should be enacted, creating the kindergarten as part of the public elementary school, and providing for State and county support of the kindergarten on the same basis as that governing such support for elementary schools.¹⁰⁰

Similar recommendations were made at the Board of Directors meeting of the CTA in September 1930. CTA Director Eugenia West Jones discussed the goal of making kindergarten a regular part of the school system, and requested a study and legislation in order to realize these plans.¹⁰¹ A year later, the Commission for the Study of the Educational Problems recommended the incorporation of kindergarten classes in elementary schools, thereby securing state and county funding support as a way of extending kindergarten beyond cities in California. The Commission stated:

Strong representations have been made to the commission that the kindergarten is still largely confined to populous districts; that a State contribution, because of constitutional provisions, inevitably involves an equal county tax, and that a county tax would impose part of the cost of support upon taxpayers in many small rural districts, which, for lack of children of kindergarten age, or because of great distances between their homes and the school, cannot open kindergarten classes, which are urban projects.¹⁰²

Even though there was public support for kindergartens, the economic depression of the 1930s impeded further action. In 1933, a “Kindergarten Bill” proposed raising the entrance age into kindergarten to age five. This became a controversial bill when Governor James Rolf vetoed the measure after its passage through both houses of the Legislature. In his veto message, he stated:

. . . The opponents of the bill contend that the measure, if signed by me, will affect adversely the entire educational system of California.

I am convinced that the training and environment of the kindergarten has become an important factor in primary education, and primary education is recognized to be the most essential element of an educational system. As stated by one educator, “the kindergarten is more important than the university.” It is in the kindergarten that the children are of the age when they are most impressionable, and receive their first directed training in social values, language, habits and character.

Parents and educators alike agree that an age of four and one-half years is a desirable age at which children should begin to receive the benefits a kindergarten offers, for it is upon the training received at this age that their future development in a large part depends.

A further objection to this bill, and one of major importance in consideration of the measure, is the fact that if the bill is signed, its ultimate effect, particularly in smaller communities will be to abolish the kindergarten entirely; depleted attendance will reduce the average daily attendance below ten, so that the kindergarten, under existing provisions of the law, will have to be discontinued. Thus, in some communities, all children would be deprived of kindergarten advantages, even though some of the children in the community met the requirements of the bill before me. . . .

The Legislature subsequently overrode the Governor’s veto. The Sacramento Bee described the action as providing savings of between \$1 million and \$1.5 million per year, which was a significant sum during the Depression.

Nearly a decade passed before kindergarten issues were considered again. By that time, many women were working outside the home during World War II. To respond to these working women’s need for child care, the federal government enacted the Lanham Act,¹⁰³

and kindergarten increased in popularity. In 1941, the kindergarten entrance age law was modified to distinguish the entrance age for school districts that maintained either one or two school terms.¹⁰⁴ This law was later changed, in 1945, to establish a uniform procedure for admitting children into kindergarten for one and two term districts at the age of four years and six months.

Finally, in November 1946, the voters of California approved a constitutional amendment that provided state aid for kindergartens as part of the elementary school system.¹⁰⁵

In 1951, the Education Code was amended to raise the entrance age for children entering kindergarten. With this amendment, children had to be four years and nine months old by September 1 in order to be admitted in a public kindergarten classroom. The law also specified that existing provisions under Education Code §8406, requiring a minimum of ten pupils for kindergarten attendance credit to be combined with the first grade or to be closed, did not apply. The law further provided local governing boards discretion to maintain a separate kindergarten. State Superintendent of Public Instruction Roy E. Simpson recommended a disapprove position to the Governor.¹⁰⁶ The California Teachers Association, among other educational organizations, had supported this policy change and asserted that younger children did not develop a readiness to begin reading until a later age and were consequently unprepared to begin the learning process. The Association had argued to Governor Warren that the responsibility for handling younger children tended to be custodial as opposed to educational.¹⁰⁷ Another argument in support of this measure was that by raising the entrance age, the number of students entering kindergarten would be reduced. This would allow districts and schools to “get caught up on the building program” for new schools in response to the increased enrollments resulting from the children born following the Second World War.¹⁰⁸ A final argument for the measure was made by the Legislative Secretary of the Governor’s staff suggesting that existing law provided that a child who had completed one year in kindergarten was eligible for admission to first grade, regardless of age, and would therefore prevent any hardship to individual cases.¹⁰⁹

It was not until 1967 that the Legislature made it mandatory for districts maintaining elementary schools to incorporate kindergarten programs for all eligible children who presented themselves for enrollment.¹¹⁰ The Legislature also granted additional attendance credit for state support of kindergarten enrollments.¹¹¹

In 1969, Governor Reagan signed a law that permitted children who were four years and nine months of age on or before September 1 to be admitted to a prekindergarten summer program that was maintained by school districts for children enrolling into kindergarten in September.¹¹²

In 1974, Governor Reagan signed a law that authorized governing boards of school districts maintaining one or more kindergartens to admit to kindergarten a five-year old child at any time during the school year with the approval of a parent or guardian. This law also required that school boards provide information to a parent or guardian of the advantages and disadvantages and any other explanatory information regarding the

effects of early admittance. This law was in response to the restrictive nature of the preceding law, which did not permit children to be admitted to kindergarten if their birthdates were after the cutoff date (four years and nine months by September 1).¹¹³

In 1987, the Legislature modified the entrance age policy to allow children to enter kindergarten as long as they had attained their fifth birthday on or before December 2. This amendment specified the date by which children had to be five years of age in order to attend kindergarten.

A Management Advisory was sent to school districts from the California Department of Education following an 1989 law, which clarified and provided uniformity among school districts for allowing admission into kindergarten based on a child's age during the first month of the school term.¹¹⁴

Current Issues Facing California's Public Kindergartens

Schools increasingly came under pressure to improve their academic curricula, particularly after the Soviet launching of Sputnik in 1957 during the Cold War. In addition, domestic concerns such as the civil rights movement, the war on poverty, and a heightened awareness of widespread illiteracy had implications for schools. Kindergartens were increasingly viewed as a means of assisting children to get an early start on their education by introducing academic concepts earlier.

Since the 1960s, researchers have noted that kindergarten education has increasingly focused on the development of academic skills and less on socialization of children. The contemporary literature has identified a variety of factors that have contributed to this trend, including:¹¹⁵

1. Higher child participation rates in preschool programs and child care homes and centers. According to the October 1999 Current Population Survey, 47 percent of three- and four-year olds in California attend either a public or private preschool program. This is in large part due to the increased proportion of mothers who have worked outside of their homes in the past 40 years.
2. Exposure to educational television programs initiated with *Sesame Street*.
3. Exposure to and use of computers, including instructional software available for young children.¹¹⁶
4. A common practice of keeping younger children out of kindergarten for an additional year (known as "redshirting").
5. Increased attention on accountability measures, including academic content and performance standards and assessments for public schools.
6. A shift from a manufacturing base to a service oriented economy that has increased the need for "knowledge workers" with strong literacy skills. This, in part, has prompted attention of kindergarten educators to focus on developing emergent literacy skills in kindergarten.¹¹⁷
7. Recent discoveries emanating from brain research, which have given early childhood educators a better understanding of brain development and young children's abilities to learn at earlier ages.¹¹⁸

In connection with the developments in brain research, many theories of cognitive development and learning have been proposed in the past century. James P. Byrnes' review of the literature focused on five theories of learning that have shaped contemporary research since the 1960s.¹¹⁹ His review included theories by Thorndike, Piaget, Schema Theorists, Information Processing Theorists, and Vygotsky. While the theories differ from one another, Byrnes found three areas of commonality among them, including the emphasis on 1) the role of practice and repetition, 2) the fact that knowledge is based on meaningful relationships, and 3) the constructive nature of

learning (that is, as children interpret reality and instruction they learn as opposed to just internalizing it).¹²⁰

In spite of a better understanding of children's cognitive learning and development from theory, many early childhood education programs, particularly in kindergarten and the primary elementary grades, have emphasized rote learning and whole-group instruction with focus on the development of academic skills.¹²¹



Ladybugs in the Spring

This trend caused concern among early childhood professionals that began advocating for a more balanced program including active learning approaches that incorporate young children's educational abilities and needs. The heightened concern among early childhood professionals prompted the National Association for the Education for Young Children (NAEYC) to develop a position statement for guiding developmentally appropriate practices (DAP) for early childhood educators. DAP are

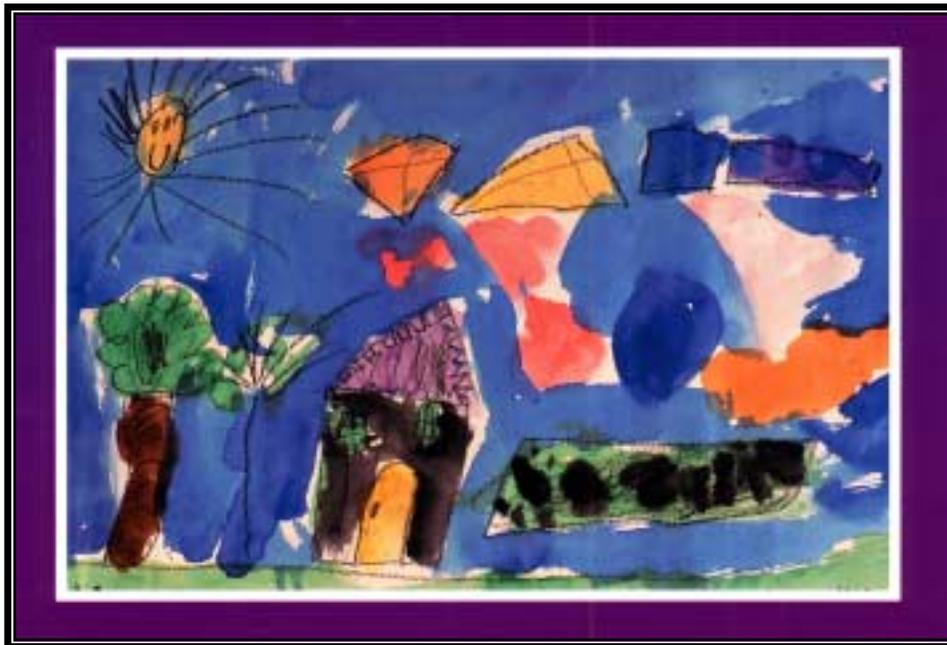
evolving conceptions as educators and researchers learn more about how young children grow, develop and learn with respect to their whole being (that is, socially, emotionally, physically, intellectually, and academically).¹²²

In addition, some early childhood researchers have raised concerns regarding testing, placement, and retention practices in kindergarten. For example, researchers suggest that the practice of testing (using school readiness and/or developmental screening tests) for children prior to entering or while in kindergarten may be inappropriate.¹²³ As testing practices have increasingly reflected the academic aims of kindergarten, in some cases these practices have resulted in identifying children as "not ready," and in turn retaining them in grade or placing them into transitional kindergarten classes. These testing practices may also affect parental decisions to hold children out of kindergarten ("redshirting") for an additional year until parents perceive that their child will "do well" in the academic setting as characterized by kindergarten today. The result of these practices is a widening of the age span of children served in the kindergarten classroom. This age range makes it more difficult for kindergarten teachers to respond to the different intellectual and social needs and expectations of older and younger children and their parents.¹²⁴

While the literature identifies and raises concerns regarding these practices (that is, the use of testing, retention practices, the use of transitional kindergarten classes, and the extent to which children are “redshirted”), California does not collect any statewide data with respect to these practices.¹²⁵ Specifically, it is not clear:

1. Whether these issues are problematic for California as a whole or for certain communities; and
2. The pervasiveness of these practices in kindergarten classrooms in California.

Therefore, the state is limited in developing appropriate policy options with respect to these issues.



A Sunny Day

The emphasis on academic goals in kindergarten has been reinforced by California’s response to the nationwide standards reform movement as established by the federal Goals 2000 law.¹²⁶ Recently, the State Board of Education adopted content standards for kindergarten even though kindergarten attendance is not mandatory.¹²⁷ (Refer to Appendix 1 for a copy of the academic content standards.) Some kindergarten experts have raised concerns regarding the appropriateness of some of the content standards. For example, under the “Writing Strategies” for English-Language Arts Content Standards, kindergarten “students write words and brief sentences that are legible.” Achieving some of the content standards may not be realistic given that preschool attendance is not universal in this state yet and that more than one-third of today’s kindergarten children are English language learners.¹²⁸ Is it possible that California has set the standards so high that children can fail to pass kindergarten?

The State Board adopted content standards for kindergarten because there is nearly universal attendance in kindergarten. Estimates range from 91 to 95 percent of all

children aged five attend a public or private kindergarten in California.¹²⁹ This is an increase from the 85 percent of five-year olds estimated to attend kindergarten about 30 years ago.¹³⁰

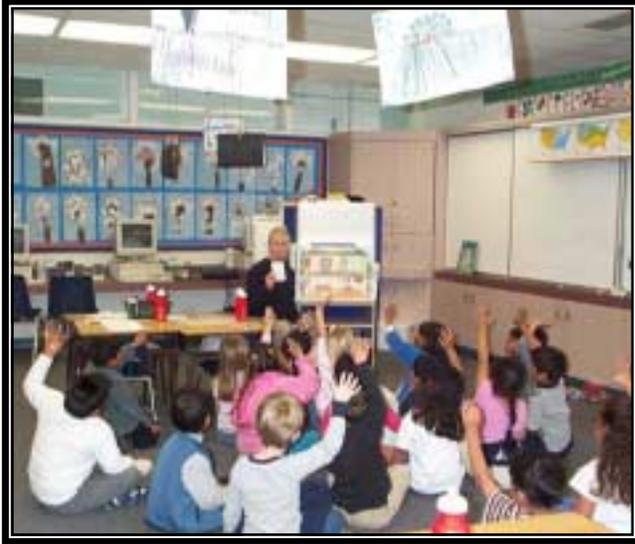
California has only five schools offering teacher preparation that result in a Multiple Subject credential and an emphasis in early childhood education for teaching children in kindergarten and the primary grades.¹³¹ Although prospective elementary teachers may take courses in early childhood growth and development, they are not required to in order to obtain a Multiple Subject credential.¹³² This may result in having many teachers in kindergarten classrooms who do not fully understand the developmental needs of young children. The existence of academic content standards for kindergarten classrooms accentuates the need for kindergarten educators to understand how to work toward achieving the standards in a manner that is appropriate to each young child's development. The California Kindergarten Association (CKA) has published a series of "Strategies" for each of the academic subject areas for which content standards have been adopted as a way to assist kindergarten classroom teachers.¹³³

Furthermore, the ethnic designation of kindergartners is 0.7 percent Native Americans; 7.0 percent Asian; 0.6 percent Pacific Islander; 2.0 percent Filipino; 49 percent Latino; 7.8 percent African American; and 32.2 percent Caucasian.¹³⁴ This demographic profile of kindergarten children further suggests the need to strengthen teaching standards for early childhood educators so that they can effectively serve an increasingly diverse group of young children entering California public schools. The minimum requirements for a preliminary single or multiple subject credential issued by the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing includes a study of alternative methods of developing English language skills, including reading, among pupils, including those for English language learners. However, these requirements are not tailored specifically for young children in kindergarten.¹³⁵

Issues affecting California's kindergarten classrooms today include:

- The extent of participation of kindergarten classes in the class size reduction (CSR) program is not known. This program gave priority to grades one and two for implementation within participating districts, leaving options to districts whether to include either kindergarten or grade three. The California Department of Education does not collect information regarding the involvement of kindergarten classes in the CSR program statewide.
- Teaching schedules may affect kindergarten teachers' abilities to participate in professional development opportunities (that is, they may teach in the morning and then have other assignments or another kindergarten class in the afternoon).
- The proportion of fully credentialed teachers in California's kindergartens is not known. The California Department of Education reports that only 86.1 percent of teachers in public schools are fully credentialed.¹³⁶ A recent study found an average 27 percent of underqualified teachers on staff in schools had more than 90 percent of minority students.¹³⁷ Similarly, the same study found that schools in which more than

three-fourths of the students qualified for a free or reduced lunch had on average 22 percent underqualified teachers on staff.



*Tanya Heilemann Alden
Conducting an English Language Development Lesson
Encinitas, California*

*San Diego Kindergarten Class
Ocean Knoll Elementary
Encinitas Union School District
February 2001*



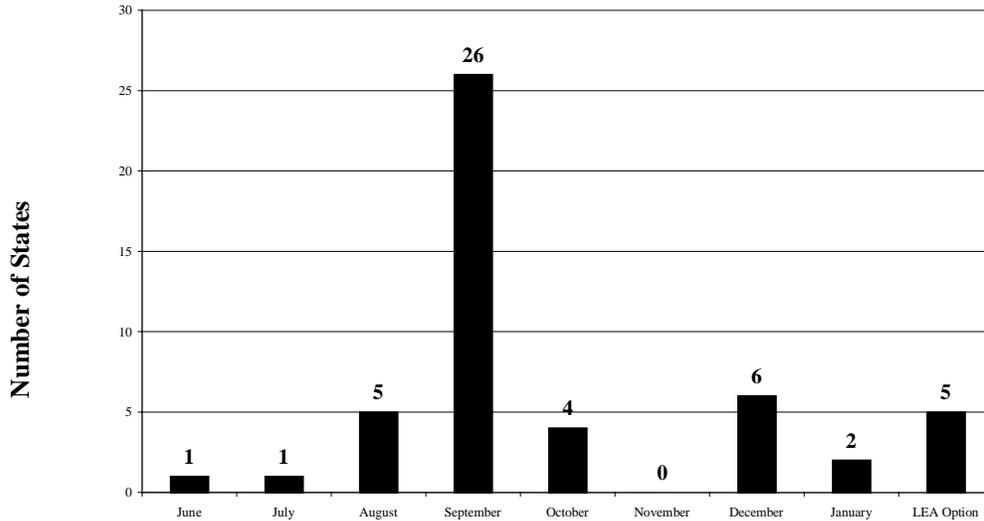
Three additional issues related to kindergarten that have been discussed in California as well as in other states include:

1. *How to determine the appropriate entrance age for kindergarten by establishing a cutoff date.*

In recent years, two legislative proposals have sought statewide changes in California's law that stipulates that children must be five years of age on or by December 2. The two bills were Assembly Bill (AB) 85 by George Runner and AB 25 by Kerry Mazzoni. Governor Davis signed AB 25 into law on September 30, 2000, as a voluntary Kindergarten Readiness Pilot Program.¹³⁸

The chart below shows the cutoff dates within the specified months which reflect states' entrance age policies. Of the 50 states, five leave this as an option for local schools to decide.¹³⁹

States' Entrance Age Policies



Appendix 2 contains the Education Commission of the States' analysis of states' policies on entrance age, mandatory/permissive district offering of kindergarten, and mandatory/permissive pupil attendance in kindergarten.

2. *Whether to mandate children's participation in kindergarten as opposed to allowing voluntary participation.*

In February 2001, AB 634 (Wesson) was introduced as a way to lower California's compulsory full-time education law from six to five years of age, thereby mandating children's participation in a full-day kindergarten program.

According to the Education Commission of the States, of the 36 states that require districts to offer kindergarten, 11 also mandate pupil attendance.¹⁴⁰

3. *Whether kindergarten ought to be offered as a full day or half day program.*

In February 2001, two legislative proposals were introduced in the California Legislature related to this issue, including AB 520 (Koretz) and AB 323 (Pavley). AB 520 would authorize school districts, county offices of education, or charter schools to require a full schoolday program for children in kindergarten as designed for pupils in grade 1. AB 323 would allow the State Board of Education to waive provisions of the Education Code allowing school districts and county offices of education to offer extended-day kindergarten programs that would meet specified criteria.

According to the Council of Chief State School Officers, of the 15 states that currently are required to offer a full day kindergarten, six require pupil attendance. Of the 26 states that currently are required to offer a half day kindergarten program, nine require pupil attendance.¹⁴¹

Refer to Appendix 3 for a copy of the Council of Chief State School Officers' analysis of states' policies regarding full day and half day kindergarten programs.



Elmer the Elephant

Last Thoughts

Given the preceding history and discussion of current issues facing kindergarten classrooms, a more fundamental conversation may be warranted. That is, it is not apparent that there is a consensus of what is the purpose of kindergarten in California.¹⁴² Kindergarten has throughout time reflected the values and needs of society, beginning with its strong religious foundation, the emphasis of manual training, the Americanization of immigrant children, the emphasis of child-centered education, the socialization of children in a classroom setting, the emergent or pre-literacy skills to the development of literacy skills themselves as delineated in adopted content standards. In earlier times, California's society was relatively more homogeneous than what we find today, which facilitated the establishment of a general consensus regarding practices in the kindergarten classroom.

As academic and literacy skills are emphasized for kindergarten classrooms, policymakers respond by proposing to make kindergarten attendance mandatory, proposing to raise the age of entrance into kindergarten, and proposing to mandate a full day program. These policies are proposed in the absence of defining what it means to be ready for kindergarten.¹⁴³ There is an implied assumption that the onus of "readiness" is on prospective kindergarten children as opposed to public schools admitting children at whatever stage of development they may be.

Lilian G. Katz recently wrote a provocative article challenging the thinking among early childhood researchers and educators.¹⁴⁴ She discussed the limitations of the traditional dichotomy between the constructivist and the instructivist teaching methods.¹⁴⁵ Katz suggests that the current polarization in thinking ("either/or") may prevent the necessary focus on developing a child's intellectual goals as distinguished from academic ones. That is, either constructivist and instructivist teaching methods can lead to a "deadening" of intellectual curiosity or not provide the necessary stimuli to cultivate further intellectual development. It is not the academic focus, in itself, that can stifle intellectual growth, but it is the manner in which concepts are presented. Katz offers a "project" approach to learning such that a child's whole being (social, emotional, physical, intellectual and academic) is fully integrated in the learning process. This is the challenge before early childhood educators.



Tissue Shadows

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Notes

¹ Other European beginnings for early childhood education included: Comenius (1592-1671), who founded a School of Infancy and the first illustrated reading book on record; Rousseau (1712-1779), who authored the famous book *Emile*, based on a study of a child to be educated; and Pestalozzi (1746-1827), who founded a school at Yverdon, Switzerland and authored various parenting books. Association for Childhood Education, Kindergarten Centennial Committee, *The Kindergarten Centennial, 1837-1937: A Brief Historical Outline of Early Childhood Education* (Washington, D.C.: the Association, 1937), 3-4.

² California's first kindergarten opened at the residence of Professor Charles Miel and Madame Miel at No. 41 South Park. William Warren Ferrier, *Ninety Years of Education in California: 1846-1936* (Oakland, Calif.: Sather Gate Book Shop, 1937), 163.

³ William Warren Ferrier, *Ninety Years of Education in California: 1846-1936*, 183.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 164.

⁵ R. D. Hunt, *California Firsts*. (San Francisco: Fearon Publishers, 1957), 152.

⁶ William Warren Ferrier, *Ninety Years of Education in California: 1846-1936*, 163.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 164.

⁸ Mrs. Severence, who was known as the mother of women's clubs in America, requested that Miss Marwedel go to Los Angeles and establish a kindergarten. Mrs. Caroline Severence had recently moved to Los Angeles from Boston, where the kindergarten movement was gaining ground under the name of the "New Education" through the efforts of Miss Elizabeth Peabody. Doyce B. Nunis, Jr., "Kate Douglas Wiggin: Pioneer in California Kindergarten Education," *California Historical Society Quarterly* XLI (1962), 295.

⁹ The two other students of the normal class were Mary Hoyt and Nettie Stewart. *Ibid.*, 293.

¹⁰ Professor Felix Alder was a well-known leader of a Free Religious Society in New York and President of the Society for Ethical Culture. He came to San Francisco in the summer of 1878 for the purpose of delivering some lectures. During his short visit to this city, he convinced several prominent gentlemen that a kindergarten movement would benefit the rising generation. The first trustees of the charity kindergarten were mainly German and Jewish ladies and gentlemen, who were "progressive in their ideas, energetic in their labors, and generous in their contributions." Nora Archibald Smith, "Early Days of Kindergarten Movement: 'This I Saw and Knew.'" *The Western Journal of Education*, September 8, 1933, 13.

¹¹ Kate Douglas Wiggin, *My Garden of Memory* (Cambridge: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1923), 112.

¹² *Ibid.*, 116.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 119.

¹⁴ It was at the request of Professor John Swett, Principal of the Girl's High School Seminary, that Mrs. Cooper visited Kate Douglas Wiggin's first free kindergarten. Mrs. Cooper referred to John Swett as the "Educational Father of the Kindergartens" for his large sympathies and genuine philanthropy. Golden Gate Kindergarten Association, *Thirteenth Annual Report of the Golden Gate Kindergarten Association* (San Francisco: George Spaulding & Company, 1892), 133.

¹⁵ Sarah B. Cooper, *Fifth Annual Report of the Golden Gate Kindergarten Association* (San Francisco: George Spaulding and & Company, 1884), 6.

¹⁶ William Warren Ferrier, *Ninety Years of Education in California: 1846-1936*, 171.

¹⁷ Miss Nora Archibald Smith was Kate Douglas Wiggin's sister. Kate Douglas Wiggin recruited her sister as one of her first students in the California Kindergarten Training School in the fall of 1880. Nora never married, and had previously taught in a private school in Magdalena, Senora, México, as well as served as a principal of the girls' department in the Tucson public schools in Arizona. After joining her sister in San Francisco, she assisted her in her daily work, and after receiving her diploma, she headed the first New Silver Street Kindergarten. Doyce B. Nunis, "Kate Douglas Wiggin: Pioneer in California Kindergarten Education," 300.

¹⁸ Mrs. Mary E. Arnold worked as a missionary with the Native Americans for 14 years prior to becoming a Kindergarten in the New Silver Street Kindergarten, No. 2. Nora Archibald Smith, "Early Days of Kindergarten Movement: 'This I Saw and Knew,'" 13; and Kate Douglas Wiggin, *Superintendent's Report of the Work of the New Silver St. Kindergarten Society and a History of the Free Kindergarten Movement* (San Francisco: California Murdock & Company, 1883), 9-11.

¹⁹ Carol Roland, "The California Kindergarten Movement: A Study in Class and Social Feminism" (A Dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, University of California, Riverside, 1980), 63-64.

²⁰ Kate Douglas Wiggin, *Superintendent's Report of the Work of the New Silver St. Kindergarten Society and a History of the Free Kindergarten Movement*, 14-15.

²¹ We note that the program does specify gymnastics on Thursday afternoons even though Mrs. Wiggin indicated the contrary in her outline. *Ibid.*, 20.

²² *Ibid.*, 24-25.

²³ Sarah B. Cooper, "The Kindergarten as a Child-Saving Work," in *the Fifth Annual Report of the Golden Gate Kindergarten Association* (San Francisco: George Spaulding and & Company, 1884), 18-28.

²⁴ Doyce B. Nunis, "Kate Douglas Wiggin: Pioneer in California Kindergarten Education," 300.

²⁵ Frances Cahn and Valeska Bary, *Welfare Activities of Federal, State, and Local Governments in California 1850-1934* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1936), 34.

²⁶ Agnes Synder, *Dauntless Women in Childhood Education: 1856-1931* (Washington, D.C.: Association for Childhood Education International, 1972), 108.

²⁷ Carol Roland, "The California Kindergarten Movement: A Study in Class and Social Feminism," 111.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 114.

²⁹ Bernard Spodek, "Conceptualizing Today's Kindergarten Curriculum," *The Elementary School Journal* 89, no. 2 (1988), 204.

³⁰ Carol Roland, "The California Kindergarten Movement: A Study in Class and Social Feminism," 75.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 75-76.

³² *Ibid.*, 76.

³³ Although we do not have more information, we may infer that Mrs. Wiggin referred to what we consider foster care homes for "homes" and mental health institutions serving children with mental disabilities for "asylums." Kate Douglas Wiggin, *Superintendent's Report of the Work of the New Silver St. Kindergarten Society and a History of the Free Kindergarten Movement*, 30.

³⁴ Carol Roland, "The California Kindergarten Movement: A Study in Class and Social Feminism," 20.

³⁵ Frances Cahn and Valeska Bary, *Welfare Activities of Federal, State, and Local Governments in California 1850-1934*, 33.

³⁶ Miss E[mma] Marwedel, Pres[ident], M[rs.] K[ate] D. Wiggin, Vice [President]. Doyce B. Nunis, “Kate Douglas Wiggin: Pioneer in California Kindergarten Education,” 306.

³⁷ William Warren Ferrier, *Ninety Years of Education in California: 1846-1936*, 172.

³⁸ Susan Blow was known as “Froebel’s greatest American interpreter” since it was through her efforts, in 1873, that kindergartens became part of the public school system in St. Louis Missouri at the time when William Torrey Harris was Superintendent. Later, Dr. Harris became the United States Commissioner of Education, 1889-1907, and became a vocal spokesperson for the kindergarten movement through his writings and lectures. Association for Childhood Education, Kindergarten Centennial Committee, *The Kindergarten Centennial, 1837-1937: A Brief Historical Outline of Early Childhood Education*, 8.

³⁹ Doyce B. Nunis, “Kate Douglas Wiggin: Pioneer in California Kindergarten Education,” 300.

⁴⁰ Golden Gate Kindergarten Association, *Eightieth Annual Report of the Golden Gate Kindergarten Association: 1879-1959* (San Francisco: The San Francisco Examiner, 1959).

⁴¹ Although we do not have more information, we may infer that there were two reasons for discontinuing the kindergarten teacher training through the Association. One reason may be that by 1925 the Normal Schools in California had more firmly established their role in preparing teachers in the State. Second, by 1915 the Golden Gate Kindergarten Association had focused its efforts on nursery education since kindergartens had established their place in public schools. Ibid.

⁴² Association for Childhood Education, *The Kindergarten Centennial, 1837-1937: A Brief Historical Outline of Early Childhood Education*, 11.

⁴³ William Warren Ferrier, *Ninety Years of Education in California: 1846-1936*, 174.

⁴⁴ Golden Gate Kindergarten Association, *Eighteenth to Twenty-fifth Annual Reports of the Golden Gate Kindergarten Association* (San Francisco: George Spaulding & Company, 1898-1904), 54.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 54.

⁴⁶ William Warren Ferrier, *Ninety Years of Education in California: 1846-1936*, 175.

⁴⁷ Roy W. Cloud, *Education in California: Leaders, Organizations, and Accomplishments of the First Hundred Years* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1952), 155.

⁴⁸ “‘How many of the students know,’ said Mrs. Monroe to a staff reporter, ‘that away out in the North Beach district this college has a sort of protégé that it watches over?’ She referred to Peoples Place, possibly known only to those of the Kindergarten Department that have been sent there to do their practice teaching.

“Peoples Place is a old settlement house that was turned over to the state some years back. The state turned it over to the care of the college with the provision that it be used as part of the training school. At the beginning of each section eighteen girls are assigned to practice teaching there.

“In all there are about sixty children enrolled. Most of them come from homes in which parents are foreign born. These children are taught by student teachers from the college. Mrs. Monroe is at the head of the Peoples Place institution. She is aided by Mrs. DeCamp, director of the kindergarten” “Kindergarten Training School Sponsored by San Francisco State Teachers College,” *Vigilante*, April 1926, 3.

⁴⁹ Agnes Synder, *Dauntless Women in Childhood Education: 1856-1931*, 371-374.

⁵⁰ The CKA Mission is:

CKA is directed and committed to facilitating quality education for all kindergarten children through:

- Promoting the value and importance of kindergarten
- Providing and encouraging leadership in kindergarten
- Advancing the professionalism of kindergarten teachers
- Promoting understanding of how children learn and develop
- Assisting in the development and implementation of appropriate environment and curricula to meet the diverse needs of young children in our pluralistic society
- Reviewing trends and issues, and disseminating research in early childhood education
- Promoting communication among teachers, administrators, parents, policy-makers, legislators and other interested in early childhood education
- Fostering public awareness of quality primary education for a diverse student population

To these ends, CKA plans, organizes, implements and evaluates activities and resources related to its mission.

⁵¹ Violet B. Robinson, "Our Roots: The Founding of CKA," *TAKE FIVE: The CKA Newsletter* (Fall 1998), 1 & 10.

⁵² The goals and purposes of NKA are:

- To provide an alliance to encourage and assist the formation and growth of state organizations,
- To identify appropriate kindergarten practices based on comprehensive research in order to effect positive change for kindergarten children throughout the nation,
- To provide support to kindergarten teachers and develop leadership in kindergarten,
- To schedule and facilitate summit meetings across the nation to address major issues facing kindergarten classroom teachers, and
- To collaborate with governing bodies in order to form a unified voice to affect change in kindergarten education.

NKA priorities are:

- Kindergarten curriculum and assessment,
- Optimum class size,
- Uniform entrance age,
- Mandated kindergarten, and
- Advantages of full day kindergarten.

⁵³ Bernard Spodek, Olivia N. Saracho, and Michael D. Davis, *Foundations of Early Childhood Education – Teaching Three-, Four-, and Five-Year Old Children*, Second Edition (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, Inc., 1991), 22.

⁵⁴ John Swett, *History of the Public School System of California* (San Francisco: A. L. Bancroft and Company, 1876), 85-86.

⁵⁵ Mrs. Cyrus Walker became President of the Golden Gate Kindergarten Association following Mrs. Cooper's death. Mrs. Walker served in this capacity for eight years.

⁵⁶ William Warren Ferrier, *Ninety Years of Education in California: 1846-1936*, 173.

⁵⁷ In 1870, Boston established a public school kindergarten that was discontinued after a few years. Association for Childhood Education, Kindergarten Centennial Committee, *The Kindergarten Centennial, 1837-1937: A Brief Historical Outline of Early Childhood Education*, 8.

- ⁵⁸ Golden Gate Kindergarten Association, *Fifth to Tenth Annual Reports of the Golden Gate Kindergarten Association* (San Francisco: George Spaulding & Company, 1889), 70.
- ⁵⁹ William Warren Ferrier, *Ninety Years of Education in California: 1846-1936*, 173.
- ⁶⁰ Agnes Synder, *Dauntless Women in Childhood Education: 1856-1931*, 108-9.
- ⁶¹ William Warren Ferrier, *Ninety Years of Education in California: 1846-1936*, 173-174.
- ⁶² *Ibid.*, 174.
- ⁶³ “No other City has the generous and princely patronage for Free Kindergartens that San Francisco enjoys. I wish we might have your wonderful secret of power in securing the co-operation of wealthy citizens and thus saving the little children under five years of age who by statute are ineligible for our Public Schools. I wish all our cities and towns might learn your secret of multiplying these great agencies for good to the commonwealth.” Golden Gate Kindergarten Association, *Sixteenth Annual Report of the Golden Gate Kindergarten Association* (San Francisco: George Spaulding & Company and Steam Book and Job Printers, 1895), 94.
- ⁶⁴ Carol Roland, “The California Kindergarten Movement: A Study in Class and Social Feminism,” 113.
- ⁶⁵ *Ibid.*
- ⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 114.
- ⁶⁷ *Ibid.*
- ⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 114-115.
- ⁶⁹ Statutes of 1891, Chapter 129, Political Code §1617.
- ⁷⁰ William Warren Ferrier, *Ninety Years of Education in California: 1846-1936*, 174.
- ⁷¹ The terms child-centered or child-focused approaches that became common as a result of the child study movement as conceived by Stanley Hall referred to providing more flexibility and freedom in the kindergarten to explore and learn according to their own interests as distinguished from having a structured curriculum dictated by the kindergarten teacher.
- ⁷² Bernard Spodek, “Conceptualizing Today’s Kindergarten Curriculum,” 204.
- ⁷³ Carol Roland, “The California Kindergarten Movement: A Study in Class and Social Feminism,” 101.
- ⁷⁴ *Ibid.*
- ⁷⁵ Golden Gate Kindergarten Association, *Sixteenth Annual Report of the Golden Gate Kindergarten Association* (San Francisco: George Spaulding & Company and Steam Book and Job Printers, 1895), 167.
- ⁷⁶ Stanley Hall initiated the child study movement and suggested new ideas about educating young children as a result of observing them. He also advocated allowing children to express their emotions and behaviors as a natural occurrence in child development.
- ⁷⁷ Frederick Burk, *A Study of the Kindergarten Problem in the Public Schools of Santa Barbara, California* (San Francisco: Whitaker and Ray Company, 1899), 22, as cited in Golden Gate Kindergarten Association, *Sixteenth Annual Report*, 116.
- ⁷⁸ Carol Roland, “The California Kindergarten Movement: A Study in Class and Social Feminism,” 116.
- ⁷⁹ Agnes Synder, *Dauntless Women in Childhood Education: 1856-1931*, 109.
- ⁸⁰ Dr. Maria Montessori established the Casa di Bambini in Rome in 1907, and reemphasized Froebel’s idea of freedom. That is, she encouraged a freedom of bodily movement and children’s own selection of activities that employed sequential small steps and fostered development

through the five senses. Children's five senses had to be trained in order for children to learn. An important contribution of Montessori's methods was observing individual children in order to determine their readiness for more advanced tasks. Association for Childhood Education, Kindergarten Centennial Committee, *The Kindergarten Centennial, 1837-1937: A Brief Historical Outline of Early Childhood Education*, 5.

⁸¹ John Dewey's writings led to "the social education movement" in America, which emphasized the social development of children and focused on a child's own interests as the focal point of an educational program. He believed that the goal of education was to prepare individuals for life in a democracy, and advocated the theory of "learning by doing." *Ibid.*, 5; and The Secretary of State of Connecticut for the Connecticut State Board of Education, *A Guide to Program Development for Kindergarten* (1988), 5.

⁸² Stanley Hall was a developmental theorist and one of the first American scientific psychologists. He is credited with greatly advancing the study of early child development. *Ibid.*, 5.

⁸³ Edward Lee Thorndike was a learning theorist, who developed the theory of learning through associations. He believed that the goal of an educator is to assist in reducing errors by connecting stimuli to reinforce correct responses. *Ibid.*

⁸⁴ Donna M. Bryant and Richard M. Clifford, "150 Years of Kindergarten: How Far Have We Come?" *Early Childhood Research Quarterly* 7 (1992), 150.

⁸⁵ The progressive education movement emphasized freedom of activity in the classroom and suggested that kindergarten education should reflect a child's everyday life. Bernard Spodek, Olivia N. Saracho, and Michael D. Davis, *Foundations of Early Childhood Education – Teaching Three-, Four-, and Five-Year-Old Children*, Second Edition, 23.

⁸⁶ Isle Forest, *The School for the Child from Two to Eight* (Boston: Ginn and Company, 1935), 13.

⁸⁷ Carol Roland, "The California Kindergarten Movement: A Study in Class and Social Feminism," 115.

⁸⁸ Isle Forest, *The School for the Child from Two to Eight* (Boston: Ginn and Company, 1935), 17.

⁸⁹ *Sinnott v. Colombet*, 107 Cal. 187 (1895).

⁹⁰ Roy W. Cloud, *Education in California: Leaders, Organizations, and Accomplishments of the First Hundred Years*, 99-100.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 105.

⁹² Statutes of 1909, Chapter 593, (§1662 (1) and (2) of the Political Code).

⁹³ William Warren Ferrier, *Ninety Years of Education in California: 1846-1936*, 174.

⁹⁴ Carol Roland, "The California Kindergarten Movement: A Study in Class and Social Feminism," 117.

⁹⁵ At that time, school districts had the choice of enrolling children in either the fall term or fall/spring term. This meant that children who began school in September needed to be age four and one half by October 1. For those children who began school in February, they needed to be four and one half by March 1.

⁹⁶ With the kindergarten fully incorporated into the public schools, the Golden Gate Kindergarten Association began focussing its attention to nursery education. Since 1925, that association has operated what are known as the Golden Gate Nursery Schools. Golden Gate Kindergarten Association, *Eightieth Annual Report of the Golden Gate Kindergarten Association: 1879-1959*.

⁹⁷ Roy W. Cloud, *Education in California: Leaders, Organizations, and Accomplishments of the First Hundred Years*, 141.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 160.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 197.

¹⁰⁰ William Warren Ferrier, *Ninety Years of Education in California: 1846-1936*, 175.

¹⁰¹ Roy W. Cloud, *Education in California: Leaders, Organizations, and Accomplishments of the First Hundred Years*, 182.

¹⁰² As quoted in William Warren Ferrier, *Ninety Years of Education in California: 1846-1936*, 175.

¹⁰³ The Lanham Act brought federal support to states for providing childcare. This Act provided support to California women who were working at the shipyards and munitions factories in support of American forces during World War II. Large urban school districts and county offices of education administered the local operations of the federally subsidized child care centers. In 1943, state administration of the Lanham Act was transferred to the California Department of Education from the Department of Social Services to simplify administration for local school superintendents. After the close of the War in 1945, federal support for child care ceased and the California Legislature continued supporting child care using State funds. California Senate Office of Research, *Flexible, Varied and Imperfect: Child Care in California* (Sacramento: the Office, 1987), 1-2.

¹⁰⁴ For example, for school districts having only one school term (from September to June), children had to be four and a half years of age on September 1. For school districts that operated two terms, the requirement was that children entering kindergarten for the fall term had to be four years and nine months of age on September 1, and for the spring term children had to be four years and nine months of age on February 1. The two-term system of admission allowed children who were not age eligible to enter school for the fall term to enroll in the spring rather than having to wait for another year. This two-term system graduated students from each succeeding grade level at the mid-term, including their graduation from high school.

¹⁰⁵ In 1943, a state legislative proposal that would have provided *state* aid to kindergartens on an average daily attendance basis failed passage. Roy W. Cloud, *Education in California: Leaders, Organizations, and Accomplishments of the First Hundred Years*, 200, 228-29.

¹⁰⁶ In his letter to the Governor, State Superintendent Simpson stated, "I cannot support a measure which will curtail any type of educational service unless an equivalent or superior service is offered in lieu thereof. This bill makes no provision for such equivalent or superior service."

¹⁰⁷ A letter from Robert E. McKay, Director of Field Service, of the California Teachers Association.

¹⁰⁸ A letter, dated May 2, 1951, from Mr. Roy Learned, Principal of the Mark Twain School, one of the "new" districts in Sacramento.

¹⁰⁹ A message to the Governor dated May 1, 1951 from Beach Vasey, Legislative Secretary.

¹¹⁰ Statues of 1967, Chapter 1646.

¹¹¹ Ernest H. Kunzi, *California Education Code* (St. Paul, MN: West Publishing Company, 1978), 17.

¹¹² The Department of Finance's "Enrolled Bill Report," dated August 26, 1969, to the Governor indicated, "some districts conduct prekindergarten summer programs for children who will be entering kindergarten in the Fall. The Department of Education has arbitrarily created an inequity situation by administratively requiring children to meet the kindergarten age requirement in order to be supported by state aid for prekindergarten programs. This automatically precludes students

from such programs if they meet the four year and nine month age level between July 1 and September 1 in spite of the fact that they will be eligible for kindergarten in that Fall.” This bill was introduced by Assemblymember Leroy Greene as AB 2200.

¹¹³ In the author’s letter to Governor Reagan on September 10, 1974, Assemblymember Vasconcellos stated, “Hopefully it is a beginning in tailoring programs to meet the individual needs of children”

¹¹⁴ California Department of Education, Management Advisory 90-10, September 1990.

¹¹⁵ For a thorough review of the literature, consult Patricia L. de Cos, *Readiness for Kindergarten: What Does It Mean?* (Sacramento: California Research Bureau, California State Library, 1997).

¹¹⁶ Jane M. Healy, *Failure to Connect: How Computers Affect Our Children’s Minds—for Better and Worse* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1998).

¹¹⁷ Violet B. Robinson, Gretchen Ross, and Harriet C. Neal, *Emergent Literacy in Kindergarten: A Review of the Research and Related Suggested Activities and Learning Strategies* (San Mateo, CA: California Kindergarten Association, 2000), 1.

¹¹⁸ Marian Diamond and Janet Hopson, *Magic Trees of the Mind: How to Nurture Your Child’s Intelligence, Creativity, and Healthy Emotions from Birth Through Adolescence* (New York: Dutton, 1998); Jane M. Healy, *Your Child’s Growing Mind: A Practical Guide to Brain Development and Learning from Birth to Adolescence* (New York: Doubleday, 1987); and National Research Council, *How People Learn: Mind, Brain, Experience, School—Expanded Edition* (Washington, D.C.: National Academy Press, 2000).

¹¹⁹ Byrnes applied two criteria for determining whether a theory shaped contemporary research. These included: 1) the theory had to be educationally relevant, and 2) the theory had to be driving current research. While Thorndike’s theory did not meet the two criteria, Byrnes included it for comparative and historical purposes.

¹²⁰ James P. Byrnes, *Cognitive Development and Learning in Instructional Contexts* (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1996), 7-33.

¹²¹ The 1997 NAEYC Position Statement refers to a 1987 (Durkin) statewide study of kindergarten classrooms. Sue Bredekamp and Carol Copple, eds., *Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Early Childhood Programs*, Revised Edition (Washington, D.C.: National Association for the Education of Young Children, 1997), 7.

¹²² The NAEYC published an initial position statement in 1986, which was revised in 1997 to incorporate new ideas and understandings regarding children’s early development and to address concerns that were raised regarding the first edition.

¹²³ Samuel J. Meisels, “Assessing Readiness,” *The Transition to Kindergarten* (Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Company 1999), 59-60.

¹²⁴ Samuel J. Meisels, “Doing Harm by Doing Good: Iatrogenic Effects of Early Childhood Enrollment and Promotion Policies,” *Early Childhood Research Quarterly* 7, 1992, 166-7.

¹²⁵ The most recent report published by the California Department of Education regarding retention in public schools was a decade ago. It was entitled *Beyond Retention: A Study of Retention Rates, Practices, and Successful Alternatives in California*, 1991.

¹²⁶ In September 1989, President George Bush convened the first National Education Summit with the nation’s governors. The purpose of the Summit was to discuss ways to improve the educational performance among American students as a means to ensure that America’s workforce would have the knowledge and skills necessary to compete in the global economy. The Summit led to the adoption of a set of eight National Education Goals, targeted for the year

2000, which would establish expectations for improvements at all stages and levels of development for young children, students, teachers, parents, and adult learners.

¹²⁷ The California State Board of Education adopted English-Language Arts and Mathematics Content Standards for California Public Schools Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve on December 11, 1997. The State Board adopted History-Social Studies and Science Content Standards for California Public Schools Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve on October 8, 1998. (The California State Board of Education also adopted English Language Development Standards in July 1999. The State Board adopted these standards in order to develop and implement the English Language Development Assessment pursuant to AB 748, Escutia.)

¹²⁸ The California Department of Education reports that 36 percent of kindergarten children are English language learners. California Department of Education, Educational Demographics Unit, *Number of English Learners in California Public Schools, by Language and Grade*, 1999-00.

¹²⁹ The 91 percent estimate is derived from the 1999 Population Projections of the Department of Finance (estimated in November 2000) for five-year olds (n=585,959) and the total number of children enrolled in 1999-2000 school year in public (n=459,742) and private (n=71,058) kindergartens in California as reported by the California Department of Education. This estimate does not capture the number of four-year-olds or six-year olds in kindergartens.

The October 1999 Current Population Survey estimates that 95 percent of California's five-year-olds are enrolled in a public or private kindergarten.

¹³⁰ California Department of Education, *The Early Childhood Education Proposal: A Master Plan to Redesign Primary Education in California* (Sacramento: the Department, 1972), 4.

¹³¹ According to the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing, there are five teacher preparation programs offering a multiple subject credential with an emphasis in early childhood growth and development. These programs are at Fresno, Long Beach, San Francisco, Sonoma State Universities and Mills College. The programs at Fresno and Sonoma State Universities offer the emphasis in early childhood education with another emphasis in cross-cultural, language and academic development (CLAD).

¹³² According to the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing, California began with regulations for a Kindergarten-Primary credential known as "generals," which continued with the adoption of the Fischer Act in 1960. In 1970, the State adopted the Ryan law, which introduced the multiple subject credentials authorizing a pre-kindergarten through adult service. The multiple subject credential had the effect of restricting a teacher to a self-contained classroom setting as opposed to limiting instruction to specific grades (such as K-3) as with the earlier credentials. This provided more flexibility to teachers and employing districts to place teachers where there was a need. In exchange, however, teachers who are placed in kindergarten may not have taken any specialized training to teach and work with young children in this setting.

¹³³ The CKA is in the process of developing the fourth "Activities and Learning Strategies Related to the California Standards for Science at the Kindergarten Level" to be published later this year.

¹³⁴ California Department of Education, Educational Demographics Unit, *Statewide Enrollment in Public Schools by Gender, Ethnic Designation and Grade*, 1999-00.

¹³⁵ California Education Code §44259 (b) (4).

¹³⁶ California Department of Education, Educational Demographics Unit, *Statewide Classroom Teacher Credentials for K-12 Schools*, 1999-00.

¹³⁷ The study defined an underqualified teacher as a teacher who is teaching but without the minimum qualifications (at least a bachelor's degree and passing a minimum academic skills

test). Center for the Future of Teaching and Learning, *Teaching and California's Future: The Status of the Teaching Profession* (Santa Cruz, Calif.: the Center, 2000), 4.

¹³⁸ Participating districts are required to offer kindergarten instruction to children who are age five on or before September 1, and must provide first grade instruction to children who are six on or before September 1. The school readiness pilot program will offer up to 150 hours of instruction for participating districts and will give priority to children who do not have access to preschool experiences. The pilot program includes an independent evaluation with initial, interim, and final reports due to specified entities by June 1, 2005, January 1, 2007, and January 1, 2008, respectively. Statutes of 2000, Chapter 1022.

¹³⁹ Education Commission of the States, "Kindergarten: State Characteristics," *ECS StateNotes Kindergarten*, March 2000.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid.

¹⁴¹ Council of Chief State School Officers, *Key State Education Policies on K-12 Education: 2000* (Washington, D.C.: The Council, State Education Assessment Center, 2000).

¹⁴² The author recently published a report, which surveyed educational experts in California and found an astounding range of opinions regarding the purpose of K-12 education in California. Patricia L. de Cos, *California's Public Schools: What the Experts Say About their Mission and Function* (Sacramento: California Research Bureau, California State Library, 2001).

¹⁴³ While the National Education Goals specify that "by the year 2000, all children in America will start school ready to learn" as its first goal, the state of California has not defined what is meant by school readiness. National Education Goals Panel, *The National Goals Report: Building a Nation of Learners* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1999).

¹⁴⁴ Lilian G. Katz, "Balancing Constructivist and Instructivist Curriculum Goals in Early Childhood Education," (*Kindergarten Education: Theory, Research, and Practice* 4, no. 2, Fall/Winter 1999), 71-83.

¹⁴⁵ *Constructivism* is characterized by a child who actively creates knowledge and understandings through his or her activities or interactions. In this setting, the instructor provides the environment for the children's active construction of knowledge. *Instructivism* is characterized by a teacher's formal instruction of knowledge and skills that are needed for a child's later academic achievement. Ibid.

Appendix 1: Content Standards for California Public Schools – Kindergarten

The following content standards are reproduced by permission of California Department of Education, P.O. Box 271, Sacramento, CA 95812-0271. Formatting has been slightly modified from the original to facilitate inclusion in this report.

ENGLISH-LANGUAGE ARTS

Reading

1.0 Word Analysis, Fluency, and Systematic Vocabulary Development

Students know about letters, words, and sounds. They apply this knowledge to read simple sentences.

Concepts About Print

- 1.1 Identify the front cover, back cover, and title page of a book.
- 1.2 Follow words from left to right and from top to bottom on the printed page.
- 1.3 Understand that printed materials provide information.
- 1.4 Recognize that sentences in print are made up of separate words.
- 1.5 Distinguish letters from words.
- 1.6 Recognize and name all uppercase and lowercase letters of the alphabet.

Phonemic Awareness

- 1.7 Track (move sequentially from sound to sound) and represent the number, sameness/difference, and order of two and three isolated phonemes (e.g., /f, s, th/, /j, d, j/).
- 1.8 Track (move sequentially from sound to sound) and represent changes in simple syllables and words with two and three sounds as one sound is added, substituted, omitted, shifted, or repeated (e.g., vowel-consonant, consonant-vowel, or consonant-vowel-consonant).
- 1.9 Blend vowel-consonant sounds orally to make words or syllables.
- 1.10 Identify and produce rhyming words in response to an oral prompt.
- 1.11 Distinguish orally stated one-syllable words and separate into beginning or ending sounds.
- 1.12 Track auditorily each word in a sentence and each syllable in a word.
- 1.13 Count the number of sounds in syllables and syllables in words.

Decoding and Word Recognition

- 1.14 Match all consonant and short-vowel sounds to appropriate letters.
- 1.15 Read simple one-syllable and high-frequency words (i.e., sight words).
- 1.16 Understand that as letters of words change, so do the sounds (i.e., the alphabetic principle).

Vocabulary and Concept Development

- 1.17 Identify and sort common words in basic categories (e.g., colors, shapes, foods).
- 1.18 Describe common objects and events in both general and specific language.

2.0 Reading Comprehension

Students identify the basic facts and ideas in what they have read, heard, or viewed. They use comprehension strategies (e.g., generating and responding to questions, comparing new information to what is already known). The selections in *Recommended Readings in Literature, Kindergarten Through Grade Eight* (California Department of Education, 1996) illustrate the quality and complexity of the materials to be read by students.

Structural Features of Informational Materials

- 2.1 Locate the title, table of contents, name of author, and name of illustrator.

Comprehension and Analysis of Grade-Level-Appropriate Text

- 2.2 Use pictures and context to make predictions about story content.
- 2.3 Connect to life experiences the information and events in texts.
- 2.4 Retell familiar stories.
- .5 Ask and answer questions about essential elements of a text.

3.0 Literary Response and Analysis

Students listen and respond to stories based on well-known characters, themes, plots, and settings. The selections in *Recommended Readings in Literature, Kindergarten Through Grade Eight* illustrate the quality and complexity of the materials to be read by students.

Narrative Analysis of Grade-Level-Appropriate Text

- 3.1 Distinguish fantasy from realistic text.
- 3.2 Identify types of everyday print materials (e.g., storybooks, poems, newspapers, signs, labels).
- 3.3 Identify characters, settings, and important events.

Writing

1.0 Writing Strategies

Students write words and brief sentences that are legible.

Organization and Focus

- 1.1 Use letters and phonetically spelled words to write about experiences, stories, people, objects, or events.
- 1.2 Write consonant-vowel-consonant words (i.e., demonstrate the alphabetic principle).
- 1.3 Write by moving from left to right and from top to bottom.

Penmanship

- 1.4 Write uppercase and lowercase letters of the alphabet independently, attending to the form and proper spacing of the letters.

Written and Oral English Language Conventions

The standards for written and oral English language conventions have been placed between those for writing and for listening and speaking because these conventions are essential to both sets of skills.

1.0 Written and Oral English Language Conventions

Students write and speak with a command of standard English conventions.

Sentence Structure

- 1.1 Recognize and use complete, coherent sentences when speaking.

Spelling

- 1.2 Spell independently by using pre-phonetic knowledge, sounds of the alphabet, and knowledge of letter names.

Listening and Speaking

1.0 Listening and Speaking Strategies

Students listen and respond to oral communication. They speak in clear and coherent sentences.

Comprehension

- 1.1 Understand and follow one-and two-step oral directions.
- 1.2 Share information and ideas, speaking audibly in complete, coherent sentences.

2.0 Speaking Applications (Genres and Their Characteristics)

Students deliver brief recitations and oral presentations about familiar experiences or interests, demonstrating command of the organization and delivery strategies outlined in Listening and Speaking Standard 1.0.

Using the listening and speaking strategies of kindergarten outlined in Listening and Speaking Standard 1.0, students:

- 2.1 Describe people, places, things (e.g., size, color, shape), locations, and actions.
- 2.2 Recite short poems, rhymes, and songs.
- 2.3 Relate an experience or creative story in a logical sequence.

MATHEMATICS

By the end of kindergarten, students understand small numbers, quantities, and simple shapes in their everyday environment. They count, compare, describe and sort objects, and develop a sense of properties and patterns.

Number Sense

1.0 Students understand the relationship between numbers and quantities (i.e., that a set of objects has the same number of objects in different situations regardless of its position or arrangement):

- 1.1. Compare two or more sets of objects (up to ten objects in each group) and identify which set is equal to, more than, or less than the other.
 - 1.2. Count, recognize, represent, name, and order a number of objects (up to 30).
 - 1.3. Know that the larger numbers describe sets with more objects in them than the smaller numbers have.
-

2.0 Students understand and describe simple additions and subtractions:

- 2.1 Use concrete objects to determine the answers to addition and subtraction problems (for two numbers that are each less than 10).
-

3.0 Students use estimation strategies in computation and problem solving that involve numbers that use the ones and tens places:

- 3.1 Recognize when an estimate is reasonable.

Algebra and Functions

1.0 Students sort and classify objects:

- 1.1 Identify, sort, and classify objects by attribute and identify objects that do not belong to a particular group (e.g., all these balls are green, those are red).

Measurement and Geometry

1.0 Students understand the concept of time and units to measure it; they understand that objects have properties, such as length, weight, and capacity, and that comparisons may be made by referring to those properties:

- 1.1 Compare the length, weight, and capacity of objects by making direct comparisons with reference objects (e.g., note which object is shorter, longer, taller, lighter, heavier, or holds more).
 - 1.2 Demonstrate and understanding of concepts of time (e.g., morning, afternoon, evening, today, yesterday, tomorrow, week, year) and tools that measure time (e.g., clock, calendar).
 - 1.3 Name the days of the week.
 - 1.4 Identify the time (to the nearest hour) of everyday events (e.g., lunch time is 12 o'clock; bedtime is 8 o'clock at night).
-

2.0 Students identify common objects in their environment and describe the geometric features:

- 2.1 Identify and describe common geometric objects (e.g., circle, triangle, square, rectangle, cube, sphere, cone).
- 2.2 Compare familiar plane and solid objects by common attributes (e.g., position, shape, size, roundness, number of corners).

Statistics, Data Analysis, and Probability

1.0 Students collect information about objects and events in their environment:

- 1.1 Pose information questions; collect data; and record the results using objects, pictures, and picture graphs.
- 1.2 Identify, describe, and extend simple patterns (such as circles or triangles) by referring to their shapes, sizes, or colors.

Mathematical Reasoning

1.0 Students make decisions about how to set up a problem:

- 1.1 Determine the approach, materials, and strategies to be used.
 - 1.2 Use tools and strategies, such as manipulatives or sketches, to model problems.
-

2.0 Students solve problems in reasonable ways and justify their reasoning:

- 2.1 Explain the reasoning used with concrete objects and / or pictorial representations.
- 2.2 Make precise calculations and check the validity of the results in the context of the problem.

HISTORY-SOCIAL SCIENCE

Learning and Working Now and Long Ago

Students in kindergarten are introduced to basic spatial, temporal, and causal relationships, emphasizing the geographic and historical connections between the world today and the world long ago. The stories of ordinary and extraordinary people help describe the range and continuity of human experience and introduce the concepts of courage, self-control, justice, heroism, leadership, deliberation, and individual responsibility. Historical empathy for how people lived and worked long ago reinforces the concept of civic behavior: how we interact respectfully with each other, following rules, and respecting the rights of others.

K.1 Students understand that being a good citizen involves acting in certain ways.

1. Follow rules, such as sharing and taking turns, and know the consequences of breaking them.
 2. Learn examples of honesty, courage, determination, individual responsibility, and patriotism in American and world history from stories and folklore.
 3. Know beliefs and related behaviors of characters in stories from times past and understand the consequences of the characters' actions.
-

K.2 Students recognize national and state symbols and icons such as the national and state flags, the bald eagle, and the Statue of Liberty.

K.3 Students match simple descriptions of work that people do and the names of related jobs at the school, in the local community, and from historical accounts.

K.4 Students compare and contrast the locations of people, places, and environments and describe their characteristics.

1. Determine the relative locations of objects using the terms near / far, left / right, and behind / in front.
2. Distinguish between land and water on maps and globes and locate general areas referenced in historical legends and stories.

3. Identify traffic symbols and map symbols (e.g., those for land, water, roads, cities).
4. Construct maps and models of neighborhoods, incorporating such structures as police and fire stations, airports, banks, hospitals, supermarkets, harbors, schools, homes, places of worship, and transportation lines.
5. Demonstrate familiarity with the school's layout, environs, and the jobs people do there.

K.5 Students put events in temporal order using a calendar, placing days, weeks, and months in proper order.

K.6 Students understand that history relates to events, people, and places of other times.

1. Identify the purposes of, and the people and events honored in, commemorative holidays, including the human struggles that were the basis for the events (e.g., Thanksgiving, Independence Day, Washington's and Lincoln's Birthdays, Martin Luther King Jr. Day, Memorial Day, Labor Day, Columbus Day, Veterans Day).
2. Know the triumphs in American legends and historical accounts through the stories of such people as Pocahontas, George Washington, Booker T. Washington, Daniel Boone, and Benjamin Franklin.
3. Understand how people lived in earlier times and how their lives would be different today (e.g., getting water from a well, growing food, making clothing, having fun, forming organizations, living by rules and laws).

SCIENCE

Physical Sciences

1. Properties of materials can be observed, measured, and predicted. As a basis for understanding this concept:
 - a. *Students know* objects can be described in terms of the materials they are made of (e.g., clay, cloth, paper) and their physical properties (e.g., color, size, shape, weight, texture, flexibility, attraction to magnets, floating, sinking).
 - b. *Students know* water can be a liquid or a solid and can be made to change back and forth from one form to the other.
 - c. *Students know* water left in an open container evaporates (goes into the air) but water in a closed container does not.

Life Sciences

2. Different types of plants and animals inhabit the earth. As a basis for understanding this concept:
 - a. *Students know* how to observe and describe similarities and differences in the appearance and behavior of plants and animals (e.g., seed-bearing plants, birds, fish, insects).
 - b. *Students know* stories sometimes give plants and animals attributes they do not really have.
 - c. *Students know* how to identify major structures of common plants and animals (e.g., stems, leaves, roots, arms, wings, legs).

Earth Sciences

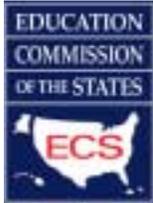
3. Earth is composed of land, air, and water. As a basis for understanding this concept:
- Students know* characteristics of mountains, rivers, oceans, valleys, deserts, and local landforms.
 - Students know* changes in weather occur from day to day and across seasons, affecting Earth and its inhabitants.
 - Students know* how to identify resources from Earth that are used in everyday life and understand that many resources can be conserved.

Investigation and Experimentation

4. Scientific progress is made by asking meaningful questions and conducting careful investigations. As a basis for understanding this concept and addressing the content in the other three strands, students should develop their own questions and perform investigations. Students will:
- Observe common objects by using the five senses.
 - Describe the properties of common objects.
 - Describe the relative position of objects by using one reference (e.g., above or below).
 - Compare and sort common objects by one physical attribute (e.g., color, shape, texture, size, weight).
 - Communicate observations orally and through drawings.

Appendix 2: ECS StateNotes – Kindergarten

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ECS StateNotes

Kindergarten

Education Commission of the States • 707 17th Street, Suite 2700 • Denver, CO 80202-3427 • 303-299-3600 • fax 303-296-8332 • www.ecs.org

Kindergarten: State Characteristics

ECS Information Clearinghouse
March 2000

KEY:

M = Mandatory

P = Permissive

LEA = Local Education Agency

State	Compulsory Age	Kindergarten Entrance Age	District Offering	Pupil Attendance
AL	7	5 on or before 9/1	M	P
AK	7	5 on or before 8/15	P	P
AS	6	5 by 9/1	M	M
AZ	6	5 before 9/1	M ¹	P
AR	5	5 on or before 9/15	M	M ²
CA	6	5 on or before 12/2	P	P
CO	7	LEA option	P	P
CT	7	5 by 1/1	M	P
DE	5	5 on or before 8/31	M	M
DC	5	5 by 12/31	M	M
FL	6	5 by 9/1	M	M ³
GA	7	5 by 9/1	M	P
HI	6	5 by 12/31	P	P
ID	7	5 by 9/1	P	P
IL	7	5 on or before 9/1	M ⁴	P
IN	7	5 by 6/1	M	P

State	Compulsory Age	Kindergarten Entrance Age	District Offering	Pupil Attendance
IA	6	5 on or before 9/15	M	P
KS	7	5 on or before 8/31	M	P
KY	6	5 on or before 10/1	M	P
LA	7	5 by September 30 ⁵	M	M ⁶
ME	7	5 on or before 10/15	M ⁷	P
MD	5	5 by 12/31	M	M
MA	6	LEA option	M	P
MI	6	5 on or before 12/1	P	P
MN	7	5 by 9/1	M	P
MS	6	5 on or before 9/1	M	P
MO	7	5 as of 7/1 ⁸	P	P
MT	7	5 on or before 9/10	M	P
NE	7	5 on or before 10/15	M ⁹	P
NV	7	5 by 9/30	M	P
NH	6	LEA option	P	P
NJ	6	LEA option	P	P
NM	5	5 by 9/1	M	P
NY	6	5 on or before 12/1	M	P
NC	7	5 on or before 10/16	M	P
ND ¹⁰	7	5 as of midnight 8/31	P	P
OH	6	5 on or before 9/30	M	M
OK	5	5 on or before 9/1	M	M
OR	7	5 on or before 9/1	P	P
PA	8	LEA option	P	P
PR	5	5 by 8/1	M	M
RI	6	5 on or before 12/31	M	M
SC	5	5 on or before 9/1	M	M ¹¹
SD	6	5 on or before 9/1	M	P
TN	7	5 on or before 9/30	M	M
TX	6	5 on or before 9/1	M	P
UT	6	5 on or before 9/2	M	P
VT	7	5 on or before 1/1 ¹²	M	P
VI	5	5 ¹³	M	M
VA	5	5 on or before 9/30	M	M
WA	8	5 on or before midnight 8/31	P ¹⁴	P
WV	6	5 prior to 9/1	M	P ¹⁵
WI	6	5 on or before 9/1	M	P
WY	7	5 on or before 9/15	P	P

NOTES:

1. Each school district shall establish a kindergarten program in Arizona, unless the governing board of the school district files an exemption claim with the department of education.
2. In Arkansas, pupil attendance is mandatory, but parents can request a waiver.
3. In Florida, the compulsory school age is 6; however, successful completion of kindergarten is mandatory and if it is not successfully completed a child may be older than 6 when entering first grade.
4. Illinois permits districts to offer full-day kindergarten programs and receive full state aid.
5. The kindergarten entrance age for the Orleans Parish, Louisiana School District is 5 by December 30.
6. Louisiana specifies mandatory half-day attendance or test for first-grade readiness.
7. In Maine, schools shall either operate a kindergarten program or otherwise provide for students to participate in such a program.
8. As of July 1, 1997, the kindergarten entrance age in Missouri is 5 before August 1. In addition, beginning with the 1997-98 school year, St. Louis and Kansas City may require that child is 5 on or before any date between August 1 and October 1.
9. Kindergarten is required for accreditation of districts in Nebraska, thus all LEAs offer it.
10. In North Dakota, children with special talents/abilities born between 9/1 and 12/31 can be enrolled early, upon passing State Department of Education approved screening tests.
11. The South Carolina Education Improvement Act of 1984 specifies that "5-year-olds shall attend kindergarten" but parents may obtain a waiver from this requirement.
12. In Vermont, a school district may establish and enforce a regulation which requires that students admitted to kindergarten have attained the age of five on or before any date between August 31 and January 1.
13. In order to be eligible for kindergarten in the Virgin Islands, a child must reach the age of 5 during the calendar year in which they enter kindergarten.
14. LEAs in Washington can permit early entrance up to 3 months.
15. Kindergarten attendance in West Virginia is permissive, but prior to entrance into the first grade each child must successfully complete kindergarten. Under extraordinary circumstances a child may pass a county school board approved readiness test in lieu of kindergarten attendance.

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Appendix 3:

Key State Education Policies on K-12 Education: 2000

Time and Attendance
Graduation Requirements
Content Standards
Teacher Licensure
School Leader Licensure
Student Assessment

Results From the *2000 CCSSO Policies and Practices Survey*, State Departments of Education

Council of Chief State School Officers, State Education Assessment Center
One Massachusetts Ave, NW, Suite 700, Washington, DC 20001

Kindergarten Programs — State Policies, 2000

FULL-DAY PROGRAM		HALF-DAY PROGRAM	
Districts Must Offer	Student Attendance Required Yes (if enrolled/enroll. not req.)	Districts Must Offer	Student Attendance Required Yes/early entrance accom.
Alabama	not req.)	Arizona (1994)	Yes
Arkansas	Yes	California	No
DoDEA	No	Connecticut	No
Florida	Yes	Delaware	Yes
Georgia	No	Illinois (<i>or full day</i>) - (1998)	No
Hawaii	No	Iowa (<i>or full day</i>)	No
Louisiana	No	Indiana	No
Mississippi	No	Kentucky	No
North Carolina	No	Maryland	Yes/early entrance accom.
North Dakota (<i>and half day</i>)	No	Massachusetts	No
South Carolina	Yes	Minnesota (<i>or full day</i>)	No
South Dakota (<i>and half day</i>)	No	Missouri (<i>or full day</i>)	No
Texas (<i>and half day</i>)	No	Montana	No
Vermont (<i>and half day</i>)	No	Nebraska (400 hrs.)	No
Virginia (<i>and half day</i>)	Yes	Nevada	No
West Virginia	Yes	New Mexico	Yes
		Ohio (<i>or full day</i>)	Yes
		Oklahoma	Yes
		Oregon	No
		Pennsylvania	No
		Rhode Island	Yes
		South Dakota	No
		Tennessee	Yes
		Utah	Yes
		Wisconsin	No
		Wyoming	No
Total states	15 Offer	Total	26 Offer
	6 Yes		9 Yes

NO STATE POLICY - LOCAL DISTRICT POLICY

Alaska
 Colorado
 Idaho
 Kansas
 Maine (offer or make available)
 Michigan
 New Hampshire
 New Jersey
 New York (1996)
 Washington (1998)

Source: State Departments of Education, CCSSO Policies and Practices Survey, 2000
 Council of Chief State School Officers, State Education Assessment Center, Washington, DC.

Length of School Day in Minimum Hours by Grade Level, 2000

STATE	Half-Day		Full Day		Grades 7-8	Grades 9-12
	Pre-K	Kindergarten	Kindergarten	Grades 1-6		
Alabama	-	-	6	6	6	6
Alaska	-	<4 hrs.	>=4 hrs.	gr. 1-3: 4; gr. 4-6: 5	5	5
Arizona (1994)	1.2	2	-	4.0-5.0	6	-
Arkansas	-	-	6	6	6	6
California	-	3.3	-	gr. 1-3: 4.7; gr. 4-6: 5	5	6
Colorado	-	-	-	-	-	-
Connecticut	-	-	-	-	-	-
Delaware	-	2.5	-	6	6	6
DoDEA	2.5	2.5	6	5.5	6	6
Florida	-	-	-	5	5	5
Georgia	4.5	-	4.5	gr. 1-3: 4.5; gr. 4-5: 5	gr. 6-8: 5.5	5.5
Hawaii	6	6	6	6	6	6
Idaho	-	2.5	4	4	4	4
Illinois (1998)	-	2	4	5	5	5
Indiana	-	2.5	-	5	6	6
Iowa	-	-	-	5.5	5.5	5.5
Kansas	-	2.5	5	6	6	6
Kentucky	-	3	6	6	6	6
Louisiana	6	-	6	6	6	6
Maine	-	2.5	2.5	5	5	5
Maryland	-	-	-	6	6	6.5
Massachusetts	-	-	-	-	-	-
Michigan	-	-	-	-	-	-
Minnesota	-	-	-	-	-	-
Mississippi	5.5	-	5.5	5.5	5.5	5.5
Missouri	-	1.5	3.0-7.0	3.0-7.0	3.0-7.0	3.0-7.0
Montana			<i>annual aggregated hours requirement</i>			
Nebraska	-	-	-	-	-	-
Nevada	-	-	2	5	5.5	5.5
New Hampshire	-	2.5	n/a	6	6	6
New Jersey	2.5	2.5	6	6	6	6
New Mexico	-	2.5	-	5.5	6	6
New York (1996)	-	2.5	5	5	5.5	5.5
North Carolina	-	-	1000 hours	for the whole	school	year
North Dakota	-	2.75	5.5	5.5	6	6
Ohio	-	2.5	-	5	5.5	5.5
Oklahoma	2.5	2.5	6	6	6	6
Oregon	-	-	-	6 (K-3)	6.5 (4-8)	7
Pennsylvania	none	2.5	5	5	5.5	5.5
Rhode Island	2.5	2.5	5	5	5-5.5	5.5
South Carolina	2.5	2.5	5	6	6	6
South Dakota			<i>no minimum hourly requirement in law</i>			
Tennessee	5.5	4	4	6.5	6.5	6.5
Texas	-	-	7	7	7	7
Utah	-	2	-	4	4	4
Vermont	-	2	-	4 (1-2)	5.5 (3-10)	-
Virginia	-	3	5.5	5.5	5.5	5.5
Washington (1998)	-	2	4	4 (1-3)	5 (4-6)	5 (7-12)
West Virginia	-	-	5.25	5.25 (K-4)	5.5 (5-8)	5.75
Wisconsin			<i>no minimum length</i>			
Wyoming	-	2.5	5	5	6	6

"-" Indicates that a state does not have a requirement in this category.

Source: State Departments of Education, CCSSO Policies and Practices Survey, 2000

Council of Chief State School Officers, State Education Assessment Center, Washington, DC.