



Transitional Kindergarten – Success is built on existing mixed delivery system

In 1977, the California Alternative Payment Program Association (CAPP) was created to serve as a voice for a mixed delivery system of public and private community based agencies dedicated to connecting working poor families to early care and education programs from birth on. In our rich history advocating for agencies that have served millions of families and children, of working to ensure that parental choice is valued, and that children are connected with early care and educational environments that will contribute to greater academic outcomes, we have become the experts of serving both the needs of working families and their children. It is our belief that if transitional kindergarten is to become a reality, then it must be built on the experience and successes of what we have learned. Below are areas for inclusion and consideration:

1. Connect transitional kindergarten to the existing community based mixed public and private early care and education delivery infrastructure of Alternative Payment Programs (APPs), Resource & Referral agencies, high quality Title 5 centers, Family Child Care Home Education Networks (FCCHENs), and small business early care and education providers.
Why? History has shown us that working poor families and those from culturally diverse backgrounds connect with early care and education providers in a variety of settings that best meet their needs to secure and maintain work, as well as that provide a responsive, developmentally appropriate environment for young children.
2. Value the “*real*” needs of working families and their children with transitional kindergarten that at a minimum include full-time options, wraparound support including transportation, and off-hour choices.
3. Invest monies in all parts of the early care and education infrastructure beginning with support for providers that care for infant and toddlers.
4. Support parental choice.
5. Guarantee and stabilize agency, center and provider funding in a way that reflects real caseloads, actual work needed to connect the needs of working families with quality early care settings, and the cost of doing business in California.

In the experience of our agencies and in wanting to make a vision of transitional kindergarten an option that we can all aspire to support, we are candid to note that our poorest of poor working families unfortunately are not in a place where the education of their four year old is the only priority. California’s working poor families, those that come in through the doors of our CalWORKs programs, or from general child care are constantly dealing with “life” issues of hunger, housing, illness, and stress. In the real world of our agencies and families, in order for our caseworkers to be able to make *real* the value of a TK experience, the other life issues noted above must first be remedied.

In closing, we believe that all of California’s children should benefit from investments made to build and strengthen our early care and education programs. Unfortunately, unless there is greater support of the true needs of our working poor families with meaningful anti poverty tools and full time early care and education options, the children that could benefit the most from access to TK will be left out.

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CAPP’s Mission Statement

To advocate for, and facilitate family access to, quality child care and supportive services, and early education and development programs.