



Kindergarten Overview

**Presented to
OUSD School Board
Teaching and Learning Committee**

**Presented By: Kasondra Walsh, TK/K Co-Chair
Maria Pirner, TK/K Co-Chair
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What's Happening In Kindergarten?

OUSD Kindergarten students are not currently getting the attention and support they deserve due to structural issues within the district.

Why?



Time and Flexibility



**Developmental
Appropriateness**



Resources

Time and Flexibility

Every day kindergarten teachers need the time to...

Maintain Student Relationships ?

Observe Students at Work and Administer 1:1 Assessments ?

Support Individual Academic and Social Emotional Needs ?

Teach Core Tier 1 Academics

Current Curriculum and District Requirements only allow for one of these....

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
8:30-8:45	SEL: Breakfast Morning Message/ Morning Circle				SEL: Breakfast and Morning Message/ Morning Circle <i>Sow to Grow Weekly check in</i>
8:45-9:45	CORE ELA EL Ed Lesson Module; Complex Text & Tasks				
9:45-10:00	Recess				
10:00-10:30	Foundational Skills Block Whole Group Instruction: <i>August-November:</i> OUSD Letter Naming Lessons and Phonological Awareness <i>December-May:</i> SIPPS Beginning Group 1				
10:30-11:00	Foundational Skills Block: <i>August-November:</i> Small group Letter ID or SIPPS lessons and application and Independent work connected to OUSD Letter Naming/PA lessons; <i>December-May:</i> SIPPS Beginning Group 2				
11:00-11:15	Foundational Skills Block Small Group Instruction: <i>August-Nov:</i> Flex for DIBELS/Letter ID Assessment <i>Dec-May:</i> Letter ID Intervention				
11:15-11:45	Lunch/Recess				
11:45-12:15	Designated ELD				
12:15-1:00	Math Core Lesson (Practice tools: i-Ready)				
1:00-1:40	FOSS Science	PE 1:00 - 1:50 (50 minutes) PREP	Closing/Clean Up 1:10 Early Dismissal	PE 1:00-1:50 (50 minutes) PREP	FOSS Science
1:40-1:55	Recess			Recess	
1:45-2:40	EL Ed Labs/Choice Time	SS/Ethnic Studies		EL Ed Labs/Choice Time	VAPA PREP
2:40-2:50	Closing/Clean Up	Closing/Clean Up		Closing/Clean Up	Closing/Clean Up

Reality Check: In the first 15 minutes students are expected to enter class, unpack, eat breakfast, and participate in a morning circle, which is both an explicit social emotional learning lesson AND community builder.

If we know this is unrealistic, you can imagine how the rest of the day goes.

Where is the time for the other the other three?

*larger view, including dual language and comparisons to ECE/TK can be seen in attachments

Developmental Appropriateness

Very young children require **time, support and practice** to learn how to be present in a community and engage in learning. This includes practicing and learning self regulatory and pro-social behaviors and engaging in learning that is developmentally appropriate (transition time, focus and attention limits, play-based learning).

TK structure v. Kindergarten (classroom setup, adult to student ratio, sitting time, whole class v. small group)

Minutes	Monday	Tuesday	Thursday	Friday
20	SEL Arrival, Breakfast and Morning Choices			
15	Morning Meeting (Question of the day with Intentional Message)			
60	Intentional Play (Guided Projects and Focused Small Group time for Language and Literacy/Math)			
20	Outdoor Recess			
10	Read-Aloud			
50	Enrichment/Prep or FOSS Science			
20	Outdoor Recess			
25	<i>Lunch</i>			
40	Rest Time			
20	Outdoor Recess			
10	Read-Aloud			
60	Intentional Play (Guided Projects and Focused Small Group time for Language and Literacy/Math)			
10	Afternoon Meeting (SEL Focused Teaching Pyramid)			



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Play IS Learning

EC Section 8973 allows schools to offer Extended Day Kindergarten if both of the following conditions are met:

- The kindergarten program does not exceed the length of the primary school day, and,
- The extended-day kindergarten program takes into account ample opportunity for both active and quiet activities with an **integrated, experiential, and developmentally appropriate** educational program.

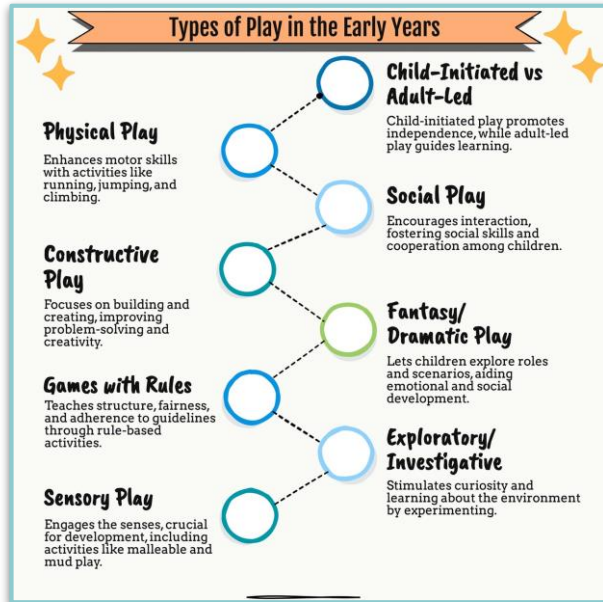


Table 1. Child Agency and Role of the Adult in Different Types of Play-Based Learning across a Continuum

The Play-Based Learning Continuum	Child Self-Determined Play (child led)	Adult-Child Collaborative Play (child led–adult scaffolded)	Adult Planned and Directed Play (adult led)
Image of the Child	a capable, engaged, and self-motivated learner whose interests and ideas are taken seriously and respected by the adult	a capable and engaged learner who benefits or learns from a more capable play partner or an adult	a developing child who lacks maturity, experience, and knowledge and requires adults to facilitate their learning and socialization
Who initiates the play?	child	child	adult
Who has agency to shape the learning goals?	child Learning goals emerge dynamically from the child's interests and intrinsic motivation.	child and adult Learning goals emerge dynamically from the child's interests and intrinsic motivation and the adult's ideas and desires (expressed through scaffolding and guidance strategies).	adult Learning goals are planned, monitored, and adapted entirely by adults.

Resources

Kindergarten currently operates at a 1:26 ratio, compared to TK which is a 1:10 ratio.

The age difference between a TK and K student can be as little as 1 week, yet those students are in two very different settings. The transition between these two grades is a HUGE leap.

To give each student JUST *1 minute* of solo connection AND *1 minute* of 1:1 support is 52 minutes per day.

To give JUST *8 students, 10 minutes* of 1:1 academic intervention support is 80 minutes per day.

This Is Not Enough

Possible Solutions to Give Students Support and Early Intervention Needed

Decrease the number
of students in the
classroom

Increase the number
of the adults in the
classroom

Provide Early Elementary
Intervention Teachers for
Tier 2 and 3 support

Decrease the time
required to deliver
Tier 1 instruction

What Can The OUSD Teaching and Learning Committee Do?



Protected Minutes

Support a board resolution that creates protected minutes for kindergarten to allow for developmentally appropriate play, exploration, robust social emotional teaching, and teacher directed tier 2 intervention.



Early Elementary Staffing

Support funding that allows for better direct to student supports such as intervention teachers at every school site dedicated to early elementary grades.

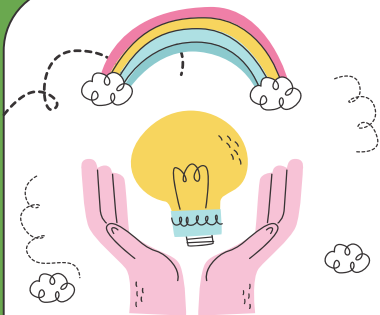
Other possible solutions could be adult to student ratios or lower class sizes.



Teacher Engagement

When a decision is brought to the board that impacts kindergarten ask for evidence of engagement with kindergarten teachers.

Including but not limited to curriculum selection and implementation, staffing, minutes, scheduling, etc.



Thinking Forward: What now?

How can the TK/K Committee Support?
How can the OUSD school board support?

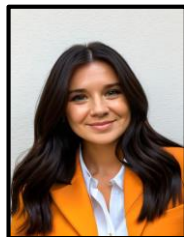
Question and Answer Time



Kasondra Walsh

Emerson

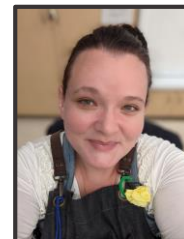
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Want To Learn More?

The following slides and information are meant to supplement this presentation.

You will find more detailed information about minutes, curriculum, and developmental research as well as data from a 2024 kindergarten teacher survey.

A Week In The Life of a Kinder According to OUSD

SEI

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
8:30-8:45	SEL:Breakfast Morning Message/ Morning Circle				SEL:Breakfast and Morning Message/Morning Circle Sown to Grow Weekly check in
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2:40-2:50	Closing/Clean Up	Closing/Clean Up		Closing/Clean Up	Closing/Clean Up

Dual Language

TIME	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	
8:30 - 8:45	SEL (15 min)		SEL (15 min)		SEL (15 min)	SLA Whole group and Small Group (45 minutes) Benchmark Adelante
8:45 - 9:00	Conciencia fonológica (15 minutes) Heggerty		Conciencia fonológica (15 minutes) Heggerty		Conciencia fonológica (15 minutes) Heggerty	
9:00 - 9:15	Fonética (30 minutes) Benchmark Adelante	8:45-9:35 Prep (50 min)	Fonética (30 minutes) Benchmark Adelante	8:45-9:35 Prep (50 min)	Fonética (30 minutes) Benchmark Adelante	
9:15 - 9:30	Minilección de Lectura		Minilección de Lectura		Minilección de Lectura	
9:30 - 9:45		SEL (15 min)		SEL (15 min)		
9:45 - 10:00	Minilección de escritura	Fonética (30 minutes) Benchmark Adelante	Minilección de escritura	Fonética (30 minutes) Benchmark Adelante	Minilección de escritura	
10:00-10:15						
10:15-10:30	Recreo (15 minutes)					
10:30 -10:45						
10:45 - 11:00	Matemáticas (45 minutes)					
11:00-11:30	Lunch (30 minutes)					
11:45-12:00	Writing Minilesson/Small Group Instruction	Reading Minilesson/Small Group Instruction	Writing Minilesson/Small Group Instruction	Reading Minilesson/Small Group Instruction	Writing Minilesson/Small Group Instruction	
12:00-12:15						ELA Whole Group & Small Group (75 minutes) Benchmark Advance
12:15-12:30						
12:30 - 12:45	Phonics (30 minutes) Letter Naming + SIPPS					
1:00 - 1:15	Designated ELD (30 min)					
1:30 - 1:45						
	Brain Break			Brain Break		
1:45 - 2:00	Social Studies (25 minutes) NewsELA	Phonemic Awareness (15 minutes) Heggerty		Social Studies (25 minutes) NewsELA	Phonemic Awareness (15 minutes) Heggerty	
2:00 - 2:15		2:10-2:45 Science (50 min) FOSS Reading & Writing Tools Pack Labs				
2:15 - 2:30	2:10-2:45 Teacher Led PE (50 min)		Minimum Day	2:10-2:45 Science (50 min) FOSS Reading & Writing Tools Pack Labs		
2:30 - 2:45					2:10-2:45 Prep (50 min)	

A Week In The Life of a TK

According to OUSD

Minutes	Monday	Tuesday	Thursday	Friday	Minutes	Wednesday
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10	Read-Aloud				10	Read-Aloud
50	Enrichment/Prep or FOSS Science				30	FOSS Science
20	Outdoor Recess				20	Outdoor Recess
25	Lunch				25	Lunch
40	Rest Time				40	Rest Time
20	Outdoor Recess				10	Read-Aloud
10	Read-Aloud				50	Intentional Play (Guided Projects and Focused Small Group time for Language and Literacy/Math)
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360					300	

A Week In The Life of a Kinder

When We Add Just A Small Amount of Reality

8:30–Bell Rings

8:40– In the door and unpacked

8:41– Hopefully start breakfast

8:50– No 5 or 6 year old can eat in 10 minutes so we are still eating and also everyone who comes in late is now starting to eat

9:00– Calendar/Morning Message/Morning Circle while you are also trying to clean up spilt milk and cereal crumbs all over the floor

9:15– skipped actually teaching SEL in morning circle because we are already 30 minutes late to start EL

9:45– Clean-up to get to recess

9:50– Actually at recess because hallways are long

9:58– end recess because there is no transition time built in and if we don't start groups right away the second group will always have their lesson cut off

11:00– The phonics stuff not covered or letter work and also maybe one kid's progress monitoring which means you use this time everyday to see each kid hopefully once a month, oh plus try to do some "intervention" with students who are still working on letter names post November

11:05– actually start cleaning up for lunch because if they are late for lunch and don't finish eating, they will be hangry since they only have 15 min to get through the line and eat before a recess break.
You get the idea....

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2:40-2:50	Closing/Clean Up	Closing/Clean Up		Closing/Clean Up	Closing/Clean Up

Handwriting and explicit writing instruction, Caring School Communities (SEL), and any other specials (library) are not even built in.

Tier 2 and 3 intervention time isn't built in

Structured Play is not built in

How is 10 minutes enough time to clean up, pack, do a closing circle, and get everyone out the door calmly?

Let's Talk Minutes

Curriculum	Subject Focus	Time Suggested/Required
EL Education	English Language Arts	EL Education Suggestion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 60 minutes for EL Education Core Lesson Daily 60 minutes Lab daily *3 hrs for full implementation (suggested by EL Education)
Benchmark		Benchmark: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 80-120 minutes
Heggerty Phonemic Awareness	Foundational Skills	75 minutes block: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 60 minute small groups 15 minute small group and independent work
Handwriting Without Tears	Foundational Skills	
SIPPS *This timing will depend on support from a literacy tutor and class size	Foundational Skills	
Eureka Math Squared	Mathematics	50-60 minutes daily
NGSS FOSS	Science	OUSD Suggestion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2 30 minute sessions per week (hands-on) 1 30 minute session per week (literacy focused) FOSS Suggestion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10 minute whole group 30-40 minutes for small groups 10 minutes to wrap up
Reflections	Social Studies	OUSD Suggestion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 50 minutes twice weekly
Language Dives	ELD	30 minutes daily
Physical Education (not all sites have a PE teacher)	Physical Education	200 minutes every two weeks
Morning & Closing Circles	Social Emotional Learning	10-20 minutes 2x per day
Breakfast After the Bell	n/a	15 minutes per day (always takes more time than this for clean up)

Weekly Total to fit it ALL in: 2,250 minutes

Weekly Total Minutes We Actually Have: 1,875 minutes

Weekly Instructional Minutes Mandated by CA: 900 minimum - 1,200 maximum

*It should also be noted that we also have recesses and lunch to put into our daily schedules as well as two, 50 minute staffed preps/enrichments for students starting Enrichments vary greatly by site depending on availability of funding from PTAs.

What's missing? PLAY!

- In comparison, TK has a 60 minutes of free choice play in interest areas in addition to 30-45 minutes of outdoor exploration.

Are the current minutes developmentally appropriate?

What Isn't Accounted For?

Explicit SEL lessons, foundational writing skills, 1:1 assessments and progress monitoring, VAPA, tier 2 interventions, tier 3 interventions...

Results?

Things are getting missed or a lot of modification is happening.



Current Curriculum

EL Education Module– Comprehension/Text Work with science threaded throughout.

- lots of sitting time for long, repetitive lessons
- They are expected to write, but writing isn't explicitly taught in these lessons

EL Labs– hands-on addition to module which most teachers don't have time to prep or implement

***SIPPS**– Meant to be a differentiated tier 2 intervention, but there is not time or support

Heggerty– Phonemic Awareness activities requiring 20+ minutes of sitting time

Foundational Letter Skills– OUSD created, kindergarten students are expected to learn the forms and names of the lowercase alphabet within 28 days.

Eureka Math 2– Core Math, no small group or intervention time built in.

FOSS– Science, requires teachers to have prep and implementation time.

Handwriting Without Tears– letter formation, not integrated intentionally

Social Studies– currently waiting for something

Caring Schools Community– SEL/Morning Meeting, closing circle

*SIPPS is changing to UFLI, anticipated 75min block



In a survey of 30 OUSD Kindergarten teachers in March of 2024...

OUSD Pacing Guides

Question: Is the district provided curriculum pacing working for you?

*This was a scaled score of 1-5 with 1 being "No, not at all" and 5 being "Yes, I'm right on track with everything"

40% reported a 1 "No, not at all"

26.7% reported a 2

23.3% reported a 3

6.7% reported a 4

1 teacher reported a 5 "Yes, I'm right on track with everything"



Content Integration, Why It Matters and What The Current Barriers Are

Too many curriculum pieces that are not integrated.

The OUSD vision of a Kindergarten day does not match realistically.

The district pacing does not take all things into consideration and makes it feel impossible to achieve.

Content Integration is a critical form of teaching that not only allows more to be taught in fewer minutes, but also allows students to build their foundational skills across multiple content topics. Both EL and FOSS highly encourage this.

EL Ed and FOSS have a lot of alignment in kindergarten, but they aren't synced up

- Barriers: EL Ed is strict about their pacing and we are required to submit scores to the district from their assessments
- We work on a FOSS rotation system in order to replenish supplies and keep supply costs down for the district.

EL Ed having 4 large modules makes it challenging to swap out a small number of lessons to align the skills with social studies or other content

Social Studies– Currently awaiting adoption, which will be another curriculum that is not aligned/timed for integration work



Curriculum Pilots and Implementation

- While teachers are asked to be part of pilots, typically they are very limited in terms of who has capacity
- Pilots happen in a very short amount of time and only test one unit

No curriculum is perfect, this is why implementation roll out is critical.

Implementation isn't part of the pilot team nor are teachers part of the implementation planning process.

Curriculum adoption and the implementation plan should go hand in hand when being adopted to prevent the cycle of poor implementation/constantly getting new curriculum.

Assessments

Required

Letter ID– Upper and Lowercase, monthly until mastery 1:1

***SIPPS Mastery Tests** (every 10 lessons, which should be every 10 days) 1:1

DIBELS– Letter Naming Fluency and Phonemic Segmentation, 3x per year 1:1

- students who score below are recommended to complete other assessments. We will increase these based on state required screeners for next year.

Math– Observational Recording Checklist, 6 times per year

- teacher provide a 1–4 score for each student, for each core standard taught in each module
- EM2 has optional 1:1 assessment at the end of each module as well

EL Ed Curriculum Embedded Assessments, 4x per year

iReady Diagnostic– reading and math, 2x per year. Results range based on how it is administered

iReady Lesson Progress Monitoring

Additional Progress Monitoring That Can Be Helpful

Letter Sounds, 1:1

Sight Words, 1:1

EM2 Module Assessment, 1:1

Reading Fluency Checks, 1:1

Shapes, counting (orally and objects), number recognition, 1:1

Phonetic Spelling, Name Writing, Letter Formation

We need structured time for the necessary one-to-one observations/assessments and additional staffing to accomplish this task. Two adults in every Kindergarten classroom would help.

Sown To Grow Mental Health Screener (currently exempt until June 2025), 1x per week



Why Play?

The Powerful Role of Play in Early Education, California Department of Education Sacramento 2021 (Click to Read)

“Play has been at the center of early childhood education and curriculum since the emergence of kindergartens and nursery schools in the United States. Despite the rich tradition of including play in early childhood education, play is disappearing from childhood and early learning settings. This trend is alarming many child advocates who recognize that loss of play in young children’s lives can have detrimental effects on learning and development. And this loss is most significant for children impacted by poverty and children of color (Milteer et al. 2012). In an effort to ensure the well-being and education of young children from birth through kindergarten, this publication explores the importance of and potential for learning through play for young children in educational settings. California’s foundations and frameworks (CDE 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013) highlight play as a primary context for learning. Play is also where the integrated nature of learning happens. This publication describes how play is central to designing developmentally, culturally, and linguistically responsive learning experiences for young children throughout their early childhood years.(pg. 18)”

In a survey of 30 OUSD Kindergarten teachers in March of 2024...

SEL & Developmental Play

Question: Does your class have time for free play/choice time? (outside of recess)

73% reported they make time for play every day but ~64% of those teachers reported having to cut other things out from the schedule to prioritize it

6.7% reported they have play a couple times per week

20% reported they have no play in their schedule but wished they could



OUSD Kindergarten Teacher Feedback

Teacher Needs

- 3–6 weeks of community building at the beginning of the year
- Supports for prep
- Differentiated PD
- District testers to support 1:1 assessments to allow more time for teaching/learning
- Integration of curriculums
- Qualified aides in every room
- Kinder specific PD and teacher-led PLCs to share resources and ideas
- More prep time during professional learning days
- Focus on results vs. pacing
- Pacing guide overhaul

Student Needs

- PLAY
- Outdoor exploration time
- Explicit writing instruction
- More time for labs and hands-on learning
- SEL
- More supports in class (push-in or full time aides)
- Decodable libraries in every room
- Small group work and centers
- Learning based on student interest
- Community circle times to start and end the day (outside of breakfast)
- More movement

Kindergarten Day Suggestions

- More time for play
- Combine subjects that make sense
- More small group supports throughout the day
- Protected SEL time & meaningful integration of SEL into all parts of the day
- Time for cultural events, social studies, etc.
- Breakfast After the Bell tailored to K (We can't be expected to hold the same schedule as 5th graders)
- More recess with Playworks/SEL