California Department of Education

Executive Office

SBE-003 (REV. 11/2017)

# **MEMORANDUM**

**DATE:** August 16, 2024

**TO:** MEMBERS, State Board of Education

**FROM:** TONY THURMOND, State Superintendent of Public Instruction

**SUBJECT:** California Department of Education Release of the Updated *Preschool/ Transitional Kindergarten Learning Foundations*

## **Summary of Key Issues**

The California Department of Education (CDE) released the updated *Preschool/Transitional Kindergarten Learning Foundations (PTKLF)* on the CDE website in July 2024. The *PTKLF* are the learning foundations for early education programs in California, including transitional kindergarten (TK).

The *PTKLF* should be used to set individualized learning goals for children, plan learning environments and teaching strategies, select and implement curricula, design and use assessments, design professional development, enhance preschool to third grade (P–3) alignment, and inform a program’s continuous quality improvement.

This memorandum provides background and an overview of the content in the *PTKLF*, the process for updating the *PTKLF*, the alignment with the *Kindergarten Common Core State Standards* (*CCSS*), and next steps.

### **Background**

The *PTKLF* describe the knowledge and skills most children ages three to five-and-a-half can achieve in a high-quality[[1]](#footnote-2) early education program. The *PTKLF* are for use during the two years prior to kindergarten, such as in preschool, prekindergarten, and TK programs across California. While the *PTKLF* are considered California’s “early learning standards”—as, for example, 33 other states have so defined them for preschool—it is important to note that PTKLF’s “early learning standards” differ from the “standards” adopted by the State Board of Education (SBE) for TK through grade twelve (TK–12), per the SBE’s role under statute.

The *PTKLF* are required to be used by the California State Preschool Program (CSPP) as the *PTKLF* are the “developmental milestones” in the “prekindergarten learning development guidelines” as defined in California *Education Code* (*EC*) Section 8203.3(a) and are required to be used by CSPP as specified in *EC* Section 8203.3(c). The development of the *PTKLF* and CSPP is under the purview of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction.

While state law does not require local educational agencies (LEAs) to use the *PTKLF* in TK, *EC* Section 48000(f) states: “It is the intent of the Legislature that transitional kindergarten curriculum be aligned to the Preschool/Transitional Kindergarten Learning Foundations developed by the department.” Thus, the Legislature intended that the purpose of the *PTKLF* in TK is to guide the selection and implementation of curricula, and to guide instructional supports for TK students along the developmental continuum of skills outlined in the foundations so that students are set up for success to then achieve the kindergarten standards by the second year of their “two-year kindergarten program”, as defined in *EC* Section 48000(d). The PTKLF is an important resource to use in TK alongside the SBE-adopted curriculum frameworks (that also include TK) to inform instruction.

The PTKLF is made up of distinct domains—or content/developmental areas—and each domain includes a series of foundation statements that describe specific skills in that domain. The domains covered in the *PTKLF* include the following:

* Language and Literacy Development, including Foundational Language Development (development of a child’s home language, English, or another language) and English Language Development (development of English for children whose home language is not English)
* Mathematics
* Social and Emotional Development
* Approaches to Learning
* Science
* History-Social Science
* Physical Development
* Visual and Performing Arts
* Health

Each domain is a separate document that includes an introduction to that domain, the foundation statements (e.g., statement describing a child’s skills in that domain), and examples of children demonstrating these skills. Some domains also include educator and teacher support sections that provide instructional strategies related to specific strands in the domain (e.g., Number Operations). There is also an “At-a-Glance" document that lists the foundations’ statements only (no examples) for all domains in one document.

The foundation statements are separated by “Early” and “Later” levels which correspond to overlapping age ranges (three to four-and-a-half; four to five-and-a-half) and should be treated as a developmental continuum. The overlap is intentional and more accurately reflects individual variation in children’s development as opposed to focusing on narrowly defined ages (e.g., at age four). In theEnglish Language Development (ELD) sub-domain, there are three levels that are based on children’s understanding and use of English rather than on their age, which are labeled “Discovering, Developing, and Broadening.”

Following each foundation statement are several examples of children demonstrating the skills outlined in each foundation. The purpose of these examples is to bring the skills to life and represent the diversity of children in California. For instance, there are examples inclusive of children with disabilities, multilingual learners, and children across various cultures and family backgrounds.

### **Preschool/Transitional Kindergarten Learning Foundations Revision Process**

The *PTKLF* were revised from the original version of the *Preschool Learning Foundations*, which were released two to four domains at a time between 2008 and 2012 (Volumes 1–3) for a total of nine domains. Senate Bill 129 (Chapter 69, Statutes of 2021), Section 206, Item 6100-190-0001, appropriated funds to revise the *Preschool Learning Foundations* to “reflect the prekindergarten year prior to kindergarten enrollment, including but not limited to, transitional kindergarten in a school setting…[and] incorporate recent research in the field, such as around dual language learners and supporting inclusion and children with disabilities…”

With this funding, the CDE Early Education Division (EED) contracted with WestEd to revise all domains of the *Preschool Learning Foundations* (Volumes 1–3) and include a new domain of Approaches to Learning, which covers skills related to executive functioning, curiosity, and motivation. Approaches to Learning is included in 39 other states’ early learning standards, as well as the learning standards for Head Start programs. The primary focus of the revision was to reflect recent research in the field of child development, be more inclusive of TK and the knowledge and skills of children across the TK age range (four to five-and-a-half year olds), and include a stronger emphasis on multilingual learners; racial, ethnic, and cultural diversity; as well as inclusion of children with disabilities. From 2021 to 2023, the CDE engaged in subject matter expert review; diversity, equity, and inclusion review; and interest holder and educator focus groups.

The list below outlines a high-level summary of who provided input and feedback on the *PTKLF*. A more detailed list with specific individuals can be found in the “Acknowledgements” document on CDE’s *PTKLF* web page at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/cd/re/psfoundations.asp>.

* WestEd
* CDE, including the Early Education Division, Multilingual Support Division, Special Education Division, and Curriculum Frameworks and Instructional Resources Division
* Thirty-six subject matter experts with child development expertise in specific domains of learning and content areas
* Thirty-five diversity, equity, and inclusion reviews, including translations of child speech in 13 different languages
* Thirty-five early education and kindergarten through twelfth grade (K–12) interest holder organizations in California
* One hundred thirteen preschool and TK educators in California

### **Preschool/Transitional Kindergarten Learning Foundations Emphasis on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion**

### As previously mentioned, one key revision of the *PTKLF* was a greater emphasis on diversity, equity, and inclusion. This focus is highlighted in the introduction of each domain and the examples within each foundation statement, which include examples of children with disabilities, multilingual learners, and references to various cultural and ethnic groups. In particular, the Language and Literacy domain includes many examples of children speaking different languages, as well as code-switching (e.g., alternating between languages). To ensure authenticity, examples were reviewed by the Multilingual Support Division at CDE as well as individuals who speak the language, or individuals who are a member of the cultural or ethnic group being represented. For inclusion of children with disabilities, the Special Education Division at CDE, special education educators, and special education researchers reviewed all examples. In some instances, the examples mention a specific disability type, but in other instances only “a child with a disability” is noted to be inclusive of all disability types that may demonstrate a skill in a certain way (e.g., non-verbal communication). Additionally, footnotes were added to define specific terminology for educators not as familiar with a culture or reference. For a snapshot of examples of diversity, equity and inclusion, see Table 1.

**Table 1. *Preschool/TK Learning Foundations* Examples that Emphasize Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion**

| **Diverse cultural, racial, and ethnic representation** | **Diverse representation of children with varying abilities** | **Diverse representation of language(s)** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Example from Social and Emotional Development, Social Awareness sub-strand:During a read aloud of *Bippity Bop* *Barbershop*[[2]](#footnote-3), a child comments, “Miles wants to be brave for his first haircut, but he’s also nervous about what might happen.” The teacher responds, “Yeah, I think Miles was nervous. Tell me about your first trip to the barbershop,” and the child responds, “I was so excited to go to the same place as my dad!” | Example from Mathematics, Counting Principles sub-strand:When reading the book *Señorita Mariposa* with the teacher, a Deaf child counts the number of butterflies on the page using sign language and communicates, “Seven butterflies.” | Example from Language and Literacy, Writing as communication sub-strand:A child writes their name at the top of a drawing, then asks their Vietnamese-speaking teacher in Vietnamese to write the description of the drawing underneath, *“Con thương bà của con.” (I love my grandma.)* |
| Example from Social and Emotional Development, Interactions with Peers sub-strand:A child talks for several minutes with a peer about how they are dressing up in kimonos\* to pretend that they are celebrating *Shogatsu*.\*\*\*A kimono is a traditional Japanese garment consisting of a long robe with wide sleeves and fastened with a sash around the waist.\*\*Shogatsu is the Japanese New Year. | Example from Approaches to Learning, Curiosity and Interest sub-strand:A child who is blind shows excitement and asks, “What is that?” when the teacher brings out bongos and begins to play with them. The child holds out both arms and says, “What are they like?” indicating a desire to touch and explore the bongos manually. | Example from Language and Literacy, Comprehension of Age-Appropriate Text sub-strand:After several read-alouds of a book about the environment, the teacher invites children to name actions they can do in their community to help the Earth. A child responds in Cantonese, “執乾淨啲 trash” (Clean up trash). |
| From History Social-Science, Self-Identify and Society sub-strand:Two children share that they saw each other at a brush dance\* over the weekend.\*A brush dance is an Indigenous ceremony to cure an ill child. During the ceremony, male dancers carry “brush” in front of them, resulting in the English-derived name. Hupa call this *hont naht weht*, Yurok use the term *meyli* or *melo*, and Kapok use the term *hapish*. | From Mathematics, Number Operations sub-strand:A child with a disability combines their magnetic tiles with a pile of a peer’s magnetic tiles and uses their communication device to show the peer that the peer’s pile has more magnetic tiles now. | From Language and Literacy, Alphabetics and Print sub-strand:While working on an alphabet puzzle in Spanish, a child picks up a piece with the letter “G” and a picture of a cat (*gato* in Spanish) and makes a /g/ sound. They repeat this with several more pieces, such as making an /ē/ sound for “I” (the appropriate sound in Spanish) and an /n/ sound for “N.” Sometimes the teacher prompts the child by saying, *“‘N.’ ¿Cuál es el sonido de la letra ‘N’? ‘N’ como naranja.”* (“N.” What sound does “N” make? “N” like *naranja* [orange]). |
| From Language and Literacy, Comprehension of Age-Appropriate Text sub-strand:An Elder from the child’s tribal community occasionally visits the class to tell stories. After having told several stories involving the character of a coyote,\*\* the storyteller asks, “Why were the other animals afraid to help coyote?” A child replies, “Because he always plays tricks.”\*\*Coyote is a character who is a trickster in the stories of many Native nations and tribal communities. | From Visual and Performing Arts, Visual Arts strand:Using a larger or adapted crayon, a child with a physical disability draws shapes representing their family. | From Language and Literacy, Phonological Awareness sub-strand:A child sings a “good morning” song in the Yurok Indigenous language: *“Skue-yen’ ’ue-koy ’ne-rah-cheen, Skue-yen’ ’ue-koy ’ne-rah-cheen, Skue-yen’ ’ue-koy ’ne-rah-cheen, Keech ’ee ’ roo kee ’ne-ruer-o-woo’-moh!”* (Good morning, my peers, Good morning, my friends, Good morning, my friends, it’s time for us to sing!) |

### **Preschool/Transitional Kindergarten Learning Foundations Alignment to the Kindergarten Standards**

Another key revision of the *PTKLF* was to increase alignment across preschool, TK, and kindergarten. The purposes for this revision were to: (1) increase overall P–3 alignment across the *PTKLF* domains and the existing California SBE-adopted standards for kindergarten through third grade (K–3) in Mathematics, Language and Literacy (titled English Language Arts and Literacy in the Kindergarten *CCSS* and Foundational Language Development in the *PTKLF*), and Science; and (2) be more inclusive of TK since the *Kindergarten* *CCSS* are in most cases beyond the knowledge and skills younger four-year-old students should know and be able to do. The *PTKLF* are intended to be used by LEAs in conjunction with the SBE-adopted curriculum frameworks to inform a developmentally appropriate and comprehensive TK educational program. Tables 2 and 3 outline some key examples of how the *PTKLF* are aligned to existing *Kindergarten CCSS* in the domains of Mathematics and Language and Literacy to reflect a more appropriate steppingstone between preschool/TK and kindergarten, while still maintaining developmental appropriateness and alignment to research on what four to five-and-half-year-old children can do. For example, in the 2008 publication of the *Preschool Learning Foundations*, the Later Foundation (year before kindergarten) included reciting numbers in order from 1 to 20. The *Kindergarten CCSS* standard in this area, however, includes reciting numbers to 100, which represents a large jump. Thus, the updated *PTKLF* revised the Later Foundation to reciting numbers in order from 1 to 30, acknowledging that young children may still make some errors in the teen numbers, but are developmentally ready to count above 20 as they begin to identify patterns in counting (e.g., as 20–30 [and beyond] repeats the 1–9 patterning sequence).

**Table 2. Examples of Alignment Across the *Preschool/TK Learning Foundations (PTKLF)* and the *Kindergarten Common Core State Standards* in Mathematics**

| **Early Foundation in *PTKLF*****(Age 3–4 ½)** | **Later Foundation in *PTKLF*****(Age 4–5 ½)** | ***Kindergarten Common Core State Standards*** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| M.1.5[[3]](#footnote-4). Recognize and name a few written numerals under 10 | M.1.5. Recognize and name all written numerals through 10. | K.CC.3[[4]](#footnote-5). Write and identify numerals from 0–20. |
| (no foundation) | M.3.3. Measure length using concrete objects laid end-to-end, sometimes needing adult support.Note: Children may not yet understand that units need to be of equal length. | K.MD.1 Describe measurable attributes of objects, such as length or weight. Describe several measurable attributes of a single object. |
| M.4.4. Use two- or three-dimensional shapes to represent different elements of a picture or design (for example, adding a circle in a corner to represent the sun). | M.4.4. Combine different two- or three-dimensional shapes to create a picture or design (for example, make a house with two blocks shaped like rectangular prisms and one shaped like a triangular prism). | K.G.6. Compose simple shapes to form larger shapes. For example, “Can you join these two triangles with full sides touching to make a rectangle?” |
| M.1.1. Recite numbers in order from 1–10 or higher with no more than a few errors. | M.1.1. Recite numbers in order from 1–30 with no more than a few errors. Count forward from a number other than one. | K.CC.1. Count to 100 by ones and by tens. |
| M.1.2. Count five objects or more using one-to-one correspondence (one object for each number word). | M.1.2. Count ten objects or more using one-to-one correspondence (one object for each number word). | K.CC.5. Given a number from 1–20, count out that many objects. |
| M.2.2. Demonstrate understanding that a set of objects is made up of smaller parts and that the whole set is bigger than its parts. | M.2.2. Decompose a set of objects into two small sets in more than one way (for example, decompose 5 into sets of 3 and 2 or 1 and 4). Combine two small sets to create a larger set (for example, 3 and 2 to make a set of 5). | K.OA.3. Decompose numbers less than or equal to 10 into pairs in more than one way, e.g., by using objects or drawings, and record each decomposition by a drawing or equation (e.g., 5 = 2 + 3 and 5 = 4 + 1). |

An example for Language and Literacy includes identifying letters in the alphabet. In the PTKLF, the Later Foundation was revised to be specific about the number of letter names children can identify (15–20 uppercase and 12–16 lowercase). This represents a developmentally appropriate stepping stone to then be able to identify and name all upper and lowercase letters by the end of kindergarten, as reflected in the *Kindergarten CCSS.*

**Table 3. Examples of Alignment Across the *Preschool/TK Learning Foundations* in Foundational Language Development and the *Kindergarten Common Core State Standards* in English Language Arts and Literacy**

| **Early Foundation in *PTKLF*****(Age 3–4 ½)** | **Later Foundation in *PTKLF*****(Age 4–5 ½)** | ***Kindergarten Common Core State Standards*** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| FLD.2.4[[5]](#footnote-6). Match some letter names to their printed form. These will commonly be letters in the child’s first name.If learning the alphabet in English, Spanish, or other languages using a similar alphabet such as Tagalog, **match some uppercase letter names (about 3–8)** to their printed form. | FLD.2.4. Match many letter names to their printed form.If learning the alphabet in English, Spanish, or other languages using a similar alphabet such as Tagalog, **match most uppercase letter names (about 15–20)** and approximately **half of the lowercase letter names (about 12–16)** to their printed form | K.RF.1d[[6]](#footnote-7). Recognize and name all upper- and lowercase letters of the alphabet. |
| FLD.2.1. Match words that have the same first sound in speech, with adult support or the support of pictures or objects. | FLD.2.1. Isolate and pronounce the first sound of a word, with adult support or the support of pictures or objects. | K.RF.2b. Isolate and pronounce the initial, medial vowel, and final sounds (phonemes) in three-phoneme (consonant-vowel-consonant, or CVC) words.\* (This does not include CVCs ending with /l/, /r/, or /x/.) |
| FLD.2.2. When presented with two single-syllable words (such as “sand” and “box”), blend them into a compound word in speech with adult support or the support of pictures or objects. | FLD.2.2. When presented with syllables and individual sounds, blend them into words in speech with adult support or the support of pictures or objects. | K.RF.2c. Blend and segment onsets and rimes of single-syllable spoken words; Count, pronounce, blend, and segment syllables in spoken words. |
| FLD. 2.5. Recognize that letters or characters have sounds. | FLD. 2.5. Accurately identify or produce sounds associated with several letters or common characters with adult support.  If learning the alphabet in English, Spanish, or other languages using a similar alphabet such as Tagalog, accurately identify or produce sounds associated with **about half of the letters**.  | K.RF.3a. Demonstrate basic knowledge of one-to-one letter-sound correspondences by producing the primary sounds or many of the most frequent sounds for each consonant. |
| **FLD.4.3.** Engage in dictating thoughts and ideas when an adult offers to help with writing them down. | **FLD.4.3.** Demonstrate interest in conveying extended thoughts and ideas in writing, engaging the help of an adult | W.K.1. Use a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to compose opinion pieces in which they tell a reader the topic or the name of the book they are writing about and state an opinion or preference about the topic or book (e.g., My favorite book is . . .). |
| (no foundation) | FLD. 4.2. Write, with adult support, a few recognizable letters that are intended to represent their corresponding sounds. | L.K.2c. Write a letter or letters for most consonant and short-vowel sounds (phonemes). |
| FLD.4.4. Write using scribbles that resemble letters or characters and are distinct from pictures. | FLD.4.4. Write a few recognizable letters or characters to represent words or ideas | L.K.1aPrint many upper and lower-case letters |

Alignment between the *PTKLF* and the Kindergarten *CCSS* was also considered in the restructuring of some domains. For example, in Mathematics the 2008 publication of the *Preschool Learning Foundations* included “Algebra and Functions” as a label, which was changed and restructured in the *PTKLF* to “Operations and Algebraic Thinking” to align more closely with this label in the *Kindergarten CCSS* for Mathematics. The updated *PTKLF* also includes Mathematical Practices that are identical to those outlined in the *CCSS*. The *PTKLF* was also revised to align more closely with the *Next Generation Science Standards* *(NGSS)* for California Public Schools. This is evident in the restructuring and renaming of categories within the *PTKLF* Science domain to emphasize the dimensions covered in the *NGSS*: science and engineering practices, disciplinary core ideas, and crosscutting concepts. By better aligning the *PTKLF* domains and the SBE-adopted standards, the *PTKLF* are better aligned for use with the SBE-adopted curriculum frameworks.

Another area of alignment is in English Language Development. In the domain of Language and Literacy – English Language Development (ELD), the *PTKLF* describe the development of multilingual learners who are learning English in preschool and TK, and the California *English Language Development* (*ELD*) *Standards* provide guidance in English language development for multilingual learners in kindergarten through twelfth grade. While the foundations and standards do not have the same organization, they cover many of the same skills, including vocabulary and grammar, using language to communicate ideas, understanding stories and informational texts, and foundational literacy skills. Both also have three levels to describe children’s progression as they acquire English language skills, but the levels—particularly the levels that represent the highest proficiency in ELD (Broadening in *PTKLF* and Bridging in K–12 ELD)—have slightly different meanings in the two documents. In the K–12 standards, the Bridging level refers to children who can participate in learning activities in English without additional supports. The *PTKLF* Broadening level represents skills and knowledge of children who are able to engage in most everyday interactions in English while continuing to develop home language competence. Children begin to learn English at different grades and ages, and the progression of their English development depends on the English input they receive and the English language support they are provided in addition to their development of their home language. As such, the Broadening stage of the *PTKLF* ELD cannot directly align with the Emerging stage (the earliest level of proficiency) of the California *ELD Standards* in kindergarten, because the levels are proficiency-based rather than age-based. Both documents offer guidance for educators on how to provide children the best support for English language development in an educational context.

While alignment was a goal of the *PTKLF* revision, there are also instances of overlap between the *PTKLF* and the *Kindergarten CCSS* (see Tables 4 and 5). This overlap is intentional and reflects what developmental research has shown four to five-and-a-half-year-old children can achieve with high-quality instruction. In consulting with subject matter experts, they did not want to limit what young children could do in the *PTKLF* because it was covered in the *Kindergarten CCSS*. In many cases, however, while the Later Foundation is similar to the kindergarten standard, the *PTKLF* uses more developmentally appropriate language. For example, adding and subtracting is only exercised “in the context of everyday situations” and children use language like “same as” instead of “equal.” This overlap between the *PTKLF* and *Kindergarten CCSS* was more common in Mathematics (Table 4), although it was also present in Language and Literacy (Table 5). For example, in the *Kindergarten CCSS* in Mathematics, one of the standards focuses on an understanding that the last number counted in a set means “how many” there are in total (e.g., cardinality). However, an understanding of cardinality typically develops by age four to five, which is before kindergarten, and exemplified in the Later Foundation in the *PTKLF*. More examples in Mathematics can be found in Table 4.

**Table 4. Examples of Overlap Across the *Preschool/TK Learning Foundations (PTKLF)* Later Foundation Statements and the *Kindergarten Common Core State Standards* in Mathematics**

| **Early Foundation in *PTKLF*****(Age 3–4 ½)** | **Later Foundation in *PTKLF*****(Age 4–5 ½)** | ***Kindergarten Common Core State Standards*** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| M.3.1. Demonstrate awareness that objects can be compared by length, weight, or capacity by noticing differences in objects and communicating about their comparison. | M.3.1. Compare two objects by length, weight, or capacity (for example, putting objects side by side) and communicate about their comparison. | K.MD.2. Directly compare two objects with a measurable attribute in common, to see which object has “more of” or “less of” the attribute and describe the difference. For example, directly compare the heights of two children and describe one child as taller or shorter. |
| M.2.5. Notice similarities and differences in the attributes of objects. Sort and classify objects by one attribute into two or more groups. | M.2.5. Sort and classify objects by one or more attributes, into two or more groups, with accuracy and flexibility. When sorting by two attributes, a child may first sort by one attribute and then by the second attribute. | K.MD.3. Classify objects into given categories; count the numbers of objects in each category and sort the categories by count |
| M.1.3. Answer the question “How many?” by counting. May repeat the last number word in the number list after counting but is still developing an understanding that the number name of the last object counted represents the total number of objects in the group. | M.1.3. Consistently demonstrate understanding, when counting, that the number name of the last object counted represents the total number of objects in the group. | K.CC.4b. Understand that the last number name said tells the number of objects counted. The number of objects is the same regardless of their arrangement or the order in which they were counted. |
| M.1.6. Compare (with or without counting) two groups of objects that are clearly equal or different in size and communicate, “same” or “more.” | M.1.6. Compare two groups of objects by counting and communicating, “more,” “same,” “less,” or “fewer.” | K.CC.6. Identify whether the number of objects in one group is greater than, less than, or equal to the number of objects in another group, e.g., by using matching and counting strategies. |
| M.2.1. Demonstrate understanding that adding or taking away one or more objects from a group will increase or decrease the number of objects in the group. | M.2.1. Demonstrate understanding that adding one or taking away one object changes the number in a small group of objects by exactly one. | K.CC.4c. Understand that each successive number name refers to a quantity that is one larger. |
| M.2.3. Solve addition and subtraction problems with a very small number of objects in the context of everyday situations. | M.2.3. Solve addition and subtraction problems with a larger number of objects (sums up to 10) ​​in the context of everyday situations. | K.OA.2. Solve addition and subtraction word problems, and add and subtract within 10, e.g., by using objects or drawings to represent the problem. |

An example of this overlap in Language and Literacy is in the discussion of read-aloud texts. The *Kindergarten English Language Arts and Literacy CCSS* details how students are able to identify key details in a story, as well as identify characters and major events in a story. This skill is also present in the Later Foundation of Foundational Language Development in the *PTKLF*, as four and five-year-olds are also able to engage in these kinds of reading comprehension skills at this age. More examples of this overlap in Language and Literacy can be found in Table 5.

**Table 5. Examples of Overlap Across the *Preschool/TK Learning Foundations (PTKLF)* Later Foundation Statements in Foundational Language Development and the *Kindergarten Common Core State Standards* in English Language Arts and Literacy**

| **Early Foundation in *PTKLF*****(Age 3–4 ½)** | **Later Foundation in *PTKLF*****(Age 4–5 ½)** | ***Kindergarten Common Core State Standards*** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| FLD. 3.2. Demonstrate basic understanding of main characters or events in a story after the child has experienced the story a few times. | FLD.3.2. Demonstrate understanding of details in a story, including knowledge of characters, events, and ordering of events, and use their increased understanding of story structure to predict what might come next when asked. | K.RL.1. With prompting and support, ask and answer questions about key details in a text; retell familiar stories, including key details; identify characters, settings, and major events in a story. |
| FLD.1.8 Participate in back-and-forth conversations with adults and peers. Respond on topic for at least one turn in a conversation | FLD.1.8 Participate in increasingly long and complex back-and-forth conversations with adults and peers. Respond on topic across several turns in the conversation. | K.SL.1. Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about kindergarten topics and texts with peers and adults in small and larger groups. a. Follow agreed-upon rules for discussions (e.g., listening to others and taking turns speaking about the topics and texts under discussion). b. Continue a conversation through multiple exchanges |
| FLD.1.5 Use questions to seek information and to clarify and confirm understanding. | FLD.1.5 Use questions and follow-up questions to seek information and to clarify and confirm understanding. | K.SL.3. Ask and answer questions in order to seek help, get information, or clarify something |

Intentionally, the PTKLF also includes examples where the Later Foundation in the *PTKLF* does not have a counterpart in the *Kindergarten CCSS* (see Table 6). This reflects what subject matter experts advised were skills that were important to emphasize prior to kindergarten, in part because it supports later development of related skills in kindergarten. For example, patterning is not a Mathematics skill that appears in the *Kindergarten CCSS*, but subject matter experts included it in the *PTKLF* because it is an algebraic thinking skill that can be more tangible for young children to engage in before applying patterning concepts to number sense (e.g., recognizing number sequence patterns) and later algebra skills (e.g., using input-output tables). In Language and Literacy, there is a strong emphasis prior to kindergarten on developing oral language skills and vocabulary unrelated to a specific text like a book read-aloud, as well as developing literacy interest and joy with reading.

**Table 6. Example *Preschool/TK Learning Foundations (PTKLF)* Mathematics and Foundational Language Development Foundation Statements with No Corresponding *Kindergarten Common Core State Standard***

| **Early Foundation in *PTKLF*****(Age 3–4 ½)** | **Later Foundation in *PTKLF*****(Age 4–5 ½)** | ***Kindergarten Common Core State Standards*** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| M.4.6 Rely on trial and error to determine how objects move in space or fit in different locations (for example, try to fit an object into a hole by rotating, flipping, or sliding the piece in different orientations until it fits). | M.4.6. Rotate, flip, or slide objects to solve a problem without relying as much on physical trial and error (for example, rotate an object before fitting it into a hole). | None. |
| M.2.4. Share a small number of objects (for example, four or six objects) equally between two recipients | M.2.4. Share a slightly larger number of objects equally between two or more recipients (for example, nine objects among three recipients). | None. |
| M.1.4. Identify without counting (e.g., subitize) the number of objects in a small collection (for example, one to four objects). | M.1.4. Identify without counting (e.g., subitize) the number of objects in a collection of one to five objects. | None. |
| M.2.6. Notice and explore patterns in their environment, and with adult support, duplicate simple repeating patterns (for example, ABAB). | M.2.6. Explore, extend, and duplicate a variety of repeating patterns (for example, AABBAABB, ABCABC) with adult support. Describe the repeating part of a pattern (pattern unit). | None. |
| FLD 3.1. Demonstrate interest in and engagement with literacy and literacy-related activities. | FLD.3.1. Demonstrate interest in and engagement with literacy and literacy-related activities for progressively extended periods of time and with increasing independence. | None. |

Finally, one key difference between the *PTKLF* and the *Kindergarten CCSS* is that the Language & Literacy–Foundational Language Development (FLD) sub-domain of the *PTKLF* was revised to be more inclusive of children’s home languages, whereas the *Kindergarten CCSS* in English Language Arts and Literacy only details learning expectations for English. For example, all *PTKLF* foundation statements in FLD, like understanding and using vocabulary, and identifying sounds, can be demonstrated in a child’s home language (e.g., Spanish), and the examples in the *PTKLF* reflect both English and other languages. The Language and Literacy-ELD sub-domain of the *PTKLF* then covers the explicit development of English for children who have a home language other than English and are learning English. The structure of strands and sub-strands for ELD in the *PTKLF*—such as understanding and using vocabulary and identifying sounds—is then identical to that of FLD to more easily see the alignment between the two sub-domains in a child’s home language compared to English (Table 7). This is different from the relationship between the California *ELD Standards* and the English Language Arts and Literacy *CCSS* in K–12 where there is not an identical structure.

**Table 7. Alignment Between Language and Literacy Sub-Domains of the *Preschool/TK Learning Foundations (PTKLF)***

| **Language and Literacy Sub-Domain** | **Strand** | **Sub-Strand** | **Levels** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Foundational Language Development(e.g., home language development, including English and other languages) | Listening and Speaking | Vocabulary | **Early Foundation:** Understand and use words for objects, actions, and attributes frequently experienced in everyday life, such as through play, conversations, or stories.**Later Foundation:** Understand and use an increasing variety of words for objects, actions, and attributes experienced in everyday life, such as through play, conversations, or stories. |
| English Language Development (e.g., English language development for students learning English as a second language) | Listening and Speaking | Vocabulary | **Discovering:** Pay attention to English oral language and understand a few common English words, while relying mainly on intonation, facial expressions, and gestures of the speaker in interactions with adults and peers**Developing:** Demonstrate understanding of words in English for objects and actions as well as phrases encountered frequently in interactions with adults and peers.**Broadening:** Demonstrate understanding of a larger set of words in English (for example, objects and actions, personal pronouns, possessives, and descriptive terms) in interactions with adults and peers. |

### **Next Steps**

Given its importance to early education instruction, it is critical that educators feel well-equipped to implement the *PTKLF* in everyday instruction. There are different grants that LEAs can use to design and implement professional development on the *PTKLF*. For example, the Educator Effectiveness Block Grant, the Early Education Teacher Development Grant, and the UPK Planning and Implementation Grant, among others. The California Department of Social Services (CDSS) also funds the California Preschool Instructional Network (CPIN), which will be updating training and modules on the revised *PTKLF*. CPIN provides free training however, because of CDSS’ focus on childcare programs and emphasis on expanding access to CPIN for family childcare homes and family, friend and neighbor settings, the focus of the *PTKLF* modules and training content may not fully meet the needs of TK educators. For more information on CPIN visit: <https://cpin.us/>.

The CDE also released pre-recorded presentations that outline each domain in the *PTKLF*. These presentations are posted on the CDE website. For more information, visit: <https://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/cd/re/psfoundations.asp>.

The CDE is also planning to release *Preschool to Third Grade (P–3) Learning Progressions* in 2025. The purpose of this resource is for educators, instructional coaches, and school leaders to more clearly see the alignment across the *PTKLF* and the existing California SBE-adopted kindergarten through third grade (K–3) standards in Mathematics, Language and Literacy, and Science. The *P–3 Learning Progressions* will also provide short in-practice examples that detail the developmental continuum of learning, since some students—regardless of being in a specific grade—may be at different parts of the continuum and educators should feel empowered to meet students where they are in their development. Another goal of this resource is to provide P–3 progressions in Social and Emotional Development and Approaches to Learning skills, as these are included in the *PTKLF*, but there are no SBE-adopted K–3 standards.

### **Attachment(s)**

* None
1. High-quality generally means that the early education program provides the kinds of interactions, instruction, and environments that research has shown promotes positive child outcomes. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. *Bippity Bop Barbershop* tells the story of a Black boy going to the barbershop for the first time. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. The notation for the *PTKLF* is a letter (e.g., “M”) which stands for the domain name (e.g., Mathematics), followed by two numbers that designate the specific strand (e.g., Operations and Algebraic Thinking), and sub-strand (e.g., Number Operations) [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. The notation for the *Kindergarten CCSS* is similar where the “K” stands for kindergarten, the next two letters stand for the specific strand (e.g., “CC” stands for Counting and Cardinality), followed by the specific standard which is a number sometimes followed by a letter. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
5. The notation for the *PTKLF* is a letter (e.g., “FLD”) which stands for the domain name (e.g., Foundational Language Development), followed by two numbers that designate the specific strand (e.g., Listening and Speaking), and sub-strand (e.g., Vocabulary). [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
6. The notation for the *Kindergarten CCSS* is similar where the “K” stands for kindergarten, the next two letters stand for the specific strand (e.g., “RF” stands for Reading Foundational Skills), followed by the specific standard which is a number sometimes followed by a letter. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)