

STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE · CALIFORNIA

California School Enrollment Guide 2026 (TK, Kindergarten and LAUSD)

Transitional Kindergarten and kindergarten age rules, vaccines, language support and rights for immigrant families. Example district: Los Angeles Unified (LAUSD).

SHORT ANSWER

No California school district may ask for a Social Security number or your immigration status to enroll a child (California Education Code §48204.1). Transitional Kindergarten (TK) requires a child to turn 4, and kindergarten requires age 5, on or before September 1, 2026; this rule is the same in every district statewide, with no exceptions. California ended the personal-belief vaccine exemption in 2016, so only a doctor-approved medical exemption is accepted. At large districts such as Los Angeles Unified (LAUSD), enrollment happens online at enroll.lausd.net.

Statewide rules

- **No SSN or immigration-status question.** Under California Attorney General guidance, a Social Security number is never required to enroll in school, and citizenship or immigration status is never asked. Districts may not require documents, such as a state driver's license or voter registration, that would functionally exclude an undocumented parent.
- **Transitional Kindergarten (TK):** for 2026-27, a child must turn 4 on or before September 1, 2026 (birthdate between September 2, 2021 and September 1, 2022). This is a state-law cutoff, and no district makes exceptions.
- **Kindergarten:** a child must turn 5 on or before September 1.
- **Only a medical vaccine exemption is accepted.** California ended the personal-belief exemption statewide in 2016 (SB 277); only a licensed physician's medical exemption is accepted anywhere in the state, a stricter rule than in Texas, which still allows a conscientious-objector exemption.
- **English learner assessment.** Every district uses a Home Language Survey at enrollment; if a language other than English is spoken at home, the child goes through ELPAC (California's English-proficiency assessment) and is placed accordingly.

Example: Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD)

In Los Angeles, LAUSD enrolls new students through LAUSD One Enrollment.

- 1 **Complete the online enrollment form** at enroll.lausd.net, or download the form, fill it out, sign it, and bring it to your zoned school.
- 2 **Call the Parent Hotline** at (213) 443-1300 for help.

- 3 In other districts** (such as San Diego Unified, San Francisco Unified or Fresno Unified), the same statewide rules apply; your address determines your district, so check your own district's official enrollment page.

LAUSD runs the "We Are One L.A. Unified" resource guide for immigrant families, the International Newcomer Enrichment summer program for grades 9-12 (open to students who arrived in the U.S. within the last 36 months), and the district-wide Migrant Education Program (migranteducation.lausd.org) for migratory children.

YOUR RIGHTS AS AN IMMIGRANT FAMILY

- Under Plyler v. Doe (1982), every child living in California may attend public school regardless of immigration status; California reinforces this with its own Education Code (§48204.1) and Attorney General guidance.
- Schools may not ask about your or your child's immigration status, and may not use it as a residency test.
- An SSN cannot be required for enrollment.
- Have your child's Turkish vaccine records translated into English and reviewed by a U.S. doctor to avoid delays; remember California accepts only a medical exemption.



TURKISH-SPEAKING IMMIGRATION ATTORNEY IN CALIFORNIA

Have a question about your immigration status?

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