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## Lafayette Kindergarten Preparedness Meeting Next Week

*By Cathy Tyson*

Entering kindergarten is a big step for young families, to make the transition just a bit easier the Lafayette School district will be hosting, "A Roadmap to Kindergarten."

"The information night is a great way for parents to get the District's take on Kindergarten readiness - straight from a Kindergarten teacher - and hear about 'a day in the life' of a kindergartner. This is certainly information every preschool parent will be interested to hear," said mother of three, Melissa Lee, who volunteered to help get the word out.

What does it take to be ready for kindergarten? Mary Maddux, Principal of Lafayette Elementary, can spell it out for newbies. Parents will also learn what their child can expect in kindergarten and throughout the school year, and about all of the partnerships in the community that help support Lafayette's schools.

Also up for discussion, the District will be introducing its planning for the new Transitional Kindergarten program that is set to start in fall 2012. With the passage of SB 1381, the Kindergarten Readiness Act, the State of California is moving the kindergarten birthday cutoff from December 1 to September 1, phased in over three years. The current cutoff for the 2012-2013 school year has moved from December 1 to November 1. For "young fives" whose kindergarten may be delayed, the bill creates a transitional kindergarten that provides a bridge between preschool and traditional kindergarten. It's estimated that the change could translate in \$700 million in state wide cost saving resulting from having fewer children entering school.

For the 2011 - 2012 school year, California children as young as four years and nine months could start kindergarten. According the Legislative Analyst's Office, "Data suggest children who are older when they start kindergarten tend to perform better on standardized tests."

The Roadmap to Kindergarten will have information on the Kindergarten registration process and dates of the Open Houses at each of Lafayette's elementary school, and feature a range of speakers including Kindergarten teacher Joan McClure, Superintendent Dr. Fred Brill and representatives from the Parent Club/PTA and Lafayette Partners in Education (LPIE).

Come as you are, crayons not required on Tuesday January 10 from 6:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. at the Lafayette Elementary Multipurpose Room, 950 Moraga Road, Lafayette. For more information on Transitional kindergarten, go to [www.preschoolcalifornia.org](http://www.preschoolcalifornia.org).

Reach the reporter at: [cathy@lamorindaweekly.com](mailto:cathy@lamorindaweekly.com)

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