

California Media and Public Leaders Support SB 1381

“Common sense, and an abundance of research, suggests that sending children to school before they are ready is not in anyone’s interests: theirs, their classmates, teachers or taxpayers. By providing preschool options with the transitional kindergarten program, Simitian’s bill is likely to reap additional savings by reducing the number of students who end up in special education or forced to repeat an early grade.” – *San Francisco Chronicle* Editorial, September 13, 2010

“The state’s elected leaders also adopted a small but nifty bill (SB 1381), introduced by Sen. Joe Simitian (D-Palo Alto), that thoughtfully phases in a requirement that all kindergartners be 5 years old when they start school. That sounds like a small change, but it acknowledges the transformation of kindergarten from a play year to an introduction to school.” – *Los Angeles Times* Editorial, September 5, 2010

“Here are a few other bills Schwarzenegger should add to his legacy... SB 1381 by Sen. Joe Simitian, D-Palo Alto...Four-year-olds are often not ready for kindergarten, and starting too early can put them hopelessly behind. The bill is supported by educators, policy wonks and the vast majority of lawmakers, for good reason.” – *San Jose Mercury News* Editorial, September 10, 2010

“Not much good came out of the recently ended state legislative session. But one of the few bright spots was the passage last week of SB 1381, a bill that raises the age that children can start school in California... Now, it’s up to the governor; we encourage him to sign this bill immediately.” – *Los Angeles Daily News* Editorial, September 8, 2010

“It isn’t often that state legislators come up with a proposal to improve education without additional spending. But a bill by state Sen. Joe Simitian, D-Palo Alto, accomplishes such a task at a time when California is bogged down in a seemingly endless budget crisis...This bipartisan effort will help children, schools and state taxpayers. It should be signed by the governor.” – *San Bernardino Sun* Editorial, September 3, 2010. Also ran in *Pasadena Star-News*, *San Gabriel Valley Tribune* and *Whittier Daily News*.

“At least one deserving bill made it through the state Legislature’s end-of-term chaos last week: SB 1381, which would gradually change the age requirement for children entering public school. Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger should sign it immediately.” – *The Reporter* Editorial, September 8, 2010

“Senate Bill 1381 by Joe Simitian, D-Palo Alto, would provide a much-needed change in the age requirements for children entering kindergarten. Currently, state law says that a child may be admitted to kindergarten in the fall if he or she turns five by Dec. 2. But teachers say students are often not ready developmentally or socially to start school that early, causing untold impacts on the class and setbacks for the student.” – *Santa Rosa Press Democrat* Editorial, September 9, 2010

“What will the children with fall birthdays do during the year they wait to enroll in kindergarten? Those with high-quality learning opportunities are more likely to spend it gaining the social and academic readiness skills they’ll need to succeed in the classroom.”

— Jill Cannon, Public Policy Institute of California, *Sacramento Bee*, May 2, 2010

Business, Law Enforcement, Media and Education Leaders Support SB 1381

“The two sets of students are separated in age by only a few months, but the gulf in maturity and academic skills is wide...Transitional kindergarten would provide two years of preparation for the first grade, which supporters say would boost test scores and reduce special education placements and the number of students held back a grade.” – [Carla Rivera, Los Angeles Times, September 7, 2010](#)

“Business leaders in California are always looking to be on the cutting edge of best practices that will improve and streamline the work they do. It has become clear that high-quality early education is a ‘best practice’ that provides huge returns on our investments by preparing children for school. This preparation leads to higher achievement and graduation rates and, in the future, to a more qualified, creative and innovative workforce. Such smart investment in high-quality early education, as what is proposed in SB 1381, will help us prepare the highly skilled workers that San Diego and our state need to succeed in an increasingly competitive global economy. It is no wonder there is such wide business support for this legislation.” – [Julie Meier Wright, President and CEO, San Diego Regional Economic Development Corporation](#)

“California’s children begin kindergarten at a younger age than kids in almost any other state, often before they are prepared to meet the challenges of school...High-quality early childhood programs like transitional kindergarten provide critical preparation for California’s students to enjoy success in elementary school and beyond.” – [Larry Powell, Fresno County Superintendent of Schools, Fresno Bee, August 12, 2010](#)

“The idea behind [transitional kindergarten] is that kids would come to kindergarten more prepared. While a few months may seem small, it can mean a big difference for a 5-year-old...what happens in these [kindergarten] classes has a huge impact. How well kindergarteners can read is a strong predictor of whether they graduate high school.” – [Emily Alpert, Voice of Diego, September 12, 2010](#)

“The more early education the better; it gives children a year to develop the maturity, social, literacy and pre-math skills they need to succeed in kindergarten. This strong early start ensures kids are ready to learn—keeping them in school and off the streets.” – [Tony Rackauckas, District Attorney, Orange County](#)

“Our youngest kindergarteners would benefit from the change in entrance age date accompanied by a transitional kindergarten experience by entering older and more prepared to meet the kindergarten standards. The passage of SB 1381 is essential to providing quality educational opportunities to all children.” – [Debra Weller, President, California Kindergarten Association](#)

These “young fives” are a little too old for preschool and a little too young for kindergarten. A kindergarten transition program, as called for by this bill, would help fill the gap. – [California State Parent Teacher Association \(PTA\)](#)

“SB 1381 would deliver more age and developmentally appropriate instruction to approximately 120,000 four year olds, while simultaneously reducing the number of students retained in kindergarten and first grade, shrinking the number of special education referrals and enhancing student test scores...SB 1381 is fiscally responsible, beneficial to the business community, and most importantly, the right policy for California’s kids.”

– [Ken McNeely, President, California AT&T](#)

“The Simitian bill will help close the achievement gap by providing a year of transitional kindergarten for children who turn five between Sept. 2 and Dec. 2...this new legislation will ensure that all children, regardless of family income, will have access to a public school program designed to prepare them for both the social and academic demands of kindergarten. The measure would give a boost to the children who need it most, while it potentially increases the overall achievement of California’s children by giving them a few more months to mature before they begin formal schooling.”

– [Deborah J. Stipek, I. James Quillen Dean and Professor of Education, Stanford University](#)