

Bill alters age requirement for California kindergartners

By Tracy Correa, McClatchy Newspapers

Monica Hoenig could have enrolled her 4-year-old son Ryan in kindergarten this year, but she was concerned that his lack of maturity would cause him to lag academically – not only now, but in years to come.

So she signed him up for a pilot transitional kindergarten program at Washington School, a charter school in Kingsburg, Calif.

The transitional program gives Ryan an extra year to learn some of what's taught in kindergarten. But Ryan also can learn at a slower pace – and with far less pressure to master skills such as writing.

The new program in Kingsburg, one of a growing number of transitional kindergarten classes statewide, would be mandated under proposed legislation that would hike the age of kindergartners and give younger children the chance to be better prepared when they enroll.

Parents and some education activists have tried for years to raise California's age requirement for kindergarten, but past bills failed to win legislative support.

Read the whole story