



PRESS RELEASE
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Delaware and New Jersey Select *Teaching Strategies GOLD*[®] for Kindergarten Entry Assessment

Bethesda, MD, September 12, 2012—Teaching Strategies, LLC is pleased to announce that its observation-based assessment system, *Teaching Strategies GOLD*[®], has been selected to inform teachers and the state about the skills, knowledge, and behaviors of incoming kindergarteners in Delaware and New Jersey. As in other states, *Teaching Strategies GOLD*[®] was chosen after a rigorous review of multiple instruments by advisory committees consisting of kindergarten teachers, school superintendents, parents, early childhood educators, state officials, and other stakeholders. Teachers can continue using *Teaching Strategies GOLD*[®] beyond kindergarten entry to measure progress and guide instructional decisions, and states can customize it to their specifications. “We are proud to be partnering with Delaware and New Jersey,” said Diane Trister Dodge, founder of Teaching Strategies. “*Teaching Strategies GOLD*[®] will help both states gain a comprehensive understanding of children’s development and learning as they enter kindergarten and inform efforts to close the school readiness gap. It will also help kindergarten teachers plan and individualize instruction for all children.”

In Delaware, *Teaching Strategies GOLD*[®] has been customized as part of the Delaware Early Learner Survey (DE-ELS). “Through the Early Learner Survey, we can better understand the developing skills of Delaware’s children as they enter kindergarten. This information will help us deepen our work to provide world-class early learning to Delaware’s infants, toddlers, and preschoolers, and will be invaluable for kindergarten teachers to inform their instructional practices and their partnerships with families,” said Harriet Dichter, Executive Director of the Delaware Office of Early Learning. The Delaware Early Learner Survey is part of the state’s Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge grant, and will be phased in over a four-year period.

In New Jersey, the Department of Education is starting with a small pilot of *Teaching Strategies GOLD*[®] this fall, with the intention of an expanded pilot next year (possibly in collaboration with other states) and a phased implementation strategy in subsequent years. “The decision to choose *Teaching Strategies GOLD*[®] for a kindergarten entry assessment pilot in New Jersey was based on three factors,” said Vincent Costanza, Early Childhood Program Specialist at the New Jersey Department of Education. “First, it provides real-world examples of how children might demonstrate what they know and can do, which makes it easy for teachers to assign child ratings. Second, it has easily customized reports for teachers and administrators, as well as intuitive web navigation. Finally, and most importantly, the tool is directly aligned to the *Common Core State Standards*, which will help teachers learn the standards and use them appropriately.”

Teaching Strategies GOLD[®] is a developmentally appropriate, observation-based assessment system for children from birth through kindergarten. It covers all essential domains of school readiness and can be used with any developmentally appropriate curriculum. It is grounded in 38 research-based objectives that include predictors of school success and are aligned with state early learning standards, the *Common Core State Standards* for kindergarten, and *The Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework*. *Teaching Strategies GOLD*[®] helps teachers document children's development and learning at particular points in time and over time, use that information to inform instruction, and communicate findings to families and other stakeholders. The tool can be used with all children, including English- and dual-language learners and children with disabilities. Extensive research conducted by the Center for Educational Measurement and Evaluation at UNC Charlotte shows that *Teaching Strategies GOLD*[®] is highly valid and reliable.

When used for kindergarten assessment, *Teaching Strategies GOLD*[®] can be customized to meet the unique needs of individual states. For example, states can decide which *Teaching Strategies GOLD*[®] objectives and dimensions teachers assess, when and how often checkpoints occur, and whether to incorporate the *Common Core State Standards* for kindergarten into the *Teaching Strategies GOLD*[®] progressions, which enables Common Core specific reporting. *Teaching Strategies GOLD*[®] provides actionable data at all levels through innovative reports for teachers, parents, administrators, and policymakers. Teaching Strategies collaborates with states to integrate results from *Teaching Strategies GOLD*[®] into statewide longitudinal data systems.

Teaching Strategies GOLD[®] can be used for kindergarten entry and ongoing formative assessment, with up to three additional checkpoint opportunities available at no additional cost. It includes free online professional development modules and interrater reliability certification to help ensure fidelity of use, as well as a family portal to promote meaningful communication with families and activities to support instruction and assessment. Teaching Strategies also offers a wide range of in-person professional development sessions designed to support teachers throughout the assessment process, and customized implementation plans to meet each state's needs.

To learn more about *Teaching Strategies GOLD*[®] and other states that are implementing it, please visit www.teachingstrategies.com/GOLD-K or contact Jonah Stuart, Director of Public Policy & Government Relations, at jonahs@teachingstrategies.com/301-832-6697.

About Teaching Strategies, LLC

Teaching Strategies provides the most innovative and effective assessment, curriculum, professional development, and family connection resources to programs serving children from birth through kindergarten. With ground-breaking solutions and a strong belief that a child's first 6 years form a critical foundation for school success, Teaching Strategies has been an advocate for the early education community for over 25 years. Teaching Strategies consistently expands its product offerings to include award-winning products like *The Creative Curriculum*[®] for Preschool and widely adopted assessment solutions like *Teaching Strategies GOLD*[®]. To learn why thousands of early childhood programs and many states choose to partner with Teaching Strategies to help ensure children's success in school and in life, visit www.teachingstrategies.com.