



PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

***Teaching Strategies GOLD*® Assessment System Selected for Use in the Washington Kindergarten Inventory of Developing Skills (WaKIDS) Program**

Bethesda, MD, October 20, 2011—Teaching Strategies is pleased to announce that its observation-based assessment system, *Teaching Strategies GOLD*®, is being used to assess incoming kindergarten children in Washington state as part of the Washington Kindergarten Inventory of Developing Skills (WaKIDS) program.

WaKIDS is a new kindergarten assessment process directed by the Washington State Department of Early Learning and the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction in consultation with Thrive by Five Washington and with generous support from the Gates Foundation. WaKIDS was developed to give kindergarten teachers valuable information about each child in their classrooms. That information informs instructional decisions and provides a statewide profile of children's developmental levels when they enter kindergarten. The University of Washington is leading the evaluation study.

Teaching Strategies GOLD® was selected for WaKIDS after a thorough review of several assessment instruments. *Teaching Strategies GOLD*® is an authentic, observation-based assessment system for children from birth through kindergarten. The system covers all essential domains of early childhood development and school readiness, and it can be used with any developmentally appropriate curriculum. It is grounded in 38 research-based objectives that include predictors of future school success and are aligned with state early learning standards, *The Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework*, and the *Common Core State Standards* for kindergarten.

The primary purpose of *Teaching Strategies GOLD*® is to document children's development and learning at particular points of time and over time, to inform instruction, and to facilitate communication with families and other stakeholders. This comprehensive assessment system provides an exceptionally strong window into children's development and learning as they enter kindergarten. It enables teachers to begin the school year with a thorough understanding of each child and to build an approach to instruction that will promote success in kindergarten and the early elementary grades. *Teaching Strategies GOLD*® can be used to assess all children, including English- and dual-language learners. It supports the assessment of children with disabilities and children who are developing typically. Extensive research conducted by the Center for Educational Measurement and Evaluation at UNC Charlotte shows that *Teaching Strategies GOLD*® is highly valid and reliable.

WaKIDS was successfully piloted during the 2010–2011 school year. This past August, Teaching Strategies trainers partnered with WaKIDS staff members to deliver more than 25 *Teaching Strategies GOLD*® online training sessions in school districts throughout the state. WaKIDS is optional for state-funded full-day kindergarten classrooms this school year, but it will become mandatory at the beginning of the 2012–2013 school year. Currently, WaKIDS includes 68 school districts, 165 schools, 479 teachers, and approximately 11,000 kindergarteners. These classrooms began fully implementing *Teaching Strategies GOLD*® in early September.

To learn more about *Teaching Strategies GOLD*[®], please visit TeachingStrategies.com/GOLD.

To learn more about WaKIDS, please visit www.k12.wa.us/wakids.

About Teaching Strategies, Inc.

Teaching Strategies is a dynamic educational publishing company that serves the early childhood community exclusively, bringing curriculum, assessment, professional development, and family connection resources to programs serving children from birth through kindergarten. Its mission is to provide the most effective early education resources to support the critical work of early childhood educators.