WaKIDS uses an observational, whole-child assessment tool called GOLD™ by Teaching Strategies®. GOLD™ helps teachers measure student knowledge, skills and behaviors that have been shown to predict future school success. This customized version of GOLD™ includes six areas of development and learning: social and emotional, physical, language, and cognitive development; literacy and mathematics.

**How do teachers assess students?**

In an observational assessment, teachers watch their students participate in routine classroom activities and document their strengths.

You may see your teachers:

- Taking notes on post-its, clipboards or tablets as they watch students complete a project or task, or engage in small group learning activities.
- Videotaping students’ conversations as they approach a task together.
- Saving a sample (or photo) of a student’s work in a portfolio.

Teachers gather and document evidence of students’ development to evaluate each objective or dimension. **Teachers can assess more than one student and objective at a time.**

**What can principals do?**

- **Encourage all experienced WaKIDS teachers to review the WaKIDS objectives.** Teachers can find the list of objectives/dimensions at [www.k12.wa.us/WaKIDS/Assessment](http://www.k12.wa.us/WaKIDS/Assessment).
- **Ask teachers how they use WaKIDS data for instruction.** Teachers shouldn’t wait until after October 31 to act on what they learn about students’ strengths.
- **Reassure teachers they do not need to delay instruction.** Students will continue to learn and develop during the WaKIDS assessment period.
- **Encourage teachers to complete their Inter-Rater Reliability (IRR) Certification:**
  - In 2015, almost 84% of WaKIDS teachers had earned their IRR certification.
  - WaKIDS 101 training includes time to complete the certificate.
- Delay or eliminate other assessments until after October 31.
- Work with your teachers to ensure all assessment data are entered into the GOLD™ online system before 9 pm on October 31. Your District Assessment Coordinator or ESD WaKIDS Coordinator can help you find and use GOLD™’s Assessment Status Report to follow teachers’ data collection progress.
- Consider ways your school can share individual student data with families. 49% of the principals who responded to the 2014 feedback survey shared results with families.
- Consider ways your school can share school/district data with early learning providers. Only 11% of principals who responded to the 2014 feedback survey said they planned to share WaKIDS data with local early learning providers. See Principal Series #5 for suggestions on collaboration.
How does WaKIDS compare to other state assessments?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WaKIDS GOLD™ by Teaching Strategies®</th>
<th>Other State Assessments (like Smarter Balanced, MSP - Science)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Measures development and learning evident at beginning of school year</td>
<td>Measure knowledge and skills evident at end of school year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is observational</td>
<td>Are multiple-choice and constructed response; can be computer-adaptive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assesses whole child</td>
<td>Assess knowledge and skills in specific academic content areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is conducted while children are engaged in curriculum-embedded learning activities</td>
<td>Are conducted as a separate testing activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is not a screening tool; additional evidence needed to identify students who might benefit from referrals</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is ongoing; evidence collected over multiple points of time</td>
<td>Measure a single point in time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uses formative data to inform instruction at the moment collected</td>
<td>Not applicable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reports summative data after teachers finish uploading it</td>
<td>Report summative data weeks after students finish testing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Password to GOLD™ All principals are assigned a username and password to GOLD™, and are given administrative privileges. If you have questions or do not receive your username in an email from implementation@teachingstrategies.com by the beginning of the school year, please contact WaKIDS@k12.wa.us.

We look forward to hearing your challenges and success stories, and hope you will share them with your colleagues!

Note: This document is one of several support materials available to deepen principals’ understanding of WaKIDS and support best practices. Additional materials are available at www.k12.wa.us/wakids.

Contact Information

**Main Number:** 360-725-6161

**Nancee Alvord,** Professional Development Coordinator
nancee.alvord@k12.wa.us

**Educational Service District WaKIDS Coordinators**
www.k12.wa.us/wakids/ESD-Coordinators.aspx

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**GOLD™ by Teaching Strategies® research:** bit.ly/1aHTu6u

**GOLD™ technical assistance:** WaKIDS@teachingstrategies.com

- Support your kindergarten teachers in the implementation phase and it will pay great rewards later! The time is worth it and we know so much more about our kindergartners than we ever did!

— Kay Gallo, Principal, Crestwood Elementary School, Sumner School District