

Child Development Coordinating Council Policy
Regarding Child Assessment and Student ID Numbers

The mission of the Child Development Coordinating Council, CDCC, is to advocate for Iowa's children and families and support model comprehensive child development for at-risk children and their families. CDCC ensures the development, delivery, and promotion of quality preschool programs.

As part of this mission, the CDCC established policies regarding accountability. In 2010-2011, the CDCC discussed mechanisms for better understanding the condition of children served by the Shared Visions preschool programs both when they enroll and when they exit the program.

As a result, two components were aligned to address accountability: unique student identification numbers for all preschool children participating and common statewide assessment information.

Unique Student Identification Numbers

What is a Unique Student Identifier Number?

Beginning in 2004-2005, all students in Iowa were assigned a unique Student Identifier. This unique identifier follows a student across their academic careers. This identifier is used across multiple data applications in order to provide linkages between various data systems to assess items such as academic growth for students.

Will this be required for all children in Shared Visions preschool programs?

Yes. Beginning in the fall of 2011, the Department of Education (DE) worked with all school districts, Head Start and child care grantees to assign the Iowa Unique Student Identifier to all children in the Shared Visions preschool programs. The DE will continue to contact all Head Start and child care grantees to gather the initial information necessary to assign a unique identifier. The process for providing this information will meet all the DE requirements of a secure data file transfer.

How will this information be used?

The information collected may be used to track children's progress over time. The unique identifier will allow the CDCC to review children's progress at kindergarten and third grade. In addition, demographic data will be collected on each child assisting the CDCC in understanding the population of children being served. These factors will contribute to effective future program evaluation.

Common Statewide Assessment

What is the purpose of establishing a common statewide assessment?

Common statewide assessments will be implemented in order to collect consistent information about all preschoolers attending the Shared Visions preschool program. This will allow the DE and the CDCC to understand the progress of all children in the state by collecting information at three points in time over the course of the program year.

What assessment will be implemented?

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The CDCC recommended approval for use of the *Teaching Strategies GOLD* (Guiding Observation, Learning, and Development) as an appropriate system for assessing all children. It focuses on 38 research-based objectives for development and learning that are predictors of school success and aligned with the Iowa Early Learning Standards. *GOLD* is also a curriculum neutral assessment so it may be used with any curriculum.

The universal design of *Teaching Strategies GOLD™* enables it to be used with all children, including those with disabilities. *GOLD™* shows typical progressions for each objective through the use of visually appealing, color-coded age bands that are tied to children's ages; because development is uneven and overlapping, the color-coded bands allow teachers to account for natural variations in children's development and learning. The program will be able to track individual and group progress and know exactly how well children's needs are being addressed. A variety of detailed reports are available to assist in making informed decisions.

What resources will be provided?

The DE has developed the *Teaching Strategies GOLD* State Service Umbrella Agreement (the state license with Teaching Strategies, Inc.) to provide the *GOLD* Online Assessment System to all state and federal early childhood programs and services, including Shared Visions preschool grantees, school districts, their community partners, and Head Start agencies. The cost of this state license is supported by DE. The CDCC has recommended using Grantee evaluation funds to assist with the annual cost of the State Service Umbrella Agreement. The state agreement allows a reduced per child cost for all grantees which is the responsibility of the agency or grantee. By way of reminder, the evaluation funds are held by the Department of Education prior to any funding being allocated to grantees.

Will this be required for all children in Shared Visions preschool programs?

Yes, all Shared Visions preschool grantees are required to maintain agreements with *Teaching Strategies, Inc.* under the *GOLD* State Service Umbrella Agreement. Grantees are expected to complete three checkpoints with all children enrolled in Shared Visions preschool classrooms. Checkpoint dates are set by the Department of Education.

What costs are involved?

Individual grantees will subscribe to the *GOLD* online system at an estimated reduced cost of \$10.45 per child per year. This cost includes the Early Childhood Outcomes (ECO) rating for federal reporting requirements under IDEA.

To learn more about *Teaching Strategies GOLD*, sign up for an online demonstration, view a *GOLD* webinar or visit the Bookshop, please access the following link:

<http://www.teachingstrategies.com/page/GOLD.cfm>.

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