UPK Guidance: My Teaching Strategies GOLD®
2018-2019 Requirements and Guidelines

Helpful Tips! Continue your success with the newly expanded My Teaching Strategies® Birth- Grade Three platform, including information that is Vermont specific.

Vermont Early Learning Standards (VELS)
Prequalified PreK programs are required to implement a developmentally appropriate curriculum which is aligned with the VELS. To obtain accurate data collection that is reliable and valid, it is important that staff understand and use the VELS to inform and plan instructional activities that are developmentally appropriate for all children.

Site Naming Guidance
All administrators of TSGOLD program accounts are to use the following guidance and make changes if necessary to help ensure that assessment results are reported correctly.
1. If you have a single site, your site name is the name of the location as it appears in your child Care License as received from the Agency of Human Services (AHS) Child Development Division (CDD).
2. If you have multiple sites, your site names will be the names of the locations as they appear on each of your Child Care Licenses.
3. DO NOT USE DEFAULT AS THE SITE!

Universal PreK Vermont Umbrella and Pricing
Prequalified PreK programs are required to sign up for GOLD® under the Vermont umbrella license by completing an online form to obtain approval. Only one application per organization/district is required. The primary authorized administrator or his/her designee should complete the form on behalf of all the sites/schools in the organization or school district. If a program is currently not under the Vermont GOLD® Umbrella, program administrators should contact a Vermont Teaching Strategies GOLD® representative. Prequalified PreK programs not under the Vermont Umbrella are at risk of losing their prequalification status.

The GOLD® pricing per Vermont’s agreement is as follows:
2018-2019: $11.75
2019-2020: $12.55

Documentation in GOLD®
Staff should make every effort to have enough documentation for each Objective and Domain, so checkpoint levels can be confidently chosen for each child. Documentation will vary depending on
language of indicators. It is highly recommended that documentation be uploaded and/or added directly to MyTeachingStrategies®.

2018-2019 and 2019-2020 Checkpoint Dates
Prequalified PreK programs are required to use GOLD® to observe, assess, and complete fall and spring checkpoints for each child in their program. Per Act 166, all checkpoints must be finalized by July 31st. Fall and Spring checkpoint finalized dates are in bold below.

Fall: 8/14/2018-12/15/2018  Checkpoint due: 12/15/2018
Fall: 8/15/2019-12/15/2019  Checkpoint due 12/15/2019
Spring: 2/17/2020-6/15/2020  Checkpoint due 6/15/2020

Checkpoint Completion for Mid-Year Transfers
If the child leaves within two weeks or so of the fall or spring final checkpoint date, the current provider should finalize the checkpoints for that child. If it is 3 weeks or more, the current provider should continue to add documentation until the child leaves. The “new” provider will use previous and current documentation within GOLD® to make the checkpoint determination.

One Portfolio for Each Child
Each child participating in Act 166 are to have one GOLD® portfolio only. This portfolio should be maintained by the program providing the 10 hours of Universal PreK. If a child attends another program for additional hours, that program may contribute feedback either in written form to the program providing Universal PreK or request to be a contributing member of Team Central.

Duplicate Portfolios
If a child has two portfolios, it is the program administrator’s responsibility to determine which portfolio should be maintained and transfer any information needed. The State GOLD® Administrator should then be notified to delete the duplicate portfolio.

Duplicate Accounts
If a program has a duplicate account, it is the program administrator’s responsibility to determine which account should be maintained and transfer any information needed. Contact Teaching Strategies® in order to close out and delete any duplicate accounts.

Archiving Students
Three years is the recommended time for archiving students after they have left your program.

Student Transfers
When a child leaves a program, it would be helpful if the sending program asked the family if they intend to enroll their child in another PreK program. If it is another Prequalified PreK, both sending and receiving providers must complete and sign the necessary transfer form and send it to the AOE GOLD® Administrator. The GOLD® Administrator will make changes ensuring the child’s portfolio will transfer with the child.
Funding Sources
The following three sources are to be completed on every child:
   1. The Supervisory Union or School District counting this child in their Average Daily Membership (ADM)
   2. Town of Residence
   3. The School District (SD) or Supervisory Union (SU) including this child in the school census

Disabling or Deletion of Administrators and Teachers and FERPA
It is the Program Administrator’s responsibility to ensure that the correct administrators and teachers have access to a child’s portfolio.

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA) is a federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education.

Therefore, if an administrator, teacher, or other individual who has access to a child’s GOLD® portfolio becomes no longer employed by the program, it is the program administrator or their designee’s responsibility to delete or disable the administrator, teacher, or other individual from the GOLD® system.

Teaching Strategies GOLD® Interrater Reliability (IRR)
Reliability, accuracy, and fidelity of GOLD® data reporting is essential. Therefore, it is best practice that every teacher and/or administrator in a prequalified prekindergarten education program who is responsible for completing GOLD® fall and spring checkpoints gain certification on the tool from Teaching Strategies™. Educators and administrators demonstrate reliability by scoring at least 80% on the GOLD® Interrater Reliability (IRR) online test, located in their My Teaching Strategies® portal. Each school district and/or program administrator should verify that all designated school district staff and contractual partners achieve interrater reliability and certification by Teaching Strategies™. This verification should occur prior to the completion of annual fall and spring GOLD® checkpoints. Please note that there is no cost for IRR certification and it is valid for three years.

In the event that a teacher has not achieved interrater reliability by the required fall and/or spring checkpoint dates, we recommend the program designate another teacher or administrator who has achieved the required level of IRR to complete the checkpoint(s) prior to the deadline.

The AOE strongly recommends that administrators of prequalified prekindergarten education public and private programs maintain IRR certification records for all staff to ensure the validity and reliability of GOLD® data. Authorization for this guidance is based on State rules of Act 166.

Helpful Resources and Documents
1. Alignment of GOLD Objectives for Development and Learning Birth-Grade 3 with the VELS:
2. MyTeachingStrategies® Support Portal: quickly and easily find the support you need by browsing articles, videos, frequently asked questions, and archived and live webinars from the resource library, or simply type your question into the search bar on the home page. The Portal also contains a form for reporting GOLD® issues.
3. GOLD® Communications Plan: This document contains dates of communications such as webinars and emails to the field that support topics for teachers and administrators such as setting up classes, documentations, planning, and checkpoints.

4. Vermont GOLD® Transfer Form

5. VELS: The Vermont Early Learning Standards (VELS) help inform families about the development and capabilities of children from birth through grade 3 and guide educators in the development and selection of program-wide curriculum and educational strategies for children from birth through grade 3. These standards are central to the shared vision of what we want for young children in Vermont and highlight the importance of high quality early childhood experiences as the foundation for school success and lifelong learning.

Questions? Please contact Katie McCarthy at Katie.mccarthy@vermont.gov.