

Child Development Coordinating Council

Policy Regarding Child Assessment and Unique Student Identifier Numbers

The mission of the Child Development Coordinating Council (Council) is to advocate for Iowa's children and families with risk factors, as well as support model comprehensive child development programs and services. The Council ensures the development, delivery and promotion of quality preschool programs.

As part of this mission, the Council established policies regarding accountability. In 2010-2011, the Council 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 identifier numbers and common statewide assessment information for all participating preschool children.

Unique Student Identifier Numbers

What is a unique student identifier number?

An 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. Beginning in 2004-2005, all students in Iowa were assigned a unique Student Identifier. This unique identifier follows a student across their academic careers.

Will this be required for all children in Shared Visions Preschool Programs?

Yes. Beginning in the fall of 2011, the Iowa Department of Education (Department) worked with all Shared Visions Preschool grantees to assign an Iowa Unique Student Identifier to all children enrolled in Shared Visions Preschool Programs. The Department will continue to contact all grantees to gather the information necessary to assign a unique identifier. The process for providing this information will meet all the Department requirements for 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 Council to review children's progress at kindergarten and third grade. In addition, demographic data will be collected on each child assisting the Council 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 to collect consistent information about all children attending the Shared Visions Preschool Program. This will allow the Department and the Council 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?

The Council 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 GOLD® enables it to be used with all children, including those with disabilities. GOLD® shows typical progressions for each objective using visually appealing, color-coded age bands that are tied to children's ages. Since 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.

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, LLC* under the Iowa State Umbrella Agreement for GOLD®. Grantees are expected to complete three checkpoints (fall, winter, spring) with all children enrolled in Shared Visions Preschool classrooms. Checkpoint dates are set by the Department.

What costs are involved?

The Department will support the cost of the Iowa State Umbrella Agreement for GOLD®, a state license with *Teaching Strategies, LLC*. This state license may allow for a reduced per child cost for all Shared Visions Preschool grantees. Individual grantees must maintain a local agreement with *Teaching Strategies, LLC* and cover the cost of individual child profiles.

The Council has recommended using grantee evaluation funds to assist with the annual cost of the state service umbrella agreement. The evaluation funds are held by the Department prior to any funding being allocated to grantees.

Additional Information

To learn more about GOLD®, sign up for an online demonstration, or view an informational webinar, visit the [Teaching Strategies](https://www.teachingstrategies.com) website.

Contact Amy Stegeman, amy.stegeman@iowa.gov, with questions.