



**Virginia DOE RFP# DOE-SGA-2012-15
Student Growth Assessments**

[IV.A.2.B.3] Narrative

3. A written narrative that includes the information requested in a–f below and the assessment documentation template completed for each assessment being proposed.

3a. The organizational structure of Offeror’s staff as it relates to the delivery of services for proposed assessments. Include details regarding helpdesk availability for tests administered online.

Teaching Strategies’ goal is to help programs build their capacity to sustain high levels of fidelity in their implementation of *Teaching Strategies GOLD*® over time. We focus on building strong partnerships with mentor teachers, coaches, and administrators so that they can support classroom teachers. Teaching Strategies offers several ways to communicate with experts in the content of the tool and in navigation of the *Teaching Strategies GOLD*® online system. Teaching Strategies will designate two staff members to provide ongoing implementation support to Virginia Local Education Agency programs. They will be available by phone and webinar to provide customized support to teachers and district administrators. The Teaching Strategies Implementation Manager responsible for the project will meet quarterly by phone with Virginia LEA primary contacts to discuss implementation and staff needs. Additional Teaching Strategies staff members will provide ongoing implementation support services by phone from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. ET, Monday through Friday, excluding federal holidays. Support via e-mail will also be available. Teaching Strategies offers webinars, live on a weekly basis and then archived and available at each user’s convenience. Online orientation sessions are also available at the user’s convenience. The Implementation Support Team can be reached at 800-637-3652, option 4 and at Implementation@TeachingStrategies.com. Technical support and consulting will be available through e-mail and by phone (866-736-5913).

[IV.A.2.B.3] Narrative

3b. A comprehensive plan to be implemented by the contractor that establishes necessary safeguards to maintain the confidentiality of all student data and any other materials deemed to be confidential by VDOE or the Offeror.

Teaching Strategies' security measures meet current industry standards for physical access, electronic access control, intrusion protection, and virus protection. They are evaluated at least annually to ensure that *Teaching Strategies GOLD*[®] meets current security standards.

To see any *Teaching Strategies GOLD*[®] data specific to an organization (i.e., information about programs, teachers, children, evaluations, etc.), users must log in successfully via SSL. Users who have logged in are able to access only data directly tied to their login configurations. For instance, a teacher is only able to access data about children in his or her own class(es). A site administrator is only able to access information about the classes and children at his or her own site. A family may only access data about its own child.

A limited number of Teaching Strategies users (Superusers) may access *Teaching Strategies GOLD*[®] data in order to support customers' use of the system. All of these authorized users have undergone background checks and must abide by strict rules that limit their interaction with and use of the data. When such a person leaves Teaching Strategies for any reason, his or her access to *Teaching Strategies GOLD*[®] online is terminated immediately. Quarterly, Teaching Strategies audits its list of users with Superuser access and makes any necessary changes.

Teaching Strategies GOLD[®] data are backed up remotely on a nightly basis. In the event of database corruption or major crash, *Teaching Strategies GOLD*[®] can be restored to the previous night's backup. Backup data are stored in a location that is separate from the production database. Within 24 hours of a catastrophic event that destroys the data center where *Teaching Strategies GOLD*[®] servers are housed, we would be able to rebuild new servers, using our source control system and the copy of the database served at RackSpace.com.

3c. A comprehensive training plan for central office staff, school administrators, and teachers

Teaching Strategies' goal is to help programs build their capacity to sustain high-quality implementation over time. We focus on building strong partnerships with mentor teachers, coaches, and administrators so that they can support classroom teachers. If requested, a customized training plan will be developed to suit the needs of VLEAs and districts. The options outlined below for teacher training and refresher training are available for a fee:

Teacher Training. Teaching Strategies offers a range of professional development options to accommodate the various training needs of *Teaching Strategies GOLD*[®] users. Teaching Strategies recommends a 2-day training for teachers before the start of each school year.

In accordance with best practices for adult learning, Teaching Strategies' professional development sessions are hands-on, practical, highly interactive, and based on sound principles of adult learning theory. Participants are given ample opportunity to explore, discover, discuss, and reflect on the concepts that are presented. Teaching Strategies can effectively train 25 teachers per session.

In the 2-day session, teachers are introduced to the components and structure of *Teaching Strategies GOLD*[®]. Through video clips and large-group discussions, teachers explore the progressions of development and learning in order to understand those sequences and scaffold the learning of all children in their classrooms. Teachers use *Teaching Strategies GOLD*[®] tools as they practice using the four-step assessment cycle, evaluate student portfolios, and complete a conference form to share with a family. In preparation for interrater reliability certification, training participants also compare their ratings of student performance to the ratings determined by master raters. In the computer lab session, teachers explore navigation of the online system. By the end of the session, teachers have the basic skills they need to begin implementing *Teaching Strategies GOLD*[®].

Refresher Training. For teachers to use *Teaching Strategies GOLD*[®] most effectively, professional development support should be provided on an on-going basis. Teaching Strategies recommends that teachers have opportunities to participate in advanced training on the assessment system every other year. This ensures that teachers have opportunities to ask questions, explore features they have not yet used, and learn about new enhancements to the system.

3c, continued

In the 1-day advanced session, teachers review the components and structure of *Teaching Strategies GOLD*[®] and explore features of the system in greater depth. Through group discussions and hands-on activities, teachers practice evaluating student portfolios, analyze assessment data, and select appropriate activities for individual children and for small and large groups. By the end of the session, teachers are able to use the planning features of *Teaching Strategies GOLD*[®].

Ongoing Support to Central Office Staff and School Administrators. Teaching Strategies knows from experience that ongoing support is critical to successful use of *Teaching Strategies GOLD*[®]. Teaching Strategies will designate two staff persons to provide ongoing implementation support to programs in Virginia. They will be available by phone and webinar to provide customized support to teachers and district administrators.

The Implementation Manager will also serve as a mentor/coach. She will be available for on-site consultation after the first checkpoint. The Implementation Associate will be available to answer data-related and technical questions. All contacts will work together to discuss coaching and training options.

Implementation support services are available by telephone from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. ET, Monday through Friday, excluding legal holidays. Support is also available by e-mail. Online orientation sessions can be scheduled at administrators' convenience. Teaching Strategies offers webinars, live on a weekly basis and then archived and available at the user's convenience. Webinars are collaborative discussions with administrators about teachers' use of the assessment system. Possible topics include

- an overview of implementation and lessons learned,
- how to run reports with real data,
- supporting teachers' ongoing implementation, and
- ask an expert (Q & A).

Interrater Reliability Certification. After completing basic *Teaching Strategies GOLD*[®] training, users can practice evaluation and achieve interrater reliability certification through a free online process. Users evaluate a variety of student portfolios that have been rated by Teaching Strategies master raters. Upon reaching 80% reliability in each area of development and learning, users are issued reliability certification.

3c, continued

Self-Paced Online Modules. In addition to the on-site training options described above, Teaching Strategies offers online professional development opportunities for teachers and administrators. These are self-paced, interactive online training experiences. These modules enable users to become familiar with *Teaching Strategies GOLD*[®], refresh their knowledge, and practice using the various system tools. Teachers and administrators may work at their own paces and on their own schedules.

3d. Evidence of experience in providing assessments that include measures of growth for local or state education agencies.

We present several documents as evidence of experience in providing assessments for state and local education agencies. The first is the 14-page *Colorado Preschool Program 2012 Legislative Report* issued in January 2012 by the Colorado Department of Education. The full text is too long to quote here, but the report is available from http://www.cde.state.co.us/cpp/download/CPDocs/2012_CPP_Legislative_Report.pdf. It is also included as Appendix D of this proposal. *Teaching Strategies GOLD*[®] is mentioned on two pages of the report:

Page 4: “Last year we did a comparison of GOLD scores and CLASS scores and there were no surprises. Teachers who scored higher on the CLASS had children who scored at or above “Widely Held Expectations” for the GOLD [assessment].

Page 6: “The graphs on the following pages...demonstrate developmental progress for CPP children using data from the three assessment systems of choice in 2010–2011: The Creative Curriculum Developmental Continuum, Teaching Strategies GOLD[®], and HighScope COR.”

Page 6: “TS GOLD is the tool we have been needing to validate our teachers’ thoughtful work with young children that is respectful of wherever the child begins. It is the instrument through which we can purposefully fill the gaps in children’s learning based on valid, developmental data!” — Becky Feuerstein, ECE Director, Jefferson County Public School

Page 6:

The 2010-2011 school year was the first year for districts to implement the newest assessment in Results Matter: Teaching Strategies GOLD[®] (see outcomes in Figure 5). GOLD contains the following unique features:

- Online inter-rater reliability certification process
- 38 objectives that are aligned with Colorado’s preschool academic standards
- User-friendly tools and resources that enable teachers to link curriculum and assessment in a differentiated way

3d, continued

- Specific strategies and resources that enable teachers to support the needs of every type of learner
- Includes meaningful ways to involve families in the assessment process

We also submit a training announcement, an agenda, and a handout from the Early Learning Coalition of Southwest Florida. Snapshots of those documents follow:

1. Early Learning Coalition announcement



Online Training Available

Anytime, your schedule! Online class modules through Teaching Strategies GOLD for anyone who is using the Teaching Strategies Gold Assessment. Four modules are available for 2 in-service credits or .2 CEUs each. (www.teachingstrategies.com)

Module 1: Introducing Teaching Strategies Gold

Learning Objectives:

- Define the structures of Teaching Strategies Gold
- Identify the components of Teaching Strategies
- Identify the areas of and objectives for development and learning
- Explain the progressions of development and learning
- Interpret the colored bands area (widely held expectations for particular age groups of children) for particular age groups of children

Module 2: Looking Closer – Teaching Strategies Gold

Learning Objectives:

- Explain levels within progressions of development and learning
- Identify when to use "On the Spot", observation recording tool and Assessment Opportunity Cards
- Identify reason for in-between levels

Module 3: The Assessment Cycle: Linking Teaching, Learning and Assessment

Learning Objectives:

- Explain the four step assessment cycle
- Discuss observation notes
- Discuss portfolios and the analysis of documentation
- Evaluate child portfolios
- Develop a plan to communicate with others.

Module 4: How do I...? Exploring the Features of Teaching Strategies Gold

Learning Objectives:

- Describe how to navigate through:
 - Documentation
 - Checkpoints
 - Planning
 - Communication
 - Children

Please note: The modules must be taken in order. Contact Gayla Thompson at 210-6868 for CEUs and you will be sent by e-mail the evaluations, assessments and CEU paperwork. Each class is \$10 administrative charge for CEUs.

3d, continued

2. Agenda for the Early Learning Coalition of SW Florida session “Teaching Strategies GOLD: Implementation, Data Collection, Reporting”

Implementing TS Gold

1. Video
2. Teacher/Administrator Views
3. Technical Summary/Research Foundation - Kathleen
4. What is included with Teaching Strategies Gold?
 - Online support and professional development *exhibit 4A & 4B*
 - It is a process not an event! (formative and summative assessment) *exhibit 4C*
 - Teacher site—The progression & widely held expectations *exhibit 4D*
 - Tools and child portfolio
 - Administrator site
 - Reports
5. Our story
 - 2010-2011 outcomes *exhibit 5E*
 - 2011-2012 changes
 - Helpful hints & pitfalls -Demonstration Sites, Email Help Sheet, Email blasts & Contract *exhibits 5F, 5G & 5H*
 - COGNOS/IMPROMTU Reports using EFS Data
 - Examining the raw data
6. Our next steps
 - Inter-rater reliability
 - Professional Development-Kristy *exhibit 6I*
7. Q & A

3d, continued

3. Early Learning Coalition of SW Florida Handout

The screenshots illustrate the following navigation steps:

- Website: Teachingstrategies.com** (indicated by a blue dashed box)
- To get to sign in click here** (indicated by a yellow dashed box pointing to the 'Sign In' link on the homepage)
- Insert your Username & Password OR Click on forgot username/password** (indicated by a yellow dashed box pointing to the sign-in form)
- To change from the teacher page to the administrator page click here** (indicated by a yellow dashed box pointing to the 'Administrator' link in the top right of the dashboard)
- To access the Dashboard & training opportunities click here** (indicated by a yellow dashed box pointing to the 'Dashboard' link in the top right of the dashboard)
- To access the training modules click** (indicated by a yellow dashed box pointing to the 'Training' link in the top right of the dashboard)
- To sign up for a web orientation or access recorded orientations click here** (indicated by a yellow dashed box pointing to the 'Support' link in the top right of the dashboard)
- To go back to the teacher/administrator pages click here** (indicated by a yellow dashed box pointing to the 'Home' link in the top right of the dashboard)

3e. A list of the local and state education agencies contracted with for similar services within the last three years. Include a brief summary of the services provided.

Teaching Strategies has provided online assessment tools and implementation support since 2001. *Teaching Strategies GOLD*® replaced an earlier tool in 2010. Teaching Strategies now provides that online assessment system, training, and ongoing support to nearly 3,000 customers ranging in size from states and branches of the U.S. military to individual schools and child care programs. Nationally, more than 100,000 teachers are currently using *Teaching Strategies GOLD*® to assess the development and learning of more than 800,000 children in infant-toddler, preschool, and kindergarten classrooms. More than a dozen states use *Teaching Strategies GOLD*® for statewide assessment in publicly funded pre-kindergarten programs, and *Teaching Strategies GOLD*® is the most widely used assessment tool in Head Start programs. Teaching Strategies currently works with the following state Departments of Education to implement *Teaching Strategies GOLD*® in kindergarten classrooms: Washington (WaKIDS), Delaware DOE, New Jersey DOE, Massachusetts DOE, Colorado DOE, Missouri DOE, and Hawaii DOE.

3f. Three references

Nan Vendegna

Director, Colorado Preschool Program and Results Matter
Colorado Department of Education
201 East Colfax, Suite 210
Denver, Colorado 80203

303.866.6602 *office*

303.854.8245 *mobile*

303.866.6370 *fax*

vendegna_n@cde.state.co.us

Holly Ford

Early Childhood Specialist
Arizona Department of Education
1535 W. Jefferson
Phoenix, AZ 85007

602.542.2790

Holly.Ford@azed.gov

Vincent J. Costanza, Ed.D.

Early Childhood Program Specialist
Division of Early Childhood Education
New Jersey Department of Education
PO Box 500
Trenton NJ 08625

609.943.5875

vincent.costanza@doe.state.nj.us