
OVERVIEW

All state-funded programs are required to use Teaching Strategies GOLD® assessment tool via the TEACH SMART platform under the Alaska DEED license to observationally assess all 3- to 5-year-old children in their programs. Completing assessment under the DEED license allows DEED to report statewide pre-elementary results, increase alignment with the Alaska Early Learning Guidelines, and support strong child outcomes through the Alaska CLIMBS system. Individual Programs are responsible for getting parent consent to test and release information to the program and the state.

CHILD PORTFOLIOS

DEED contracts with Teaching Strategies, LLC directly for the “child portfolios” based on the number of 3- to 5-year-old children. Programs will contact DEED if an adjustment is needed. DEED does not provide support for portfolios for children ages 0-2. Programs may subscribe separately or enroll in Learn & Grow for support with 0-2 portfolios.

ARCHIVING STUDENTS

When a child exits a program that **child’s portfolio record must be archived by a program’s administrator**. After archiving the portfolio, that slot is now available for a new child. All exited students must be archived before a program can request additional portfolios. Programs must not delete any portfolio that contains active child data.

ADMINISTRATOR AND TEACHER LOGINS

Each program will designate a lead Administrator. Administrators will assign sites, teachers, and classes for their programs. Administrators must keep site, teacher, and child information up to date on the platform. Administrators are responsible for disseminating information to staff that is provided in the DEED monthly webinars. A primary point of contact is required and must be kept up-to-date with DEED.

TRAINING

DEED staff provides on-going support for *My Teaching Strategies* through monthly webinars. Programs are encouraged to also utilize the online resources available in the platform through Quorum.

Occasionally, DEED’s contract would include either online or in-person training days which programs may register to attend upon a first-come first served availability. If programs want to contact Teaching Strategies on their own for training, the program is responsible for funding it on their own.

INTERRATER RELIABILITY (IRR)

Each program must have at least one person who completed [Interrater Reliability \(IRR\) Certification](#) by the Fall Checkpoint period. Any staff without IRR may take observations, but IRR certified staff must submit the checkpoints or review checkpoints prior to submission. DEED will pull reports a month before the Fall checkpoint. IRR Certification must be renewed every 3 years.

- The IRR process generally takes about 3 hours. Programs must allow time for Interrater Reliability to be completed.
- Staff must score 80% to achieve certification and may repeat the test as many times as necessary.
There is no cost for Interrater Reliability and it is available in English & Spanish.

TEACHER RESPONSIBILITIES

In total, there are 37 dimensions that are required for all 3 to 5 year-old students. These dimensions are: 1a, 1b, 2b, 2c, 2d, 3a, 3b, 4, 5, 6, 7a, 7b, 8a, 8b, 9a, 9b, 10a, 10b, 11a, 11b, 11d, 13, 15a, 15b, 15c, 15d, 16a, 16b, 17a, 17b, 18a, 18b, 18c, 19a, 20a, 20b, and 23.

Programs are strongly encouraged to rate all dimensions in all the domain areas that align with the *2020 State of Alaska Early Learning Guidelines and the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework*. If a program wants to access Area level reports or Growth reports, they must complete 70% of the objectives in the area and may require additional dimensions of their own staff.

Teachers are required to observe all children throughout the school year but are not required to put documentation into the platform.

Programs are encouraged to use the guidelines that are outlined in the AK CLIMBS Handbook.

FINALIZED CHECKPOINTS

IRR staff are required to finalize their ratings for each child 2 times per year in the fall and spring. (Optional: winter & summer reporting is a programmatic decision and will be based on the program needs). Teachers must finalize the checkpoints for all children who attended class for at least 4 weeks before the due date. Teachers may use "Not observed."

Finalized checkpoints are due to the state according to the dates below:

Fall: November 30

Winter: (Optional) March 1

Spring: June 1

Summer: (Optional) August 15

Programs may choose to require teachers to finalize checkpoints earlier to accommodate administrative review. Administrators are encouraged to review their own internal checkpoints to make sure the dates align.

DEED ACCESS TO GOLD® DATA

Alaska DEED has permission to access child data entered under the Alaska DEED GOLD® license according to the subscription agreement.

A signature below indicates that you have read and understand all the information in this document.

District/Head Start Authorized Representative Signature

Date