



Questions and answers from WaKIDS webinar May 17, 2011

Contact

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Legislation

Q: At this point, if we receive state-funding for full-day kindergarten, according to House Bill 1510, we have to participate in WaKIDS, correct?

A: The new kindergarten assessment process, WaKIDS, is **voluntary** for the 2011-2012 school year for any kindergarten teachers, including state-funded full-day kindergarten teachers. State-funded full-day kindergarten is now being funded to 20% of our children. The bill that outlines the WaKIDS assessment process is Senate Bill 5427. It can be found at this link:

<http://apps.leg.wa.gov/documents/billdocs/2011-12/Pdf/Bills/Session%20Law%202011/5427-S2.SL.pdf>

Funding/budget

Q: Could you explain what "state-funded" full-day kindergarten means? All our full-day students pay tuition, except if qualified for free and reduced lunch. Is this considered state-funded?

A: There are about 20% of our schools that receive state-funded full-day kindergarten based on free and reduced lunch count. There are many other programs that are funded through district funds or are tuition based.

The RCW regarding state-funded full-day kindergarten is: RCW 28A.150.315. Part of the RCW states, "Beginning with the 2007-08 school year, funding for voluntary all-day kindergarten programs shall be phased-in beginning with schools with the highest poverty levels, defined as those schools with the highest percentages of students qualifying for free and reduced-price lunch support in the prior school year." Currently the average free and reduced-price lunch rate at state-funded full-day kindergarten sites is about 80%.

This RCW can be found at: <http://apps.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=28A.150.315>

Q: How many state-funded full-day kindergarten teachers are there? If more than 359, how will the kindergarten teachers be chosen?

A: There are approximately 652 state-funded full-day kindergarten teachers. Because the 2011-12 school year is a voluntary year, it was estimated that approximately 55% of state-funded full-day kindergarten teachers would volunteer to participate. If more than 359 state-funded full-day kindergarten teachers choose to participate this next year, the selection will start with the teachers at the schools with the highest poverty level and work down the list until all 359 teachers are selected.

Q: If you are a state-funded full-day kindergarten, but didn't participate in the WaKIDS pilot, can you participate next year?

A: Absolutely!

Q: If the legislation is funded, what will be covered for state-funded full-day kindergarten? Training expenses? Per diem pay? Will we get funding for extra days for teachers before school to make home visits?

A: Included in the funding is reimbursement to the districts for the two (six hour) days of training for the teachers in

August at \$480, training costs and the cost for the assessment materials.

Regarding funding for extra days for teachers to meet with families before school starts, districts have the opportunity to choose what family connection works best for them and their teachers. If districts choose not to allocate funds for extra days for the teachers to meet with families before school starts, using the first two days of school seemed to work well for many schools during the pilot. The family connection does not need to be all home visits. The teachers should contact the families and see what works best for both the families and teachers. Many families enjoy (or prefer) coming to school in order to see the classroom and become familiar and comfortable with what will be their child's new classroom.

Q: My school is not currently full-day kindergarten, but I am looking at utilizing district funds to go to full-day kindergarten next year. Can non-state-funded full-day kindergarten programs have access to WaKIDS? If so, what are the costs involved?

A: Yes. We are opening up WaKIDS to all programs that are interested, including non-state-funded full-day kindergarten programs such as the one you are trying to start. The exact costs haven't been confirmed yet. (This will be determined once the vendor of the "whole child" assessment is selected in late June.) We estimate that it will cost between \$500 and \$1,000 per teacher/classroom. The costs will be for the materials and the training. You can sign up by completing the "Intent to Participate" form, and then if the costs are too much for your budget you can opt out. The form is due by June 3, 2011. The link to the form is included in OSPI memo #M020-11, which can be found at:

<http://www.k12.wa.us/BulletinsMemos/memoranda2011.aspx>

The "Intent to Participate" form is located at: <http://ospi.b970505860cd.sgizmo.com/s3/>

Q: Is the \$500 to \$1,000 per teacher inclusive of the materials?

A: Yes.

Q: Can the 2010-11 pilot teachers who are not full-day funded through the state continue to participate at the state's expense, or do districts need to fund this?

A: If a teacher participated in the WaKIDS pilot this year, he/she is welcome to continue next year. The costs will be covered by the WaKIDS funding even if he/she is not in a state-funded full-day kindergarten school.

Application process

Q: Do all state-funded full-day kindergarten teachers need to participate from the same school?

A: Not during the 2011-2012 school year. This first year is voluntary, and not all teachers from the same school need to participate. However, it might be a good idea so the teachers can share ideas, support each other and create a professional learning community focused on the WaKIDS process. Additionally, districts may want to participate in order to have more information about a larger group of incoming kindergarteners.

Districts should include only those teachers who want to participate on the "Intent to Participate" form found in OSPI memo # M020-11. The form is due by June 3, 2011. The link to the form is included in memo, which can be found at: www.k12.wa.us/BulletinsMemos/memoranda2011.aspx

The "Intent to Participate" form is located at: <http://ospi.b970505860cd.sgizmo.com/s3/>

Q: If we are a state-funded full-day kindergarten and we participated in the WAKIDS pilot this school year, do we participate again next year? Do you want new schools to fill those spots?

A: Pilot teachers are most welcome to participate again next year if they choose, whether they are state-funded full-day kindergarten or not. We will still need the "Intent to Participate" form from your district (see previous question), if you

are choosing to voluntarily participate next year.

Q: If we are a state-funded full-day kindergarten school, are we automatically enrolled in the WaKIDS program?

A: No. Because the 2011-12 school year is a voluntary year, it was estimated that approximately 55% of state-funded full-day kindergarten teachers (359 teachers) would volunteer to participate. If more than 359 state-funded full-day kindergarten teachers choose to participate this next year, the selection will start with the teachers at the schools with the highest poverty level and work down the list until all 359 teachers are selected. Districts will need to submit the "Intent to Participate" form (see first question in this section) for all schools and teachers that want to participate, as well as complete the iGrants application if selected.

Q: I have state-funded full-day kindergarten in our district. How do we get WaKIDS going?

A: Your district will need to complete the "Intent to Participate" form (see first question in this section). Kindergarten teachers will want to speak to their principal to let them know they want to participate in WaKIDS. The district assessment coordinator will be the primary contact for the WaKIDS process, so schools will want to communicate with their assessment coordinator regarding submitting the "Intent to Participate" form. There is a short form that the assessment coordinator completes. They then send a link to the principal(s) of the school(s) that want to participate in WaKIDS, so the principal can provide the kindergarten teacher contact information. It is very important to have summer contact information, so we can provide information to the teachers about the August training.

Q: How do I find out if our district is participating?

A: Ask your principal. If they do not know what schools are participating, they can check with the district assessment coordinator.

Q: If funding isn't provided after special session can our "Intent to Participate" be rescinded?

A: The 2011 Legislature has adjourned. The 2011-2013 state operating budget does include funding for WaKIDS. Districts that submit an "Intent to Participate" for schools that are not state-funded full-day kindergarten, may rescind their "Intent to Participate" if the costs that are negotiated with the "whole child" assessment vendor at the end of June exceeds what is manageable in their budget.

Q: If we are supposed to submit our "Intent to Participate" by June 3, do I understand that that is done before the type of tool will be released?

A: Yes. The "whole child" assessment tool will be selected on June 22. If you submit your "Intent to Participate" on June 3, you may choose to opt out when the tool is selected. We will send all interested districts a confirmation email when their "Intent to Participate" is received with instructions on a final decision that will be due June 27.

Q: So, what happens after we submit our "Intent to Participate" on June 3?

A: We will send a confirmation email to all the districts that submit an "Intent to Participate" form with instructions on how to notify us of their final decision regarding WaKIDS participation for the 2011-12 school year. The final decision is due June 27 after the "whole child" assessment has been selected and budget decisions have been made.

When the final decision is submitted:

- Districts with the 359 state-funded full-day kindergarten teachers will need to apply in iGrants to be reimbursed for the WaKIDS funds as outlined above in the Funding/Budget section.
- All kindergarten teachers that will be participating next year will be notified of their training location and time. They will then need to register on Events Manager on the OSPI website at: <https://eds.ospi.k12.wa.us/EventsManager/Public/Calendar.aspx>
- If your kindergarten teachers/staff do not plan to participate in the June 14 webinar about the Family Connection, they will want to view it afterwards in order to prepare for the family connection at the beginning of the school year. We will send the "Introducing Me" booklet to schools that are participating in June.

WaKIDS implementation

Q: What are the expectations of WaKIDS teacher participants?

A: Teachers participating in WaKIDS will be expected to:

- ✓ View the Family Connection webinar at some point (if not on the day it is scheduled – June 14) to learn about the family connection. For the family connection, teachers will:
 - meet with families either before school starts or at the beginning of school.
 - use the “Introducing Me” booklet as a guide for focusing the conversation on the child (as well as providing the necessary information about bus routes, schedules, lunch routines, kindergarten expectations, etc.)
- ✓ Attend a two-day training in August about the “whole child” assessment.
- ✓ Complete the “whole child” assessment at the beginning of the school year including submitting their students’ data and sharing the information with families. We are working to ensure technical support by the selected vendor, as well as WaKIDS program staff
- ✓ Participate in the development of the Early Learning Collaboration. At this point, it has not been determined what this will look like, but it is anticipated for this first year that ideas, feedback and possible connections with early care and education professionals may be included.

Additionally, it would be beneficial for teachers/districts to continue to use the “whole child” assessment tool that is selected throughout the year as a progress monitoring tool. The tools being considered are appropriate for that purpose. Multiple opportunities will be offered for further training and conversations about the tools (and the WaKIDS process as a whole) on a **voluntary basis**. These opportunities will be offered in various venues to accommodate teacher and district schedules. They may include online forums, trainings on CD, webinars, etc. This is new to WaKIDS this year.

Q: How will the experience be different if we do WaKIDS the second year?

A: Many of the differences (and aspects that will remain the same) in the second year are due to feedback we’ve received from the pilot teachers and district staff. The experience will be different/same in the following ways:

- Teachers/districts will have the Family Connection information in June, so they can plan and know what to expect for the fall. Many pilot teachers requested the “Introducing Me!” booklet and information in summer, so they could begin to plan and contact their families. The “Introducing Me!” booklet will remain largely the same, as teachers found the booklet useful.
- Teachers will receive two-days of training on the “whole child” assessment tool, instead of one as was completed in the pilot year.
- Since the “whole child” assessment tool will be selected, there will be very intentional and concentrated efforts to provide multiple training opportunities around the administration of the assessment and use of the data in the classroom. (These trainings will be voluntary. Please see the answer to the previous question in this section for more information.)
- We will work to have the technical support from the vendor for the administration of the “whole child” assessment, as well as program support at OSPI.
- There will be a focused effort to coordinate the Early Learning Collaboration at the district/building level. We look forward to working with teachers and early care and education professionals on the development and implementation of this work.

Q: Has any district that has participated in WaKIDS changed their kindergarten screening procedures (i.e., time of year, assessment tool)?

A: This information has been collected by the University of Washington through the pilot surveys. It will soon be available in their final report, which will be released in June.

Q: How will the data and tools used in the pre-K assessments be communicated to the kindergarten teacher? Are we looking at a possible database that can be shared? (Equal access to both pre-K and kindergarten teachers)

A: This has been a large part of the discussion about the Early Learning Collaboration. It is the intent to focus on this aspect of WaKIDS this next year. Many possibilities have been discussed, including the possibility of some sort of database that would be accessible to both pre-K and kindergarten teachers.

Q: How was the decision made that the district assessment coordinators would be the point of contacts for WaKIDS?

A: Since the “whole child” assessment requires the submission of student data and coordination of the administration of the assessment, it made sense to have the district assessment coordinators be the primary contact. That is not to say that other staff will not (or cannot) be involved. For example, for the pilot many districts that have an early learning coordinator or kindergarten manager had that person be the contact for the kindergarten teachers and principals, so if there were questions that person would be the “go-to person” for the building staff. Then, that person provided information to the Assessment Coordinator as needed. How that is handled will be a local decision.

Q: So as a kindergarten teacher, I will coordinate with my testing coordinator?

A: You should talk with your principal about who will communicate with your Assessment Coordinator.

“Whole child” assessment questions

Q: Did you form the test or are you choosing between assessments that are already made?

A: All three assessments that were piloted this year are published assessments that are nationally recognized. The vendors went through a rigorous evaluation process before being selected for the pilot, including a technical review and rating the appropriateness of the assessments for use with young children. Additionally, pilot teachers have provided feedback about the use of the tools in the classroom. The three tools are:

- *CTB/McGraw-Hill: Developing Skills Checklist*
- *Pearson: Work Sampling System*
- *Teaching Strategies: GOLD*

Q: Where can we preview/view the three assessment choices?

A: There are links to the websites of the three assessments on the WaKIDS webpage: www.del.wa.gov/wakids. The vendors provide an overview of the tools.

Q: I went to the website you indicated and followed the links to the three assessments. It would appear I need to purchase the three assessments to view the assessment itself. Is that correct?

A: You are able to get an idea of what the tools are like from these websites, but they do not post all the materials.

Q: Are any of the three assessments piloted this year computer-based?

A: Yes, GOLD is computer-based.

Q: Are the "whole child" assessments available in Spanish? Does it matter which language they are they administered in?

A: Developing Skills Checklist is available in both an English and a Spanish version.

Both Work Sampling System and GOLD are observational in nature, so the teacher observes the child in a naturalistic setting as they go about their day of learning. Thus, in order to determine the true abilities of a child, a teacher would observe the child using their primary language (e.g., the child can readily identify numbers of objects and uses quantifying language with ease in their primary language). If the child is learning English, and a teacher observes the child only using English, you will obtain their level of English Language Acquisition, not their true abilities about what is being measured.

Q: Does the WaKIDS assessment currently align with state standards?

A: Following is how the 15 Performance Goals that are measured in the fall were identified:

- Information was collected about what the most current expectations are for entering kindergarteners from

numerous programs and research from around the nation

- Common expectations between the programs were extracted
- Those common expectations were compared to the Washington State Early Learning and Development Benchmarks to see which ones aligned with our State's Benchmarks
- Those were pulled out of the Benchmarks
- The Benchmark expectations were aligned with the kindergarten state standards (as well as the Common Core State Standards)

The 15 Performance Goals can be viewed at: www.del.wa.gov/wakids

Q: How many times per year is the WaKIDS “whole child” assessment expected to be given and reported?

A: The WaKIDS “whole child” assessment is administered and reported once a year in the fall. The assessments are appropriate for use throughout the school year to monitor progress. Many teachers and districts may decide to continue using the assessment to monitor growth over the course of the year.

Q: How long does the process take to get all the info on each child in our classes?

A: The UW has collected information about how long the assessments take. This will be included in their final report.

Developing Skills Checklist is a one-to-one assessment with the child. The teacher primarily works with individual children to gather the information. The social and emotional development is an observational assessment.

Both GOLD and Work Sampling System are observational in nature, so the assessments are embedded throughout the day in an intentional manner. Teachers may also observe a child demonstrating a skill or behavior that was not “planned” and makes note of those as well.

Q: We piloted one of the assessments, which provided great information but it took a lot of time to administer and a lot of instructional time. Will you consider the time factor per child when selecting the assessment?

A: Yes. The University of Washington has collected information about the time it took to administer the assessment. That will be considered when making the final selection.

Q: Will both pre-k and kindergarten teachers be giving the same assessments?

A: This is a large part of the discussion as WaKIDS moves forward.

Q: Can someone explain more of what the components of the test look like?

A: Each assessment is somewhat different with GOLD and WSS being more similar to each other because they are observational and naturalistic in nature.

They all gather information about the whole child, which means they not only collect information about how many letters the child knows or if they can classify/sort objects, but also areas involving their physical and social/emotional development.

For the observations, a teacher may set-up a lesson where she/he is working with rhyming words in a small group. The children may “play a game” where they each have physical objects that they place on a game board square that has an object that matches the rhyme. The teacher can assess which children understand the concept of rhyming, as well as teaching a lesson.

Developing Skills Checklist is a one-to-one assessment where the teacher sits with each child and gathers information about different skills and knowledge acquisition. There is also an observational component involved with the social and emotional development where the teacher observes that child and takes observational notes.

Q: Are we only required to submit data from assessments in the fall?

A: You will only be required to do the WAKIDS assessment in the fall and submit that data to OSPI. There has been discussion about schools/teachers that want to volunteer to submit information in the spring how that might be used to show growth over the year. We will keep districts informed about this possible option if they are interested.

Family connection

Q: We have over 23 languages besides Spanish in our school. Will the Introducing Me booklet be translated in other languages in the near future?

A: This would be great! Last year, the parent surveys were provided in 10 different languages. We will have discussions about whether it is possible for the University of Washington (or another entity) to begin translating over time into other languages. Unfortunately, it takes quite a bit of time and funding to translate, as well as publishing costs to complete smaller runs, but it will definitely be explored.

Q: What languages is "Introducing Me" being translated into?

A: It is currently translated into Spanish.

Q: Is the book "Introducing Me" given to teachers who are participating in this webinar, or the family connection webinar?

A: Teachers who participate in the June 14 Family Connection webinar will receive hard-copies of the "Introducing Me!" booklet.

Q: How does slow start differ from first two-days of school?

A: Generally, a slow-start is where a small group of children come in the first day, another group comes in the second day and possibly a third group comes in the next day. Then, all children come in the next day. Using the "first two-days of school" would be just individual families and their child coming at appointed times throughout the day, not groups of children.

Q: Is "Introducing Me" available to those not currently in pilot?

A: Currently, "Introducing Me!" comes with the WaKIDS training around family engagement and transitions. We will look into whether we can make it available to others.

State-funded full-day kindergarten data collection

Q: If we are a state-funded full-day kindergarten school and decide to participate in WaKIDS, is it correct that we would NOT have to complete the state-funded assessment requirements or are both assessments required?

A: If you are a state-funded full-day kindergarten site and are participating in WaKIDS, you will only submit the WaKIDS data and not the literacy data that had been required in the past (e.g., DIBELS data).

Training

Q: If a teacher is not able to make it to a regional training this summer can they attend in a different region?

A: We certainly hope to make that option available as we did this past summer with the pilot, but we will need to see how much room there is at each training. The teachers in each local region will have the first opportunity to be included in their local training. This is part of the reason it is important to submit the "Intent to Participate" form, so we can determine just how many teachers are interested in each region.

Q: Are there any dates set for the August trainings?

A: We are working on setting the dates. We anticipate that the trainings will occur the first three weeks in August. We know how important it is for people to have dates, especially during the summer. The information should be to the

districts by mid-June. Therefore, districts will have the information before the final decision about whether to participate is due on June 27. Principals, teachers and district assessment coordinators will get information about training as soon as dates are set.

Pilot information

Q: What percentage of students who participated in the pilot were ELL?

A: Approximately, 17 percent of the students in the pilot schools were identified as bilingual.

Q: What kind of survey responses did you get from the teachers regarding the amount of time it took to administer the survey and input the data?

A: The University of Washington will be reporting this information in their final report due on June 10.