

A Systemic Approach to Meeting the Assessment Needs of PreK Children: Nebraska and the use
of Teaching Strategies GOLD™ as a primary tool

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many respects. In the past, the various agencies have worked independently with little regard to

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representations, have compiled a list of mental health supports across the state of Nebraska.

Their main task

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program and those not participating) where children receiving the intervention practices outperformed on state achievement measures into middle school grades. Keeping in mind, the measuring of outcomes to guide instructions, Teaching Strategies, Results Matter GOLD™, was implemented to track outcomes for children with high needs from birth through five years of age. Teaching Strategies, Results Matter GOLD™, is the same assessment program used by Nebraska for the PreK age range.

According to Yoshikawa (2014), in Louisiana, one sees quite a different picture as a result of poverty levels. Two thirds of the 700,000 public school students in Louisiana receive federally subsidized lunches. Thirty- The state is working hard to improve outcomes for students as they use assessment tools to indicate success.

In 2013 nearly 4,000 more Louisiana seniors than in 2012 achieved a college-going ACT score. And last year, Louisiana was the fastest growing state in the nation in Advanced Placement participation and test passage. Part of the reason for this progress is

ation of state-funded pre-

program and the Nonpublic Early Childhood Development Program (NSECD) private school program. (White, 2014, para. 3)

PreK students who participant in the NSECD programs have shown positive gains in the areas of literacy, remaining in school, and less need for Special Education services through 8th grade. Using Teaching Strategies GOLD™ assessment, 69 schools are currently piloting the program with an additional 15 joining this spring of 2014. This program assists in clarifying outcomes in developmental progress. Louisiana also uses the Classroom Assessment Scoring

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Strategies used in Nebraska to Achieve Optimal Development for all PreK Children

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Early Childhood Education jobs going unfilled, according to the Nebraska Department of

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Results Matter GOLD™ assessment program. Math had been shown to be a needs-based, local, area for improvement. The social-emotional area was identified on the state level as being a priority (Task Force, page 3).

To continue with positive growth for young children, some future professional development topics will include: Positive Behavior Support with Children showing Challenging Behaviors, Scheduling Time and Attention to Meeting Individual Needs, Information about *Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale-Revised* (ECERS-R) and *Classroom Assessment Scoring System* (CLASS), as well as, Profession Relationships with Families. Assessment procedures will continue to be used to guide and refine the educational learning environment for young children. Results Matter GOLD™ uses observational assessment, gathered samples of child work, videos, and other inputs to form the basis for outcomes. All such components are best measured through physical, social, emotional, language, and cognitive skill assessment gathering techniques (Vendegna, 2013).

To best meet the needs of child development through monitoring of quality in the educational environment; the state of Nebraska recommends these guides and assessment tools: Early Childhood Guidelines (Standards), CLASS, Teaching Strategies/ Results Matter GOLD™, and ECERS-S (Data Conference, 2014). The assessment tools should be aligned with existing curriculum which is left up to the school or educator to choose. Results Matter GOLD™ aligns well with many existing curriculums. According to the Teachstone website; CLASS™ is a tool that focuses on effective teaching, helps teachers recognize and understand the power of their interactions with students, aligns with professional development tools, and works across age levels and subjects. Independent, trained observers visit a specific classroom and observe what is taking place. They rate what is observed and share the outcomes with the educator in order to

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