

Silver State Kindergarten Inventory Development Statewide (SSKIDS)
Pilot Evaluation:
Findings from Nevada's Users of the
Teaching Strategies Gold (TSG) Assessment Tool

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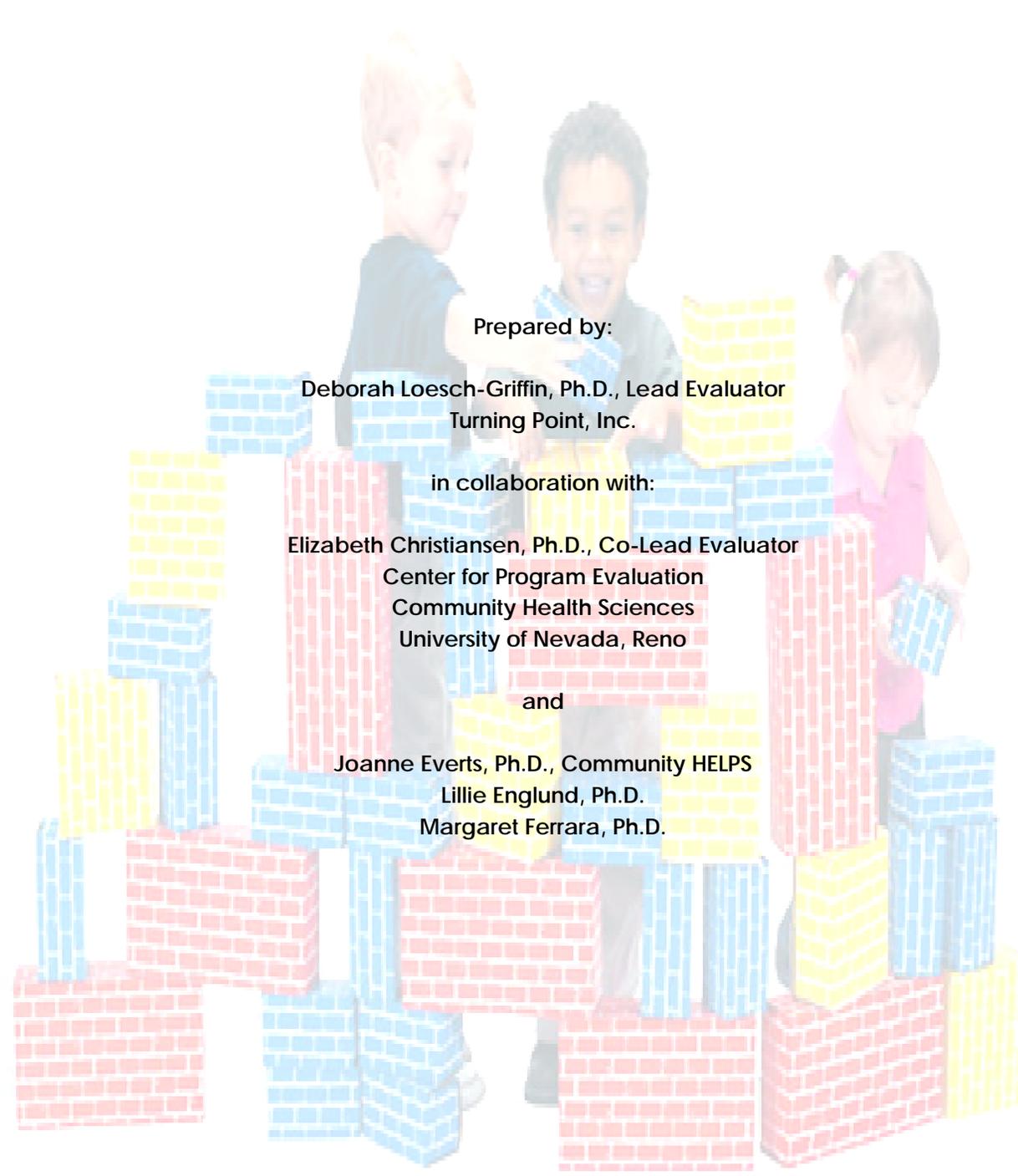
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A background image showing three young children (two boys and one girl) playing with large, colorful blocks (red, blue, yellow) that resemble building blocks. The children are smiling and engaged in their play. The blocks are arranged in various stacks and structures.

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The majority of activities associated with the Silver State Kindergarten Inventory Development Statewide (SSKIDS) Pilot Evaluation took place from February 6th through June 6th, 2014. During this span of time, the project transitioned from the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) to the Nevada Department of Education (NDE) under the Nevada Head Start Collaboration and Early Childhood Systems (HSC&ECS) Office. The evaluation was quite intense as it was reduced from one year to four months of planning and data collection. We'd like to acknowledge the coordinated response, availability, and sustained commitment of Amber Joiner, Deputy Director, DHHS, and Janie Lowe, State Title I Director-Education Programs Supervisor, NDE, as we learned about the system's key stakeholders and the feasibility of our plan, which enabled the evaluation team to move forward in an informed and timely manner.

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We would also like to acknowledge the 21 school principals and other district level or organizational administrators who, in addition to completing a survey, took time during an intensively busy time of year to participate in interviews. These individuals included 12 from Clark County School District, five from Washoe County School District, and one each from the Washoe Tribal Head Start, UNR's Early Head Start Program, Carson City Early Learning Center (WNCC), and White Pine County School District. The response rates of each survey we administered were remarkable and indicative of the commitment and interest of TSG users across the state who are trying to insure that children are ready for kindergarten and can grow and learn in developmentally appropriate environments.

Finally, we'd like to thank the 25 parents who provided insights into the use and value of TSG as a tool for helping them learn more about how their children learn and grow, and most importantly, what they, as their children's first teachers, can do to support their children's learning at home.

Many thanks to you all for your participation in Phase One of the SSKIDS Pilot Evaluation!

The SSKIDS Evaluation Team:

Elizabeth Christiansen, Lillie Englund, Joanne Everts, Margaret Ferrara and Deborah Loesch-Griffin

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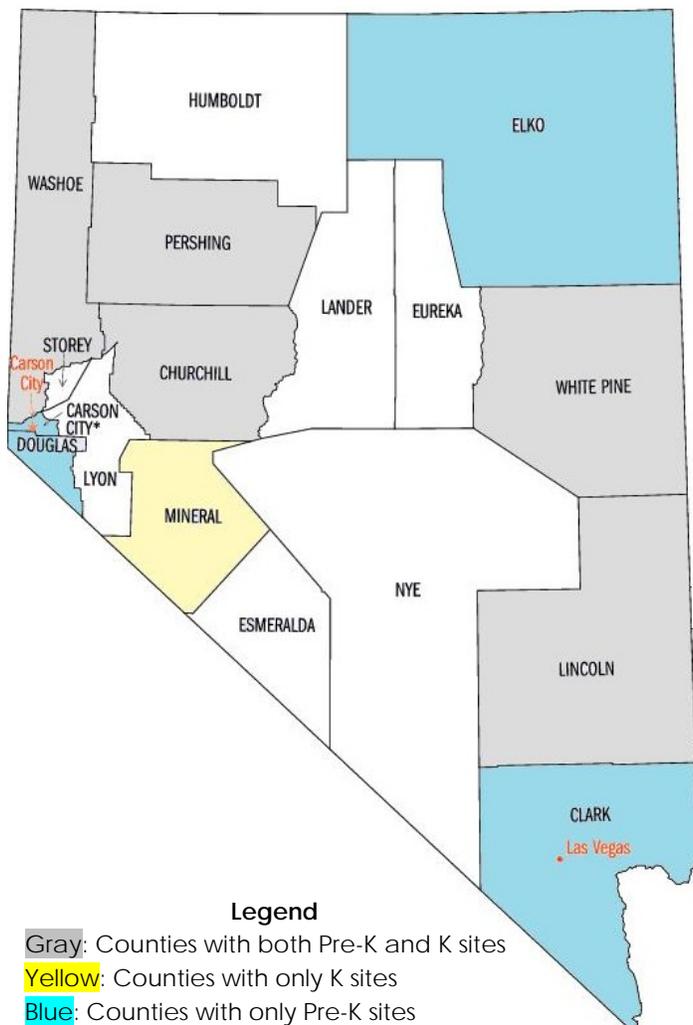
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The state contracted with Turning Point, Inc. to carry out an evaluation of the Silver State Kindergarten Inventory of Development Statewide (SSKIDS) Pilot. This project involved the first phase of evaluating the Silver State KIDS pilot funded by Senate Bill 486, which was passed during the 2013 Legislative Session. Teaching Strategies GOLD (TSG) is the selected tool that has been used throughout this project. Teaching Strategies GOLD is a developmentally appropriate, criterion-referenced system for assessing the knowledge, skills, and behaviors of children from birth through kindergarten. It blends ongoing, authentic observational assessment across 10 areas of development and learning with performance-assessment tasks for selected literacy and numeracy objectives. The purpose of the SSKIDS evaluation, as stated in the original Request for Bids, was for the State of Nevada to understand if the tool does all of the above in Nevada, if Nevada teachers and parents find it easy to use and informative, and whether the state should continue to use the tool into the next biennium. Of primary interest to Nevada, as noted by the Nevada Early Childhood Advisory Council (Nevada ECAC) and the Department of Education was using the TSG assessment tool to determine kindergarten readiness--what percent of children enter kindergarten "ready to learn." The objective of the SSKIDS pilot according to the Nevada ECAC website is to "implement a statewide kindergarten assessment that measures what a child knows and can do upon kindergarten entry, and establish a plan for building a coordinated early childhood data system that links Pre-K data with K-12 data."

A total of ten counties and programs in Carson City participated in the SSKIDS Pilot Project (see Figure A). Eight of the 11 counties involved pre-kindergarten teachers as TSG users and six also involved kindergarten teachers as TSG users. Approximately one-third of the county programs or school districts in the pilot involved both pre-kindergarten and kindergarten teachers (N=4). The pilot pre-kindergarten programs were largely aligned with the school districts' state-funded pre-kindergarten, early childhood special education and Title I programs. However, among the pre-kindergarten TSG users in the pilot, there were also three counties where Head Start programs were TSG users (Carson City, Douglas, and White Pine counties) and three higher education programs in Carson City, Washoe and Elko Counties.

The evaluation focused on how TSG was implemented in Nevada during the Pilot Phase One, ease of use of the tool, how information from the tool was used by teachers, administrators, districts and parents, if the tool was meeting the needs of stakeholders, and how implementation and the tool might be improved. The state

Figure A. Map of SSKIDS Pilot Sites

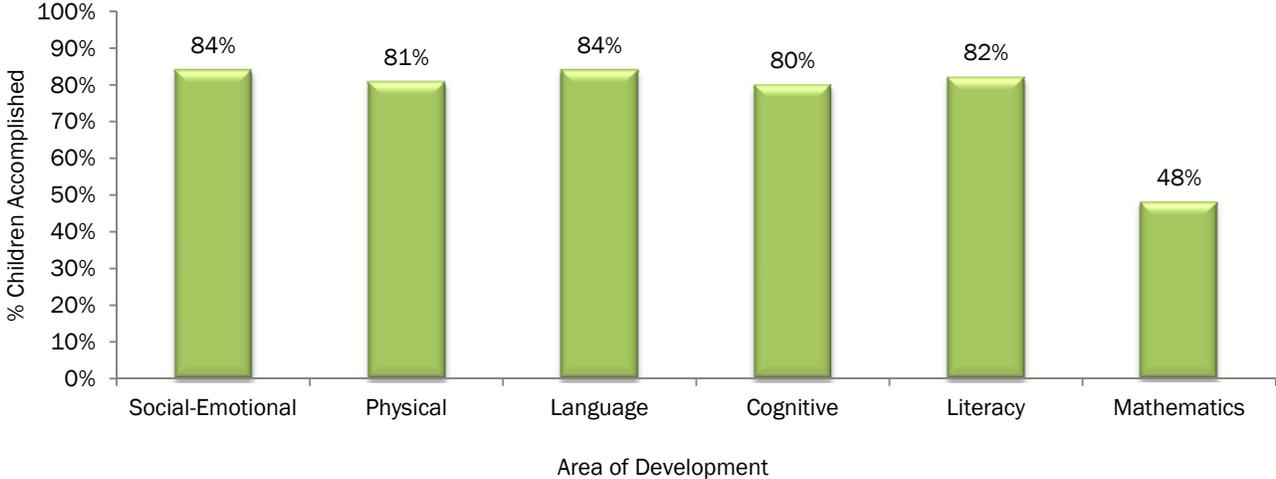


developed a set of 10 evaluation questions which guided Phase One of the evaluation project and are answered in this report. To address the evaluation questions, TPI conducted 16 focus groups, 20 interviews and five on-line surveys with TSG users and stakeholders throughout the state between March and June 2014. A total of 579 TSG teacher users and trainers, 72 principals and 38 administrators responded to the first four of five surveys, for an average response rate of nearly half (49%). The response rate of the final post survey administered to active TSG users topped 50% (53%) and included 292 TSG users. Focus groups were conducted with teachers (11 groups; 122 participants total), administrators (2 groups; 16 participants total), and parents (3 groups; 25 participants total).

Definitions of school readiness abound in the literature. As noted, a primary purpose for selecting the TSG was its ability to assess kindergarten readiness. The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) states that “school readiness includes the readiness of the individual child, the school readiness for children, and the ability of the family and community to support optimal early childhood development.” States are currently revising definitions to include new brain research and importance of “non- cognitive skills” or executive function on academic success. In Nevada, the definition of school readiness mirrors the AAP’s definition: READY FAMILIES + READY EDUCATORS + READY SCHOOLS + READY COMMUNITIES + READY SYSTEMS = CHILDREN ARE READY FOR SCHOOL (Nevada ECAC). The Teaching Strategies Gold Assessment tool measures kindergarten readiness focusing on what the child is able to do upon entry in six distinct domains of development: 1) social-emotional; 2) physical; 3) language; 4) cognitive; 5) literacy and 6) math.

Figure B presents the results for children entering kindergarten in the pilot schools in fall 2013, some of whom had a public, quality Pre-K experience, some of whom might have had another Pre-K experience, and some who had no Pre-K experience prior to entering kindergarten. Information on enrollment in Pre-K was not available for this year’s pilot kindergarten cohort. Figure B shows the readiness levels accomplished by kindergarten children (without IEPs) in the study based on each of six

Figure B. SSKIDS Pilot Kindergarten Readiness at Start of Kindergarten



developmental areas. At the kindergarten fall checkpoint, social-emotional, language and literacy were the areas with the highest percentages of ready children. The range of readiness for TSG Kindergarten sites in the pilot study was 80-84% for five of the six domains and 48% for math.

While the TSG is an important tool for assessing kindergarten readiness, of equal or greater importance is how these data are used by teachers to inform instruction and how they inform the myriad of activities that support a child’s learning, growth and development. Table C presents the teachers’ responses regarding how they use the TSG results. Over half (58%) of the teachers use the results to share with

parents and increase their “readiness” as the child’s first teacher. Over half (55%) use the results to help write IEPs for children with special education needs; and over half (54%) use the results to target more individualized areas for the child. Nearly half (49%) use the results to develop and plan curriculum for their group of children.

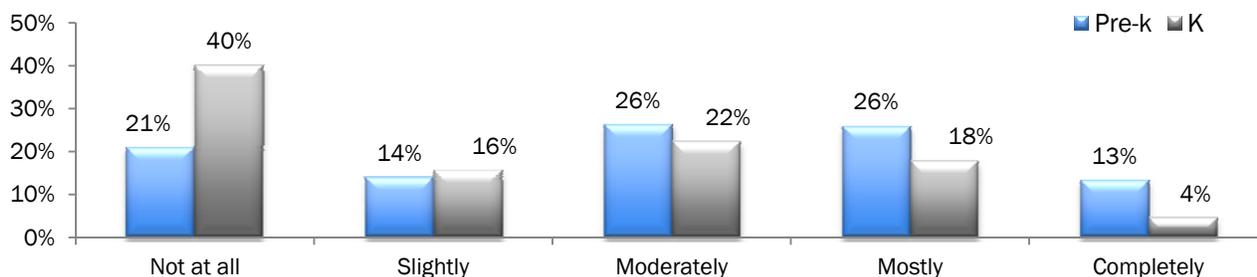
Table C. Ways Teachers Use TSG results (n=277)	
To share with parents and to help at home (n=150)	58%
To help write IEP’s	55%
To target more individualized areas	54%
To develop/plan curriculum, lesson plans, activities	49%
To set goals	41%
To group children according to needs	32%
To bring in new materials to support new activities	29%
I have not used results for instruction.	14%

Figure D. Top TSG User Needs for Additional Training



Ideally, all teachers using TSG would report using the results to improve instruction and to address the individual learning needs of each child. Training is noted as an important reason why more teachers are not using results to inform instruction or to communicate the results to others as a way to support READY FAMILIES, READY SCHOOLS and READY SYSTEMS. These aspects of training were rated only second and third to time management skills as areas for future training (see Figure D).

Figure E. Willingness to Continue Using TSG



TSG is embraced by Pre-K/early childhood special educators (65% were *slightly* to *completely* willing to continue using TSG) as a valuable assessment tool that addresses the whole child in a developmentally appropriate manner (see Figure E). As such, it is useful for guiding instruction. An important consideration is whether TSG is suitable for use in kindergarten. One of the state’s largest school districts has already established policy and practices for use of an alternative assessment tool for kindergarten.

In the school sites (three to date) where the tool is used consistently by both Pre-K and kindergarten teachers, there is emerging evidence that it can be a useful tool for communicating child growth and development and readiness for kindergarten and in planning instruction accordingly. Further conversations and work on behalf of teachers, administrators, TSG developers and NDE personnel is needed to: 1) review and evaluate the appropriateness of the alignment of TSG with Nevada Academic Content Standards for kindergarten and 2) identify and unpack the sets of skills from domains to more accurately reflect actual growth and learning along the continuum of development of children in kindergarten—much as Washington has done with its Teaching Strategies Gold assessment project by reducing the number of domains measured. It is recommended that an in-depth evaluation of these sites be conducted to learn how the tool facilitates the transition to kindergarten. In addition, as more consistent training is provided to pilot sites along with Inter-Rater Reliability certification, the evaluation should focus on how consistently and comparably the TSG is used by Pre-K/ECSE and K teachers as a full assessment and instructional guidance tool.

Three major findings from SSKIDS Evaluation Phase 1:

- 1) TSG is a useful tool for determining kindergarten readiness, and is particularly useful when those results are shared among peers and colleagues and between Pre-K/Early Childhood Special Educators and Kindergarten (K) teachers to inform instruction.
- 2) TSG is highly recommended by educators—teachers and administrators—and parents for continuing use, with specific attention to the adjustments and adaptations found in this report as reflected in the third finding.
- 3) For successful implementation and sustained use of the TSG tool, users specifically need adequate time, professional development and training, technical support and leadership from both site level and program administration as well as the Nevada Department of Education (NDE) and funding to sustain TSG use beyond the pilot.

INTRODUCTION AND PROJECT BACKGROUND

Research supports the importance of high quality early education in the prediction of school success. Key components supporting improved outcomes for children entering kindergarten include a state level definition of school readiness and a common kindergarten readiness assessment, a data system that provides seamless tracking for children from pre-kindergarten through kindergarten and the primary grades, improved training and education for early childhood educators, improved quality of early childhood programs, and more access to affordable quality early childhood education programs (*Children's Advocacy Alliance, caanv.org*). **Silver State Kindergarten Inventory of Development Statewide (SSKIDS)**, (a kindergarten entrance assessment and data system), along with **Silver State Stars**, (improving the quality of early childhood programs in Nevada) support Nevada's commitment to quality early childhood education and improved readiness skills for all children entering kindergarten.

Silver State KIDS, a system for assessing school readiness for Nevada's children entering kindergarten, as well as a data system for seamless tracking of child outcomes prek-12, is a component of Nevada's Early Childhood Comprehensive System Strategic Plan, **Silver State Strong**. This plan identifies goals and objectives that will improve the outcomes for young children in Nevada, increasing the school readiness skills for all children in Nevada, particularly children with high needs. The *Nevada Early Childhood Advisory Council* conducted a needs assessment and reviewed existing assessment tools that provided assessment of the whole child—how they demonstrate what they know and can do when they interact in an authentic setting. The *Teaching Strategies GOLD (TSG)* assessment was chosen to use for a pilot project for *Silver States KIDS*, supported by funding from Senate Bill 486, passed during the 2013 Legislative Session. Teaching Strategies GOLD® is a developmentally appropriate, criterion-referenced system for assessing the knowledge, skills, and behaviors of children from birth through kindergarten. It blends ongoing, authentic observational assessment across 10 areas of development and learning with performance-assessment tasks for selected literacy and numeracy objectives. Extensive research has shown it to be highly valid and reliable for children from diverse cultures, languages, socioeconomic backgrounds, and abilities.

The purpose of the SSKIDS evaluation, as stated in the original Request for Bids, was for the State of Nevada to understand if the tool does all of the above in Nevada, if Nevada teachers and parents find it easy to use and informative, and whether the state should continue to use the tool into the next biennium. More specifically, the evaluation focused on how TSG was implemented in Nevada during the Pilot Phase One, ease of use of the tool, how information from the tool was used by teachers, administrators, districts and parents, if the tool was meeting the needs of stakeholders, and how implementation and the tool might be improved. The state developed a set of 10 evaluation questions which guided Phase One of the evaluation project and are answered in this report.

The state contracted with Turning Point, Inc. to carry out an evaluation of the Silver State Kindergarten Inventory of Development Statewide (SSKIDS) Pilot. This project involved the first phase of evaluating the Silver State KIDS pilot funded by Senate Bill 486. To do this, TPI conducted focus groups, interviews and on-line surveys with Teaching Strategies GOLD® users and stakeholders throughout the state between March and June 2014. A second phase of the evaluation will be conducted starting in July 2014 to learn more about the implications for ongoing use of the tool.

The following evaluation report documents Nevada's pilot project, implementing a common kindergarten readiness tool, *Teaching Strategies GOLD®*, in school districts, private and charter schools, Head Start programs and private preschools. These sites voluntarily agreed to use the assessment in their early childhood education programs including infant, toddler, preschool/Pre-K, early childhood special

education and kindergarten levels. The results of the Phase One pilot evaluation will inform and assist the Nevada Department of Education in designing the implementation and evaluation of the second year of the pilot and the establishment of a kindergarten entry assessment for Nevada.



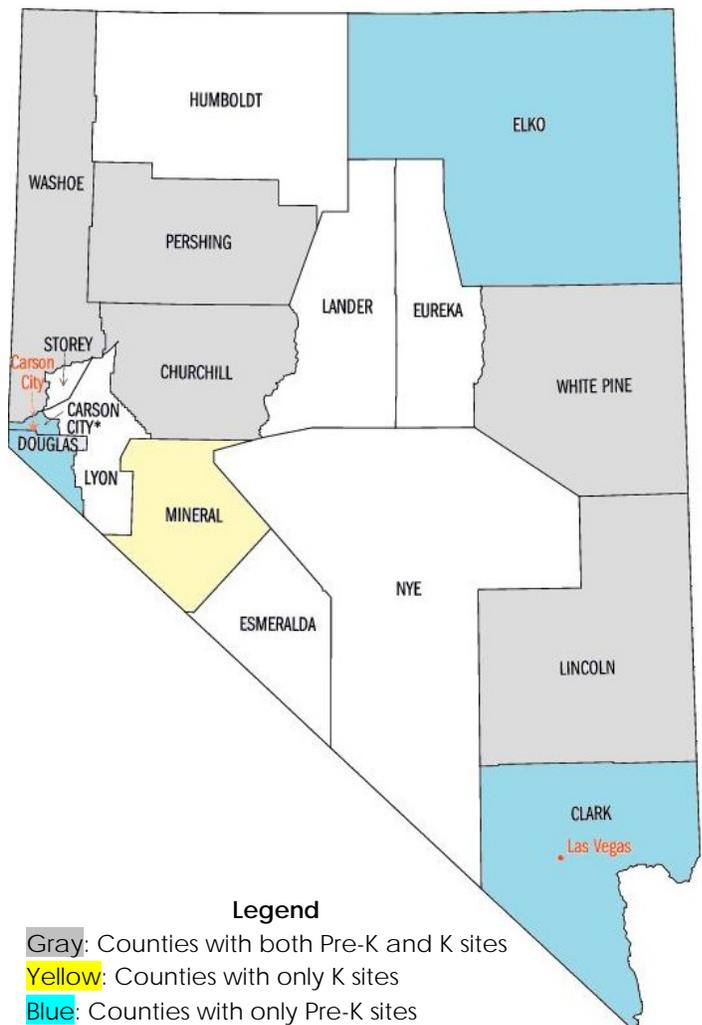
METHODS

A total of ten counties and programs in Carson City participated in the SSKIDS Pilot Project (see Figure 1). Eight of the 11 counties involved pre-kindergarten teachers as TSG users and six also involved kindergarten teachers as TSG users. Approximately one-third of the county programs or school districts in the pilot involved both pre-kindergarten and kindergarten teachers (N=4). The pilot pre-kindergarten programs were largely aligned with the school districts' state-funded pre-kindergarten, Early Childhood Special Education and Title I programs. However, among the pre-kindergarten TSG users in the pilot there were also three counties where Head Start programs were TSG users (Carson City, Douglas, and White Pine counties) and there were three higher education programs in Carson City, Washoe and Elko Counties (see map below for pilot locations by county).

The evaluation team used a variety of methods to answer the evaluation questions. A 10-item teacher pre-survey was launched on Survey Monkey in February 2014 in order to help determine actual levels of TSG use in the state of Nevada and to recruit participants in focus groups around the state. While the TSG database included 759 Nevadans with teacher level accounts, not all of those individuals were actual TSG users. Of 743 valid email addresses from the TSG teacher account database, 568 responded for a response rate of 76%.

A principal survey and administrator survey were also administered online via Survey Monkey in February and March 2014 to determine levels of principal and administrator involvement with TSG and to recruit participants for interviews. Of 220 valid TSG site principal emails, 72 responded to the survey for a 33% response rate. Of 118 valid TSG administrator-level user emails, 38 responded for a 32% response rate. Following the survey, principals who indicated they would be willing to participate in an interview were contacted. Interviews with district administrators, building administrators, supervisors, directors and teachers were conducted in April and May 2014 to help capture feedback on the awareness and use of TSG in the various settings in Nevada. There were a total of 20 interviews: five Clark County School District (CCSD) principals, one Churchill County School District principal and one Washoe County School District (WCSD) charter principal; four CCSD ECE teachers and one WCSD ECE teacher; two CCSD directors, one White Pine County School District (WPCSD) director, one Tribal Head Start director, one University of Nevada, Reno (UNR) director, and three WCSD supervisors. Interview questions focused on a description of the role and location of the interviewee; the perception of the feasibility of the TSG in terms of a data collection instrument, as a reporting instrument for others (e.g., teachers, families), intention of using the instrument in 2014-2015.

Figure 1. Map of SSKIDS Pilot Sites



A trainer survey was sent to 20 TSG train-the-trainer participants, of which 11 responded for a response rate of 55%. Trainers were asked about the number of trainings they had delivered, their confidence in presenting the material, their challenges and strengths delivering the training, and their need for additional training and support.

Personal interviews were conducted with key stakeholders either in person or by phone. Interviewees included teachers (n=5) and administrators and principals (n=15).

Focus groups were conducted by evaluation team members across the state in April and May 2014 (see Table 1) in conjunction with the NV Association for the Education of Young Children (NV-AEYC) conference in Las Vegas (South) and in other locations in the north, south and rural communities where users could participate with other users from their county or as mixed-county user focus groups. Focus groups were conducted with teachers (11 groups; 122 participants total), administrators (2 groups; 16 participants total), and parents (3 groups; 25 participants total). Focus group responses were imported into QSR NVivo 9.0 qualitative analysis software and then coded thematically and summarized.

Table 1. Distribution of Focus Groups and Interviews				
Type	South	North	Rural	Total
<i>Focus Groups</i>				
Teacher	2	7	2	11
Administrator	2	0	0	2
Parent	2	1	0	3
<i>Interviews</i>				
Principal	6	1	0	7
Administrator	2	4	1	7
Teacher	4	1	0	5

The teacher post-survey was sent via Survey Monkey to any pre-survey respondents who indicated they were current or past TSG users along with pre-survey non-respondents. Of the 554 email invitations sent, 292 respondents completed the teacher post-survey for a response rate of 53%. Focus group results were used to develop the post-survey items. The main purposes of the teacher post survey were to better understand how teachers are using TSG, their experiences with the tool, and their suggestions for improving the tool and its implementation in Nevada in the future.

FINDINGS ON LEVEL OF USE

What is the level of individual use at the Pre-K and Kindergarten levels across the state for teachers identified as “users?”

The majority of pre-survey respondents were current TSG users (467; 83%); and, 3% (15) of respondents were former TSG users. Current users had been using TSG for a mean of 2.1 years, while past users had used for a mean of 0.5 years. The majority of non-users who responded to the pre-survey were Speech Language Therapists/Pathologists from the Clark County School District who made up 24% of respondents to the pre-survey. Kindergarten teachers made up 6% of the sample, while the remaining 70% of respondents were Pre-K and early childhood special education teachers. The majority of respondents were from Clark County School District (86%).

Of those responding to the teacher post-survey, 97% were current users; and 3% were past users. More than half the respondents had used TSG for less than one year (see Figure 2). Most of the principal survey respondents indicated that TSG was used at their site, either currently (89%) or in the past (3%). All of the administrator survey respondents indicated that TSG was used at their site. According to post-survey, teacher focus group and principal/administrator survey results, the majority of TSG users were either Pre-K or early childhood special education teachers (see Table 2).

For those participating in the teacher focus groups, 92% indicated that they were currently using TSG with children in their own classrooms. The majority of these TSG users also indicated that they used TSG results to help design instruction (80%) and share with parents for suggestions on how they can help their children at home (75%). Over half (57%) of administrators participating in focus groups indicated they shared results with parents, colleagues, and other groups. Ninety-six percent (96%) of parents participating in the focus groups indicated that their child’s teacher or home visitor had told them about the TSG assessment tool and had shared results based on the TSG about their child’s growth and learning. One hundred percent (100%) of parents found this information useful to their understanding of how their children are growing and learning.

Figure 2. Length of TSG Use Among Teacher Post-Survey Respondents (N=289)

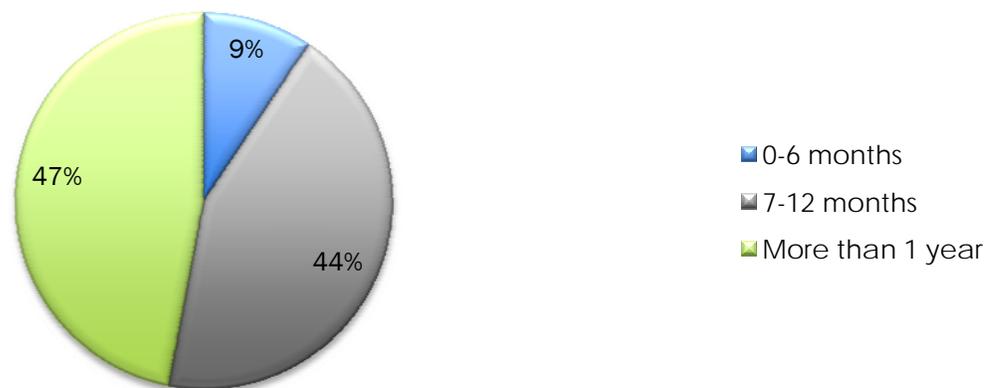


Table 2. Levels taught by TSG Users

	Teacher Post n=283	Focus Group Survey (Teachers)	Principal survey n=63	Administrator Survey n=36
Pre-K	52.7%	54.5%	76.2%	66.7%
Early Childhood Special Education	51.2%	(included in above)	77.8%	63.9%
Kindergarten	15.9%	14.8%	14.3%	19.4%
1st Grade	0.4%	0%	--	--
2nd Grade	0.4%	0%	--	--
Special Education	8.8%		--	--
Speech Therapist/Pathologist	--	0%	4.8%	5.6%
Other (0-3 years, etc.)	6.7%	30.7%	1.6%	27.8%

Note: Respondents could select more than one response option.

FINDINGS ON PREPAREDNESS AND USE OF THE TEACHING STRATEGIES GOLD ASSESSMENT

1. DO TEACHERS FEEL PREPARED TO USE THE ASSESSMENT?

How prepared teachers felt to use TSG largely depended on the amount of training they had received, when teachers received the assessment information, and what is meant by “feel prepared.” When teachers were already prepared, that is, when they had been using TSG before (as is the case in Clark County in the Pre-K programs, for example) or if the teacher who received the training gained an understanding of the instrument in a gradual and supportive way (as was the case in White Pine County School District), teachers reported that they felt prepared to try out the instrument and to share what they were learning with others. This was especially evident from interviews of principals and directors who felt that the ECE teachers shared their experiences and techniques that were useful in data observations, collections, and analysis. Many times, this was paired with the supervisor who provided new teachers with training on using the instrument. In the case of a program like the Washoe Tribe Head Start that has used the program for two years, all of the teaching staff completed the on-line modules and next year, according to the director, the teachers will be doing the inter-rater reliability (IRR) certification.

For the most part, teacher focus group participants felt *very to moderately prepared* to use TSG. Some teachers mentioned feeling well prepared now because they had been using it for a long time already.

“We have used it for a long time, so we have the book memorized.” (Focus group participant)

“We can anticipate what we are looking for, and can use observations naturally in the class.” (Focus group participant)

Training prepared some of the newer users, while others felt more prepared after getting some experience actually using the tool. Several participants mentioned feeling more prepared with practice and becoming familiar with the tool throughout the year.

“[I felt] very prepared after training [and] jumped right in using it.” (Focus group participant)

“[I felt] well prepared, especially after the first checkpoint.” (Focus group participant)

“[I] started late, but it’s easy to learn. If you understand tech, it is easy to use.” (Focus group participant)

For those teachers who did not feel well prepared, lack of training was the most frequently mentioned reason. Some also mentioned the need for more ongoing support from other colleagues who used TSG.

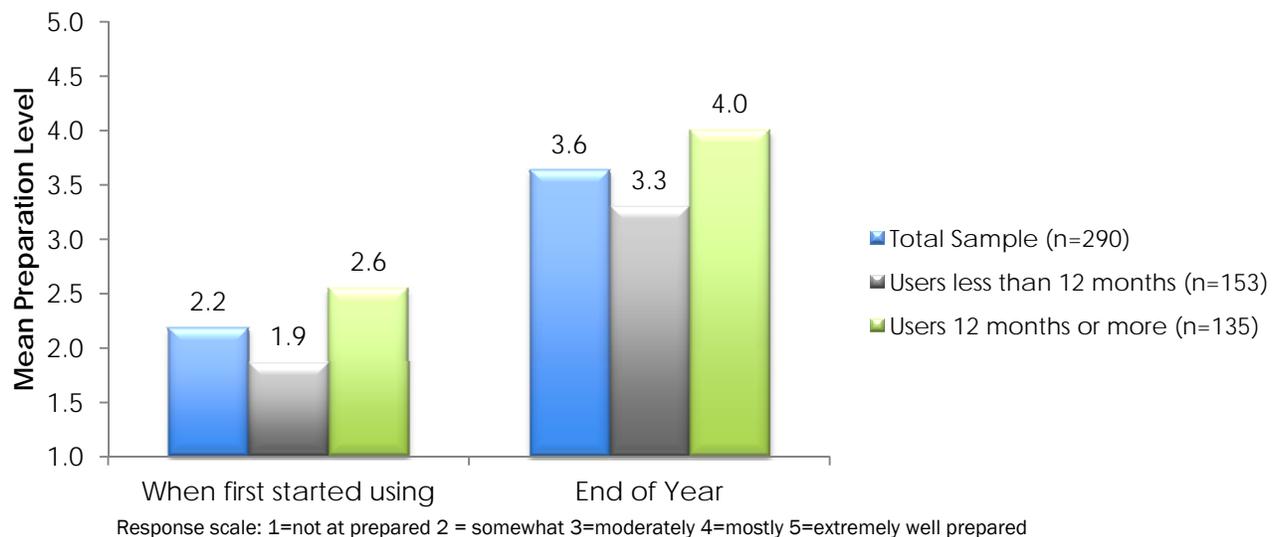
“[I] need actual legitimate training on it because I am not super secure with it.” (Focus group participant)

“[The] train-the-trainer [was] not enough. [I] needed monthly meetings and other teachers who helped. [There was] not enough training, particularly for K teachers.” (Focus group participant)



Teacher post survey respondents rated how prepared they felt to use TSG appropriately with children in their class when they first started using it compared to the end of the year (May 2014). As shown in Figure 3, overall, teachers' mean ratings of preparedness to use TSG at the end of the year were in the *moderately to mostly prepared* range ($M = 3.6$). Teachers indicated they felt more prepared to use TSG currently than they did when they first started using the tool. However, mean ratings were higher for both initial use and the end of the year for longer-term users (using TSG for 12 months or more) compared to shorter-term users (using TSG for less than 12 months).

Figure 3. Comparison of teacher perceived preparation level to use TSG from initial use to present (N=290)



The reports from the use of TSG in kindergarten were limited. Survey, focus group and interview results highlighted two possible explanations for less frequent use of TSG in kindergarten: (1) kindergarten teachers were not prepared to look at their students from a global developmental perspective, including multiple domains beyond language and mathematics; rather teachers were trained as K-8 teachers and were accustomed to assessments that were checklists rather than overall developmental instruments; and (2) kindergarten teachers' time to fully learn and implement TSG was greatly limited due to other obligations, such as other required assessments and district report cards and a lack of assistance from aides. Additionally, there was a perception among kindergarten teachers that TSG was not aligned with the Nevada Academic Content Standards (NVACS, referred to repeatedly as "common core"), which they were required to follow. Some of these are illustrated by an interview with a teacher in the Washoe County School district who agreed to share her insights after her school discontinued the use of TSG.

Challenges Using TSG in Kindergarten:

"We were expecting to have a testing protocol that would be something we could do on the fly and not take a lot of teacher time. We wanted to have usable teacher information and useful information for parents. We wanted to have help in figuring out what our children would need – in other words, an extra picture about our students. We wanted to have an instrument that would help us pull out useful data we could use in the kindergarten classrooms. We did not find TSG as useful for kindergarten teachers. Kindergarten involves skills that are more advanced and TSG did not address some of these skills. I have heard in other schools that the preschool teachers love TSG. It is different for us in the kindergarten classroom. We are alone in our classroom and have 25 students. If I were in a preschool classroom with 13 students and an aide, I can see how TSG can work. We do not have a preschool here in my school and so we are a group of kindergarten teachers who did not have enough knowledge and time to find the instrument useful and practical." (Kindergarten teacher)

Other challenges noted in the responses of focus group participants related to how well prepared and supported teachers felt in their use of TSG, particularly at the kindergarten level. Some user perceptions indicated that during this first pilot year there was:

- a lack of support, training and leadership from the state
- no consistency in how it was rolled out- how it was used and the level of district involvement
- a sense of competing demands by requiring other evaluations in addition to TSG (district and other grant requirements)
- secondary priority given to the TSG as an assessment—after other assessments were completed and submitted
- difficulty using the tool at the infant level due to a lack of developmental scales that aligned with more specific dimensions (attributes) for children at the infant level.

Recommendations for Improving User Preparedness

Create a roll-out plan for program implementation that would include:

- More standardized training and technical support for all users, including a recommended progression of amount and type of training that includes:
 - Requirements of Inter-Rater Reliability (IRR) certification for all users
 - Recertification in IRR annually
 - Training for principals

Provide opportunities for Communities of Practice that integrate with the evaluation's use of action learning circles and that will be sustained beyond the pilot and involve:

- Peer to peer training across the state
- Teacher sharing time
- Bringing users together in a conference to increase interaction with each other and TSG staff.

2. ARE SCORES ACROSS CLASSROOMS COMPARABLE?

Completion of the Inter-Rater Reliability Certification (IRR) among TSG users was extremely rare. The IRR certification is a process that is completed by the user entirely online. The user chooses the developmental level at which they wish to be certified (e.g., infant, Pre-K or kindergarten). Then, they view documentation and assess sample children on each of the domains. A user is certified for the domain when they accurately score 80% or better. The user can go repeat the process for each domain until they have scored 80% on all domains and completed the IRR certification, which is valid for three years. A small number of teacher pre-survey respondents indicated they had completed (22; 5%) or started (13; 3%) the IRR certification process; however, actual numbers of completers (13) and starters (7) in the TSG database were even lower. Many pre-survey respondents (67; 14%) wrote in that they did not know what the IRR certification was.

Of the 13 official IRR certification completers, six passed in the first round, three each passed in rounds two and three, while one passed in round four. The number of people passing by area is shown in Table 3. Some people have passed some areas but not all of the areas at this point. Across the six domains, the 13 IRR certification completers averaged scores of 92%.

Table 3. IRR Certification By Area

Area	Number Passed For This Area
Social-Emotional	14
Physical	16
Language	15
Cognitive	14
Literacy	16
Mathematics	15

To understand more about the IRR process, the 20 official TSG IRR completers and starters were invited to participate in a focus group over the phone. Three individuals participated in the focus group, all of whom happened to be from the same school district. In this district, the administrator and teachers had completed the IRR certification process at the beginning of the school year, shortly after their local TSG training. The teachers were able to work on the IRR process during a professional development day. The IRR focus group participants estimated that the time it took them to complete the IRR certification was approximately three hours. The participants felt that the process was fairly easy and self-explanatory.

"I thought it was helpful. It was long but when it would tell you what your score was, you could see maybe you didn't score as you should have. It is a good tool to see what [you should be] looking for and where to put [the child] on the color band." (IRR focus group participant)

All of the focus group participants felt that the IRR certification helped them use TSG more reliably and changed the way they rated children.

"I felt like even though I had been at the train-the-trainer session, I felt like I was unsure of a lot of the information, but after I sat down to take IRR, I felt like I could answer questions from the teachers on where to put kids on color band." (IRR focus group participant)

"I think it helped a lot. Once you took the IRR, you could see, when you watched video or read documentation. I started looking for words in the documentation, to see how to rate. I stopped to think about what the documentation said or what I saw in video and it helped to be more precise in the classroom." (IRR focus group participant)

"I felt more confident where I was rating kids. I know the Pre-K teachers were super frustrated because if you didn't pass it didn't tell you why. That came later in the year but after our teachers did it. If they were not passing it, they knew they weren't looking at something in the right field. Initially, when we started the IRR, you got your score and had to try again without knowing why. Social emotional was a struggle for one teacher and another struggling with cognitive. Later in the year there was an announcement, that now it would tell them why they didn't pass it. It would have eased a lot of the frustration. Our k teachers passed every section the first time. But not the Pre-K, they struggled." (IRR focus group participant)

"It gave you more confidence. On one section I got 100% and it made me feel that I did know what I was doing. On the ones I got 80%, it made me pay more attention. When I document and put on the color band, I felt more confident." (IRR focus group participant)

"It helped to be able to see where they should be. To see where they rated the child, so I knew how I should rate it on the classroom." (IRR focus group participant)

All of the participants recommended that TSG users complete the IRR certification because it was so important to being able to use the tool effectively and accurately. Furthermore, they recommended that all TSG users complete the IRR certification process close to or during training, before they start using the tool in the classroom.

"I think it helped all of us have a better grasp on where we were rating kids and that we were rating them appropriately. When our Pre-K teachers were so off base on rating kids, I think it made them pay more attention to how they were observing/rating development." (IRR focus group participant)

"I think from our experience, right after first trainings would be good [to take the IRR certification]. We should have packed our training closer to when school started. Take the IRR early and have confidence. I think it has to be done before doing first set of checkpoints to know scoring correctly." (IRR focus group participant)

"I agree. You need to take it before you start scoring your own students. It is a helpful tool to use as you are scoring. If you take it after the first checkpoint, then the teachers will be second guessing how they did the first check point." (IRR focus group participant)

Some aspects of the IRR certification process that worked well were that it was online and that one had choices in how to complete the process.

"I like that it was online. The data was right there. You could see if you passed the section. You could choose one student and do all of their sections. Or you could focus on area of development. You have some options depending on your style of thinking." (IRR focus group participant)

An initial challenge with the IRR certification was not being told why one got something wrong. That challenge was resolved when TSG changed the process and told participants the reasons for the errors. Participants felt that the most useful aspects of engaging in the IRR certification process were the confidence in how they were scoring children and being more thoughtful in their documentation.

"I feel more confident in helping the other teachers. Since I'm not using the program to score kids, I felt more confident helping them score kids and answering questions." (IRR focus group participant)

"I think it helped me after I took it to be more thoughtful in my documentation, to think about wording I was putting down. When I was rating them or doing assessments, I would be more thoughtful in looking at where they were developmentally according to that color band." (IRR focus group participant)

Spring 2014 documentation from one IRR-certified and one non-IRR certified teacher were selected each from the Pre-K and kindergarten. Due to the small number of IRR-certified teachers, which were all concentrated in one county, just one classroom was selected of each type at each level. The average number of documentations per child, the number of areas documented (i.e., Social-Emotional, Cognitive, etc.), and the types of documentation (i.e., photo, notes, etc.) are compared in Table 4. Due to the very small sample size, these comparisons should be interpreted with caution. In another year, should more teachers become IRR-certified, more classrooms could be included in the comparisons. In these examples, the IRR certified teachers at both Pre-K and K levels had a higher number of documentations per child and a greater number of areas documented. At the kindergarten level, the IRR-certified teacher had used more types of documentation than the non-IRR certified teacher. At the Pre-K level, both teachers used the same types of documentation.

Table 4. Comparison of Documentation for IRR certified and Non-IRR certified Pre-K and K Classrooms

	Pre-K		Kindergarten	
	Non-IRR certified	IRR certified	Non-IRR certified	IRR certified
Average # of documentations per child	5.4	7.4	1	2.8
# areas documented	2	8	1	3-4
Types of documentation	Photo, observation notes	Photos, observation notes	Photos	Photos, videos, observation/journal notes

Recommendations for Inter-rater Reliability Certification

As far as recommendations for improving the IRR certification, the participants felt that although the certification expires in three years, it would really be helpful to complete it on a yearly basis as a refresher. Other recommendations they had related to the training itself. They felt it would have been helpful for teachers to go through some of the online modules earlier. Overall, these participants felt that the IRR certification was a valuable process to go through and felt that all TSG users would benefit from completing it, preferably soon after completing training.

- Overall, it is highly recommended that training include an introduction to the IRR module and starting point for all participants.
- Additionally, all participants should be required to complete the IRR on-line training within the first quarter to six months.

3. WHAT ELEMENTS OF IMPLEMENTATION WERE COMPLETED AS PLANNED?

USE OF TSG

There was a continuum of use of TSG from little or no use (such as the sites that dropped out of the pilot) to very frequent use across multiple domains. Also, as discussed in detail above in section 2, although initially part of the pilot plans, participation in the Inter-rater Reliability Certification was extremely low and limited to just a handful of users.

Few kindergarten sites were recruited for the pilot. This number grew even smaller as the year progressed and several sites withdrew from the pilot. On the teacher pre-survey, former TSG users were asked why they had stopped using it. Some of the reasons given were that it was too difficult, too time-consuming, and that they did not perceive it as aligning with the Nevada Academic Content Standards for kindergarten.

"We decided to quit the pilot program because it was not effective in helping our team plan future lessons." (Former TSG user)

"We did not find it the best tool for kindergarten." (Former TSG user)

"TSG was too difficult, too time consuming, not common core aligned and we wound up doing TSG and common core assessments, and the kindergarten portfolio assessments in order to get the information we needed and to satisfy our administrator." (Former TSG user)

TSG DOMAINS

Among teacher focus group participants, more indicated that they used selected components of TSG than all the components. Some examples of actual use included:

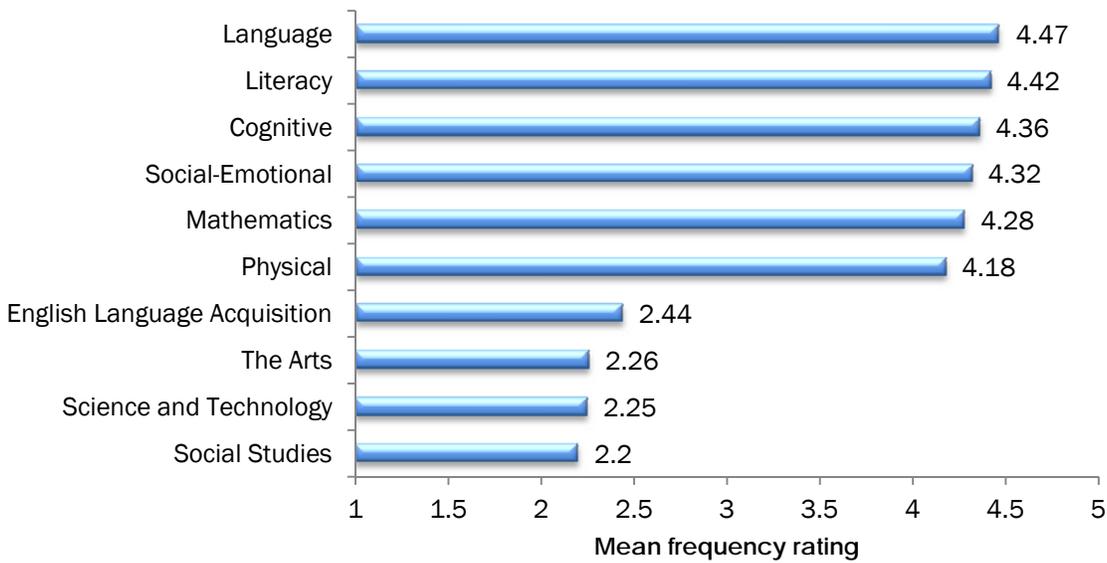
"First we did one [objective] in each domain, then we only did the list of WCSD K [standards]." (Focus group participant)

"We use all but [it's] too much; we want to use 18 like Washington." (Focus group participant)

"We used all components of the assessment, but not things like lesson plans." (Focus group participant)

Figure 4 shows the mean frequency with which teacher post-survey respondents reported documenting each of the ten TSG areas. Six areas were used most frequently by TSG users: Language, Literacy, Cognitive, Social-Emotional, Mathematics, and Physical. The majority of TSG users documented these six areas *frequently* to *always*. The Arts, Science and Technology, and Social Studies were used less frequently.

Figure 4. Frequency of TSG Area Documentation (N=286)



USE OF DATA FOR DETERMINING KINDERGARTEN READINESS

Another implementation gap noted in phase one of the pilot was lack of use of TSG data for determining kindergarten readiness—one of the main original purposes of selecting a comprehensive assessment tool. Less than one-third of teacher post-survey respondents (30%) knew for certain that TSG results had been used to determine children’s readiness for kindergarten at their site (see Table 5). Even fewer (18%) knew for certain that Pre-K TSG results had been shared with kindergarten teachers as children move into kindergarten.

Table 5. Use and Sharing of TSG Results for Kindergarten Readiness

	Teachers’ knowledge that TSG had been used to determine readiness for kindergarten at their site n=281	Teachers’ knowledge that TSG results had been shared with kindergarten teachers at their site n=274
I do not know.	24.9%	29.6%
No, they have not.	45.6%	52.6%
Yes, they have.	29.5%	17.9%
Other	1.1%	6.9%

Some sample respondent comments about sharing TSG results with kindergarten teachers indicate some lack of communication of results. However, in some cases, since it was the first year using TSG, there had not yet been an opportunity to share results with kindergarten teachers.

"I will share reports but I'm not sure that it is required. Communication is certainly lacking." (Teacher post-survey respondent)

"We plan to share TSG results with Kindergarten teachers at the end of this year." (Teacher post-survey respondent)

"They have been placed in the cumulative folders." (Teacher post-survey respondent)

"Yes, but I've had many parents/teachers say they don't understand how to read/interpret the individual child reports. I've had to spend extra time writing up explanations to attach to the reports." (Teacher post-survey respondent)

It is important to note that although most teachers reported they have not used TSG to determine kindergarten readiness or do not know if it has been used for this purpose does not mean it is not a valid tool for determining kindergarten readiness or that it isn't helpful for determining whether Nevada's children are ready for kindergarten. In Section 4, we used existing data to determine the readiness levels of children who were assessed using the TSG.

TRAINING

Teacher pre-survey respondents were asked what type(s) of training they had completed. Although 11% had no training to date, most had some type of training (see Table 6). Informal training was most common (40%), followed by one day of on-site training (37%). (Further discussion of teacher training from the teacher post-survey is found under section 5).

Response Options	%	#
None to date	10.9%	54
Informal training	40.0%	199
Online modules	24.3%	121
1 day of on-site training	37.0%	184
2 days of on-site training	14.9%	74
Other	22.1%	110

The most commonly mentioned training that focus group participants received was online training or webinars. In-person training tended to be provided at the district or site level. Some reported receiving monthly and/or ongoing training, while others reported receiving little or no training. Usefulness of the training received varied across respondents with some finding it very useful, some moderately useful and others not at all useful. Focus group findings with respect to training indicate a lack of consistency across the state.

Focus Group Participants' Training Experiences:

"We learned to use it by trial and error."

"Not formal training. Staff provided help with what they know."

"If I had the time to know about it, I would be able to use it more. The training is not as clear and the site is frustrating. That is because we never learned how to navigate it properly and we do not know what it is supposed to give back to us."

"The training for the trainer did not include any of the questions that the teachers have for me in my center. When I left [the training of trainers], I knew something about bands but not enough to do effective training with my team."

"I did online training video and testing. It was not very useful. Hands-on training would be more useful."

"I attended a group training in large group. It was a good introduction but left large gaps when directly applied. I still had large questions."

"We used the tutorials and then I had them work with each other. We need more training if we are hoping to use this instrument to its fullest. Right now, we see possibilities but we are frustrated because we cannot do more without more training."

"I went through and played with the TSG and looked at it for all the ages. I found that at the toddlers and down through the infant section, the tool is increasingly more difficult to learn. I found that at the preschool level, it works better and gives the teacher more support. Overall, with the older age, it was a little bit easier."

"The TSG training was only about how to get on the App and passwords."

TRAINING OF TRAINERS

Most of the Training of Trainer (TOT) participants (9; 82%) who responded to the survey indicated that they had delivered training since they attended the TSG TOT session. In all, these trainers had trained from 5 to 61 individuals each from one to eleven different training sessions. The total number of individuals trained by the TOT survey respondents was 188, with an average of four sessions and 20.9 trainees per trainer. These trainers indicated they had *low* to *moderate* levels of confidence in presenting TSG (Mean rating of 2.2 on a scale from 1= *not at all confident* to 4 = *extremely confident*). More than half the trainers (56%) felt most comfortable using the training notes (see Table 7). Trainers' biggest challenges varied across the respondents. Additional challenges trainers mentioned were not being able to use the Sandbox as it was intended and needing additional training and support.

Of the two who had not delivered TSG training, one had not been asked to deliver training, while the other was not clear about his or her role and did not feel ready to train. The confidence level in presenting TSG was very low for these two TOT participants. They felt their biggest challenges in presenting TSG would be navigating TSG (1; 50%) and using the training notes (1; 50%). One felt most comfortable with the TSG content, while the other felt most comfortable using the training notes.

"It wasn't clear when I was invited to the training what my role as a trainer might be given that I don't typically work with kindergarten teachers. I also didn't feel equipped to train because I had never actually used the tool." (TSG TOT Participant)

Table 7. Trainers' biggest challenges and areas of comfort with presenting TSG

Response Options	Biggest Challenges		Most Comfortable	
	Percent	Count	Percent	Count
The content	22.2%	2	22.2%	2
Navigating TSG	22.2%	2	22.2%	2
Using the training notes	22.2%	2	55.6%	5
Other	44.4%	4	0.0%	0

All of the TOT respondents indicated that they needed extensive (20%) or more (80%) information and/or support with respect to delivering TSG. Trainers were interested in more face-to-face training from TSG (78%) and additional webinar training (56%). Some other interests in support are described below.

"Tips and supports for training administrators to access and understand data on system." (TSG TOT Participant)

"I would need to actually use the tool to be able to train on it and I don't have children to practice with. Perhaps it would be more effective to have teachers who are using TSG train other teachers on how to implement it." (TSG TOT Participant)

FOLLOW-UP AND TECHNICAL SUPPORT

Focus group participants discussed the availability of follow-up and technical support. The most frequently mentioned support was the TSG tech support line and email, which participants either accessed themselves or accessed through a site or district supervisor or administrator. Support from other colleagues was also frequently mentioned as was district-level support and professional development meetings:

"We share what we find out how to do, such as, you can upload more than one picture in one observation. We need to know how to do it." (Focus Group Participant)

"After implementing for a bit we talked about it as a staff." (Focus Group Participant)

"We ask peers who are familiar with it." (Focus Group Participant)

"Supervisor and coworkers have been a valuable resource." (Focus Group Participant)

Some were frustrated with the lack of support, indicating it often took a while to get a response from TSG:

"There is a phone number to call for technical support although they did not help me. They asked others in the office but did not know how to address issues related to infant assessment." (Focus Group Participant)

"I did not get a call back the first time and I had to call again and then they answered my questions and concerns." (Focus Group Participant)

"When we would call or e-mail for help, it took a long time to get answers." (Focus Group Participant)

Others had success getting the support they needed from TSG:

"I was able to learn from the technical team how to take pictures with my own iPads and that there was an app for android and it was just Apple friendly (I could not use it on my Samsung). That was great, except it takes time to put it into TSG." (Focus Group Participant)

"I have TSG staff on speed dial. I wish we had more opportunity to work with the teachers and administrators to work together." (Focus Group Participant)

Teacher post-survey respondents rated the acceptability of technical support from TSG. The majority of respondents who had received support (84%) reported it to be *moderately* to *completely* acceptable, with a mean rating of 3.7 on a scale from 1 = *not at all acceptable* to 5 = *completely acceptable*.

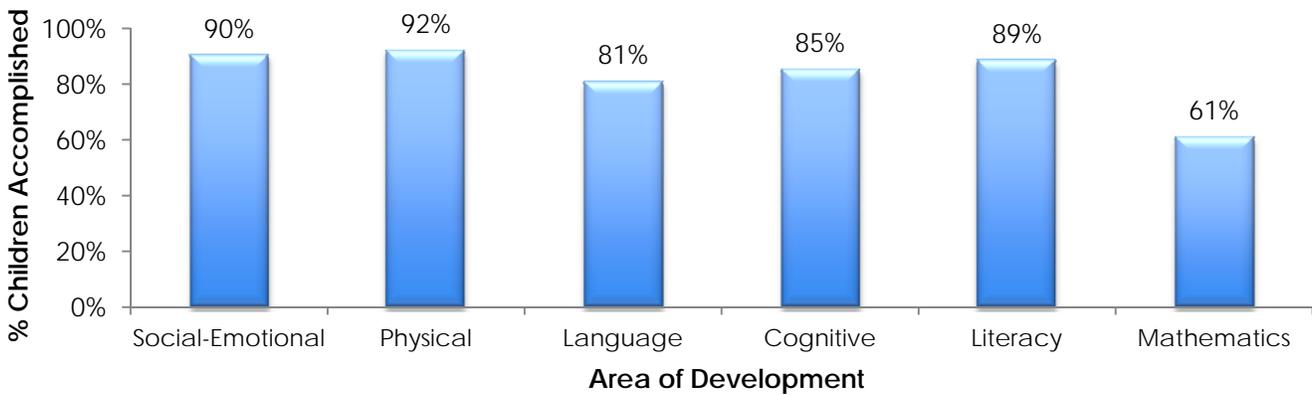
Recommendations for Improving Implementation

- Provide all TSG users with iPads and instructions on how to use apps to document and collect data.
- Insure consistency in on-site training for all TSG users, inclusive of an orientation and practice with on-line systems and hands-on practice with the diverse components of TSG.
- Make sure TSG trainers are users themselves and can speak to practice issues, how to use the on-line system and how the assessment is linked to results.
- Provide more extensive training and technical support to TOTs.

4. WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT SCHOOL READINESS FOR NEVADA'S CHILDREN IN THE TSG PILOT WHEN THEY LEAVE PRE-K PROGRAMS?

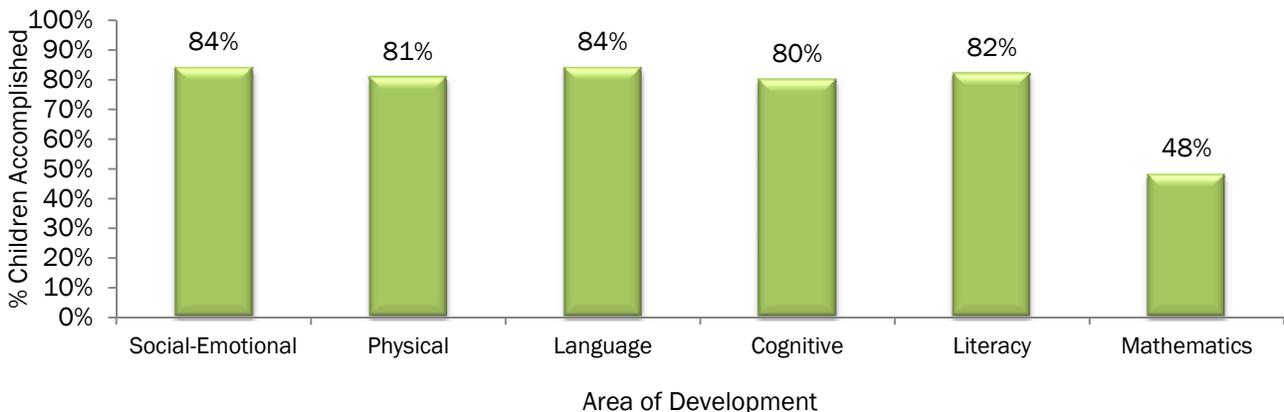
Since this was the first year of the pilot, kindergarten readiness data were not available for the same cohort of children to compare a spring Pre-K checkpoint to a fall kindergarten checkpoint. Instead, we examined readiness levels for the spring 2014 Pre-K cohort to determine what percent of the children who had a public Pre-K experience were "ready for kindergarten." Figure 5 shows the readiness levels accomplished by Pre-K children (without IEPs) in the study based on each of six developmental areas. At the Pre-K spring checkpoint, physical, social-emotional, and literacy were the areas with the highest percentages of ready children. Across all TSG Pre-K sites in the pilot study, the range of readiness was 85-92% in five of the six domains. Only in math did readiness fall to 61%.

Figure 5. Kindergarten Readiness at End of Pre-K for SSKIDS 2013-2014 Cohort



Similarly, we examined readiness levels of the fall 2013 kindergarten cohort, some of whom had a public, quality Pre-K experience, some of whom might have had another Pre-K experience, and some who had no Pre-K experience prior to entering kindergarten. Information on enrollment in Pre-K was not available for this year's pilot kindergarten cohort, therefore, we could not carry out a within group comparison of the children enrolled in kindergarten at a TSG pilot site during fall 2013 along the three conditions: public Pre-K; other Pre-K; no Pre-K. Figure 6 shows the readiness levels accomplished by kindergarten children (without IEPs) in the study based on each of six developmental areas. At the kindergarten fall checkpoint, social-emotional, language and literacy were the areas with the highest

Figure 6. Kindergarten Readiness at Start of Kindergarten for SSKIDS 2013-2014 Cohort



percentages of ready children. The range of readiness for TSG Kindergarten sites in the pilot study was 80-84% for five of the six domains and 48% for math.

We then compared readiness levels of the group of Pre-K children in spring 2014 to readiness levels for the kindergarten cohort from fall 2013 for all children participating in the TSG pilot sites. These data were extracted from the TSG database using the Comparative Report with the TSG Readiness option checked. This template will be used for reporting school readiness at the state level in the future.

The percentages of Pre-K children who were ready in the spring were higher than the percentages of kindergarteners that were ready in the fall on five of the domains—social-emotional, physical, cognitive, literacy and math. A slightly higher percentage of kindergartners than Pre-K children were ready with respect to language at their respective checkpoints. Readiness in math was much lower for both Pre-K and kindergartners compared to the other areas of development. There was also a large gap between readiness of Pre-K and kindergarten children. While 61% of Pre-K children accomplished readiness in math, only 48% kindergarten children had accomplished readiness in mathematics.

There are two important considerations as we interpret these findings:

- What role does having a quality Pre-K experience play in getting children ready for kindergarten?
- What role does time play—development that naturally occurs between the average ages of four and five as children continue to engage with learning environments at home and in the community during the summer months between Pre-K and kindergarten—in getting children ready for kindergarten?

Percentages of ready children varied greatly from site to site in each of the areas of development (see Table 8 below). Percentages of children ready in math at the spring Pre-K checkpoint ranged from 20% at one site to 89% at another site and from 25% to 96% at the fall kindergarten checkpoint.

Table 8. Ranges in Percentages of Children Ready for School in Six Developmental Areas Across Nevada TSG Pilot Sites				
	Kindergarten (Fall 2013) (N=582)		Pre-K (Spring 2014) (N=3,830)	
	Minimum	Maximum	Minimum	Maximum
Social-Emotional	79%	100%	83%	100%
Physical	73%	100%	63%	100%
Language	80%	100%	68%	100%
Cognitive	25%	100%	68%	100%
Literacy	25%	100%	65%	100%
Mathematics	25%	96%	20%	89%

In sum, these data from the first year of the Nevada TSG pilot indicate that in the spring of their last preschool year, 81% to 92% of Pre-K children in the Nevada pilot sites were ready for school in the developmental areas of social-emotional, physical, language, cognitive, and literacy. However, fewer (61%) were ready for school with respect to mathematics. This same pattern holds true for children in the fall of their kindergarten year, although the percentages of children ready were slightly lower, ranging

from 80% to 84%. Mathematics readiness was an even greater challenge for children in the fall of kindergarten with only 48% ready for school in math at that checkpoint.

At the ECE level, it appears that teachers see TSG as a way to talk about continuity of learning. Teachers in programs where TSG is in use have reported to their supervisors how they share the results of their students' growth and development with the receiving ECE teacher. One principal shared that the TSG is used as an instrument to support a child if s/he needs to continue with special education services or has the competencies to move into a regular kindergarten. The TSG is an instrument that is placed in the student's folder when the child moves to the next grade level (e.g., ECE to kindergarten) or from one ECE center to another. Initial conclusions that bear further investigation to substantiate them are:

- Pre-K experiences make a difference in getting children ready for kindergarten.
- The TSG provides important information on children's readiness levels and is a valid tool for determining not only children's readiness for language, literacy and mathematics, but also in other key areas that contribute to a child's readiness and capacity to learn: social-emotional, cognitive, and physical development.

Recommendations for Using TSG to Assess Kindergarten Readiness

To truly understand the value of the TSG tool in assessing kindergarten readiness for Nevada's children and in adjusting instruction to insure children can learn and grow and succeed throughout their kindergarten year it would be advisable to:

- Conduct an intensive evaluation of those sites where the transition to kindergarten can be examined for the same children—where TSG is in use at both the Pre-K/ECSE and kindergarten level.
- Coordinate/facilitate communication between Pre-K/ECSE and kindergarten teachers so that TSG results can be used immediately upon the child's entry into kindergarten.
- Insure that children from different systems where the TSG is used for Pre-K can share their data in a timely and consistent manner (e.g., Head Start, private Pre-Ks or public Pre-K).
- Insure kindergarten teachers have access and are encouraged to access and use the data for instructional planning.



5. WHAT ARE TEACHER'S EXPERIENCES WITH THE ASSESSMENT?

HOW TEACHERS ADMINISTER AND USE TSG

Focus group participants were asked to share how they use the assessment in their classes. Participants cited that they used the TSG in a variety of activities throughout the day—in their small group, large group and individual learning activities. They also used the observation feature of TSG to collect data and provide additional documentation through photos and videos.

Teacher post-survey respondents indicated the level of frequency with which they implemented TSG in a variety of ways. Class observations were used most frequently and it was noted these were on an ongoing daily basis. Individual, small group and large group activities were used with similar frequency, that is, at least 50% of the time on a weekly basis (see Table 9). Suggested activities from TSG were used infrequently, usually a few instances per month. Teachers cited that they used observation notes, work samples, photos, and checklists as the most frequently used types of documentation (see Figure 7).

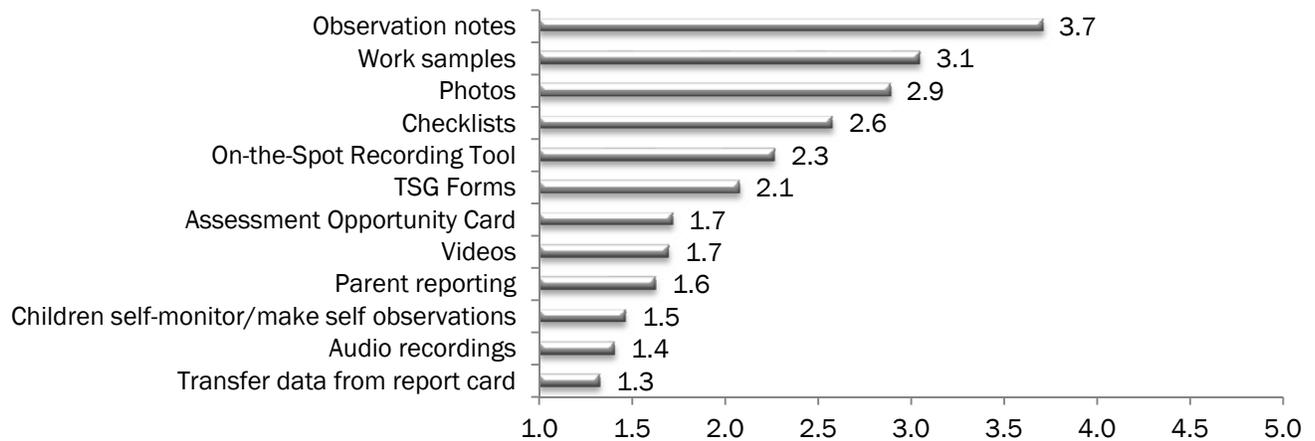
Table 9. Frequency of Methods of TSG Administration (N=278)

Response Options	Never	Rarely/Less than once a month	1 to 3 times a month	1 to 3 days a week	4 to 5 days a week
Individual activities	4%	9%	31%	45%	10%
Small group activities	4%	10%	28%	46%	13%
Large group activities	5%	10%	29%	44%	12%
Throughout the day	6%	12%	23%	39%	20%
Class observations	3%	8%	26%	44%	20%
Suggested activities from TSG	30%	32%	22%	16%	0%

Principals and supervisors reported that their teachers usually collected data on a weekly basis. Many times, in order to keep up with this process, teachers completed the data entries at home. This was an area that teachers found time-consuming yet despite this issue, many also noted how the data helped with planning and with writing reports. Sometimes data entry was cumbersome, that is, took more time than teachers had put into their schedule. Teachers reported to their supervisors or principals that they found if they could assess two to three students a day, they were able to keep a good schedule for data collection and data entry. One teacher supported the importance of data collection despite the fact that it is time consuming:

"We were happy because some of the other counties have to handwrite all their reports. Yes, the data entry is time-consuming but at least we have data in order to write reports. We don't have kids on Friday and that is when we try to enter data and even though we have this time, it is still not enough time and we need to take it home to complete the reports." (Clark County teacher)

Figure 7. Frequency of Documentation Types (N= 279)



Mean Frequency based on scale from 1 = Never to 5 = 4-5 days a week

Documentation with videos and photos was an aspect of data collection that teachers reported as highly informative and “enjoyable.” Not all of the teachers in the program had access to iPads and, sometimes, use of the iPads was limited because the teachers did not have hot spots or Internet access. Other times, teachers had an app they used for videotapes or photos on a smartphone. While this did work, many times, these teachers expressed a desire to have an iPad as it took more time to download the photos or videos on a smartphone. Half of the principals and supervisors interviewed reported that their teachers wished they had more training in using this feature of the instrument as they learned it on their own or by calling the helpline for TSG. It was also difficult for the teachers who did not have iPads to write data descriptions as easily as those teachers who had iPads. Focus group participants also discussed how they have used the assessment results to inform and alter their instruction. Most frequently they used the results to target more individualized areas for children, to plan lessons/curriculum/activities, to set goals, and to group children for instruction. Only a few focus group participants had not yet used results to alter their instruction.

How Focus Group Participants Use TSG as a Tool for Designing Instruction:

“I have taken goals from all the children that I see they need help with and incorporate activities in the curriculum.”

“I am more mindful of areas in which they need to develop and plan activities in my curriculum to achieve them.”

“It is helpful to be more exact on what needs to be done in the curriculum. TSG has many ideas of how to help set up the next steps of development, even for parents.”

“Results were used to alter our parent/teacher conferences, setting up strengths/goals and observing growth.”

“It gives you a way to individualize, be more specific in our teaching, with a specific goal.”

Teacher post-survey respondents also indicated how they had used TSG results to alter their instruction. More than half said they share the results with parents to help at home, to target more individualized areas, and to help write Individualized Education Plans (IEPs). Using results to plan curriculum, lesson plans and activities and to set goals were indicated by more than 40% of respondents (see Table 10). Close to 14% of respondents had not used results to alter instruction.

Table 10. Ways that TSG assessment results are used to alter instruction (N=287)		
Response Options	Response Percent	Response Count
To share with parents and to help at home	57.8%	160
To help write IEP's	54.9%	152
To target more individualized areas	54.2%	150
To develop/plan curriculum, lesson plans, activities	49.1%	136
To set goals	40.8%	113
To group children according to needs	31.8%	88
To bring in new materials to support new activities	28.5%	79
I have not used results for instruction.	13.7%	38



TRAINING

Post-survey respondents indicated the quantity and types of additional training needed on a variety of topics. Most frequently cited needs for additional training included time management skills, how to use the assessment results to support instruction, and how to communicate the results effectively and organization skills (see Figure 8). Written comments from respondents shed further light on some of their challenges and needs.

Teacher Post-Survey Respondent Challenges and Needs for Further TSG Training:

"Getting time to do observations is what I find so difficult. I take data but writing what the student says, etc. is tough."

"The system is too time consuming. I don't believe there is enough time for teachers to input without having to do it at home or have it encroach on teaching time."

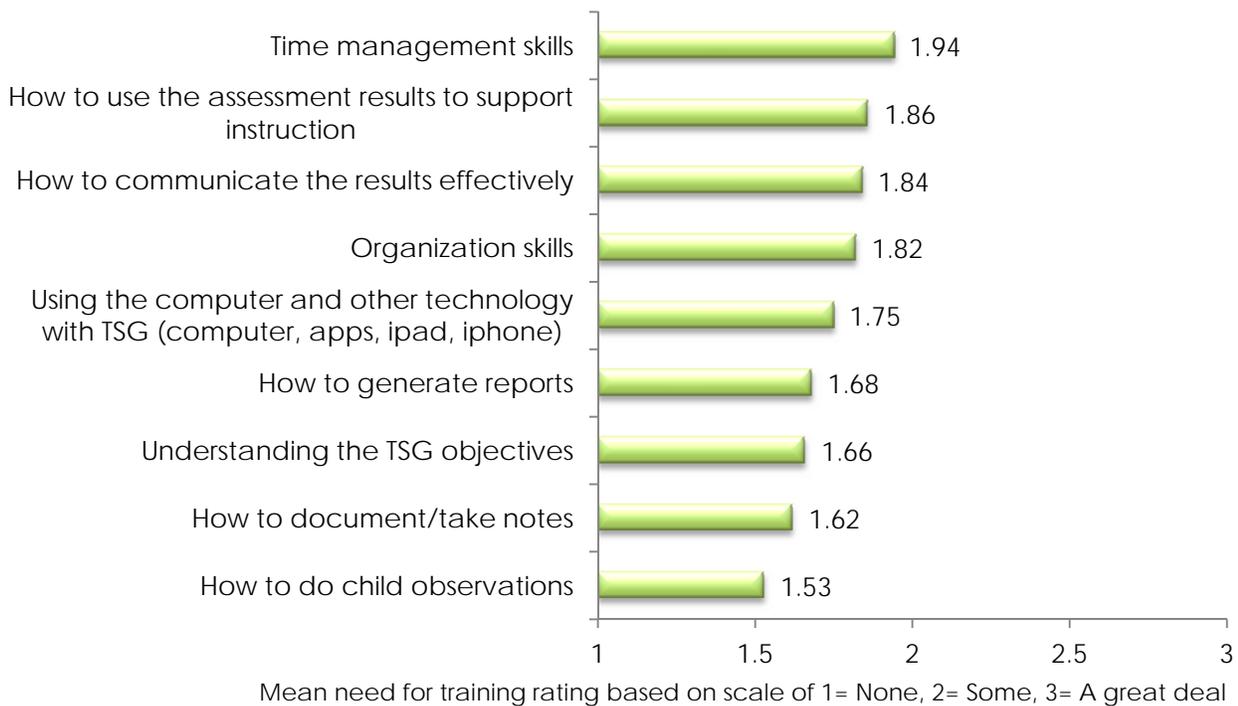
"Our school would like to figure out a way to create report cards from TSG data."

"I think everyone using TSG should be trained in reliability and accuracy of this tool. My interpretation of an objective may be different from someone else. That makes TSG an invalid and unreliable instrument. Due to the high transiency rate in our district, it is crucial that all participants be on the same page."

"How to fit teaching, taking documentation and entering all the documentation for each child, generating the reports, and doing all the other paperwork the Special Education classroom requires."

"How to make it useful for our daily instruction. Aligning it to common core to make it efficient in what we're already doing and not creating more work."

Figure 8. Need for additional training (N=286)



Respondents offered several options for training opportunities to learn more about TSG. The highest rated formats were group-meeting time with other TSG users/colleagues and in-person training (see Table 11).

Table 11. Interest in training formats (N=286)	
Answer Options	Mean Rating*
Group meeting time with other TSG users/colleagues	2.85
In-person training	2.82
Individual meeting time with other TSG user	2.42
Online training	2.36
*Ratings based on scale from 1 = Not at all interested to 5 = Extremely interested.	

EASE OF USING TSG

Teacher post-survey respondents rated their level of agreement with a series of statements about TSG on a scale from 1= completely disagree to 5 = completely agree. Overall, the majority of respondents (77%) *somewhat* (39%) or *completely agreed* (38%) that they feel confident using TSG in their classroom. Similarly, the majority of respondents (75%) *somewhat* (42%) or *completely agreed* (33%) that the training they received on TSG was useful in helping them implement it in their classroom. Mean ratings for nine of the ten items were 3.4 and higher on the five-point scale, indicating favorable levels of agreement with those items. Figure 9 compares mean levels of agreement with the statements for kindergarten versus Pre-K teachers. Kindergarten teacher levels of agreement were lower than Pre-K teachers on all of the items. Enthusiasm for TSG was apparent based on a principal interview at the High Desert Montessori School in Reno, NV.

PLCs Provide a Space for sharing and enhancing TSG Use:

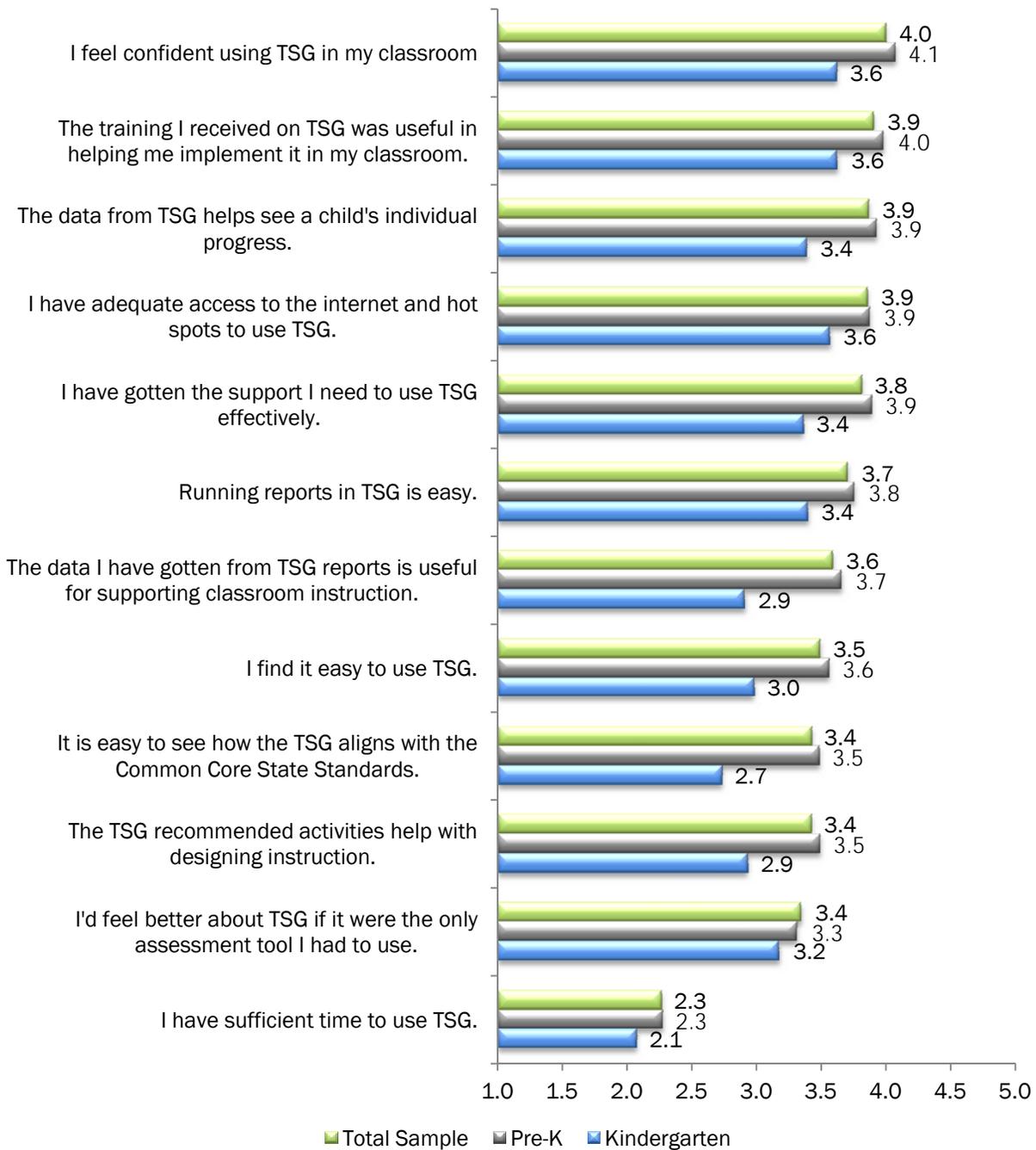
“Even though we don’t have the time like the district for the early Wednesday, the teachers have figured it out how to meet. They are able to rotate with the other teachers so all of the (Professional Learning Communities) have times to meet. They have worked as a team for many years and that ties into them feeling comfortable and using the PLC process. They are also using the portfolio and they have created their own portfolio and report card. They try to put things in with layman terms and this helps to communicate with their parents. The ECE teachers actually presented what they were doing and learning using TSG to the staff. Our PLC’s are organized of by levels so I have my primary, lower elementary and upper elementary and then middle school. Each has to have a focus and have a Montessori link and present one of their practices to the staff, their process, and where they are at this time.” (Principal, High Desert Montessori School)

Focus group participants discussed what works well in using TSG. Teachers found that being able to use photos and videos for documentation useful. Many found the apps worked well. The fact that TSG is a comprehensive tool that takes a broad developmental assessment of the child was an attractive aspect for many. Another positive aspect of the tool that focus groups reported was showing the graphs and reports to parents.

What Works Well in Using TSG:

- *Recommended activities support planning.*
- *Data capture the child's individual progress.*
- *The camera and video help with documentation.*
- *The apps are an excellent feature.*
- *It is a comprehensive tool that looks at the whole child.*
- *The graphs and reports are effective in parent conferences.*
- *TSG provides data to share with others (administrators, teachers, and families).*

Figure 9. Teacher Mean Ratings of TSG Ease of Use (N=289)



A sample of quotes from focus group participants further illustrates what they found works well with TSG:

"TSG is easier to use than other assessments- much better than paper portfolio." (Focus Group Participant)

"Supervisors can see classroom data, child, site level data. We can then create school readiness goals for the whole program." (Focus Group Participant)

"I love that it is online. I can look at it at home. I love the reports and the various ways to print out information. You can demonstrate different things with those reports." (Focus Group Participant)

As for what was difficult about using TSG, focus group participants most frequently mentioned technical issues, the time it takes to document observations, having too many objectives, and lack of alignment to the Common Core. At one school, a teacher whose team had volunteered to use TSG and then was given permission by her principal to stop using TSG reported that the tool was too difficult to use. She explained that teachers had wanted something that was "quick and easy." Another reason given was that teachers in some of the schools in a large school district also had to use the district reporting instruments – the school/district report card and tests that align with the Nevada Academic Content Standards. Teachers who used TSG in their classroom along with other data tools found that the data collection process paired with the other demands were simply "too much" in terms of time, data entry, and duplication with the other instruments also in place in the classroom.

Teacher post-survey results also reflect the same issues reported in the focus groups. The majority of post-survey respondents (66%) somewhat (29%) or completely disagreed (37%) with the statement "I have sufficient time to use TSG." Kindergarten teachers also had low levels of agreement with several other items indicating that TSG recommended activities did not help them with designing instruction, that the data from TSG was not useful for supporting classroom instruction, and they it was not easy to see how TSG aligns with the Common Core State Standards.

Teacher post-survey respondents indicated the frequency of problems they had with entering the data into the TSG system. The most frequently selected issue was having to fill in levels every time for each child even if there was no change in development or the child had already reached the highest level (see Table 12). Having a slow web connection and issues with the TSG website were other problems encountered by some users. Teachers' top recommendations for technical improvements to TSG included:

- Adding a "click all" button (Mean rating = 4.1, on a 5-point scale)
- Including the ability to add comments to explain growth and development/level of mastery (Mean rating = 3.5, on a 5-point scale)
- Improving the app (Mean rating = 3.5, on a 5-point scale)
- Being able to use reports without finalizing them (Mean rating = 3.4, on a 5-point scale)

What Focus Group Participants Found to be Difficult Using TSG:

"Sometimes there are problems with the app or website, and it takes a while for it to be resolved."

"There are some standards that are not addressed in TSG but we created a different sheet that we record those on. We work around it."

"I have too many kids and no aides and this can be overwhelming."

"...What drives me crazy is the sheer number of objectives. I love that it gives good information but also makes it hard."

"The biggest difficulty is the time. I don't feel like we have enough time to enter the info after it's collected and to analyze it. I would like more time to collaborate on it."

Table 12. Issues Entering Data into the TSG System (N=287)

Response Options	Have not had this issue	Have this issue sometimes	Have this issue frequently	Have this issues always
Website issues	43%	46%	8%	2%
Slow connection	30%	46%	19%	4%
Loss of data	63%	29%	7%	1%
App issues	53%	33%	10%	5%
Having to fill in levels every time for each child even if there is no change in development or have already reached the highest level	21%	27%	26%	26%

Teachers also cited numerous issues when they were entering data. Some teachers provided suggestions to help with user interface with the TSG tool:

"Find a way to stay on the page you were on after entering in the data rather than start over each time."

"It is very confusing to see levels from last time period. Also the multiple children leveling is not user friendly, difficult to mark and difficult to see past levels and observations."

"Having to fill in levels every time for each child even if there is no change in development or have already reached the highest level."

"Be able to add more than one video and picture within the app."

"Observation notes are not easily accessible from the iPad. It would be nice to record what a child did in writing and be able to see the note that was entered the next time you work with that child. As of now the data goes off to a cloud that is not accessed. The data is then not used to drive instruction."

"Why are a.m. & p.m. classes in separate tabs? It would be so much faster to have them in the same tab."

"Add a drop-down menu for standards where you can type in the number (like for student names) - way less clicks."

"The report card isn't streamlined - it takes a lot of space to say very little; add a descriptor for the indicator - at least for the level they're at (more like a spreadsheet where you check or highlight the correct box)."

The recommendations post-survey teacher respondents rated as most important for improving the tool included:

- Better alignment with the Nevada Academic Content Standards (Mean rating = 3.9, on a 5-point scale)
- Fewer objectives/adopt the Washington state reduced set of objectives (Mean ratings = 3.81 and 3.5, respectively, on 5-point scale)

Teachers cited issues they have with the content of the tool and some suggestions for improving it:

"For me, the biggest issue is how time consuming TSG is, mostly with entering all different types of observations. The checkpoints are also time-consuming because there are so many objectives and we have to report on them 3 times a year." (Teacher Post-Survey Respondent)

"The objectives beyond math, literacy, social emotional and cognitive did not seem necessary to mark as often in the year as the areas I mentioned." (Teacher Post-Survey Respondent)

"Very tedious and cumbersome, especially at finalization time. Not happy with the combinations of objectives on many of the rubrics. Should be revised! Example: the children may know the job of the author and illustrator, and not know that a set of particular books belong to a certain author. The children are 4 and 5 years old! I'm happy they can tell me the author writes the story and the illustrator draws the pictures. So when these combinations are put together in one rubric, how do you score it? They know 2/3's of the rubric. These examples happen repeatedly." (Teacher Post-Survey Respondent)

"Each level in the rubric sometimes has too many things for the child to meet before you can mark them at that level. For example in quantify I had students who didn't move past 4 all year because they could not meet the criteria of decomposition. So it looks as if they made no growth all year when in fact they made quite a bit of growth. There are way too many objectives for a teacher to document and still teach effectively. The objectives do not correlate with instruction in the CCSS so many times additional activities and one on one assessment would have to occur in order to observe the objectives." (Teacher Post-Survey Respondent)

"There is no time within contract hours to do all that is required. We found there are no whole class spreadsheets similar to what we use with common core common assessment. It was difficult to compare as a team, which is a requirement of our principal, therefore TSG was not driving instruction. It was just one more thing we had to do. That and the fact that we struggled with understanding how to input and download information. There are way too many steps in TSG to accomplish one task...again very, very time consuming. Also the objectives need to be reduced in number and more aligned with common core." (Teacher Post-Survey Respondent)

"Something needs to be done to lessen the number of objectives/standards that need to be graded for a 4 year old. I don't understand why an anecdotal record needs to be submitted for every standard/objective. This takes a lot of time to input...hours that are above and beyond contracted time...and this is not just a few hours...it's more like 75-100 hrs. Why can't individual grade be entered and an overall comment be entered for an academic strand? For example,

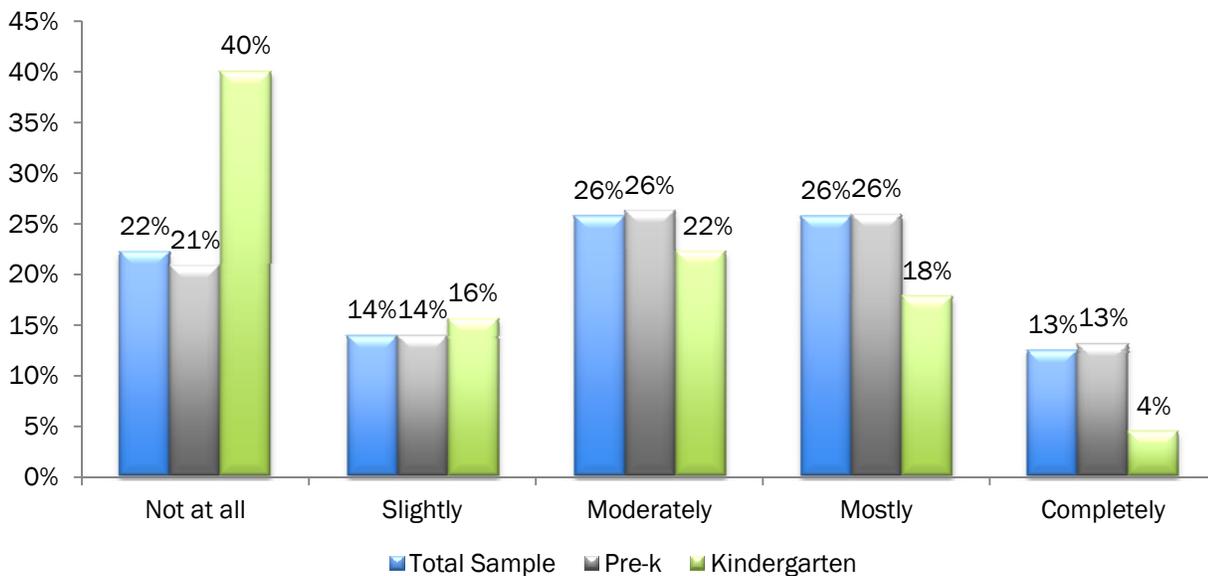
The Wordle in Figure 11 below provides a sense of the perceptions of teachers who participated in focus groups when asked, "What have you found has been difficult for you in using the TSG Assessment?"

Figure 11. Wordle Depicting Frequency of Words Describing Difficulties Teachers Experienced in Using TSG



When asked how willing they would be to continue using TSG in the future, if they had a choice, responses were mixed: 38% of teacher post-survey respondents were mostly or completely willing, 26% were moderately willing, and 36% were not at all or slightly willing (mean rating of 2.9 on a scale from 1 = not at all willing to 5 = completely willing.) Figure 12 shows the difference in ratings between kindergarten teachers and Pre-K teachers. Kindergarten teachers were much less likely to be willing to use TSG in the future, with more than half (56%) not at all or slightly willing to continue using it.

Figure 12. Willingness to Continue Using TSG (N=288)



Teacher post-survey respondents were asked if they would be interested in participating in an action-learning circle consisting of a smaller group of active TSG users in the 2014-2015 academic year. Fifty-five respondents said they were definitely interested, while another 76 were maybe interested.

When principals or ECE administrators who were interviewed were asked if they wanted to continue the use of TSG, they responded favorably in all but one case.

"I love TSG. I use it in combination with Brigance and I can use it for strategies and it gives details that better explain levels one and two, for example, if a child is not holding a marker with the right grasp or if the child is using a fist grasp. It helps the teacher see what is developmentally appropriate and what the teacher can do to continue to work with developmental behaviors."

"Absolutely - teachers are finding great values in it and it really does keep concrete reality for our children and for the teachers and parents."

Recommendations for Improving Teachers' Experiences with TSG

- Increase the frequency of use of TSG suggested activities in the classroom
- Support regular face-to-face time for training and for peer-to-peer user meetings.
- Reduce the number of assessments required for kindergarten users.
- Change the data entry system to be more efficient and user-friendly.
- Create opportunities for a working group to align the TSG with the Nevada Academic Content Standards.

6. WHAT ARE FAMILIES' EXPERIENCES WITH THIS INFORMATION?

Three parent focus groups were conducted with parents of preschoolers to gain a better understanding of families' experience with information gained from TSG. Two groups were held in Clark County—one at a Head Start site and one at a school-based Pre-K program (10 mainly Spanish-speaking parents). One group was held at an Early Head Start in Washoe County (1 grandma, 2 dads, and 6 moms). Parents were asked what they knew about the assessment, Teaching Strategies Gold. At one site, though they did not know the term TSG or Teaching Strategies Gold, they understood the assessment information reported by the teacher. They had received no information regarding the pilot project and the statewide use of TSG, or of the assessment tool. At another site, parents seemed to have a firm understanding of the scope of the assessment and how it helped them partner with the school to support their children's learning and readiness for school. At the third site, most parents had heard about TSG and its purpose from the teachers/home visitors.

Parent focus group responses helped demonstrate how teachers in the program, as well as the home visitors, blended TSG with early childhood practices. When asked about how TSG had helped them, parents' comments showed a range of strategies they had learned from data shared about developmental skills.

"I found out that he still eats crayons but now he also uses them to color a little." (Parent)

"We learned about our children's strengths and weaknesses. We learned that my child is still weak in some gross motor skills. We also learned about our children's strengths like my child is now learning more cognitive skills – taking the paper out of the box. So we learned what we can do now to help our child learn more and how to help our child learn these skills." (Parent)

"Since my son has been attending, he applies the things he learns there to home, helping out. He's turning into such a helper and is able to identify emotions. Before he didn't know how to express emotions. Before he had tantrums. Now he counts and organizes toys. It touches my heart how he uses what he has learned at school already." (Parent)

In a follow-up probe when asked if this information helped them understand how their children were growing and learning, parents responded with positive comments:

"Absolutely. Yes. We learned about our baby's vision and how to help our baby learn to track color and moving objects. We learned how our child's vision develops and what he can see. I would not have not known this without this program." (Parent)

"The program also helps our child with activities. I now focus each day on a set activity. We get to see what our children are lacking and then we help them learn from this observation." (Parent)

"I learned that my child needed to have more communication and now I am using sign language. She is trying to learn more about communication." (Parent)

Parents also discussed how they and their child's teacher/home visitor used TSG results to decide what the next steps were in helping their child's ability and learning based on TSG, as well as what activities to do at home. Learning about children's progress through conferences that discussed the TSG assessment enabled parents to understand how to support their children's learning at home. Parent engagement sessions instructed the parents to be home teachers in a fun and natural way. This cooperation between the school and the parents has enabled parents to recognize achievement in their children and the children to be more confident. Teachers had parent meetings and gave examples of how to teach their child at home (grocery store, etc.).

Examples of Activities Parents Did with Children at Home, Based on TSG results and Teacher Guidance:

"On road trips we sing the color song in the car – he gets antsy and this helps our ride and his learning." (Parent)

"My son has this rhyming game he does he'll say 'I did ten, did you see?' " (Parent)

"I'm now trusting my son with higher levels, if he can do this at school, I'm having him do it at home."

"We set readiness goals. Set goals to work toward that next activity and then practice the new learning at home. "

"The program helps the child because it has activities that the child likes to do – and then it has other things to do with these activities. It helps my child learn more from what my child already enjoys doing. "

"You talked a little about activities and you get to decide and they ask you if you want to choose the situation. The home visitor and I use the teaching strategies and we pick other activities along the same guidelines and she modeled it for us. "

A follow-up question asked parents how TSG helped them and their children get ready for school. Parents have a better understanding of kindergarten readiness and how to help them become ready. Parents also understand where their children are on the continuum of readiness.

"My daughter knows how to get on and off the school bus." (Parent)

"Teaches how to be a responsible student and parents how to be responsible as parents." (Parent)

"Teaches kids kindergarten readiness and parents how to help them. " (Parent)

"They hit everything possible: ABC's, colors, numbers, will teach how to keep his hands to himself, and better behavior. They are doing so much ... my son is three and not emotionally ready for Kindergarten, but academically he is. " (Parent)

"I tend to be overprotective and I sometimes am afraid to try new things. This program helps me try new things. " (Parent)

"This helps children be prepared to go to school. I was not confident and ready to go to school and I believe this will not be true with my child." (Parent)

"The program also helps because it gives me an opportunity to be with other adults and share ideas. Until I started this program, I did not talk to adults sometimes for a few weeks. It feels so good to now have some to talk to. " (Parent)

"It teaches the child how to be a responsible student and parents how to be responsible as parents. I know what to ask and how to use what they tell you. It teaches kids kindergarten readiness and teaches parents how to help them. Now I'm learning what Dad and Mom need to be doing to support kids." (Parent)

A significant understanding by parents of the role of children's social and emotional growth to success in school resulted from the assessment conversations (conferences) and parent engagement meetings among teachers and parents. Many families believed school only taught colors, shapes, numbers, and letters, and were surprised that social and emotional growth was important. TSG is one of few early childhood assessments that measures these domains.

Parents' Perspectives on the Role of Social and Emotional Learning:

"I learned that my daughter is nurturing and empathetic when not at home, she loves to be a leader and she is a fast learner." (Parent)

"Since my son attended Acelero...he is able to identify emotions, before he didn't know how to express emotions, before tantrums, now counts and organizes his toys. It touches my heart how he uses what he has learned at school already." (Parent)

"It was very important how sociable she was, how she worked with peers. I was surprised. I didn't know how sociable she was. I didn't know they would measure those things." (Parent)

Recommendations for Improving Parents' Experiences with TSG

- Provide teachers with information on ways to communicate and raise awareness among parents about the TSG assessment and how it can help them as "first teachers" of their children.
- Provide portals for parents to access and easily use the suggested activities in the TSG system when they receive results from their children's teachers

7. WHAT ARE THE WAYS IN WHICH INFORMATION HAS BEEN SHARED? WITH WHICH PARTNERS?

The sharing of TSG assessment data varies with each school and/or setting. For example, there are principals who report that they know nothing about TSG (Clark County) and this was verified by one of the only two early childhood special education teachers in the same building who use TSG. In another building in Clark County School District, the principal was so interested in TSG that she read about it, had her teachers provide her with examples of the data, and now attends their PLC meeting when they discuss TSG results. Another school in Clark has implemented TSG in its preschool and special education programs in previous years and now is fully implementing the assessment tool and sharing data with parents and other teachers in the district. When the assessment is being implemented, data is shared typically at the school level with parents, the principal, teacher aides, and other teachers in the grade level (e.g., ECE or ECE special education). The Washoe County Head Start program shared some positive insights about data sharing with the school district overall:

"We have seen the progress in student performance from fall to spring. We can identify children who begin at "Not Yet" or "Below Age Level" and progress to "Just Below Age Level" or "Beginning of Age Level"... those with IEP's, in a family crisis and/or poor attendance. In our discussions with the teachers in the school districts, they are pleased overall with our children's status when entering kindergarten. They have also stated that some of the Head Start Outcomes and upper age levels of Teaching Strategies are not necessary for Kindergarten entry."

Data sharing is not as clearly specified for teachers who "receive" the children the following year. Typically, the data collected by TSG are put into a folder and then the report is given to the receiving teacher, usually the kindergarten teacher. Based on interview data, there was no evidence that preschool program teachers (ECE or special education ECE) met with the kindergarten teachers as part of the end-of-the-year debriefing. On a positive note, the supervisor at White Pine County School District reported positive use of TSG for parent reports based on the cooperation of one of the building principals.

Principal Perspectives on Positive Alternatives for Educating and Engaging Parents:

"One of our [rural] elementary schools saw the information and the teachers loved it so they are not using report cards; rather they are using TSG to share with their parents. The teachers wanted to show the parents the developmental progressions and the parents could see the growth. It is not so important that the parents know the levels but more importantly, that their children are making progress." (White Pine County School District supervisor)

From focus group data, it appears that Early Childhood teachers who are involved in Professional Learning Communities (PLC's) beyond the building meetings do share information with other teachers who are using TSG. In a focus group session with home providers from the WCSD Early Childhood Education Center and the University of Nevada, Reno Early Head Start Center, the responses were highly positive about the importance of sharing TSG data with parents:

"As a home visitor, it builds home relationships. It builds relationships and it is the relationship first and everything else comes secondary. We are enjoying our place and we are enjoying our children here in the agency. We now are able to see so much more when we work with them. This is because the program helps us look more closely at the child and see more details."

Additionally, the Washoe Tribe Head Start uses the data to aggregate and disaggregate the information, looking for trends and areas of improvement. The director noted, “We have a school readiness team of staff and representatives from the school districts. The information is shared with the Policy Council. Each teacher and I review their specific classroom information and determine training needs.”

While some focus group participants did not share TSG information with parents, those that shared did so in a variety of ways—at parent-teacher conferences, during Individualized Education Plans (IEP), through home reports, and as an addition to the child’s portfolio. The information that is shared with parents also varied. The most frequently shared data were in the form of reports; some teachers shared documentation and pictures as well.

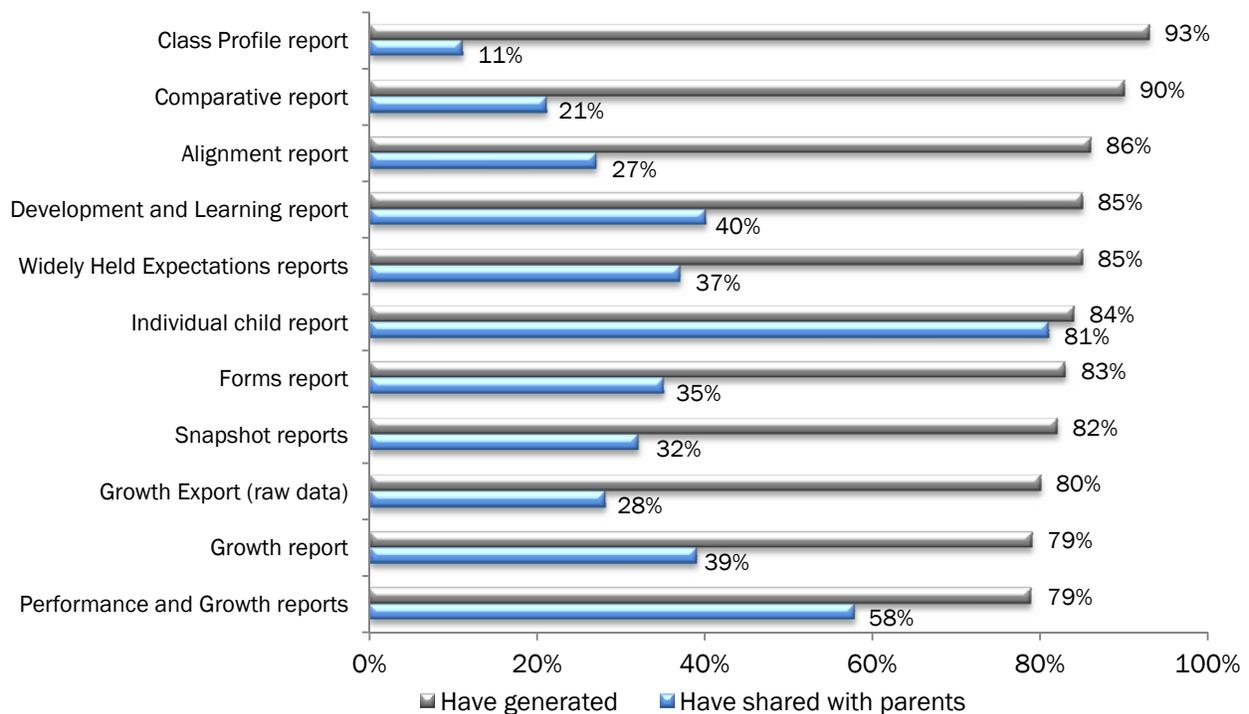
“I use a portfolio with documentation and pictures to show which objectives they have met, birth to 5, strengths and goals.” (Focus group participant)

“We share all the reports and checkpoints with the parents.” (Focus group participant)

“I like how you can turn out the graphing. It helps to show this to the parents. It is one document for the whole time. It is something that travels across the time.” (Focus group participant)

Teacher post-survey respondents indicated which of 11 different TSG reports they have generated and if they have shared it with parents (see Figure 13). The most frequently generated reports were the class profile report (93%), comparative report (90%), and alignment report (86%). The reports most frequently shared with parents included the individual child report (81%) and the performance and growth reports (58%). In addition to parents, the majority of teacher post-survey respondents also shared TSG results with other teachers (66%) and site/school administrators (52%). Fewer had shared results with district administrators (10%).

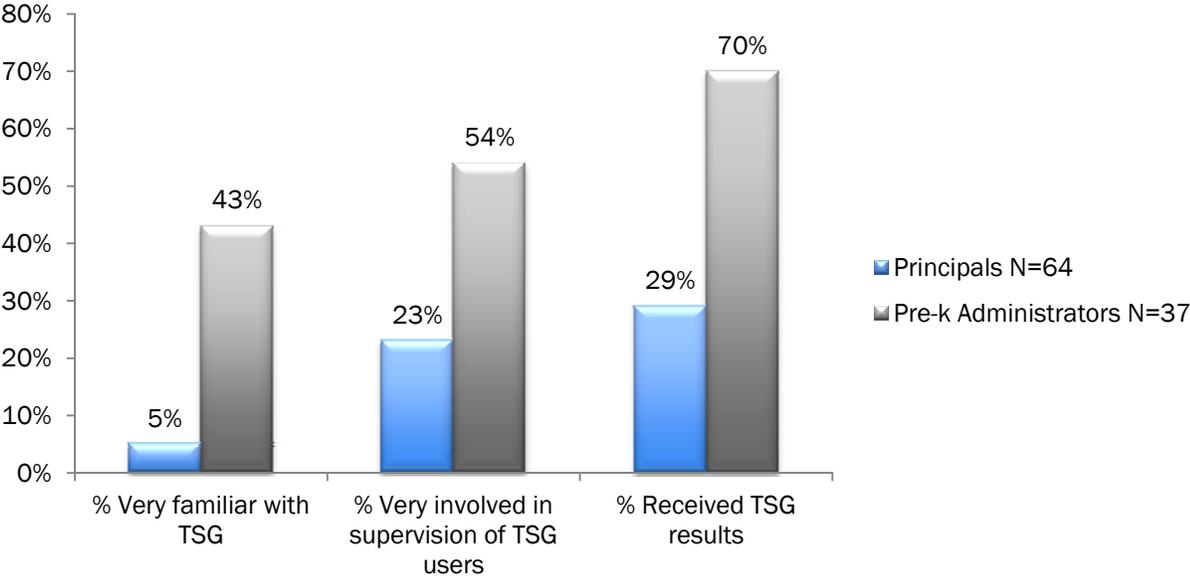
Figure 13. Types of reports generated and shared (N=268)



Principal and Pre-K administrator survey results also provided evidence on what TSG information was shared and to whom it was shared. Both groups were asked how familiar they were with the TSG assessment tool. Principals tended to be less familiar than Pre-K administrators; less involved in supervising and/or meeting with teachers, staff and others who use the tool; and less likely to have received results from TSG (see Figure 14). Eighty percent (80%) of the Pre-K administrators and 61% of principals shared results with others. Pre-K administrators most commonly shared TSG results with teachers at their school (most frequently) followed by parents, other site administrators or colleagues, and district-level staff (see Table 13).

Table 13. Types of Recipients of Shared TSG Results		
Answer Options	Principals N=11	Pre-K Administrators N=21
Other site administrators or colleagues	36.4%	76.2%
Teachers at your school/site	81.8%	71.4%
Parents	45.5%	52.4%
District-level staff	18.2%	42.9%
Others	0.0%	9.5%

Figure 14. Principal and Pre-K Administrator familiarity with TSG



Recommendations for Improving Sharing of TSG Data

- Provide teachers with examples of the reports and suggestions for how reports can be used to communicate TSG results with principals, administrators, other teachers, and parents.
- Include a session in the training or follow-up on how to effectively communicate results and use data to inform conversations around planning, instruction and parent involvement.

8. DOES THE INSTRUMENT AND DATA SHARING PROCESS COLLECT THE RIGHT DATA TO MEET MULTIPLE NEEDS?

Based on what their teachers reported to them, principals and supervisors who participated in interviews reported that their teachers, in at least 50% of the interviews, used data to discuss student levels (moving from level one to level two...and so on) or to talk about data points and strands. These were data discussions that took place within Professional Learning Communities' (PLCs) rather than with parents. TSG was cited in at least 25% of the interviews as a tool that was used to talk about students who had special needs and use the data to write IEP's and for deciding placement and accommodations for the following year. Some of the principals shared how data provided information for teachers in kindergarten for the following year. The principals added that TSG was richer and more meaningful than the data that are used for kindergarten screening alone (like the DRA and Brigance).

The Importance of Sharing Data in the Transition from ECE to Kindergarten

"I haven't heard from the teachers but right now, assessment sharing is an issue of time. Our teachers have a lot of professional development and finding the time to squeeze it in is difficult. Some of the building administrators are allowing teachers to use professional development time as part of their data team. Teachers have asked to have more training in their data team. When we got the tool, we just jumped in headfirst and tried to do our best. Our teachers are doing really well and are excited. I think our kindergarten teachers are interested and would like to see it. We have used the Brigance when kids are entering kindergarten. The data from TSG is more in depth vs. a 10-minute assessment that we just grabbed based on Brigance. We are hoping we can have TSG at the kindergarten level. Our teachers really want to know where do we take each child. We love the depth of information, and this is especially important for kids who are coming in low to our programs. TSG tells us where the kids are and what do we need next. Once we learn this, we are using the information to set of large groups and small groups and centers."
(White Pine County School District Administrator)

Focus group participants were asked how well they thought TSG serves as a reliable and valid tool for children from diverse cultures, languages, socioeconomic backgrounds and abilities. Participants were fairly evenly divided between those who felt it was reliable and valid for a wide range of children and those who indicated there were some problems. Some participants felt there were problems using the tool for children with disabilities and for languages other than English or Spanish. Comments suggest areas for further conversation with TSG developers:

"Can only use with English or Spanish- not for multiple languages." (Focus group participant)

"Subcultures that are quieter than others might be misrepresented as less cognitively capable." (Focus group participant)

"There are only two objectives that address ELL skills." (Focus group participant)

"Many of our kids don't have background knowledge. Many don't know their colors, which is not assessed. They are expected to know their colors at 3 years, but many of our children don't." (Focus group participant)

"Goals are worded on a high level of education, and parents don't understand the questions and explanations." (Focus group participant)

Additionally, use of the tool as a zero to third grade assessment has challenges, particularly with respect to use at the infant level.

TSG and Infants:

"I am the only infant teacher so my concern is from two different directions. I don't feel the tool has adequate development for infants so I am not getting a clear picture for what infants can do and are needing to do next. It is as if the developers built a preschool program and then rolled it down and it was not done in a highly developmental way as it moved down to younger children. This is also the issue when they attempted to move it to older grades – kindergarten and beyond. There is an instrument in California that is like TSG. The developers did the same thing in terms of some of the weaknesses with the earlier developmental stages." (Infant teacher)

Teacher post-survey respondents were asked to indicate which other reports or assessment tools they were required to use in addition to TSG. The Brigance (76%) was the most common requirement, followed by district report cards (44%). Principals and administrators who had received TSG results were asked how useful they found the results in learning about school readiness of Pre-K and kindergarten students. All of the administrators found the results somewhat useful (38%) to very useful (62%). Principals tended to find the results very useful (22%) as compared to administrators (72%) who found them somewhat useful.

Recommendations for Improving TSG to Meet Multiple Needs

- Follow-up with TSG developers to review the cultural and linguistic appropriateness of TSG assessment tool for non-English or Spanish speakers, parents with less education and lower literacy levels, and 0-3 years.
- Determine if TSG could replace other assessments used by districts across the state and identify if adjustments to the assessment would be needed to make this feasible.

9. WHAT ASPECTS OF IMPLEMENTATION CAN BE IMPROVED?

A number of implementation issues were identified and will be important for review and improvement during the second year of the pilot. These include:

- Professional Development and Training
- Time for teachers to plan, assess and share their experiences with others
- Technology
- Technical Support
- State Level Involvement and Reduction of Competing Assessments

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

A critical need that was brought out in multiple ways through different perspectives in the interviews across the state was training and ongoing professional development. The issues related to training involved the challenges of centralized training, the experiences of those designated as trainers, and the need to provide some level of training for all stakeholder groups (i.e., teachers, principals, administrators, and aides). Teachers need additional professional development from knowledgeable TSG trainers to dive deep into the TSG tools. Sustained professional development in collecting observational notes in an authentic classroom setting would be beneficial for kindergarten teachers. Site principals and other district leaders should receive detailed information regarding TSG and how to support their teachers as an instructional leader. Additionally, it is recommended that all TSG users (special education and ESL teachers) have a mini-iPad allocated for collecting data on the students they serve.

"This has been a problem for us. It takes an hour to get into downtown Vegas and we have gotten great support from the district. Our zone leadership has been supportive to provide training and someone came to provide tool for lesson plan. I am sure if there are other components of the tool and she had more training, she could make better links between this instrument and the other instruments she is using in her classroom." (Principal in Clark County)

Several focus group participants discussed the importance of having mentors or coaches at the school or program level that can provide on-going support. This might mean having an identified staff hired specifically to help with TSG. It also means making sure every person involved with children in TSG classrooms and the leadership of the school be trained in TSG.

"Principals don't know what they are doing with Pre-K/ECE. Need training for principals to understand practice and TSG. The Stead Principal went to CLASS training at the Mega Conference and was confused about CLASS vs. TSG. Need to help principals understand the idea of developmentally appropriate practice and the classroom environment vs. the child assessment in that environment." (Washoe County School District Supervisor)

"We will be doing all our collegial groups focus on TSG next year & plan to have paraprofessional training for aides on TSG (ECE). The state needs to provide more training. We need IPADS for all the teachers & support staff, with training for everyone." (Washoe County School District Supervisor)

"Teachers/principals need training on purposeful play and intentional teaching, as well as group observation. Need funding for professional development and support for teachers to get inter-rater reliability." (Washoe County School District Supervisor)

TEACHER TIME

Teachers commented on surveys and in focus groups about their need to have more structured time and support to thoroughly assess children (using observational assessment methods). Teachers also reported needing additional time to transfer information into the system to generate reports, communicate what had been learned and design instruction. Additional time is also needed for collaboration with colleagues to improve their systematic use of the tool. Many had not completed the inter-rater reliability certification or explored the online training modules also because time was an issue. Indeed several kindergarten sites dropped out mainly due to the heavy time commitment it involved for teachers.

"Teachers need to be able to visit each other's classroom and get continuing education hours for extra time. Need mini-grant for sub days so that teachers can visit and spend extra time with TSG input etc." (Washoe County School District Supervisor)

Many focus group participants identified the need for additional time to implement the TSG. Teachers reported having to work additional hours at home to input data. Teachers suggested additional time for TSG be provided during the school day.

"I did not get a lot of training. We got training for one or two days and there were other things that we needed to talk about at these meetings so it was a dual-purpose training. We did not have enough support and it appeared that the trainers did not have enough training and they did not know some of the answers. We found out we needed more training as did our supervisors. We also found out that it was taking too much time and that to use the tool, we need to have training that makes using the tool faster and more user friendly." (Focus group participant)

TECHNOLOGY ACCESS AND SUPPORT

Technology was an issue for many of the focus group participants. Many teachers did not get their iPads for several months after implementation. The level of technology ability varied, so that training for the use of technology such as using an IPAD or smart phone, taking videos and uploading documentation was needed by some teachers. Another issue is the access to wireless at school. Uploading videos and pictures on some wireless networks was slow. Focus group participants recommended that training and support be available for those who need additional help with the use of technology.

TSG TECHNICAL SUPPORT

As was noted earlier in the report, TSG technical support was inconsistent—with some users reporting strong and timely responses and others having to wait for long periods before they received a response.

"The HELP line is good. We had to make phone calls, and could get help with reports, etc. Should have a quarterly phone call with TSG to deal with new components on website, or issues etc." (Washoe County School District Supervisor)

STATE LEVEL INVOLVEMENT AND REDUCTION OF COMPETING ASSESSMENTS

The transition from the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) to the Department of Education during the first pilot year created a disconnect for some of the teachers and other TSG Users who had expectations of leadership and guidance from the “state.” Many expressed an interest in having direction and support at this level and were anxious to find ways to connect to other users within and outside of their schools and districts and discuss how the pilot was going as well as next steps.

“The state needs to make a plan for roll out a year ahead. This could be accomplished by zones in WCSD. Would need funding for a person to supervise and implement for the district. Would need to fund the cost and provide professional development system for all teachers and staff using. Needs to have the connections with Head Start and other programs using in Pre-K.”
(Washoe County School District Supervisor)

Many kindergarten teachers in the focus groups stated that they could manage doing the TSG, if they weren’t required by their districts or by other grants to use other instruments.

Recommendations for Improving Aspects of TSG Implementation

- Provide state guidance to review requirements associated with various state and federal grants along with district-imposed requirements for using alternative assessments with the goal of providing options, inclusive of the TSG, that would achieve the same goal.
- Provide state level coordination with the TSG developers to establish regular technical support expectations and deliverables that will facilitate consistent, ongoing support to the field of users.

10. WHAT ASPECTS OF THE INSTRUMENT ITSELF MAY NEED ATTENTION?

Focus group and interview participants stated that the TSG tool could be refined in both its content and the process of data entry and reporting.

QUANTITY OF OBJECTIVES

Focus group participants generally agreed that the instrument would be easier to manage with fewer objectives. Several groups had heard about the Washington model and recommended that the state look at this model, particularly for kindergarten.

INSTRUMENT REDUNDANCY

Users indicated that they had to continue inputting data at each checkpoint, despite children having met the objective during previous checkpoints.

"TSG is a good assessment tool, however, it tends to be redundant. I feel we are assessing the same objective over and over each trimester. If a student has mastered a non-academic concept, such as washing his hands, we shouldn't have to assess and provide documentation the he is still able to do so. Also, TSG can be subjective. There is not a common assessment to use to determine levels. There are examples but nothing concrete." (Clark County Principal)

INSTRUMENT REFINEMENT FOR 0-3 YEARS AND KINDERGARTEN AND ABOVE

The development of the instrument by TSG started with a focus on Pre-K. The infant/toddler and kindergarten levels are not as well developed. Several infant/toddler teachers, as well as kindergarten teachers, identified the need for more work on those levels of the instrument. A teacher in Washoe County where TSG was discontinued after only three months also voiced how the tool did not include some skills required for kindergarten.

"One thing that I know about TSG is that it helps break down skills. That was what was fabulous about the tool. If a child is having trouble counting to five, we are able to see what skills are involved in seeing what the child can master and has not yet mastered. But when we had to do this for each child, it was time-consuming. For each child, we had to do so many clicks to enter the data. Also, we are focused on Common Core and some of the objectives in TSG are not matched to the Common Core. For example, there is no standard in TSG for sight word recognition. We kept finding disconnects between TSG and the Common Core. We also found that the instrument did not cover some of the skills we needed to document for our report cards. We were doing double duty- we needed to complete the white card (that is a list of skills for WCSD and what follows the student into another classroom). We kept finding things we needed to respond to on the white card that were not part of TSG." (Kindergarten teacher)

In addition, several teachers stated that the instrument does not include higher level skills, therefore an advanced student's growth would appear to be flat.

ALIGNMENT WITH NEVADA ACADEMIC CONTENT STANDARDS (NVACS) FOR KINDERGARTEN

Although TSG does have documentation on their website showing how their objectives align with the Common Core, which since 2010 has been renamed the Nevada Academic Content Standards

(NVACS), the perception among teachers and administrators who participated in the focus groups, interviews and surveys was that TSG was not aligned well with the NVACS. Due to this pervasive perception, it will be important in the future both to review how well TSG actually aligns with the NVACS and to educate TSG users about how it does align. Throughout the interviews and focus groups references were made to Washington’s TSG project—both in terms of the reduction in objectives and how they perceive these as more closely aligned to the Common Core.

“It works well for Pre-K/ECE since the bands are flexible. For kindergarten, there is a weakness in the kindergarten level objectives. They don’t meet the common core academic standards in language and literacy and math. There are also school site requirements that are different and higher for kindergarten. Everything is being pushed up for academics. Need to have a group of teacher users and trainers to look at items and add Common Core standards alignment. Need to look at what works such as streamlining objectives like Washington State Model.”
(Washoe County School District Supervisor)

COST OF PROGRAM

While the cost of the program was covered for sites participating in the pilot, teachers and administrators mentioned the uncertainty of how feasible continued use would be if state support did not continue. The cost of the program was noted as being unreasonable if there is not a state contract in place. This is important for ongoing and sustained use beyond the pilot year.

“As with all Head Start programs, funding is always an issue. We have committed to TSG and annual renewal is a priority for the budget. Holding the cost to programs would be helpful. We would also like to do more in the way of refresher training or initial training for new staff. Can KEA provide this?” (Washoe County Head Start)

Overall, the TSG tool was deemed valuable and comprehensive, with serious consideration given to the above caveats and concerns related to having the necessary resources (i.e., funding, time, tools, training, etc.). The TSG tool received support for ongoing use by the majority of members from all user groups including principals and administrators involved with the pilot schools, although within group support varied by age/grade level and level of training varied.

- TSG informed teaching practice.
 - Use in kindergarten presented challenges and many felt major changes would be needed before use in kindergarten across state would be feasible. The following were noted as suggestions from users:
 - Smaller classes
 - More aids
 - Align to common core
 - Reduce other assessment requirements
 - Six areas were used most frequently by TSG users: Language, Literacy, Cognitive, Social-Emotional, Mathematics, and Physical.
- TSG authors and developers need to be informed regarding the challenges with the instrument. In addition, other TSG training and technical support issues were noted:
 - TSG trainers were often those who didn't have a history of TSG use .
 - As a result, TSG trainers often didn't link training to implementation results.
 - TSG trainers often had a lack of familiarity with technology.

TSG is embraced by Pre-K/Early Childhood Special Educators as a valuable assessment tool that addresses the whole child in a developmentally appropriate manner. As such it is useful for guiding instruction. An important consideration is whether TSG is suitable for use in kindergarten. One of the state's largest school districts has already established policy and practices for use of an alternative assessment tool for kindergarten. In the school sites (three to date) where the tool is used consistently by both Pre-K and kindergarten teachers there is emerging evidence that it can be a useful tool for communicating child growth and development and readiness for kindergarten and in planning instruction accordingly.

Recommendations:

Throughout each section above, specific recommendations have been made that will support the ongoing use of the TSG tool as a kindergarten readiness assessment and for designing developmentally appropriate instruction at the Pre-K and kindergarten levels. Below are some of the recommendations we have chosen to highlight from above or add as they are more global in nature:

1. Create a roll-out plan for program implementation that would include more standardized training and technical support for all users, including a recommended progression of amount and type of training.
2. Provide opportunities for Communities of Practice that integrate with the evaluation's use of action learning circles and that will be sustained beyond the pilot.
3. Build a state system to store data and make it accessible to users.
4. Increase awareness and use of parent portals to increase parent engagement in using the TSG activities for home-based learning.
5. Build new and strengthen existing connections between TSG and the P-3 movement in the state to insure sustainability of the assessment tool and guided instruction process.
6. Overall, it is highly recommended that training include an introduction to the inter-rater reliability certification process for all participants. Additionally, all participants should be required to complete the inter-rater reliability certification within the first quarter to six months.

7. Reduce the number of objectives for assessment to reflect a reasonable and relevant set, much like Washington has done in reducing its TSG use to 18 objectives.
8. Engage teachers, administrators, TSG developers and NDE personnel in conversations and work groups to: 1) review and evaluate the appropriateness of the alignment of TSG with Nevada Academic Content Standards for kindergarten and 2) identify and unpack the sets of skills from domains to more accurately reflect actual growth and learning along the continuum of development of children in kindergarten—much as Washington has done with its Teaching Strategies Gold assessment project by reducing the number of domains measured.
9. As more consistent training is provided to pilot sites along with training in Inter-Rater Reliability, the evaluation should focus on how consistently and comparably the TSG is used by Pre-K/ECSE and K teachers as a full assessment and instructional guidance tool.
10. Finally, it is recommended that an in-depth evaluation of the sites where TSG is in use for both Pre-K/ECSE through kindergarten be conducted to learn how the tool can be used to determine kindergarten readiness and facilitate the transition to kindergarten.



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TEACHER PRE-SURVEY

Silver State Kids Evaluation Teacher Survey 1

Your school and classroom have been identified by the Nevada Department of Education as using the Teaching Strategies Gold assessment with your students. The state of Nevada has contracted with Turning Point, Inc. (TPI) to conduct an evaluation of the Silver State Kids. The purpose of evaluation is to assess if the Teaching Strategies GOLD has high validity and reliability for children from diverse cultures, languages, socioeconomic backgrounds, and abilities. Also, the intent of the evaluation is to see if teachers and parents find it easy to use and informative. This will help the State decide whether or not to continue to use this tool into the next biennium.

To accomplish these set of objectives, TPI is conducting focus groups, interviews, and on-line surveys with Teaching Strategies GOLD users and stakeholders throughout the State between March and June 2014. TPI will keep all involved and informed through a webpage that can be followed with postings and shared experiences.

A second phase of the evaluation will be conducted starting in July if the results from the pilot evaluation provide justification for further use of the tool. We will be asking interested Pre-K/K teachers to participate in an Action Learning Circle in Year 2 so that we can have more consistent involvement and opportunities to learn about how people are prepared/trained to use the tool, how the tool is used, and what impact it may be having on instruction and learning for children.

We would appreciate your answering a few questions about your use of Teaching Strategies GOLD to date and your availability to participate in focus groups this spring.

1. What level is your user account in Teaching Strategies GOLD?

- Teacher
- Administrator
- Both

2. What type of training have you completed? (Please select all that apply)

- None to date
- Informal training
- Online modules
- 1 day of on-site training
- 2 days of on-site training

Other (please specify)

3. What stage have you reached in the Interrater Reliability Certification process?

- Have not started
- Have started, but not finished it yet
- Have completed it

Other (please specify)

Silver State Kids Evaluation Teacher Survey 1

4. Are you currently using Teaching Strategies GOLD?

- Yes
- No, I have not used it yet.
- No, but I used it previously.
- Does not apply

Does not apply (please explain)

5. How long have you been using Teaching Strategies GOLD in your classroom?

If less than 1 year, enter number of months:

If 1 year or more, enter number of years:

6. How long did you use Teaching Strategies GOLD in your classroom?

If less than 1 year, enter number of months:

If 1 year or more, enter number of years:

7. What were your reasons for stopping use of Teaching Strategies GOLD?

8. Do you plan to attend the 2014 NevAEYC State Conference at Bally's Las Vegas on April 17-19, 2014?

- Yes
- Maybe
- No

Silver State Kids Evaluation Teacher Survey 1

9. Would you be willing to attend a focus group during a NevAEYC conference session to discuss your experiences with the Teaching Strategies Gold pilot?

- Yes
 Maybe
 No

10. If you might be interested in participating in a focus group at the conference or another location this spring, please provide your name, school and email address below so that we may contact you with the details.

Name:
School:
Email Address:

Thank you for completing this survey!

Silver State Kids Teacher Follow-up Survey

As a user of the Teaching Strategies GOLD assessment tool, we would like you to complete a follow-up survey for the 2013-2014 evaluation. We will randomly select five survey respondents to receive a \$25 gift card to Lakeshore Learning.

The first survey we sent to teachers was designed to better understand the extent of actual use of TSG in Nevada and to recruit participants for focus groups held around the state. We have used the data gathered from the focus groups to create this follow-up survey which is designed to evaluate TSG as it has been used in Nevada. We are interested in finding out how prepared teachers feel to use TSG, what their experiences are using the assessment, and what recommendations they have for the State regarding future use of the tool. Your feedback is extremely important and will be used by the State to make important decisions.

Some preliminary evaluation results are available on our blog site <http://sskidsevalproject.wordpress.com/what-are-we-learning-comments-from-others/>. The site also provides some information about our evaluation team, project background and schedule.

A second phase of the evaluation will be conducted starting in July if the results from the pilot evaluation provide justification for further use of the tool. We will be asking interested Pre-K/K teachers to participate in an Action Learning Circle in Year 2 so that we can have more consistent involvement and opportunities to learn about how people are prepared/trained to use the tool, how the tool is used, and what impact it may be having on instruction and learning for children. At the end of this survey, you will have the chance to indicate your interest in participating in that group should next year's evaluation be funded.

If you have any difficulties with the survey, please contact Elizabeth Christiansen at the Center for Program Evaluation, University of Nevada, Reno at elizabethc@unr.edu

1. Do you currently use Teaching Strategies GOLD (TSG)?

- No, I have never used Teaching Strategies GOLD.
- No, I do not currently use TSG, but I have in the past.
- Yes, I currently use TSG.

2. How long have you been using TSG (or did you in the past)?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="radio"/> I have not used TSG | <input type="radio"/> 7-12 months |
| <input type="radio"/> 0-3 months | <input type="radio"/> 12 months to 2 years |
| <input type="radio"/> 3-6 months | <input type="radio"/> More than 2 years |

Silver State Kids Teacher Follow-up Survey

3. What is your position at your school or site?

- Teacher Administrator
 Paraprofessional/Teacher Aide/Teacher Assistant Speech/Language Therapist or Pathologist

Other (please specify)

4. What level(s) do you teach (or work with if administrator or other position)?

- Pre-K 1st Grade
 Early Childhood Special Education 2nd Grade
 Kindergarten Special Education

Other (please specify)

5. When you first started using TSG, how prepared did you feel to use the tool appropriately with children in your class?

1 Not at all prepared 2 Somewhat prepared 3 Moderately prepared 4 Mostly prepared 5 Extremely well prepared

6. How prepared do you feel to use the tool appropriately with children in your class now?

1 Not at all prepared 2 Somewhat prepared 3 Moderately prepared 4 Mostly prepared 5 Extremely well prepared

7. If given a choice, how willing would you be to continue using TSG in the future?

1 Not at all 2 Slightly 3 Moderately 4 Mostly 5 Completely

Training

Silver State Kids Teacher Follow-up Survey

8. How much, if any, additional training do you feel you need on the following topics to use TSG more effectively?

	None	Some	A great deal
Understanding the TSG objectives	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Using the computer and other technology with TSG (computer, apps, iPad, iPhone)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
How to document/take notes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
How to do child observations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Time management skills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Organization skills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
How to generate reports	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
How to use the assessment results to support instruction	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
How to communicate the results effectively	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Other (please specify)

Training

9. How interested are you in additional training in the following formats?

	Not at all interested	Somewhat interested	Moderately interested	Quite interested	Extremely interested
In-person training	<input type="radio"/>				
Online training	<input type="radio"/>				
Group meeting time with other TSG users/colleagues	<input type="radio"/>				
Individual meeting time with other TSG user	<input type="radio"/>				

Other (please specify)

Evaluation of TSG

Silver State Kids Teacher Follow-up Survey

10. To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about TSG?

	Completely disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Completely agree	N/A
I feel confident using TSG in my classroom.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The training I received on TSG was useful in helping me implement it in my classroom.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have gotten the support I need to use TSG effectively.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I find it easy to use TSG.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The TSG recommended activities help with designing instruction.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have adequate access to the internet and hot spots to use TSG.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have sufficient time to use TSG.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Running reports in TSG is easy.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The data from TSG helps see a child's individual progress.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The data I have gotten from TSG reports is useful for supporting classroom instruction.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I'd feel better about TSG if it were the only assessment tool I had to use.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It is easy to see how the TSG aligns with the Common Core State Standards.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Evaluation of TSG

11. How acceptable has the technical support you have received from Teaching Strategies Gold been? (Mark N/A if you have not needed technical support)

1 Not at all acceptable	2 Slightly acceptable	3 Moderately acceptable	4 Mostly acceptable	5 Completely acceptable	N/A
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Silver State Kids Teacher Follow-up Survey

12. If you have entered data into the TSG system, have you had any of the following issues? (Mark N/A if you have not entered data into the TSG system)

	Have not had this issue	Have this issue sometimes	Have this issue frequently	Have this issue always	N/A
Website issues	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Slow connection	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Loss of data	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
App issues	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Timely response to issues or questions I raise	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Having to fill in levels every time for each child even if there is no change in development or have already reached the highest level	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other (please specify)	<input type="text"/>				

Use of TSG

13. Which of these TSG objectives/dimensions do you document?

	Never	Rarely	Somewhat frequently	Frequently	Always
Social-Emotional	<input type="radio"/>				
Physical	<input type="radio"/>				
Language	<input type="radio"/>				
Cognitive	<input type="radio"/>				
Literacy	<input type="radio"/>				
Mathematics	<input type="radio"/>				
Science and Technology	<input type="radio"/>				
Social Studies	<input type="radio"/>				
The Arts	<input type="radio"/>				
English Language Acquisition	<input type="radio"/>				

14. Additional comments about TSG objectives:

Silver State Kids Teacher Follow-up Survey

15. How frequently do you administer TSG in the following ways (or did you previously if not a current user)?

	Never	Rarely/Less than once a month	1-3 times a month	1 to 3 days a week	4 to 5 days a week
Individual activities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Small group activities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Large group activities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Throughout the day	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Class observations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Suggested activities from TSG	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other (please specify)	<input type="text"/>				

Documentation

16. How often do you use these types of documentation?

	Never	Rarely or Less than once a month	1 to 3 times a month	1 to 3 days a week	4 to 5 days a week
Observation notes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Photos	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Work samples	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Videos	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Audio recordings	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Checklists	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
On-the-Spot Recording Tool	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Assessment Opportunity Card	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
TSG Forms (alphabet knowledge, Spanish alphabet knowledge, number concepts, shapes)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Children self-monitor/make self observations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Parent reporting	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Transfer data from report card	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other (please specify)	<input type="text"/>				

Reports and Use of Results

Silver State Kids Teacher Follow-up Survey

17. For each of the TSG reports listed below, please indicate if you have generated that type of report and if you have shown it to parents.

	Have generated	Have shared with parents
Widely Held Expectations reports	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Performance and Growth reports	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Growth Export (raw data)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Growth report	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Snapshot reports	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Alignment report	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Class Profile report	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comparative report	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Development and Learning report	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Individual child report	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Forms report	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please specify)	<input type="text"/>	

18. With which of these others have you shared TSG results?

- Other teachers
 Schoolschool administrators
 District administrators

Other (please specify)

19. How have you used TSG assessment results to alter your instruction? (Check all that apply)

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> To target more individualized areas | <input type="checkbox"/> To group children according to needs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> To help write IEP's | <input type="checkbox"/> To bring in new materials to support new activities |
| <input type="checkbox"/> To share with parents and to help at home | <input type="checkbox"/> To set goals |
| <input type="checkbox"/> To develop/plan curriculum, lesson plans, activities | <input type="checkbox"/> I have not used results for instruction. |

Other (please specify)

Silver State Kids Teacher Follow-up Survey

20. To your knowledge, at your site, have TSG results been used to determine children's readiness for kindergarten?

- I do not know. No, they have not. Yes, they have.

Other (please specify)

21. To your knowledge, at your site, have Pre-K TSG results been shared with kindergarten teachers as children move into kindergarten?

- I do not know. No, they have not. Yes, they have.

Other (please specify)

22. In addition to TSG, what other reports or assessment tools are you required to use?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> ASQ-3 | <input type="checkbox"/> State Power School reporting |
| <input type="checkbox"/> District report cards | <input type="checkbox"/> Brigance |

Other (please specify)

Silver State Kids Teacher Follow-up Survey

23. How important are the following recommendations to the State Department of Education, should the TSG be adopted as a statewide tool for use birth through 3rd grade?

	1 Not at all	2 Slightly	3 Moderately	4 Quite	5 Extremely	Don't know
Have fewer objectives	<input type="radio"/>					
Adopt the Washington state reduced set of objectives	<input type="radio"/>					
Better align with the Common Core State Standards	<input type="radio"/>					
Provide funding for technology equipment such as iPads and computers	<input type="radio"/>					
Have more hands-on training/modeling of TSG use	<input type="radio"/>					
Ongoing coaching and support	<input type="radio"/>					
Have project facilitators/coaches available to help with using the tool, understanding the objectives	<input type="radio"/>					
Have improved technical support from TSG	<input type="radio"/>					
Be able to use reports without finalizing them	<input type="radio"/>					
Improve the app	<input type="radio"/>					
Improve video upload	<input type="radio"/>					
Include ability to add comments to explain growth and development/level of mastery	<input type="radio"/>					
Adding a "click all" button	<input type="radio"/>					
Science/arts/ social studies needs more specific developmental descriptions	<input type="radio"/>					
Language & Literacy and Math need to be "unpacked" so that individual developmental milestones and tasks can be measured and reported separately.	<input type="radio"/>					

Other recommendations (please specify)

Survey Raffle and Next Year's Learning Circle

Silver State Kids Teacher Follow-up Survey

24. Should the state fund the Silver State KIDS evaluation next year, we will be recruiting a smaller group of active TSG users to participate in an action learning circle for the 2014-2015 academic year. Participants will receive stipends and will participate in the evaluation throughout the year, interacting online using Google Hang-Out.

Action Research, based in an action learning cycle of assessment, planning, action, and reflection, is a methodology that supports the gathering of ongoing qualitative and real-time evidence around critical implementation factors, while building participants' capacity and creating a peer mentor network that will support their ability to sustain and apply what they learn from their own and peer's experiences, as well as share this with future cadres of users.

Please indicate your interest in participating in the Action Learning Circle next year.

- Yes, I definitely am interested.
- I may be interested.
- No, I am not interested.

Name, if you are definitely or maybe interested:

25. If you are interested in being entered into a raffle to win one of five \$25 gift cards from Lakeshore Learning, please provide your name, mailing address and email address.

Name:

Address:

Address 2:

City/Town:

State:

ZIP:

Email Address:

Thank you for completing this survey!

Silver State Kids Inventory Pilot Evaluation Principal Survey

Your school has been identified by the Nevada Department of Education as using the Teaching Strategies GOLD (TSG) assessment tool with students. The state of Nevada has contracted with Turning Point, Inc. (TPI) to conduct an evaluation of the Silver State Kids pilot project. The purpose of the evaluation is to assess if TSG has high validity and reliability for children from diverse cultures, languages, socioeconomic backgrounds, and abilities.

Also, the intent of the evaluation is to see whether administrators, parents, and teachers find it easy to use and whether it provides useful information. This will help the State decide whether or not to continue to use this tool into the next biennium. To accomplish this set of objectives, TPI is conducting focus groups, interviews, and online surveys with TSG users and stakeholders, including school administrators at pilot schools, throughout the State between March and June 2014. TPI will keep everyone involved and informed through a webpage that can be followed with postings and shared experiences.

We'd appreciate you taking a few moments to complete this survey. If you have technical issues with the survey, please contact Elizabeth Christiansen elizabethc@unr.edu.

If you have any questions about the pilot evaluation, please contact Deborah Loesch-Griffin, trmpt@aol.com or (775) 843-2275.

1. Is your school/site currently using Teaching Strategies GOLD assessment tool?

- Yes
- No, but we plan to.
- No, we used to, but no longer are using it.
- No, never used at our school.

2. Which groups are currently using TSG at your school?

- Pre-K Educators
- Early Childhood Special Educators
- Kindergarten teachers
- Speech Therapists/Pathologists
- Other

Other (please specify)

3. How familiar are you with the Teaching Strategies Gold Assessment tool?

1 Not familiar at all

2 Somewhat familiar

3 Very familiar

Silver State Kids Inventory Pilot Evaluation Principal Survey

4. How involved are you in supervising and/or meeting with your teachers and staff who use the tool?

1 Not Involved at all

2 Somewhat Involved

3 Very Involved



5. If you rated either of the questions above as 1 "not at all," please provide the contact information below for someone at your site with whom you would suggest we talk to learn more about how the tool is being administered and the experiences of specific users (e.g., Pre-K coordinator/teacher).

Other Contact Name:

Site:

Role:

Email Address:

6. Have you received any results from the TSG Assessment?

Yes

No

7. How useful have you found the results in learning about school readiness of pre-K and kindergarten students?

1 Not at all useful

2 Somewhat useful

3 Very useful



8. Have you shared these results with others?

Yes

No

Silver State Kids Inventory Pilot Evaluation Principal Survey

9. With whom have you shared the results? (check all that apply)

- Other site administrators or colleagues
- Teachers at your school/site
- Parents
- District-level staff
- Others

Other (please specify)

10. Would you be willing to participate in an individual or group interview to share more about your experiences with TSG?

- Yes
- No

11. Please provide your contact information for participation in an individual or group interview:

Name:

School/Site:

Email Address:

Phone Number:

12. Days that work best for you:

- Monday
- Tuesday
- Wednesday
- Thursday
- Friday

13. Time(s) that work best for you:

Thank you for completing this survey!

Silver State Kids Inventory Pilot Evaluation Administrator Survey

You have been identified by the Nevada Department of Education as an administrator at a site or district level where the Teaching Strategies GOLD (TSG) assessment tool is being used with students. The state of Nevada has contracted with Turning Point, Inc. (TPI) to conduct an evaluation of the Silver State Kids pilot project. The purpose of the evaluation is to assess if TSG has high validity and reliability for children from diverse cultures, languages, socioeconomic backgrounds, and abilities.

Also, the intent of the evaluation is to see whether administrators, parents, and teachers find it easy to use and whether it provides useful information. This will help the State decide whether or not to continue to use this tool into the next biennium. To accomplish this set of objectives, TPI is conducting focus groups, interviews, and online surveys with TSG users and stakeholders, including school administrators at pilot schools, throughout the State between March and June 2014. TPI will keep everyone involved and informed through a webpage that can be followed with postings and shared experiences.

We'd appreciate you taking a few moments to complete this survey. If you have technical issues with the survey, please contact Elizabeth Christiansen elizabethc@unr.edu.

If you have any questions about the pilot evaluation, please contact Deborah Loesch-Griffin, tmpt@aol.com or (775) 843-2275.

1. Is your school(s)/site(s)/district currently using Teaching Strategies GOLD assessment tool?

- Yes
- No, but we plan to.
- No, we used to, but no longer are using it.
- No, never used at our school.

2. Which groups use or have used TSG at your school/site/district?

- Pre-K Educators
- Early Childhood Special Educators
- Kindergarten teachers
- Speech Therapists/Pathologists
- Other

Other (please specify)

Silver State Kids Inventory Pilot Evaluation Administrator Survey

3. How familiar are you with the Teaching Strategies Gold Assessment tool?

1 Not familiar at all

2 Somewhat familiar

3 Very familiar

4. How involved are/were you in supervising and/or meeting with teachers, staff, and others who use the tool?

1 Not involved at all

2 Somewhat involved

3 Very involved

5. If you rated either of the questions above as 1 "not at all," please provide the contact information below for someone at your school/site/district with whom you would suggest we talk to learn more about how the tool is being administered and the experiences of specific users (e.g., Pre-K coordinator/teacher).

Other Contact Name:

Site:

Role:

Email Address:

6. Have you received any results from the TSG Assessment?

Yes

No

7. How useful have you found the results in learning about school readiness of pre-K and kindergarten students?

1 Not at all useful

2 Somewhat useful

3 Very useful

8. Have you shared these results with others?

Yes

No

Silver State Kids Inventory Pilot Evaluation Administrator Survey

9. With whom have you shared the results? (check all that apply)

- Other site administrators or colleagues
- Teachers at your school/site
- Parents
- District-level staff
- Others

Other (please specify)

10. Would you be willing to participate in an individual or group interview to share more about your experiences with TSG?

- Yes
- No

11. Please provide your contact information for participation in an individual or group interview:

Name:

School/Site:

Email Address:

Phone Number:

12. Days that work best for you:

- Monday
- Tuesday
- Wednesday
- Thursday
- Friday

13. Time(s) that work best for you:

Thank you for completing this survey!

Silver State Kids Evaluation Trainer Survey 1

You have been identified by the Nevada Department of Education participating in the Teaching Strategies Gold Train the Trainer training. The state of Nevada has contracted with Turning Point, Inc. (TPI) to conduct an evaluation of the Silver State Kids. The purpose of evaluation is to assess if the Teaching Strategies GOLD has high validity and reliability for children from diverse cultures, languages, socioeconomic backgrounds, and abilities. Also, the intent of the evaluation is to see if teachers and parents find it easy to use and informative. This will help the State decide whether or not to continue to use this tool into the next biennium.

We would appreciate your answering a few questions about your experience with Teaching Strategies GOLD training.

* 1. Have you delivered Teaching Strategies GOLD training since you attended the Training of Trainers session?

- No
 Yes

2. Why have you not delivered a GOLD training yet?

3. Overall, how would you rate your level of confidence in presenting GOLD?

1 Not at all confident 2 Somewhat confident 3 Mostly confident 4 Extremely confident

4. What do you feel will be your biggest challenge with presenting GOLD? (Choose one answer)

- The content Using the training notes
 Navigating GOLD Other

Other (please specify)

Silver State Kids Evaluation Trainer Survey 1

5. What do you feel most comfortable with respect to presenting GOLD? (Choose one answer)

The content

Using the training notes

Navigating GOLD

Other

Other (please specify)

6. How many other teachers or administrators have you trained?

Total number of participants you have trained:

7. How many different training sessions have you provided to others?

Number of different training sessions:

8. Overall, how would you rate your level of confidence in presenting GOLD?

1 Not at all confident

2 Somewhat confident

3 Mostly confident

4 Extremely confident

9. What do you feel is your biggest challenge with presenting GOLD? (Choose one answer)

The content

Using the training notes

Navigating GOLD

Other

Other (please specify)

10. What do you feel most comfortable with as you present GOLD? (Choose one answer)

The content

Using the training notes

Navigating GOLD

Other

Other (please specify)

Silver State Kids Evaluation Trainer Survey 1

11. Which best describes your need for additional training and/or support with respect to delivering GOLD training? (Choose one answer)

- I still need extensive information and/or support.
- I still need some more information and/or support.
- I am satisfied with my current level of information and support.
- I could teach someone else to deliver the GOLD training.

12. What additional training and/or support do you need to better prepare you for delivering future training sessions? (Check all that apply)

- More face-to-face training from Teaching Strategies
- Additional Webinar training
- Nothing, I am confident in my ability to deliver future training sessions.

Other (please specify)

Thank you for completing this survey!

TEACHER FOCUS GROUP PROTOCOL AND SURVEY

Silver State Kids Inventory of Development (SSKID) Statewide Pilot Evaluation Focus Group Questions for Pre-K/Kindergarten Teachers

Introduction:

Your school and classroom have been identified by the Nevada Department of Education as using the Teaching Strategies Gold assessment tool with students. The state of Nevada has contracted with Turning Point, Inc. (TPI) to conduct an evaluation of the Silver State Kids. The purpose of evaluation is to assess if the Teaching Strategies GOLD has high validity and reliability for children from diverse cultures, languages, socioeconomic backgrounds, and abilities.

Also, the intent of the evaluation is to see if teachers and parents find it easy to use and informative. This will help the State decide whether or not to continue to use this tool into the next biennium. To accomplish these set of objectives, TPI is conducting focus groups, interviews, and online surveys with Teaching Strategies GOLD users and stakeholders throughout the State between March and June 2014. TPI will keep all involved and informed through a webpage that can be followed with postings and shared experiences.

A second phase of the evaluation will be conducted starting in July if the results from the pilot evaluation provide justification for further use of the tool. We will be asking interested PreK/K teachers to participate in an Action Learning Circle in Year 2 so that we can have more consistent involvement and opportunities to learn about how people are prepared/trained to use the tool, how the tool is used, and what impact it may be having on instruction and learning for children.

1. What is your understanding of the purpose of the TSG assessment tool and why it was selected for use in Nevada?
2. How prepared do you feel you are to use the assessment tool appropriately with children in your class?
3. What training did you receive, and how useful was it?
What follow-up and technical support were available?
4. What kinds of knowledge and skills are required for teachers (like you) to be able to effectively use the assessment tool?
5. How well does this assessment tool serve as a reliable and valid tool for children in your class from diverse cultures, languages, socioeconomic backgrounds, and abilities?
6. Share how you use the assessment with individual children and groups of children in your classes. How is the TSG Assessment actually administered in your classes?
(a) Where/how it's done, time & process involved;
(b) Did you use selective components of the TSG or all the components?
7. How have you used the assessment results to alter your instruction?
8. If you use the TSG results to communicate with parents, how do you do this and what do you typically share with parents about the results?
9. What have you found works well in using the TSG Assessment Tool?
10. What have you found has been difficult for you in using the TSG Assessment Tool?
11. If the TSG Assessment Tool is adopted as a statewide tool for use birth through 3rd grade, what recommendations or suggestions would you make to the Department of Education to insure that it can be implemented successfully at the classroom level.

Silver State Kids Inventory of Development (SSKID) Statewide Pilot Evaluation

Short Survey for Focus Group Participants

Introduction:

You have been identified by the Nevada Department of Education as using the Teaching Strategies Gold assessment tool with students. The state of Nevada has contracted with Turning Point, Inc. (TPI) to conduct an evaluation of the Silver State Kids. The purpose of evaluation is to assess if the Teaching Strategies GOLD has high validity and reliability for children from diverse cultures, languages, socioeconomic backgrounds, and abilities.

Also, the intent of the evaluation is to see if teachers and parents find it easy to use and informative. This will help the State decide whether or not to continue to use this tool into the next biennium. To accomplish these set of objectives, TPI is conducting focus groups, interviews, and online surveys with Teaching Strategies GOLD users and stakeholders throughout the State between March and June 2014. TPI will keep all involved and informed through a webpage that can be followed with postings and shared experiences.

A second phase of the evaluation will be conducted starting in July if the results from the pilot evaluation provide justification for further use of the tool. We will be asking interested PreK/K teachers to participate in an Action Learning Circle in Year 2 so that we can have more consistent involvement and opportunities to learn about how people are prepared/trained to use the tool, how the tool is used, and what impact it may be having on instruction and learning for children.

Grade/Age Level: _____

Your Role: _____

Location: _____, NV

- | | | |
|--|-----|----|
| 1. Did you receive training from TSG or a local trainer in use of the assessment tool? | Yes | No |
| 2. Are you currently using the TSG with children in your classroom? | Yes | No |
| 3. Do you use the TSG results to help design instruction? | Yes | No |
| 4. Do you use the TSG results to share with parents for suggestions about how they can help their child at home? | Yes | No |
| 5. If given a choice, would you continue to use the TSG or would you choose another assessment tool or process to use with your children? (circle one) | | |

USE TSG

CHOOSE ANOTHER

NOT USE ANY

PARENT FOCUS GROUP SURVEY

Silver State Kids Inventory of Development (SSKID) Statewide Pilot Evaluation

Short Survey for Focus Group Parent Participants

Date: _____

Grade/Age Level of your child: 0-3 years Pre-K (3-5 years) Kindergarten (5+ years)

I am the child's: Mother Father Caregiver Grandparent Other

Your child's school: _____ City _____, NV

Your child's teacher: _____

1. Are you familiar with the Teaching Strategies Gold Assessment tool? Yes No

2. Did you receive information on the Teaching Strategies Gold assessment tool from
your child's teacher or school? Yes No

2. Did your child's teacher share results from the assessment they used with your child? Yes No

3. Did your child's teacher make suggestions about how you can help your child at home?
Yes No

4. If given a choice, would you recommend that your child's school continue to use the TSG or would
you choose another assessment tool or process to use with children? (circle one)

USE TSG

CHOOSE ANOTHER

NOT USE ANY

ADMINISTRATOR FOCUS GROUP SURVEY

Silver State Kids Inventory of Development (SSKID) Statewide Pilot Evaluation Short Survey for Focus Group Participants Introduction:

You have been identified by the Nevada Department of Education as supervising those who use the Teaching Strategies Gold assessment tool with students. The state of Nevada has contracted with Turning Point, Inc. (TPI) to conduct an evaluation of the Silver State Kids. The purpose of evaluation is to assess if the Teaching Strategies GOLD has high validity and reliability for children from diverse cultures, languages, socioeconomic backgrounds, and abilities.

Also, the intent of the evaluation is to see if teachers and parents find it easy to use and informative. This will help the State decide whether or not to continue to use this tool into the next biennium. To accomplish this set of objectives, TPI is conducting focus groups, interviews, and online surveys with Teaching Strategies GOLD users and stakeholders throughout the State between March and June 2014. TPI will keep all involved and informed through a webpage that can be followed with postings and shared experiences.

A second phase of the evaluation will be conducted starting in July if the results from the pilot evaluation provide justification for further use of the tool. We will be asking interested PreK/K teachers to participate in an Action Learning Circle in Year 2 so that we can have more consistent involvement and opportunities to learn about how people are prepared/trained to use the tool, how the tool is used, and what impact it may be having on instruction and learning for children.

What groups of users you supervise? (Please check as many as apply)

_____ 0-3 years- Early Head Start _____ 3-5 years: ECE ECSE _____ 5+(K-3)

_____ Title I Teachers serving ___ to ___ years

Your role (Please check one):

_____ ECE Coordinator _____ Title I Coordinator _____ Head Start Administrator

_____ Elementary School Administrator, _____ University-based Administrator

_____ Other _____

Location/Site Name: _____ City _____, NV Zip: _____

1. How familiar are you with the Teaching Strategies Gold Assessment Tool?

Very Familiar

Somewhat Familiar

Not at All Familiar

2. Did you receive training from TSG or a local trainer in use of the assessment tool? Yes No

3. Are you currently supervising users of the TSG? Yes No

4. Do you provide technical support for users to design instruction based on TSG results? Yes No

5. Do you use the TSG results from users to share with parents, colleagues or other groups? Yes No

6. If given a choice, would you advise users to continue to use the TSG or would you choose another assessment tool or process to use with children? (circle one)

USE TSG

CHOOSE ANOTHER

NOT USE ANY

INTERRATER RELIABILITY FOCUS GROUP PROTOCOL

Silver State Kids Inventory of Development (SSKID) Statewide Pilot Evaluation

Focus Group Questions for Interrater Reliability Certification Participants

Introduction:

Your school and classroom have been identified by the Nevada Department of Education as using the Teaching Strategies Gold assessment tool with students. The state of Nevada has contracted with Turning Point, Inc. (TPI) to conduct an evaluation of the Silver State Kids. The purpose of evaluation is to assess if the Teaching Strategies GOLD has high validity and reliability for children from diverse cultures, languages, socioeconomic backgrounds, and abilities.

Also, the intent of the evaluation is to see if teachers and parents find it easy to use and informative. This will help the State decide whether or not to continue to use this tool into the next biennium. To accomplish these set of objectives, TPI is conducting focus groups, interviews, and online surveys with Teaching Strategies GOLD users and stakeholders throughout the State between March and June 2014. TPI will keep all involved and informed through a webpage that can be followed with postings and shared experiences.

A second phase of the evaluation will be conducted starting in July if the results from the pilot evaluation provide justification for further use of the tool. We will be asking interested PreK/K teachers to participate in an Action Learning Circle in Year 2 so that we can have more consistent involvement and opportunities to learn about how people are prepared/trained to use the tool, how the tool is used, and what impact it may be having on instruction and learning for children.

12. Please Describe the TSG IRR certification process as you understand it.
13. About how much time in all have you spent doing the IRR certification process?
14. Do you feel that the IRR certification has helped you to use the assessment tool more reliably (or to help other use the tool more reliably)?
15. Would you recommend that TSG users complete the IRR certification?
16. At what point do you feel would be the ideal time for a person to complete the IRR certification process? (during training, right after training, after using the tool in a real classroom, etc.)
17. Did you find some areas more challenging to complete than others? If so, which ones? (social-emotional, physical, language, cognitive, literacy, mathematics)
18. What worked well with the IRR certification process?
19. What were some challenges that you had with the IRR certification process?
 - a. Were the challenges resolved and how?
20. Do you have any recommendations or suggestions for improving the IRR certification?

PRINCIPAL/ADMINISTRATOR INTERVIEWS

Administrator Phone Interview Questions

Interview:

1. What were your expectations when you learned your school would be participating in the pilot of the TSG Assessment Tool?
2. What, if anything, do you know about how the Teaching Strategies Gold Assessment tool?
3. How are assessment results currently being shared and with whom?
4. If you're familiar with the results to date, how do these inform your school about how ready children are that are entering kindergarten?
5. Based on the same question, have you discussed or developed any interventions to address children's readiness levels?
6. At this point, would you consider ongoing use of the Teaching Strategies Gold Assessment tool? Why or why not?
7. What conditions would need to be in place to sustain the use of this tool?

ADDITIONAL APPENDICES

Additional Appendices of Statistical Summaries of the Focus Group Surveys and On-Line Surveys can be found at the SSKIDS Pilot Evaluation Website. The link is: <http://sskidsevalproject.wordpress.com/>