

2025 Transition to Kindergarten (TK) Checkpoint Guidance

Assessment and Progress Monitoring

Many school districts require diagnostic, formative, and summative assessments to be administered in the early grades, primarily in reading and mathematics. While no single assessment is valid for all purposes, [RCW 28A.150.315](#) states that it is the intent of the Legislature that administration of the Washington Kindergarten Inventory of Developing Skills (WaKIDS) replace the administration of other assessments required by school districts or that other assessments only be administered if they seek to obtain information not covered by WaKIDS.

Washington Kindergarten Inventory of Developing Skills

WaKIDS is a transition process that strives to connect the key adults in a child's life and provide a smooth transition between early learning or home into the Transition to Kindergarten (TK) or kindergarten classroom. WaKIDS also provides important information about where Washington's TK/kindergartners are in their development early in the school year.

Inequities begin prior to the start of kindergarten and persist far into the child's TK–12 experience and beyond. The data collected through WaKIDS helps to inform classroom decisions about individualized learning and district-and state-level decisions about education policy and investments.

WaKIDS has three components:

- **Family Connection:** TK/K teachers are expected to meet individually with each student's parents and/or guardians. These individual meetings, which generally take 20–45 minutes, occur at the school or at a mutually agreed upon location, before or near the beginning of the program.
- **Whole-child Assessment:** Students are assessed within the context of daily routines and classroom activities using *GOLD*®. Students are not pulled out from the classroom for the Whole-child Assessment. TK teachers are required to complete one checkpoint at the beginning of the program and, additionally, it is required that the WaKIDS Whole-child Assessment be administered at least one more time during the school year. The checkpoint dates for TK align with kindergarten and ECEAP classrooms using *GOLD*®. A



student's parent or guardian has the option to decline or excuse their student from the assessment. Districts must keep records of any test refusals following their test refusal policy.

- **Early Learning Collaboration:** Local education agencies administering a TK program must make a best effort to coordinate with local child care and early learning providers to assure best placement and appropriate services based on each child and family's need.

It is a requirement that TK programs administer all three components of WaKIDS at the start of the program and the WaKIDS Whole-child Assessment one more time during the school year ([WAC 392-425-055](#)).

WaKIDS Whole-child Assessment data for TK students must be submitted and finalized by the appropriate checkpoint dates, based on the program start date. While TK programs have flexibility on selecting their second checkpoint, OSPI recommends selecting the Spring checkpoint as the final checkpoint to show growth throughout the program.

| Period | When teachers can start entering data for the period | Checkpoint date |
|--------|--|-----------------|
| Fall | 8/1/2025 | 11/15/2025 |
| Winter | 11/20/2025 | 3/15/2026 |
| Spring | 3/16/2026 | 6/15/2026 |

Policy for TK Programs Starting BEFORE October 1

| Program Start Date | Fall Checkpoint (November 15) | Winter Checkpoint (March 15) | Spring Checkpoint (June 15) |
|--------------------|----------------------------------|--|---|
| Before October 1 | Required | Option 1 for the 2 nd Checkpoint | Option 2 for the 2 nd Checkpoint (Recommended) |

Policy for TK Programs Starting AFTER October 1

Programs beginning *after* October 1 will have two checkpoint timeline pathways:

Pathway 1: Starting with Fall Checkpoint (November 15)

| Fall Checkpoint (November 15) | Winter Checkpoint (March 15) | Spring Checkpoint (June 15) |
|--|---------------------------------|---|
| 1 st Checkpoint: Completed | 2nd Checkpoint: Option 1 | 2nd Checkpoint: Option 2 (Recommended) |



| Pros | Cons |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Immediate access to the <i>SmartTeach</i>™ platform to assess children’s knowledge, skills, and abilities • Earlier completion of assessment requirements • More authentic observation timeline aligned with program start • Quicker turnaround for data analysis and intervention planning • Alignment with fall reporting windows • OSPI score files have a quicker turnaround for importing into the student information system. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compressed timeframe for conducting WaKIDS Whole-child Assessment (compared to a full checkpoint period) • May create additional time pressure for educators |

If **Pathway 1** is selected, the TK program must select and complete either the Winter or Spring Checkpoint as their second Checkpoint Option.

Pathway 2: Starting with Winter Checkpoint (March 15)

| Fall Checkpoint (November 15) | Winter Checkpoint (March 15) | Spring Checkpoint (June 15) |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| N/A | 1st Checkpoint | 2nd Checkpoint |

| Pros | Cons |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More time for student acclimation and more time to conduct the WaKIDS Whole-child Assessment • Reduced time pressure on educators | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers can still conduct observations and collect data, but it cannot be inputted in <i>SmartTeach</i>™ until November 20 when the winter checkpoint opens. • Data may not be reflective of children’s knowledge, skills, and abilities at the beginning of the program • Greater time gap between program starts and assessment completion • Potential misalignment with other reporting timelines • OSPI score files turn around is slower compared to the fall turn around. |

If **Pathway 2** is selected, the TK program must complete both the Winter and Spring Checkpoints.



Future Planning Considerations

For upcoming academic years, programs should consider:

- How program start dates align to the Fall and Winter Checkpoint dates
- How checkpoint timelines affect overall program assessment strategy
- Which timeline best serves their student population and staff capacity
- How the WaKIDS data is used to support on-going instruction

OSPI remains committed to supporting all programs regardless of the checkpoint selected.

WaKIDS Trainings

WaKIDS assessment must be conducted by the certificated, WaKIDS-trained teacher to whom the student is assigned. WaKIDS 101 and Refresher courses are offered virtually throughout the year. Training dates can be found on the [WaKIDS Events and Training webpage](#).

