

WaKIDS New Teacher Checklist

This checklist is for Transition to Kindergarten (TK), Kindergarten, and Special Education teachers supporting kindergartners who are new to implementing the WaKIDS Whole-child Assessment.

Purpose: This checklist guides you through your WaKIDS responsibilities from summer preparation through the Whole-child Assessment checkpoint and beyond.

Before School Starts

- ☐ **Get trained.** Teachers new to TK/kindergarten and Special Education teachers supporting kindergartners must complete the WaKIDS 101 training AND earn Interrater Reliability (IRR) certification within the required training window. This training is available asynchronously through OSPI. Register on the [OSPI WaKIDS Training page](#).
- ☐ **Familiarize yourself with *GOLD*® Objectives for Development and Learning (ODL).** Become comfortable with the *GOLD*® ODL for WaKIDS. Focus on indicators where the green/blue bands meet (TK) and purple/blue bands meet (K). This is where students' entering skills are most likely to fall.
- ☐ **Set up a developmentally appropriate and engaging learning environment.** Review the [Washington State Transition to Kindergarten and Kindergarten Guide](#) for guidance on high-quality learning environments. Your classroom setup directly affects your ability to observe children naturally. Consider how your classroom environment supports observation across all six areas of development.
- ☐ **Plan with your teaching team, teaching team, and specialists.** Intentional observational assessment happens best when the whole team plans together. Discuss your approach to observation, documentation, and instructional decision-making.
- ☐ **Plan for Family Connection with your principal and teaching team.** Principals and teachers decide together how to schedule and conduct Family Connection meetings, which typically occur during the first three days of school. Think through logistics, staffing, and materials.
- ☐ **Support your paraprofessional.** Encourage your paraprofessional to take the optional WaKIDS Support Staff Training if you'd like their help with observation. Details are on the [OSPI WaKIDS Training page](#).

First Weeks of School

- ☐ **Conduct Family Connection Meetings.** These meetings build relationships with families and welcome them to TK/kindergarten. Use the [Introducing Me! Booklet](#) as a starting point. Important note: these meetings are not for assessing children.



- ❑ **Check *SmartTeach*™ for your student roster.** Your DAC will complete the upload of students by September 15. Observe children and keep hard copy documentation before students appear in the system. Do not add children to your own account. Find your DAC at the [OSPI District Test Coordinator Connect Information page](#).
- ❑ **Use the first weeks to get to know students and establish routines.** The beginning of the school year is full of rich observational data. Note children's ability to care for their own needs, follow directions, and engage with routines; all rich sources of authentic developmental data.
- ❑ **Download the *SmartTeach*™ app.** The *SmartTeach*™ app lets you capture documentation (photos, videos, notes) in real time in your classroom. It links to your *SmartTeach*™ account using the same username and password.
- ❑ **Create an observation plan.** Work with your teaching team to plan how you will observe and document all children across all six areas of development. Paraprofessionals can take the WaKIDS Support Staff course to assist with documentation. Use the [sample pacing guides](#) on the OSPI WaKIDS website.
- ❑ **Begin observing and gathering documentation.** Use the full checkpoint period to collect documentation. Use multiple types: anecdotal notes, checklists, work samples, and video clips via *SmartTeach*™. Plan activities that combine multiple developmental skills at once.
- ❑ **Understand your checkpoint period.** Kindergarten classrooms are required to complete the Fall checkpoint by November 15. TK classrooms must complete two checkpoints. Visit the [OSPI TK Webpage](#) and search for the TK Checkpoint Guidance document for more information. Three total checkpoints (Fall, Winter, Spring) are available to all classrooms.

During the Checkpoint Window

- ❑ **Continue to observe and gather documentation throughout the full window.** More authentic observation across the full period produces richer, more accurate assessment data. Avoid rushing everything to the end of the window.
- ❑ **Know the late-entry rule.** Children entering your program on or after November 1 do not need to be observed for the Fall checkpoint. The same two-week rule applies for all checkpoints: March 1 for Winter, June 1 for Spring.
- ❑ **Organize your documentation.** Decide whether you will maintain hard copies or upload to *SmartTeach*™ (or both). Ensure you are collecting evidence for all children across all objectives and dimensions. Uploading documentation into *SmartTeach*™ will enable you to use the report functions.
- ❑ **Leverage planning time with your teaching team.** Collaborate regularly to develop observation strategies, discuss student progress, and support each other. Allow time to learn new practices and celebrate team accomplishments.

- ☐ **Check your Documentation Status.** Use the Teacher Documentation Status report in *SmartTeach*™ to track how much evidence you have collected for each student. If keeping hard copies, check your records to ensure complete coverage.
- ☐ **Run preliminary and final data reports.** Use the Reports area in *SmartTeach*™ to run Individual Child and Class Profile Reports. What are you learning? What new questions are emerging? Let data guide your weekly instructional decisions.
- ☐ **Use the Teacher Assessment Status Report.** This report tracks which objectives and areas you have finalized. Use it regularly to confirm complete coverage before the deadline.
- ☐ **Finalize your Whole-child Assessment data by November 15 at 9:00 pm PT.** Use the *SmartTeach*™ Support Portal for [step-by-step guidance on finalization](#). Do not wait until the final day.

After the Checkpoint Window

- ☐ **Review and analyze your final data.** *GOLD*® provides several useful reports: the Individual Child Report, Class Profile Report, and Comparative Report. What are you learning about your students individually and as a group? What surprises you?
- ☐ **Share information with families.** Share what you've learned about each student's strengths with parents and guardians. Use the Report Card in *SmartTeach*™ for fall family conferences, or the Development and Learning Report and Family Conference Form.
- ☐ **Reflect on your data collection process.** What worked well? What would you adjust? Share reflections with your teaching team and principal to inform planning and preparation for next year.

Optional

- ☐ **Use *GOLD*® for TPEP and Student Growth Goals.** WaKIDS data can serve as evidence for your teacher evaluation (TPEP) and Student Growth Goals. Talk to your principal about incorporating *GOLD*® data into your professional growth planning.
- ☐ **Complete multiple checkpoints.** While only the Fall checkpoint is required for kindergarten, completing Winter and Spring checkpoints allows you to track student growth across the year and gather richer instructional data.

Checkpoint Dates at a Glance		
FALL	WINTER	SPRING
November 15 <i>Required for K</i>	March 15 <i>Optional / TK varies</i>	June 15 <i>Optional / TK varies</i>

TK Note: TK programs must complete the Whole-child Assessment at the start of their program and once more during the school year. Refer to the TK Checkpoint Guidance document for TK-specific dates and requirements.

Questions?	
WaKIDS Policy & Implementation	Contact the OSPI WaKIDS team: wakids@k12.wa.us Visit the OSPI WaKIDS website for FAQs and resources.
SmartTeach™ & GOLD® Technical Support	Call: Teaching Strategies: 844-853-4653 (7 am–9 pm ET, Monday–Friday) Email: wakids@teachingstrategies.com (typically 48-hour turnaround) SmartTeach™ Support Portal : search 900+ how-to articles. This is your first stop for all platform questions.
OSPI Office Hours & Webinars	OSPI hosts ongoing office hours and webinars throughout the school year. Visit the OSPI WaKIDS Events & Training page for the current schedule.
Your District Assessment Coordinator (DAC)	Find your DAC at the OSPI District Test Coordinator Connect Information page .