

June 2014
Issue 5

Got GOLD?



One year in the GOLD Pilot

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This month marks one year of participation and collaboration between the Children's Services Council, the Early Learning Coalition, and community partners in Palm Beach County on the GOLD pilot project. It has been one year since the GOLD online assessment system was introduced to our first cohort of participants. Last May, six school sites were equipped with laptops, and offered some basic supports and recommendations for getting started and making progress in the GOLD. These sites, and four new cohorts of schools for young children, have continued to learn and grow while making authentic assessment and documentation a central focus of their work with children.

Together we have learned some global lessons during this first year. In the pilot project we have grown to understand the importance of "quantity across dimensions" in the GOLD.

Having enough "quantity across dimensions" refers to having enough connections between pieces of documentation and objectives/dimensions in the GOLD system to complete the Checkpoint phases of the assessment cycle without having to enter "Not Observed - Other". We have learned that we (leaders, administrators, and teachers) can track quantity goals by checking the Documentation By Objective/Dimensions screen. We are also beginning to know what quality means in this online assessment system. Quality has to do with objective and descriptive anecdotal records, strong connections to dimensions, and accurate levels (preliminary and checkpoint levels).

Administrators and leaders-on-site have worked through issues of managing staff and children, as well as monitoring and supporting teaching staff to de-

velop regular systems of use in the GOLD. Teachers in participating sites have worked to observe, document, and interpret their documentation. They have learned to see connections to development in the actions and words of the children, and the life of the classroom. We have all learned many lessons in this first year. It is the purpose of a pilot program to reveal trends of challenges and successes in the field, and to develop strategies in response to the realities of implementation of this assessment tool. Over time we have learned that daily use leads to an increase in the quality of anecdotal records and efficient use of time spent adding and leveling documentation. As the language of the objectives and dimensions becomes embedded in a teacher's everyday discussions, the connections between documentation and dimensions strengthen.



One year in the GOLD Pilot continued

Administrators are creating time for teachers to enter their observations regularly and using reports to be informed of teacher progress, as well as child level formative assessment data at their school.

The “long observation” strategy has supported teachers to transition from focusing only on quantity, toward generating quality pieces of documentation which may connect with many objectives/dimensions in the GOLD.

Teachers are developing classroom systems for ongoing observation and documentation of children at play for extended moments of time. These “long observations” with detailed and objective descriptions, allow possibilities for multiple connections to objectives and dimensions. The “long observation” strategy has supported teachers to transition from focusing only on quantity, toward generating quality pieces of documentation which may connect with many objectives/dimensions in the GOLD.

Although it has only been a year, we have learned a great deal from the challenges we have experienced together. These challenges

have led us to strategies and new questions that will guide the project in the months ahead. With over 2700 children with active portfolios and 45 early care and education programs currently using GOLD, this is only the beginning.

This Got GOLD? issue is dedicated to all of sites who participated in this first year of the pilot project.

Thank you for your time and your tremendous effort.

It is truly appreciated!

Questions Answered

How do I change my GOLD preferences to view GOLD in Spanish or in English?

The GOLD system allows every user to either view the information in GOLD in Spanish or English. At any time a user can change their settings by following these directions:

1. Log into GOLD
2. Go to the [Dashboard](#)
3. Go to the [My Profile](#) tab to the left:
4. Select [Edit Profile](#)
5. Scroll down to the bottom of the page
6. Select your language preference for viewing the GOLD site
7. Submit

The screenshot shows the 'MY PROFILE' tab selected in the top navigation. A dropdown menu is open, showing 'Edit My Profile' as the first option, which is highlighted with a black arrow. Below it are 'Community Profile', 'Change Password', 'Change Security Questions', and 'Change Username'. To the right, the 'GOLD Preferences' form is visible. It has two sections: 'Sort Children in GOLD By' with radio buttons for 'First Name' (selected) and 'Last Name'; and 'Select language preference for viewing the GOLD Site.' with radio buttons for 'English' (selected) and 'Spanish'. Below that is a section 'By default, take me to this site when I log in' with radio buttons for 'Teacher Site' and 'Administrator Site' (selected). At the bottom of the form is a 'Submit' button, highlighted with a red arrow.

Featured Program: Little Steps Academy

Little Steps Academy in West Palm Beach has taken a strong step in the direction of supporting teachers toward success in the GOLD. They have invited a new member to their team.

Starting this year, Ms. Vicky is onsite every afternoon at Little Steps to collaborate with teachers as they work through their first year using the GOLD online assessment system in all of their classrooms. Lilliana Perez directs the school site and works closely with Vicky to identify and understand key strategies within the assessment system. In a recent visit to the school Lilliana spoke about the value of the GOLD to the school and the school's decision to hire Vicky for this work. *"It's the base! If you believe in quality, you need to be responsible for helping teachers to succeed. We need experts to support the teachers. At the end of the program, the benefit is*

going to be for the children." By creating a position within the school organization that is dedicated to support for teachers is one way that school leaders can get the most out of their first year implementing this authentic assessment system.

The challenge of "making time" for the GOLD has come up in the work of this pilot project. This work demands time for documentation and interpretation. Time is not a commodity that we have in large quantity in this business. In order to make the most of this assessment system, teachers must "find time" every day if possible to observe, document, and enter and interpret this documentation.

"Making time" is the job of leadership. This is different from finding the time in the day. "Making time" is about creating new opportunities for working together with a co-teacher or faculty member, or hav-

ing weekly GOLD meetings with leadership present to guide and inform the work. These are the kinds of moments that only owners and directors can create. Adding a staff member part-time creates pockets of time spent on this work. This kind of support is found at many sites in the job of the "Curriculum Specialist" or "Assistant Director". In these cases, the GOLD is one of many projects that this leader-on-site is required to oversee. Little Steps has decided that the GOLD is worth the investment in time and additional staff at this moment. As they grow to be experts in the GOLD, Vicky will be there to grow as well, and expand her work with Lilliana and the teachers at Little Steps Academy. For now, they are focused a great deal on putting their heads together about documentation as assessment.



How is a child's **GOLD** portfolio transferred between programs?

When new children enroll in your program who have previously attended a program participating in the GOLD pilot, these children will likely already have

GOLD portfolios. This portfolio can easily be transferred to your program's GOLD account. To transfer a child's GOLD portfolio, complete the GOLD Child

Portfolio Transfer Request Form found on the Early Learning Coalition of Palm Beach County's website at www.elcpalmbeach.org.

**One Child
=
One Portfolio**

If you get a "Warning: Another Child in your Organization..."

message when you attempt to enter a new child in GOLD, this means a portfolio already exists for this child.

GOLD Child Portfolio Transfer Request

To request the transfer of child *GOLD* portfolio(s) to your district/program *GOLD* account, please complete the following table. Please include children's full names.

Once complete, please fax to 561.214.7450 or mail copy to:
 The Early Learning Coalition
 Attention: Jennifer Coleman
 2300 High Ridge Road, Suite 115
 Boynton Beach, FL 33426

The previous program will be contacted by email to approve transfer of child portfolio(s).

Child First and Last Name	Date of Birth	Previous Program	New Program Teacher and Class Name (as it appears in GOLD)	Name/Title of person requesting transfer

How is a **GOLD** user account transferred between programs?

GOLD User Account Transfer Request

- User accounts within the Children's Services Council of Palm Beach County's GOLD license can be transferred between programs. The transfer of staff user accounts ensures that:
 - GOLD professional development and Interrater Reliability records follow the user to a new place of employment
 - Duplicate user accounts are not created within the Children's Services Council of Palm Beach County's GOLD license
- In order to transfer user account information between programs, permission of the user is required.
- Please complete the information below an email to jennifer.coleman@elcpalmbeach.org or fax to Jennifer Coleman at 561.214.7450.

Name

Username

Email Address

Previous employer/GOLD program name

User accounts in GOLD can be transferred between programs. The transfer of staff user accounts ensure that GOLD professional development records and Interrater Reliability certifications follow the user to a new place of employment. Transferring existing staff user accounts ensures that duplicates are not created. If you have a new employee who has previously used Teaching Strategies GOLD in Palm Beach County, please have them complete, sign and submit the User Account Transfer Request found on the Early Learning Coalition of Palm Beach County's website at www.elcpalmbeach.org.

End of Year Guide

The End of Year Guide assists you in answering the question “What do I need to do at the end of the year in GOLD?”.

When your program is ready to transfer children to new classrooms, add new children and say good-bye to graduating children, please use the following guide to help manage your data from one year to the next.

Clean up your children’s files.

It may be time to archive or transfer children's records to ensure that your program has space for new children. Here's what you need to know about these options:

If your program is year round, you may not need to transfer or archive children until after the summer checkpoint period.

If your program has some year round classes and some classes that are not participating in the Summer Checkpoint due to a modified schedule, then follow both instructions:

Year round classes -wait until after Summer Checkpoint to archive and transfer children and,

Classes that have modified schedules and are not participating in summer checkpoint- archive and transfer those children now.

For programs closed for the summer, please follow the below steps to prepare for the Fall 2014/2015 checkpoint:

Archive children

All children leaving your program for any reason should be archived. Archiving children’s files will allow you to store and reactivate the data at any time. Additionally, all administrative reports can include archived files.

Transfer children

Children who will remain active in your program may be assigned to new classes. Their records should be transferred for next school year.



Change children’s color bands (*not applicable for children birth to 36 months*)

For children who are 3 years of age or older, you will need to change their color band when they are transferred to a new age group/class. Most programs will have the child’s color band match the class color band, unless the classroom has mixed ages such as 3, 4, and 5 year olds.

Clean up your staff files

Disable the accounts of any teachers who no longer work for your organization. Be sure to transfer or archive the children's files before disabling the account of the departing staff member. For classrooms that have a new teacher, make sure you have changed the primary teacher to the new teacher prior to disabling the former teacher’s account.

Use your Resources

Use the GOLD step-by-step instructions on www.elcpalmbeach.org:

- How to transfer and archive the children in your program
- How to change a child’s color band
- Assigning color bands

NEW 2014-2015 Checkpoint Dates

<u>Checkpoint Season</u>	<u>Documentation Window</u>	<u>Finalize Levels</u>	<u>Data Finalized By:</u>
Fall	Aug 1 (or first day of program)- Nov. 7	Nov. 10- Nov. 21	November 21, 2014
Winter	Nov. 24- Feb. 27	March 2 - 13	March 13, 2015
Spring	March 16- May 22	May 26- June 5	June 5, 2015
Summer (Optional)	June 9- July 31	Aug. 3-14	August 14, 2015

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Nonprofits First®

Please email:

helpdesk@nonprofitsfirst.org

or

Call 561-910-3895.

(Hours of support M-F 9am - 5pm)