



SUCCESS STORY

A preschool streamlines its assessment process by using an online solution

Washington County NB and PW Club, Inc.
Head Start/Georgia Pre-K Program



Pearson

The Challenge

“Head Start requires us to have three checkpoints. The first one is our baseline checkpoint that we like to do as soon as possible to get a true picture of where our children are when they begin with us. Period two is our midpoint checkpoint, and that’s very important. At the midpoint, we go back and we measure the gains that our children have made in meeting our school readiness goals from the first period to the second period. In our third and final checkpoint, we measure period one through period three to determine the gains the children have made. And that’s what we’re most interested in—what difference have we made with the opportunity and the time that we’ve had with these children,” explained Lee Aycock, education coordinator, Washington County NB and PW Club, Inc.

Washington County’s Head Start program serves high-risk three-, four-, and five-year-olds at five locations. It uses the information collected during the checkpoints to improve its preschool program. “We aggregate the data to determine if our teachers need more training, what areas we need to focus on more, and if we feel like the children are moving in the right direction. It’s also data that we share with our parents during conferences,” Aycock noted.

In 2011, the Bright from the Start: Georgia’s Pre-K Program asked its preschools to use the The Work Sampling System®, an authentic performance assessment, to monitor student progress. Since Georgia’s Pre-K Program provides funding for the operation of the Blended Head Start/Georgia Pre-K classrooms, the Washington County NB and PW Club decided to implement Work Sampling for Head Start™ so that its teachers did not have to complete two different assessments and the program would have one unified assessment tool for all its Head Start preschool classrooms.

PROFILE

City/State

Sandersville, Georgia

School Enrollment

388 students

Teachers

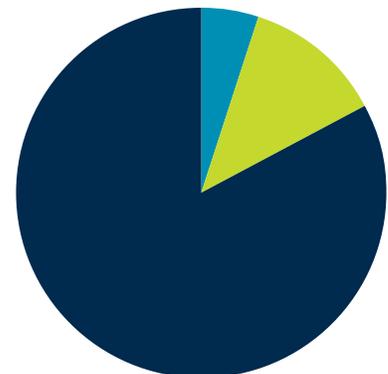
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Grade

PreK

Ethnicity

- 83% African American
- 12% Caucasian
- 5% Other



An Online Assessment Solution

Aycock is happy with the solution. It ensures that the assessment data is reliable and consistent and meets the state's and Head Start's requirements. "What I love is that The Work Sampling System is aligned to our state and the Head Start framework so it's clear to the teachers, especially the new ones, what they are assessing the children on," she explained.

In 2013, when the online version was launched, Aycock saw an opportunity to improve the assessment process. Work Sampling Online™ allows teachers to include evidence and make comments on the five early learning domains (Language and Literacy, Cognition and General Knowledge, Approaches to Learning, Physical Well-Being and Motor Development, and Social and Emotional Development), so that all the information on a student is located in a single place.

Last year, Washington County purchased tablets for each of the preschool classroom teachers to further streamline the process. Teachers can now enter their observations wherever they are—at the playground, on a field trip—and can easily take and save photos and videos to demonstrate student progress.

The Results

Teacher, administrator, and parent feedback on Work Sampling Online has been positive. Aycock reported that the system has saved teachers a lot of time. "Once they learn to use the system, they love it. Just to be able to post a piece of evidence and have the ability to link it to more than one domain, that's time management for them."

As an administrator, Aycock appreciates being able to access the data online. "I need to monitor the assessment process to make sure everyone's on task," she explained. "I can go right to the teachers' checklist screen and get them on the phone, and we can both look at things that they're doing. I can see areas they may have overlooked. It's right there—I'm looking at it and they're looking at it. It's a wonderful monitoring tool."

“Work Sampling Online provides us with accurate data to really look at and evaluate what we’re doing.”

—Lee Aycock, Education Coordinator, Washington County NB and PW Club, Inc.

Aycock concluded, "And it's wonderful for the parents. They love to see portfolios with all the evidence of what their child has done. In fact, I met with a parent this week, and she shared with me how she could see the progress her child had made by observing the evidence that we had collected. She noticed how details in her child's work samples progressed as the year went on. She could see how her child was trying to express himself in his work samples, and she was amazed."

“The reports in Work Sampling Online are wonderful because they provide me with the gains data from where the children started to where they finished.”

—Lee Aycock, Education
Coordinator, Washington
County NB and PW Club, Inc.

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