Elementary Reading Coaches Guide to a Comprehensive Assessment Plan
August, 2005
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Florida Center for Reading Research
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Introduction and Purpose of Guide

Anyone who has worked as a teacher or principal in an elementary school understands the value of reliable and valid assessments of early reading progress. Timely and reliable assessments tell us which children are falling behind in critical reading skills so we can help them make better progress in learning to read. Reliable and valid assessments also help us monitor the effectiveness of our instruction for all children. Unless we regularly assess the progress of our children in learning to read, we cannot know which children need more help or whether our instructional plan is working for them. Because scientific studies have repeatedly demonstrated the value of regularly assessing reading progress, one of the critical goals of the reading initiative in Florida is to increase the quality and frequency of reading assessments for all children in the early elementary grades.

This Guide is designed to acquaint school reading coaches with the assessment requirements of Florida’s Reading First grant and to provide guidance on the implementation of the K-12 comprehensive reading plan. Valid and reliable assessment of reading skills of kindergarten through third grade students is an essential feature of Reading First. It is also a critical element in addressing the needs of struggling readers at all grade levels. It is important that this activity is carried out with integrity, that students are assessed in a timely and accurate manner, and that the test results are used appropriately to assist all students in becoming successful readers.

Reading assessment does not operate in isolation but is an essential ingredient in designing solutions for reading problems. It must be used as part of the identification of those students who are at risk of reading failure and to let us know which students are likely to perform well. It guides teachers in determining why deficiencies in reading skills exist, it aids in specifying the skills that need to be taught to specific groups of students, and it informs teachers and parents about the effectiveness of these remedial strategies in meeting short- and long-term reading goals.

To successfully implement the assessment requirements of Reading First, each school district should have a team of individuals at both the district and school levels who are trained in the assessment procedures required by the grant. Some of these educators should also be skilled in training others to be members of the school and district assessment teams so that assessment resources are readily available when they are needed. Trained team members must be able to organize and prepare a school for the assessment activities, work with teachers and administrators to meet the time lines for assessment and keep them informed of the results, and ensure that the data are dependable and available for making important decisions about reading instruction. Non-Reading First schools may initiate an assessment team to carry out the planned assessments or institute a rigorous training program for teachers who will assess students along with an assessment team or assessment coordinator.

Each Reading First school should be prepared to enter assessment data into a web-based data management system, interpret data reports produced by the data system, and modify instruction and educational practices through an analysis of the student, classroom, and grade-level reports generated by the web-based system. Non-Reading First schools are also encouraged to use this data management system which is offered at no cost to all Florida schools.

This Guide provides a plan for district and school personnel to follow in setting up and carrying out the many assessment responsibilities of Reading First. Schools that do not have a Reading First grant but want to follow this assessment plan will find the Guide essential to effective implementation. The following pages explain:
Purpose of Assessment

Assessment is the process of collecting data for the purpose of (a) specifying and verifying problems and (b) making decisions about students (Salvia & Ysseldyke, 1991). Assessment may be formal or informal and is conducted through a variety of methods: record reviews, interviews, observations and testing. An easy way to remember these different types of assessment methods is to think of the acronym “RIOT.”

Assessment may also be classified according to the way the performance of the individual is interpreted. Norm-referenced assessments have been standardized on a norm group and scaled so that each individual score reflects an individual’s standing relative to the norm group. When a norm-referenced measure is used, it is important that the individuals who are being assessed with the procedure are very similar to the group of individuals used in the standardization or norming process. Assessment may also be considered as criterion referenced; that is, the individual’s performance is compared against established standards and is used to determine if the person has met the standard or criterion for success. For example, research on a large sample of Florida students has found that a third grade student reading at 111 or more words per minute has met a standard of success (criterion) in oral reading fluency at that grade level. That student has a high probability of success on the reading portion of the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT). In contrast, the norm or average score for this test may be quite different and would not necessarily represent an appropriate goal or criterion for success. Scores, and subsequently the norms, change as skills being studied are emphasized or not. Criteria do not change unless the goal (e.g., successful performance on the FCAT) changes. All students may be expected to meet a criterion; but all students cannot be above the 50th percentile because the norms require a distribution of scores from very low to very high with the majority of scores falling between low average and high average. This is why we often see norm-referenced tests being revised – so the test can remain true to the required distribution of scores. This distribution of scores is referred to as the “normal curve.”

Two important features of assessment required by Reading First are that the measures selected must meet rigorous, research-based standards of reliability and validity. A reliable measure is one that produces dependable scores. That is, if another person tested the individual, the scores should be similar. Also, if the individual was tested on a different day but close in time to the first testing, the scores should also be similar. A test is determined to be reliable if there is a very high relationship between the scores on the two times that the student was tested.

A valid test is one that measures the skill or behavior that it is supposed to measure. Tests are valid for a specific purpose, and the validity of a test can be established through a variety of methods. One of the more common ways to establish validity is to determine the relationship between the test in question and another test that has been shown to be related to the concept or behavior of interest. Another way to establish validity is to compare scores on the test with a relevant criterion or outcome. For example, a test of reading might be considered valid if students who performed well on the test also performed well on another activity at a later time that depended heavily on skilled reading.
**Reading First Assessment Requirements**

Every school that receives Reading First funds must have a coordinated plan to use four types of reading assessments to guide instruction and program evaluation in the school. These types of assessments are designed to capture the students’ skills in the essential components of reading: phonemic awareness, phonics, reading fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension strategies.

The four types of assessment required by Reading First are as follows:

- **Screening** – Screening tests provide the teacher a beginning assessment of the child’s preparation for grade-level reading instruction. They are a “first alert” that a child will need extra help to make adequate progress in reading during the year. They also provide information to the reading coach and principal about the distribution of students with proficient reading skills as well as those with weak reading skills in each classroom and grade level.

- **Progress monitoring** – Progress monitoring tests keep the teacher informed about the child’s progress in learning to read during the school year. They are a quick sample of critical reading skills that will tell the teacher if the child is making adequate progress toward achieving grade-level reading ability at the end of the year. Coaches use the data from progress monitoring to assist teachers in the selection and implementation of supplementary and intensive reading programs and activities.

- **Diagnostic** – Diagnostic tests are used to measure a variety of reading, language, or cognitive skills. Although they can be given as soon as a screening test indicates a child is behind in reading growth, they will usually be used only if a child fails to make adequate progress after receiving extra help in learning to read. They are designed to provide a more precise and detailed picture of the full range of a child’s knowledge and skill so that instruction can be more precisely planned. Teachers and coaches work together to determine if and when a diagnostic test should be administered and how the information will be used to guide instruction.

- **Outcome** – Outcome assessments are given at the end of the year for two purposes. First, they can help the teachers, coach, and principal in a school evaluate the overall effectiveness of their reading program for all children. Second, they are required in Reading First schools to help districts evaluate their progress toward meeting the goal of “every child reading on grade level” by third grade. Schools must show regular progress toward this goal to continue receiving Reading First funds. In Florida, the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) is the primary outcome measure in grade three and above.

Table 1 provides a summary of the Reading First assessment requirements, when they are administered, which students will be assessed, and how the results can help the teacher and school administration in making effective decisions about reading instruction. Some of the Reading First assessments are specified in the Florida Reading First grant while others are chosen by the district to best meet the needs of the students in that district. The screening and diagnostic measures may be selected by school districts but must be shown to be valid and reliable measures. The state requires a common set of progress monitoring and outcome measures that districts must incorporate into their Reading First grants. When implemented in non-Reading First schools and with struggling readers in all elementary grades, these four assessments are powerful tools for guiding the decisions of teachers, coaches, and administrators to ensure that all students become successful readers. An alternate summary of assessment suggestions for non-Reading First schools and for grades four and five is provided in Table 2.
Table 1: Summary of Reading First Assessment Requirements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Required Assessment</th>
<th>When Administered</th>
<th>Who is Assessed</th>
<th>Probable Decisions To Be Made</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Screening</td>
<td>Beginning of school year</td>
<td>All K-3 students</td>
<td>Establish risk status Determine groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diagnostics</td>
<td>As needed</td>
<td>Non-responders to interventions</td>
<td>Plan Instruction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Progress Monitoring</td>
<td>Four times per school year at specified intervals</td>
<td>All students</td>
<td>Differentiate instruction Readjust groupings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome</td>
<td>End of school year</td>
<td>All students</td>
<td>Determine Impact of reading program</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: Assessment Suggestions for Non-Reading First Schools and Grades 4 - 5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment</th>
<th>When Administered</th>
<th>Who is Assessed</th>
<th>Probable Decisions To Be Made</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Screening</td>
<td>Beginning of school year</td>
<td>All K-3 students All Grade 4-5 students at Level 1 or 2 on FCAT Reading</td>
<td>Establish risk status Determine groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diagnostics</td>
<td>As needed</td>
<td>Non-responders to interventions</td>
<td>Plan Instruction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Progress Monitoring</td>
<td>Three or four times per school year at specified intervals</td>
<td>All K-5 students who perform below benchmark on screening</td>
<td>Differentiate instruction Readjust groupings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome</td>
<td>End of school year</td>
<td>All students</td>
<td>Determine impact of school’s comprehensive reading program Identify students at risk for future reading success</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Screening

The majority of Florida schools have chosen to use the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS®) as their screening measures. The DIBELS® measures can be used for both screening and progress monitoring. Districts have selected DIBELS® because it is reliable and valid and, when administered at the beginning of the school year, can fulfill the screening as well as initial progress monitoring requirements. Some districts have chosen additional screening measures to obtain a broader sample of beginning-of-the-year skills. These supplementary screening measures are not required by the Reading First grant but would not be inconsistent with the role of screening for making decisions about reading instruction.

Two DIBELS® measures are required as part of Florida’s kindergarten screening program, the School Readiness Uniform Screening System (SRUSS). These measures are Letter Naming Fluency (LNF) and Initial Sound Fluency (ISF). The SRUSS requires that these measures are administered between school days 20 and 29. For Reading First schools, this is identical to the first assessment interval and satisfies both the SRUSS and Reading First early literacy screening requirements.

Progress Monitoring

The Florida Reading First grant requires that DIBELS® be used as the progress monitoring measure. DIBELS® was developed at the University of Oregon, Institute for the Development of Educational Achievement, and has a strong research base as a reliable and valid measure of phonemic awareness, phonics, and reading fluency. The Florida schedule for progress monitoring is similar to the Oregon model for benchmark assessment with several exceptions. First, the Oregon model is set up with three benchmark assessment times: in the fall, winter and spring of the school year. The Florida progress-monitoring schedule has four assessment times at specific 45-day intervals during the school year. The flowchart on page 9 displays the yearly schedule for progress monitoring and other Reading First and Florida state required assessments. Non-Reading First schools may use a different schedule but this would prevent them from using the web-based data management system developed and provided by the Florida Center for Reading Research (FCRR).

The DIBELS® measures that will be given in all Reading First schools for monitoring progress in basic reading skills are these:

**Kindergarten**

✓ Letter Naming Fluency (Assessment 1, 2, 3, 4)
✓ Initial Sound Fluency (Assessment 1, 2, 3)
✓ Phoneme Segmentation Fluency (Assessment 3, 4)
✓ Nonsense Word Fluency (Assessment 3, 4)

**First Grade**

✓ Letter Naming Fluency (Assessment 1)
✓ Phoneme Segmentation Fluency (Assessment 1, 2, 3, 4)
✓ Nonsense Word Fluency (Assessment 1, 2, 3, 4)
✓ Oral Reading Fluency (Assessment 1, 2, 3, 4)
Any school using DIBELS® for progress monitoring students in grades four and five should use Oral Reading Fluency during assessments 1, 2, 3, and 4.

Brief descriptions of these progress-monitoring measures are given below:

**Letter Naming Fluency (LNF)** – this test assesses how fluently children can identify the names of letters on a page. Students are shown upper- and lower-case letters that are arranged in random order, and they are asked to name as many letters as they can in one minute. This is a measure of rapid automatic naming (RAN) and is an excellent indicator of risk with young children.

**Initial Sound Fluency (ISF)** – this is a measure of early phonemic awareness. Children are presented with pictures and asked to say the first sound or sounds of a word depicted by one of the pictures and indicate pictures that begin with a particular phoneme or sound.

**Phoneme Segmentation Fluency (PSF)** – this is a slightly more advanced measure of phonemic awareness. It tests children’s ability to produce the individual phonemes (sounds) in words that have three and four phonemes (e.g., cat, man, rest).

**Nonsense Word Fluency (NWF)** – this is a measure of children’s knowledge and skill in applying the alphabetic principle. Correct responses are earned by giving the individual sounds represented by the letters in simple non-words or by blending the sounds together and pronouncing the non-word as a whole word unit (e.g., bim, ral, stob).

**Oral Reading Fluency (ORF)** – this is a measure of children’s ability to read grade level text fluently and accurately. Children receive a score based on the number of words in a passage they can read accurately in one minute.

**Time Needed to Administer**

The DIBELS® measures can be administered to each student in five to ten minutes. An entire classroom of 20 kindergarten students can be assessed in about 90 minutes to two hours with a slightly longer time period needed on the third assessment when four measures are administered. A first grade classroom of 20 students will require about three hours to assess; a second grade classroom will require about 90 minutes with approximately the same amount of time needed for a third grade classroom. The average size elementary school of 400 to 500 kindergarten through third grade students with a school-based assessment team of five to six individuals can complete the DIBELS® assessments in about five days. Extra time may need to be set aside for assessing students who were absent on the days that the assessment took place.

Although Reading First schools are required to give DIBELS® four times a year, districts or schools can administer progress-monitoring measures more often if desired (see page 28 for a description of Ongoing Progress Monitoring). More frequent monitoring of progress may be particularly beneficial with children who are assigned to receive more intensive reading instruction because they are experiencing special difficulties learning to read.
Flowchart of Reading First Assessments and State-Required Assessments

1. Day 20-29 Screening and Progress Monitoring
2. Day 65-74 Progress Monitoring
3. Day 110-119 Progress Monitoring
4. Day 150-169 Progress Monitoring and Outcome Measures

Kindergarten SRUSS Screening

At-risk Students Diagnostic Assessment

Third Grade March FCAT
Diagnostics

School districts use their discretion in selecting diagnostic measures for Reading First purposes as long as the measures meet the stringent requirements for reliability and validity. FCRR and the Florida Department of Education (FLDOE) developed a menu of diagnostic measures meeting exacting standards for reliability and validity. That menu is updated periodically and posted on the FCRR website at http://www.fcrr.org/assessment. Much of the information on diagnostic measures is based on the work of a national committee of reading and assessment experts. This committee was asked by the National Institute for Literacy to review tests to determine whether they had sufficient evidence of reliability and validity for specific assessment purposes. The report of the committee also is available on the web at http://idea.uoregon.edu/assessment/index.html. District- and school-level personnel responsible for assessment are encouraged to read the executive summary of the report.

Specific diagnostic measures assess one or more of the five essential components of reading. The selection of one or more diagnostic measures for an individual child should be based on the answers to the following questions:

1. What is the suspected area of reading weakness or strength that needs further clarification?
2. Is the diagnostic measure appropriate for the age and/or grade of the student?
3. Is the measure designed for individual administration, or can more than one student be tested at a time?
4. How long does it take to assess the student, and is the information gained of sufficient depth to answer the teacher’s concerns?
5. Are there less costly assessments that provide the same information and that are available at the school?

Diagnostic assessments usually require a moderate level of expertise in testing. This expertise can be obtained through training or extended study and practice. Districts should be sure that everyone who is responsible for conducting diagnostic assessments is given sufficient training to perform this function competently. It is important, in order to gain reliable information (even with a reliable test), that the person who administers the test be able to administer and score it accurately. The design of instructional strategies for a student’s remediation must be based on correct data. The ultimate decision to administer a diagnostic test should be determined by the nature of the student’s difficulties in acquiring the prerequisite reading skills essential to grade-level performance and when existing instructional strategies are not successful.

A certain expenditure of resources is required to administer and to score the diagnostic measures. Therefore, teachers and school staff should review the availability of resources to ensure that students most in need of further evaluation are given priority in the diagnostic assessment process.

The following article, written by Dr. Joseph Torgesen, Director of FCRR, provides valuable information on the appropriate use of diagnostic measures in reading.

**Recommendations for the Use of Diagnostic Tests in Reading First Schools**

**Joseph K. Torgesen, Ph.D.**

Director, Florida Center for Reading Research

**Purpose and Overview**

This paper is written to provide guidance for the use of diagnostic reading measures in Reading First schools. The four sections will address: 1) the purposes of diagnostic assessments; 2) the use of diagnostic measures within the context of the other assessments that are part of each school’s Reading First assessment plan; 3) research evidence on the validity of various diagnostic approaches in reading instruction; and, 4) summary and examples of the use of diagnostic tests for specific purposes.
Purpose of diagnostic assessments in Reading First

The major purpose for administering diagnostic tests to K-3 children in Reading First schools is to provide information that is useful in planning more effective instruction. Diagnostic tests should only be given when there is a clear expectation that they will provide new information about a child’s difficulties learning to read that can be used to provide more focused, or more powerful instruction. Because they are expensive and time-consuming to administer, diagnostic tests should not be given routinely to every struggling reader in a class or grade. Rather, they should only be given in special cases in which insufficient information is currently available to guide instruction.

An example of an appropriate use of a diagnostic instrument would be to discover which components of reading are impaired in a child who has performed below grade level on a year-end test of reading comprehension. In this case, it would be useful to know if the child is impaired in reading fluency or accuracy, knowledge of word meanings, general background knowledge, or use of efficient comprehension strategies. It might also be helpful to know if the child has special difficulties on group administered, multiple choice tests (if that is the kind of test used in the year-end outcome assessment). If the diagnostic test revealed that the child was a very dysfluent or inaccurate reader, that would suggest a need for instruction to strengthen these areas.

In another example, if a child was struggling to acquire fluent and efficient phonemic decoding skills (phonics), it would be useful to know something about the child’s level of phonemic awareness and letter knowledge. An important note here is that most reliable and valid diagnostic reading tests do not provide complete information about which letter/sound correspondences are unknown, or which specific phonemes the child might be struggling with. Rather, diagnostic tests typically provide information about the relative level of skill a child has across several different components of reading or intellectual functioning. Information at a very specific level (i.e., which letter/sound correspondences are known fluently) must typically be obtained through administration of an informal reading inventory or a classroom or curriculum based test.

Diagnostic measures in the context of the overall Reading First Assessment Plan

All Reading First schools are required to administer four types of reading assessments as part of their Reading First plan. These assessments are:

1. Screening instruments for the early identification of children who may need various levels of instructional intervention in order to maintain adequate growth in reading.
2. Classroom assessments, or progress monitoring assessments, to provide information about the child’s progress in acquiring critical reading skills.
3. Diagnostic assessments to provide specific information to help focus instruction most effectively for individual children.
4. Outcome assessments to monitor the extent to which children have met grade level expectations in reading.

If schools are implementing screening, progress monitoring, and outcome assessments in a reliable and valid way, diagnostic measures may be necessary only in unusual circumstances. For example, there are reliable and valid screening and progress monitoring measures available in K-3 for phonemic awareness, letter knowledge, phonics, and reading fluency. If these constructs are reliably assessed several times a year with screening and progress monitoring instruments, there should be little need for additional assessment of these areas with a diagnostic test in cases where children have participated fully in the assessment plan throughout the school year. If vocabulary (knowledge of word meanings) and reading comprehension are reliably assessed in the yearly outcome assessment, information about these constructs will also be available, and they need not be reassessed using a diagnostic instrument unless there is some question about the validity or reliability of the outcome assessment. Before a diagnostic assessment is given, the child’s teacher and grade level team should determine whether the diagnostic assessment that will be given actually can provide more information about the child’s strengths and weaknesses in reading than they already possess. If it will provide additional information, then they also need to ask whether this new information will be useful to them in planning additional instruction for the child.

One obvious case in which a diagnostic assessment might be useful would occur when a child who had not been participating in a Reading First assessment plan moves into the school. If the child appears to be a struggling reader, then a diagnostic assessment might provide a useful way to measure a range of reading
The four most important points from the foregoing discussion of diagnostic measures in reading first schools are:

1. **Recommendations for the Use of Diagnostic Tests in Reading First Schools — continued**

   - **Research based information about instructional utility of various diagnostic measures**
     - The use of diagnostic tests in Reading First schools should be guided by current research on the instructional utility of various types of diagnostic assessment. For example, there are many tests that claim to diagnose specific cognitive or language skills that are important for reading growth. These tests measure such constructs as verbal short-term memory, visual processing ability, auditory processing ability, rapid automatic naming skill, spatial or visual memory, etc. Although some of these constructs may have strong or moderate predictive relationships with reading growth, there is no compelling evidence that knowing a child’s score on any of these tests can help teachers provide more effective instruction in reading. These constructs are sometimes assessed to determine whether a child has a “learning disability” in reading, but, according to the preponderance of evidence from research, they do not help plan more effective instruction for students with learning disabilities. For example, children who perform poorly on measures of rapid automatic naming of digits and letters frequently have difficulties acquiring fluent reading skills. In fact, very low performance on this measure can indicate the presence of a learning disability in reading. However, there are no interventions available to directly improve children’s performance on this construct. Rather, what is currently indicated by low performance on this measure is the need for careful attention to the acquisition of fluency at all stages of learning to read. If fluency on phonemic awareness tasks, letter knowledge tasks, phonemic decoding tasks, and text reading is regularly monitored during reading instruction, then teachers will be alerted in a timely fashion to students who require more support for the development of reading fluency.

   - The current research base indicates that diagnostic assessments in reading should focus on measuring language/reading skills that can be directly taught, and that make a difference to reading outcomes. These constructs have been identified as phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary (word knowledge), and comprehension strategies. Currently, we have available reliable and valid measures of four of these constructs (phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, and vocabulary) but not the fifth. We can, of course, reliably measure reading comprehension itself, but there are currently available no standardized procedures for determining the extent to which a child actively and efficiently uses appropriate reading strategies to increase comprehension. Other things that likely make a difference to individual differences in reading growth are motivation and attitudes about reading, parental support, extent and richness of the child’s knowledge base, language ability, and general intelligence. Some of these constructs, such as motivation and parental support, are not usually assessed with “diagnostic tests” and others, such as the child’s general knowledge base or intelligence, are not a specific part of reading instruction. Although teachers are encouraged to activate the parts of a child’s knowledge base that might be helpful to understanding a given reading selection, this is a strategy used to help a child use what is already known about a specific topic, not to provide all the background knowledge required to understand the nuances of the selection.

2. **Summary points and examples to guide the use of diagnostic assessments in Reading First schools**

   - The four most important points from the foregoing discussion of diagnostic measures in reading first schools are:
Recommendations for the Use of Diagnostic Tests in Reading First Schools — continued

1. Diagnostic measures should be used only in cases where there is a high probability they will provide new information to help plan more effective instruction.

2. In cases where a full Reading First assessment plan is being reliably implemented, the information typically provided by diagnostic assessments may already be available from screening, progress monitoring, or outcome assessments.

3. Not all information provided by “diagnostic tests” in the reading area is actually useful for planning instruction.

4. Diagnostic assessments should focus on areas of reading and language knowledge/skill that can be directly taught, and that will have an impact on reading growth if they are taught more effectively.

Examples to guide use of diagnostic measures in Reading First schools

Kindergarten

Example 1 – Johnny B. has received small-group instruction for 30 minutes three times a week to build phonemic awareness and letter/sound knowledge because the screening test in September indicated that he was particularly low in this area. On the December general progress monitoring assessment, he still performed in the “high risk” categories on these measures. Should a formal diagnostic test be given?

Answer: Probably not. If the concern is that Johnny has not made adequate progress in acquiring phonemic awareness and letter/sound knowledge, a diagnostic test is not likely to provide information beyond what is already known. A diagnostic test will show that Johnny is low in phonemic awareness and letter knowledge, which is already known from the progress assessments. Although a diagnostic test might break phonemic awareness down into different kinds of tasks (i.e. segmenting, blending, elision, rhyming), these tests are highly correlated with one another, and the teacher should already know which kinds of tasks Johnny struggles with based on her instruction. The most effective course of action at this point will likely involve increasing the intensity of the instruction, or changing to a more explicit and systematic method of teaching.

Example 2 – Sara R. is making good progress in February in acquiring phonemic awareness and phonics skills, but she seems less able to respond appropriately during class discussions that emphasize the meaning of selections that the teacher reads to the students. Should a formal diagnostic test be given?

Answer: Perhaps. Sara’s difficulty comprehending passages read by the teacher may signal a seriously underdeveloped vocabulary, or other lack of facility with language comprehension. A diagnostic test that assessed vocabulary or listening comprehension would provide information not already available from screening or progress monitoring tests (unless these skills were, in fact, assessed as part of the progress monitoring assessment). Low performance on a measure of oral language vocabulary might indicate the need for very focused and systematic instruction in this area.

First Grade

Example 1 – In the February progress monitoring test, Shakira performed in the “high risk” category for oral reading fluency, even though she had been a member of the smallest instructional group in her first grade class since the beginning of the year. She also performed in the “high risk” group on the assessment of phonemic awareness and phonemic decoding fluency that were part of the progress monitoring assessment. Should a diagnostic test be given?

Answer: Probably not. In Shakira’s case, her teacher already knows she remains weak in phonemic awareness and phonics, which are both prerequisite skills to the growth of oral reading fluency. A diagnostic test might be used to confirm these weaknesses, but it is unlikely to provide additional information beyond that available from the progress monitoring assessment. Her teacher might also wonder about Shakira’s general word knowledge as it affects her ability to understand the meaning of what she reads. If Shakira was in a Reading First school the previous year, there should be information available from the outcome assessment about her oral language vocabulary. If the teacher questioned that assessment, or desired more current information about vocabulary growth, then the vocabulary subtest from a diagnostic measure might be given. Shakira’s most urgent need at this point, however, is to master the alphabetic principle so that her reading becomes more accurate and she is more capable of reading independently.

Example 2 – Alex’s teacher feels that he has made tremendous progress since the beginning of the year in becoming a more fluent and accurate reader. He has been receiving 1:3 instruction in a special group that
has received instruction focused on building reading accuracy and fluency. However, when the February progress assessment was done, Alex's score in the reading fluency category was still in the “high risk” category. His scores on the measures of phonemic awareness and phonics are in the “low risk” category. Should a diagnostic assessment be done?

Answer: Probably not. A diagnostic assessment at this level will likely give scores in phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and reading comprehension. The teacher already knows that Alex is doing well in both phonemic awareness and phonics, but remains deficient in text reading fluency. Administration of a measure of Rapid Automatic Naming might indicate if Alex has a specific disability that might predict continued difficulty in the reading fluency area, but it would not help the teacher plan more effective instruction. At this point in Alex’s growth, the best predictor of future reading fluency growth is the current assessment of fluency in the progress monitoring measures. Alex should be provided ample opportunities to build fluency in reading through repeated reading practice that focuses on building a “sight word” vocabulary of frequent and high utility words.

**Second Grade**

*Example 1* – Tanisha’s second grade teacher notes that Tanisha performed substantially below grade level on the reading comprehension and vocabulary measures at the end of first grade. The first progress assessment in second grade (which can also be considered a screening assessment) indicates that Tanisha is currently performing in the “high risk” category in phonemic decoding fluency and oral reading fluency. Should a diagnostic test be given?

Answer: Probably not. A diagnostic reading test is unlikely to provide more information than is already available about Tanisha’s reading skills. The teacher knows that Tanisha is still struggling with basic word level reading skills, and that she is also lagging behind in the growth of her vocabulary. All these factors are the most probable explanation for her poor performance on the reading comprehension measure at the end of first grade. The information currently available indicates that Tanisha should receive immediate and intensive intervention that works to build her accuracy and fluency in reading text, as well as her vocabulary and effective use of reading comprehension strategies.

*Example 2* – In the progress monitoring assessment in December, Tony R. continues to perform in the “high risk” category on the oral reading fluency measure. He also performs at the “high risk” category on the measure of phonemic decoding skills. Tony R. moved into the Reading First school this fall, so detailed data about his reading progress in kindergarten and first grade is not available. Should a diagnostic test be given?

Answer: Perhaps. Since Tony is new to the school, and he is clearly struggling in reading, it might be useful to administer a diagnostic measure of phonemic awareness, as well as a measure of oral language vocabulary. If Tony performs poorly on the measure of phonemic awareness, this will alert the teacher to the full extent of Tony’s problems acquiring alphabetic reading skills, and that more “in depth” instruction in phonemic awareness and phonics may be needed than is typically provided in her second grade classroom. If Tony performs adequately on the measure of vocabulary, this will alert the teacher to focus on increasing Tony’s reading accuracy and fluency as the highest instructional priority for him.

**Third Grade**

*Example 1* – In October, Elvira’s teacher notices that she is continuing to struggle with understanding the main ideas from passages that she is asked to read in class. Compared to most of the other children in the class, Elvira is not able to adequately comprehend the meaning of the third grade passages they are reading together in class. Should a diagnostic test be given?

Answer: Probably not for purposes of guiding instruction. Elvira has been a student in this Reading First school since kindergarten, so the teacher has available a relatively complete record of her growth in the knowledge and skills necessary for reading comprehension. The second grade outcome measures indicate that Elvira is very weak in general vocabulary, and the beginning of the year progress test (or screening test) showed that she is still performing in the “high risk” category in reading fluency. The last progress assessment in second grade also showed that she continued to struggle with phonemic decoding fluency. From the information the teacher has currently available, it is apparent that Shakira needs small group instruction that provides systematic and explicit support for the growth of basic word reading skills, as well as vocabulary and comprehension strategies. The teacher might want to give a placement test if she is using...
Recommendations for the Use of Diagnostic Tests in Reading First Schools — continued

A remedial program that has a test for this purpose, or she might want to administer an informal reading inventory to determine the specific extent of Elvira’s letter/sound knowledge, sight word knowledge, and text reading skills in order to develop a more detailed picture of her instructional needs in these areas. If the teacher and school believe that Elvira cannot receive the instructional support she needs within a regular classroom setting, then a diagnostic test may be required to establish Elvira’s eligibility for extra support from a Special Education teacher.

Example 2 – Jackie’s initial screening (progress monitoring) assessment in September indicated that she was performing in the “moderate risk” category in oral reading fluency. She is new to the school district, having moved in from another state. Her records indicate that she was mildly below grade level on the reading comprehension test she took at the second grade in her previous school. Should a diagnostic test be given?

Answer: Probably not. Although not very much is currently known about Jackie’s reading skills other than the fact that she is moderately below grade level in reading fluency and reading comprehension, Jackie’s teacher will learn a lot more about her reading capabilities during the small group instructional period in the 90 minute reading block. Based on her “moderate risk” reading fluency score, Jackie should probably be assigned to one of the smaller instructional groups in her classroom, one in which the teacher will have ample opportunities to observe her reading and discussing written material. From these observations, the teacher should be able to determine Jackie’s instructional needs more accurately than through the administration of a formal diagnostic assessment.

Outcome Measures

The federal Reading First program requires that end-of-year outcomes be measured in each of the five critical areas of reading growth that are appropriate at each grade level (phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension). Florida’s Reading First assessment plan requires all Reading First schools to give a common set of outcome measures each year from kindergarten through third grade. The measures used are as follows:

**Kindergarten**
- Phonemic Awareness — Phoneme Segmentation Fluency
- Phonics — Letter Naming Fluency, Nonsense Word Fluency
- Vocabulary — Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test, 3rd Edition (PPVT-III)

**First Grade**
- Phonemic Awareness — Phoneme Segmentation Fluency
- Phonics — Nonsense Word Fluency
- Fluency — Oral Reading Fluency
- Vocabulary — PPVT-III
- Comprehension — Stanford Achievement Test, 10th Edition (SAT-10)

**Second Grade**
- Phonics — Nonsense Word Fluency
- Fluency — Oral Reading Fluency
- Vocabulary — Gates MacGinitie Reading Test (GMRT) and PPVT-III
- Comprehension — SAT-10
Third Grade

Fluency — Oral Reading Fluency
Vocabulary — GMRT and PPVT-III
Comprehension — FCAT - Norm Referenced Test (FCAT-NRT — SAT-10 equivalent)

FCRR provides a training CD and technical assistance guide to all Reading First schools on the administration of these outcome measures. This guide is available on the web at http://www.fcrr.org/assessment/pdf/outcome/outcomemeasuresguide.pdf. Reading coaches often play a key role in the training and implementation of these outcome measures.

Time Needed to Administer: The oral vocabulary measure (PPVT-III) will be individually administered, requiring 15-20 minutes to test each student. Reading First schools are encouraged to use their school-based assessment teams to administer and score this test.

The reading comprehension (SAT-10 and FCAT-NRT) and reading vocabulary (GMRT) measures will be group administered in the classroom by the classroom teacher, a procedure requiring approximately 30 minutes for each measure. Scoring of the reading comprehension and reading vocabulary measures will be the responsibility of the test publisher.

The most unusual aspect of the Florida assessment plan is the requirement that oral language vocabulary be measured among all students at the end of each year through third grade. In second and third grade, there will be a measure of both oral language and reading vocabulary. Since vocabulary development is such an important issue for the majority of children in Reading First schools and since vocabulary growth is so important to the development of reading comprehension, it will be very useful to schools and districts to have a measure of vocabulary development that is not confounded with word reading ability. This will allow school principals and teachers to determine whether their methods of support for vocabulary are sufficient to accelerate vocabulary growth in the children they serve.

Another aspect of this assessment schedule that requires explanation is the administration of the reading comprehension test. Since the third grade FCAT Norm Referenced Test administered in late February and early March includes a measure of reading comprehension, Reading First schools will not need to give an additional measure of reading comprehension at the end of third grade. However, first and second grade students will be administered the SAT-10 and FCAT-NRT reading comprehension subtest in early spring of the school year. The SAT-10 reading comprehension subtest allows an examination of growth in reading comprehension using a common format in first through third grade.
Training and Technical Assistance

FCRR is responsible for providing technical assistance to schools in the development and implementation of their Reading First assessment plans as well as assisting other schools in the development and implementation of effective reading assessment programs. The Assessment Program staff at FCRR provides several kinds of assistance to districts and schools as they design and implement their plans.

- First, staff is available to provide consultation about assessment procedures appropriate for inclusion in assessment plans and that may be needed for specific reading problems.
- Second, FCRR provides training to districts and schools in the administration of progress monitoring and outcome assessments.
- FCRR also provides all the necessary materials (testing forms, stopwatches, administration and scoring directions, calculators, etc.) to Reading First schools to implement the DIBELS® progress monitoring assessments during the four assessment periods.
- FCRR assists non-Reading First schools and districts by providing directions for downloading DIBELS® student probes and examiner scoring sheets for the four assessment intervals from the University of Oregon’s website. FCRR also posts an order form for DIBELS® from Sopris West Educational Services should districts wish to take advantage of this service.
- Schools implementing mClass® DIBELS® are provided technical assistance for use of a hand held device (PDA) for administering and scoring DIBELS®. Student probes for grades 1-3 are available from FCRR with FLDOE providing the kindergarten probes as part of SRUSS.
- ORF passages to use with 4th and 5th grade students during the four progress monitoring intervals are available from Sopris West Educational Services.
- Finally, technical assistance is available by phone at (850) 644-9352, via e-mail at assessments@fcrr.org, or through on-site consultation.

Progress Monitoring Training

FCRR has state-level Master Trainers who provide two stages of training in DIBELS® and in FORF, the common progress monitoring measures. Stage One training is designed to train individuals in the administration and scoring of DIBELS®. The training is nine hours in duration, with six hours of training on the first day followed by three hours of training on the second day to allow trainees to practice the measures with students. An outline of objectives, activities, in-service education points possible, and reading endorsement alignment for these training days is included in Appendix B and on pages 21 and 22 of this guide.

An outline to help schools prepare for the three-hour practice with students on the morning of day two is provided in Appendix C.

The initial Stage One training in DIBELS® is usually provided to a team of district-level staff knowledgeable in the areas of reading and/or assessment and the reading coach at each school. These individuals are selected to participate in the initial first-stage training because, following a period of intense experience with testing at least 20 students at each of the four grade levels K-3, they return for Stage Two training. This intense experience with DIBELS® may be gained in one of two ways:
1. Conducting the first progress monitoring assessment at one or two schools, or
2. Administering practice measures to one class at each of grade levels kindergarten through third grade.

**Stage Two** training, often referred to as Facilitator Training, is a one-half day experience during which participants become familiar with using a scripted guide and the accompanying training CD to successfully conduct Stage One training in the district. To become a DIBELS® training Facilitator, a person must attend both Stage One and Stage Two trainings.

Suggested candidates to become Facilitators of DIBELS® training are individuals with the following characteristics:

1. Open to learning new skills and comfortable teaching new skills to adult learners
2. Able to make the time commitment to prepare for and to train identified school and district staff
3. Possess a positive attitude and able to establish rapport in a learning environment
4. Supportive of and able to be faithful to the content of the DIBELS® training as well as the training process
5. Appreciative of the importance and relevance of data for making educational decisions for students, classrooms, and systems
6. Knowledgeable and proficient in the administration, scoring, and interpretation of the DIBELS® measures from attendance at training and practice with materials
7. Experienced in obtaining DIBELS® data on at least 20 students from each elementary grade level, K-3
8. Familiar with the following publications: *Put Reading First* and *Prevention of Reading Difficulties*.

The most likely staff to consider for these initial Stage One and Stage Two trainings would be reading program supervisors/coordinators/specialists, school reading coaches, school psychologists, speech and language pathologists, district assessment coordinators, and staff development specialists.

**School-Based Assessment Teams**

Each *Reading First* school will identify approximately five to ten individuals to form a school-based assessment team. School-based assessment teams are trained by the district Facilitators.

Facilitators should not attempt to train more than 30 individuals at one time. Experience has shown that exceeding this number will have a negative impact on the learning of the participants and may compromise their ability to assess students accurately. Another recommendation is that Facilitators initially train in pairs to ensure a smooth and less challenging training program since training requires the use of multiple audiovisual tools that need to be synchronized during the training session.

Likely candidates for a school-based assessment team would be the reading coach, school psychologist, speech and language pathologist, guidance counselor, media specialist, retired or substitute teachers, and assistant principal. It is very beneficial for school principals to attend DIBELS® training or to receive an overview of DIBELS®. By doing so, they will learn how the information from the web-based data management system can assist them in making administrative decisions about the school’s reading program and the overall reading needs of the students. Schools are often challenged to identify sufficient individuals to serve on the school’s assessment team. A briefing paper entitled *Increasing Resources for Reading First Assessment Teams* was developed at FCRR to provide guidance in this area. This briefing paper is located in Appendix D.
Teacher and Staff Training

Teachers should be provided with an overview of DIBELS® and how these measures can assist them in their classroom. FCRR has prepared a Power Point presentation about DIBELS® and the other assessment requirements of Reading First. This presentation is posted on the FCRR website at http://www.fcrr.org/assessment/ppt/faculty_presentation_052004.ppt. Teachers may also request training in selected DIBELS® measures if they wish to conduct more frequent progress monitoring on selected students. These students would be selected for frequent assessment with DIBELS® if the teacher wanted to monitor their progress in reading skills more closely because they were receiving intensive interventions for reading. The reading coach, if he/she has attended the Facilitator training, is an excellent resource for this teacher training. Even though one or more teachers in a Reading First school are trained in all or some of the DIBELS® measures, their classroom instructional time should be protected, and they should not be given the responsibility for the DIBELS® assessments assigned to the school-based assessment team.

Outcome Measures Training

FCRR has developed district-level training materials on the selected outcome measures PPVT-III, SAT-10, and GMRT. This training should take place in the early spring of the first year of the school’s Reading First grant and is conducted through a prepared CD and training script provided by FCRR. Attendees should be district level assessment team members who will be able to train coaches and school-based teams in the administration and scoring of the oral vocabulary test and to train teachers in the group-administered outcome measures in reading vocabulary and reading comprehension.

Comments

Participants in DIBELS®, diagnostic, and outcome measures training have responsibilities for implementing these assessment procedures with fidelity; that is, they must always follow the standardized administration and scoring procedures. Because DIBELS® and other standardized measures have specific administration and scoring procedures, any deviation from those procedures could have an unknown impact on a student’s performance.

Additional training to develop a broader base of master trainers has been offered to selected districts by FCRR. Districts interested in having staff become Master Trainers and Facilitators should contact FCRR via e-mail at assessments@fcrr.org.

This Reading First training design was developed to ensure that school districts could build capacity for training teams at current and future Reading First schools as well as at schools wishing to follow the Reading First assessment plan. Districts benefit in many ways from this infrastructure-building process, needing only technical assistance and training materials from FCRR as they deliver training to interested staff. Training in FORF (grades six through eight) is available from FCRR through regional training meetings. FORF Facilitator training is a three hour session designed to assist districts in implementing progress monitoring in middle schools.

FCRR maintains a database of all individuals who have participated in DIBELS® training, both Stage One and Stage Two, as well as FORF Facilitator training. Districts wanting confirmation of the training experience of staff at the district and school level can contact FCRR via e-mail at assessments@fcrr.org for this information.
To implement the DIBELS® and other required reading assessments successfully, the district and school staff must be prepared to implement the activities specifically as designed. Reading First funds can be used to pay the salaries of additional assessment personnel required to accomplish the assessments. Similarly, school-level assessment teams can be composed of individuals already on staff, or schools can hire additional part-time personnel to accomplish the assessments. Reading coaches at each Reading First school may help coordinate the overall assessment plan for the school as well as being a part of the assessment team.

The progress monitoring measures will be administered at 45-day intervals with the first assessment occurring between the 20th and 29th instructional day. Between school days 155 and 165, the fourth progress monitoring test will be given as well as the PPVT-III. The individually administered measures will be scored and entered by identified school staff into the Progress Monitoring and Reporting Network (PMRN), the web-based data management system. Classroom teachers will administer SAT-10 in grades one and two and GMRT in grades two and three. The group-administered, machine-scored tests will be sent to the test publishers for scoring. Test publishers will report scores from the machine-scored tests back to the school and directly to FCRR for entry into the PMRN.

Table 3 shows the time frame for all the activities that will occur in the implementation of the Reading First assessment plan in Florida.
The Assessment Process

An outline of activities for establishing a smooth assessment process follows:

**Assessment Materials: District Office Responsibilities**

1. Let schools know when the assessment materials will be delivered to the schools and, if appropriate, when the materials will need to be returned to the district office.
2. Determine whether school assessment team members are fully prepared to undertake the assessment. Assign district staff to school to assist with assessment as necessary.

**Preparing Examiner Scoring Sheets for Classrooms**

**District Office**

1. One to two weeks prior to data collection, send DIBELS® scoring forms and student probes to every Reading First school. Keep any extra scoring forms and student probes at district office for distribution as needed. Non-Reading First schools will purchase scoring forms and student probes through an online ordering system provided by FCRR.
2. Send materials for outcome measures to Reading First schools at a predetermined date (FCRR recommends that it be within two weeks of the first day that the outcome measures will be administered).

**School**

1. Divide scoring forms into sufficient numbers for each classroom.
2. Notify the district office if extra copies are needed.
3. Download class lists from the PMRN, have teachers confirm accuracy, revise class lists as necessary, and print corresponding student labels to place on top of each scoring form. Keep materials in a secure location until the day of assessment.

**Preparing for Data Collection Days: School Responsibilities**

1. Confirm that all individuals responsible for assessment have been trained and have the prerequisite skills to assess the students.
2. Designate a convenient location for team to work during the day (workroom).
3. Prepare maps of school with classrooms noted for each assessment team member.
4. Determine assessment schedule for each classroom based on teacher’s schedule, size of assessment team, grade level (typically, younger children should be assessed earlier in the day).
5. Explain the procedures for assessment to the classroom teachers so they are comfortable with the process when students are selected for assessment.
6. Post assessment schedule at least one week in advance for teachers to review.
7. Establish locations to conduct assessment for each classroom being certain that students waiting to be assessed are out of hearing range of students being assessed.

Suggestions include:

a. Setting up the media center (or other large area) where classes come with teacher while the team evaluates the individual children

b. Setting up a desk and two chairs in the classroom in a quiet location for each examiner to assess students who come one at a time when called by the team member
c. Setting up a desk and two chairs in a location close to the classroom, have two students come to site with one student being evaluated while other student waits his or her turn. Once the first student has been assessed, that student serves as a runner to get another student from the classroom. The third student will then wait while the second child is being assessed. Continue until all students are evaluated.

**Data Collection Day**

1. Set up sign-in procedures for team members who are not regular members of the school’s staff at the front office with directions to the designated DIBELS® workroom.

2. Once team members have arrived:
   a. Determine lunchroom needs and let lunchroom staff know of additional guests.
   b. Provide overview of DIBELS® administration and scoring procedures.
   c. Review audio CD with selected PSF and NWF measures.

3. Provide maps and the testing schedule to each team member.

4. Have extra pens, pencils, and reinforcement stickers handy. Determine that each team member has stopwatch, calculator, clipboard, student probes, test manuals, and any other materials necessary to conduct the assessment. Team members can put student labels on forms as they are working with a classroom. If more convenient, these can be affixed prior to data collection day with forms kept in alphabetical order. Labels are placed on the first page of the scoring form.

5. Team members should score and initial all forms they complete. Once a team member has completed the testing assignment, he/she should return the completed forms to the workroom. If forms for a given classroom are divided up among several team members, be sure that all classroom specific forms are combined in the workroom with the class list; include labels not used (with notation on label providing reason that label was not used).

6. Once all students have been assessed in a classroom, randomly select twenty percent of the completed examiner scoring forms from the classroom; assign to another team member to verify scores. The verifying team member initials the scoring form below the examiner’s initials. If any errors are found, have all scoring forms reviewed for accuracy.

7. Students who were absent on the day of assessment should be assessed within the next five school days but no later than the date when the PMRN system will be closed for data entry.

8. Provide scoring forms to the individual assigned to perform data entry into the PMRN immediately after all assessments have been completed. After data entry is completed, store scoring forms in a secure location along with any unused forms and all student probes. Forms should be available for teacher review when requested.

9. Conduct a debriefing meeting to review any issues or concerns that came up during data collection.

10. Conduct reliability assessment as directed by FCRR. See a later section of this Guide for procedures to complete reliability assessment.
### Table 3: Reading First Assessment Time Frame

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time Frame</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>During the spring/summer after districts/schools receive their Reading First Grants</td>
<td>FCRR trains the district level assessment teams in the progress monitoring tests for grades K - 3. All materials required for the tests will be provided by FCRR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-29 school days into the school year</td>
<td>Initial progress monitoring tests (DIBELS®) are administered by the district level team or the school based teams (if they have been trained)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As testing is completed in each class/school</td>
<td>Data from DIBELS® are entered into the PMRN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After assessment data are entered</td>
<td>Reports for individual children and classes will be available immediately to coaches, teachers, principals, and district staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October</td>
<td>As needed, FCRR trains members of the district level teams to become Facilitators in DIBELS®</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>District Facilitators train school level assessment teams for progress monitoring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65-74 school days into the school year</td>
<td>School based assessment teams administer second DIBELS® with assistance from the district level teams where necessary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As testing is completed in each class/school</td>
<td>Data from DIBELS® are entered into the PMRN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After assessment data are entered</td>
<td>Reports for individual children and classes will be available immediately to coaches, teachers, principals, and district staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January</td>
<td>Districts order the required assessment materials for the end-of-year outcome assessments in oral and reading vocabulary and reading comprehension</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January/February/March</td>
<td>FCRR provides district training materials to staff in administration procedures for the end of year outcome assessments. Third grade students are administered the third grade FCAT-NRT as the Reading First measure of reading comprehension</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td>District Facilitators train school level teams and classroom teachers on the outcome assessments PPVT-III, SAT-10, and GMRT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>110-119 school days into the school year</td>
<td>School based assessment teams administer third DIBELS® in their schools with assistance from the district level teams where necessary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As testing is completed in each class/school</td>
<td>Data from DIBELS® are entered into the PMRN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After assessment data are entered</td>
<td>Reports for individual children and classes will be available immediately to coaches, teachers, principals, and district staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initial FCAT date plus 40 instructional days</td>
<td>Districts schedule a ten day window to administer reading comprehension outcome measure (SAT-10) to first and second grades and submit completed test forms to district</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>150-154 school days into the school year</td>
<td>Teachers administer reading vocabulary outcome measure (GMRT) and school submits completed test forms to district</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>155-169 school days into the school year</td>
<td>School level teams administer fourth and final DIBELS® and the oral vocabulary outcome assessment (PPVT-III)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As testing is completed in each class/school</td>
<td>Data from DIBELS® and PPVT-III are entered into the PMRN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After assessment data are entered and the scores on outcome tests are received by the test publisher</td>
<td>Reports for individual children and classes will be available immediately to coaches, teachers, principals, and district staff</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Assessment of Students With Disabilities and/or Limited English Proficiency**

The intent of *Reading First* and the more comprehensive federal legislation of *No Child Left Behind*, is that no child should be excluded from expectations for success. This includes students with disabilities as well as students with limited English proficiency. Braille versions of DIBELS® and FORF are available from the Florida Institutional Materials Center for the Visually Impaired through the teacher of the visually impaired.

The DIBELS® directions for administration have been translated into Spanish, Haitian Creole, Albanian, Bosnian, Farsi, French, German, Portuguese, and Vietnamese. Copies of these translated directions are available on the FCRR website at [http://www.fcrr.org/assessments](http://www.fcrr.org/assessments) under the “Screening and Progress Monitoring (DIBELS®)” section as well as from the school district contact for the *Reading First* program. Individuals who are proficient in the student’s preferred language should be trained in the administration and scoring of the DIBELS® measures. If this is not feasible, they should work with a trained person to ensure that the administration in the student’s preferred language follows the standardized procedures.

**Approved Accommodations**

The developers of DIBELS®, Dr. Roland Good and Dr. Ruth Kaminski, have prepared a list of approved accommodations (Good & Kaminski, 2002) to facilitate assessment for children when the standard administration procedures may result in inaccurate estimates of the student’s early literacy skills. These approved accommodations should not substantially change the interpretation of the scores but provide a more accurate reflection of skills targeted by the specific measure. Other accommodations in test administration and scoring that are not included in the “Approved Accommodations” listing should not be considered for any data that are being entered into the PMRN. Changes in timing of assessments or untimed administrations are not acceptable modifications since DIBELS® is a fluency measure that is based on strict timing procedures. Automaticity, or fluency of response, is an integral part of the DIBELS® measurement system; changes in timing procedures would violate the integrity of that system.

The “Approved Accommodation” chart is included in Appendix E.
Reliability Procedures Addressing Administration and Scoring

FCRR continually reviews the reliability of DIBELS® administration and scoring procedures beginning with the second assessment period in the first year of each school’s Reading First grant. In years following the first year, reliability of measurement will be assessed at other selected assessment periods. The purpose of this reliability process is to ensure accuracy in the administration and scoring of the DIBELS® measures. The reliability procedures will be a test-retest process occurring within one month of the end of one or more of the four assessment periods for the district. Students from one grade level will be selected from the PMRN database according to a random selection procedure. Each school will be provided with names for a minimum of five students (maximum of 50 students) per selected grade level. Schools will be provided with an equivalent form of DIBELS® by FCRR. Schools will assign an examiner to retest the student; this examiner will be different from the one who performed the original assessment as noted on the initial testing score form. Reliability reassessments must be completed within a five-day window, and the data from the reliability measures will be entered into the PMRN according to procedures outlined by FCRR. A report will then be available to the school district indicating the level of reliability for each test at each grade level in the district. FCRR will provide technical assistance to all districts having reliability coefficients outside the acceptable range.
The Progress Monitoring and Reporting Network (PMRN)

The web-based data management system developed by FCRR is called the Progress Monitoring and Reporting Network (PMRN). The PMRN is a tool to assist educators in using test data for analyzing, planning, and communicating what happens educationally in Florida's classrooms. All kindergarten through third grade students in all Reading First schools are required to participate in the established assessment program and have scores entered into the PMRN. All other elementary schools are encouraged to participate in the Reading First assessments and to utilize this valuable resource. The PMRN is also available to all or selected students in grades four and five with DIBELS® Oral Reading Fluency and grades six through eight with Florida Oral Reading Fluency. The purpose of the PMRN is to efficiently and accurately accomplish three tasks:

1. Allow the data from required tests to be entered quickly and easily,
2. Store the data in a safe and secure location, and
3. Provide timely and helpful reports to educators.

Individual student scores will generate summary reports that identify the gains a student is making in each of the areas tested. Using research-based decision rules (see briefing paper, Determining Instructional Levels Using DIBELS® Data: Common Patterns of Scores and Decisions in Appendix F), the system will report on the overall instructional support needs of the student. The students' scores will be aggregated to generate reports at the classroom, school, district, region, and state levels. The reports will show the current status and the gains throughout the year, and it will anonymously compare groups of students to other groups of students with a similar demographic makeup. Easy to read charts and graphs show the reading performance from the student level to the state level over multiple years.

At the beginning of the school year, Reading First districts will submit student, teacher, and classroom assignment information to FCRR. From that information, class lists will be generated for downloading from the system. Designated school-based personnel can edit each class list. After the district/school-based assessment team completes each progress monitoring assessment, the designated data entry person enters the scores through the secure website. Teachers may conduct Ongoing Progress Monitoring tests in addition to the four required assessments. The teacher will be able to enter these additional scores into the system. The district/school-based reading team administers the oral vocabulary portion of the year-end outcome assessment. The school-level data entry person will enter these scores at the same time as he or she enters the scores from the fourth progress monitoring assessments. The classroom teacher administers the reading comprehension and reading vocabulary year-end outcome tests to the whole class at one time. These tests are machine scored by the test publishers and entered automatically into the database by FCRR.

The reports can be accessed through any computer that is connected to the Internet and uses a current browser. The principal must authorize a teacher's access to the system and submit the teacher's name, identification number and e-mail address. After logging on to the PMRN website https://pmrn.fcrr.org, teachers can view the reports for their students. Access to reports is limited to those individuals who have a legitimate educational interest as defined by student records laws. Navigation through the reports is as easy as the click of a mouse. Additional information on the PMRN is available at http://www.fcrr.org/pmrn.
Using Data to Inform Instruction

*Reading First* in Florida requires that information from assessments guide reading instruction. To accomplish this, information from screening, diagnostics, and progress monitoring measures should inform teachers and coaches about:

- the risk levels of students,
- specific weaknesses in reading skills that one or more students might exhibit,
- how students should be grouped,
- how intense instruction will need to be for certain students through smaller groupings or more time on skill-building activities,
- which skills should be emphasized for particular students,
- how much change is occurring in student skills over time with interventions, and
- their own professional development needs in the areas of reading instruction.

School principals and coaches will use information from reading assessments, including outcome measures, to identify:

- which teachers are in need of extra support and/or resources to meet the needs of the students,
- the rate of growth in reading skills across grade levels and across years,
- the overall effectiveness of reading programs and strategies that are implemented in a classroom, grade level, or school wide, and
- the organization and management of the school’s overall reading program including professional development of the instructional staff and assignment of mentoring services by the coach to individual teachers.

Specific training in using *Reading First* assessment results to guide instructional decisions will be a critical element in local and state professional development activities over the course of the *Reading First* grant.

A summary of effective resources for aligning instruction with assessment results is included in Appendix G.
Ongoing Progress Monitoring (OPM) with the DIBELS® measures is an excellent way for teachers to get continuous feedback on the effectiveness of interventions with struggling students. It is the process of conducting frequent, repeated assessments with alternate forms of selected DIBELS® measures to monitor growth on a weekly, biweekly, or monthly basis. For example, if a second grade student was performing poorly on both oral reading fluency (ORF) and nonsense word fluency (NWF), the teacher might institute additional instruction in word attack skills. Then, on a weekly basis, the teacher could assess the student’s skills in NWF and enter the data into the PMRN. The teacher might continue to work on phonics skills development for about four weeks, assessing growth with an alternate form of NWF each week. At the end of the month, or earlier if the teacher chooses, he or she could also measure the student’s oral reading fluency and enter these results into the PMRN. The teacher would receive a report of the student’s progress and determine if phonics interventions should be continued, modified, or discontinued based on the student’s monthly progress. It is not uncommon for scores taken at frequent intervals to fluctuate because of factors within the child, conditions within the testing environment, or features of the particular measure shown. However, the excellent reliability of the DIBELS® measures should provide teachers with confidence in the student’s scores given these normal fluctuations.

Teachers who want to obtain frequent measures on one or more of the students should contact the reading coach to discuss training in the administration and scoring procedures for DIBELS® measures. It is possible for teachers to assess students in measures that have benchmarks for achievement at grades lower than a student’s current grade placement. For example, a third grade student might be low in oral reading fluency and the teacher is implementing phonics instruction to strengthen word attack skills. Weekly assessment by using NWF measures would be an appropriate method for monitoring growth as an outcome of the phonics instruction. The PMRN allows the input of data received from OPM, including measures that are off-grade level. Up to 32 scores for the school year can be recorded in the PMRN for any one measure, essentially allowing weekly OPM.

To assist in the process of conducting OPM, the guide Conducting Ongoing Progress Monitoring and Determining Instructional Level has been provided to all Reading First district contacts. This guide includes steps and decision rules as well as a set of the materials for OPM that can also be downloaded from the DIBELS® website, http://dibels.uoregon.edu. For more information on OPM and determining instructional level, contact FCRR at assessments@fcrr.org.

Training Recommendations for Ongoing Progress Monitoring

Should a school want to train all or some of the teachers in Ongoing Progress Monitoring measures, it would not have to train teachers in all of the five DIBELS® measures, at least initially. To begin the process of supporting teachers in more frequent assessment of struggling readers, FCRR recommends that the training be conducted early in the school year and that it include the introductory section of the DIBELS® training as well as the segment on sounds in the English language. In addition, the following schedule would provide teachers with the critical skills they would need to monitor students’ progress as interventions are being implemented:

Kindergarten:
- Train initially in Initial Sound Fluency (Letter Naming Fluency does not have OPM measures)
- Train midyear in Phoneme Segmentation Fluency and Nonsense Word Fluency
First Grade:
- Train in Phoneme Segmentation Fluency, Nonsense Word Fluency, and Oral Reading Fluency

Second and Third Grade:
- Train in Nonsense Word Fluency and Oral Reading Fluency

OPM materials are available at no cost through the University of Oregon website, http://dibels.uoregon.edu. Because of terminology differences between Florida and Oregon, be sure to download the progress monitoring (not the benchmark assessment) materials for the 6th edition of DIBELS®.

Options for Non-Reading First Schools

FCRR and the Just Read, Florida! office encourage all Florida elementary schools to use the DIBELS® measures and the PMRN to document student progress in important reading skills. Middle schools are also encouraged to use FORF and the PMRN with students on an AIP. Requests for training in DIBELS® and orders for DIBELS® assessment materials should be sent to assessments@fcrr.org. Additional information on Reading First assessment may also be obtained from the FCRR website at http://www.fcrr.org/assessment, by e-mail at assessments@fcrr.org, or by calling the Assessment Program Office at (850) 644-9352.

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Appendix A

Training Materials Information: “Catch Them Before They Fall”

To advance the use of Reading First DIBELS® in schools, FCRR has developed this listing of training materials that will be needed to implement training using the FCRR model. This materials list is intended for those schools that are not Reading First schools or that are not designated to receive these materials at no cost by the Department of Education. Facilitators using these materials must have completed the FCRR designed Facilitator’s training so that the integrity of the training can be maintained. Please contact the FCRR Assessment Programs via e-mail at assessments@fcrr.org for further information on possible vendors for these materials and/or a detailed list of ordering information.

(Order 1 per participant in training)

**Tote Bags with “Catch Them Before They Fall” logo**
Price: Approximately $3.00 per bag plus shipping and handling

**Stopwatches**
Price: $6.00 per stopwatch plus shipping and handling

**Training Manuals**
Price: Approximately $12.50 per notebook depending on number ordered plus shipping and handling

**Practice Materials File Folder**
Price: $3.75 per file folder plus shipping and handling

**DIBELS® Administration and Scoring Procedures CD**
Contact assessments@fcrr.org for duplication procedures

**Other Materials Needed**
For inclusion in tote bags in addition to items listed above:
- Clipboard
- Highlighter
- Power Point handout
- Calculator
- Red pen
- Post-It® notes

Adobe® Acrobat® PDF files materials are available from FCRR by contacting the Assessment Programs Office via e-mail at assessments@fcrr.org or calling (850) 644-9352.

**Additional Assessment Resources**

**mClass® DIBELS® Probes**
Schools who are implementing mClass® DIBELS® will only need the student probes as the scoring sheet is located on the Palm® device. Student probes for Kindergarten are provided by FLDOE as part of SRUSS. FCRR has developed files that include the student probes that will be needed for all four assessment intervals for Grades 1-3.
Determining Instructional Levels and Ongoing Progress Monitoring (OPM)

OPM refers to more frequent administration of DIBELS® measures. It is one way to determine if a student is responding adequately to intervention. FCRR has put together a guide that details how to conduct OPM and determine a student’s instructional level.

Florida Oral Reading Fluency (FORF) for Grades 6-8

Materials for conducting Progress Monitoring with middle school students are available at the Florida Achieves! website, http://www.florida-achieves.com. A user name and password must be requested before these materials can be accessed. Training in the administration and scoring of FORF is required prior to implementation.
A Professional Development Activity for Educators:  DIBELS®

Objectives

• Administer and score Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills™ (DIBELS®) measures
• Interpret DIBELS® data based on indicators for instructional interventions
• Work with targeted schools/students to develop a system for the administration, scoring, and reporting of student data four times a year or more frequently

Activities to Accomplish Objectives

• Review progress monitoring requirements of Reading First and the critical elements of reading instruction and reading assessment
• Observe modeling of administration and scoring of the five DIBELS® measures; role play measures with learning teams; practice with students; administer and score as part of Reading First or school assessment requirements
• Interpret scores based on benchmarks for each grade level and for each measure
• Demonstrate knowledge of the sounds of the English language by segmenting words and sounding out nonsense words
• Provide examples of instructional activities that may be guided by DIBELS® data

In-service Education Points/Hours:  up to 16 hours

• Attend training:  6 hours
• Practice with students:  3-4 hours
• Administer and score DIBELS® measures:  up to 6 hours

Certification Areas:

3.3 Interpret student’s formal and informal test results:  3 hours
3.4 Demonstrate knowledge of the characteristics, administration, and interpretation of both quantitative and qualitative instructional assessments:  9 hours
3.5 Analyze data to identify trends that indicate adequate progress:  2 hours
Appendix C

Practicing DIBELS® to Proficiency

School Site Experience: 1/2 day or 3 hours

1. Determine site (elementary school) where practice can be set up.
2. Have participants arrive at school at 8:00 or appropriate early morning time. Set up location for them to meet where they can practice with each other in pairs and with students. The media center is usually selected.
3. Preselect classrooms (one first grade classroom and one second grade classroom) for practice through principal/teacher. The first grade class will be needed for practice about one hour after trainees arrive. The second grade class should be available about two hours after trainees arrive. Facilitators should check on lunch schedule or special activities so that the practice time does not conflict. Adjust accordingly.
4. Facilitator reviews procedures for LNF and ISF with trainees using Day 2 training CD.
5. Participants practice with each other these two measures on kindergarten practice forms.
6. First grade students are brought to the location by classroom teacher (one classroom should be more than adequate).
7. Students are evaluated by one trainee with another trainee acting as an observer, then the roles are reversed. Students return to their classroom as a group or individually as deemed appropriate by teacher. Practice time usually takes no more than 30 minutes. Teachers are encouraged to stay and observe the practice session and ask any questions they might have of the Facilitator.
8. Next, trainees discuss the experience. Then the Facilitator reviews PSF, NWF and ORF requirements. Trainees practice with each other with first grade practice forms.
9. Second grade students arrive for practice with PSF, NWF, and ORF. Again, practice time usually takes no more than 30 minutes.
10. Students return to classroom.
11. Trainees discuss the experience. Other questions are answered.

NOTE: A CD entitled “Day 2 DIBELS®: Practice With Children” is available from FCRR to Facilitators for use during this training.
Appendix D

FCRR Briefing Paper

Increasing Resources for Reading First Assessment Teams

Reading First schools in Florida are required to administer screening, progress monitoring, diagnostic, and outcome assessments in order to provide useful information to help guide instruction in every classroom. These assessments also are essential to insure that no child who is struggling in learning to read will go unnoticed by his or her teacher and principal. One of the key elements in successfully executing the Reading First assessment plan is a highly skilled, school-based assessment team. Identifying, training, and assigning these team members to conduct screening and progress monitoring testing four times a year with all kindergarten through third grade students can be an arduous task. However, school principals are in a unique position to determine how this can be accomplished without sacrificing other critical activities that must be carried on at the school during these assessment periods.

One aspect of the Reading First grant that principals should work to protect is the role of the Reading Coach. This individual’s primary responsibility is to assist teachers in implementing high quality instruction through mentoring, staff development, and support services. In many cases, during the first year of implementation of the Reading First program, the Reading Coach has devoted considerable time to organizing the assessment team and then participating as an active member. This has resulted in a diversion of their teacher-support role to that of an assessment specialist for a considerable amount of time during the year. This FCRR Briefing Paper is written to provide principals with suggestions for developing assessment teams in a way that will allow coaches to spend less time on assessment and more time providing professional development to teachers.

In order to assist principals in selecting appropriate persons to serve on the Reading First assessment team, the following considerations are offered:

1. Reading First funds can be used to hire personnel from outside the school to be trained to a high level of expertise in progress monitoring (DIBELS®), one of the outcome measures (PPVT-III), and to offer assessment services. Besides participating in training, these individuals would need to be well informed about the confidentiality of student records and meet whatever other personnel requirements are necessary to work in the school. Individuals who might be considered for training to assume part time employment as assessment team members include:
   ✓ Retired teachers or other educators (in general, retirees must have been retired at least one year before being reemployed)
   ✓ AmeriCorps members
   ✓ University or College of Education students and interns
   ✓ Active PTA members from the community
   ✓ Stay-at-home fathers and mothers
   ✓ Business partners
   ✓ Substitute teachers

2. Educators who are current employees of the school district also should be considered as possible members of the school assessment team. In some cases arrangements may need to be made with other administrators to release these individuals from current assignments for one or more days.
to serve on the assessment team. The following educators from outside the school or who provide itinerant services to the school may be considered for training and to provide assistance as members of the assessment team:

✓ Speech and Language Pathologists
✓ FDLRS staff
✓ Central or regional district office staff
✓ School Psychologists

3. Finally, non-instructional staff at the Reading First school should be considered for the assessment team but given relief from all but critical duties during the assessment windows. These staff include:

✓ Principals (some prefer to assess third graders to have better knowledge of the reading skills of students at this grade level)
✓ Assistant Principals
✓ Guidance Counselors
✓ Media Specialists
✓ ESE teachers
✓ ESOL teachers
✓ Paraprofessionals

The assessment windows for each school will be posted on the Progress Monitoring and Reporting Network (PMRN) website, and this information will be useful to principals in recruiting team members well before the Reading First assessments begin and in arranging for training from district DIBELS® Training Facilitators. If you want to know the names of your district’s DIBELS® Training Facilitators, contact the coordinator of the Reading First program in your district or e-mail the FCRR Assessment Program office at assessments@fccrr.org. Having individuals identify specific dates for these assignments may be beneficial in ensuring that commitments are honored and the school is able to handle the assessment requirements without undue burden to any one person.
DIBELS® Approved Accommodations

Good, R. H., & Kaminski, R. A.
Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills, 6th Edition
Institute for the Development of Educational Achievement
Eugene, Oregon
Available: http://dibels.uoregon.edu/

The purpose of accommodations is to facilitate assessment for children for whom a standard administration may not provide an accurate estimate of their skills in the core early literacy skill areas. Assessment and accommodations to assessment should be consistent with the primary goal of accurately estimating the child’s skills in phonemic awareness, phonics or alphabetic principle, accuracy and fluency with connected text, reading comprehension, and vocabulary development.

DIBELS® approved accommodations are accommodations that are unlikely to change substantially the meaning or interpretation of scores on the measures or the target skill being assessed by the measure. When DIBELS® approved accommodations are used, the regular DIBELS® interpretation guidelines apply, and the scores can be entered into the DIBELS® Data System for reporting and interpretation. The “Tested with DIBELS® Approved Accommodations” box should be checked in the student demographics section (note: Florida Reading First schools will not be using the DIBELS® data system. Scores will be entered into the FCRR Progress Monitoring and Reporting Network.).

When the DIBELS® assessments are administered in ways different from both a DIBELS® standard administration and the DIBELS® approved accommodations, the administration would be considered a nonstandard administration and the resulting scores cannot be interpreted with the DIBELS® interpretive and reporting procedures. Scores from a nonstandard administration using unapproved accommodations should not be entered into the DIBELS® Data System for reporting and analysis. For example, extended time or un-timed administration would not be a DIBELS® Approved Accommodation. For the DIBELS® measures, fluency is an integral aspect of the construct being assessed. Scores from an un-timed administration would not be comparable or interpretable with the procedures for reporting and interpreting DIBELS® scores.

An interventionist may elect to administer the DIBELS® in an un-timed way, but the scores should not be entered into the DIBELS® Data System, the reliability and validity data for DIBELS® would not be applicable, and the benchmark goals would not be relevant or appropriate.

Changes in Test Administration and Scoring that are Not Approved Accommodations

Timing. Changes in the timing of DIBELS® assessments or un-timed administrations are not approved accommodations. If the DIBELS® measures are administered under un-timed conditions or with extended time, the scores should not be entered into the DIBELS® Data System. In addition, the research establishing the reliability and validity of the measures would not apply to un-timed or extended time administrations. In addition, the scoring guidelines for interpreting level of risk and for making instructional recommendations would not apply.
The student may be tested in an alternate setting. For example, a special room with minimal distractions, complete quiet, or enhanced or specialized lighting.

Response to instruction is a second, powerful accommodation for students who experience a variety of difficulties. Repeated assessment on different days with different probes in the context of explicit instruction on the target skills. The target skills are phonemic awareness, phonics, and accuracy and fluency with text. The target skills should be explicitly taught; under no conditions should the specific items on a probe be explicitly taught. The median of the three most recent assessments should be used as the best indicator of the student’s skills.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Approved Accommodations for Setting and Tester</th>
<th>ISF</th>
<th>PSF</th>
<th>NWF</th>
<th>DORF</th>
<th>LNF</th>
<th>WUF</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The student may be tested in an alternate setting. For example, a special room with minimal distractions, complete quiet, or enhanced or specialized lighting.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The student may be tested with a familiar person, interpreter, specialist, or other facilitator present. The familiar person or interpreter may assist in supporting the student and the tester to obtain an accurate estimate of the student’s skills.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The student may be tested by a tester who is familiar with the student’s language and communicative strategies and with whom the student is comfortable. For example, the student’s teacher, or an aide especially familiar to the student, or even the student’s parent. In all cases, the tester must receive appropriate training, observation, and supervision.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The student may be tested by a professional with relevant specialized training. For example, a student with severe articulation difficulty might be tested by a Speech-Language Pathologist. In this case, appropriate training is essential.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Approved Accommodations for Directions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Accommodation</th>
<th>ISF</th>
<th>PSF</th>
<th>NWF</th>
<th>DORF</th>
<th>LNF</th>
<th>WUF</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The practice item may be repeated or one additional example may be provided.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If necessary, the child can be provided with a lead example in addition to the model example. “The sounds in ‘sam’ are /s/ /a/ /m/. Do it with me, /s/ /a/ /m/.&quot;</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The student’s understanding of directions can be checked. For example, the student can be asked to repeat or summarize the directions.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The directions can be provided in a manner more accessible to the student. For example, directions can be provided in sign language for a student who would be more comfortable with sign than verbal directions. A student with limited English proficiency may be provided with the directions in their primary language. For example, to assess a student’s early literacy skills in English, directions for the task may be provided in Spanish and stimulus items presented in English.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Approved Accommodations for Stimulus Materials

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Accommodation</th>
<th>ISF</th>
<th>PSF</th>
<th>NWF</th>
<th>DORF</th>
<th>LNF</th>
<th>WUF</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Large print or an enlarged edition of stimulus materials may be used.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Closed-circuit TV for enlargement of print and picture stimuli is appropriate if necessary to enhance performance for students with low vision.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colored overlays, filters, or lighting is appropriate if vision and performance is enhanced.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If a student has sufficient skills with Braille, a Braille edition of stimulus materials may be used. A Braille edition of materials is being developed. Scores for the Braille edition may not be directly comparable to the non-Braille edition.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An alternate typeface for stimulus materials may be used. For example, a frequently encountered typeface for most print and reading materials used in first and second grade is a ‘Times’ typeface. The target of any typeface is one that would be used in reading material in first grade.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stimulus materials may be printed in color for ease of identification and use.</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Approved Accommodations for Stimulus Materials (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>ISF</th>
<th>PSF</th>
<th>NWF</th>
<th>DORF</th>
<th>LNF</th>
<th>WUF</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alternate pictures of the target words may be used if pictures that are more familiar to the student are available. The target word should not be changed.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If the words in the Initial Sound Fluency are unfamiliar vocabulary for the student, the student can be asked to repeat the words associated with each picture. For example, “This is ‘mouse.’ What is this? This is ‘flowers.’ What is this? This is ‘pillow.’ What is this? This is ‘letters.’ What is this?”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If the words used in the Initial Sound Fluency are unfamiliar vocabulary for the student, the vocabulary can be taught prior to the administration of the measure. The words selected for the ISF measure are drawn from written materials appropriate for first and second grade students, so students can be expected to encounter the words in their reading.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amplification or a direct-sound system from tester to student is appropriate if it will facilitate the hearing of directions or test stimuli.</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Approved Accommodations for Student Responses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>ISF</th>
<th>PSF</th>
<th>NWF</th>
<th>DORF</th>
<th>LNF</th>
<th>WUF</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>If necessary to facilitate student response, the student or tester may have a marker or ruler under a line of text or items in order to focus attention. This accommodation should only be used if necessary to evoke a response. In a standard administration, if the student skips a row, the row is not counted or penalized, and instructionally relevant information on the student’s tracking skills is obtained.</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The student may respond using a preferred or their strongest mode of communication. For example, the student may sign, use a word board, or computer to use a word or read a passage. The tester should make a professional judgement regarding the fluency of response. If the student’s fluency is affected by the accommodation, then the standard scoring rules should not be applied.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix F

FCRR Briefing Paper
Determining Instructional Levels Using DIBELS® Data: Common Patterns of Scores and Decisions

The Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS®) are administered to Florida students in kindergarten through third grade in Reading First and other selected schools to determine risk levels for later difficulties in reading. In many cases, students are administered more than one DIBELS® measure, and the risk levels achieved on each measure are not always identical. This is not unusual, since students develop some early literacy skills with greater ease than others.

To assist in combining the results from different DIBELS® measures into a single statement of overall instructional need, Dr. Roland Good and colleagues at the University of Oregon have prepared Technical Report #11. This report, which is titled “Summary of Decision Rules for Intensive, Strategic, and Benchmark Instructional Recommendations in Kindergarten Through Third Grade,” may be viewed in its entirety on the following web page: http://dibels.uoregon.edu/techreports/decision_rule_summary.pdf.

Recommendations for overall level of instructional need were determined from the end-of-year or later performance of students whose scores were entered into the DIBELS® Data System at the University of Oregon. Within Technical Report #11 there are a number of tables that represent the different configurations of scores (risk levels) that resulted when students were administered the DIBELS® measures appropriate to their grade level and time of year. There are many possible combinations of scores since, in kindergarten and first grade, more than one measure is given at any one time. Students in the second and third grades whose scores were entered into the DIBELS® Data System were administered only the Oral Reading Fluency (ORF) measure. Therefore, instructional recommendations provided by Dr. Good for second and third grade students are based solely on the ORF scores and student performance on end-of-third grade ORF measures.

The purpose of this document is to reduce the complexity of the decision charts provided in Technical Report #11 into some general statements reflecting patterns that will appear more commonly with DIBELS® testing. The language used in this Briefing Paper will be consistent with language used in the Progress Monitoring and Reporting Network (PMRN) where risk levels and instructional recommendations are provided in colored, graphic form.

Kindergarten

Deciding about the instructional needs of kindergarten students becomes more complex as the number of tests administered increases during the school year. For the first two assessment periods, only two measures are administered, Letter Naming Fluency (LNF) and Initial Sound Fluency (ISF). Common patterns for students identified as needing intensive reading interventions are those who are at high risk in both measures or are at high risk in one measure and at moderate risk in the other. Those considered at grade level or who are expected to continue to profit from initial instruction, are those who are at low risk on both measures. The remaining students, those with mixed results on the two measures or where both measures fall in the moderate risk range, are deemed to be in need of strategic interventions where additional supports over and above initial instruction are indicated.

Kindergarten students are assessed at Interval 3 with four measures and with three measures at Interval 4. The Oregon system does not administer Nonsense Word Fluency (NWF) until the last assessment of kindergarten. Therefore, the instructional recommendations in the technical report for Interval 3 are based on risk levels obtained on LNF, ISF, and Phoneme Segmentation Fluency (PSF). The instructional recommendations for Interval 4 are based on the risk levels for LNF, PSF, and NWF. In general, at both the 3rd and 4th Intervals, the patterns for determining instructional levels are somewhat similar. Specifically, students who are at high risk on at least two
of the measures and at moderate risk on the third measure are considered to need intensive interventions. Those who are judged to be able to continue to profit from quality initial instruction are primarily those who are at low risk on at least two of the measures and at moderate risk on the third measure. Those falling within the strategic level tend to have somewhat mixed results on the three measures or to have at least two measures that are in the moderate risk range.

**Summary - Kindergarten**

The instructional level for kindergarten students during Intervals 1 and 2 is determined primarily by the consistency of the risk levels on the two measures. There is a tendency to place greater weight on the higher risk measure in recommending intensity of instruction. During Intervals 3 and 4, two measures at high risk usually result in a recommendation for intensive instruction and two measures at low risk typically result in a recommendation for grade level initial instruction. Students with mixed profiles are typically recommended for strategic instruction.

**First Grade**

First grade students in Florida are administered four DIBELS® measures at the first interval: LNF, PSF, NWF and ORF. The University of Oregon model does not administer ORF at the beginning of first grade. Therefore, this measure is not incorporated into the decisions for instructional need. Most students at the beginning of first grade who are at high risk in two or three measures are classified as needing intensive instruction. Those at low risk in all measures or at low risk in two measures and at moderate risk in the third measure are determined to be on grade level with continued high quality instruction. Those with varied combinations of scores on the three measures or with a predominance of moderate risk measures are characterized as needing strategic interventions. During Intervals 2 and 3 in first grade where PSF, NWF, and ORF are administered, the recommendations for instruction are identical. The greatest weight is placed on ORF and NWF scores. Students at high risk in one or both of these two measures are considered to need intensive supports. The only exception, and this is not a common profile, is students who are at high risk in ORF and low risk in NWF. In this case, students are judged to need strategic supports. Students at moderate risk in ORF and moderate or low risk in NWF also will benefit from strategic interventions as will students who are low risk on ORF but high risk on NWF. During the fourth Interval, the determining factor for the level of support needed is the student’s performance on ORF. If this is at high risk, the student needs intensive support. Similarly if this is at moderate risk, the student needs strategic support. Finally, if ORF is at low risk, the student can continue with the core reading program.

It is important to keep in mind as we discuss instructional levels that this is only a first level indicator of the need for extra instruction. It is intended to draw attention to the students most in need of either very intensive interventions or for less intensive additional support (strategic level of intervention). By looking at scores on the individual measures, teachers can begin to form a plan to focus on the critical skills that are most in need of intervention.

**Summary - Grade 1**

The instructional level for first grade students during Interval 1 is determined primarily by the consistency of the risk levels on three measures (ORF is not included) with a tendency to place greater weight on the higher risk level measure in recommending intensity of instruction. During Intervals 2 and 3, the ORF measure replaces the LNF and plays an important role along with the NWF in the instructional recommendations. By Interval 4, the level of support is entirely dependent on the student’s performance on ORF.
Second and Third Grades

The simplest interpretation occurs with the second and third grade students. Although Florida requires the administration of Nonsense Word Fluency (NWF) during second grade, the decision system created at the University of Oregon uses only the ORF measure. Therefore, the level of risk for ORF indicates an equivalent level of instructional intensity because ORF is the best predictor of later proficiency in reading fluency. Specifically, if students scores are in the high risk range on ORF, they are classified as needing intensive and substantial reading interventions; if they score in the moderate risk range, they are judged to need strategic or additional interventions; and if they score in the low risk range, they are classified as being at grade level for initial instruction.

Please note that the exclusion of the NWF measure from the decision rules for instructional level does not mean that this measure is not an important indicator of instructional need in second grade. It simply reflects the fact that the this measure has not previously been widely administered in second grade, so that it was not possible to incorporate it in the decision rules for second grade which are based on statistical probabilities.

**Summary - Grades 2 and 3**

The instructional level for students in grades 2 and 3 reflects their risk level obtained on the ORF alone.

Appendix G

Resources/Strategies for Reading

Phonemic Awareness


Phonics


Fluency

Strategies:
• Echo Reading
• Choral Reading
• Partner Reading
• Guided Repeated Oral Reading
• Timed Reading on Independent Level Text (for one minute)
  1. Read text
  2. Record number of words read correctly
  3. Set goal
4. Read same text again
5. Record number of words read correctly
6. Set goal
7. Read same text again
8. Record number of words read correctly

**Vocabulary**


Steck-Vaughn. *Elements of Reading: Vocabulary K-3*

**Strategies:**
- Specifically teach words and concepts
- Extend instruction to promote active engagement with vocabulary
- Provide multiple exposures to words
- Read aloud to students
- Encourage independent wide reading
- Promote word consciousness
- Teach word learning strategies

**Comprehension**


**Strategies:**
- Story grammar maps for narrative text
- Activate prior knowledge by
  - Asking questions
  - Brainstorming
  - Discussing
  - Providing Analogies
- Teaching pre-reading strategies to recall prior knowledge