The Purpose of Assessment is to Change Life Trajectories for Children

This presentation will address the role of assessment in a prevention/early-intervention oriented approach to children’s difficulties learning to read:

- The Outcomes Driven Model incorporates screening, progress monitoring, diagnostic, and outcome assessment in an integrated educational decision-making model.
- The Outcomes Driven Model builds on the established Problem Solving Model, but is a prevention/early-intervention oriented model designed to prevent academic problems.

Beginning Reading Core Areas

#1. Phonemic Awareness: The ability to hear and manipulate sound in words.
#2. Alphabetic Principle: The ability to associate sounds with letters and use these sounds to read words.
#3. Accuracy and Fluency with Connected Text: The effortless, automatic ability to read words in isolation (orthographic reading) and connected text.
#4. Vocabulary Development: The ability to understand (receptive) and use (expressive) words to acquire and convey meaning.
#5. Reading Comprehension: The complex cognitive process involving the intentional interaction between reader and text to extract meaning.
Alphabetic Principle Goal

Instructional Goal: To have a powerful strategy to encounter an unknown word and confidently obtain a reasonable pronunciation of the word.

NWF Indicator: 50 correct letter sounds with 15 words recoded by middle of first grade.

- Two reasons for students to have the alphabetic principle:
  1. Beginning readers encounter a lot of new words. A powerful strategy to attack them is valuable.
  2. The alphabetic principle establishes the pathways and mechanisms by which a skilled, mature, fluent, confident reader accesses words and word meanings. Automaticity with the code is based on phonics/phonological awareness processes.

DIBELS Nonsense Word Fluency (NWF)

Here are some more make-believe words (point to the student probe). Start here (point to the first word) and go across the page (point across the page). When I say, “begin”, read the words the best you can. Point to each letter and tell me the sound or read the whole word. Read the words the best you can. Put your finger on the first word. Ready, begin.

kik woj sig faj yis
kaj fek av zin zez
lan nul zem og nom
yuf pos vok viv feg
bub dij sij vus tos
wuv nij pik nok mot
nif vec al boj nen
suv yig dit tum joj
yaj zof um vim vel
tig mak sog wot sav

DIBELS are Indicators

- DIBELS is a toothpick
- DIBELS are not designed to provide an exhaustive assessment

- DIBELS provides an efficient indicator of essential literacy skills acquisition like a toothpick provides an efficient way to tell if the cake is baked.
- If the toothpick has dough on it, what should we do?

Bake the Whole Cake, Don’t Just Cook One Place!

- Using a torch to cook only the place we checked with the toothpick would not produce a very satisfying cake!
Alphabetic Principle: Bake the Whole Cake

Teaching the alphabetic principle skill builds better readers
• Teach letter-sounds (some think this is all phonics refers to)
• Teach a decoding strategy: left to right, say it slowly sound by sound, say it fast, say the word.
• Instruction on scaffolded recoding: sound out and read word
• Instruction on fading the scaffold: teach to internalize the sounding out step and just read the word
• Fluency building instruction: practice putting the whole piece together quickly and confidently.

Alphabetic Principle: Torching the cake

Artificial ways to raise the NWF score without actually teaching the skill are like torching the cake – they don’t lead to better reading outcomes.
• Memorizing and practicing the nonsense words on the next DIBELS assessment. Knowing tob dos et tuj kej does not help children learn to read better.
• Telling children not to recode (read the words as a word) but instead just to say the letter sounds as fast as they can. (Recoding is the point of NWF)
• Giving extra time or assistance.

Accuracy and Fluency with Connected Text: Torching the cake

Artificial ways to raise the ORF score without actually teaching the skill are like torching the cake – they don’t lead to better reading outcomes.
• Practicing the next DIBELS probe so they can read it fast does not help children learn to read better.
• Encouraging children to read only the words they know: The and a an …. 
• Telling children to read as fast as they can.
• Sending the passage home to practice.
• Start reading the passage at the third sentence.
• Giving extra time or assistance.

Bake the Whole Cake Squad

Official Member of the DIBELS Bake the Whole Cake Squad
I understand the importance of teaching the whole early literacy skill and not just the DIBELS measure. I will try to help others who are confused to focus instruction on the skills and not the probes to make a genuine difference in children’s reading outcomes.

(Signature)
Role of Mid First Alphabetic Principle

School A:
- Odds of achieving ORF reading goal in March of First Grade when Established with NWF in December of First Grade are 11 out of 11, or 100%.
- Odds of achieving ORF reading goal in March of First Grade when Deficit with NWF in December of First Grade are 0 out of 32, or 0%.

Similar Odds, Different Outcome

School B:
- Odds of achieving ORF reading goal in May of First Grade when Established with NWF in January of First Grade are 39 out of 43, or 90%.
- Odds of achieving ORF reading goal in May of First Grade when Deficit with NWF in January of First Grade are 0 out of 4, or 0%.

Oregon Reading First 2004-2005:
- Odds of achieving ORF reading goal in May of First Grade when low risk on NWF in the beginning of First Grade are 83%.
- Odds of achieving ORF reading goal in May of First Grade when at risk on NWF in the beginning of First Grade are 14%.

Overall Odds of Reading Outcomes

Odds of being on track with ORF in end of first grade when Established with NWF in middle of first grade are 91% across all schools in DIBELS Data System 2001-2002.
Odds of being on track with ORF in end of first grade when Deficit with NWF in middle of first grade are 18%
Relation between percent at benchmark in winter of first grade (NWF Goal) and percent achieving 40 on ORF in spring of first grade (Fien, 2004). Each dot is a school.

$\text{Percent at Benchmark in Winter of First Grade}$

$\text{Percent Established on ORF in Spring of First Grade}$

$r = .85$

Four Purposes of Reading Assessments

An effective, comprehensive, reading program includes reading assessments to accomplish four purposes:

- **Screening Measure:** Brief assessment that *focuses on critical reading skills* strongly predictive of future reading growth and development, and conducted at the beginning of the school year with all children in grades K, 1, 2, and 3 to *identify children* likely to need extra or alternative forms of instruction.

- **Diagnostic Measure:** Assessment conducted at any time during the school year only when more in-depth analysis of a student’s strengths and weaknesses is needed to *guide instruction*.

Four Kinds of Reading Assessments

- **Progress Monitoring Measure:** Assessment conducted a minimum of three times a year or on a routine basis (i.e., weekly, monthly, or quarterly) using comparable and multiple test forms to (a) estimate rates of reading improvement, (b) identify children who are not demonstrating adequate progress and therefore require additional or different forms of instruction, and/or (c) compare the efficacy of different forms of instruction for struggling readers and thereby design more effective, individualized instructional programs for those at-risk learners.

- **Outcome Measure:** Assessment for the purpose of classifying students in terms of whether they achieved grade-level performance or improved.

Efficient and Purposeful Assessment

- **Goal:** Assessment *maintained over time with the resources available*, and in a way that is not so time-consuming that it compromises the instructional mission of the school.

- One way to achieve efficient assessment is to have one measure accomplish screening, progress monitoring, and outcome purposes.

- The initial screening can also serve as the first progress monitoring assessment.

- Example: CTOPP, TOWRE, TPRI, CBM, and DIBELS (among others) have sufficient evidence for screening, progress monitoring, and outcome decisions in selected areas.
Outcomes Driven Model Provides a Decision Structure for Assessment

**Outcomes Driven Model for Instructional Decisions**

1. Identify Need for Support
2. Validate Need for Instructional Support
3. Plan and Implement Instructional Support
4. Evaluate and Modify Instructional Support
5. Review Outcomes for Individuals and Systems

**Outcomes Driven Model in a Picture**

Implement a Research-Based Intervention

- Increase intensity of Intervention:
  1) Increase intervention fidelity
  2) Increase time
  3) Smaller Group Size

**5. Reviewing Outcomes**

**Key Decisions for Outcome Assessment:**

- Does each individual child have the early literacy skills predictive of successful reading outcomes? Is each individual child making adequate progress toward important literacy goals?

- Does the school have a schoolwide system of instruction and support so their students achieve literacy outcomes?

- Evaluate the schoolwide system (core curriculum and instruction, supplemental support, and intervention) for each step to identify strengths and targets of opportunity for improvement.
Amanda’s Progress In First Semester of First Grade

- Amanda is making progress on alphabetic principle skills (phonics), but not enough progress to change her risk status.
- Amanda is not making adequate progress.

Belinda’s Progress In First Semester of First Grade

- Belinda is making progress on alphabetic principle skills (phonics), and reducing her risk level (moving from at risk to some risk).
- Belinda is making adequate progress.

Calvin’s Progress In First Semester of First Grade

- Calvin is making progress on alphabetic principle skills (phonics), and achieving the middle of first grade goal. (We want 3 consecutive points above the goal to be sure.)
- Calvin is making exceptional progress.

Predictions for Amanda, Belinda, and Calvin

- Predictions of first grade reading outcomes are based on 289 Oregon Reading First students whose progress was monitored at least 5 times in the first semester of first grade.
- Predicted end of first grade reading outcomes are based only on NWF initial skills and slope of progress on NWF for the first semester of first grade. (Note, predictions are improved when use all DIBELS).
- Initial skills on the alphabetic principle explained 24% of the variance in first grade reading outcomes.
- Slope or rate of progress on alphabetic principle skills added an additional 35% of variance explained.
DIBELS for Schoolwide System Review:
I am very anxious about using DIBELS for Accountability decisions

- On the one hand, if our children are not making adequate progress in reading, I think we should stand up and take notice.
- On the other hand, if students, teachers, schools, districts, or states are criticized or suffer consequences for DIBELS scores, they are less likely to use the information as designed to improve instruction.

- **DIBELS should never be used for student retention decisions.**
  http://www.nasponline.org/information/pospaper_graderetent.html
  http://www.education.ucsb.edu/jimerson/retention/

- **DIBELS should be used to identify targets of opportunity and provide support.**

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**DIBELS is very appropriate for Outcomes Assessment**

- Supports effective leadership to focus effort, set ambitious goals, provide support to achieve goals, emphasize outcomes, build teams.
- **School-based teams** make decisions about how to improve the system of instruction.
- Identify targets of opportunity – What grades? What tiers of the system? What core skill areas?
- Focus on support – What can we provide to improve outcomes?

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**The purpose of DIBELS is to improve Outcomes**

**Effect of Retention on Student Outcomes**

- No evidence of positive effects of retention on long-term achievement, self esteem, or adjustment
- Negative effects of Retention: Retention increases the odds of
  - Increased odds of academic difficulty, especially in reading.
  - Increased odds of socio-emotional adjustment difficulties.
  - Increased likelihood of behavior problems especially in adolescence.
  - Increased risk of school drop out. Retention is one of the most powerful predictors of not completing high school.
  - Increased risk of being retained a second time. Students retained more than once have very low likelihood of completing high school.
  - Increased risk of “emotional distress, cigarette use, alcohol use, drug abuse, driving while drinking, use of alcohol during sexual activity, early onset of sexual activity, suicidal intentions, and violent behaviors” (NASP, 2003).
  - More likely to be unemployed, underemployed, or on public assistance.
  - More likely to be in prison.

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**Focus on Support**

- What can we do as a **system** to support the effectiveness of the Schoolwide System of Instruction?
- What would it take to help the school achieve literacy goals?
  - Professional development on essential components of early literacy?
  - More powerful interventions or supplemental materials?
  - Coaching to improve fidelity of implementation?
  - Additional resources to meet the needs of challenging students (e.g., ELL, high mobility)?
  - Administrative support to invest substantial time and resources to change outcomes?
Core Curriculum and Instruction

- Not just the reading curriculum selected but also the way it is delivered.
- aka Primary Prevention or Benchmark Instruction
- **Primary Goal:** Meet the needs of 80% of students in the school. If the school has lots of children who need strategic or intensive support, the core curriculum and instruction will need to include many features of strategic support and intensive intervention
- **Primary Step-Goal:** Support all benchmark students to make adequate progress and achieve the benchmark goal.
- **Secondary Step-Goal:** Support 50% of strategic students to achieve the benchmark goal.

Supplemental Support

- Additional time, smaller group, more intensive, supplemental or intervention program, delivered with fidelity.
- aka Secondary Prevention or Strategic Support
- **Primary Goal:** Meet the needs of 15% of students in the school who will need more support than the core curriculum and instruction can provide.
- **Primary Step-Goal:** Adequate progress to reduce risk of reading difficulty. Support all strategic students to achieve the benchmark goal.
Schoolwide System of Instruction and Support  

-- Intervention --

- Additional time, smaller group, more intensive, supplemental or intervention program, delivered with fidelity.
- aka Tertiary Prevention or Intensive Intervention
- **Primary Goal:** Meet the needs of the 5% of students in the school who will need very intensive intervention to achieve literacy goals.
- **Primary Step-Goal:** Accelerate learning and progress to support all intensive students to achieve the benchmark goal or reduce their risk of reading difficulty to strategic. If one step can get them to strategic, the next step can get them to benchmark.

Steps to Achieving Reading Outcomes

Adapted from Good, R. H., Simmons, D. C., & Kame'enui, E. J. (2001). The importance and decision-making utility of a continuum of fluency-based indicators of foundational reading skills for third-grade high-stakes outcomes. *Scientific Studies of Reading, 5*, 257-288.

Instructional Goals for Essential Components of Beginning Reading

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Timeline</th>
<th>Essential Component</th>
<th>DIBELS Indicator</th>
<th>Goal Skill Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mid K</td>
<td>Phonological Awareness</td>
<td>Initial Sound Fluency</td>
<td>25-35 on ISF (and 18 on PSF)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>End K</td>
<td>Phonological Awareness &amp; Alphabetic Principle</td>
<td>Phonemic Segmentation Fluency</td>
<td>35-45 on PSF (and 25 on NWF)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid 1st</td>
<td>Alphabetic Principle &amp; Fluency</td>
<td>Nonsense Word Fluency</td>
<td>50-60 on NWF with 15 words recoded (and 20 on DORF)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>End 1st</td>
<td>Fluency</td>
<td>DIBELS Oral Reading Fluency</td>
<td>40-50 on DORF (and 25% on RTF)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>End 2nd</td>
<td>Fluency</td>
<td>DIBELS Oral Reading Fluency</td>
<td>90+ on DORF (and 25% on RTF)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>End 3rd</td>
<td>Fluency</td>
<td>DIBELS Oral Reading Fluency</td>
<td>110+ on DORF (and 25% on RTF)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

DIBELS Steps to Reading Success

One Step per Semester  
One Goal per Step  
(Keep moving in the direction of the next goal)

Adapted from Howe, 2005.
95% Schoolwide System Goal

- A powerful schoolwide system goal is to have 95% of our students achieve the benchmark goals on time.
- If 95% achieve the goal, the core curriculum and instruction, supplemental support, and intensive intervention are all doing their part.
- We always are striving for 100%, but 95% means the system is working, the remaining students represent individual issues and challenges.
  - 45% achieving the goal means we need to revise our system.
  - One or two students not achieving the goal means we need to address their individual challenges.

System-wide Comparisons of Middle of First Grade NWF Outcomes

- How do our Alphabetic Principle outcomes compare to other schools around the country?

57% or more established on NWF in middle of first grade would be in the upper third.

34% or less established on NWF in the middle of first grade would be in the lower third.

Note: Based on N = 2316 schools with at least 40 students per grade level participating in the DIBELS Data System in 2003-2004.

System-wide Comparisons of End of First Grade ORF Outcomes

- How do our Accuracy and Fluency with Connected Text outcomes compare to other schools around the country?

70% or more Low Risk on ORF and end of first would be in the upper third.

51% or less Low Risk on ORF at the end of first grade would be in the lower third.

Note: Based on N = 2298 schools with at least 40 students per grade level participating in the DIBELS Data System in 2003-2004.
If our school is not yet at a schoolwide system strength (95% at goal), Examine CSI Reports

- Effectiveness Reports and CSI Reports examine each Tier of our 3 Tier system of support.
  - Tier 1 – Core curriculum and instruction examines outcomes for our students with a Benchmark instructional recommendation.
  - Tier 2 – Supplemental Support examines outcomes for our students with a Strategic instructional recommendation.
  - Tier 3 – Intensive Intervention examines outcomes for our students with an Intensive Support instructional recommendation.
- The purpose reviewing each tier of our system is to identify a target of opportunity where we can strengthen a level of our system to improve outcomes overall.

DIBELLS Summary of Effectiveness Reports
4 Ways to Achieve Adequate Progress
(Baker, 2005)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time 1 (e.g., Fall)</th>
<th>Time 2 (e.g., Winter)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intensive (Tier 3)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At Risk</td>
<td>Effective Intensive Intervention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Some Risk</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Low Risk</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategic (Tier 2)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At Risk</td>
<td>Effective Core and Supplemental Support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some Risk</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Low Risk</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benchmark (Tier 1)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At Risk</td>
<td>Effective Core Curriculum and Instruction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some Risk</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Low Risk</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

CSI Report – Identify Targets of Opportunity

- Core Curriculum and Instruction – Benchmark Students
  - Strength – 95% of Benchmark Students Achieve Goal
  - Relative Strength – Upper Third
  - Needs Support – Middle Third
  - Needs Substantial Support – Lower Third
- Supplemental Instruction – Strategic Support Students
  - Strength – 80% of Strategic Students Achieve Goal
  - Relative Strength – Upper Third
  - Needs Support – Middle Third
  - Needs Substantial Support – Lower Third
- Intensive Intervention – Intensive Support Students
  - Strength – 80% of Intensive Students are Emerging or Achieve Goal
  - Relative Strength – Upper Third
  - Needs Support – Middle Third
  - Needs Substantial Support – Lower Third

Core Instruction Should Keep Students On Track for Literacy Outcomes

- Students that are on track (a Benchmark Instructional Recommendation) should achieve the next literacy goals.
- Strength of the core curriculum and instruction is the backbone of the schoolwide instructional system.
- Adequate progress of Strategic Students and Benchmark Students signal a strong system of core curriculum and instruction.
- Many benchmark students not making adequate progress signals a target of opportunity.
- How much progress can we reasonably expect?
Summary of Effectiveness Report

- Available from http://dibels.uoregon.edu
- Summary of Effectiveness Report is available through the DIBELS Data System.
- For Wireless Generation Palm users, there is a data bridge between the mClass data system and the DIBELS Data System. Palm users can access all of the reports from the DIBELS Data System.
- Or, examine the model and count the number of Benchmark Students at the beginning of each step who achieve each goal for that step, and divide by the number of Benchmark Students at the beginning of the step.
First, clarify the primary instructional goal for the first semester of first grade.

- **Essential Component:** Phonics or Alphabetic Principle
- **DIBELS Indicator:** Nonsense Word Fluency (NWF)
- **Goal Skill Level:** 50 letter sounds correct per minute with recoding
- **Timeline:** by the middle of first grade.

## Evaluating Effectiveness Worksheet

### Evaluating Effectiveness

#### I. Outcomes Criterion – Bottom line
- 95% of all students achieve the early literacy goal.
- Schoolwide system of instruction and support in the first semester of first grade is a **strength** if 95% of students are Established on DIBELS NWF in the middle of first grade.
  - Core curriculum and instruction is effective
  - System of additional interventions is effective

#### II. Adequate Progress Criteria – are all students making adequate progress?
- Core Curriculum and Instruction: Benchmark students make adequate progress and achieve goals
- Supplemental Support: Strategic students make adequate progress and achieve goals
- Intensive Intervention: Intensive students make adequate progress and achieve goals or at least reduce risk.
**Absolute Standard and Relative Standard of Adequate Progress**

- **Absolute Standard** – held constant from year to year, represents an ambitious goal that all schools could attain.
  - **Strength:**
    - Adequate progress for 95% of Benchmark
    - Adequate progress for 80% of Strategic
    - Adequate progress for 80% of Intensive

- **Relative Standard** – Based on most recently available schoolwide norms. Represents the current state of curriculum, supplemental support, intervention.
  - **Relative Strength:** Upper third compared to other schools
  - **Needs Support:** Middle third compared to other schools
  - **Needs Substantial Support:** Lower third compared to other schools

**Compare to Decision Rules and Other Schools to Evaluate Effectiveness**

- **Strength** – effective core curriculum and instruction supports 95% of benchmark students to achieve the goal.
  - McKinley does not meet the 95% adequate progress goal.

- **McKinley School supported 67% of their benchmark students to reach the NWF middle of first grade goal.** Compared to other schools, McKinley School is in the
  - **Upper Third – Relative Strength**
  - **Middle Third – Needs Support**
  - **Lower Third – Needs Substantial Support**

**McKinley Elementary School**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instructional Step Grade, Semester</th>
<th>Core Curriculum and Instruction</th>
<th>Supplemental Support</th>
<th>Intensive Intervention</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kinder, 1st Sem: Phonemic Awareness</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kinder, 2nd Sem: Phonemic Awareness and Phonics</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First, 1st Sem: Phonics and Fluency</td>
<td>Support</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First, 2nd Sem: Fluency and Comprehension</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Second, 1st Sem: Fluency and Comp.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Second, 2nd Sem: Fluency and Comp.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Third, 1st Sem: Fluency and Comp.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Third, 2nd Sem: Fluency and Comp.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Meaningful Differences in Effectiveness of Core Curriculum and Instruction

- Schools differ in the percent of Benchmark Students who achieve literacy goals.
- Consistent and robust finding: Odds are in favor of achieving goals for benchmark students, but sometimes more in favor.
- 82% District wide
  - 82% Adams
  - 79% Garfield
  - 78% Jefferson
  - 80% Lincoln
  - 67% McKinley
  - 95% Washington

Target of Opportunity

- Identifying a classroom, schoolwide, or even district-wide step as needing substantial support is a target of opportunity.
- Needs Support or Needs Substantial Support means we have the knowledge, skills, curriculum, interventions to accomplish better outcomes for the instructional step and contribute to changing reading outcomes in third grade.

Use Models of Effective Core Curriculum and Instruction

- Seek models of success in the district, state, or region.
- Within the district, Washington School is an exemplar of effective core instruction in the first semester of first grade with students with similar skills at the beginning of first grade.
- How are they structuring the school day?
- How are they assigning resources?
- What curriculum are they using?
- The essential question is, *How can we support McKinley to accomplish better outcomes?*

So, How do we support all my children to learn the *alphabetic principle* so well they all reach NWF of 50 with 15 words recoded correctly?

- Assess to inform decisions that change outcomes
- Start with Foundation of Phonemic Awareness
- Provide Systematic and Explicit Instruction using Research Based Interventions
- Bake the whole cake – Include instruction and practice on all the skills (follow the map)
- Start Early and *Move in the Direction*
- Practice
- Monitor Progress
- Do Something About Lack of Adequate Progress
Using an Outcomes Driven Model to inform Instructional Decisions

**Outcomes Driven Model:** Decision making steps

1. Identifying Need for Support
2. Validating Need for Instructional Support
3. Planning and Implementing Instructional Support
4. Evaluating and Modifying Instructional Support
5. Reviewing Outcomes for Individuals and Systems

### 1. Identifying Need for Support

**Key Decision for Screening Assessment:**
- Which children may need additional instructional support to attain important reading outcomes?

**Data used to inform the decision:**
- Compare individual student’s performance to **normative context** or **expected performance** to evaluate need for additional instructional support.

- **Normative context:** First, choose a percentile cutoff. 20th percentile is a common cutoff for “at risk” status, and the 40th percentile is a common cutoff for “low risk” status.
- **Longitudinal research:** “At risk” odds are against achieving subsequent literacy goals – unless an intensive intervention is implemented.
Decision Utility of DIBELS Fall of 1st

- **Benchmark**
  DIBELS NWF $\geq 24$, PSF $\geq 35$, LNF $\geq 37$

  Odds of reading 40 or more words correct per minute at the end of first grade: 84%

- **Intensive - Needs substantial intervention**
  DIBELS NWF $< 13$, PSF $< 10$, LNF $< 25$

  Odds of reading 40 or more words correct per minute at the end of first grade: 18%

Value of knowing the instructional recommendation and the goal early enough to change the outcome: Priceless.

2. Validate Need for Support

Key Decision:

- Are we **reasonably confident** the student needs instructional support?
  - More reliable and valid information is needed to validate need for support than for screening decisions.
  - Rule out easy reasons for poor performance: Bad day, confused on directions or task, ill, shy…

Data used to inform the decision:

- Repeated assessments on different days under different conditions using **progress monitoring assessments** to examine a pattern of performance
- Or, more extensive and intensive **diagnostic assessment**.

Validating Need for Support

- **Option 1**: Verify need for instructional support by retesting with progress monitoring until we are **reasonably confident**.

- **Option 2**: Use the pattern of performance over time obtained from the student’s continued involvement in the Reading First screening, progress monitoring, and outcome assessment to be **reasonably confident** that the student needs continued intervention.

- **Option 3 (avoid)**: Use time-consuming and resource intensive diagnostic assessment to be **reasonably confident** of need for intervention.

- **Note**: with progress monitoring assessment integrated with instruction and intervention, educational decisions are self-correcting so we do not need to be completely confident, just **reasonably confident**.
3. Planning and Implementing Instructional Support

Key Decisions for *Diagnostic Assessment*:

- **What are the Goals of instruction?**
  - Where are we? Where do we want to be? By when? What course do we need to follow to get there?

- **What skills should we teach?**
  - Focus on the *beginning reading core areas*: Phonological Awareness, Alphabetic Principle, Accuracy and Fluency with Connected Text
  - Level of skills based on error analysis.

- **How much instructional support may be needed?**
  - Intensive Instructional Support
  - Strategic Instructional Support
  - Benchmark Instruction

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**Target Core Components for Intervention Focus**

- Deficit on PA → Intervention targeting PA
- Established PA, Deficit on AP → Intervention targeting AP
- Established PA and AP, Deficit on fluency with connected text → Intervention targeting reading connected text and fluency building.

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**Instructional Goals for Core Components of Beginning Reading**

Benchmark Goals to be On Grade Level:

- **Middle K:** *Phonological Awareness* with 25 - 35 on DIBELS
  - Initial Sound Fluency by *mid kindergarten* (and 18 on PSF)

- **End K:** *Phonemic Awareness* with 35 - 45 on DIBELS
  - Phoneme Segmentation Fluency by end of kindergarten (and 25 on NWF)

- **Middle 1st:** *Alphabetic principle* 50 - 60 on DIBELS
  - Nonsense Word Fluency by *mid first grade* (and 20 on DORF)

- **End 1st:** *Fluency* with 40 - 50 on DIBELS
  - Oral reading fluency by end of first grade (and RTF 25% or more).

- **End 2nd:** *Fluency* with 90 + on DIBELS
  - Oral reading fluency by end of second grade (and RTF 25% or more)

- **End 3rd:** *Fluency* with 110 + on DIBELS
  - Oral reading fluency by end of third grade (and RTF 25% or more)

---

**Instructional Goals**

- Establish an Instructional Goal for *Alphabetic Principle* that will change odds of being a reader.
Select Research-Based Intervention

- Oregon Reading First reviewed 106 supplemental and intervention programs for the percent of criteria met. http://oregonreadingfirst.uoregon.edu/SIreport.php

**Phonemic Awareness**
- Early Reading Intervention 95%
- Buildup Kit Complete 88%
- Corrective Reading 98%
- First Grade PALS 88%
- Funnix 93%
- First Grade Open Court Phonics Kit 88%
- Read Well (K) 97%
- Reading Mastery Fast Cycle 93%
- Voyager Passport 92% to 97%
- Voyager Universal Literacy 92% to 94%
- Waterford 94% to 100%

- Or choose from many others rated below 88%

**Phonics or Alphabetic Principle**
- Reading Master 82% to 96%
- Corrective Reading 92% to 100%
- Read Well 92% to 94%
- Voyager Passport 92%
- Early Reading Intervention 81%
- Horizons Fast Track 88%
- Saxon Phonics 84% to 96%
- Systematic Instruction in Phonemic Awareness, Phonics, and
  - Sight Words (Level 1) 91%
- Voyager Passport K and 1 90% to 92%

- Or choose from many others rated below 88%

**Fluency with Connected Text**
- Read Well 100%
- Read Naturally 92%
- Corrective Reading 75% to 84%
- Funnix 80%
- Phonics for Reading 60% to 81%
- Reading Mastery 84% to 89%
- Grade 1 Saxon Phonics and Spelling 83%
- Grade 1 & 2 Voyager Passport 80% to 91%
- Waterford 85% to 94%

- Or choose from many others rated below 80%
Foundation in Phonemic Awareness with Systematic and Explicit Phonics Instruction

Phonemic Awareness Skill

Instruction on Letter Sounds

Instruction on a Decoding Strategy

Instruction on a Scaffolded Recoding

Instruction on Fading the Scaffold

Fluency Building Instruction

Alphabetic Principle

Alphabetic Principle:

Teaching the Alphabetic Principle

1. Critical features of Alphabetic Principle instruction
2. Critical Alphabetic Principle skills students should learn
3. Sequencing Alphabetic Principle skills
4. Alphabetic Principle benchmarks
5. Alphabetic Principle programs and materials

Alphabetic Principle in Beginning Reading

Examples of Tasks Illustrating Alphabetic Understanding

- Letter-sound association: What is the sound of this letter?
- Sound blending: Blend the sounds of these letters to make a word (mmmmmmmmmmmm).
- Segmenting: What sounds do you hear in this word?
- Manipulating letter-sound correspondences in words: What word would you have if you change the /d/ in /map/ to /p/?
- Reading pseudowords: What is this word, mps?
- Word identification: What is this word, map?

Curriculum Maps:

Curriculum maps list specific skills that relate to each big idea. Each skill can be taught during at an optimal time during the school year. Click here for an explanation of how to read curriculum maps.

Kindergarten Curriculum Map

Mapping of Instruction To Achieve Instructional Priorities

Focus 1: Letter-Sound Correspondence

* 1a: Identifies letter matched to a sound
  X X X X X

* 1b: Says the most common sound associated with individual letters
  X x x x x x

Focus 2: Decoding (Sounding Out Words)

* 2a: Blends letter sounds in 1-syllable words

Focus 3: Sight-Word Reading

* 3a: Recognizes some words by sight
  X X X

DIBELS NWF

At least 13 on DIBELS NWF

25 on DIBELS NWF

From Big Ideas in Beginning Reading, University of Oregon, 2002-2004
http://reading.uoregon.edu/
**Alphabetic Principle: First Grade Curriculum Map**

From Big Ideas in Beginning Reading, University of Oregon, 2002-2004

Indianapolis, IN

- **Focus 1:** Letter & Letter Combinations
  - 1a: Produces common sound-letter combinations
  - 1b: Produces sounds to common letter combinations

- **Focus 2:** Decoding (Sound Out)
  - 2a: Decodes words with consonant blends
  - 2b: Decodes words with letter combinations
  - 2c: Decodes regular 1-syllable words fluently
  - 2d: Decodes words with common word parts

- **Focus 3:** Sight-Word Reading
  - 3a: Reads common sight words automatically

- **Focus 4:** Reading Connected Text
  - 4a: Reads accurately (1 error in 20 words)
  - 4b: Reads fluently (1 word per 3.5 sec early mid year)
  - 4c: Phrasing attending to ending punctuation
  - 4d: Reads and rereads to increase familiarity
  - 4e: Rereads and self-corrects while reading

*High-priority skill

- **NWF** with at least 15 words recoded correctly
- **DIBELS**

**Alphabetic Principle: Second Grade Curriculum Map**

From Big Ideas in Beginning Reading, University of Oregon, 2002-2004

Indianapolis, IN

- **Focus 1:** Letter-Sound Knowledge
  - 1a: Produces diphthongs and digraphs

- **Focus 2:** Decoding and Word Recognition
  - 2a: Uses advanced phoneme elements to recognize words
  - 2b: Reads compound words, contractions, possessives, inflectional endings
  - 2c: Reads multisyllabic words

- **Focus 3:** Sight Word Reading
  - 3a: Reads more sight words accurately

- **Focus 4:** Reading Connected Text
  - 4a: Reads 90-100 wpm
  - 4b: Reads with phrasing and expression
  - 4c: Listens to fluent oral reading and practices increasing oral reading fluency
  - 4d: Reads and rereads to increase familiarity
  - 4e: Self-corrects word recognition errors

*High-priority skill

- **90 - 110 on DIBELS ORF**

**Alphabetic Principle: Third Grade Curriculum Map**

From Big Ideas in Beginning Reading, University of Oregon, 2002-2004

Indianapolis, IN

- **Focus 1:** Decoding and Word Recognition
  - 1a: Uses advanced phoneme elements to recognize words
  - 1b: Reads regular multisyllabic words
  - 1c: Reads compound words, contractions, possessives, inflectional endings

- **Focus 2:** Word Meaning and Order
  - 2a: Uses word order and meaning in the sentence to confirm decoding efforts

- **Focus 3:** Reading Connected Text
  - 3a: Reads 120 wpm
  - 3b: Reads with phrasing, expression, inflection
  - 3c: Increases independent reading

*High-priority skill

- **110 - 120 on DIBELS ORF**

**Alphabetic Principle: Indicator, Goal, and Timeline**

Earlier Intervention and Prevention are Best

From Big Ideas in Beginning Reading, University of Oregon, 2002-2004

Indianapolis, IN

Practice? Should I use DIBELS NWF to practice decoding nonsense words?

- Absolutely not.
- **Under no conditions should DIBELS assessment materials be used for instruction or practice.**
- Reason 1: Children should always be tested cold on the skills. If they aren’t tested cold we don’t know what their scores mean. We don’t know if they are on track or not.
- Reason 2: More important, the DIBELS NWF score is not the point. The **alphabetic principle** is the point. Our instruction should always focus on the big idea or core component: phonics and the alphabetic principle.

Practice what? Should I never have my children practice reading nonsense words?

- I think practicing decoding and reading words is great: real words and nonsense words both.
- Keep in mind the big idea goal: To have a powerful **strategy** to encounter an unknown word and confidently obtain a reasonable pronunciation of the word.
- Practice should occur in the context of meaningful and important instruction on the alphabetic principle.
- Don’t forget **recoding**: using letter sound knowledge to recover the pronunciation of the whole word.
- For example, The Alien Word Game (Source unknown)

The Alien Word Game (Source unknown)

- Start with a set of magnetic or felt letters, a mixture of consonants and vowels, that the students have been learning and practicing. For example, a o i m t l p s r n
- have the students review the sounds of all the letters, group and individual turns, signal for group response so low kids respond at the same time as the group. Make sure low kids are accurate with the letter sounds.
- make a word “tap” and practice reading the word: first sound by sound then say it fast – what word? tap Is it an alien word? No
- next switch out one of the letters – trade the p for an n. read the word: sound by sound, say it fast, what word? tan Is it an alien word? No
- next switch out another letter – trade t for l. Read the word: sound by sound, say it fast, what word? lan Is it an alien word? Yes, it is an alien word. It is not a real word, it is a make believe word. It might be a new word that someone makes up some day.
- - as students develop skill in reading a variety of words with these letters, real and alien, you can fade the sound by sound part so they are reading words and judging what the word is. (i.e., they are recoding the words fluently and automatically)

4. Evaluating and Modifying Instructional Support

**Key Decision for Progress Monitoring Assessment:**

- Is the intervention effective in improving the child’s early literacy skills?
- How much instructional support is needed?
  - Enough to get the child on trajectory for Benchmark Goal.
- When is increased support needed?
  - Monitor child’s progress during intervention by comparing their performance and progress to past performance and their aimline. **Three assessments in a row below the aimline** indicates a need to increase instructional support.
4. Evaluate and Modify Support

Implement a Research-Based Intervention

Increase intensity of Intervention:
1) Increase intervention fidelity
2) Increase time
3) Smaller Group Size

Mid-year cutoff at risk

1. Identify Need for Support
2. Validate Need for Support
3. Plan and Implement Support
4. Evaluate and Modify Support

Implement a Research-Based Intervention

• Progress on Alphabetic Principle is not adequate to achieve the goal with current intervention – Change.

Increase intensity of Intervention:
1) Increase intervention fidelity
2) Increase time
3) Smaller Group Size

Initial First Grade Skills are Important

• Most Low Risk students achieve adequate first grade reading outcomes.

End First ORF
M = 102, odds 97%
N = 12288

End First ORF
M = 62, odds 76%
N = 38082

End First ORF
M = 43, odds 47%
N = 20606

End First ORF
M = 27, odds 22%
N = 20739

Middle of First Grade is also Important

• Most Low Risk students in mid first grade achieve adequate first grade reading outcomes.

End First ORF
M = 78, odds 87%
N = 40510

End First ORF
M = 43, odds 49%
N = 32698

End First ORF
M = 24, odds 18%
N = 17615
Adequate Progress is Essential
Yes there are two paths you can go by, but there is still time to change the road you are on.

Efficient Progress Monitoring
- Repeated, formative assessment to evaluate progress toward important goals for the purpose of modifying instruction or intervention.
- Increase frequency of progress monitoring based on risk
  - **Benchmark:** 3 times per year for students at low risk (All Students)
  - **Strategic:** 1 per month for students with some risk
  - **Intensive:** 2 – 4 per month for students at risk

Effects of Progress Monitoring
- Fuchs and Fuchs (1986) found the average effect size associated with progress monitoring was:
  - +0.70 for monitoring progress
  - +0.80 when graphing of progress was added
  - +0.90 when decision rules were added

Purpose of Diagnostic Assessment
The overarching purpose of diagnostic assessment is adequate progress for the student.
- Diagnostic assessment informs effective instruction to enable the student to make adequate progress.
  - Provide increased confidence of need for educational support.
  - Target core components for intervention focus.
  - Establish goals for instruction.
  - Identify level of support and intervention intensity
  - Identify specific skill deficits (e.g., initial blends) or other instructionally relevant characteristics (e.g., RAN, general verbal knowledge, background knowledge) to directly inform instruction.
Outcome-Driven Diagnostic Assessment

- **The goals of Outcome-Driven Diagnostic Assessments are to:**
  
  **A. Achieve meaningful literacy outcomes.**
  
  **B. Move rapidly and efficiently to research-based intervention using available assessment information.**
  
  **C. Rapidly accelerate intensity of intervention depending on student progress.**

- **First,** select students for intervention based on Identify and Validate Need for Support decisions.

- **Second,** select core component, select research-based intervention, and instructional goals using information from Plan and Implement Support.

- **Third,** evaluate the adequacy of the intervention using progress monitoring assessment.
  - If adequate progress ➔ maintain intervention
  - If lack of adequate progress ➔ increase intensity

- **Fourth,** increase intensity of intervention by (1) examining and increasing the fidelity of implementation of the intervention, (2) increasing the amount of time allocated for the intervention, (3) decreasing the group size and increasing opportunities to respond.
  - If adequate progress ➔ maintain
  - If lack of adequate progress ➔ increase intensity

- **Fifth,** increase intensity of intervention if student continues to have a sustained lack of adequate progress.
  - Early literacy team review of intervention and progress
  - Examine manipulable components of instruction.
  - Determine whether additional diagnostic assessment is necessary to inform instruction.

- Only for serious, sustained lack of adequate progress with escalating intensity of intervention is additional diagnostic assessment indicated.

---

**Themes**

- Don’t lose track of the bottom line. Are we getting closer to important and meaningful outcomes?
- Assess -- and teach -- what is important: Phonemic Awareness, Alphabetic Principle, Accuracy and Fluency with Connected Text
- Use assessment information to make decisions that change outcomes for children.
- Assessment should be efficient and purposeful.
- Start early! Trajectories of reading progress are very difficult to change.
What if?

- What if the National Reading Panel is right and the alphabetic principle is an essential core component for students to make adequate progress in early literacy?
- What if DIBELS is right and the amount of instruction and level of skill needed for adequate progress is both greater and earlier than is currently in place?
- What if Scientifically Based Reading Research is right and we have powerful instruction to teach the alphabetic principle to almost all children?
- What if monitoring progress toward important instructional goals increases the effectiveness of interventions?

What if?

- What if we could cure dyslexia? Prevent learning disabilities? Prevent reading failure? Prevent illiteracy?
- What if we could prevent the behavior problems, conduct disorders, an mental health toll associated with poor reading outcomes?
- What if we could ensure for all children the right to read?
- What if we could provide all children with choices for their future?
## Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills
### Summary of Effectiveness by Class

**District:** Test District  
**School:** McKinley  
**Date:** September, 2001-2002  
**Class:** McKinley 1st #8  
**Step:** Beginning of 1st Grade to Middle of 1st Grade

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<tr>
<th>Students at Intensive at Beginning of Year</th>
<th>Effectiveness of Intensive Support Program</th>
<th>Effectiveness of Strategic Support Program</th>
<th>Effectiveness of Core Curriculum and Instruction</th>
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<th>Beginning NWF Score</th>
<th>Middle NWF Score</th>
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Summary of Effectiveness Report, 06/12/2005, 5
# Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills
## Summary of Effectiveness by District

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<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Step: Beginning of 1st Grade to Middle of 1st Grade</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>% of Instructional Recommendation</th>
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<td>45 Students Benchmark at Beginning of 1st</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12 Students Strategic at Beginning of 1st</td>
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<td>33 Students Benchmark at Beginning of 1st</td>
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<td>12.7% of Total Students</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>43.6% of Total Students</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>2.1%</td>
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<tr>
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<td>43.6% of Total Students</td>
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<td>3.4%</td>
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Summary of Effectiveness by District, 11/01/2004, 1
First Grade - First Semester
Evaluating Effectiveness of Schoolwide System Worksheet

1. **First Semester Goal:** What is the primary instructional goal for the first half of first grade?
   - Core Component or Big Idea: ____________________________
   - DIBELS Measure: ____________________________
   - Goal Skill Level: ____________________________
   - Goal Timeline to Achieve: ____________________________

2. **First Semester Outcome:** In the middle of first grade, on NWF, what percent are:
   - Established: ______
   - Emerging: ______
   - Deficit: ______

   Is the outcome criterion (95% Established) met? Yes. Schoolwide System is a Strength | No. Go to 3 & evaluate progress

   If Schoolwide System Strength you do not need to complete numbers 3 – 10.

3. **Initial Skills:** In the beginning of first grade, what percentage of students schoolwide are
   - Benchmark: ______
   - Strategic: ______
   - Intensive: ______

4. **Adequate Progress of Benchmark Students:** Of the students who were Benchmark at the beginning of first grade, what percent achieved the NWF goal of 50 for the middle first grade? ______

5. How would you rate the effectiveness of the core curriculum and instruction?
   - Strength – 95% to 100% of benchmark students achieve NWF goal.
   - Relative Strength – 73% to 94% of benchmark achieve NWF goal
   - Needs Support – 56% to 72% of benchmark students achieve NWF goal.
   - Substantial Support – 0% to 55% of benchmark students achieve NWF goal.

6. **Adequate Progress of Strategic Students:** Of the students who were Strategic at the beginning of first grade, what percent achieved the NWF goal of 50 for the middle first grade? ______

7. How would you rate the effectiveness of the schoolwide system of supplemental support?
   - Strength – 80% to 100% of strategic students achieve NWF goal.
   - Relative Strength – 40% to 79% of strategic achieve NWF goal
   - Needs Support – 20% to 39% of strategic students achieve NWF goal.
   - Needs Substantial Support – 0% to 19% of strategic students achieve NWF goal.

8. **Adequate Progress of Intensive Students:** Of the students who were Intensive at the beginning of first grade, what percent achieved NWF of 30 (emerging) or 50 (established) for the middle of first grade? ______

9. How would you rate the effectiveness of the schoolwide system of intensive intervention?
   - Strength – 80% to 100% of intensive students achieve NWF emerging or established.
   - Relative Strength – 67% to 79% of intensive students achieve NWF emerging or established
   - Needs Support – 40% to 66% of intensive students achieve NWF emerging or established.
   - Needs Substantial Support – 0% to 39% of intensive students achieve NWF emerging or established.

10. Do parts of the schoolwide system Need Support or Need Substantial Support? What is the plan to improve the effectiveness of the schoolwide system for the first semester of first grade?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step Grade: Semester</th>
<th>Primary Instructional Goal</th>
<th>Effectiveness of Core Curriculum and Instruction</th>
<th>Effectiveness of Supplemental Support</th>
<th>Effectiveness of Intensive Interventions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kinder: First Semester</td>
<td>Phonological Awareness: 25 on ISF</td>
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<td>Kinder: Second Semester</td>
<td>Phonemic Awareness: 35 on PSF</td>
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<td>First: First Semester</td>
<td>Alphabetic Principle: 50 on NWF</td>
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<td>First: Second Semester</td>
<td>Oral Reading Fluency: 40 on DORF</td>
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<td>Oral Reading Fluency: 90 on DORF</td>
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<td>Third: Second Semester</td>
<td>Oral Reading Fluency: 110 on DORF</td>
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</table>

Strength
Relative Strength
Support
Substantial Support

95% upper third
middle third
lower third

80% upper third
middle third
lower third

80% upper third
middle third
lower third