

June 2, 2023

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Attached to this note is the results of your child's *Dynamic Indicators of Basic Literacy (DIBELS)* benchmark. DIBELS is a reading test that has been developed by the University of Oregon, which is given three times per year. We are working on sharing our DIBELS data, and will continue sharing this data next school year.

This spring we are including information regarding your child's progress in reading with the *DIBELS 8th Edition* benchmark system. Your involvement in reading contributes to your child's success in this area. The assessment includes the following parts:

Kindergarten	1st Grade	2nd Grade
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Letter Naming Fluency (LNF)</li> <li>● Phonemic Segmentation Fluency (PSF)</li> <li>● Nonsense Word Fluency (NWF)</li> <li>● Word Reading Fluency (WRF)</li> <li>● Composite Score</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Letter Naming Fluency (LNF)</li> <li>● Phonemic Segmentation Fluency (PSF)</li> <li>● Nonsense Word Fluency (NWF)</li> <li>● Word Reading Fluency (WRF)</li> <li>● Oral Reading Fluency (ORF) - Words Correct</li> <li>● Oral Reading Fluency (ORF) - Accuracy</li> <li>● Composite Score</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Nonsense Word Fluency (NWF)</li> <li>● Word Reading Fluency (WRF)</li> <li>● Oral Reading Fluency (ORF) - Words Correct</li> <li>● Oral Reading Fluency (ORF) - Accuracy</li> </ul>

If you would like more in-depth information please explore the University of Oregon's DIBELS Data System website at <http://dibels.uoregon.edu>

Please see the attached handout, *Parent Guide to DIBELS Assessment* with descriptions regarding the "Big Ideas" and critical skills of beginning reading that are measured with this assessment. We have also included a list of ideas that address each of the *Big Ideas* for you to try with your child this summer, if you would like.

<b>What is the “Big Idea”? What does it tell us?</b>	<b>What are some ways to help your child at home?</b>
<p><b>Letter Naming Fluency (LNF):</b> This measure tells us how many letters your child knows. This skill is a strong predictor of future reading success in young children. This test is timed, so your child may know more letters when given more time. <i>Our goal at the end of kindergarten is to have students master all of the letters (capital and lowercase).</i></p>	<p><b>Letter Naming:</b> Play games with letter flashcards where your child identifies the names of the letters.</p> <p>Have a letter scavenger hunt at home or when you are out and about. Focus on both capital and lowercase letters.</p> <p>Comment on how you notice the differences in letters that look alike:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- p, g, q, b, d</li> <li>- B, D</li> <li>- m, n, h</li> <li>- M, N, W, H</li> </ul>
<p><b>Phoneme Segmentation Fluency (PSF):</b> This measures phonemic awareness, which is the ability to hear and manipulate sounds in spoken words. The child repeats the sounds that they hear in words. This test is timed, so your child may know more letter sounds when given more time.</p>	<p><b>Blending and Segmenting Sounds:</b> Play games where the child breaks apart the sounds they hear in words, then blends them together:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- “cat” - “c” - “a” - “t”</li> </ul> <p>Play games where the child has to put together and manipulate the sounds that they hear</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- “d” - “o” - “g”, What word? “Dog”</li> <li>- Change the “c” in “cat” to a “s” What word is that? “sat”</li> </ul>
<p><b>Nonsense Word Fluency - Correct Letter Sounds (NWF - CLS) and Nonsense Word Fluency - Words Read Correctly (NWF - WRC)</b> This measures basic phonics skills. The student is given a choice to read nonsense words by sound or read (blend) the whole word. This test is timed, so your child may know more letter sounds when given more time.</p>	<p><b>Clap the sounds:</b> Say simple words starting with two sounds and working up. Have your child clap for each sound in the word. If this task is too difficult, start with component words like /pop/ /corn/ and have them clap for each word.</p> <p><b>Which of these words is not like the other?</b> Say a series of words with the same beginning sound and one that starts with a different sound. For example, “cat, car, can, mop.” Which one of these words is not like the other? You can make this more difficult as your child progresses by working with ending sounds too.</p> <p><b>Please have your child practice with real words with patterns. For example:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Long - “a” sound words (<i>maple, baby, lady...</i>)</li> <li>- Words that start with “s”(sail, sell, set...)</li> <li>- Decodable Reader books such as the <i>Bob Books</i> series</li> </ul>

<p><b>Word Reading Fluency (WRF) and Oral Reading Fluency (ORF):</b> WRF measures the ability to read grade-level words from a page. ORF measures the ability to read accurately and automatically from a page. Both subtests are one minute.</p>	<p><b>Model Fluent Reading:</b> Let your child see and hear what fluent reading sounds like. Make sure you include plenty of expressions and emotion while reading and model proper phrasing and pacing. Then, ask your child to read the same passage in the same style or manner as you did.</p> <p><b>Choral read aloud sessions:</b> "Choral reading" is when a teacher or parent reads aloud and asks the children to follow at the same pace. Choral reading is another way to show your child what fluent reading should sound like. Choosing a book at the child's independent reading level will make it easier for them to keep up with the accuracy and pace.</p> <p><b>Stopwatch Readings:</b> Another strategy that works for improving reading speed, which is also a major part of fluency, is asking your child to read a given passage in a set time frame. Here's how it's done: Set a stopwatch for one minute, and have your child read a passage with as few errors as possible. Notice where your child stops or breaks their fluency and work on improving those areas. Perhaps there was a word they couldn't pronounce. Ask them to repeatedly pronounce the word after learning the meaning. Then once again, ask your child to read the passage with the timer set to one minute. This time the reading should be faster.</p> <p>The one minute read works because it is a manageable chunk of time and your child will be able to practice several repeated reads in a row without losing focus or interest.</p>
<p><b>Composite Score:</b> A composite score is determined based on scores from the reading skills tests and how those combined skills predict reading proficiency over time.</p>	<p>These scores are a quick measure to help us plan for a student's needs. It is important to remember that these scores are only a brief glimpse into a student's reading ability. If a teacher notices a difference between a student's scores and their performance in class, the teacher will perform additional assessments to learn more about the differences between test and observation.</p>

If you have any questions or concerns regarding your child's reading assessments, please reach out to your child's teacher and/or the River Grove team. We are here to help.

In Collaboration,

River Grove K-2 Staff



***What are DIBELS?***

DIBELS are measures that help teachers and schools determine how students are performing on important reading skills. DIBELS stands for *Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills*. These measures are designed for students in grades K-8.

***What skills are measured by DIBELS and why are they important?***

The critical skills necessary for successful beginning reading include: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. The DIBELS measures assess students on four of these five critical skills, which are often referred to as the “Big Ideas” of reading. The table on page 2 describes each big idea of reading and lists the corresponding DIBELS measure.

***Which tests will be given to my son or daughter?***

Each student will complete the tests depending on his or her grade and the time of year. The table on page 2 shows the timeline for assessing your student on the big ideas of reading across grade levels.

***How often are students assessed?***

All students in a school building are given the DIBELS test three times each year; usually this occurs in the fall, winter, and spring. This school-wide testing is called benchmark assessment. School personnel may also regularly check on the progress of students who receive extra reading help to make sure their reading skills are improving. These regular checks are called progress monitoring. Students who are progress monitored may complete one or two of the individual DIBELS tests as often as once a week or as little as once every 6 weeks depending on school resources and the needs of the student.

***How much time does it take?***

Each of the DIBELS tests only takes about one minute to complete. DIBELS tests are “indicators” of the student’s overall reading status, and are not intended to be in-depth or comprehensive measures of reading. Just like using a thermometer to take your child’s temperature, which provides a quick indicator of your child’s general health, these quick DIBELS tests provide teachers with information about your child’s reading health and how well he or she is progressing on a particular early reading skill. Benchmark assessments generally take 2 to 6 minutes to give, depending on the grade of the student and time of year. Teachers only need about 1 to 2 minutes to progress monitor students at each testing time. DIBELS measures allow teachers to get valuable information about students’ reading skills without using large amounts of instructional time.

***How will the results be used?***

A student’s scores on the DIBELS measures give the school information about whether or not a student is on track for grade-level reading success. A school can quickly identify students who do not meet the goals on each DIBELS measure and provide extra help. For example, if your child is reading words accurately, but slowly, the teacher can provide extra practice re-reading stories and passages to improve his or her reading rate or fluency. The teacher can use the progress monitoring scores to make sure your student receives extra help to improve other reading skills during the school year.

Teachers can review scores on DIBELS measures for all the students in a class to make decisions about how to prepare their day-to-day reading lessons. School and district staff can also study the test scores across classrooms and grade levels to make decisions about how to best use resources to make sure that every child in the school, including your child, is on track to become an accurate and fluent reader.

**Please explore the University of Oregon’s DIBELS Data System website at <http://dibels.uoregon.edu> to learn more about the importance of early literacy instruction and assessment.**

# Parent Guide to DIBELS Assessment

The DIBELS measures include six individual tests that focus on the big ideas and critical skills of beginning reading.

Big Ideas	What is it? Why is it important?	DIBELS Measures	Grades Assessed					
			K	1	2	3	4-6	7-8
<b>Phonemic Awareness</b>	Phonemic awareness refers to your child's ability to hear and manipulate sounds in spoken words only. This skill is a powerful predictor of future reading success. It is a skill that is typically assessed early in a child's schooling (i.e., kindergarten), but it is also used with older children who are experiencing difficulty reading.	First Sound Fluency (FSF) or Initial Sound Fluency (ISF)  Phoneme Segmentation Fluency (PSF)	✓	✓				
<b>Phonics</b>	Phonics refers to the ability to learn the individual sounds in spoken language and map those sounds to specific written letters in the English language. Students who have strong phonics skills are able to connect individual sounds with letters and use those sounds to read words.	Nonsense Word Fluency (NWF)  Word Reading Fluency (WRF)	✓	✓	✓	✓		
<b>Reading Fluency</b>	Reading fluency refers to your child's ability to read text accurately and automatically so that students can understand what they are reading.	Oral Reading Fluency (ORF)  Word Reading Fluency (WRF)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>Vocabulary</b>	Vocabulary refers to your child's knowledge of the meanings of individual words being read. Vocabulary knowledge is important to a student's ability to read and comprehend what is read.							
<b>Reading Comprehension</b>	Reading comprehension refers to your child's ability to understand what he or she reads. It is the ultimate goal of reading instruction.	Maze Daze			✓	✓	✓	✓

## Test of Related Early Literacy Skills

	Letter Naming Fluency assesses a student's ability to say the "names" of upper and lowercase letters in the English alphabet. This skill is a strong predictor of future reading success in young children.	Letter Naming Fluency (LNF)	✓	✓				
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