



An important message from the authors of DIBELS®

Ruth A. Kaminski and Roland H. Good III

Roland Good and Ruth Kaminski, Dynamic Measurement Group (DMG), the authors of DIBELS Next® and DIBELS® 6th Edition, want you to understand the benefits of the research-based DIBELS Next® assessments for your students.

Released in May 2010, DIBELS Next® measures are brief, powerful indicators of foundational reading skills that are quick and efficient to administer and score. *Improvements to DIBELS Next®* include the addition of new measures, new scores for selected measures that provide additional information about foundational skills, and new research-based benchmark goals. In addition, DIBELS® Oral Reading Fluency (DORF) consists of all new reading passages that have been field tested with students and empirically leveled.

The improvements to DIBELS Next® are based on research conducted over 4 years on more than 25,000 students in 90 schools throughout the United States as well as feedback from users of DIBELS® 6th Edition. The DIBELS Next® Technical Manual describing the research and findings on DIBELS Next® is publicly available at our website (<http://dibels.org/>) along with technical reports and presentations at national conferences.

DMG's research results to date indicate that the DIBELS Next® Composite Score, including Retell, is the single best predictor of later reading outcomes. Across first through sixth grade, the median additional variance explained by the DIBELS Next® Composite Score with Retell ranges from 3% to 17%, generally with greater additional variance explained in upper grades.

As we constructed DIBELS Next® we were guided in equal parts by research and theory—models of reading acquisition and educational considerations. For example, not only is the DIBELS Next® Composite Score *the single best predictor* of later reading outcomes based on our research, it has *educational significance* in that it is comprised of the range of research-based Foundational Reading Skills listed by the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). The Common Core State Standards state that it is essential for students

to “Read with sufficient accuracy and fluency to support comprehension.”

In addition, DIBELS Next® measures are designed for decision-making utility across a range of educational decisions. For example, while the utility of a score in predicting later outcomes is relevant to screening decisions, *DIBELS Next® measures are designed to help educators make decisions about instructional support as well as for monitoring progress.*

The scores and measures that comprise the composite score provide useful information for making instructional decisions such as identifying on which specific foundational skills a student may need additional instructional support to achieve benchmark goals and be a proficient reader. *This educational significance cannot be overlooked.* If a goal is set only with respect to reading rate, and student progress monitored on rate alone, a student may not receive the instructional support needed in phonics, word reading and decoding, or comprehension. (For further information on the use of Retell, please see the position paper on our website titled: *Why is Retell a Required Part of DORF in DIBELS Next®?*)

DMG values independent research conducted at other institutions and has a track record of using research from scholars around the world in developing, updating, and revising its measures, benchmark goals, and decision rules. The DMG team reviews and gives careful consideration to all independent research that uses different methodologies and outcome variables and will make changes in measures, benchmark goals, and/or decision rules when it is clearly justified to do so based on converging evidence from multiple studies.

DMG's team continues to be actively engaged in ongoing research on DIBELS®. In fact, 100% of DMG's profits from the sales of DIBELS® is allocated directly to continued research and development. It is DMG's commitment to provide educators with the best reading assessment tools available so students read with accuracy, fluency and maximum comprehension for success in the classroom and in life.