What does unbundling the composite score mean? Unbundling the composite score means that districts and schools are no longer required to administer all the DIBELS Next measures for benchmark assessment, but instead may administer select individual measures. After all, this is how DIBELS was originally validated and we think it's technically more defensible. By administering select individual measures, districts and schools:

- are able to more accurately identify students in need of additional support;
- are able to reduce the time required for universal screening; and
- are no longer required to use the composite as a predictor of student performance.

Scientific evidence does not support the notion that the composite score is a consistently better predictor of student performance than individual measures. In fact, University of Oregon research has shown that select individual measures are frequently a more powerful predictor of end-of-year student performance than the composite score. Unbundling the composite score results in no loss of value in predicting students' future reading performance and, in fact, can save your school time and money.

Who should decide which benchmark measures to administer? Districts and schools may continue to administer all DIBELS measures if they wish, but they will also have the option to administer a subset of the standard DIBELS Next benchmark measures. Decisions about which measures to use should be made at the district level or at the school level. All schools and classrooms within a district should follow the same procedures.

Is it better to use the composite score than to focus on select individual skills? A private for-profit company developed and required the use of a composite score with DIBELS Next, which was not part of previous editions of DIBELS. However, the composite score does not help teachers to consider each foundational skill in isolation and ensure student proficiency. In addition, the statistical methods used to develop the composite scores do not follow standard test development guidelines. The shift away from the composite score and back to the original DIBELS procedures of considering individual measures reminds teachers to stay focused on the skills students need to learn in order to become successful readers.

Which measures should be administered if we decide to no longer use the composite score? The DIBELS Data System (DDS) is using a new rating system for each measure to help decision-makers determine which measures to administer at the various grade levels and points in time. Research from the University of Oregon and other researchers indicates that some measures predict future outcomes much more strongly than others. Based on an extensive analysis of the DDS data, each measure falls into one of the following categories:

- required

- optional, endorsed

- optional, not endorsed

The following table provides updated information about each measure to help districts and schools make informed decisions about which measures to administer for benchmark assessment across grade levels and times of year.

Revised: 3-18-2013

MEASURE	Grade, Time of Year, DDS Rating			ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
Letter Naming Fluency (LNF)	K	BOY	Required	**LNF** is a strong predictor of reading outcomes. Benchmark goals are now provided for **LNF** on the DDS. **LNF** is a measure of risk, NOT an instructional target so teachers do not need to dedicate instructional time specifically to teaching letter names.
		MOY	Required	
		EOY	Required	
	1	BOY	Required	
First Sound Fluency (FSF)	K	BOY	Required	**FSF** works well in the beginning and middle of kindergarten to predict reading outcomes.
		MOY	Required	
Phonemic Segmentation Fluency (PSF)	K	MOY	Required	Analysis of DDS data indicates that **PSF** works well in the middle of kindergarten, but not beyond. Benchmark goals were not calculated for PSF at the end of kindergarten or beginning of grade 1.
		EOY	Optional, Endorsed	
	1	BOY	Optional, Not Endorsed	
Nonsense Word Fluency (NWF)	K	MOY	CLS – Required WWR-Optional, Endorsed	**NWF-Correct Letter Sounds (CLS)** is a strong predictor whenever it is used. **NWF-Whole Words Read (WWR)** is a strong predictor from the end of K to the beginning of grade 2, but not in the middle of kindergarten. Calculating WWR on **NWF** is now *optional* in the middle of kindergarten.
		EOY	CLS-Required WWR-Required	
	1	BOY	CLS-Required WWR-Required	
		MOY	CLS-Required WWR-Required	
		EOY	CLS-Required WWR-Required	
	2	BOY	CLS-Required WWR-Required	
Oral Reading Fluency (ORF)	1	MOY	Required	The revised recommendations always include the administration of **ORF**. **ORF** alone is a very strong predictor in grades 1-6. In fact, at the end of the year in grades 1-5, **ORF** by itself is a stronger predictor of student outcomes on a standardized outcome measure in reading (i.e., the SAT10) than the composite score.
		EOY	Required	
	2	BOY	Required	
		MOY	Required	
		EOY	Required	
	3	BOY	Required	
		MOY	Required	
		EOY	Required	
	4	BOY	Required	
		MOY	Required	
		EOY	Required	
	5	BOY	Required	
		MOY	Required	
		EOY	Required	
	6	BOY	Required	
		MOY	Required	
		EOY	Required	
Daze	3	BOY	Optional, Endorsed	**Daze** is a strong predictor of reading outcomes. Administration of **Daze** measures for students in grades 3-6 is *optional, but endorsed*.
		MOY	Optional, Endorsed	
		EOY	Optional, Endorsed	
	4	BOY	Optional, Endorsed	
		MOY	Optional, Endorsed	
		EOY	Optional, Endorsed	
	5	BOY	Optional, Endorsed	
		MOY	Optional, Endorsed	
		EOY	Optional, Endorsed	
	6	BOY	Optional, Endorsed	
		MOY	Optional, Endorsed	
		EOY	Optional, Endorsed	
Retell Fluency	Optional, Not Endorsed			Administration of the **Retell Fluency** measure is *optional and not endorsed* for any grades or time periods. **Retell Fluency** does not have the technical features necessary to require its use large scale for benchmark assessment. It does not add value to instructional predictions.

How do we introduce and transition to the recommended goals? The Recommended Goals page of our website has additional resources to help administrators, teachers and support staff transition to the recommended goals.

We suggest that all staff members view the two short videos on the recommended goals page. The videos were developed by our research team and provide the reasoning behind recommending new goals. Each video is approximately 5 minutes long. The videos remind educators that DIBELS are part of a prevention-oriented model that relies on accurate, early identification of students who need additional instructional support. The videos also highlight some of the technical strengths of the recommended goals including the fact that the recommended goals are directly connected to an external literacy assessment, whereas the former goals are not. We also recommend that staff members who would like more in-depth information about the technical strengths of the recommended goals view our webinars. The webinars provide more detailed information about why additional research was needed, the prevention-oriented model and the use of DDS reports. Additional materials are recommended for assessment directors, district coordinators and other key decision makers. We have detailed technical information on our recommended goals page in the form of three technical reports to assist personnel in these positions.

Suggested viewing for all staff members	Video highlights
Video 1 (Posted July 2012): https://dibels.uoregon.edu/training/newfeaturesvideo	-Benefits of unbundling composite score -New research independently reviewed
Video 2 (Posted October 2012): https://dibels.uoregon.edu/training/recommendedgoalsvideo	-Composite score masks student needs -New goals directly linked to student outcomes

Webinars for an expanded introduction	Webinar highlights
Webinar 1 (Posted November 2012): https://dibels.uoregon.edu/training/webinars/webinar1.php	-Option to use either set of goals - Recommended goals more accurately identify students who need additional support
Webinar 2 (Posted December 2012): https://dibels.uoregon.edu/training/webinars/webinar2.php	-Prevention-oriented model -Which reports to use in screening decisions

Additional technical research reports and resources for assessment directors, district coordinators and key decision makers	Document summary
Part I: DIBELS Next Composite Score (CTL, 2012),	Research behind the unbundling of composite score
Part II: DIBELS Next Benchmark Goals (CTL, 2012)	Research behind the recommended goals
Technical Supplement (CTL, 2012)	Statistical processes used to develop the recommended goals

Please contact us if you have any questions. We are here to support you.

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