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# NEW MEXICO READING FIRST

September 2006



## New Mexico Reading First Program One of the Top Ten in the Nation

Santa Fe—At a recent state director’s meeting in Boston, Massachusetts, New Mexico Reading First learned that New Mexico scored among the top ten states (of the 50 participating states) on several measures reported by the federal Reading First office.

In **comprehension** which is based on the percentage of all students at proficiency in Reading, on standardized or criterion referenced assessments, New Mexico Reading First was one of the top ten in Grade 3 Reading. When student subgroups were analyzed, New Mexico was in the top ten in Grade 3 Reading Achievement for Economically Disadvantaged students, English Language Learners, and African American students. Native American students were not included in the federal analysis presented.

On the **Oral Reading Fluency** subtest of the DIBELS assessment (Oral Reading Fluency is the predictor of 3<sup>rd</sup> grade reading proficiency) New Mexico Reading First was one of the top ten states for all students in Grades 1, 2, and 3; One of the top ten states in Reading for Grade 3 for Students with Disabilities; and one of the top ten states in Grades 1 and 2 for English Language Learners.

Secretary of Education, Dr. Veronica C. García said, “This is exciting news indicating a lot of hard work on the part of the teachers, coaches, and administrators in 30 districts, 90 schools, and the staff of New Mexico Reading First. The success of our Reading First program is a crucial part of helping close the achievement gap and raise academic excellence for all students.”

Dr. Lana M. Paolillo, “This year’s results, which are entered into the federal database each November will no doubt place New Mexico in the top ten category again next year. This increase in literacy statewide is an accomplishment that will continue to have important ramifications as these students move through the school system in their elementary, middle and high school years.”

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## ***Reading First* Program Making A Difference For Literacy in New Mexico**

Santa Fe—The Public Education Department is proud to release the latest research on the New Mexico *Reading First* program. This new research clearly shows that the program is making statistically significant gains at helping students in grades 1-3 reach the appropriate benchmarks for reading at grade level. A comparison of students in grades 1-3 on the September 2005 DIBELS assessment for students who are “returning” to *Reading First*, and those “new” students who transferred in from a non-*Reading First* school or district indicated that at each grade level returning students were more likely to be at benchmark in September than the “new” students.

Grade	% Benchmark of students exposed to RF in previous year (n=9935)	% Benchmark of students <i>not</i> exposed to RF in previous year (n=2739)	% Difference
1st Grade	55%	44%	11%
2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade	38%	28%	10%
3rd Grade	35%	28%	7%

Secretary of Education, Dr. Veronica C. García said, “I am very encouraged by this latest data on our *Reading First* program. I vowed when I took office, that my number one priority would be to close the achievement gap and it is important to validate with data those programs that are helping close the gap. *Reading First* is helping close the gap and I salute all the terrific teachers and reading coaches that are achieving success with their students through this exemplary program.”

## Reading First Making A Difference

Grade	% Intensive of students exposed to RF in previous year (n=9935)	% Intensive of students <b>not</b> exposed to RF in previous year (n=2739)	% Difference
1st Grade	11%	20%	-9%
2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade	22%	33%	-11%
3rd Grade	25%	34%	-9%

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## ASSESSING SPANISH READERS: IDEL, MIDE, TEJAS LEE WHAT WILL WE DO?

The DIBELS and the IDEL have been used in Reading First schools since 2003-04. In January, 2005 Liza Rael, Reading First program specialist in Bilingual Education, was reviewing the IDEL (Spanish DIBELS) and concluded that it was not a very good assessment. The Spanish was not good Spanish and there were no established cut points, i.e. Benchmark, Strategic and Intensive, as there is with the DIBELS. In addition there was no "progress monitoring" an essential assessment requirement for Reading First schools.

NM Reading First attacked this problem in several ways, and it was a problem because we were restricted in the kind of technical assistance we could provide to our schools teaching Reading in Spanish because we had no hard data. We worked all this year with Roland Good and Doris Baker, the creators of the DIBELS/IDEL, and with Wireless Generation our data collector and reporter, to find out if and when we could expect a revised IDEL with "good" Spanish, cut-points, and progress monitoring. At the same time we explored alternative Spanish Reading assessments the Tejas Lee (Spanish TPRI), and the MIDE a new assessment brought to us by two well respected bilingual educators. We invited the MIDE creator and AIMSWEB (MIDE's data collector and reporter) to come to New Mexico and present to our Reading First schools. We invited the Bilingual Department and the Advisory Committee to attend the presentation. Everyone seemed to really like the MIDE. However, neither the creator nor AIMSWEB could provide us with district or school data on using the MIDE.

Dr. Catherine Collins, Reading First program specialist in ELL, formed a committee of teachers who volunteered to review the MIDE and the current IDEL. These teachers from Bernalillo, a district that teaches Reading in Spanish as well as English, much preferred the MIDE. Everyone agreed that the MIDE seemed like the better instrument. NM Reading First then began a search for districts and schools that were using the MIDE. We got no response despite numerous phone calls, emails primarily to Illinois where some schools are using the instrument. Dr. Collins had many conversations with the developer of the MIDE, we even brought Wireless and AIMSWEB together to make sure that if we adopted the MIDE that we could load both assessments on the same PDA. At the same time we continued to pursue the status of the new IDEL.

Today we got our first reply to our numerous requests for information from a school in Illinois, on the use of the MIDE, stating that he liked the MIDE but he failed to answer any of Dr. Collin's questions about the data. The creator has not provided us with any research on the implementation of the assessment with Reading First schools. Our outside evaluator EDC could not find any data on the MIDE. Essentially we have nothing to recommend to the federal Reading First office to amend our State Plan and switch from the IDEL to the MIDE. All we have is a consensus that it seems like a better instrument.

Dr. Roland Good and Dr. Doris Baker, Univ. of Oregon, have come through and we now have cut scores for the IDEL. Liza Rael and Catherine Collins have reviewed the new IDEL passages, albeit they were only provided with a few, and felt that indeed they had revised the IDEL and the Spanish was much better.

Currently we have 3 years of IDEL data that we can now finally analyze. Preliminary analysis is exceptionally good. And, we have the information we need to provide our schools with the appropriate professional development and technical assistance.

We are not saying that the IDEL is better than the MIDE. Nor are we saying that the MIDE is better than the IDEL. We just don't know. And, perhaps more importantly, no one seems to know. New Mexico Reading First advocated for the right to teach and assess our students in Spanish. We are encouraging the Bilingual Education department to undertake an extensive review of the research on Spanish assessments and will participate on such a committee. For now, the IDEL meets our needs and we will continue to use it.

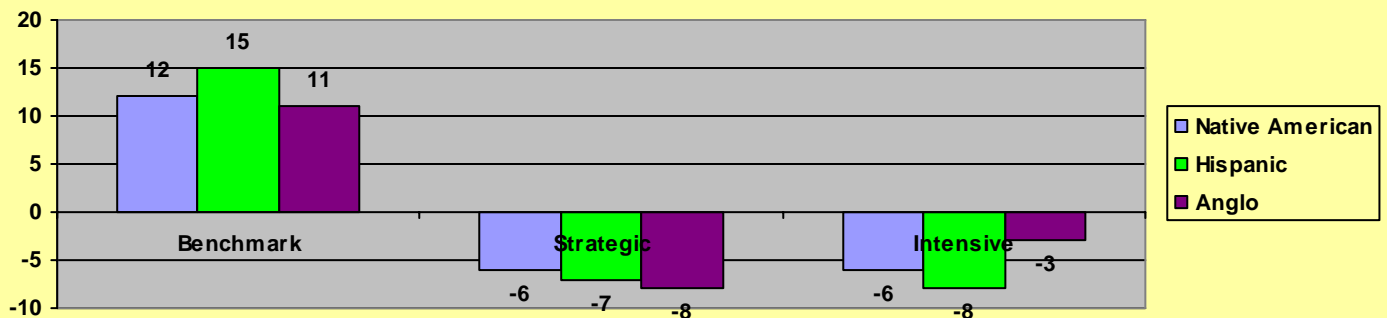
Lana M. Paolillo, Ph.D.  
Director, Reading First

## Welcome New Districts: Belen, Central, Floyd, Loving, Ruidoso, Vaughn

### State of the State Summary:

New Mexico Reading First again showed overall K-3 improvement in student achievement in Reading. Of particular note are Grades 1 and 3. Although we continue to show a decline in Benchmark students at the end of Grade 1, this year was the smallest decline in three years, 2.8% compared to 12% in 04-05 and 13% in 03-04. Teachers are obviously paying attention to Oral Reading Fluency in both Kindergarten and the first part of Grade 1. Remember the first time students receive the ORF assessment is January of Grade 1. Kindergarten scores remain the highest, and Grade 2 showed increases in Benchmark students for the first time in three years. Grade 3 produced tremendous gains in students reaching Benchmark by the end of the year. The increase for 05-06 was 14.2%, compared to 3% in 04-05 and 2.5% in 03-04. This coupled with New Mexico placing in the Top Ten States in Grade 3 Reading Comprehension should dispel any lingering doubt that we are just producing fast readers. The link between oral reading fluency and reading comprehension holds. Remember the stick shift analogy – free the mind from the mechanics so as to concentrate on the meaning.

**Closing the Achievement Gap:** The positive trend we saw in 2004-05 has held for 2005-06 indicating that indeed New Mexico Reading First is closing the achievement gap. Our Native American and Hispanic students continue to show higher percentages of students achieving Benchmark and decreasing Intensive support recommendations on the DIBELS.



### Non-Negotiables

- SBRR Core Reading Program
- 90 Minute Uninterrupted Reading Block
- 30 Additional Minutes for Strategic Students
- 60 Additional Minutes for Intensive Students
- Use the DIBELS/IDEL as your screening and progress monitoring instrument. Submit data to Wireless Generation
- Administer the DIBELS/IDEL in August/September, January, and May
- Use the TPRI/Tejas Lee, Woodcock Johnson, Woodcock Reading Mastery as diagnostic instrument for those Intensive students not showing progress after systematic and intensive instruction.
- Use SBRR Supplemental materials for Strategic students.
- Use SBRR Intervention materials for Intensive students.
- Provide professional development that is site specific.
- Attend NMRF professional development to the extent feasible.



## **New Mexico Scores 2<sup>nd</sup> in the Nation for Getting Junk Foods Out of Schools**

**Santa Fe**—The Public Education Department proudly announces that The Center for Science in the Public Interest, CSPI, released a state by state comparison of each state's policy on food available to students at school. This includes foods sold out of vending machines, school stores, a la carte and other foods sold outside of school meals.

New Mexico scored 2<sup>nd</sup> in the nation receiving a B+ on nutrition standards. New Mexico's grade places New Mexicans behind only one state, Kentucky. By contrast, two out of three states received D's or F's for their weak policies which allow nutrition poor a

Secretary of Education, Dr. Veronica C. García said, "This is exciting news because one year ago Governor Richardson vowed to get junk food out of schools. Now we are getting national recognition for taking action to improve the health of our students. We know that healthier students make better learners. The Center for Science in the Public Interest is a non profit organization based in Washington D.C. Since 1971, CSPI has been working to improve the public through its work on nutrition, food safety and alcohol issues their website [www.cspinet.org](http://www.cspinet.org)'s health