

**Benton School District – Benton, Arkansas**  
**Intensive Reading Intervention Report**  
**for the School Year 2006-2007**

Background Information: The *Barton Reading & Spelling System*, an *Orton-Gillingham* based reading intervention, was first piloted at Ringgold Elementary in 2005-2006. Intense one-on-one specialized instruction was given to selected Kindergarten and First Grade students who were significantly behind their peers in reading and spelling. At the beginning of the school year 2006-2007, all four elementary schools in Benton School District participated in early reading intervention. First, each school identified those students in K-1 who showed significant deficits in early reading skills. The students most deficient were then placed in an Intensive Reading Intervention program which included the *Barton Reading & Spelling System*.

To identify which students were most at risk for learning to read, every student in Kindergarten and First Grade was screened by using the DIBELS measurements. DIBELS, Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills, measures critical foundational skills that are necessary for reading success. The subtest indicators in DIBELS assess phonemic awareness (Initial Sound Fluency and Phoneme Segmentation Fluency), phonics (Nonsense Word Fluency), fluency and comprehension (Oral Reading Fluency and Oral Retell Fluency) and Vocabulary ((Word Usage Fluency). Each of these skills is recognized by the National Reading Panel as necessary to become a successful reader. The National Reading Panel reported that **phonemic awareness is the core and causal reason for a person to not read successfully**. The DIBELS early assessment helped identify those students who lacked phonemic awareness. The National Institute of Child Development states that early identification can predict with 92% accuracy which children will struggle with learning to read.

With this scientifically research-based information compiled, it was obvious that a preventive approach in Kindergarten and First Grade to help students at risk for reading failure was more appropriate than waiting to see if they would struggle in later grades. Typically, third

grade was marked as the year when a child would “hit the wall” and require special education testing and instruction. In addition, the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) has consistently shown a high rise of reading failure in fourth and eighth grade students. But reading problems can be prevented in most children if detected early – in Kindergarten or early First Grade.

After DIBELS was used to identify those students most at risk for learning to read, it was necessary to use the correct instruction to help these children gain proficiency in the skills they lacked. The Barton Reading & Spelling System was selected because it is Orton Gillingham based, multisensory, cost efficient, easy to learn with instructional DVDs, and successful. Brain imaging has shown increases in left hemisphere brain activity (the areas that are responsible for word recognition) after Orton-Gillingham based instruction. With appropriate instruction, over time, the brain of a child with reading disabilities can function the same as a child who reads with no difficulty.

Level 1 of the Barton Reading & Spelling System focuses on phonemic awareness. With very specific and systematic multisensory instruction, children acquire the ability to hear and manipulate phonemes, the most basic units of sounds. Levels 2, 3, and 4 continue systematically and explicitly with the grapheme-phoneme correspondence, decoding fluency, spelling, and comprehension. Each level is based on Orton-Gillingham (the only proven researched method that actually helps students with dyslexia learn to read and spell).

Each of the four elementary schools has one person primarily responsible for DIBELS assessment for all Kindergarten and First Grade students and placing children in reading intervention groups. The reading groups based on DIBELS results are Intensive (Tier III), Strategic (Tier II), and Benchmark (Tier I). The DIBELS Data Analysis Online System calculates percentages of students who meet end of year goals based on current individual DIBELS assessment scores and identifies which students require more intensive instruction, strategic instruction, or who are most likely to reach end of year benchmarks. Tier III students receive the most intensive instruction. These children meet with the instructor one-on-one or in

small group of no more than 3 and receive Barton instruction at least three times a week for thirty minutes each session. Strategic, Tier II, students are placed in small group instruction with the regular classroom teacher for specialized instruction. Tier I students continue with the regular classroom instruction by the classroom teacher.

Of the four elementary schools in Benton School District, two are Title I schools. Each of the Title I schools has a certified teacher as a Literacy Specialist who provides DIBELS assessments and Barton reading intervention instruction. The other two elementary schools have each hired a paraprofessional who has been trained in DIBELS and the Barton System. In addition, each school has trained the Special Education teachers, Reading Recovery teachers, Self-contained teachers, and Speech teachers in the Barton System. Benton School District purchased site licenses for each of the elementary schools for book levels 1-4.

Teachers and paraprofessionals attended a two-day training in the Barton System the week before school began. The facilitator for the training had the materials copied and color tiles and alphabet tiles ready for each of the participants. The teachers viewed the Barton training DVDs and practiced the lessons with each other. Levels one and two were primarily studied. Each teacher was given a set of DVDs for each of the first four levels to review and study as needed. Teachers will meet again prior to the next school year to review and discuss any questions, to watch the DVDs for Levels 3 and 4, and then practice the lessons with each other.

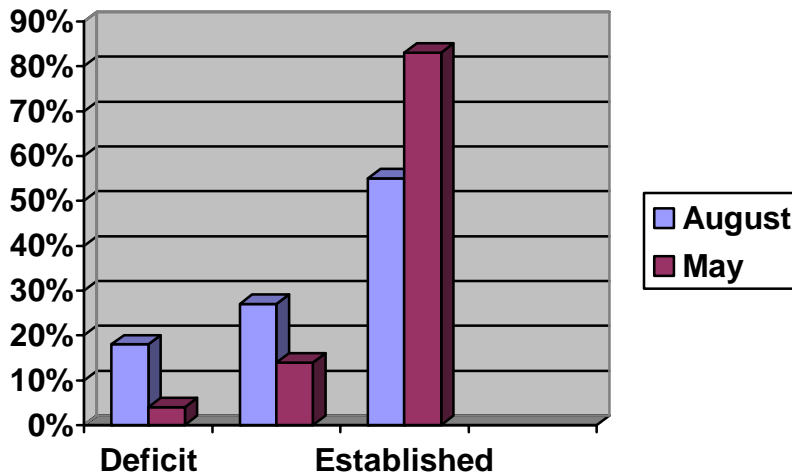
A retired teacher will be employed part-time during the next school year to provide additional Barton instruction to students in upper grades. It is more time consuming to help an older student catch up to his grade level because he is much further behind than Kindergarten and first grade students. But these children cannot be overlooked. Funding for additional instructors will be a goal to achieve next year.

The following graphs show the growth of K-1 students following intervention.

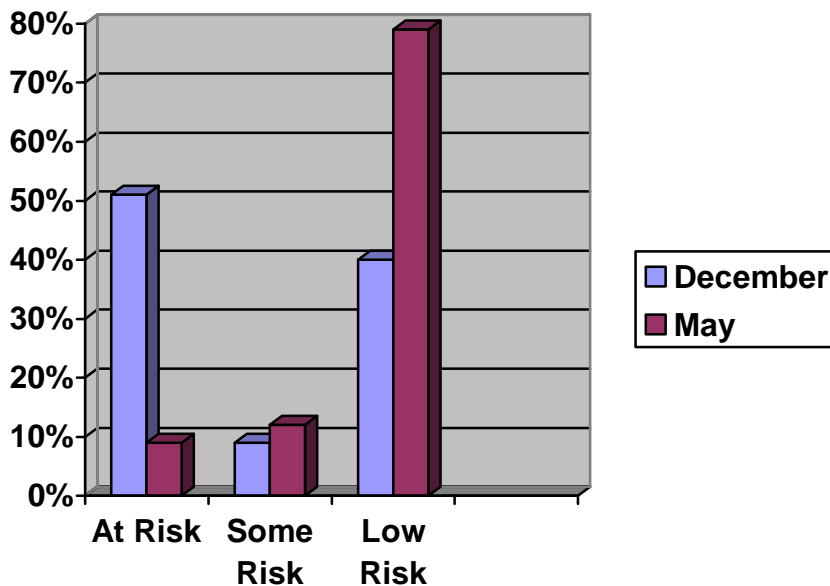
# DIBELS Results Kindergarten and First Grade 2006-2007

Percent of students in each category  
on the DIBELS tests

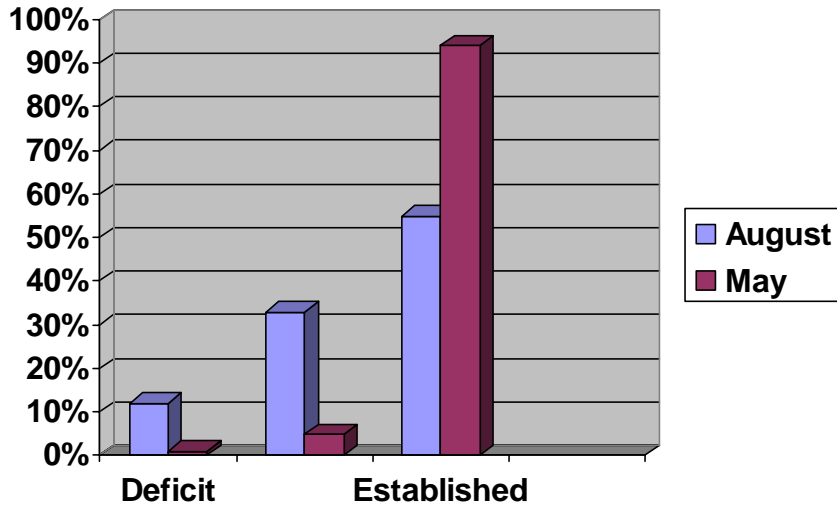
## Kindergarten – Phoneme Segmentation Fluency



## Kindergarten – Nonsense Word Fluency



### First Grade - Phoneme Segmentation Fluency



### First Grade – Nonsense Word Fluency

