



MESSAGE FROM UTLA ELEMENTARY VICE PRESIDENT JUAN RAMIREZ

Issues with DIBELS® testing

Numerous members have contacted UTLA with serious concerns about the implementation of DIBELS® (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills), and we share those concerns.

The problems fall into three major categories:

- LAUSD is asking some teachers to use their own electronic devices (iPads, smartphones, etc.) to administer the assessment. It is LAUSD's responsibility to provide the tools you need to implement the District's programs—you should not be forced to use your personal devices to do District work (and, in fact, using your own devices could expose your personal information to LAUSD).
- Many UTLA members have not been trained in the assessment but are being asked to administer it as if they had been. LAUSD is also not paying members during the school year for time spent in training.
- Some teachers are being asked to train others in the program, even though they are not certified to do so and the time it would take to do so impacts instructional time with students.

We are sending you a sample letter to give to your principal (also give a copy to your chapter chair), so that your concerns can be put on record. Put a checkmark by the issues that apply in your case. Please also email your concerns about this issue to webmaster@utla.net.

UTLA does not necessarily have a problem with the DIBELS® assessment itself; our concerns are with the poorly planned rollout of the program.

Juan Ramirez
UTLA Elementary Vice President

SAMPLE LETTER

September 26, 2011

Dear Principal,

The directive issued by you, on behalf of the LAUSD, to test each student using the “Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills” (i.e. DIBELS®) is problematic. Therefore I feel the need, as an impacted teacher, to delineate the problems associated with this directive.

Specifically, the roadblocks to successful delivery on the District’s directive to me are:

- I have no computer that can handle this task in my classroom, no PDA or smartphone issued by the District to do this work.

- I have no training by the District in administering DIBELS® or I have been asked to train others with no certification to do so nor am I willing to train during the school day or time after school that is devoted to student work and planning. There are, however, people in the District who are out of the classroom who should be assigned this task.

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It is because of the major roadblocks listed above that I wanted to put my concerns in writing and make a formal request that you relay this information to your superiors and ask that I be given the capacity to do the job that I am being required to do. Further, I am informing you that I am concerned about the loss of instructional time due to the lack of the necessary instruments and training to properly perform the assessment.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation and assistance in resolving the problems indicated above.

Respectfully submitted,