

Guidance Manual on the
THIRD GRADE READING GUARANTEE
SCHOOL YEAR 2022-2023



The Ohio Department of Education created this guidance manual to help school districts, community schools and chartered nonpublic schools understand the requirements of the Third Grade Reading Guarantee and connect these requirements to instructional practices grounded in the science of reading. Each section, except for the Federal Funding, Data Reporting and Chartered Nonpublic Schools sections, is organized by the Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) research-based practice and the requirements under the Third Grade Reading Guarantee. Only practices outlined under the headings “Requirements under the Third Grade Reading Guarantee” are required by state law.

To view Department-created resources for administrators, educators and parents, visit the [literacy webpage](#). To see the law regarding Ohio’s Third Grade Reading Guarantee for public school districts and community schools, go to [Ohio Revised Code 3313.608](#). For the Third Grade Reading Guarantee law regarding chartered nonpublic schools, go to [ORC 3301.163](#).

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Universal Reading Screening (Fall Reading Diagnostic) - Administration

MULTI-TIERED SYSTEM OF SUPPORT - FOCUS: ASSESSMENT

A school does screening at the beginning of the school year and sometimes repeats it two to three times throughout the school year to identify or predict students who may be at risk for poor learning outcomes. Universal screening assessments, also called benchmark assessments, typically are brief, conducted with all students at a grade level, and followed by additional testing or short-term progress monitoring to verify students' risk status ([Center on Response to Intervention](#)).

More information on universal screening, including links to the research supporting the practice, related professional development and reviews of screening tools, is available on the [National Center for Improving Literacy's website](#).

REQUIREMENTS UNDER THE THIRD GRADE READING GUARANTEE

***Important note regarding terminology used in Ohio law:** The term "reading diagnostic," when expressed in Ohio law as a requirement for all students, describes the research-based practice of reading screening. This section of the guidance manual will use the term "reading diagnostic," since it is language used in Ohio Revised Code.

Districts and schools must adopt policies and procedures for annually assessing the reading skills of each student in grades K-3. Each year, districts and schools must administer the reading diagnostic by Sept. 30 for grades 1-3 and during the first 20 days of instruction for kindergarten students.

Every district and school must administer a reading diagnostic from the state-approved list or use the [state-developed diagnostic](#).

The results of the reading diagnostic determine whether a child is on-track or not on-track in reading. A child is on-track, or reading at or above grade level, at the beginning of each grade if the child is reading at the level set by Ohio's Learning Standards for the end of the previous grade. For example, a third grade student is on-track in reading if the child's fall reading diagnostic shows that he or she is reading at least at the level expected at the end of grade 2. A student is not on-track, or reading below grade level, if he or she is not reading at least at the level set by Ohio's Learning Standards for the end of the previous grade.

Below are the reading diagnostic options districts may use to meet the deadlines set by the Third Grade Reading Guarantee.

Reading Diagnostic Options for 2019-2020 School Year	
Grade Level	Reading screening options to meet the Sept. 30 deadline for grades 1-3 and within the first 20 days of instruction for kindergarten
Kindergarten	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KRA <i>Language and Literacy</i> area • Department Kindergarten Screener • Comparable Tool <i>from Department-approved list</i>
Grade 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department Grade 1 Screener • Comparable Tool <i>from Department-approved list</i>
Grade 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department Grade 2 Screener • Comparable Tool <i>from Department-approved list</i>
Grade 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department Grade 3 Screener • Comparable Tool <i>from Department-approved list</i>

KINDERGARTEN READINESS ASSESSMENT-REVISED

Public school districts and community schools must administer the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment-Revised (KRA-R) to all first-time kindergarten students. The KRA-R Language and Literacy domain may be used to meet the requirement of a reading diagnostic for the Third Grade Reading Guarantee. The Language and Literacy domain cut score for on-track in reading is 263 (scaled score) and above. If a student scores 262 or lower on the Language and Literacy domain, the child is not on track for reading on grade level. The cut score refers to the Language and Literacy subscore only, not the Overall score.

Districts will be required to submit both KRA-R and reading diagnostic results through the Education Management Information System (EMIS). If a district uses the Language and Literacy domain of the KRA-R to meet the reading diagnostic requirement for the Third Grade Reading Guarantee, the district will report the on-track or not-on-track status based on the KRA-R Language and Literacy domain score. The district also will report the Overall and Domain scale scores for the KRA-R to EMIS. More information on the KRA-R is available on the [Department's website](#).

STATE-APPROVED COMPARABLE TOOLS FOR READING SCREENING

The table below represents the 2022-2023 list of state-approved comparable tools for reading screening. The state may revisit the list annually, and it is limited by vendors voluntarily applying to be placed on this list. Scoring information for each approved vendor assessment is located on the Department website.

Districts are expected to use the vendor-provided on-track/not on-track scores as a minimum standard when reporting this information to the Department.

Vendor	Assessment	Approved Grade Levels
Amplify Education, Inc.	<i>mCLASS: DIBELS 8th Edition</i>	K-3
Curriculum Associates, LLC	<i>i-Ready Assessment</i>	K-3
Acadience Reading Inc. (DBA Dynamic Measurement Group)	<i>Acadience Reading K-6</i>	K-3
Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA)	<i>Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) for Reading MAP Reading Fluency</i>	K-3
NCS Pearson, Inc., through the Clinical Assessment Division	<i>aimswebPlus</i>	K-3
Lexia Voyager Sopris Learning, Inc.	<i>Acadience Reading K-6 (Formerly DIBELS Next)</i>	K-3
Renaissance Learning, Inc.	<i>STAR Reading</i>	1-3
Renaissance Learning, Inc.	<i>STAR Early Literacy</i>	K-3
Riverside Insights	<i>Iowa Assessments Forms E/F/G IowaFLEX</i>	K-3
Lexia Learning Systems, LLC	<i>Lexia RAPID Assessment</i>	K-3
Istation	<i>Istation's Indicators of Progress Early Reading (ISIP ER)</i>	K-3

TRANSFER STUDENTS IN GRADES K-3**No known reading diagnostic:**

If a K-3 student transfers to the district, or to a different school within the district, and has not been given an approved reading diagnostic in the current school year by the district or school the student previously attended, the board of education of each city, local and exempted village school district must administer the reading diagnostic within 30 days after the date of transfer.

The new district or building must give the same reading diagnostic it administered to other students for the Third Grade Reading Guarantee. The KRA-R is the only exception to this because schools cannot administer the KRA-R after the first 20 days of instruction. In that case, districts and schools must provide a different reading diagnostic for kindergarteners enrolling after the first 20 instructional days of the school year.

If the district or school to which the student transfers cannot determine whether the student has been administered an approved reading diagnostic in the current school year, the district or school must administer a reading diagnostic to the student.

If a transferred student scores not on-track on a diagnostic, the district or school must develop a Reading Improvement and Monitoring Plan within 60 days of receiving the results of that student's reading diagnostic.

If a student transfers near the beginning of the year, the district or school has the longer of these options to give the reading screener:

- Thirty days; or
- The number of days remaining until the diagnostic deadline.

If a student enrolls in a district with fewer than 30 calendar days remaining in the school year, the school is not required to administer the reading diagnostic to this student.

Student completed a reading diagnostic at previous school:

If a student transfers at any point during the school year having taken a reading diagnostic administered for the Third Grade Reading Guarantee, the receiving school may use that diagnostic's *on-track/not on-track* results. The school also may reassess the student using the reading diagnostic the school administered to other students for the Third Grade Reading Guarantee. The school may base a new Reading Improvement and Monitoring Plan on these results.

Schools must honor the previous school's Reading Improvement and Monitoring Plan if the child's parent or guardian wants it to continue. Modifications to the plan can occur for a transfer student if:

- The process for modification in the plan allows for a change;
- The parent or guardian of the student requests or consents to the change; or
- The school reassesses the student using the reading diagnostic it administered to other students for the Third Grade Reading Guarantee.

Universal Reading Screening (Fall Reading Diagnostic) - Use of Screening Results**MULTI-TIERED SYSTEM OF SUPPORT - FOCUS: ASSESSMENT**

Individual Student Data: The primary goal of screening is to accurately identify students who are at risk for poor learning outcomes. This is why it is important that screening measures are valid, reliable, efficient and produce the least amount of false negative and false positive results. A false negative result occurs when a child is identified as not at risk but in fact is at risk. A false positive occurs when a child is identified at risk but in fact is not at risk. Additionally, when a student is assessed using screeners that have not been made accessible, false-negative data often is the result.

Once a student is identified by a screener as at risk, additional diagnostic, performance or other observation data may need to be collected to determine the student's academic need in a specific component of reading. The school then applies instructional decision rules to match the student with the right set of skills and instructional practices.

School and Grade-Level Data: Screening data at the school and grade levels allow for instructional decision-making, provide evidence of curriculum effectiveness and inform measurable school improvement goals.

District-Level Data: Screening data can reflect evidence of curriculum effectiveness across schools and grade levels, show effectiveness of Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) or Response to Intervention (RTI) structures in a district and inform continuous improvement decisions.

Screening data also can provide a teacher, school and district with evidence of effectiveness of instruction. If the results of the screening data show a large percentage of students are experiencing language or literacy challenges, it could indicate the instruction or curriculum might not be effective or may not have been effective in one or more previous school years ([Center on Response to Intervention](#)).

REQUIREMENTS UNDER THE THIRD GRADE READING GUARANTEE

***Important note regarding terminology used in Ohio law:** The term "reading diagnostic," when expressed in Ohio law as a requirement for all students, describes the research-based practice of reading screening. This section of the guidance manual will use the term "reading diagnostic," since it is language used in Ohio Revised Code.

FOR K-3 STUDENTS WHO ARE NOT ON-TRACK

If the reading diagnostic shows that a student is not on-track (is reading below grade level), schools must communicate the following, as soon as possible and in writing, to the parents:

- Notice that their child is not reading on grade level;
- A description of current services the student is receiving;
- A description of proposed supplemental instructional services;
- Notice that Ohio's grade 3 English language arts test is not the sole factor determining promotion; and
- Notice that unless the student reaches the appropriate level of reading competency by the end of grade 3, the student will be retained, unless he or she is exempt from retention.

The Department encourages districts and schools to make every effort to communicate with parents in person or by phone before sending written notification.

For each student who is *not on-track* (reading below grade level), the school also must:

- Administer any necessary informal or formal diagnostic assessments to determine the instructional needs of the student;
- Immediately provide reading instruction and/or intervention using research-based reading strategies that have been shown to be successful in improving reading among low-performing readers and are targeted at the student's identified reading deficiencies; and
- Develop a Reading Improvement and Monitoring Plan within 60 days of receiving the student's diagnostic result.

Additionally, if the student also is a child with a disability and has an Individualized Education Program, additional requirements, outlined in the Children with Disabilities section, must be documented in the Reading Improvement and Monitoring Plan and Individualized Education Program.

FOR K-3 STUDENTS WHO ARE ON-TRACK

Schools may electively place students who are on-track on Reading Improvement and Monitoring Plans if there is evidence showing the student needs support in reading and they decide these students need additional help with reading. If a school electively places an on-track student on a Reading Improvement and Monitoring Plan, it must meet all of the Reading Improvement and Monitoring Plan requirements, [including reporting requirements](#).

A CHANGE IN A STUDENT'S NOT ON-TRACK STATUS

If a student is not on-track based on the reading diagnostic, the student officially will be not on-track and on a Reading Improvement and Monitoring Plan until the student scores on-track on the following school year's reading diagnostic or scores proficient (700) or higher on Ohio's State Test for grade 3 English language arts. A student's reported on-track/not on-track status in EMIS must be based only on the outcome of the required fall reading diagnostic.

If a student in grades 1-3 is not on-track by Sept. 30 or a student in kindergarten is not on-track within the first 20 days of instruction but the student scores on-track on a reading assessment during the same school year, the school may revise the student's Reading Improvement and Monitoring Plan based on the new test results. However, the Reading Improvement and Monitoring Plan cannot be terminated, and no change is made to the student's not on-track status in EMIS for the current school year. In other words, if the school benchmarks all students three times a year and the student scores on-track on the winter or spring assessment, the school may revise the student's Reading Improvement and Monitoring Plan based on the new test results.

Frequently asked question: Why doesn't a student's reported *on-track/not on-track* status change in EMIS if the student demonstrates during the school year that he or she is reading on grade level (either through another administration of the reading diagnostic or by demonstrating proficiency on the fall administration of the grade 3 English language arts test)?

Answer:

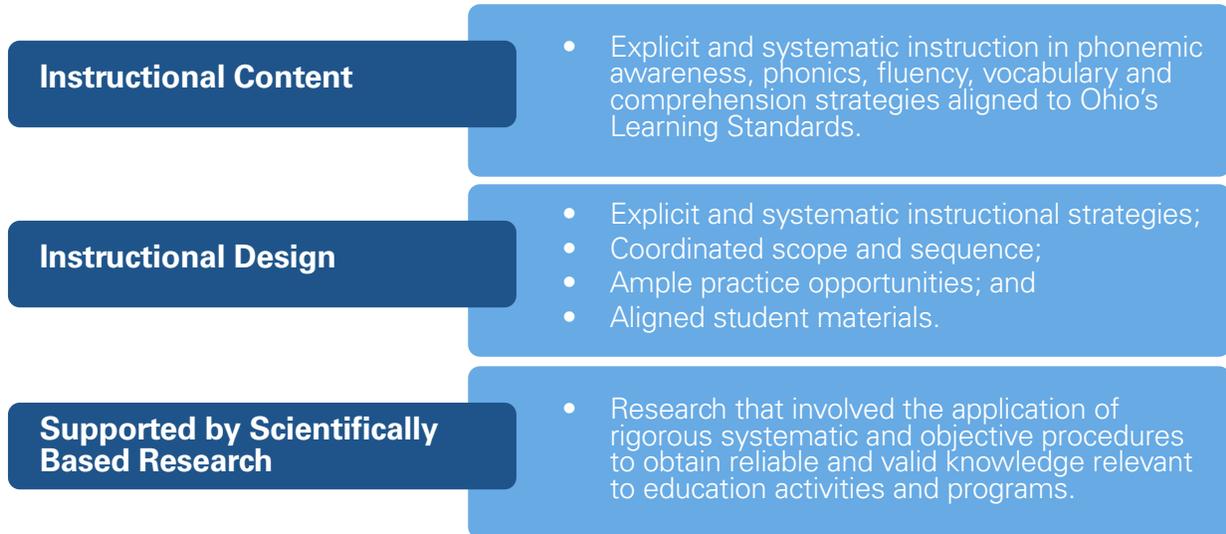
1. This information is collected in EMIS with the Reading Diagnostic Result Element. State law requires districts to administer the reading diagnostic to students by Sept. 30 in grades 1-3 and within the first 20 days of instruction for kindergarten students. If the results of a different test administration are reported to EMIS, the data no longer represents the required assessment. More information on how to report the results of the reading diagnostic is available in the [EMIS Manual](#).
2. The data submitted to EMIS for the Reading Diagnostic Result Element is used for the Early Literacy component on the Ohio School Report Cards.
 - o This measure compares the Reading Diagnostic Result from year to year. Districts and schools must report each student's on-track/not on-track status each year according to the requirements in the Third Grade Reading Guarantee law and the EMIS manual reporting instructions to ensure the calculation is accurate and the district or school receives full credit in the measure for students who move from not on-track in year one to on-track in year two.
 - o The Department's [website](#) contains more information on how the Early Literacy Component of the Ohio School Report Cards is calculated.

Instructional Supports for Students

MULTI-TIERED SYSTEM OF SUPPORT FOCUS: TIERED RESEARCH-BASED INSTRUCTION, INCREASING INTENSITY OF INSTRUCTION AND PROGRESS MONITORING

RESEARCH-BASED READING INSTRUCTION

Research-based reading instruction includes:



Explicit instruction: The words and actions of the teacher are unambiguous, direct and visible, making it clear what students are to do and learn. Nothing is left to guesswork (Florida Center for Reading Research).

Systematic instruction: Establishes what will be taught and the order of instruction, building on the knowledge and skills a student must have to learn through a planned scope and sequence for all areas of reading (Florida Center for Reading Research).

Frequently asked question: What is the difference between “research-derived” and “research-supported” instructional practice?

Research-derived: Content and methods are supported by previous empirical work, theory and general knowledge (Florida Center for Reading Research). For example, a curriculum may be based upon research on the five components of reading, however, the curriculum itself has never been the subject of research. For more information, see the National Center for Improving Literacy’s webpage titled [What Do We Mean by Evidence-Based?](#)

Research-supported: The strategy, program or curriculum itself has been the subject of peer-reviewed, independent research.



WARNING: Not all research-based reading instruction programs and interventions are created equal:

- Research-based does not necessarily mean the program is effective or will be effective for all students;
- Some research-derived programs will include both principles supported by research and principles not supported by research.
- Make note of who conducted and who was included in the research. Some research will make claims about effectiveness, but when reading closer, the research was conducted with a very unique or specific profile/population of students and may not generalize to all learners.

Resources to support a district or school’s selection of research-based reading instructional materials is available on the Department’s [literacy webpage](#).

THE THREE-TIER MODEL OF INSTRUCTION

“The three-tier model [of instruction] is a model of **prevention**, linking scientifically based reading research to practice, assessment, and professional development” (Honig, Diamond & Gutlohn, 2013). With effective Tier 1 instruction and research-based instruction within all tiers, researchers estimate 95 percent of students can be taught to read at the proficient level (Mathes, et al. 2005).

The purpose of the three-tier model of instruction is to address reading difficulties as quickly as possible, not to keep students in intervention for multiple years (Kilpatrick, 2015). Each tier adds a level of intensity that is meant to accelerate the student’s rate of learning. As a student responds positively to the instruction, the intensity is gradually faded. It is important to understand that movement within the tiers of instruction is fluid and data-based and the tiers represent intensity of instruction and supports, not categories of students. All students should be provided access to all three tiers. Districts must ensure each and every student, regardless of severity of disability, receives full access to high-quality Tier 1 instruction first and foremost. In addition, all students should be provided with Tiers 2 and 3 interventions/instruction as needed based on individual screening and diagnostic data.

Below are descriptions of the three tiers of instruction referenced in this publication.

<p>Tier 1 Instruction: High-quality research-based reading instruction, including small-group differentiation, provided to all students.</p> 	<p>Tier 2 Instruction: <i>Additional research-based instruction provided to students who are at risk for reading failure or who demonstrate reading difficulties in small clusters of targeted skills within one or more strands of language and literacy. This instruction is provided in addition to Tier 1 instruction.</i></p>	<p>Tier 3 Instruction: <i>More intensive level of research-based instruction or intervention that is provided to Tiers 1 and 2 based on data showing large, broad-spanning skill gaps across strands of language and literacy for students who need more intensive and targeted re-instruction.</i></p>
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(Kilpatrick, 2015)

INTENSITY OF INSTRUCTION

INCREASING INTENSITY OF INSTRUCTION

Increasing intensity is characterized by adjusting factors, based on data, to target a student’s needs. Strategies for increasing intensity include, but are not limited to, changes to group size, frequency, duration, instructional principles (for example, instructional methods, materials, range of or specific learning targets) included in the instruction or type of feedback ([National Center on Intensive Intervention](#)).

PROGRESS MONITORING

Progress monitoring is used to:

1. Monitor a student’s response to instruction or intervention to ensure instruction is accelerating the student’s learning and closing the gap;
2. Identify students who are not making adequate progress; and
3. Compare different forms of instruction.

Research demonstrates that when progress monitoring tools are used to make instructional decisions, specifically curriculum-based measures, students learn more, teachers’ decision-making improves and students are more aware of their own achievement ([Center on Response to Intervention](#)).

Curriculum-Based Measure: Curriculum-based measure, a type of curriculum-based assessment, is a measurement approach used to screen students or monitor student progress in mathematics, reading, writing, spelling and other content areas. With curriculum-based measure, teachers and schools can assess individual responsiveness to instruction. When a student proves unresponsive to the instructional program, curriculum-based measure signals the team to revise the program to better align with the individual student’s needs. Curriculum-based measure is a distinctive form of curriculum-based assessment because of three additional properties: (1) Each curriculum-based measure test is an alternate form of equivalent difficulty; (2) Curriculum-based measure is an overall indicator of competence in the target curriculum; and (3) Curriculum-based measure is standardized, with its reliability and validity well documented. These properties allow teachers and schools to look at student growth over time ([Center on Response to Intervention](#)).

Resources to support a district or school’s selection and use of strategies, tools and assessments for research-based reading instruction are available on the Department’s [literacy webpage](#).

REQUIREMENTS UNDER THE THIRD GRADE READING GUARANTEE

INSTRUCTION AND INTERVENTION

All instruction and intervention required under the Third Grade Reading Guarantee must be research-based reading strategies successful in improving reading among students with reading difficulties and instruction targeted at the student's identified reading difficulties. Any intervention or remediation services required by the Third Grade Reading Guarantee must include intensive, explicit and systematic instruction.

Reading Improvement and Monitoring Plans

Reading Improvement and Monitoring Plans allow teachers and parents to work together to understand the student's reading difficulties and outline reading instruction and support. The instructional services selected for a student on a Reading Improvement and Monitoring Plan rely on the judgment of the student's teacher and parents

A template for the Reading Improvement and Monitoring Plan is available on the Department's [Third Grade Reading Guarantee Teacher Resources webpage](#).

Districts and schools must create Reading Improvement and Monitoring Plans (RIMP) for a student who is not on-track (reading below grade level) within 60 days of receiving the reading diagnostic results. The district must involve the student's parent or guardian and the classroom teacher in developing the plan.

A Reading Improvement and Monitoring Plan must include:

- Identification of the student's specific reading deficiency;
- A description of proposed supplemental instruction services that will target the student's identified reading deficiencies;
- Opportunities for the student's parents or guardians to be involved in the instructional services;
- A process to monitor the implementation of the student's instructional services (progress monitoring);
- A reading curriculum during regular school hours that:
 - o Helps students read at grade level;
 - o Provides scientifically based and reliable assessment; and
 - o Provides initial and ongoing analysis of each student's reading progress.
- A statement that unless the student attains the appropriate level of reading competency by the end of grade 3, the student will be retained unless otherwise exempt.

For K-3 students who are on-track: A school may electively place a student who scores on-track on the reading diagnostic on a Reading Improvement and Monitoring Plan if there is evidence of reading difficulties and it decides the student needs additional help with reading. If a school electively places an on-track student on a Reading Improvement and Monitoring Plan, it must adhere to all the requirements of a Reading Improvement and Monitoring Plan, including [reporting requirements](#).

Reading Improvement and Monitoring Plan Intervention EMIS Codes: The list of Reading Improvement and Monitoring Plan intervention codes can be found on the [Department's website](#). A [RIMP Intervention video series](#) is available on the Third Grade Reading Guarantee webpage. Section 2.9 of the EMIS Manual includes a brief description of each Reading Improvement and Monitoring Plan Intervention, the assigned Program Code and EMIS reporting instructions.

Students with disabilities: Students with disabilities who have Individualized Education Programs and are not on-track for reading must have Reading Improvement and Monitoring Plans that align and do not conflict with their IEPs. More information is available in the section of this manual titled [Students with Disabilities](#).

Retention in the Third Grade

MULTI-TIERED SYSTEM OF SUPPORT - FOCUS: INTENSIVE INTERVENTION

INTENSIVE INTERVENTION

Intensive intervention is designed to address severe and persistent learning or behavior difficulties. It also is used for students who have proven nonresponsive to Tier 2 or secondary intervention. Intensive interventions are characterized by increased intensity (for example, smaller-group or direct, 1:1 instruction or intervention, targeted re-instruction across a larger strand of skills using more accessible methods and/or materials, increased time) and individualization of academic or behavioral intervention. Intensive intervention is sometimes synonymous with Tier 3 or interventions delivered within the tertiary prevention level ([National Center on Intensive Intervention](#)).

Frequently asked question: Why is it essential, and required in the Third Grade Reading Guarantee law, to provide retained third grade students with intensive intervention?

Answer from research:

“Reviews and meta-analyses have revealed larger effects for reading interventions provided in the early stages of reading acquisition than for those provided in Grades 3 and higher... Although the reading difficulties of students in Grades 3-5 can be remediated through intensive small group or one-on-one intervention, this is typically more challenging than providing intervention in the earlier grades...” (Denton, 2017).

REQUIREMENTS UNDER THE THIRD GRADE READING GUARANTEE

Each year, districts and schools must retain students who score below the promotion score on Ohio’s State Test for grade 3 English language arts, unless those students are exempt from retention under the Third Grade Reading Guarantee (see [exemptions](#) on page 15).

State law requires the State Board of Education to annually increase the promotion score on Ohio’s State Test for grade 3 English language arts until it reaches proficient for the 2024-2025 school year. Accordingly, the State Board voted to raise the promotion score for grade 3 English language arts to **685** for the 2022-2023 school year. Any student who scores 685 or higher on the English language arts scaled score will be eligible for promotion to fourth grade at the end of the 2022-2023 school year.

In addition, the Department has set the reading subscore alternative assessment score for Ohio’s State Test for grade 3 English language arts test at **47** for the 2022-2023 school year. Any student who scores 47 or higher on the reading subscore will be eligible for promotion to fourth grade at the end of the 2022-2023 school year, even if the student scores below 685 on Ohio’s State Test for grade 3 English language arts.

INSTRUCTIONAL REQUIREMENTS

Districts and schools must provide **intensive intervention** in reading that addresses the areas of reading difficulty identified by the fall reading diagnostic, and any other relevant assessment, for at least 90 minutes of reading instruction per day and may include any of the following:

- Small-group instruction;
- Reduced teacher-student ratios;
- More frequent progress monitoring;
- Tutoring or mentoring;
- Transition classes containing students in grades 3-4;
- Summer reading camp; or
- Extended school day, week or year.

Intensive remediation services must target the student’s identified reading difficulties. Any intervention or remediation services required by the Third Grade Reading Guarantee must include **intensive, explicit** and **systematic** instruction.

A student who is retained in third grade under the Third Grade Reading Guarantee is required to receive intensive intervention in reading. Enrollment in third grade does *not* qualify as this intensive intervention.

SERVICES FROM OUTSIDE PROVIDERS

Districts and schools must offer retained third grade students intervention or tutoring services from at least one provider other than the district. Because local circumstances and needs vary, each district has authority to select its own service provider. Districts and schools may, but are not required to, use this [screening tool](#) to help evaluate potential service providers.

INSTRUCTION IN OTHER ACADEMIC SUBJECTS

Districts and schools are responsible for designing instructional programs to meet the needs of individual students. Teachers are expected to differentiate instruction for the varying learning needs of the students in their classrooms. If a retained third grade student shows proficiency in mathematics, social studies or science, the student must receive instruction corresponding to his or her ability in that subject area.

The decision to provide higher-level instruction and/or material is based on student data, progress monitoring and individual learning needs. Districts will benefit from adopting a policy stating how this will be accomplished and communicated to the parents or guardians of retained students. It’s important for districts and schools to consider their staff, building configuration, curriculum demands and mid-year promotion policy when determining how this higher-level instruction is delivered to a retained third grade student.

Retained third grade students must take Ohio’s third grade state tests in all subject areas, even if they are receiving advanced instruction in other academic subjects. Retained students must be reported in EMIS as third grade students in all subject areas until the district promotes them to fourth grade.

The Department encourages districts to use Ohio’s State Test in mathematics, approved vendor assessments for student growth, local district-approved assessments for student growth and classroom assessments when determining whether a student is proficient in each academic subject area. This information should be in the student’s cumulative folder so it is available if the student transfers to another district. Proficiency is determined by meeting end-of-year expectations for third-grade students.

MID-YEAR PROMOTION

Districts and schools must establish a policy for retained third grade students to be promoted mid-year to grade 4 if they demonstrate they are reading at or above grade level. Retained students are third grade students in all subjects, even if they are receiving higher-level instruction in specific subject areas in which they have demonstrated proficiency, until they are promoted through this policy to fourth grade. The table below can be used to determine the state assessments required for each scenario that applies to a retained third grade student:

Enrollment Status at the Start of the School Year	Receives Advanced Instruction in At Least One Other Subject Area	Meets District’s Criteria for Mid-Year Promotion	State Test Participation
Retained Third Grade Student	No	No	Grade 3 ELA Grade 3 Mathematics
Retained Third Grade Student	No	Yes	Grade 4 ELA Grade 4 Mathematics
Retained Third Grade Student	Yes	No	Grade 3 ELA Grade 3 Mathematics
Retained Third Grade Student	Yes	Yes	Grade 4 ELA Grade 4 Mathematics

STUDENTS RETAINED IN THIRD GRADE FOR NON-READING REASONS

Students retained in grade 3 for non-reading reasons alone, such as poor math grades or attendance issues, are not required to have these services. If the student is retained in grade 3 for more than one reason, one of which includes the Third Grade Reading Guarantee, the district must provide the services outlined in law.

EXEMPTIONS TO RETENTION

Each year, students scoring below the promotion score on Ohio’s grade 3 English language arts test must be retained, except for the following students:

- A student who is an English learner enrolled in U.S. schools for fewer than three full school years and with fewer than three years of instruction in an English as a second language program;
- A student whose Individualized Education Program specifically exempts the student from retention under the Third Grade Reading Guarantee (more information is available in the [Students with Disabilities](#) section of this manual);
- A student who demonstrates reading competency on an alternative assessment for reading approved by the Department (see detailed guidance below);
- A student whose Individualized Education Program shows the student received intensive remediation in reading for two years and the student previously was retained in any of grades kindergarten through 3; and
- A student who received intensive remediation in reading for two years and previously was retained in any of grades kindergarten through 3.**

**A student who is promoted under this exemption must continue to receive intensive reading instruction in grade 4. This instruction shall include an altered instructional day that includes specialized, diagnostic information and specific, research-based reading strategies for the student that have been successful in improving reading among low-performing readers.

Detailed Guidance: Alternative Reading Assessments

The alternative reading assessment is one or more standardized assessments for reading approved by the Department for the Third Grade Reading Guarantee. Alternative reading assessments allow third grade students to demonstrate an acceptable level of reading performance for promotion to the fourth grade. Administering the approved vendor alternative reading assessments is optional for districts. The district is responsible for the cost of approved vendor alternative reading assessments. Districts may administer the approved vendor alternative reading assessment twice during the school year and once during the summer to mimic Ohio’s grade 3 English language arts test administration. Districts and schools should set dates for administering these assessments.

The table below represents the list of Department-approved alternative reading assessments for the 2022-2023 school year. Alternative assessment promotion scores for the 2022-2023 school year are posted on the [Department’s website](#).

Assessment	Service Summary
Iowa Assessments	Iowa Assessments – Form E, F & G Reading Test Part 1 and Part 2, Level 9 (Grade 3)
Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA)-Measurement of Academic Progress (MAP)	Measurement of Academic Progress (MAP) for Reading Assessments
Terra Nova 3	Terra Nova, Third Edition Reading Grade 3
Renaissance Learning STAR Reading Third Grade Reading Proficiency Assessment	STAR Reading Third Grade Proficiency Assessment
i-Ready	Curriculum Associates, LLC. i-Ready

STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN STATE TESTS

Federal and state laws require all districts and schools to test all students in specific grades and courses. There is no state law that allows a parent or student to opt out of state testing, and there is no state test opt-out procedure or form. To help parents make informed decisions, schools should tell parents, in writing, the possible consequences of withdrawing their children from certain state tests. More information on student participation in state tests is available on the [Department's website](#).

If a student does not take Ohio's State Test for grade 3 English language arts during the testing dates, the student will not have a score on that test. Unless the student qualifies for an exemption, the district will retain the student (see Exemptions to Retention). Also, the student may be counted as "not proficient" for purposes of the [Early Literacy component on the Ohio School Report Cards](#). More information about the Early Literacy component of the Ohio School Report Cards is available on the [Department's website](#).

TRANSFER STUDENTS ENROLLING IN THIRD GRADE

A third grade student must achieve a promotion score at some time during the third grade year regardless of the date of enrollment, unless the student is exempt. Districts and schools should strongly consider making the summer administration of the Ohio's State Test for grade 3 English language arts and/or one of the approved alternative reading assessments available if a student has missed the spring testing window for Ohio's State Test for grade 3 English language arts, has not achieved a promotion score on the fall grade 3 English language arts test and is not exempt from retention under the Third Grade Reading Guarantee.

Promotion to Fourth Grade

MULTI-TIERED SYSTEM OF SUPPORT – FOCUS: SECONDARY APPLICATION

The three-tier model for instruction applies to all grade levels, including secondary education (upper elementary, middle school and high school). See the previous sections on [instructional supports](#) and [intensive intervention](#) to review this model. See also [Ohio's Plan to Raise Literacy Achievement](#)

REQUIREMENTS UNDER THE THIRD GRADE READING GUARANTEE

A third grade student who attains the promotion score on the grade 3 English language arts test is eligible for promotion at the end of the school year. The student can achieve this score in the fall, spring or summer administration of the grade 3 English language arts test. Also, students who qualify for the exemptions outlined in the [Retention in the Third Grade](#) section of this manual are eligible for promotion at the end of the school year. The decision on whether to promote a student to fourth grade who has attained the promotion score, or is exempt from having to attain the promotion score, is to be based on the district's promotion/placement policy.

INTERVENTION IN FOURTH GRADE

Students who score below proficient on Ohio's grade 3 English language arts test: State law requires schools to provide intervention services to all students who score below proficient in any skill on a state achievement test.¹

Students exempt from retention because they previously were retained in any of grades K-3 and received at least two years of intensive reading remediation: Schools are required to provide intensive reading instruction in grade 4 to students who are promoted to fourth grade under this exemption. This instruction must include an altered instructional day that includes specialized diagnostic information and specific research-based reading strategies for the student that have been successful in improving reading among low-performing readers.

The use of a Reading Improvement and Monitoring Plan in grade 4 and beyond: Districts and schools may, but are not required to, continue using a student's Reading Improvement and Monitoring Plan in grade 4 and beyond. Districts that choose to continue using a student's Reading Improvement and Monitoring Plan in grade 4 and beyond will report these interventions using Academic Intervention Program Codes, not Reading Improvement and Monitoring Plan Intervention Codes. More information on specific EMIS reporting codes is available in the [EMIS Manual](#).

¹ ORC 3301.0711(D)(1)

Teacher Qualifications

MULTI-TIERED SYSTEM OF SUPPORT – FOCUS: SUPPORTING TEACHERS IN PROVIDING RESEARCH-BASED READING INSTRUCTION

The three-tier model for instruction applies to all grade levels, including secondary education. See the previous sections on instructional supports and intensive intervention to review this model.



Information of Interest: In 2016, the National Council on Teacher Quality found that only 39% (up from 29% in 2014) of undergraduate elementary programs for teachers provide instruction in all five components of early reading instruction. Most programs include comprehension (75%), two-thirds include vocabulary (64%) and phonics (62%), but only half include fluency (48%) and phonemic awareness (46%) (Lubell & Putman, 2016).

Five Principles of Effective Professional Development as described by the [Center for Public Education](#):

The duration of PD must be significant and ongoing to allow time for teachers to learn a new strategy and grapple with the implementation problem.

(Darling-Hammond, et al. 2009)

There must be support for a teacher during the implementation stage that addresses the specific challenges of changing classroom and intervention practice.

(Truesdale, 2003; Knight, 2009)

Teachers' initial exposure to a concept should not be passive but rather should engage teachers through varied approaches so they can practice actively in making sense of a new practice.

(French, 1997; Roy, 2005; Richardson, 1998)

Modeling has been found to be highly effective in helping teachers to understand a new practice.

(Snow-Renner, 2005)

The content presented to teachers shouldn't be generic but instead specific to the discipline and/or grade level.

(Blank, de las Alas & Smith, 2007)

REQUIREMENTS UNDER THE THIRD GRADE READING GUARANTEE

A teacher of a third grade student who has been retained or is on a Reading Improvement and Monitoring Plan must have at least one year of teaching experience and must meet at least one of the following qualifications required in law (see **clarification of each on the next two pages**):

- Has a K-12 reading endorsement on the teacher's license;
- Completed a master's degree with a major in reading or literacy;
- Rated "most effective" for reading instruction consecutively for the most recent two years based on state-approved tests of student growth;
- Rated "above expected value-added" in reading instruction consecutively for the most recent two school years;
- Earned a passing score on a rigorous test of principles of scientifically research-based reading instruction (**The only test that satisfies this qualification is the Praxis 5205.**);
- Has an educator license issued on or after July 1, 2017, in early childhood (preK-3), middle childhood (4-9) education, or K-12 Intervention Specialists (Early Childhood, Mild/Moderate, Moderate/Intensive, Hearing Impaired, Visually Impaired, or Gifted) ; or
- Holds a license issued by the Board of Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology under Chapter 4753 of the Ohio Revised Code and a professional pupil services license as a school speech-pathologist issued by the State Board of Education.

First-Year Teachers: A teacher who does not have at least one year of teaching experience may serve as the teacher of record as long as the teacher holds one of the aforementioned qualifications and is assigned a mentor who meets the qualifications. A first-year teacher's Resident Educator mentor may serve in this role if he or she meets the teacher qualifications above. See more information on the [Resident Educator Program](#) on the Department's website.

The assigned teacher (teacher of record): The teacher to whom a student is assigned is the “teacher of record.” The classroom teacher is the primary teacher responsible for the student’s reading instruction and spends the most time with that student. The assigned teacher must maintain the necessary qualifications outlined by law and is responsible for assigning the student a reading grade. The teacher of record is responsible for the reading growth of the student. The student’s progress will be reported on that teacher’s student growth measure.

A teacher may provide any services required by the Third Grade Reading Guarantee in place of the student’s assigned teacher but must:

- Meet the teacher qualification requirements;
- Have the service approved by the teacher of record and school principal; and
- Document such an assignment in the student’s Reading Improvement and Monitoring Plan.

GUIDANCE FOR EACH TEACHER QUALIFICATION

One year of teaching experience: One year of teaching experience can include reading, but it is not required.

Reading endorsement: A reading endorsement is for K-12 and appears on a teacher’s certificate or license as #059902. No other endorsements fulfill this requirement. A passing score on a test is not required if there was no corresponding test required when the reading endorsement was earned.

The reading P-3 notation appearing on some early childhood P-3 licenses is not a reading endorsement. Educators whose early childhood licenses say “reading P-3” were not required to do additional reading coursework or testing.

Master’s in reading: A master’s degree must contain the words “reading” or “literacy” in the degree name or on the transcript as the major area of study, specialization or concentration. These words must be explicitly located somewhere on the transcript or diploma. Doctoral degrees in reading or literacy also qualify.

“Most effective” ratings: The teacher must receive the rating for the past two years to qualify. To determine a “most effective” rating, use comparable test data to determine whether a teacher has attained a level 5 on a scale of 1-5. A vendor must develop an equivalent leveling for its product. Districts may only use approved vendor assessments for student growth for this purpose.

“Above expected value-added” rating: The teacher must receive the rating for the past two years to qualify. The “above expected value-added growth” is a measure best suited for fourth or fifth grade educators who are moving to third grade assignments. Specifically, this designation is defined as being two standard deviations above the mean of expected student growth.

Reading instruction test: The only test that satisfies this qualification is the Praxis 5205. Passage of this test will not result in a reading endorsement. Information about the Praxis 5205 can be found on [Education Testing Services website](#).

Licenses issued on or after July 1, 2017: Educators issued licenses in early childhood (preK-3) or middle childhood (4-9) education on or after July 1, 2017, are required to take an additional licensure test in the foundations of reading (OAE 90). This test is aligned to Ohio’s Reading Competencies. Passing this test will not result in a reading endorsement and does not replace the Praxis 5205 for teachers who were issued licenses before July 1, 2017. Find more information on the [Foundations of Reading Test](#).

ALTERNATIVE TEACHER QUALIFICATION OPTIONS

For teachers with a valid, standard Ohio teaching license who do not meet the teacher qualifications requirements described on page 23, [Ohio law](#) provides alternative options for teachers of the following categories of **third grade students**:

- English learners in the United States for three years or fewer with Reading Improvement and Monitoring Plans or retained in third grade;
- Students with Individualized Education Programs with Reading Improvement and Monitoring Plans or retained in third grade.

Teachers of these students will meet the Third Grade Reading Guarantee's teacher qualification requirements if they hold one of the credentials listed below or completed one of the reading instruction programs listed below:

- National Board Certification in Literacy;
- The Institute for Multi-Sensory Education's (IMSE) Orton Gillingham 30-Hour Comprehensive Course Plus 45-Hour Practicum;
- Success for All Foundation's Initial Professional Development Plus School Year Practicum;
- Voyager Sopris Learning's Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling (LETRS) (Online or Print and Face-to-Face);
- Wilson Reading System Level 1 Certification;
- Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) endorsement or license; or
- Bilingual Education Endorsement.

Students with Disabilities

MULTI-TIERED SYSTEM OF SUPPORT – FOCUS: STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

In a multi-tiered system of support, every student has access to Tier 1 universal instruction. A multi-tiered system of support presumes that every student, including those with disabilities, will participate in the core curriculum, which includes small- and large-group instruction.

Intensive intervention and supports: Receiving intensive interventions and supports does not automatically mean a student will be evaluated for special education eligibility. Not all students receiving intensive supports are identified as students with disabilities. Additionally, not all students identified with disabilities need intensive supports in all areas.

REQUIREMENTS UNDER THE THIRD GRADE READING GUARANTEE

STUDENTS WITH SIGNIFICANT COGNITIVE DISABILITIES

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act requires that all students with disabilities are included in all general state and districtwide assessment programs, with appropriate accommodations and alternate assessments, if necessary, as indicated on their respective IEPs.²

In addition to the IDEA assessment requirement above, Ohio has new dyslexia screening requirements, which, in part, require administering annual dyslexia screenings beginning in the 2023-2024 school year and include all students in grades K-3 without any exemptions.³ For more information, visit [Ohio's Dyslexia Intervention and Support Frequently Asked Questions](#).

The Third Grade Reading Guarantee states that students with significant cognitive disabilities are exempt from the requirements outlined in the guarantee. However, significant cognitive disability is not a disability category under IDEA or in Ohio. A student with the most significant cognitive disability is determined by a team after reviewing all available data and utilizing the [Alternate Assessment Decision-Making Tool](#) beginning in grade 3.

A very small percentage of students are eligible to participate in the alternate assessment. Students qualify if all the criteria in the [Alternate Assessment Decision-Making Tool](#) are met. This decision should be made as close to the third quarter of third grade as possible, utilizing all state and local assessment data collected up to that point. If learners meet these requirements, they may be eligible for the Third Grade Reading Guarantee exemption; however, they still will need to meet the requirements for screening and assessments for all students, even students with significant cognitive disabilities as outlined above.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

[Each Child Means Each Child](#) is the companion document specific to students with disabilities that builds upon *Each Child, Our Future*, Ohio's Strategic Plan for Education. This plan focuses on improving learning experiences and outcomes for students with disabilities. Ohio supports practices reflective of the idea that all children, including children with most significant cognitive disabilities, can and are expected to reach higher standards and levels of achievement. This occurs when a collective effort by all educators, parents and community members works toward this educational model.

[Ohio's Plan to Raise Literacy Achievement](#) also supports the commitment of Ohio's belief that all learners, no matter the complexity of their disabilities, have the potential to grow their skills and knowledge in language and literacy.

This proactive approach will help shift mindsets toward high expectations for students with disabilities.

¹ 34 CFR § 300.160

² ORC 3323.251

WHAT CAN WE DO TO SUPPORT THIRD GRADE READING GUARANTEE ASSESSMENT ACCESS FOR ALL STUDENTS IN GRADES K-2?

It is highly recommended by the Department that students with Individualized Education Programs in grades kindergarten through 2 are not exempt from the requirements outlined in the Third Grade Reading Guarantee. In these grade levels, students should participate in reading screeners, diagnostics or other individually accessible assessments within the same time frames as their peers so schools and districts can gather data to make decisions about supports, services and interventions across grade levels.

For more information on how learners with alternate forms of communication, motor, cognitive and sensory differences can access and participate in state and local assessments, please visit the [Literacy Access for All website](#) to find information on Acadience/AIMSweb Access Guidance, the Assessment Decision Flowchart and the Communication Discovery Process. Find the Reading Improvement and Monitoring Plan Intervention videos on the [Department's Third Grade Reading Guarantee Teacher Resources page](#). For additional information on access, view the [Guidelines on Allowable Supports for the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment](#).

Each student's Individualized Education Program should address foundational skills for literacy as determined based on layers of data. For example, the Individualized Education Program should address the student's mode of communication and communicative intent if the data show that communication has been a barrier to participation in assessment and/or instruction. In addition, if communication is the focus of intervention, the Reading Improvement and Monitoring Plan would reflect this and link to the EMIS code "Explicit Intervention in Communication/Language."

EXEMPTIONS FOR THIRD GRADE READING GUARANTEE IN THE INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM

Based on the guidance above, the decision about the Third Grade Reading Guarantee exemption is linked to a checkbox on the Individualized Education Program within section 13, titled "Exemptions," and is only applicable for students in third grade, as close to the third quarter as possible. For students in grades kindergarten through 2, check the box labeled "N/A."

EXEMPT ONLY FROM THE RETENTION PROVISION OF THE THIRD GRADE READING GUARANTEE

Not every student with an Individualized Education Program should be exempt from the retention provision of the Third Grade Reading Guarantee. The Individualized Education Program team must have adequate progress monitoring and reading achievement data to identify students who may be eligible to be exempt from retention.

Even if a student is exempt from the retention provision, all remaining provisions of the Third Grade Reading Guarantee still are required for the student. Districts and schools should document a student's evaluation and assessment data, including the required reading diagnostic results and previous interventions within the student's Evaluation Team Report.

Districts and schools should use caution to make sure a student with an Individualized Education Program does not receive less intensive reading interventions and supports than students without Individualized Education Programs.

For more detailed guidance regarding exemption from the retention provision of the Third Grade Reading Guarantee, see the Third Grade Reading Guarantee requirements and Reading Improvement and Monitoring Plan to an Individualized Education Program section in this manual.

Chartered Nonpublic Schools: An individual services plan created for a student with a disability that specifies that the child is not subject to retention under the Third Grade Reading Guarantee shall be considered in the same manner as an Individualized Education Program.⁴ The individual services plan must be reviewed by the student’s school district of residence or the district in which the chartered nonpublic school is located.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Accommodations on the reading diagnostic: All students should be administered the reading diagnostic. Students with disabilities may receive allowable accommodations so long as they are documented in the student’s Individualized Education Program and align with the diagnostic’s administration manual. The district can determine some other measure that would yield valid data to help the team plan a reading program for the student. The “other measure” can inform instructional practices but may not determine on-track or not on-track status.

For students who are blind or visually impaired: The reading diagnostic requirements are the same for a student learning to read braille. These students must be assessed with a district-selected diagnostic that may be brailled, magnified or provided in large print, and the district must complete a Reading Improvement and Monitoring Plan if the student needs one. The district also should have a teacher who is qualified to work with students with visual impairments help the team determine the appropriate instructional medium.

For students who are deaf/hearing impaired: The reading diagnostic requirements are the same for a student who is deaf or hearing impaired. See “accommodations on the reading diagnostic” above for further information. In addition, the district should have a teacher who is qualified in working with students who are deaf/hearing impaired to help determine the “some other measure” and help the team determine appropriate reading instruction for the student. The “other measure” can inform instructional practices but may not determine on-track or not on-track status. The district must complete a Reading Improvement and Monitoring Plan if the student needs one.

If the student is not on-track based on the reading diagnostic: A student’s not on-track status is to be discussed at each Individualized Education Program meeting following the guidelines below. Ohio law requires schools to provide Reading Improvement and Monitoring Plans to all students who are not on-track based on the fall reading diagnostic.

Even if students with Individualized Education Programs are determined to be not on-track, the designation does not necessarily point to the need for Individualized Education Program goals to address reading. The Reading Improvement and Monitoring Plan should document reading interventions to address newly identified deficits. Based on the student’s progress on reading interventions and the student’s already-identified disability, the Individualized Education Program team may need to meet again to plan for reevaluation to determine whether the student has an additional disability.

Relationship of a Reading Improvement and Monitoring Plan to an Individualized Education Program

Schools should use caution to ensure the Reading Improvement and Monitoring Plan aligns with the Individualized Education Program. The Individualized Education Program team should consider the following:

- Discussions about retention in third grade and promotion to grade 4 are included as part of the student’s yearly Reading Improvement and Monitoring Plan development, as well as during the Individualized Education Program meetings;
- If the Individualized Education Program team decides to exempt a student from retention in grade 3 and the student will move on to grade 4, the Individualized Education Program document should include clear, targeted reading interventions and progress markers for grade 4.

⁴ ORC 3301.163 (A)

Beginning in kindergarten after the fall reading diagnostic testing, if the child is not on-track for reading performance, the Individualized Education Program team should include reference to the student's Reading Improvement and Monitoring Plan as outlined below within the Individualized Education Program. This information should be included in each annual review of the Individualized Education Program after the student takes a reading diagnostic. Sections of the Individualized Education Program that will include references to the student's Reading Improvement and Monitoring Plan are explained below.

Section 3: Profile

Include:

- Identification of specific reading deficiency;
- A summary of Reading Improvement and Monitoring Plan interventions;
- A reference to annual Individualized Education Program goals that support the student's Reading Improvement and Monitoring Plan.

If a student also has a reading goal:

Section 6: Present Levels of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance; and Measurable Annual Goals:

Include reference to the student's present levels of performance in the areas of reading deficiency addressed in the student's Reading Improvement and Monitoring Plan and compared to grade-level expectations. Include annual goals that have been developed to address the identified reading deficiency.

If a student also has a reading goal: Section 6: Measurable Annual Goals:

Include a description of the progress monitoring and progress reporting processes for annual goals related to the student's reading needs.

If a student also has a reading goal: Section 7: Description of Specially Designed Instruction:

Include specially designed instruction, related services and/or other section 7 areas of service needed to address the identified reading deficiency.

Section 10: General Factors

- For grades K through 3 only (N/A in all other grades), this question asks, "Did the team consider the child's on-track/not on-track status in the reading diagnostic process for the Third Grade Reading Guarantee?"
- This would be answered yes, after the team considers the information about the student annually or at each IEP meeting, for all children in grades K through 3.
- It would be answered N/A for all other children.
- This question does not refer directly to the student's reading diagnostic scores, on-track or not on-track status, nor the Reading Improvement and Monitoring Plan status. Rather, it asks, "Has the team considered this information in the Individualized Education Program and documented the information as outlined in the Third Grade Reading Guarantee manual as appropriate?"

Section 12: Statewide and Districtwide Testing

The team may consider allowable accommodations for the screeners and diagnostics used. Any accommodations listed in section 12 of the IEP also should be listed in section 7 of the Individualized Education Program

Section 13: Exemptions – Third Grade Reading Guarantee

Based on the guidance within this manual, the decision about the Third Grade Reading Guarantee exemption is linked to a checkbox on the Individualized Education Program within section 13, titled "Exemptions," and is only applicable for students in third grade, as close to the third quarter as possible. For students in grades kindergarten through 2, check the box labeled "N/A."

Federal Funding

The most current information regarding the use of federal funds is available on the Department's [Office of Federal Programs](#) webpage.

TITLE I FUNDS

A district or school may use its Title I funds to support and supplement reading instruction programs selected or created by the district or school for students who are at risk of not meeting state achievement standards.

A student on a Reading Improvement and Monitoring Plan can participate in reading intervention programs funded by Title I if the student meets the criteria for students regularly served by that program.

To learn more about how to use Title I funds to support literacy instruction, contact the Department's [Office of Federal Programs](#).

IDEA EARLY INTERVENING FUNDS

Districts may use IDEA Early Intervening Funds for the Third Grade Reading Guarantee to provide [Comprehensive Coordinated Early Intervening Services](#). Districts and schools may redirect up to 15% of their sum of Part B and Early Childhood Special Education original allocations pursuant to IDEA Sec 613(f) Early Intervening Service. To use these federal Early Intervening Funds, districts and schools must apply them to students who do not have Individualized Education Programs.

To learn more about IDEA Early Intervening Funds, contact the Department's [Office for Exceptional Children](#).

MEDICAID SCHOOLS PROGRAM

The Medicaid Schools Program provides funding for Individualized Education Program-defined, medically necessary services for Medicaid-eligible students. Assistance with reading most likely does not fall within allowable Medicaid-reimbursable activities.

Data Reporting

Districts and schools must report information annually to the Department on their implementation of and compliance with the Third Grade Reading Guarantee. Find information on specific EMIS reporting instructions in the Department's [EMIS Manual](#). Districts and schools should have procedures to collect and report the following data to the Department on their implementation of the Third Grade Reading Guarantee during the EMIS data collections:

- Whether an individual student is on-track or not on-track for reading based on the fall reading diagnostic;
- The types of instruction for each student with a Reading Improvement and Monitoring Plan;
- The retention status of each student; and
- The mid-year promotion of retained third grade students.

Districts and schools should enter the data listed above in their student software systems as soon as the data is available and begin reviewing the data prior to EMIS data collections opening.

READING DIAGNOSTIC

On the state-developed K-3 reading diagnostic, students whose reading diagnostic score identifies them as on-track and "Needs Further Assessment" are reported in EMIS as on-track. A student who is not reading at the level for the end of the previous grade is reported in EMIS as not on-track. For Department-approved vendor reading diagnostic assessments, please follow the vendor-provided scores or percentiles to determine the student's on-track and not on-track status.

MORE THAN ONE READING DIAGNOSTIC ADMINISTERED

If a district or school administers more than one reading diagnostic to a student during the current school year, only the result of the first reading diagnostic determines if the student is on-track or not on-track, and it is this result that is reported to EMIS. Districts and schools do not report subsequent reading tests for the reading diagnostic result in EMIS. Districts and schools may use the additional tests to inform the student's instruction, but the student's initial on-track/not on-track status reported to EMIS does not change.

Districts and schools should report the Reading Improvement and Monitoring Plan Intervention Program Code or codes that best describe the instruction the student received under his or her plan. Report multiple Reading Improvement and Monitoring Plan codes for a single student if instruction the student received under his or her plan throughout the school year calls for more than one code.

READING IMPROVEMENT AND MONITORING PLANS

STUDENTS WHO ARE NOT ON-TRACK ON THE FALL READING DIAGNOSTIC

Students who are reported as not on-track on the fall reading diagnostic must receive a Reading Improvement and Monitoring Plan within 60 days of the district or school receiving the results of the fall reading diagnostic. Only plans that meet all requirements outlined in the Third Grade Reading Guarantee may be reported using Reading Improvement and Monitoring Plan Intervention Program Codes in EMIS. (See Reading Improvement and Monitoring Plan requirements on the [Department's website](#).)

Districts and schools should report the Reading Improvement and Monitoring Plan Intervention Program Code or codes that best describe the instruction the student received under his or her plan. Report multiple reading improvement and monitoring plan codes for a single student if instruction the student received under his or her plan throughout the school year calls for more than one code.

STUDENTS WHO ARE ON-TRACK ON THE FALL READING DIAGNOSTIC

Districts and schools may choose to place a student who scores on-track on the reading diagnostic on a reading improvement and monitoring plan if there is evidence of a reading deficiency and the school decides the student needs additional help with reading. If a school electively places an on-track student on a Reading Improvement and Monitoring Plan, it must adhere to all the requirements of a Reading Improvement and Monitoring Plan. Only plans that meet all requirements outlined in the Third Grade Reading Guarantee may be reported using Reading Improvement and Monitoring Plan Intervention Program Codes in EMIS. This includes the requirement that the plan must be created within 60 days of the district or school receiving the results of the fall reading diagnostic. (See Reading Improvement and Monitoring Plan requirements on the [Department's website](#).)

Frequently asked question: How should the interventions from a student's reading plan that do not meet all of the requirements of a Reading Improvement and Monitoring Plan be reported in EMIS?

Answer:

If a student is provided a reading plan that does not meet all the requirements of a Reading Improvement and Monitoring Plan, the plan may be reported to EMIS using the Academic Intervention Program Codes (151490-Summer; 152330-School Year) in the Student Program (GQ) Record, as long as the plan meets the specific requirements associated with Academic Intervention Program Code found in Section 2.9 of the EMIS Manual.

Some examples of Reading Improvement and Monitoring Plan requirements not met include: the plan not being created within 60 days of receiving the results of the student's fall reading diagnostic, the plan not being created in collaboration with the student's parent or guardian and classroom teacher, or any of the other requirements outlined in this manual.

RETENTION/PROMOTION STATUS OF ALL STUDENTS

Districts and schools report the most appropriate Retained/Promoted Status Option for every student that best describes the student's status as of the end of the prior school year and anything that occurs prior to the first day of the current school year.

Districts and schools report the retention status option for every student that best describes the student's retention status on the first day of the current school year.

FOURTH GRADE STUDENTS AND RETAINED THIRD GRADE STUDENTS

If a student was enrolled in third grade the previous school year, the district or school reports the most appropriate Retained/Promoted Status Option as of the first day of the current school year.

- **Promoted Status: Choose the option that describes how the student is being promoted to grade 4.**
 - The student met the promotion score on the state assessment;
 - The student did not meet the reading requirement in the Third Grade Reading Guarantee but was not retained due to adequate performance on one of the Third Grade Reading Guarantee alternative assessments; or
 - The specific exemption to retention for which the student qualified.
- **Retained Status: Choose the option that describes how the student is being retained:**
 - The student did not meet the requirements of the Third Grade Reading Guarantee;
 - The student demonstrated adequate performance on a Third Grade Reading Guarantee alternative assessment but was retained for other reasons; or
 - The student was retained for reasons other than the Third Grade Reading Guarantee.

MID-YEAR PROMOTION OF A RETAINED THIRD GRADE STUDENT

Retained third grade students who are promoted to fourth grade mid-year are reported in EMIS with Grade Level "04" and the effective date of the mid-year promotion. For example, if a retained third grade student meets the requirements of the district's mid-year promotion policy and is promoted to grade 4 on Nov. 1 of the school year, the student will be reported with Grade Level "04," effective date of Nov. 1 of that school year.

Chartered Nonpublic Schools.**GENERAL GUIDANCE - [ORC 3301.163](#)**

Beginning in the 2015-2016 school year, any third grade student who attends a chartered nonpublic school with a scholarship awarded under the EdChoice Scholarship or the Cleveland Scholarship is subject to the Third Grade Reading Guarantee retention provision, including the exemptions prescribed by law.

In addition, each chartered nonpublic school that enrolls students with scholarships awarded under the EdChoice Scholarship or Cleveland Scholarship must adopt policies and procedures for annually assessing the reading skills of those K-3 students. If a student is identified as reading below grade level, the school must notify the parents of this deficiency and the potential for retaining the student in third grade. The school also must provide intensive reading instruction services to the student.

CHARTERED NONPUBLIC SCHOOLS AND ASSESSMENTS FOR SCHOLARSHIP STUDENTS

Any chartered nonpublic school that enrolls students participating in state scholarship programs may administer an alternative standardized assessment determined by the Department instead of Ohio's State Tests in grades 3-8.

For grade 3 scholarship students assessed in English language arts, schools may administer

Ohio's State Test for grade 3 English language arts, an approved Third Grade Reading Guarantee alternative assessment or both. If a chartered nonpublic school decides not to administer

Ohio's State Test for grade 3 English language arts to its scholarship students, then the school may administer an approved Third Grade Reading Guarantee alternative assessment twice during the school year and once during the summer.

RETENTION PROVISION - ORC 3301.163(A)

Any third grade student attending a chartered nonpublic school on an EdChoice Scholarship or Cleveland Scholarship is subject to the Third Grade Reading Guarantee retention provision under division (A)(2) of ORC 3313.608, including the exemptions outlined in that division and outlined below.

Only students enrolled in chartered nonpublic schools using EdChoice or Cleveland Scholarships are subject to this provision. The Third Grade Reading Guarantee retention provision uses the promotion score from Ohio's grade 3 English language arts test. The exemptions to retention apply to:

- A student who is an English learner enrolled in U.S. schools for less than three full school years and has had less than three years of instruction in an English as a Second Language program;
- A student whose Individualized Education Program or individual services plan specifically exempts the student from retention under the Third Grade Reading Guarantee (more information is available in the [Students with Disabilities](#) section of this manual);
- A student who demonstrates an acceptable level of performance on an [alternative reading assessment](#) approved by the Ohio Department of Education. More information on alternative reading assessments is available on the [Department's website](#);
- A student whose Individualized Education Program shows the student received intensive remediation in reading for two years, and the student was previously retained in any of grades kindergarten through 3; and
- A student who received intensive remediation for two years and previously was retained in any of grades kindergarten through 3.**

***A student who is promoted under this exemption must continue to receive intensive reading instruction in grade 4. This instruction must include an altered instructional day that includes specialized diagnostic information and specific, research-based reading strategies for the student that have been successful in improving reading among low-performing readers.*

REPORTING GUIDANCE - ORC 3301.163(B)

Each chartered nonpublic school that enrolls students in any of grades kindergarten-3 and that enrolls students under the EdChoice Scholarship Programs or Cleveland Scholarship Programs must adopt policies and procedures for the annual assessment of the reading skills of those K-3 students. Schools may use the state-developed reading diagnostic assessment, an assessment from the [approved comparable reading diagnostic list](#) or a non-Department approved diagnostic assessment to meet this requirement. For each student identified as having reading skills below grade level, the school must do the following:

- a. Provide to the student's parent or guardian, in writing, all of the following:
 - I. Notification that the student has been identified as having a deficiency in reading;
 - II. Notification that if the student does not attain the promotion score designated under division (A)(3) of ORC 3301.0710 on Ohio's third grade English language arts test or an alternative reading assessment approved by the Ohio Department of Education, the student will be retained, unless the student is exempt.
- b. Provide intensive reading instruction services, as determined appropriate by the school, to each student identified as reading below grade level.

READING DIAGNOSTIC GUIDANCE - ORC 3301.163(C)

Each chartered nonpublic school subject to ORC 3301.163 annually must report to the Department the number of students identified as reading at grade level and the number of students identified as reading below grade level. Schools will report student-level data through the online scholarship system. For questions or assistance, please contact the [Office of Nonpublic Educational Options](#).

CHARTERED NONPUBLIC SCHOOLS WITH AT LEAST 65% OF STUDENT ENROLLMENT USING STATE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMS

According to ORC 3301.0711(K)(1)(a), each chartered nonpublic school for which at least 65 percent of total enrollment are students who are participating in state scholarship programs (EdChoice Scholarship Program, Cleveland Scholarship Program, Jon Peterson Scholarship Program or Autism Scholarship Program — high school only) must administer the state assessments or an alternative assessment approved by the Department to all its students. However, only students awarded the EdChoice Scholarship or Cleveland Scholarship are held to the Third Grade Reading Guarantee's retention provision.

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