

READING SKILLS ASSESSMENTS AND INTERVENTION
(Third Grade Reading Guarantee)

The District is required annually to assess the reading skills of each K-3 student, except those students with significant cognitive disabilities or other disabilities as authorized by the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) on a case-by-case basis, ~~by September 30~~. The District uses the diagnostic assessment to measure reading ability either approved under State law or a comparable tool that has been approved by ODE.

If the diagnostic assessment shows that a student is not reading at grade level, the District provides written notification to the parents or guardian that includes:

1. notice that the school has identified a substantial reading deficiency in their child;
2. a description of current services provided to the student;
3. a description of proposed supplemental instruction services and supports;
4. notice that the diagnostic assessment for third grade reading is not the sole determinant of promotion and that additional evaluations and assessments are available and
5. notice that the student will be retained unless the student falls under an exemption or attains the appropriate level of reading competency by the end of third grade.

For a student not reading at grade level, the District provides intensive reading instruction services and regular diagnostic assessments immediately following the identification of a reading deficiency until the development of the reading improvement and monitoring plan referenced below. These intervention services must:

1. include research-based reading strategies that have been shown to be successful in improving the reading skills of low-performing readers and
2. be targeted at the student's identified reading deficiencies.

For each student receiving required reading intervention, the District develops a reading improvement and monitoring plan. This plan is developed within 60 days of receiving the student's results on the diagnostic assessment. The plan includes all of the following:

1. identification of the student's specific reading deficiencies;
2. a description of additional instructional services that target the student's identified reading deficiencies;

3. opportunities for the student's parents or guardians to be involved in the instructional services;
4. a process to monitor the implementation of the student's instructional services;
5. a reading curriculum during regular school hours that assists students to read at grade level, provides for scientifically based and reliable assessments, and provides ongoing analysis of each student's reading progress and
6. a statement that if the student does not attain at least the equivalent level of achievement under Ohio Revised Code Section 3301.0710 by the end of third grade, the student will be retained.

For a student with a reading improvement and monitoring plan entering the third grade for the first time on or after July 1, 2013, the District provides a teacher who has at least one year of teaching experience and who satisfies one or more of the following criteria:

1. holds a reading endorsement on the teacher's license and has attained a passing score on the corresponding assessment for that endorsement, as applicable;
2. has completed a master's degree program with a major in reading;
3. was rated "most effective" for reading instruction consecutively for the most recent two years based on assessments of student growth measures developed by a vendor and that is on the list of student assessments approved by the State Board of Education (SBOE);
4. was rated "above expected value-added," in reading instruction, as determined by ODE for the most recent consecutive two years;
5. has earned a passing score on a rigorous test of principles of scientifically research-based reading instruction as approved by the SBOE or
6. holds an educator license for teaching grades pre-kindergarten through third or grades four through nine issued on or after July 1, 2017.

For a student with a reading improvement and monitoring plan entering the third grade for the first time on or after July 1, 2013, the District may provide a teacher who:

1. has less than one year of teaching experience provided that the teacher meets one or more of the criteria listed above and is assigned to a mentor teacher who has at least one year of teaching experience and meets one or more of the criteria above or

2. holds an alternative credential approved by ODE or who has successfully completed training that is based on principles of scientifically research-based reading instruction that has been approved by the department. Beginning July 1, 2014, the alternate credentials shall be aligned with the reading competencies adopted by the SBOE.

For a student with a reading improvement and monitoring plan entering the third grade for the first time on or after July 1, 2013, the District may provide:

1. reading intervention or remediation services under this section from an individual employed as a speech-language pathologist who holds a license issued by the Board of speech-language pathology and audiology and a professional pupil services license as a school speech-language pathologist issued by the SBOE and/or
2. a teacher, other than the student's teacher of record, to provide any services required under this section, so long as that other teacher meets the assigned teacher criteria above and the teacher of record and the school principal agree to the assignment. This assignment is documented in the student's reading improvement and monitoring plan.

For any student who is an English language learner and who has been in the U.S. for three years or less or for a student who has an individualized educational plan, a teacher may teach reading if the teacher holds an alternative credential approved by ODE or who has successfully completed training that is based on principles of scientifically research-based reading instruction that has been approved by ODE. Beginning July 1, 2014, the alternate credentials shall be aligned with the reading competencies adopted by the SBOE.

The District has specific responsibilities for a student who has been retained at the end of third grade. The District must:

1. Establish a District policy for the midyear promotion of a student who is reading at or above grade level that provides that a student who participates in remediation services and who demonstrates the required reading proficiency prior to the start of fourth grade will be promoted to that grade.
2. Provide intensive remediation that addresses the student's areas of deficiencies. This must include, but not be limited to, not less than 90 minutes of daily reading. In addition, the remediation may include any of the following:
 - A. small group instruction
 - B. reduced teacher-student ratios
 - C. more frequent progress monitoring
 - D. tutoring or mentoring
 - E. transition classes containing third and fourth grade students
 - F. extended school day, week or year
 - G. summer reading camps

3. Provide a teacher who satisfies one or more of the criteria set forth above.
4. Offer the student the option to receive applicable services from one or more providers other than the District. These providers will be screened and approved by the District or by ODE.
5. Provide instruction that is commensurate to the achievement level for a retained student who has a demonstrated proficiency in a specific academic field as defined by State law.

Districts required to submit staffing plans do so in accordance with State law.

(Approval date:)

NOTE: THIS IS A REQUIRED REGULATION

In 2013, House Bill (HB) 555 made changes to the Third Grade Reading Guarantee, most notably in the requirements for teachers assigned to students who have been retained in the third grade or students who have been assessed to have a substantial reading deficiency. HB 555 also requires school districts and community schools that cannot furnish the needed number of teachers to satisfy the above criteria by the bill's effective date to develop and submit a plan to the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) indicating the criteria that will be used to determine those teachers in the district or community school who will teach and how the teacher criteria will be satisfied. The school district or community school may include the option to contract with another school district or private provider that has been screened and approved by ODE to provide intervention services. If the plan is not approved by ODE by August 15, 2013, the school district or community school is required to use a private contractor from a list approved by ODE or contract with another district to provide intervention services. ODE will determine the manner in which the plan will be submitted.

Senate Bill (SB) 21, also in 2013, made additional changes to the Third Grade Reading Guarantee, mainly in modifying the criteria for teachers assigned to students with a reading deficiency. Under these changes, more teachers will be able to instruct students who do not attain the equivalent level of achievement on the reading assessment. SB 21 also broadened the category of students excused from taking the assessment as well as expanded the category of limited English proficient students who may still be promoted to the fourth grade without achieving the equivalent level of achievement on the assessment.

Further, SB 21 requires the SBOE to adopt reading competencies for all reading credentials and training, which must include, but not be limited to, an understanding of phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, appropriate use of assessments, differentiated instruction and selection of appropriate instructional materials and application of research-based instructional practices. These must be established by January 31, 2014.

Not later than December 31, 2014, the SBOE must adopt rules prescribing the content of and deadlines for the reading achievement improvement plans some districts and community schools will have to submit beginning December 31, 2016 and every December 31 thereafter. The rules must prescribe that each plan include, at the minimum, an analysis of relevant student performance data, measurable student performance goals, strategies to meet specific student needs, a staffing and professional development plan and instructional strategies for improving literacy. The districts or community schools that will be required to submit such plans are those that received a grade of "D" or "F" on the kindergarten through third grade literacy process measure and those with less than 60% of students who took the third grade reading assessment during the most recent fall and spring administrations of the assessment achieving at least a proficient score on the assessment.

A district or community school that cannot furnish the number of teachers needed to satisfy the teacher criteria set forth under the third grade reading guarantee submits a staffing plan to ODE. The staffing plan must include criteria that will be used to assign a student to a teacher, credentials or training held by teachers currently teaching at the school and how the school district or community school will meet these requirements. The district or community school posts the staffing plan on its website for the applicable school year.

Not later than March 1, 2014, and on the first day of March in each year thereafter, a district or community school that has submitted a plan under this division submits to ODE a detailed report of the progress the district or school has made in meeting these requirements.

A district or community school may request an extension of a staffing plan beyond the 2013-2014 school year. Extension requests must be submitted to the department not later than the 30th day of April prior to the start of the applicable school year. ODE may grant extensions valid through the 2015-2016 school year. Until June 30, 2015, ODE annually shall review all staffing plans and report the progress of districts and community schools in meeting the requirements to the SBOE not later than the 30th day of June of each year.

HB 487 (2014) specifies that districts may submit staffing plans for the 2014-2015 or 2015-2016 school year. These plans differ from the extension plans submitted by districts that submitted staffing plans for the 2013-2014 school year.