

Michigan's Third Grade Reading Law

Page 1 **Third Grade Reading Law Overview**

Page 2 **Reading Assessments**
What School Districts Must Do
English Language Learners

Page 3 **Reading Intervention Programs**

Page 4 **Third Grade Reading Retention**
Retention Exemptions

Page 5 **Individual Reading Improvement Plans (IRIP)**
Read at Home Plans

Page 6 **What if there is no improvement?**
What if a student is held back?

In 2016, the Third Grade Reading Law was passed by the Michigan Legislature:

- Goal: Improve reading rates for all Michigan third-graders.
- Takes full effect beginning in the 2019-2020 school year
- Students must be reading at or near grade-level to go to the fourth grade.
- Third grade students who are far behind may be held back.



Reading Assessments:

- Michigan’s kindergarten through third grade students will be assessed every year for their reading level proficiency at least three times per school year. The first assessment will be given within the first 30 days of the school year.

School districts are required by law to:

- Provide all students who have been identified as having a reading deficiency according to an assessment an Individual Reading Improvement Plan (IRIP).
- Send parents of K-3 students written notice of their child’s reading difficulties early and regularly.
- Provide professional development to K-3 teachers based on the reading needs of incoming students to better prepare them to improve their student’s reading abilities.
- Use literacy coaches from their school district or ISD to work with teachers and improve reading instruction for students.
- Provide reading intervention programs for students.
- Consider offering summer reading camps with highly effective teachers to improve reading instruction for students.
- Provide reading intervention programs.

English Language Learners:

- English language learners must receive specific intervention services under the Third Grade Reading Law. Typically, these students are immigrant children or the children of immigrants, who are learning English for the first time.
- Because this may be their first chance to speak English, these students will need additional support in the following areas:
 - On-going assessments that provide actionable data for teachers
 - Instruction in academic vocabulary and in the 5 major reading components
 - Common strategies in English language development

School Districts will develop Individual Reading Intervention Programs (IRIP):

- In the programs for K-3 students who exhibit a reading deficiency, school districts may include:
 - a. Student-specific interventions
 - b. Periodic screening and monitoring of student’s reading progress
 - c. Evidenced-based core reading instruction
 - d. Reading intervention to include intensive development in 5 major reading components. These areas are: phonemic awareness (identifying and manipulating sounds in spoken words), phonics (how sounds and letters relate to each other), fluency, vocabulary and comprehension.
 - e. “Read at Home” plans for parents that include training workshops
 - f. Documentation of school’s efforts to engage student’s, parents/guardians of the success of the interventions or any opinions on the student’s IRIP

- School districts must include the following for 3rd grade students who exhibit a reading deficiency as needed by an individual student:
 - a. Evidenced-based reading instruction which has shown to improve reading achievement in one school year
 - b. More evidence-based reading instruction and intervention to the student than the student received in the previous school year
 - c. Daily targeted small group or one-on-one reading intervention
 - d. Periodic monitoring and screening of student’s reading progress
 - e. Additional evidence-based reading intervention delivery from a teacher, coach, or volunteer with specialized reading training outside of student’s regular language arts class
 - f. “Read at Home” plans for parents that include training workshops
 - g. Documentation of school’s efforts to engage student’s and parents/guardians of the success of the interventions or any opinions on the student’s IRIP

Third Grade Retention

- In order to transition to 4th grade, students **must**:
 - a. Be less than one grade level behind in reading on the state assessment (M-STEP),
 - b. Perform at grade-level in reading on an approved alternative assessment, or
 - c. Demonstrate grade level proficiency through a portfolio of work

Some students may receive an exemption from repeating 3rd grade. A student may qualify for a “Good Cause” exemption, which includes:

- Students with an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or a 504 plan
- English language learners who have been in an English learner program for less than 3 years
- Students that have been previously held back and have received intensive reading intervention for 2 or more years and still exhibit a reading deficiency
- New students to the school district (enrolled for less than 2 years) who did not receive an Individual Reading Improvement Plan (IRIP) in their prior school district
- Students who are proficient in all other school subjects other than reading as demonstrated through the State assessment (M-STEP) for math and through a student portfolio for social studies and science

The parents/guardians may request an exemption based on the best interest of the student and the request must be approved by the school district Superintendent.

Individual Reading Improvement Plan (IRIP):

- The Third Grade Reading Law states that every Michigan School District **must** develop and provide an Individual Reading Improvement Plan (IRIP) for students who are identified with a reading deficiency based on their school's reading assessments. The IRIP is:
 - a. A reading plan that explains the reading resources that are needed to improve the student's reading abilities.
 - b. Developed by teachers, the principal, parent or legal guardian, and anyone else the team agrees should be part of the student's reading improvement process.
 - c. Maintained for students as long as they continue to show a reading deficiency.
 - d. Updated throughout the school year to reflect the student's reading improvement.

Students will be assessed at minimum three times during the school year to check for improvement.

IRIP's are updated following each assessment to continue to support the student in improving their reading scores. If the parent/guardian and their child does not receive an IRIP, and the child has been identified as having a reading deficiency, they should meet with their child's teacher. If the child still does not receive an IRIP, the parent/guardian should call or meet with their school's administrator.

What is a Read at Home Plan?

- Reading at Home Plans are required by the Third Grade Reading Law and should be used by parents/guardians at home during the school year and the summer break.
- Regularly reading outside of school will allow students more time to practice reading with the goal of improving their reading abilities and reading scores.
- Read at Home Plans will be developed in collaboration between parents/guardians, the child's school and the student to support them as they work to improve reading at home.
- The school districts and public school academies will provide resources and activities for the Read at Home Plan.

What if there is No Improvement?

- The school district or public school's academy will notify the student's family that their child may be held back if the student is one or more grade levels behind a 3rd grade reading level.
- A school district superintendent is the only person who can officially hold a student back.
- The parent/guardian of a child that may be held back should contact their school district's superintendent to set up a meeting to discuss their child's options, ways to support student learning and to see if any exemptions may be appropriate.

What if a student is Held Back?

- **If a student is held back** in the 3rd grade, school districts or public school academies are required to provide a reading intervention program with effective instructional strategies to help the student improve their reading. The reading intervention program **must** include the following steps for students:
 - a. Assigning the student to the one or more of the following:
 1. A highly effective teacher of reading
 2. The highest evaluated 3rd grade teacher in the school
 3. A reading specialist
 - b. Use an evidence-based reading program that has shown to improve reading achievement in one school year.
 - c. Reading instruction and intervention for most of the student's time each day that provides opportunities to learn 4th grade standards for all subject areas
 - d. Daily targeted small group or one-to-one reading intervention
 - e. Frequent screening and monitoring of student's reading progress toward a growth target
 - f. "Read at Home Plans" for parents that includes trainings and workshops