



Ohio

Third Grade Reading Guarantee Guidance Manual

AUGUST 2016

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. The department also created a section on its website to serve as a collection of resources for administrators, educators and parents. To view these resources, go directly to the Third Grade Reading Guarantee [page](#) or visit the department’s website at <http://www.education.ohio.gov> and search “Third Grade Reading Guarantee.” The law is available at [ORC 3313.608](#) (public school districts and community schools) and [ORC 3301.163](#) (chartered nonpublic schools).

Revision History

The revision history of this manual provides a means for readers to easily navigate to places in the relevant section where updates have occurred. Minor changes, such as typos, formatting and grammar corrections or updates, are not noted.

Page	Description
Table of Contents	New sections: Promotion to Fourth Grade; Transfer Students Enrolling in Fourth Grade
5	State-Approved Comparable Reading Diagnostics - list updated for the 2016-2017 school year; list now includes vendor supplied <i>on track/not on track scores</i>
10	State-Approved Alternative Reading Assessments - list updated for the 2016-2017 school year
11	Retention in the Third Grade: Instruction in Other Academic Subjects - updated guidance
12	New Section: Promotion to the Fourth Grade
12	New Section: Transfer Students Enrolling in Fourth Grade
14	Teacher Qualifications: Teacher Staffing Plan - staffing plans are no longer permitted as of the 2016-2017 school year
15	Students with Disabilities: Exempt Only from the Retention Provision of the Third Grade Reading Guarantee - updated guidance; new guidance for chartered nonpublic schools
16	Students with Disabilities: Other Considerations for Students with Disabilities - new guidance on accommodations on the reading diagnostic
18	Federal Funding - updated guidance

Table of Contents:

<u>Diagnostic Testing</u>	<u>4</u>
<u>Transfer Students and Diagnostic Testing</u>	<u>6</u>
<u>Use of Diagnostic Results</u>	<u>7</u>
<u>Intensive Intervention Programs</u>	<u>8</u>
<u>Reading Improvement and Monitoring Plans</u>	<u>9</u>
<u>Retention in the Third Grade</u>	<u>10</u>
New: <u>Promotion to Fourth Grade</u>	<u>12</u>
New: <u>Transfer Students Enrolling in Fourth Grade</u>	<u>12</u>
<u>Teacher Qualifications</u>	<u>13</u>
<u>Student with Disabilities</u>	<u>15</u>
<u>Federal Funding</u>	<u>18</u>
<u>Data Reporting</u>	<u>18</u>
<u>Chartered Nonpublic Schools</u>	<u>19</u>

Diagnostic Testing

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 Nov. 1 for kindergarten.

Every district can either administer a reading diagnostic from the state-approved list or use the [state-developed diagnostic](#), regardless of district or school-level performance. If the reading diagnostic currently being used is not on the state-approved list, it cannot fulfill the diagnostics requirement. This does not restrict the use of the diagnostic during the remainder of the year to inform instruction.

The results of the Sept. 30 and Nov. 1 reading diagnostic tests determine whether a child is *on track* or *not on track* in reading. A child is *on track* 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-grader is *on track* in reading if the child's fall reading diagnostic shows that he or she is reading at the level of end of grade 2. A student is *not on track* if he or she is not reading at the beginning of each grade at the level set by Ohio's Learning Standards for the end of the previous grade.

The following table outlines the reading diagnostic options that districts may use to meet the diagnostic deadlines set by the Third Grade Reading Guarantee:

<i>For the 2015-2016 School Year</i>	
Grade Level	Reading diagnostic test options to meet the Sept. 30 deadline for grades 1-3 and Nov. 1 for kindergarten
Kindergarten	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• KRA <i>Language and Literacy area</i>• 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

Beginning in the 2014-2015 school year, public school districts and community schools are required to administer the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA) for **all first-time** kindergarten students. It also may be used to meet the requirement of a reading diagnostic test for the Third Grade Reading Guarantee. If the KRA Language and Literacy area is used for the Third Grade Reading Guarantee, it must be administered by Nov. 1. The Language and Literacy area cut score for *on track* in reading is 263 (scaled-score) and above. If a student scores 262 or less on the Language and Literacy area, the child is *not on track* for reading on grade level. This score is for the Language and Literacy sub score only, not the composite score.

Districts will be required to submit both KRA and reading diagnostic results through the Education Management Information System (EMIS). If a district uses the Language and Literacy area of the KRA 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 this area of the KRA. The district will then also report the results of the assessment in EMIS for KRA. More information on the [KRA](#) is available on the department's website.

STATE-APPROVED COMPARABLE READING DIAGNOSTICS

The table below represents the list of state-approved, comparable reading diagnostics. The state may annually revisit the list. The *on track/not on track* scores for each approved vendor assessment are located on the vendor's submitted Form C. Districts are expected to use the vendor supplied *on track/not on track* scores when reporting this information to the department. If a test appears on both the Ohio Department of Education's approved list for the Third Grade Reading Guarantee and the multiple measures of student growth, it can fulfill both purposes.

Vendor	Assessment	Approved Grade Levels	Form C
Amplify Education, Inc.	mCLASS: DIBELS Next	K-3	mCLASS:DIBELS Next
Curriculum Associates, LLC	i-Ready Diagnostic Reading	K-3	i-Ready Diagnostic Reading
Scantron	Performance Series- Reading	K-3	Performance Series- Reading
Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA)	Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) for Reading	K-3	MAP for Reading
Pearson	AIMSweb	K-3	AIMSweb
Pearson	Developmental Reading Assessment, Second Edition Plus (DRA2+)	1-3	DRA2+
Renaissance Learning, Inc.	STAR Reading	1-3	STAR Reading
Renaissance Learning, Inc.	STAR Early Literacy	K-3	STAR Early Literacy
Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company	HMH Reading Inventory	1-3	HMH Reading Inventory
NEW: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company	NEW: Iowa Assessments Forms E/F Reading Tests Levels 5-9	1-3	Iowa Assessments Forms E/F Reading Tests Levels 5-9
NEW: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company	NEW: Continuum Benchmark Assessments for ELA	K-3	Continuum Benchmark Assessments for ELA
NEW: IStation	NEW: IStation's Indicators of Progress, Early Reading (ISIP ER)	K-3	ISIP ER
NEW: Lexia Learning Systems, LLC	NEW: Lexia RAPID Assessment	3	Lexia RAPID Assessment

Transfer Students in K-3

NO KNOWN DIAGNOSTIC

The board of education of each city, local and exempted village school district must administer each applicable diagnostic test to any student who transfers into the district or to a different school within the district if each applicable diagnostic test was not administered by the district or school the student previously attended in the current school year, within 30 days after the date of transfer.

If a student transfers in with no reading diagnostic result from the previous district or building, the new district or new building must give the same reading diagnostic assessment that was administered to other students for the purposes of the Third Grade Reading Guarantee. An exception to this is the KRA because schools cannot administer the KRA after Nov. 1. Districts and schools will need to provide a different reading diagnostic for kindergarteners enrolling after Nov. 1.

If the district or school into which the student transfers cannot determine whether the student has taken any applicable diagnostic test in the current school year, the district or school must administer the diagnostic test to the student.

If a student transfers near the beginning of the year, the district or school has the longer of 30 days or number of days to the diagnostic deadline to give the reading diagnostic.

The district or school must still develop a reading improvement and monitoring plan within 60 days of a student testing as *not on track*.

STUDENT COMPLETED A DIAGNOSTIC AT PREVIOUS SCHOOL

If a student transfers in 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 school's designated reading diagnostic administered to other students for the purposes of the Third Grade Reading Guarantee or the state diagnostic. The school may base a new reading improvement and monitoring plan on this diagnostic.

Schools must honor the previous school's reading improvement and monitoring plan if the parent/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/guardian of the student request or consent to the change; or
- The school uses its designated reading diagnostic administered to other students for the purpose of the Third Grade Reading Guarantee to reassess the student.

The district or school must still develop a reading improvement and monitoring plan within 60 days of a student testing as *not on track*.

THIRD GRADE STUDENT

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 Ohio grade 3 English language arts test or one of the approved alternative reading assessments available if a student has missed the spring testing window for Ohio's grade 3 English language arts test, 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. More information on transfer students and the retention provision of the Third Grade Reading Guarantee is available in the [Transfer Students Enrolling in Fourth Grade](#) section of this manual.

Use of Diagnostic Results

FOR K-3 STUDENTS THAT ARE *NOT ON TRACK*

If the diagnostic shows that a student is *not on track*, schools must communicate, as soon as possible and in writing, to the parents all of the following:

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

*Note: Even if a student is exempt from retention, all other requirements of the Third Grade Reading Guarantee apply.

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

For each student who is *not on track*, the school also must:

- Begin reading intervention immediately using research-based reading strategies 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.

A CHANGE IN STUDENTS' *NOT ON TRACK* STATUS

If a student is *not on track* based on the fall reading diagnostic, that student will officially be *not on track* and on a reading improvement and monitoring plan until the student either scores *on track* on the following school year's reading diagnostic or scores "proficient" (700) or higher on Ohio's grade 3 English language arts test. A student's reported *on track/not on track* status must only be based on the student's performance on the required fall reading diagnostic.

If a student in grades 1-3 is *not on track* by Sept. 30 or by Nov. 1 for a student in kindergarten but scores *on track* on a reading diagnostic 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 plan cannot be terminated and no change is made to the student's *not on track* status in EMIS for the current school year.

FOR K-3 STUDENTS THAT ARE *ON TRACK*

Schools may electively place students who are *on track* on reading improvement and monitoring plans if there is evidence of a reading deficiency and the decision is that these students need help with reading. If a school electively places an *on track* student on a reading improvement and monitoring plan, all the requirements of a reading improvement and monitoring plan must be adhered to, including reporting requirements.

Intensive Intervention Services

STUDENTS ON READING IMPROVEMENT AND MONITORING PLANS

The district or school must immediately provide intensive reading instruction services and regular progress monitoring to students identified as *not on track*.

The intervention services selected for a student on a reading improvement and monitoring plan rely on the judgment of the student's teacher and parents. These services must be research-based reading strategies that are successful in improving reading among low-performing readers and instruction targeted at the student's identified reading deficiencies.

The intervention services must include intensive, explicit and systematic instruction. Districts can use the following explanations as guidance when planning instruction:

- "Intensive" instruction concentrates only on reading and is very thorough or vigorous;
- "Explicit" instruction clearly and directly explains concepts and makes no assumptions about the student's ability to make inferences; and
- "Systematic" instruction addresses all the areas of reading deficiency through a planned scope and sequence, monitors the student's progress and continually reviews and extends reading skills.

RETAINED THIRD GRADE STUDENTS

Districts and schools must provide at least 90 minutes of reading instruction to retained third grade students. The 90 minutes of reading instruction may take place during the regular school day and during regular classroom activities. It does not have to be in a single block of time. Interventions for students who have been retained may include:

- 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 deficiencies. Any intervention or remediation services required by the guarantee must include intensive, explicit and systematic instruction.

The district or school must offer the option for retained students to receive reading intervention services from one or more providers other than the district. Districts and schools will screen and approve these providers, make this information publicly available and pay for the cost of the services. More information is available in the chapter of this manual titled [Retention in the Third Grade](#).

Students retained in grade 3 for non-reading reasons alone (poor math grades, attendance issues, etc.) are not required to have these special interventions. If the student is retained in grade 3 for multiple reasons, one of which includes the Third Grade Reading Guarantee, then the district must provide the special interventions outlined in law.

Reading Improvement and Monitoring Plans

Reading improvement and monitoring plans allow teachers and parents to work together to understand the student's reading deficiency and outline reading intervention and support.

A [template](#) for the reading improvement and monitoring plan is available on the department of education's website.

Schools must create a reading improvement and monitoring plan, also known as a RIMP, for students who are *not on track* within 60 days of receiving the reading diagnostic results. The district must involve the student's parent or guardian and the classroom teacher in the development of the plan. A 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;
- A reading curriculum during regular school hours that assists students to read at grade level and provides for reliable tests and ongoing analysis of each student's reading progress; and
- 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 THAT ARE *ON TRACK*

Schools may electively place students who are *on track* on reading improvement and monitoring plans if there is evidence of a reading deficiency and the decision is that these students need help with reading. If a school electively places an *on track* student on a reading improvement and monitoring plan, all the requirements of a reading improvement and monitoring plan must be adhered to, including reporting requirements.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Students with disabilities who have individualized education programs (IEP) and also 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

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 less than three full school years and with less than three years of instruction in an English as a second language program;
- A student whose IEP 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 IEP shows that the student has received intensive remediation in reading for two years, and the student was previously retained in any of grades kindergarten through grade 3; and
- A student who has received intensive remediation in reading for two years and was previously retained in any of grades kindergarten through grade 3.**

**A student that is promoted under this exemption must continue to receive intensive reading instruction in grade four. 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 a standardized assessment(s) for reading determined by the Ohio Department of Education for the Third Grade Reading Guarantee. It allows a third grade student to take and demonstrate an acceptable level of reading performance for promotion to the fourth grade. The alternative reading assessments are optional for districts to administer. The district is responsible for the cost of the alternative reading assessment. Districts may administer these alternative reading assessments 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 the administration of these assessments.

In fall of 2015, the Ohio Department of Education reviewed vendor proposals submitted in response to the Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for the Alternative Assessment for the Third Grade Reading Guarantee. This was not a competitive procurement process. Promotion scores for the 2016-2017 school year will be forthcoming.

The table below represents the list of state-approved alternative reading assessments for the 2016-2017 school year. The state may annually revisit the list. Promotion scores for the 2016-2017 school year are forthcoming.

Assessment	Service Summary
Iowa Assessments	Iowa Assessments Form F, Complete Battery, 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

SERVICES FROM OUTSIDE PROVIDERS

Districts and community schools must offer to 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 demonstrates proficiency in mathematics, social studies or science, the student must receive instruction commensurate with 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 how this will be communicated to the parents or guardians of retained third grade 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-graders in all subject areas until the district promotes them to fourth grade.

Districts are encouraged 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 that it is available if the student transfers between districts. Proficiency is determined by meeting end of the year third grade expectations.

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 that they are reading at or above grade level. Retained students are third-graders in all subjects until they are promoted through this policy to fourth grade.

Students who are *not promoted* mid-year to fourth grade will take Ohio's third grade state tests in all subject areas. The retention provision, including exemptions to retention, continue to apply to these students. Students *promoted* mid-year to fourth grade will take Ohio's fourth grade state tests in all subject areas.

The table below can be used to determine the state assessments required for each scenario of a retained third grade student:

Current Enrollment Status (2016-2017)	Receives Advanced Instruction in Other Subject Areas	Meets District's Criteria for Mid-Year Promotion	2016-2017 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 Grade 4 Social Studies
Retained Third Grade Student	Yes	No	Grade 3 ELA Grade 3 Mathematics
Retained Third Grade Student	Yes	Yes	Grade 4 ELA Grade 4 Mathematics Grade 4 Social Studies

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 to make informed decisions, schools should provide in writing the possible consequences of withdrawing his or her child's participation in 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 grade 3 English language arts test during the testing window, the student will not have a score on that test. Unless the student qualifies for an exemption, the student will be retained (see [Exemptions to Retention](#) above). In addition, the student may be counted as "not proficient" for purposes of the K-3 Literacy Improvement Measure. More information on the [K-3 Literacy Improvement Measure](#) is available on the department's website.

Promotion to Fourth Grade

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. This score can be attained on the fall, spring or summer administration of the grade 3 English language arts test. In addition, students that 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 whether to promote a student who has attained the promotion score, or is exempt from having to attain the promotion score, to fourth grade is to be based on the district's promotion/placement policy.

REQUIRED INTERVENTIONS 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 were previously retained in any grade K-3 and received at least two years of intensive reading remediation: Schools are required to provide students who are promoted to fourth grade under this exemption with intensive reading instruction in grade four. 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.

The use of a reading improvement and monitoring plan (RIMP) 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](#).

Transfer Students Enrolling in Fourth Grade

Districts are responsible to determine whether a transfer student enrolling in fourth grade has met the requirements of the Third Grade Reading Guarantee prior to placing the student in fourth grade.

Transfer Student from an Ohio Public School District or Community School: Before placing the student in fourth grade, the district must determine from the student's records if the student has met the requirements of the Third Grade Reading Guarantee. If the student has not met the requirements and is not exempt from retention, the school must place the student in third grade and provide the services required for retained third grade students.

¹ ORC 3301.0711(D)(1)

Transfer Student from a Chartered Nonpublic School: Students enrolled in chartered nonpublic schools awarded the EdChoice Scholarship or Cleveland Scholarship are held to the retention requirements of the Third Grade Reading Guarantee. The district must determine if the student was awarded one of these scholarships and if they met the requirements of the Third Grade Reading Guarantee before placing the student in fourth grade. If the student was awarded an EdChoice Scholarship or Cleveland Scholarship and has not met the requirements, and is not exempt from retention, the school must place the student in third grade and provide the services required for retained third grade students. If the student was not awarded an EdChoice Scholarship or Cleveland Scholarship, the district should consult their placement policy when determining the student's grade level.

Transfer Student from Out of State: Students who were enrolled in a school outside of the state of Ohio at the end of the previous school year were not held to the Third Grade Reading Guarantee requirements. The district should consult their placement policy when determining the student's grade level.

Teacher Qualifications

A teacher of a grade 3 student who has been retained or is on a reading improvement plan must have at least one year of teaching experience and must meet at least one of the following qualifications required in law (for further clarification for each teacher qualification, see below):

- 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;
- Holds an educator license for teaching grades preK-3 or 4-9 issued on or after July 1, 2017; 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 qualifications and is assigned a mentor who meets the qualifications. A first-year teacher's Resident Educator mentor may serve in this role as long as he or she meets the teacher qualifications above. More information on the [Resident Educator Program](#) is available on the department's website.

The assigned teacher (the 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 and the student's progress will be reported on his or her 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;
- Gain the approval of the service by the teacher of record and the school principal; and
- Document such an assignment in the student's reading improvement and monitoring plan.

For instruction of students who are English language learners and have been in the United States for three years or less, or for a student who has an individualized education program: The teacher holds an alternative qualification approved by the department or has successfully completed a department-approved reading instruction training for working with English learners who have been in the United States three or less years or with students who have individualized education programs. More information is available on the department's [website](#).

GUIDANCE FOR EACH TEACHER QUALIFICATION

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

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

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 in the manner aforementioned. Doctoral degrees in reading or literacy also qualify.

"Most effective" ratings: The teacher must receive the rating for the past two years to qualify. In order 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. Only [approved vendor assessments](#) for student growth can be utilized 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 down to take 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 5203. This is not the same test that is used in the reading endorsement program. **Passage of this test will not result in a reading endorsement.**

Information about the reading instruction test is here: www.ets.org/praxis/prepare/materials/5203

Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) Endorsement: Beginning July 1, 2016, teachers with a TESOL endorsement will only be qualified under the Third Grade Reading Guarantee to teach reading to third grade students who are English learners and have been in the United States for three years or less.

TEACHER STAFFING PLANS

The law does not allow for the continuation of staffing plans after the 2015-2016 school year.

Students with Disabilities

STUDENTS WITH SIGNIFICANT COGNITIVE DISABILITIES: EXEMPT FROM ALL PROVISIONS OF THE THIRD GRADE READING GUARANTEE

Students with significant cognitive disabilities are exempt from the requirements outlined in the Third Grade Reading Guarantee. Students with the most significant cognitive disabilities are either completing a substantially modified curriculum (in form and/or substance) by the individualized education program (IEP) from the general education curriculum, or the students are completing the general education curriculum but have a disability that presents unique and significant challenges such that the IEP provides for accommodations that exceed the allowable criteria for statewide test accommodations.

Students with significant cognitive disabilities are exempt from taking the reading diagnostic and therefore these students are exempt from all the other provisions of the Third Grade Reading Guarantee (reading improvement and monitoring plan, retention, etc.). This exemption should be an annual (K, 1, 2 and 3) IEP team discussion and decision. Each student's IEP should address foundational skills for literacy. For example, the IEP should address the student's mode of communication and communicative intent.

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

Not every student with an IEP should be exempt from the retention provision of the Third Grade Reading Guarantee; IEP teams may discuss this option. The IEP team should have adequate progress monitoring and reading achievement data to identify students who may be eligible to be exempt from retention prior to the spring administration of the grade 3 English language arts test.

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

Districts and schools should use caution that a student with an IEP does not receive less intensive reading interventions and supports than students without IEPs.

Considerations for students who are exempt from the retention provision of the Third Grade Reading Guarantee:

- The reading improvement and monitoring plan aligns and does not conflict with the child's IEP throughout the kindergarten through grade 3 years.
- Retention in third grade and/or promotion to grade 4 should be discussed as a part of each child's yearly reading improvement and monitoring plan(s), as well as during the IEP meeting(s).
- The IEP team should document supporting rationale within the *present levels* section of the IEP that clearly describes the data, discussion and progress monitoring through the reading improvement and monitoring plan. Additionally, the team should include rationale and decisions around consideration of exemption from retention.
- If the IEP team decides to exempt the child from retention in grade 3 and that the child will move on to grade 4, the IEP should include clear, targeted reading interventions and progress markers that will take place in grade 4.

Chartered Nonpublic Schools: For the purpose of determining if a child with a disability is exempt from retention, an individual services plan created for that child that has been reviewed by either the student's school district of residence or the school district in which the chartered nonpublic school is located and that specifies that the student is not subject to retention under the Third Grade Reading Guarantee shall be considered in the same manner as an individualized education program.²

² ORC 3301.163 (A)

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Accommodations on the reading diagnostic: All students should be administered the reading diagnostic that the district administers. Students with disabilities may be provided allowable accommodations so long as the accommodations are documented in the student’s IEP and align with the diagnostic’s administration manual. If the diagnostic is attempted but no score is obtained, then this should be noted. The district can determine if some other measure would assist in providing valid data to assist the team in program planning for the student in the area of reading. The “other measure” can inform instructional practices but may not determine *on track/not on track* status.

For students reading with Braille: The reading diagnostic requirements are the same for a student learning to read with Braille. These students are required to be assessed with the district-selected diagnostic that may be Brailled and a reading improvement and monitoring plan must be completed if necessary. The district also should have a teacher qualified to work with students with visual impairments assist the team in determining appropriate reading instruction.

For students who are deaf/hearing impaired: See “accommodations on the reading diagnostic” above. In addition, the district should have a teacher who works with students who are deaf/hearing impaired help determine the “some other measure” and assist the team in determining appropriate reading instruction for the student. The “other measure” can inform instructional practices but may not determine *on track/not on track* status.

Student is *not on track* based on the reading diagnostic: Schools are required to provide reading improvement and monitoring plans to all students, including students with IEPs, who are *not on track* based on the fall reading diagnostic.

Even if students with IEPs are determined to be *not on track*, this designation does not necessarily indicate the need to create IEP 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 child’s already identified disability, the IEP team may need to reconvene and plan for a re-evaluation to determine whether the child has an additional disability.

Relationship of a Reading Improvement and Monitoring Plan (RIMP) to an Individualized Education Program (IEP): Schools should use caution to ensure that the reading improvement and monitoring plan aligns but does not conflict with the IEP.

The *chart* that follows - *Relationship of a Reading Improvement and Monitoring Plan to an Individualized Education Program (IEP)* - may be used to review whether any of the required components of the reading improvement and monitoring plan are addressed in the IEP.

- Components one through five in the reading improvement and monitoring plan column of the table are not required or recommended to be documented within the IEP;
- Component six, the exemption from retention, should be documented within the IEP using the options outlined in the chart below.

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

Reading Improvement and Monitoring Plan <i>Third Grade Reading Guarantee</i>	Individualized Education Program (IEP) <i>Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)</i>
1. Identification of the student’s specific reading deficiency.	Section 3: Profile (identification of specific reading deficiency)

	Section 6: Measurable Annual Goals (specific to identified reading deficiency)
2. A description of proposed supplemental instruction services that will target the student’s identified reading deficiencies.	Section 7: Description of specially designed services (to intervene with the identified reading deficiency)
3. Opportunities for the student’s parents or guardians to be involved in the instructional services.	Section 6: Measurable Annual Goals (shared or developed with parents)
4. A process to monitor the implementation of the student’s instructional services.	Section 6: Measurable Annual Goals (monitoring 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 reliable assessments and provides ongoing analysis of each student’s reading progress.	Section 11: Least Restrictive Environment (Accessible reading curriculum during the regular school day...)
6. A statement that unless the student attains the appropriate level of reading competency by the end of grade 3, the student will be retained.	Section 12: Statewide and District wide testing “Yes, the child is exempt from retention in the third grade under the Third Grade Reading Guarantee.”

Federal Funding

The most up to date information regarding the use of federal funds is available on the [Office of Federal Programs](#) website.

TITLE I FUNDS

Districts and schools may use their Title I funds to support and supplement reading instruction programs selected or created by the district or school for children 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 Office of Federal Programs.

IDEA EARLY INTERVENING FUNDS

IDEA Early Intervening Funds may be used for the Third Grade Reading Guarantee. Districts and schools may redirect up to 15 percent 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 use them for students who do not have individualized education programs (IEPs).

To learn more about IDEA Early Intervening funds, contact the Office for Exceptional Children.

MEDICAID SCHOOLS PROGRAM

Medicaid Schools Program pays for IEP-defined medical 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 of education on the implementation of and compliance with the Third Grade Reading Guarantee.

ON TRACK/NOT ON TRACK REPORTING FOR READING DIAGNOSTIC

Information on specific EMIS reporting instructions can be located in the department's [EMIS Manual](#).

Districts and schools should have procedures to track and report the following data to the department on the implementation of the Third Grade Reading Guarantee during the EMIS data collections:

- Whether an individual student is *on track* or *not on track* based on the fall reading diagnostic; and
- The types of intervention for each student with a reading improvement and monitoring plan.

Students whose reading diagnostic identifies them as *on track* and “Needs Further Assessment” on the state-developed reading diagnostic are *on track*. A student who is not reading at the level for the end of the previous grade is *not on track*.

If a school uses a vendor English language arts diagnostic for the Third Grade Reading Guarantee, then the school only reports the *on track/not on track* results of the reading section of the diagnostic for the purposes of the Third Grade Reading Guarantee.

Districts and schools should enter the data in their student software systems as soon as the data is available.

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*. The results of this test go to the department of education. 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 interventions and reading improvement and monitoring plan, but do not change the *on track/not on track* status in EMIS.

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 either the **EdChoice Scholarship** or **Cleveland Scholarship** will be subject to the Third Grade Reading Guarantee retention provision, including the exemptions prescribed by that law.

In addition, each chartered nonpublic school that enrolls students with a scholarship awarded under either **EdChoice Scholarship** or **Cleveland Scholarship** must adopt policies and procedures for the annual assessment of the reading skills of those K-3 students. For students identified as reading below grade level, the school must notify the parents of this deficiency and the potential for retention in third grade. The school also must provide intensive reading instruction services to those students.

RETENTION PROVISION- [ORC 3301.163\(A\)](#)

Beginning July 1, 2015, any third grade student attending a chartered nonpublic school with a scholarship awarded under either the EdChoice Scholarship Program or Cleveland Scholarship Program shall be subject to the Third Grade Reading Guarantee retention provision under division (A)(2) of ORC 3313.608, including the exemptions prescribed by that division (see below).

Only students enrolled using an EdChoice or Cleveland Scholarship 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 has had less than three years of instruction in an English as a Second Language program;
- A student whose IEP, 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 IEP shows that the student has received intensive remediation in reading for two years, and the student was previously retained in any of grades kindergarten through grade 3; and
- A student who has received intensive remediation for two years and was previously retained in any of grades kindergarten through grade 3.**

**A student that is promoted under this exemption must continue to receive intensive reading instruction in grade four. 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.

READING DIAGNOSTIC GUIDANCE - [ORC 3301.163\(B\)](#)

Each chartered nonpublic school that enrolls students in any of grades kindergarten through three and that enrolls students under the EdChoice Scholarship Program or Cleveland Scholarship Program shall 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 or a non-department 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, 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.

REPORTING GUIDANCE - [ORC 3301.163\(C\)](#)

Each chartered nonpublic school subject to ORC 3301.163 annually shall 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 scholarship office.

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

Per [ORC 3301.0711\(K\)\(1\)\(a\)](#), each chartered nonpublic school for which at least 65 percent of its total enrollment is made up of students who are participating in state scholarship programs (Ed Choice Scholarship Program, Cleveland Scholarship Program, Tutoring Scholarship Program, Jon Peterson Scholarship Program or Autism Scholarship Program – high school only) shall administer the state assessments to all its students.

Schools must administer the grade 3 English language arts test to all of their students if they meet this criteria. However, only students awarded the EdChoice Scholarship or the Cleveland Scholarship are held to the retention provision of the Third Grade Reading Guarantee.