

What is Ohio's Third Grade Reading Guarantee?



Ohio's Third Grade Reading Guarantee is a law that Ohio schools must follow starting in Kindergarten (See [Ohio Revised Code 3313.608](#)).



The law requires that schools:

- 1) **Test the reading skills** of all children in Kindergarten through third grade at the beginning of each school year.
- 2) **Tell families in writing if your child is not reading as expected for their grade-level** based on the test results. The law is specific about the details that schools must provide to families about the test results and the school's plan to teach the child to read at school.
- 3) **Give special instruction to the child, called intervention services.** The services should be specific to your child's learning needs if they scored below grade-level on the test. The intervention services must be based on the science of reading.
- 4) **Create a Reading Improvement and Monitoring Plan within 60 days** of the date your child was given the reading test at the beginning of the year. The child's classroom teacher and parent/guardian must be involved in the creation of this plan.

Why do we have this law in Ohio?

Children who are not reading at grade level have a hard time in school if they don't get extra help. They are four times more likely to drop out of high school.

What can I do to help my child catch up?

Parents can do a lot to help their child with reading every day!

- **Praise your child's reading often.** It is very exciting when a child makes reading progress. Share how proud you are of their growth.
- **Give your child time to practice the reading and writing skills they have already learned** in school. Ask your child's teachers for the exact skills to work on.
- **Listen to your child while they read.** Certain books, called decodables, are very good for practicing specific reading skills. Ask the teacher or a librarian for example books matched to what your child needs to practice.
- **If they make a mistake, ask them to read the word slowly again.** Have your child reread the sentence to be sure they understand the meaning.
- **It is okay to take a break from books if your child needs one. Try letter flashcards, other learning games and materials, or work on writing instead.** Learning can happen in many different ways.
- **Keep books and writing materials in all the places where your child spends time each day.**
- **Talk to your child's teacher monthly** or more often about how reading is going at home, and ask for details about how reading time is going at school.

Questions to ask the teacher

- **What data has the school collected** about my child's reading and writing this school year? Can I have a copy of the results? If the results are confusing, ask for more information to help you understand.
- **What curriculum and materials are being used with my child** for their reading and writing time?
- **What happens during reading and writing time at school?** Is my child able to pay attention and participate in the lessons? Do they seem to be making progress? If not, what else could the school do to better help my child learn?
- **If my child does not make any progress in the next month**, what are my other options within the school system to get my child more help?

Can my child go to fourth grade if they don't pass the Reading Test?

Yes. Schools might recommend that some students repeat part or all of their third grade year due to not meeting the grade-level score for reading in third grade. Students may still go to fourth grade based on the following exemptions in this law.

Exemptions from repeating third grade

- 1) **Parents can request that their child move on to fourth grade**, after talking with their child's teacher and school principal about their reading scores and options for receiving support for their reading. Parents are given the ultimate authority on this decision. [Read more about this exemption on the Ohio Statewide Family Engagement Center's website.](#)
- 2) **Students receiving English Language services** with less than three years of English Language support may go to fourth grade.
- 3) **Students receiving Special Education services** who have it written in their IEP that they are exempt.
- 4) **Students receiving Special Education services** who have already received intensive remediation in reading for two school years but still are not reading at their grade level.
- 5) **Students who received intensive remediation in reading for two school years and who have already repeated a grade level** in Kindergarten through Third Grade.
- 6) **Students who reach a passing score on an alternative test** approved by the state.

What supports are provided to students after third grade?

Even though it is called the third grade reading guarantee, schools must continue to provide supports for students not reading at grade-level all the way through 12th grade. Ask your child's school about the support they provide to your child until they are reading at grade level.

Questions?

Send an email to ThirdGradeGuarantee@education.ohio.gov.