

Third Grade Reading Guarantee

October 2012

Dear Parents/Guardians of K-3 Students:

In June, Governor Kasich signed into law SB 316, which will impact a vast number of educational policies across the state. However, the most notable change based on this bill for our elementary school parents is the *Third Grade Reading Guarantee*. Over the past months, we have been working as a district to examine the requirements of this law and plan for its implementation in Strongsville. It is our hope that this FAQ-style communication will be a user-friendly reference for our K-3 parents/guardians.

If you have any questions after reading the FAQ's, please feel free to contact me or your building principal.

Sincerely,



Cameron M. Ryba

Assistant Superintendent for
Human Resources and Staff Development

What is the purpose of the *Third Grade Reading Guarantee (TGRG)*?

The purpose of the *TGRG* is to ensure all students are reading at grade-level by the time they conclude their third grade year. In K-2, students are still learning how to read. Third grade is commonly thought of as a transition year where students are now reading to learn. This means that third grade students are moving from learning letters, letter sounds and decoding words in K-2 to being expected to read and comprehend fact-filled texts to develop their understanding of a topic. Research has proven that students that do not meet grade-level reading standards by the conclusion of their third grade year are likely to struggle with reading for years to come or for the remainder of their school and adult life.

How will I know if my child is reading at grade-level?

The *TGRG* mandates that we annually assess all K-3 students in reading by September 30th each school year to determine if they have met the reading standards for the previous grade. As an example, when a 2nd grader is tested in the Fall, we are assessing to determine if they met the reading standards for 1st grade. For the 2012-13 school year, we will assess your kindergarten child with the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment-Literacy (KRA-L) assessment. The AIMSweb assessment will be used for students in grades one, two and three. Based on the results of the applicable assessment, your child will be designated as *on-track* or *not on-track*. Current 1st, 2nd and 3rd grade students were assessed last year in the Fall, Winter and Spring using the AIMSweb reading assessment.

How will KRA-L and AIMSweb data be utilized to determine if my child is *on-track* or *not on-track*?

All K-3 students must be classified as *on-track* or *not on-track* in reading based on the state's definition.

- *On-Track*: any student who is reading at grade-level based on previous end of year standards expectations by September 30.
- *Not On-Track*: any student who is **not** reading at grade-level based on previous end of year standards expectations by September 30.

As a district, we will use KRA-L data for our kindergarten students and national norms from our AIMSweb data for students in grades one, two and three. To illustrate the concept of national norms for our AIMSweb data, this means that across the country the average 2nd grader taking the Fall Reading Curriculum-Based Assessment should be able to read 60 words correctly in one-minute. If your 2nd grader is reading significantly less than 60 words correctly in one-minute, he/she may be deemed as *not on-track*. The data provided by both KRA-L and AIMSweb specifically shares whether or not students should find success in their current program of study (*on-track*) or if additional intervention is warranted (*not on-track*).

As a parent, how will I be informed if my child is *on-track* or *not on-track*?

Parents of K-3 students that are *not on-track* based on the KRA-L or Fall AIMSweb assessment will receive a mailed letter from their school principal by November 1, 2012. This letter will inform parents of the *not on-track* designation and will clearly state the identified reading deficiencies, current reading services and proposed supplemental reading instruction. In addition, this mailing will include a draft copy of a *Reading Improvement and Monitoring Plan* (as described below) that has been designed to assist your child in getting “on-track” in reading.

Parents of K-3 students that are *on-track* based on the KRA-L or Fall AIMSweb assessment will be notified during October parent/teacher conferences. If a parent is not attending conferences, he/she will need to contact the reading teacher for this information.

What will happen if my child is *not on-track*?

K-3 students who are *not on-track* based on the KRA-L or Fall AIMSweb assessment must be put on a *Reading Improvement and Monitoring Plan* per the state requirement. This plan will provide research-based interventions related to the child’s identified area(s) of reading deficiency. Parents will receive a draft copy of their child’s *Reading Improvement and Monitoring Plan* in the mail by November 1, 2012. The mailed letter and draft plan will detail the opportunities for parents to review and have input into the final plan.

Will my child be retained in third grade if he/she does not pass the third grade reading OAA?

For the 2012-13 school year, the retention of third grade students not reaching the designated Ohio Achievement Assessment (OAA) third grade reading cut score (390) will be a collaborative decision between the principal, reading teacher and parent. Retention is not mandated by the state for the 2012-13 school year.

Starting with the 2013-14 school year, third grade students not scoring 392 or better on the third grade reading OAA will be retained in the third grade unless they meet one of the state approved exemptions, which are specified below.

- **Limited English Proficient** students who have been enrolled in a U.S. school for less than two full school years and have had less than two full years of instruction in an English Language Learner (ELL) program.
- **Special Education** students whose IEP’s specifically exempt them from retention under the *TGRG*.
- Students who are able to demonstrate reading competency on an **alternative reading assessment** approved by the Ohio Department of Education.
- A student who received **intensive remediation for two years** and was **previously retained** in grades K-3.

What if my child surpasses the cut score on the Fall Reading OAA, but not the Spring Reading OAA?

This decision will be finalized by the Ohio Department of Education in October 2012

My child has a 504-Plan. How will the *Third Grade Guarantee* impact him/her?

All students, including those students with 504-Plans must follow all provisions of the law from assessment to intervention, including possible retention.

My child has an IEP. How will the *Third Grade Guarantee* impact him/her?

All students, including those students with an IEP must follow all provisions of the law from assessment to intervention. However, a student with an IEP may be exempt from the retention component of the law only. This exemption is an IEP team decision that is based on the student’s disability and identified area(s) of deficiency.