

## Facts for Families: What is the Third Grade Reading Law?

In 2016, the Michigan Legislature passed a law that requires schools to identify learners who are struggling with reading and writing and to provide additional help. The law states that third graders may repeat third grade if they are more than one grade level behind beginning with the 2019-2020 school year. These *Facts for Families* help families understand the Third Grade Reading Law so they can support their child.



### ***How is my child identified as having a reading concern?***

Assessments are given to all children who are in Kindergarten through Third grade **within 30 days of the first day of school**. An Individualized Reading Improvement Plan (IRIP) will be written for all learners who have been identified through these assessments as having a reading concern.

### ***When is an Individualized Reading Improvement Plan (IRIP) developed?***

An IRIP is developed following identification of a reading concern **within 30 days** of the screening assessment. The IRIP is developed with the help of teachers, the principal, parent or legal guardian, and anyone else that the team agrees needs to be involved. Your child will remain on an IRIP as long as there is a reading concern. Your child will be assessed several times through the year to check on their progress. IRIPs should be updated to reflect the needs of your child.

### ***What is the “Read at Home” plan?***

A “Read at Home” plan is developed between the school and family to develop efforts you will take to support your child at home. Resources and activities are provided to families.

### ***What if my child’s reading does not improve?***

Your child will take the M-STEP in the spring of their third-grade year. The M-STEP is the Michigan Student Test of Educational Progress. The M-STEP measures what your child should be able to know and do. If your child scores one or more grade level behind the third-grade reading level, then a notification will be generated for you and your child’s school that your child **may** be retained.

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### **When do I get notification that my child may be retained?**

If your child's reading score on the English Language Arts M-STEP is more than one year below grade level, you and your child's school will be notified by **June 1** of that school year.

### **When do I need to talk to the school if I don't agree with the decision to retain my child?**

If you do not agree with the decision, you should request a meeting with your child's school and file a **Good Cause Exemption within 30 days** of receiving a notice regarding potential retention. Your child's school must make themselves available to discuss your child's progress.

For more information on the Good Cause Exemption, please refer to: *Facts for Families: What is a Good Cause Exemption in the Third Grade Reading Law?*

### **When will I find out if my child is being retained after I ask for a Good Cause Exemption?**

Your child's school needs to have a decision on retaining your child **30 days before the first day of school**. This decision is made by the school principal and/or superintendent and is a final decision.

### **What support will my child get if they are retained in 3rd Grade?**

The school will provide a reading program that is designed to improve your child's specific reading concern. This program includes teaching strategies to help your child be a successful reader. Your child may also be assigned to a highly effective teacher of reading, a reading specialist, an evidence-based reading program, daily small group instruction, ongoing assessments, or specialized reading help.