Essentials for Meeting the Third-Grade Guarantee

Achieve Third-Grade Reading Proficiency

A Critical Milestone

Early Achievement is Key to Lifelong Success

Many children in the U.S. face dim academic and career prospects, as millions going into the fourth grade are unable to read proficiently. Research shows that third-grade reading proficiency is critical for educational and lifelong success. It's a key to gaining achievement in the new knowledge economy and breaking the cycle of poverty over time.

Fortunately, there are frameworks and solutions available to create and advance a comprehensive third-grade reading proficiency achievement plan—ones that will both empower educators and accelerate reading outcomes, so all children learn to read at grade level by the end of third grade.

Focus on Third Grade

Literacy is the basis for all content learning. Therefore, effective literacy instruction in the early grades is critical. Educators have long known that an important transition takes place during elementary school—from learning to read in kindergarten through second grade, to reading to learn in third grade.

Students who are not reading at grade level in third grade begin having difficulty comprehending the written material that is critical to learning in the grades that follow. Early reading proficiency bolsters STEM skills, as well as communication and critical analysis skills. Finally, being at or above grade level in third grade is a significant predictor of high school graduation and college and career readiness.

2017 Third-Grade Reading Legislation

■ Require Retention   ■ Allow Retention But Do Not Require
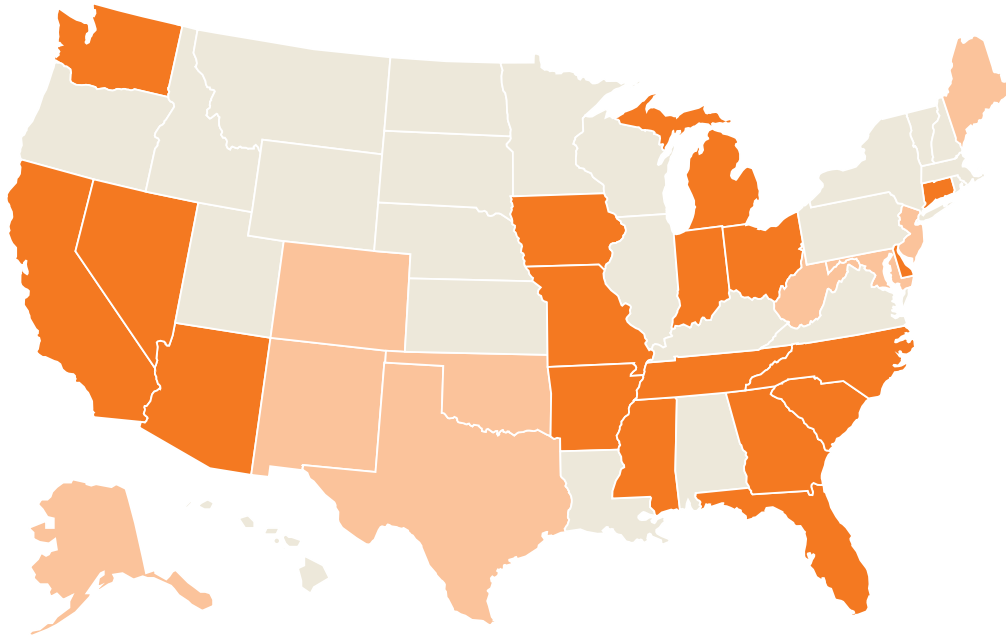
A Guarantee for Accountability

Reading proficiently by the end of third grade is a significant milestone. With this higher focus on accountability in mind, many states have adopted a third-grade reading "guarantee" to ensure that students become proficient readers before moving onto the fourth grade. Increasingly, states are passing legislation that requires students who do not read proficiently by the end of third grade to be retained.

No matter the name, a district's Third-Grade Reading Guarantee prescribes actions on the part of educators, including:

• Identifying reading deficiencies through assessment.

• Providing intervention for struggling readers in kindergarten through third grade.

• Retaining students who do not read proficiently by the end of third grade.

Address the Third-Grade Reading Guarantee

Three essential areas comprise a strong model for educational leaders seeking to strengthen their third-grade reading proficiency initiatives.

1. Implement a strong core English Language Arts (ELA) program containing evidence-based instruction for foundational reading skills.

2. Use data from universal screeners and ongoing assessments to identify and monitor reading deficiencies.

3. Institute a system of instructional supports with increasing intensity to meet the needs of all students.

1   Core ELA K–3 Program

Four strategies are recommended to help schools improve literacy skills in the early grades and to create a strong core or basal ELA program in kindergarten through third grade.[7]

- Teach students academic language skills, including the use of inferential and narrative language, along with vocabulary knowledge.

- Develop awareness of the segments of sounds in speech and how they link to letters.

- Teach students to decode words, analyze word parts, and write and recognize words.

- Ensure that students read connected text every day to support reading accuracy, fluency, and comprehension.

2 Data and Progress Monitoring

There are three ways data and progress monitoring can assist educators in driving student achievement: by providing early identification of reading deficiencies through universal screening, indicating the need for intervention to address those deficiencies, and evaluating the effectiveness of these interventions.

1. **Universal Screening** Early screening of all students helps identify those at risk for academic deficiencies and is a central component of all Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) and Response to Intervention (RTI) models.

2. **Progress Monitoring** Progress measures can be used regularly, and as frequently as necessary, throughout the school year to gauge the effectiveness of instruction.

3. **Data-Based Decision Making** Student outcome data can better inform educators' decisions and strategies surrounding instruction and intervention within MTSS and RTI models.

3 System of Instructional Supports

One of the main challenges for educators is the differences in students' abilities. High-performing districts and schools apply a strong system of instructional supports which are founded on an MTSS- or RTI-type framework. Multiple tiers of instructional supports begin with a core foundational tier for all learners. The framework extends by adding tiers for secondary and tertiary prevention to support and accommodate students with increasingly specific needs.

Scientific research on reading provides important characteristics of effective academic interventions. Research-based interventions should:

• Be offered as soon as a reading deficiency is identified.

• Significantly increase in intensity by increasing instructional time and/or reducing the size of the instructional group.

• Provide explicit, systematic instruction along with practice and review to ensure mastery.

• Provide skillful instruction with error corrections and many opportunities for immediate positive feedback.

• Be guided by, and responsive to, data on student progress.

• Be motivating, engaging, and supportive—to create a positive learning environment.*

*__Adapted from:__ The *Intensive Reading Interventions for Struggling Readers in Early Elementary School: A Principal's Guide*, developed by the Center on Instruction.[8]

Develop a Comprehensive Third-Grade Reading Proficiency Achievement Plan

A comprehensive reading proficiency achievement plan helps lay a strong foundation in kindergarten through second grade and ensures third graders achieve grade-level expectations. It includes curriculum resources to uphold and reinforce the three key elements of core instruction, data and progress monitoring, and multi-tiered supports.

Recommended Curriculum Resources for a Comprehensive Third-Grade Reading Proficiency Achievement Plan

Instructional Curriculum Action	ELA Curriculum Programs
Choose a strong core program to meet the specific needs of your student population.	*SRA Reading Mastery®* *SRA Open Court Reading®* *Wonders®*
Provide intensive intervention and/or prevention with explicit, systematic instruction of foundational reading skills.	*SRA Open Court Reading®* Foundational Skills Kits *SRA Reading Mastery®* *SRA Early Interventions in Reading* *SRA Corrective Reading®* (Third grade and above) *WonderWorks*
Ensure support for English Learners.	*SRA Language for Learning* *SRA Language for Thinking* *SRA Language for Writing* *Intervenciones tempranas de la lectura* *Maravillas®*
Develop and strengthen phonological awareness, language, and literacy skills in early learning settings, including PreK.	*SRA Language for Learning* *SRA Phonemic Awareness* *SRA Open Court Reading®* Foundational Skills Kits *WonderWorks* Foundational Skills Kit
Track progress and share achievements.	*SRA 2Inform®* Online Progress Monitoring *Engrade®* *Wonders* Assessments and Data Dashboard

Implement a Third-Grade Reading Proficiency Plan

US districts and schools are implementing robust ELA curriculum solutions and resources to meet literacy and achievement action plans, improve student performance, and lower student retention rates.

Mindful planning and strategic partnering ensure educational leaders can move toward ensuring that 100 percent of students meet Third-Grade Reading Guarantee requirements. Begin by taking these key steps:

- Implement district wide or building wide with a priority focus on the lowest-performing classrooms and schools.

- Align your plan with your district's instructional initiatives and multi-tiered support framework.

- Customize the approach to meet your district's unique needs.

- Center your course of action on research-based curriculum programs and resources.

- Support your K–3 literacy instructional approach with a partner who holds both substantial expertise and a portfolio of comprehensive curriculum solutions.

Take steps this school year to map out or enhance your comprehensive third-grade reading proficiency plan. Our representatives can evaluate literacy and achievement action plans and recommend top ELA curriculum solutions to match your school's or district's needs.

To schedule a consultative meeting with one of our representatives, visit

mheonline.com/3gproficiency

Citations

1. Lyon, G.R. (1996). Learning Disabilities. The future of children: Special education for students with disabilities. 6:54-76.

   Lyon, G.R. Learning disabilities. In Child psychopathology. E. Marsh and R. Barkley, eds. New York: Guilford Press, 1996, pp. 390–434.

2. Fiester, L., (2013). Early Warning: Why Reading by the End of Third Grade Matters. Baltimore, MD: Annie E. Casey Foundation. Available at http://lib.post. ca.gov/Publications/Building%20a%20 Career%20Pipeline%20Documents/ EarlyWarningConfirmed.pdf

3. National Assessment of Adult Literacy (NAAL) Data Files from the 2003 National Assessment of Adult Literacy". Nces.ed.gov.

4. Juel, C. (1988). Learning to read and write: A longitudinal study of 54 children from first through fourth grades. Journal of Educational Psychology, 80, 437-447.

5. Lesnick, J., Goerge, R., Smithgall, C., & Gwynne J. (2010). Reading on Grade Level in Third Grade: How Is It Related to High School Performance and College Enrollment? Chicago: Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago

6. Francis, D. J. (1996). Developmental lag versus deficit models of reading disability: A longitudinal, individual growth curves analysis. Journal of Educational Psychology, 88 (1), 3-17.

   Shaywitz, S. E., Escobar, M. D., Shaywitz, B. A., Fletcher, J. M., & Makuch, R. (1992). Distribution and temporal stability of dyslexia in an epidemiological sample of 414 children followed longitudinally. New England Journal of Medicine, 326, 145-150.

7. Foorman, B., Beyler, N., Borradaile, K., Coyne, M., Denton, C. A., Dimino, J., Furgeson, J., Hayes, L., Henke, J., Justice, L., Keating, B., Lewis, W., Sattar, S., Streke, A., Wagner, R., & Wissel, S. (2016). Foundational skills to support reading for understanding in kindergarten through 3rd grade (NCEE 2016-4008). Washington, DC: National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance (NCEE), Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education. Retrieved from the NCEE website: http://whatworks.ed.gov.

8. Torgesen, J. K. (2006) Intensive reading interventions for struggling readers in early elementary school: A principal's guide. Portsmouth, NH: RMC Research Corporation, Center on Instruction.

To schedule a consultative meeting
with one of our representatives, visit

mheonline.com/3gproficiency

Mc
Graw
Hill
Education

Because learning changes everything.™