

## **Update on Senate Bill 21 and its Impact on the Third Grade Reading Guarantee** *March 4, 2013*

### Senate Bill 21

The Ohio General Assembly is considering modifications to the Third Grade Reading Guarantee (TGRG) with regard to teacher qualifications and students with significant disabilities in Senate Bill 21 (SB 21). The version of SB 21 that passed the Ohio Senate last week proposes the following changes:

- The requirement that teachers with a student affected by the TGRG be actively engaged in reading instruction for the previous three years would be removed.
- Two of the options available to teachers to demonstrate their ability to teach reading to a student affected by the TGRG would be altered:
  - Teachers would be required to provide evidence of “completion” of a scientifically research-based reading instruction program instead of a “credential”.
  - Teachers would be able to use the reading instruction program option beyond the 2013-2014 school year. Current law has it only for one year.
  - The Value-Added option would be altered to focus on several measures of teacher effectiveness in reading instruction as designated by the Ohio Department of Education (ODE).
- Plans for districts that do not have a sufficient number of qualified teachers to fulfill the TGRG requirements in the 2013-2014 school year would not require approval from ODE. These plans are sometimes referred to as the teacher staffing plans. Any district that submits a plan would automatically receive flexibility on the TGRG teacher qualifications for the 2013-2014 school year only.
- Students with significant cognitive disabilities would be exempted from all the requirements of the TGRG.
- ODE would be authorized to exempt other students with significant disabilities from all the requirements of the TGRG.

### Upcoming Third Grade Reading Guarantee Updates

As SB 21 moves through the legislative process, ODE will release updates on any changes and what these changes mean for school districts. ODE is preparing to release a comprehensive package of guidance and materials related the TGRG to be released several weeks after the final passage of SB 21. This package will include:

- A list of comparable reading diagnostic assessments that can be used to meet the September 30 deadline;
- A reading improvement and monitoring plan template;
- A process for exempting students with significant disabilities from the requirements of the TGRG (if changed by SB 21);
- The list of approved scientifically research-based reading instruction programs;
- Criteria for determining if a teacher is considered an effective reading instructor (if changed by SB 21);
- A template for the teacher staffing plan for districts to use when submitting their plans; and
- Topic specific and streamlined guidance documents.