

Third Grade Reading Guarantee Promotion Policy Guidance for District Leaders

This summer, school districts across Ohio are considering how to devise their Mid-Year Promotion Policy. This guidance document will aid in making these important decisions by providing the legal background and additional considerations when planning for summer reading intervention programs, summer promotion and mid-year promotion to fourth-grade.

1. Summer Reading Programs

What you should know:

Ohio law¹ says that instruction offered as part of a summer reading intervention programs must be:

- **Intensive**—in-depth and for a sufficient period of time
- **Explicit**—offer clear, complete explanations of reading concepts, while not assuming that a student already understands or can link the concepts
- **Systematic**—address each student’s unique reading challenges and continually evaluate the student’s progress to identify what he or she still needs to progress

Considerations for Summer Reading Programs:

- Student needs as identified by the student’s teacher and test results
- The extent to which your district can provide intervention services
- Program timing and duration
- The experience and qualifications of intervention teachers
 - Although the summer reading teacher should be experienced and qualified to help struggling readers, the specific qualifications of the Third Grade Reading Guarantee do not apply
- The focus of the intervention program
 - For example, basing the intervention on each student’s Third Grade Reading Improvement and Monitoring Plan (RIMP)
- Evaluation and monitoring of each student’s instruction and results
- How parents will be involved

2. Summer Testing

The Ohio Department of Education will offer the summer version of the Ohio Achievement Assessment on July 7-11. District testing coordinators have received a newsletter with details. Students will have one opportunity to take the state test. Students also may have an opportunity to take an alternative to the Ohio Achievement Assessment during the summer. This must be an assessment approved by the Ohio Department of Education.

¹ ORC 3313.608(F)

3. Summer promotion

The students can advance to fourth-grade during the summer by:

- Reaching the promotion score on the Ohio Achievement Assessment (that's 392 for the 2013-2014 school year), or
- Reaching a promotion score on an alternative assessment.
 - The promotion scores on the alternative assessments are aligned with the promotion score on the Ohio Achievement Assessment.

4. Mid-year promotion

What you should know:

- The law says that even if a student does not reach the promotion score in the summer, the student may become eligible for mid-year promotion. Students who are retained are considered third graders until they are able to show reading proficiency on one of the promotion tests. Law also states that students receive instruction at levels matching their ability in other subjects if capable of doing so. The decision to provide higher-level material is based on student data, progress monitoring, and individual learning needs.
- Here's something else important: Ohio law² says that districts must offer retained students the option to receive reading intervention services from one or more providers other than the district. Your district's mid-year promotion policy should make this clear.

Mid-Year Promotion policy considerations:

- Intervention service providers other than the district
- The focus of the district's intervention
 - For example, basing the intervention on each student's Third Grade Reading Improvement and Monitoring Plan and providing at least 90 minutes of reading instruction a day
- Monitoring and evaluation of service providers, teachers and student achievement
- How parents will be involved

Placement in other subjects:

The law³ says that retained students who demonstrated proficiency in other academic subjects must receive instruction that matches their achievement level. Districts will benefit from adopting a policy that states how this will be accomplished. It's important to consider your staff, building configuration, and curriculum demands.

Third Grade Ohio Achievement Assessments for retained students:

Even if they are getting more advanced instruction in other academic subjects, retained third-grade students must still take the third-grade Ohio Achievement Assessments in all subject areas. It's good to keep this in mind as you determine when to administer Mid-Year Promotion tests.

Also remember that students promoted to fourth-grade must take all fourth-grade Ohio Achievement Assessments. Retained students must be reported in EMIS as third-graders until the district promotes them to fourth-grade.

² ORC 3313.608(B)(2)(a)(i)

³ ORC 3313.608 (B)(4)

Promotion Deadline: Districts should decide on a deadline for promoting retained students. Here are things to consider when setting this date:

- The test used and the expected date for getting results
- An appropriate time for students to make a smooth transition to the fourth-grade curriculum
- The administration dates of the fall and spring Ohio Achievement (the timing of promotion will determine which OAA the promoted student takes)
- Whether the fourth-grade reading teacher will be positioned to produce a comprehensive, fair, and accurate grade for the promoted student when a quarter or semester is complete.

Test Selection and Administration: When determining what tests to use for Mid-Year Promotion opportunities, consider:

- The desired promotion timeline
- Alignment of the test with the district's curriculum
- Frequency of the tests

Districts should select a comparable test (at least comparable with 3rd grade promotion skills) that is able to determine if students have the ability to show proficiency of academic content consistent with the month of promotion to fourth-grade. This will ensure that students promoted mid-year can keep up with their fourth-grade classmates.

Criteria for Mid-Year Promotion:

Students must demonstrate the skill-level fourth-graders need at the time the promotion takes place. *In addition*, students must achieve a suitable promotion score on whatever test the district chooses to give.

Promoted Students:

Students that satisfy the requirements for Mid-Year Promotion will be classified as fourth-graders in EMIS. Once promoted, the student will take the fourth-grade Ohio Achievement Assessment in all subjects.

Retained students that do not achieve the minimum standards for Mid-Year Promotion:

If a student does not meet the requirements for Mid-Year Promotion, he or she will remain classified as a third-grade student for the rest of the school year. The student will take the third-grade OAA in all subject areas and enter fourth-grade the following year.