



READ BY GRADE THREE
POLICY TALKING POINTS



MICHIGAN POLICY TALKING POINTS

Reading is a critical predictor of educational and lifelong success

A student's ability to read is a critical predictor of educational and lifelong success.

Strong programs, beginning in kindergarten, help students get on—and stay on—the path to grade-level reading. They are designed to give students every opportunity to be successful.

Beginning in fourth grade, students shift from “learning to read” to “reading to learn.” Reading to learn enables a student to comprehend facts in social studies and science, understand word problems in math, and interpret complex concepts in language arts.

When students enter fourth grade with strong reading skills, they are better positioned for success in the classroom, high school graduation, and readiness for college or a good job.

Making Michigan a Top 10 state for education

Top 10 in 10 Years is Michigan's effort to make Michigan a Top 10 state for education. Our goal is to help students read on grade level by the end of third grade to ensure they achieve long-term success and are able to meet the challenges of a global economy.

Michigan's Read by Grade Three takes steps to ensure early on that all students, no matter where they live, are gaining the skills they need to be successful in school and beyond.

A comprehensive K-3 reading policy, Read by Grade Three focuses on identifying struggling readers early and providing them with the instructional supports they need to read on grade level before they enter fourth grade.

Read by Grade Three helps ensure that more students will achieve a score of at least proficient in English language arts on the grade 3 M-STEP assessment.

The law requires districts and public school academies to:

Use a reading assessment system to identify students in need of additional support and to monitor student progress.

Create early literacy coaching models that provide ongoing teacher training in reading instruction and on administering and using assessment results to inform instruction.

Provide targeted instruction and supports to students.

Engage in consistent monitoring to be able to quickly identify and address students' reading challenges.

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Ensuring teachers are trained and supported is critical

Teachers in grades K-3 will receive targeted training based on the reading development needs of their incoming students and their progress in improving the reading level of their students.

Schools should set aside time for teachers, early literacy coaches, and other instructional staff to collaborate on professional development.

Early literacy coaches bring a high level of experience and expertise to support reading instruction. They have experience as a successful classroom teacher, hold a bachelor's degree, and have completed advanced coursework in reading or training in literacy instructional strategies.

Parents - Key partners in supporting reading success

Supporting a student's reading success should happen beyond the classroom. Parents and guardians play an important role in helping their child develop reading skills at home and outside of school.

Students who are not reading on grade level are given a "Read at Home" plan to provide parents and guardians with tools and resources for supporting reading at home.

It is very important to continue reading efforts over the summer months. Creating a plan to spend quality time reading over the summer can help prevent kids from falling behind and ensure they're ready for the new school year.

There are multiple ways to support your child's reading outside of the classroom.

Read something every day. Reading 20 minutes each day can help your child read on grade level.

Talk about letters and sounds. Help your child learn the names of the letters and the sounds the letters make.

Choose the right books and ones of interest to your child. Make sure the books your child is reading are just right—not too hard and not too easy.

Make sure books are around. Your child will be more likely to pick up a book and read if books are out in the open and easy to find.

Talk to your child. Use trips to the grocery store, dinnertime chats, and driving in the car as a time to introduce new words and practice their speaking skills.

Sing rhyming songs, read rhyming books, and say tongue twisters with your child. This helps them learn new sounds in words.

Have your child write. Writing grocery lists and notes or letters helps children connect spoken words to written words.

Ask your child questions about what they read. Talking about the words in the book helps them understand what they are reading.

Take advantage of help out there. Ask your child's teacher or school librarian for help picking out books. Visit the library for books, events, and programs like reading clubs.

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Valid and reliable screening and reading assessment systems are essential for success

Educators, schools, and districts use an assessment system to identify any reading challenges, inform instructional needs, and assess progress toward growth goals for students in grades K-3.

A student's reading skills will be assessed at least three times per school year in kindergarten through third grade. The first assessment will take place within the first 30 school days of the school year.

Individual Reading Improvement Plans outline supports provided to struggling readers.

Any student in grades K-3 who is identified as having a reading challenge will receive an Individual Reading Improvement Plan (IRIP) within 30 days of identification. IRIPs are developed by the student's teacher, school principal, and parent or legal guardian.

IRIPs detail the comprehensive, targeted reading supports and resources the school will provide to the student until they are reading on grade level.

Supports outlined in IRIPs take place during regular school hours, in addition to regular classroom reading instruction.

In addition to in-school supports, districts and public school academies are encouraged to offer summer reading camps to support students' reading development. These camps are staffed with highly effective teachers with specialized training in reading.

Parents and legal guardians will receive written updates regarding their child's reading challenges and progress.

Retention - One part of the comprehensive reading supports

It may be determined that a student needs additional time and support to gain grade-level reading skills before moving on to the fourth grade. This decision is based on a number of factors, including a student's performance on assessments.

Beginning in the 2019-20 school year, the M-STEP state summative assessment will be used to identify students who may benefit from retention.

This retention is not a simple repetition of the third grade. The additional year provides struggling readers with the extra time and intensive instructional supports they need to meet their individual reading needs, setting them up for success in fourth grade and beyond.

If a student is retained, they receive personalized intensive reading supports such as a highly effective reading teacher, additional reading instructional time, daily targeted small group or one-on-one instruction, specialized tutoring, and a parent home reading plan so they can successfully enter fourth grade reading to learn.

Schools work in partnership with parents and guardians to support the needs of students. As part of these conversations, schools will communicate if there is a need for retention at the end of third grade.

Some students are exempted from retention. They may include students with an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) and students with less than three years of English instruction.

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There are a number of ways students can show that they are reading on grade level and ready to enter fourth grade:

Achieving a reading score that is less than one grade level behind as determined by the department, based on the grade 3 state English language arts assessment.

Demonstrating a grade 3 reading level through performance on an alternative standardized reading assessment approved by the superintendent of public instruction.

Additionally, districts can grant exemptions for a student to advance to grade 4 without meeting the requirements of Read by Grade Three. Reasons for an exemption include:

The student has an individualized education program (IEP) or a section 504 plan and it is decided the student should move up to the fourth grade.

The student is a limited English speaker who has had less than three years of instruction in an English language learner program.

The student's parent or guardian has requested a good cause exemption and it is determined that the good cause exemption is in the best interest of the student.