

Third Grade Reading Guarantee

First-year results under Ohio's Third Grade Reading Guarantee show schools are working harder than ever to give beginning readers the skills they'll need to succeed in grades 4-12. The effort is paying off.

Why a guarantee?

Experience shows that children who do not gain basic reading skills by the end of grade 3 struggle to succeed in later grades, where they learn mostly by reading. Yet too many schools have not known how to help their poor readers. Over the years, schools have continued promoting these children to higher grades hoping they would eventually catch up. Instead, many fall farther and farther behind. The result? Each year, 24,000 students drop out of Ohio high schools, many of them without the reading skills they need to function in jobs and society. Ohio's Third Grade Guarantee ensures that every struggling reader gets the support he or she needs to be able to learn and achieve.

How does it work?

The Third Grade Reading Guarantee is a support program that spans kindergarten through grade 3. Under the guarantee, teachers assess each student's reading skills at the beginning of each school year. If a student is reading below grade level, the school creates a reading improvement plan for the child. That plan includes extra reading help right away and for as long as the child needs it.

So far, the guarantee has helped most students get back on track in reading by the end of the school year. But students who enter grade 3 still struggling to read receive the added help of a specially trained teacher. There is a final strategy to protect these students from long-term academic failure: A student who has not gained third-grade reading skills before the fourth grade begins must continue in third grade to build his or her reading skills. The child may do fourth grade work in other subjects, if he or she is able. The child also may be promoted to fourth grade mid-year, if the district's policy permits it.

How do we know it's working?

The results from the state's spring 2014 reading test for third-graders are in. They show that 25,000 readers improved enough between the start and end of the school year to begin Grade 4 with the reading skills they need to succeed. These girls and boys now can continue their school years confident and able to learn.

For more information visit:

education.ohio.gov

Search **Third Grade Reading Guarantee**