

# A PARENT GUIDE TO PUBLIC ACT 306 THIRD GRADE READING BILL

### **What is the law all about?**

Michigan's test scores on both the Michigan-based M-STEP ELA assessment and the NAEP (National Assessment of Educational Progress) reading assessment have shown a need for attention to early reading and literacy. In an effort to boost reading achievement, Michigan lawmakers passed Public Act 306 in October 2016. On the 2015 NAEP Michigan was 41st in the nation for 4th grade reading achievement. To help more students be proficient by the end of 3rd grade, the law requires extra support for K-3 students who are not at grade level in reading. The law also states that a child may be retained in 3rd grade if he/she is one or more grade levels behind in reading at the end of 3rd grade.

### **What do I need to know as a parent?**

Your child's reading progress will be closely monitored. If your child is not reading at the expected level, we will create an Individualized Reading Improvement Plan (IRIP) to support your child and track progress throughout the year. This may include:

- Extra instruction or support in areas of need;
- Ongoing checks on reading progress;
- A read-at-home plan.

If you are notified your child may be retained, you have the right to meet with school officials and to request an exemption if in the best interest of your child. At Dexter Schools, retention is never our first option and we work with families to ensure there are supports available for our students. Educational research does not support retention based on academic progress alone, and it is not our intent or plan to retain students solely based on assessment scores. You have the right to be involved every step of the way and we encourage you to do so.

### **What can I do to support my child?**

Share enjoyable books at home with your child daily, even in the summer. Some ways to do this:

- Read out loud to your child.
- Listen to your child read.
- Echo read (You read a line, then they repeat).
- Read together at the same time.
- Reread or retell favorite stories.
- Talk to your child about the reading.
- Talk to and with your kids a lot. Knowing more words helps kids to understand the words they read better.
- Encourage writing. Let children write the sounds they hear, spelling is developmental and a work in progress.
- Be involved in your child's education and support the reading plan if your child has one.

## How will this affect my child?

**In Grades K-3:** Your school will use tests to identify students that need extra help with reading. These students are at risk of not passing the M-STEP ELA in 3rd grade, or are not reading at the expected level for his or her grade level and time of year. If your child is identified as needing additional supports (extra help), your school will provide your child with an Individual Reading Improvement Plan (IRIP). This means your child's teacher and school will work with your child to find where your child needs support in his reading development and create a plan to support him or her.

- The extra supports in your child's reading improvement plan will occur in small groups during the school day.
- Your child will not miss regular reading instruction.

Part of your child's IRIP will include a read-at-home plan that encourages you and your child to read and write outside of the school day.

- Your child may also be encouraged to participate in summer reading programs.
- Your child's teacher will also receive supports in evidence-based effective practices in teaching reading and writing to support all learners to grow as readers and writers.

**In 3rd Grade:** Starting in 2019-2020, a student will not be promoted to 4th grade unless he or she:

- Receives a reading score of less than one year behind on grade 3 ELA state assessment (M-STEP), or
- Shows a grade 3 reading level on another test approved by superintendent of public instruction, or
- Shows a grade 3 reading level through a portfolio, or collection, of student work in all grade 3 ELA standards.

You will be notified by the state and district if your child may be required to be retained. At Dexter Schools, retention is never our first option and we work with families to ensure there are supports available for our students. Educational research does not support retention based on academic progress alone, and it is not our intent or plan to retain students solely based on assessment scores. A child will only be required to repeat 3rd grade once.

You as a parent have the right:

- To ask for a good cause exemption with the school or district within thirty days once notified.
- To request a meeting with school officials (principal, etc.).

## Are there any exceptions?

Considerations may be made if:

- Your child has an IEP or 504 plan;
- Your child is an English-proficient student (speaks second language);
- Your child has had an IRIP for two years and was previously retained;
- Your child has been enrolled in current district for less than two years and did not receive reading support;
- Your child is at grade level in all other subjects;
- It is in the best interest of the student and requested within thirty days

If a request is made, the district superintendent will make a decision in writing and notify parents. The decision will be shared at least thirty days before school begins. The decision is final. If your child repeats 3rd grade, his/her class will be with a highly rated teacher and/or reading specialist. Most of the day will be spent on reading instruction but some 4th grade standards will also be taught. Students will still have an independent reading improvement plan and get extra support. Student progress will be closely monitored.