

November 20, 2017

Dear Parents,

The Ann Arbor Public Schools is committed to providing a high quality education for all students. Ensuring that students are proficient and skillful readers and writers is one of our highest district priorities. In 2016, the State of Michigan passed legislation that immediately impacts reading expectations for all students in kindergarten through third grade. This legislation became Public Act 306 and is referred to as the **Third Grade Reading Law**. This Third Grade Reading Law sets out standards for student achievement and guidelines to ensure students achieve grade level proficiency by the end of third grade.

AAPS has been in compliance with many elements of this new law for many years--we are taking this opportunity to strengthen even further the district's reading and writing program. The law has several requirements that must be integrated into every school district's Pre-K through 3rd grade reading program over the next three years. We want to assure parents that the Ann Arbor Public Schools has a solid, robust plan to meet the requirements of the law and to provide strong and adaptive instructional support for young readers.

Attached to this cover letter is a general overview of the elements of the Third Grade Reading law and how parents/families will be a strong partner in this achievement. Every student in grades K-5 will have a personalized learning plan (PLP) and all students who are not now grade level proficient in reading will have an Individual Reading Improvement Plan (IRIP). This plan will address the student's challenge areas and strategies for improving them. Teachers will actively engage parents in generating these plans to include effective "at home" reading activities.

Reading proficiency is a strong indicator of future career and college readiness. The Ann Arbor Public Schools continues to take steps to assure that literacy skills are embedded in all subject areas throughout the school day. Family engagement plays a vital role in a child's success as a reader. Your collaboration is both appreciated and necessary to ensure your student is a skillful reader and writer.

You may have heard the Third Grade Reading legislation includes language about third grade retention beginning in 2019-2020. We want to assure parents that the Ann Arbor Public Schools **does not** intend to implement this element. While the State of Michigan will monitor and report annually on a student's level of proficiency as measured by the MSTEP (Michigan Student Test of Educational Progress), local school districts have the authority to modify this provision if certain exemptions are documented. We firmly believe new enhancements to our core literacy program with additional supports and collaboration with families will ensure our K-3 students develop skills to be reading proficient.

If you have any questions or concerns please do not hesitate to contact your student's principal or classroom teacher. As partners in your child's education we encourage you to communicate frequently with your child's teacher about his/her progress. Together, we will ensure our students will develop critical reading skills necessary to thrive in our diverse and global world.

In partnership,



Lee Ann Dickinson-Kelley  
Assistant Superintendent for K-12 Instruction