

ORANGE COUNTY
BOARD OF EDUCATION

AGENDA ITEM ABSTRACT

Meeting Date: February 25, 2013

AGENDA
ITEM No. 13-02-(2)-11

ACTION: (Y/N) N

SUBJECT: N.C. General Assembly's Read to Achieve Program

INFO. CONTACT: Dr. Denise Morton, Dr. Lisa Napp, Vickie Smith PHONE: (919) 732-8126

ATTACHMENTS: 1. Implementation of the North Carolina General Assembly's Read to Achieve Program PowerPoint
2. K-3 Reading Legislation: Frequently Asked Questions (FAQS)

PURPOSE: To provide information to the Board of Education about North Carolina General Assembly's Read to Achieve Program and how Orange County Schools is preparing teachers and parents for the changes that will occur as the program is implemented.

BACKGROUND: The Read to Achieve Program is part of the Excellent Public Schools Act which became law in July of 2012. The goal of the law is to ensure that every student reads at or above grade level by the end of third grade. Currently 31% of students are reading below grade level in North Carolina. In Orange County Schools, 25% of 3rd graders are reading below grade level. Since 2009-10, Orange County Schools have seen a 14.11% increase in the number of 3rd grade students proficient on the Reading EOG exam.

The Read to Achieve legislation consists of a developmental screening and Kindergarten entry assessment process, third grade retention, summer reading camp for students who are not reading proficiently by the end of the third grade, a 3rd/4th grade accelerated transition class, and diagnostic formative assessments in K-3. This legislation mandated third grade retention for students who do not achieve a level 3 on state assessments.

To prepare teachers and parents for these changes, Orange County Schools has completed the following: presented to staff at each elementary school, created and began a professional development schedule to train K-3 teachers on the new reading assessments, and created a Frequently Asked Questions document. In March, principals will hold informational meetings for K-2 parents.

FINANCIAL IMPACT: Orange County Schools received state purchased reading kits and \$42,000 of state funding to purchase technology devices for K-3 teachers to implement diagnostic and formative reading assessments. The district chose iPad minis for their technology devices; some local funding was needed to complete the purchase in the amount of \$14,935.29. The mandated 3rd grade 6-8 weeks summer camp that is to be held beginning the summer of 2014 for those 3rd graders who failed the state assessments is an unfunded mandate. Local districts must absorb the cost of the summer reading camps, which will be determined next year.

RECOMMENDATION: The Superintendent recommends that the Board of Education receive and discuss information about the Read to Achieve Program and how Orange County Schools is transitioning to implementation in 2013-2014.



Implementation of the North Carolina General Assembly's Read to Achieve Program



North Carolina Read to Achieve

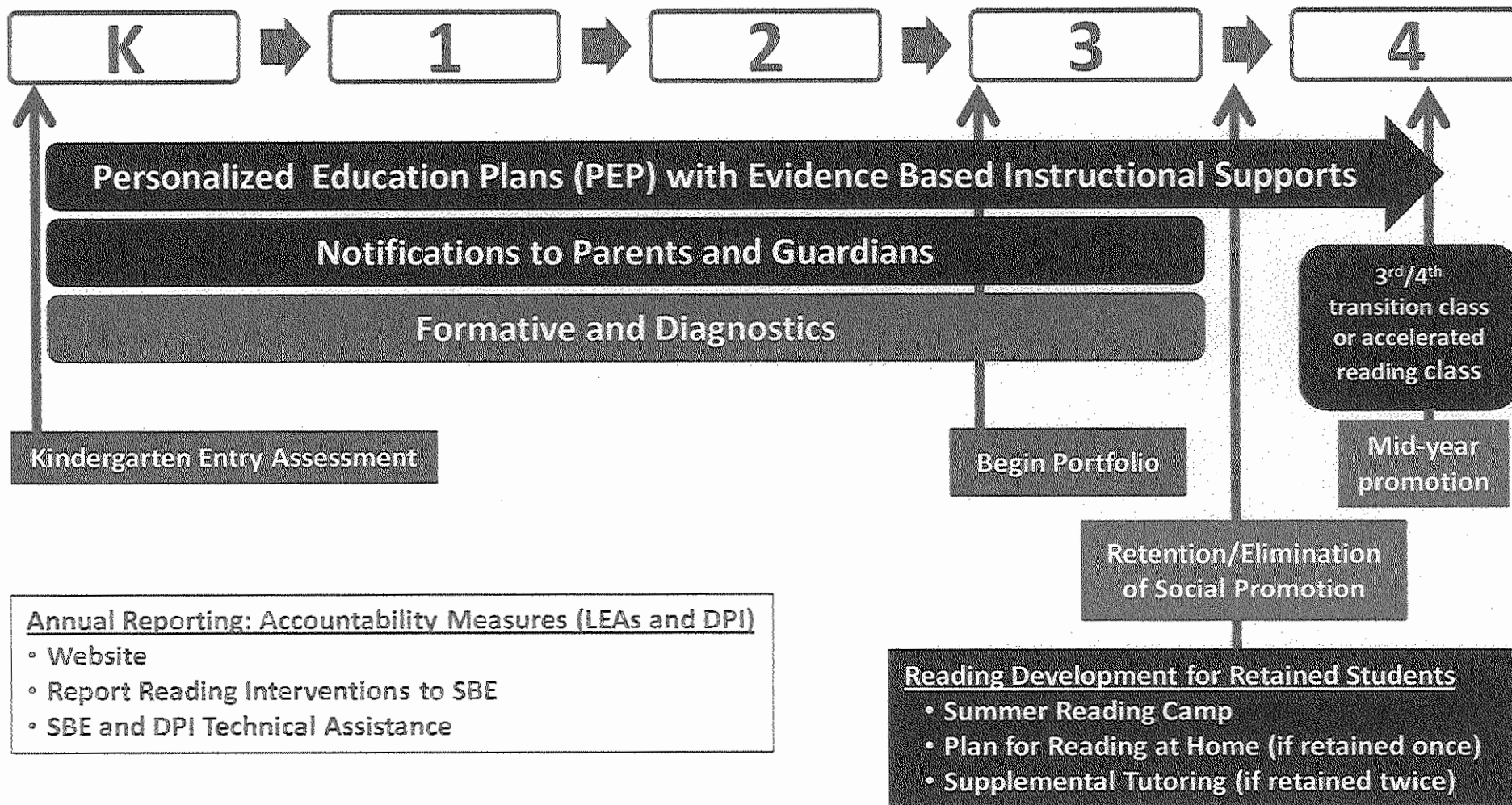
7 Components of North Carolina Read to Achieve



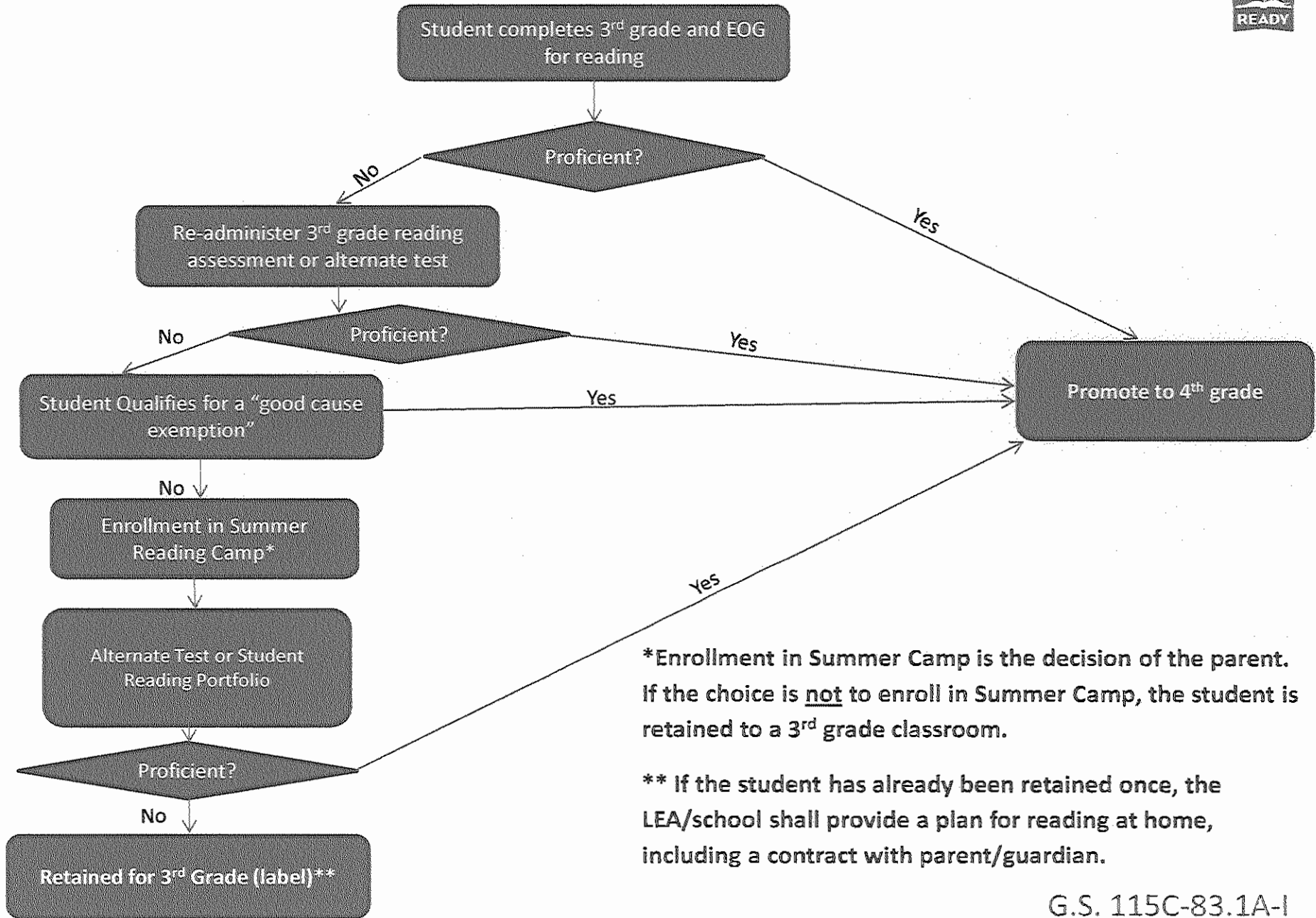
- Comprehensive Reading Plan
- Developmental Screening and Kindergarten Entry Assessment (KEA)
- Facilitating Early Grade Reading Proficiency
- Elimination of Social Promotion
- Successful Reading Development for Retained Students
- Parent/Guardian Notification
- Accountability Measures

North Carolina General Assembly's Read to Achieve Program Grade Level Implementation Plan

Goal: The goal of the State is to ensure that every student read at or above grade level by the end of third grade.



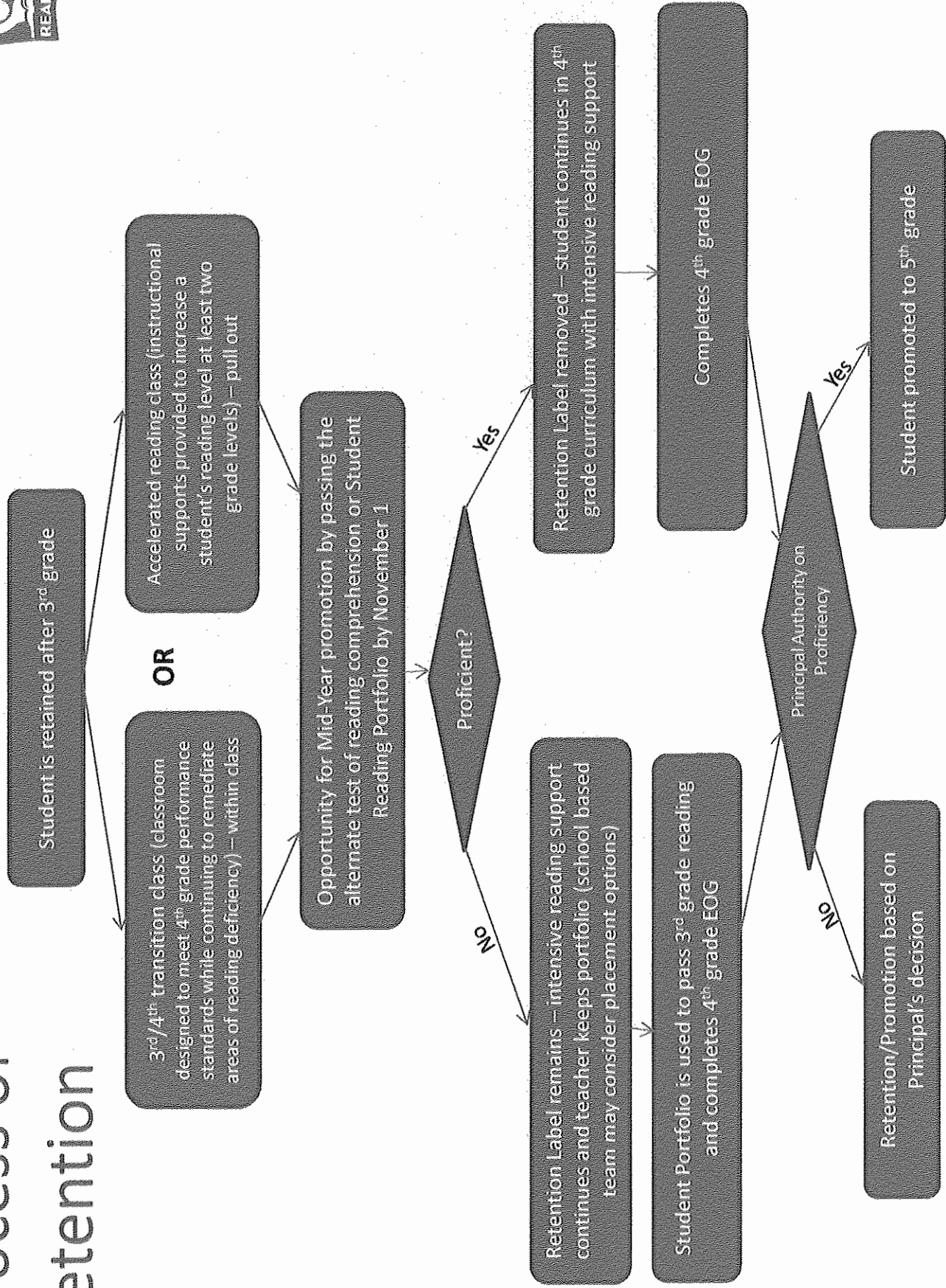
End of Third Grade



*Enrollment in Summer Camp is the decision of the parent. If the choice is not to enroll in Summer Camp, the student is retained to a 3rd grade classroom.

** If the student has already been retained once, the LEA/school shall provide a plan for reading at home, including a contract with parent/guardian.

Process of Retention



Good Cause Exemptions



1. Limited English Proficient students with less than two years of instruction in an English as a Second Language program.
2. Students with disabilities, as defined in G.S. 115C-106.3(1), whose individualized education program indicates the use of alternative assessments and reading interventions.
3. Students who demonstrate reading proficiency appropriate for third grade students on an alternative assessment approved by the State Board of Education. Teachers may administer the alternative assessment following the administration of the State-approved standardized test of reading comprehension typically given to third grade students at the end of the school year, or after a student's participation in the local school administrative unit's summer reading camp.
4. Students who demonstrate, through a student reading portfolio, reading proficiency appropriate for third grade students. Teachers may submit the student reading portfolio at the end of the school year or after a student's participation in the local school administrative unit's summer reading camp. The student reading portfolio and review process shall be established by the State Board of Education.
5. Students who have (i) received reading intervention and (ii) previously been retained more than once in kindergarten, first, second, or third grades.

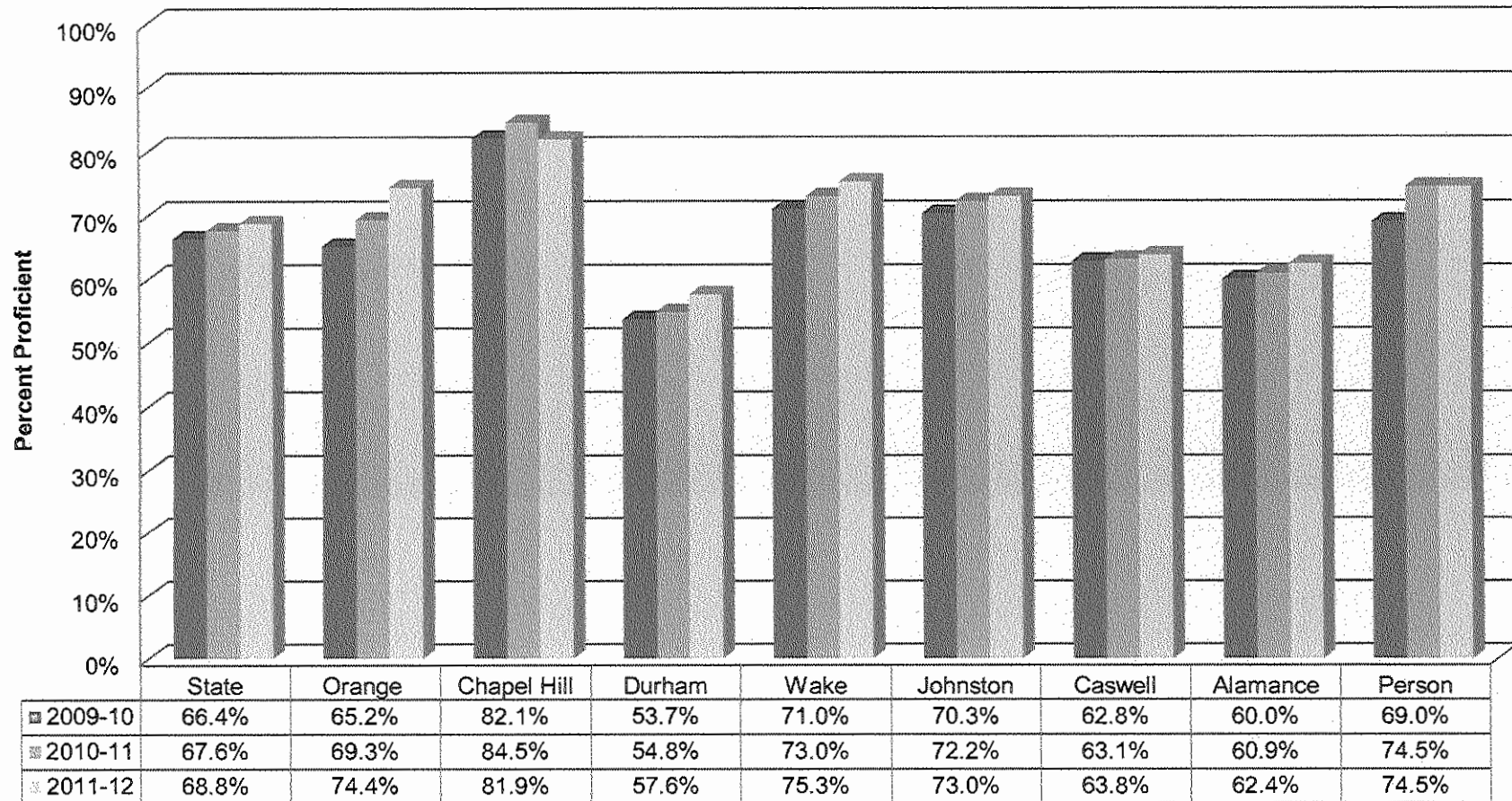
Facilitating Early Grades Reading Proficiency



Legislative Component	Facilitating Early Grade Reading Proficiency: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • K-3 students shall be assessed with valid reliable, formative and diagnostic reading assessments • Assessments and instructional supports shall address the National Reading Panel’s research on the Big 5 ideas of reading • LEAs are encouraged to partner with volunteers, mentors, tutors
Action Plan (for LEAs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that all schools in all districts are trained and have correct materials and devices • Check fidelity of implementation of benchmarking and progress monitoring after schools begin using the assessment system • Maintain communication with Regional Consultants about needs, questions, and successes • Analyze data to develop schedules, identify professional development needs, guide and change instruction • Provide instructional supports and intervention strategies to teachers • Develop relationships with community organizations, businesses, and volunteer groups for providing mentors and tutoring

Orange County Schools Third Grade Reading Scores 2009-10 to 2011-12

High 5 and Surrounding Districts and State



K-3 Reading Legislation: Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

1. How quick is the turn-around for scores?
Reading 3D scores are available electronically once the assessments for a student are completed.
2. Why is mClass not consistent for all grade levels K-5? Will it give us the same information as the TCRA?
Reading 3D is required by state legislation for grades K-3. It has an informal reading inventory component called Text Reading Comprehension (TRC) that reports instructional reading level. The use of Teachers College K-5 was a local decision. Therefore, we will need to gather data over the next few years to determine how the two assessments align.
3. What legislator's relative is getting the money from mCLASS? Since when did the legislators start telling districts what materials to use?
The Excellent Public Schools Act requires the State to "[assess] with valid, reliable, formative, and diagnostic reading assessments made available to local school administrative units." NCDPI chose mCLASS Reading 3D as the electronic assessment tool NC districts will use.
4. What will happen to our laptops?
K-3 classroom teachers will keep their laptops and will be given an iPad Mini to conduct the Reading 3D assessments.
5. How does it fit into Common Core? Does it correlate?
Reading 3D has published documents showing correlations between the Reading 3D assessments and the Common Core State Standards. For a complete list of how Reading 3D assesses the Common Core State Standards, visit http://www.wirelessgeneration.com/pdf/general/R3D_CommCoreAlign_DNext_10-12.pdf
6. How does it drive instruction?
As K-3 teachers use Reading 3D, this is the key question we will be asking in site-based PLCs with literacy coaches and reading teachers. We will determine as a district how it informs teaching and learning.
7. Is there an alternative for kids with test-taking anxieties or something different for EC and ELL students?
No. Reading 3D is to be used with all students.
8. How much time does it take?
Some of the assessments are fast, requiring 1 minute. Other assessments will take longer, such as Text Reading Comprehension which is an informal reading inventory. Since these assessments are electronic, teachers will have a two-pronged learning curve. It will require knowledge of the assessment itself as well as knowledge of the computer program. Practice over time will tell us how long it will take to give the assessments.
9. What strands of the Common Core are being assessed?

mClass: Reading 3D says all Common Core reading standards are addressed in the following strands: Reading Literature, Reading Informational Text, and Reading Foundational Skills. For a complete list of how Reading 3D assesses the Common Core State Standards, visit http://www.wirelessgeneration.com/pdf/general/R3D_CommCoreAlign_DNext_10-12.pdf

10. Will Teacher Assistants be included in the training?
Teacher Assistants will not be included in the training.
11. Can we retain in other grades? Can they be retained more than once?
Retention is possible in all grades. Students can be retained more than once; however, under the Excellent Public Schools Act, students cannot be retained more than twice by the end of 3rd grade.
12. Are there exemptions for EC students?
The Excellent Public Schools Act says some students may be exempt from mandatory retention. For example, "students with disabilities, as defined by G.S.115C-106.3(1), whose Individualized Education Program indicates the use of alternative assessments and reading interventions" are exempt.
13. What is the alternative assessment?
Students who do not pass the Reading EOG can take an alternative assessment. The alternative assessment has not yet been identified by NCDPI.
14. Will we still be doing the TCRA assessment?
K-3 teachers will not be required to use TCRA. Instead they will use Text Reading Comprehension which is a component of mCLASS: Reading 3D. 4th & 5th grade teachers will use TCRA.
15. What will 4th and 5th grade teachers use as literacy assessments?
4th and 5th grade teachers will use the current OCS literacy assessments, including Teachers College.
16. Will we still be doing the Common Formative Assessments (CFAs)?
Yes. CFAs will remain in place for grades K-5. The purpose of the CFAs is different than the purpose of mCLASS: Reading 3D. The CFAs assess a student's ability to apply reading, writing, listening, and viewing skills. The CFAs look like the Common Core assessments that will be released by the Smarter Balanced Consortium (SBAC) in 2014.
17. What about our writing assessments?
We will keep the same writing requirements for grades K-5.
18. Will all the retained 3rd graders be in one transitional 4th grade classroom? How will this affect Standard 6 on the PDP?
Retained 3rd graders will be clustered based on the number of students who require a transitional classroom. Standard 6 measures student growth rather than student proficiency.

19. With the transitional 4th grade classroom, how can a child receive a year and a half of 3rd grade material, and only half a year of 4th grade material?
Students in a transitional 4th grade classroom will learn 4th grade standards. During reading workshop, they will receive intensive reading instruction at their reading level, informed by their area(s) of greatest need.
20. Do the Reading 3D assessments have to be given by a certified teacher? Are teacher assistants allowed to assess students, if trained?
NCDPI has said that the assessments must be given by a certified teacher.
21. Will students be interacting with the iPad during assessments?
No. Only the teacher interacts with the iPad.
22. How will this impact accountability in relation to standard 6?
Standard 6 is a growth rather than a proficiency model. This means that a teacher will be evaluated on how much students show growth over time. The data that will be used to determine this growth has not been specified by NCDPI.
23. How often will assessments take place?
When K-3 teachers attend training, they will get a chart that outlines which assessments are given and at what time during the year.
24. Will more reading support be placed in K-2 to prevent kids from being retained in 3rd grade?
The state has not provided funding to support an increase in staff. Other options will be explored by the district and site-based administration.
25. If there are students already in question for retention in K-2, should we not retain them and wait for them to be retained in 3rd grade?
No. Retention is a case-by-case process determined by student growth and whether another year in the present grade level would ensure success in the next grade level. Under the Excellent Public Schools Act, a student may be retained twice by the end of third grade. Research shows that retained K-8 students are more likely to drop out of school; therefore, we will follow district guidelines in making decisions about retention.
26. What if a student doesn't pass the reading test after being retained?
The Excellent Public Schools Act states that a child may be retained twice by the end of 3rd grade. However, it also states that the Superintendent makes final decisions concerning retention as recommended by a school's principal and the waiver process.
27. What if students are really low in math or social/behavioral skills? Are they in a transitional class or just retained in 3rd grade?
Students who do not pass the reading EOG and/or an alternative reading assessment but are proficient on other grade level standards can be placed in a transitional classroom. If students are being considered for retention for reasons other than reading, they could repeat 3rd grade in a traditional 3rd grade classroom.
28. Will K-3 teachers have their own teacher assistants?

The state has not provided funding to support an increase in staff. Local funds help to support TA positions. Average Daily Membership (ADM) for K-3 determines how many TAs each school is allocated. How TAs are utilized in a school is a site-based decision.

29. Will the transitional class have a smaller number of students? Will it have a full-time assistant?
The district has to adhere to state guidelines for class size limits. In K-3 a class can't have more than 24 students. Other than this guideline, the state hasn't provided any guidance on the number of students in each transitional class. Locally this decision will be determined once reading data is analyzed. The state has not provided funding to support an increase in staff. Local funds help to support TA positions. Average Daily Membership (ADM) for K-3 determines how many TAs each school is allocated. How TAs are utilized in a school is a site-based decision.
30. Will the new assessments assess all literacy areas--writing, reading, phonics, spelling, word id, fluency?
The new assessments are for reading, in the areas of phonics, phonemic awareness, word identification, fluency, and comprehension.
31. Why isn't retention happening at lower grade levels?
Retention can occur at any grade level. The Excellent Public Schools Act is mandating retention at 3rd grade for readers who do not demonstrate reading proficiency.
32. Who is going to inform parents about these changes?
Principals will hold site-based meetings for parent groups regarding these changes.
33. If students are in the transitional class at what point will they receive the 4th grade Common Core reading standards?
If a student is in a transitional class, the teacher will teach the 4th grade standards at the student's reading level. Differentiation will be the key to meeting the needs of students in a transitional classroom.
34. Who will be paying for the summer reading camp?
The state legislature will fund summer reading camp.
35. Are EOG scores going to be the determining factor for retention?
No. EOG scores will be one factor that will inform retention decisions.
36. How many times can a student be retained in elementary school?
The state says that students cannot be retained more than twice in elementary school, once in K-2 and once in 3-5.
37. Will the iPad minis work with AMC too?
Yes, they should. This is something the AMC team will look into.