Read to Succeed

This information is for parents of South Carolina's third-grade students. It is designed to help parents understand what South Carolina's Read to Succeed says about reading requirements for third grade students and promotion to fourth grade. It also describes what the school will do to help children who are reading below grade level.

BACKGROUND

Reading and comprehension are the foundations for all academic learning. Walk into any in kindergarten, first, second, or third grade classroom and you will find students learning to read. Students may be talking about the sounds letters make, listening to the teacher read a story, reading aloud together, or talking and writing about what they have read. Reading is the core of the school day for young children because students need strong reading skills to learn in all other school subjects, such as science, social studies, writing, and even math.

THE LAW

Section 59-155-160 of Read to Succeed states, "Beginning with the 2017-18 school year, a student must be retained in the third grade if the student fails to demonstrate reading proficiency at the end of the third grade as indicated by scoring at the lowest achievement level on the state summative reading assessment that equates to Not Met" on the South Carolina College and Career Readiness Assessment. (SC READY).

GOOD CAUSE EXEMPTIONS

Some students with disabilities, limited English proficiency, and those who have been previously retained can receive a "good cause exemption" and be promoted to the fourth grade even if they are not reading at the required level. Other good cause exemptions exist for students who scored poorly on the state summative assessment, but who have demonstrated grade-level reading proficiency on other tests or through a reading portfolio.

EXPECTATIONS FOR THIRD GRADERS

The specific skills that students need in reading are described in the South Carolina College- and Career-Ready (SCCCR) Standards. Designed by stakeholders in South Carolina, the SCCCR Standards outline what students should know and be able to do at the end of each grade level. By the end of third grade, students are expected to be able to read independently and comprehend a variety of texts. This means they can read and understand words, sentences, and

paragraphs without help. Third grade students should become self-directed, critical thinkers and readers.

WHY THIRD GRADE?

According to the 2013 National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP), only thirty-five percent of the nation's fourth grade students are reading on grade level. A substantial reading deficiency must be addressed before students can move on to the more difficult schoolwork required in fourth grade and beyond when textbooks become more complex and reading passages are longer. Those who have trouble understanding what they read find it very difficult to keep up. Many students become frustrated when they try to tackle this schoolwork without independent reading skills. For some students, this leads to years of difficulty in school and limited opportunities in college and career.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact the principal of the school your child attends.