

Summary of HB 555 Changes to the Third Grade Reading Guarantee

Teacher Credentials:

Under the previous version of Third Grade Reading Guarantee law, there were two sets of teacher credentials required depending on the students served. A reading endorsement or passing score on a rigorous test of principles of scientifically based reading instruction was required for any teacher with a student on a reading improvement and monitoring plan. A teacher with a student retained under the Third Grade Reading Guarantee was required to be “high performing” as determined by their performance reviews and student data.

House Bill 555 (HB 555), which was passed in December 2012, expanded the ways teachers could demonstrate their ability to provide reading instruction to students reading below grade level. Furthermore, it aligns the teacher credentials required for retained students and students on a reading improvement and monitoring plan. The credential requirements for the 2013-14 school year are slightly different than the requirements that begin in the 2014-15 school year.

For the 2013-2014 school year, only teachers with a *third grade* student who was retained or is on a reading improvement and monitoring plan must have the special credentials outlined in law. Beginning in the 2014-2015 school year, a teacher with those students in *kindergarten through grade three* must have the special credentials outlined in law. Finally, there is an option to submit a plan to the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) for schools that cannot provide enough teachers to meet the required credentials for the 2013-2014 school year only.

New Credentials:

Any teacher with a student retained by the Third Grade Reading Guarantee or on a reading improvement and monitoring plan must have been actively engaged in the reading instruction of students for the previous three years, and meet at least one of the follow criteria:

- For the 2013-2014 school year:
 - a) Holds a reading endorsement on the teacher’s license and attained a passing score on the corresponding assessment for that endorsement
 - b) Completed a master’s degree program with a major in reading
 - c) Was rated “above value added,” as defined by ODE, for the last two years
 - d) Has demonstrated evidence of a credential earned from an ODE-approved list of research-based reading instruction programs

- For the 2014-2015 school year and thereafter:
 - a) Holds a reading endorsement on the teacher's license and attained a passing grade on the corresponding assessment for that endorsement
 - b) Completed a master's degree program with a major in reading
 - c) Was rated "above value added", as defined by ODE, for the last two year
 - d) Earned a passing score on a rigorous test of principles of scientifically research-based reading instruction selected through a competitive bidding process and approved by the State Board of Education

Credentialed Staffing Plan (only qualifies for the 2013-14 school year):

A school district or community school that cannot supply the number of teachers needed to meet the 2013-14 requirements of the Third Grade Reading Guarantee can submit a plan to ODE that indicates:

- The criteria that will be used to determine those teachers who will teach students retained or on a Reading Improvement Monitoring Plan. A school district or community school may opt to include outside services in the plans they submit to ODE; and
- How the teacher credential requirements will be met starting in the 2014-15 school year.

This plan must be submitted to ODE by June 30, 2013 and it will be approved or rejected by ODE by August 15, 2013. If a plan is rejected, the school district or community school must use a private contractor from an ODE approved list of outside service providers.

Literacy Performance Measure on the Local Report Card (LRC):

Beginning on the LRC for the 2013-2014 school year, each district and building will receive a grade on how well they are improving literacy in grades K-3. The exact calculations of the measure will be set by the State Board of Education by December 31, 2013 (including letter grade determination), but the law outlines a few requirements:

- The grade will be based on the reduction in the percentage of students scoring below grade level or below proficient in reading from the previous year.
- The measure will use data from the reading diagnostics required by the Sept. 30 deadline and the Grade 3 Reading Ohio Achievement Assessment.
- A grade of "C" cannot be lower than the statewide average value for this measure.
- Any district or building with less than 5% of its kindergarten students scoring *not on-track* on the reading diagnostic required by the Sept. 30 deadline will not receive a grade.

Ninety Minutes of Reading:

There was confusion around the required "ninety minutes of reading daily" in the original legislation. The law has been clarified that any student retained by the Third Grade Reading Guarantee must receive "not less than ninety minutes of reading *instruction* per day." This allows interventions as outlined by the student's reading improvement and monitoring plan.

Immediate Intervention Clarification:

When a student is found to be *not on-track*, the school must offer immediate, intensive reading instruction. However, the original language in law said that the interventions had to be in accordance with the student's reading improvement and monitoring plan. Since the plan is not completed immediately after the test result (it could take up to 60 days), this was not feasible. The law now says that students should receive intensive reading instruction services and regular diagnostic assessment until the development of the reading improvement and monitoring plan is complete.

Diagnostic Assessments:

- The diagnostics assessments outlined in law (ORC 3301.079 (D)) previously referenced an English language arts (ELA) diagnostic assessment. HB 555 changes this reference so that it says "reading" and "writing" diagnostic assessments instead. The mathematics diagnostic was unchanged. Similarly, the bill changes the diagnostic assessment reference in the Third Grade Reading Guarantee section (ORC 3313.608 (B) (1)) to "reading" rather than ELA.
- Diagnostic assessments are required by law (ORC 3301.0715) for certain grades. The requirement was expanded so all students in grades one through three take a diagnostic assessment for which a state version is available. This includes the third grade reading diagnostic assessment.
- The flexibility provisions were also modified to eliminate references to Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). Flexibility to use mathematics and writing diagnostic assessments other than ODE's is now contingent on the district's rating of excellent or effective in the prior school (or the equivalent of such rating as determined by ODE for future years).
 - If a district chooses to use a non-ODE diagnostic assessment for reading, it must be on the ODE approved list starting in the 2013-2014 school year.