

Teacher Credentials and The Third Grade Reading Guarantee

January 23, 2013

Under the previous version of the Third Grade Reading Guarantee law, there were two sets of teacher credentials required depending on the students served. House Bill 555 (HB 555), which was passed in December 2012, expanded the ways teachers could demonstrate their ability to provide high quality reading instruction and aligned the requirements for different students affected by the Third Grade Reading Guarantee. The changes also include a phase in year (2013-2014 school year), where the teacher credential requirements will only apply to the teachers of third grade students.

This document outlines all the recent changes to teacher credentials and provides detail on important topics. This is a user-friendly version of the same information included in the January 9, 2013 version of the general Third Grade Reading Guarantee Guidance Document posted on ODE's website. To view this document and other resources, go directly to the [Third Grade Reading Guarantee page](#) or visit ODE's website at www.education.ohio.gov and search "Third Grade Reading Guarantee."

Overview of Requirements & Changes

- Previously, there were two sets of teacher credentials required, based on the students served:
 - A reading endorsement or a passing score on a reading instruction test was required for any teacher with a student on a reading improvement and monitoring plan.
 - A teacher with a student retained by the Third Grade Reading Guarantee was required to be "high performing" as determined by their performance reviews and student data.
- The new required credentials include four options for the teacher of a student affected by the Third Grade Reading Guarantee. There is one set of options for the 2013-2014 school year and another set for all subsequent years.

- *For the 2013-2014 school year*, each student on a reading improvement and monitoring plan in the third grade only or a student retained by the Third Grade Reading Guarantee must be assigned to a teacher actively engaged in the reading instruction of students for the previous three years and who has at least one of the following:
 1. A reading endorsement on their teacher’s license and a passing score on the corresponding assessment for that endorsement;
 2. A master’s degree in with a major in reading;
 3. A rating of “above value-added” for the last two school years; or
 4. A credential from a program on the ODE approved list of scientifically research-based reading instruction programs.
- *For the 2013-2014 school year only*, districts that cannot provide enough teachers to meet the required credentials for the 2013-2014 school year must submit a plan to ODE by June 30, 2013 describing:
 - The criteria that will be used to determine those teachers in the district who will teach students on a reading improvement and monitoring plan or students retained by the Third Grade Reading Guarantee.
 - How the school district will meet the teacher credential requirements in the 2014-2015 school year. Districts may include in the plan the option to contract with another school district or other provider.
- ODE will approve or reject plans by August 15, 2013. If a plan is rejected, the district must use a private provider than has been approved by ODE to provide intervention services.
- *For the 2014-2015 school year*, each student on a reading improvement and monitoring plan in kindergarten through grade three or a student retained by the Third Grade Reading Guarantee must be assigned to a teacher actively engaged in the reading instruction of students for the previous three years and who has at least one of the following:
 1. A reading endorsement on their teacher’s license and a passing score on the corresponding assessment for that endorsement;
 2. A master’s degree in with a major in reading;
 3. A rating of “above value-added” for the last two school years; or
 4. A passing score on a rigorous test of principles of scientifically research-based reading instruction.
- There will be no plan option for the 2014-2015 school year.

Grade Levels Affected:

- 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 qualifications outlined in law.
- For the 2014-2015 school year, teachers with a student in *kindergarten through grade three* who was retained or is on a reading improvement and monitoring plan must have the special qualifications outlined in law.

The Assigned Teacher:

- The classroom teacher is the primary teacher responsible for the student's education and spends the most time with that student. Typically, this will be the teacher assigning the student's grade for reading.
- Instructional aides or intervention specialists may supplement a student's reading interventions, under the supervision of the student's credentialed classroom teacher. Those other staff members are not required to have the special credentials.
- However, ODE highly recommends they have extensive training or experience in remediating struggling readers.

Three Years of Reading Instruction:

- To qualify, a teacher must have been actively engaged in the reading instruction of students for the previous three full school years.
- A teacher may have several years of reading instruction experience. However, it does not count unless it includes the previous three years.
- Student teaching does not count towards the three year requirement.
- Specialized reading professionals, such as reading intervention specialists, may include their time actively engaged in the reading instruction of students outside the role of teacher. These professionals must have dedicated the majority of their time to reading instruction.
- A teacher does not have to have exclusively taught reading over the past three years to qualify (such as a self-contained classroom teacher). However, the teacher must have experience in reading instruction.

Reading Endorsements:

- A passing score on an assessment is not required if there was no corresponding assessment required when the reading endorsement was earned.
- A reading endorsement is for K-12 and would appear on a teacher's certificate or license as #059902. No other endorsements will fulfill this requirement. A notation of 'Reading P-3' does not count as a reading endorsement.

Master's in Reading:

- A master's degree with a major in reading must be completed before it can count as fulfilling the legislative requirement.
- A master's degree must have the word "reading" in either in the degree name or on the transcript as the major area of study.

Above Value Added:

- ODE will release further guidance on how a teacher would be designated as "above value added" in late spring 2013.

Reading Instruction Program Credential:

- This credential option is for one year only (2013-2014) and is meant to serve as a bridge to the final criteria beginning in the 2014-2015 school year.
- A credential is documented evidence that an educator has completed a scientifically research-based reading instruction program that provides knowledge and skills that may be utilized to provide reading instruction and intervention to the educator's assigned students for the 2013-2014 school year.
- ODE will release the list of approved scientifically research-based reading instruction programs in late spring 2013.

Reading Instruction Test:

- The reading instruction test option begins in the 2014-2015 school year. There will be no test option for the 2013-2014 school year.
- The test will be selected by a competitive bid process and ultimately approved by the State Board of Education by spring 2014.

Teacher Staffing Plan for the 2013-2014 School Year:

- If a district does not have a sufficient number of qualified teachers to fulfill the requirements for the 2013-2014 school year, the district must submit a plan to ODE.
- This plan must outline the criteria that the district will use to decide who teaches the students on a reading improvement and monitoring plan or retained students.
- The district must also detail how they intend to provide the new required staffing levels for students on a reading improvement and monitoring plan or retained students in the 2014-2015 school year and beyond.
- The plan must be submitted by June 30, 2013 and will be approved or rejected by ODE by August 15, 2013.
- ODE will release guidance on what is expected in the teacher staffing plans in spring 2013.

Contracted Providers:

- A district may contract with other school districts, ESCs, community schools, or other providers to meet the reading instruction needs of their students.
- Districts may include the contracted providers in the teacher staffing plan.
- If a district's teacher staffing plan is rejected by ODE, the district must use a private provider selected from a list of ODE approved providers.
- ODE will release a list of approved outside service providers in spring 2013. The list of approved private providers will be a subset of the approved list used by parents seeking an outside service provider for their child retained by the Third Grade Reading Guarantee.