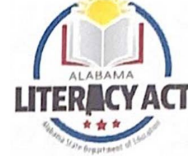


Frequently Asked Questions FOR K-3 FAMILIES

Lauderdale County Schools

Adapted from the Jan. 2021 Frequently Asked Questions FOR K-3 FAMILIES
Published by the ALABAMA STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
with the amendments to HB220 signed into law April 2022



What is the ALABAMA LITERACY ACT?

The *Alabama Literacy Act* was passed in 2019 and created to help improve reading in Alabama public schools to ensure students are reading on grade level by the end of the 3rd grade. Reading is the gateway to lifelong achievement and the students of Alabama deserve a strong start on their path to success.

Why focus on literacy?

By 3rd grade, students must be proficient in foundational reading skills in order to comprehend texts. If they are unsuccessful, they will have difficulty understanding grade level reading material. As a result, students begin to fall further behind each year. Students also need strong reading skills in order to learn other school subjects such as science, social studies, writing, and even math.

What happens if my child is not reading on grade level?

If your child is reading below grade level reading standards or is struggling with reading, his/her teacher will inform you of the reading difficulty that has been identified. The school will provide your child with additional reading instruction and support, and you will be given strategies to help your child at home.

If your child is reading below grade level expectations entering 3rd grade, you will be informed that he/she may not be promoted to 4th grade unless sufficient progress is made. Beginning in the 2023-2024 school year, if your child does not demonstrate sufficient reading skills at the end of 3rd grade, you will receive notification that he/she may not be promoted to 4th grade.

What are additional considerations for promotion from 3rd to 4th grade?

Good cause exemptions allow students who are reading below grade level to be promoted to the 4th grade but still receive interventions and other supports. The good cause exemptions apply to:

- Students with limited English proficiency with less than three years of instruction in an English Language Learner program; Students with disabilities whose Individualized Education Program (IEP) indicates that participation in statewide accountability assessment program is not appropriate;
- Students with a disability whose IEP or Section 504 plan indicates the student has received intensive remediation for two years but still demonstrates deficiency in reading or was previously retained in kindergarten, 1st, 2nd, or 3rd grade;
- Students who have received intensive intervention in reading for two or more years but have been previously retained in kindergarten, 1st, 2nd, or 3rd grade for a total of two years.

Third grade students who demonstrate an acceptable level of reading proficiency on an ALSDE approved supplemental standardized assessment or reading portfolio may be promoted to 4th grade.

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How will schools help students who are retained in 3rd grade because the student does not meet the promotion requirement?

Students retained in 3rd grade will receive more intensive reading intervention services including:

- Reading instruction provided by a highly effective teacher;
- Dedicated time each day for intensive reading instruction;
- Reading instruction that is grounded in the science of reading;
- Frequent monitoring to help ensure students are progressing and on track to meet grade-level reading standards;
- A Families Read-at-Home Plan.

How will families be informed about their child's progress?

Each student in Kindergarten through 3rd grade will have his/her reading assessed at the beginning, middle, and end of the school year. These assessments will identify students who need intensive reading instruction and intervention. These assessments also provide useful information to the teacher to help him/her tailor instruction to meet individual student needs. Families should receive these results in writing within a designated time frame.

What is The Alabama State Board of Education approved assessment that is required for promotion to the 4th grade?

The Board-approved assessment is the reading portion of the 3rd grade Alabama Comprehensive Assessment Program (ACAP) English Language Arts assessment. Students not demonstrating sufficient reading skills may be retained at the end of 3rd grade. Your child's school will provide interventions to help your child. Students who do not make substantial progress toward proficiency of grade level standards and who are not eligible for additional considerations may not be promoted to 4th grade.

How can families and guardians help?

Families are the backbone of student learning. Families should talk regularly with teachers and ask questions about their child's progress. For specific tips about how to help children at home, visit:

- <https://alabamafamilycentral.org/programs/>
- <https://parents.aplusala.org/supporting-learning-from-home/lessons-from-home/>
- <https://www.alsde.edu/sec/ari/Pages/parentresall.aspx>