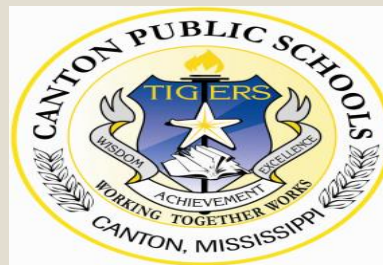


The Mississippi Literacy-Based Promotion Act



**A GUIDE FOR
CANTON PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT'S
PARENTS AND STAKEHOLDERS
(PLEASE CLICK THE ICON ON THE BOTTOM
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2014-2015



What is the Mississippi Literacy-Based Promotion Act?



- The Literacy-Based Promotion Act was passed by the Mississippi Legislature and became state law on July 1, 2013.
- The legislation was passed in an effort to improve the reading skills of kindergarten through third grade public school students.
- The goal of the law is to ensure that every student completes third grade reading at or above grade level.



Why the Intense Focus on Reading?



- Learning to read by the third grade is a critical milestone for children.
- Students who are too far behind in their reading skills by the third grade rarely catch up.
- Research has shown that students who don't read well by the end of the third grade are four times more likely to drop out of high school.
- Students need strong reading skills to comprehend material in other subjects, including science, history, and even math.



How Will Students Be Assessed?



- All Mississippi public school kindergarten and pre-kindergarten students will be given a kindergarten readiness assessment to measure proficiency in foundational skills in reading, language, and mathematics. This test will provide parents, teachers, and early childhood providers with an understanding of what children know and are able to do upon entering kindergarten.
- Kindergarten through third grade students will be assessed at the beginning and end of the school year. Parents should receive the results of the first test within the first 30 days of school.
- Students in grades 1-3 will be assessed again in the middle of the school year. Parents should receive these results by February.



How Will Children's Progress Be Communicated to Parents?



- **Students' results will be communicated in the following ways:**
 - Parents will receive the results of K-3 students' assessments following the test administrations.
 - Students' progress will also be documented in quarterly report cards.
 - Quarterly communication will include information about the services being provided, additional reading supports, and at-home strategies.



How Will Schools Help Students With Reading Deficiencies?

- Students who are reading below grade level or who have a substantial reading deficiency will receive focused and targeted supplemental instruction and intensive interventions.
- Schools will provide parents with strategies and instructional materials that can be used at home to assist in strengthening students' reading development.



What is the End-of-the-Year Test Required for Promotion to the 4th Grade?



- The 3rd Grade Reading Summative Assessment will be used to determine students' reading mastery status.
- Students scoring at the lowest achievement level on this assessment will have the opportunity to be reassessed before the school year ends and over the summer.
- Interventions must be provided between the first and second test.
- Students who still do not demonstrate proficiency will not be promoted to the 4th grade. All information related to a child's promotion status will be communicated to parents in writing.



Are There Any Exceptions?



- Certain factors will exempt some students from being retained in the 3rd grade. These factors are called *good cause exemptions*.
- **The following are good cause exemptions identified by the Mississippi Department of Education:**
 - Students with limited English proficiency with less than two years instruction in an English Language Learner program
 - Students with disabilities whose individual education plan (IEP) indicates that participation in a 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 and was previously retained
 - Students who demonstrate an acceptable level of reading proficiency on an MDE approved alternative standardized assessment
 - Students who have received intensive intervention in reading for two or more years but have been previously retained for a total of two years and have not met exceptional education criteria



How Will Schools Help Retained Students?

- **Students retained in 3rd grade will receive more intensive reading intervention services including:**
 - ✓ Reading instruction provided by a high-performing teacher
 - ✓ 90 minutes of dedicated time each day for intensive reading instruction
 - ✓ Research-based reading instruction that addresses the five components of reading
 - ✓ Frequent progress monitoring to help ensure students are on track to meet grade-level reading standards
 - ✓ A Parent Read-at-Home- Plan will be provided to parents
 - ✓ Students will receive additional supports including tutoring and small group instruction



What Resources Can Parents Use Now?



- The following are websites that parents can visit for specific tips for helping students at home:
1. www.mde.k12.ms.us/literacy
 2. www.pta.org/parents/content.cfm?ItemNumber=2910
 3. www.centeroninstruction.org/files/PutReadingFirst_ParentGuide.pdf



What Else Should Parents Do?

- Talk regularly with teachers and ask questions about students' abilities.
- Emphasize and model the importance of reading.
- Request resources from the school to help students with reading at home.
- Contact the school whenever there are questions about a child's progress.



Whom Should Parents Call For More Information?



- The teacher and/or principal at the child's school
- The Office of Curriculum and Instruction at Canton Public School District
(601) 859-6720

