



## Overview 2020-2021

### Introduction

Arizona’s Move On When Reading (MOWR) legislation is designed to provide students with evidence-based reading instruction and intervention in kindergarten through third grade in order to position them for success as they progress through school, college, and the workforce. The heart of the legislation emphasizes early identification and immediate intervention for struggling readers, especially in kindergarten and first grade. This document provides a brief overview of the key elements of the legislation.

### The School/District’s Role

A student’s school/district plays a vital role in ensuring he/she is reading at grade level at or before third grade. A.R.S. § 15-704 and 15-211 require every school/district who serves kindergarten through third grade students in Arizona to:

1. Provide a comprehensive literacy assessment system that assesses and monitors student progress. This system must include the use of universal screeners (fall, winter, and spring), diagnostics, and progress monitors.
2. Adopt and implement an evidence-based reading curriculum that includes the essential components of early literacy: phonological awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension and is aligned to standards.
3. Provide high-quality ongoing professional development in evidence-based reading instruction.
4. Devote reasonable amounts of time to explicit evidence-based literacy instruction and independent reading.
5. Use funding provided by the MOWR legislation to build the literacy skills of students in kindergarten through third grade.

### School Literacy Plans

Schools create and implement literacy plans to strategically identify and address the specific literacy needs of their students. School districts and charters with a letter grade of A or B are only required to submit literacy plans and benchmark literacy assessment data during odd-numbered school years, for example the 2019-2020 school year. All school districts and charters with letter grades of C, D, or F, or without a letter grade, must submit K-3 literacy plans and benchmark literacy assessment data every year. *Any school districts or charter schools (who are required to submit) that do not submit literacy plans by October 1 will be in danger of losing their designated MOWR funds for the year.*

1. Annual Due Dates
  - a. Literacy Plan Submission: October 1
  - b. Literacy Screener/Benchmark Data Submission #1: October 1
  - c. Literacy Screener/Benchmark Data Submission #2: February 1
  - d. Literacy Screener/Benchmark Data Submission #3: June 1



## Statewide Exam Scoring

MOWR results are included in the statewide exam electronic student data file and in two AzM2 Reports, the online Individual Student Report and the paper Family Score Report. Information on accessing, interpreting, downloading, and printing ORS reports is included in the [linked available resources](#) for District Test Coordinators.

## Student Retention

The strategic planning and quality instruction provided by Arizona schools work to ensure that students are reading at the appropriate level; however, some students require added time and attention to hone their literacy skills. A.R.S. § 15-701 requires that a student not be promoted from the third grade if he/she obtains a score on the reading portion of the statewide exam that falls below the MOWR cut score established by the State Board of Education.

## Exemptions to 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Student Retention

The MOWR legislation was designed with the understanding that some students face unique challenges to learning. There are exemptions to retention for a student who does not obtain a sufficient score on the reading portion of the statewide exam.

- Is an English learner or is limited English proficient and has received less than two years of English language instruction.
- Is in the process of a special education referral or evaluation for placement in special education, or has been diagnosed as having a significant reading impairment, including dyslexia
- Is a child with a disability as defined in section 15-761 and the child's individualized education program (IEP) team, which includes the student's parent/guardian, agrees that promotion is appropriate.
- A student has demonstrated or subsequently demonstrates sufficient reading skills or adequate progress towards sufficient reading skills of the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade reading standards as evidenced through a collection of reading assessments which meet criteria approved by the State Board of Education.

## Summer School Promotion

A student who is to be retained in third grade due to an insufficient score on the reading portion of the statewide exam, and does not meet one of the previous exemptions, can be promoted to the fourth grade upon completing a summer school program and demonstrating that he/she is reading at a proficient level on an appropriate reading assessment administered by the school/district prior to the start of the next school year.

## Midyear Promotion

A student who is retained in third grade due to an insufficient score on the reading portion of the statewide exam and does not meet one of the previous exemptions, can be promoted to the fourth grade midway through the next year, the year he/she is retained, if he demonstrates that he/she is reading at a proficient level on an appropriate reading assessment administered by the school/district, as described in the school district or charter school's policy on midyear promotion to a higher grade.



## Interventions for Retained Students

The goal of the Move on When Reading legislation is to provide each student the level of support he/she needs to become a strong reader. Students who are retained must receive *more than one* of the following interventions:

1. Assignment to a different teacher whose most recent performance evaluation is in one of the top two performance classifications.
2. Summer school reading instruction.
3. Intensive reading instruction before, during, and/or after the regular school day.
4. Small-group and teacher-led evidence-based reading instruction, which may include computer-based or online reading instruction.

## Parent/Guardian Communication

### Annual Notification

Students learn best when parents are a part of the educational process. At the beginning of each school year or upon entry for new students, schools/districts are required to provide annual written notification to parents of students in kindergarten, first, second, and third grade informing them about the MOWR and Dyslexia legislations and the possibility for retention for students who do not earn a sufficient score on the reading portion of the statewide exam.

### Early Identification of Reading Deficiencies

The earlier parents and teachers are made aware of a student's struggles with reading, the sooner they can act. If a school/district determines that a kindergarten through third grade student is substantially deficient in reading, the school/district will provide the parent/guardian of that student with separate written notification of the reading deficiency, including characteristics consistent with dyslexia. This notification will include the following six requirements:

1. A description of the student's specific area(s) of struggle with reading, including indicators of dyslexia.
2. A description of the current interventions/reading services being provided to the student at school.
3. A description of any available supplemental instructional reading services and/or supporting programs that are available at the school.
4. Strategies for the parents/guardians to use at home to assist their student in attaining reading proficiency.
5. A statement that the student will not be promoted from the third grade if he/she does not obtain a sufficient score on the reading portion of the statewide exam taken at the end of the third grade.
6. A description of the school/district policies on midyear promotion to a higher grade.