Early Literacy and Florida’s Third Grade Policy

Southern Legislative Conference

July 28, 2013
Why a Statewide Third Grade Reading Policy?

19 Year Old Dropouts by 3rd Grade Reading Scores
- Annie E. Casey Foundation

88% 11%

- Non Proficient Readers in 3rd grade
- Proficient Readers in 3rd grade
Why a Statewide Third Grade Reading Policy?

4. Children who are not reading proficiently in 3rd grade are 4 times more likely to not graduate high school.

6. Below basic readers are almost 6 times more likely than proficient readers to not finish high school on time.

8. Poor Black and Hispanic students who are struggling readers are about 8 times more likely than proficient readers to drop out of high school.
Why a Statewide Third Grade Reading Policy?

- Students build and master foundational reading skills in grades K-3.
- Students transition from learning to read to reading to learn from third to fourth grade.
- In 2001-02, 27% of students in third grade were functionally illiterate – scoring at Level 1 on FCAT.
Florida’s Statewide Third Grade Reading Policy

• An end to social promotion in 3rd grade.
  – Students who score the lowest level (level 1 out of 5) in reading on the 3rd grade FCAT must be retained unless the student meets good cause exemptions.
Florida’s Statewide Third Grade Reading Policy

• Six Good Cause Exemptions:
  – Student with a disability who does not take FCAT
  – English Language Learners (ELL) who have had less than 2 years of English for Speaker’s of Other Languages (ESOL) instruction
  – Student with a disability who takes FCAT and has previously been retained
  – Any student with a reading deficiency who has previously been retained twice
  – Student demonstrates proficiency on an alternate standardized assessment (e.g. Stanford 10)
  – Student demonstrates proficiency through a student portfolio
Florida’s Statewide Third Grade Reading Policy

- **Early Literacy screening** in K-3 grades
- **Parent notification** for any student identified with a reading deficiency K-3.
- **Student reading plans**, in collaboration with the parent, prescribing interventions aimed at removing that deficiency.
- 3rd graders who score at the **lowest level** on the state test are **retained** unless they meet a good cause exemption.
- Retention with **more intensive interventions** (a different course of action)
Florida’s Statewide Third Grade Reading Policy

*It’s not just additional time that’s important – it’s what you do with it!*

- Retained students must be provided a **highly effective teacher** in retained year
- Retained students must have an opportunity to attend **Summer Reading Camp**
- **Reduced student/teacher ratio** (small group and/or class size)
- **90 minutes** of dedicated scientifically-based reading instruction, and **daily intervention** in addition to or an extension of the 90 minute block
- Diagnostic assessments and **routine progress monitoring** to guide instruction
The Results....
A Command Focus on Reading

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Percent of 3rd graders Level 1 on FCAT Reading</th>
<th>Percent of 3rd graders retained</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2000-01</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>3.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001-02</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002-03</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>14.4%</td>
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<tr>
<td>2003-04</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>11.1%</td>
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<tr>
<td>2004-05</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>9.8%</td>
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<tr>
<td>2006-07</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>8.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007-08</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>6.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008-09</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>6.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009-10</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**FCAT 2.0 administered (more rigorous test)**

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<th>Percent of 3rd graders retained</th>
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<tr>
<td>2010-11</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
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**Increased cut score for proficiency on FCAT 2.0**

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<th>Percent of 3rd graders Level 1 on FCAT Reading</th>
<th>Percent of 3rd graders retained</th>
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<tr>
<td>2011-12</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>7.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012-13</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>Not available yet</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
After Two Years...

Getting Farther Ahead by Staying Behind...
Jay P. Greene and Marcus A. Winters
University of Arkansas

Retained kids made significant gains compared to promoted kids.

Those gains grew substantially from year one to year two.

Retained kids were able to catch up; promoted kids fell behind.

The greatest impact in learning was for minority kids.
After Five Years...

Retained kids were still outperforming promoted kids... in reading and math

Jay Green and Marcus Winters, Getting Farther Ahead, by Staying Behind; Manhattan Institute, 2006
Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT)

Elementary School FCAT Reading
Grades 3, 4 and 5

Percent

2001 2002 2003 2004 2005 2006 2007 2008 2009 2010

FCAT Level 3 and Above (On Grade Level and Above)

FCAT Level 1
Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT)

Middle School FCAT Reading  
Grades 6, 7 and 8

Dotted line indicates first year the first class of the 3rd grade retention policy reached 6th grade.
Next Steps for Florida....
Analyze Data...

- Florida Assessment for Instruction in Reading (FAIR)
- Summer Reading Camp
- Study in conjunction with the Florida Center for Reading Research
Transition to Common Core State Standards

• Blended curriculum in 2013-14
• Full implementation in 2014-15
• Common Core promotes integration of reading, writing, listening and speaking and language and requires that students:
  – Master foundational reading skills
  – Negotiate complex text
  – Think deeply about text
  – Collaborate and express ideas clearly
In Summary...

• Florida’s Third Grade Reading Policy was implemented to address the fact that a growing number of third grade students were promoted without sufficient skills to be successful in fourth grade and beyond.

• Reading deficiencies at the end of third grade result in students who are not college and career ready by the end of 12th grade.

• Students are retained as a last resort.
In Summary...

• Retained students receive a different course of instruction that is intensive, targeted, and delivered by a highly effective teacher.

• Children who might otherwise have experienced ongoing failure in school gain the reading skills they need to be successful.

• Florida will continue to raise expectations to support student achievement and success.
Contact Information

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