



**Department of Curriculum,
Instruction and Assessment**

Keith Howell

Director of PreK- Elementary Instruction

389 St. Clair Avenue
Grosse Pointe, Michigan 48230-1599
Phone: (313) 432-3044
Fax: (313) 432-3041
E-Mail: keith.howell@gpschools.org
Twitter: @principalhowell

Dear Parent/Guardian(s),

As you know, reading is the foundation for success in school and it is essential for all subjects. In 2016, the Michigan Legislature passed the Third Grade Retention Law to ensure that students exit third grade reading at or above grade level. The law states that beginning with the 2019-20 school year, third-graders could be retained if they demonstrate reading proficiency levels that are more than one grade level behind. Schools are required to assess the reading skills of all K-3 students at least three times per year in an effort to identify struggling students. Students experiencing deficiencies would be required to have an Individual Reading Improvement Plan (I-RIP) created in partnership with their teacher, principal, and parents. With the exception of the retention language, this law is consistent with Grosse Pointe Public School Systems historical approach and dedication to a multi-tiered system of support for our students.

The Grosse Pointe Public School System monitors student progress with Fall/Winter/Spring NWEA testing while using Fountas & Pinnell (Benchmark Reading Assessment) and other classroom assessments to determine a differentiated reading approach for students. Classroom teachers provide Tier II interventions while our trained Literacy Coaches provide Tier III small group instruction for those who qualify. **During October conferences, parents will receive additional information about the available supports and/or services that their child is receiving if they qualify for an I-RIP. At that time parents will receive the I-RIP, identifying the interventions that are already in place, along with any additional strategies to support their child at home.** The new legislation will just add to the already existing supports our children are accustomed to receiving.

The district will continue to comply with the mandated expectations of the Third Grade Retention Law, keeping our instructional focus on what is best and developmentally appropriate for our students. Family involvement and understanding is an important part of this effort.

Additional information regarding the legislation is available on [our website under the parent tab](#). We appreciate your ongoing support as partners in education.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Keith Howell'.

Keith Howell