



Move On When Reading Statewide Test Administration Purpose and Talking Points Spring 2021- Parent Information

Arizona's Move On When Reading (MOWR) program helps to identify struggling readers as early as possible and provide them with supports so that they are reading at or above grade-level by the end of third grade.

It is important that schools are able to identify and meet the needs of struggling readers as early as possible because research shows that students who are not reading at or above grade-level by the end of third grade are four times less likely to graduate from high school.

Starting in kindergarten and continuing through third grade, all students are administered a reading assessment to identify their strengths and areas of improvement in language development and reading. Students who are identified with struggles receive targeted supports across kindergarten through third grade.

As part of legislation (ARS 15-701), third-grade students who score below the MOWR cut score on the reading portion of the third-grade statewide English Language Arts (ELA) exam may not be promoted to the fourth grade. However, there are several exemptions to this legislation.

- There are four good-cause exemptions to retention for a student that
 - Is an English learner or is limited English proficient and has received less than two years of English language instruction; or
 - 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; or
 - Is a child with a disability and the child's individualized education program (IEP) team, which includes the student's parent/guardian, agrees that promotion is appropriate; or
 - A student that demonstrates sufficient reading skills or adequate progress towards the third-grade reading standards as evidenced through a collection of reading assessments which meet criteria approved by the State Board of Education.

Due to the pandemic and the closing of schools in the 2019-2020 school year, the MOWR retention requirement for third-grade students was suspended as AzM2 was not given. For the 2020-2021 school year, this requirement has not been suspended by the state legislature at this point.

However, it is important to remember that

- A third-grade student who fails to meet the MOWR cut score can demonstrate "sufficient progress towards reading" on a reading assessment, as described above.
 - Summer school may also be provided for students who struggle. If the student demonstrates sufficient progress towards reading by the close of the program, the student may be promoted to fourth grade.
- The use of the statewide third-grade English Language Arts exam provides important information about a student's progress in reading. Students who struggle on the statewide exam and/or fail to meet the MOWR cut score, even if they are promoted to fourth grade based on a good-cause exemption, should receive immediate supports upon entering fourth grade.
- Students without a reported score for the 2021 Spring third-grade AzM2 ELA assessment are not to be retained based on Move On When Reading requirements.