

Ingham Impact Episode 33 - Read by Grade 3

Shelly Probstle: In October 2016, House Bill 4822 was passed requiring students in third grade to be at a proficient reading level to advance to grade four. This is the Read By Grade 3 Legislation. Effective the fall 2021, any student not reading proficiently by grade three on the MSTEP will not advance to grade four. A statewide group of educators and researchers developed essential instructional practices in early literacy to help everyone align their practices with current research and help students be successful.

Wendy Boyce: A child's learning starts from birth; 90% of a child's brain is developed by age 5. The earlier the learning begins the better. This legislation purposefully brought our early childhood, general education, and special education teams together to problem solve and look at more ways to support families from birth to grade three. All of the foundational reading skills should be developed by grade three, although they can be developed sooner, depending on the student. And after grade three, a child starts reading for learning of all subject types and the foundational elements should be mastered. It is significantly more difficult for a child to catch up after grade three, if they are not reading at a proficient level. That's why you often hear people say, "students learn to read by grade three, so they can read to learn everything else". Mary Jo Wegenke: Ingham ISD has been supporting many districts in the service area with literacy efforts by the way of professional development, financial core curriculum supports and data analysis for years. In 2015-16, the Family Learning Connection website was developed to help families in the areas of math, literacy and behavior. The website has tips on how to help the student at home, questions to ask the teacher, and what developmental milestone should my child be performing?

There is no cost to use this website and all the information is based on a child's age or grade. Shelly Probstle: Since this bill has been introduced, we have added more tools and provided more training to enhance current literacy efforts with districts in our service area. In 2017-18, parent and educator guides were developed and shared with districts and families to better understand the impacts of the legislation and how to enrich student experiences to increase reading proficiency rates for all children. Reports were also prepared for districts as a tool to use with parents showing a student's current reading levels based on regular assessments, called an Individual Reading Improvement Plan. Wendy Boyce: At the early childhood level, early learning calendars that have daily learning activities, including math and literacy, were developed and provided to families. These were well received by the community, so much so that we have printed more in 2018-19 and worked with our general education department to create a literacy calendar for children in grades Kindergarten and first. Both versions of the calendars are available in eight languages and can be found at www.inghamisd.org. Mary Jo Wegenke: And every year, we work with districts based on their needs to provide teacher professional development to hone in on their classroom skills. Ingham ISD has three literacy coaches that span Pre-K through Grade 5, go to districts and provide embedded professional development so that teachers don't need to leave their classrooms. In the future, there is a plan to develop another calendar for students in grades 2-3 and we hope to have an online app so parents can receive notifications to their phones to remind them of the activities in the calendar each day.

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