



**Department of Curriculum,  
Instruction and Assessment**  
20601 Morningside  
Grosse Pointe Woods, Michigan 48236  
Phone: (313) 432-3044  
E-Mail: [howellk@gpschools.org](mailto:howellk@gpschools.org)

**Keith Howell**  
Director of PreK-Elementary Instruction

Dear GPPSS Elementary Families,

Reading is the foundation for success in school and it is essential for all subjects. In 2016, the Michigan Legislature passed the Third Grade Reading Law to ensure that students exit third grade reading at or above grade level. The law states that third-graders could be retained if they demonstrate reading proficiency levels that are more than one grade level behind. During the 2022-23 school year, schools are required to assess the reading skills of all Young Five - Third Grade students within the first 30 days of school in an effort to identify struggling students. Students demonstrating deficiencies are required to have an Individual Reading Improvement Plan (IRIP) 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 System's historical approach and dedication to a multi-tiered system of support for our students.

The Grosse Pointe Public School System monitors student progress with 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 fall conferences, parents will receive additional information about the available support and/or services that their child is receiving if they qualify for an IRIP. At that time parents will receive the IRIP, identifying the interventions that are already in place, along with any additional strategies to support their child at home. This plan will continue to be updated throughout the school year and revised at parent/teacher conferences in March. This legislation adds to the already existing support our children are accustomed to receiving.

A team of educators and administrators continue to collaborate to update our already successful local plan to be consistent with the requirements identified in the Third Grade Reading Law. The district will continue to comply with the mandated testing, keeping our instructional focus on what is best and developmentally appropriate for our students. Family involvement and understanding is a critical part of this effort.

The most important thing you can do is to set aside time each day to read together. Please connect with your building principal and/or Literacy Coach if you have any questions. We appreciate your ongoing support as partners in education.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Keith Howell".

Keith Howell