Estimated Read by Grade 3 Retention Rates

A Report Prepared for the Michigan Department of Education

June 2019
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OVERVIEW AND PURPOSE

• The Education Policy Innovation Collaborative (EPIC) is the strategic research partner to the Michigan Department of Education (MDE).

• EPIC provides technical research support to the MDE to improve education outcomes for Michigan students.

• To support the administration of the Read by Grade 3 law (RBG3), the MDE has asked EPIC to estimate retention rates for Michigan public school students.

• In response, we have estimated statewide retention rates, retention rates for sub-group classifications of tested students, and tested students in different school types and geographic locales.

• We have also calculated upper and lower bound estimates of RBG3 retention rates to provide a range of potential outcomes under the law.
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ESTIMATION METHOD:

• We use 2017-18 Grade 3 M-STEP ELA results to estimate the percentage of tested students who would be retained under RBG3 Category 1 with a score of 1252 or lower.

• We estimate lower bounds by assuming all Category 1 English Learner (EL), students with disabilities (SWD), students with 504 plans and previously retained students are promoted via Good Cause Exemptions.

• We provide sub-group estimates by student characteristics. Student subgroup percentages are based on the total number of student who took the test within each subgroup:
  – Race/Ethnicity;
  – Gender;
  – Economic disadvantage (ED);
  – English learners (EL); and
  – Students with disabilities (SWD).

• We provide estimates by school characteristics:
  – Partnership status and ELA achievement quartile;
  – Public School Academy versus Local Education Agency; and
  – Urban locale.
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LOWER BOUND ESTIMATES:

• Students whose test scores fall into Category 1 but are in one of the following categories may be promoted to 4th grade with the approval of the district superintendent through a Good Cause Exemption:
  - *English Learners* (11.65% of Category 1 students);
  - *SWDs* (28.19% of Category 1 students);
  - *Students with a 504 plan* (0.90% of Category 1 students); and
  - *Previously Retained Students* (24.40% of Category 1 students).

• We estimate lower bounds by assuming all Category 1 EL, SWD, students with 504 plans and previously retained students are promoted under the Good Cause Exemption.

• Estimates do not account for students receiving a Good Cause Exemption due to switching schools within the last two years, parent requests, or portfolios demonstrating proficiency.
Estimated RBG3 Retention Rates by Race/Ethnicity

- **All Students**: 4.4%
- **African-American or Black**: 10.7%
- **American Indian or Alaska Native**: 5.1%
- **Asian**: 2.1%
- **Hispanic or Latino**: 4.7%
- **Two or More Races**: 4.0%
- **White**: 2.6%
Estimated RBG3 Retention Rates by Student Characteristics

- All Students: 4.4%
- Female: 3.7%
- Male: 5.0%
- Not Econ Dis.: 1.5%
- Econ. Dis.: 6.5%
- Non-SWD: 3.6%
- SWD: 9.5%
- Not EL: 4.3%
- EL: 5.1%
Estimated RBG3 Retention Rates by School Characteristics

- All Students: 4.4%
- Not Partner: 3.7%
- Partner: 19.8%
- LEA: 4.0%
- PSA: 7.1%
- Bottom 25% ELA Ach: 12.5%
- Top 25% ELA Ach: 1.0%

Statewide Estimated Retention Rates for all Tested Students in Each Sub-Group
Estimated RBG3 Retention Rates by School Urbanicity

- All Students: 4.4%
- City: 8.1%
- Suburb: 3.2%
- Town: 2.9%
- Rural: 2.9%
- Not Specified: 6.3%
**Estimated Upper and Lower Bounds of RBG3 Retention Rates by Race/Ethnicity**

**Statewide Estimated Retention Rates for all Tested Students in Each Sub-Group**

- **All Students**: 4.4% (2.1% Lower Bound, 6.6% Upper Bound)
- **African-American or Black**: 10.7% (6.6% Lower Bound, 10.7% Upper Bound)
- **American Indian or Alaska Native**: 5.1% (1.7% Lower Bound, 5.1% Upper Bound)
- **Asian**: 2.1% (0.1% Lower Bound, 2.1% Upper Bound)
- **Hispanic or Latino**: 4.7% (1.0% Lower Bound, 4.7% Upper Bound)
- **Two or More Races**: 4.0% (2.0% Lower Bound, 4.0% Upper Bound)
- **White**: 2.6% (1.1% Lower Bound, 2.6% Upper Bound)

**Note:** Lower bounds are created by assuming all EL, SWD, students with 504 plans, and previously retained students in Category 1 are promoted under a Good Cause Exemption outlined in statute.
Estimated Upper and Lower Bounds of RBG3 Retention Rates by Student Characteristics

Note: Lower bounds are created by assuming all EL, SWD, students with 504 plans, and previously retained students in Category 1 are promoted under a Good Cause Exemption outlined in statute.
Statewide Estimated Retention Rates for all Tested Students in Each Sub-Group

Estimated Upper and Lower Bounds of RBG3 Retention Rates by School Characteristics

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**KEY TAKEAWAYS:**

Depending on how many students receive Good Cause Exemptions, estimates suggest that:

- Between 2% and 5% of 3rd graders may be retained as a result of Read by Grade 3.
- Between 7% and 11% of African Americans may be retained.
- Up to 10% of Special Education students may be retained.
- Between 12-20% of students in Partnership Schools may be retained.
- Between 2-4% of students in Traditional Public Schools may be retained and between 4-7% of students in Public School Academies may be retained.