

HB 117: Proponent Testimony

Chair Bird, Vice Chair Fowler Arthur, Ranking Member Robinson and Members of the Committee:

My name is Melinda Lindauer. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of House Bill 117. It is time to end the retention of third graders under the Third Grade Guarantee. Please pass this bill.

Let me tell you a little about my background. My mother taught 3rd grade, my husband taught 3rd grade, retired with 35 years and is in the Lebanon City Schools Hall of Fame. I just retired after 41 years of teaching 2nd and 3rd grades and received the Project Excellence award for Warren County. All three of our children are educators.

Education is in my blood and the Third Grade Reading Guarantee makes my blood boil!

Have any of you observed a child take the test?

Let me explain to you some of the many things are wrong with the 3GRG! The test that Ohio uses to determine retention is simply NOT Developmentally Appropriate.

What the 3GRG ACTUALLY guarantees is . . .

- Extreme stress for teachers, parents, and children
- Crying and lots of Tears before, during and after the test!
- Inaccurate computer graded test results - I observed a student who could barely read, score GIFTED, by copy/pasting sentences from the story into the ESSAY BOX. I observed another student FAIL who wrote a beautiful essay but ran out of time trying to type it.
- Children are erroneously retained or labeled gifted based on ONE test.
- No teacher input on the students actual ability is allowed
- 3GRG is ignoring the research that PROVES retention is not the best solution for struggling students
- Huge amounts of instructional time are wasted on preparing for and giving tests
- Testing 8 year olds with attention spans of 20 minutes with a 3 hour test is NOT developmentally appropriate
- It guarantees eye strain and headaches from working too long on a computer screen
- The test requires concrete learners to read and analyze long reading selections, NOT developmentally appropriate
- It requires 8 year olds to TYPE multi-paragraph ESSAYS to address what they have analyzed, NOT developmentally appropriate
- It is guaranteed to test WRITING and TYPING skills NOT reading skills.
- We teach children to read carefully and take their time yet it is a TIMED TEST, NOT developmentally appropriate
- I believe teachers should be held accountable but not on the backs of 8 year olds and not at the expense of valuable instructional time.

House Bill 117 will remove the punitive and unfair mandatory retention provision and reduce testing time. Please give our students, teachers and parents some relief. We cannot continue to allow decisions that impact the lives of so many students to be made based on the score on this test. I implore you to focus on best practice, listen to professional educators and pass this bill.

Thank you, Chair Bird. I'm happy to answer questions from the committee.