

Date

Ms. Linda Smith  
101 Chisholm Trail  
Any Town OK 74555

Dear Ms. Smith,

It was nice speaking with you on the phone today. The intent of the third-grade progression statute is to ensure that students have the necessary reading skills in order to be successful in grade four and beyond, where the rigors of reading in the content areas increase. In order to be promoted to the fourth grade, a student must score above the Unsatisfactory Level on the Oklahoma Core Curriculum Test (OCCT) or Oklahoma Modified Alternate Assessment Program (OMAAP) in reading. If a student does not demonstrate proficiency on the OCCT or OMAAP, they are required to attend a Summer Academy Reading Program to ensure they receive additional instruction to catch up with their peers. There is also statute language stating that OCCT or OMAAP results are the initial determinant for promotion decisions, but they are not the sole determiner and that portfolio reviews and assessments are available to assist the school district in knowing when a child is reading at or above grade level and ready for a grade promotion. Some third graders who score Unsatisfactory Level on the OCCT or OMAAP in reading can be exempted from the retention requirement and be promoted to fourth grade. This is called a “good-cause exemption.” Good-cause exemptions are only given to the following students:

- **Students who show an acceptable level of performance on an alternative standardized reading test**
- **Students who demonstrate mastery of reading through a teacher-developed portfolio**
- English Language Learners who have had less than two years of instruction in English
- Students who take the Oklahoma Alternate Assessment Program (OAAP)
- Students with disabilities who take the OCCT or OMAAP and whose Individualized Education Plan (IEP) states that they have received intensive remediation in reading for more than two years but who still show a deficiency in reading and who were previously retained in kindergarten, first grade, second grade, or third grade, or
- Students who have received intensive remediation in reading for two or more years but who still have a deficiency in reading and who have already been retained in kindergarten, first grade, second grade, or third grade for a total of two years

Ms. Smith  
Page 2  
Date

The two good-cause exemptions that apply to your granddaughter are the ones in **bold** print, and they are described in more detail below:

**Alternative Reading Assessment:** An alternative assessment is the other opportunity given to students to demonstrate mastery of reading.

Under 70 O.S. § 1210.508C, (Eliminating Social Promotion), students who score Unsatisfactory on the OCCT or OMAAP on the grade-three reading portion may be promoted to fourth grade if they demonstrate through an alternative assessment that they are reading on grade level as evidenced by mastery of reading of the Oklahoma C<sup>3</sup> Standards (45 percent or above on SAT10, 45 percent or above on the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS), or 45 percent or above on the Terranova.) These assessments have been State Board approved as alternative standardized reading assessments which may be used for good-cause exemption.

**Student Portfolio:** The portfolio is an alternative means for students to demonstrate proficiency of third-grade skills.

Under 70 O.S. § 1210.508C, (Eliminating Social Promotion), students who score Unsatisfactory on the grade-three reading portion of the OCCT or OMAAP may be promoted to fourth grade if they demonstrate through a student portfolio that they are reading on grade level as evidenced by mastery of the Oklahoma C<sup>3</sup> Standards.

To be accepted as meeting the portfolio option for demonstrating mastery of the required reading skills, the student portfolio must:

- Be selected by the student's teacher;
- Be an accurate picture of the student's ability and only include student work that has been independently produced in the classroom;
- Include evidence that the benchmarks assessed by the grade-three reading portion of the OCCT or OMAAP have been met. This includes multiple choice items and passages that are approximately 50 percent literary text and 50 percent expository text that are between 200-600 words with an average of 350 words. Such evidence could include chapter or unit tests from the district's/school's adopted core reading curriculum that are aligned with the Oklahoma C<sup>3</sup> Standards or teacher-prepared assessments that are aligned with the Oklahoma C<sup>3</sup> Standards;
- Be an organized collection of evidence of the student's mastery of the Oklahoma C<sup>3</sup> State Standard Benchmarks for Language Arts that are assessed by the grade-three reading OCCT or OMAAP. For each benchmark, there must be at least four examples of mastery as demonstrated by a grade of "70 percent" or above; and

Ms. Finch  
Page 3  
Date

- Be signed by the student's reading teacher and the principal attesting that the portfolio is an accurate assessment and that the student possesses the required reading skills to be promoted to the fourth grade.

I've included a Read to Learn brochure, which provides information for parents regarding third-grade progression as well as good-cause exemptions, along with a Third-Grade Progression Technical Assistance as distributed to districts for guidance with implementation of the law.

If you have any additional questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

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TB/cs

Enclosures