

What do we know about third-grade retention?

“Besides failing to correct learning problems, grade retention is associated with increases in behavior, attitudinal, and emotional problems.”

— *Grade Retention: What’s the Prevailing Policy and What Needs to be Done?* Center for Mental Health in Schools at UCLA (2008)

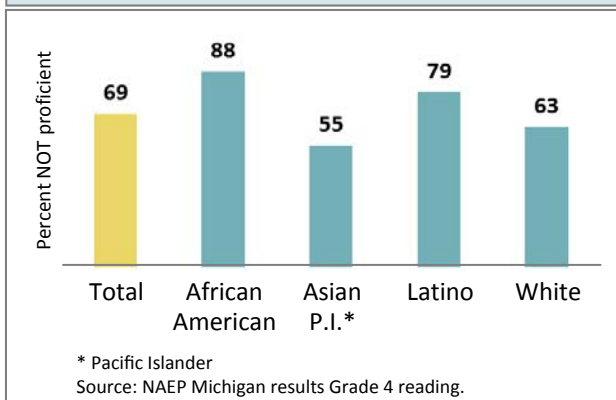
“In general, students who do not pass a grade the first time around are unlikely to do much better the second time around, all else being equal (which it usually is).”

— David & Cuban, 2006

Who would be affected?¹

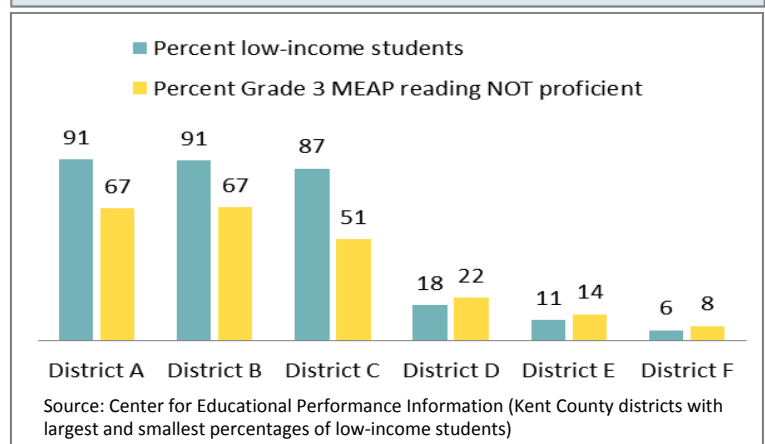
40,000—70,000
third-graders

More African American and Latino Kids Affected



African American students have fewer high-quality teachers, less resourced schools, fewer gifted programs, and limited access to college preparatory coursework. These inequities are further complicated by issues of poverty and geography.

More Kids in Michigan Low-income Districts Affected²



What are our options?

- ◆ Michigan needs to fund support and interventions for those most at risk beginning at birth.
- ◆ Focus on policies to reduce child poverty—a key factor in educational achievement.
- ◆ Intensive, evidence-based, well-financed and guaranteed interventions should begin long before children reach the third grade.
- ◆ MI can improve reading without implementing a one-size-fits-all mandatory retention.
- ◆ **ADDRESS THE BARRIERS TO LEARNING DIRECTLY**

¹ Estimates are based on reading proficiency levels as measured by the latest state and national tests.

² Lowering the retention standard to basic skill level rather than proficiency would alter the total number and percentage affected but not the disproportionate impact on children of color and those in low-income communities.