

The Reading Report

Reading ASSIST Institute 425-4080 100 W. 10th St., Suite 910, Wilmington, DE 19801
www.readingassist.org April

READING RESEARCH ALERT:

2011 Study: Early reading failure linked to high school drop-out rate.

- A study released by the American Educational Research Association at its convention in New Orleans earlier this month warns that **a student who can't read on grade level by Grade 3 is four times less likely to graduate by age 19** than a child who does read proficiently by that time. Low income and minority students are 13 times less likely to graduate on time than their more proficient peers.
- In this study, **88% of the students who failed to graduate had struggled with reading in early elementary school.** This makes low reading skills a greater predictor of dropping out of high school than living one year in poverty, which affected 70% of the students who did not graduate.
- The study's author, Donald J. Hernandez, a sociology professor at Hunter College, at the City University of New York, says, "We teach reading for the first three grades and then after that children are not so much learning to read but using their reading skills to learn other topics. **In that sense if you haven't succeeded by 3rd grade it's more difficult to remediate than it would have been if you started before then.**"
- On the 2009 NAEP (National Assessment of Educational Progress), **65% of Delaware's fourth graders scored below "Proficient" in reading**, and 27% scored below "Basic".
- Research shows that 7-10% of all children require direct, structured language reading intervention to learn how to read. In Delaware, that equates to **over 2500 children in grades K-3 who may be a risk for dropping out of high school**.
- Delaware's talented and dedicated teachers lack the time to provide the intensive, individual instruction required to ensure that all children can read at grade level.

Reading ASSIST Institute is a Delaware nonprofit organization dedicated to improving the literacy skills of children at risk for reading failure. Since 1989, Reading ASSIST Institute's Volunteer Tutor Program has brought free research-based, intensive, individualized intervention to struggling readers in grades K-3 in schools throughout Delaware. RAI is most grateful to the Delaware General Assembly for its ongoing support of this critical and unique program through State of Delaware Grant in Aid.