

## New Data Find Nearly Nine in 10 Parents Say Their Child Is at or Above Grade Level in Reading and Math, Despite Historic Declines

*Awareness gap sidelines parents in supporting their child's learning.*

Washington, D.C. — November 15, 2023 — A new report from Gallup and Learning Heroes, [\*\*B-flation: How Good Grades Can Sideline Parents\*\*](#), finds that while nearly eight in 10 U.S. parents (79%) say their child is receiving mostly B's or better and almost nine in 10 believe their child is at or above grade level in reading (88%) and math (89%), they may not be seeing the full academic picture. Parents' perceptions of their child's performance deviate sharply from other measures, including standardized test scores, that suggest less than half of children are performing at grade level.

The study surveyed nearly 2,000 parents of K-12 students nationwide, learning about their experiences with and perceptions of their children's progress, how they get information from and engage with their child's school, and their hopes and worries for the future. The findings were complemented by national data on student performance highlighting the nuances of parents' understanding of whether their child is performing at grade level and demonstrating that some parents don't have the information needed to understand the full picture.

The study found that the majority of parents (64%) say report cards are an important measure to know whether their child is at grade level, potentially leading many parents to equate good grades with grade-level achievement. However, report cards are only one source of information on academic progress and measure much more than achievement — including attendance, participation and effort.

“As parents, we are a formidable force when it comes to our children. If there are issues to address, we'll address them. If there are actions to take, we'll take them. But we can't take action without information,” said Bibb Hubbard, founder and president of Learning Heroes. “This is a solvable problem, and we are leaving an incredible national asset — America's parents — on the sidelines, lulled into complacency by B-flation.”

*When parents are informed, they act.* Highlighting the need for more clarity regarding their child's performance, when parents know their child is below grade level in math, 97% are worried about their child's math skills, compared with only 22% of all parents who say their child is at or above grade level. Seventy-four percent of parents who know their child is below grade level in math say they've discussed their concerns about their child's academic progress with their child's teacher, compared with 50% of all parents.

The survey found that parents most often use in-classroom measures like report cards, feedback from the teacher and in-class tests to get information about their child's academic performance. Yet, fewer than one in three parents use year-end state standardized test results (21%) or benchmark tests (26%). And when it comes to further engaging with the school on their child's progress, while 86% of parents report attending their parent-teacher conference, less than half are following up with the teacher for one-to-one conversations (40%) or for regular check-ins with their child's teacher that are not organized by the school (46%).

“Knowing whether a child is ‘at grade level’ is critically important to supporting them, as parents and teachers who recognize the child is not performing at grade level can take different actions to best advocate for their child's learning and support them at home,” said Andrea Malek Ash, research consultant at Gallup. “Despite a variety of measures of academic achievement, it can be difficult for parents to answer this question accurately.”

To address the gap between parents' perceptions of their child's academic performance and the reality, Learning Heroes, in partnership with National Urban League, UnidosUS, Univision, U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation, National PTA, UNCF, and GreatSchools.org, launched "Go Beyond Grades," a national campaign in English and Spanish for families and educators to find free tools, resources, videos and more. The research and Go Beyond Grades campaign were made possible through the support of Griffin Catalyst, the philanthropic and civic engagement of Kenneth C. Griffin, founder and CEO of Citadel. For more information, visit [GoBeyondGrades.org](https://www.gobeyondgrades.org).

To view the full Gallup-Learning Heroes study, read [\*B-flation: How Good Grades Can Sideline Parents\*](#).

### **About Learning Heroes**

Learning Heroes is a national nonprofit that supports families and educators in teaming up to advance student learning and wellbeing. For more information, visit [www.belearninghero.org](https://www.belearninghero.org).

### **About Gallup**

Gallup delivers analytics and advice to help leaders and organizations solve their most pressing problems. Combining more than 80 years of experience with its global reach, Gallup knows more about the attitudes and behaviors of employees, customers, students and citizens than any other organization in the world.

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