

# Understanding Your Child's Academic Progress

Understanding your child's academic progress is crucial for their success in school. By knowing how well they are doing in their studies, you can support and guide them effectively. There are various ways your child's school may assess their learning, such as exams and assignments. These provide important insights into their education journey.

The school will share about your child's progress in many ways. They might send emails or messages with your child's grade or test results. They may also send letters or call home. Every school has a parent-teacher conference where your family can meet with the teacher to learn about your child's progress. It is important to attend these meetings. If you are not comfortable using English, you may request an interpreter. Talk with your child's teacher to know what your options are. You may also learn about interpreters in [our using interpreters section](#).

Understanding your child's academic progress allows you to help your child and support them. If you notice areas where they struggle, you can offer additional help. Some options include tutoring or extra practice at home. Celebrating their achievements and efforts will also motivate them to continue working hard. Keep reading to learn about how to support your child and how schools check on your child's progress.

## How can you help?

**Even if you are busy**, you can still help your child. Ask them about how they are doing and what they are learning in school. As they get older, you can encourage them to ask their school for help. They can join programs to help them learn and grow. Here are some more ideas and examples.

You can help your child even if English is not your first language or if your experiences with school were different. You can help your child in many ways.

## Keep track of your child's progress.

You can do this in a few ways. Many schools use online portals to update families about their child's progress. Some common online portals include Infinite Campus, Class Dojo, Bloomz, and Power School. You may also ask your child's teacher or other school staff. Teachers often share about your child's progress during school events like parent-teacher conferences.

## Stay updated.

Your child may forget to share information or handouts they receive at school. When they are younger, it may be helpful to check their backpack for homework assignments or other communications sent by the school.

## Ask teachers how they grade students' work.

Ask your child's teachers how they grade students' work and how they monitor their progress. Ask how they will share this information with you. It is best to ask the teacher at the beginning of the school year or class. That way, you and your child will be able to talk about their progress as they are learning. It is never too late to ask how your child is being graded and assessed.

### You can ask:

- What is the best way to contact you if I have questions about my child's grades or academic progress?
- How do you assess my child's work?
- Where can I check my child's grades?
- How can I learn about my child's progress?

## Ask teachers how they will share about your child's progress and grades.

Many schools use an online program to record students' grades, test scores, or assessment results. The school is responsible for helping families access these online programs. They must help families understand the information about their child's grades or other results. If you do not find the online program helpful or if it is not available in your preferred language,

ask to see your child's grades or results differently. This may be through email, in person, or on the phone.

### You can ask:

- I have trouble viewing my child's grades online. Is there another way for me to see their grades?
- Where can I get help to view my child's grades? What about their assessment results?
- How can I meet with you to know more about my child's learning and grades?

## How can you support your child's learning at different ages?

### Support your child during elementary school.

You may talk with your child's teacher to ask about your child's learning and how to support them. You may ask how they grade students or what assessments they will take. If your child is younger, you may talk with the teacher. Ask how they grade students or what assessments they will take. Get ideas on how to help your child learn at home. You may also share about your child and how they like to learn. If your child is struggling, bored, or anxious about schoolwork, you may also want to share that with the teacher. Remember you can talk about your child's grades and progress during [parent-teacher conferences](#) where this is often a topic of conversation. [Request interpreters](#) in advance, if needed.

You may feel uncomfortable talking with the teacher. Remember that it is important for families, teachers, and schools to have good communication to support your child.

### Support your child during middle and high school.

When children are older, they may be able to take more control of their learning. Children in middle school and high school have a better understanding of grades. They understand what is expected of them in school more than younger children.

- Talk to your child about their grades and their learning. Doing this shows your child that you are confident about their academic abilities. Allow them to be responsible for

their education.

- Teach your child that they can ask for help when they need it. It is important to talk with your children about school throughout the school year.
- When your child is feeling confused, frustrated, or needs more help, it may help them to meet with the teacher. Sometimes, it can be helpful for parents or caregivers to go to the meeting too. Other times, your child may be able to meet with the teacher on their own. It can be as simple as having your child talk with their teacher before or after class. If your child meets with a teacher on their own, you can ask your child about how the conversation went. Praise them for asking for help and being responsible for their education.

### You can ask your child:

#### Questions about grades

- How do you feel about your grades?
- How are you graded in your classes?
- How do you know what your grades are?

#### Questions about your child's progress

- How are you doing in school?
- How do you feel about your progress in school?
- What subjects or topics do you enjoy learning about?
- What subjects do you feel confident in?

#### Questions to support their learning

- Where do you think you could improve?
- Do you worry about any of your classes?
- Which topics or subjects do you have to work the hardest on?
- Which subjects or areas would you like more help with?
- Do you feel like you are getting the help you need to be successful?
- How can I help you?

## Different Ways Schools Check Academic Progress

Assessment and test results play a role in understanding your child's academic progress. The results show what areas your child is doing well in and where they can improve. Your child's report cards, test scores, and teacher's feedback are all also ways to check on their progress. You can learn more in this section.

### Assessments and State Tests

Assessments are used to learn about students' academic progress. They include traditional tests, but also include classroom activities. These activities help teachers determine when each student needs additional help or practice and when they are ready to move ahead.

Assessments are also used to check on students' English skills. Students who have English levels that are below proficient are considered English Learners. They take an English test each year to check their progress.

State tests measure students' academic progress based on the Ohio Learning Standards in certain subject areas. The test results also help measure each public school's performance which is shared on the Ohio School Report Card.

Students in third grade through eighth grade and high school take Ohio's State Tests in English language arts and math. In middle and high school, students may take state tests in science and social studies.

More information about Ohio's State Tests is available on the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce website.

**Grades are used to measure students' schoolwork.** Each school may grade students differently. Teachers in the same school may also grade differently. Some grading systems only include class assessments or tests and exclude homework. Others focus on mastery learning. There are even standards-based report cards. There are too many systems to list here. But families need to understand their school and teacher's grading system. It is important to check with your school and your child's teachers to know how they grade. Here

are some common ways students are graded in Ohio.

## Grading in Elementary and Early Childhood

During the early years of school, like kindergarten and elementary school, the school might use letters for grades. Each letter stands for a word that explains how well a child has learned a skill or concept.

### Examples of common grading scales:

Letter	Meaning
O	Outstanding
S	Satisfactory
N	Needs improvement
U	Unsatisfactory

Letter	Meaning
E	Exceeds expectations
M	Meets expectations
P	Progressing
I	Insufficient progress

## Grading in Middle School and High School

Middle and high schools might also use letters for grades. The letters stand for a number that is usually between zero and 100. A lower number is a lower score. A higher number is a better (higher) grade.

Students' grades may be subtracted from a total of 100. This is based on how well they do on an assignment or task. Some schools might subtract 10 points (a 10-point grading scale).

Others may subtract seven points (a 7-point grading scale).

This means that in the 10-point grading scale the difference between one grade and another is 10 points. In the 7-point grading scale the difference is seven points.

Either way, both grading scales use the letter A as the highest grade and the letter F as the

lowest grade.

**These grading scales may look like this:**

Letter	10-point grading scale	7-point grading scale
A	100 – 90	100 – 93
B	89 – 80	92 – 85
C	79 – 70	84 – 78
D	69 – 60	77 – 70
F	59 and below	69 and below

### Grade Point Average (GPA)

In middle and high school, student grades may be added together and reported in a Grade Point Average (or GPA). A student's GPA is something that employers, colleges, or universities may review for scholarship or career opportunities.

### Report Cards

Report cards are used by schools to share final grades with families and students. They can be sent home or posted online. Report cards are part of a student's permanent record in the school.

### Progress Reports

Many schools send families a progress report after a few months of the school year. This report helps families and students know how well their child is learning what is being taught in school. This report can help teachers and families understand where the student excels and where they can improve.

Check with your school to know when and how report cards or progress reports are shared with families.



### Additional Resources

You can find more resources and information about grading below.

- You can learn more from the “Helping Your Child Be Successful in School” section of the NCELA Family Toolkit when you select Chapter 6. It is available in four languages (English, Arabic, Chinese, and Spanish). <https://ncela.ed.gov/educator-support/toolkits/family-toolkit>
- More information about talking with your child’s teacher can be found on the Colorin Colorado website. <https://www.colorincolorado.org/article/talk-your-childs-teacher>
- The Read a Report Card resource from Reading Rockets provides more information. <https://www.readingrockets.org/article/how-read-report-card>
- Learn twenty ways you can support your child on the Colorin Colorado website. <https://www.colorincolorado.org/article/twenty-ways-you-can-help-your-children-succeed-school>
- The USA Hello page about how to help your child in school is available in many languages. <https://usahello.org/education/children/help-child-in-school>
- The Taking a Closer Look at My Child’s Academic Success resource from Reading Rockets describes how families can support their child’s academic success. <https://www.readingrockets.org/article/taking-closer-look-my-childs-academic-success>
- More information on supporting children in middle school can be found on the Ohio Statewide Family Engagement Center website. <https://ohiofamiliesengage.osu.edu/resources/launching-your-middle-schooler-to-success-available-in-chinese-somali-nepali-spanish-and-arabic>
- Your public library may be a great resource for helping your child have good grades. Besides free access to books, many public libraries have free homework help and tutoring. They may help students with virtual learning. They can also help them get access to computers, the internet, and other technology they may need. To find a public library near you visit the Library Ohio website. <https://library.ohio.gov/using-the-library/find-an-ohio-library>
- The free Write and Improve website helps students improve their writing.



<https://writeandimprove.com/free>

*These resources aim to bolster academic, student wellness, and college and career outcomes for Ohio's multilingual learners. Resources were created through a collaborative effort between the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce and The Ohio State University's Center on Education and Training for Employment along with a dedicated group of family advocates, community leaders, school district staff, and teachers.*