



Arkansas Department of Education

Division of Elementary and Secondary Education

Jacob Oliva, Secretary

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CONTACT: Kaelin Clay

PHONE: (501) 442-6977

kaelin.clay@ade.arkansas.gov

Arkansas Campaign Helps Parents #GoBeyondGrades to Understand their Child's Reading Progress

LITTLE ROCK, AR – Today, the Arkansas Department of Education (ADE), in collaboration with a coalition of partners, announced the launch of the [#GoBeyondGrades](#) spring and summer campaign. Developed in partnership with Learning Heroes, a national nonprofit focused on building school-home partnerships, the campaign helps families and educators work together to support every Arkansas student in becoming a strong reader.

A new statewide survey revealed that 84% of Arkansas parents believe their child is reading on grade level, and less than one-third of parents are worried about their child's reading skills. When it comes to grades, 72% report their child gets mostly B's or better.

To help families understand their child's reading level and access supports, the campaign connects to free tips and tools, including information about the Arkansas LEARNS Act. Beginning this school year, third-grade students who are not meeting reading standards may need an intervention plan in order to be promoted to fourth grade. LEARNS provides tailored support for students who are off track, such as expanded daily reading instruction, customized reading plans, frequent progress checks, and access to tutoring.

"Parents deserve to know that if their child needs help with reading, the state is providing resources to support every Arkansas student to read on grade level," **said Secretary of Education Jacob Oliva**. "This campaign helps ensure every family has an accurate picture of their child's reading progress before the school year ends, so they can make a plan for support, strengthen reading skills over the summer, and get a head start on the next school year."

The statewide campaign highlights three steps for families:

1. **CHECK your child's progress** using the ATLAS portal to see reading and math levels.
2. **CREATE a plan with your child's teacher** to support individual needs.
3. **CONNECT to summer learning resources**.

The campaign features digital ads, videos from Arkansas parents and teachers, and a centralized hub at GoBeyondGrades.org/Arkansas. The site provides free tips and resources in both English

and Spanish to help parents navigate their child's learning, including an interactive tool to connect to local public libraries.

The campaign is made possible by several local partners that have come together to support parents in ensuring they have the information they need to be their child's best advocate:

- Arkansas Department of Education
- Arkansas Economic Developers & Chamber Executives
- Arkansas Alliance of Boys & Girls Clubs
- AR Kids Read
- Arkansas State Library
- The Reform Alliance
- Arkansas Public School Resource Center

"When young people have access to supportive environments and caring mentors, they gain more than academic skills—they build confidence, discover their interests, and begin to see what's possible for their future," **said Karissa McDonald, Director of the Arkansas Alliance of Boys & Girls Clubs of America.** "In partnership with Learning Heroes and the Go Beyond Grades Campaign, Arkansas Alliance of Boys & Girls Clubs of America is helping families better understand how their children are progressing while reinforcing learning beyond the school day. Together, we can ensure every young person is equipped with the tools, experiences, and encouragement they need to succeed in school and in life."

"When families have clear information and the right tools, they can change the trajectory of their child's reading journey, **said Kathy French, Executive Director of AR Kids Read.** "In partnership with Learning Heroes and the Go Beyond Grades Campaign, AR Kids Read is working directly with communities across Arkansas to help families understand school assessments and how to support their child's reading at home. Together, we can ensure every child has the support they need to become a confident reader."

"Arkansas is taking an important step forward with Go Beyond Grades by recognizing that student success extends beyond test scores," **said Candice Lawrence, Executive Director of the Arkansas Economic Developers & Chamber Executives (AEDCE).** "By helping families see the full picture of student learning, we can ensure every child gains the skills and knowledge needed to pursue their chosen path. Local chambers play a critical role, using their trusted relationships with businesses to connect classroom learning to real-world opportunities and make education more relevant for students and families. At the AEDCE, we support chambers with the training, resources, and professional development needed to lead this work, strengthening connections between schools, communities, and employers and ultimately driving better outcomes for students across Arkansas."

"Arkansas LEARNS has led to a significant investment in improving early literacy in our state, where only a third of third graders read proficiently," **said Emmy Henley, managing director of The Reform Alliance.** "Among those investments are grants for struggling K-3 readers that will pay for in-person or online tutoring, as well as learning tools to improve literacy. Parents, if you receive a letter stating your child is eligible for this grant, this is an opportunity for you to utilize the resources

our state has made available. We are happy to partner with Learning Heroes to spread the word to all parents in Arkansas."

"At the Arkansas Public School Resource Center, we support Go Beyond Grades for its data-informed approach to closing the understanding gap around grade-level proficiency," **said Scott Smith, Executive Director of the Arkansas Public School Resource Center (APSRC)**. "While most parents believe their child is on grade level despite national data showing otherwise, Go Beyond Grades provides transparent information beyond report card grades, strengthens communication between families and schools, and supports timely action for student success."

The online survey was conducted among parents of public school students in Arkansas from March 2-18, 2026, by [Edge Research](#).

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Four Capitol Mall • Little Rock, AR 72201 • 501-682-4475

