



The MassINC Polling Group
The Education Trust
2023 Fall, Grade 6-12 Parents Survey
 Statewide Survey of 1,018 Grade 6-12 Parents
 Field Dates: September 14 – October 1, 2023

What grade(s) is/are your child(ren) currently in? **ALLOW MULTIPLE RESPONSES, SELECT ALL THAT APPLY. PROBE IF NEEDED:** And your other children?

Kindergarten	7%
First	3%
Second	6%
Third	6%
Fourth	6%
Fifth	6%
Sixth	18%
Seventh	17%
Eighth	17%
Ninth	19%
Tenth	19%
Eleventh	21%
Twelfth	19%
Don't Know / Refused	0%

IF NO CHILDREN IN GRADES 6-12, TERMINATE

Which of the following best describes the school where your child(ren) is/are enrolled this year? **ALLOW MULTIPLE RESPONSES, SELECT ALL THAT APPLY.**

A public school run by a school district	82%
A public charter school	9%
A parochial or Catholic school	5%
A non-Catholic private or independent school	5%
Homeschooling	2%
Another format	3%
Don't Know / Refused	<1%

To the best of your knowledge, are any of your children enrolled in a vocational technical school? Vocational technical schools teach students the skills they need for a trade or occupation.

Yes	16%
No	82%
Don't Know / Refused	2%

IF HAVE MORE THAN ONE CHILD IN GRADES 6-12, READ THE FOLLOWING. OTHERWISE, SKIP THIS DIRECTION AND DO NOT SPECIFY GRADE LEVEL IN THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS. You mentioned you had a child in the **SELECT GRADE LEVEL FOR RANDOM CHILD**. The following several questions will be about this child's school.

IF ONLY ONE CHILD, SKIP FOLLOWING, AND RECORD ANSWERS FROM PREVIOUS SCHOOL TYPE QUESTION IN THEIR PLACE

First, which of the following best describes the school where your **GRADE LEVEL** child is enrolled this year?

A public school run by a school district	79%
A public charter school	8%
A parochial or Catholic school	4%
A non-Catholic private or independent school	5%
Home school	2%
Another format	3%
Don't Know / Refused	<1%

Students are often graded on the quality of their work using the letters A, B, C, D, and F. Suppose your **GRADE LEVEL** child's school was graded in the same way. Considering all parts of the school experience, such as communications, academic support, curriculum, counselors, teachers, extracurriculars, and so on, how would you grade your **GRADE LEVEL** child's school so far this year? Or is it too early in the year to tell?

A	26%
B	31%
C	8%
D	3%
F	1%
Too early to tell	30%
Don't Know / Refused	1%

ASK IF RESPONDENT ASSIGNED A LETTER GRADE

Thinking about the letter grade you just gave to your **GRADE LEVEL** child's school, what were you thinking of in particular when you gave the grade you did? **OPEN-END, RECORD VERBATIM.**

Workload / curriculum	22%
Grades / student performance	21%
Teacher / administration performance	20%
School resources (academic support, shortages, AP classes, extracurriculars, infrastructure etc.)	17%
Communication / support among staff and parents	13%
Individualized attention / meeting child's needs	9%
General comments	6%
School community / environment	4%
School safety	2%
Other (lack of diversity, politics, location, IEP support, etc.)	10%
Don't know / too early to tell / school just started	5%

ASK IF RESPONDENT DID NOT ASSIGN A LETTER GRADE

When thinking about a grade for your child’s school, what factors will be most important to you? **OPEN-END, RECORD VERBATIM.**

Quality of education (content of curriculum, workload, specific classes, etc.)	40%
Quality teachers	20%
Learning life skills & post HS preparation	15%
Communication	14%
Environmental norms (supportive, no bullying, community, respect, fairness, DEI etc.)	13%
School resources (extracurriculars, counselors, staffing etc.)	12%
Grades / student performance / academic standing	11%
School safety	9%
Support for students with IEP's & disabilities	6%
Other / don't know	9%

ASK ALL

To the best of your knowledge, is your **GRADE LEVEL** child reading at the level expected for students in their age group?

Yes, they are	87%
No, they are not	10%
Don't Know / Refused	3%

How about in terms of math? Is your **GRADE LEVEL** child working at the level expected for students in their age group when it comes to math?

Yes, they are	82%
No, they are not	14%
Don't Know / Refused	4%

Does your **GRADE LEVEL** child have an Individualized Education Plan, sometimes called an IEP?

Yes	28%
No	66%
Don't Know / Refused	6%

Does your **GRADE LEVEL** child receive services for English Language Learners, sometimes called ELL?

Yes	13%
No	82%
Don't Know / Refused	6%

Thinking about your **GRADE LEVEL** child's mental and emotional health this year, would you say you are very concerned, somewhat concerned, not too concerned, or not at all concerned?

Very concerned	12%
Somewhat concerned	27%
Not too concerned	31%
Not at all concerned	30%
Don't Know / Refused	1%

How much have you discussed your **GRADE LEVEL** child's hopes and plans for after high school with them?

A great deal	38%
A fair amount	37%
Just a little	20%
Not at all	4%
Don't Know / Refused	1%

Which of the following do you think your **GRADE LEVEL** child would be interested in doing once they finish high school?

Begin an Associate degree	13%
Begin a Bachelor's degree	57%
Begin a training program for a trade job	20%
Enter the workforce	9%
Something else (specify: _____)	6%
Don't Know / Refused	10%

IF RESPONDENT CHOOSES MORE THAN ONE OPTION, FILTER TO OPTIONS SELECTED. SKIP IF DON'T KNOW / REFUSED

What would your **GRADE LEVEL** child most like to do after high school?

Begin an Associate degree	9%
Begin a Bachelor's degree	53%
Begin a training program for a trade job	14%
Enter the workforce	6%
Something else (specify: _____)	6%
Don't Know / Refused	12%

How well is your **GRADE LEVEL** child's school preparing your child to pursue their goals after high school?

Very well	41%
Somewhat well	35%
Not too well	10%
Not at all well	5%
Don't Know / Refused	9%

What would you say are the most significant challenges ahead for your child as they work to achieve their post-high school goals? **OPEN END, RECORD VERBATIM.**

Education pathways (acceptance, application, grades, determining what they want to do)	32%
Life skills (self-organization, self-motivation, scheduling)	16%
Career pathways (finding a job, determining what they want to do, making enough money)	13%
Cost of higher education	12%
Social / emotional factors (network to rely on, ability to make friends)	8%
Disabilities, physical and mental health concerns	8%
Societal change (economy, pandemic, political)	8%
No Challenges	4%
Other	10%
NA / don't know / not sure	6%

You said your **GRADE LEVEL** child would most like to **READ WHAT STUDENT WOULD MOST LIKE TO DO AFTER HIGH SCHOOL.** How confident are you that your child will be in a position to do this after high school?

Very confident	63%
Somewhat confident	30%
Not too confident	5%
Not at all confident	1%
Don't Know / Refused	1%

ASK ALL

When thinking about the possibility of your **GRADE LEVEL** child attending college, how much of a concern is each of the following?

ROTATE ORDER	Major concern	Minor concern	Not a concern	Don't know / Refused
The cost of books	33%	40%	23%	3%
Total tuition cost	68%	19%	10%	3%
The cost of applying to college	35%	31%	31%	3%
The cost of room and board	58%	24%	14%	4%

Do you believe the potential long-term benefits of a college degree make the cost worthwhile for nearly everybody, most people, some people, just a few people, or nobody?

Nearly everybody	10%
Most people	33%
Some people	43%
Just a few people	10%
Nobody	3%
Don't Know / Refused	3%

As you may know, vocational-technical or voc tech programs provide hands-on skills and training for future careers. Does your **GRADE LEVEL** child's school offer vocational training?

Yes, they do	29%
No, they do not	57%
Don't Know / Refused	13%

ASK RESPONDENT IF SCHOOL DOES NOT OFFER VOC TECH

Do you think vocational technical programs in your **GRADE LEVEL** child’s school would benefit your child's future career opportunities, or not?

Yes, they would	63%
No, they would not	23%
Don't Know / Refused	13%

ASK ALL

Would you be open to exploring vocational programs for your **GRADE LEVEL** child after they finish high school?

Would consider	50%
Might or might not consider	26%
Would not consider	17%
Don't Know / Refused	6%

What would your hesitations be about considering vocational programs for your **GRADE LEVEL** child? **OPEN-END, RECORD VERBATIM.**

No hesitations	29%
What child wants / Best fit	16%
Child isn't interested (prefers another path, college, career, sports)	15%
Bad fit (capability, intelligence, age, mental health, disability, IEP)	7%
Not enough career or college prep / Limited learning / Opportunities	6%
Resource limitations (cost, location, transportation, acceptance, availability, access)	6%
Don't know / Needs to do research / unaware of available programs	6%
Parent prefers college / Another path	6%
Perceptions (income, social concerns, stigma, quality)	3%
Other	9%

When thinking about post-high school plans for your **GRADE LEVEL** child, how important do you believe **READ FIRST** is/are in helping make their plans? How about **READ NEXT**?

ROTATE ORDER	Very Important	Somewhat important	Not too important	Not at all important	Don't Know / Refused
Guidance counselors	51%	35%	7%	5%	2%
Your influence as a parent	79%	17%	2%	<1%	1%
Friends' and peers' plans	28%	42%	23%	6%	1%
Family members	58%	33%	7%	1%	<1%
Teachers	61%	32%	5%	2%	1%
College prep programs	43%	40%	10%	3%	4%

ASK HIGH SCHOOL PARENTS ONLY. CHOSE OLDEST HIGH SCHOOL CHILD TO ASK ABOUT IN THIS SECTION. IF THIS IS DIFFERENT THAN THE CHILD FROM PREVIOUS SECTIONS, SAY "Now I'd like to ask about your **GRADE LEVEL child."**

How well is your **GRADE LEVEL** child's school preparing students academically for the possibility of attending college?

Very well	47%
Somewhat well	36%
Not too well	7%
Not at all well	4%
Don't Know / Refused	7%

Which opportunities, if any, does your **GRADE LEVEL** child's high school offer? **SELECT ALL THAT APPLY**

Advanced Placement or International Baccalaureate courses	55%
Dual enrollment courses	26%
Early college courses	37%
Work-based learning or internship opportunities	29%
Don't Know / Refused	21%

ASK THE FOLLOWING QUESTION IF CURRENT CHILD IS IN GRADES 11 OR 12

Which of the following best describes your **GRADE LEVEL** child?

They have already started applying to college	23%
They will likely apply to college later	58%
They will likely not apply to college	12%
Don't Know / Refused	7%

ASK RESPONDENT THE FOLLOWING THREE QUESTIONS IF STUDENT HAS STARTED APPLYING TO COLLEGE, WILL APPLY LATER, OR DON'T KNOW / REFUSED

How much would you say you know about the college admissions process?

A great deal	26%
A fair amount	39%
Just a little	21%
Nothing at all	10%
Don't Know / Refused	4%

How much would you say you know about the financial aid process for college?

A great deal	25%
A fair amount	31%
Just a little	27%
Nothing at all	14%
Don't Know / Refused	3%

To what extent do you believe the cost of college might impact your **GRADE LEVEL** child's choice of what college to attend?

A great deal	39%
A fair amount	32%
Just a little	17%
Not at all	8%
Don't Know / Refused	4%

RESUME ASKING ALL HIGH SCHOOL PARENTS

Has your **GRADE LEVEL** child participated in college preparation programs while in high school or not?

Yes they did	38%
Not they did not	50%
Don't Know / Refused	12%

Has your **GRADE LEVEL** child taken any courses that offered college credit while in high school?

Yes they have	31%
No, they have not	59%
Don't Know / Refused	10%

Which of the following career development activities has your **GRADE LEVEL** child participated in while in high school? **SELECT ALL THAT APPLY.**

Career fairs	24%
Job shadowing opportunities	14%
Resume building workshops	17%
Mock interviews	15%
Internships or co-op programs	22%
None of the above	43%
Don't Know / Refused	10%

ASK ALL

To the best of your knowledge, does your **GRADE LEVEL** child identify as LGBTQIA+ or not?

Yes they do	9%
No, they do not	82%
Don't Know / Refused	9%

Demographics

Age:

18 to 34 years old	6%
35 to 39 years old	11%
40 to 44 years old	20%
45 to 49 years old	28%
50+	35%
Don't Know / Refused	<1%

Gender:

Man	44%
Woman	54%
Non-binary	<1%
Some other way: _____	<1%
Don't Know / Refused	1%

Race:

White	66%
Black / African-American	7%
Hispanic / Latino	14%
Asian	8%
Other / more than one	4%
Don't Know / Refused	2%

Education:

High school or less	27%
Some college, no degree	22%
College degree	26%
Advanced degree	24%
Don't Know / Refused	1%

About the Poll

These results are based on a survey of 1,018 Massachusetts parents with children in grades 6 through 12. Live telephone interviews and online interviewing were conducted in English and Spanish September 14 - October 1, 2023. Telephone respondents were reached by both landline and cell phone. Oversamples of Black, Latino, and Asian respondents were obtained to bring the total interview count up to at least 200 for each group. Results within race and ethnicity were weighted to population parameters for age, gender, and education level within each group. Groups were then combined and weighted to population parameters for the state as a whole. The credibility interval for this survey is 4.0 percentage points for the entire sample, including the design effect. The poll was sponsored by The Education Trust.