



Washington

Overall Rank

#48

Washington fell five spots down to #48 in overall education freedom. The state ranks low in education choice (#46) and teacher freedom (#49).

Education Choice Rank

#46

Washington ranks 46th for **education choice**. Washington could do much more to expand education choice. Washington could improve its ranking by enacting a K-12 education savings account (ESA) policy, making it easier for more charter schools to open and operate, removing excessive regulations on homeschooling families, and giving families more choices among traditional public schools beyond their assigned school.

Transparency Rank

#40

Washington ranks 40th in **academic transparency**. Washington lawmakers have not adopted proposals to increase academic transparency or that reject the prejudice caused by the application of critical race theory in schools.

Teacher Freedom Rank

#49

Washington ranks 49th in **teacher freedom**. Just 19 percent of teachers in the Evergreen State made their way to the K-12 classroom through alternative teacher certification routes, and the state does not have full reciprocity of teacher licensure with other states. Educators in Washington are required to pass the Praxis test, a teacher certification exam administered by the Educational Testing Service. Moreover, a full 74 percent of school districts in the state with more than 15,000 students employ a “chief diversity officer,” and the state still uses Common Core-aligned tests. Washington can improve its teacher freedom score by allowing more aspiring teachers to make their way into the K-12 classroom through alternative teacher certification routes, bypassing traditional university-based colleges of education, and by eliminating the Praxis test mandate. It should also allow full reciprocity of teacher licensure or eliminate teacher certification requirements altogether. Washington should also end its participation in the Common Core-aligned assessments.

Return on Investment Rank

#17

Washington ranks 17th in **return on investment (ROI)** for education spending. Washington spends the 18th-most per pupil among states, spending \$17,744 in cost-of-living-adjusted terms annually. Washington ranks 21st in its combined fourth-grade and eighth-grade math and reading average NAEP score. The Evergreen State employs 2.78 teachers for every non-teacher in its public schools. Washington’s unfunded teacher pension liability represents zero percent of its state GDP. Washington can improve its ROI ranking by improving academic outcomes on the NAEP, and by stopping the growth in non-teaching staff.

Washington: One-Year Rank Changes (2023–2024)

OVERALL	EDUCATION CHOICE	TRANSPARENCY	TEACHER FREEDOM	RETURN ON INVESTMENT
▼ 5	▲ 1	▼ 4	0	▼ 9