



Idaho

Overall Rank

#18

Idaho drops to #18 in overall education freedom, down seven spots from 2024. The state's rank declined due to a significant drop in its teacher freedom ranking.

Education Choice Rank

#24

Idaho ranks 24th for **education choice**, up five spots since 2023. Idaho does well in empowering families to choose among charter and district schools but could do much more to expand private education choice. Additionally, Idaho respects the autonomy of homeschool families. Idaho could improve its ranking by enacting a K-12 education savings account (ESA) policy and making it easier for more charter schools to open and operate.

Transparency Rank

#7

Idaho ranks seventh in **academic transparency**. In 2021, Idaho lawmakers enacted H.B. No. 377,¹ which states: “No public institution of higher education, school district, or public school, including a public charter school, shall direct or otherwise compel students to personally affirm, adopt, or adhere” to ideas that violate the Civil Rights Act of 1964 or otherwise say that individuals of certain ethnicities are responsible for actions committed by other people of the same ethnicity or background throughout history. This prohibition of compelled speech protects students from being forced to believe ideas that violate their conscience, such as critical race theory’s false notion that America is irredeemably racist. Idaho lawmakers should consider proposals that address the threats to minor children from the teaching of “gender” in place of biological sex.

Teacher Freedom Rank

#47

Idaho ranks 47th in **teacher freedom**. Although 30 percent of the state’s teachers are alternatively certified, the Gem State does not allow full reciprocity of teacher licensure. Educators in Idaho are required to pass the Praxis test, a teacher certification exam administered by the Educational Testing Service. Two of the four school districts in the state with more than 15,000 students employs a “chief diversity officer.” The remaining 111 districts have fewer than 15,000 students. Idaho also still uses Common Core-aligned tests. The state can improve its teacher freedom score by exiting the Common Core tests, continuing the growth of the number of pathways to the K-12 classroom available to aspiring teachers or ending certification requirements altogether, allowing full reciprocity of teacher licensure, and eliminating the Praxis requirement.

Return on Investment Rank

#1

Idaho ranks first in the nation in **return on investment (ROI)** for education spending. Idaho spends the least per pupil among all states, spending \$11,201 in cost-of-living-adjusted terms annually. Idaho is tied for ninth place with Colorado and Florida in its combined fourth-grade and eighth-grade math and reading average NAEP scores. The Gem State employs 3.88 teachers for every non-teacher in its public schools. Idaho’s unfunded teacher pension liability represents 3.6 percent of its state GDP. Idaho can maintain its first-place standing by continuing to improve academic outcomes on the NAEP and further lowering its unfunded teacher pension liabilities.

Idaho: One-Year Rank Changes (2023-2024)

OVERALL	EDUCATION CHOICE	TRANSPARENCY	TEACHER FREEDOM	RETURN ON INVESTMENT
▼ 7	▲ 5	▲ 1	▼ 24	0

NOTE:

1. <https://legislature.idaho.gov/wp-content/uploads/sessioninfo/2021/legislation/H0377.pdf>