



Kansas

Overall Rank

#27

Kansas remains in the middle of the pack in terms of overall education freedom, currently #27. However, the state underperforms on transparency, at #35.

Education Choice Rank

#25

Kansas ranks 25th for **education choice**, down two spots since 2023. Kansas does fairly well in empowering families to choose among private and district schools but could do more to expand education choice. Additionally, Kansas generally respects the autonomy of homeschooling families. Kansas could improve its ranking by enacting a K-12 education savings account (ESA) policy, expanding eligibility for and boosting participation in its private education choice policy, making it easier for more charter schools to open and operate, and giving families more choices among traditional public schools beyond their assigned school.

Transparency Rank

#35

Kansas ranks 35th on **academic transparency**. In 2013, lawmakers adopted a parental bill of rights¹ stating that it is “the fundamental right of every parent to control the care and custody of such parent’s minor children, including, but not limited to, control over education, discipline, religious and moral instruction, health, medical care, welfare,” and more. Lawmakers have not adopted proposals to make K-12 academic content more transparent to taxpayers and families, nor have policymakers rejected the application of critical race theory in schools.

Teacher Freedom Rank

#27

The Sunflower State ranks 27th in **teacher freedom**. Although Kansas does not use Common Core-aligned tests, that is where the good news ends. Just 22 percent of its teachers are alternatively certified, and the state does not allow full reciprocity of teacher licensure. Educators in Kansas are required to pass the Praxis test, a teacher certification exam administered by the Educational Testing Service. While 80 percent of school districts with more than 15,000 students employ a “chief diversity officer,” only five school districts in the state enroll that many students. Kansas can improve its teacher freedom score further by significantly increasing the number of aspiring teachers who have alternative routes into the K-12 classroom or ending certification requirements altogether, eliminating the Praxis requirement, and allowing full reciprocity of teacher licensure.

Return on Investment Rank

#30

Kansas ranks 30th in **return on investment (ROI)** for education spending. Kansas spends the 27th-most per pupil among states, spending \$15,697 in cost-of-living-adjusted terms annually. Kansas ranks 30th in its combined fourth-grade and eighth-grade math and reading average NAEP score. The Sunflower State employs 2.47 teachers for every non-teacher in its public schools. Kansas’s unfunded teacher pension liability represents 5 percent of its state GDP. Kansas can improve its ROI ranking by lowering per-pupil spending, improving academic outcomes on the NAEP, and limiting its unfunded teacher pension liabilities.

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

OVERALL	EDUCATION CHOICE	TRANSPARENCY	TEACHER FREEDOM	RETURN ON INVESTMENT
▲ 4	▼ 2	0	▲ 14	▼ 3

NOTE:

1. http://www.kslegislature.org/li_2014/b2013_14/measures/hb2203/