



# Michigan

## Overall Rank

#32

Michigan ranks #32 in overall education freedom, dropping five spots from the previous year. The state ranks in the bottom 10 states in terms of teacher freedom.

## Education Choice Rank

#29

Michigan ranks 29th for **education choice**. Michigan does fairly well in empowering families to choose among charter and district schools but could do more to expand education choice. Michigan respects the autonomy of homeschooling families. Michigan 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, and giving families more choices among traditional public schools beyond their assigned school.

## Transparency Rank

#15

Michigan ranks 15th in **academic transparency**. Michigan lawmakers have not adopted proposals that reject critical race theory and compelled speech. State law<sup>1</sup> contains a broad provision that allows parents to “review the curriculum, textbooks, and teaching materials of the school in which the pupil is enrolled at a reasonable time and place and in a reasonable manner” and a modest parental bill of rights<sup>2</sup> that states: “It is the natural, fundamental right of parents and legal guardians to determine and direct the care, teaching and education of their children.”

## Teacher Freedom Rank

#41

Michigan ranks 41st in **teacher freedom**. Just 8 percent of teachers in the state are alternatively certified, making their way to the K-12 classroom through a means other than a university-based college of education, and the state does not allow full reciprocity of teacher licensure with other states. However, educators in Michigan are not required to take the Praxis test, a teacher certification exam administered by the Educational Testing Service. Half of school districts enrolling more than 15,000 students in Michigan employ a “chief diversity officer.” The state partially uses Common Core-aligned tests. Michigan can improve its teacher freedom ranking by allowing aspiring teachers to make their way to the K-12 classroom through means other than a university-based college of education or by eliminating teacher certification requirements altogether. Policymakers should also allow full reciprocity of teacher licensure, and should end the growth in non-teaching staff, particularly chief diversity officers.

## Return on Investment Rank

#34

Michigan ranks 34th in **return on investment (ROI)** for education spending. Michigan spends the 25th-most per pupil among states, spending \$16,555 in cost-of-living-adjusted terms annually. Michigan ranks 34th in its combined fourth-grade and eighth-grade math and reading average NAEP score. The Wolverine State employs 1.86 teachers for every non-teacher in its public schools. Michigan’s unfunded teacher pension liability represents 8.5 percent of its state GDP. Michigan can improve its ROI ranking by improving academic outcomes on the NAEP, stopping growth in non-teaching staff, and addressing its unfunded teacher pension liabilities.

### Michigan: One-Year Rank Changes (2023–2024)

OVERALL	EDUCATION CHOICE	TRANSPARENCY	TEACHER FREEDOM	RETURN ON INVESTMENT
▼ 5	▼ 1	▼ 4	▼ 6	▼ 4

#### NOTES:

- [http://legislature.mi.gov/\(S\(weayrbcsstffjblk2ktdxkr\)\)/mileg.aspx?page=getObject&objectName=mcl-380-1137](http://legislature.mi.gov/(S(weayrbcsstffjblk2ktdxkr))/mileg.aspx?page=getObject&objectName=mcl-380-1137)
- [http://www.legislature.mi.gov/\(S\(45aryz4v4bgtvbqvz22e1p\)\)/mileg.aspx?page=getObject&objectName=mcl-chap380](http://www.legislature.mi.gov/(S(45aryz4v4bgtvbqvz22e1p))/mileg.aspx?page=getObject&objectName=mcl-chap380)