



# Wisconsin

## Overall Rank #24

Wisconsin ranks #24 overall in education freedom and #18 in education choice. However, the state ranks near the bottom in transparency at #47.

## Education Choice Rank #18

Wisconsin ranks 18th for **education choice**, down four spots since 2023. Wisconsin does well in empowering families to choose among private, charter, and district schools, but could do more to expand education choice. Wisconsin generally respects the autonomy of homeschooling families. Wisconsin could improve its ranking by enacting a K-12 education savings account (ESA) policy, expanding eligibility for and boosting participation in its existing private education choice policies, and eliminating unnecessary regulations on participating private schools, including the state test mandate and interference with schools' admissions standards. Wisconsin could also improve its ranking by 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 #47

Wisconsin ranks 47th in **academic transparency**. While Governor Tony Evers (D) signed a<sup>1</sup> proposal<sup>2</sup> in 2021 to make school finances more transparent to taxpayers, he vetoed a proposal that would have allowed parents and taxpayers to view the school curricula.

## Teacher Freedom Rank #34

Wisconsin ranks 34th in **teacher freedom**. Just 6 percent of teachers made their way to the K-12 classroom through alternative certification routes, and the Badger State does not have full reciprocity of teacher licensure with other states. Educators in Wisconsin are required to pass the Praxis test, a teacher certification exam administered by the Educational Testing Service. A staggering 100 percent of school districts in Wisconsin with more than 15,000 students employ a "chief diversity officer." The state does not use prescriptive Common Core-aligned tests. Wisconsin can improve its teacher freedom score by eliminating the Praxis test requirement, significantly increasing the number of teachers who make their way to the K-12 classroom through alternative certification routes, and allowing full reciprocity of teacher licensure or eliminating certification requirements altogether. The state should also stop the growth in non-teaching personnel, such as chief diversity officers.

## Return on Investment Rank #14

Wisconsin ranks 14th in **return on investment (ROI)** for education spending. Wisconsin spends the 24th-most per pupil among states, spending \$16,855 in cost-of-living-adjusted terms annually. Wisconsin ranks sixth in its combined fourth-grade and eighth-grade math and reading average NAEP score. The Badger State employs 2.33 teachers for every non-teacher in its public schools. Wisconsin's unfunded teacher pension liability represents 2.2 percent of its state GDP. Wisconsin can improve its ROI ranking by further reducing per-pupil spending and addressing its unfunded teacher pension liabilities.

### Wisconsin: One-Year Rank Changes (2023-2024)

OVERALL	EDUCATION CHOICE	TRANSPARENCY	TEACHER FREEDOM	RETURN ON INVESTMENT
0	▼ 4	▲ 1	▲ 6	▼ 4

#### NOTES:

- [https://www.thecentersquare.com/wisconsin/gov-evers-vetoes-classroom-transparency-proposal/article\\_blee827c-5761-11ec-9613-8bfd8988867e.html](https://www.thecentersquare.com/wisconsin/gov-evers-vetoes-classroom-transparency-proposal/article_blee827c-5761-11ec-9613-8bfd8988867e.html)
- <https://wisconsinexaminer.com/2021/11/05/evers-signs-school-transparency-bill-vetoes-reading-assessments/>