



# Florida

## Overall Rank

#1

Florida ranks #1 in overall education freedom for the second year. The state ranks in the top five in every category, including #1 in transparency.

## Education Choice Rank

#2

Florida ranks #2 for education choice, up one spot since last year after expanding eligibility for its education choice policy to all students. Florida does exceptionally well in giving families the freedom to choose among private, charter, and district schools, as well as other learning environments. Florida offers K-12 education savings accounts (ESAs) that all families can use to customize the education of eligible students. Additionally, Florida generally respects the autonomy of homeschooling families.

## Transparency Rank

#1

Florida lawmakers set a high standard for academic transparency and rejected critical race theory's pernicious ideas in 2022. State officials approved a proposal that prohibits students from being compelled to affirm the prejudiced ideas that critical race theory teaches. Lawmakers also approved<sup>1</sup> a proposal<sup>2</sup> that requires academic transparency so that parents and taxpayers can review classroom assignments before educators use them as part of K-12 instruction. Florida lawmakers have also adopted a parent bill of rights.<sup>3</sup>

## Teacher Freedom Rank

#2

The Sunshine State ranks second in teacher freedom, making it one of the freest states for teachers and students to pursue education largely devoid of red tape. An impressive 47 percent of Florida teachers are alternatively certified, making their way to the K-12 classroom through a means other than a traditional university-based college of education. The state has full reciprocity of teacher licensure, allowing anyone with a valid teaching license from another state to teach in Florida, or anyone who holds a certificate issued by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. Florida does not use Common Core-aligned tests. Despite its number one rank, the Sunshine State has some room for improvement. Forty-two percent of its school districts with more than 15,000 students employ a "chief diversity officer." Florida can maintain its number one ranking by limiting growth in non-teaching staff, such as chief diversity officers, and continuing to embrace alternative routes for teachers to the K-12 classroom, or by ending certification requirements altogether.

## Return on Investment Rank

#5

Florida ranks fifth overall in return on investment (ROI) for education spending. Florida spends the 48th-most per pupil among states (meaning the 3rd least per pupil), spending \$10,962 in cost-of-living-adjusted terms annually. Florida is tied with Colorado and Idaho for ninth place in its combined fourth-grade and eighth-grade math and reading average NAEP score. The Sunshine State employs 0.93 teachers for every non-teacher in its public schools. Florida's unfunded teacher pension liability represents 4 percent of its state GDP. Florida can improve its ROI ranking by limiting growth in non-teaching staff and lowering its unfunded teacher pension liabilities.

### Florida: One-Year Rank Changes (2022-2023)

OVERALL	EDUCATION CHOICE	TRANSPARENCY	TEACHER FREEDOM	RETURN ON INVESTMENT
0	▲ 1	0	0	▲ 2

#### NOTES:

- [https://www.myfloridahouse.gov/Sections/Documents/loaddoc.aspx?FileName=\\_h0007er.docx&DocumentType=Bill&BillNumber=0007&Session=2022](https://www.myfloridahouse.gov/Sections/Documents/loaddoc.aspx?FileName=_h0007er.docx&DocumentType=Bill&BillNumber=0007&Session=2022)
- <https://www.flgov.com/2022/03/25/governor-ron-desantis-signs-bill-that-requires-curriculum-transparency/>
- <https://www.myfloridahouse.gov/Sections/Bills/billsdetail.aspx?BillId=70313>