



Oklahoma

Overall Rank

#10

Oklahoma improved its overall education rank by nine spots and is now ranked #10, in large part due to the state's new universal account-style education choice option.

Education Choice Rank

#5

Oklahoma ranks #5 for education choice. Oklahoma does exceptionally well in giving families the freedom to choose among private, charter, and district schools, as well as other learning environments, especially since it enacted a refundable personal-use tax credit in 2023 that all families can use for education expenses. Oklahoma respects the autonomy of homeschooling families. Oklahoma could improve its ranking by giving families a choice of traditional public schools beyond their assigned school.

Transparency Rank

#42

In 2021, Oklahoma lawmakers adopted a proposal¹ that rejects the application of critical race theory in K-12 classrooms, but this proposal also bans the discussion of certain ideas and materials in schools. Such provisions can create confusion among educators and students and should be replaced with provisions that state that no teacher or student shall be compelled to affirm any idea that violates the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

Oklahoma officials have adopted a parent bill of rights. State law² includes provisions that state:

All parental rights are reserved to a parent of a minor child without obstruction or interference from this state, any political subdivision of this state, any other governmental entity or any other institution, including, but not limited to, the following rights: 1. The right to direct the education of the minor child; ... 3. The right to direct the upbringing of the minor child; 4. The right to direct the moral or religious training of the minor child; 5. The right to make healthcare decisions for the minor child, unless otherwise prohibited by law...

Teacher Freedom Rank

#8

Oklahoma ranks eighth among states for teacher freedom. Although no teachers made their way to the classroom through alternative teacher certification options, the state does allow full reciprocity of teacher licensure. Thirty-eight percent of school districts with more than 15,000 students employ "chief diversity officers," but the state does not use Common Core-aligned tests. The Sooner State can improve its teacher freedom score by allowing aspiring teachers to enter the K-12 classroom without having to go through university-based colleges of education, or by eliminating teacher certification altogether. Oklahoma should also stop the growth of non-teaching staff, particularly of chief diversity officers.

Return on Investment Rank

#24

Oklahoma ranks 24th overall in return on investment (ROI) in education spending. Oklahoma spends the 46th-most per pupil among states (meaning the 6th-least per pupil), spending \$11,624 in cost-of-living-adjusted terms annually. Oklahoma ranks 47th in its combined fourth-grade and eighth-grade math and reading average NAEP score. The Sooner State employs 0.95 teachers for every non-teacher in its public schools. Oklahoma's unfunded teacher pension liability represents 6.4 percent of its state GDP. Oklahoma can improve its ROI ranking by improving academic outcomes on the NAEP, stopping growth in non-teaching staff, and limiting its considerable unfunded teacher pension liabilities.

Oklahoma: One-Year Rank Changes (2022-2023)

OVERALL	EDUCATION CHOICE	TRANSPARENCY	TEACHER FREEDOM	RETURN ON INVESTMENT
▲ 8	0	▲ 4	0	▼ 15

NOTES:

- http://webserver1.lsb.state.ok.us/cf_pdf/2021-22%20ENR/hB/HB1775%20ENR.PDF
- <https://oksenate.gov/sites/default/files/2019-12/os25.pdf>