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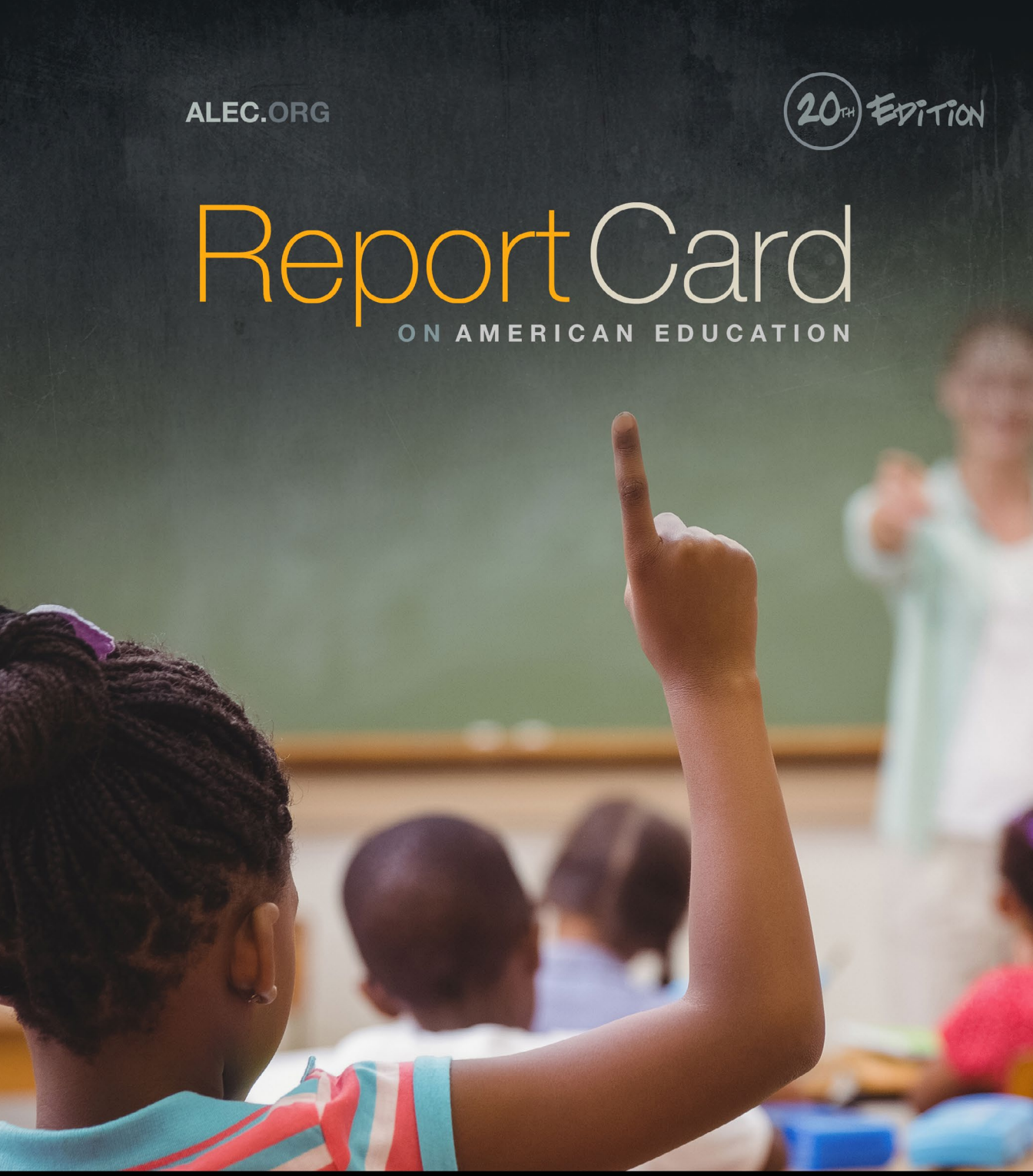
Report Card

ON AMERICAN EDUCATION



RANKING STATE K-12 PERFORMANCE, PROGRESS AND REFORM

By ***Dr. Matthew Ladner***
Foreword by ***Governor Scott Walker***

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Ranking State K-12 Performance, Progress and Reform

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2900 Crystal Drive
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Phone: (202) 725-7764
Fax: (703) 373-0927

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For more information, contact
the ALEC Public Affairs office.

Dr. Matthew Ladner

Lindsay Russell, director, Task Force on Education and Workforce Development
Daniel Turner, legislative analyst, Task Force on Education and Workforce Development

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About the Author

DR. MATTHEW LADNER

Dr. Matthew Ladner is the Senior Advisor of Policy and Research for the Foundation for Excellence in Education. He previously served as Vice President of Research at the Goldwater Institute. Prior to joining Goldwater, Ladner was director of state projects at the Alliance for School Choice. Ladner has written numerous studies on school choice, charter schools and special education reform and coauthored *Report Card on American Education: Ranking State K-12 Performance, Progress and Reform* for the American Legislative Exchange Council. Ladner has testified before Congress, the United States Commission of Civil Rights and numerous state legislative committees. Ladner is a graduate of the University of Texas at Austin and received both a Masters and a Ph.D. in Political Science from the University of Houston. Ladner is a Senior Fellow with the Foundation for Educational Choice and the Goldwater Institute. Dr. Ladner lives in Phoenix, Arizona.

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Foreword

by Scott Walker, Governor of Wisconsin

The United States of America is at a critical moment in its history. In the 21st century our nation faces economic, political, and cultural challenges across the globe. To maintain our competitive advantages in innovative technology, advanced agriculture, manufacturing, and scientific research we need every student to have a world class education and leave school ready compete in the global economy.

In Wisconsin we have responded to this challenge through a number of education reforms. We made systematic changes to education governance and finance through Act 10, to free school districts from unfair agreements with unions over benefits and wages. In the process we saved taxpayers millions of dollars.

In addition to the financial benefits of Act 10, we also created opportunities for long overdue educational reforms. School districts can now hire and fire teachers based upon merit, not seniority. Districts have instituted performance based pay programs and experimented with new scheduling formats. Our reforms moved education from a bureaucratic, top down approach to a locally based system that gives communities control over their schools. This has given school districts the independence to decide how to best organize and manage their schools based on what their students need and what gets results.

We have also increased options for students who want to attend schools outside the traditional public school system. Wisconsin was the first state to create a modern school choice program in Milwaukee in 1989. Since then, Wisconsin's parental choice program has grown significantly from its beginnings as a limited program in Milwaukee to a statewide program that is growing every year. Today, more than 27,000 students are attending approximately 150 participating schools, exercising choices these parents didn't have before.

With an eye toward providing even more options for parents and students, we have open enrollment policies, charter schools, and tax deductions for private school tuition. We are determined to ensure that a child's education is not limited due to their zip code but to what fits best with that student's individual educational needs and skills.

The University of Wisconsin's Flexible Options program is our innovative approach to higher education in the 21st Century. Now students can earn degrees based upon previous work,

education or life experiences in an individualized, competency based program. This is designed to give students an alternative to the traditional classroom model that is difficult and time consuming for working or non-traditional students. It is vital that we give our citizens the ability to be lifelong learners in the constantly changing national and global economy.

The opponents of reform often claim that any changes will lead to dire consequences for schools and student outcomes. In Wisconsin we have shattered that myth.

Since we implemented our reforms, school districts have saved millions of taxpayer dollars, used new innovative teaching methods and instituted merit pay to reward successful teachers. Our students reaped the benefits; high school graduation rates are up, third grade reading scores are up, and our students are ranked 2nd in the nation for ACT scores.

The American Legislative Exchange Council's Report Card on American Education is a vital tool that helps states measure their education reform progress and learn from other states' successes and failures. Often, education reform efforts are met with vigorous public debate and can face powerful opponents. Too often these opponents are the very groups that benefit from the status quo. We must not be discouraged by these special interests. Instead, we must continue to demand all students have access to a high quality education that prepares them for higher learning, service in the military, and the workforce. In Wisconsin, we have shown that reform is possible.

Sincerely,

Scott Walker
Governor of Wisconsin

CHAPTER 1

Education Reform: A Year in Review

Education Reform: A Year in Review

EDUCATION REFORM MAKES SIGNIFICANT ADVANCES IN 2014-15

Since the publication of the 19th edition of the *ALEC Report Card on American Education*, lawmakers have been active around the country in passing K-12 reforms. Laws that give more students public and private schooling options have advanced, and lawmakers have improved public school transparency. For instance, the United States Department of Education broke out American scores on the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) reading exam by ethnicity. The Department study found levels of reading achievement for American Black and Hispanic students similar to countries such as Turkey, Chile and Mexico.[1] These nations spend a fraction of the American spending per pupil and have far greater absolute poverty problems. Despite continuing policy progress, many American children still significantly underperform in comparison to their global peers.

When addressing reform strategies to meet the individual state needs, policymakers should investigate the following best practices already executed in a number of states and also view the extensive information produced by legislators from every state and housed at the American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC).

SILVER STATE LAWMAKERS STRIKE K-12 REFORM GOLD

Nevada has more than its share of education challenges. Long among the fastest growing states on a percentage basis, overcrowding remains an endemic problem in its public schools. A 2014 *New York Times* piece on Clark County (Las Vegas area) noted that the district had the equivalent of 40 elementary schools of students housed in portable buildings. "I could build 23 elementary schools today, and they would open up full and overcrowded," said Clark County Superintendent of Schools Pat Skorkowsky at a neighboring Henderson County Chamber of Commerce breakfast, according to the paper.[2] Since schools are bursting at the seams due to enrollment growth and are failing to reach average levels of academic achievement, Nevada lawmakers face both gigantic quantity and substantial quality problems.

In 2015, they took dramatic action to address both problems simultaneously when Nevada Governor Brian Sandoval signed multiple K-12 reform bills into law. Collectively, these new laws constitute a comprehensive approach, including broad parental choice and district reform efforts. Most notably, Nevada created the nation's strongest parental choice program to date in terms of both student eligibility and in the allowed uses of funds. In addition, lawmakers took action to end social promotion and increase charter school offerings.

Signed into law June 2, 2015, Senate Bill 302, created Nevada's Education Savings Account (ESA) program in which participating parents manage a state-funded account for each student with multiple but restricted uses under a system of state oversight. Sponsored by state Senator Scott Hammond and signed by Sandoval, SB 302 makes all Nevada students with previous public school attendance eligible for an ESA.

The Nevada Office of the State Treasurer will administer the program. Students with disabilities and those from families with incomes at or below

185 percent of the federal poverty level will receive an amount equal to 100 percent of the statewide average basic support per pupil—currently around $5,700. Other students will receive a level of funding equal to 90 percent of this figure—currently around $5,100.

Parents opting into the program can use funds for:

- Tuition and fees at an approved private school
- Textbooks required for a student at an approved private school
- Tutoring or other services provided by a tutor or tutoring facility that is a participating entity
- Tuition and fees for a distance-learning program
- Fees for any national norm-referenced achievement examination, advanced placement or similar examination, or standardized examination required for admission to college or university
- Fees for any special instruction or special services if the child is a pupil with a disability
- Fees and tuition for a college or university in Nevada if that student utilizes those expenses for dual credit
- Textbooks for a college or university in Nevada, also if that student utilizes those expenses for dual credit
- Transportation to school up to $750.00
- Purchases of curriculum or any supplemental materials
- Management fees

The state treasurer will oversee the program and is able to deduct up to 3 percent from the appropriated ESA funds to cover the costs of administration. The treasurer has the authority to remove either a vendor or a student from the program for failure to comply with the legal requirements of the program and refer cases to the state attorney general for criminal prosecution.

Participating students must complete a nationally norm-referenced test annually in mathematics and English; and report the results to the Nevada Department of Education. The department will aggregate the data according to grade level, gender, race and family income level. After three years, it will report ESA student graduation rates.[3]

Nevada's program sets unprecedented education policy. No existing private choice program can match the state's combination of broad student eligibility and multiple educational uses. As with most all-choice programs, the new Nevada ESA program remains a work in progress. Future areas of improvement could be the inclusion of funding weights for children with disabilities and English language learners to mirror the public school formula. Currently, the legislation allows the rolling over of unused funds from year to year and the earning of college credit through dual enrollment and advanced placement.

The state's bold new choice law, however, was not the only big advancement, as lawmakers passed other substantial reforms. Nevada's Senate Bill 391 -Read by Three Act will create programs to aggressively address early childhood illiteracy through early identification and parental notification of reading deficiencies, intensive interventions for students and retention at the end of third grade, as a last resort.

Nevada's SB 491 appropriated $10 million for the creation and operation of high-quality charter schools to serve students who live in poverty. Assembly Bill 448 created an Achievement School District to identify low-performing district schools and convert them into public charter schools.

Assembly Bill 483 requires school districts to set aside funding for additional performance pay for highly effective teachers and administrators. The law prioritizes student achievement and is not subject to change through collective bargaining. Senate Bill 92 took the further step of requiring all layoff decisions for teachers and administrators be guided by the statewide evaluation system, ending the pernicious practice of "last in, first out," whereby teachers get laid off according to seniority rather effectiveness.[4]

In addition to these crucial public school reforms, Nevada lawmakers created two private choice programs. Assembly Bill 165 created a corporate

scholarship tax credit program for students from low and middle-income households. The program has an initial $5 million cap on credits with a provision to increase the cap annually.

The Nevada Constitution guarantees public education, so it will always be available. Due to the constant pressure of current and projected enrollment growth, the Nevada public school system needs all the help it can get. These legislative efforts ensure Nevada schools are moving in the right direction. The consistent experience of previous choice programs demonstrates that, there will not be a mad exodus out of the Nevada public school system, even with the ESA program's broad eligibility. Instead, the program will reduce the strain on the public school system due to enrollment growth and create a crucial exit option that will provide positive motivation for the public schools to improve. Nevada lawmakers have made history by initiating an audacious experiment in liberty that gives parents the ability to customize the education of their children. Big problems require bold leadership.

VERGARA VS. CALIFORNIA DECISION: POTENTIAL WATERSHED

In 2012, nine California students filed suit against the State of California claiming that state policies—such as granting tenure after 18 months on the job, extremely complex appeals processes that make it nearly impossible to terminate an ineffective teacher and "last in, first out" —violated their opportunity to obtain a quality education. On June 11, 2014, the Superior Court of the State of California County of Los Angeles ruled in favor of the students, saying:

> *Plaintiffs claim that the Challenged Statutes result in grossly ineffective teachers obtaining and retaining permanent employment, and that these teachers are disproportionately situated in schools serving predominantly low-income and minority students. Plaintiffs' equal protection claims assert that the Challenged Statutes violate their fundamental rights to equality of education by adversely affecting the quality of the education they are afforded by the state.*
>
> *This court is asked to directly assess how the Challenged Statutes affect the educational experience. It must decide whether the Challenged Statutes cause the potential and/or unreasonable exposure of grossly ineffective teachers to all California students in general and to minority and/or low-income students in particular, in violation of the equal protection clause of the California Constitution.*[5]
>
> *This Court finds that the Plaintiffs have met their burden of proof on all issues presented.*

This landmark decision amounted to a political earthquake. Despite having the full resources of the State of California and the California Teachers Association (CTA), the defendants proved incapable of defending the indefensible. The ruling notes: "Evidence has been elicited in this trail of the specific effect of the grossly ineffective teachers on students. The evidence is compelling. Indeed, it shocks the conscience."

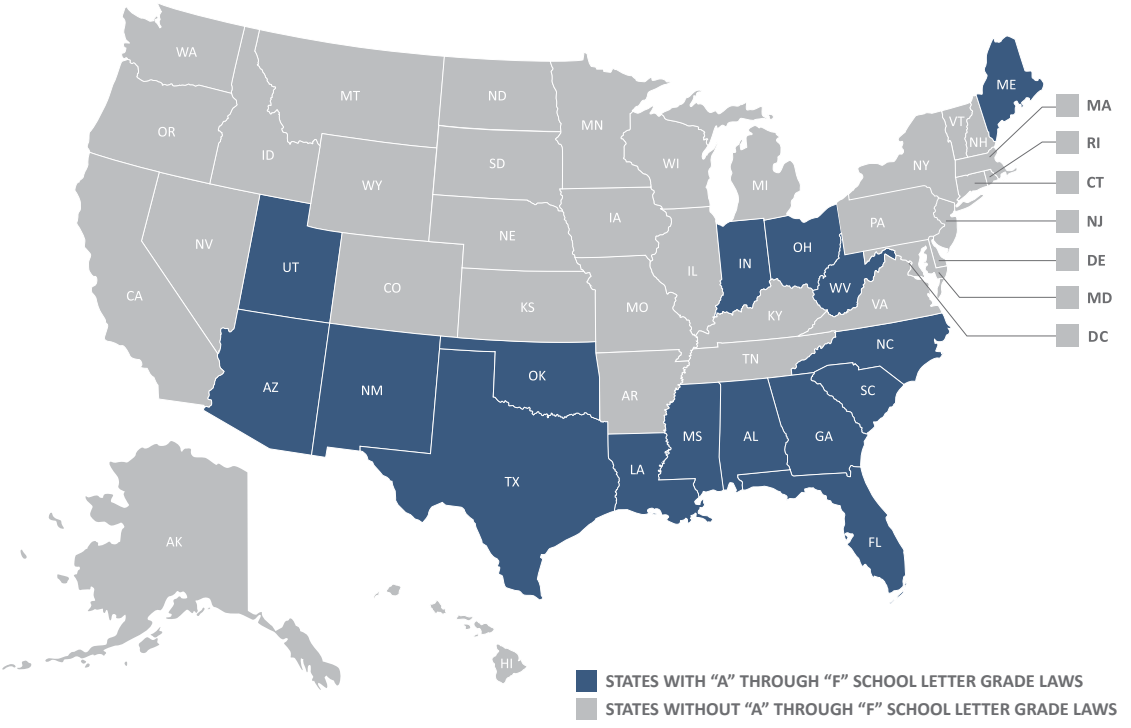
The ruling resulted in an inevitable appeal that will take years to resolve in the California court system. In the meantime, other groups have filed similar lawsuits in other states. The decision reveals just how deeply discredited practices like unconditional tenure and "last in, first out" have become. Both sides put their best case forward on these issues, and the court used both sides' testimonies to reach their ruling.

GEORGIA AND TEXAS BECOME THE 16TH AND 17TH STATES TO ADOPT "A" THROUGH "F" SCHOOL LETTER GRADES

Georgia lawmakers made Georgia the latest state to pass transparent A through F letter grades to describe public school academic performance. The use of letter grades in state accountability systems began in Florida in 1999, followed by Arizona, Indiana, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Utah, Alabama, Mississippi, North Carolina, Ohio, South Carolina, Arkansas, Maine, West Virginia—and most recently the Peach State—between 1999 and 2015.

The Texas legislature also adopted campus-level A through F school grades in 2015, although it

FIGURE 1 | **STATES WITH "A" THROUGHT "F" SCHOOL LETTER GRADE LAWS, 2015**



uses a formula that includes a number of non-academic grading factors. It also allows districts to choose some of their own grading criteria. This means that the grading system will not be comparable across districts. The previous system of campus labels, however, amounted to a "pass/fail" with 91 percent of schools receiving a "met standard" label in 2013 according to state criteria. Simultaneously only 28 percent to 41 percent of Texas students scored "proficient or better" on the 2013 fourth and eighth-grade National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) math and reading exams. Texas still has room for improvement in the area of test-based school accountability.

School grading policies suffered setbacks in places such as New York City, where Mayor Bill de Blasio ended the use of letter grades. Lawmakers in Virginia also chose to cancel the adoption of the policy in the face of opposition from Governor Terry McAuliffe. The Virginia law passed in 2013, but state officials never actually implemented the law. School grading proponents chose to support the Virginia repeal rather than see the grades enacted without fidelity to the principles of the policy.

MULTIPLE STATES INTRODUCE EDUCATION SAVINGS ACCOUNT LEGISLATION

Arizona became the first state to pass a new variety of parental choice program in 2011 with the passage of the Empowerment Scholarship Account Program, which introduced education savings accounts. This model has several advantages over the traditional school voucher mechanism. First, it has proved more robust to court challenge in Arizona than previous voucher programs. It survived legal challenge, whereas two previous voucher programs were ruled unconstitutional under Arizona's Blaine Amendment. It is possible that a program following this model might have a similar

advantage under other state constitutions.

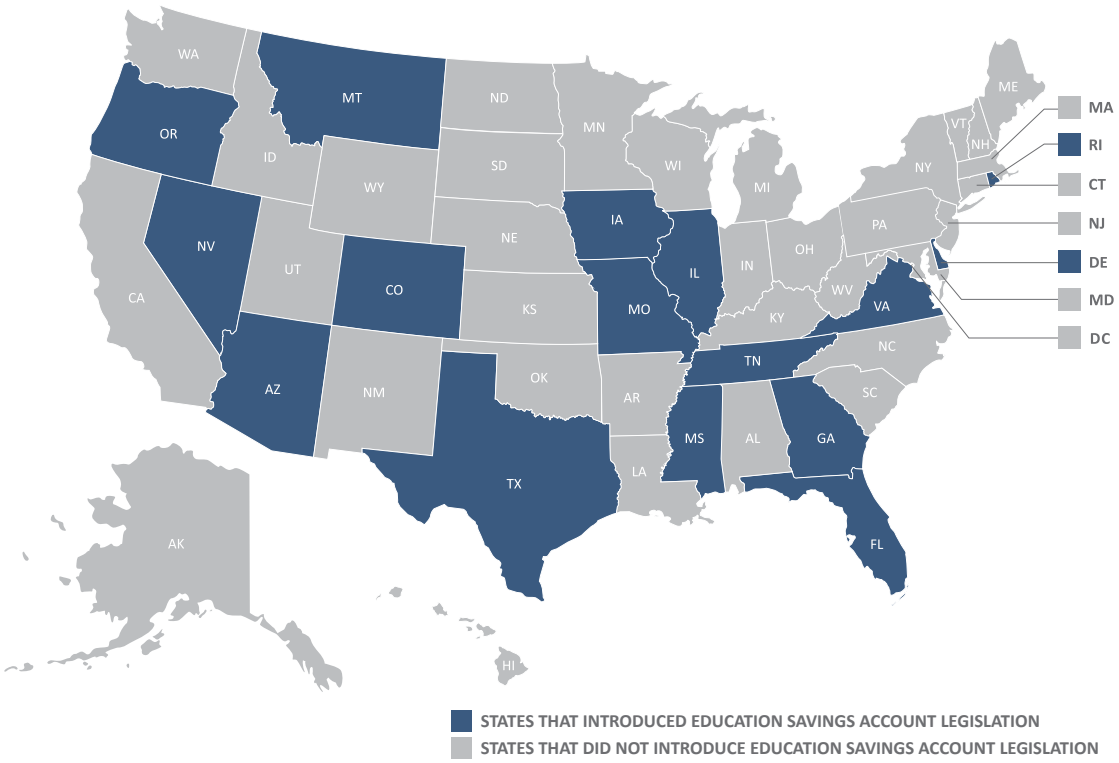
The ESA model also provides more flexibility to parents than a voucher does. Parents use vouchers to choose among schools, and vouchers broaden their possible choices to include participating private schools. ESA programs give parents choices not just among schools, but also among education methods and programs. Parents can choose to enroll students in a school full-time, but they also have other options, including hiring private tutors and therapists, online education programs and even purchasing individual classes at schools or community colleges.

The ESA model also allows parents to save money for future higher education expenses. This creates an incentive for parents to carefully choose providers not only according to perceived quality but also cost. Providers thereby are motivated to provide high-quality services at affordable prices—the exact opposite of the trend seen in the district system in which spending surges and outcomes largely stagnate.

Arizona lawmakers originally crafted their scholarship legislation to serve only students with disabilities. Subsequently, however, lawmakers have made additional students eligible—children in public schools in districts with D or F grades, students who have been through the foster care system and the dependents or survivors of parents in the military. In 2014, Arizona Governor Jan Brewer signed legislation making the siblings of already eligible students eligible for the Empowerment Scholarship Accounts. This change made it possible, for instance, for a family with two children—one of whom was eligible for the program with an Individual Education Plan—to educate both children in the same fashion or send both to the same school.

In 2015, Arizona State Senator Carlyle Begay sponsored legislation making children residing

FIGURE 2 | **STATES INTRODUCING EDUCATION SAVINGS ACCOUNT LEGISLATION IN 2015**



on Arizona American Indian reservations eligible for the Empowerment Scholarship Accounts Program. Arizona has 55,000 American Indian children, and NAEP shows that their levels of academic achievement rank consistently below those of their peers in other states and among the lowest for any student subgroup in the nation.

Following the adoption of the Arizona program in 2011, ALEC adopted model ESA policy that was later updated to reflect significant changes in 2015.

NEVADA, FLORIDA, MISSISSIPPI AND TENNESSEE JOIN ARIZONA IN THE ESA FAMILY

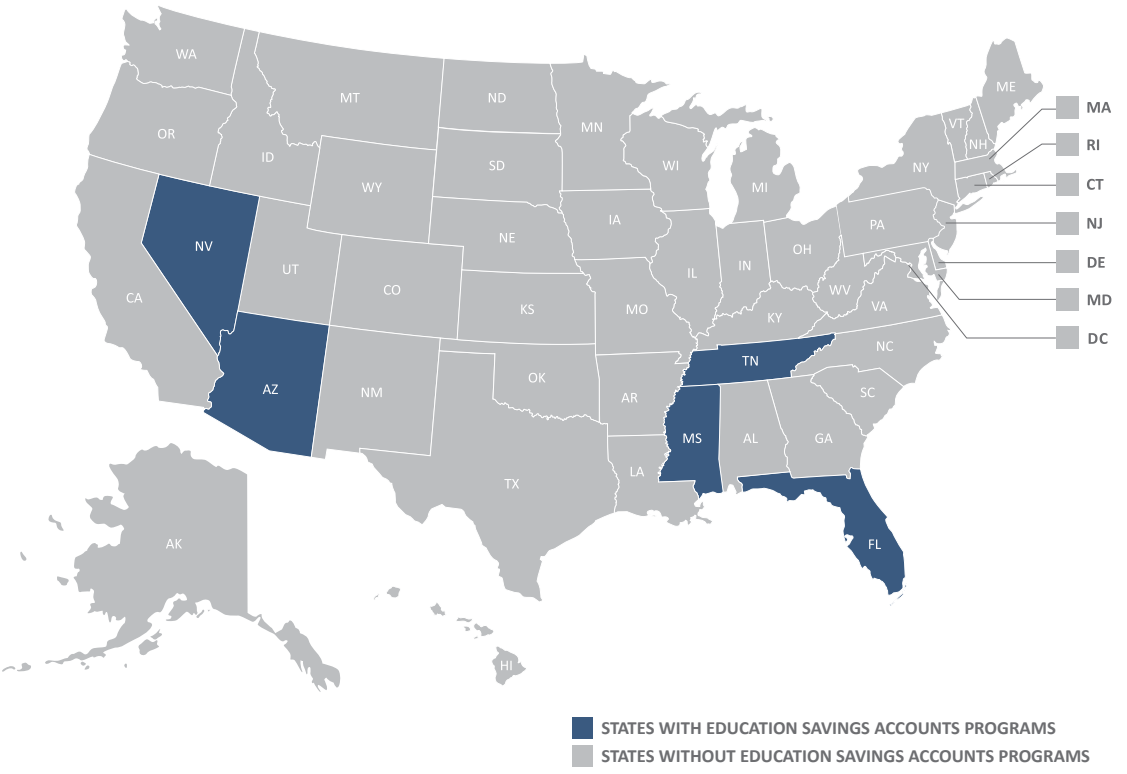
Lawmakers in a number of other states began to introduce account-based choice programs in 2012. In 2014, Florida lawmakers succeeded in passing the Personal Learning Savings Accounts (PLSA) program—the second of its kind in the nation.

The PLSA program initially focused on children with relatively severe disabilities and was launched in the fall of 2014. The innovative Florida program is administered by nonprofit groups with state oversight. (The Arizona Department of Education and Office of the Treasury administer the original program). Florida lawmakers initially appropriated $18 million in 2014 for the PLSA program but increased the appropriation to $53 million in 2015.

In Mississippi, the fight for ESAs for special-needs children began in 2014, but problems have existed for decades. *Jackson Clarion Ledge*r noted Feb. 2, 2014 that the graduation rate for special needs students is the worst in the nation. Despite billions in federal funding since the late 1990s, teachers are still ill-trained, and graduation rates for students with special needs have raised a mere 6 percent since then. In 1997, the same paper noted a graduation rate of just 17 percent for special needs students.[6]

Mississippi lawmakers and parents fought hard

FIGURE 3 | **STATES WITH EDUCATION SAVINGS ACCOUNTS PROGRAMS, 2015**



for an account-based choice program, very nearly passing it in 2014 and finally achieving success the following year. Governor Phil Bryant signed the measure into law in 2015, making Mississippi the third state to enact an account-based choice program.

Choice advocates in Tennessee did not have to wait long for the fourth program, as lawmakers passed, and Governor William Haslam signed, ESA legislation for students with special needs just weeks after Mississippi. Montana legislators passed an ESA bill as well, but the measure was vetoed by Governor Stephen Bullock.

STATES AND DISTRICTS EXPAND WEIGHTED STUDENT FUNDING SYSTEMS

School funding methods can give schools a strong incentive to respond positively to competition. Indiana, for example, until recently had a district funding formula that included "ghost students." Through this method, the state continued to allocate funds to districts for students the schools were no longer educating.[7] Lawmakers wisely replaced this formula with current-year funding when they introduced school vouchers. Without making this change, the state would have double-funded these students while reducing the incentive of districts to respond to competition.

Weighted Student Funding (WSF) represents an important, if commonly misunderstood, reform. Most states fund districts according to a formula, but the details are important. Many states fund districts rather than schools, and they base it on the previous year's student count rather than the current count.

Arizona has run parallel traditional and WSF systems for decades. For 20 years, Arizona has funded charter schools at the campus level using current-year counts. All the while, the state has funded its school districts based on the previous year's count—and has funded districts rather than schools.

WSF has not proved a magic bullet to guarantee school quality—many Arizona charter schools have closed, and more will likely close at the expiration of their original charter. Comparisons between district and charter schools have difficulty accounting for the many possible external causes for apparent differences in outcomes. For example, Harvard University scholar Paul Peterson noted that students typically take a temporary academic hit when transferring between schools, and new schools typically have a "shakedown" period during which they have yet to hit peak performance. Charter sectors with large numbers of new schools full of newly transferred students can negatively bias a snapshot comparison of charter schools.

Arizona's school grading system, however, which equally weighs overall proficiency and academic growth over time, shows a clear advantage for charter schools. In 2013-2014, 40 percent of Arizona charter schools earned an A grade compared to only 28 percent of district schools that earned an A. Arizona charters were also relatively underrepresented at the low end, with 7 percent receiving D grades compared to 9 percent of district schools earning a D.

Hawaii implemented WSF during the 2006-2007 school year. Between 2007 and 2013, Hawaii doubled or tripled the national average for progress on the four main NAEP examinations (fourth- and eighth-grade reading and mathematics). While no one can prove that WSF was the sole or even primary cause of this high level of improvement, a general trend toward decentralization seems to have served the state well.

In an American Institute for Research evaluation of Hawaii's WSF program, a survey of school principals revealed a consensus that WSF had increased equity, transparency and campus autonomy. While many principals expressed the desire for greater resources to be at their disposal, some principals noted that greater control over budgets would prove far more meaningful if they also had control over staffing.[8]

The move to directly fund schools rather than districts gives school principals more control over their budgets, better enabling them to compete. Imagine being tasked with running a school with little control over either the budget or staff. If we want to hold school leaders accountable for

results, it makes sense to give them the authority they need to succeed.

STATES CONTINUE TO IMPROVE DIGITAL LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Digital learning has opened opportunities for students to take courses that would otherwise be unavailable. Online learning has the potential to connect more students to high-quality teachers and increase the number of students that highly effective instructors can serve. Students can access everything from technical and career education to advanced science and mathematics instruction to foreign language opportunities through digital learning.

Digital Learning Now, an initiative of the Foundation for Excellence in Education, produces an annual Digital Learning Report Card to measure state laws against the 10 Elements of High-Quality Digital Learning. By 2014, states had implemented and refined the 422 laws touching on digital learning—some far more effectively than others. Overall, the report card noted progress in 2014, with half of the states improving their grades overall, 14 states moving up one letter grade and nine states earning their way out of the F category since the 2013 report.

State policymakers play a critical role in accelerating the adoption of new models of learning enabled by technology. State policy can either remove barriers to innovative approaches or it can stifle them with restrictions and red tape to protect the status quo.

Despite the progress of recent years, only two states—Florida and Utah—earned an A in the 2014 Digital Learning Report Card.[9] Lawmakers have made strides, but many miles remain ahead in the journey.

FIGURE 4 | ***DIGITAL LEARNING NOW*** **GRADES BY STATE, 2014**

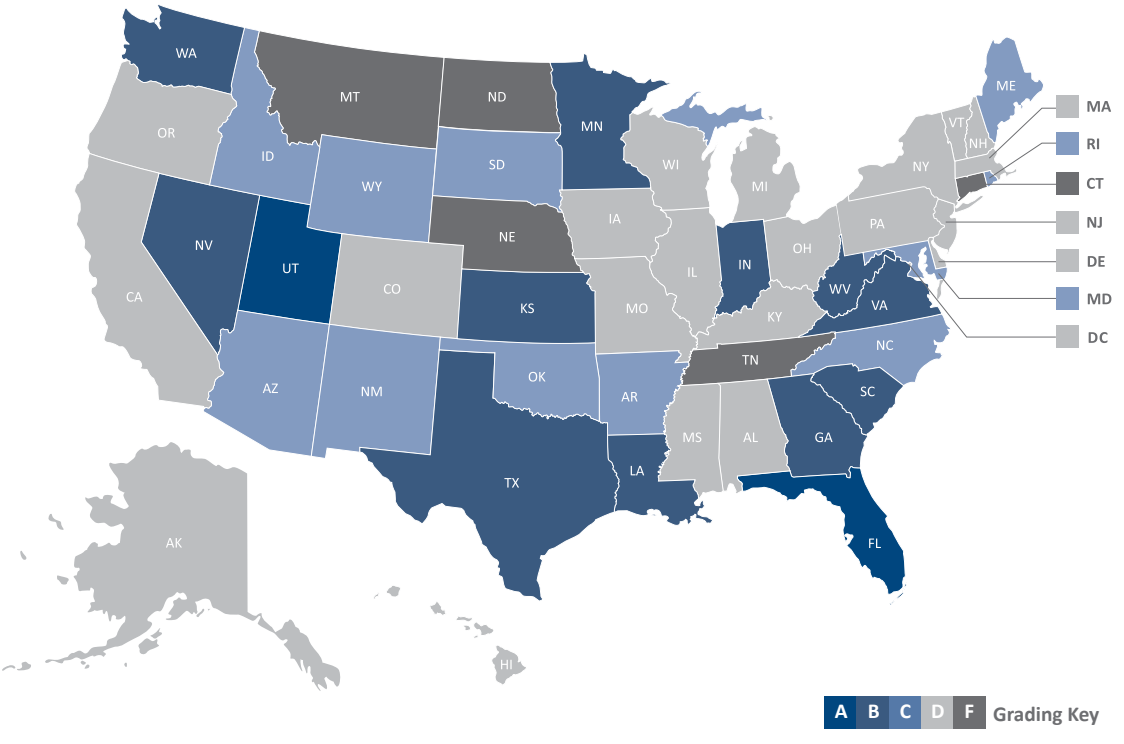
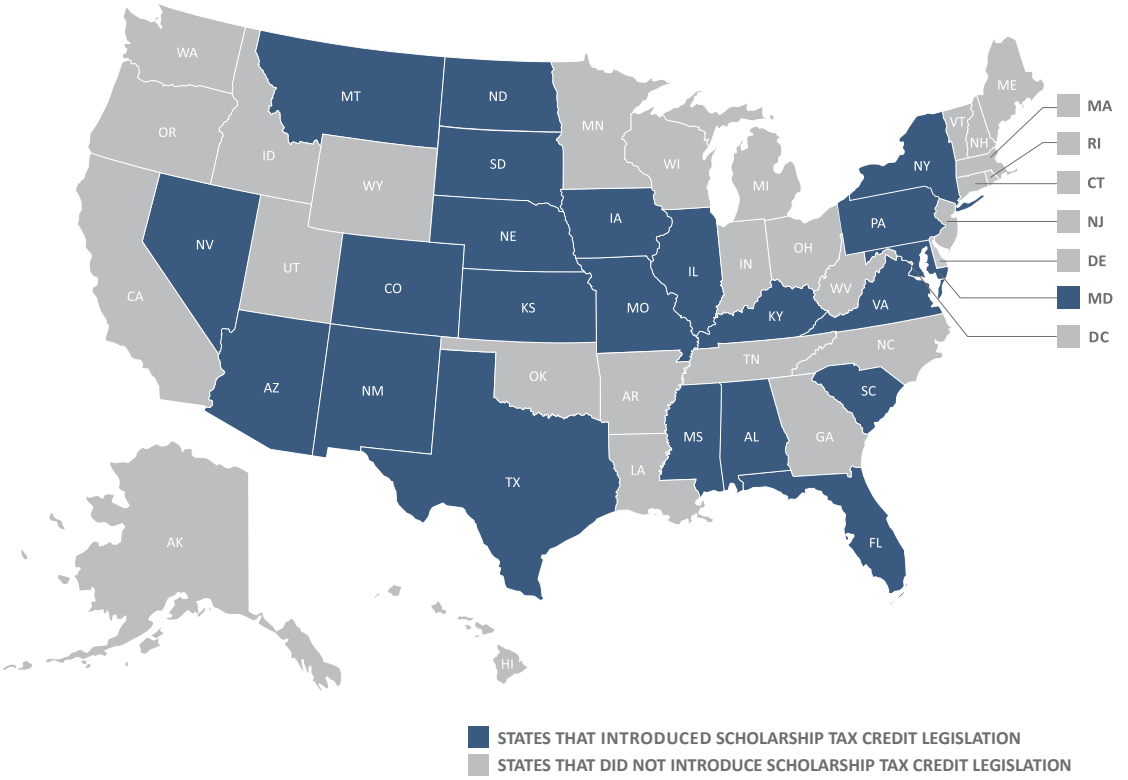


FIGURE 5 | **STATES INTRODUCING SCHOLARSHIP TAX CREDIT LEGISLATION, 2015**



LAWMAKERS INTRODUCE MULTIPLE SCHOLARSHIP TAX CREDIT BILLS

Arizona lawmakers created the first scholarship tax credit program in 1997 when they approved a dollar-for-dollar credit against the state individual income tax for donations to nonprofit groups that provide scholarships for children to attend private schools. Pennsylvania and Florida followed suit in 2001 with corporate scholarship credits.

The 2014 legislative sessions were relatively uneventful in terms of school choice, although Kansas lawmakers created the Tax Credit for Low Income Students Scholarship Program. The tax credit allows corporations to claim a 70 percent tax credit for contributions to approved nonprofits that grant private school scholarships. The total amount of tax credits awarded statewide is limited to $10 million.

Lawmakers were anything but inactive in 2015, however, with 23 states introducing scholarship tax credit legislation. In addition to the aforementioned Nevada scholarship tax credit program, Arizona lawmakers included subchapter S corporations in the state's preexisting corporate scholarship credit, which expanded the universe of potential donors. Montana lawmakers also created a modest scholarship tax credit program in 2015.

Although it remains unresolved at the time of this writing, New York Governor Andrew Cuomo took the lead in a bipartisan push for tax credits in 2015. Win or lose, history was made with a prominent Democrat governor aggressively advocating for a private choice program. *The New York Times* reported the following from a public appearance Cuomo made to promote tax credit legislation:

"There are some areas, frankly, where the public schools are not places where you would want to send your children," he said at the Shrine Church of St. Jude in Canarsie, Brooklyn. He added that "sending your child to one of these failing public schools is in many ways condemning your child to get a second-class education."[10]

"We want you to have the ability to choose where to send your child," Mr. Cuomo told churchgoers, asking them to contact their legislators.

Mr. Cuomo said his father, former Governor Mario M. Cuomo, chose to send him to parochial school, believing that "I needed the nuns to keep me on the straight and narrow."

On the other hand, Mr. Cuomo said he sent his three daughters to public school, citing the quality of the public schools in Westchester County. (He did not mention that after attending public school, two of his daughters went on to graduate from Deerfield Academy, a boarding school in Massachusetts.)

"There's no right or wrong," he said. "But it should be your choice."

SCHOOL VOUCHER PROGRAMS CONTINUE TO ADVANCE

Lawmakers continued to debate school voucher legislation in 2015, with Arkansas legislators passing a new school voucher program for children with disabilities. Lawmakers in Wisconsin and Ohio significantly expanded pre-existing voucher programs. Most notably, lawmakers removed the cap from Wisconsin's statewide voucher program and created a new program for special needs children.

FIGURE 6 | **STATES WITH TAX CREDIT PROGRAMS, 2015**

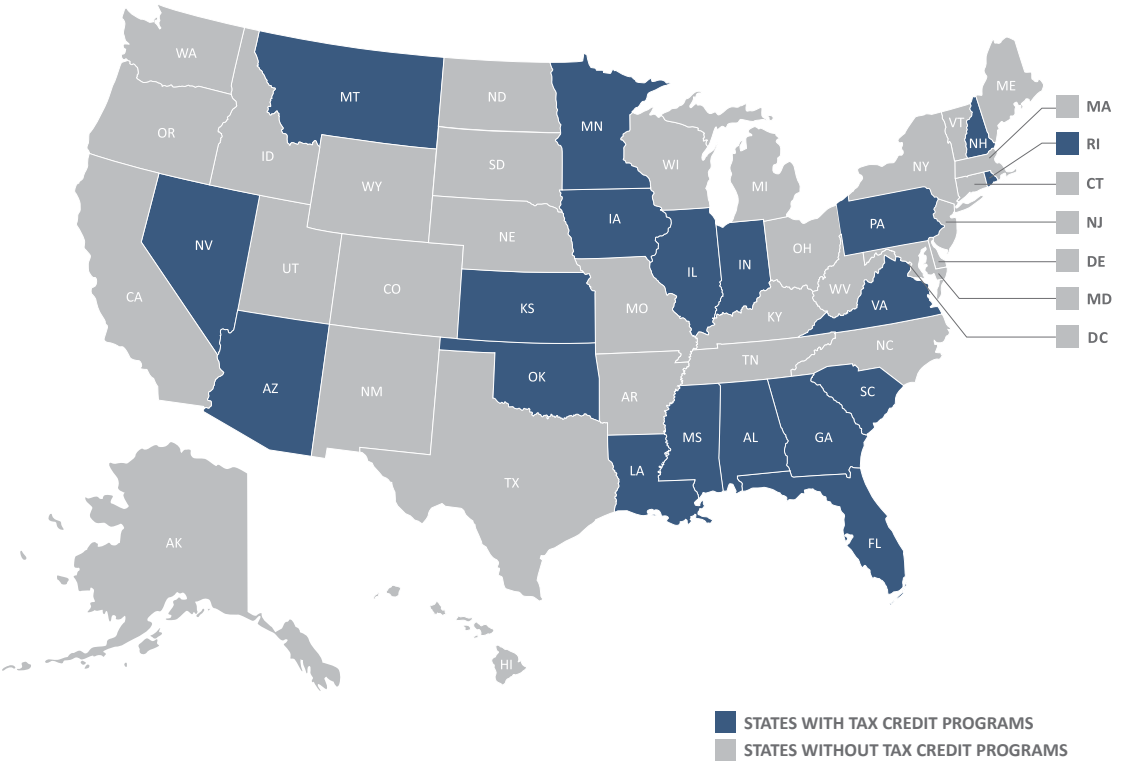


FIGURE 7 | **STATES INTRODUCING SCHOOL VOUCHER LEGISLATION IN 2015**

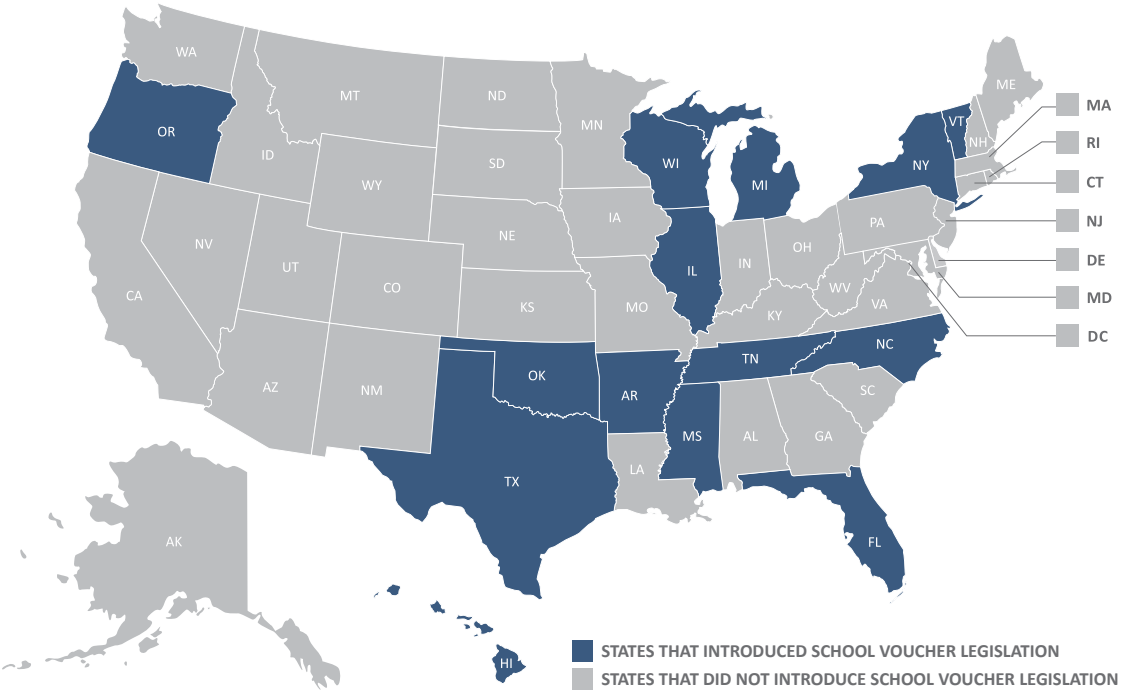
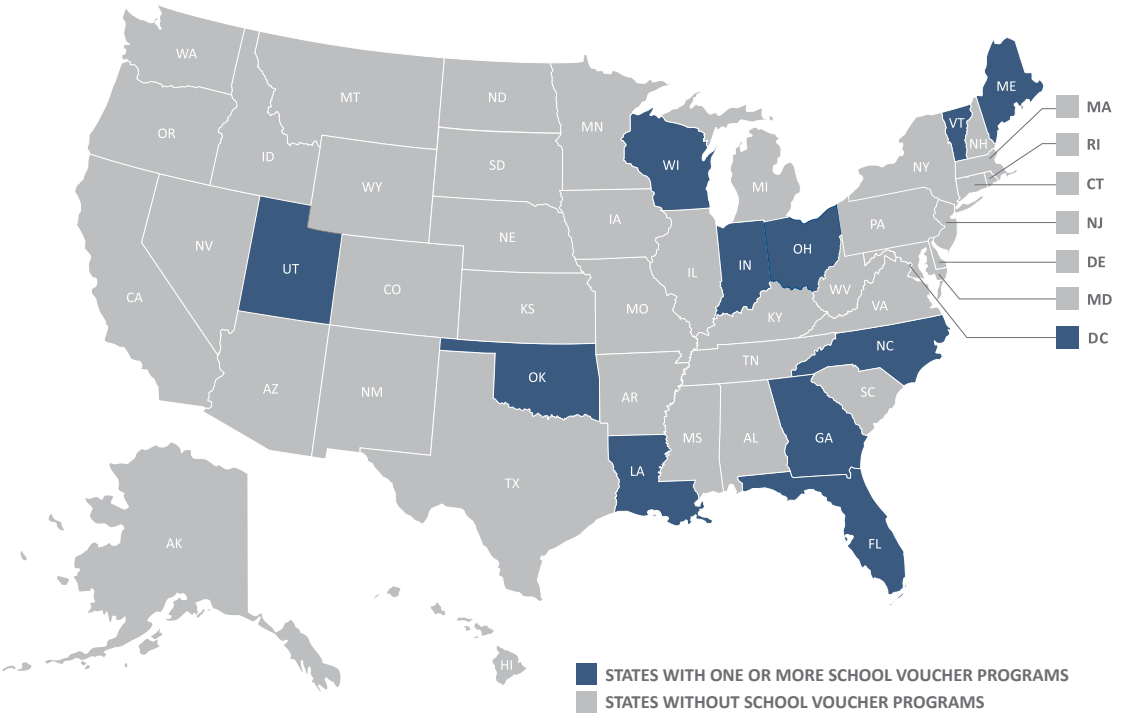


FIGURE 8 | **STATES WITH ONE OR MORE SCHOOL VOUCHER PROGRAMS, 2015**



With the addition of Arkansas, Figure 8 presents states having one or more school voucher program. Florida, Louisiana and Ohio have multiple school voucher programs.

AFTER THE 2015 SESSIONS A MAJORITY OF STATES HAVE A PRIVATE CHOICE PROGRAM

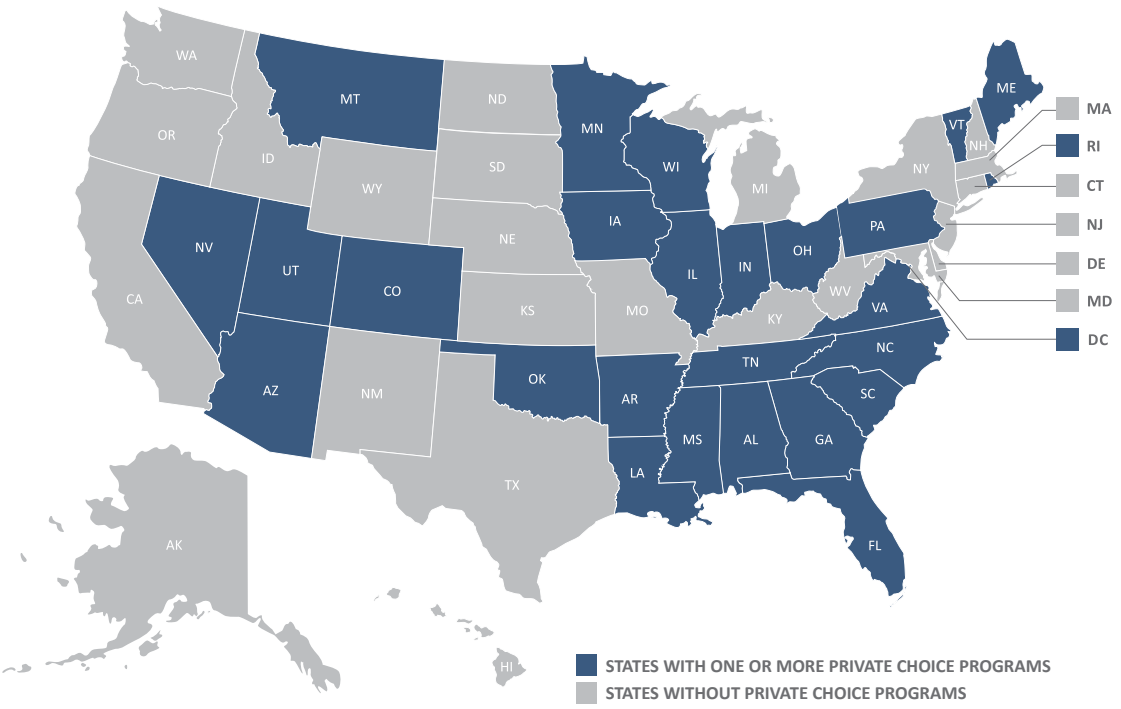
First, the good news: a majority of states (26) have one or more private choice programs. In 2015, a person could drive from Key West, Fla., to the California border near Lake Tahoe and never once enter a state without a private choice program, as displayed in Figure 9. Many of these states contain multiple programs, including Alabama, Arizona, Florida, Georgia, Indiana, Iowa, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin.

On the other hand, more than 28 percent of American school children live in California, Texas or New York, states in which no children have access to a private choice program. To put this in perspective, California's 6.2 million school children equal the combined student enrollments of the 22 smallest states combined. The more than five million students in Texas equal the combined enrollments of the smallest 20 states.

STATE TESTS ALIGN MORE CLOSELY TO NAEP IN 20 STATES, LOWERED IN EIGHT

Fifty years have passed since Congress enacted the Elementary and Secondary Education Act in 1965. Congress renamed and revised the statute in 2002, now known as No Child Left Behind (NCLB). As a condition of receiving federal education dollars, NCLB requires states to test students in grades three through eight and again in high school on math and reading achievement. Each state test sets a cut score for what constitutes "proficient" achievement on these math and reading tests. At

FIGURE 9 | **STATES WITH ONE OR MORE PRIVATE CHOICE PROGRAMS 2015**



the time of this writing, Congress is considering legislation to reauthorize this law, which has stood unchanged since 2002 despite having been scheduled for renewal in 2007.

NCLB requires state participation in fourth-grade and eighth-grade math and reading exams as part of NAEP. NAEP tests have performance level cut scores roughly equivalent to those set by international organizations that estimate student proficiency worldwide.[11] In other words, if students are proficient according to NAEP, they likely have a level of content mastery that is globally competitive.

Paul Peterson and Matthew Ackerman compared the proficiency standards of state tests to those of NAEP, thus serving as a measure of "truth in advertising" for state accountability exams.

Their Summer 2015 contained good news overall:

> *In this paper we extend the five prior analyses by identifying the changes in state proficiency standards between 2011 and 2013, the last year for which the relevant information is available. We show that many states have raised their proficiency bars since 2011. Indeed, the 2013 data reveal that for the first time, substantially more states have raised their proficiency standards than have let those standards slip to lower levels. Overall, 20 states strengthened their standards, while just 8 loosened them.*[12]

Peterson and Ackerman found that Florida, Idaho, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Maryland, Michigan, Missouri, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Utah, South Dakota, Texas, Virginia, Wisconsin and Wyoming improved their alignment with NAEP from 2011 to 2013. Arkansas, Louisiana, Minnesota, Mississippi, New Hampshire, New Mexico and Oklahoma lowered the rigor of their state tests.

Figure 10 presents state grades by year, with A grades denoting close alignment with NAEP proficiency standards, F grades signifying a large gap—much higher student performance on state tests than NAEP.

The rigor of state tests fluctuates over time in a dynamic fashion. The Peterson and Ackerman study takes a snapshot of the 2011 to 2013 period, but things will continue to change state by state each year. In the end, state policymakers (usually a state board of education) will make decisions regarding state standards and proficiency cut scores. Policymakers in states with low grades should take action to provide truth in advertising for their students, parents and taxpayers.

Many disagreements surround the process of adopting and maintaining state academic standards and tests. No one, however, should support using taxpayer dollars to create what amounts to a state-sponsored system of smoke and mirrors. The ultimate victims of a state testing system that labels illiterate and innumerate children "proficient" are the children themselves.

CHARTER SCHOOL PARENTS WIN SHOWDOWN WITH NEW YORK MAYOR BILL DE BLASIO

Former New York City Mayor Mike Bloomberg supported a policy of co-location for charter schools. Given the considerable expense of Gotham real estate and the availability of empty space in city-owned school buildings, this represented a vital enabling reform in the creation of charter schools. Current New York City Mayor de Blasio, however, made an effort to evict three highly effective charter schools from their city-provided facilities, creating a showdown between charter supporters and the new mayor.

Governor Cuomo and the New York legislature resolved this dispute in favor of the charter parents in a decisive fashion. With the active and vocal support of the governor, a bipartisan majority of the New York legislature passed a state law governing co-location policy. Chalkbeat New York, a web site covering New York education, provided the following description of the impact of the legislation:

> *The new law requires the city to provide new charter schools with free space inside the city's*

FIGURE 10 | THE STRENGTH OF STATE PROFICIENCY STANDARDS

		Strength of State Proficiency Standards 2013				Overall Averages by Year						Change in Difference Between State and NAEP	
Rank	State	4th Grade		8th Grade		2003	2005	2007	2009	2011	2013	2011–2013**	2005–2013**
		Math	Reading	Math	Reading								
1	New York	A	A	A	A	B-	C	C+	D+	B-	A	31.5	35.3
2	Wisconsin	A	A	A	A	D+	C-	C-	D+	D+	A	28.8	38.7
3	Utah	A	A	A	A		D+	D+	C-	D+	A	31.6	40.2
4	North Carolina	A	A	A	A	D-	F	D	C-	C-	A	40.6	50.2
5	Pennsylvania	A	A	A	A	C+	C	C	C	C	A	9.7	24.6
6	Massachusetts	A	A	A	B-	A	A	A	A	A	A	6.9	-9.6
7	Kentucky	A	A	B+	A	B	B-	C	C	C	A	13.7	15.5
8	Missouri	B+	A	B+	A	A	A	A	A	B+	A	-7.0	-12.9
9	Tennessee	A	A	C+	A	F	F	F	F	A	A	40.9	47.5
10	Florida	B-	B+	B-	B+	B-	C+	C+	C	C	B	17.7	9.1
11	Washington	B+	C+	B+	B	B-	C	B-	B-	B	B	11.8	11.2
12	Colorado	B-	B	B+	B-	D+	D	B-	B-	B	B	30.1	28.0
13	Michigan	A	C	A	C+	C	C-	D	D	D-	B	26.1	18.2
14	Illinois	B-	B	C+	B	C+	C	D	D	D	B-	-4.9	10.5
15	Minnesota	B+	C+	B	C+			B-	B-	B	B-	-34.7	0.9*
16	New Mexico	B+	B+	D+	B+		B-	B-	C+	B	B-	2.0	-0.8
17	New Jersey	C	A	B-	C	C	C	C	C+	C+	B-	20.8	9.5
18	California	D+	C	A	B-	A	B	B+	C+	C+	C+	3.0	-5.1
19	Maine	B	C+	C+	C	A	A	B-	C+	C+	C+	-5.0	-24.3
20	Virginia	C+	B	C+	C	C-	D+	D+	D	D	C+	4.1	15.7
21	New Hampshire	B	C+	C+	C			B-	B-	B	C+	-35.6	-4.6*
22	Nevada	D+	C-	B+	B+		C+	C	C	C+	C+	-8.2	-0.2
23	Rhode Island	B-	B-	C+	C	B+	B	B-	C+	C+	C+	11.5	-6.8
24	Oregon	C+	C	C	C+		C	C-	C-	C-	C	-7.6	-0.7
25	Maryland	C	C	C+	C	B	C	C-	C-	C-	C	14.8	3.5
26	Hawaii	B	B-	D+	C-	A	A	A	C+	C	C	0.3	-19.6
27	Iowa	C	C	D+	B-		D+	C-	D+	D+	C	13.9	7.9
28	North Dakota	C	C+	C	C	C+	C	C	C-	C	C	12.0	1.7
29	Montana	B-	D+	C+	C-	C	C+	C	C	C	C	9.4	-6.2
30	District of Columbia	C	B-	D-	C		C		C	C	C	-3.3	-5.9
31	Nebraska	C	C	C	C-		D-	F	F	C	C	23.3	15.0
32	Wyoming	C	C	C	C	A	A	C	C	C-	C	-11.5	-30.5
33	Delaware	C	C	D+	C	C	C	C-	D+	C+	C	-11.8	-0.6
34	Arizona	C+	D+	C	C-	B+	D+	C-	D+	C	C	18.6	6.3
35	South Dakota	C	C-	C-	C	C	D+	D+	C	C-	C	13.5	5.9
36	Indiana	C	C-	D	C	C	C-	C	C	C-	C-	11.2	-1.1
37	Connecticut	C-	C+	D-	C	C	C	C	C	C-	C-	8.9	-3.9
38	Texas	C+	C-	D+	D-	F	D+	D-	F	D-	C-	17.4	3.9
39	Ohio	C	D	C-	D+	B-	C	C-	C	C-	C-	6.5	-7.0
40	Mississippi	D	C	F	C	D	D-	D-	C	C	C-	18.2	10.2
41	Kansas	C	D+	C-	D	C	C-	C-	D	D	D+	-6.5	-1.7
42	Alaska	C-	D+	C-	D	C-	D+	D	D+	D+	D+	13.9	0.8
43	South Carolina	D	D	D+	C	A	A	A	C-	D+	D+	-20.8	-39.8
44	Arkansas	D	D	D+	D+	B	B	C+	C-	D+	D	-8.2	-25.4
45	Oklahoma	D+	C-	D-	D-	D-	D-	F	C	C-	D	19.4	3.8
46	Louisiana	D	D-	D	D+	C	C	C-	D+	D+	D	5.2	-10.8
47	Idaho	D	D-	D	D-	C-	D	D+	D	D-	D	15.1	-1.3
48	Georgia	D	F	F	F	D-	D-	F	F	F	F	15.7	-4.7
49	Alabama	F	F	F	F		D-	D-	F	F	F	13.7	-7.0
	Vermont					B		B	B-	B-			
	West Virginia						F	D-	C	B			

** 2005 data are missing; change is calculated from 2007*

*** A positive number indicates narrowing the difference between the NAEP and state exams*

NOTE: Grades are blue in states with rising standards

Source: Paul Peterson's and Matthew Ackerman's calculations base on state tests and NAEP

own buildings or public funding to cover rent in a private facility. The legislation is a rebuke from state lawmakers of de Blasio's criticism of charter schools during the mayoral campaign and his early months in office.

One challenge the law poses for de Blasio is that it makes financial sense to keep charter schools in city buildings. If the city doesn't provide space, the law provides for charters to receive an extra funding allowance for each student, which in 2015 would be $2,775, from the city.

Thirteen charter schools have already been approved to open that year, serving 2,000 students at first and 5,800 at full capacity. Private space for those schools would cost as much as $5 million in the 2015-16 school year and $16 million once they are all at capacity, based on enrollment estimates.

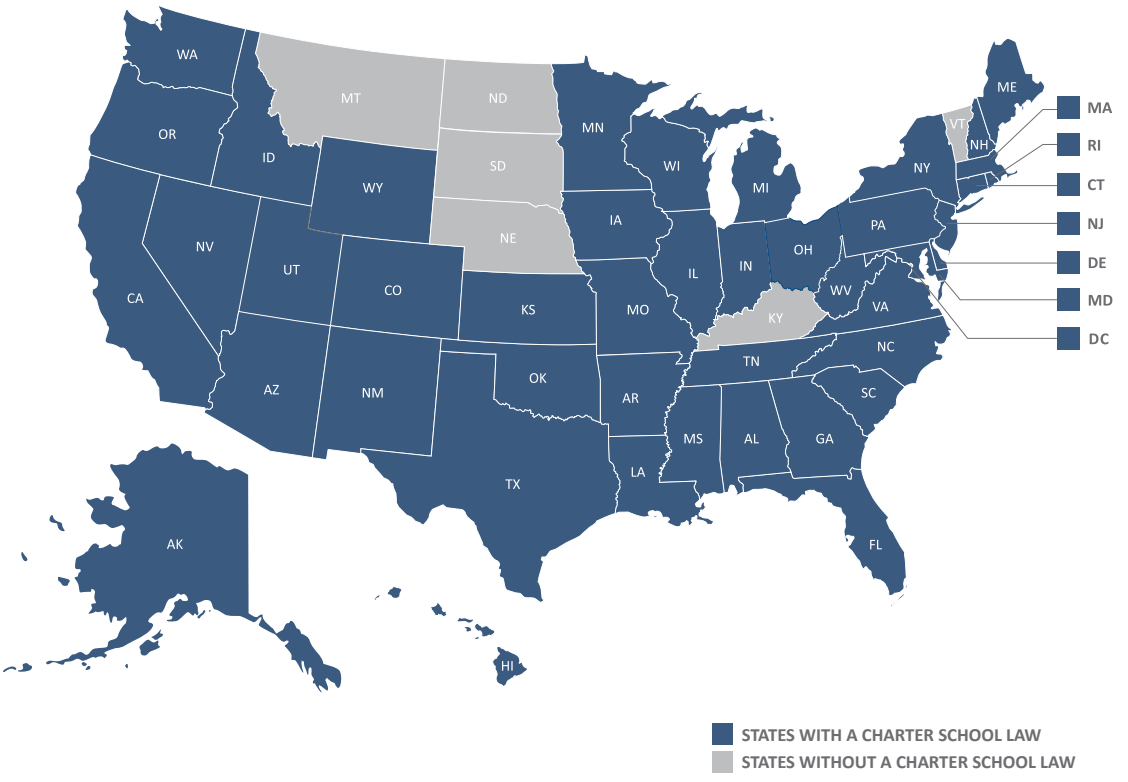
In addition, the city is planning to spend $5.4 million next year for three displaced Success Academy schools, which will have fewer than 500 students next year, to operate in Catholic school buildings.[13]

The bipartisan victory of the New York charter school community, with the benefit of hindsight, may be viewed as a watershed moment for the entire parental choice movement. New York parents want more choice in education, and state lawmakers delivered a decisive victory to them.

CHARTER SCHOOLS CONTINUE NATIONWIDE ADVANCE

The number of states without a charter school law on the books continues to shrink to a handful of rural states. In 2013, Mississippi passed new charter school legislation. In 2015, Alabama Governor Robert Bentley made Alabama the latest state to join the charter school family.

FIGURE 11 | **STATES WITH A CHARTER SCHOOL LAW, 2015**



Minnesota lawmakers passed the nation's first charter school law in 1991, and at the time of this writing, almost three million students attended public charter schools in 42 states around the country. Only a handful of states, however, have passed what studies rank as strong charter laws. One sign of weak laws is an inability of charter school operators to satisfy demand for charter school seats. Nationwide, more than a million students sit on charter school waiting lists.[14]

FIGURE 12a | **ESTIMATED NUMBER OF PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOLS AND STUDENTS, 2014-15**

State	New Charters, Fall 2014	Closed Charters, Spring 2014	Net Gain Charters, 2014-15	Total Charter Schools, 2014-15	Charter School Growth	Estimated Enrollment, 2014-15	Charter Enrollment Growth
AK	0	0	0	27	0%	6,300	2%
AR	6	0	6	45	15%	23,100	41%
AZ	31	13	18	623	3%	225,000	20%
CA	88	36	52	1,184	5%	547,800	7%
CO	16	2	14	214	7%	98,000	5%
CT	4	0	4	22	22%	8,200	17%
DC	5 (+2 campuses)	4 (+2 campuses)	0	61 (on 112 Campuses)	0%	35,300	16%
DE	3	0	3	24	14%	12,500	13%
FL	56	28	28	653	4%	275,000	20%
GA	11	4	7	103	7%	80,600	16%
HI	1	0	1	34	3%	10,400	6%
IA	0	0	0	3	0%	300	-4%
ID	3	2	1	48	2%	19,600	-4%
IL	3 (+2 campuses)	2	2	66 (on 148 campuses)	3%	63,000	6%
IN	6	2	4	79	5%	44,300	25%
KS	0	0	0	11	0%	2,700	6%
LA	18	6	12	129	10%	74,000	25%
MA	3	6	-3	78	-4%	35,700	3%
MD	3	2	1	53[v]	2%	18,600	5%
ME	1	0	1	6	20%	900	135%

The Center for Education Reform annually grades state charter school laws on an A through F scale. In 2015 they gave the charter school laws of four states—Arizona, Indiana, Michigan and Minnesota, plus the District of Columbia—an A grade. An additional eight states—California, Colorado, Florida, Idaho, Missouri, Nevada, South Carolina and Utah—received B Grades.

The National Alliance for Public Charter Schools listed 10 states that enacted legislation to strengthen their authorizing environments in 2014, drawing attention especially to Alaska, New York, South Carolina and Tennessee

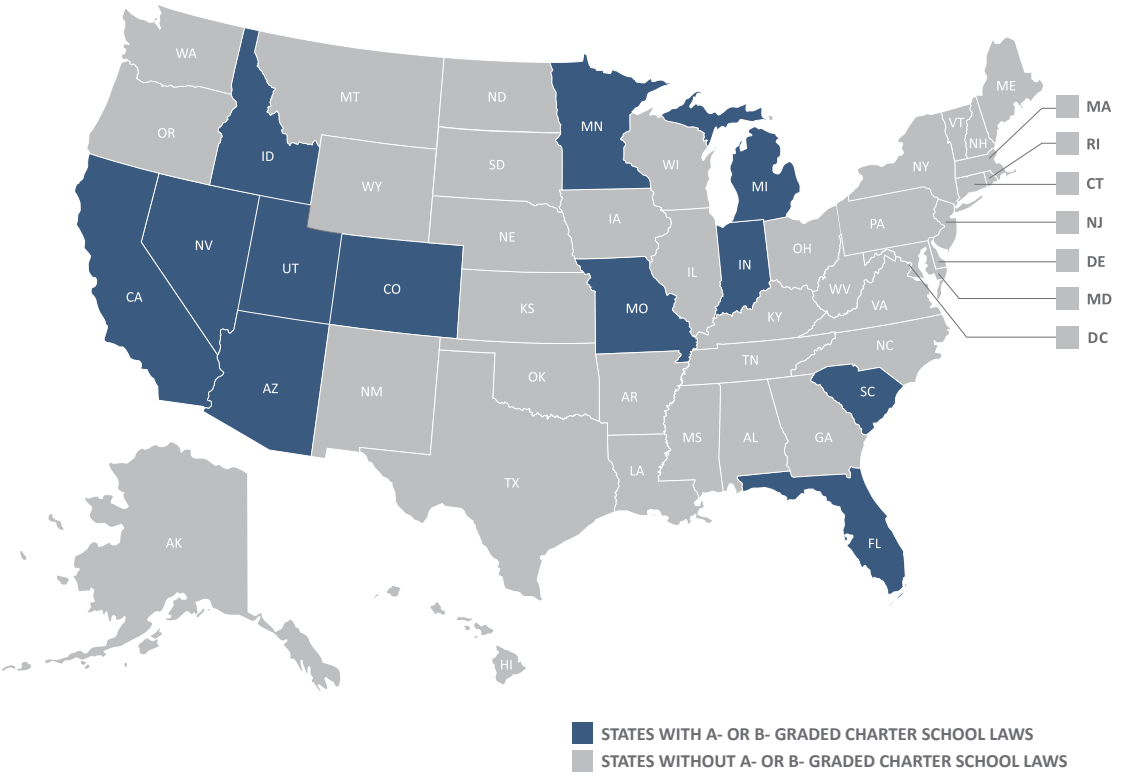
While a large majority of states now have charter school laws, a majority of these laws still contain significant weaknesses and departures from best practices—such as caps on the number of schools, single authorizers and district-only authorizing. Figure 13 shows that only distinct minorities of states have relatively strong charter laws,

FIGURE 12b | **ESTIMATED NUMBER OF PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOLS AND STUDENTS, 2014-15**

State	New Charters, Fall 2014	Closed Charters, Spring 2014	Net Gain Charters, 2014-15	Total Charter Schools, 2014-15	Charter School Growth	Estimated Enrollment, 2014-15	Charter Enrollment Growth
MI	17	7	10	307	3%	159,000	16%
MN	10	1	9	158	6%	47,900	11%
MO	2	1	1	51	2%	20,000	8%
NC	25	1	24	151	19%	70,800	22%
NH	4	0	4	23	21%	3,000	43%
NJ	5	5	0	87	0%	41,000	27%
NM	4	2	2	97	2%	24,400	14%
NV	4	0	4	38	12%	28,200	15%
NY	17	2	15	248	6%	106,000	17%
OH	11	27	-16	384	-4%	146,000	18%
OK	3	1	2	27	8%	18,700	40%
OR	2	1	1	125	1%	32,000	12%
PA	4	4	0	176	0%	128,000	-1%
RI	3	0	3	21	17%	7,100	19%
SC	10	3	7	66	12%	27,400	18%
TN	14	5	9	80	13%	20,900	72%
TX	2 (+53 campuses)	7 (+18 campuses	35	275 (on 721 campuses)	15%	280,000	18%
UT	15	0	15	110	16%	65,400	19%
VA	1	0	1	7	17%	46,800	7%
WA	1	0	1	1		45	
WI	22	22	0	245	0%	46,800	7%
WY	0	0	0	4	0%	600	27%
Total	**491**	**216**	**278**	**6,724**	**4%**	**2,890,000**	**14%**

Public charter school data can be found on the Public Charter School Dashboard: http://dashboard.publiccharters.org/dashboard/home

FIGURE 13 | **STATES WITH A- OR B- GRADED CHARTER SCHOOL LAWS**



and hundreds of thousands of children sit on the waiting lists of charter schools in the states with "strong" laws.

REFORM IS ROLLING BUT HAS MUCH FARTHER TO GO

While reform momentum continues, the accomplishments to date only represent critical steps in a long journey. Average children continue to face waiting lists if they want to attend high-quality charter schools and have limited access to private choice programs. They also attend schools governed by human resource policies of the sort decried in the Vergara.

Nevertheless, decades of K-12 practice have begun a fundamental shift. Lawmakers are now thinking far more deeply about what it will take to improve academic outcomes after decades of reform strategies that amounted to sending school districts more money and hoping for the best. Parental choice has proved both successful and popular with parents. Lawmakers have begun serious efforts to address injurious human resource issues that threaten students. The political forces invested in maintaining the status quo remain incredibly powerful, but over the past decade it has become increasingly common for dedicated lawmakers to prevail. Reformers are not only seeing more victories, but also increasingly able to obtain strong bipartisan for their efforts.

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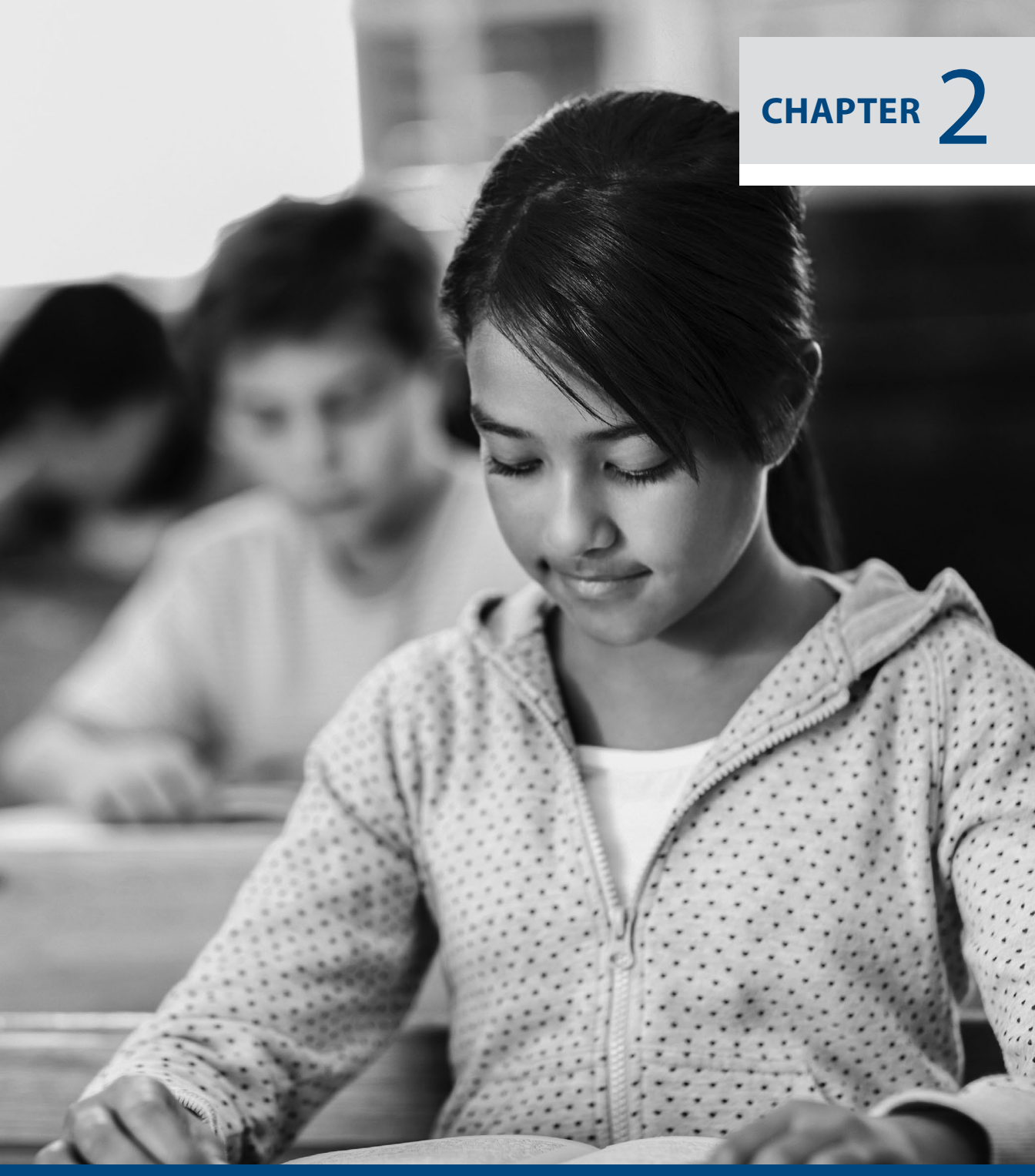


CHAPTER 2

Appropriately Equipping Our Students Today for a Prosperous Tomorrow

Appropriately Equipping Our Students Today for a Prosperous Tomorrow

Over the next 15 years public pensions will be strained and tax revenues may shift as many baby boomers move from their prime earning years to fixed incomes. In addition, demands for public health spending, at the state level primarily through the Medicaid program, will rise as the elderly population increases.

In 2010, the nation's largest retirement destination, Florida, had the nation's largest elderly population as a percentage of its total. However, looking forward in census projections to the year 2030, the vast majority of states will have a larger percentage of elderly population than America's prime retirement destination does today. Figure 1 shows the projections by state for populations of people 65 and older in 2030, along with Florida's percentage of the same in 2010.

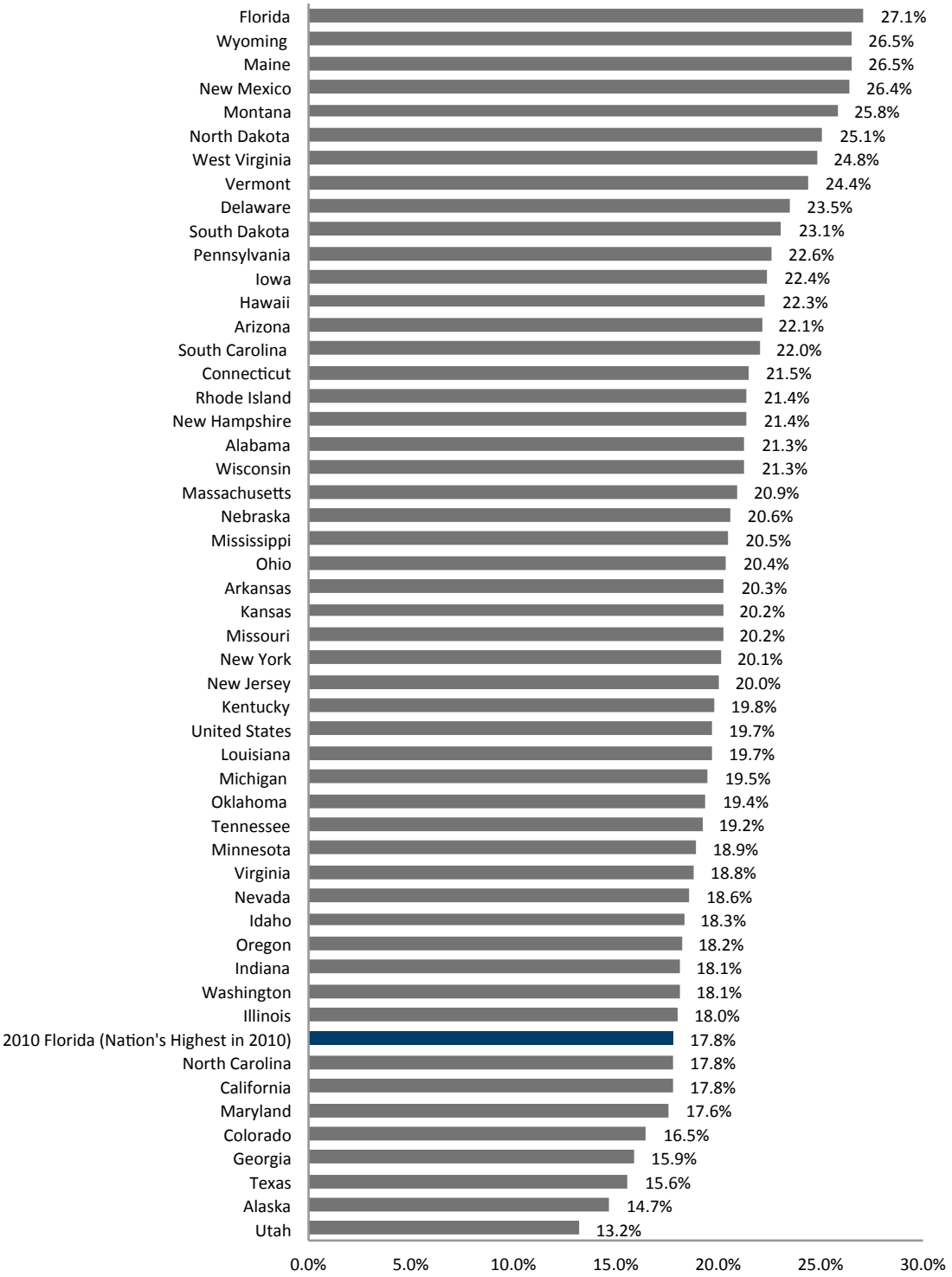
Many states face increased spending pressures from both ends of the age spectrum due to the large increase in the retired populations coupled with large projected increases in their youth population. The percentage of the population in the prime working years (ages 18 to 64) will shrink in all 50 states as both the elderly and youth populations increase. The youth of today will face considerable challenges as they become middle-aged taxpayers supporting an increasingly aging populace. Much of the working-age population in 2030 and beyond, those primarily tasked with keeping vital public services viable, sit in K-12 classrooms now. One major responsibility of policymakers today is to ensure the policies enacted now increase return on K-12 investment.

Education policy cannot hope to solve the problem alone, but it can contribute. Current age demographic projections foretell an impending future in which the demand for public dollars in the form of health care, public pension outlays and education expenses exceeds the likely supply of public dollars—absent a substantial and sustained period of above-average economic growth. Better-educated students today will translate into growth and innovation tomorrow.

Appropriately equipping the America of tomorrow must start today. Academic achievement and attainment both strongly predict future earnings. Improved mastery of reading and mathematics strongly influences future college and career success for students in both low- and high-income households. For instance, the National Center for Education Statistics recently completed a tracking study of 2002 high school sophomores and their success in earning bachelors' degrees by 2012. Figure 2 shows the differences in college success among students from low-income families by their mathematics performance quartile.

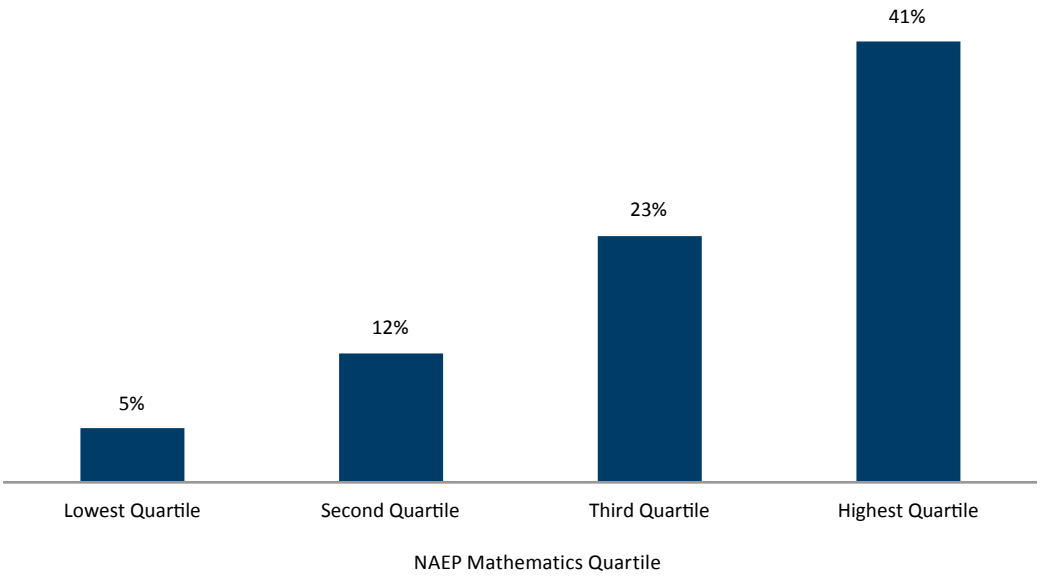
Among students from low-income households, those scoring in the highest 25 percent of overall mathematics achievement were more than eight times more likely to have completed a bachelor's degree than those who scored in the lowest performing mathematics quartile. Students from low-income families in the lowest quartile of achievement, meanwhile, had only a one-in-20 rate of obtaining a bachelor's degree.

FIGURE 1 | **PROJECTIONS FOR THE PERCENTAGE OF POPULATION AGED 65+ IN 2030**



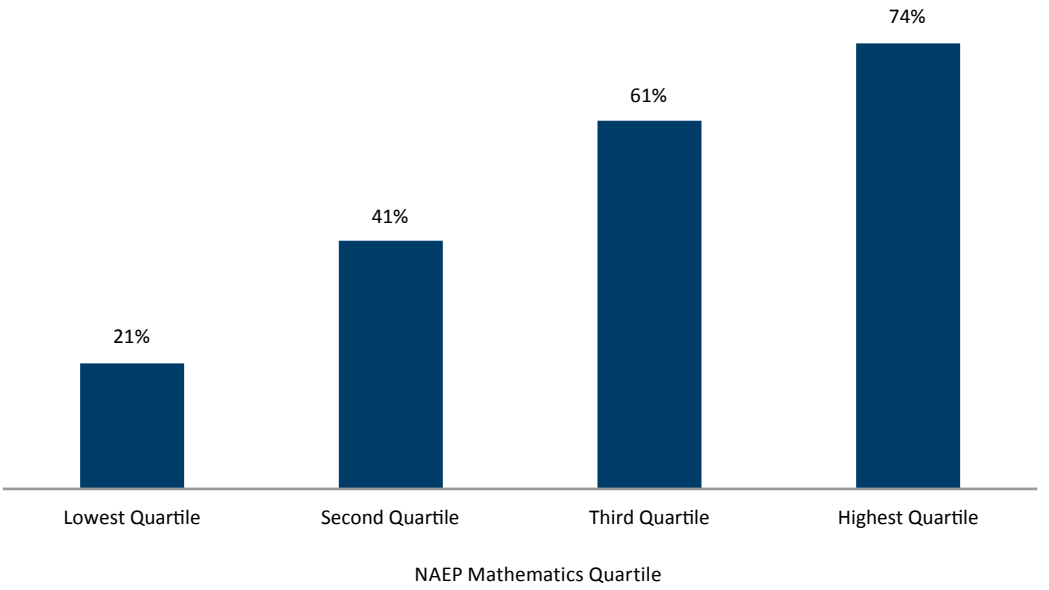
Source: United States Census Bureau

FIGURE 2 | **LOW-INCOME SPRING 2002 SOPHOMORES WHO EARNED A BACHELOR'S DEGREE OR HIGHER BY 2012**



Source: National Center for Education Statistics

FIGURE 3 | **HIGH-INCOME SPRING 2002 SOPHOMORES WHO EARNED A BACHELOR'S DEGREE OR HIGHER BY 2012**



Source: National Center for Education Statistics

Figure 3 presents similar data for students from middle- and higher-income households.

Income plays a large role when it comes to earning degrees. Students in high-income households scoring in the lowest quartile had a 21 percent rate of earning a bachelor's degree by 2012 compared to only 5 percent among similar peers from lower-income families. High-scoring students from middle- and high-income backgrounds obtained a degree at a much higher rate than their low-income peers with similar math ability—71 percent to 41 percent.

In addition to family income, K-12 academic achievement also played a big role in college success—with the highest-scoring students from middle- and high-income households earning bachelors' degrees at a 74 percent rate. This was more than three-times the rate of their economic peers with bottom quartile mathematics achievement.[1]

America's approaching age demographic challenge means the expression "a mind is a terrible thing to waste" will loom ever larger. The country does not have children whose educations it can afford to waste—whether they are from low-, middle- or high-income families. The future of America needs all students sitting in the classroom today to become productive and innovative prosperity generators. This, of course, does not mean that every student needs to attend college. In fact, many students who choose to enter the workforce rather than an institution of higher learning find themselves earning higher wages with less debt than their peers with college degrees. Many productive and innovative people either did so or (à la Bill Gates, Michael Dell, and others) dropped out of college to pursue their careers.

A solid foundation of academic skills and knowledge is incredibly useful in whatever walk of life students pursue. All students should have the academic skills to succeed in college and career.

The pages that follow demonstrate that American colleges currently accept far more students than the American K-12 system adequately prepares for college success. High rates of college dropouts, in essence, begin with the problems of the K-12 system. Fixing the leaks in America's broken human capital pipeline is a matter of utmost urgency for lawmakers.

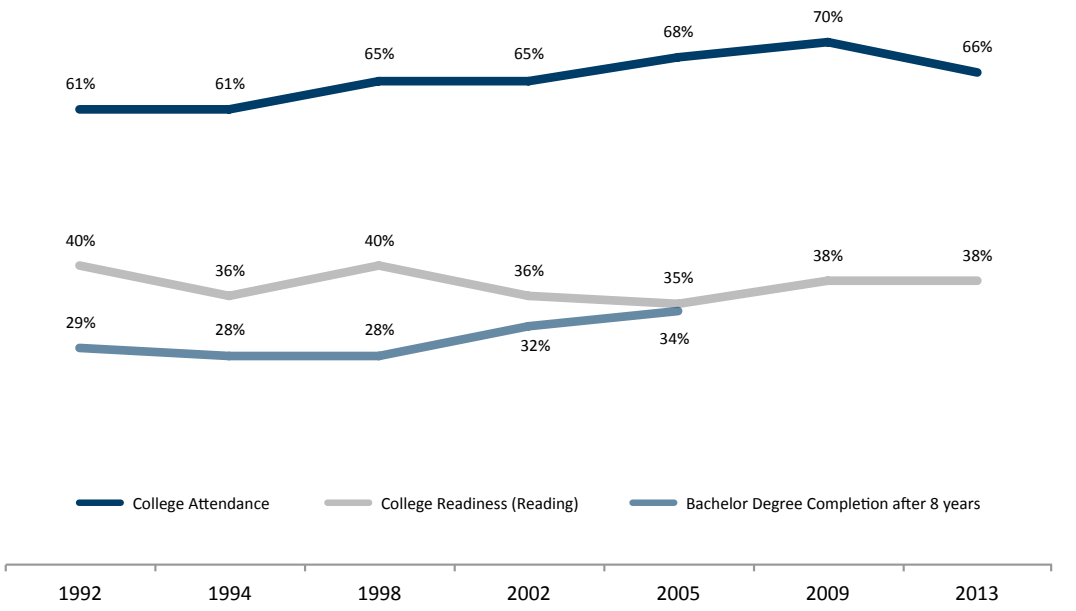
NAEP READING SCORES AS A PREDICTOR OF COLLEGE SUCCESS

How well-prepared are students to face the challenges of tomorrow? The National Center for Education Statistics recently conducted a study that sheds light on this question. The National Assessment Governing Board established a commission to study the use of 12th-grade NAEP reading and mathematics exams to estimate college readiness. The commission conducted a series of technical studies and reached the following conclusion:

> *Students who are considered ready for college are generally expected to be academically prepared for entry-level college coursework. A combination of factors contributes to students' readiness for college, including content knowledge, cognitive strategies, learning skills, and transitioning skills.[4] As a measure of students' knowledge in core subject areas, the potential use of NAEP results as an indicator of students' academic preparedness for postsecondary education and training is being explored by the Governing Board.*
>
> *A series of studies conducted since 2008 supported inferences about performance on the grade 12 NAEP mathematics and reading assessments in relation to academic preparedness for college. The results of the research studies indicate that students scoring at or above 163 on the NAEP mathematics scale, and students scoring at or above 302 on the NAEP reading scale are likely to possess the knowledge, skills, and abilities in those subjects that would make them academically prepared for college.*

Based upon the 2013 NAEP, the commission found that only 39 percent of the class of 2013 qualified as "college ready" in math and 38 percent in reading.[2] These results provide an important clue as to why so many students drop out of college. The rate of college attendance for recent

FIGURE 4 | **COLLEGE ATTENDANCE, READINESS AND COMPLETION RATES**



Source: Thomas B. Fordham Institute

high school graduates reached 70 percent nationwide in 2009.[3] The problem is that the rate of students attending college far exceeds the percentage of those who are properly prepared.

In a column from the Thomas B. Fordham Institute titled "Want more college graduates? Improve our K–12 system," Mike Petrilli collected data on the national rates of college preparedness based on NAEP reading scores, the rate of college attendance for high school graduates and the rate of degree attainment within an eight year window of high school graduation.

In examining this data (Figure 4), Petrilli noted:

> *Back in 1992, 40 percent of twelfth graders were "college-prepared" in reading, according to the National Assessment of Educational Progress. Yet eight years later, just 29 percent of Americans aged 25–29 had obtained at least a bachelor's degree. Some of that gap can be explained by high school dropouts—kids who left school before twelfth grade and would not be expected to get a college degree. But most could be seen as lost potential—young people who were academically prepared for college but either didn't go or didn't finish.*
>
> *But note what happened by the high school class of 2005. Thirty-five percent of twelfth graders were prepared for college in reading (and 36 percent in math); eight years later, 34 percent of their age cohort had completed a college degree. This is good news: We closed the gap between college readiness and college attainment. But it also implies that if we want to increase college attainment, we need to make progress on college readiness.*[4]

This figure clearly illustrates the sizeable gulf between college attendance and college graduation across the board in the national rates—only about half of enrollees finish—and the much smaller gap between the NAEP college readiness rate and the college completion rate. Others can debate whether admitting under-prepared students into college to ultimately watch more of

them fail to finish represents good policy. However, it's an unambiguously good thing if more K-12 students obtain the academic skills needed to succeed in college and career.

Unfortunately, 12th-grade NAEP reading proficiency rates are only available from a handful of states, and the mathematics college readiness rate for any state cannot be accessed. Fortunately, NAEP samples state cohorts of students at different times in their K-12 careers.[5] This chapter will demonstrate that the eighth-grade proficiency rates of a student cohort closely correspond to the proficiency rates for the same cohort of students when they reach 12th-grade. The good news, therefore, is that NAEP eighth-grade proficiency rates reveal something important about the quality of the college readiness pipeline in each state.

The bad news is that the information received on college readiness by state varies only in degrees of negativity, as demonstrated below.

STATE-LEVEL PIPELINES: LINKING EIGHTH- AND 12TH-GRADE NAEP SCORES BY COHORT

The National Center for Education Statistics has established that NAEP 12th-grade reading proficiency predicts success in college. Only a small number of states have reported 12th-grade NAEP reading proficiency rates. A quick examination of those rates demonstrates a strong relationship between 12th-grade rates and the eighth-grade rates for the same cohort of students four years earlier. NAEP provides eighth-grade reading proficiency rates for all 50 states, and these rates provide a sense of the college readiness pipeline in each state.

NAEP's finding of a national 39 percent college readiness rate based on mathematics achievement and 38 percent rate based upon reading has limitations. NAEP tests representative samples of students in order to draw conclusions about larger populations. The reading and math samples in any given year represent different samples of students. Therefore, the percentage of students prepared for college in both reading and mathematics cannot be determined through NAEP scores, because of the small percentage of students tested in both subjects.

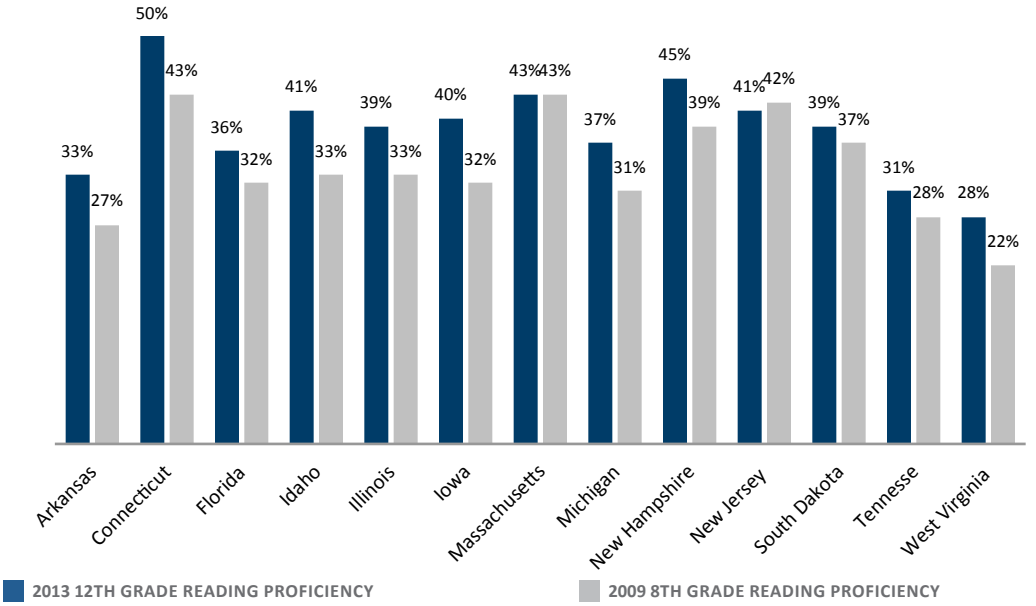
Because the percentage of students college-ready in both math and reading at the state level cannot be determined from NAEP data, only reading scores will be considered. It is certainly possible for a student to be college-ready in reading, while being prevented from graduating by a lack of math skills. Readers should view the college-readiness reading rates as a ceiling for a state's total college readiness rate. The total rate only can be lower than the reading rate; it cannot be higher. Reading comprehension, after all, represents a crucial mathematical skill when attempting to reason one's way through a word problem. A lack of math skills among highly literate high school graduates may sink them in college, but an inability to read will almost certainly prove fatal to a college career. Many college majors allow students to skirt high-level mathematics courses, but none allow them to avoid learning from written texts.

With this understanding, consider NAEP reading proficiency rates by state. National averages can only inform state-level policy making to a limited degree. Unfortunately, NAEP only provides 12th-grade reading data (and thus college readiness rates based on reading) for a small number of states.

NAEP eighth-grade reading proficiency rates (available in all states) strongly predict subsequent 12th-grade proficiency rates for the same cohort of students. For example, the reading proficiency rates for the class of 2013 as eighth-graders (in 2009) were similar to that of the reading proficiency rates for the same cohort of students as high school seniors in 2013. In essence, a state's eighth-grade reading proficiency is an indicator of likely future post-secondary success at the aggregate level. NAEP eighth-grade reading proficiency therefore represents an important indicator of a state's college readiness pipeline.

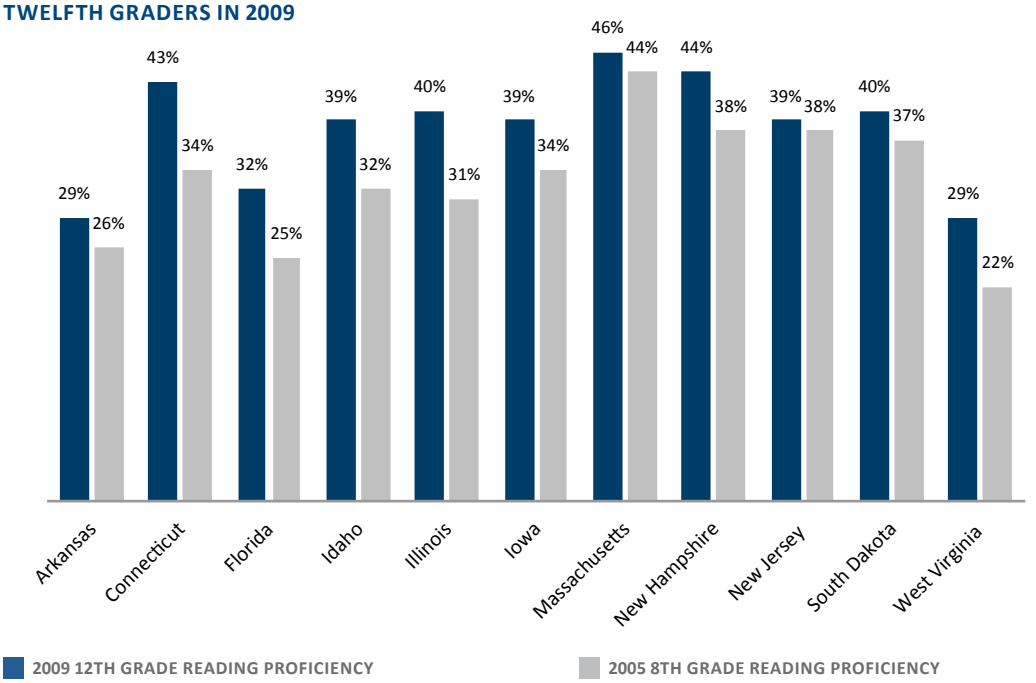
Federal law creates a powerful financial incentive for states to participate in fourth- and eighth-grade NAEP testing, but 12th-grade testing remains voluntary at the state level. Thirteen

FIGURE 5 | **READING PROFICIENCY RATES FOR THE CLASS OF 2013 AS EIGHTH GRADERS IN 2009 AND 12TH GRADERS IN 2013**



Source: National Center for Education Statistics

FIGURE 6 | **READING PROFICIENCY RATES FOR THE CLASS OF 2009 AS EIGHTH GRADERS IN 2005 AND TWELFTH GRADERS IN 2009**



Source: National Center for Education Statistics

states—Arkansas, Connecticut, Florida, Idaho, Illinois, Iowa, Massachusetts, Michigan, New Hampshire, New Jersey, South Dakota, Tennessee and West Virginia—volunteered to have their 12th graders participate in the 2013 NAEP.

A similar pattern emerges when examining the eighth- and 12th-grade reading proficiency rates for the class of 2009, as seen in Figure 6.

Data from both the class of 2009 and the class of 2013 demonstrate that eighth- and 12th-grade reading proficiency rates do not change dramatically, with a similar tendency for slightly higher rates for the cohort as 12th graders. One should expect the higher rates for 12th graders given student attrition rates. Individual students, of course, move in and out of states over time, making them eligible for inclusion in the NAEP samples of different states. The aggregate impact of this should be minimal, however, unless a particular state is systematically losing well-prepared students while gaining poorly performing students from other states.

Dropouts, however, represent a more pervasive cause of the change in these numbers, and almost certainly help explain why the 12th-grade numbers are consistently higher than the eighth- grade numbers. Many academically lower-performing students drop out of school between their eighth- and 12th-grade years, making them unavailable for NAEP testing as 12th-graders. Therefore, 12th-grade scores (for the students still attending school) would likely look better than eighth-grade scores, all else being equal, even if the cohort makes an average amount of progress during their high school careers.

The numbers presented in this chart comport well with an analysis by the American College Test (ACT), which calculates the percentage of students taking the nationwide ACT college readiness exams. These standards differ from those of NAEP in rigor and they are only for students taking the ACT tests—not for the general population. Thus, the rate of students taking ACT exams can influence the rates of college readiness.

Despite these limitations, the ACT national numbers fit comfortably with the NAEP college readiness rate. The ACT found a college readiness rate of 64 percent for English, 44 percent for reading, 44 percent for math and 36 percent for science. Thus, the ACT reading rate was somewhat higher than that provided by NAEP, but the difference between a broad population measure (NAEP) and a self-selected group (ACT) easily could explain a gap of 6 percent, even if the standards were identical. The ACT found that only 26 percent of students who took the ACT test in 2013 met the college-readiness benchmark in all four subjects (English, reading, math and science).[6] The difference between the college readiness rate based on the reading test alone (44 percent) and the percentage of those college ready in all four subjects (26 percent) should further reinforce that NAEP reading scores serve only as a ceiling for college-readiness.

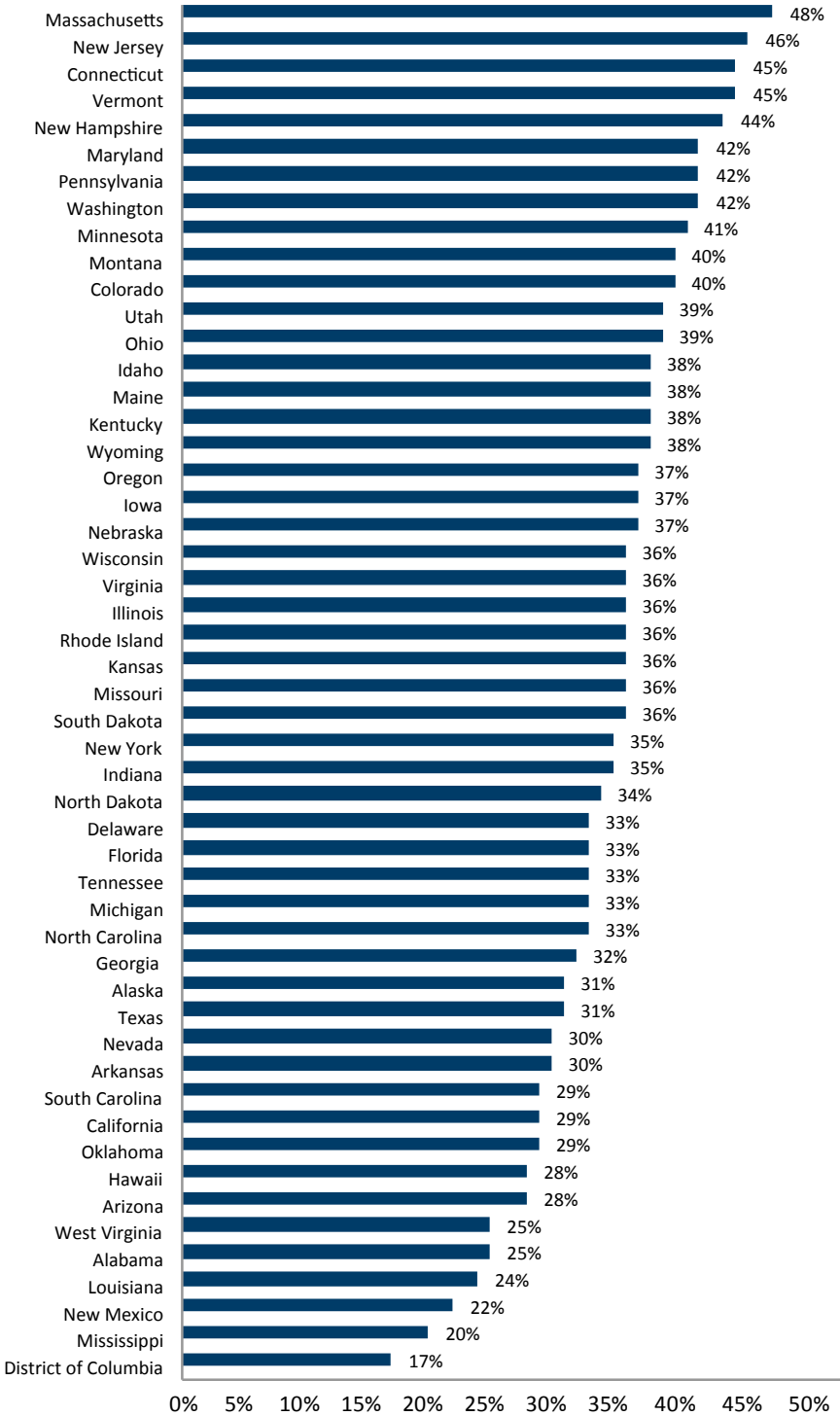
Again, when considering the NAEP data, some students prepared in reading can be poorly prepared in other subjects. The actual percentage of well-prepared students in reading should be considered higher than the actual percentage of college-ready students in every case. In other words, reading readiness alone overestimates total college readiness with regards to the NAEP data just as it does in the ACT (where 44 percent scored college ready according to their reading scores but only 26 percent qualified as college ready in all subjects).

Given this context, NAEP eighth-grade reading proficiency rates serve as a rough upper limit on the college proficiency pipeline for each state's near future. A student's lack of preparation in other academic subjects can certainly further impede college success, but a lack of ability to process and fully comprehend text will inhibit post-secondary success.

Figure 7 presents eighth-grade reading proficiency rates for the entire student population by state or jurisdiction from the 2013 NAEP.

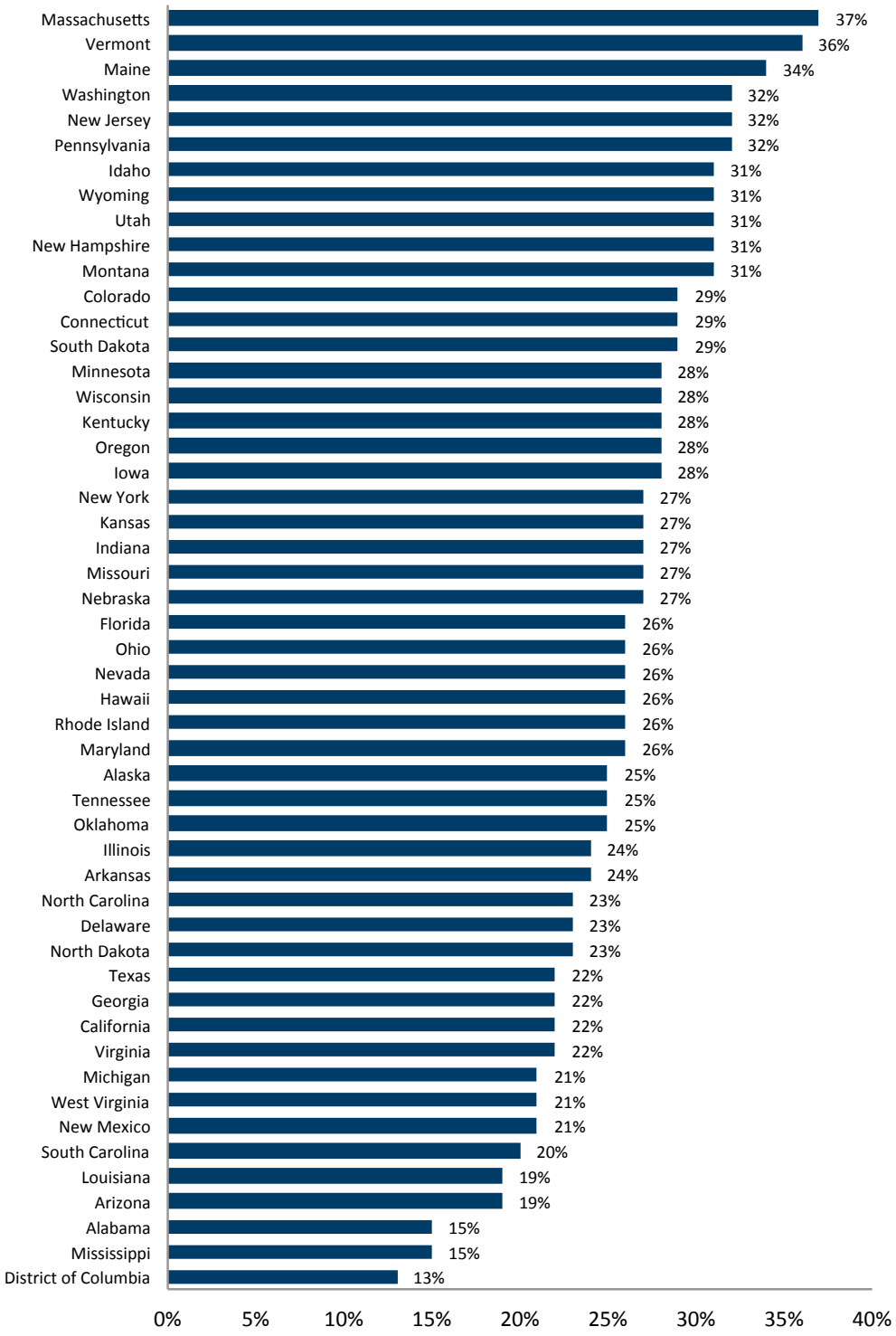
These rates are low for all states. Even the top performing state, Massachusetts, has a minority of eighth graders on track for college success based upon their reading ability alone. Also, achievement gaps play a strong role in the list. The top 10 states stand apart from the national average in both

FIGURE 7 | **NAEP EIGHTH GRADE READING PROFICIENCY RATES, 2013**



Source: National Center for Education Statistics

FIGURE 8 | **NAEP EIGHTH GRADE GENERAL-EDUCATION STUDENTS ELIGIBLE FOR A FREE OR REDUCED LUNCH STUDENTS SCORING "PROFICIENT OR BETTER"**



family income and student ethnicity but still fail to teach a majority of children to read proficiently. Judging the relative effectiveness of state K-12 efforts, Figure 8 presents the same eighth-grade reading proficiency data, but the table also considers socio-economic status and student special programs like English language learners and special education. As discussed in previous editions of the *Report Card on American Education*, some states have much higher average family incomes than others. States also vary in rates of special program participation.

While it is impossible to determine where family education success ends and school success begins, it is worth noting that many defenders of the status quo plead helplessness in the face of student poverty, while willingly giving the K-12 system full credit for the academic success of children from high-income families. For instance, researchers sometimes compare middle- and high-income American students with entire national averages. A sober analysis of the international data would note that American students are often outscored by countries that spend a quarter of what the U.S. spends on public school education—a condition only made possible by the affluence of the United States. Instead, status quo defenders implicitly postulate that Americans hold a global monopoly on student poverty.[7]

In order to minimize the role such factors play in determining academic outcomes and thus get a better understanding of the relative effectiveness of state efforts, Figure 8 provides NAEP eighth-grade reading proficiency rates for students qualifying for a free or reduced-price lunch under federal guidelines and who do not participate in special programs such as English language learners or special education. Examining the scores of only low-income general-education children does not constitute a perfect control for student demographic characteristics; it is simply much better than examining raw performance to determine the relative effectiveness of state efforts.

Previous editions of the *Report Card* have presented the case that racial and ethnic differences in academic achievement should be viewed as a cultural challenge. The essence of effective schooling involves adult guidance of student culture to ensure learning occurs. While schools and states can narrow achievement gaps through schools with strong cultures (many examples exist), Figure 8 shows how much room states have to improve on this front. Even after taking economic and special-program differences into account, the racial and ethnic profile of the top 10 ranking states looks strikingly different from that of the bottom 10 states.

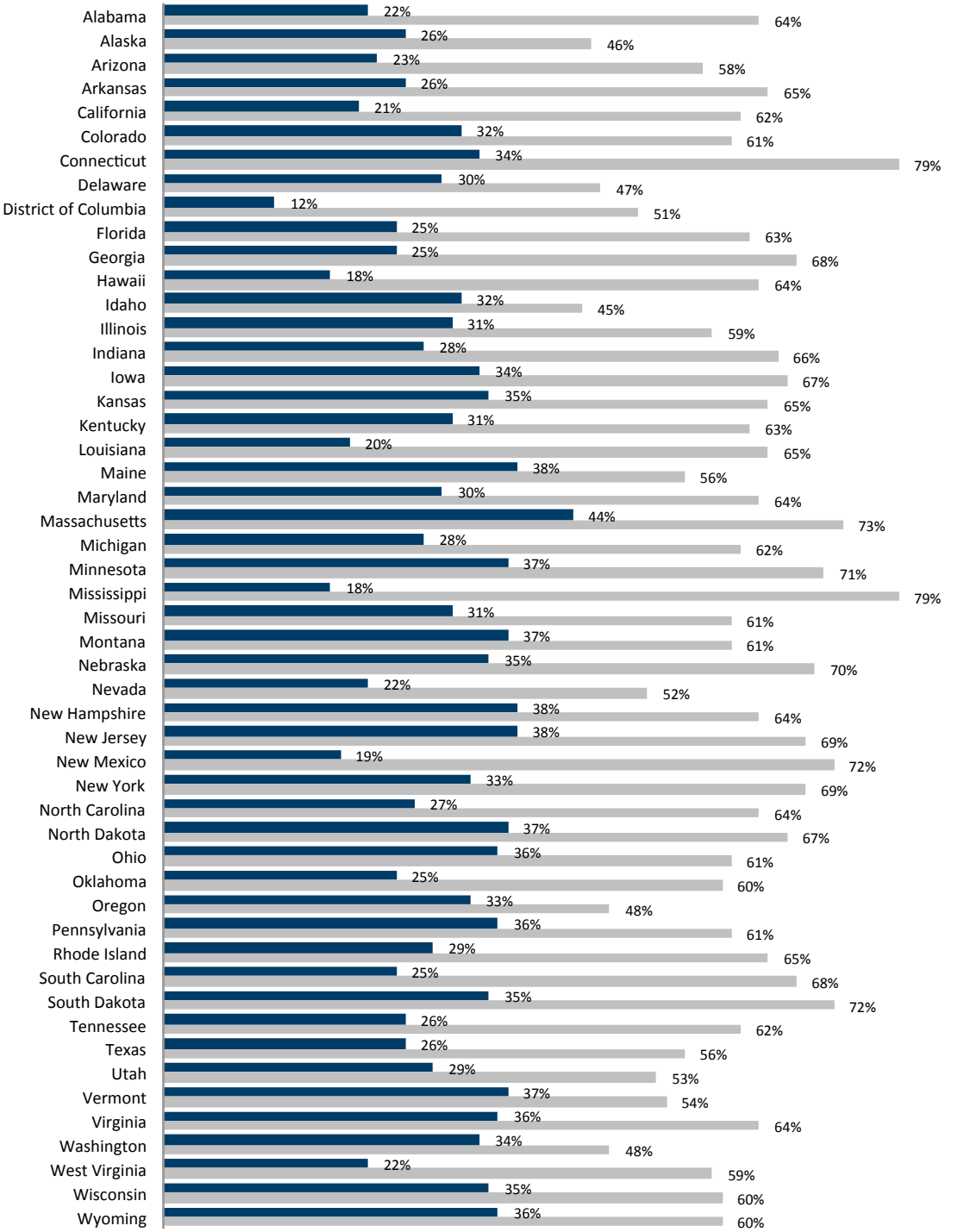
The most important point, however, is that all of these numbers are far too low. If the most effective public education system in the country (Massachusetts) can only teach 37 percent of general-education low-income children to read proficiently, educators and parents need to consider entirely new policies. Looking ahead to America's approaching age demographic crisis, no state can afford to have 63 percent of low-income students off-track for college in eighth-grade.

SENDING STUDENTS TO COLLEGE WITHOUT NECESSARY READING SKILLS

Figure 9 compares the measured proficiency rates of a cohort of students on the NAEP reading exam in 2005 to the college attendance rate in the fall of 2010. In each state, the rate of college attendance greatly exceeds the rate of previously measured reading proficiency. Thus, in California only 21 percent of the class of 2010 read as proficiently as eighth graders, but 79 percent of high school graduates attended college in the fall semester after their scheduled spring graduation in May 2010.

Again, these numbers should be viewed roughly rather than deterministically. This does not argue that only 21 percent of the California class of 2010 ought to have been admitted into college, or that it is known which particular students ought to have been admitted from the California class. It can, however, be predicted that college is likely to go badly for students who were not reading proficiently in eighth grade.

FIGURE 9 | **NAEP EIGHTH GRADE PROFICIENCY RATES AND THE FALL 2010 COLLEGE ATTENDANCE RATES FOR THE CLASS OF 2009**



Source: National Center for Education Statistics

DETAILED DATA FROM ARIZONA: WHAT HAPPENS WHEN UNPREPARED STUDENTS ATTEND COLLEGE

The Arizona Board of Regents commissioned *Arizona's College Completion Report* to specifically track the entire public school class of 2006 through the higher education system. The study provides a great deal of insight into the consequences of poor K-12 preparation for higher-education success.[8] The study makes use of the National Clearinghouse, which tracks student progress in public and private universities across the country.

As indicated in Figure 9, the 2005 NAEP recorded that only 22 percent of the Arizona eighth-grade class of 2005 read proficiently, but that 58 percent of students were attending college in the fall of 2010. How does this play out as they move on to college? The *Arizona Republic* summarized the findings:

> *Half of the state's public high schools saw 5 percent or fewer of their graduates from 2006 earn bachelor's degrees, a new study finds.*
>
> *And 62 percent of the college degrees earned by the high-school Class of 2006 went to students from just 40 of the state's 460 high schools.*
>
> *The report out today from the Arizona Board of Regents is the first in the state to provide a snapshot of college-completion rates for individual high schools. For six years, the regents tracked 53,392 Arizona students who graduated from high school in the 2005-06 school year, regardless of whether they moved or attended college out of state.*
>
> *Using data from colleges nationwide, the report found that 57 percent of the Arizona students who graduated from high school in 2005-06 went on to college, but only 19 percent graduated from a four-year institution within six years.*
>
> *An additional 6 percent graduated from a two-year college or trade school.*[9]

The eighth-grade NAEP reading scores of the early years of the new millennium would lead one to believe that the upper threshold percentage for college preparedness was in the low 20s. Undoubtedly some students fail to complete college because of algebra after getting through freshman composition. Life has many other pitfalls to snare college students as well. In Arizona, however, the college completion rate was eerily close to what NAEP eighth-grade reading scores suggested years before: the Class of 2006 had a 23 percent reading proficiency rate in 2002 when they were eighth graders, and 18.6 percent had finished a four-year degree six years after graduation from high school.

Only one word can describe these results: catastrophic. But this problem is not isolated to just one state. Arizona's reading proficiency rates for eighth-grade students have plenty of company in the low 20 percent range. A tracking study similar to the one performed by the Arizona Board of Regents in any of these other low-performing states might reveal the same thing.

The higher education system certainly bears some responsibility for this low graduation rate. Low entry standards set the tone for K-12, and in so doing set up many Arizona students to fail. The universities and colleges take money from unprepared kids and then proceed to flunk them out in droves. They might play a more productive role by setting some minimum standards related to college success and communicate those standards forcefully to the K-12 system.

Ultimately, however, responsibility for this problem primarily rests with the K-12 system. Higher education officials can—and often will—frame admission issues as one of "access" and "opportunity." Access and opportunity are indeed incredibly important, but they are no substitute for proper academic preparation.

There are a few bright spots, mostly found among schools of choice in the state (charter and magnet), but on the whole, the 5 percent (or less) rate of college graduates from half of Arizona's schools is unacceptable. Defenders of the system will be quick to claim that Arizona's relatively low spending per pupil is to blame, but this is factually untrue for two reasons. First, Arizona administrators currently spend more than their predecessors from

previous decades on a per-pupil basis after adjusting for inflation. While rankings of state spending per pupil are a useful framing mechanism for those seeking increased funding, spending has increased substantially in all states.

Multiple rankings over many years allow spending advocates to substitute as many as eight states at any given time as 49th in per-pupil spending. The truth is that all states spend far more than they did in the past. Arizona would not spend its way to high-quality schools, even if this was possible—and it may not be. Much better should be expected from one of the most generously funded K-12 systems in the world.

The Arizona Board of Regents' analysis should be understood as a time capsule from the world of 2006. Many of the state's high-quality charter school operators had few or no campuses graduating seniors in 2006. The Regents' report did not include private or home schools. NAEP shows that the aggregate eighth-grade proficiency rate improved from 22 percent in 2002 to 28 percent in 2013.

It is hard to escape the sinking feeling, however, that this will prove too little, too late for the Grand Canyon State at its current rate of improvement. All states need to address their education policy now if they want to meet the challenges of the future.

CONCLUSION: LIGHT AT THE END OF THE TUNNEL OR ONCOMING TRAIN?

Age demographics positioned the 1980s and 1990s for strong economic growth. The large baby boom population reached its prime earning years. High rates of economic growth also produced larger state tax revenues. Baby boom had turned to "baby bust," lowering the percentage of the population in school and the associated costs. The large size of the baby boom generation relative to the number of retirees and children along with strong economic growth allowed increased spending on both the elderly and children. A similar pattern of baby boom followed by bust, with increased spending on both the young and the elderly, occurred not just in the United States, but to varying degrees throughout the developed world in the latter half of the 20th century.[10]

This process, however, has already reversed. The baby boom generation began qualifying for federal retirement benefits in 2008. The age demographic bounty of the late 20th century will force difficult choices in the coming years. A considerable burden lies ahead for millennials as they simultaneously attempt to finance their parents' elderly entitlements and the education of their own children. More high school and college graduates and fewer high school and college dropouts among the youth of today would aid enormously in facing the considerable challenges of tomorrow.

The concerns of American policymakers have continued to grow at a much faster pace than schools have improved. Americans have faced even greater challenges in the past—the twin defeats of global fascism and communism come readily to mind. The primary task facing American policymakers is to secure a considerably higher return on each dollar invested in the delivery of vital public services, such as education and health care. Maintaining the status quo is not an option, whether one views it as benign or flawed.

Public funding for K-12 education is guaranteed in every state constitution and strongly supported by the public. It is here to stay, but policymakers need to pursue far more robust reforms to get the education system to work for all students as soon as possible. Based on their reading scores, in 2013, all states had a majority of students off-track to finish college. In 20 states, a quarter or fewer of their students were on-track for college success based on their reading scores alone. States universally have huge percentages of students attending institutions of higher learning without the academic knowledge and skills necessary for success.

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CHAPTER 3

Student Performance and State Education Policy Grades

Student Performance and State Education Policy Grades

Building on the past year's state education policy advances highlighted so far in this Report Card, state policies can now be viewed in context alongside each state's student performance.

The following state profiles underscore state education policies with a focus on academic progress. Keeping in mind that no two states started at the same place, the states were evaluated on their education systems based on absolute scores combined with academic growth. This pushes states with above-average education systems not to rest on their laurels, but rather to strive for even better results. At the same time, states that have historically struggled but are making remarkable gains receive due credit for their progress.

Recognizing that this *Report Card* looks at a snapshot in time of student performance, the trends seen over the past few years give insight into the direction of each state's K-12 system and can guide policymakers as they seek to improve student outcomes in their states.

RANKING STATES ON THE PERFORMANCE OF GENERAL EDUCATION LOW-INCOME STUDENTS

Numerous studies reveal that children from wealthier families tend to score better in the classroom than those from low-income families. This occurs for a variety of reasons, including generally greater opportunities to learn more at home. Thus they enter the school system with a distinct advantage over their lower-income peers. Consequently, students from lower-income families are more reliant upon the education system for a majority of their education.

Like the previous four editions of the ALEC *Report Card*, this edition focuses the impact of education policy on disadvantaged students. The performance ranking portion, however, examines how well states are living up to the task of providing a high-quality education for all students.

Each state has a unique student population. Wealth and income levels vary wildly by state, as does regional cost of living. States also have differing numbers of students who qualify as English language learners or for an individualized education program. Therefore, the following rankings and grades are made as much of an "apples-to-apples" comparison as possible by evaluating states based on similar students. In order to maximize comparability, the ranking system judges each state based on the NAEP performance of children eligible for free or reduced-priced lunches under the National School Lunch Program, which determines eligibility by family income. The ranking system only looks at general education students who are not enrolled in either special education or English language learner programs.

By tracking the absolute performance and progress (or lack thereof) of general-education program students from families with low incomes, the vast differences among state K–12 populations in relation to a relatively common metric are minimized. Comparing children from low-income households outside special programs across jurisdictions allows one to better assess the relative success and/or failure of particular public policies.

These comparisons are imperfect, as no perfect comparisons exist. However, the comparisons here are much more equitable than a simple comparison of state scores.

To calculate the performance rankings in this Report Card, the scores of general-education low-income students on each state's four main 2003 to 2013 NAEP exams (fourth- and eighth-grade reading and mathematics) were considered. This R*eport Card* examines two components of those four exams: the actual scores on the 2013 NAEP; and the gains (or losses) made between 2003 and 2013. The 2013 scores are given equal weight with the gains made over the past decade. From these numbers, states earn their performance ranking.

One caveat regarding NAEP exams: NAEP gives exams to random samples of students with measurable ranges of sampling error. Sampling errors are random in nature and thus the errors cancel themselves out. (For example, if a state's NAEP 4th grade reading test is randomly a bit on the high end, it can be mitigated by another test being on the low end.) Overall, readers should take greater note of whether their state falls on the high, middle or low end of the rankings, rather than fixating on an exact numerical ranking.

GRADING EDUCATION POLICIES

This *Report Card* is based on the presupposition that a high-quality education should be available to every child. Accordingly, as states make advances in education policies, the grading methodology must take into account these advances.

OVERALL EDUCATION POLICY GRADE

The goal of these policy grades is to identify the policies that provide all students with educational opportunities most appropriate for their individual needs. The education policy grading system evaluates state policies that place the focus on the needs of individual students. Policy areas include quality testing and accountability mechanisms; improving teacher quality; and expanding parents' abilities to choose the best learning environment for their children, including public district schools, public charter schools, private schools, homeschools and digital learning providers. These grades were partially based on measures and grading systems from education organizations and experts who analyzed various aspects of education reform.

To develop each state's overall policy grade, each policy category was first analyzed individually. For example, the Teacher Quality Policies category has four components that determine its overall category grade, while Digital Learning has one component. The subcategories were averaged together to form category grades. Each state's six category grades were then given equal weight and averaged together for the overall state policy grade.

POLICY CATEGORIES

In this 20th *Report Card*, state education policy grades are composed of the following categories: Academic Standards, Charter Schools, Homeschooling, Private School Choice, Teacher Quality and Digital Learning. These categories remain constant from the 19th *Report Card,* although individual components of those categories have been updated as described below.

ACADEMIC STANDARDS

States' academic standards lay the foundation for what content knowledge is expected of students as they progress through grade levels. Using data provided by Paul Peterson and Matthew Ackerman at EducationNext, this policy category examines the proficiency bar set by states as they compare to those set by NAEP.[1] States have generally been subjected to political pressure to set their proficiency bar low, giving the false illusion of academic proficiency and creating false advertising of their schools' performances. In this policy category, Peterson and Kaplan's examination of each state's self-reported proficiency rates compared to NAEP proficiency results were instructive.

CHARTER SCHOOLS

Charter schools are innovative public schools that agree to meet performance standards set

by governing authorities but are otherwise free from most regulations governing traditional public schools. This autonomy allows for new teaching methods, special curricula and academic programs, and flexible governance policies, such as holding longer school days. The charter school grades note whether a state has a charter school law and, if so, analyze how strong the law is in supporting the success of charter schools. The Center for Education Reform provides this information in their annual Charter School Law Ranking and Scorecard.[2]

HOMESCHOOLING REGULATION BURDEN LEVEL

Two million students are home schooled each year. With an annual growth rate of approximately 5 percent, this is the fastest growing sector of school options. The homeschooling regulation burden level indicates the regulatory requirements parents face when homeschooling their children. The Home School Legal Defense Association rates the states' homeschooling oversight in four categories: "none," "low," "moderate" and "high."[3]

PRIVATE SCHOOL CHOICE

A growing body of empirical evidence suggests that private school policies that allow families to choose the best school for their children yield positive outcomes, including improved family satisfaction, higher academic achievement and improved graduation rates. For these reasons, each state is evaluated on whether it has a private school choice program, such as vouchers or scholarships, tuition or scholarship tax credits or education savings accounts. Several factors determine grades, including statewide student eligibility for private school choice programs, the purchasing power these programs provide for families and budget caps, which limit the availability of these programs for families. This analysis is based on a review of state school choice policies and is supported by research from the Friedman Foundation for Educational Choice.[4]

TEACHER QUALITY POLICIES

Academic research shows that the greatest determining factor regarding a student's academic success within a school is teacher effectiveness. Every student deserves the opportunity to learn from a great teacher. This category looks at states' abilities to provide high-quality teachers in each classroom, ensuring students aren't subjected to ineffective teachers. The National Council on Teacher Quality's 2014 State Teacher Policy Yearbook provides grades for how well states identify high-quality teachers, retain effective teachers and remove ineffective ones.[5]

DIGITAL LEARNING

A fast-changing state education policy is digital learning. These policy grades are derived from the Foundation for Excellence in Education's 2014 Digital Learning Now initiative, which produces its annual Digital Learning Report Card. States are measured on their progress toward creating a statewide environment that supports high-quality digital learning options for all students.[6]

POLICY GRADE METHODOLOGY

States' education policy grades were calculated in the following manner. First, all analyses were converted into letter grades where possible. For example, homeschooling regulation burden levels were converted as such: none = A, low = B, moderate = C and high = D. Next, all letter grades were converted to a numerical score based on a grade point average scale (A=4, B=3, C=2, D=1, F=0). Those scores were tallied and divided by the number of categories in which a score was present.

For some categories, grades were awarded with pluses and minuses, and numerical conversions were altered appropriately. A grade of B-, for example, was converted to a numeric score of 2.667, while a C+ was converted to 2.333.)

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

In addition to the policy grades and performance rankings, each state profile contains additional information, such as per-pupil spending levels and student populations. This data is purely for informational purposes and is not included in the grading or ranking of the states.[7 8 9 10]

Table 1 | **LETTER GRADE KEY**

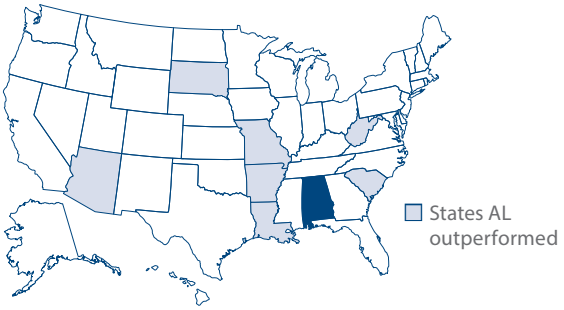
Grade	Low Score	High Score
A	3.834	4.166
A-	3.5	3.833
B+	3.167	3.499
B	2.834	3.166
B-	2.5	2.833
C+	2.167	2.499
C	1.834	2.166
C-	1.5	1.833
D+	1.167	1.499
D	0.834	1.166
D-	0.5	0.833
F	0.00	0.499

ENDNOTES

1. Peterson, Paul and Matthew Ackerman. "States Raise Proficiency Standards in Math and Reading: Commitments to Common Core may be Driving the Proficiency Bar Upward". *EducationNext*. Summer 2015. Available at http://educationnext.org/states-raise-proficiency-standards-math-reading/.
2. Consoletti, Alison Zgainer and Kara Kerwin "Charter School Laws across the States: 2015 Rankings and Scorecard." Center for Education Reform. Available at https://www.edreform.com/2015/03/charter-school-laws-across-the-states-2015-rankings-scorecard/.
3. Home School Legal Defense Association. "State Laws." Available at http://www.hslda.org/laws/default.asp.
4. "School Choice by State." Friedman Foundation for Educational Choice. Available at http://www.edchoice.org/school-choice/school-choice-in-america/.
5. "State Teacher Policy Yearbook." National Council on Teacher Quality. Available at http://www.nctq.org/statePolicy/2014/statePolicyFindings.do?stateId=1.
6. "2014 Digital Learning Report Card." Digital Learning Now. Available at http://www.digitallearningnow.com.
7. "Common Core of Data." National Center for Education Statistics, Institute of Education Sciences. Available at http://nces.ed.gov/ccd/tables/ACGR_2010-11_to_2012-13.asp.
8. "Public High School 4-year Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate (ACGR) for the United States, the 50 states and the District of Columbia: School years 2010-11 to 2012-13." (n.d.). Common Core of Data. National Center for Education Statistics Online. Available at http://nces.ed.gov/ccd/tables/ACGR_2010-11_to_2012-13.asp.
9. "Public Education Finances: 2013." United States Census Bureau, U.S. Department of Commerce. Available at http://www2.census.gov/govs/school/13f33pub.pdf.
10. "Elementary/Secondary Information System." National Center for Education Statistics, Institute of Education Sciences. Available at http://nces.ed.gov/ccd/elsi/tableGenerator.aspx.

Alabama

The Cotton State



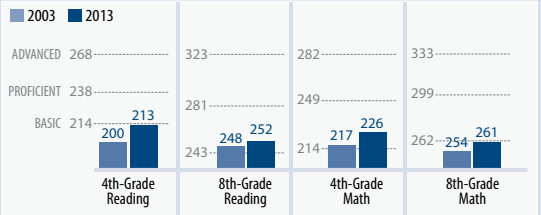
2013 NAEP Performance Rank

44

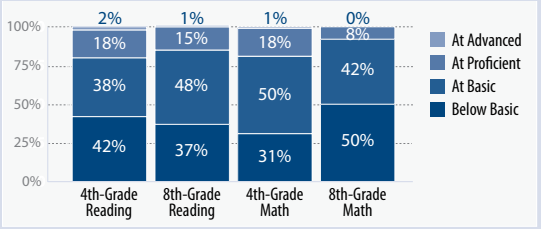
ALEC Historical Ranking *2009 NAEP: 40th | 2011 NAEP: 34th*

Measures the overall scores for low-income general education students (non-ELL and non-IEP) and their gains/losses on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) fourth- and eighth-grade reading and mathematics exams from 2003 to 2013.

NAEP Scores for Low-Income General Education Students (2003-2013)



NAEP Low-Income General Education Student Score Distribution (2013)



Supplemental Information

(The following is provided solely for informative reasons. It does not influence the above grade or ranking.)

Graduation Rate	Average Class Size	Annual Cost Per Student
71.8%	15.77	$9,874

Education Policy Grade

D

ALEC Historical Grading *2011: D+ | 2012: D+ | 2013: D+*

Grades state-level education policies that provide high-quality educational options to all students.

State Academic Standards	F

Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	No
Charter School Law Grade	—

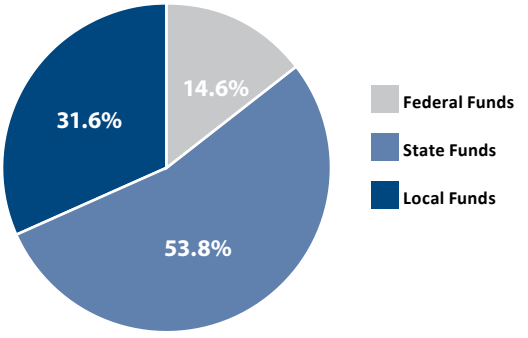
Homeschool Regulation Burden *(A=None, B=Low, C=Moderate, D=High)*	B

Private School Choice Programs	C

Teacher Quality and Policies: Overall Grade	D
Delivering Well Prepared Teachers	B-
Expanding the Teaching Pool	C
Identifying Effective Teachers	D
Retaining Effective Teachers	D-
Exiting Ineffective Teachers	D

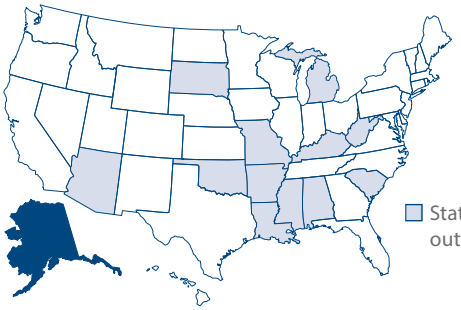
Digital Learning	D-

Funding Sources



Alaska

The Last Frontier



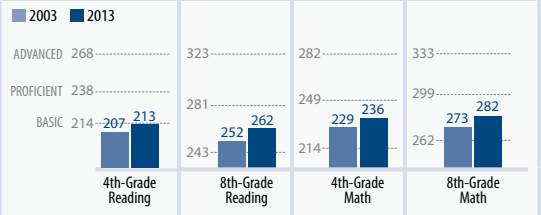
2013 NAEP Performance Rank

39

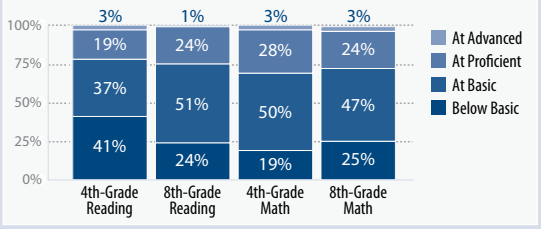
ALEC Historical Ranking *2009 NAEP: 11th | 2011 NAEP: 32nd*

Measures the overall scores for low-income general education students (non-ELL and non-IEP) and their gains/losses on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) fourth- and eighth-grade reading and mathematics exams from 2003 to 2013.

NAEP Scores for Low-Income General Education Students (2003-2013)



NAEP Low-Income General Education Student Score Distribution (2013)



Supplemental Information

(The following is provided solely for informative reasons. It does not influence the above grade or ranking.)

Graduation Rate	Average Class Size	Annual Cost Per Student
75.5%	16.29	$17,902

Education Policy Grade

D+

ALEC Historical Grading *2011: B- | 2012: C- | 2013: C-*

Grades state-level education policies that provide high-quality educational options to all students.

State Academic Standards	D+

Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	D

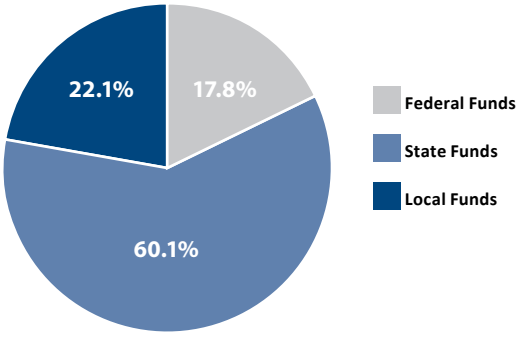
Home School Regulation Burden *(A=None, B=Low, C=Moderate, D=High)*	A

Private School Choice Programs	F

Teacher Quality and Policies: Overall Grade	D
Delivering Well Prepared Teachers	F
Expanding the Teaching Pool	D
Identifying Effective Teachers	D+
Retaining Effective Teachers	D
Exiting Ineffective Teachers	D-

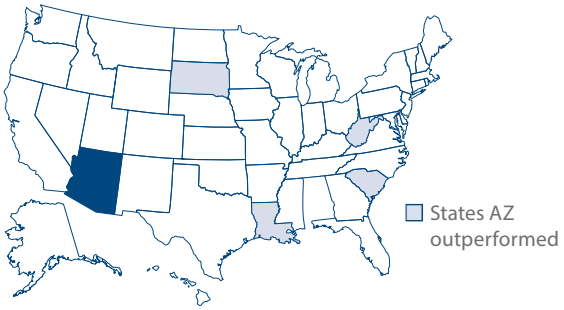
Digital Learning	D+

Funding Sources



Arizona

The Grand Canyon State



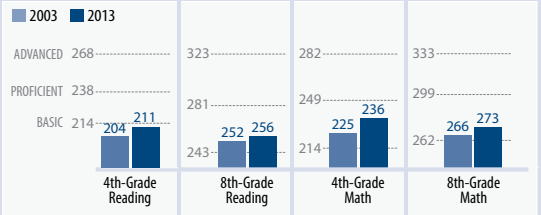
47

2013 NAEP Performance Rank

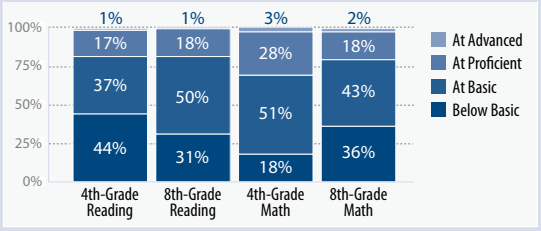
ALEC Historical Ranking *2009 NAEP: 45th | 2011 NAEP: 36th*

Measures the overall scores for low-income general education students (non-ELL and non-IEP) and their gains/losses on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) fourth- and eighth-grade reading and mathematics exams from 2003 to 2013.

NAEP Scores for Low-Income General Education Students (2003-2013)



NAEP Low-Income General Education Student Score Distribution (2013)



Supplemental Information

(The following is provided solely for informative reasons. It does not influence the above grade or ranking.)

Graduation Rate	Average Class Size	Annual Cost Per Student
74.7%	20.75	$8,806

Education Policy Grade

B-

ALEC Historical Grading *2011: B | 2012: B+| 2013: B-*

Grades state-level education policies that provide high-quality educational options to all students.

State Academic Standards	C

Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	A

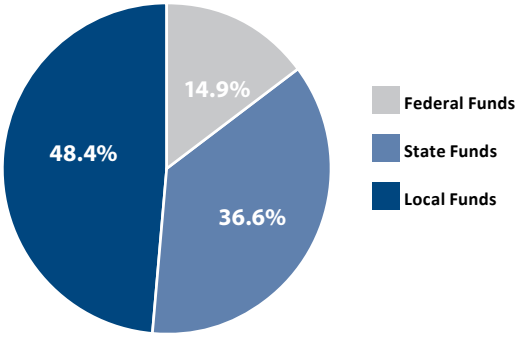
Homeschool Regulation Burden *(A=None, B=Low, C=Moderate, D=High)*	B

Private School Choice Programs	A

Teacher Quality and Policies: Overall Grade	C-
Delivering Well Prepared Teachers	D
Expanding the Teaching Pool	C-
Identifying Effective Teachers	C
Retaining Effective Teachers	C
Exiting Ineffective Teachers	D+

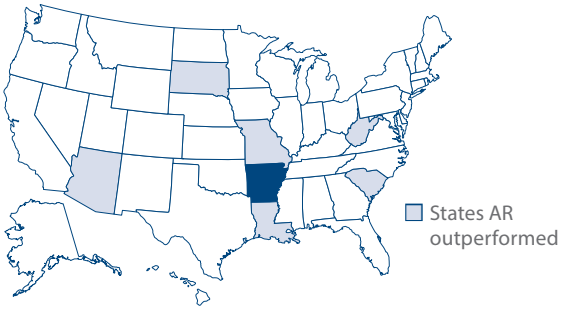
Digital Learning	C+

Funding Sources



Arkansas

The Natural State



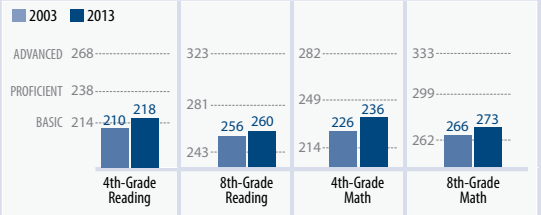
2013 NAEP Performance Rank

45

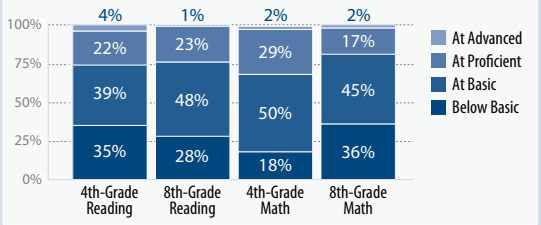
ALEC Historical Ranking *2009 NAEP: 44th | 2011 NAEP: 45th*

Measures the overall scores for low-income general education students (non-ELL and non-IEP) and their gains/losses on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) fourth- and eighth-grade reading and mathematics exams from 2003 to 2013.

NAEP Scores for Low-Income General Education Students (2003-2013)



NAEP Low-Income General Education Student Score Distribution (2013)



Supplemental Information

(The following is provided solely for informative reasons. It does not influence the above grade or ranking.)

Graduation Rate	Average Class Size	Annual Cost Per Student
75.0%	12.9	$10,844

Education Policy Grade

C

ALEC Historical Grading *2011: C | 2012: C | 2013: D+*

Grades state-level education policies that provide high-quality educational options to all students.

State Academic Standards	D

Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	D

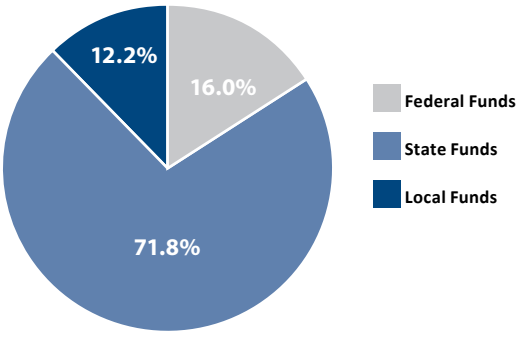
Homeschool Regulation Burden *(A=None, B=Low, C=Moderate, D=High)*	C

Private School Choice Programs	B

Teacher Quality and Policies: Overall Grade	B-
Delivering Well Prepared Teachers	C+
Expanding the Teaching Pool	B
Identifying Effective Teachers	C-
Retaining Effective Teachers	B-
Exiting Ineffective Teachers	C-

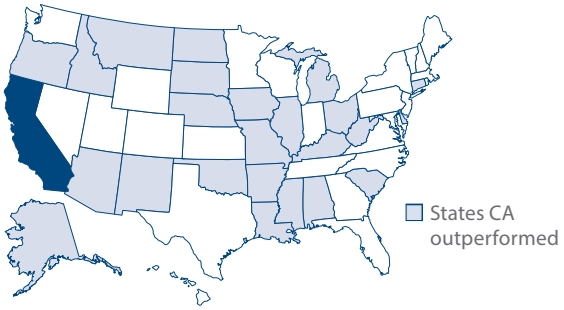
Digital Learning	C

Funding Sources



California

The Golden State



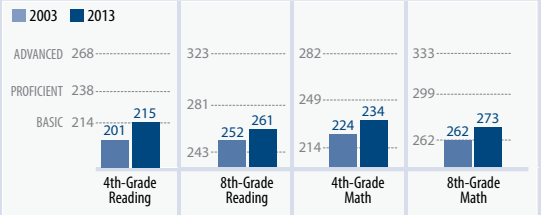
2013 NAEP Performance Rank

27

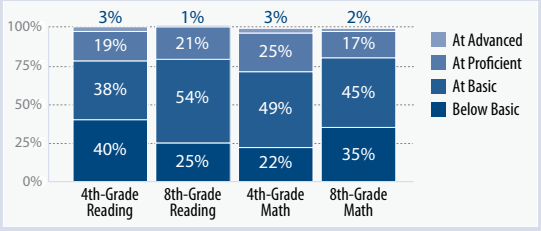
ALEC Historical Ranking *2009 NAEP: 30th | 2011 NAEP: 30th*

Measures the overall scores for low-income general education students (non-ELL and non-IEP) and their gains/losses on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) fourth- and eighth-grade reading and mathematics exams from 2003 to 2013.

NAEP Scores for Low-Income General Education Students (2003-2013)



NAEP Low-Income General Education Student Score Distribution (2013)



Supplemental Information

(The following is provided solely for informative reasons. It does not influence the above grade or ranking.)

Graduation Rate	Average Class Size	Annual Cost Per Student
78.2%	19.8	$10,581

Education Policy Grade

C-

ALEC Historical Grading *2011: B | 2012: C+| 2013: C*

Grades state-level education policies that provide high-quality educational options to all students.

State Academic Standards	C+

Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	B

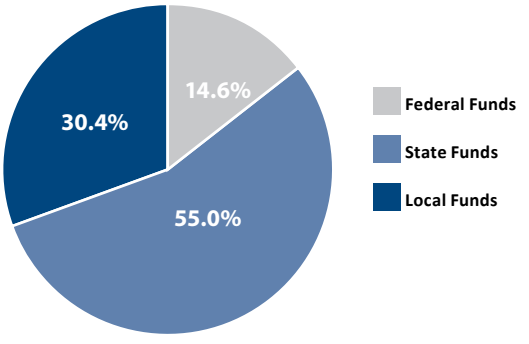
Homeschool Regulation Burden *(A=None, B=Low, C=Moderate, D=High)*	B

Private School Choice Programs	F

Teacher Quality and Policies: Overall Grade	D+
Delivering Well Prepared Teachers	D+
Expanding the Teaching Pool	C-
Identifying Effective Teachers	D-
Retaining Effective Teachers	C+
Exiting Ineffective Teachers	F

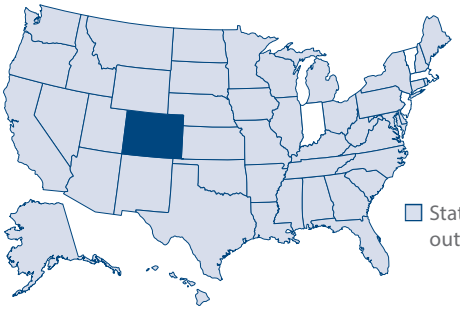
Digital Learning	D-

Funding Sources



Colorado

The Centennial State



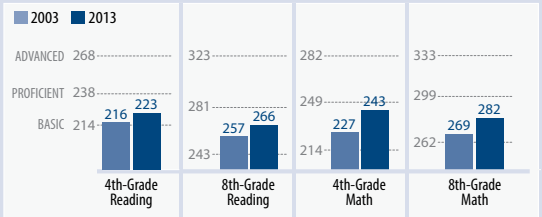
2013 NAEP Performance Rank

5

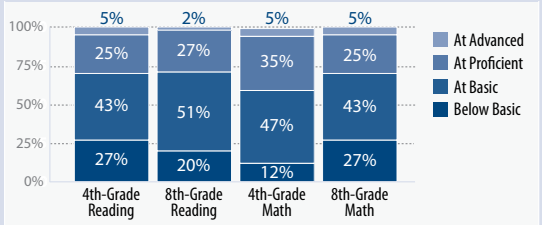
ALEC Historical Ranking *2009 NAEP: 17th | 2011 NAEP: 4th*

Measures the overall scores for low-income general education students (non-ELL and non-IEP) and their gains/losses on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) fourth- and eighth-grade reading and mathematics exams from 2003 to 2013.

NAEP Scores for Low-Income General Education Students (2003-2013)



NAEP Low-Income General Education Student Score Distribution (2013)



Supplemental Information

(The following is provided solely for informative reasons. It does not influence the above grade or ranking.)

Graduation Rate	Average Class Size	Annual Cost Per Student
79.8%	16.97	$10,421

Education Policy Grade

C

ALEC Historical Grading *2011: B | 2012: C+| 2013: C+*

Grades state-level education policies that provide high-quality educational options to all students.

State Academic Standards	B

Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	B

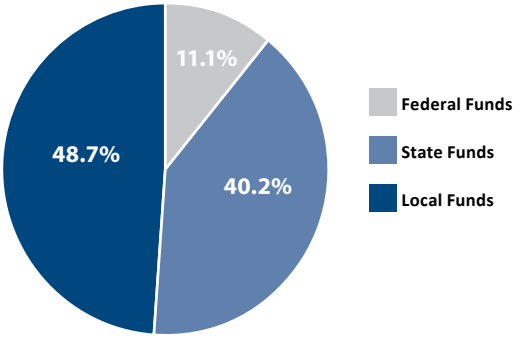
Homeschool Regulation Burden *(A=None, B=Low, C=Moderate, D=High)*	C

Private School Choice Programs	F

Teacher Quality and Policies: Overall Grade	C+
Delivering Well Prepared Teachers	D-
Expanding the Teaching Pool	D+
Identifying Effective Teachers	B-
Retaining Effective Teachers	C
Exiting Ineffective Teachers	A

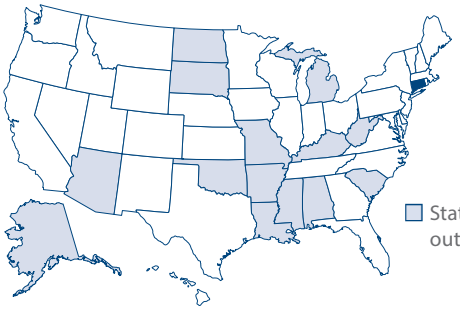
Digital Learning	D+

Funding Sources



Connecticut

The Constitution State



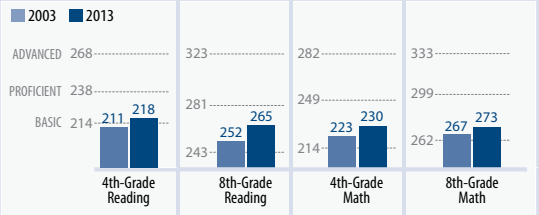
2013 NAEP Performance Rank

37

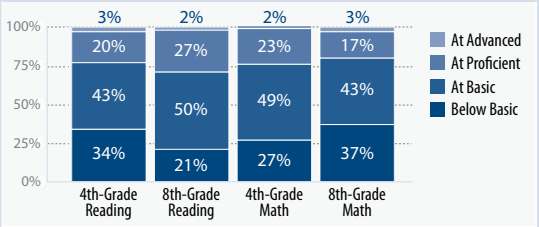
ALEC Historical Ranking *2009 NAEP: 29th | 2011 NAEP: 39th*

Measures the overall scores for low-income general education students (non-ELL and non-IEP) and their gains/losses on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) fourth- and eighth-grade reading and mathematics exams from 2003 to 2013.

NAEP Scores for Low-Income General Education Students (2003-2013)



NAEP Low-Income General Education Student Score Distribution (2013)



Supplemental Information

(The following is provided solely for informative reasons. It does not influence the above grade or ranking.)

Graduation Rate	Average Class Size	Annual Cost Per Student
75.1%	12.94	$18,061

Education Policy Grade

C-

ALEC Historical Grading *2011: C+ | 2012: C- | 2013: C-*

Grades state-level education policies that provide high-quality educational options to all students.

State Academic Standards	C-

Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	D

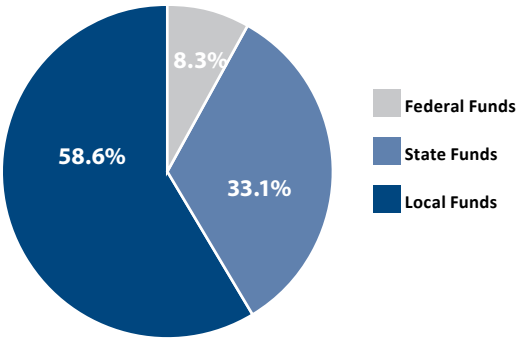
Homeschool Regulation Burden *(A=None, B=Low, C=Moderate, D=High)*	A

Private School Choice Programs	F

Teacher Quality and Policies: Overall Grade	B-
Delivering Well Prepared Teachers	B-
Expanding the Teaching Pool	C+
Identifying Effective Teachers	B
Retaining Effective Teachers	C
Exiting Ineffective Teachers	C-

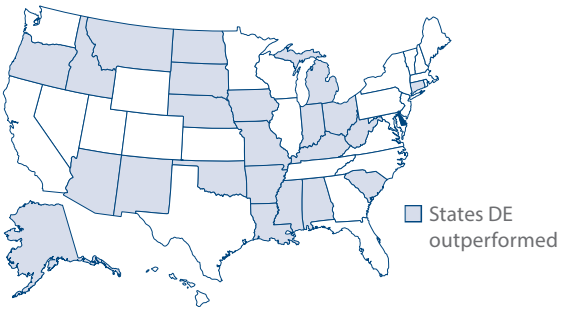
Digital Learning	F

Funding Sources



Delaware

The First State



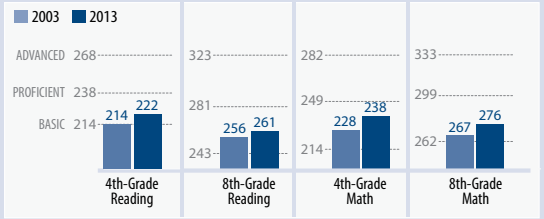
2013 NAEP Performance Rank

28

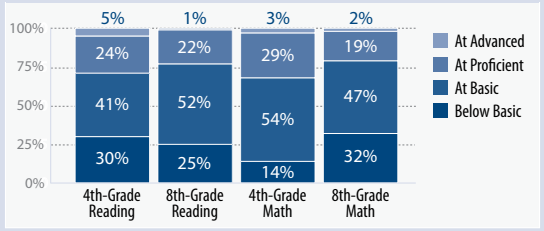
ALEC Historical Ranking *2009 NAEP: 19th | 2011 NAEP: 22nd*

Measures the overall scores for low-income general education students (non-ELL and non-IEP) and their gains/losses on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) fourth- and eighth-grade reading and mathematics exams from 2003 to 2013.

NAEP Scores for Low-Income General Education Students (2003-2013)



NAEP Low-Income General Education Student Score Distribution (2013)



Supplemental Information

(The following is provided solely for informative reasons. It does not influence the above grade or ranking.)

Graduation Rate	Average Class Size	Annual Cost Per Student
75.5%	14.68	$14,280

Education Policy Grade

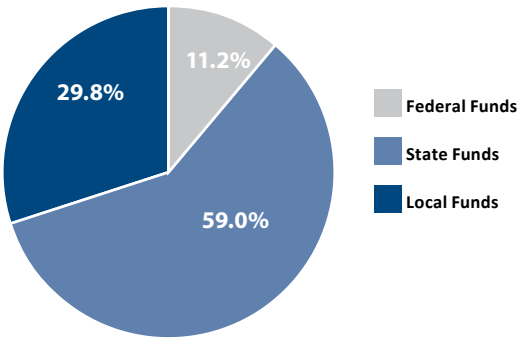
C-

ALEC Historical Grading *2011: C+ | 2012: C | 2013: C*

Grades state-level education policies that provide high-quality educational options to all students.

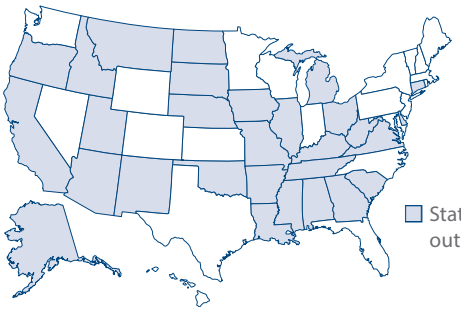
State Academic Standards	C
Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	C
Homeschool Regulation Burden *(A=None, B=Low, C=Moderate, D=High)*	B
Private School Choice Programs	F
Teacher Quality and Policies: Overall Grade	C+
Delivering Well Prepared Teachers	B-
Expanding the Teaching Pool	C+
Identifying Effective Teachers	B
Retaining Effective Teachers	C
Exiting Ineffective Teachers	D
Digital Learning	D-

Funding Sources



District of Columbia

The Federal City

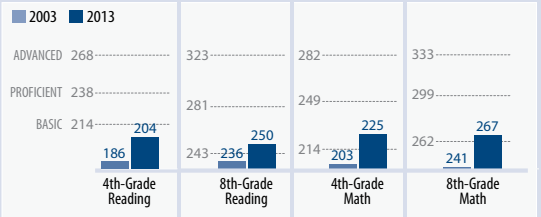


2013 NAEP Performance Rank **22**

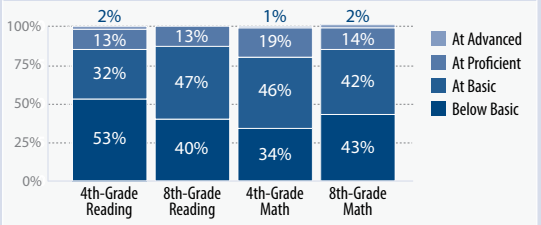
ALEC Historical Ranking *2009 NAEP: 26th | 2011 NAEP: 24th*

Measures the overall scores for low-income general education students (non-ELL and non-IEP) and their gains/losses on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) fourth- and eighth-grade reading and mathematics exams from 2003 to 2013.

NAEP Scores for Low-Income General Education Students (2003-2013)



NAEP Low-Income General Education Student Score Distribution (2013)



Supplemental Information

(The following is provided solely for informative reasons. It does not influence the above grade or ranking.)

Graduation Rate	Average Class Size	Annual Cost Per Student
59.9%	11.86	$29,049

Education Policy Grade **C-**

ALEC Historical Grading *2011: B | 2012: B- | 2013: B-*

Grades state-level education policies that provide high-quality educational options to all students.

State Academic Standards	C

Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	A

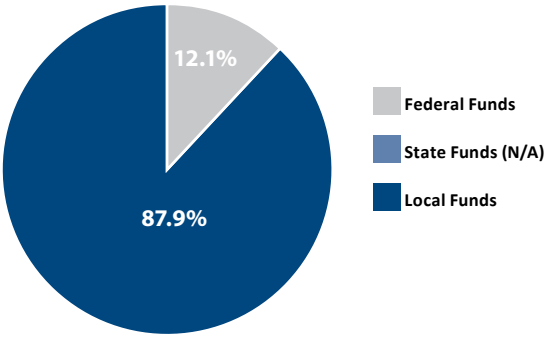
Homeschool Regulation Burden *(A=None, B=Low, C=Moderate, D=High)*	C

Private School Choice Programs	D

Teacher Quality and Policies: Overall Grade	D+
Delivering Well Prepared Teachers	C-
Expanding the Teaching Pool	C
Identifying Effective Teachers	D
Retaining Effective Teachers	F
Exiting Ineffective Teachers	D

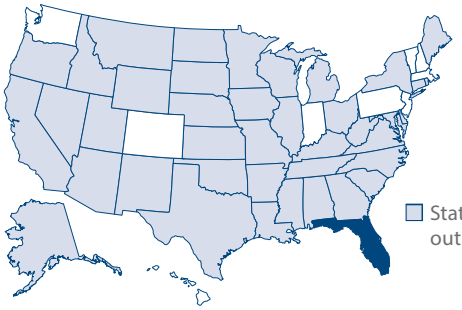
Digital Learning	–

Funding Sources



Florida

The Sunshine State



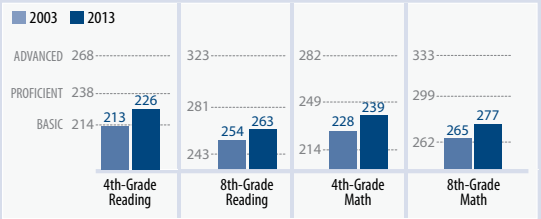
2013 NAEP Performance Rank

10

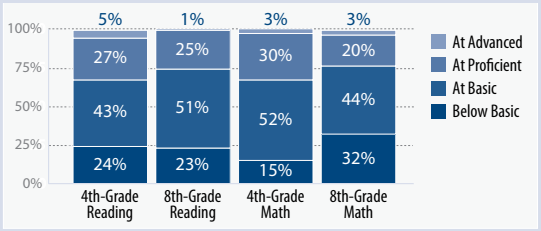
ALEC Historical Ranking *2009 NAEP: 3rd | 2011 NAEP: 12th*

Measures the overall scores for low-income general education students (non-ELL and non-IEP) and their gains/losses on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) fourth- and eighth-grade reading and mathematics exams from 2003 to 2013.

NAEP Scores for Low-Income General Education Students (2003-2013)



NAEP Low-Income General Education Student Score Distribution (2013)



Supplemental Information

(The following is provided solely for informative reasons. It does not influence the above grade or ranking.)

Graduation Rate	Average Class Size	Annual Cost Per Student
70.8%	14.33	$10,031

Education Policy Grade

B

ALEC Historical Grading *2011: B+ | 2012: B | 2013: B*

Grades state-level education policies that provide high-quality educational options to all students.

State Academic Standards	B

Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	B

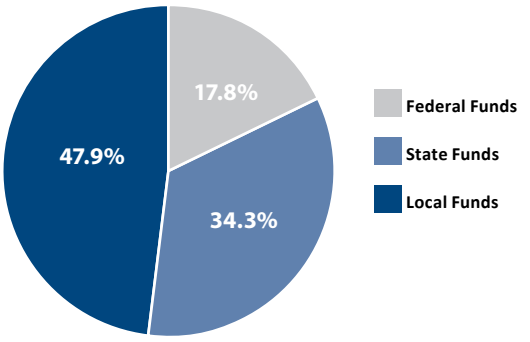
Homeschool Regulation Burden *(A=None, B=Low, C=Moderate, D=High)*	C

Private School Choice Programs	A

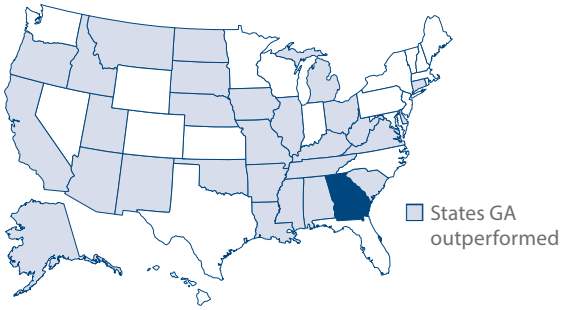
Teacher Quality and Policies: Overall Grade	B+
Delivering Well Prepared Teachers	B+
Expanding the Teaching Pool	B
Identifying Effective Teachers	B+
Retaining Effective Teachers	B+
Exiting Ineffective Teachers	B-

Digital Learning	A-

Funding Sources



Georgia
The Peach State



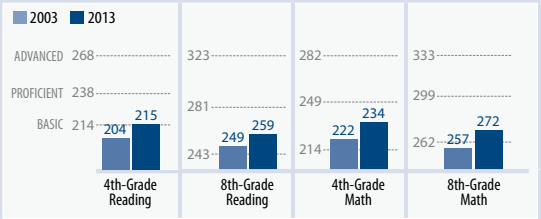
2013 NAEP Performance Rank

23

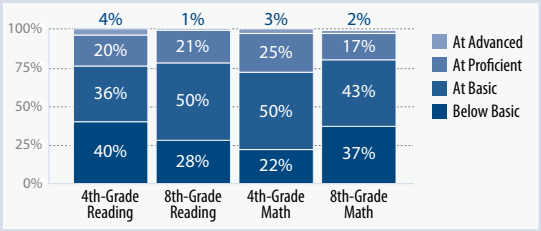
ALEC Historical Ranking *2009 NAEP: 27th | 2011 NAEP: 27th*

Measures the overall scores for low-income general education students (non-ELL and non-IEP) and their gains/losses on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) fourth- and eighth-grade reading and mathematics exams from 2003 to 2013.

NAEP Scores for Low-Income General Education Students (2003-2013)



NAEP Low-Income General Education Student Score Distribution (2013)



Supplemental Information

(The following is provided solely for informative reasons. It does not influence the above grade or ranking.)

Graduation Rate	Average Class Size	Annual Cost Per Student
69.9%	14.39	$10,821

Education Policy Grade

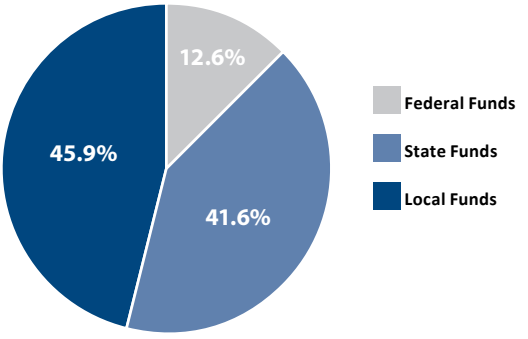
C+

ALEC Historical Grading *2011: B | 2012: B- | 2013: C+*

Grades state-level education policies that provide high-quality educational options to all students.

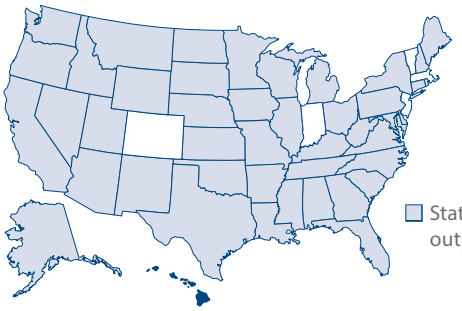
State Academic Standards	F
Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	C
Homeschool Regulation Burden *(A=None, B=Low, C=Moderate, D=High)*	B
Private School Choice Programs	B
Teacher Quality and Policies: Overall Grade	B-
Delivering Well Prepared Teachers	C+
Expanding the Teaching Pool	B
Identifying Effective Teachers	C+
Retaining Effective Teachers	C
Exiting Ineffective Teachers	B+
Digital Learning	B

Funding Sources



Hawaii

The Aloha State



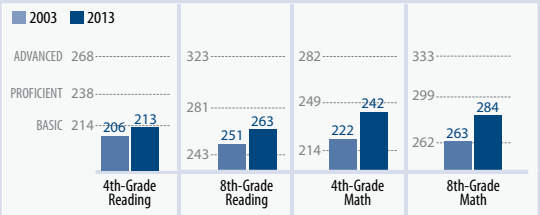
2013 NAEP Performance Rank

6

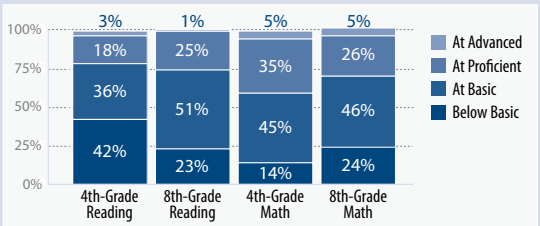
ALEC Historical Ranking *2009 NAEP: 15th | 2011 NAEP: 13th*

Measures the overall scores for low-income general education students (non-ELL and non-IEP) and their gains/losses on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) fourth- and eighth-grade reading and mathematics exams from 2003 to 2013.

NAEP Scores for Low-Income General Education Students (2003-2013)



NAEP Low-Income General Education Student Score Distribution (2013)



Supplemental Information

(The following is provided solely for informative reasons. It does not influence the above grade or ranking.)

Graduation Rate	Average Class Size	Annual Cost Per Student
75.4%	15.71	$13,917

Education Policy Grade

D+

ALEC Historical Grading *2011: C+ | 2012: C- | 2013: C-*

Grades state-level education policies that provide high-quality educational options to all students.

State Academic Standards	C

Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	C

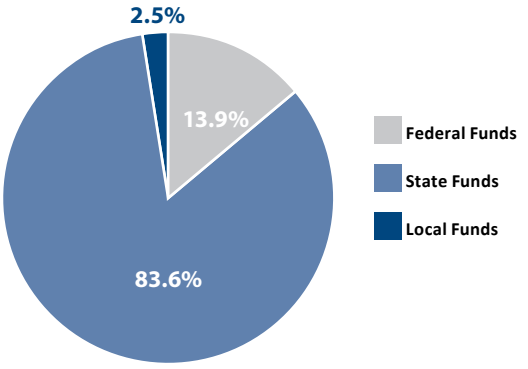
Homeschool Regulation Burden *(A=None, B=Low, C=Moderate, D=High)*	C

Private School Choice Programs	F

Teacher Quality and Policies: Overall Grade	D+
Delivering Well Prepared Teachers	D-
Expanding the Teaching Pool	F
Identifying Effective Teachers	B
Retaining Effective Teachers	C+
Exiting Ineffective Teachers	D

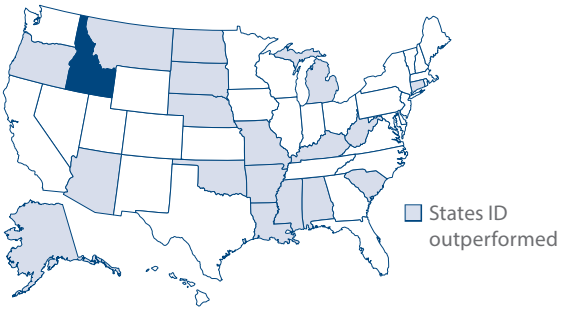
Digital Learning	D

Funding Sources



Idaho

The Gem State



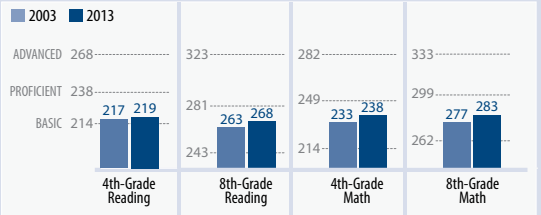
2013 NAEP Performance Rank

33

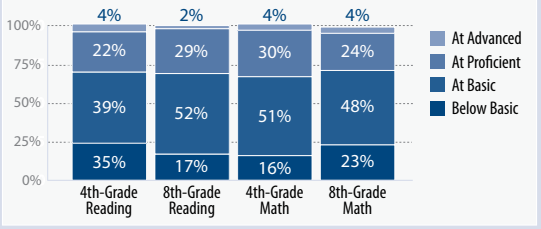
ALEC Historical Ranking *2009 NAEP: 22nd | 2011 NAEP: 29th*

Measures the overall scores for low-income general education students (non-ELL and non-IEP) and their gains/losses on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) fourth- and eighth-grade reading and mathematics exams from 2003 to 2013.

NAEP Scores for Low-Income General Education Students (2003-2013)



NAEP Low-Income General Education Student Score Distribution (2013)



Supplemental Information

(The following is provided solely for informative reasons. It does not influence the above grade or ranking.)

Graduation Rate	Average Class Size	Annual Cost Per Student
84.0%	18.18	$7,863

Education Policy Grade

C

ALEC Historical Grading *2011: B- | 2012: B- | 2013: C*

Grades state-level education policies that provide high-quality educational options to all students.

State Academic Standards	D

Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	B

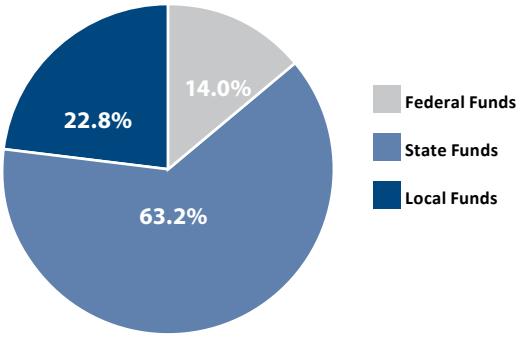
Homeschool Regulation Burden *(A=None, B=Low, C=Moderate, D=High)*	A

Private School Choice Programs	F

Teacher Quality and Policies: Overall Grade	D+
Delivering Well Prepared Teachers	D+
Expanding the Teaching Pool	D
Identifying Effective Teachers	C-
Retaining Effective Teachers	D-
Exiting Ineffective Teachers	D

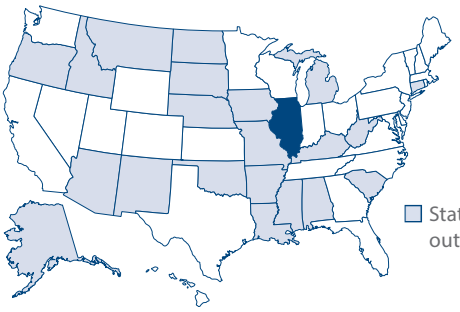
Digital Learning	C

Funding Sources



Illinois

The Prairie State



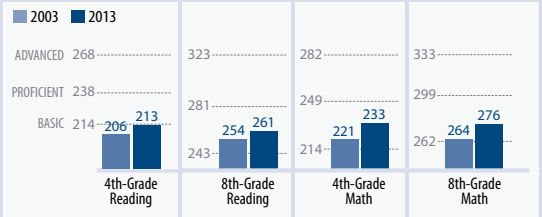
30

2013 NAEP Performance Rank

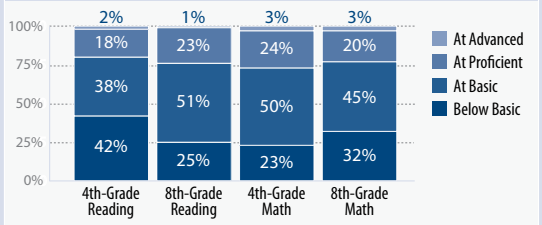
ALEC Historical Ranking *2009 NAEP: 38th | 2011 NAEP: 28th*

Measures the overall scores for low-income general education students (non-ELL and non-IEP) and their gains/losses on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) fourth- and eighth-grade reading and mathematics exams from 2003 to 2013.

NAEP Scores for Low-Income General Education Students (2003-2013)



NAEP Low-Income General Education Student Score Distribution (2013)



Supplemental Information

(The following is provided solely for informative reasons. It does not influence the above grade or ranking.)

Graduation Rate	Average Class Size	Annual Cost Per Student
81.9%	15.19	$13,848

Education Policy Grade

C+

ALEC Historical Grading *2011: C+ | 2012: C | 2013: C*

Grades state-level education policies that provide high-quality educational options to all students.

State Academic Standards	B-

Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	C

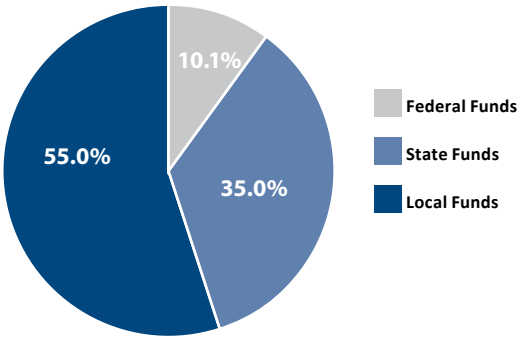
Homeschool Regulation Burden *(A=None, B=Low, C=Moderate, D=High)*	A

Private School Choice Programs	C

Teacher Quality and Policies: Overall Grade	C+
Delivering Well Prepared Teachers	D+
Expanding the Teaching Pool	C-
Identifying Effective Teachers	C+
Retaining Effective Teachers	C-
Exiting Ineffective Teachers	A

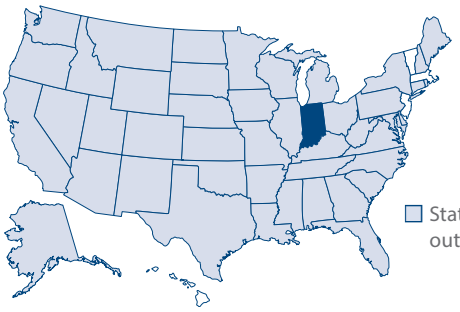
Digital Learning	D-

Funding Sources



Indiana

The Hoosier State



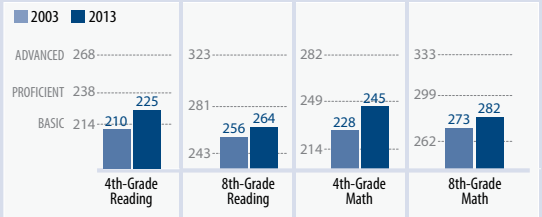
4

2013 NAEP Performance Rank

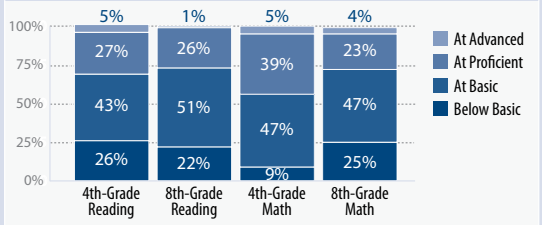
ALEC Historical Ranking *2009 NAEP: 13th | 2011 NAEP: 17th*

Measures the overall scores for low-income general education students (non-ELL and non-IEP) and their gains/losses on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) fourth- and eighth-grade reading and mathematics exams from 2003 to 2013.

NAEP Scores for Low-Income General Education Students (2003-2013)



NAEP Low-Income General Education Student Score Distribution (2013)



Supplemental Information

(The following is provided solely for informative reasons. It does not influence the above grade or ranking.)

Graduation Rate	Average Class Size	Annual Cost Per Student
77.2%	16.81	$11,583

B+

Education Policy Grade

ALEC Historical Grading *2011: B | 2012: B+| 2013: B+*

Grades state-level education policies that provide high-quality educational options to all students.

State Academic Standards	C-

Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	A

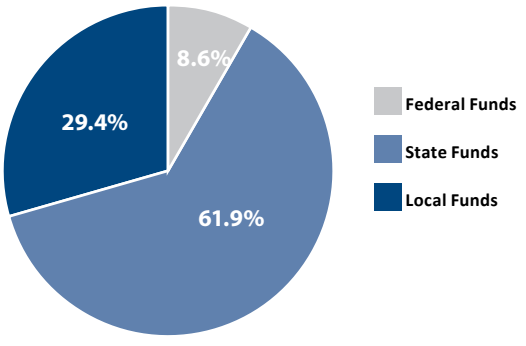
Homeschool Regulation Burden *(A=None, B=Low, C=Moderate, D=High)*	A

Private School Choice Programs	A

Teacher Quality and Policies: Overall Grade	B-
Delivering Well Prepared Teachers	B+
Expanding the Teaching Pool	C-
Identifying Effective Teachers	C
Retaining Effective Teachers	C-
Exiting Ineffective Teachers	B

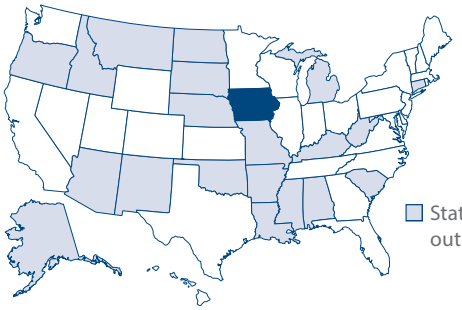
Digital Learning	B-

Funding Sources



Iowa

The Hawkeye State



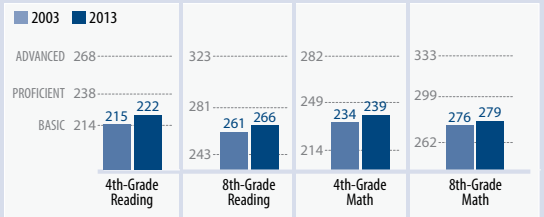
2013 NAEP Performance Rank

31

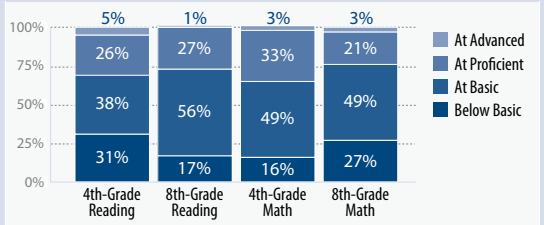
ALEC Historical Ranking *2009 NAEP: 31st | 2011 NAEP: 31st*

Measures the overall scores for low-income general education students (non-ELL and non-IEP) and their gains/losses on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) fourth- and eighth-grade reading and mathematics exams from 2003 to 2013.

NAEP Scores for Low-Income General Education Students (2003-2013)



NAEP Low-Income General Education Student Score Distribution (2013)



Supplemental Information

(The following is provided solely for informative reasons. It does not influence the above grade or ranking.)

Graduation Rate	Average Class Size	Annual Cost Per Student
87.9%	13.72	$11,909

Education Policy Grade

C-

ALEC Historical Grading *2011: C- | 2012: C| 2013: C-*

Grades state-level education policies that provide high-quality educational options to all students.

State Academic Standards	C

Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	D

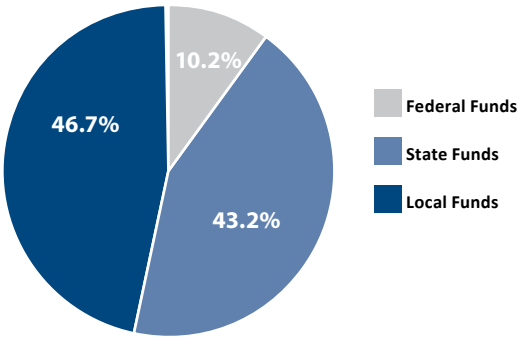
Homeschool Regulation Burden *(A=None, B=Low, C=Moderate, D=High)*	A

Private School Choice Programs	C

Teacher Quality and Policies: Overall Grade	D
Delivering Well Prepared Teachers	D+
Expanding the Teaching Pool	D+
Identifying Effective Teachers	D-
Retaining Effective Teachers	D
Exiting Ineffective Teachers	D

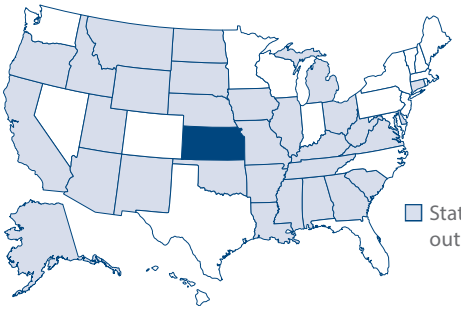
Digital Learning	D

Funding Sources



Kansas

The Sunflower State



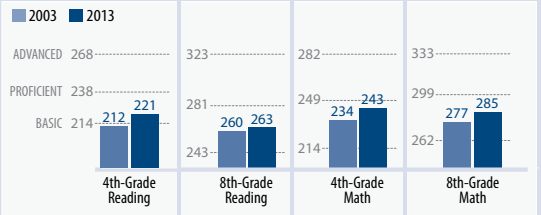
20

2013 NAEP Performance Rank

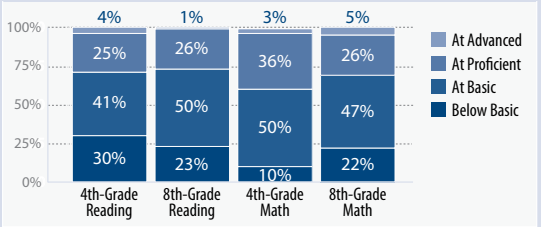
ALEC Historical Ranking *2009 NAEP: 7th | 2011 NAEP: 8th*

Measures the overall scores for low-income general education students (non-ELL and non-IEP) and their gains/losses on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) fourth- and eighth-grade reading and mathematics exams from 2003 to 2013.

NAEP Scores for Low-Income General Education Students (2003-2013)



NAEP Low-Income General Education Student Score Distribution (2013)



Supplemental Information

(The following is provided solely for informative reasons. It does not influence the above grade or ranking.)

Graduation Rate	Average Class Size	Annual Cost Per Student
84.5%	13.67	$11,472

C-

Education Policy Grade

ALEC Historical Grading *2011: C- | 2012: C- | 2013: D+*

Grades state-level education policies that provide high-quality educational options to all students.

State Academic Standards	D+

Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	F

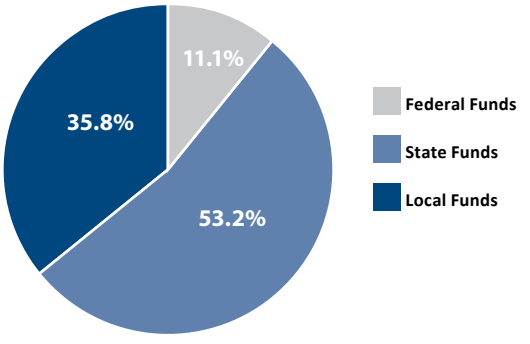
Homeschool Regulation Burden *(A=None, B=Low, C=Moderate, D=High)*	B

Private School Choice Programs	D

Teacher Quality and Policies: Overall Grade	D
Delivering Well Prepared Teachers	D+
Expanding the Teaching Pool	D-
Identifying Effective Teachers	D+
Retaining Effective Teachers	D
Exiting Ineffective Teachers	F

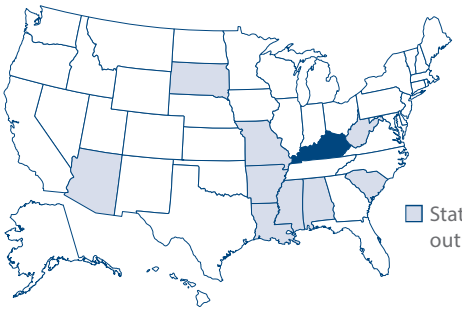
Digital Learning	B-

Funding Sources



Kentucky

The Bluegrass State



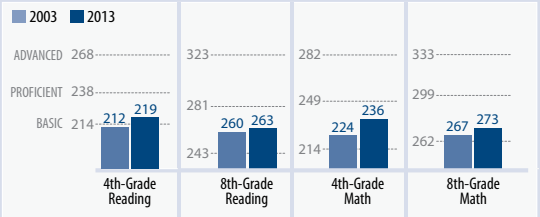
2013 NAEP Performance Rank

42

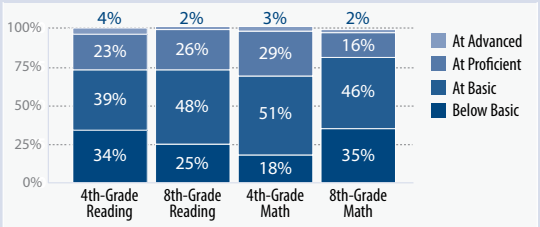
ALEC Historical Ranking *2009 NAEP: 37th | 2011 NAEP: 37th*

Measures the overall scores for low-income general education students (non-ELL and non-IEP) and their gains/losses on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) fourth- and eighth-grade reading and mathematics exams from 2003 to 2013.

NAEP Scores for Low-Income General Education Students (2003-2013)



NAEP Low-Income General Education Student Score Distribution (2013)



Supplemental Information

(The following is provided solely for informative reasons. It does not influence the above grade or ranking.)

Graduation Rate	Average Class Size	Annual Cost Per Student
79.9%	16.2	$10,555

Education Policy Grade

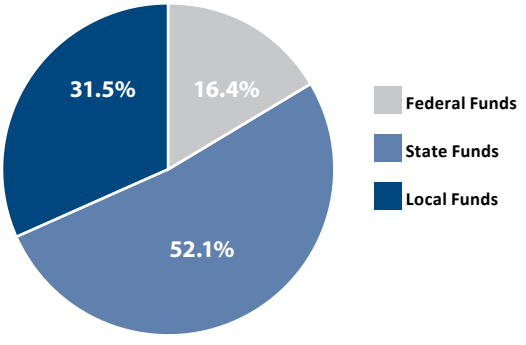
C-

ALEC Historical Grading *2011: C | 2012: D+| 2013: C-*

Grades state-level education policies that provide high-quality educational options to all students.

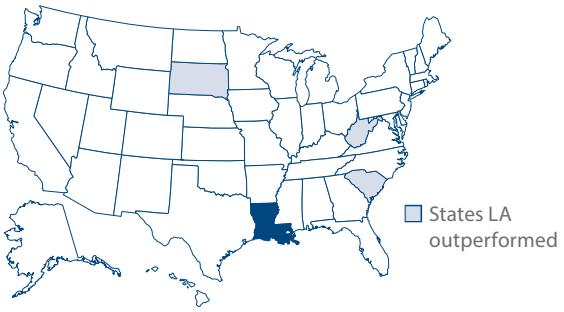
State Academic Standards	A
Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	No
Charter School Law Grade	–
Homeschool Regulation Burden *(A=None, B=Low, C=Moderate, D=High)*	B
Private School Choice Programs	F
Teacher Quality and Policies: Overall Grade	C
Delivering Well Prepared Teachers	B-
Expanding the Teaching Pool	C
Identifying Effective Teachers	C-
Retaining Effective Teachers	C
Exiting Ineffective Teachers	D
Digital Learning	D-

Funding Sources



Louisiana

The Pelican State



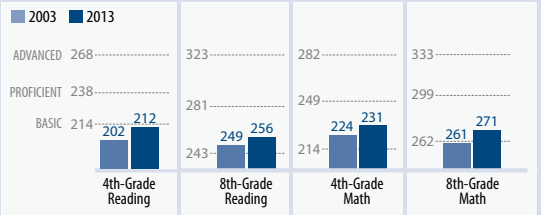
2013 NAEP Performance Rank

48

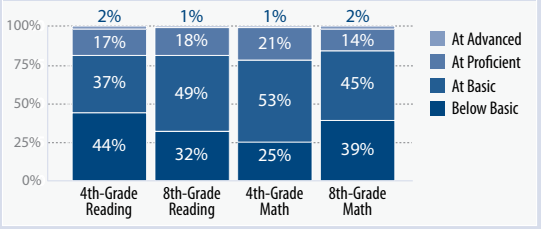
ALEC Historical Ranking *2009 NAEP: 47th | 2011 NAEP: 49th*

Measures the overall scores for low-income general education students (non-ELL and non-IEP) and their gains/losses on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) fourth- and eighth-grade reading and mathematics exams from 2003 to 2013.

NAEP Scores for Low-Income General Education Students (2003-2013)



NAEP Low-Income General Education Student Score Distribution (2013)



Supplemental Information

(The following is provided solely for informative reasons. It does not influence the above grade or ranking.)

Graduation Rate	Average Class Size	Annual Cost Per Student
68.8%	13.92	$12,054

Education Policy Grade

C+

ALEC Historical Grading *2011: B- | 2012: B| 2013: B-*

Grades state-level education policies that provide high-quality educational options to all students.

State Academic Standards	D

Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	C

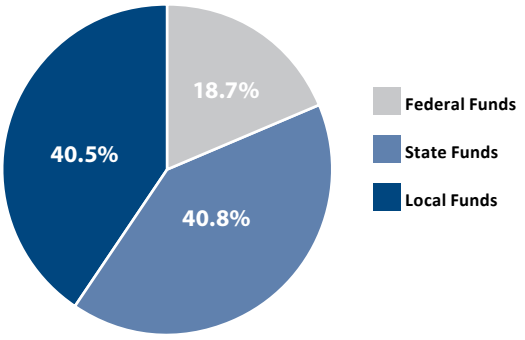
Homeschool Regulation Burden *(A=None, B=Low, C=Moderate, D=High)*	C

Private School Choice Programs	A

Teacher Quality and Policies: Overall Grade	B
Delivering Well Prepared Teachers	C
Expanding the Teaching Pool	C+
Identifying Effective Teachers	A-
Retaining Effective Teachers	B+
Exiting Ineffective Teachers	C

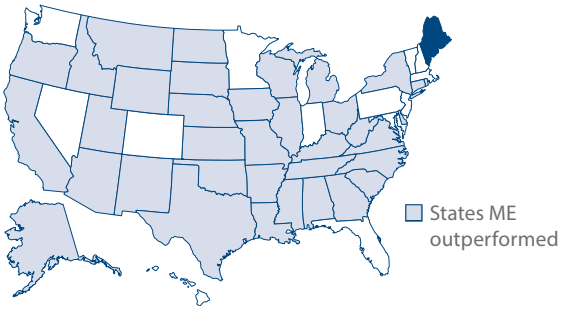
Digital Learning	B-

Funding Sources



Maine

The Pine Tree State



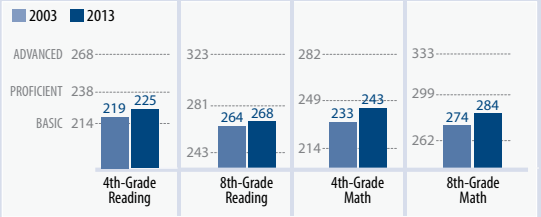
2013 NAEP Performance Rank

14

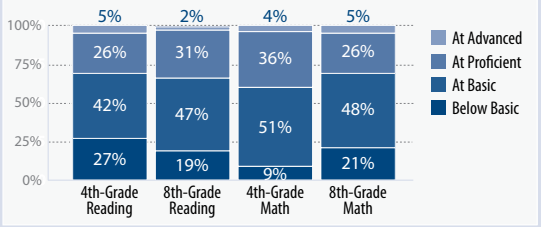
ALEC Historical Ranking *2009 NAEP: 14th | 2011 NAEP: 14th*

Measures the overall scores for low-income general education students (non-ELL and non-IEP) and their gains/losses on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) fourth- and eighth-grade reading and mathematics exams from 2003 to 2013.

NAEP Scores for Low-Income General Education Students (2003-2013)



NAEP Low-Income General Education Student Score Distribution (2013)



Supplemental Information

(The following is provided solely for informative reasons. It does not influence the above grade or ranking.)

Graduation Rate	Average Class Size	Annual Cost Per Student
82.8%	11.59	$12,704

Education Policy Grade

C

ALEC Historical Grading *2011: C- | 2012: C-| 2013: C*

Grades state-level education policies that provide high-quality educational options to all students.

State Academic Standards	C+

Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	C

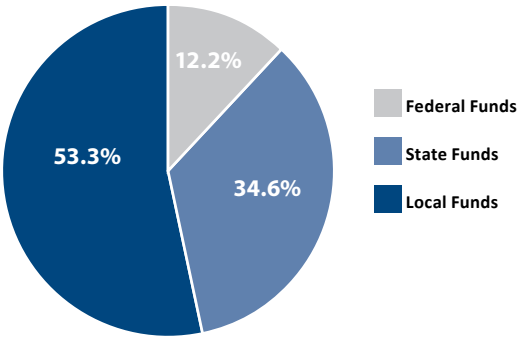
Homeschool Regulation Burden *(A=None, B=Low, C=Moderate, D=High)*	C

Private School Choice Programs	C

Teacher Quality and Policies: Overall Grade	C-
Delivering Well Prepared Teachers	D+
Expanding the Teaching Pool	C-
Identifying Effective Teachers	D-
Retaining Effective Teachers	C+
Exiting Ineffective Teachers	C

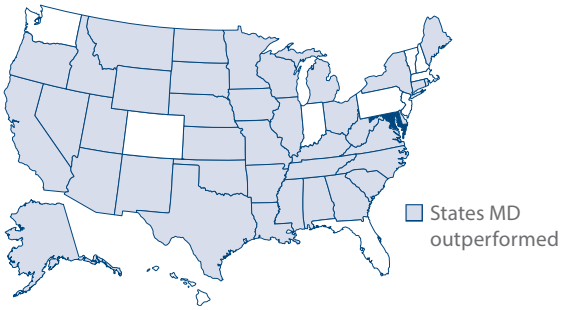
Digital Learning	C

Funding Sources



Maryland

The Old Line State



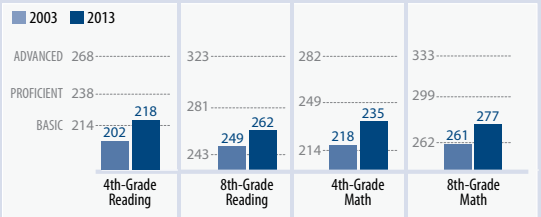
2013 NAEP Performance Rank

11

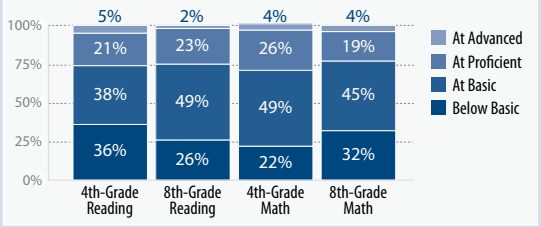
ALEC Historical Ranking *2009 NAEP: 20th | 2011 NAEP: 20th*

Measures the overall scores for low-income general education students (non-ELL and non-IEP) and their gains/losses on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) fourth- and eighth-grade reading and mathematics exams from 2003 to 2013.

NAEP Scores for Low-Income General Education Students (2003-2013)



NAEP Low-Income General Education Student Score Distribution (2013)



Supplemental Information

(The following is provided solely for informative reasons. It does not influence the above grade or ranking.)

Graduation Rate	Average Class Size	Annual Cost Per Student
82.2%	14.51	$15,774

Education Policy Grade

D+

ALEC Historical Grading *2011: C- | 2012: D+| 2013: D+*

Grades state-level education policies that provide high-quality educational options to all students.

State Academic Standards	C

Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	F

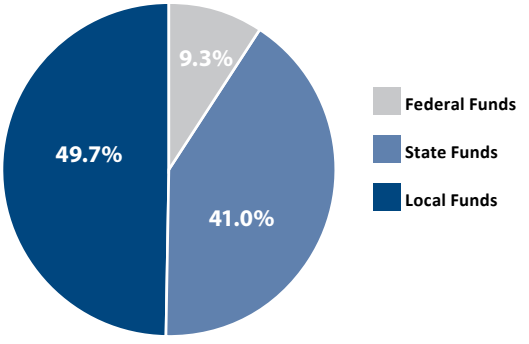
Homeschool Regulation Burden *(A=None, B=Low, C=Moderate, D=High)*	C

Private School Choice Programs	F

Teacher Quality and Policies: Overall Grade	D+
Delivering Well Prepared Teachers	D+
Expanding the Teaching Pool	C-
Identifying Effective Teachers	C-
Retaining Effective Teachers	C-
Exiting Ineffective Teachers	F

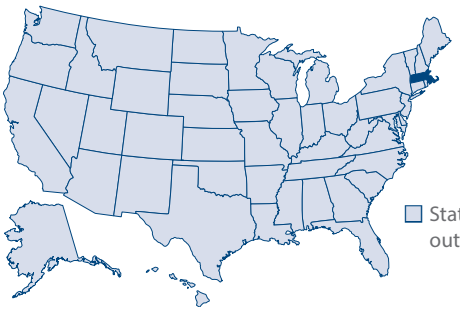
Digital Learning	C

Funding Sources



Massachusetts

The Bay State



States MA outperformed

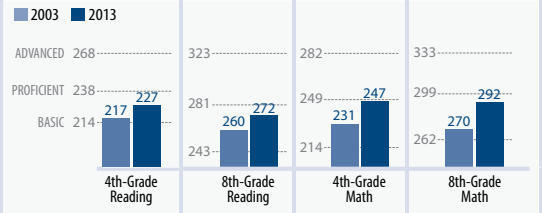
1

2013 NAEP Performance Rank

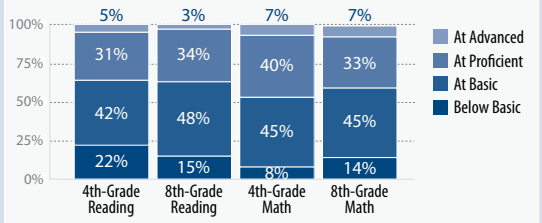
ALEC Historical Ranking *2009 NAEP: 2nd | 2011 NAEP: 1st*

Measures the overall scores for low-income general education students (non-ELL and non-IEP) and their gains/losses on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) fourth- and eighth-grade reading and mathematics exams from 2003 to 2013.

NAEP Scores for Low-Income General Education Students (2003-2013)



NAEP Low-Income General Education Student Score Distribution (2013)



Supplemental Information

(The following is provided solely for informative reasons. It does not influence the above grade or ranking.)

Graduation Rate	Average Class Size	Annual Cost Per Student
82.6%	13.69	$16,495

C-

Education Policy Grade

ALEC Historical Grading *2011: B- | 2012: C | 2013: C*

Grades state-level education policies that provide high-quality educational options to all students.

State Academic Standards	A

Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	C

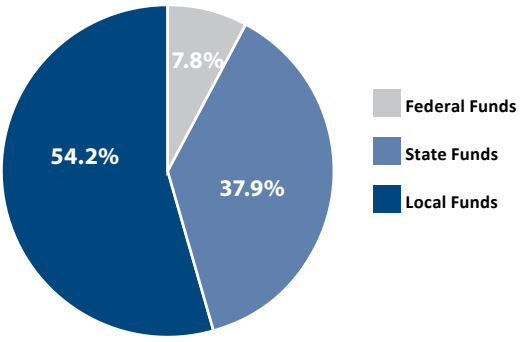
Homeschool Regulation Burden *(A=None, B=Low, C=Moderate, D=High)*	D

Private School Choice Programs	F

Teacher Quality and Policies: Overall Grade	B-
Delivering Well Prepared Teachers	B-
Expanding the Teaching Pool	C+
Identifying Effective Teachers	C-
Retaining Effective Teachers	C+
Exiting Ineffective Teachers	B

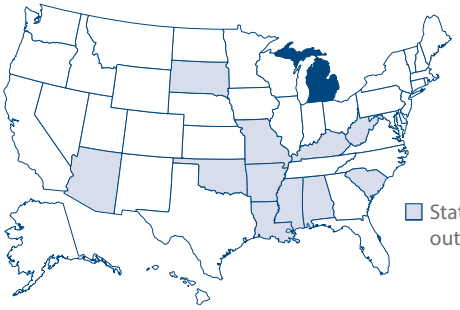
Digital Learning	D+

Funding Sources



Michigan

The Great Lakes State



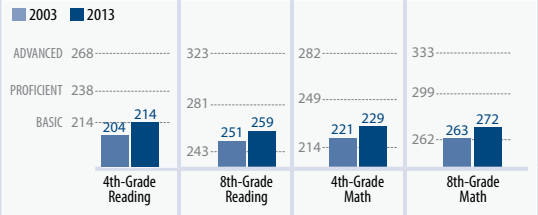
2013 NAEP Performance Rank

40

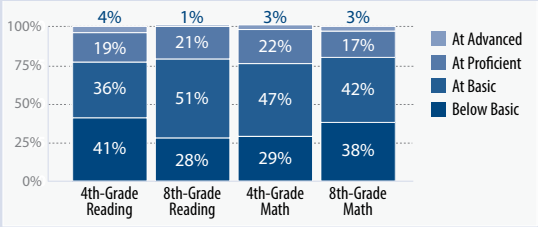
ALEC Historical Ranking *2009 NAEP: 49th | 2011 NAEP: 46th*

Measures the overall scores for low-income general education students (non-ELL and non-IEP) and their gains/losses on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) fourth- and eighth-grade reading and mathematics exams from 2003 to 2013.

NAEP Scores for Low-Income General Education Students (2003-2013)



NAEP Low-Income General Education Student Score Distribution (2013)



Supplemental Information

(The following is provided solely for informative reasons. It does not influence the above grade or ranking.)

Graduation Rate	Average Class Size	Annual Cost Per Student
75.9%	17.79	$12,644

Education Policy Grade

B-

ALEC Historical Grading *2011: B- | 2012: B- | 2013: C+*

Grades state-level education policies that provide high-quality educational options to all students.

State Academic Standards	B

Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	A

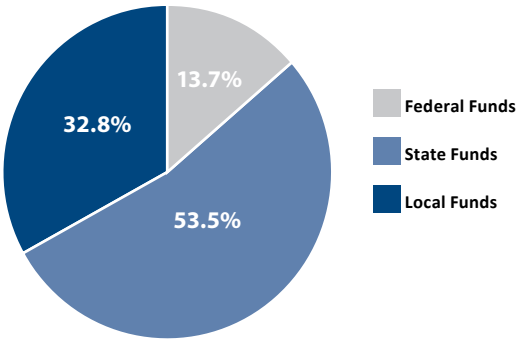
Homeschool Regulation Burden *(A=None, B=Low, C=Moderate, D=High)*	A

Private School Choice Programs	F

Teacher Quality and Policies: Overall Grade	B-
Delivering Well Prepared Teachers	D+
Expanding the Teaching Pool	B-
Identifying Effective Teachers	B
Retaining Effective Teachers	B-
Exiting Ineffective Teachers	C+

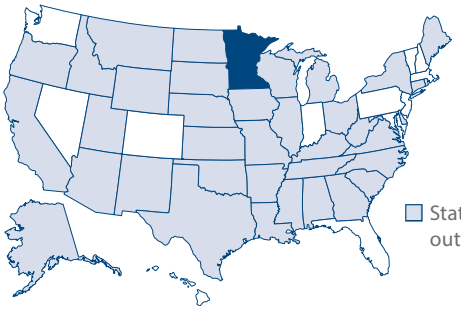
Digital Learning	C

Funding Sources



Minnesota

The North Star State



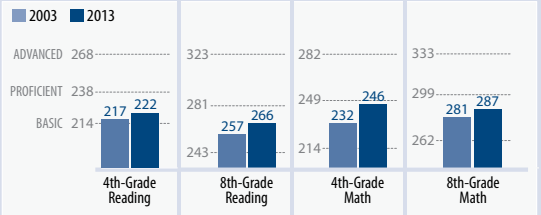
2013 NAEP Performance Rank

13

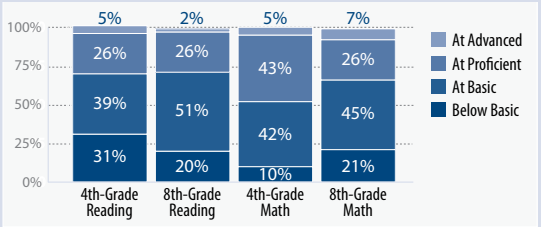
ALEC Historical Ranking *2009 NAEP: 23rd | 2011 NAEP: 18th*

Measures the overall scores for low-income general education students (non-ELL and non-IEP) and their gains/losses on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) fourth- and eighth-grade reading and mathematics exams from 2003 to 2013.

NAEP Scores for Low-Income General Education Students (2003-2013)



NAEP Low-Income General Education Student Score Distribution (2013)



Supplemental Information

(The following is provided solely for informative reasons. It does not influence the above grade or ranking.)

Graduation Rate	Average Class Size	Annual Cost Per Student
88.8%	15.84	$13,464

Education Policy Grade

B-

ALEC Historical Grading *2011: B+ | 2012: C+| 2013: C+*

Grades state-level education policies that provide high-quality educational options to all students.

State Academic Standards	B-

Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	A

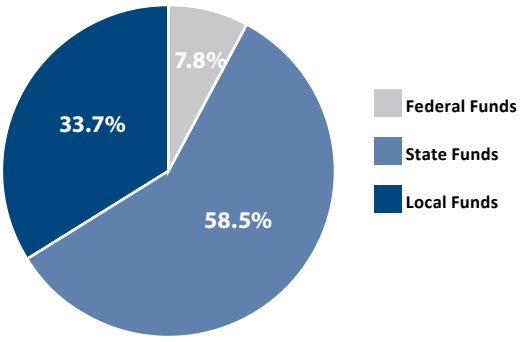
Homeschool Regulation Burden *(A=None, B=Low, C=Moderate, D=High)*	C

Private School Choice Programs	C

Teacher Quality and Policies: Overall Grade	C-
Delivering Well Prepared Teachers	C+
Expanding the Teaching Pool	C
Identifying Effective Teachers	C-
Retaining Effective Teachers	D+
Exiting Ineffective Teachers	F

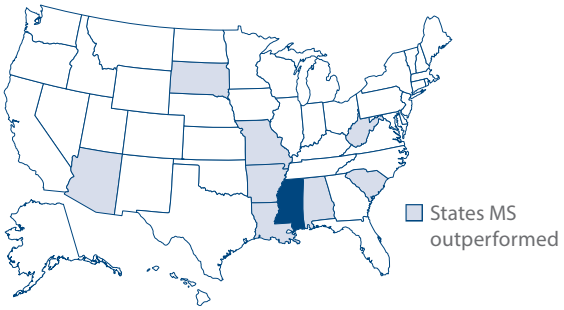
Digital Learning	B+

Funding Sources



Mississippi

The Magnolia State



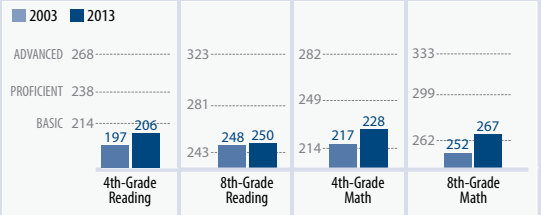
43

2013 NAEP Performance Rank

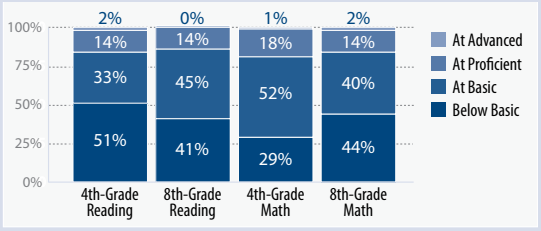
ALEC Historical Ranking *2009 NAEP: 46th | 2011 NAEP: 48th*

Measures the overall scores for low-income general education students (non-ELL and non-IEP) and their gains/losses on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) fourth- and eighth-grade reading and mathematics exams from 2003 to 2013.

NAEP Scores for Low-Income General Education Students (2003-2013)



NAEP Low-Income General Education Student Score Distribution (2013)



Supplemental Information

(The following is provided solely for informative reasons. It does not influence the above grade or ranking.)

Graduation Rate	Average Class Size	Annual Cost Per Student
63.8%	14.88	$9,190

C

Education Policy Grade

ALEC Historical Grading *2011: C | 2012: C-| 2013: C-*

Grades state-level education policies that provide high-quality educational options to all students.

State Academic Standards	C-

Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	D

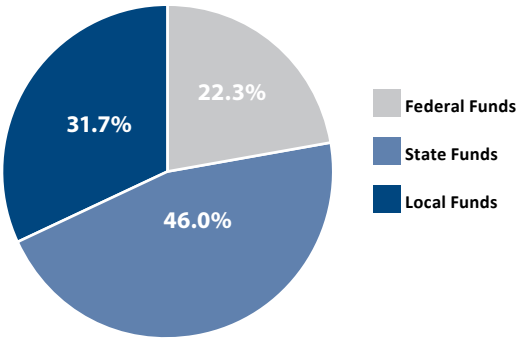
Homeschool Regulation Burden *(A=None, B=Low, C=Moderate, D=High)*	B

Private School Choice Programs	B

Teacher Quality and Policies: Overall Grade	C
Delivering Well Prepared Teachers	C
Expanding the Teaching Pool	C+
Identifying Effective Teachers	C-
Retaining Effective Teachers	C
Exiting Ineffective Teachers	D+

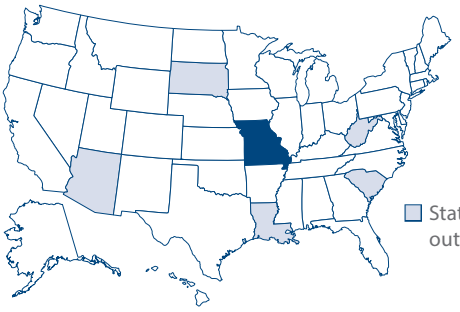
Digital Learning	D-

Funding Sources



Missouri

The Show-Me State



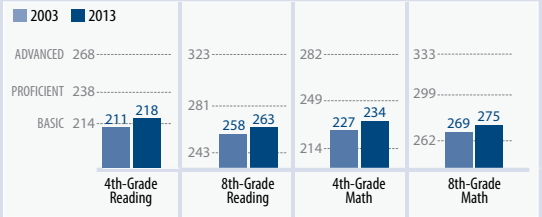
2013 NAEP Performance Rank

46

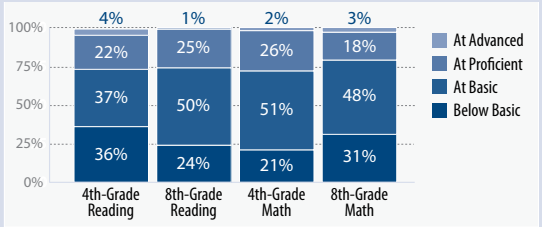
ALEC Historical Ranking *2009 NAEP: 34th | 2011 NAEP: 47th*

Measures the overall scores for low-income general education students (non-ELL and non-IEP) and their gains/losses on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) fourth- and eighth-grade reading and mathematics exams from 2003 to 2013.

NAEP Scores for Low-Income General Education Students (2003-2013)



NAEP Low-Income General Education Student Score Distribution (2013)



Supplemental Information

(The following is provided solely for informative reasons. It does not influence the above grade or ranking.)

Graduation Rate	Average Class Size	Annual Cost Per Student
83.7%	13.54	$10,977

Education Policy Grade

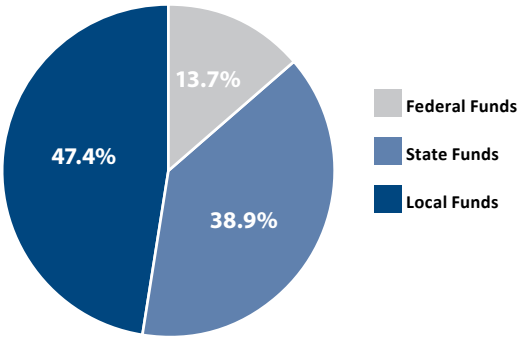
C+

ALEC Historical Grading *2011: A- | 2012: C | 2013: B-*

Grades state-level education policies that provide high-quality educational options to all students.

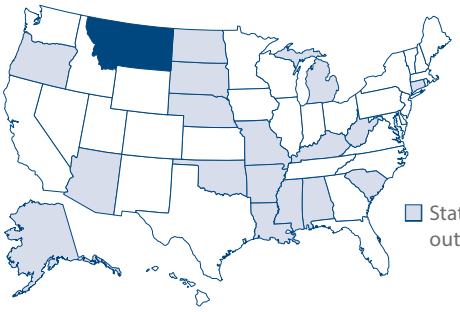
State Academic Standards	A
Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	B
Homeschool Regulation Burden *(A=None, B=Low, C=Moderate, D=High)*	A
Private School Choice Programs	F
Teacher Quality and Policies: Overall Grade	C-
Delivering Well Prepared Teachers	B-
Expanding the Teaching Pool	D+
Identifying Effective Teachers	D+
Retaining Effective Teachers	C
Exiting Ineffective Teachers	D+
Digital Learning	D+

Funding Sources



Montana

The Treasure State



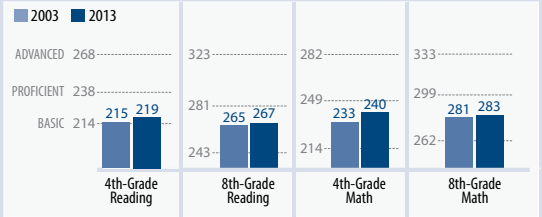
2013 NAEP Performance Rank

34

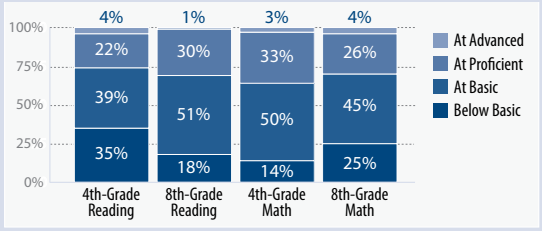
ALEC Historical Ranking *2009 NAEP: 9th | 2011 NAEP: 16th*

Measures the overall scores for low-income general education students (non-ELL and non-IEP) and their gains/losses on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) fourth- and eighth-grade reading and mathematics exams from 2003 to 2013.

NAEP Scores for Low-Income General Education Students (2003-2013)



NAEP Low-Income General Education Student Score Distribution (2013)



Supplemental Information

(The following is provided solely for informative reasons. It does not influence the above grade or ranking.)

Graduation Rate	Average Class Size	Annual Cost Per Student
81.9%	13.48	$11,434

Education Policy Grade

D

ALEC Historical Grading *2011: C | 2012: D | 2013: D+*

Grades state-level education policies that provide high-quality educational options to all students.

State Academic Standards	C

Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	No
Charter School Law Grade	–

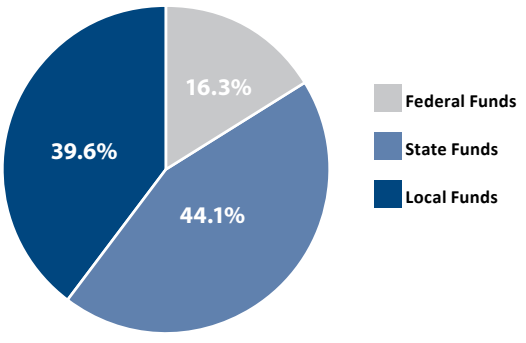
Homeschool Regulation Burden *(A=None, B=Low, C=Moderate, D=High)*	B

Private School Choice Programs	D

Teacher Quality and Policies: Overall Grade	F
Delivering Well Prepared Teachers	F
Expanding the Teaching Pool	F
Identifying Effective Teachers	F
Retaining Effective Teachers	D-
Exiting Ineffective Teachers	F

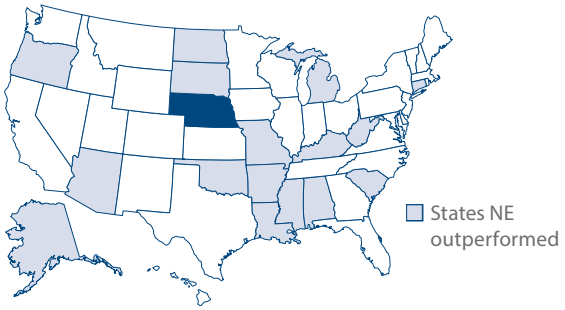
Digital Learning	F

Funding Sources



Nebraska

The Cornhusker State



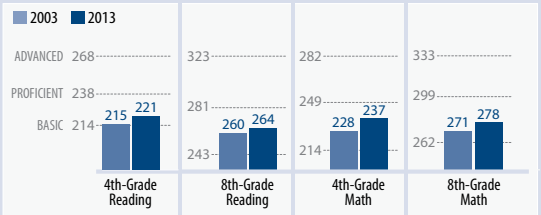
2013 NAEP Performance Rank

35

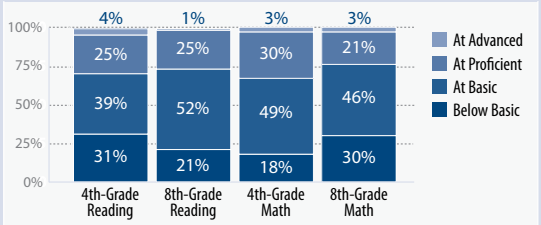
ALEC Historical Ranking *2009 NAEP: 33rd | 2011 NAEP: 42nd*

Measures the overall scores for low-income general education students (non-ELL and non-IEP) and their gains/losses on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) fourth- and eighth-grade reading and mathematics exams from 2003 to 2013.

NAEP Scores for Low-Income General Education Students (2003-2013)



NAEP Low-Income General Education Student Score Distribution (2013)



Supplemental Information

(The following is provided solely for informative reasons. It does not influence the above grade or ranking.)

Graduation Rate	Average Class Size	Annual Cost Per Student
83.8%	13.27	$12,773

Education Policy Grade

D

ALEC Historical Grading *2011: D+ | 2012: D | 2013: D+*

Grades state-level education policies that provide high-quality educational options to all students.

State Academic Standards	C

Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	No
Charter School Law Grade	–

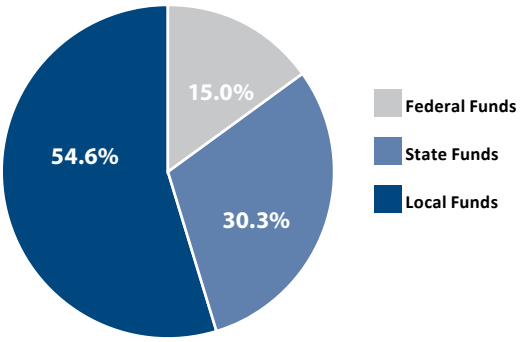
Homeschool Regulation Burden *(A=None, B=Low, C=Moderate, D=High)*	B

Private School Choice Programs	F

Teacher Quality and Policies: Overall Grade	D-
Delivering Well Prepared Teachers	D-
Expanding the Teaching Pool	D-
Identifying Effective Teachers	D
Retaining Effective Teachers	D+
Exiting Ineffective Teachers	F

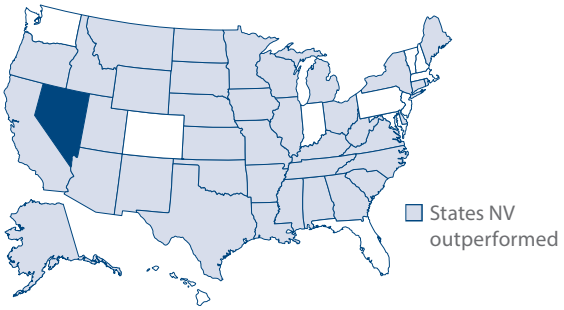
Digital Learning	F

Funding Sources



Nevada

The Silver State



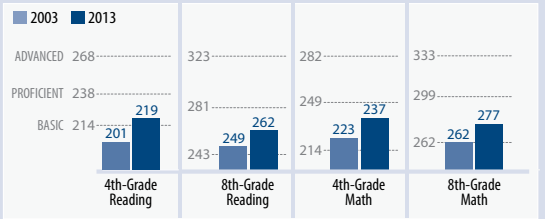
2013 NAEP Performance Rank

12

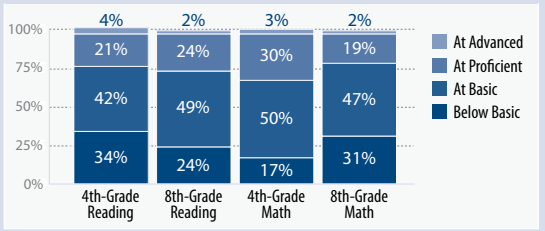
ALEC Historical Ranking *2009 NAEP: 18th | 2011 NAEP: 15th*

Measures the overall scores for low-income general education students (non-ELL and non-IEP) and their gains/losses on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) fourth- and eighth-grade reading and mathematics exams from 2003 to 2013.

NAEP Scores for Low-Income General Education Students (2003-2013)



NAEP Low-Income General Education Student Score Distribution (2013)



Supplemental Information

(The following is provided solely for informative reasons. It does not influence the above grade or ranking.)

Graduation Rate	Average Class Size	Annual Cost Per Student
57.8%	19.41	$9,649

Education Policy Grade

B-

ALEC Historical Grading *2011: C+ | 2012: C+| 2013: C*

Grades state-level education policies that provide high-quality educational options to all students.

State Academic Standards	C+

Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	C

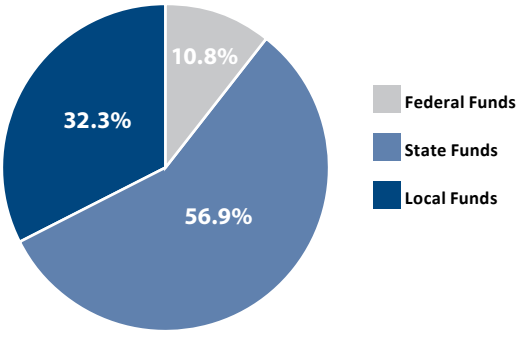
Homeschool Regulation Burden *(A=None, B=Low, C=Moderate, D=High)*	B

Private School Choice Programs	A

Teacher Quality and Policies: Overall Grade	C-
Delivering Well Prepared Teachers	D-
Expanding the Teaching Pool	D
Identifying Effective Teachers	B-
Retaining Effective Teachers	D+
Exiting Ineffective Teachers	B

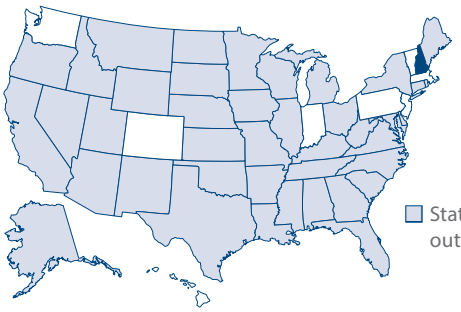
Digital Learning	B+

Funding Sources



New Hampshire

The Granite State



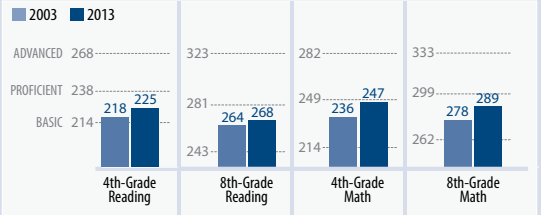
9

2013 NAEP Performance Rank

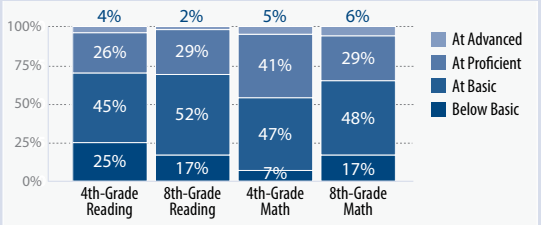
ALEC Historical Ranking *2009 NAEP: 4th | 2011 NAEP: 9th*

Measures the overall scores for low-income general education students (non-ELL and non-IEP) and their gains/losses on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) fourth- and eighth-grade reading and mathematics exams from 2003 to 2013.

NAEP Scores for Low-Income General Education Students (2003-2013)



NAEP Low-Income General Education Student Score Distribution (2013)



Supplemental Information

(The following is provided solely for informative reasons. It does not influence the above grade or ranking.)

Graduation Rate	Average Class Size	Annual Cost Per Student
86.3%	12.73	$15,032

Education Policy Grade

D+

ALEC Historical Grading *2011: C+ | 2012: C | 2013: C*

Grades state-level education policies that provide high-quality educational options to all students.

State Academic Standards	C+

Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	D

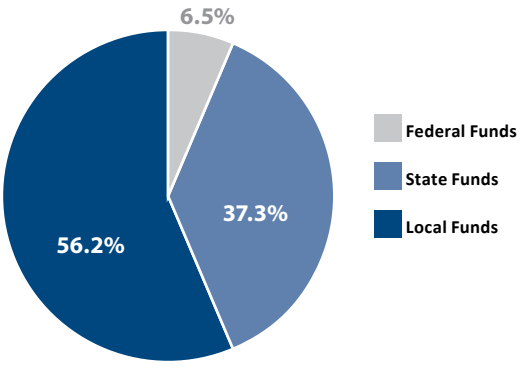
Homeschool Regulation Burden *(A=None, B=Low, C=Moderate, D=High)*	C

Private School Choice Programs	D

Teacher Quality and Policies: Overall Grade	D
Delivering Well Prepared Teachers	C-
Expanding the Teaching Pool	D
Identifying Effective Teachers	D-
Retaining Effective Teachers	F
Exiting Ineffective Teachers	D

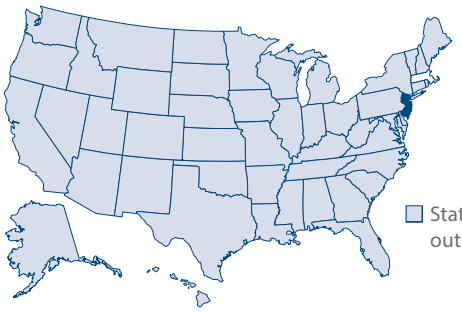
Digital Learning	D

Funding Sources



New Jersey

The Garden State



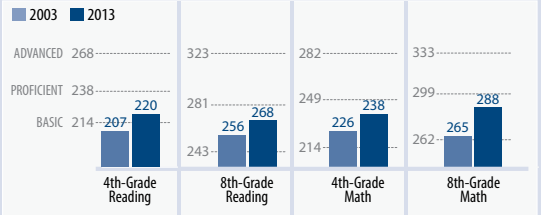
2013 NAEP Performance Rank

2

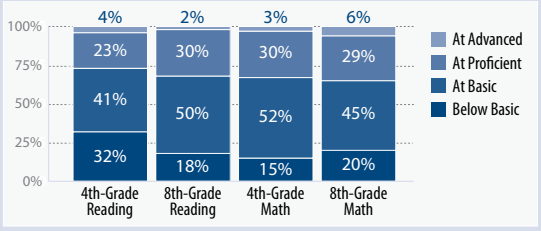
ALEC Historical Ranking *2009 NAEP: 10th | 2011 NAEP: 3rd*

Measures the overall scores for low-income general education students (non-ELL and non-IEP) and their gains/losses on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) fourth- and eighth-grade reading and mathematics exams from 2003 to 2013.

NAEP Scores for Low-Income General Education Students (2003-2013)



NAEP Low-Income General Education Student Score Distribution (2013)



Supplemental Information

(The following is provided solely for informative reasons. It does not influence the above grade or ranking.)

Graduation Rate	Average Class Size	Annual Cost Per Student
87.2%	12.11	$18,083

Education Policy Grade

C

ALEC Historical Grading *2011: B- | 2012: C | 2013: C+*

Grades state-level education policies that provide high-quality educational options to all students.

State Academic Standards	B-

Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	C

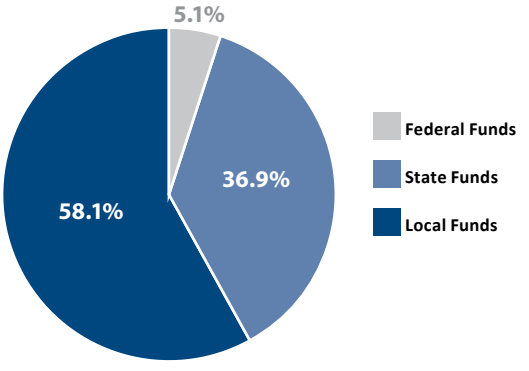
Homeschool Regulation Burden *(A=None, B=Low, C=Moderate, D=High)*	A

Private School Choice Programs	F

Teacher Quality and Policies: Overall Grade	B-
Delivering Well Prepared Teachers	B-
Expanding the Teaching Pool	B-
Identifying Effective Teachers	B-
Retaining Effective Teachers	C
Exiting Ineffective Teachers	C

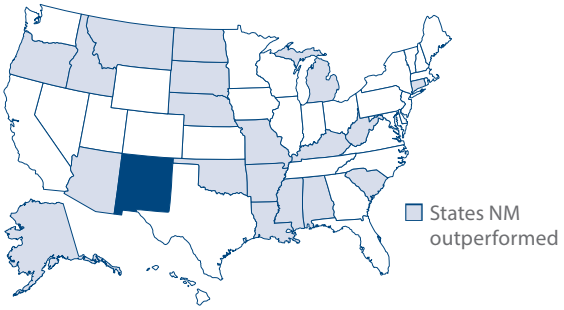
Digital Learning	D-

Funding Sources



New Mexico

The Land of Enchantment



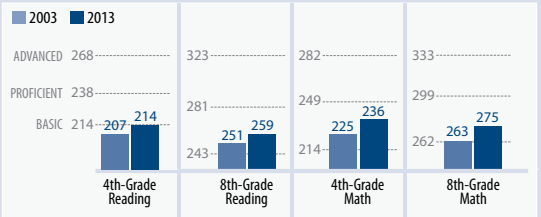
2013 NAEP Performance Rank

32

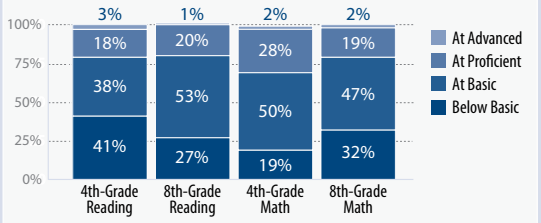
ALEC Historical Ranking *2009 NAEP: 48th | 2011 NAEP: 35th*

Measures the overall scores for low-income general education students (non-ELL and non-IEP) and their gains/losses on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) fourth- and eighth-grade reading and mathematics exams from 2003 to 2013.

NAEP Scores for Low-Income General Education Students (2003-2013)



NAEP Low-Income General Education Student Score Distribution (2013)



Supplemental Information

(The following is provided solely for informative reasons. It does not influence the above grade or ranking.)

Graduation Rate	Average Class Size	Annual Cost Per Student
67.3%	14.72	$10,838

Education Policy Grade

C-

ALEC Historical Grading *2011: B | 2012: C | 2013: C*

Grades state-level education policies that provide high-quality educational options to all students.

State Academic Standards	B-

Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	C

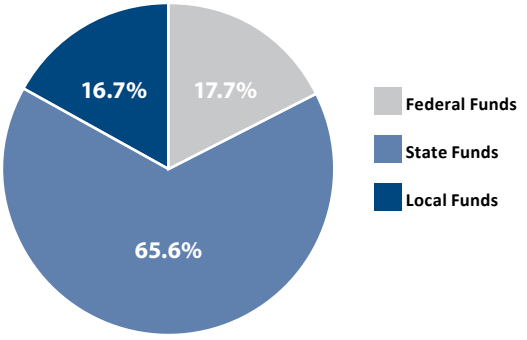
Homeschool Regulation Burden *(A=None, B=Low, C=Moderate, D=High)*	B

Private School Choice Programs	F

Teacher Quality and Policies: Overall Grade	D+
Delivering Well Prepared Teachers	D+
Expanding the Teaching Pool	D-
Identifying Effective Teachers	C-
Retaining Effective Teachers	C-
Exiting Ineffective Teachers	C

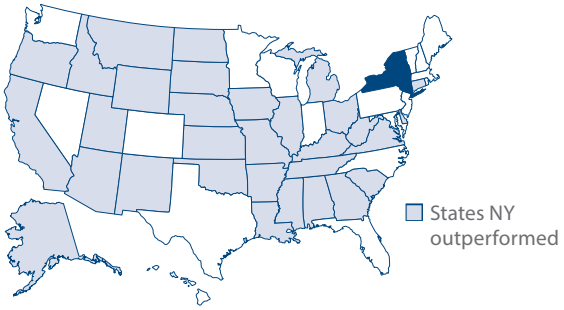
Digital Learning	C

Funding Sources



New York

The Empire State



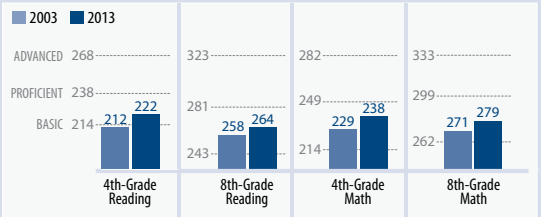
2013 NAEP Performance Rank

19

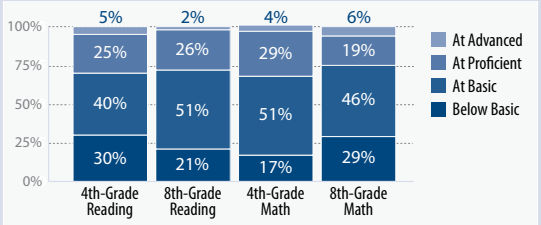
ALEC Historical Ranking *2009 NAEP: 5th | 2011 NAEP: 10th*

Measures the overall scores for low-income general education students (non-ELL and non-IEP) and their gains/losses on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) fourth- and eighth-grade reading and mathematics exams from 2003 to 2013.

NAEP Scores for Low-Income General Education Students (2003-2013)



NAEP Low-Income General Education Student Score Distribution (2013)



Supplemental Information

(The following is provided solely for informative reasons. It does not influence the above grade or ranking.)

Graduation Rate	Average Class Size	Annual Cost Per Student
76.0%	12.88	$21,489

Education Policy Grade

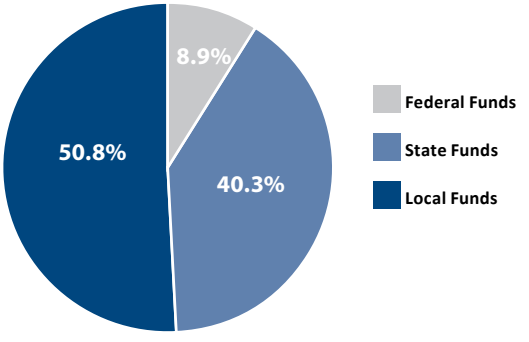
C

ALEC Historical Grading *2011: C- | 2012: C- | 2013: C*

Grades state-level education policies that provide high-quality educational options to all students.

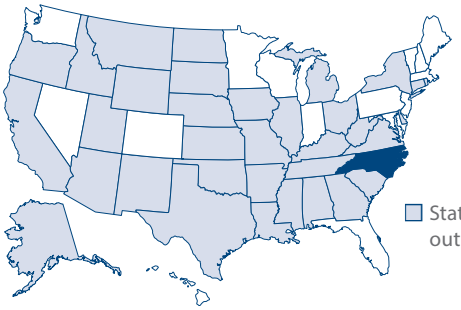
State Academic Standards	A
Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	B
Homeschool Regulation Burden *(A=None, B=Low, C=Moderate, D=High)*	D
Private School Choice Programs	F
Teacher Quality and Policies: Overall Grade	B-
Delivering Well Prepared Teachers	B
Expanding the Teaching Pool	C+
Identifying Effective Teachers	B-
Retaining Effective Teachers	C+
Exiting Ineffective Teachers	C-
Digital Learning	D-

Funding Sources



North Carolina

The Old North State



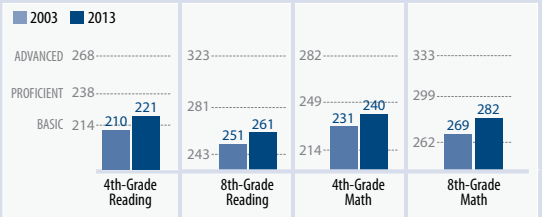
2013 NAEP Performance Rank

16

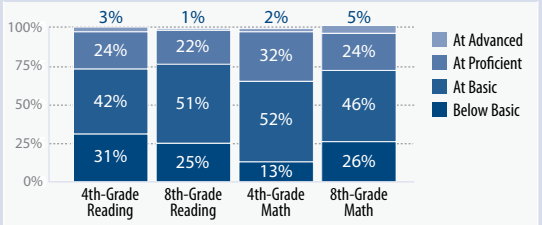
ALEC Historical Ranking *2009 NAEP: 41st | 2011 NAEP: 7th*

Measures the overall scores for low-income general education students (non-ELL and non-IEP) and their gains/losses on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) fourth- and eighth-grade reading and mathematics exams from 2003 to 2013.

NAEP Scores for Low-Income General Education Students (2003-2013)



NAEP Low-Income General Education Student Score Distribution (2013)



Supplemental Information

(The following is provided solely for informative reasons. It does not influence the above grade or ranking.)

Graduation Rate	Average Class Size	Annual Cost Per Student
76.9%	14.12	$9,951

Education Policy Grade

B-

ALEC Historical Grading *2011: C | 2012: C | 2013: C+*

Grades state-level education policies that provide high-quality educational options to all students.

State Academic Standards	A

Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	C

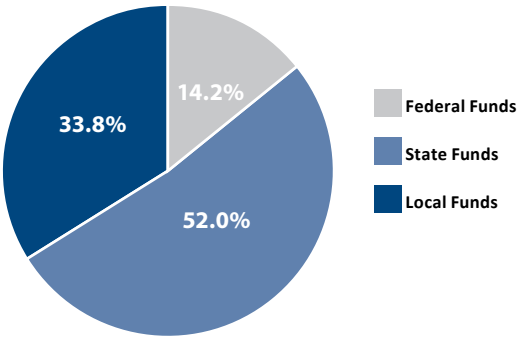
Homeschool Regulation Burden *(A=None, B=Low, C=Moderate, D=High)*	C

Private School Choice Programs	B

Teacher Quality and Policies: Overall Grade	C
Delivering Well Prepared Teachers	C+
Expanding the Teaching Pool	D+
Identifying Effective Teachers	B-
Retaining Effective Teachers	B-
Exiting Ineffective Teachers	F

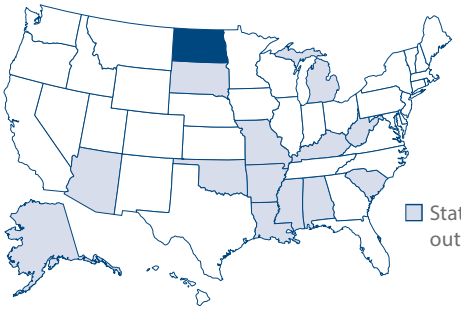
Digital Learning	C

Funding Sources



North Dakota

The Peace Garden State



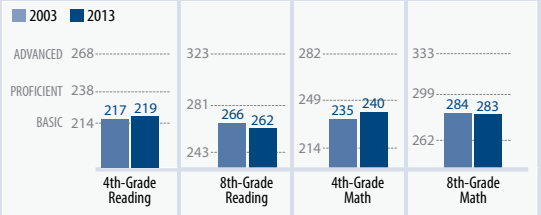
2013 NAEP Performance Rank

38

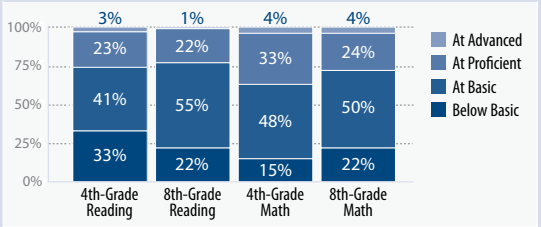
ALEC Historical Ranking *2009 NAEP: 24th | 2011 NAEP: 33rd*

Measures the overall scores for low-income general education students (non-ELL and non-IEP) and their gains/losses on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) fourth- and eighth-grade reading and mathematics exams from 2003 to 2013.

NAEP Scores for Low-Income General Education Students (2003-2013)



NAEP Low-Income General Education Student Score Distribution (2013)



Supplemental Information

(The following is provided solely for informative reasons. It does not influence the above grade or ranking.)

Graduation Rate	Average Class Size	Annual Cost Per Student
88.4%	11.36	$13,118

Education Policy Grade

D-

ALEC Historical Grading *2011: D+ | 2012: D | 2013: D*

Grades state-level education policies that provide high-quality educational options to all students.

State Academic Standards	C

Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	No
Charter School Law Grade	–

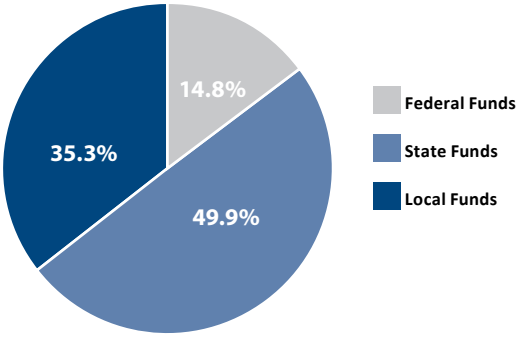
Homeschool Regulation Burden *(A=None, B=Low, C=Moderate, D=High)*	C

Private School Choice Programs	F

Teacher Quality and Policies: Overall Grade	D
Delivering Well Prepared Teachers	D
Expanding the Teaching Pool	F
Identifying Effective Teachers	D
Retaining Effective Teachers	D
Exiting Ineffective Teachers	D

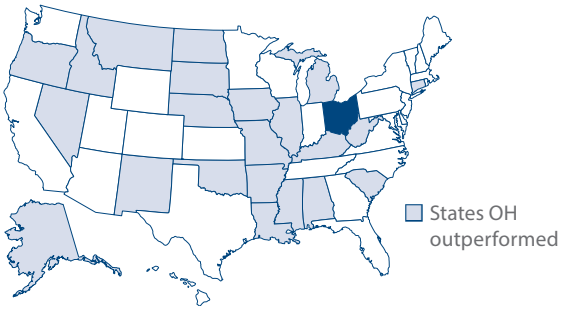
Digital Learning	F

Funding Sources



Ohio

The Buckeye State



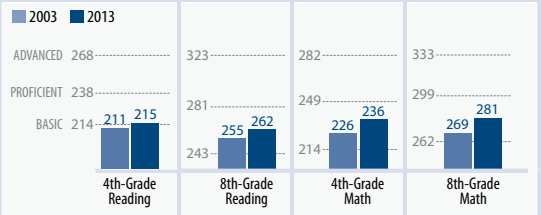
2013 NAEP Performance Rank

29

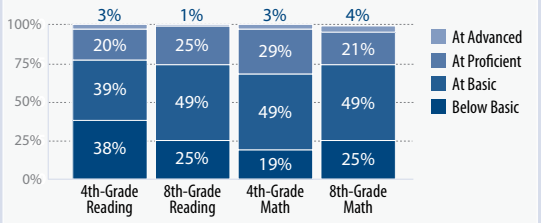
ALEC Historical Ranking *2009 NAEP: 35th | 2011 NAEP: 21st*

Measures the overall scores for low-income general education students (non-ELL and non-IEP) and their gains/losses on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) fourth- and eighth-grade reading and mathematics exams from 2003 to 2013.

NAEP Scores for Low-Income General Education Students (2003-2013)



NAEP Low-Income General Education Student Score Distribution (2013)



Supplemental Information

(The following is provided solely for informative reasons. It does not influence the above grade or ranking.)

Graduation Rate	Average Class Size	Annual Cost Per Student
81.4%	15.84	$13,764

Education Policy Grade

C+

ALEC Historical Grading *2011: B | 2012: B | 2013: C*

Grades state-level education policies that provide high-quality educational options to all students.

State Academic Standards	C-

Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	C

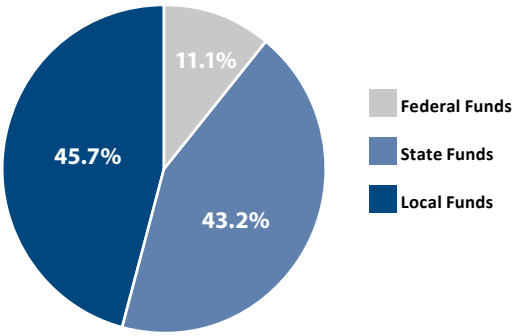
Homeschool Regulation Burden *(A=None, B=Low, C=Moderate, D=High)*	C

Private School Choice Programs	A

Teacher Quality and Policies: Overall Grade	B-
Delivering Well Prepared Teachers	C
Expanding the Teaching Pool	B
Identifying Effective Teachers	C
Retaining Effective Teachers	C+
Exiting Ineffective Teachers	B-

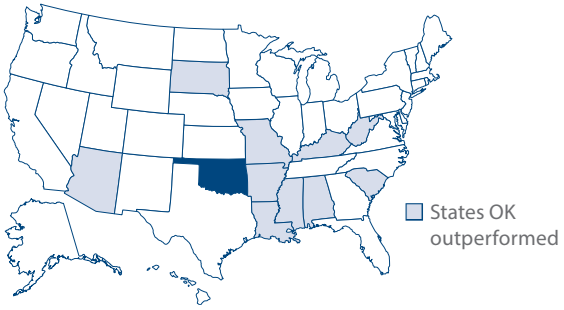
Digital Learning	D

Funding Sources



Oklahoma

The Sooner State



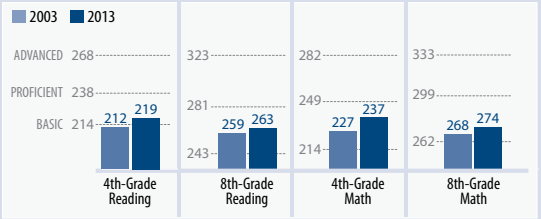
2013 NAEP Performance Rank

41

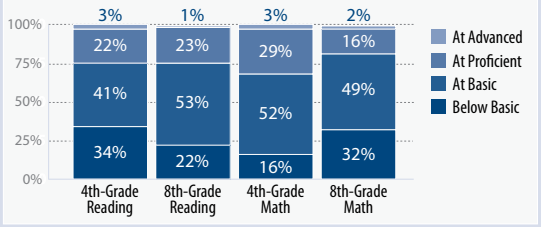
ALEC Historical Ranking *2009 NAEP: 43rd | 2011 NAEP: 43rd*

Measures the overall scores for low-income general education students (non-ELL and non-IEP) and their gains/losses on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) fourth- and eighth-grade reading and mathematics exams from 2003 to 2013.

NAEP Scores for Low-Income General Education Students (2003-2013)



NAEP Low-Income General Education Student Score Distribution (2013)



Supplemental Information

(The following is provided solely for informative reasons. It does not influence the above grade or ranking.)

Graduation Rate	Average Class Size	Annual Cost Per Student
78.5%	15.37	$8,863

Education Policy Grade

B-

ALEC Historical Grading *2011: B | 2012: B+ | 2013: B-*

Grades state-level education policies that provide high-quality educational options to all students.

State Academic Standards	D

Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	C

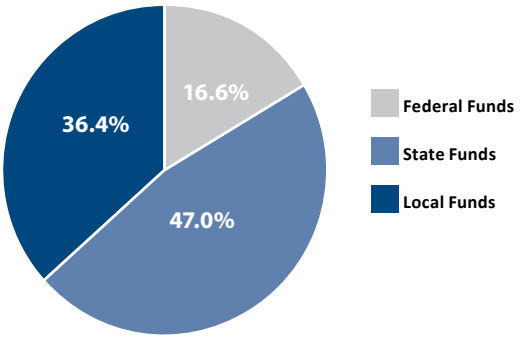
Homeschool Regulation Burden *(A=None, B=Low, C=Moderate, D=High)*	A

Private School Choice Programs	A

Teacher Quality and Policies: Overall Grade	B-
Delivering Well Prepared Teachers	C
Expanding the Teaching Pool	C+
Identifying Effective Teachers	C+
Retaining Effective Teachers	C+
Exiting Ineffective Teachers	A

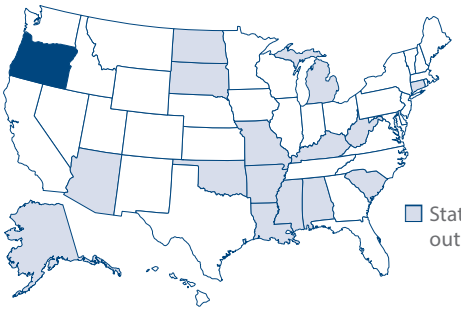
Digital Learning	C+

Funding Sources



Oregon

The Beaver State



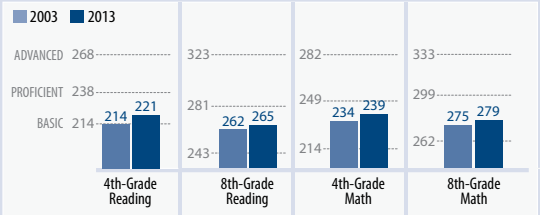
2013 NAEP Performance Rank

36

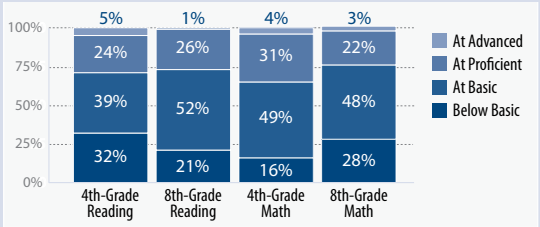
ALEC Historical Ranking *2009 NAEP: 32nd | 2011 NAEP: 40th*

Measures the overall scores for low-income general education students (non-ELL and non-IEP) and their gains/losses on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) fourth- and eighth-grade reading and mathematics exams from 2003 to 2013.

NAEP Scores for Low-Income General Education Students (2003-2013)



NAEP Low-Income General Education Student Score Distribution (2013)



Supplemental Information

(The following is provided solely for informative reasons. It does not influence the above grade or ranking.)

Graduation Rate	Average Class Size	Annual Cost Per Student
76.3%	20.26	$10,832

Education Policy Grade

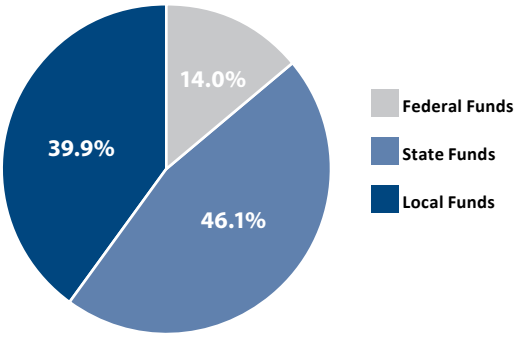
C-

ALEC Historical Grading *2011: C | 2012: C | 2013: C-*

Grades state-level education policies that provide high-quality educational options to all students.

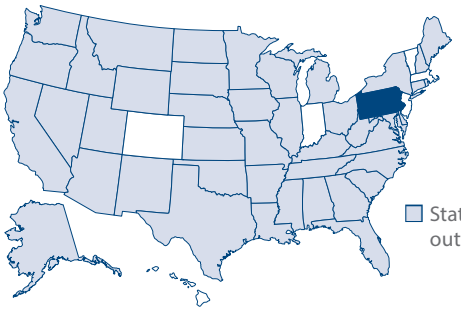
State Academic Standards	C
Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	C
Homeschool Regulation Burden *(A=None, B=Low, C=Moderate, D=High)*	C
Private School Choice Programs	F
Teacher Quality and Policies: Overall Grade	D
Delivering Well Prepared Teachers	D+
Expanding the Teaching Pool	D-
Identifying Effective Teachers	D
Retaining Effective Teachers	C-
Exiting Ineffective Teachers	F
Digital Learning	C

Funding Sources



Pennsylvania

The Keystone State



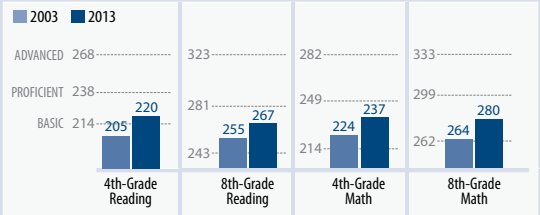
2013 NAEP Performance Rank

7

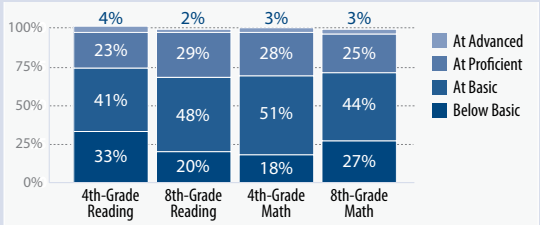
ALEC Historical Ranking — *2009 NAEP: 6th | 2011 NAEP: 5th*

Measures the overall scores for low-income general education students (non-ELL and non-IEP) and their gains/losses on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) fourth- and eighth-grade reading and mathematics exams from 2003 to 2013.

NAEP Scores for Low-Income General Education Students (2003-2013)



NAEP Low-Income General Education Student Score Distribution (2013)



Supplemental Information

(The following is provided solely for informative reasons. It does not influence the above grade or ranking.)

Graduation Rate	Average Class Size	Annual Cost Per Student
84.1%	13.64	$16,186

Education Policy Grade

C-

ALEC Historical Grading — *2011: C+ | 2012: B- | 2013: C-*

Grades state-level education policies that provide high-quality educational options to all students.

State Academic Standards	A

Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	C

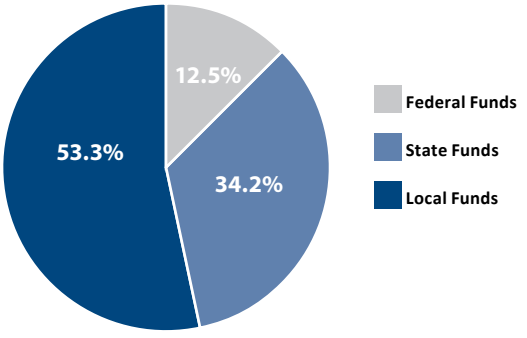
Homeschool Regulation Burden *(A=None, B=Low, C=Moderate, D=High)*	D

Private School Choice Programs	D

Teacher Quality and Policies: Overall Grade	C-
Delivering Well Prepared Teachers	C
Expanding the Teaching Pool	C-
Identifying Effective Teachers	C
Retaining Effective Teachers	D+
Exiting Ineffective Teachers	D-

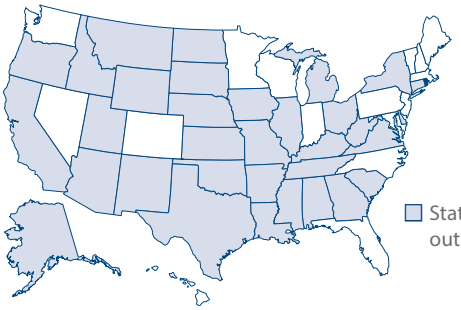
Digital Learning	D

Funding Sources



Rhode Island

The Ocean State



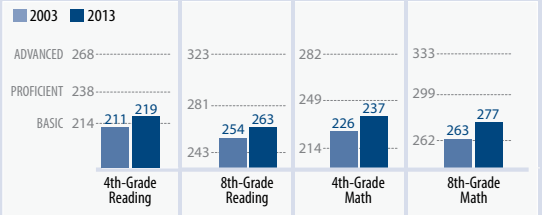
17

2013 NAEP Performance Rank

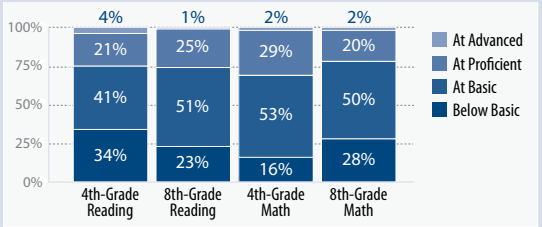
ALEC Historical Ranking *2009 NAEP: 25th | 2011 NAEP: 6th*

Measures the overall scores for low-income general education students (non-ELL and non-IEP) and their gains/losses on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) fourth- and eighth-grade reading and mathematics exams from 2003 to 2013.

NAEP Scores for Low-Income General Education Students (2003-2013)



NAEP Low-Income General Education Student Score Distribution (2013)



Supplemental Information

(The following is provided solely for informative reasons. It does not influence the above grade or ranking.)

Graduation Rate	Average Class Size	Annual Cost Per Student
76.4%	12.77	$15,799

C-

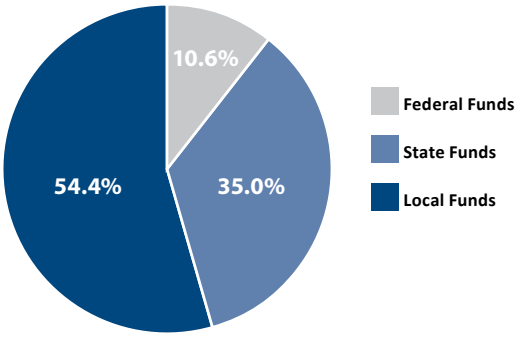
Education Policy Grade

ALEC Historical Grading *2011: C | 2012: D+ | 2013: C*

Grades state-level education policies that provide high-quality educational options to all students.

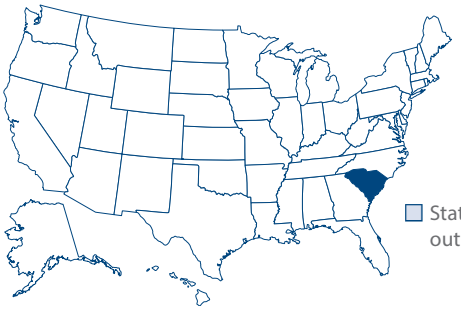
State Academic Standards	C+
Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	D
Homeschool Regulation Burden *(A=None, B=Low, C=Moderate, D=High)*	D
Private School Choice Programs	D
Teacher Quality and Policies: Overall Grade	B
Delivering Well Prepared Teachers	B+
Expanding the Teaching Pool	B-
Identifying Effective Teachers	B+
Retaining Effective Teachers	C-
Exiting Ineffective Teachers	B
Digital Learning	C

Funding Sources



South Carolina

The Palmetto State



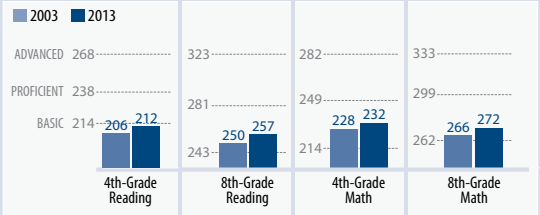
2013 NAEP Performance Rank

51

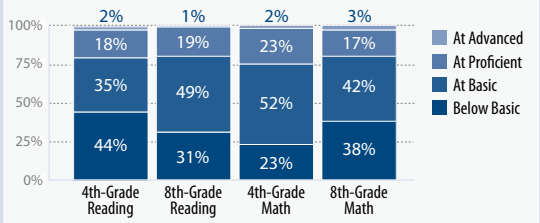
ALEC Historical Ranking *2009 NAEP: 51st | 2011 NAEP: 50th*

Measures the overall scores for low-income general education students (non-ELL and non-IEP) and their gains/losses on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) fourth- and eighth-grade reading and mathematics exams from 2003 to 2013.

NAEP Scores for Low-Income General Education Students (2003-2013)



NAEP Low-Income General Education Student Score Distribution (2013)



Supplemental Information

(The following is provided solely for informative reasons. It does not influence the above grade or ranking.)

Graduation Rate	Average Class Size	Annual Cost Per Student
68.2%	15.39	$10,878

Education Policy Grade

C

ALEC Historical Grading *2011: C+ | 2012: C | 2013: C+*

Grades state-level education policies that provide high-quality educational options to all students.

State Academic Standards	D+

Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	B

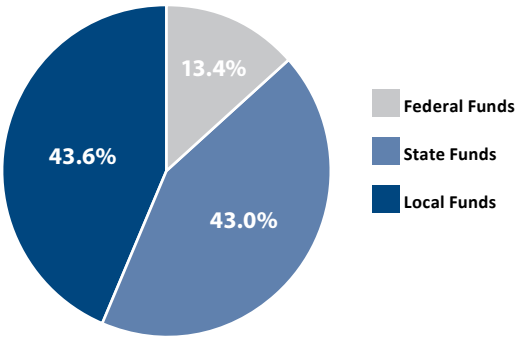
Homeschool Regulation Burden *(A=None, B=Low, C=Moderate, D=High)*	C

Private School Choice Programs	D

Teacher Quality and Policies: Overall Grade	C-
Delivering Well Prepared Teachers	C+
Expanding the Teaching Pool	C
Identifying Effective Teachers	D+
Retaining Effective Teachers	C+
Exiting Ineffective Teachers	D+

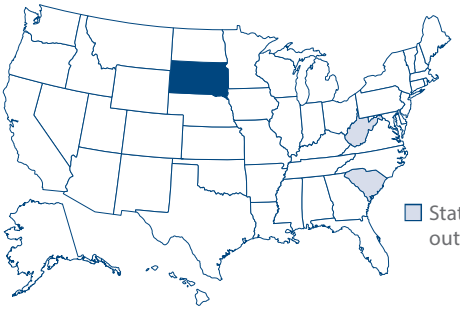
Digital Learning	B-

Funding Sources



South Dakota

The Mount Rushmore State



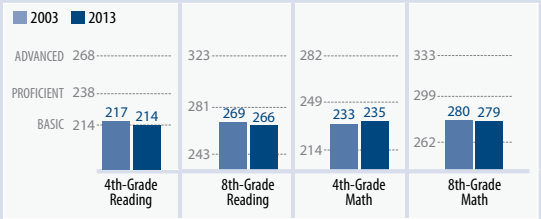
2013 NAEP Performance Rank

49

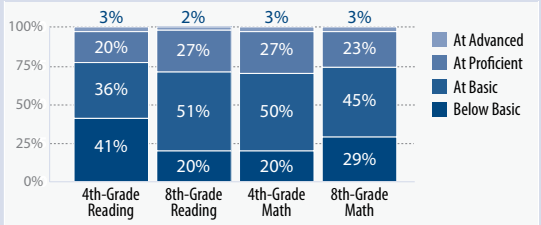
ALEC Historical Ranking *2009 NAEP: 39th | 2011 NAEP: 38th*

Measures the overall scores for low-income general education students (non-ELL and non-IEP) and their gains/losses on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) fourth- and eighth-grade reading and mathematics exams from 2003 to 2013.

NAEP Scores for Low-Income General Education Students (2003-2013)



NAEP Low-Income General Education Student Score Distribution (2013)



Supplemental Information

(The following is provided solely for informative reasons. It does not influence the above grade or ranking.)

Graduation Rate	Average Class Size	Annual Cost Per Student
81.8%	13.27	$10,311

Education Policy Grade

D

ALEC Historical Grading *2011: C- | 2012: D+ | 2013: D+*

Grades state-level education policies that provide high-quality educational options to all students.

State Academic Standards	C

Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	No
Charter School Law Grade	–

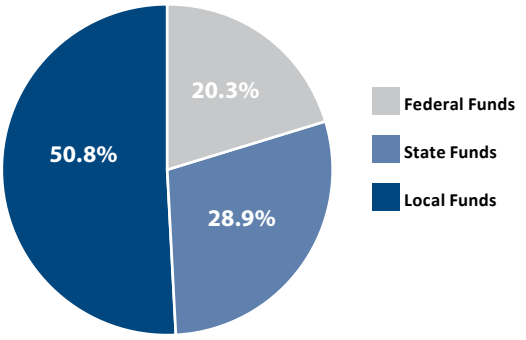
Homeschool Regulation Burden *(A=None, B=Low, C=Moderate, D=High)*	C

Private School Choice Programs	F

Teacher Quality and Policies: Overall Grade	D-
Delivering Well Prepared Teachers	D
Expanding the Teaching Pool	D+
Identifying Effective Teachers	F
Retaining Effective Teachers	D-
Exiting Ineffective Teachers	F

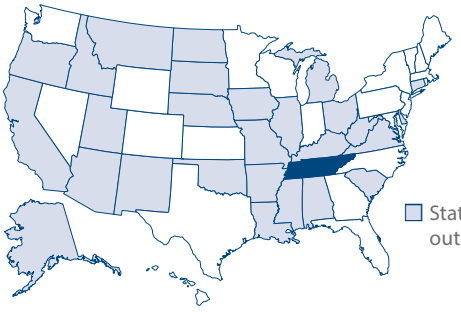
Digital Learning	C

Funding Sources



Tennessee

The Volunteer State



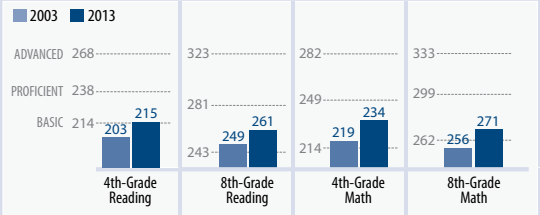
2013 NAEP Performance Rank

24

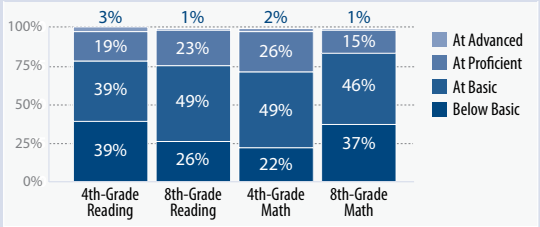
ALEC Historical Ranking *2009 NAEP: 36th | 2011 NAEP: 44th*

Measures the overall scores for low-income general education students (non-ELL and non-IEP) and their gains/losses on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) fourth- and eighth-grade reading and mathematics exams from 2003 to 2013.

NAEP Scores for Low-Income General Education Students (2003-2013)



NAEP Low-Income General Education Student Score Distribution (2013)



Supplemental Information

(The following is provided solely for informative reasons. It does not influence the above grade or ranking.)

Graduation Rate	Average Class Size	Annual Cost Per Student
80.4%	14.88	$8,765

Education Policy Grade

C

ALEC Historical Grading *2011: C | 2012: C | 2013: C+*

Grades state-level education policies that provide high-quality educational options to all students.

State Academic Standards	A

Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	C

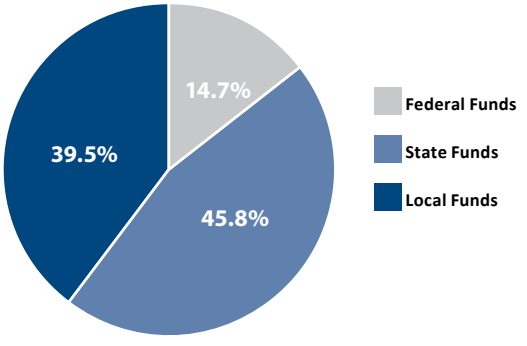
Homeschool Regulation Burden *(A=None, B=Low, C=Moderate, D=High)*	C

Private School Choice Programs	C

Teacher Quality and Policies: Overall Grade	B
Delivering Well Prepared Teachers	B-
Expanding the Teaching Pool	C+
Identifying Effective Teachers	B+
Retaining Effective Teachers	C+
Exiting Ineffective Teachers	B-

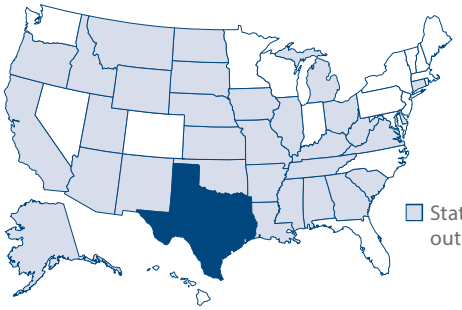
Digital Learning	F

Funding Sources



Texas

The Lone Star State



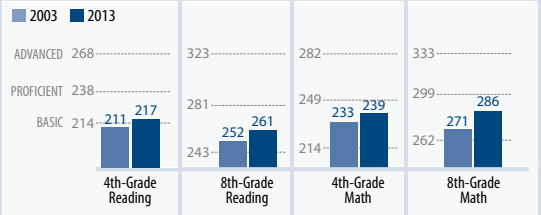
18

2013 NAEP Performance Rank

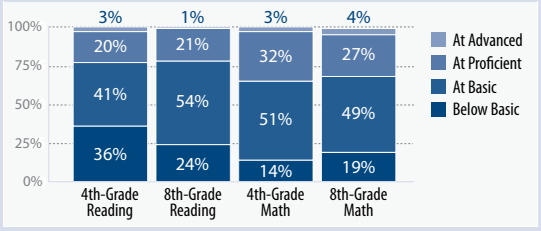
ALEC Historical Ranking *2009 NAEP: 8th | 2011 NAEP: 11th*

Measures the overall scores for low-income general education students (non-ELL and non-IEP) and their gains/losses on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) fourth- and eighth-grade reading and mathematics exams from 2003 to 2013.

NAEP Scores for Low-Income General Education Students (2003-2013)



NAEP Low-Income General Education Student Score Distribution (2013)



Supplemental Information

(The following is provided solely for informative reasons. It does not influence the above grade or ranking.)

Graduation Rate	Average Class Size	Annual Cost Per Student
78.9%	14.56	$10,595

C

Education Policy Grade

ALEC Historical Grading *2011: C+ | 2012: C+ | 2013: C*

Grades state-level education policies that provide high-quality educational options to all students.

State Academic Standards	C-

Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	C

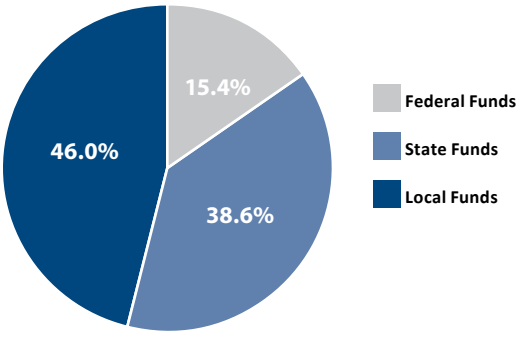
Homeschool Regulation Burden *(A=None, B=Low, C=Moderate, D=High)*	A

Private School Choice Programs	F

Teacher Quality and Policies: Overall Grade	C-
Delivering Well Prepared Teachers	B
Expanding the Teaching Pool	C+
Identifying Effective Teachers	D-
Retaining Effective Teachers	D+
Exiting Ineffective Teachers	D+

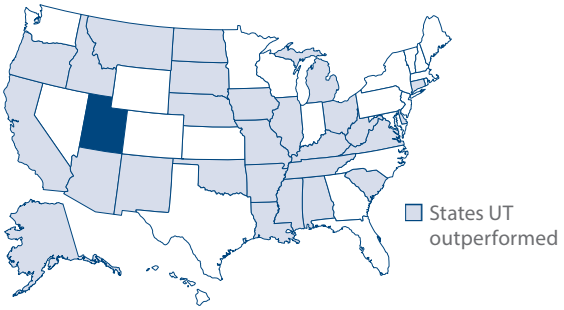
Digital Learning	B-

Funding Sources



Utah

The Beehive State



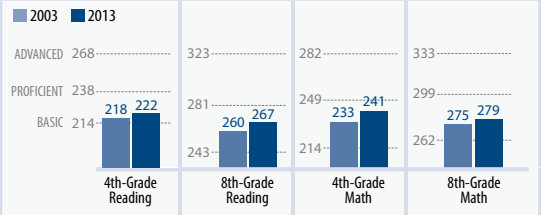
2013 NAEP Performance Rank

25

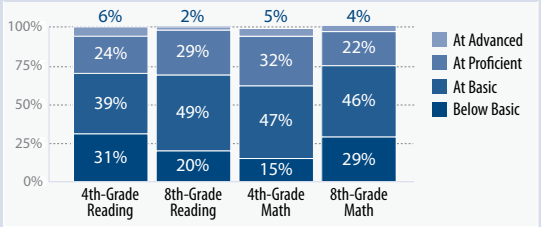
ALEC Historical Ranking *2009 NAEP: 42nd | 2011 NAEP: 41st*

Measures the overall scores for low-income general education students (non-ELL and non-IEP) and their gains/losses on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) fourth- and eighth-grade reading and mathematics exams from 2003 to 2013.

NAEP Scores for Low-Income General Education Students (2003-2013)



NAEP Low-Income General Education Student Score Distribution (2013)



Supplemental Information

(The following is provided solely for informative reasons. It does not influence the above grade or ranking.)

Graduation Rate	Average Class Size	Annual Cost Per Student
78.6%	22.31	$7,584

Education Policy Grade

B-

ALEC Historical Grading *2011: B | 2012: B- | 2013: B-*

Grades state-level education policies that provide high-quality educational options to all students.

State Academic Standards	A

Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	B

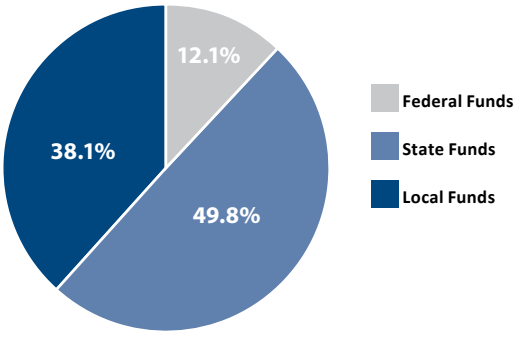
Homeschool Regulation Burden *(A=None, B=Low, C=Moderate, D=High)*	B

Private School Choice Programs	D

Teacher Quality and Policies: Overall Grade	C
Delivering Well Prepared Teachers	C-
Expanding the Teaching Pool	D+
Identifying Effective Teachers	D+
Retaining Effective Teachers	B-
Exiting Ineffective Teachers	B-

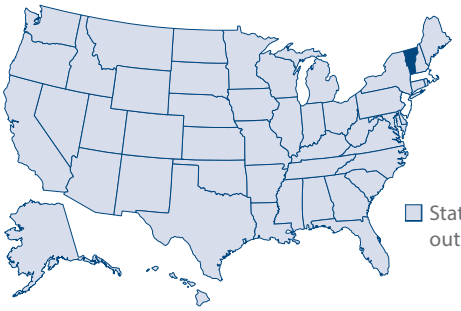
Digital Learning	A-

Funding Sources



Vermont

The Green Mountain State



States VT outperformed

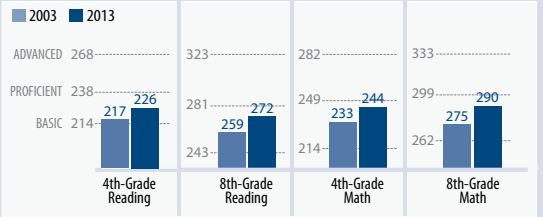
3

2013 NAEP Performance Rank

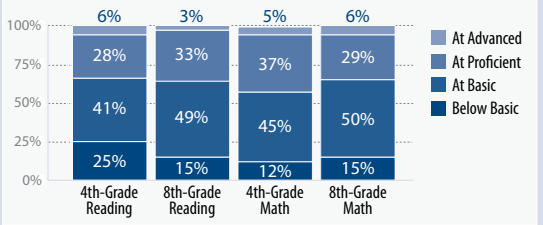
ALEC Historical Ranking *2009 NAEP: 1st | 2011 NAEP: 2nd*

Measures the overall scores for low-income general education students (non-ELL and non-IEP) and their gains/losses on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) fourth- and eighth-grade reading and mathematics exams from 2003 to 2013.

NAEP Scores for Low-Income General Education Students (2003-2013)



NAEP Low-Income General Education Student Score Distribution (2013)



Supplemental Information

(The following is provided solely for informative reasons. It does not influence the above grade or ranking.)

Graduation Rate	Average Class Size	Annual Cost Per Student
91.4%	10.47	$17,317

Education Policy Grade

D+

ALEC Historical Grading *2011: D+ | 2012: D+ | 2013: D+*

Grades state-level education policies that provide high-quality educational options to all students.

State Academic Standards	B-

Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	No
Charter School Law Grade	–

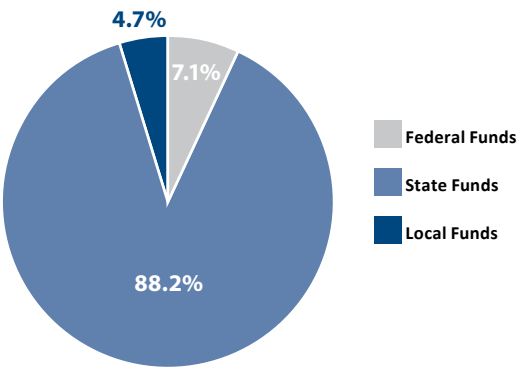
Homeschool Regulation Burden *(A=None, B=Low, C=Moderate, D=High)*	D

Private School Choice Programs	B

Teacher Quality and Policies: Overall Grade	D-
Delivering Well Prepared Teachers	C
Expanding the Teaching Pool	F
Identifying Effective Teachers	F
Retaining Effective Teachers	F
Exiting Ineffective Teachers	F

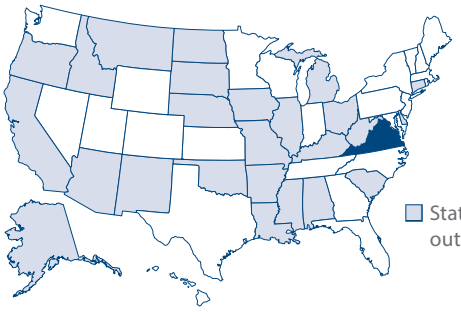
Digital Learning	D-

Funding Sources



Virginia

The Old Dominion



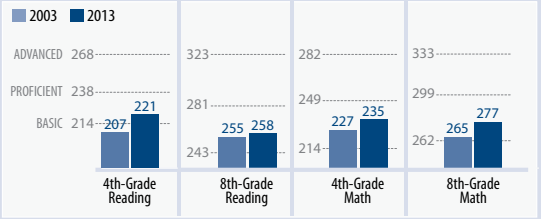
26

2013 NAEP Performance Rank

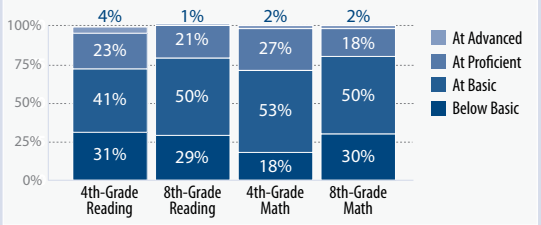
ALEC Historical Ranking *2009 NAEP: 12th | 2011 NAEP: 26th*

Measures the overall scores for low-income general education students (non-ELL and non-IEP) and their gains/losses on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) fourth- and eighth-grade reading and mathematics exams from 2003 to 2013.

NAEP Scores for Low-Income General Education Students (2003-2013)



NAEP Low-Income General Education Student Score Distribution (2013)



Supplemental Information

(The following is provided solely for informative reasons. It does not influence the above grade or ranking.)

Graduation Rate	Average Class Size	Annual Cost Per Student
81.2%	17.58	$11,527

C-

Education Policy Grade

ALEC Historical Grading *2011: C- | 2012: C- | 2013: C-*

Grades state-level education policies that provide high-quality educational options to all students.

State Academic Standards	C+

Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	F

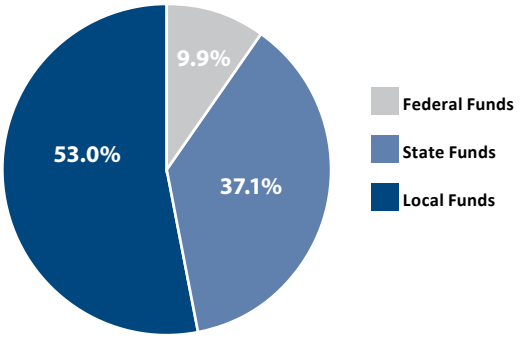
Homeschool Regulation Burden *(A=None, B=Low, C=Moderate, D=High)*	C

Private School Choice Programs	D

Teacher Quality and Policies: Overall Grade	C+
Delivering Well Prepared Teachers	B-
Expanding the Teaching Pool	C-
Identifying Effective Teachers	C-
Retaining Effective Teachers	B
Exiting Ineffective Teachers	C

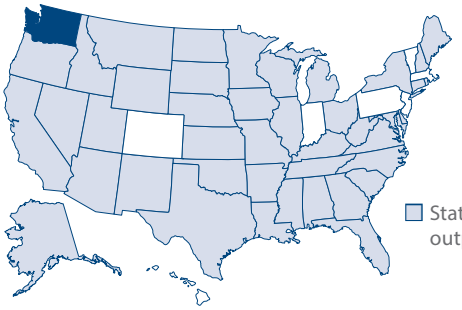
Digital Learning	B

Funding Sources



Washington

The Evergreen State



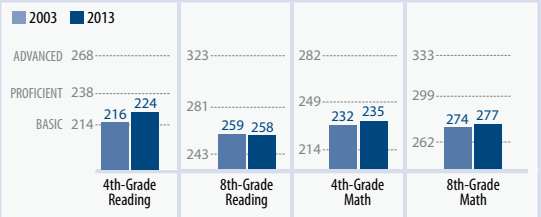
8

2013 NAEP Performance Rank

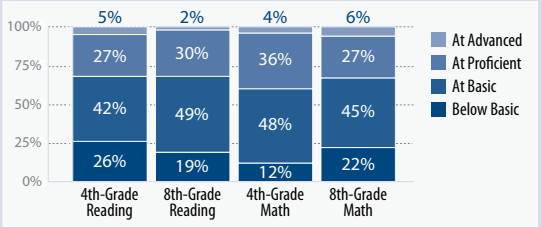
ALEC Historical Ranking *2009 NAEP: 16th | 2011 NAEP: 25th*

Measures the overall scores for low-income general education students (non-ELL and non-IEP) and their gains/losses on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) fourth- and eighth-grade reading and mathematics exams from 2003 to 2013.

NAEP Scores for Low-Income General Education Students (2003-2013)



NAEP Low-Income General Education Student Score Distribution (2013)



Supplemental Information

(The following is provided solely for informative reasons. It does not influence the above grade or ranking.)

Graduation Rate	Average Class Size	Annual Cost Per Student
77.2%	19.37	$11,329

C

Education Policy Grade

ALEC Historical Grading *2011: C | 2012: C- | 2013: C*

Grades state-level education policies that provide high-quality educational options to all students.

State Academic Standards	B

Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	C

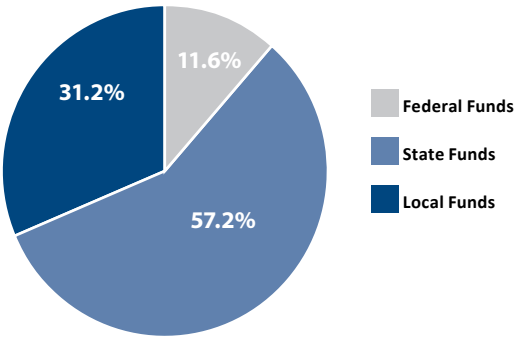
Homeschool Regulation Burden *(A=None, B=Low, C=Moderate, D=High)*	C

Private School Choice Programs	F

Teacher Quality and Policies: Overall Grade	C-
Delivering Well Prepared Teachers	D+
Expanding the Teaching Pool	C+
Identifying Effective Teachers	C-
Retaining Effective Teachers	C-
Exiting Ineffective Teachers	C-

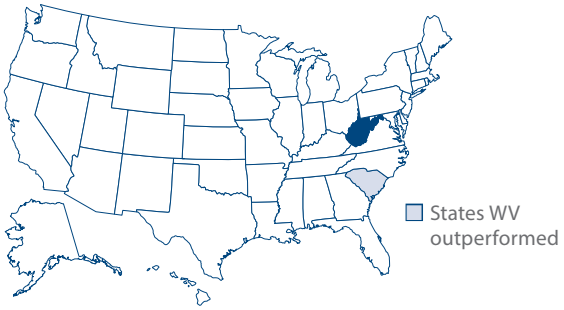
Digital Learning	B-

Funding Sources



West Virginia

The Mountain State



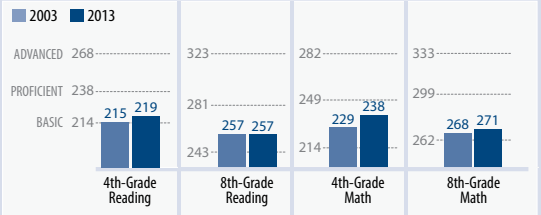
2013 NAEP Performance Rank

50

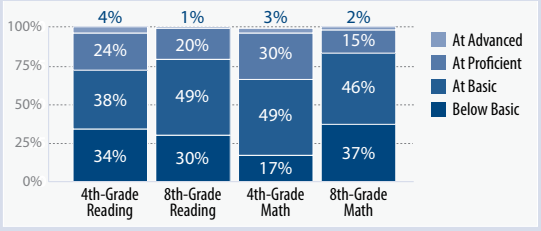
ALEC Historical Ranking *2009 NAEP: 50th | 2011 NAEP: 51st*

Measures the overall scores for low-income general education students (non-ELL and non-IEP) and their gains/losses on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) fourth- and eighth-grade reading and mathematics exams from 2003 to 2013.

NAEP Scores for Low-Income General Education Students (2003-2013)



NAEP Low-Income General Education Student Score Distribution (2013)



Supplemental Information

(The following is provided solely for informative reasons. It does not influence the above grade or ranking.)

Graduation Rate	Average Class Size	Annual Cost Per Student
78.3%	13.93	$12,280

Education Policy Grade

C-

ALEC Historical Grading *2011: D+ | 2012: D+ | 2013: C-*

Grades state-level education policies that provide high-quality educational options to all students.

State Academic Standards	B

Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	No
Charter School Law Grade	–

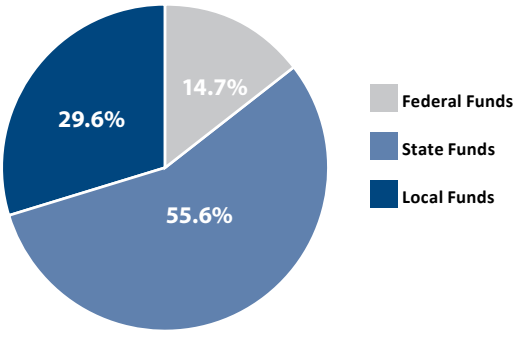
Homeschool Regulation Burden *(A=None, B=Low, C=Moderate, D=High)*	C

Private School Choice Programs	F

Teacher Quality and Policies: Overall Grade	C-
Delivering Well Prepared Teachers	C+
Expanding the Teaching Pool	D+
Identifying Effective Teachers	D+
Retaining Effective Teachers	D+
Exiting Ineffective Teachers	C-

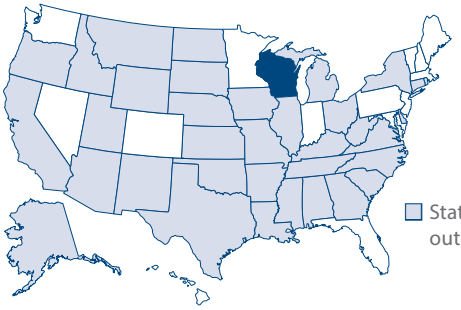
Digital Learning	B-

Funding Sources



Wisconsin

America's Dairyland



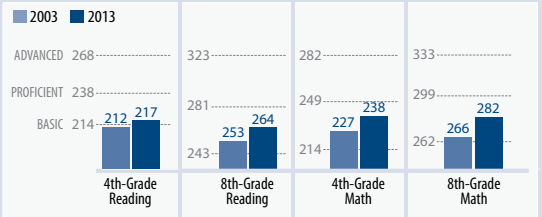
2013 NAEP Performance Rank

15

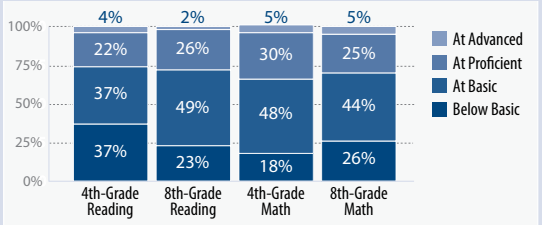
ALEC Historical Ranking *2009 NAEP: 21st | 2011 NAEP: 19th*

Measures the overall scores for low-income general education students (non-ELL and non-IEP) and their gains/losses on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) fourth- and eighth-grade reading and mathematics exams from 2003 to 2013.

NAEP Scores for Low-Income General Education Students (2003-2013)



NAEP Low-Income General Education Student Score Distribution (2013)



Supplemental Information

(The following is provided solely for informative reasons. It does not influence the above grade or ranking.)

Graduation Rate	Average Class Size	Annual Cost Per Student
91.1%	14.93	$13,197

Education Policy Grade

B-

ALEC Historical Grading *2011: B- | 2012: B- | 2013: C*

Grades state-level education policies that provide high-quality educational options to all students.

State Academic Standards	A

Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	C

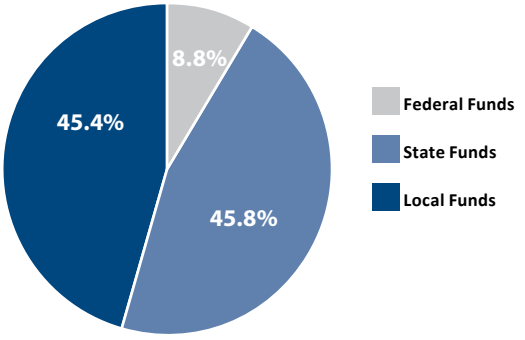
Homeschool Regulation Burden *(A=None, B=Low, C=Moderate, D=High)*	B

Private School Choice Programs	A

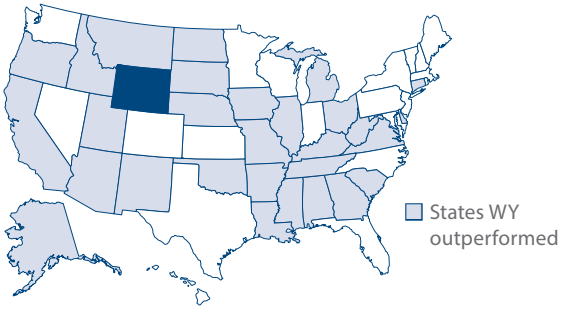
Teacher Quality and Policies: Overall Grade	D+
Delivering Well Prepared Teachers	C
Expanding the Teaching Pool	D-
Identifying Effective Teachers	C-
Retaining Effective Teachers	D
Exiting Ineffective Teachers	D-

Digital Learning	D

Funding Sources



Wyoming
The Equality State



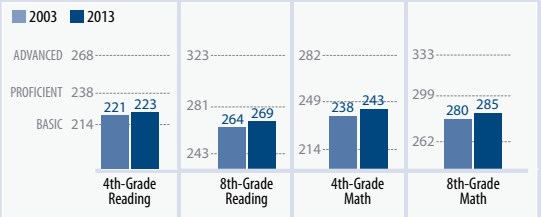
2013 NAEP Performance Rank

21

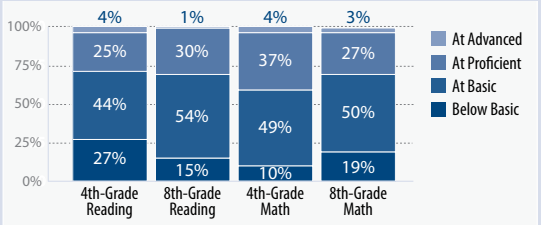
ALEC Historical Ranking *2011 NAEP: 23rd | 2009 NAEP: 28th*

Measures the overall scores for low-income general education students (non-ELL and non-IEP) and their gains/losses on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) fourth- and eighth-grade reading and mathematics exams from 2003 to 2013.

NAEP Scores for Low-Income General Education Students (2003-2013)



NAEP Low-Income General Education Student Score Distribution (2013)



Supplemental Information

(The following is provided solely for informative reasons. It does not influence the above grade or ranking.)

Graduation Rate	Average Class Size	Annual Cost Per Student
80.3%	12.3	$18,679

Education Policy Grade

D+

ALEC Historical Grading *2011: C+ | 2012: C | 2013: C-*

Grades state-level education policies that provide high-quality educational options to all students.

State Academic Standards	C

Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	D

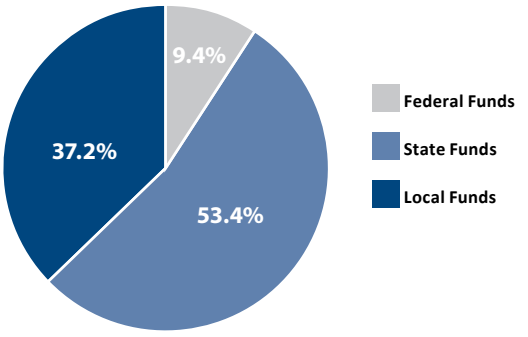
Homeschool Regulation Burden *(A=None, B=Low, C=Moderate, D=High)*	B

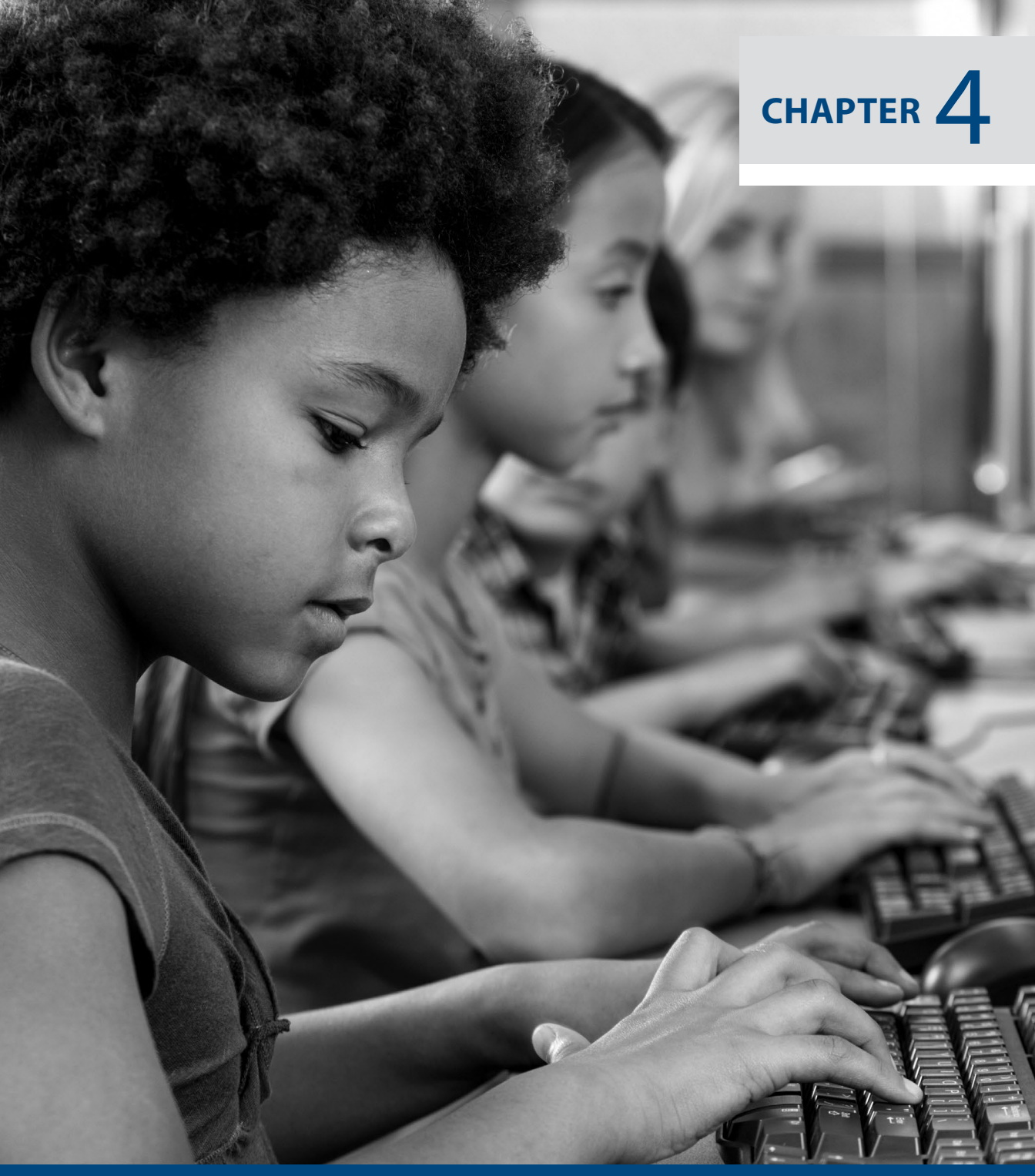
Private School Choice Programs	F

Teacher Quality and Policies: Overall Grade	D
Delivering Well Prepared Teachers	D-
Expanding the Teaching Pool	D-
Identifying Effective Teachers	D+
Retaining Effective Teachers	D
Exiting Ineffective Teachers	D+

Digital Learning	C-

Funding Sources





CHAPTER 4

Cost Versus Outcomes – The Importance of Educational Efficiency

Cost Versus Outcomes – The Importance of Educational Efficiency

As discussed in Chapter 1, the United States spends a great amount on the public education system. Yet for far too many students, that spending does not translate to academic proficiency. Significant numbers of students perform on par with many countries that spend a fraction of U.S. investment. Unfortunately, underperforming students are often concentrated in certain ethnicities—mainly black and Hispanic students.

Sometimes, states set the highest annual per-pupil spending levels in areas with the most disadvantaged student populations. For example, consider one of the wealthiest states in the country: New Jersey. Wide variations in per-pupil funding depend on geography. The much-beleaguered city of Newark has per-pupil funding of $24,281.[1] This is in a city with a poverty rate of nearly 30 percent and a median household income of $33,960.[2] Despite this sky-high level of spending, fewer than half of Newark third-grade students are considered literate.[3]

In nearby leafy Chatham, N.J., the poverty rate is well below 5 percent, yet that district spends $16,037 per-pupil each year—two-thirds of what Newark spends.[4] [5] To say Newark's public schools are strapped for cash is hardly an honest statement. In fact, this is the same district that recently received a $100 million donation from Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg. The problem in Newark is that the huge amount of money produces far too little.

Chapter 3 outlines a whole host of statistics that address spending and class size in each state. Put together, the country spends an enormous amount of money each year on education. Despite large variances in spending, it would be stretch to say even the most frugal education system is underfunded.

For example, Idaho spends $7,408 per pupil, per year, while the lavish District of Columbia spends nearly 400 percent that amount—$29,427.

Overall, there is more consistency in class sizes across the states, but these still range from the fewest average students per classroom in Vermont at 10.67 to California, with more than double that number of students in each classroom—just shy of 24.

When average class size and per-pupil spending is put together, the true disparity of the numbers hits home. In North Carolina, a state with a fairly average classroom size of slightly more than 15 students, taxpayers invest $133,518 for each classroom of students. Compare this with the nation's capital: Despite relatively small classroom sizes, the District of Columbia spends $378,137 for each classroom, each year.

That astronomical expense would be a non-story if schools in DC had similarly astronomical student outcomes. Unfortunately, the reason Chapter 4 is dedicated to funding is because the opposite is true. Even though DC taxpayers spend nearly $30,000 on each student each year, student performance still remains near the bottom compared to the rest of the country. This is not to say DC students are not improving. In fact, DC has consistently been in the "Hall of Fame" for the "Most Improved" category. However, that distinction comes from recent years of student-centered

reforms, not extravagant spending. In fact, DC charter school students have far fewer resources devoted to their education but substantially outperform DC district students.

THE EXAMPLE OF WYOMING

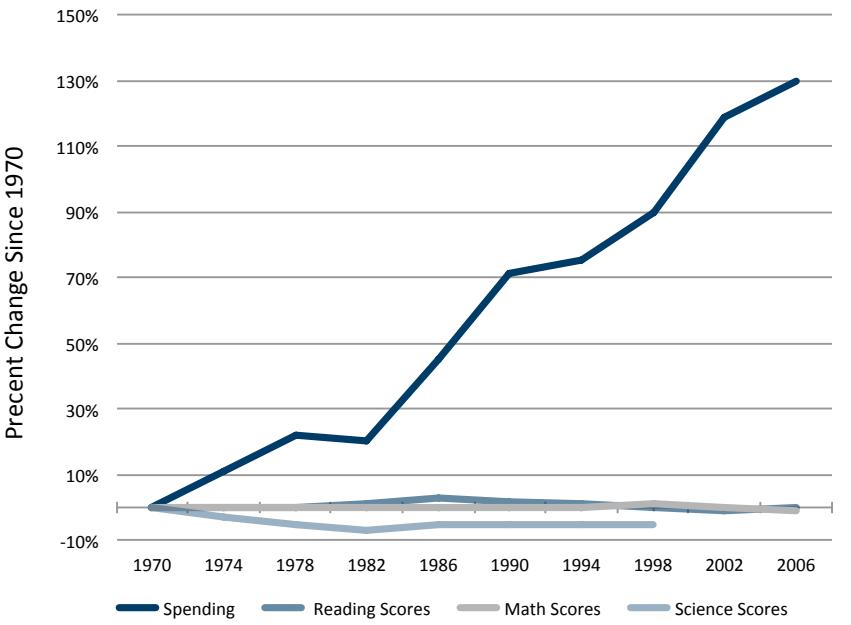
To answer those who might say, "But DC is an expensive place to live, with an entirely urban population. Of course spending will be higher," one must take a look at a state nearly the opposite of the nation's capital: Wyoming.

Wyoming is fortunate in many regards. As a resource-rich state, a large portion of educational funding comes from coal and natural gas revenue, which has been booming in recent years. However, past education leaders may have squandered that revenue. Under the false assumption that providing more money to an education system would fix it, Wyoming effectively attempted to buy better student success without any significant policy reforms. Wyoming's per-pupil funding jumped more than $4,000 in a single year between 2006 and 2007.[6] It is highly doubtful this massive increase was implemented in a targeted, strategic fashion. Instead, Wyoming gained the talking point of saying it increased its per-pupil funding by more than one-third in a single year.

With the knowledge that implementation takes time, raising student achievement can take multiple years to accomplish. To account for that, one can examine student achievement on the fourth- and eighth-grade reading and mathematics NAEP in 2005, the year before this spending windfall occurred, and compare that against subsequent results (2007, 2009, 2011 and 2013). Unsurprisingly, there are no statistically significant academic gains in any of the four exams.

Flooding the system with money instead of using funds strategically to target programs that focus on student success has created a system that, as Figure 1 from Andrew Coulson at the Cato Institute shows, has runaway inflation with stagnant student test scores.

FIGURE 1 | **INFLATION–ADJUSTED PER PUPIL SPENDING AND ACHIEVEMENT OF 17- YEAR-OLDS, PERCENTAGE CHANGE SINCE 1970**



Cato Institute
Data source (spending): National Center for Education Statistics, Digest of Education Statistics 2008, Table 181

Data sources (scores): National Assessment of Educational Progress, Long Term Trends reports.

Prepared by: Andrew J. Coulson. Missing spending year spending values linearly interpolated or extrapolated

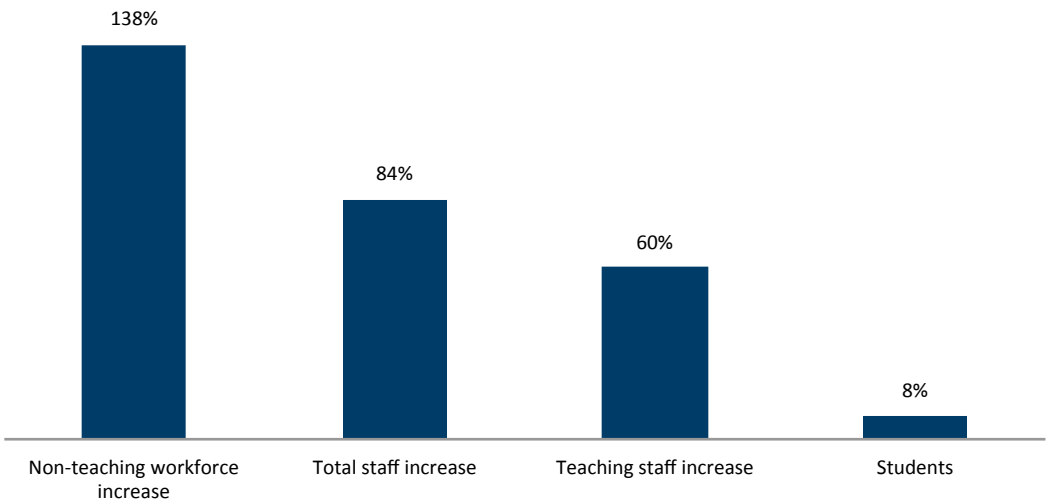
Source: Cato Institute

Today, Wyoming spends nearly $18,500 for each student each year. (For a more detailed history of Wyoming's spending habits, read the 17th edition of ALEC's *Report Card on American Education*.) That might be fine if students were receiving $18,500 worth of education each year. However, this does not seem to be the case; the gains of Wyoming students on NAEP exams have proved unremarkable in recent years, despite the very large increase in per-pupil funding.

This is not to pick on Wyoming, but instead to illustrate inefficiencies built into a system that has become more responsive to the needs of its employees than to those who the system was created to serve: students.

A common argument that goes hand-in-hand with the need to increase school funding is the desire to shrink the size of classrooms. Class sizes dictate the size of the teaching force and thus play a strong role in driving the cost structure of education. As Figure 1 shows, the country has drastically increased per-pupil funding. But as Figure 2 illustrates, that increase in funding has largely *not* gone to increase teaching staff in order to support smaller classes. Instead, non-teaching staff has increased at a rate twice that of teaching staff. This could perhaps be justified if there were clear evidence of substantially improved learning outcomes as a result of surrounding students with more and more adults. Unfortunately that evidence does not exist.

FIGURE 2 | **INCREASES IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOL STAFF AND STUDENTS IN AMERICA SINCE 1970**



Source: Heritage Foundation

EDUCATION EFFICIENCY

Childhood literacy is the key to future learning.[7] Unless students master the fundamental skills of reading and comprehension, they will find their subsequent courses out of reach. This not only leads to poor student outcomes down the line but also to various increased costs in other areas, such as incarceration and health care. For more information on the link between educational outcomes and health care, see the 16th edition of ALEC's *Report Card on American Education*.[8]

For students in a growing number of states, including Nevada as discussed in Chapter 1, legislators are focusing on early-childhood literacy. Because of the importance of ensuring all students are literate by fourth-grade, the following section examines achievement of fourth-graders on the NAEP reading exam. Combined with the achievement information is current education spending levels.

Figure 3 shows how much each state spends on students through the end of fourth-grade. For this examination, students who were in the fourth-grade in 2011 were considered. This is the most recent complete set of data available. Then, fourth-grade spending levels for those students in 2011 were combined with 2010 third-grade spending levels and so on back to 2007 kindergarten spending. This provides the cumulative investment spent to get a student through fourth-grade.

Utah spends the least to get a student through fourth-grade, with New York at the other end of the spectrum spending the most, nearly triple the Utah expenditure. These spending levels alone, however, give an incomplete picture and must be combined with actual educational attainment.

The information in Figure 3 that shows the price of investment in students from kindergarten through fourth-grade in each state would come as a shock to most people. With constant calls for more education spending, the narrative often heard in the media is that the education system is vastly underfunded. In reality, this rhetoric is used by those within the school system to prop up an unsustainable model and has little to do with better education for students.

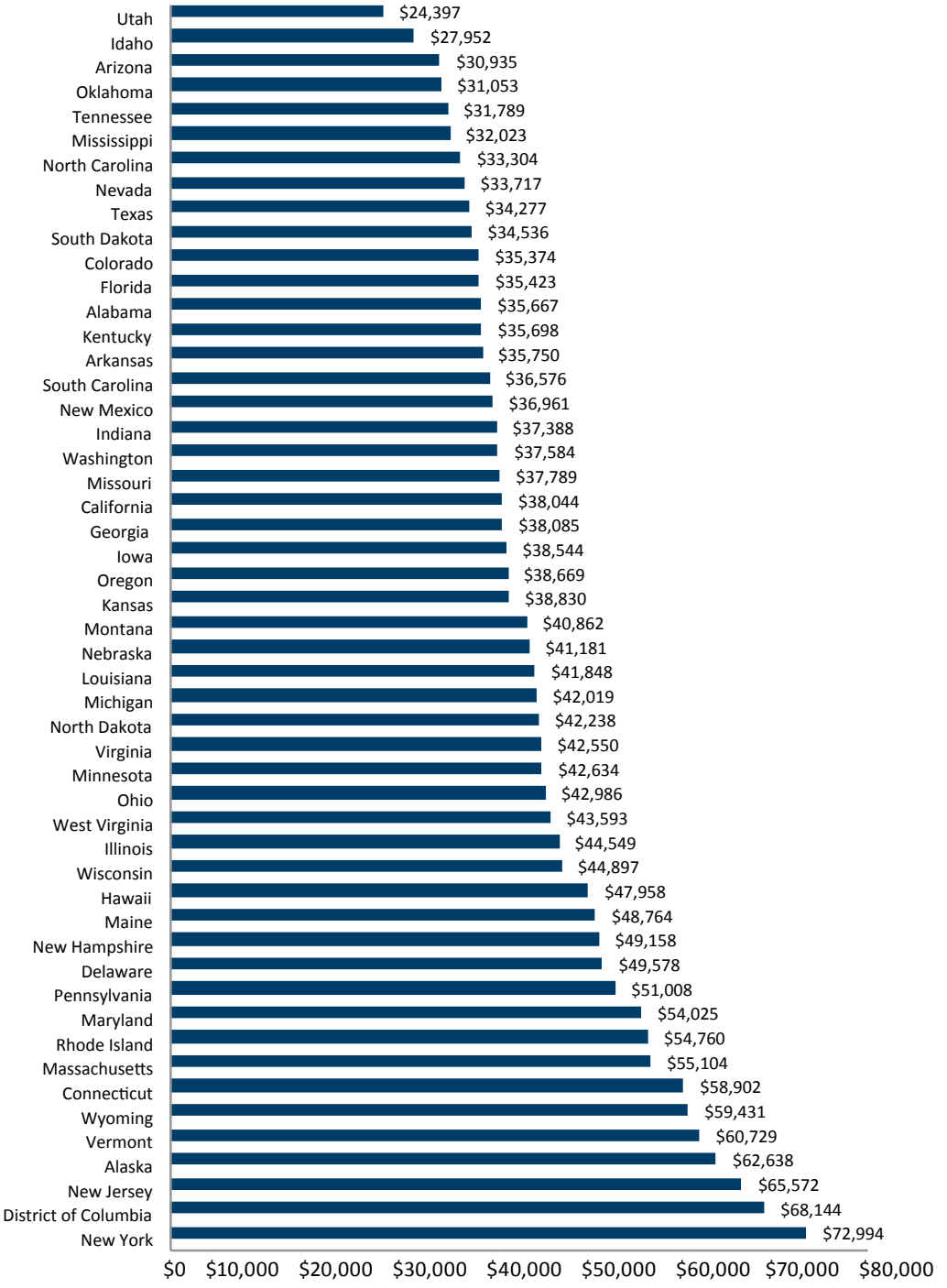
In a recent survey by the Friedman Foundation for Educational Choice, fewer than 14 percent of Americans could estimate within a $4,000-range the correct per-pupil funding level.[9] The majority of respondents who provided wrong estimates underestimated the amount, often significantly.

Figure 5 brings Figure 4 into perspective by adding fourth-grade reading proficiency. This chart looks at the 2011 fourth-grade reading NAEP, which is graded on a zero to 500-point scale, and divides that by the total cumulative spending found in Figure 3. This illustrates an average price per point for the NAEP exam for each of the 50 states and the District of Columbia. Consistent with other examinations of NAEP data throughout this *Report Card*, in order to increase comparability among states, this chart looks at low-income students who do not have an individualized education program and are not English language speakers.

When comparing Utah with its neighbor Wyoming, Utah's public school system appears twice as efficient on a per-reading-point basis in their elementary schools. When comparing Idaho and Wyoming, Idaho public schools prove radically more efficient than those in Wyoming when measured on a per-point basis. These disparities would not be so large if Wyoming had increased the reading achievement of students as a result of increased spending, while neighboring states increased spending at a more modest pace.

In the Midwest, Indiana proves the most efficient judged on a per-reading-point basis. The lag in the availability of financial data compelled the use of 2011 rather than 2013 NAEP data. However, Indiana's gain on the NAEP fourth-grade reading test between 2011 and 2013 came in four-times larger than the national average, giving the state a big leg up in future measures. Indiana spent $171 per fourth-grade reading point, while Illinois spent $210 per point. Indiana has been racing ahead of

FIGURE 3 | **CUMULATIVE CURRENT SPENDING PER PUPIL FOR GRADES K, 1, 2, 3 AND 4 BY STATE, 2007-2011**

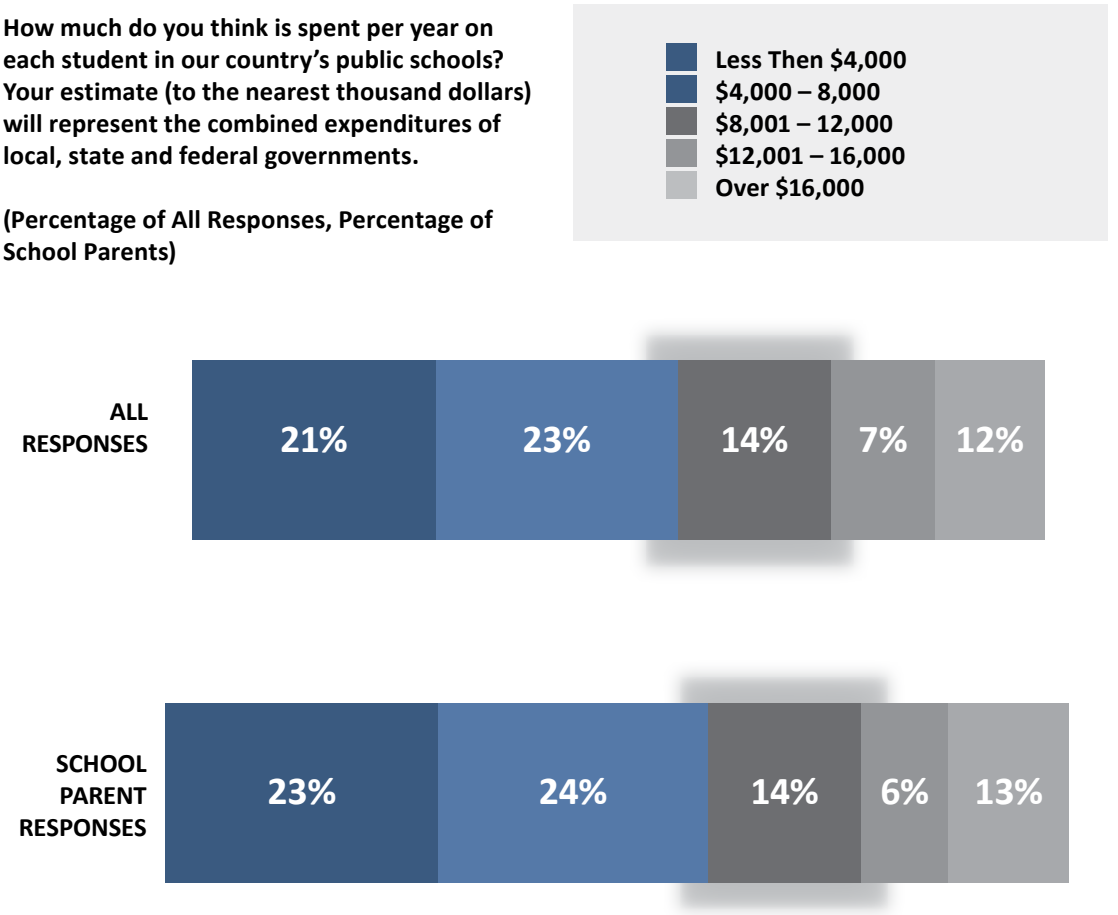


Source: United States Census Bureau

FIGURE 4 | **GENERAL EDUCATION LOW-INCOME STUDENTS SCORING "PROFICIENT" OR BETTER ON THE TRIAL URBAN DISTRICT ASSESSMENT EIGHTH-GRADE READING, 2013**

How much do you think is spent per year on each student in our country's public schools? Your estimate (to the nearest thousand dollars) will represent the combined expenditures of local, state and federal governments.

(Percentage of All Responses, Percentage of School Parents)



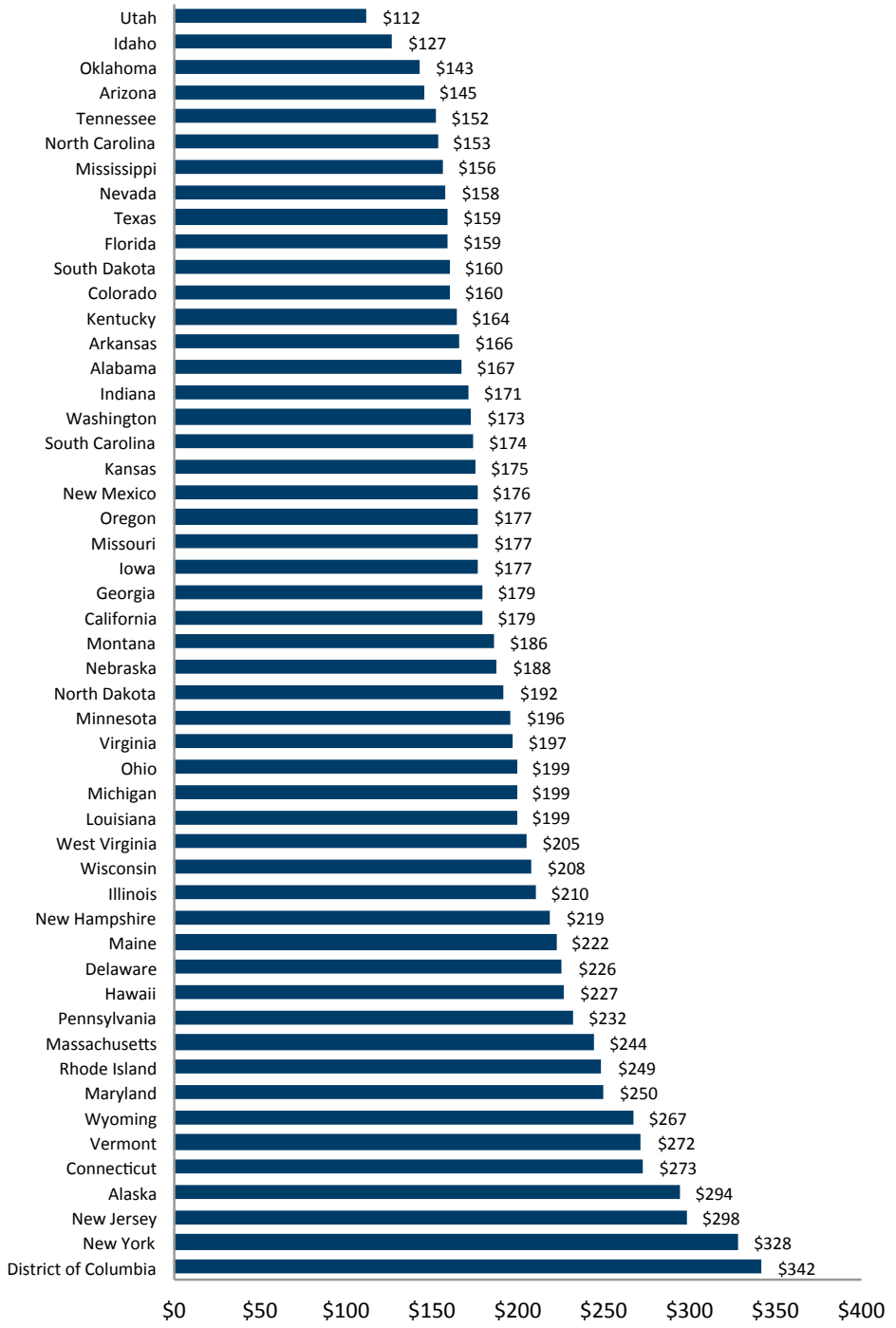
Source: Freidman Foundation for Educational Choice, 2015 Schooling in America Survey, Q7

the national average on NAEP fourth-grade reading scores, while the scores in Illinois have not budged since 2007.

In the South, Tennessee comes in as the efficiency champion on a per-point basis, and the future looks bright for improvement. Tennessee's statewide improvement on NAEP fourth-grade reading scores between 2011 and 2013 (after this measurement) stood at five-times greater than the national average. North Carolina came in second and Florida came in third in the region.

In the Northeast, New Hampshire is the most efficient state by our measure while Connecticut is the least efficient. Utah scores best in efficiency in the West and tripled the national average gain in fourth-grade reading between 2011 and 2013.

FIGURE 5 | **CUMULATIVE CURRENT SPENDING 2007-11 (K-4) PER POINT ON THE 2011 NAEP FOURTH-GRADE READING EXAM FOR GENERAL EDUCATION LOW-INCOME CHILDREN**



Source: United States Census Bureau

Every state has a significant segment of low-income students, and the education system is one of the greatest tools available to lift up all students to get out of "low-income" status. However, schools are failing to help these students.

Washington, DC deserves to be in the "hall of shame" for sky-high student spending combined with extremely low proficiency rates. As a whole, New York spends well above $70,000 to get a child through fourth grade. But for $15,000 less, its neighbor Massachusetts, which has a similarly expensive cost of living, gets better results. State education policies matter. Since state policies affect student achievement, *Report Card on American Education* has always focused on the need for states to craft education policies that put students at the center of the education system.

MISMANAGED RESOURCES

Philadelphia has a large low-income population, a low high school graduation rate and a severely mismanaged budget. Recent articles have lamented the lack of resources available in the district.[10] Reports point to the lack of resources available directly to teachers, such as access to textbooks within a classroom. This is not to say the resources do not exist. To put it more bluntly, there is no reason why a district that spends $20,173 per student should not be able to provide the basics to students.[11]

In fact, Philadelphia has thousands of unused books.[12] Sitting in the basement of the Philadelphia School District's main office are thousands of new books that were consolidated when multiple schools were closed a few years ago. Keeping these resources out of reach of teachers and students in a school district that has nearly 60 percent of students reading below grade level is a tragedy.

These are not poor school districts. These are wealthy districts that are poorly managed to the detriment of students from low-income households.

PUTTING STUDENTS ABOVE MONEY

Throughout the past several editions of this *Report Card on American Education*, the focus has been on low-income students. High-income students have distinct advantages, including easier access to private schools and the ability to "buy" a better public education by moving to a better district, which is typically out of the monetary reach of those most in need.

Those who are most harmed by inefficiencies are the low-income students who are depending on their school to provide them with a high-quality education. The low-income students in Philadelphia and across the country are trapped in poor-performing schools that are wasting money and setting students up for failure.

There have been extreme variations in not just student funding, but in how well that funding is used for educating students. If states, districts and schools are able to provide a better education by better using what is being spent on students now, they have a responsibility to do so. They owe it to those who are funding the system with a not-so-trivial amount of money. But most important, they owe it to students.

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CHANGE IN NAEP SCORES FOR ALL STUDENTS FROM 2003 TO 2013

(Non-IEP, Non-ELL) Average scores

Jurisdiction	Change in Fourth-Grade Reading Scores	Change in Fourth-Grade Math Scores
Alabama	11	10
Alaska	-2	3
Arizona	4	11
Arkansas	5	11
California	7	7
Colorado	3	12
Connecticut	1	2
Delaware	2	7
District of Columbia	17	24
Florida	9	8
Georgia	8	10
Hawaii	7	16
Idaho	1	6
Illinois	2	6
Indiana	5	11
Iowa	1	8
Kansas	3	4
Kentucky	5	12
Louisiana	6	5
Maine	1	8
Maryland	13	12
Massachusetts	5	11
Michigan	-1	1
Minnesota	4	11
Mississippi	3	8
Missouri	0	5
Montana	0	8
National Average	4	7
Nebraska	3	7
Nevada	7	8
New Hampshire	4	10
New Jersey	4	8
New Mexico	3	10
New York	2	4
North Carolina	1	3
North Dakota	2	8
Ohio	2	8
Oklahoma	3	10
Oregon	2	4
Pennsylvania	8	8
Rhode Island	6	11
South Carolina	-1	1
South Dakota	-4	4
Tennessee	8	12
Texas	2	5
Utah	4	8
Vermont	2	6
Virginia	5	7
Washington	4	8
West Virginia	-5	6
Wisconsin	0	8
Wyoming	4	6

Jurisdiction	Change in Eighth-Grade Reading Scores	Change in Eighth-Grade Math Scores
Alabama	4	7
Alaska	5	3
Arizona	5	9
Arkansas	4	12
California	11	9
Colorado	3	7
Connecticut	7	1
Delaware	1	5
District of Columbia	9	22
Florida	9	10
Georgia	7	9
Hawaii	9	15
Idaho	6	6
Illinois	1	8
Indiana	2	7
Iowa	1	1
Kansas	1	6
Kentucky	4	7
Louisiana	4	7
Maine	1	7
Maryland	12	9
Massachusetts	4	14
Michigan	2	4
Minnesota	3	4
Mississippi	-2	10
Missouri	0	4
Montana	2	3
National Average	5	7
Nebraska	3	3
Nevada	10	10
New Hampshire	3	10
New Jersey	8	15
New Mexico	4	10
New York	1	2
North Carolina	3	5
North Dakota	-2	4
Ohio	2	8
Oklahoma	0	4
Oregon	4	3
Pennsylvania	8	11
Rhode Island	6	12
South Carolina	3	3
South Dakota	-2	2
Tennessee	7	10
Texas	5	11
Utah	6	3
Vermont	3	9
Virginia	0	6
Washington	8	9
West Virginia	-3	3
Wisconsin	2	5
Wyoming	4	4

EDUCATION POLICY GRADE COMPONENTS

Jurisdiction	State Academic Standards	Charter School Law	Charter School Grade	Homeschool Regulation Burden	Private School Choice Programs
Alabama	F	N	–	B	C
Alaska	D+	Y	D	A	F
Arizona	C	Y	A	B	A
Arkansas	D	Y	D	C	B
California	C+	Y	B	B	F
Colorado	B	Y	B	C	F
Connecticut	C-	Y	D	A	F
Delaware	C	Y	C	B	F
District of Columbia	C	Y	A	C	D
Florida	B	Y	B	C	A
Georgia	F	Y	C	B	B
Hawaii	C	Y	C	C	F
Idaho	D	Y	B	A	F
Illinois	B-	Y	C	A	C
Indiana	C-	Y	A	A	A
Iowa	C	Y	D	A	C
Kansas	D+	Y	F	B	D
Kentucky	A	N	–	B	F
Louisiana	D	Y	C	C	A
Maine	C+	Y	C	C	C
Maryland	C	Y	F	C	F
Massachusetts	A	Y	C	D	F
Michigan	B	Y	A	A	F
Minnesota	B-	Y	A	C	C
Mississippi	C-	Y	D	B	B
Missouri	A	Y	B	A	F
Montana	C	N	–	B	D
Nebraska	C	N	–	B	F
Nevada	C+	Y	C	B	A
New Hampshire	C+	Y	D	C	D
New Jersey	B-	Y	C	A	F
New Mexico	B-	Y	C	B	F
New York	A	Y	B	D	F
North Carolina	A	Y	C	C	B
North Dakota	C	N	–	C	F
Ohio	C-	Y	C	C	A
Oklahoma	D	Y	C	A	A
Oregon	C	Y	C	C	F
Pennsylvania	A	Y	C	D	D
Rhode Island	C+	Y	D	D	D
South Carolina	D+	Y	B	C	D
South Dakota	C	N	–	C	F
Tennessee	A	Y	C	C	C
Texas	C-	Y	C	A	F
Utah	A	Y	B	B	D
Vermont	B-	N	–	D	B
Virginia	C+	Y	F	C	D
Washington	B	Y	C	C	F
West Virginia	B	N	–	C	F
Wisconsin	A	Y	C	B	A
Wyoming	C	Y	D	B	F

Jurisdiction	Overall Teacher Quality and Policies Grade	Digital Learning Grade
Alabama	D	D-
Alaska	D	D+
Arizona	C-	C+
Arkansas	B-	C
California	D+	D-
Colorado	C+	D+
Connecticut	B-	F
Delaware	C+	D-
District of Columbia	D+	–
Florida	B+	A-
Georgia	B-	B
Hawaii	D+	D
Idaho	D+	C
Illinois	C+	D-
Indiana	B-	B-
Iowa	D	D
Kansas	D	B-
Kentucky	C	D
Louisiana	B	B-
Maine	C-	C
Maryland	D+	C
Massachusetts	B-	D+
Michigan	B-	C
Minnesota	C-	B+
Mississippi	C	D-
Missouri	C-	D+
Montana	F	F
Nebraska	D-	F
Nevada	C-	B+
New Hampshire	D	D
New Jersey	B-	D-
New Mexico	D+	C
New York	B-	D-
North Carolina	C	C
North Dakota	D	F
Ohio	B-	D
Oklahoma	B-	C+
Oregon	D	C
Pennsylvania	C-	D
Rhode Island	B	C
South Carolina	C-	B-
South Dakota	D-	C
Tennessee	B	F
Texas	C-	B-
Utah	C	A-
Vermont	D-	D-
Virginia	C+	B
Washington	C-	B-
West Virginia	C-	B-
Wisconsin	D+	D
Wyoming	D	C-

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In state legislatures around the country, citizen groups foster ideas, participate in discussions and provide their points of view to lawmakers. This process is an important part of American democracy.

ALEC and its nine task forces closely imitate the state legislative process: Resolutions are introduced and assigned to an appropriate task force based on subject and scope; meetings are conducted where experts present facts and opinion for discussion, just as they would in committee hearings; these discussions are followed by a vote.

ALEC task forces serve as testing grounds to judge whether resolutions can achieve consensus and enough support to survive the legislative process in a state capitol. All adopted model policies are published at www.alec.org to promote increased education and the open exchange of ideas across America.

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- Employee Rights and Freedoms

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American Legislative Exchange Council
2900 Crystal Drive, Suite 600
Arlington, VA 22202
P: 703.373.0933 • F: 703.373.0927
www.alec.org