



## Overall Rank

#31

Colorado is now ranked #31 in overall education freedom, falling three spots from 2023. The state scores particularly poorly in education choice and transparency.

## Education Choice Rank

#36

Colorado ranks 36th for **education choice**, down one spot since 2023. Colorado does fairly well in empowering families to choose among charter and district schools but could do much more to expand private education choice. Additionally, Colorado generally respects the autonomy of homeschooling families. Colorado could improve its ranking by enacting a K-12 education savings account (ESA) policy and making it easier for more charter schools to open and operate.

## Transparency Rank

#34

Colorado ranks 34th in **academic transparency**. Colorado law<sup>1</sup> contains a parent bill of rights that says that “parents have a fundamental right and responsibility to make decisions concerning the care, custody, and control of their children.” Colorado lawmakers have not adopted proposals to increase academic transparency or that reject the prejudice caused by the application of critical race theory in schools.

## Teacher Freedom Rank

#21

Colorado is in the middle of the pack in terms of its **teacher freedom**, ranking 21st among states. Thirty-two percent of its teachers are alternatively certified, and the state does not use Common Core-aligned assessments. However, Colorado does not allow full reciprocity of teacher licensure and 61 percent of its school districts with more than 15,000 students employ a “chief diversity officer.” Educators in Colorado are required to pass the Praxis test, a teacher certification exam administered by the Educational Testing Service. To improve its teacher freedom ranking, the Centennial State should allow full reciprocity of teacher licensure with other states, or end certification requirements altogether, halt growth in non-teaching administrative staff in public schools, and eliminate the Praxis requirement.

## Return on Investment Rank

#28

Colorado ranks 28th for **return on investment (ROI)** in education spending. Colorado spends the 34th-most per pupil among states, spending \$15,000 in cost-of-living-adjusted terms annually. However, Colorado is tied for ninth place with Florida and Idaho in its combined fourth-grade and eighth-grade math and reading average NAEP scores. The Centennial State employs 1.69 teachers for every non-teacher in its public schools. Colorado’s unfunded teacher pension liability represents 6.8 percent of its state GDP. Colorado can improve its ROI ranking by limiting increases in per-pupil spending, stopping growth in non-teaching staff, and lowering its unfunded teacher pension liabilities.

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

OVERALL	EDUCATION CHOICE	TRANSPARENCY	TEACHER FREEDOM	RETURN ON INVESTMENT
▼ 3	▼ 1	▼ 1	▼ 1	▼ 8

#### NOTE:

1. <http://www.lpdirect.net/casb/crs/13-22-107.html>