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AMERICAN EDUCATION

RANKING STATE K-12 PERFORMANCE, PROGRESS, AND REFORM
18TH EDITION

-By-

Dr. Matthew Ladner and Dave Myslinski

Foreword by Gov. Mary Fallin

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Report Card on American Education

Ranking State K-12 Performance, Progress, and Reform

Dr. Matthew Ladner

Dave Myslinski

AMERICAN LEGISLATIVE EXCHANGE COUNCIL
ALEC

*Report Card on American Education:
Ranking State K-12 Performance, Progress, and Reform*
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Foreword

by Mary Fallin, Governor of Oklahoma

From the first day of my administration, education has been a cornerstone of my agenda. Improving our schools is the right thing to do for our children, but it also serves as an investment in our communities, our future workforce and our long term prospects for economic growth. Over the last two years, I am happy to announce that, through a collaborative effort, Oklahoma successfully implemented a series of comprehensive reforms that put our children and our schools on a pathway to greater success.

To promote our focus of “College, Career, and Citizen Readiness,” we decided to take a three-pronged approach advancing teacher quality, school accountability and a greater focus on literacy.

To ensure teacher quality, we needed to make sure that underperforming teachers could be let go without jumping through expensive legal hoops. Although most of our educators are excellent, the lengthy and expensive appeals process used to dismiss those who were underperforming was a burden on the state and our schools. Under the old system, teachers dismissed by local school boards could appeal the decision through “trial de novo,” a seemingly endless legal process that was costly for schools. Reforms I signed into law in 2011 now allow locally elected school boards the full authority and final decision in releasing a teacher that is under performing.

We also focused on literacy, one of the foundations of any good education. Studies have shown from kindergarten through third grade that children learn to read, but from fourth grade forward they read to learn. What we found in Oklahoma, however, was that children were being sent to the fourth grade without the basic reading skills needed to learn,” thus falling farther and farther behind.

The main culprit was a policy known as “social promotion,” or the practice of allowing students to advance with similar aged peers regardless of subject knowledge.

Oklahoma’s legislature passed, and I signed into law, a bill ending that practice and requiring every third grader to read at grade appropriate level before they can advance.

We can now be confident our children are either prepared for success or else are receiving additional literacy help during their most critical learning years.

Increasing accountability is another cornerstone of the reform measures we have pursued in Oklahoma. We cannot improve our schools unless we can first identify our strengths and weaknesses. To do so, we have recently instituted a new, easily understood A-F grading system for our public schools.

With the new system in place, parents, students, teachers and administrators have an easy way of measuring their schools progress. Good and improving schools are now publicly recognized for their successes, which we should all be proud of. And if a school is falling behind, we can identify that problem and fix it.

Implementing positive reforms, such as those we made in Oklahoma, requires collaboration and information. To create effective legislation, ALEC’s Report Card on American Education serves as a helpful guide for education reformers across America. The Report Card offers an assessment of American Education and a blueprint for how to make changes. With a comprehensive state-by-state evaluation—providing spending levels and achievement data, an education policy grade, and state NAEP performance rankings—reformers across the country can assess where

their state currently stands, and what positive changes they should consider.

We live in an aspirational society and the opportunity to receive a quality education is a part of the American Dream. The time to act is now—not just in Oklahoma, but across America. I am asking each reader of this guide to join me in pledging to improve our schools and give every child the opportunity to receive a dream-worthy education that builds the foundation for a better America.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mary Fallin". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Mary Fallin
Governor of Oklahoma



Reform-Minded Policymakers
Enact Large Changes in 2012

Reform-Minded Policymakers Enact Large Changes in 2012

During the 2011 legislative sessions, a number of blockbuster reforms were produced across a variety of education policy areas. *The Wall Street Journal* dubbed 2011 “The Year of School Choice,” and *Education Week* reported on a “sea change” of teacher tenure and evaluation policy.^{i,ii} That momentum continued in 2012 with major reforms impacting a variety of K–12 policy domains. In addition to major policy advances, a number of high-quality academic studies strongly buttressed the case for these crucial reforms. Importantly, with state education policy now beginning to accept a student-driven environment, it has freed education innovators to field-test stunningly novel digital learning techniques that have the potential to revolutionize learning not just in the United States, but around the world.

In this chapter, we summarize legislative achievements and new high-quality research that reinforce the case for still more—and more substantial—reform. Despite the quickening pace of reform in recent years, one must keep things in perspective and not become complacent with the hard-earned battles we have won thus far. The average American student still attends a school system that routinely practices social promotion, where school choice is scarce to non-existent, where course options are limited for students seeking education beyond core classes, and where highly effective teachers go unrewarded. At the same time, highly ineffective teachers remain untouched by corrective actions. Many states continue to cling to absurd barriers to entry for those seeking to join the teaching profession, despite demonstrations that the barriers do nothing to promote student learning and have no link to teacher effectiveness. Most states continue

to boost teacher pay based upon demonstrably meaningless credentials and age alone.

Despite these challenges, many reform-minded state policymakers have replaced these antiquated policies with practical ones, bringing states’ educational systems into the 21st century

LITERACY-BASED PROMOTION ADVANCES AS RESEARCH FINDS LONG-TERM BENEFITS

President Bill Clinton noted in his 1998 State of the Union address, “When we promote a child from grade to grade who hasn’t mastered the work, we don’t do that child any favors. It is time to end social promotion in American schools.”ⁱⁱⁱ It has taken social scientists many years to confirm Clinton’s common-sense assertion. Many in the nation’s colleges of education oppose the idea of earned promotion, citing concerns such as the possibilities of higher dropout rates and harm to children’s self-esteem.

These opinions, however, most often are based on unsophisticated studies carried out on sometimes-flawed retention policies. A new generation of methodologically sophisticated statistical studies employing powerful statistical techniques, carried out on more thoughtful *earned promotion* policies in Florida and New York City have led a growing number of states to take decisive action that curbs rigid social promotion policies.^{iv}

Answering tricky research questions such as, “Does this drug kill people or is it the cancer we’re treating?” requires researchers to employ powerful statistical techniques. The impact of retention policies represents just such a question. Opponents claim that retention causes higher dropout rates, but it is difficult to determine whether the academic problems that trigger retention

teacher, count yourself lucky. A great many students attending dysfunctional schools are not so fortunate.

The political power and preferences of education union bosses have largely made it impossible to reward the former, or to remove the latter from the classroom.

Fortunately, this has begun to change—a welcome development after years of miserable stasis. Lawmakers in some states, including Florida and Indiana, have taken aggressive steps to tie the compensation and retention of both teachers and principals to student performance and other factors. Unfortunately, educators and lawmakers in a sadly large number of other states have done nothing of the sort.

New research indicates lawmakers should urgently update antiquated human resource policies impacting teachers. A landmark 2011 study by Harvard and Columbia University professors demonstrated that individual teachers make immediate and lasting impacts on student test scores. Researchers isolated an individual teacher's impact by tracking student test score trends when a highly effective teacher transfers between schools

The researchers established that not only do student test scores rise with an effective teacher in the classroom, but, on average, student test scores from that teacher's former class fall once the teacher transfers. The study, in short, found extremely powerful evidence to demonstrate that individual teachers are not identical widgets and ought not to be treated like interchangeable factory workers.

The Harvard and Columbia researchers found long-term impacts even more impressive. By matching tax return data of students from the Internal Revenue Service with student outcomes, the authors demonstrated the long-term impacts of effective teachers. Ultimately, these highly effective instructors produce positive benefits ranging from higher college attendance rates and higher earned-income levels to lower teenage pregnancy rates for students.^{vi}

Running opposed to looking at each teacher as an individual, union methods and influence take a different tack. Most notable are employment policies that focus simply on seniority. Firing teachers simply based on seniority, without regard to effectiveness, represents one of the

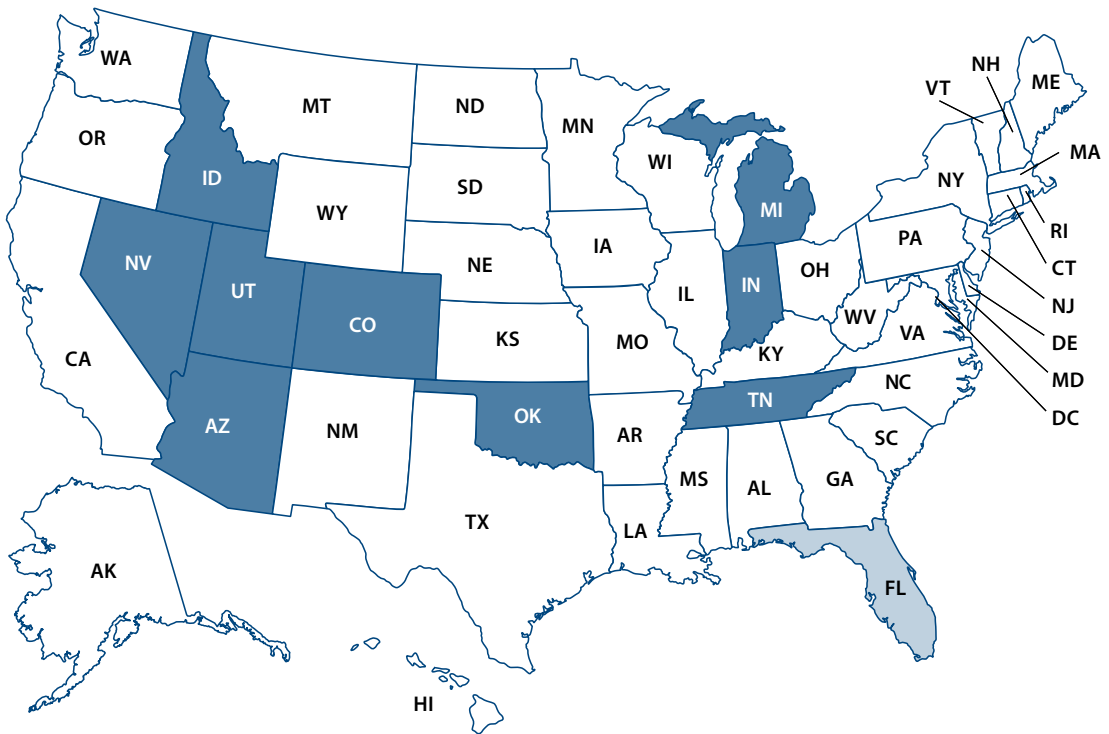
most morally repugnant policies unions cling to. The salience of the issue emerged dramatically as the nation plunged into a prolonged recession in 2008. Temporary federal measures delayed the need for large layoffs in public schools, but likely only kicked the can down the road. Research on teacher quality demonstrates conclusively that some teachers are far more effective than others. Policies to reduce the teacher workforce that ignore teacher quality will result in an academic catastrophe for American students. A number of states—but far too few—have taken the necessary action to introduce common sense into teacher human resource policy.

Despite recent progress, The New Teacher Project, an organization with the goal of ensuring excellent teachers are available to all students, identified 14 states—Alaska, California, Hawaii, Illinois, Kentucky, Minnesota, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, West Virginia, and Wisconsin—where it is *illegal* for school administrators to consider student performance in making layoff decisions. This objectionable policy caters to the self-interest of a few, while endangering many children's futures.^{vii}

Imagine a school district that, due to funding cuts, must reduce its teacher payrolls by 10 percent. If layoffs occur only according to seniority, then all teachers laid off will be young teachers, regardless of their effectiveness. As we detailed in the 17th edition of ALEC's *Report Card on American Education* last year, researchers have found experience to be only weakly related to effectiveness, meaning that schools can employ both highly effective young teachers and ineffective veteran instructors.

Antiquated human resource policies that reward teachers with “step pay” —increases based on age alone—may artificially inflate wages for older teachers while artificially depressing younger teacher wages. District officials also end up firing more young teachers when they have to cut teaching jobs to achieve the same savings, leaving fewer teachers available to teach. These policies also explicitly prohibit adjustments for effectiveness. A district required to make cuts could potentially let go of a relatively small number of higher paid ineffective teachers in order to keep a larger number of younger, more effective instructors.

FIGURE 2 | STATES THAT HAVE BANNED “LAST-IN, FIRST-OUT” POLICIES AS OF AUGUST 2012
(SOURCE: STUDENTS FIRST)



“Last-in, first-out” (LIFO) policies, however, forbid such rational decision-making and are indefensible in terms of promoting the best interests of students. Fortunately, a small but growing number of states have required schools to use student academic progress as a factor when making layoff decisions. Figure 2 notes states that have made this critical change.

With teachers’ employment based on performance, teachers’ unions often express fears that school administrators will fire older teachers simply because they are older and thus more expensive. Such accusations show very little confidence in public school administrators, most of whom started off as teachers themselves. Moreover, they completely ignore the body of federal civil rights laws that protect against age discrimination. Ultimately, these scenarios represent little more than scare tactics intended to preserve a broken status quo and jobs for longtime union members, although many who repeat the story may fail to recognize it as such.

Ending LIFO, however, only represents a necessary first step to overhauling a badly broken system that is not structured to recruit and retain high-quality instructors. Research clearly shows that highly effective teachers make a substantial difference in the lives of students, but most states continue to reward teachers for certifications and master’s degrees often unrelated to student learning gains. This expensive practice is estimated to cost an additional \$15 billion for our country’s education outlays each year.^{viii} States and districts can better allocate their educational dollars by directing them to rewarding and retaining effective teachers instead of paying teachers for holding—and in many cases, earning—a certificate.

ALTERNATIVE TEACHER CERTIFICATION ACQUIRES STRONG SUPPORT IN 2012

Facing rapid student enrollment growth that the state’s universities could not keep pace with on their own, Florida lawmakers embraced multiple alternative certification paths during the 1990s.

Table 1 | Characteristics of Teachers by Certification Route
(Source, Sass 2011)

Certification Pathway	Percent from Most Selective Colleges (Barron's Rankings)	Percent from Least Selective Colleges (Barron's Rankings)	Percent Passing State General Knowledge Reading Certification Exam on First Attempt	Average SAT Score
Traditional Florida College of Education	13.9%	19.6%	66.3%	937
Course Analysis	19.2%	16%	64.5%	955
Certified in Another State	7.8%	21.3%	*	*
Graduate of an Out of State Teacher Preparation Program	7.5%	23.3%	55.9%	*
District Alternative Certification Program	22.9%	13.5%	76.4%	1029
Educator Preparation Institute	22.3%	14.4%	91%	1029
American Board for Certification of Teaching Excellence	22.5%	18%	100%	1096
College Teaching Experience	35.8%	9.4%	69.2%	*

*=Data not available

The other option to alternative certification was not more traditionally certified teachers, but, in many cases, no teachers at all. Alternative certification coincided with a substantial improvement in academic achievement, did nothing to prevent such progress, and likely helped make it possible.

Analysis of teacher characteristics and student test score gains indicate that alternative certification succeeded in attracting many highly qualified candidates into the teaching profession. Georgia State Economist Tim R. Sass analyzed Florida certification routes and student test score gains and identified 10 routes to certification in Florida. Examples include traditional programs, full reciprocity, and Educator Preparation Institutes—partnerships between the Florida Department of Education and the community college system.

The Florida data warehouse maintained by the Florida Department of Education contains information about the route that teachers took for certification and information about the types and number of courses taken in college. Sass includes a number of tables on the level of academic preparation of teachers by certification status. A summary is in Table 1.

In a broad sense, the data demonstrates that alternatively certified teachers had higher

SAT scores as entering college students. For instance, the average traditionally certified student earned an SAT score of 937, while the average score for the highest scoring alternative certification candidates—who were certified through the American Board for Certification of Teacher Excellence (ABCTE)—was 1096. Alternative certification paths have allowed additional academically accomplished candidates to enter the profession. The passing rates for the Florida General Knowledge Certification Exams also varied by certification route, generally the alternative routes.

Sass analyzed student learning gains by certification route and finds that alternatively certified teachers have similar academic gains to those traditionally certified—similar to the findings of previous studies. Sass, however, found positive results for ABCTE, particularly for math teachers, who performed better, on average, than for traditional preparation program graduates. Across all specifications and tests, ABCTE teachers boost math achievement by 6 to 11 percent more than traditionally prepared teachers.

These results have implications for alternative certification beyond the ABCTE program, as selectivity is a key feature of the program, and

prospective teaching candidates must complete rigorous content examinations to be certified.

Sass rightly cautions that the ABCTE cohort is not large, so further research is warranted. Like the empirical investigations into the learning gains for students with Teach for America teachers, the gains in reading are much smaller than those in math, which merits further investigation. Researchers should continue to investigate the link between selectivity of programs and student test score gains.^{ix}

Florida's positive experience reinforces national research on alternative teacher certification. Harvard University scholars Daniel Nadler and Paul E. Peterson succinctly summarized the findings of their investigation into alternative certification with *What Happens When States Have Genuine Alternative Certification? We Get More Minority Teachers and Test Scores Rise*. Nadler and Peterson distinguish between states with genuine and non-genuine alternative certification, because many states have alternative certification paths on the books that require students to take years of coursework in a college of education.

Nadler and Peterson identified 21 states with genuine alternative teacher certification and then tracked the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) gains for all states. They found:

In states that had genuine alternative certification, test-score gains on the NAEP exceeded those in the other states by 4.8 points and 7.6 points in 4th- and 8th-grade math, respectively. In reading, the additional gains in the states with genuine alternative certification were 10.6 points and 3.9 points for the two grade levels, respectively. Among African Americans, test-score gains were also larger in the states with genuine alternative certification.

Nadler and Peterson then used information from the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights to measure the extent to which the race and ethnicity of each state's teaching force matched the state's overall adult population. They found that states with genuine alternative certification had teaching forces more closely aligned with the ethnic makeup of the state and cited specific examples of alternative certification

programs that were used disproportionately by minority degree holders to enter the teaching profession.^x

Florida's experience has been consistent with both of these national findings. Florida's NAEP scores have improved substantially, and Nadler and Peterson found Florida to have one of the most racially representative teaching forces in the nation.

LAWMAKERS CONTINUE TO RUN UP THE SCORE ON SCHOOL CHOICE CYNICS

In early 2011, an exchange between Friedman Foundation for Educational Choice senior fellow Greg Forster and *The Washington Post* education columnist Jay Mathews led to an interesting wager. Forster provided Mathews with a summary of high-quality random-assignment research showing a variety of positive benefits associated with school choice programs. In response, Mathews wrote a piece that ran on *The Washington Post's* Web site on March 25, 2011, titled "Vouchers work, but so what?"^{xi}

Mathews conceded the overwhelmingly positive random assignment research on school voucher programs, calling them "impressive." He then, in essence, argued that charter schools are the politically easier path to parental choice and that vouchers were essentially irrelevant:

The young educators who have led the robust growth of charters prefer to work in public schools. Many voters will continue to resist sending their tax dollars to private schools, particularly with the pressures to cut back government spending that are likely to be with us for many years.

If I am wrong about that, and the political winds blow in a pro-voucher direction, then Forster's good paper will be a useful addition to the debate. But I think we are better off spending what money we have on public charter schools.

It will take some big change in the culture—at least a half-century away—to give Forster the opportunity for universal vouchers that he hopes for. I am not going to live that long. Charters are the better bet.^{xii}

Mathews' use of the term "bet" proved prescient, as Forster then challenged Mathews to a wager. Mathews bet dinner at a restaurant of the winner's choice that 10 or fewer state legislative chambers would pass a private choice program expansion in 2011. Lawmakers promptly blasted past that low bar. Forster, being a good sport, agreed to raise the bar from 10 legislative chambers passing a private choice program to seven actual program enactments or expansions.

America's lawmakers quickly surpassed that higher bar as well. Congress reenacted Washington, D.C.'s Opportunity Scholarship Program (DCOSP); state lawmakers created brand new programs in Arizona, Colorado, Indiana, North Carolina, Ohio, and Wisconsin. Arizona, Colorado, and North Carolina created entirely new programs without previous precedent in 2011—Empowerment Savings Accounts in Arizona, a district-created voucher program in Colorado, and a personal use tax-credit program for students with disabilities in North Carolina.

Indiana lawmakers created the nation's most expansive school voucher program and expanded their preexisting tax credit program. Ohio lawmakers expanded their preexisting "failing schools" voucher and created a new program for special-needs children. Wisconsin lawmakers expanded Milwaukee's voucher program and created a new one for Racine. Lawmakers expanded most preexisting choice programs nationwide. With such ample justification, *The Wall Street Journal* proclaimed 2011 as "The Year of School Choice."^{xiii}

When the smoke cleared, lawmakers had surpassed the Forster-Mathews threshold by a wide margin. In 2012 lawmakers surpassed that threshold again, surprising those who asked themselves, "How are we going to top 2011 this year?" The year after "The Year of School Choice" turned out to be "The Year of School Choice: Part II."

Louisiana, with the strong partnership of Louisiana Gov. Bobby Jindal, State Superintendent John White, and state legislators took the lead with two far-reaching pieces of legislation. First, Louisiana lawmakers created a school voucher program to rival Indiana's by creating the statewide Louisiana K–12 Scholarship Program, which provides scholarships to students from

families of modest incomes attending C-, D-, or F-rated public schools. To qualify, students must live in a household with an income at or below 250 percent of the federal poverty rate—\$57,625 for a family of four in 2012. In all, approximately 380,000 students out of Louisiana's 700,000 students statewide are eligible to apply for a scholarship under the program.^{xiv} In 2012, approximately 950 out of Louisiana's 1,300 statewide public schools were graded as C or lower. Scholarship recipients can choose to attend non-public or A/B-rated public schools.

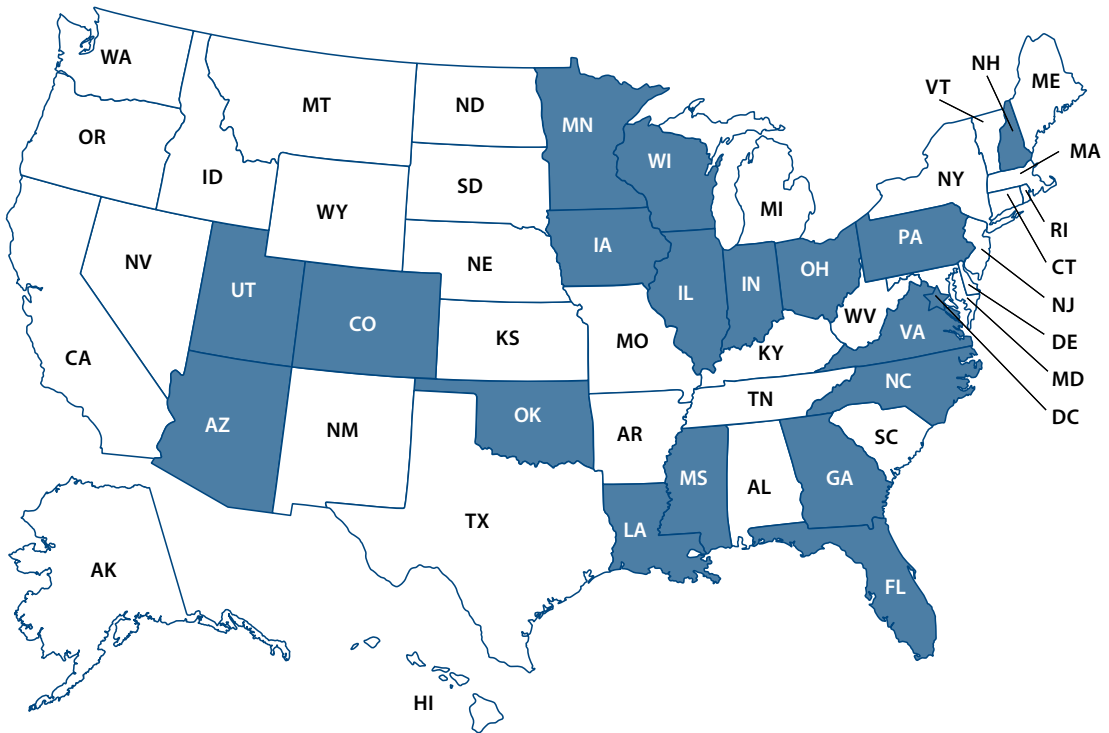
Louisiana lawmakers also created a Tax Credit for Donations to School Tuition Organizations program to provide scholarships for low-income students. Louisiana policymakers had previously created a scholarship for children with disabilities and provided a small tax deduction for private school expenses. Collectively, these programs have made Louisiana one of the top private school choice states.

For some time, Arizona lawmakers have been national leaders in school choice reform. And they were not idle in recent years as Indiana and Louisiana policymakers made aggressive moves for the title of the top parental choice state. In 2011, Arizona lawmakers created the Empowerment Scholarship Account (ESA) program—the first of its kind in the nation. To replace a school voucher program for special-needs students that fell to a court challenge, the Empowerment Scholarship Account program created a novel approach to parental choice, with special-needs students eligible upon its implementation.

Rather than a voucher program, ESA creates education savings accounts for eligible students, which are managed by parents or guardians. The accounts can be used to support private school tuition, the hiring of certified tutors, online education programs and even cover community college or university tuition. Parents also may use the funds to contribute to a 529 college savings plan for future higher education expenses. This creates a powerful incentive for parents to scrutinize education providers on both quality and cost.

Under the program, the state deposits 90 percent of an individual student's annual public school funding total into an eligible student's ESA. In return, the parent or guardian of

FIGURE 3 | States with One or More Private School Choice Programs, 2012
(Star=Washington, D.C.)



an ESA-eligible student must sign an agreement with the Arizona Department of Education to educate his or her child in core academic subjects and agree not to enroll them in a public school for the next school year.

Originally only for special-needs students attending public schools, Arizona lawmakers in 2012 expanded the eligibility of the ESA program to include students attending D- and F-rated schools or school districts, children of active-duty military members, and children who had passed through the foster care system. These changes will take effect in the fall of 2013 making 20 percent of Arizona public school students eligible for the program.

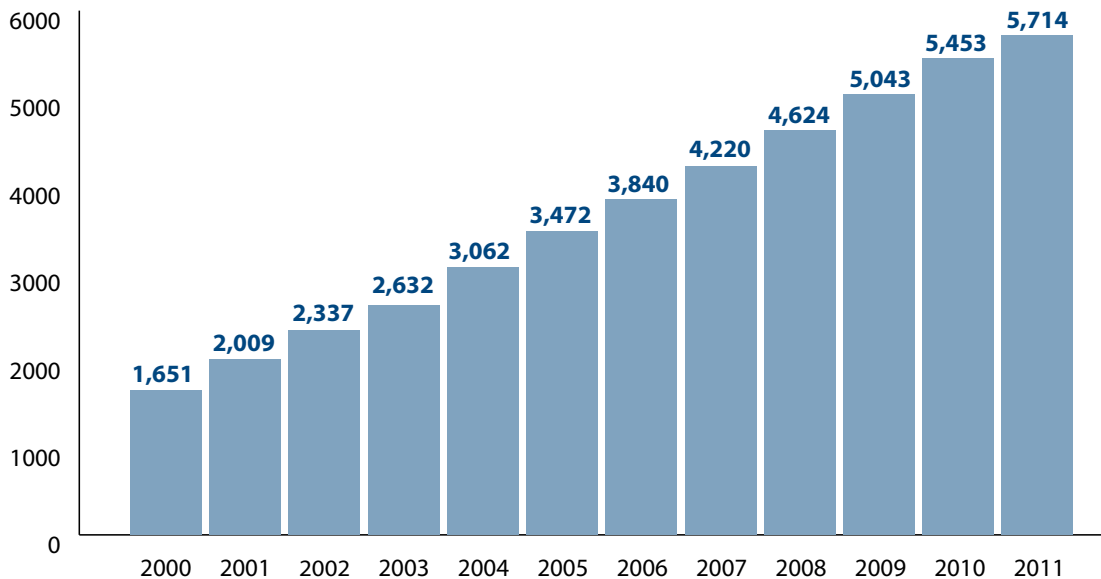
Already known for creating the nation's first tax credit program in 1997, which allows taxpayers to make donations to a qualified scholarship-granting nonprofit organization and receive a dollar-for-dollar credit against their state income tax liability, Arizona lawmakers created a new individual scholarship tax credit for children in middle- and low-income families. Similar to a corporate tax credit program created in 2006 aimed at

low- and middle-income students, lawmakers in 2012 created a new individual tax credit to raise additional funds for these students.

Pennsylvania was one of the earliest states to follow Arizona's example in creating a scholarship tax credit program with its Education Improvement Tax Credit (EITC). In 2012, lawmakers expanded the EITC by \$25 million to bring the statewide cap on donations to \$75 million. They also created a new \$50 million tax credit—the Education Opportunity Scholarship Tax Credit Program—for students attending a low-performing public school.

Three new states joined the private parental choice family in 2012 as well, all with new tax credit programs. New Hampshire lawmakers overrode the veto of Gov. John Lynch to enact a scholarship tax credit program for low- and middle-income students. Virginia legislators passed their own scholarship tax credit program, while Mississippi lawmakers passed a small tax credit program to benefit children with dyslexia. Figure 3 is the revised map showing states that have enacted one or more private school choice programs, including the three new states for 2012.

Figure 4 | Total Charter Schools, 2000-2011
(Source: Center for Education Reform)



If Jay Mathews still has some money burning a hole in his pocket, we are more than happy to make the same bet with him for 2013.

CHARTER SCHOOLS MAINTAIN MOMENTUM BUTTRESSED BY STRONG RESEARCH

The 2011–2012 school year saw 5,714 charter schools in operation educating almost two million students. Of these charter schools, almost 10 percent (518) were newly opened in 2011. Figure 4 illustrates the growth in the number of charter schools nationwide between 2001 and 2011. All too often, this level of growth is happening despite the inaction of lawmakers in many states.

The Center for Education Reform annually grades states' charter school laws. In 2012, only Arizona, Michigan, Minnesota, Washington, D.C., and newcomer Indiana had A-graded charter school laws. Figure 5 shows states scoring an A-rated charter school law in blue and B-rated charter laws in green.

Indiana lawmakers improved their charter school law grade from a B to an A in 2011, while Maine's lawmakers enacted their first charter school law in 2011, however it only earned a C grade. Idaho lawmakers removed a cap on charter schools to move up to a B. Arizona improved from a B to an A—mostly on the basis

of allowing universities to authorize charter schools—and Michigan lawmakers removed a cap on university authorized charter schools after a long multi-year struggle on the part of charter school advocates.

On the other hand, 2012 sessions met with disappointments in Alabama and Mississippi.^{xv} The Alabama debate included some truly absurd fear mongering from charter school opponents regarding the possibility of Muslim charter schools. These came despite the fact that charter schools cannot teach religion, and the only place anyone has been using charter schools as al-Qaida training centers is in the fever dreams of opportunistic charter school opponents.

ALEC has developed a set of model bills to stimulate improvement of America's charter school laws. A growing body of research indicates that students would benefit substantially from stronger charter school laws. The Global Report Card, published by the George W. Bush Institute, recently found that one-third of the nation's top 30 school districts ranked by mathematics scores were charter schools.^{xvi} This is an impressive achievement considering that charter schools still only constitute 5 percent of the nation's public schools.^{xvii}

Charter school opponents often claim that charter schools look better on paper than they actually are because they “skim the cream” in selecting highly motivated students. A growing body of empirical work, however, disproves the notion. Most charter school laws require a random lottery for admission when applicants exceed available seats. This requirement creates the necessary conditions for a high-quality random assignment study. Additionally, the locations where charter schools are most often found are indeed where they are most often needed—districts notable for historically poor academic performance.

A random assignment design represents the gold standard of social science research. The Food and Drug Administration mandates random assignment in evaluating the efficacy of new drugs because it is the most powerful research method available. Random assignment is especially useful in answering questions regarding whether charter schools perform better than district schools or whether they may simply appear to do so because they draw more highly motivated students and parents.

In a random assignment study, students are randomly assigned into an experimental group (lottery winners) and a control group (lottery losers). The random assignment of students into these groups isolates our key variable of interest: the impact of charter schools. All the parents who applied for the lottery were motivated to seek a new school for their child. The key difference between the two randomly chosen groups of students is the fact that one group got the opportunity to attend a charter school and the other group did not get the same opportunity.

Currently, four random assignment charter school studies tap into charter school effectiveness and provide some high confidence. In one study, a team of researchers from MIT, Harvard, Duke, and the University of Michigan examined the academic impact of charter schools for students in Boston. They found that the charter school effects are “large enough to reduce the black-white reading gap in middle school by two-thirds.”^{xviii}

Stanford University economist Caroline Hoxby performed separate random assignment studies on charter schools in New York City and Chicago. In Chicago, Hoxby found that “students in charter schools outperformed a comparable group

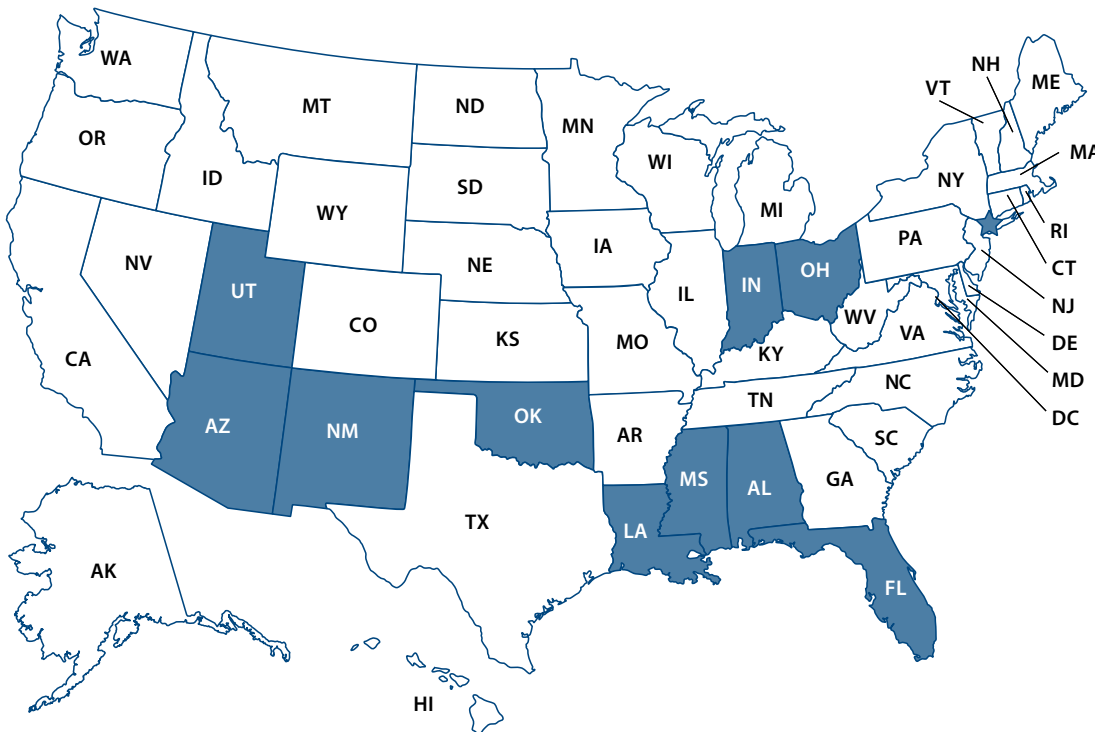
of lottery losing students who remained in regular Chicago public schools by 5 to 6 percentile points in math and about 5 percentile points in reading. ... To put the gains in perspective, it may help to know that 5 to 6 percentile points is just under half of the gap between the average disadvantaged minority student in Chicago public schools and the average middle-income non-minority student in a suburban district.”^{xix}

Hoxby also found a substantial charter school advantage in New York City: “On average, a student who attended a charter school for all of grades kindergarten through eight would close about 86 percent of the ‘Scarsdale–Harlem achievement gap’ in math and 66 percent of the achievement gap in English.”^{xx}

Mathematica research performed a random assignment study on 36 charter middle schools across 15 states for the U.S. Department of Education. Consistent with the Boston, Chicago, and New York charter school studies, this report found a positive and significant result for low-income students attending charter schools in urban areas. The same study found significant negative impact for non-poor students attending charter schools in suburban areas. Researchers should further examine the suburban finding to determine whether it holds up across a larger sample of schools and to see whether the same pattern emerges at the elementary and high school levels. The results for urban students, however, show a consistent pattern of improved results associated with charter schools.^{xxi}

The Obama administration’s Race to the Top competition generated a great deal of press by giving states bonus points for removing charter school caps. Policymakers should recognize, however, that merely removing a statewide cap is meaningless unless the state has a solid system of authorization—preferably with multiple independent authorizers, including a statewide authorizer. A state that only allows school districts to authorize schools, for instance, could remove a statewide cap on the number of charter schools without seeing any increase in the actual number of charter schools. Lawmakers should carefully examine the model ALEC bills to improve existing charter laws in their states or create a high-quality statute in a state without a charter law.

FIGURE 6 | JURISDICTIONS ADOPTING A-through-F LETTER GRADES FOR SCHOOL TRANSPARENCY
(STAR = NEW YORK CITY)



“This,” starts student Matthew Carpenter in Wired, “is my favorite exercise.” I peer over his shoulder at his laptop screen to see the math problem the fifth grader is pondering. It’s an inverse trigonometric function:

$$\cos^{-1}(1) = ?$$

After your humble author had an involuntary and painful flashback to his 1985 Trigonometry class, he went on to read that this was Matthew Carpenter’s 642nd trig problem, and that he was a 10-year-old student mid-way through the 4th grade.

Give that some thought: A formal evaluation of the efficacy of classroom flipping has yet to appear, but some preliminary data released by Khan Academy looks promising. In 2012, however, flipping the classroom was not the biggest bit of digital learning news.

Two Stanford professors, inspired by a presentation from Khan Academy’s founder and namesake Sal Khan decided to put their graduate-level

computer science course online for free. Stanford officials drew the line at granting Stanford course credit for taking the course online, but the professors decided to issue certificates of completion for online students successfully completing the course. The course, which was focused on the topic of artificial intelligence and required an advanced grasp of mathematics, included lectures, readings and tests, and was open to anyone in the world, free of charge.

The subject of the course—artificial intelligence—required an advanced grasp of mathematics. Nevertheless, one of the two professors thought they might get 1,000 students to take the course. The other—a wide-eyed optimist—thought they could get 5,000 online students to take the class, along with the 200 in-person Stanford students.

Both professors were wrong, as 160,000 people took the course and 20,000 of them successfully completed it. One-hundred-ninety nations had self-motivated citizens taking the course, and some very interesting things happened along the

way. For instance, 85 percent of Stanford's in-person, paying students stopped attending the class, explaining that they preferred to watch the lectures online because they could pause and rewind them.

When ranking student performance on exams, the top Stanford-affiliated student came in at 411th out of the 20,000 students who completed the course. So, despite Stanford's serious entrance requirements, physical access to the lectures and professor office hours, and what one would presume would be an above the global average grasp of English, Stanford students could not crack the top 400.

The advent of the Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) has been quite a shock to the higher education establishment, with a variety of universities joining various projects such as Coursera, EdX, and Udacity to provide free online education. These courses offer the highest quality curriculum and teachers but are largely not yet credit bearing. The implications for K–12, while less commented upon thus far, are also profound. With Ivy League-quality courses already online and free, it is only a matter of time until district, charter, private and home school students avail themselves to such courses, eventually en masse.

For instance, Coursera, a joint project of 16 top American Universities, already has more than 40 college-level online courses in topics ranging from humanities, medicine, biology, social sciences, and mathematics to business and computer science. These courses are currently offered by professors from Stanford, Princeton, Rice, the University of Michigan, and a number of other institutions, and students take these courses free of charge. These are far more than simple online lectures; they include reading, homework assignments, and examinations. However, the lecture portions employ novel techniques, many of which are impractical with a large number of students in a traditional learning environment. For example, instant “pop” quizzes require students to demonstrate that they have absorbed material before being allowed to proceed. If a student “gets lost” in a lecture, the technology literally requires them to find their way back to the path. Those who successfully complete the course receive a certificate of completion, which some higher learning institutions currently accept for credit.

With free access to such knowledge, current institutions of education will have to adjust or will find themselves falling out of favor. Unlimited students now have access—for free—to the world's top experts in virtually every field. The challenge for institutions will be accurately and comprehensively assessing student knowledge. As employers recognize that not all knowledge is gained through the traditional classroom, the importance of certification and validation of knowledge will become ever more important.

Coursera co-founder Daphne Koller believes that the future of universities will include a retooling effort whereby professors add value to online instruction through applied learning projects.^{xxii} The same logic could also be applied to K–12 instruction. It is impossible to forecast just what the average school will look like in 50 years or how it will perform, but put your bets down on *different and better*.

CONCLUSION: ONCE MORE UNTO THE BREACH DEAR FRIENDS

The stasis in school practices, a result of what Stanford political scientist Terry Moe described as a “Whack-a-Mole” strategy by unions, has been compromised. Teachers' unions and other elements of the status-quo coalition have blocked the vast majority of reforms the vast majority of the time. The resulting policy uniformity across states left little in the way of meaningful differences among states. In 1989, no state provided much in the way of parental choice outside the school district system. Academic and financial transparency stood somewhere between abysmal and nonexistent at the school level. Evaluating teachers based, in part, by student performance constituted little more than a fantasy held by a small group of reformers.

Going forward, state laboratories of reform will allow for the continued evaluation of a number of important reforms. Education reform now represents a decentralized learning process and, as parental dissatisfaction turns into intolerance of continued failure, the pace will likely quicken in the years ahead. A virtuous cycle is underway whereby policymakers enact reforms, and academics—employing high-quality statistical techniques—have found encouraging evidence to support such policies. Some of the more

recent examples of such research are summarized here.

More reforms lead to still more research. Notice that no one has yet been able to produce a random assignment study to suggest that school vouchers harm student achievement, or even a logically coherent argument in favor of unconditional tenure, much less any high-quality statistical evidence in favor of it. Through a decentralized

learning process carried out on a blossoming variety of policies, the case for reform continues to get stronger.

Meanwhile, a new generation of innovators has bypassed bureaucracy, bringing powerful learning tools directly to students. The full implications of this for the K–12 system remain impossible to forecast, but this much is clear: The best is yet to come.



Closing Achievement Gaps: Some States Jog while Others Crawl

Closing Achievement Gaps: Some States Jog while Others Crawl

In 1997, Professor Lawrence Stedman characterized the state of academic achievement gaps in America with precision and brutal honesty:

Twelfth-grade black students are performing at the level of middle school white students. These students are about to graduate, yet they lag four or more years behind in every area including math, science, writing, history and geography. Latino seniors do somewhat better than 8th-grade white students in math and writing but, in other areas, are also four years behind white 12th graders. . . . Schools and society remains divided into two different worlds, one black, one white, separate and unequal.^{xxiii}

The following recent data demonstrates that nationally, 15 years after Stedman’s chillingly accurate assessment, little has changed. America’s system of schooling continues to systematically underserve low-income and minority students, despite large, above-and-beyond inflation increases in per-pupil spending. The picture varies considerably from state to state however, with some states having made solid progress in closing gaps and others falling even further behind.

This chapter ranks states according to their progress in closing achievement gaps. For reasons we will explain, there is only one good way to close an achievement gap: Realize gains for everyone, with larger-than-average gains for disadvantaged student groups. Understanding ways of closing achievement gaps in proper context will reveal a large variety in the effectiveness of state efforts to close those gaps.

CAUTION: ACHIEVEMENT GAPS ARE NOT ALWAYS WHAT THEY APPEAR

Achievement gaps easily can mislead the unwary thinker. Consider, for instance, the white-black achievement gap. Normally, we would think closing this gap is good and desirable, and a growing gap is bad and undesirable.

The way in which achievement gaps grow or close, however, is vitally important. Imagine, for instance, a state whose white-black achievement gap closed due to a decline in the achievement scores of white students accompanied by a decline in black scores, with white scores declining at a faster rate. Congratulations! The achievement gap closed, but you have an academic catastrophe on your hands. This may seem like a far-fetched scenario, but it actually happened in West Virginia, as we detail here.

Likewise, an achievement gap can expand, even when all scores have risen, if the scores of the traditionally higher scoring group increase faster. The District of Columbia, in the midst of a substantial gentrification, has seen just such a trend over the past decade. Ethicists can debate whether we should view the District of Columbia trend as a boon or a disaster, but it is clearly a better state of affairs than in West Virginia—with all scores going up in D.C., and all scores going down in West Virginia—unless you are the sort who places an irrationally high value on equality of misery.

If you fall into that trap, you may congratulate West Virginia for its “closing” achievement gap, while scolding Washington, D.C., for its “widening” gap. This shows the need to go deeper than the surface and to examine the crucial details of how states close achievement gaps, not simply *if* they close them.

There will always be differences in academic achievement between various student subgroups and non-schooling factors that contribute to such gaps. On the whole, students from low-income households will face greater challenges than those from their wealthy classmates.

“Bad gap closings” and “good gap expansions,” if we wanted to call them that, are the exceptions rather than the rules, but they have happened, as we have detailed. Nevertheless, broadly speaking, the sort of huge and appalling gaps found in America point to deep flaws in our system of schooling. The vast majority of the time, states show a persistent achievement gap. The following data point to a horrible but unavoidable conclusion: American schools give the most to the children with the most. Far too many children who begin with little receive very little in the way of an education. Vast swaths of American children find themselves warehoused more than educated in what has become government-subsidized daycare.

First, we present both national and international data on achievement gaps. Next, we carefully examine both national and state-level achievement data to rank state performance. Americans have been crawling a marathon in closing achievement gaps. Distressingly, some are crawling away from the finish line. A few states, however, have stood up and begun to jog in the right direction.

ACHIEVEMENT GAPS: INTERNATIONAL EVIDENCE OF A NATIONAL DISGRACE

The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) began giving exams to measure student K–12 achievement in member nations during the late 1990s. The 2009 Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) gave random student samples academic exams in 74 countries. The following PISA data focus on 15-year-old students (10th graders in America), as this is often the minimum age of mandatory school attendance around the world. In short, this data is as close to a comparable finished academic product as possible.

The U.S. Department of Education performed an additional analysis of the American data to break down results by both income and racial/ethnic subgroups. Figure 1 presents data for American subgroups by income compared to PISA averages. The chart divides the American sample into quartiles based upon the percentage of students at the school level who qualify for a free or reduced-price lunch under the National School Lunch Program (NSLP). The program is administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and provides free and reduced-price lunches for children whose family income falls below certain thresholds, which vary by family size and are updated from year to year to account for inflation. In 2009,

Figure 1 | PISA Combined Literacy Scores for 15-year-olds by School Affluence (Percentage of Students at American Schools Qualifying for a Free or Reduced Lunch)

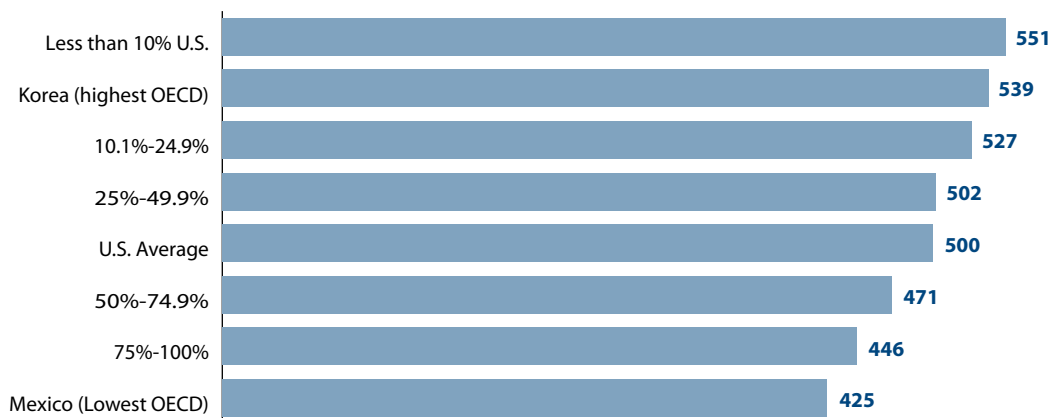


Figure 2 | PISA Combined Literacy Scores for 15-year-olds—American scores by Race and Ethnicity



a family of four could earn a maximum of just more than \$40,000 to qualify for a reduced-price lunch, but approximately 80 percent of these students qualify for a free lunch, which, for the same family of four, has a maximum family income of just over \$28,000.^{xxiv} Figure 1 compares American income subgroups against the performance of the lowest and highest OECD performers.

The wealthiest Americans achieve quite well—higher than average for the highest performing nation. Notice, however, how things slip by income: Students attending schools with a majority of low-income students score closer to the average of Mexico (the lowest scoring OECD country) than to South Korea (the highest scoring nation). This is a disappointing result, to say the least, given that American schools spend approximately four times as much per pupil on a purchasing-power-adjusted basis.^{xxv}

Figure 2 shows the same disappointing pattern by racial and ethnic subgroups.

American 15-year-old white students score at an internationally competitive level, but one can only describe the results for black and Hispanic students as *catastrophic*. Mexico’s schools may produce the lowest scores in the OECD, but on a point-produced-per-dollar basis, they easily outshine American schools serving black and Hispanic students, despite having lower average family incomes.

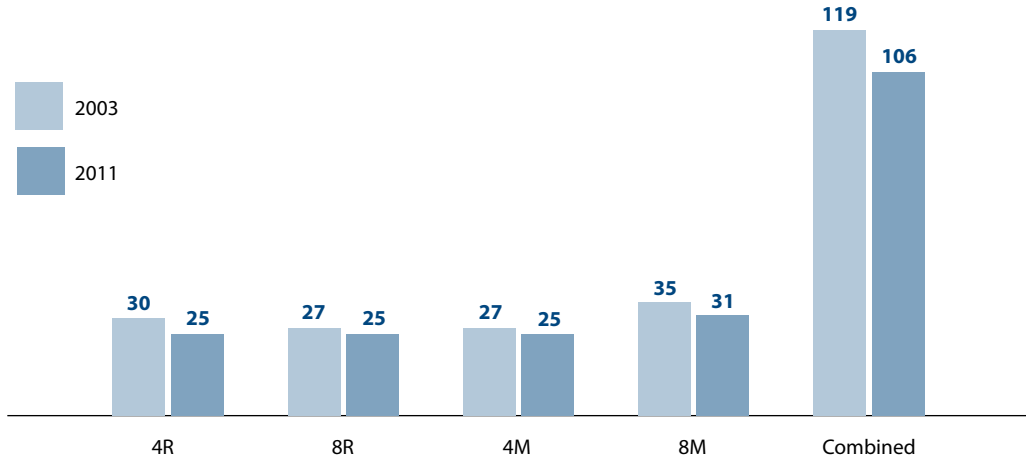
Researchers find the same achievement gaps in domestic and international testing data. Each year, millions of children—disproportionately

low-income and minority children—fail to learn basic literacy skills in the developmentally critical grades. Rather than addressing these problems head-on, standard practice involves simply socially promoting students to the next grade. Our collective failure to reform this shameful practice preserves a system of schooling that routinely gives the least to the students who start with the greatest needs.

One can only describe the catastrophically low level of academic achievement among low-income and minority students as a crisis and a source of enormous national shame. The collective failure of American schools and society to educate low-income and minority students has produced what McKinsey & Company describes as a “permanent national recession” in America. Obviously, the economic impact of education failure falls primarily upon the poor, but with consequences for everyone.

In subsequent pages, we measure and rank the progress of each of the 50 states and the District of Columbia in narrowing achievement gaps by race/ethnicity and income. We will utilize NAEP data to do so, making use of all four major NAEP tests (fourth-grade mathematics, fourth-grade reading, eighth-grade mathematics and eighth-grade reading) for the entire period for which all 51 jurisdictions took these exams available at the time of this writing (2003 to 2011).

The data makes clear that some states have made progress on narrowing gaps, while others continue to flounder as achievement gaps not only fail to narrow but actually continue to grow.

Figure 3 | **White-Black Achievement Gap by NAEP Subject, 2003 and 2011**

THE WHITE-BLACK ACHIEVEMENT GAP

The yawning gap in academic achievement between white and black students continues to be a devil American schools. Figure 3 details the size of the gap between white and black achievement for each of the main NAEP exams, plus the combined point total for all four tests in 2003 (the first tests administered to all 50 states) and 2011 (the latest available NAEP results at the time of this writing). The figure shows score gaps by subtracting the average score for black students from the average score for white students on the combined fourth- and eighth-grade reading and math exams, respectively, and then presents a combined total from all four tests.

Figure 3 shows that the national achievement gaps are *very large*. Despite some improvement between 2003 and 2011, the white/black achievement gap remained larger than 100 points in 2011. To put these scores in context, on NAEP reading, the average amount of academic progress achieved in an average academic year roughly equals 10 points.^{xviii} In other words, a group of fifth graders could be expected to score about 10 points higher than a group of fourth graders on the NAEP reading test, all else being equal.

The national 25-point gap between white and black students in eighth-grade reading in 2011 therefore constitutes a gigantic problem: Black eighth-graders were reading at an average level comparable to white fifth-graders. Further, the fact that the results in 2011 were a smidgen better than in 2003 provides limited comfort. At this rate, assuming

uninterrupted progress (a heroic assumption) the white-black achievement gap on eighth-grade reading would close in about 65 years.

Nationwide, the country saw a 13-point decline in the size of the white-black achievement gap between 2003 and 2011. This averages roughly four points per NAEP test over that eight-year period. This is a geological rate of progress relative to the needs of the country to prepare all students for the challenges of the 21st century.

The picture however becomes more promising when examining state rather than national results. National stasis conceals a considerable amount of variation among states regarding improvements in reducing income achievement gaps.

Figure 4 shows the reduction (or in some cases expansion) in the size of the total NAEP white-black achievement gap (negative numbers) and the states in which the gap grew for the 2003-2011 period.

(Hawaii, Idaho, Maine, Montana, New Hampshire, North Dakota, Oregon, South Dakota, Utah, Vermont, and Wyoming lacked black student populations large enough for NAEP to reliably sample, and thus are not included in the analysis. Washington D.C., lacked a white student population large enough to sample in the eighth grade, excluding them from the analysis as well.)

National leaders in reducing the white-black achievement gap—New York, Louisiana, and Florida—doubled the average rate of progress. The worst performing state, Oregon, saw almost a 23-point *increase* in the size of the white-black achievement gap between 2003 and 2011.

Figure 4 | Trends in the Combined NAEP White-Black Achievement Gap, 2003 to 2011
(Negative Numbers=Declining Gap)

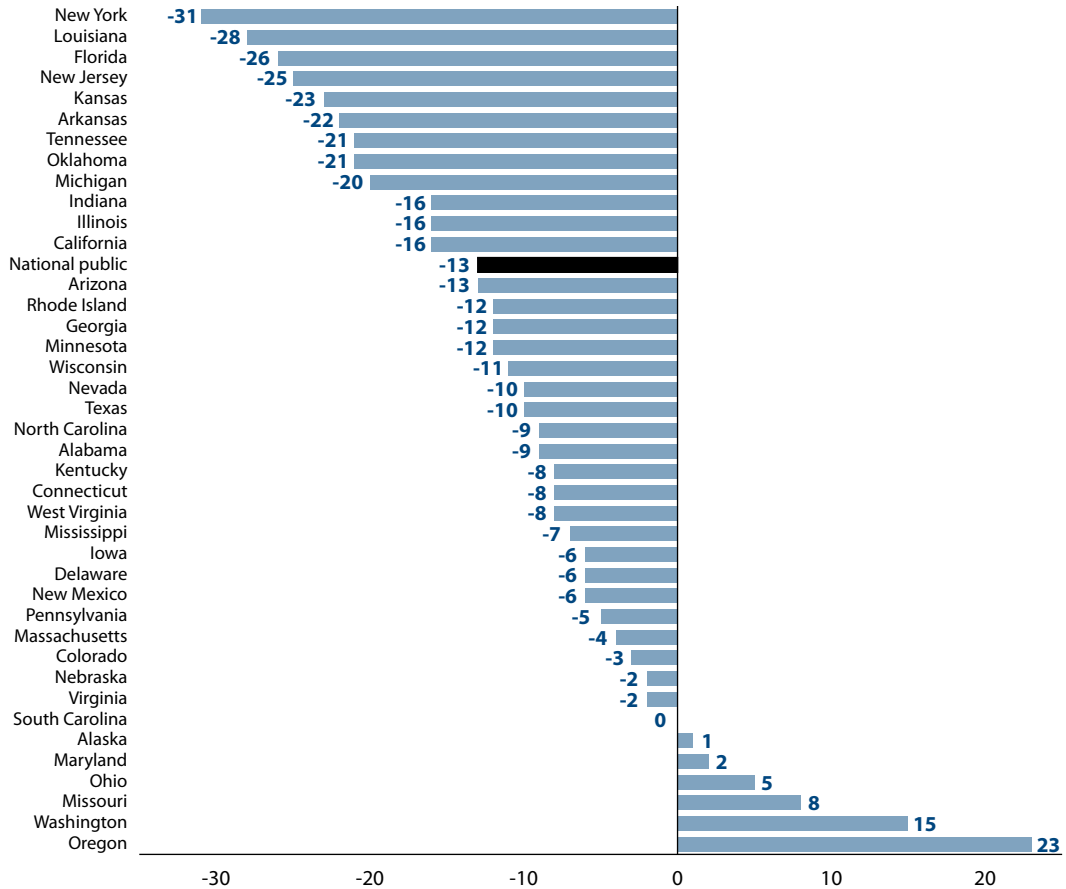


Figure 5 presents the absolute size of white-black achievement gaps by state using the 2011 data—the combined NAEP fourth- and eighth-grade reading and mathematics tests. The figures again represent the combined white scores minus the combined black scores on the four NAEP tests given consistently since 2003. Rather than measuring trends, Figure 5 shows the *absolute size* of the gaps in 2011 by subtracting black scores from white scores on the four main NAEP exams.

Again, use caution when interpreting the data in Figure 5. For instance, West Virginia has the nation’s smallest white-black achievement gap in the nation. Cause for celebration? Not in this case: West Virginia also had the lowest scores for white students in the country *on all four major NAEP tests in 2011*.

Black student scores in West Virginia are a bit above the national average, but the small achievement gap is largely explained by the low scores of

the students who comprise almost 93 percent of the student population. West Virginia has white scores far below the national average and black scores that are approximately average, creating a small white-black achievement gap, but hardly one that anyone would wish to emulate.

Figure 6, therefore, corrects for such issues with regard to progress, or lack thereof. The trend lines presented in Figure 5 can provide a misleading picture of trends if white students’ scores in a given state have underperformed the national average. Between 2003 and 2011, scores for white students were generally increasing. A state in which white students’ scores increased below the national average, stagnated, or actually fell could show a decline in the white-black achievement gap. In some instances this could happen even if black students’ scores themselves were declining (e.g., if white students’ scores were declining at a faster rate).

Figure 5 | Combined NAEP Achievement Gaps (4th and 8th Grade Reading and Math) by Jurisdiction, 2011

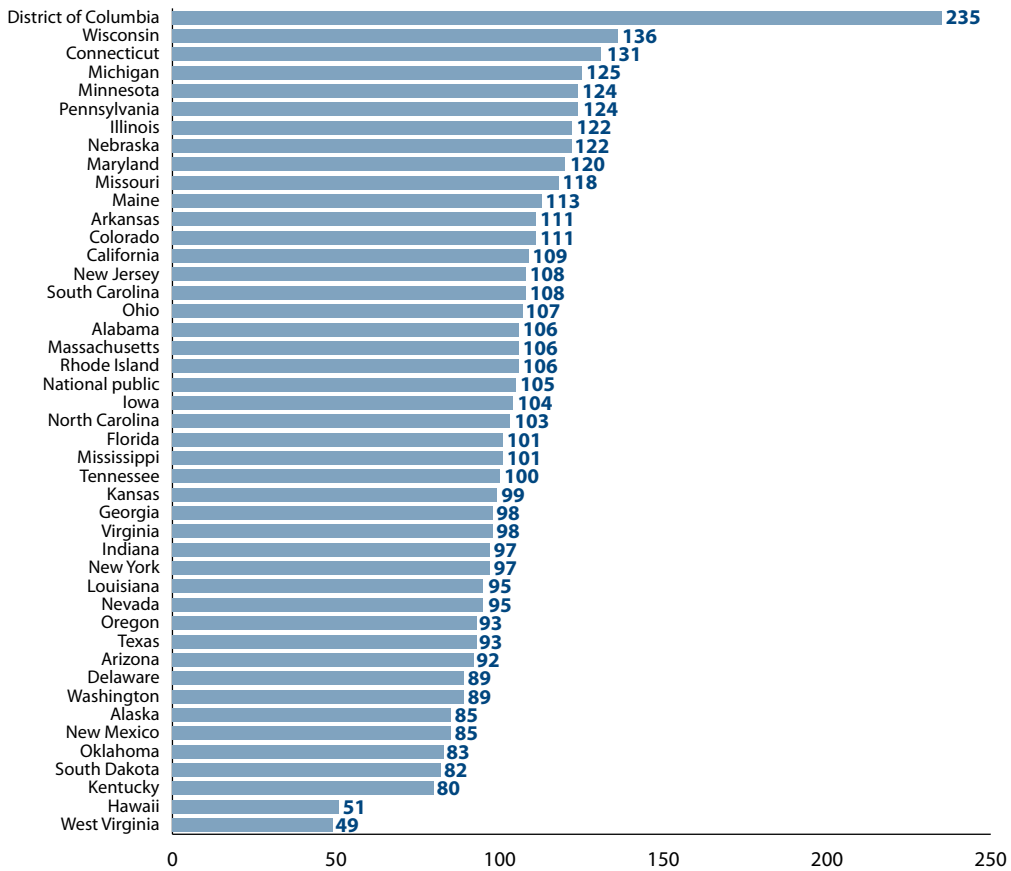


Figure 6 takes these possibilities into account by only ranking the trend of the white-black achievement gap for states making at least average progress for white students. This is, in fact, the best way to close an achievement gap: Have both advantaged and disadvantaged students make gains, with the disadvantaged student group showing larger gains. In summary, these states made truly admirable progress on the white-black achievement gap.

The white-black achievement gap is not going anywhere fast. Florida, which advanced fastest during this period, would take more than three decades to close the gap if the current pace were maintained. Colorado, the state with the slowest progress, would close the gap between white and black students in approximately 296 years at the current pace.^{xxviii}

There are worse things afoot, however, than what we see in Colorado. Recall from Figure 4

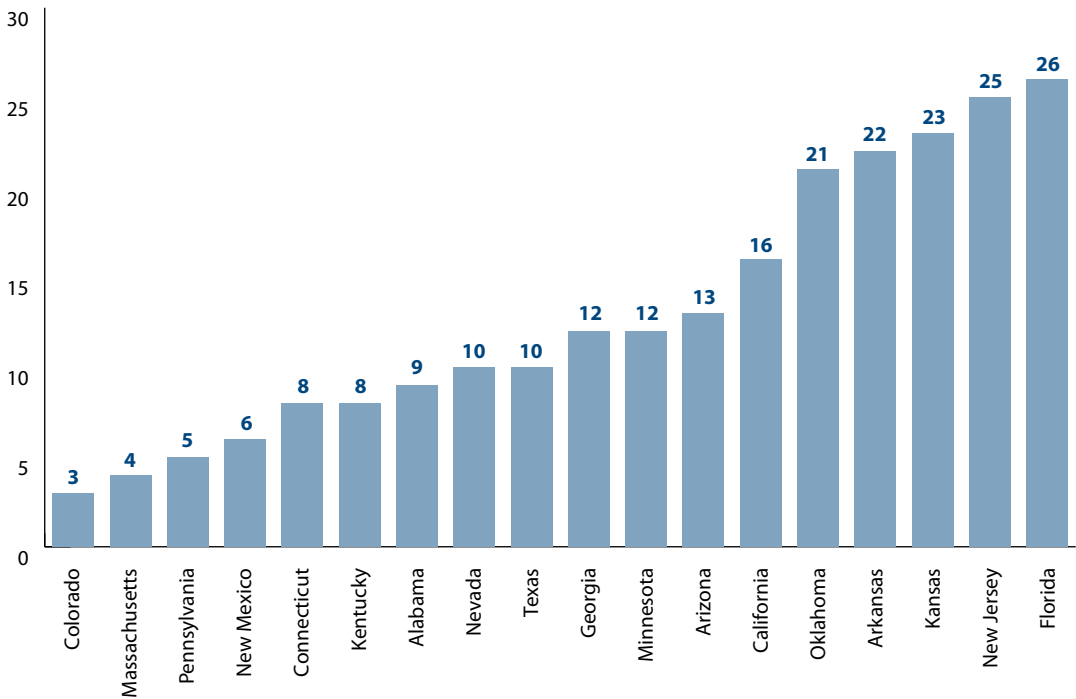
that Alaska, Maryland, Missouri, Ohio, Oregon, and Washington expanded the size of their white-black achievement gaps between 2003 and 2011. In Oregon, the question is not whether they can start to close the gap but just how big it will get before deciding to do something about it.

Reformers must recalibrate the scale of their efforts if they wish to achieve meaningful results while they are still alive.

THE WHITE-HISPANIC ACHIEVEMENT GAP

America's Hispanic children have also had considerable difficulty in closing the achievement gap. Figure 8 presents the 2003 and 2011 white-Hispanic achievement gaps for the four main NAEP exams and the combined total. The gaping size of the 2011 gap overshadows the fact that each of the academic gaps shrank marginally between 2003 and 2011. For instance, the 2009

Figure 6 | Declines in the White-Black Achievement Gap on the Combined NAEP exams for States with Average or Above White Academic Progress, 2003 to 2011



fourth-grade reading gap between white and Hispanic students stood at an appalling 25 points—roughly equivalent to two and a half school years of academic progress.

One might hope that language barriers account for the gap and that it would narrow as the billions of dollars spent on English-Language

Learner programs took hold—hope in vain, that is. The eighth-grade reading gap looms almost identically large to the fourth-grade gap. At the rate of progress achieved between 2003 and 2011 (if steadily and consistently maintained—a heroic assumption) Hispanics will close the gap seen in Figure 7 somewhere around the year 2056.

Figure 7 | National White-Hispanic Achievement Gaps by NAEP Subject, 2003-2011

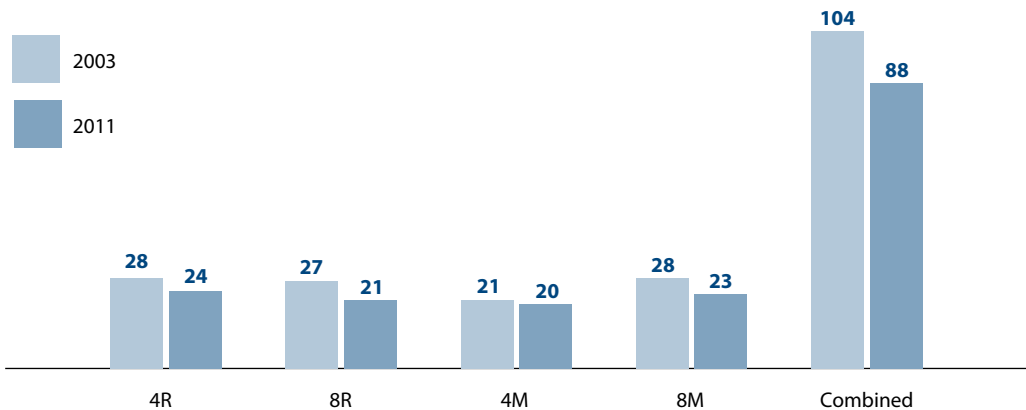
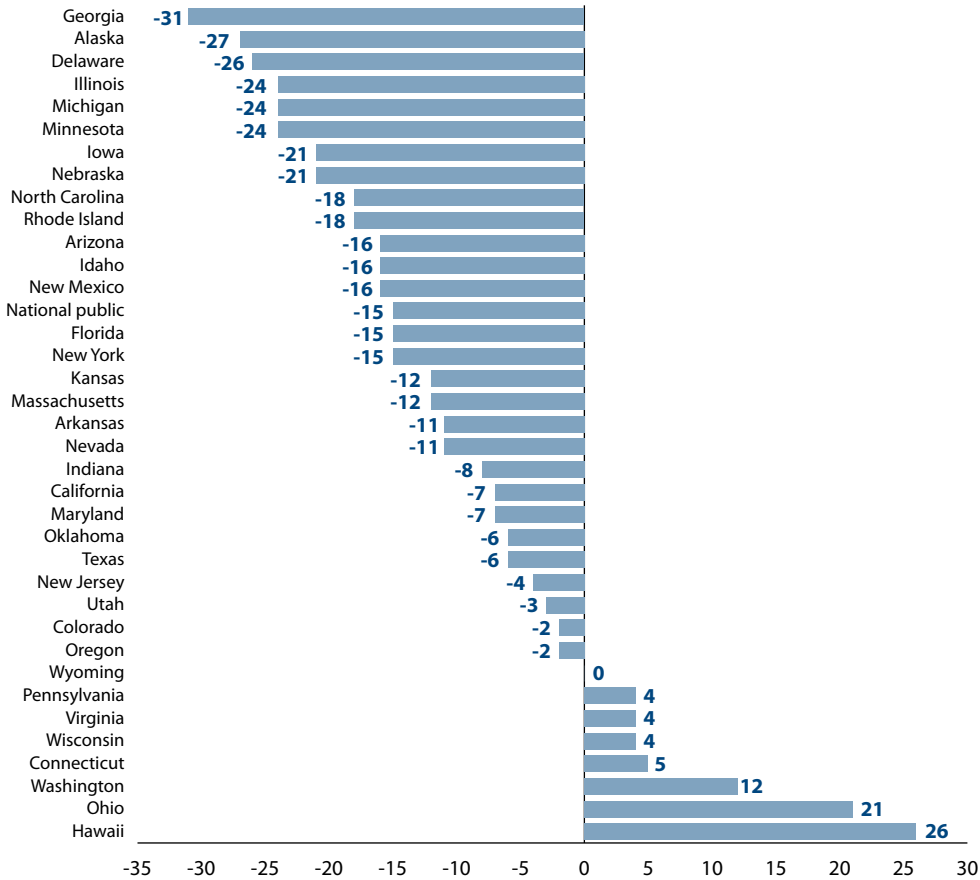


Figure 8 | Combined NAEP White-Hispanic Achievement Gap Trend, 2003-2011
 (Note: Negative Scores Signify a Closing Gap)



The national situation hardly inspires confidence, although more progress is seen than in the case of the black-white gap. State-by-state data, however, demonstrates amazing variability among jurisdictions in closing the Hispanic achievement gap. One can find everything from inspiring success to worsening failure in the states.

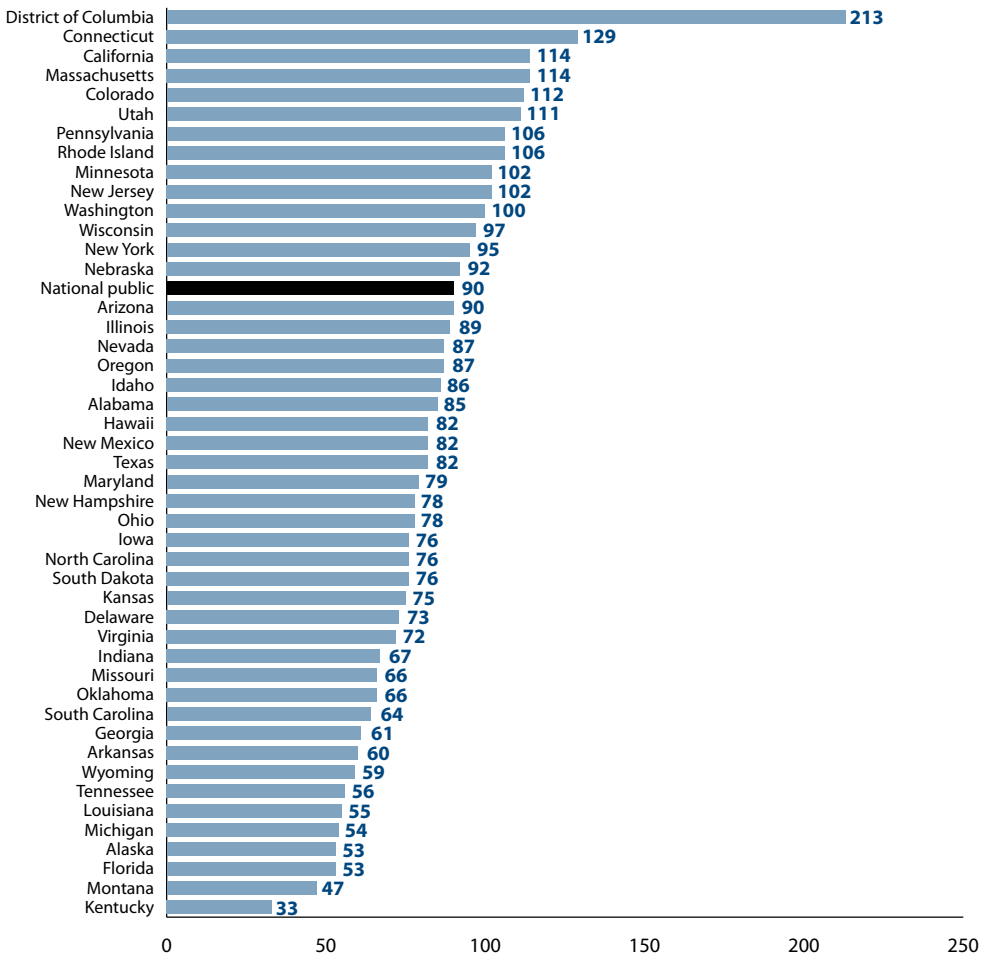
Figure 8 presents the trend for the combined white-Hispanic gaps on the four main NAEP exams (fourth-grade math and reading, eighth-grade math and reading). The Hispanic populations of a number of states fell below the size required to reliably sample, so they are not included in the analysis. These states included Alabama, Idaho, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, New Hampshire, North Dakota, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Utah, Vermont, West Virginia, and Wyoming. Washington, D.C., had eighth-grade white populations too small to reliably sample as well.

In total, 19 states reduced their total Hispanic achievement gap more than the national average, although most only by modest margins. Notice the substantial variation in outcomes among states: Delaware reduced the Hispanic gap by approximately three-times the national average. Meanwhile, Ohio suffered an increase to the gap more than twice the size of the national decline.

Figure 9 presents the absolute size of the white-Hispanic achievement gap using all four major NAEP exams given in 2011. Note that the same caveats previously discussed regarding the white-Black achievement gap apply to the Hispanic gap as well.

Figure 10 presents the figures for states making admirable progress on the white-Hispanic achievement gap—states with above-average white and Hispanic student gains.

Figure 9 | **Combined NAEP White-Hispanic Achievement Gap in NAEP Scale Points, 2011**



If Georgia were to maintain its current pace, then it would close the white-Hispanic achievement gap in approximately 16 years. Colorado, the slowest of the states making admirable progress, would take 448 years at its current pace. The Hispanic achievement “Hall of Shame” is made up of Connecticut, Hawaii, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Virginia, Washington, and Wisconsin, where the gap expanded between 2003 and 2011.

TRENDS IN ECONOMIC ACHIEVEMENT GAPS BY STATE

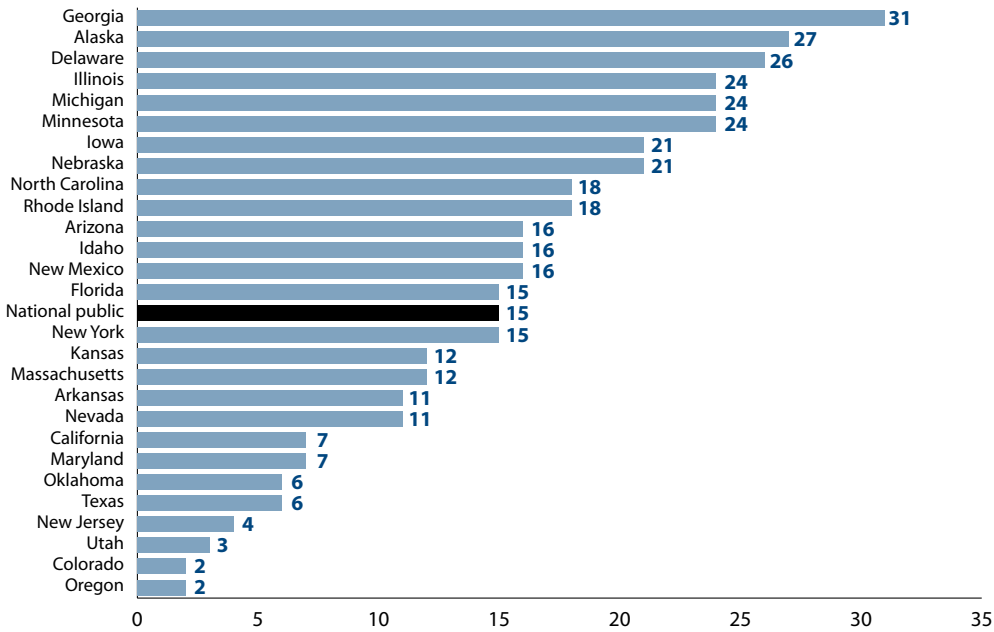
Nationwide, the gap in achievement between poor and non-poor students on the combined NAEP assessments has declined somewhat between the 2003 and 2011 NAEP, as shown in Figure 11.

The gaps between students from low- and

middle/high-income families are large and only narrowing slowly. A national achievement gap of almost 27 points on fourth-grade reading between poor and non-poor students represents a very large gulf in academic achievement from the 2011 NAEP. On average, poor children will not be reading approximately at the level of non-poor fourth-graders until they finish the seventh grade. The situation proved only slightly better in eighth-grade reading. Non-poor students also outscore poor students by a sizable margin in fourth-grade math and by an even larger amount in eighth-grade math.

Finally, Figure 11 sums all four gaps into a cumulative gap of 104 points for 2003 and 99 points in 2011. Mark your calendar for the year 2177 to celebrate cutting the income achievement gap in

Figure 10 | **Combined NAEP White-Hispanic Achievement Gap Closing for States Making an Average or Above-Average Progress for White Students, 2003-2011**



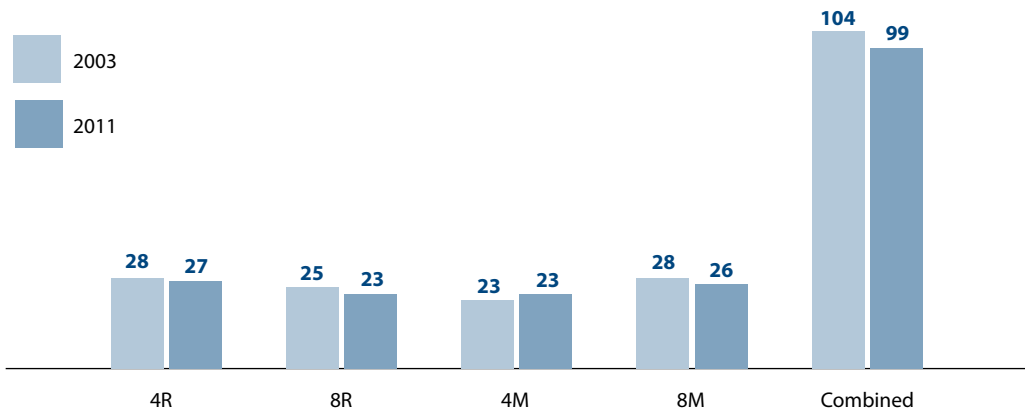
fourth-grade reading by half, assuming endurance of the current glacial pace of improvement.

The national trend between 2003 and 2011 failed to show much progress, but in terms of sheer size of income achievement gaps among states, we find a remarkable amount of variation. Figure 12 presents the combined NAEP achievement gap between poor and non-poor students for all 50 states and the District of Columbia.

Notice that the state with the largest income

gap, Connecticut, has an income achievement gap more than twice as large (121 points) as the state with the smallest gap, Wyoming (60 points). Statistical evaluation of variation between these scores lies outside of the scope of this work, but obviously, multiple demographic and other factors influence the size of such gaps. Connecticut, for example, contains a large inner-city district (Hartford) into which many of the state's low-income students have clustered. Wyoming, a rural

Figure 11 | **The National NAEP Family Income Achievement Gap (Non FRL eligible minus FRL eligible) by Subject, 2003 and 2009**



state, lacks a similar major urban district. High scores among non-poor students contribute to the gap just as much as low scores among poor students.

Figure 12 shows the absolute size of the income gaps in 2011. Figure 13 shows the progress (or lack thereof) for all 50 states in closing the income achievement gap on the combined NAEP exams. Some states moved the needle on lowering income gap, while many others floundered helplessly, their gaps growing larger.

Figure 13 presents the combined NAEP income achievement gaps for all 50 states and the District of Columbia for the 2003–2011 period. The figures presented in Figure 13 simply represent the 2011 combined gap minus the 2003

combined gap. Positive numbers signify a growing income achievement gap, while negative numbers show a declining gap.

Broadly speaking, income gap figures by state show most jurisdictions in the middle: some having made limited progress, and a disturbingly large number of states having somewhat expanded their income achievement gap. Two jurisdictions—Washington, D.C., and Oregon—suffered disturbingly large increases in income achievement gaps.

Figure 14 illustrates the trends in the economic achievement gap for states making average or better academic progress for non-poor students.

Florida, the state with the most rapidly closing gap between 2003 and 2011, could close its

Figure 12 | 2011 Combined NAEP Income Achievement Gap by State—Non- Poor minus Poor scores on the four main NAEP exams

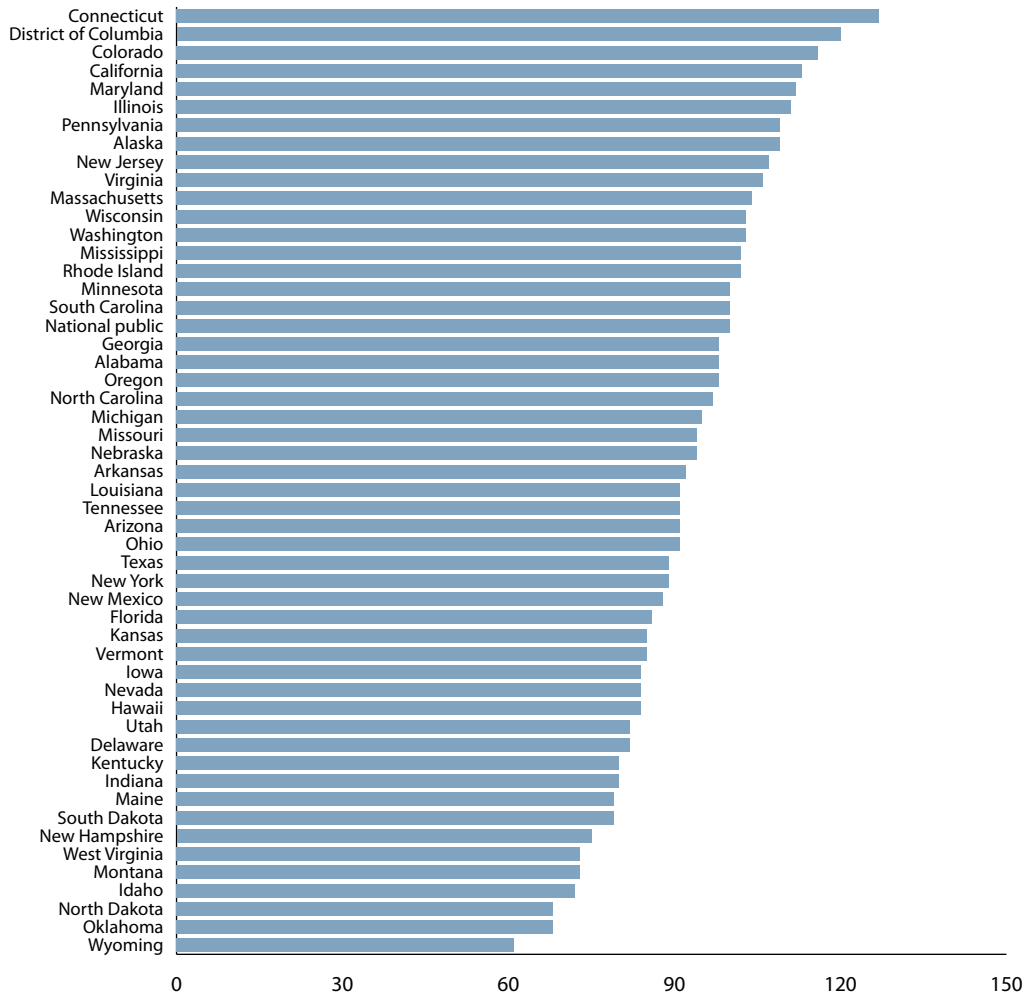
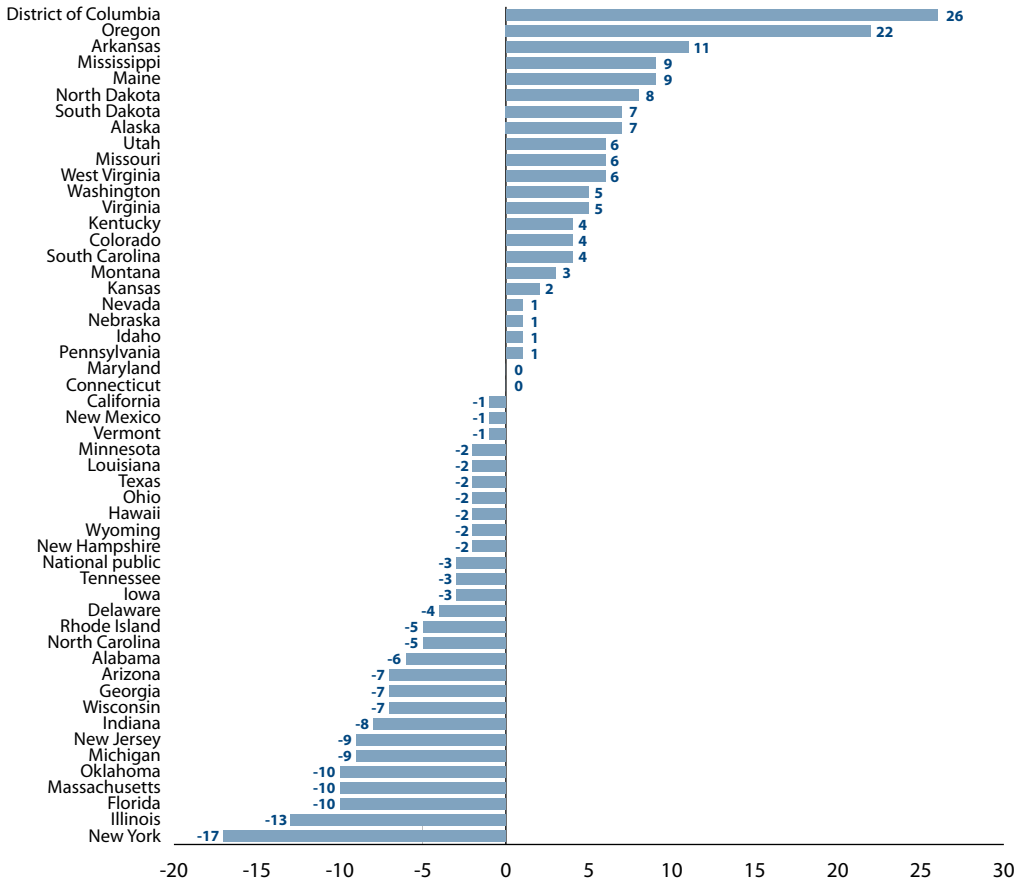


Figure 13 | **Trend in the Combined NAEP Non-Poor/Poor Achievement Gap Trend, 2003-2011**



economic achievement gap in approximately 59 years if they maintain their current pace. California, the slowest moving of the states making admirable progress during this period, is on pace to close this gap in 880 years. As bad as this sounds, 19 states and the District of Columbia all watched their economic achievement gaps expand during this period, putting them on pace to never close them.

TRENDS IN THE ACHIEVEMENT GAP FOR DISABLED STUDENTS

The disability achievement gap does not generate as much attention as racial, ethnic, or economic gaps, but policymakers should pay greater attention to trends in scores for children with disabilities. Few areas of K–12 policy have proved as troublesome and frustrating as the education of children with disabilities. At the time of the passage of the federal Education for All Handicapped Children Act in the 1970s, public schools were

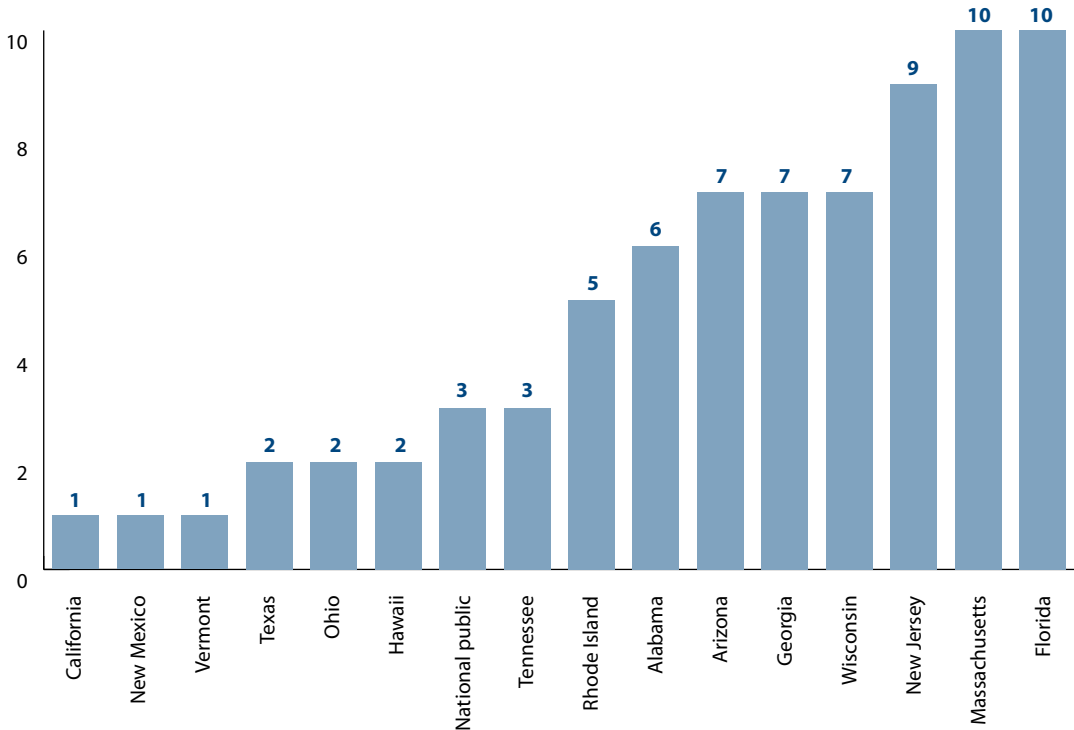
denying an estimated one million students access to their schools.^{xxix} Of all the trends in achievement gaps, this one is easily the most troublesome, with the least amount of state progress.

While federal special education law stands as a landmark piece of legislation protecting disabled students from discrimination, huge problems surround the education of children with disabilities. Parents register enormous dissatisfaction with the lack of services available; researchers point to the over-identification of minority students and out-of-control costs; and teachers vent their frustration with the amount of red tape and paperwork involved.

In 2001, the conservative Thomas B. Fordham Foundation and the liberal Progressive Policy Institute (PPI) teamed up to summarize the situation this way:

“For this program that has done so much is also sorely troubled. America’s program for

Figure 14 | Decline in the Combined NAEP Economic Achievement Gap for States Making Average or Better Progress Among Middle-/High Income Students, 2003-2011



youngsters with disabilities has itself developed infirmities, handicaps and special needs of its own. . . . [W]e are not educating many disabled children to a satisfactory level of skills and knowledge. Too often we are frustrating their parents, distracting their teachers, hobbling their schools, and making it harder to keep order in their classrooms, all this despite the best of intentions and the most earnest of efforts by families, educators, and policymakers.”^{xxx}

The Fordham/PPI message broke something of a taboo against criticizing the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) by exposing a legion of problems with special education. These problems included, but are not limited to, the fact that IDEA emphasizes procedure over student achievement, that an alarmingly large number of children have been inappropriately placed in special education due to poor early reading instruction, and there is evidence of racial bias in placement of minority children.^{xxxii}

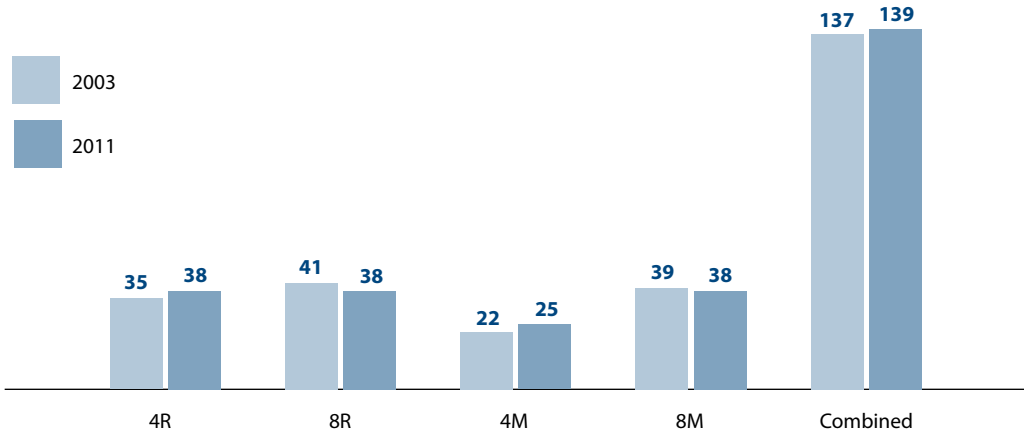
By some estimates, 40 percent of the increase in K–12 spending has gone toward special

education. Special education, in short, does too little to help children with disabilities and too much to harm children without disabilities. Jay Mathews of *The Washington Post* noted that the available research “suggests that the special education system has led to widespread, if well-intentioned, misuse of tax dollars and has failed to help kids.”^{xxxiii}

More recently, there has been evidence of some progress on the special education front. After decades of steady increases in the number of children identified with a disability, the population of students with disabilities peaked in 2004–2005, with 6.7 million youngsters, comprising 13.8 percent of the nation’s student population.

The following year marked the first time since the enactment of IDEA that special-education participation numbers declined—and they have continued to do so, falling to 6.5 million students by 2009–2010, or 13.1 percent of all students nationwide. There are multiple possible causes for this decline. The most hopeful of these is the possibility that improved reading instruction through the proliferation of Response to Intervention (RTI)

Figure 15 | The National NAEP Disability Achievement Gap by Subject, 2003 and 2011



may have lessened the misidentification of children with reading problems as having a disability.^{xxxiii} Further research is certainly warranted on this subject.

Figure 15 presents the disability gaps by subject with NAEP data for both 2003 and 2011. We calculated these figures by subtracting the scores of children with disabilities from the

Figure 16 | Trends in the Combined NAEP Disability Achievement Gap, 2003-2011
(Note: Negative Numbers Signify a Closing Gap)

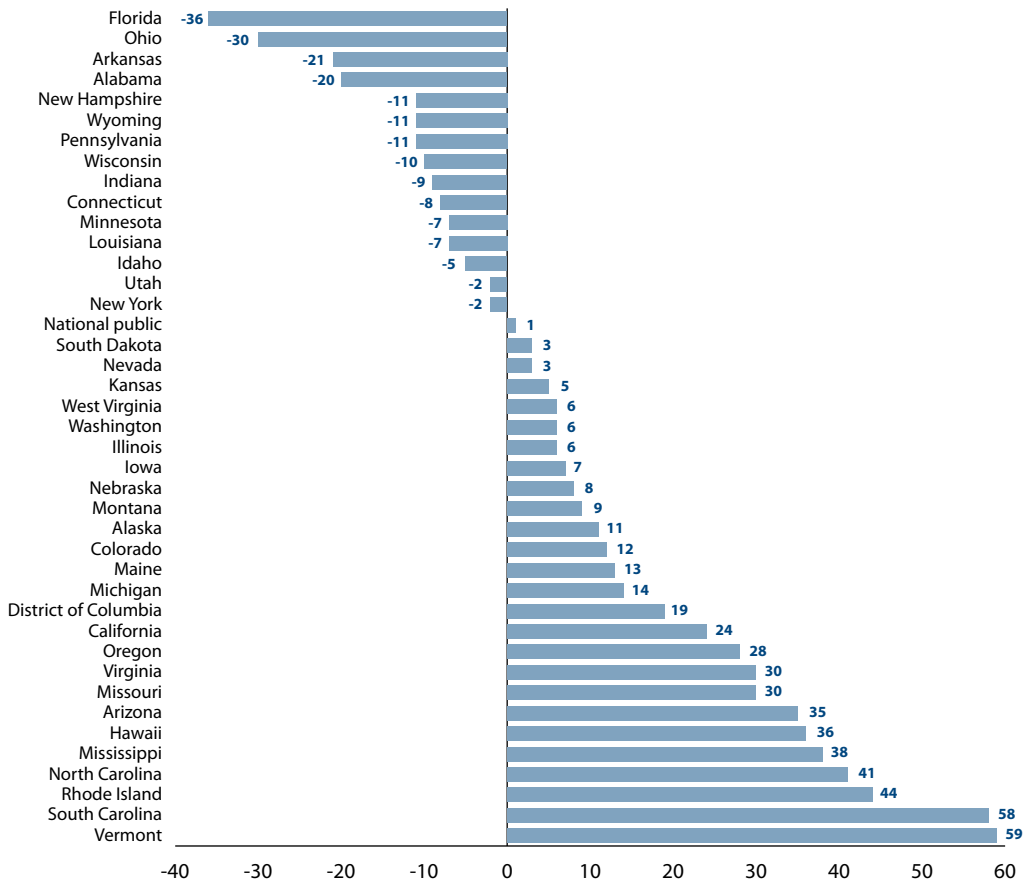
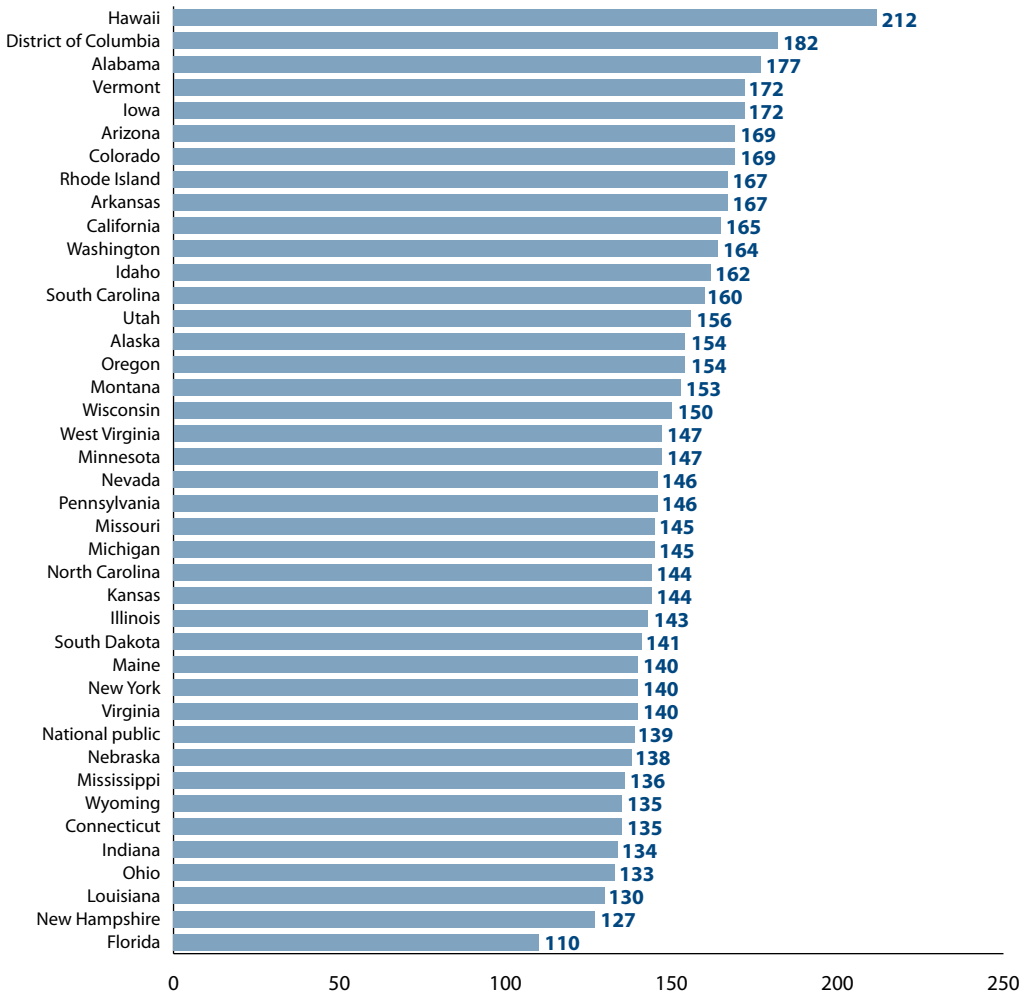


Figure 17 | **The Combined NAEP Disability Achievement Gap, 2011**



scores for children without disabilities for each major NAEP test.

Not surprising, the scale of the disability achievement gap is considerably larger than either the economic or the racial/ethnic gaps. Disturbing, however, is that the disability achievement gap has been growing, rather than shrinking, and it is the only gap to do so.

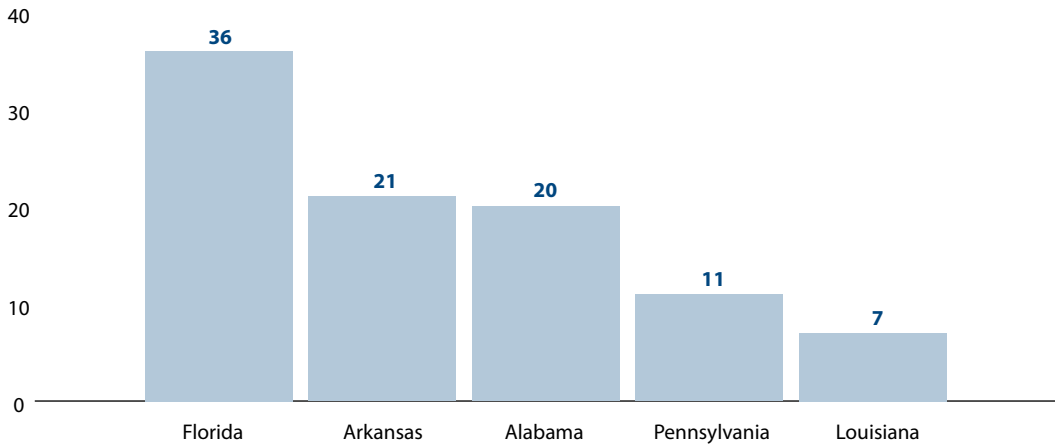
Figure 16 calculates the achievement gap trend for each jurisdiction between 2003 and 2011. Again, states with negative numbers exhibit narrowing gaps, while states with positive numbers experienced a growing gap between disabled and non-disabled students during this period. This chart does not include the 11 states that failed to meet NAEP inclusion standards for children with

disabilities: Delaware, Georgia, Kentucky, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Tennessee, and Texas.^{xxxiv} Some of these states failed to test a very large percentage of their special-needs students on NAEP (sometimes testing only a minority of students) making their scores for special-needs students unreliable in our judgment.

Notice the wide amount of variability among jurisdictions with regard to the disability gap. Both North Dakota and Florida made almost five times the amount of progress in closing the disability gap as the national average, while North Carolina saw its gap grow by almost the same amount.

Florida has the smallest disability achievement gap in the nation at 110 points, which, while

Figure 18 | **States Closing the Disability Achievement Gap without Below-Average Performance among Non-Disabled Students, 2003-2011**



huge, is still only slightly larger than half the size of Hawaii’s yawning gap. As Figure 18 shows, Florida also leads the way among states making admirable progress on the disability gap.

Since 2001, all Florida children with disabilities have been eligible under Florida’s McKay Scholarships for Students with Disabilities Program to transfer to a public or private school of their choice. While it is certain that other policy changes also helped increase academic achievement among children with disabilities, we do have evidence that the McKay Scholarship program has helped increase scores in Florida public schools that are now facing higher levels of competition while directly aiding 25,000 students enrolled in the program.^{xxxv}

It could be that the McKay Scholarship program was largely incidental to Florida having the smallest disability gap and making the most progress—it’s just not very likely. The guaranteed right to a public education works better when you also have the right to opt out of a different school setting if needed.

CONCLUSION: GLACIAL AND UNEVEN PROGRESS ON ACHIEVEMENT GAPS

The average American school, district, and state did precious little to narrow race- or income-based achievement gaps between 2003 and 2011. A disturbingly large swath of schools, districts, and states, in fact, did precisely the opposite. Given the emphasis on testing and accountability ushered in by the No Child Left Behind Act, only the scale of the disappointment can be in question; there can be no doubt that these results fall far short of the hopes of the bipartisan group that ushered in that law.

The genius of our founders, however, is still at work: We have some states accomplishing far more than others in lowering academic achievement gaps. We move now to an analysis of gains in order to get a firm grasp on the scale of success and failure in various jurisdictions.

The incomplete information presented in this chapter does support one early conclusion: Whatever it is we are doing as a nation to improve the education to date, it has not been enough.



Education Policy Grades
and Academic Performance

Education Policy Grades and Academic Performance

Beginning with the 16th edition of *ALEC's Report Card on American Education*, we created a new system to grade the education reform policies of each of the 50 states and the District of Columbia. These grades are based on whether states have enacted policies to reform their education systems through quality testing and accountability mechanisms, improving teacher quality, and expanding parents' ability to choose the best learning environment for their children, including traditional public schools, public charter schools, private school choice, homeschooling, and digital learning options. We derived these grades based on measures and grading systems from education organizations or experts that analyzed various aspects of education reform.

Our overall goal in grading states on their education policies is to best reflect how each state is striving to provide high-quality education options to every student.

With that goal in mind, our grading methodology must be changed to stay relevant, address the changing environments across the states, and incorporate new policies in the reformer's toolbox. As such, we have adjusted our grading methodology to account for new policies that have been enacted as well as new sources that provide a more comprehensive look at each state's education system.

We calculated states' education policy grades in the following manner. First, we converted all rankings into letter grades where possible. For example, we converted homeschooling regulation burden levels as such: none = A, low = B, moderate = C and high = D. Next, we converted all letter grades to a numerical score based on a GPA 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. In 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.)

Table 2 | 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

Policy Categories

Based on the original education policy rankings that have been used in recent *Report Cards*, these policy grades were based on the updated analysis and rankings of education reform groups for six reform categories.

Academic Standards: Using the Thomas B. Fordham Institute's grades of academic standards, we looked at each state's academic standards. This category has been altered from last

year's *Report Card* and provides a more up-to-date view of standards being taught in two categories: mathematics and English language arts.

Charter School Law: The charter school rankings analyze whether a state has a charter school law and, if so, 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 grades. 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.^{xxxvi}

Homeschooling Regulation Burden Level:

The homeschooling regulation burden level indicates the regulatory requirements parents face when homeschooling their children. The Home School Legal Defense Association rates the states' oversight of homeschooling in four categories (none, low, moderate, and high). More than 2 million students are home schooled each year, with an annual growth rate of approximately 5 percent.^{xxxvii xxxviii}

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 this reason, each state is evaluated based on whether it has a private school choice program (such as vouchers or scholarships, tuition or scholarship tax credits, or education savings accounts). In addition, states could earn extra credit if they have multiple school choice programs. This analysis was based on our own review of state's school choice policies and analysis from organization such as the Friedman Foundation for Educational Choice and the Alliance for School Choice.^{xxxix}

Teacher Quality Policies: Grades for whether states are identifying high quality teachers, retaining effective teachers, and removing ineffective teachers are obtained from the National Council on Teacher Quality's 2011 State Teacher

Policy Yearbook. Academic research shows that the greatest determining factor regarding a student's academic success within school walls is teacher effectiveness.^{xi}

Digital Learning: As education reform continues to march forward across the country, we are seeing the conversation shift to how we can best customize learning to suit each student's unique needs, and we expect this conversation to quickly become the main focal point of education reform. States were graded on two aspects of digital learning.^{xii}

The first policy looks at if the state has multi-district fully online schools. We used results from "Keeping Pace with K–12 Online Learning: An Annual Review of Policy and Practice" to determine which states have these schools, which serve as the main education providers for their students, who do not need to go to a physical school to access any aspect of their education, although they may do so. These schools often draw students from across an entire state.

The second policy for digital learning we examine measures each state's progress toward achieving the 10 Elements of High Quality Digital Learning. Using the 2011 Digital Learning Report Card from Digital Learning Now!, we look at the accomplishments of each state, as measured by 72 metrics comprising the 10 Elements. We then convert this to a percentage and a subsequent grade.

Overall Policy Grade

Each of the policy categories were analyzed individually. For example, Teacher Quality Policies has four components that determine its category grade, and Digital Learning has two components. These two categories were then given equal weighting. We then averaged together all category grades to calculate the overall state policy grade.

Additional information included in the state profiles, such as per-pupil spending, are purely for informational purposes and are not including in the grading or ranking of the states.

Is the Investment in State Per-Student Public Education Spending Paying Off?

Each state's education reform page also includes a snapshot of the state's current average per-student expenditure for every child enrolled in public

school. This figure is drawn from the U.S. Census Bureau's report.^{xiii}

To provide some context for how well taxpayers' investments in public education are paying off in terms of students' academic achievement, each state's reform page presents an analysis of how much each state has spent, on average, by the time a child reaches fourth grade, along with the percentage of students scoring "Proficient" on the NAEP reading examination. For example, in the state of Illinois, taxpayers spend \$11,874 per student, or approximately \$47,000 between first and fourth grade. Yet according to the 2011 NAEP, only 32 percent of the state's fourth graders scored "Proficient" (or are reading on grade level). There are about 104,000 fourth graders in the Land of Lincoln who are unable to read despite having nearly \$50,000 spent on their educations.

Ranking States on the Performance of General-Education Low-Income Students

We continue to focus on disadvantaged students when ranking each state's performance. High-income children score better, on average, than children from low-income families. Low-income students can learn, mind you, but higher-income children tend to learn much more at home, and generally enter school with an advantage over their peers.

When ranking states' academic performance, we ought not to simply congratulate states with schools that have the good fortune of relatively wealthy student bodies. Nor should we castigate states for the poverty levels of their students. Instead, our rankings seek to make as much of an "apples to apples" comparison as possible by grading states based on similar students.

States also vary in the number of children identified for special education services and in the percentage of students who are not native English speakers. In New Mexico, schools have designated more than 18 percent of their students as English Language Learners (ELL) while in West Virginia less than 1 percent of students are ELL. The fact that New Mexico has a rate of non-native English speakers more than 18 times higher than West Virginia's makes a straightforward comparison of states' academic performance problematic.

In order to maximize comparability, our ranking system judges each state based on the NAEP

performance of children eligible for free or reduced-priced lunches (FRL) based on their family income that 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 of families with low incomes, we hope to minimize the vast differences between state K–12 populations to a relatively common metric.

While every state has sizable populations of low-income students, not all states have a large enough sample for black, Hispanic, or, in the case of Washington, D.C., white students.

For example, the 2011 NAEP fourth-grade reading exam did not report black-student subgroups' scores for Idaho, Maine, Montana, New Hampshire, Utah or Wyoming. The NAEP simply cannot give a solid estimate of black student's scores in these states because there are too few of them in the population, and thus in the sample. Similarly, NAEP gave no Hispanic subgroup results for Maine, Vermont, or West Virginia on the same exam. At the beginning of our comparison (2003) even more states lacked black and Hispanic subgroups.

The NAEP does however have reliable scores for low-income children in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. In addition to the fact that low-income children are ubiquitous, there is also less economic variation between such students from state to state.

High-income states, of course, will have school systems relatively flush with students far above the FRL income limits. Both the family headed by a modestly successful manual laborer and that headed by a billionaire will be included in the "Not Eligible for Free or Reduced-Price Lunch" category. The wider variation, therefore, limits the utility of the non-FRL category for purposes of ranking the quality of state education efforts. Lower-income children are on average more academically reliant on their schools. Higher-income children, on the other hand, have greater prospects to overcome deficits in their education through learning at home or private tutoring.

This is not to say that the education of middle-and higher-income children, special education children, and non-native English speakers is unimportant. Let us be clear: All children matter. For the purposes of this study, we can most

readily compare low-income children outside special programs across jurisdictions, and that such children are more reflective of the relative success and/or failure of public policy. We make no claim that these comparisons are perfect. In fact, we are confident that no perfect comparisons exist. Rather we merely claim that the comparisons made here are much more equitable than a simple comparison of state scores. While there will be variation among mainstream low-income students, the variation will be dramatically lower than the usual presentation of statewide average scores.

Taxpayers in every state provide funds for a general diffusion of knowledge and skills, and states should accomplish this task regardless of the ethnicity of the students. Successful inner-city educators refuse to use race as an excuse for poor performance. We will do the same in ranking the performance of state school systems.

Our grade of state academic performance equally weights the four main NAEP exams (fourth- and eighth-grade reading and mathematics) for the entire period all 50 states participated (2003 to 2011). We examine the performance of low-income children in the general education program, and weight equally the overall performance

and the gains over time. The District of Columbia falls in the middle of our rankings, for example, because the District had the largest gains but the lowest overall scores (despite the recent gains).

A few caveats regarding NAEP tests apply here: NAEP is given to random samples of students with measurable ranges of sampling error (similar to an opinion poll). However, any sampling error should be random in nature, thus often canceling itself out (if one test is randomly a bit on the high end, it can be mitigated by another test being on the low end, and vice-versa).

The reader should overall take greater note of whether their state falls on the high, middle or low end of the rankings, rather than to fixate on an exact numerical ranking. Small changes in test scores can make large differences in rankings, but will not move you to the penthouse from the cellar.

Student demographics clearly play a much stronger role in our rankings than spending per pupil. All of the top ten states have majority white-student populations, most by a wide margin. The average low-income general education student benefit from the favorable end of racial achievement gaps in these states.

Alabama

The Cotton State

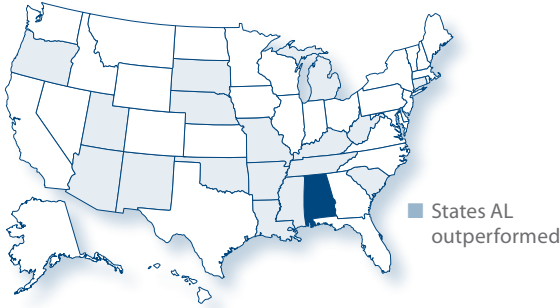
D+

Education Policy Grade

ALEC Historical Grading

2011: D+

Contains scores and grades for policies that allow the state's education system to make available high-quality education through accountability, high standards, public- and private-school choice, high-quality teachers, and innovative delivery mechanisms



34

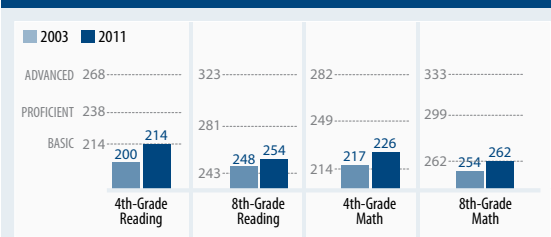
Student NAEP Performance Rank

ALEC Historical Ranking

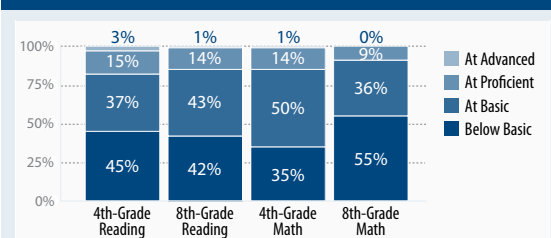
2010:40

Measures the overall 2011 scores for low-income 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 2011

NAEP Scores for Low-Income Children (2003-2011)



NAEP Score Distribution (2011)



State Academic Standards	
English and Language Arts	B+
Mathematics	A-

Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	No
Charter School Law Grade	—

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

Private School Choice Programs	
Private School Choice Program	—
"A" Grade or Multiple Programs	—

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

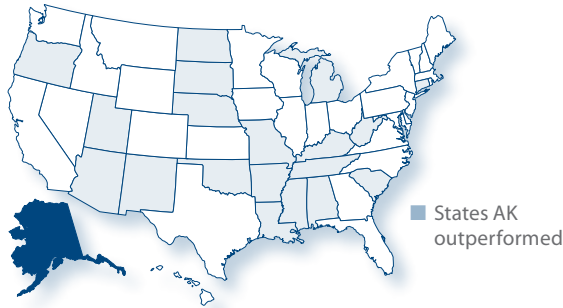
Online Learning	
Multi-District Full-Time Online School	No
Digital Learning Now! Metrics Achieved	25/72

Spending Levels and Achievement: 4th- and 8th-Grade NAEP Reading Exams Results and Costs

Graduation Rate	Average Class Size 2009-2010 Data	Annual Cost Per Student	4th Grade			8th Grade		
			Cumulative Investment Per Student	Statewide Enrollment	Percent of Students Scoring "Proficient" or Higher	Cumulative Investment Per Student	Statewide Enrollment	Percent of Students Scoring "Proficient" or Higher
64.5%	15.77	\$9,721 (Rank: 45)	\$41,924	58,593	28% (Rank: 37)	\$83,848	57,809	24% (Rank: 42)

Alaska

The Last Frontier



32

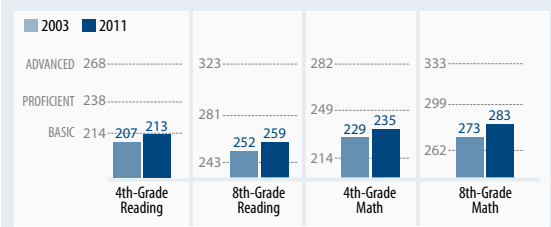
Student NAEP Performance Rank

ALEC Historical Ranking

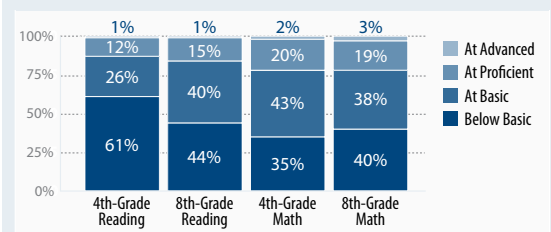
2010: 11

Measures the overall 2011 scores for low-income 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 2011

NAEP Scores for Low-Income Children (2003-2011)



NAEP Score Distribution (2011)



Education Policy Grade

ALEC Historical Grading

2011: B-

Contains scores and grades for policies that allow the state's education system to make available high-quality education through accountability, high standards, public- and private-school choice, high-quality teachers, and innovative delivery mechanisms

State Academic Standards	
English and Language Arts	F
Mathematics	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	
Private School Choice Program	—
"A" Grade or Multiple Programs	—

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

Online Learning	
Multi-District Full-Time Online School	Yes
Digital Learning Now! Metrics Achieved	37/72

Spending Levels and Achievement: 4th- and 8th-Grade NAEP Reading Exams Results and Costs

Graduation Rate	Average Class Size 2009-2010 Data	Annual Cost Per Student	4th Grade			8th Grade		
			Cumulative Investment Per Student	Statewide Enrollment	Percent of Students Scoring "Proficient" or Higher	Cumulative Investment Per Student	Statewide Enrollment	Percent of Students Scoring "Proficient" or Higher
70.2%	16.29	\$16,990 (Rank: 7)	\$69,196	9,756	27% (Rank: 42)	\$138,392	9,673	27% (Rank: 36)

Arizona

The Grand Canyon State

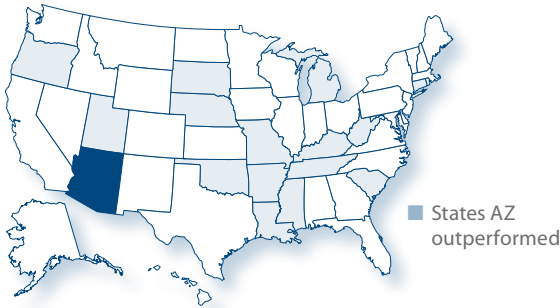
B+

Education Policy Grade

ALEC Historical Grading

2011: B

Contains scores and grades for policies that allow the state's education system to make available high-quality education through accountability, high standards, public- and private-school choice, high-quality teachers, and innovative delivery mechanisms



36

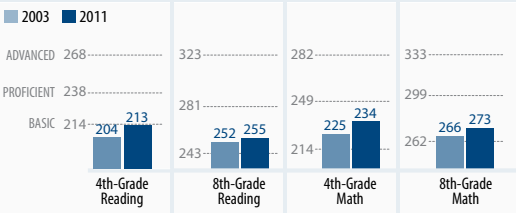
Student NAEP Performance Rank

ALEC Historical Ranking

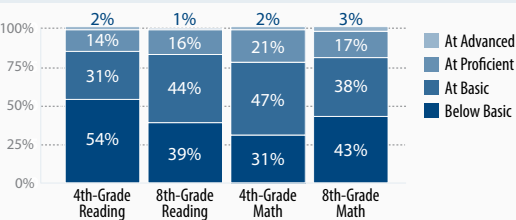
2010: 45

Measures the overall 2011 scores for low-income 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 2011

NAEP Scores for Low-Income Children (2003-2011)



NAEP Score Distribution (2011)



State Academic Standards	
English and Language Arts	B+
Mathematics	A-

Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	A

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

Private School Choice Programs	
Private School Choice Program	A
"A" Grade or Multiple Programs	Yes

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

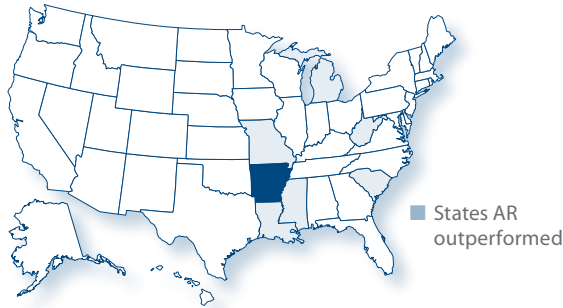
Online Learning	
Multi-District Full-Time Online School	Yes
Digital Learning Now! Metrics Achieved	47/72

Spending Levels and Achievement: 4th- and 8th-Grade NAEP Reading Exams Results and Costs

Graduation Rate	Average Class Size 2009-2010 Data	Annual Cost Per Student	4th Grade			8th Grade		
			Cumulative Investment Per Student	Statewide Enrollment	Percent of Students Scoring "Proficient" or Higher	Cumulative Investment Per Student	Statewide Enrollment	Percent of Students Scoring "Proficient" or Higher
63.0%	20.75	\$9,059 (Rank: 47)	\$38,564	83,793	25% (Rank: 45)	\$77,128	81,576	27% (Rank: 36)

Arkansas

The Natural State



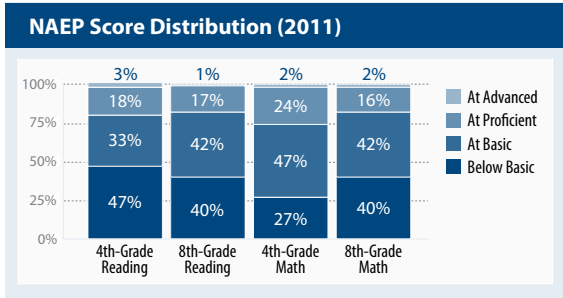
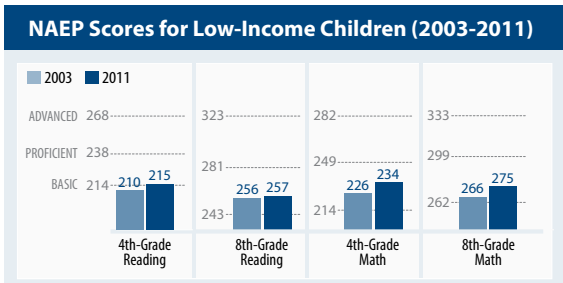
45

Student NAEP Performance Rank

ALEC Historical Ranking

2010: 44

Measures the overall 2011 scores for low-income 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 2011



C

Education Policy Grade

ALEC Historical Grading

2011: C

Contains scores and grades for policies that allow the state's education system to make available high-quality education through accountability, high standards, public- and private-school choice, high-quality teachers, and innovative delivery mechanisms

State Academic Standards	
English and Language Arts	B+
Mathematics	A-

Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	D

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

Private School Choice Programs	
Private School Choice Program	—
"A" Grade or Multiple Programs	—

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

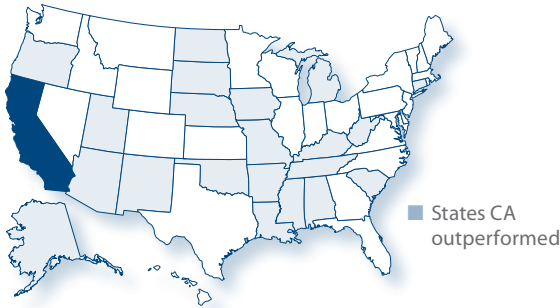
Online Learning	
Multi-District Full-Time Online School	Yes
Digital Learning Now! Metrics Achieved	27/72

Spending Levels and Achievement: 4th- and 8th-Grade NAEP Reading Exams Results and Costs

Graduation Rate	Average Class Size 2009-2010 Data	Annual Cost Per Student	4th Grade			8th Grade		
			Cumulative Investment Per Student	Statewide Enrollment	Percent of Students Scoring "Proficient" or Higher	Cumulative Investment Per Student	Statewide Enrollment	Percent of Students Scoring "Proficient" or Higher
72.0%	12.9	\$10,633 (Rank: 37)	\$39,864	36,345	29% (Rank: 35)	\$79,728	35,387	27% (Rank: 36)

California

The Golden State

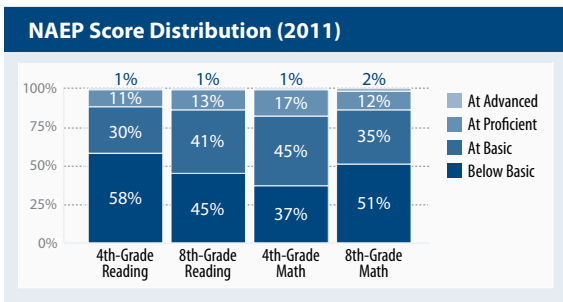
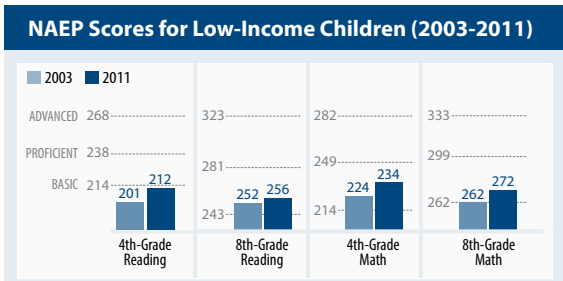


30

Student NAEP Performance Rank

ALEC Historical Ranking 2010: 30

Measures the overall 2011 scores for low-income 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 2011



Education Policy Grade

ALEC Historical Grading

2011: B

Contains scores and grades for policies that allow the state's education system to make available high-quality education through accountability, high standards, public- and private-school choice, high-quality teachers, and innovative delivery mechanisms

State Academic Standards	
English and Language Arts	B+
Mathematics	A-

Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	B

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

Private School Choice Programs	
Private School Choice Program	—
"A" Grade or Multiple Programs	—

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

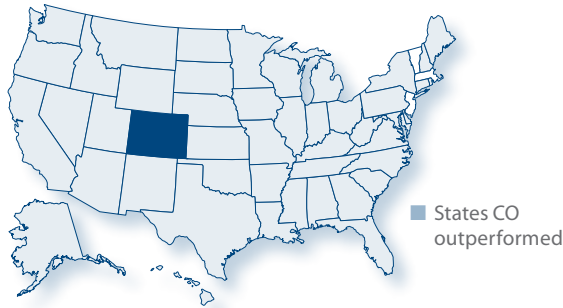
Online Learning	
Multi-District Full-Time Online School	Yes
Digital Learning Now! Metrics Achieved	14/72

Spending Levels and Achievement: 4th- and 8th-Grade NAEP Reading Exams Results and Costs

Graduation Rate	Average Class Size 2009-2010 Data	Annual Cost Per Student	4th Grade			8th Grade		
			Cumulative Investment Per Student	Statewide Enrollment	Percent of Students Scoring "Proficient" or Higher	Cumulative Investment Per Student	Statewide Enrollment	Percent of Students Scoring "Proficient" or Higher
68.1%	19.8	\$10,581 (Rank: 40)	\$45,832	463,904	24% (Rank: 46)	\$91,664	486,390	22% (Rank: 44)

Colorado

The Centennial State



4

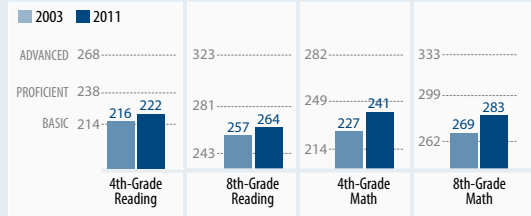
Student NAEP Performance Rank

ALEC Historical Ranking

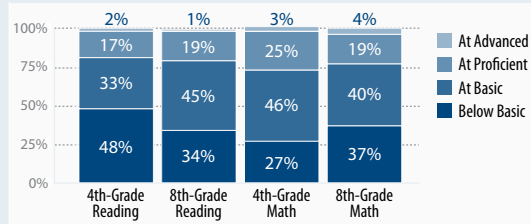
2010: 17

Measures the overall 2011 scores for low-income 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 2011

NAEP Scores for Low-Income Children (2003-2011)



NAEP Score Distribution (2011)



Education Policy Grade

ALEC Historical Grading

2011: B

Contains scores and grades for policies that allow the state's education system to make available high-quality education through accountability, high standards, public- and private-school choice, high-quality teachers, and innovative delivery mechanisms

State Academic Standards	
English and Language Arts	B+
Mathematics	A-

Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	B

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

Private School Choice Programs	
Private School Choice Program	—
"A" Grade or Multiple Programs	—

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

Online Learning	
Multi-District Full-Time Online School	Yes
Digital Learning Now! Metrics Achieved	33/72

Spending Levels and Achievement: 4th- and 8th-Grade NAEP Reading Exams Results and Costs

Graduation Rate	Average Class Size 2009-2010 Data	Annual Cost Per Student	4th Grade			8th Grade		
			Cumulative Investment Per Student	Statewide Enrollment	Percent of Students Scoring "Proficient" or Higher	Cumulative Investment Per Student	Statewide Enrollment	Percent of Students Scoring "Proficient" or Higher
74.4%	16.97	\$10,586 (Rank: 39)	\$44,244	61,058	40% (Rank: 5)	\$88,488	58,733	32% (Rank: 26)

Connecticut

The Constitution State



39

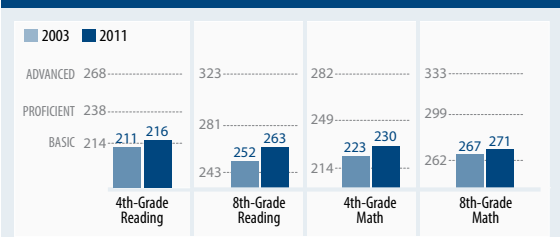
Student NAEP Performance Rank

ALEC Historical Ranking

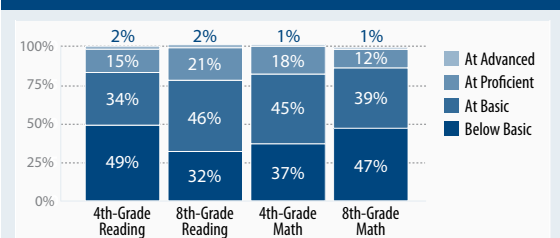
2010: 29

Measures the overall 2011 scores for low-income 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 2011

NAEP Scores for Low-Income Children (2003-2011)



NAEP Score Distribution (2011)



Education Policy Grade

ALEC Historical Grading

2011: C+

Contains scores and grades for policies that allow the state's education system to make available high-quality education through accountability, high standards, public- and private-school choice, high-quality teachers, and innovative delivery mechanisms

State Academic Standards	
English and Language Arts	B+
Mathematics	A-

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	
Private School Choice Program	—
"A" Grade or Multiple Programs	—

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

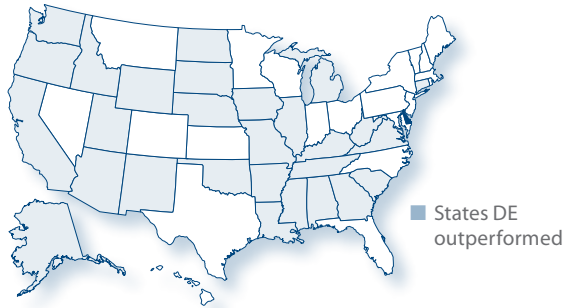
Online Learning	
Multi-District Full-Time Online School	No
Digital Learning Now! Metrics Achieved	16/72

Spending Levels and Achievement: 4th- and 8th-Grade NAEP Reading Exams Results and Costs

Graduation Rate	Average Class Size 2009-2010 Data	Annual Cost Per Student	4th Grade			8th Grade		
			Cumulative Investment Per Student	Statewide Enrollment	Percent of Students Scoring "Proficient" or Higher	Cumulative Investment Per Student	Statewide Enrollment	Percent of Students Scoring "Proficient" or Higher
71.3%	12.94	\$17,573 (Rank: 5)	\$66,120	41,792	42% (Rank: 2)	\$132,240	43,027	43% (Rank: 1)

Delaware

The First State



22

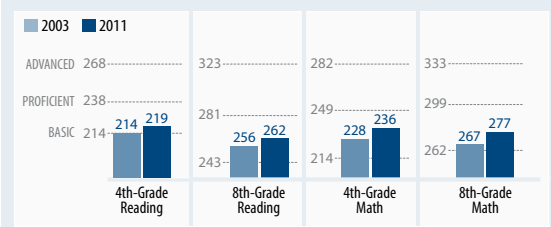
Student NAEP Performance Rank

ALEC Historical Ranking

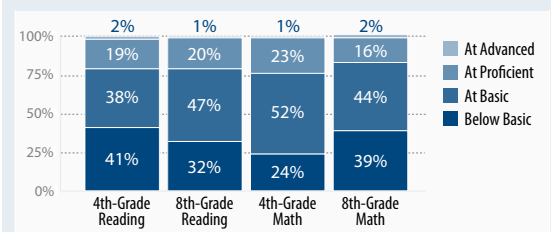
2010: 19

Measures the overall 2011 scores for low-income 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 2011

NAEP Scores for Low-Income Children (2003-2011)



NAEP Score Distribution (2011)



Education Policy Grade

ALEC Historical Grading

2011: C+

Contains scores and grades for policies that allow the state's education system to make available high-quality education through accountability, high standards, public- and private-school choice, high-quality teachers, and innovative delivery mechanisms

State Academic Standards	
English and Language Arts	B+
Mathematics	A-

Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	C

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

Private School Choice Programs	
Private School Choice Program	—
"A" Grade or Multiple Programs	—

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

Online Learning	
Multi-District Full-Time Online School	No
Digital Learning Now! Metrics Achieved	20/72

Spending Levels and Achievement: 4th- and 8th-Grade NAEP Reading Exams Results and Costs

Graduation Rate	Average Class Size 2009-2010 Data	Annual Cost Per Student	4th Grade			8th Grade		
			Cumulative Investment Per Student	Statewide Enrollment	Percent of Students Scoring "Proficient" or Higher	Cumulative Investment Per Student	Statewide Enrollment	Percent of Students Scoring "Proficient" or Higher
67.4%	14.68	\$14,415 (Rank: 12)	\$57,924	9,521	35% (Rank: 17)	\$115,848	9,908	31% (Rank: 30)

District of Columbia

The Federal City

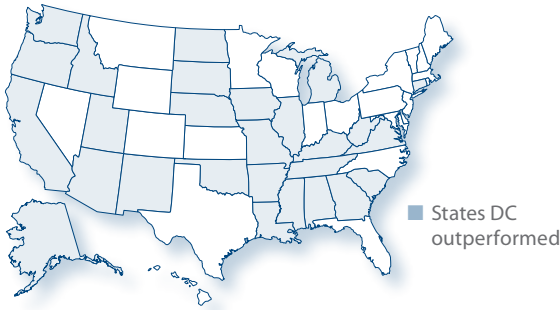
B-

Education Policy Grade

ALEC Historical Grading

2011: B

Contains scores and grades for policies that allow the state's education system to make available high-quality education through accountability, high standards, public- and private-school choice, high-quality teachers, and innovative delivery mechanisms



24

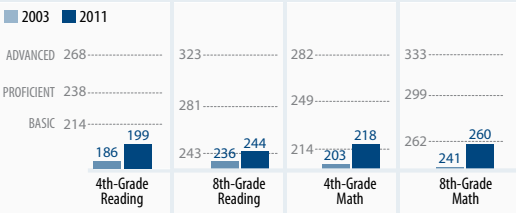
Student NAEP Performance Rank

ALEC Historical Ranking

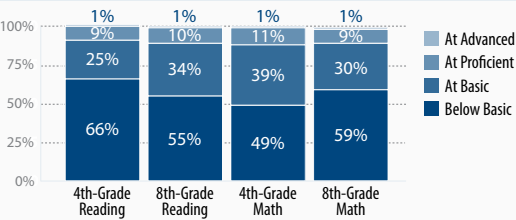
2010: 26

Measures the overall 2011 scores for low-income 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 2011

NAEP Scores for Low-Income Children (2003-2011)



NAEP Score Distribution (2011)



State Academic Standards	
English and Language Arts	B+
Mathematics	A-

Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	A

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

Private School Choice Programs	
Private School Choice Program	D
"A" Grade or Multiple Programs	—

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

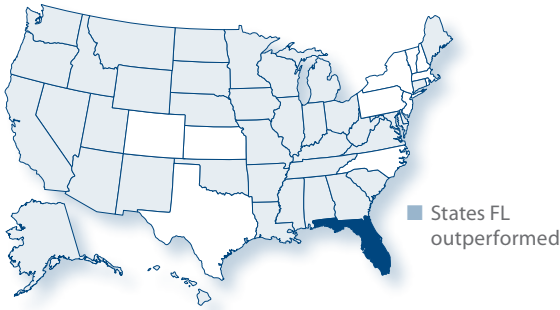
Online Learning	
Multi-District Full-Time Online School	Yes
Digital Learning Now! Metrics Achieved	X/72

Spending Levels and Achievement: 4th- and 8th-Grade NAEP Reading Exams Results and Costs

Graduation Rate	Average Class Size 2009-2010 Data	Annual Cost Per Student	4th Grade			8th Grade		
			Cumulative Investment Per Student	Statewide Enrollment	Percent of Students Scoring "Proficient" or Higher	Cumulative Investment Per Student	Statewide Enrollment	Percent of Students Scoring "Proficient" or Higher
—	11.86	\$27,263 (Rank: 1)	\$80,264	4,595	17% (Rank: 51)	\$160,528	4,540	14% (Rank: 51)

Florida

The Sunshine State



12

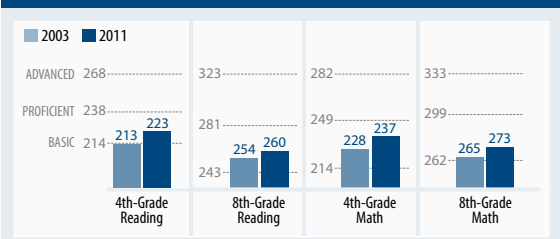
Student NAEP Performance Rank

ALEC Historical Ranking

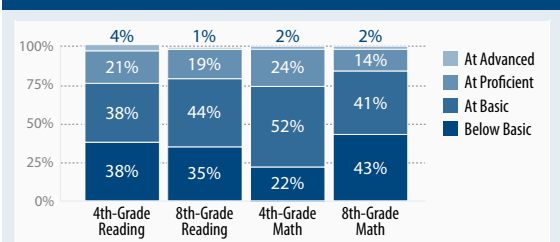
2010: 3

Measures the overall 2011 scores for low-income 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 2011

NAEP Scores for Low-Income Children (2003-2011)



NAEP Score Distribution (2011)



B

Education Policy Grade

ALEC Historical Grading

2011: B+

Contains scores and grades for policies that allow the state's education system to make available high-quality education through accountability, high standards, public- and private-school choice, high-quality teachers, and innovative delivery mechanisms

State Academic Standards	
English and Language Arts	B+
Mathematics	A-

Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	B

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

Private School Choice Programs	
Private School Choice Program	B
"A" Grade or Multiple Programs	Yes

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

Online Learning	
Multi-District Full-Time Online School	Yes
Digital Learning Now! Metrics Achieved	41/72

Spending Levels and Achievement: 4th- and 8th-Grade NAEP Reading Exams Results and Costs

Graduation Rate	Average Class Size 2009-2010 Data	Annual Cost Per Student	4th Grade			8th Grade		
			Cumulative Investment Per Student	Statewide Enrollment	Percent of Students Scoring "Proficient" or Higher	Cumulative Investment Per Student	Statewide Enrollment	Percent of Students Scoring "Proficient" or Higher
61.1%	14.33	\$9,981 (Rank: 44)	\$46,504	198,129	36% (Rank: 11)	\$93,008	200,736	32% (Rank: 26)

Georgia

The Peach State

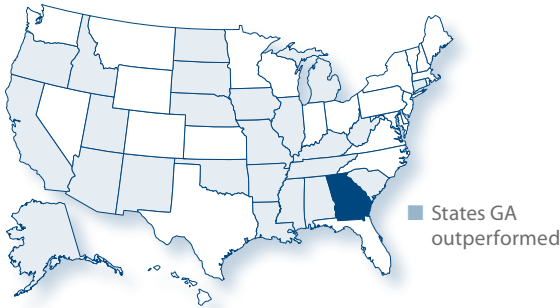
B-

Education Policy Grade

ALEC Historical Grading

2011: B

Contains scores and grades for policies that allow the state's education system to make available high-quality education through accountability, high standards, public- and private-school choice, high-quality teachers, and innovative delivery mechanisms



27

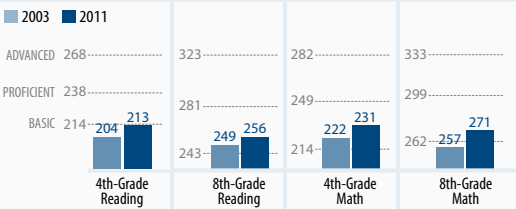
Student NAEP Performance Rank

ALEC Historical Ranking

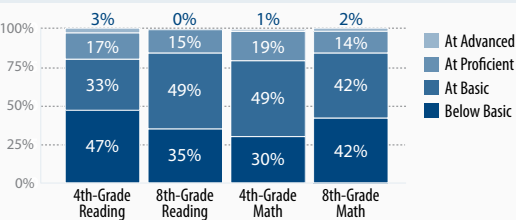
2010: 27

Measures the overall 2011 scores for low-income 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 2011

NAEP Scores for Low-Income Children (2003-2011)



NAEP Score Distribution (2011)



State Academic Standards	
English and Language Arts	B+
Mathematics	A-

Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	C

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

Private School Choice Programs	
Private School Choice Program	B
"A" Grade or Multiple Programs	Yes

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

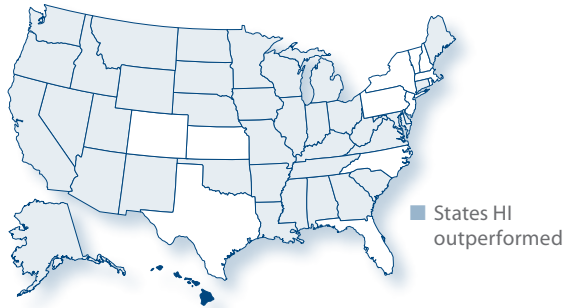
Online Learning	
Multi-District Full-Time Online School	Yes
Digital Learning Now! Metrics Achieved	32/72

Spending Levels and Achievement: 4th- and 8th-Grade NAEP Reading Exams Results and Costs

Graduation Rate	Average Class Size 2009-2010 Data	Annual Cost Per Student	4th Grade			8th Grade		
			Cumulative Investment Per Student	Statewide Enrollment	Percent of Students Scoring "Proficient" or Higher	Cumulative Investment Per Student	Statewide Enrollment	Percent of Students Scoring "Proficient" or Higher
59.3%	14.39	\$10,740 (Rank: 35)	\$45,992	127,285	29% (Rank: 35)	\$91,984	123,857	27% (Rank: 36)

Hawaii

The Aloha State



13

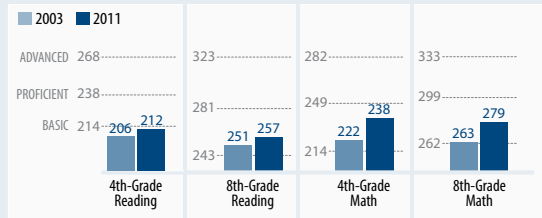
Student NAEP Performance Rank

ALEC Historical Ranking

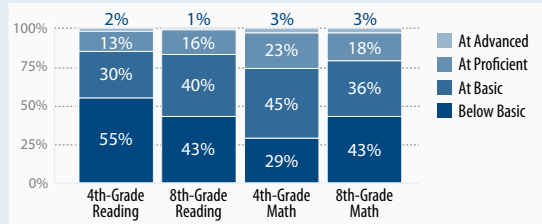
2010: 15

Measures the overall 2011 scores for low-income 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 2011

NAEP Scores for Low-Income Children (2003-2011)



NAEP Score Distribution (2011)



C-

Education Policy Grade

ALEC Historical Grading

2011: C+

Contains scores and grades for policies that allow the state's education system to make available high-quality education through accountability, high standards, public- and private-school choice, high-quality teachers, and innovative delivery mechanisms

State Academic Standards	
English and Language Arts	B+
Mathematics	A-

Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	D

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

Private School Choice Programs	
Private School Choice Program	—
"A" Grade or Multiple Programs	—

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

Online Learning	
Multi-District Full-Time Online School	Yes
Digital Learning Now! Metrics Achieved	27/72

Spending Levels and Achievement: 4th- and 8th-Grade NAEP Reading Exams Results and Costs

Graduation Rate	Average Class Size 2009-2010 Data	Annual Cost Per Student	4th Grade			8th Grade		
			Cumulative Investment Per Student	Statewide Enrollment	Percent of Students Scoring "Proficient" or Higher	Cumulative Investment Per Student	Statewide Enrollment	Percent of Students Scoring "Proficient" or Higher
67.0%	15.71	\$14,234 (Rank: 13)	\$51,508	13,739	26% (Rank: 43)	\$103,016	12,665	22% (Rank: 44)

Idaho

The Gem State

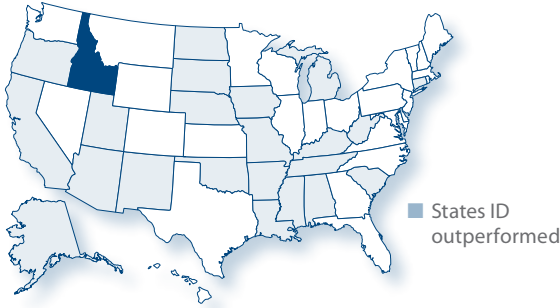
B-

Education Policy Grade

ALEC Historical Grading

2011: B-

Contains scores and grades for policies that allow the state's education system to make available high-quality education through accountability, high standards, public- and private-school choice, high-quality teachers, and innovative delivery mechanisms



29

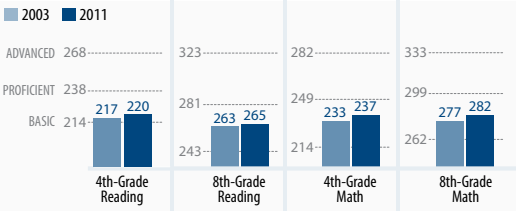
Student NAEP Performance Rank

ALEC Historical Ranking

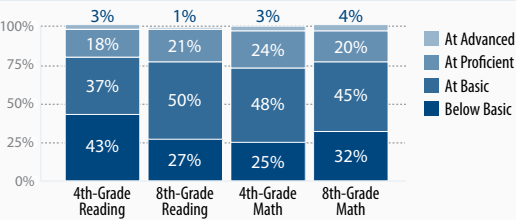
2010: 22

Measures the overall 2011 scores for low-income 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 2011

NAEP Scores for Low-Income Children (2003-2011)



NAEP Score Distribution (2011)



State Academic Standards	
English and Language Arts	B+
Mathematics	A-

Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	B

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

Private School Choice Programs	
Private School Choice Program	—
"A" Grade or Multiple Programs	—

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

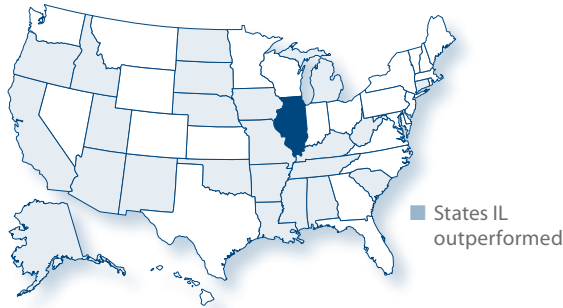
Online Learning	
Multi-District Full-Time Online School	Yes
Digital Learning Now! Metrics Achieved	46/72

Spending Levels and Achievement: 4th- and 8th-Grade NAEP Reading Exams Results and Costs

Graduation Rate	Average Class Size 2009-2010 Data	Annual Cost Per Student	4th Grade			8th Grade		
			Cumulative Investment Per Student	Statewide Enrollment	Percent of Students Scoring "Proficient" or Higher	Cumulative Investment Per Student	Statewide Enrollment	Percent of Students Scoring "Proficient" or Higher
77.9%	18.18	\$8,163 (Rank: 50)	\$34,100	21,450	32% (Rank: 28)	\$68,200	20,623	33% (Rank: 19)

Illinois

The Prairie State

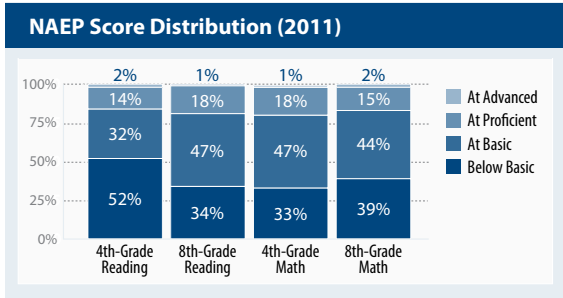
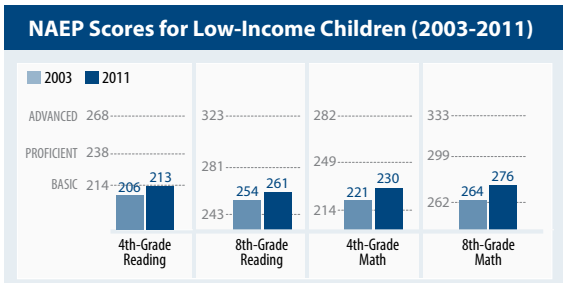


28

Student NAEP Performance Rank

ALEC Historical Ranking *2010: 38*

Measures the overall 2011 scores for low-income 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 2011



Education Policy Grade

ALEC Historical Grading

2011: C+

Contains scores and grades for policies that allow the state's education system to make available high-quality education through accountability, high standards, public- and private-school choice, high-quality teachers, and innovative delivery mechanisms

State Academic Standards	
English and Language Arts	B+
Mathematics	A-

Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	C

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

Private School Choice Programs	
Private School Choice Program	—
"A" Grade or Multiple Programs	—

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

Online Learning	
Multi-District Full-Time Online School	No
Digital Learning Now! Metrics Achieved	23/72

Spending Levels and Achievement: 4th- and 8th-Grade NAEP Reading Exams Results and Costs

Graduation Rate	Average Class Size 2009-2010 Data	Annual Cost Per Student	4th Grade			8th Grade		
			Cumulative Investment Per Student	Statewide Enrollment	Percent of Students Scoring "Proficient" or Higher	Cumulative Investment Per Student	Statewide Enrollment	Percent of Students Scoring "Proficient" or Higher
72.4%	15.19	\$13,124 (Rank: 19)	\$47,496	152,951	32% (Rank: 28)	\$94,992	159,272	33% (Rank: 19)

Indiana

The Hoosier State

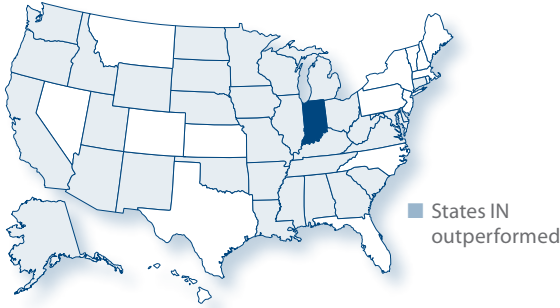
B+

Education Policy Grade

ALEC Historical Grading

2011: B

Contains scores and grades for policies that allow the state's education system to make available high-quality education through accountability, high standards, public- and private-school choice, high-quality teachers, and innovative delivery mechanisms



17

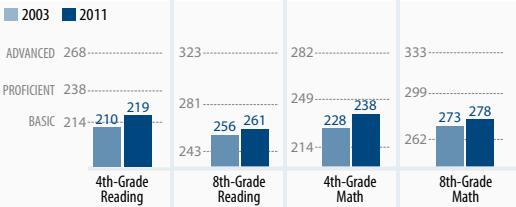
Student NAEP Performance Rank

ALEC Historical Ranking

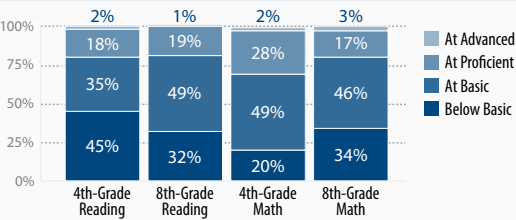
2010: 13

Measures the overall 2011 scores for low-income 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 2011

NAEP Scores for Low-Income Children (2003-2011)



NAEP Score Distribution (2011)



State Academic Standards	
English and Language Arts	B+
Mathematics	A-

Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	A

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

Private School Choice Programs	
Private School Choice Program	B
"A" Grade or Multiple Programs	Yes

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

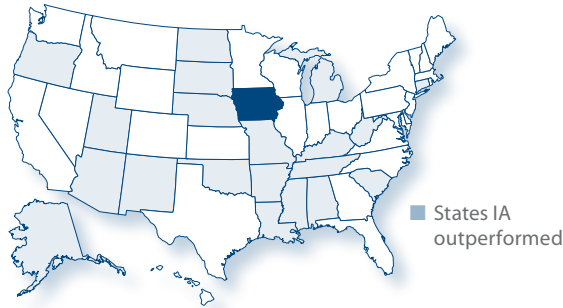
Online Learning	
Multi-District Full-Time Online School	Yes
Digital Learning Now! Metrics Achieved	41/72

Spending Levels and Achievement: 4th- and 8th-Grade NAEP Reading Exams Results and Costs

Graduation Rate	Average Class Size 2009-2010 Data	Annual Cost Per Student	4th Grade			8th Grade		
			Cumulative Investment Per Student	Statewide Enrollment	Percent of Students Scoring "Proficient" or Higher	Cumulative Investment Per Student	Statewide Enrollment	Percent of Students Scoring "Proficient" or Higher
70.4%	16.81	\$13,374 (Rank: 17)	\$40,160	78,842	32% (Rank: 28)	\$80,320	80,874	31% (Rank: 30)

Iowa

The Hawkeye State



31

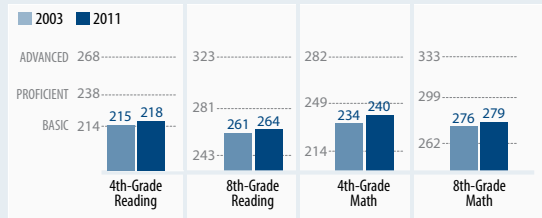
Student NAEP Performance Rank

ALEC Historical Ranking

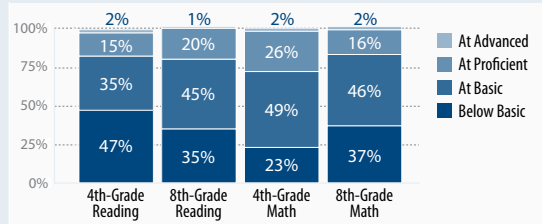
2010: 31

Measures the overall 2011 scores for low-income 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 2011

NAEP Scores for Low-Income Children (2003-2011)



NAEP Score Distribution (2011)



Education Policy Grade

ALEC Historical Grading

2011: C-

Contains scores and grades for policies that allow the state's education system to make available high-quality education through accountability, high standards, public- and private-school choice, high-quality teachers, and innovative delivery mechanisms

State Academic Standards	
English and Language Arts	B+
Mathematics	A-

Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	F

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

Private School Choice Programs	
Private School Choice Program	C
"A" Grade or Multiple Programs	—

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

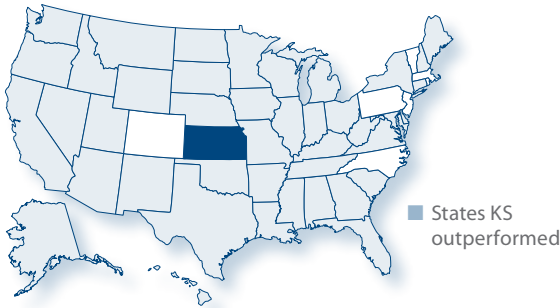
Online Learning	
Multi-District Full-Time Online School	Yes
Digital Learning Now! Metrics Achieved	24/72

Spending Levels and Achievement: 4th- and 8th-Grade NAEP Reading Exams Results and Costs

Graduation Rate	Average Class Size 2009-2010 Data	Annual Cost Per Student	4th Grade			8th Grade		
			Cumulative Investment Per Student	Statewide Enrollment	Percent of Students Scoring "Proficient" or Higher	Cumulative Investment Per Student	Statewide Enrollment	Percent of Students Scoring "Proficient" or Higher
82.6%	13.72	\$11,264 (Rank: 31)	\$44,504	35,031	34% (Rank: 23)	\$89,008	35,324	32% (Rank: 26)

Kansas

The Sunflower State



8

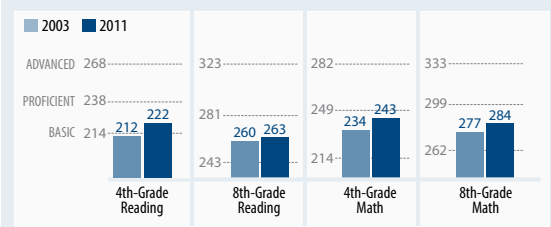
Student NAEP Performance Rank

ALEC Historical Ranking

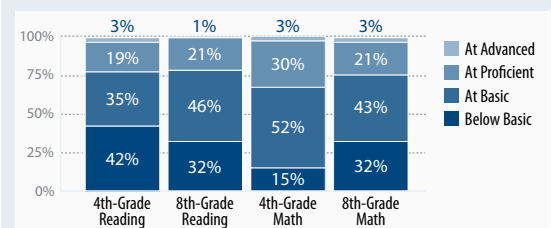
2010: 7

Measures the overall 2011 scores for low-income 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 2011

NAEP Scores for Low-Income Children (2003-2011)



NAEP Score Distribution (2011)



Education Policy Grade

ALEC Historical Grading

2011: C-

Contains scores and grades for policies that allow the state's education system to make available high-quality education through accountability, high standards, public- and private-school choice, high-quality teachers, and innovative delivery mechanisms

State Academic Standards	
English and Language Arts	B+
Mathematics	A-

Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	F

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

Private School Choice Programs	
Private School Choice Program	—
"A" Grade or Multiple Programs	—

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

Online Learning	
Multi-District Full-Time Online School	Yes
Digital Learning Now! Metrics Achieved	28/72

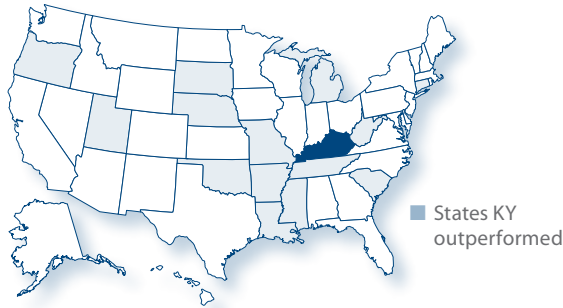
Spending Levels and Achievement: 4th- and 8th-Grade NAEP Reading Exams Results and Costs

Graduation Rate	Average Class Size 2009-2010 Data	Annual Cost Per Student	4th Grade			8th Grade		
			Cumulative Investment Per Student	Statewide Enrollment	Percent of Students Scoring "Proficient" or Higher	Cumulative Investment Per Student	Statewide Enrollment	Percent of Students Scoring "Proficient" or Higher
77.5%	13.67	\$11,566 (Rank: 26)	\$44,036	34,965	35% (Rank: 17)	\$88,072	34,366	33% (Rank: 19)

Kentucky

The Bluegrass State

D+



37

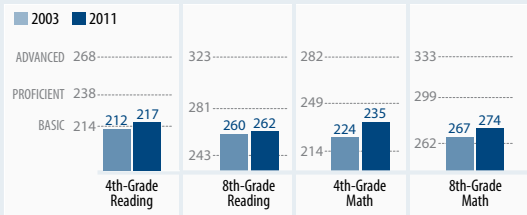
Student NAEP Performance Rank

ALEC Historical Ranking

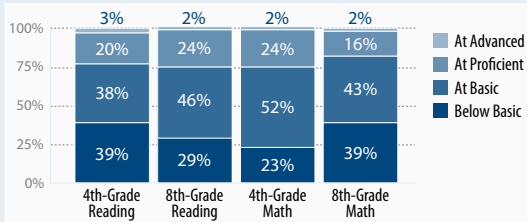
2010: 37

Measures the overall 2011 scores for low-income 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 2011

NAEP Scores for Low-Income Children (2003-2011)



NAEP Score Distribution (2011)



Education Policy Grade

ALEC Historical Grading

2011: C

Contains scores and grades for policies that allow the state's education system to make available high-quality education through accountability, high standards, public- and private-school choice, high-quality teachers, and innovative delivery mechanisms

State Academic Standards	
English and Language Arts	B+
Mathematics	A-

Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	No
Charter School Law Grade	—

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

Private School Choice Programs	
Private School Choice Program	—
"A" Grade or Multiple Programs	—

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

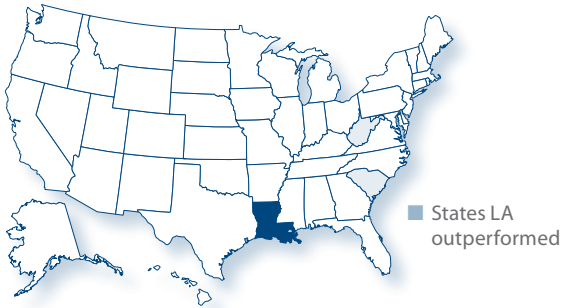
Online Learning	
Multi-District Full-Time Online School	No
Digital Learning Now! Metrics Achieved	25/72

Spending Levels and Achievement: 4th- and 8th-Grade NAEP Reading Exams Results and Costs

Graduation Rate	Average Class Size 2009-2010 Data	Annual Cost Per Student	4th Grade			8th Grade		
			Cumulative Investment Per Student	Statewide Enrollment	Percent of Students Scoring "Proficient" or Higher	Cumulative Investment Per Student	Statewide Enrollment	Percent of Students Scoring "Proficient" or Higher
71.7%	16.2	\$10,238 (Rank: 42)	\$40,304	49,875	36% (Rank: 11)	\$80,608	49,668	33% (Rank: 19)

Louisiana

The Pelican State



49

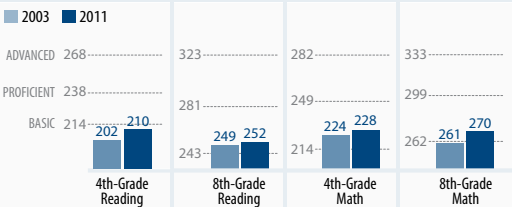
Student NAEP Performance Rank

ALEC Historical Ranking

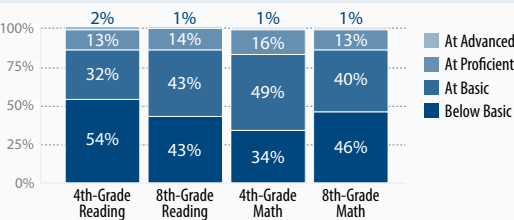
2010: 47

Measures the overall 2011 scores for low-income 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 2011

NAEP Scores for Low-Income Children (2003-2011)



NAEP Score Distribution (2011)



Education Policy Grade

ALEC Historical Grading

B

2011: B-

Contains scores and grades for policies that allow the state's education system to make available high-quality education through accountability, high standards, public- and private-school choice, high-quality teachers, and innovative delivery mechanisms

State Academic Standards	
English and Language Arts	B+
Mathematics	A-

Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	B

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

Private School Choice Programs	
Private School Choice Program	A
"A" Grade or Multiple Programs	Yes

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

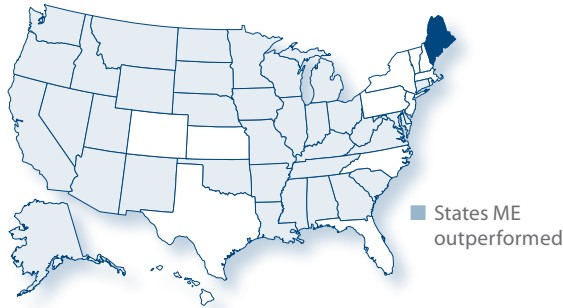
Online Learning	
Multi-District Full-Time Online School	Yes
Digital Learning Now! Metrics Achieved	40/72

Spending Levels and Achievement: 4th- and 8th-Grade NAEP Reading Exams Results and Costs

Graduation Rate	Average Class Size 2009-2010 Data	Annual Cost Per Student	4th Grade			8th Grade		
			Cumulative Investment Per Student	Statewide Enrollment	Percent of Students Scoring "Proficient" or Higher	Cumulative Investment Per Student	Statewide Enrollment	Percent of Students Scoring "Proficient" or Higher
67.1%	13.92	\$12,111 (Rank: 23)	\$45,316	57,165	18% (Rank: 50)	\$90,632	51,910	20% (Rank: 49)

Maine

The Pine Tree State



14

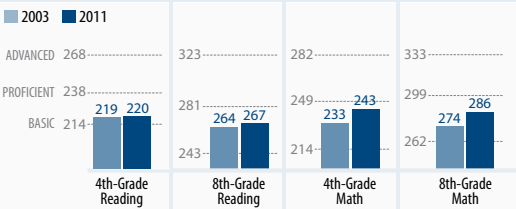
Student NAEP Performance Rank

ALEC Historical Ranking

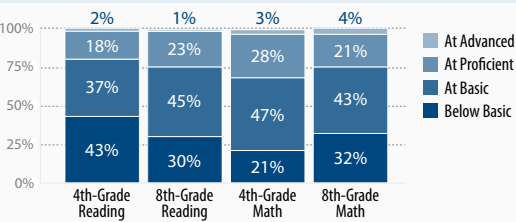
2010: 14

Measures the overall 2011 scores for low-income 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 2011

NAEP Scores for Low-Income Children (2003-2011)



NAEP Score Distribution (2011)



Education Policy Grade

ALEC Historical Grading

2011: C-

Contains scores and grades for policies that allow the state's education system to make available high-quality education through accountability, high standards, public- and private-school choice, high-quality teachers, and innovative delivery mechanisms

State Academic Standards	
English and Language Arts	B+
Mathematics	A-

Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	C

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

Private School Choice Programs	
Private School Choice Program	C
"A" Grade or Multiple Programs	—

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

Online Learning	
Multi-District Full-Time Online School	No
Digital Learning Now! Metrics Achieved	25/72

Spending Levels and Achievement: 4th- and 8th-Grade NAEP Reading Exams Results and Costs

Graduation Rate	Average Class Size 2009-2010 Data	Annual Cost Per Student	4th Grade			8th Grade		
			Cumulative Investment Per Student	Statewide Enrollment	Percent of Students Scoring "Proficient" or Higher	Cumulative Investment Per Student	Statewide Enrollment	Percent of Students Scoring "Proficient" or Higher
87.6%	11.59	\$14,144 (Rank: 15)	\$50,784	13,860	35% (Rank: 17)	\$101,568	14,886	35% (Rank: 13)

Maryland

The Old Line State

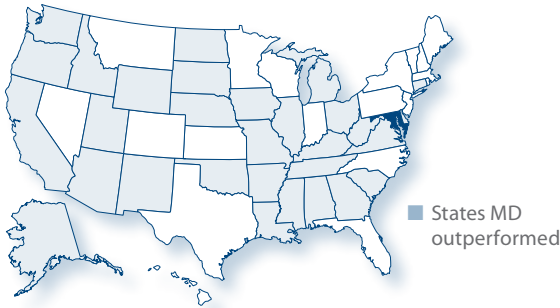
D+

Education Policy Grade

ALEC Historical Grading

2011: C-

Contains scores and grades for policies that allow the state's education system to make available high-quality education through accountability, high standards, public- and private-school choice, high-quality teachers, and innovative delivery mechanisms



20

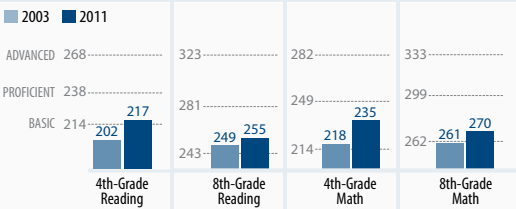
Student NAEP Performance Rank

ALEC Historical Ranking

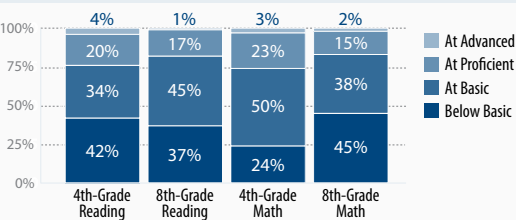
2010: 20

Measures the overall 2011 scores for low-income 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 2011

NAEP Scores for Low-Income Children (2003-2011)



NAEP Score Distribution (2011)



State Academic Standards	
English and Language Arts	B+
Mathematics	A-

Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	D

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

Private School Choice Programs	
Private School Choice Program	—
"A" Grade or Multiple Programs	—

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

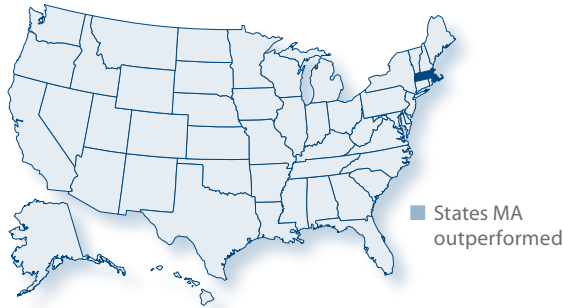
Online Learning	
Multi-District Full-Time Online School	No
Digital Learning Now! Metrics Achieved	24/72

Spending Levels and Achievement: 4th- and 8th-Grade NAEP Reading Exams Results and Costs

Graduation Rate	Average Class Size 2009-2010 Data	Annual Cost Per Student	4th Grade			8th Grade		
			Cumulative Investment Per Student	Statewide Enrollment	Percent of Students Scoring "Proficient" or Higher	Cumulative Investment Per Student	Statewide Enrollment	Percent of Students Scoring "Proficient" or Higher
73.1%	14.51	\$15,705 (Rank: 9)	\$60,128	59,512	37% (Rank: 8)	\$120,256	63,639	36% (Rank: 11)

Massachusetts

The Bay State



1

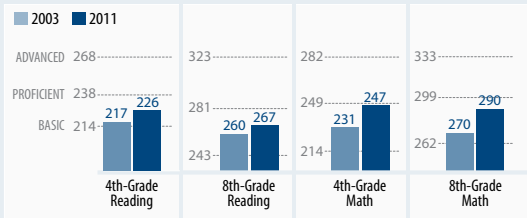
Student NAEP Performance Rank

ALEC Historical Ranking

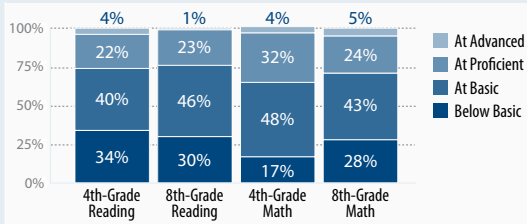
2010: 2

Measures the overall 2011 scores for low-income 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 2011

NAEP Scores for Low-Income Children (2003-2011)



NAEP Score Distribution (2011)



C

Education Policy Grade

ALEC Historical Grading

2011: B-

Contains scores and grades for policies that allow the state's education system to make available high-quality education through accountability, high standards, public- and private-school choice, high-quality teachers, and innovative delivery mechanisms

State Academic Standards	
English and Language Arts	B+
Mathematics	A-

Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	C

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

Private School Choice Programs	
Private School Choice Program	—
"A" Grade or Multiple Programs	—

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

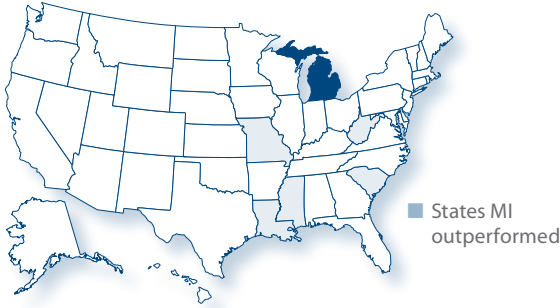
Online Learning	
Multi-District Full-Time Online School	Yes
Digital Learning Now! Metrics Achieved	28/72

Spending Levels and Achievement: 4th- and 8th-Grade NAEP Reading Exams Results and Costs

Graduation Rate	Average Class Size 2009-2010 Data	Annual Cost Per Student	4th Grade			8th Grade		
			Cumulative Investment Per Student	Statewide Enrollment	Percent of Students Scoring "Proficient" or Higher	Cumulative Investment Per Student	Statewide Enrollment	Percent of Students Scoring "Proficient" or Higher
78.8%	13.69	\$16,664 (Rank: 8)	\$56,960	70,666	47% (Rank: 1)	\$113,920	73,170	43% (Rank: 1)

Michigan

The Great Lakes State



46

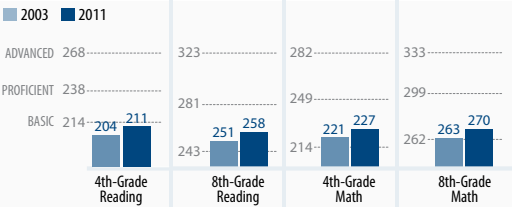
Student NAEP Performance Rank

ALEC Historical Ranking

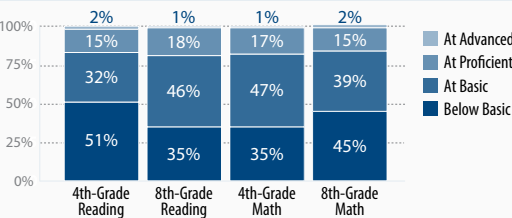
2010: 49

Measures the overall 2011 scores for low-income 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 2011

NAEP Scores for Low-Income Children (2003-2011)



NAEP Score Distribution (2011)



B-

Education Policy Grade

ALEC Historical Grading

2011: B-

Contains scores and grades for policies that allow the state's education system to make available high-quality education through accountability, high standards, public- and private-school choice, high-quality teachers, and innovative delivery mechanisms

State Academic Standards	
English and Language Arts	B+
Mathematics	A-

Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	A

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

Private School Choice Programs	
Private School Choice Program	—
"A" Grade or Multiple Programs	—

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

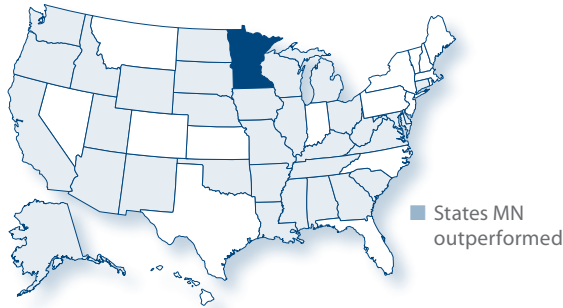
Online Learning	
Multi-District Full-Time Online School	Yes
Digital Learning Now! Metrics Achieved	37/72

Spending Levels and Achievement: 4th- and 8th-Grade NAEP Reading Exams Results and Costs

Graduation Rate	Average Class Size 2009-2010 Data	Annual Cost Per Student	4th Grade			8th Grade		
			Cumulative Investment Per Student	Statewide Enrollment	Percent of Students Scoring "Proficient" or Higher	Cumulative Investment Per Student	Statewide Enrollment	Percent of Students Scoring "Proficient" or Higher
71.1%	17.79	\$12,081 (Rank: 24)	\$45,780	117,432	30% (Rank: 34)	\$91,560	123,823	31% (Rank: 30)

Minnesota

The North Star State



18

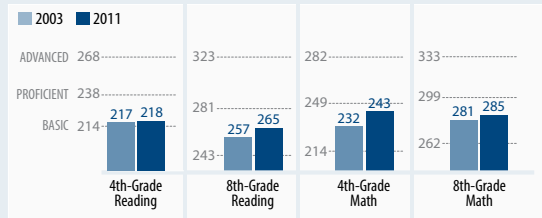
Student NAEP Performance Rank

ALEC Historical Ranking

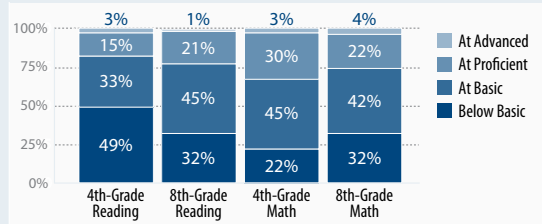
2010: 23

Measures the overall 2011 scores for low-income 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 2011

NAEP Scores for Low-Income Children (2003-2011)



NAEP Score Distribution (2011)



Education Policy Grade

ALEC Historical Grading

2011: B+

Contains scores and grades for policies that allow the state's education system to make available high-quality education through accountability, high standards, public- and private-school choice, high-quality teachers, and innovative delivery mechanisms

State Academic Standards	
English and Language Arts	B+
Mathematics	B

Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	A

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

Private School Choice Programs	
Private School Choice Program	—
"A" Grade or Multiple Programs	—

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

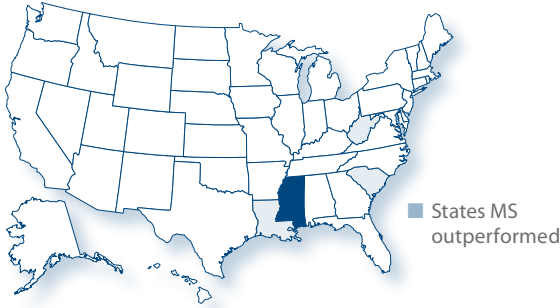
Online Learning	
Multi-District Full-Time Online School	Yes
Digital Learning Now! Metrics Achieved	47/72

Spending Levels and Achievement: 4th- and 8th-Grade NAEP Reading Exams Results and Costs

Graduation Rate	Average Class Size 2009-2010 Data	Annual Cost Per Student	4th Grade			8th Grade		
			Cumulative Investment Per Student	Statewide Enrollment	Percent of Students Scoring "Proficient" or Higher	Cumulative Investment Per Student	Statewide Enrollment	Percent of Students Scoring "Proficient" or Higher
86.2%	15.84	\$12,757 (Rank: 21)	\$47,772	59,822	37% (Rank: 8)	\$95,544	62,080	38% (Rank: 7)

Mississippi

The Magnolia State



48

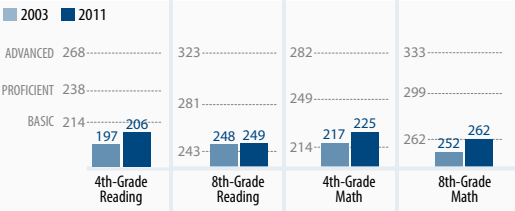
Student NAEP Performance Rank

ALEC Historical Ranking

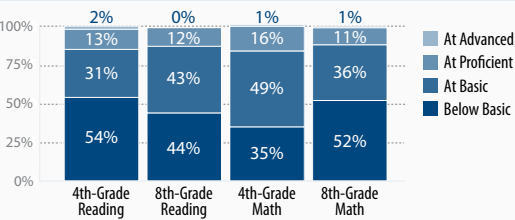
2010: 46

Measures the overall 2011 scores for low-income 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 2011

NAEP Scores for Low-Income Children (2003-2011)



NAEP Score Distribution (2011)



Education Policy Grade

ALEC Historical Grading

2011: C

Contains scores and grades for policies that allow the state's education system to make available high-quality education through accountability, high standards, public- and private-school choice, high-quality teachers, and innovative delivery mechanisms

State Academic Standards	
English and Language Arts	B+
Mathematics	A-

Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	F

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

Private School Choice Programs	
Private School Choice Program	C
"A" Grade or Multiple Programs	—

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

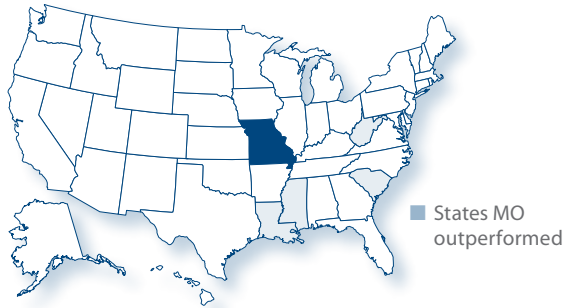
Online Learning	
Multi-District Full-Time Online School	No
Digital Learning Now! Metrics Achieved	25/72

Spending Levels and Achievement: 4th- and 8th-Grade NAEP Reading Exams Results and Costs

Graduation Rate	Average Class Size 2009-2010 Data	Annual Cost Per Student	4th Grade			8th Grade		
			Cumulative Investment Per Student	Statewide Enrollment	Percent of Students Scoring "Proficient" or Higher	Cumulative Investment Per Student	Statewide Enrollment	Percent of Students Scoring "Proficient" or Higher
59.5%	14.88	\$9,061 (Rank: 46)	\$34,348	38,159	22% (Rank: 48)	\$68,696	37,889	19% (Rank: 50)

Missouri

The Show-Me State



47

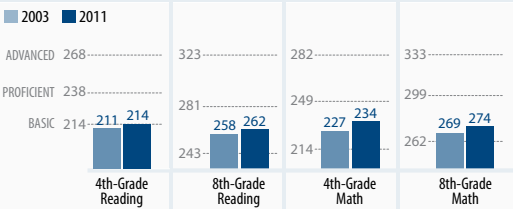
Student NAEP Performance Rank

ALEC Historical Ranking

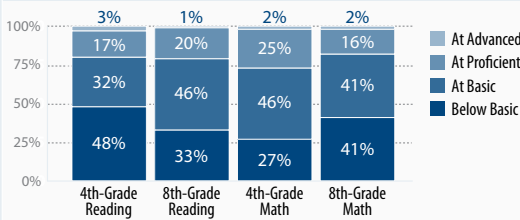
2010: 34

Measures the overall 2011 scores for low-income 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 2011

NAEP Scores for Low-Income Children (2003-2011)



NAEP Score Distribution (2011)



Education Policy Grade

ALEC Historical Grading

2011: A-

Contains scores and grades for policies that allow the state's education system to make available high-quality education through accountability, high standards, public- and private-school choice, high-quality teachers, and innovative delivery mechanisms

State Academic Standards	
English and Language Arts	B+
Mathematics	A-

Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	B

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

Private School Choice Programs	
Private School Choice Program	—
"A" Grade or Multiple Programs	—

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

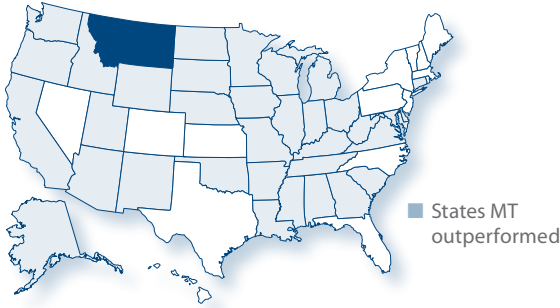
Online Learning	
Multi-District Full-Time Online School	No
Digital Learning Now! Metrics Achieved	39/72

Spending Levels and Achievement: 4th- and 8th-Grade NAEP Reading Exams Results and Costs

Graduation Rate	Average Class Size 2009-2010 Data	Annual Cost Per Student	4th Grade			8th Grade		
			Cumulative Investment Per Student	Statewide Enrollment	Percent of Students Scoring "Proficient" or Higher	Cumulative Investment Per Student	Statewide Enrollment	Percent of Students Scoring "Proficient" or Higher
78.2%	13.54	\$10,596 (Rank: 38)	\$44,280	67,620	36% (Rank: 11)	\$88,560	68,030	34% (Rank: 15)

Montana

The Treasure State



16

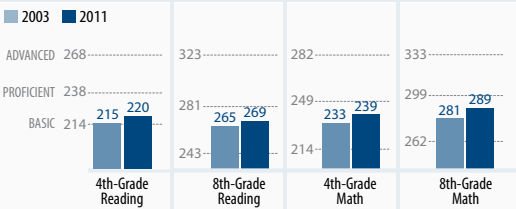
Student NAEP Performance Rank

ALEC Historical Ranking

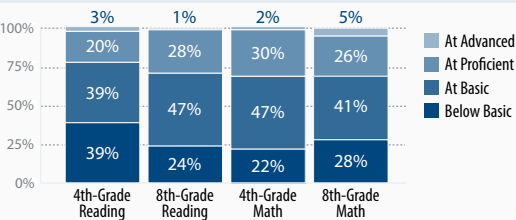
2010: 9

Measures the overall 2011 scores for low-income 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 2011

NAEP Scores for Low-Income Children (2003-2011)



NAEP Score Distribution (2011)



D

Education Policy Grade

ALEC Historical Grading

2011: C

Contains scores and grades for policies that allow the state's education system to make available high-quality education through accountability, high standards, public- and private-school choice, high-quality teachers, and innovative delivery mechanisms

State Academic Standards	
English and Language Arts	B+
Mathematics	A-

Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	No
Charter School Law Grade	—

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

Private School Choice Programs	
Private School Choice Program	—
"A" Grade or Multiple Programs	—

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

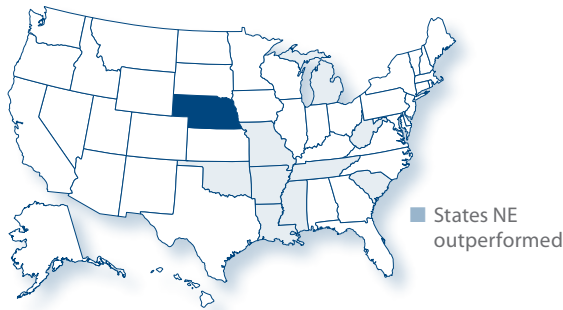
Online Learning	
Multi-District Full-Time Online School	No
Digital Learning Now! Metrics Achieved	18/72

Spending Levels and Achievement: 4th- and 8th-Grade NAEP Reading Exams Results and Costs

Graduation Rate	Average Class Size 2009-2010 Data	Annual Cost Per Student	4th Grade			8th Grade		
			Cumulative Investment Per Student	Statewide Enrollment	Percent of Students Scoring "Proficient" or Higher	Cumulative Investment Per Student	Statewide Enrollment	Percent of Students Scoring "Proficient" or Higher
78.9%	13.48	\$11,359 (Rank: 29)	\$43,764	10,558	35% (Rank: 17)	\$87,528	10,890	38% (Rank: 7)

Nebraska

The Cornhusker State



42

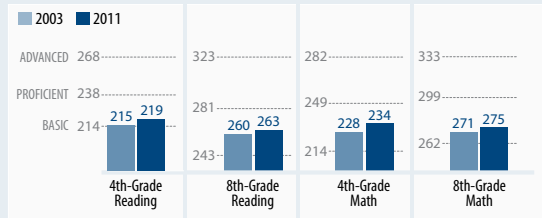
Student NAEP Performance Rank

ALEC Historical Ranking

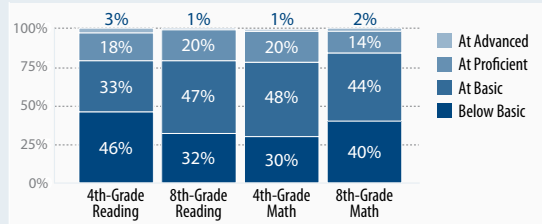
2010: 33

Measures the overall 2011 scores for low-income 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 2011

NAEP Scores for Low-Income Children (2003-2011)



NAEP Score Distribution (2011)



D

Education Policy Grade

ALEC Historical Grading

2011: D+

Contains scores and grades for policies that allow the state's education system to make available high-quality education through accountability, high standards, public- and private-school choice, high-quality teachers, and innovative delivery mechanisms

State Academic Standards	
English and Language Arts	F
Mathematics	C

Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	No
Charter School Law Grade	—

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

Private School Choice Programs	
Private School Choice Program	—
"A" Grade or Multiple Programs	—

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

Online Learning	
Multi-District Full-Time Online School	No
Digital Learning Now! Metrics Achieved	16/72

Spending Levels and Achievement: 4th- and 8th-Grade NAEP Reading Exams Results and Costs

Graduation Rate	Average Class Size 2009-2010 Data	Annual Cost Per Student	4th Grade			8th Grade		
			Cumulative Investment Per Student	Statewide Enrollment	Percent of Students Scoring "Proficient" or Higher	Cumulative Investment Per Student	Statewide Enrollment	Percent of Students Scoring "Proficient" or Higher
78.2%	13.27	\$12,353 (Rank: 22)	\$49,148	20,939	35% (Rank: 17)	\$98,296	20,958	35% (Rank: 13)

Nevada

The Silver State

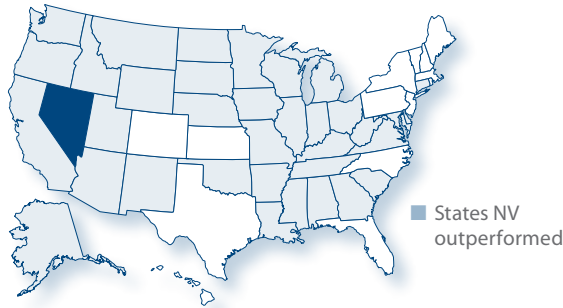


Education Policy Grade

ALEC Historical Grading

2011: C+

Contains scores and grades for policies that allow the state's education system to make available high-quality education through accountability, high standards, public- and private-school choice, high-quality teachers, and innovative delivery mechanisms



15

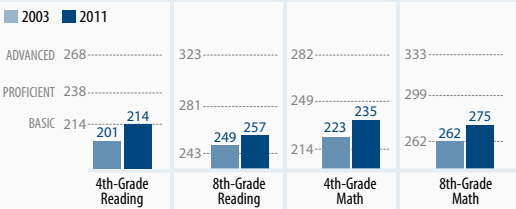
Student NAEP Performance Rank

ALEC Historical Ranking

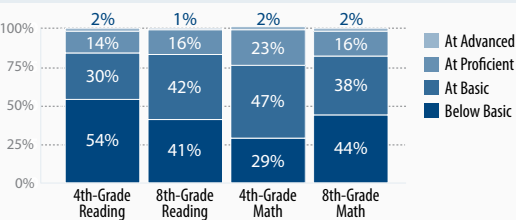
2010: 18

Measures the overall 2011 scores for low-income 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 2011

NAEP Scores for Low-Income Children (2003-2011)



NAEP Score Distribution (2011)



State Academic Standards	
English and Language Arts	B+
Mathematics	A-

Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	C

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

Private School Choice Programs	
Private School Choice Program	—
"A" Grade or Multiple Programs	—

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

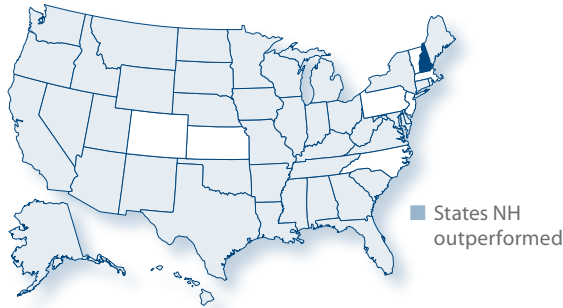
Online Learning	
Multi-District Full-Time Online School	Yes
Digital Learning Now! Metrics Achieved	32/72

Spending Levels and Achievement: 4th- and 8th-Grade NAEP Reading Exams Results and Costs

Graduation Rate	Average Class Size 2009-2010 Data	Annual Cost Per Student	4th Grade			8th Grade		
			Cumulative Investment Per Student	Statewide Enrollment	Percent of Students Scoring "Proficient" or Higher	Cumulative Investment Per Student	Statewide Enrollment	Percent of Students Scoring "Proficient" or Higher
50.5%	19.41	\$10,054 (Rank: 43)	\$41,508	34,099	24% (Rank: 46)	\$83,016	34,394	22% (Rank: 44)

New Hampshire

The Granite State



9

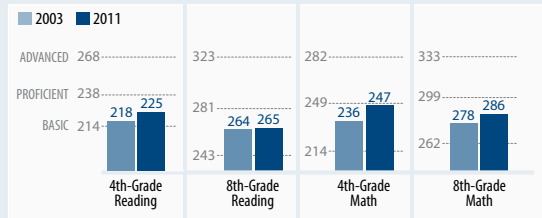
Student NAEP Performance Rank

ALEC Historical Ranking

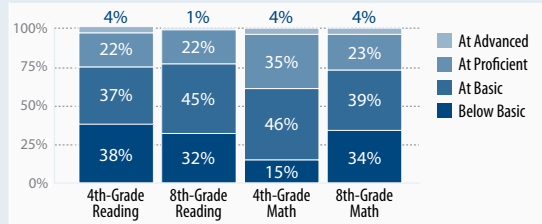
2010: 4

Measures the overall 2011 scores for low-income 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 2011

NAEP Scores for Low-Income Children (2003-2011)



NAEP Score Distribution (2011)



C

Education Policy Grade

ALEC Historical Grading

2011: C+

Contains scores and grades for policies that allow the state's education system to make available high-quality education through accountability, high standards, public- and private-school choice, high-quality teachers, and innovative delivery mechanisms

State Academic Standards	
English and Language Arts	B+
Mathematics	A-

Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	D

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

Private School Choice Programs	
Private School Choice Program	C
"A" Grade or Multiple Programs	—

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

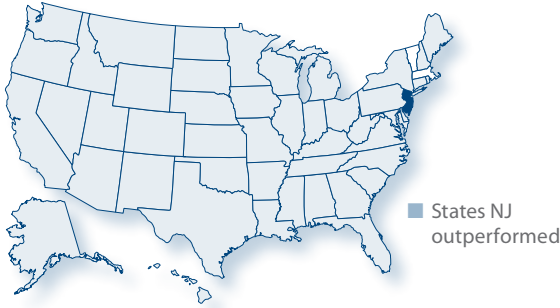
Online Learning	
Multi-District Full-Time Online School	Yes
Digital Learning Now! Metrics Achieved	26/72

Spending Levels and Achievement: 4th- and 8th-Grade NAEP Reading Exams Results and Costs

Graduation Rate	Average Class Size 2009-2010 Data	Annual Cost Per Student	4th Grade			8th Grade		
			Cumulative Investment Per Student	Statewide Enrollment	Percent of Students Scoring "Proficient" or Higher	Cumulative Investment Per Student	Statewide Enrollment	Percent of Students Scoring "Proficient" or Higher
80.8%	12.73	\$14,221 (Rank: 14)	\$52,028	14,613	41% (Rank: 3)	\$104,056	15,783	39% (Rank: 6)

New Jersey

The Garden State



3

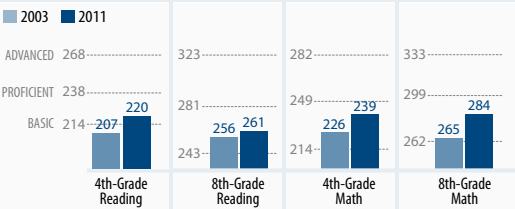
Student NAEP Performance Rank

ALEC Historical Ranking

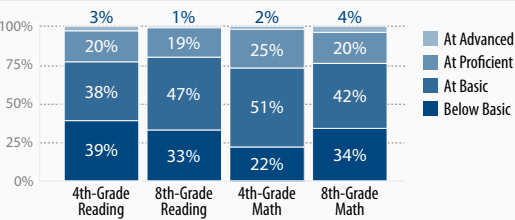
2010: 10

Measures the overall 2011 scores for low-income 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 2011

NAEP Scores for Low-Income Children (2003-2011)



NAEP Score Distribution (2011)



Education Policy Grade

ALEC Historical Grading

2011: B-

Contains scores and grades for policies that allow the state's education system to make available high-quality education through accountability, high standards, public- and private-school choice, high-quality teachers, and innovative delivery mechanisms

State Academic Standards	
English and Language Arts	B+
Mathematics	A-

Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	C

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

Private School Choice Programs	
Private School Choice Program	—
"A" Grade or Multiple Programs	—

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

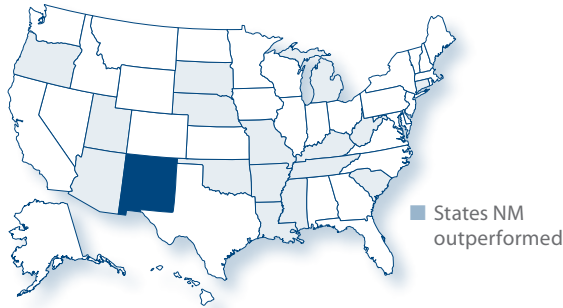
Online Learning	
Multi-District Full-Time Online School	No
Digital Learning Now! Metrics Achieved	24/72

Spending Levels and Achievement: 4th- and 8th-Grade NAEP Reading Exams Results and Costs

Graduation Rate	Average Class Size 2009-2010 Data	Annual Cost Per Student	4th Grade			8th Grade		
			Cumulative Investment Per Student	Statewide Enrollment	Percent of Students Scoring "Proficient" or Higher	Cumulative Investment Per Student	Statewide Enrollment	Percent of Students Scoring "Proficient" or Higher
86.4%	12.11	\$18,827 (Rank: 4)	\$75,884	99,242	40% (Rank: 5)	\$151,768	100,894	42% (Rank: 3)

New Mexico

The Land of Enchantment



35

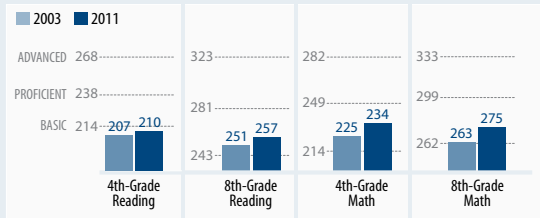
Student NAEP Performance Rank

ALEC Historical Ranking

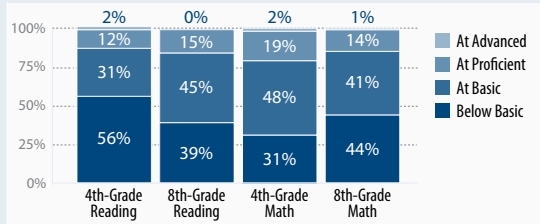
2010: 48

Measures the overall 2011 scores for low-income 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 2011

NAEP Scores for Low-Income Children (2003-2011)



NAEP Score Distribution (2011)



Education Policy Grade

ALEC Historical Grading

2011: B

Contains scores and grades for policies that allow the state's education system to make available high-quality education through accountability, high standards, public- and private-school choice, high-quality teachers, and innovative delivery mechanisms

State Academic Standards	
English and Language Arts	B+
Mathematics	A-

Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	C

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

Private School Choice Programs	
Private School Choice Program	—
"A" Grade or Multiple Programs	—

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

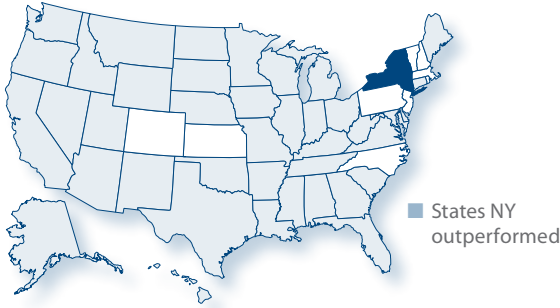
Online Learning	
Multi-District Full-Time Online School	Yes
Digital Learning Now! Metrics Achieved	27/72

Spending Levels and Achievement: 4th- and 8th-Grade NAEP Reading Exams Results and Costs

Graduation Rate	Average Class Size 2009-2010 Data	Annual Cost Per Student	4th Grade			8th Grade		
			Cumulative Investment Per Student	Statewide Enrollment	Percent of Students Scoring "Proficient" or Higher	Cumulative Investment Per Student	Statewide Enrollment	Percent of Students Scoring "Proficient" or Higher
59.7%	14.72	\$10,978 (Rank: 33)	\$43,192	25,119	20% (Rank: 49)	\$86,384	24,366	22% (Rank: 44)

New York

The Empire State



10

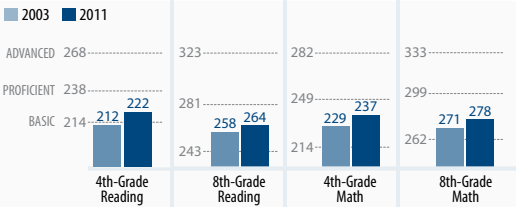
Student NAEP Performance Rank

ALEC Historical Ranking

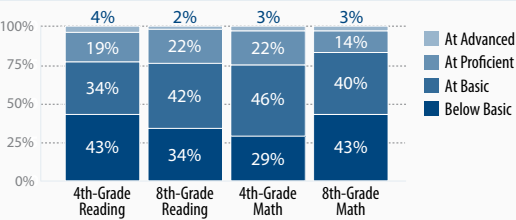
2010: 5

Measures the overall 2011 scores for low-income 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 2011

NAEP Scores for Low-Income Children (2003-2011)



NAEP Score Distribution (2011)



Education Policy Grade

ALEC Historical Grading

2011: C-

Contains scores and grades for policies that allow the state's education system to make available high-quality education through accountability, high standards, public- and private-school choice, high-quality teachers, and innovative delivery mechanisms

State Academic Standards	
English and Language Arts	B+
Mathematics	A-

Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	B

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

Private School Choice Programs	
Private School Choice Program	—
"A" Grade or Multiple Programs	—

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

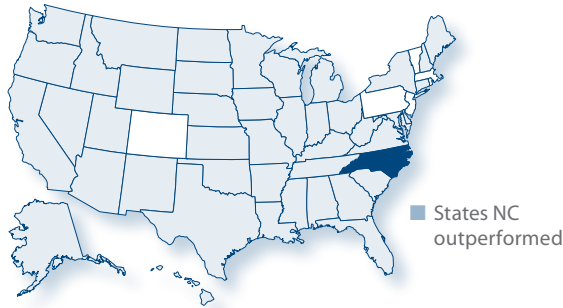
Online Learning	
Multi-District Full-Time Online School	No
Digital Learning Now! Metrics Achieved	16/72

Spending Levels and Achievement: 4th- and 8th-Grade NAEP Reading Exams Results and Costs

Graduation Rate	Average Class Size 2009-2010 Data	Annual Cost Per Student	4th Grade			8th Grade		
			Cumulative Investment Per Student	Statewide Enrollment	Percent of Students Scoring "Proficient" or Higher	Cumulative Investment Per Student	Statewide Enrollment	Percent of Students Scoring "Proficient" or Higher
70.1%	12.88	\$20,480 (Rank: 2)	\$72,292	190,067	36% (Rank: 11)	\$144,584	201,895	33% (Rank: 19)

North Carolina

The Old North State



7

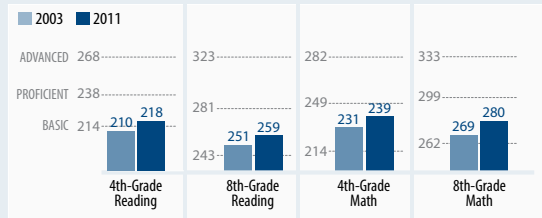
Student NAEP Performance Rank

ALEC Historical Ranking

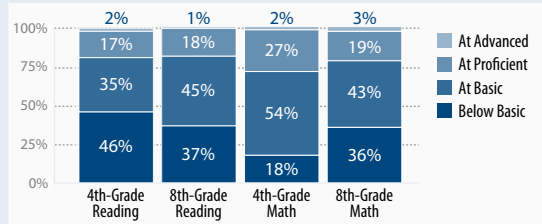
2010: 41

Measures the overall 2011 scores for low-income 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 2011

NAEP Scores for Low-Income Children (2003-2011)



NAEP Score Distribution (2011)



C

Education Policy Grade

ALEC Historical Grading

2011: C

Contains scores and grades for policies that allow the state's education system to make available high-quality education through accountability, high standards, public- and private-school choice, high-quality teachers, and innovative delivery mechanisms

State Academic Standards	
English and Language Arts	B+
Mathematics	A-

Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	C

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

Private School Choice Programs	
Private School Choice Program	B
"A" Grade or Multiple Programs	—

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

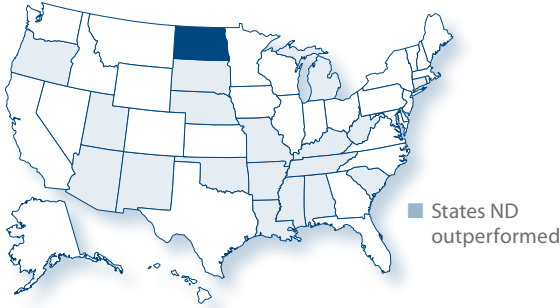
Online Learning	
Multi-District Full-Time Online School	No
Digital Learning Now! Metrics Achieved	22/72

Spending Levels and Achievement: 4th- and 8th-Grade NAEP Reading Exams Results and Costs

Graduation Rate	Average Class Size 2009-2010 Data	Annual Cost Per Student	4th Grade			8th Grade		
			Cumulative Investment Per Student	Statewide Enrollment	Percent of Students Scoring "Proficient" or Higher	Cumulative Investment Per Student	Statewide Enrollment	Percent of Students Scoring "Proficient" or Higher
66.1%	14.12	\$11,507 (Rank: 27)	\$36,180	114,909	32% (Rank: 28)	\$72,360	111,050	29% (Rank: 33)

North Dakota

The Peace Garden State



33

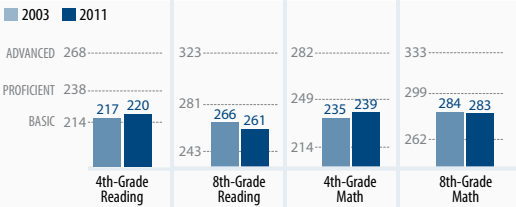
Student NAEP Performance Rank

ALEC Historical Ranking

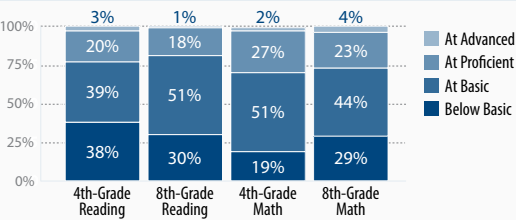
2010: 24

Measures the overall 2011 scores for low-income 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 2011

NAEP Scores for Low-Income Children (2003-2011)



NAEP Score Distribution (2011)



D

Education Policy Grade

ALEC Historical Grading

2011: D+

Contains scores and grades for policies that allow the state's education system to make available high-quality education through accountability, high standards, public- and private-school choice, high-quality teachers, and innovative delivery mechanisms

State Academic Standards	
English and Language Arts	B+
Mathematics	A-

Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	No
Charter School Law Grade	—

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

Private School Choice Programs	
Private School Choice Program	—
"A" Grade or Multiple Programs	—

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

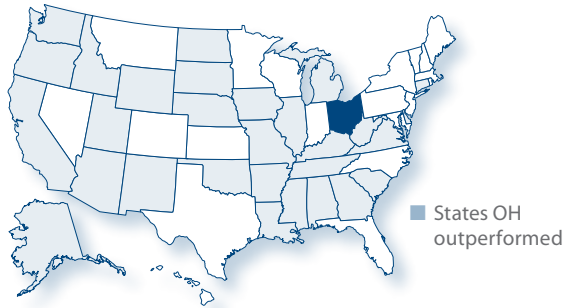
Online Learning	
Multi-District Full-Time Online School	No
Digital Learning Now! Metrics Achieved	17/72

Spending Levels and Achievement: 4th- and 8th-Grade NAEP Reading Exams Results and Costs

Graduation Rate	Average Class Size 2009-2010 Data	Annual Cost Per Student	4th Grade			8th Grade		
			Cumulative Investment Per Student	Statewide Enrollment	Percent of Students Scoring "Proficient" or Higher	Cumulative Investment Per Student	Statewide Enrollment	Percent of Students Scoring "Proficient" or Higher
85.2%	11.36	\$13,273 (Rank: 18)	\$41,512	6,812	35% (Rank: 17)	\$83,024	7,364	34% (Rank: 15)

Ohio

The Buckeye State



21

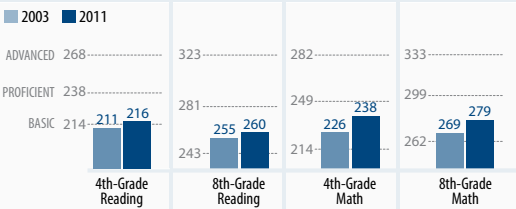
Student NAEP Performance Rank

ALEC Historical Ranking

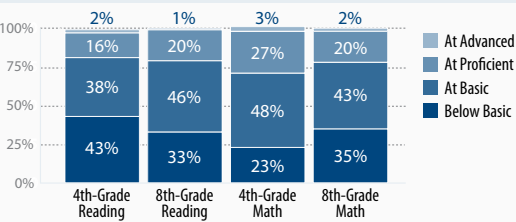
2010: 35

Measures the overall 2011 scores for low-income 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 2011

NAEP Scores for Low-Income Children (2003-2011)



NAEP Score Distribution (2011)



B

Education Policy Grade

ALEC Historical Grading

2011: B-

Contains scores and grades for policies that allow the state's education system to make available high-quality education through accountability, high standards, public- and private-school choice, high-quality teachers, and innovative delivery mechanisms

State Academic Standards	
English and Language Arts	B+
Mathematics	A-

Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	B

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

Private School Choice Programs	
Private School Choice Program	C
"A" Grade or Multiple Programs	Yes

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

Online Learning	
Multi-District Full-Time Online School	Yes
Digital Learning Now! Metrics Achieved	37/72

Spending Levels and Achievement: 4th- and 8th-Grade NAEP Reading Exams Results and Costs

Graduation Rate	Average Class Size 2009-2010 Data	Annual Cost Per Student	4th Grade			8th Grade		
			Cumulative Investment Per Student	Statewide Enrollment	Percent of Students Scoring "Proficient" or Higher	Cumulative Investment Per Student	Statewide Enrollment	Percent of Students Scoring "Proficient" or Higher
72.2%	15.84	\$13,531 (Rank: 16)	\$47,928	132,680	36% (Rank: 11)	\$95,856	137,479	37% (Rank: 9)

Oklahoma

The Sooner State

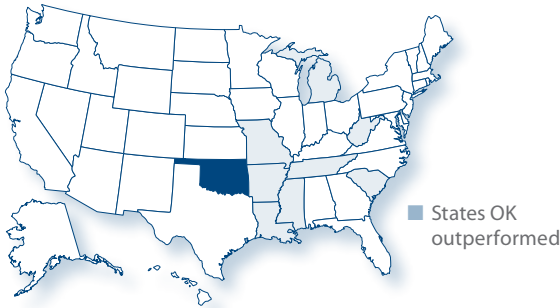
B+

Education Policy Grade

ALEC Historical Grading

2011: B

Contains scores and grades for policies that allow the state's education system to make available high-quality education through accountability, high standards, public- and private-school choice, high-quality teachers, and innovative delivery mechanisms



43

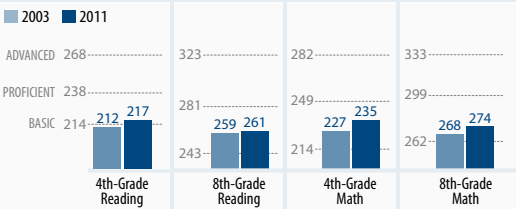
Student NAEP Performance Rank

ALEC Historical Ranking

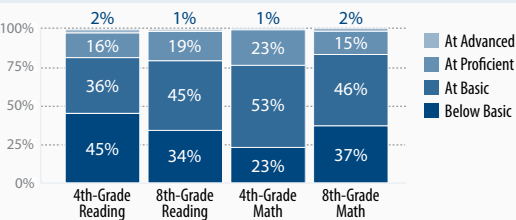
2010: 43

Measures the overall 2011 scores for low-income 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 2011

NAEP Scores for Low-Income Children (2003-2011)



NAEP Score Distribution (2011)



State Academic Standards	
English and Language Arts	B+
Mathematics	A-

Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	C

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

Private School Choice Programs	
Private School Choice Program	B
"A" Grade or Multiple Programs	Yes

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

Online Learning	
Multi-District Full-Time Online School	Yes
Digital Learning Now! Metrics Achieved	31/72

Spending Levels and Achievement: 4th- and 8th-Grade NAEP Reading Exams Results and Costs

Graduation Rate	Average Class Size 2009-2010 Data	Annual Cost Per Student	4th Grade			8th Grade		
			Cumulative Investment Per Student	Statewide Enrollment	Percent of Students Scoring "Proficient" or Higher	Cumulative Investment Per Student	Statewide Enrollment	Percent of Students Scoring "Proficient" or Higher
74.3%	15.37	\$8,840 (Rank: 48)	\$33,488	47,245	28% (Rank: 37)	\$66,976	45,149	26% (Rank: 41)

Oregon

The Beaver State



40

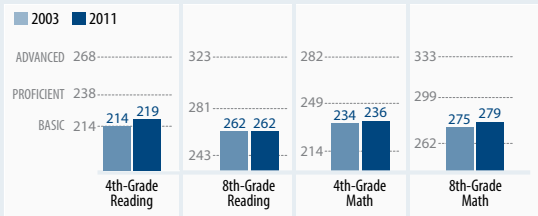
Student NAEP Performance Rank

ALEC Historical Ranking

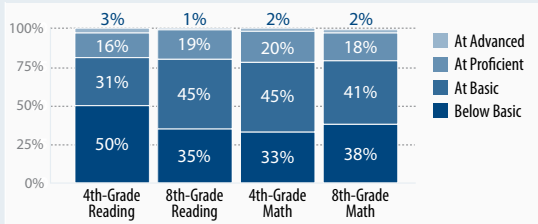
2010: 32

Measures the overall 2011 scores for low-income 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 2011

NAEP Scores for Low-Income Children (2003-2011)



NAEP Score Distribution (2011)



Education Policy Grade

ALEC Historical Grading

C

2011: C

Contains scores and grades for policies that allow the state's education system to make available high-quality education through accountability, high standards, public- and private-school choice, high-quality teachers, and innovative delivery mechanisms

State Academic Standards	
English and Language Arts	B+
Mathematics	A-

Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	C

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

Private School Choice Programs	
Private School Choice Program	—
"A" Grade or Multiple Programs	—

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

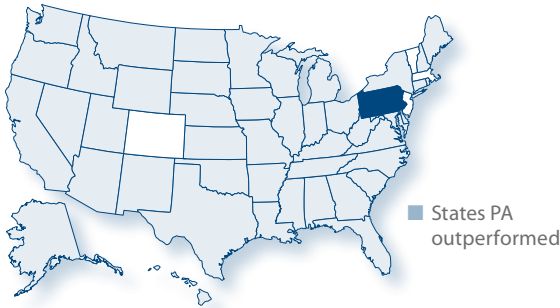
Online Learning	
Multi-District Full-Time Online School	Yes
Digital Learning Now! Metrics Achieved	34/72

Spending Levels and Achievement: 4th- and 8th-Grade NAEP Reading Exams Results and Costs

Graduation Rate	Average Class Size 2009-2010 Data	Annual Cost Per Student	4th Grade			8th Grade		
			Cumulative Investment Per Student	Statewide Enrollment	Percent of Students Scoring "Proficient" or Higher	Cumulative Investment Per Student	Statewide Enrollment	Percent of Students Scoring "Proficient" or Higher
73.5%	20.26	\$11,016 (Rank: 32)	\$44,624	43,272	31% (Rank: 32)	\$89,248	43,339	33% (Rank: 19)

Pennsylvania

The Keystone State



5

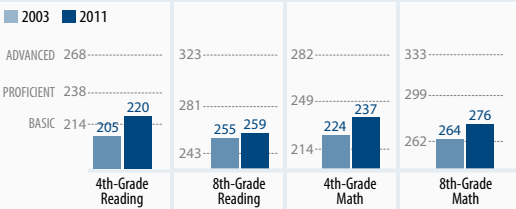
Student NAEP Performance Rank

ALEC Historical Ranking

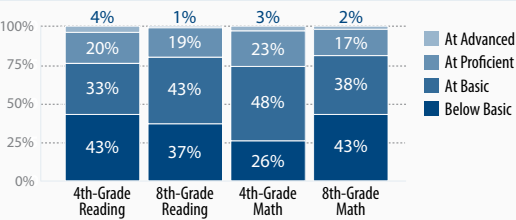
2010: 6

Measures the overall 2011 scores for low-income 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 2011

NAEP Scores for Low-Income Children (2003-2011)



NAEP Score Distribution (2011)



B-

Education Policy Grade

ALEC Historical Grading

2011: C+

Contains scores and grades for policies that allow the state's education system to make available high-quality education through accountability, high standards, public- and private-school choice, high-quality teachers, and innovative delivery mechanisms

State Academic Standards	
English and Language Arts	B+
Mathematics	A-

Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	B

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

Private School Choice Programs	
Private School Choice Program	C
"A" Grade or Multiple Programs	Yes

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

Online Learning	
Multi-District Full-Time Online School	Yes
Digital Learning Now! Metrics Achieved	41/72

Spending Levels and Achievement: 4th- and 8th-Grade NAEP Reading Exams Results and Costs

Graduation Rate	Average Class Size 2009-2010 Data	Annual Cost Per Student	4th Grade			8th Grade		
			Cumulative Investment Per Student	Statewide Enrollment	Percent of Students Scoring "Proficient" or Higher	Cumulative Investment Per Student	Statewide Enrollment	Percent of Students Scoring "Proficient" or Higher
79.1%	13.64	\$15,612 (Rank: 10)	\$54,848	130,592	37% (Rank: 8)	\$109,696	139,173	40% (Rank: 5)

Rhode Island

The Ocean State

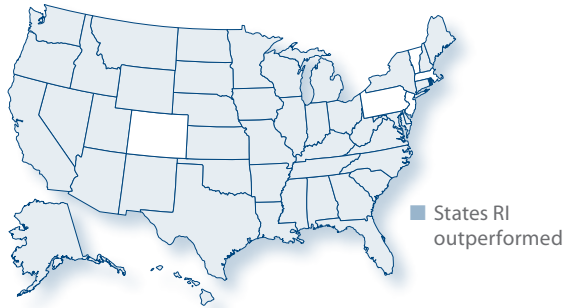
D+

Education Policy Grade

ALEC Historical Grading

2011: C

Contains scores and grades for policies that allow the state's education system to make available high-quality education through accountability, high standards, public- and private-school choice, high-quality teachers, and innovative delivery mechanisms



6

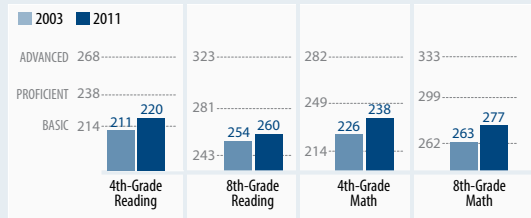
Student NAEP Performance Rank

ALEC Historical Ranking

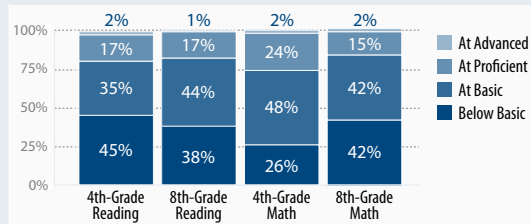
2010: 25

Measures the overall 2011 scores for low-income 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 2011

NAEP Scores for Low-Income Children (2003-2011)



NAEP Score Distribution (2011)



State Academic Standards	
English and Language Arts	B+
Mathematics	A-

Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	D

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

Private School Choice Programs	
Private School Choice Program	—
"A" Grade or Multiple Programs	—

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

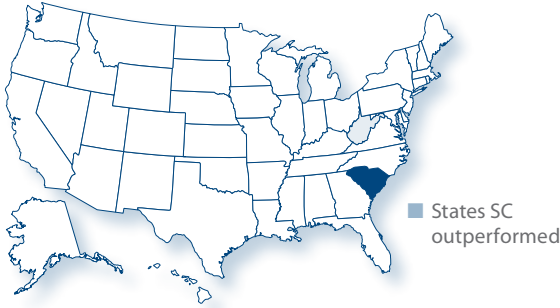
Online Learning	
Multi-District Full-Time Online School	No
Digital Learning Now! Metrics Achieved	25/72

Spending Levels and Achievement: 4th- and 8th-Grade NAEP Reading Exams Results and Costs

Graduation Rate	Average Class Size 2009-2010 Data	Annual Cost Per Student	4th Grade			8th Grade		
			Cumulative Investment Per Student	Statewide Enrollment	Percent of Students Scoring "Proficient" or Higher	Cumulative Investment Per Student	Statewide Enrollment	Percent of Students Scoring "Proficient" or Higher
70.7%	12.77	\$15,553 (Rank: 11)	\$59,588	9,752	36% (Rank: 11)	\$119,176	11,422	28% (Rank: 34)

South Carolina

The Palmetto State

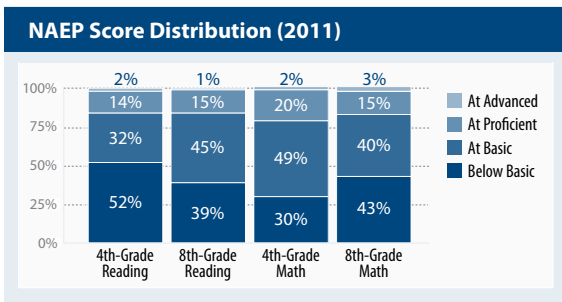
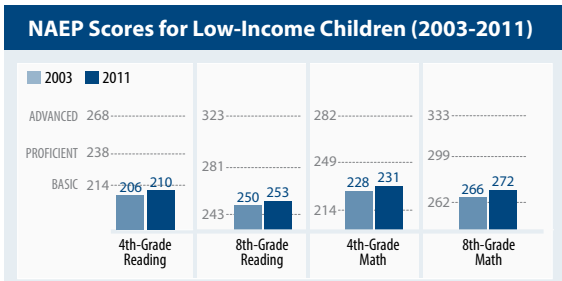


50

Student NAEP Performance Rank

ALEC Historical Ranking 2010: 51

Measures the overall 2011 scores for low-income 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 2011



C

Education Policy Grade

ALEC Historical Grading

2011: C+

Contains scores and grades for policies that allow the state's education system to make available high-quality education through accountability, high standards, public- and private-school choice, high-quality teachers, and innovative delivery mechanisms

State Academic Standards	
English and Language Arts	B+
Mathematics	A-

Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	C

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

Private School Choice Programs	
Private School Choice Program	—
"A" Grade or Multiple Programs	—

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

Online Learning	
Multi-District Full-Time Online School	Yes
Digital Learning Now! Metrics Achieved	29/72

Spending Levels and Achievement: 4th- and 8th-Grade NAEP Reading Exams Results and Costs

Graduation Rate	Average Class Size 2009-2010 Data	Annual Cost Per Student	4th Grade			8th Grade		
			Cumulative Investment Per Student	Statewide Enrollment	Percent of Students Scoring "Proficient" or Higher	Cumulative Investment Per Student	Statewide Enrollment	Percent of Students Scoring "Proficient" or Higher
58.8%	15.39	\$10,820 (Rank: 34)	\$44,512	53,996	28% (Rank: 37)	\$89,024	53,446	24% (Rank: 42)

South Dakota

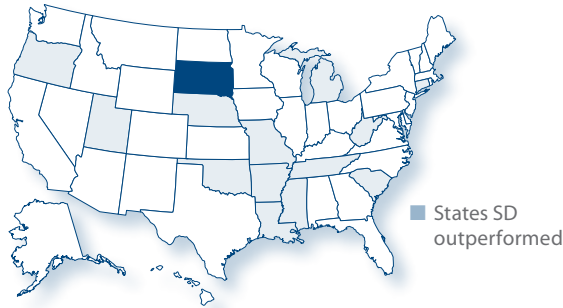
The Mount Rushmore State

D+

Education Policy Grade
ALEC Historical Grading

2011: C-

Contains scores and grades for policies that allow the state's education system to make available high-quality education through accountability, high standards, public- and private-school choice, high-quality teachers, and innovative delivery mechanisms



38

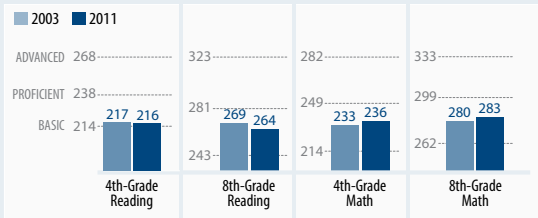
Student NAEP Performance Rank

ALEC Historical Ranking

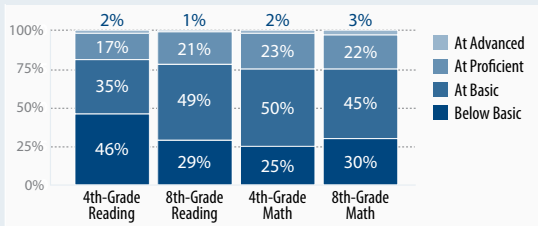
2010: 39

Measures the overall 2011 scores for low-income 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 2011

NAEP Scores for Low-Income Children (2003-2011)



NAEP Score Distribution (2011)



State Academic Standards	
English and Language Arts	B+
Mathematics	A-

Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	No
Charter School Law Grade	—

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

Private School Choice Programs	
Private School Choice Program	—
"A" Grade or Multiple Programs	—

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

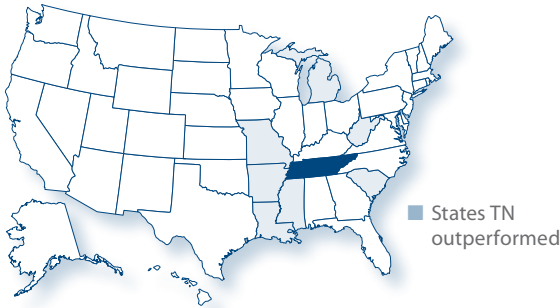
Online Learning	
Multi-District Full-Time Online School	No
Digital Learning Now! Metrics Achieved	27/72

Spending Levels and Achievement: 4th- and 8th-Grade NAEP Reading Exams Results and Costs

Graduation Rate	Average Class Size 2009-2010 Data	Annual Cost Per Student	4th Grade			8th Grade		
			Cumulative Investment Per Student	Statewide Enrollment	Percent of Students Scoring "Proficient" or Higher	Cumulative Investment Per Student	Statewide Enrollment	Percent of Students Scoring "Proficient" or Higher
78.8%	13.27	\$10,437 (Rank: 41)	\$38,736	9,234	33% (Rank: 24)	\$77,472	9,446	37% (Rank: 9)

Tennessee

The Volunteer State



44

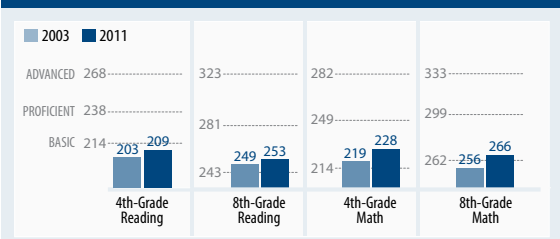
Student NAEP Performance Rank

ALEC Historical Ranking

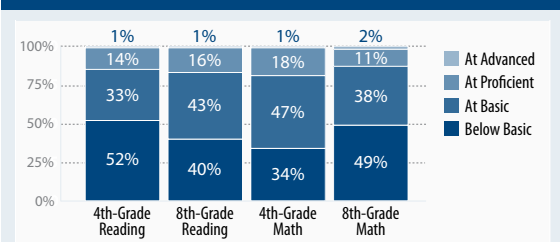
2010: 36

Measures the overall 2011 scores for low-income 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 2011

NAEP Scores for Low-Income Children (2003-2011)



NAEP Score Distribution (2011)



Education Policy Grade

ALEC Historical Grading

2011: C

Contains scores and grades for policies that allow the state's education system to make available high-quality education through accountability, high standards, public- and private-school choice, high-quality teachers, and innovative delivery mechanisms

State Academic Standards	
English and Language Arts	B+
Mathematics	A-

Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	C

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

Private School Choice Programs	
Private School Choice Program	—
"A" Grade or Multiple Programs	—

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

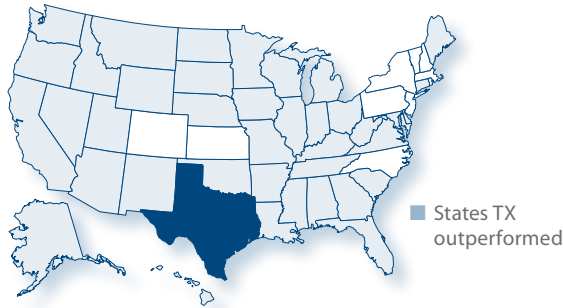
Online Learning	
Multi-District Full-Time Online School	Yes
Digital Learning Now! Metrics Achieved	25/72

Spending Levels and Achievement: 4th- and 8th-Grade NAEP Reading Exams Results and Costs

Graduation Rate	Average Class Size 2009-2010 Data	Annual Cost Per Student	4th Grade			8th Grade		
			Cumulative Investment Per Student	Statewide Enrollment	Percent of Students Scoring "Proficient" or Higher	Cumulative Investment Per Student	Statewide Enrollment	Percent of Students Scoring "Proficient" or Higher
74.2%	14.88	\$8,618 (Rank: 49)	\$34,984	75,091	28% (Rank: 37)	\$69,968	72,255	28% (Rank: 34)

Texas

The Lone Star State



11

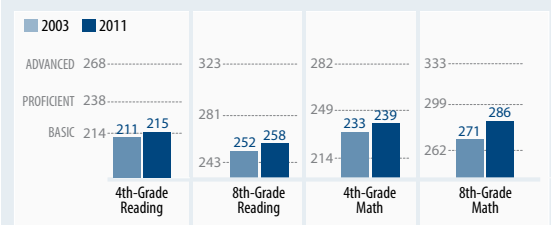
Student NAEP Performance Rank

ALEC Historical Ranking

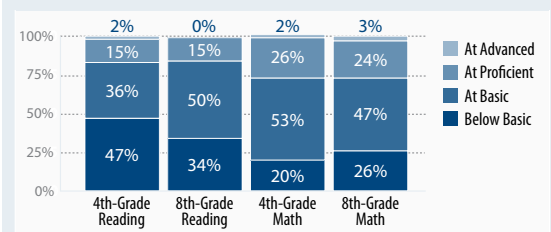
2010: 8

Measures the overall 2011 scores for low-income 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 2011

NAEP Scores for Low-Income Children (2003-2011)



NAEP Score Distribution (2011)



Education Policy Grade

ALEC Historical Grading

2011: C+

Contains scores and grades for policies that allow the state's education system to make available high-quality education through accountability, high standards, public- and private-school choice, high-quality teachers, and innovative delivery mechanisms

State Academic Standards	
English and Language Arts	A-
Mathematics	C

Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	C

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

Private School Choice Programs	
Private School Choice Program	—
"A" Grade or Multiple Programs	—

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

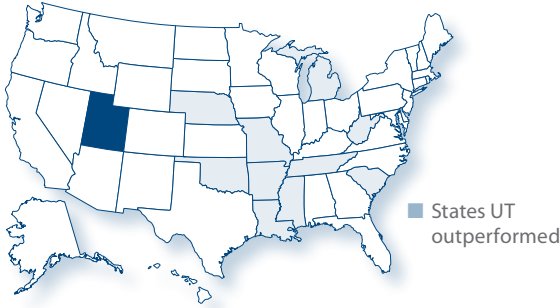
Online Learning	
Multi-District Full-Time Online School	Yes
Digital Learning Now! Metrics Achieved	40/72

Spending Levels and Achievement: 4th- and 8th-Grade NAEP Reading Exams Results and Costs

Graduation Rate	Average Class Size 2009-2010 Data	Annual Cost Per Student	4th Grade			8th Grade		
			Cumulative Investment Per Student	Statewide Enrollment	Percent of Students Scoring "Proficient" or Higher	Cumulative Investment Per Student	Statewide Enrollment	Percent of Students Scoring "Proficient" or Higher
66.9%	14.56	\$10,656 (Rank: 36)	\$42,384	355,578	28% (Rank: 37)	\$84,768	343,548	27% (Rank: 36)

Utah

The Beehive State



41

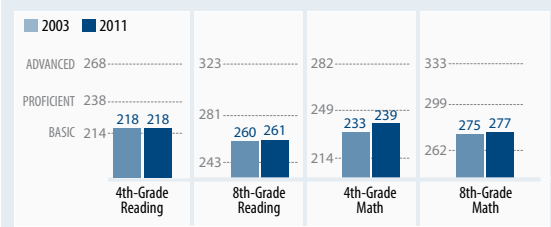
Student NAEP Performance Rank

ALEC Historical Ranking

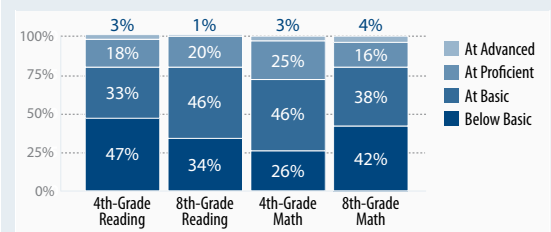
2010: 42

Measures the overall 2011 scores for low-income 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 2011

NAEP Scores for Low-Income Children (2003-2011)



NAEP Score Distribution (2011)



Spending Levels and Achievement: 4th- and 8th-Grade NAEP Reading Exams Results and Costs

Graduation Rate	Average Class Size 2009-2010 Data	Annual Cost Per Student	4th Grade			8th Grade		
			Cumulative Investment Per Student	Statewide Enrollment	Percent of Students Scoring "Proficient" or Higher	Cumulative Investment Per Student	Statewide Enrollment	Percent of Students Scoring "Proficient" or Higher
78.6%	22.31	\$7,743 (Rank: 51)	\$31,024	44,546	31% (Rank: 32)	\$62,048	40,261	33% (Rank: 19)

Education Policy Grade

B-

ALEC Historical Grading

2011: B

Contains scores and grades for policies that allow the state's education system to make available high-quality education through accountability, high standards, public- and private-school choice, high-quality teachers, and innovative delivery mechanisms

State Academic Standards	
English and Language Arts	B+
Mathematics	A-

Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	B

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

Private School Choice Programs	
Private School Choice Program	C
"A" Grade or Multiple Programs	—

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

Online Learning	
Multi-District Full-Time Online School	Yes
Digital Learning Now! Metrics Achieved	49/72

Vermont

The Green Mountain State

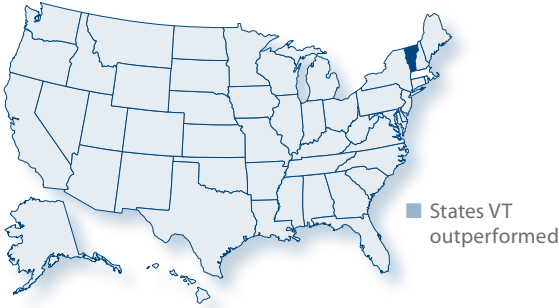
D+

Education Policy Grade

ALEC Historical Grading

2011: D+

Contains scores and grades for policies that allow the state's education system to make available high-quality education through accountability, high standards, public- and private-school choice, high-quality teachers, and innovative delivery mechanisms



2

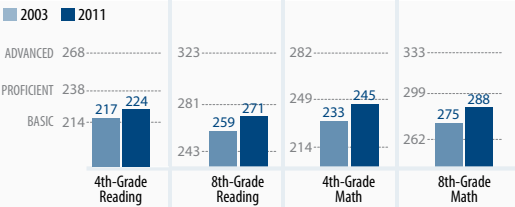
Student NAEP Performance Rank

ALEC Historical Ranking

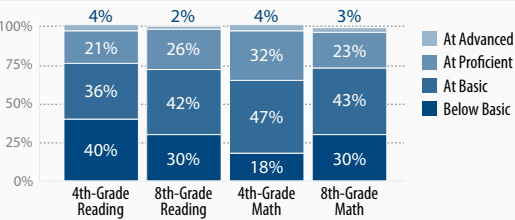
2010: 1

Measures the overall 2011 scores for low-income 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 2011

NAEP Scores for Low-Income Children (2003-2011)



NAEP Score Distribution (2011)



State Academic Standards	
English and Language Arts	B+
Mathematics	A-

Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	No
Charter School Law Grade	—

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

Private School Choice Programs	
Private School Choice Program	B
"A" Grade or Multiple Programs	—

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

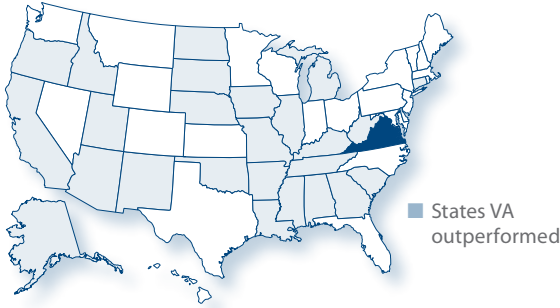
Online Learning	
Multi-District Full-Time Online School	No
Digital Learning Now! Metrics Achieved	20/72

Spending Levels and Achievement: 4th- and 8th-Grade NAEP Reading Exams Results and Costs

Graduation Rate	Average Class Size 2009-2010 Data	Annual Cost Per Student	4th Grade			8th Grade		
			Cumulative Investment Per Student	Statewide Enrollment	Percent of Students Scoring "Proficient" or Higher	Cumulative Investment Per Student	Statewide Enrollment	Percent of Students Scoring "Proficient" or Higher
86.6%	10.47	\$17,333 (Rank: 6)	\$61,860	6,471	41% (Rank: 3)	\$123,720	7,004	41% (Rank: 4)

Virginia

The Old Dominion

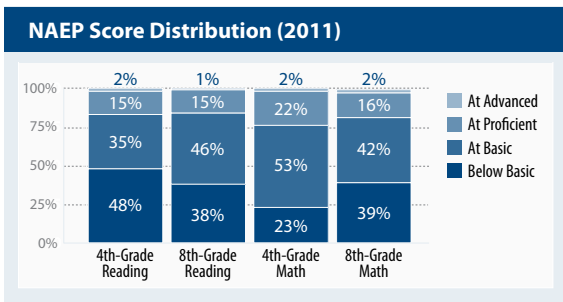
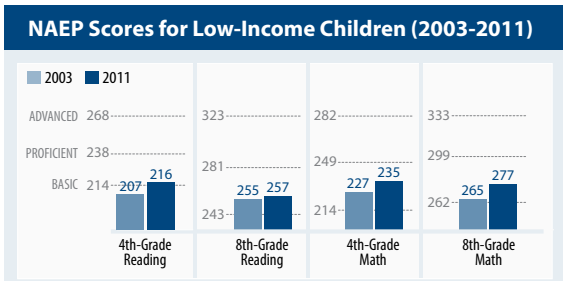


26

Student NAEP Performance Rank

ALEC Historical Ranking 2010: 12

Measures the overall 2011 scores for low-income 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 2011



Education Policy Grade

ALEC Historical Grading 2011: C-

Contains scores and grades for policies that allow the state's education system to make available high-quality education through accountability, high standards, public- and private-school choice, high-quality teachers, and innovative delivery mechanisms

State Academic Standards	
English and Language Arts	B+
Mathematics	C

Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	F

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

Private School Choice Programs	
Private School Choice Program	D
"A" Grade or Multiple Programs	—

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

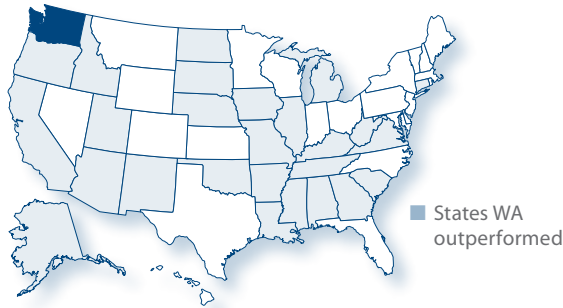
Online Learning	
Multi-District Full-Time Online School	Yes
Digital Learning Now! Metrics Achieved	44/72

Spending Levels and Achievement: 4th- and 8th-Grade NAEP Reading Exams Results and Costs

Graduation Rate	Average Class Size 2009-2010 Data	Annual Cost Per Student	4th Grade			8th Grade		
			Cumulative Investment Per Student	Statewide Enrollment	Percent of Students Scoring "Proficient" or Higher	Cumulative Investment Per Student	Statewide Enrollment	Percent of Students Scoring "Proficient" or Higher
71.3%	17.58	\$11,805 (Rank: 25)	\$48,120	91,133	38% (Rank: 7)	\$96,240	92,881	32% (Rank: 26)

Washington

The Evergreen State



25

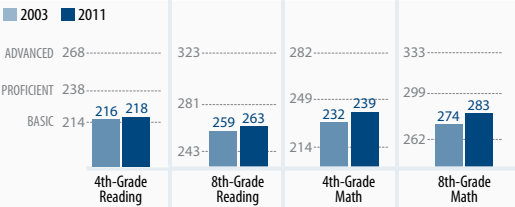
Student NAEP Performance Rank

ALEC Historical Ranking

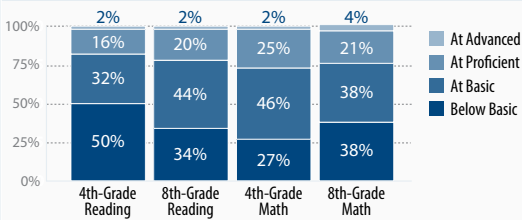
2010: 16

Measures the overall 2011 scores for low-income 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 2011

NAEP Scores for Low-Income Children (2003-2011)



NAEP Score Distribution (2011)



Education Policy Grade

ALEC Historical Grading

2011: C

Contains scores and grades for policies that allow the state's education system to make available high-quality education through accountability, high standards, public- and private-school choice, high-quality teachers, and innovative delivery mechanisms

State Academic Standards	
English and Language Arts	B+
Mathematics	C

Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	No
Charter School Law Grade	—

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

Private School Choice Programs	
Private School Choice Program	—
"A" Grade or Multiple Programs	—

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

Online Learning	
Multi-District Full-Time Online School	Yes
Digital Learning Now! Metrics Achieved	46/72

Spending Levels and Achievement: 4th- and 8th-Grade NAEP Reading Exams Results and Costs

Graduation Rate	Average Class Size 2009-2010 Data	Annual Cost Per Student	4th Grade			8th Grade		
			Cumulative Investment Per Student	Statewide Enrollment	Percent of Students Scoring "Proficient" or Higher	Cumulative Investment Per Student	Statewide Enrollment	Percent of Students Scoring "Proficient" or Higher
68.7%	19.37	\$11,432 (Rank: 28)	\$44,800	77,999	33% (Rank: 24)	\$89,600	78,902	36% (Rank: 11)

West Virginia

The Mountain State

D+

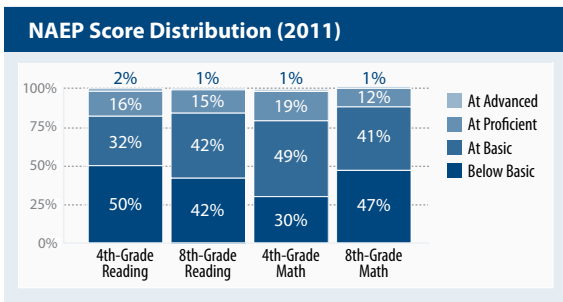
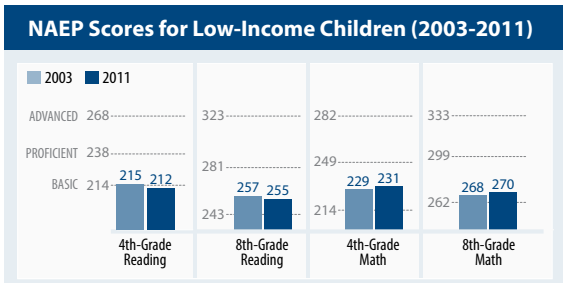


51

Student NAEP Performance Rank

ALEC Historical Ranking 2010: 50

Measures the overall 2011 scores for low-income 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 2011



Education Policy Grade

ALEC Historical Grading

2011: D+

Contains scores and grades for policies that allow the state's education system to make available high-quality education through accountability, high standards, public- and private-school choice, high-quality teachers, and innovative delivery mechanisms

State Academic Standards	
English and Language Arts	B+
Mathematics	A-

Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	No
Charter School Law Grade	—

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

Private School Choice Programs	
Private School Choice Program	—
"A" Grade or Multiple Programs	—

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

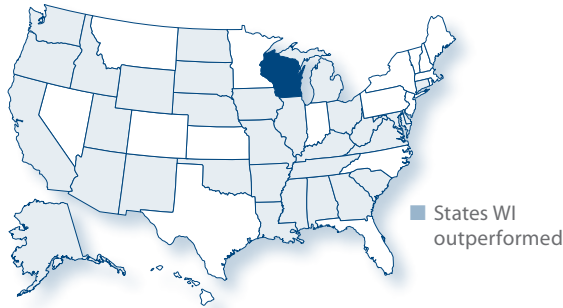
Online Learning	
Multi-District Full-Time Online School	No
Digital Learning Now! Metrics Achieved	21/72

Spending Levels and Achievement: 4th- and 8th-Grade NAEP Reading Exams Results and Costs

Graduation Rate	Average Class Size 2009-2010 Data	Annual Cost Per Student	4th Grade			8th Grade		
			Cumulative Investment Per Student	Statewide Enrollment	Percent of Students Scoring "Proficient" or Higher	Cumulative Investment Per Student	Statewide Enrollment	Percent of Students Scoring "Proficient" or Higher
71.6%	13.93	\$11,269 (Rank: 30)	\$41,364	20,162	26% (Rank: 43)	\$82,728	21,268	22% (Rank: 44)

Wisconsin

America's Dairyland



19

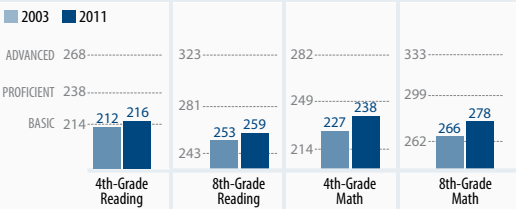
Student NAEP Performance Rank

ALEC Historical Ranking

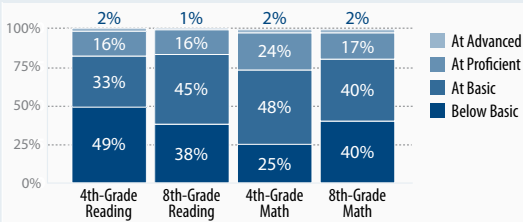
2010: 21

Measures the overall 2011 scores for low-income 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 2011

NAEP Scores for Low-Income Children (2003-2011)



NAEP Score Distribution (2011)



Education Policy Grade

B-

ALEC Historical Grading

2011: B-

Contains scores and grades for policies that allow the state's education system to make available high-quality education through accountability, high standards, public- and private-school choice, high-quality teachers, and innovative delivery mechanisms

State Academic Standards	
English and Language Arts	B+
Mathematics	A-

Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	C

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

Private School Choice Programs	
Private School Choice Program	C
"A" Grade or Multiple Programs	Yes

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

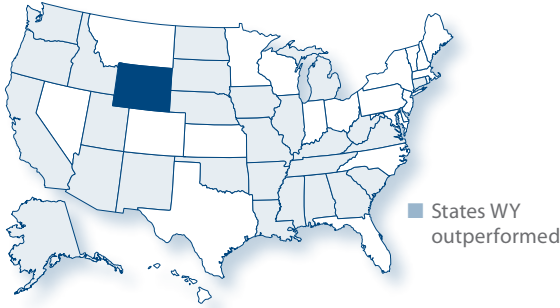
Online Learning	
Multi-District Full-Time Online School	Yes
Digital Learning Now! Metrics Achieved	41/72

Spending Levels and Achievement: 4th- and 8th-Grade NAEP Reading Exams Results and Costs

Graduation Rate	Average Class Size 2009-2010 Data	Annual Cost Per Student	4th Grade			8th Grade		
			Cumulative Investment Per Student	Statewide Enrollment	Percent of Students Scoring "Proficient" or Higher	Cumulative Investment Per Student	Statewide Enrollment	Percent of Students Scoring "Proficient" or Higher
85.3%	14.93	\$12,775 (Rank: 20)	\$49,248	60,319	33% (Rank: 24)	\$98,496	62,317	34% (Rank: 15)

Wyoming

The Equality State



23

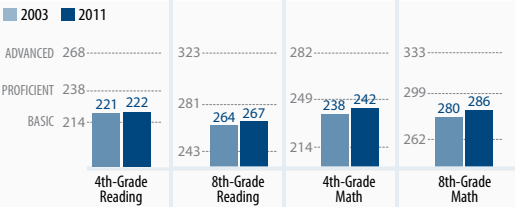
Student NAEP Performance Rank

ALEC Historical Ranking

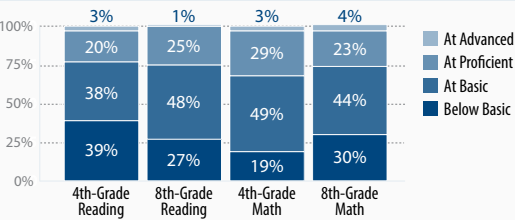
2010: 28

Measures the overall 2011 scores for low-income 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 2011

NAEP Scores for Low-Income Children (2003-2011)



NAEP Score Distribution (2011)



Education Policy Grade

ALEC Historical Grading

2011: C+

Contains scores and grades for policies that allow the state's education system to make available high-quality education through accountability, high standards, public- and private-school choice, high-quality teachers, and innovative delivery mechanisms

State Academic Standards	
English and Language Arts	B+
Mathematics	A-

Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	D

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

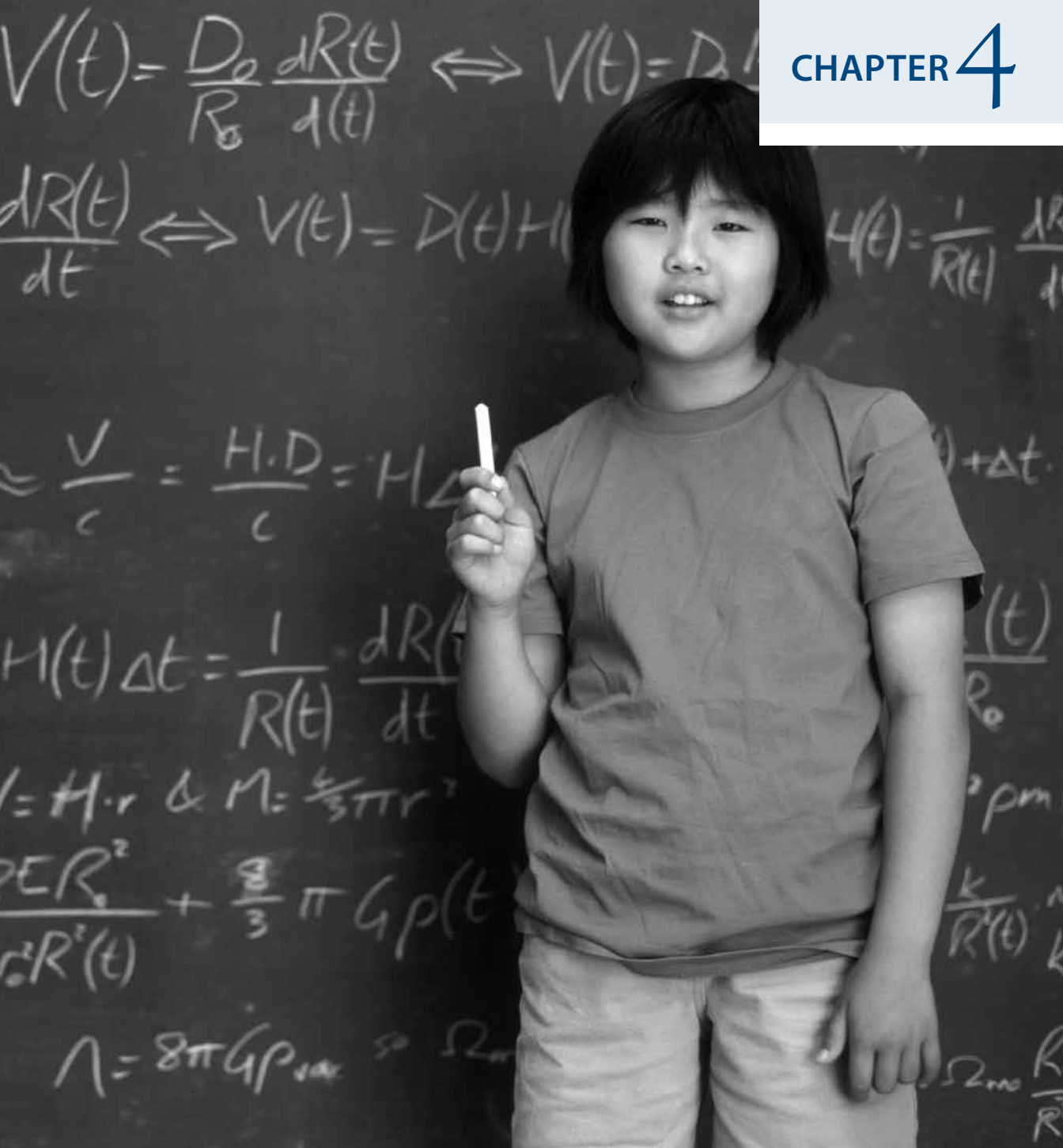
Private School Choice Programs	
Private School Choice Program	—
"A" Grade or Multiple Programs	—

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

Online Learning	
Multi-District Full-Time Online School	Yes
Digital Learning Now! Metrics Achieved	49/72

Spending Levels and Achievement: 4th- and 8th-Grade NAEP Reading Exams Results and Costs

Graduation Rate	Average Class Size 2009-2010 Data	Annual Cost Per Student	4th Grade			8th Grade		
			Cumulative Investment Per Student	Statewide Enrollment	Percent of Students Scoring "Proficient" or Higher	Cumulative Investment Per Student	Statewide Enrollment	Percent of Students Scoring "Proficient" or Higher
73.2%	12.3	\$19,510 (Rank: 3)	\$69,912	6,608	33% (Rank: 24)	\$139,824	6,456	34% (Rank: 15)



The Global Achievement Gap

The Global Achievement Gap

Chapter 2 took a hard look at achievement gaps among American student subgroups, poor and non-poor, white, black, and so on for the states. In this chapter, we examine a final achievement gap: the global-American achievement gap.

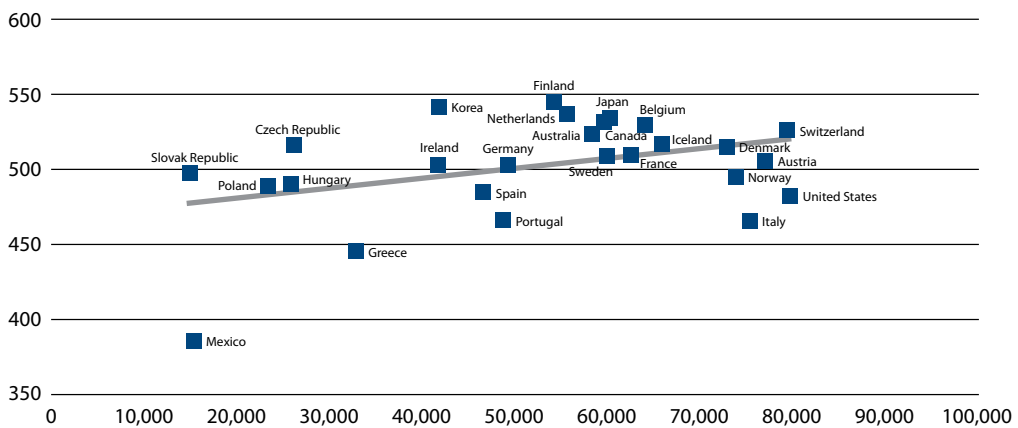
Like progress on economic and ethnic achievement gaps, available evidence suggests that Americans are failing, overall, to close the global achievement gap. Similar to the pattern seen with economic and racial achievement gaps, however, the data clearly demonstrate that some states have made far more progress in closing the global achievement gap than others.

Currently, America rests on the high end of the spending scale but on the low end of achievement. Figure 1 shows cumulative per-pupil spending for ages 6 through 15 by mathematics performance on

the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA), administered by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). A large number of countries, including the Czech Republic, Hungary, Ireland, South Korea, Poland, and Slovakia achieve higher levels in mathematics than the United States, while spending *less than half* of the dollar amount the United States spends per pupil.

Martin West of Brown University and Ludger Woessmann from the University of Munich statistically studied variations in PISA math, science, and reading scores and also cost per pupil. West and Woessmann noted that private school attendance rates vary widely among countries and found rates for private school attendance as high as 75 percent in the Netherlands. Belgium, Ireland, and South Korea had more than one-half of students attending privately operated schools.

Figure 1 | Relationship Between Performance in Mathematics and Cumulative Expenditure on Educational Institutions Per Student Between the Ages of 6 and 15 Years, in U.S. Dollars, Converted Using Purchasing Power Parities (PPPs)
(Source: OECD)



Greece, Iceland, Italy, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Sweden, and Turkey have just below 5 percent of students attending privately run schools. Note that in Figure 1, Italy and Norway are the nations closest to the United States in the combined high-cost/low-achievement zone. Slightly more than 6 percent of American 15-year-olds sampled by the PISA data used by West and Woessmann attend private schools.

They found a robust relationship between PISA reading, math, and science scores related to private school attendance after statistically controlling for a variety of other factors. The authors also found a statistically significant relationship between the rate of private school attendance and cost per pupil. Specifically, the authors found that a 10 percent increase in the number of students attending privately run schools is associated with more than a 5 percent decrease in per-pupil costs.^{xliii}

The relatively low rate of students attending privately run schools seems to help explain U.S. costs and academic problems, but it is hardly the only explanation. Poland, for instance, has a similar percentage of students attending public schools, spends a fraction of what we do in America, and scores better achievement results. One should infer from this that the United States should seek improvement from any and all reasonable strategies. As we will see, the United States performs below the OECD average and has been improving at only an average rate. Absent serious intervention, American students will suffer from a global achievement gap indefinitely.

This chapter examines the global achievement gap both in terms of spending and achievement. We examine how the United States finds itself so high on the spending side compared to other countries, then we will examine both the national rate of progress over time in the United States vis-à-vis other nations, and finally we examine the rates of state progress over time in international context.

AMERICAN K–12 COSTS GREW FAR FASTER THAN ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

Figure 1 shows that the United States spends like wealthy Switzerland but scores worse than much lower spending nations of the former Soviet bloc. American schooling costs, in fact, have

been notably defying a trend for goods and services to become less expensive and of higher quality. In short, in a world full of improved quality and efficiency, American K–12 scores stick out like a sore thumb.

American Enterprise Institute economist Mark J. Perry recently took a page out of a 1964 Sears catalog showing the image and price of a television set, which cost, at the time, \$749. Those old enough to be around when those televisions were in use will recall them as large wooden pieces of furniture with about 12 channels and no remote control. Adjusting for inflation, Perry found the cost of that television to be the equivalent of \$5,300 in 2010 dollars.

He then posed the question as to what electronics one could buy today for the equivalent of the 1964 television set. For starters, you could buy a far superior flat-screen television with a practically unlimited number of channels and a remote control for about \$700 in 2010 and have \$4,600 left over.

Perry then found that you could use the remaining \$4,600 to buy 16 other electronic products in addition to the vastly superior television set, including a washer, dryer, refrigerator, separate freezer, microwave oven, smart phone, global positioning system, digital camera, and Blu-ray Disc player. Most of those products were unavailable at any price in 1964, but today they are not only available, they are getting less expensive to buy.^{xliiv}

The phenomenon of products and services improving in quality and cost exists outside of electronics, as shown in Figure 1. Citing Bureau of Economic Analysis figures, Perry notes that the percentage of personal consumption expenditures going to buy food, cars, clothing, and household furnishings had dropped to about 16 percent in 2010, from about 45 percent in 1950.^{xliv}

Progress, in terms of cost and quality, represents a defining characteristic of modern life. American education, however, has failed to keep pace and, as we will demonstrate, has moved in precisely the opposite direction on the cost side of the ledger.

Education is a labor-intensive activity—just as agriculture once was. Unlike agriculture, which has grown enormously more efficient in recent decades, American educators have failed

to make the key transition seen in agriculture and other fields—a successful substitution of technology for labor. If the soil were still plowed by a mule, Americans would have less food and much higher food prices. The United States expenditures on food as a share of disposable income declined from about 24 percent in 1929 to a mere 9.4 percent in 2010.^{xlvi} Instead, Figure 3 shows that the percentage of food expenditures as a share of disposable income has declined for decades.

We hasten to note that, while experiments are ongoing with regards to school models that blend technology and labor, the search for highly productive models shows promise but remains in an early stage.^{xlvii} A correct understanding of the past requires recognition of the fact that the labor-intensive, basic model of schooling left itself vulnerable to a natural form of cost increase, which has been greatly enhanced by politics.

AMERICAN K–12 AND “BAUMOL’S” DISEASE

American education has suffered from what scholars call “Baumol’s” cost disease. Paul Hill and Marguerite Roza, of the Center on Reinventing Public Education at the University of Washington, explained it in 2010:

In fact, nearly all schools look much the same today as they did fifty years ago. Even after waves of reform, including class-size reductions, new curricula, the introduction of forms of school choice, and the implementation of standards and accountability mechanisms through No Child Left Behind (NCLB), the basic structure of education is unchanged. Despite huge advances in computing and communications in other sectors, the core technology of education has remained virtually intact: schools are dominated by a cadre of teachers who guide a group of same-aged children through curricula delivered in nine-month segments. Schools are highly labor intensive and getting more so, due to pressures for class size reduction and increasing use of specialist teachers. Yet, on average, schools are producing at best only slightly better results than at earlier times; thus, given increased costs, they are literally becoming less productive.

Hill and Roza then explained what they see as the cause for this decline in productivity:

Is this inevitable? Some claim so, due to Baumol’s disease: the tendency of labor-intensive organizations to become more expensive over time but not any more productive. In the 1960s, economist William Baumol observed that productivity (defined as the quantity of product per dollar expended) in the labor-intensive services sector lags behind manufacturing. Because labor-intensive services must compete with other parts of the economy for workers, yet cannot cut staffing without reducing output, costs rise constantly. This phenomenon of rising costs without commensurate increases in output has been labeled Baumol’s cost disease.

Baumol’s prime exemplar was the string quartet, which produces the same music from the time it is first assembled until the players all retire, yet experiences higher costs as the players receive salary increases to keep up with the wages earned by others. There are compelling indicators that K–12 education suffers from the same disease. The combination of rising costs and stagnant productivity are major problems in an environment where many children are not learning the skills they need, and education is now not likely to receive sustained increases in public funding.^{xlviii}

The hiring of teachers and administrators costs more on a per-employee basis, but this is only part of the story. The major driver of costs

Figure 2 | Pupils per Employee in the Public School System

(Source: Digest of Education Statistics)

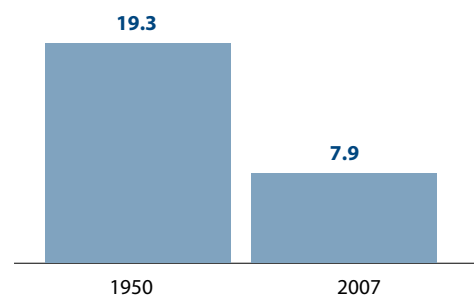
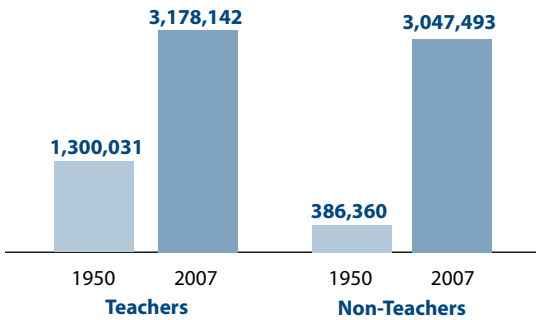


Figure 3 | Teachers and Non-Teachers in the American Public School System, 1950 and 2007
(Source: Digest of Education Statistics)



in the American public school system owes to a vast increase in the number of public school employees per pupil. Data on school staffing and student performance from the National Center on Education Statistics illustrate the phenomenon in Figure 2.

The most striking thing about the change in staffing ratios shown in Figure 3 has been the truly mind-boggling increase in the number of non-teachers in the American public school system. In 1950, teachers outnumbered non-teachers by

more than 3-to-1. In 2007, non-teaching employees had nearly closed the gap with teachers in the public school system, despite a vast increase in the number of teachers.

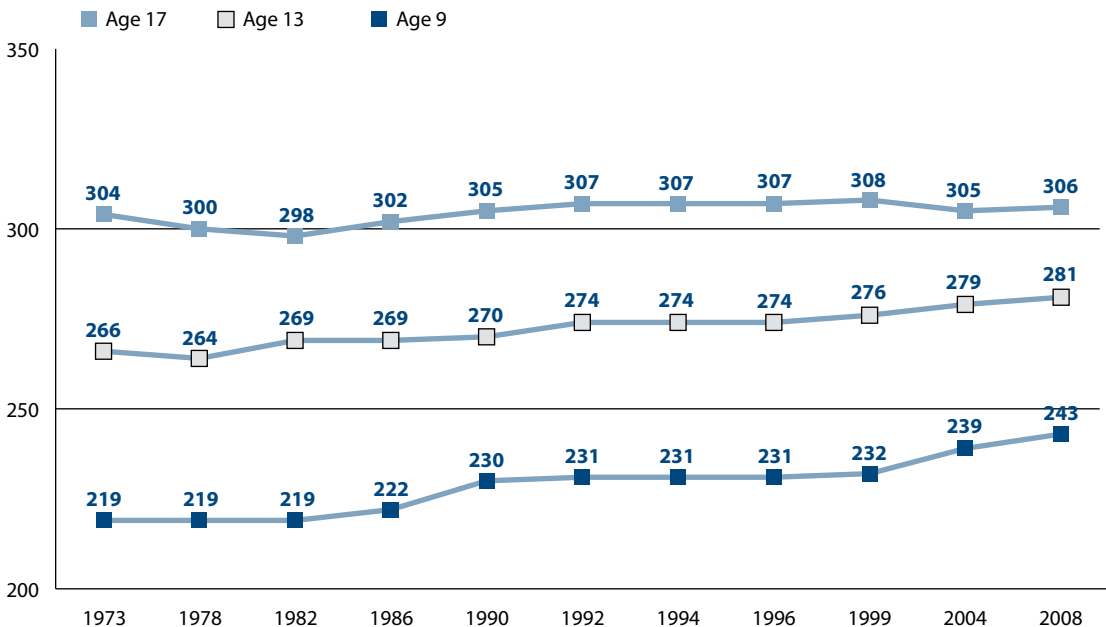
American schools have unremarkable teacher-to-pupil ratios when compared to other OECD nations. Several OECD nations get better PISA scores with higher pupil-per-teacher ratios (most notably South Korea) but are near OECD averages for both primary and secondary education.

This vast increase in spending and staffing may have been worthwhile had it resulted in vastly improved student learning in American schools. Sadly, this didn't happen.

During the period of 1973-2008, we saw only very small academic gains for students. Figure 4 is the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) long-term Mathematics trend data. Notice that 17-year-olds—students at the cusp of graduation—show a two-point gain on a 500 scale point test since 1973. This minuscule gain comes despite a vast increase in spending and staffing. The NAEP shows similarly small gains for 17-year-old students in reading.

The data make it abundantly clear why American schools spend on the high side in relation to other nations in Figure 1. We have vastly

Figure 4 | Long-Term Trend NAEP Math Scores, 1973-2008



increased the amount of spending and staffing per pupil—especially among non-teachers. We sit on the low end in terms of achievement because this vast increase in staffing did not result in strong levels of academic growth for the nation as a whole.

Financial statistics from the OECD, however, put America's Baumol experience into perspective: Teacher salary spending per student in the United States is remarkably close to the OECD average. America's total cost per student, however, is firmly on the far upper end of the OECD scale, behind only tiny Luxembourg. Although a number of reasons doubtlessly contribute to this explanation, Figure 3 points straight to the elephant in the room: the vast increase in non-teaching staff in the American public school system.^{xlix}

Why did this happen? The complete answer to that lies outside the scope of this book, aside from saying it happened because it *could*. The public school system operates under multiple layers of democratic control and influence, starting at the local district level, going up to the state, and ultimately the federal government. One can imagine confronting officials from all three levels of governance simply to have them all point fingers at the other two classes of officials and claim: "They did it!"

U.S. public education, in short, is a high-spending and underachieving mess. For now, however, we must keep our focus on academic achievement, as the problem is not equally distributed. American states vary widely in terms of academic achievement and academic gains. No American state reaches the very top ranks of global achievement, but the achievement problem is far worse in some states than in others, as we will examine.

STATE ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT IN INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

A team of academics from Harvard, Stanford, and the University of Munich employed an equating procedure to allow comparisons between state academic achievement on the NAEP and national performance on the PISA.

Figure 5 shows that the United States as a nation scored 32nd overall in eighth-grade mathematics, but there was also a substantial amount of variation in achievement among American states.

The information conveyed in Figure 5 is not uniformly bad news. Unfortunately, a close examination of the mathematics achievement data shows that only the most demographically unrepresentative states (wealthy and predominantly white) achieve at respectable international levels. Kansas, Massachusetts, Minnesota, North Dakota, and Vermont all score about as well or better than most Western European countries. Given the wealth, spending, and nationally unrepresentative demographic profile of these states, however, it would be alarming if they did not achieve at least such status.

Note, however, that West Virginia scores barely above Turkey, while Mississippi shows a level of proficiency similar to Uruguay. Thailand and Mexico bookend District of Columbia scores—despite student spending at almost \$30,000 per pupil in Washington, D.C.^l Mexico, on the other hand, spends less than \$2,500 per pupil to achieve a similar level in eighth-grade mathematics. Mexico, moreover, would be happy to swap poverty problems with the District of Columbia.^{li} And Mexico also has about twice as many students per teacher in primary education as the American average.^{lii}

Figure 6 presents international reading achievement data, along with American state reading levels.

Notice that the American states either above or near the U.S. average are among the most demographically advantaged: All have predominantly white student bodies, with many relatively wealthy compared to the U.S. average. (This is even more pronounced if compared to the OECD average for family incomes.) There is no room for complacency in these charts, even at the high end of achievement. Massachusetts, for instance, scores highest in both mathematics and reading achievement, which is great. Given that Massachusetts vastly outspends the countries that perform better and has an average family of four income in the six-figures, leads one to ask: Shouldn't Massachusetts beat a country like South Korea or Finland by a wide margin?

The shameful failure of America to educate minority students anywhere close to an internationally decent education level looms large in the patterns displayed in figures 5 and 6. As we noted in Chapter 2, an equating study performed

Figure 5 | State Mathematics Performance in International Perspective: PISA and NAEP Equated, Percent of Students Proficient

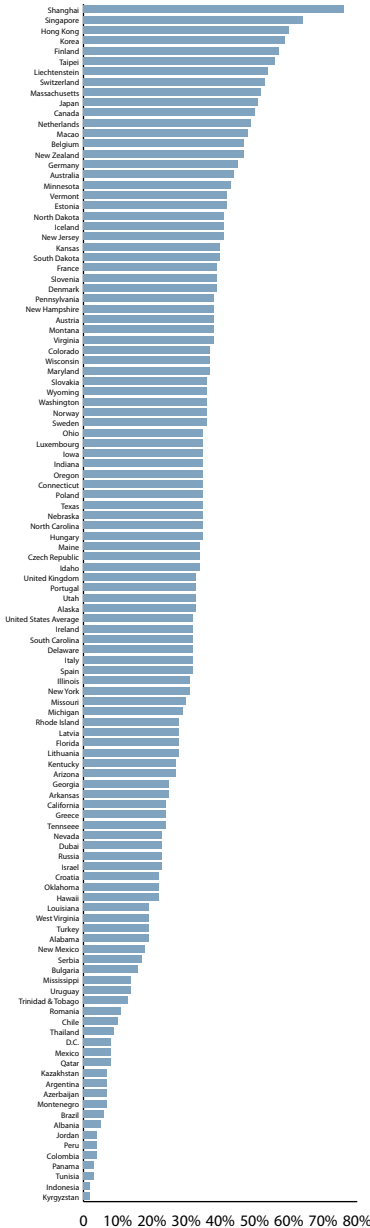
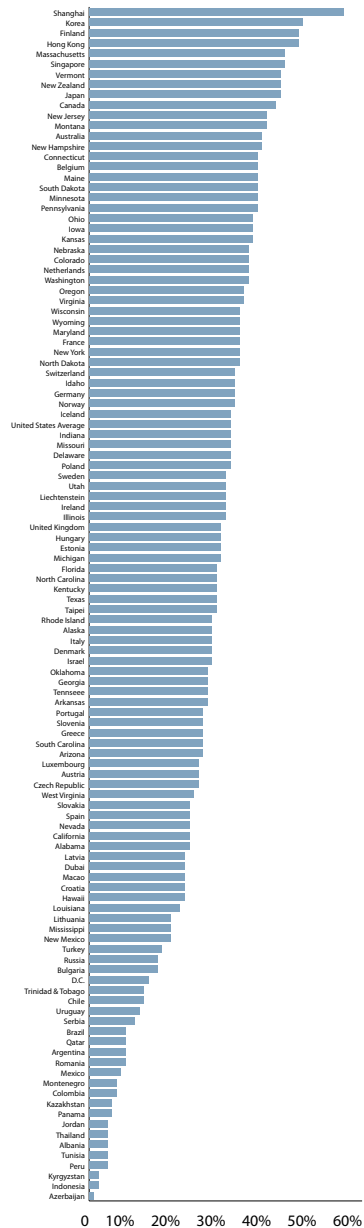


Figure 6 | State Reading Performance in International Perspective: PISA and NAEP Equated, Percent of Students Proficient

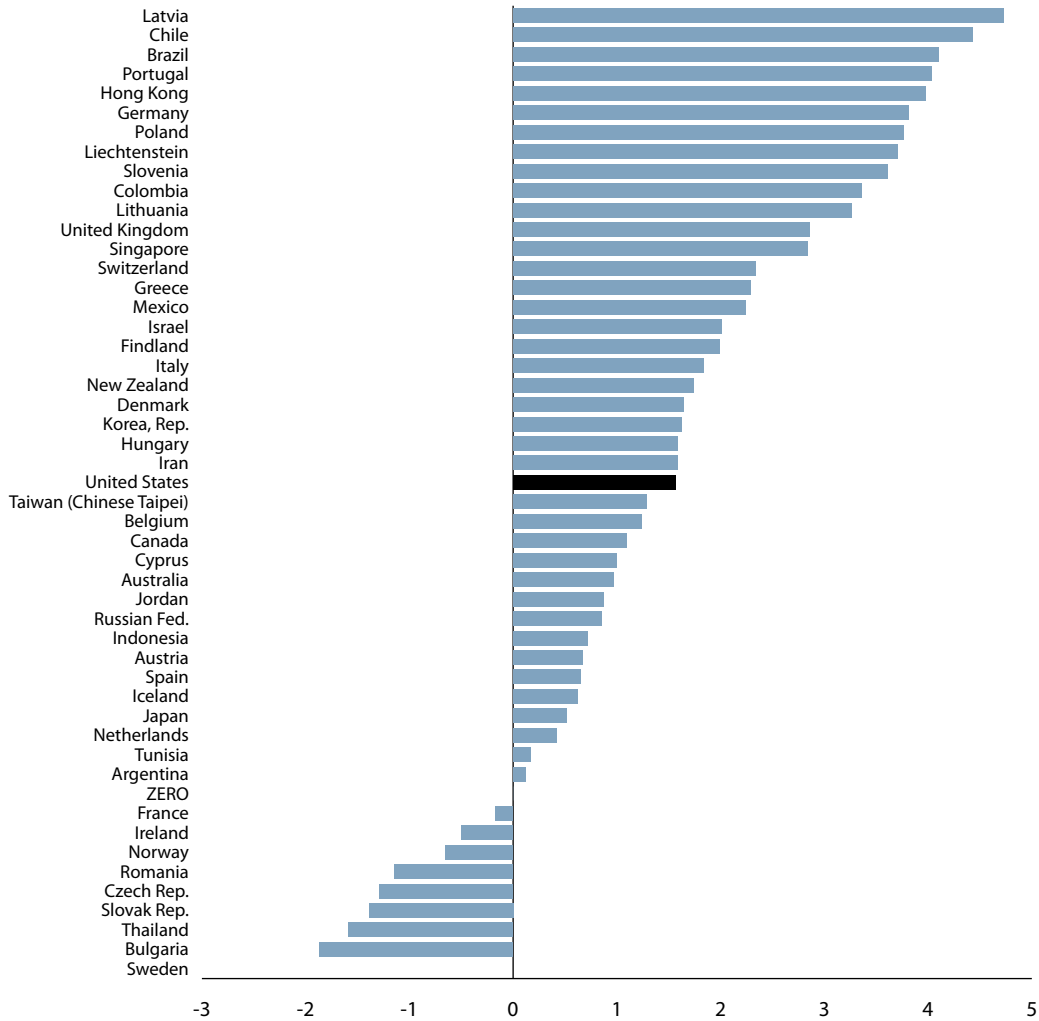


by the U.S. Department of Education with PISA and NAEP data shows levels of academic achievement for American black and Hispanic students comparable to the average in Mexico. School superintendents in Mexico would gladly exchange funding levels and/or poverty problems with any American jurisdiction.

STATE ACADEMIC GAINS IN INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

Writing for the Harvard Program on Education Policy and Governance, researchers Eric Hanushek, from Stanford, Ludger Woessmann, from the University of Munich, and Harvard political scientist Paul Peterson published

Figure 7 | American Academic Progress is Only Average
 (Source: Hanushek, Woessmann and Peterson)



Achievement Growth: International and U.S. State Trends in Student Performance in 2012. This team measured the academic progress of American states versus other countries by using comparisons between the NAEP and the PISA, administered by the OECD.^{liii}

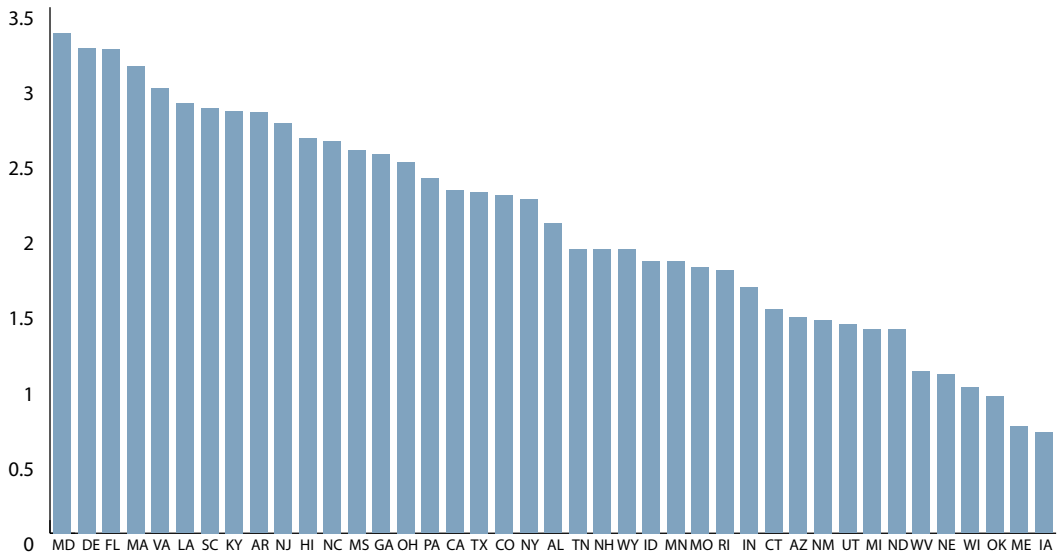
The authors focused their analysis on fourth-grade reading, finding that the United States is making progress only at the international average for nations participating in PISA. The United States, in fact, is making gains at less than half the pace of Latvia and Chile, who lead the pack despite spending a mere fraction per pupil of what American schools receive. The current rate of American progress is not fast enough to close the gap with the highest performing nations.^{liv}

The authors, however, found enormous variations in the rate of progress among American states. Figure 8 shows that the slowest gaining state, Iowa, had gains approximately one-sixth the size of leaders Maryland and Florida.

They also examined trends in mathematics progress among states based upon the amount of inflation-adjusted per-pupil spending increases seen during this period. Although the authors avoid noting that, they fail to find a relationship between spending and academic progress, Figure 4 conveys much more beyond that.

First, note the context provided by the charts when considering Figure 1, The United States is a nation with *low* international scores, *very high* spending by international standards, and *average*

Figure 8 | States Vary Considerably in Academic Gains on NAEP, 1992-2011
(Source: Hanushek, Woessmann and Peterson)



academic gains. Therefore, as a policymaker, you want to be well above the American average for progress. After all, if Latvia and Chile can do it, why can't we?

Second, note that the size of some of the per-pupil increases in American states comfortably exceeds the total amount spent per pupil in a great many nations measured on the PISA. New York and Wyoming, for instance, increased per-pupil spending by \$6,000 from 1990 to 2009 in real dollars. This increase is well above twice the 2008 total spending per pupil of OECD members Chile and Mexico (\$2,635 per pupil in Chile, \$2,284 in Mexico) and approximately equal to the total per-pupil spending in the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Israel. The *total* per-pupil spending in high-spending states like New York and Wyoming simply dwarfs spending in most OECD nations. For 2009, the U.S. Census Bureau put total per-pupil spending at \$20,480 in New York and \$19,510 in Wyoming.

The top four states in terms of NAEP gains in Figure 9 are (in order): Maryland, Florida, Delaware, and Massachusetts.^{lv} Take note of the per-pupil increase in spending for each state: Maryland (\$4,500), Florida (\$1,000), Delaware (\$3,000), and Massachusetts (\$5,000). Florida clearly achieves the biggest bang for the buck, while simultaneously holding the lowest increase

in spending and notching the second largest overall gain.

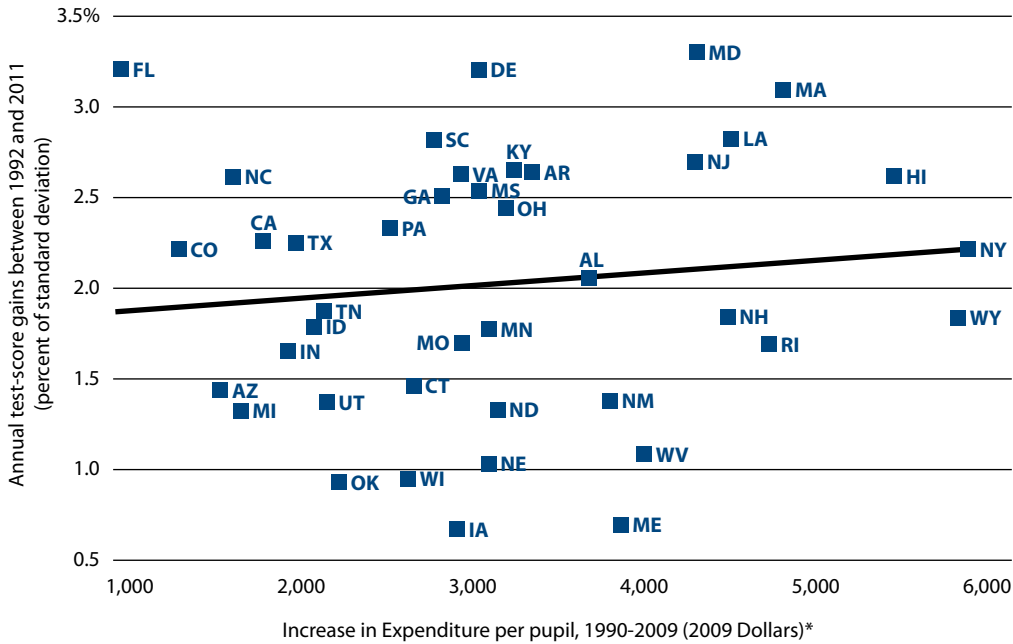
New York and Wyoming, meanwhile, tie for the largest increase in per-pupil spending and realize only average and below-average academic gains, respectively. A number of states, in fact, exceeded the national average in terms of increased spending, while underperforming the (modest) national average of improvement, including Minnesota, North Dakota, Nebraska, New Mexico, West Virginia, Maine, New Hampshire, and Rhode Island, in addition to New York and Wyoming.

CONCLUSION: DEEPER REFORMS ARE NEEDED TO CLOSE THE GLOBAL ACHIEVEMENT GAP

Former Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and former Chancellor of New York City Schools Joel Klein—a Republican and a Democrat, respectively—led a team that produced a report for the Council on Foreign Relations in March 2012 and pulled no punches in describing the dire nature of America's education crisis.^{lvi} The bipartisan report notes that:

- *More than 25 percent of students fail to graduate from high school in four years; for African-American and Hispanic students, this number is approaching 40 percent.*

Figure 9 | State Improvement on NAEP and Real Increase in Spending per Pupil, 1990-2011



* Expenditure increments are adjusted for inflation

- In civics, only a quarter of U.S. students are proficient or better on the National Assessment of Educational Progress.
- Although the United States is a nation of immigrants, roughly eight in ten Americans speak only English and a decreasing number of schools are teaching foreign languages.
- A recent report by ACT, the not-for-profit testing organization, found that only 22 percent of U.S. high school students met “college ready” standards in all of their core subjects; these figures are even lower for African-American and Hispanic students.
- The College Board reported that even among college-bound seniors, only 43 percent met college-ready standards, meaning that more college students need to take remedial courses.^{lvii}

Rice and Klein sounded the alarm on America’s underperforming schools loud and clear:

It is not hyperbole to say that the state of education in our country is a challenge to our national security. Human capital has never been more important for success in our increasingly competitive world economy. Yet, although the

United States invests more in education than almost any other developed nation, its students rank in the middle of the pack in reading and toward the bottom in math and science. On average, U.S. students have fallen behind peers in Korea and China, Poland and Canada and New Zealand. This puts us on a trajectory toward massive failure.

Our schools simply must do better. It is essential, too, that we provide a base of knowledge for our students in order to produce citizens who can serve in the Foreign Service, the intelligence community and the armed forces. The State Department is struggling to recruit enough foreign language speakers, U.S. generals are cautioning that enlistees cannot read training manuals for sophisticated equipment, and a report from the XVIII Airborne Corps in Iraq found that out of 250 intelligence personnel, fewer than five had the “aptitude to put pieces together to form a conclusion.”

Finally, we must also foster a deeper understanding of America’s core institutions and values. Successfully educating our young people

about our country, its governmental institutions and values—what is sometimes called “civics”—is crucial to our coherence as a population and for informed citizenry.^{lviii}

The United States suffers from a costly and ineffective system of K–12 schooling—a disadvantage that we can scarcely afford in an increasingly competitive world. A small handful of the wealthiest states do reasonably well in international comparisons, but not one is a world contender.

Florida, a racially diverse state that spends less than the national average, has exceeded the national educational improvement rate by approximately 50 percent since the early 1990s. The most reform-minded state during this period, it remains a modest performer in international comparisons, despite its faster rate of

improvement. However, if the rest of the nation had improved at the same rate as the highest growth states, the global achievement gap would have narrowed measurably during the past two decades.

Instead, the United States made only average academic improvement, despite high levels of spending. The current pace keeps the global achievement gap firmly in place. Rice and Klein sounded a bipartisan call for greater reform: higher academic standards, greater educational choice, and greater transparency and accountability.

ALEC and many other reform-minded groups share these priorities. The weight of international data draws one to the conclusion that the boldest state reform efforts taken to date should be viewed as a floor for future efforts, not the ceiling that it serves as today.

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TABLE 3 | Ranking States by Achievement and Gains of Free and Reduced-Price Lunch-Eligible General Population Students on the NAEP 4th- and 8th-Grade Reading and Math Exams, 2003-2011

Rank	Jurisdiction
1	Massachusetts
2	Vermont
3	New Jersey
4	Colorado
5	Pennsylvania
6	Rhode Island
7	North Carolina
8	Kansas
9	New Hampshire
10	New York
11	Texas
12	Florida
13	Hawaii
14	Maine
15	Nevada
16	Montana
17	Indiana
18	Minnesota
19	Wisconsin
20	Maryland
21	Ohio
22	Delaware
23	Wyoming
24	District of Columbia
25	Washington
26	Virginia
27	Georgia
28	Illinois
29	Idaho
30	California
31	Iowa
32	Alaska
33	North Dakota
34	Alabama
35	New Mexico
36	Arizona
37	Kentucky
38	South Dakota
39	Connecticut
40	Oregon
41	Utah
42	Nebraska
43	Oklahoma
44	Tennessee
45	Arkansas
46	Michigan
47	Missouri
48	Mississippi
49	Louisiana
50	South Carolina
51	West Virginia

TABLE 4 | State Education Policy Grades

Grade	Jurisdiction	Numeric Score
B+	Indiana	3.49
B+	Arizona	3.19
B+	Oklahoma	3.17
B	Florida	3.11
B	Ohio	2.98
B	Louisiana	2.88
B-	Michigan	2.81
B-	Wisconsin	2.77
B-	Utah	2.76
B-	Georgia	2.73
B-	Pennsylvania	2.66
B-	District of Columbia	2.58
B-	Idaho	2.52
C+	Minnesota	2.36
C+	Texas	2.27
C+	Colorado	2.24
C+	California	2.20
C+	Nevada	2.18
C	Tennessee	2.14
C	New Mexico	2.10
C	North Carolina	2.07
C	Illinois	2.02
C	South Carolina	2.00
C	New Hampshire	1.98
C	Wyoming	1.98
C	Missouri	1.93
C	New Jersey	1.92
C	Massachusetts	1.88
C	Arkansas	1.88
C	Iowa	1.86
C	Oregon	1.85
C	Delaware	1.84
C-	Maine	1.81
C-	Connecticut	1.77
C-	Mississippi	1.75
C-	Kansas	1.71
C-	Virginia	1.70
C-	New York	1.66
C-	Hawaii	1.65
C-	Washington	1.60
C-	Alaska	1.59
D+	Alabama	1.48
D+	Rhode Island	1.48
D+	Vermont	1.45
D+	Kentucky	1.42
D+	Maryland	1.42
D+	West Virginia	1.24
D+	South Dakota	1.21
D	Montana	1.17
D	North Dakota	1.00
D	Nebraska	0.85

TABLE 5 | 2011 NAEP Scores for Low-Income Students

(Non-IEP, Non-ELL) Average scores (0-500) and rank (1-51)

Jurisdiction	4th-Grade Reading Score	Rank	4th-Grade Math Score	Rank	8th-Grade Reading Score	Rank	8th-Grade Math Score	Rank
Alabama	214	35	226	49	254	46	262	50
Alaska	213	40	235	33	259	33	283	14
Arizona	213	39	234	37	255	43	273	38
Arkansas	215	34	234	35	257	39	275	33
California	212	42	234	39	256	41	272	41
Colorado	222	7	241	8	264	11	283	12
Connecticut	216	31	230	44	263	13	271	43
Delaware	219	16	236	27	262	20	277	25
District of Columbia	199	51	218	51	244	51	260	51
Florida	223	4	237	22	260	27	273	39
Georgia	213	38	231	41	256	42	271	42
Hawaii	212	44	238	21	257	38	279	18
Idaho	220	15	237	24	265	7	282	16
Illinois	213	41	230	45	261	26	276	30
Indiana	219	19	238	17	261	23	278	22
Iowa	218	24	240	9	264	10	279	19
Kansas	222	8	243	5	263	15	284	9
Kentucky	217	25	235	32	262	18	274	35
Louisiana	210	47	228	46	252	49	270	45
Maine	220	10	243	4	267	5	286	5
Maryland	217	27	235	34	255	44	270	47
Massachusetts	226	1	247	2	267	4	290	1
Michigan	211	45	227	48	258	35	270	44
Minnesota	218	23	243	6	265	6	285	8
Mississippi	206	50	225	50	249	50	262	49
Missouri	214	37	234	40	262	19	274	37
Montana	220	14	239	11	269	2	289	2
National Public	216		235		259		276	
Nebraska	219	17	234	38	263	16	275	34
Nevada	214	36	235	30	257	36	275	31
New Hampshire	225	2	247	1	265	8	286	7
New Jersey	220	12	239	15	261	22	284	10
New Mexico	210	46	234	36	257	37	275	32
New York	222	6	237	25	264	9	278	24
North Carolina	218	21	239	13	259	30	280	17
North Dakota	220	9	239	16	261	24	283	11
Ohio	216	32	238	19	260	29	279	21
Oklahoma	217	26	235	31	261	25	274	36
Oregon	219	18	236	28	262	17	279	20
Pennsylvania	220	13	237	23	259	31	276	29
Rhode Island	220	11	238	18	260	28	277	28
South Carolina	210	48	231	42	253	48	272	40
South Dakota	216	30	236	26	264	12	283	13
Tennessee	209	49	228	47	253	47	266	48
Texas	215	33	239	12	258	34	286	4
Utah	218	20	239	10	261	21	277	26
Vermont	224	3	245	3	271	1	288	3
Virginia	216	29	235	29	257	40	277	27
Washington	218	22	239	14	263	14	283	15
West Virginia	212	43	231	43	255	45	270	46
Wisconsin	216	28	238	20	259	32	278	23
Wyoming	222	5	242	7	267	3	286	6

TABLE 6 | Change in NAEP Scores for Low-Income Students from 2003 to 2011

(Non-IEP, Non-ELL) Average scores (0-500) and rank (1-51)

Jurisdiction	Change in 4th-Grade Reading Scores	Improvement Rank	Change in 4th-Grade Math Scores	Improvement Rank
Alabama	14.4	3	8.8	25
Alaska	5.7	26	5.3	43
Arizona	8.7	15	9.7	18
Arkansas	4.7	32	8.8	27
California	11.2	7	9.9	17
Colorado	5.2	29	13.9	5
Connecticut	5.3	28	7.1	35
Delaware	5.5	27	7.6	33
District of Columbia	12.6	5	14.8	4
Florida	10.2	8	9.7	20
Georgia	9.1	13	8.9	23
Hawaii	6.0	25	15.6	3
Idaho	2.8	42	4.2	45
Illinois	6.7	23	8.8	24
Indiana	8.5	16	9.9	16
Iowa	2.1	44	6.2	39
Kansas	9.7	10	8.3	30
Kentucky	5.0	31	11.3	12
Louisiana	8.4	17	4.4	44
Maine	1.4	46	9.7	19
Maryland	14.7	2	16.9	1
Massachusetts	9.6	11	15.9	2
Michigan	7.3	20	6.1	40
Minnesota	1.1	48	10.5	15
Mississippi	8.4	18	8.6	28
Missouri	2.3	43	7.1	34
Montana	4.4	35	6.3	38
National public	7.9		9.0	
Nebraska	4.3	36	5.4	42
Nevada	12.7	4	12.3	8
New Hampshire	7.0	21	10.9	14
New Jersey	12.3	6	12.4	7
New Mexico	3.6	40	9.0	21
New York	10.1	9	7.6	32
North Carolina	7.9	19	7.9	31
North Dakota	3.3	41	3.7	47
Ohio	5.2	30	11.6	11
Oklahoma	4.2	38	8.6	29
Oregon	4.6	34	1.2	51
Pennsylvania	15.3	1	13.6	6
Rhode Island	9.3	12	12.3	9
South Carolina	4.2	37	2.7	49
South Dakota	-1.5	50	3.2	48
Tennessee	6.8	22	8.9	22
Texas	4.6	33	6.0	41
Utah	-0.7	49	6.4	37
Vermont	6.1	24	11.9	10
Virginia	9.1	14	8.8	26
Washington	1.7	45	7.1	36
West Virginia	-2.3	51	1.8	50
Wisconsin	3.9	39	10.9	13
Wyoming	1.3	47	3.8	46

Jurisdiction	Change in 8th-Grade Reading Scores	Improvement Rank	Change in 8th-Grade Math Scores	Improvement Rank
Alabama	5.6	22	7.6	31
Alaska	6.7	9	9.7	23
Arizona	3.4	32	7.5	32
Arkansas	0.4	48	8.8	26
California	3.6	30	9.7	22
Colorado	6.6	10	13.5	9
Connecticut	11.1	2	4.0	44
Delaware	5.4	23	10.1	21
District of Columbia	7.4	7	19.7	2
Florida	6.2	19	8.1	29
Georgia	6.1	20	13.9	6
Hawaii	6.2	18	16.6	4
Idaho	1.6	44	5.3	41
Illinois	6.5	11	12.0	15
Indiana	5.1	24	5.8	39
Iowa	3.2	33	2.9	47
Kansas	3.0	36	7.7	30
Kentucky	1.7	43	7.0	35
Louisiana	3.1	34	8.6	27
Maine	2.3	38	12.0	13
Maryland	6.3	16	9.0	24
Massachusetts	6.7	8	20.5	1
Michigan	7.5	6	7.5	33
Minnesota	8.2	4	3.7	45
Mississippi	1.3	45	10.4	19
Missouri	3.7	29	4.4	42
Montana	4.5	25	7.4	34
National public	4.9		10.1	
Nebraska	2.3	39	3.1	46
Nevada	7.9	5	12.6	10
New Hampshire	0.6	46	8.1	28
New Jersey	5.7	21	18.7	3
New Mexico	6.3	15	11.8	16
New York	6.4	12	6.7	36
North Carolina	8.3	3	11.0	17
North Dakota	-4.9	50	-0.4	51
Ohio	4.3	26	10.6	18
Oklahoma	1.8	41	6.5	37
Oregon	0.5	47	4.2	43
Pennsylvania	4.0	27	12.0	14
Rhode Island	6.3	14	13.8	7
South Carolina	2.9	37	6.2	38
South Dakota	-4.9	51	2.7	48
Tennessee	3.7	28	10.3	20
Texas	6.3	17	15.5	5
Utah	1.9	40	1.9	49
Vermont	11.5	1	13.6	8
Virginia	1.8	42	12.1	12
Washington	3.6	31	8.8	25
West Virginia	-1.9	49	1.3	50
Wisconsin	6.4	13	12.6	11
Wyoming	3.0	35	5.6	40

TABLE 7 | Education Policy Grade Components

Jurisdiction	State Academic Standards		Charter School Law	Charter School Grade	Home-school Regulation Burden	Private School Choice	"A" Grade or Multiple Programs
	English and Language Arts	Mathematics					
Alabama	B+	A-	No		B		
Alaska	F	D	Yes	D	A		
Arizona	B+	A-	Yes	A	B	Yes	A
Arkansas	B+	A-	Yes	D	C		
California	B+	A-	Yes	B	B		
Colorado	B+	A-	Yes	B	C		
Connecticut	B+	A-	Yes	D	A		
Delaware	B+	A-	Yes	C	B		
District of Columbia	B+	A-	Yes	A	C		D
Florida	B+	A-	Yes	B	C	Yes	B
Georgia	B+	A-	Yes	C	C	Yes	B
Hawaii	B+	A-	Yes	D	C		
Idaho	B+	A-	Yes	B	A		
Illinois	B+	A-	Yes	C	A		
Indiana	B+	A-	Yes	A	A	Yes	B
Iowa	B+	A-	Yes	F	C		C
Kansas	B+	A-	Yes	F	B		
Kentucky	B+	A-	No		B		
Louisiana	B+	A-	Yes	B	C	Yes	A
Maine	B+	A-	Yes	C	C		C
Maryland	B+	A-	Yes	D	C		
Massachusetts	B+	A-	Yes	C	D		
Michigan	B+	A-	Yes	A	A		
Minnesota	B+	B	Yes	A	C		
Mississippi	B+	A-	Yes	F	B		C
Missouri	B+	A-	Yes	B	A		
Montana	B+	A-	No		B		
Nebraska	F	C	No		B		
Nevada	B+	A-	Yes	C	B		
New Hampshire	B+	A-	Yes	D	C		C
New Jersey	B+	A-	Yes	C	A		
New Mexico	B+	A-	Yes	C	B		
New York	B+	A-	Yes	B	D		
North Carolina	B+	A-	Yes	C	C		B
North Dakota	B+	A-	No		D		
Ohio	B+	A-	Yes	B	C	Yes	C
Oklahoma	B+	A-	Yes	C	A	Yes	B
Oregon	B+	A-	Yes	C	C		
Pennsylvania	B+	A-	Yes	B	D	Yes	C
Rhode Island	B+	A-	Yes	D	D		
South Carolina	B+	A-	Yes	C	C		
South Dakota	B+	A-	No		C		
Tennessee	B+	A-	Yes	C	C		
Texas	A-	C	Yes	C	A		
Utah	B+	A-	Yes	B	B		C
Vermont	B+	A-	No		D		B
Virginia	B+	C	Yes	F	C		D
Washington	B+	C	No		C		
West Virginia	B+	A-	No		C		
Wisconsin	B+	A-	Yes	C	B	Yes	C
Wyoming	B+	A-	Yes	D	B		

Jurisdiction	Overall Teacher Quality and Policies Grade	Multi-District Full-Time Online School	Digital learning Now! Report Card 2011
Alabama	C-	No	25
Alaska	D	Yes	37
Arizona	D+	Yes	47
Arkansas	C	Yes	27
California	D+	Yes	14
Colorado	C	Yes	33
Connecticut	C-	No	16
Delaware	C	No	20
District of Columbia	D	Yes	
Florida	B	Yes	41
Georgia	C	Yes	32
Hawaii	D-	Yes	27
Idaho	D+	Yes	46
Illinois	C	No	23
Indiana	C+	Yes	41
Iowa	D	Yes	24
Kansas	D	Yes	28
Kentucky	D+	No	25
Louisiana	C-	Yes	40
Maine	D-	No	25
Maryland	D+	No	24
Massachusetts	C	Yes	28
Michigan	C+	Yes	37
Minnesota	C-	Yes	47
Mississippi	D+	No	25
Missouri	D	No	39
Montana	F	No	18
Nebraska	D-	No	16
Nevada	C-	Yes	32
New Hampshire	D-	Yes	26
New Jersey	D+	No	24
New Mexico	D+	Yes	27
New York	C	No	16
North Carolina	D+	No	22
North Dakota	D	No	17
Ohio	C+	Yes	37
Oklahoma	B-	Yes	31
Oregon	D-	Yes	34
Pennsylvania	D+	Yes	41
Rhode Island	B-	No	25
South Carolina	C-	Yes	29
South Dakota	D	No	27
Tennessee	B-	Yes	25
Texas	C-	Yes	40
Utah	C-	Yes	49
Vermont	D-	No	20
Virginia	D+	Yes	44
Washington	C-	Yes	46
West Virginia	D+	No	21
Wisconsin	D	Yes	41
Wyoming	D	Yes	49

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Listed below are summaries for relevant pieces of ALEC model legislation. For more information on these or other bills, or for the full text of these bills, contact a staff member for ALEC's Education Task Force.

A-Plus Literacy Act

The *A-Plus Literacy Act* is inspired by a comprehensive set of K–12 reforms implemented by Florida lawmakers in 1999, and supplemented over the next decade. The chapters of this bill are: School and District Report Cards and Grades; School Recognition Program; Opportunity Scholarship Program; Special Needs Scholarship Program Act; Great Schools Tax Credit Program Act; Alternative Teacher Certification Act; Student Promotion to a Higher Grade; and School and Teacher Bonuses for Advanced Placement Exam Success.

Alternative Certification Act

Teacher quality is crucial to the improvement of instruction and student performance. However, certification requirements that correspond to state-approved education programs in most states prevent many individuals from entering the teaching profession. To obtain an education degree, students must often complete requirements in educational methods, theory, and style rather than in-depth study in a chosen subject area. Comprehensive alternative certification programs improve teacher quality by opening up the profession to well-educated, qualified, and mature individuals. States should enact alternative teacher certification programs to prepare persons with subject area expertise and life experience to become teachers through a demonstration of competency and a comprehensive mentoring program.

Autism Scholarship Act

The *Autism Scholarship Program Act* would create a scholarship program that provides students with autism the option to attend the public or private elementary or secondary school of their parents' choice.

Career Ladder Opportunities Act

The *Career Ladder Opportunity Act* requires school districts to adopt extraordinary performance pay plans for elementary and secondary public school teachers who demonstrate success in the classroom. The local school district must design the plan in consultation with teachers and administrators. Because reward systems in the past have often failed because of premature abandonment, the district must keep the plan for three years and make improvements on it when necessary.

Charter School Growth with Quality Act

The *Charter School Growth with Quality Act* intends to expand quality public education opportunities for all children by establishing a state public charter school commission to serve as an independent state-wide charter authorizer.

Education Savings Account Act

The *Education Savings Account Act* allows parents to use the funds that would have been allocated to their child at their resident school district for an education program of the parents' choosing.

Family Education Tax Credit Program Act

The *Family Education Tax Credit Program Act* would create a family education tax credit for payment of tuition, fees, and certain other educational expenses and a tax credit for individual and corporate contributions to organizations that provide educational scholarships to eligible students so they can attend the public or private schools of their parents' choice.

Foster Child Scholarship Program Act

The *Foster Child Scholarship Program Act* would create a scholarship program that provides children who have been placed in foster care the option to attend the public or private elementary or secondary school of their guardians' choice.

Great Schools Tax Credit Act

The *Great Schools Tax Credit Act* would authorize a tax credit for individual and corporate contributions to organizations that provide educational scholarships to eligible students so they can attend qualifying public or private schools of their parents' choice.

Great Teachers and Leaders Act

The *Great Teachers and Leaders Act* reforms the practice of tenure, known as nonprobationary status in some states. Teachers can earn tenure after 3 years of sufficient student academic growth; tenure is revocable following 2 consecutive years of insufficient growth. The Act requires principals to be evaluated annually with 50 percent of the evaluation based on student achievement and their ability to develop teachers in their buildings and increase their effectiveness. The Act eliminates the practice of forced teacher placement and replaces it with mutual consent hiring. The Act allows school districts to make reduction in force decisions based on teacher performance rather than on seniority.

Indiana Education Reform Package

The *Indiana Education Reform Package* is inspired by their comprehensive set of K–12 education reforms adopted by the Indiana Legislature in the spring of 2011 and signed by Gov. Mitch Daniels. This act incorporates several of the key reforms the Indiana Legislature passed, including Charter Schools Act, School Scholarships Act, Teacher Evaluations and Licensing Act, Teacher Collective Bargaining Act, Turnaround Academies Act, Early Graduation Scholarship Act, and Textbooks and Other Curricular Material Act.

Longitudinal Student Growth Act

The *Longitudinal Student Growth Act* would require the state department of education to implement a state data management system for collecting and reporting student assessment data and identifies the duties and responsibilities of the state department of education and the school districts in implementing the data management system. The legislation instructs the state board of education to adopt a mixed-effects statistical model to diagnostically calculate students' annual academic growth over the periods between the administration of the statewide assessments, based on the students' assessment scores. The legislation next requires the department to provide to each school district and each charter school an academic growth information report for each student enrolled in the school district or charter school, and requires the school district or charter school to adopt a policy for using the information in the report and communicating the information in the report to students and their parents.

Next Generation Charter Schools Act

The *Next Generation Charter Schools Act* recognizes charter schools are a necessity to improve the opportunities of all families and that charter schools serve a distinct purpose in supporting innovations and best practices that can be adopted among all public schools. Further, this act recognizes that there must be a variety of public institutions that can authorize the establishment of charter schools as defined by law, and recognizes that independent but publicly accountable multiple authorizing authorities, such as independent state commissions or universities, contribute to the health and growth of strong public charter schools. This act establishes that existing or new public entities may be created to approve and monitor charter schools in addition to public school district boards. This act also removes procedural and funding barriers to charter school success.

Online Learning Clearinghouse Act

The *Online Learning Clearinghouse Act* creates a clearinghouse through which school districts may offer their computer-based courses to students of other school districts.

Open Enrollment Act

The *Open Enrollment Act* stipulates that a student may, with the assistance of the state, attend any public school in the state. The legislation allows the parents of the student to apply for attendance in any nonresident school. The nonresident school district would advise the parent within an established time whether the application was accepted or rejected. The nonresident school district would be obligated to adopt standards for consideration of such applications. State aid follows the transferring student from the resident to the nonresident district. State funds are thus used to facilitate the expansion of educational choice available to the student and the parent.

Parent Trigger Act

The *Parent Trigger Act* places democratic control into the hands of parents at school level. Parents can, with a simple majority, opt to usher in one of three choice-based options of reform: (1) transforming their school into a charter school, (2) supplying students from that school with a 75 percent per pupil cost voucher, or (3) closing the school.

Parental Choice Scholarship Program Act

The *Parental Choice Scholarship Program Act* creates a scholarship program that provides all children the option to attend the public or private elementary or secondary school of their parents' choice.

Public School Financial Transparency Act

The *Public School Financial Transparency Act* would require each local education provider in the state to create and maintain a searchable expenditure and revenue Web site database that includes detailed data of revenues and expenditures. It also would require each local education provider to maintain the data in a format that is easily accessible, searchable, and downloadable.

Resolution Adopting the 10 Elements of High-Quality Digital Learning for K-12

This resolution adopts Digital Learning Now's 10 Elements of High-Quality Digital Learning. This states the 10 Elements should be incorporated as necessary through future legislation as well as immediate state regulation, strategic planning, guidelines and/or procedures on the part of the state education agency, local education agencies, and any other relevant public or private bodies.

Special Needs Scholarship Program Act

The *Special Needs Scholarship Program Act* creates a scholarship program that provides students with special needs the option to attend the public or private elementary or secondary school of their parents' choice.

Statewide Online Education Act

This *Statewide Online Education Act* creates a statewide program that provides high school students with access to online learning options regardless of where the student lives. The options are designed to be high quality and allow for maximized learning potential by focusing on student mastery of subject at their own pace and own time, instead of the traditional seat-time learning requirements.

Student-Centered Funding Act

The *Student-Centered Funding Act* would create a student-centered finance model based on a weighted student formula in which money “follows” a child to his or her school. Funds follow students to whichever public school they attend, both district and charter, which better ensures that funding can be more accurately adjusted to meet the real costs to schools of all sizes and locations of educating various students based on their unique characteristics. Parents, regardless of income or address, have a greater array of education options for their children based on their unique, individual needs.

Teacher Choice Compensation Act

The *Teacher Choice Compensation Act* would create a program where by teachers may be eligible for performance-based salary stipends if they opt out of their permanent contract and meet measurable student performance goals based on a value-added test instrument developed by the state department of education.

Teacher Quality and Recognition Demonstration Act

The need for quality teachers in improving student achievement is generally recognized as one of the most crucial elements of state reform efforts. A primary concern in the quality of the performance of teachers is the forecast for an increasing need for more teachers. This bill is directed toward creating a new structure of the current teaching system that will promote the retention and reward of good teachers and attract new talent to the profession. This bill establishes teacher quality demonstration projects wherein local education agencies are exempt from education rules and regulations regarding teacher certification, tenure, recruitment, and compensation, and are granted funding for the purpose of creating new models of teacher hiring, professional growth and development, compensation and recruitment.

Virtual Public Schools Act

The *Virtual Public Schools Act* would allow the use of computer- and Internet-based instruction for students in a virtual or remote setting.

Alliance for School Choicewww.allianceforschoolchoice.org

The Alliance for School Choice is a national leader in promoting school vouchers and scholarship tax credit programs. The Alliance works to improve K-12 education by advancing public policy that empowers parents, particularly those in low-income families, to choose the education they determine is best for their children.

American Board for Certification of Teacher Excellencewww.abcte.org

The American Board for Certification of Teacher Excellence recruits, prepares, certifies, and supports dedicated professionals to improve student achievement through quality teaching.

American Enterprise Institutewww.aei.org

The American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research is a private, nonpartisan, nonprofit institution dedicated to research and education on issues of government, politics, economics, and social welfare.

Black Alliance for Educational Optionswww.baeo.org

The Black Alliance for Educational Options works to increase access to high-quality educational options for Black children by actively supporting parental choice policies and programs that empower low-income and working-class Black families.

Cato Institutewww.cato.org

The Cato Institute's education research is founded on the principle that parents are best suited to make important decisions regarding the care and education of their children. Cato's researchers seek to shift the terms of public debate in favor of the fundamental right of parents.

Center for Digital Educationwww.centerdigitaled.com

The Center for Digital Education is a resource on K-12 and higher education technologies. The Center provides dynamic and diverse opportunities for private- and public-sector leaders to succeed in 21st century education.

Center for Education Reformwww.edreform.com

The Center for Education Reform drives the creation of better educational opportunities for all children by leading parents, policymakers and the media in boldly advocating for school choice, advancing the charter school movement, and challenging the education establishment.

Center on Reinventing Public Educationwww.crpe.org

The Center on Reinventing Public Education engages in independent research and policy analysis on a range of K-12 public education reform issues, including choice and charters, finance and productivity, teachers, urban district reform, leadership, and state and federal reform.

Digital Learning Now!www.digitallearningnow.com

Digital Learning Now! is a national campaign to advance policies that will create a high quality digital learning environment to better prepare students with the knowledge and skills to succeed in college and careers.

Education|Evolvingwww.educationevolving.org

Education|Evolving is a kind of “design shop” working to help public education with the difficult process of change. Education|Evolving is involved with the architecture and redesign of schooling.

Evergreen Education Groupwww.evergreenedgroup.com

The Evergreen Education Group seeks to understand the national landscape of K-12 online learning and apply its understanding to the challenges that schools, agencies, legislators, and others face.

Foundation for Excellence in Educationwww.excelined.org

The mission of the Foundation for Excellence in Education is answer the pivotal questions of what motivates students to exceed expectations, what are the secrets to successful teaching, and how do we replicate academic achievement?

The Freedom Foundationwww.myfreedomfoundation.com

The Freedom Foundation's mission is to advance individual liberty, free enterprise, and limited, accountable government. Its primary research areas are budget and taxes, education, labor, elections, and citizenship and governance.

Friedman Foundation for Educational Choicewww.edchoice.org

The Friedman Foundation for Educational Choice plays a critical and unique role in the school choice movement. As the only national organization dedicated solely to advancing Milton and Rose Friedman's vision of an education system where all parents are free to choose, the Foundation brings an unsurpassed clarity of purpose to the education reform debate.

Goldwater Institutewww.goldwaterinstitute.org

The Goldwater Institute is an independent government watchdog supported by people who are committed to expanding free enterprise and liberty. The Institute develops innovative, principled solutions to pressing issues facing the states and enforces constitutionally limited government through litigation.

Heartland Institutewww.heartland.org

Heartland's mission is to discover, develop, and promote free-market solutions to social and economic problems. Such solutions include parental choice in education, choice and personal responsibility in health care, privatization of public services, and deregulation in areas where property rights and markets do a better job than government bureaucracies.

Heritage Foundationwww.heritage.org

The Heritage Foundation is the nation's most broadly supported public policy research institute. Heritage works to formulate and promote conservative public policies based on the principles of free enterprise, limited government, individual freedom, traditional American values, and a strong national defense.

Hispanic Council for Reform and Educational Optionswww.hcreo.com

The Hispanic Council for Reform and Educational Options works to improve educational outcomes for Hispanic children by empowering families through parental choice. It achieves this by providing parents with free information and resources.

Home School Legal Defense Associationwww.hslda.org

The Home School Legal Defense Association is a nonprofit advocacy organization established to defend and advance the constitutional right of parents to direct the education of their children and to protect family freedoms.

Hoover Institutionwww.hoover.org

The Hoover Institution seeks to secure and safeguard peace, improve the human condition, and limit government intrusion into the lives of individuals by collecting knowledge, generating ideas, and disseminating both.

Insight Schoolswww.insightschools.net

Insight Schools works to ensure online learning is delivering significant improvements in our educational system: helping to reduce the nation's high school dropout rate; bringing students back into public schools; providing new opportunities for students; and helping prepare them for college and life after high school.

Independence Institutewww.i2i.org

The Independence Institute is established upon the eternal truths of the Declaration of Independence dedicated to providing timely information to concerned citizens, government officials, and public opinion leaders.

Institute for Justicewww.ij.org

The Institute for Justice challenges the government when it stands in the way of people trying to earn an honest living, when it unconstitutionally takes away individuals' property, when bureaucrats instead of parents dictate the education of children, and when government stifles speech.

International Association for K-12 Online Learning (iNACOL)www.inacol.org

The International Association for K-12 Online Learning works to ensure all students have access to world-class education and quality online learning opportunities that prepare them for a lifetime of success.

Innosight Institutewww.innosightinstitute.org

Innosight Institute is a not-for-profit, non-partisan think tank whose mission is to apply Harvard Business School Professor Clayton M. Christensen's theories of disruptive innovation to develop and promote solutions to the most vexing problems in the social sector.

James Madison Institutewww.jamesmadison.org

The James Madison Institute is a Florida-based research and educational organization engaged in the battle of ideas. The Institute's ideas are rooted in a belief in the U.S. Constitution and such timeless ideals as limited government, economic freedom, federalism, and individual liberty coupled with individual responsibility.

John Locke Foundationwww.johnlocke.org

The John Locke Foundation employs research, journalism, and outreach programs to transform government through competition, innovation, personal freedom, and personal responsibility. The Foundation seeks a better balance between the public sector and private institutions of family, faith, community, and enterprise.

K¹², Inc.www.k12.com

K¹², Inc.'s mission is to provide any child access to exceptional curriculum and tools that enable him or her to maximize his or her success in life, regardless of geographic, financial, or demographic circumstance.

Mackinac Center for Public Policywww.mackinac.org

The Mackinac Center for Public Policy is a non-partisan research and educational institute that promotes sound solutions to Michigan's state and local policy questions. The Center assists policy-makers, business people, the media, and the public by providing objective analysis of Michigan issues.

Maine Heritage Policy Centerwww.mainepolicy.org

The Maine Heritage Policy Center is a research and educational organization whose mission is to formulate and promote conservative public policies based on the principles of free enterprise; limited, constitutional government; individual freedom; and traditional American values.

National Alliance for Public Charter Schoolswww.publiccharters.org

The National Alliance for Public Charter Schools works to increase the number of high-quality charter schools available to all families, particularly in disadvantaged communities that lack access to quality public schools.

National Coalition for Public School Optionswww.publicschooloptions.org

The National Coalition for Public School Options is an alliance of parents that supports and defends parents' rights to access the best public school options for their children. The Coalition supports charter schools, online schools, magnet schools, open enrollment policies, and other innovative education programs.

National Council on Teacher Qualitywww.nctq.org

The National Council on Teacher Quality is a non-partisan research and advocacy group committed to restructuring the teaching profession, led by its vision that every child deserves effective teachers.

National Heritage Academieswww.heritageacademies.com

National Heritage Academies works with school boards that are looking to bring parents in their community another educational option for their children. NHA invests resources into its schools to ensure that in every classroom, in every school, it is challenging each child to achieve.

Oklahoma Council of Public Affairswww.ocpathink.org

Oklahoma Council of Public Affairs (OCPA) was founded in 1993 as a public policy research organization focused primarily on state-level issues.

OCPA has been part of an emerging, national trend of free-market, state-based think tanks. Throughout its 16 years of existence, OCPA has conducted research and analysis of public issues in Oklahoma from a perspective of limited government, individual liberty and a free-market economy.

Pacific Research Institutewww.pacificresearch.org

The Pacific Research Institute champions freedom, opportunity, and personal responsibility for all individuals by advancing free-market policy solutions. The Institute's activities include publications, legislative testimony, and community outreach.

State Policy Networkwww.spn.org

The State Policy Network is dedicated solely to improving the practical effectiveness of independent, nonprofit, market-oriented, state-focused think tanks. SPN's programs enable these organizations to better educate local citizens, policy makers and opinion leaders about market-oriented alternatives to state and local policy challenges.

StudentsFirstwww.studentsfirst.org

StudentsFirst formed in 2010 in response to an increasing demand for a better education system in America. Our grassroots movement is designed to mobilize parents, teachers, students, administrators, and citizens throughout country, and to channel their energy to produce meaningful results on both the local and national level.

Texas Public Policy Foundationwww.texaspolicy.com

The Texas Public Policy Foundation's mission is to promote and defend liberty, personal responsibility, and free enterprise in Texas by educating and affecting policymakers and the Texas public policy debate with academically sound research and outreach.

Thomas B. Fordham Institutewww.edexcellence.net

The Thomas B. Fordham Institute believes all children deserve a high quality K-12 education at the school of their choice. The Institute strives to close America's vexing achievement gaps by raising standards, strengthening accountability, and expanding education options for parents and families.

Washington Policy Centerwww.washingtonpolicy.org

Washington Policy Center improves the lives of Washington citizens by providing accurate, high-quality research for policymakers, the media, and the public. The Center provides innovative recommendations for improving education.

About the American Legislative Exchange Council

The American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC) is the nation's largest, nonpartisan, individual membership association of state legislators. With 2,000 members, ALEC's mission is to advance the Jeffersonian principles of limited government, federalism, and individual liberty through a nonpartisan public-private partnership of state legislators, the business community, the federal government, and the general public.

Founded in 1973, ALEC is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that promotes free-market principles through model legislation, developed by its public- and private-sector members in nine Task Forces:

CIVIL JUSTICE

To promote systematic fairness in the courts by discouraging frivolous lawsuits, fairly balancing judicial and legislative authority, treating defendants and plaintiffs in a consistent manner, and installing transparency and accountability in the trial system.

COMMERCE, INSURANCE, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

To enhance economic competitiveness, to promote employment and economic prosperity, to encourage innovation, and to limit government regulation imposed upon business.

EDUCATION

To promote excellence in the nation's educational system, to advance reforms through parental choice, to support efficiency, accountability, and transparency in all educational institutions, and to ensure America's youth are given the opportunity to succeed.

ENERGY, ENVIRONMENT, AND AGRICULTURE

To operate under the principles of free-market environmentalism, that is to promote the mutually beneficial link between a robust economy and a healthy environment, to unleash the creative powers of the free market for environmental stewardship, and to enhance the quality and use of our natural and agricultural resources for the benefit of human health and well-being.

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

To reduce governmental involvement in health care, to support a consumer-driven health care system, and to promote free-market, pro-patient health care reforms at the state level.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

To promote the core ALEC principles of free markets and limited government beyond our shores, to support final ratification of free trade agreements that create American jobs and grow our economy, and to protect the intellectual property rights of U.S. companies doing business overseas.

PUBLIC SAFETY AND ELECTIONS

To develop model policies that reduce crime and violence in our cities and neighborhoods, while also developing policies to ensure integrity and efficiency in our elections and systems of government.

TAX AND FISCAL POLICY

To reduce excessive government spending, to lower the overall tax burden, to enhance transparency of government operations, and to develop sound, free-market tax and fiscal policy.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

To advance consumer choice in the dynamic and converging areas of telecommunications and information technology by furthering public policies that preserve free-market principles, promote competitive federalism, uphold deregulation efforts, and keep industries free from new burdensome regulations.



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