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Report Card

ON AMERICAN EDUCATION

19TH EDITION

RANKING STATE K-12 PERFORMANCE, PROGRESS AND REFORM

By *Dr. Matthew Ladner* and *David J. Myslinski*
Foreword by **Gov. Mike Pence**

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

by Mike Pence, Governor of Indiana

Our greatest obligation as policymakers is to ensure that all of our children have access to a quality education. Our nation's long-term success is dependent upon the success of our children, whose early start in life depends greatly on the quality of our schools. This fundamental truth was evident to our nation's founders. George Washington once said that a "virtuous and happy people will be found in the right education of youth."

In this era of global competition and mobile capital, we owe it to our children to ensure they are prepared to succeed in a changing world. If we fail our children in the classroom, they are more likely to fail in life. In Indiana, we've taken this lesson to heart. In our efforts to increase access to quality schools, we enacted the most ambitious school choice program in the country in 2011. Last year, nearly 20,000 low-income Hoosiers used vouchers, or what we call Choice Scholarships, to attend the school of their choice—a 500 percent increase from the year before. This year, the number of applications has grown to nearly 30,000. In addition to the Choice Scholarships, more than 35,000 Indiana students are attending public charter schools across our state.

We have a strong commitment to high academic standards in Indiana that is producing real results. In 2013, under our A-F system of school

accountability, 500 public schools improved a full letter grade or more. Indiana's gains on the "Nation's Report Card" were in the top five for fourth grade reading and math, and our graduation rate is at an all-time high. Finally, more than 86 percent of Hoosier third graders passed the state reading exam, a critical measure of future educational success.

We have also worked hard to ensure that our students have a rich set of post-secondary education opportunities. While anyone who wants to go to college should be able to do so, many high-wage, high-demand jobs do not require a four-year college degree. With strong bipartisan support, Indiana is making career and vocational education an option for every high school student in Indiana in order to ensure that all students have a pathway to a career regardless of whether they decide to go to college. We are expanding curricula in our high schools and developing new partnerships with local businesses to support career and technical education on a regional basis.

Because every child should start school prepared to learn, we developed a voluntary pre-K voucher program for disadvantaged children in Indiana. I have always believed the best pre-K program is a family that provides the kind of enrichment that every child deserves, but too often

low-income children need extra help. Targeted pre-K programs can improve future educational outcomes for our most disadvantaged kids, especially when families can choose with a voucher the programs that are best for their kids.

Indiana and other states have made great progress in our efforts to give our children the best educational options available to them. Much remains to be done. Too many of our children are trapped in failing schools and do not have access to the kind of learning needed to produce within them the skills necessary to develop the skills students need to succeed in today's challenging economy. The *Report Card on American Education* is an invaluable resource that shows where

we have been, where we are, and most important, where we need to go from here. It is required reading for anyone who believes that we need to make sure all of our kids get a fair shot at the American Dream.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael R. Pence". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "M" and "P".

Mike Pence
Governor of Indiana



Education Reform:
A Year in Review

Education Reform: A Year in Review

Policy advancements in recent years have given students across America more educational options than many thought probable—even as recently as five years ago. And 2013 proved to be another landmark year, as state lawmakers expanded successful reforms and explored innovative new policies that build on prior educational successes. Importantly, students are rightly at the core of lawmaker conversations.

NORTH CAROLINA LAWMAKERS GO BIG ON K-12 REFORM IN 2013

North Carolina legislators moved the Tar Heel State into the top ranks of education reform with a comprehensive set of K-12 reforms. In so doing, North Carolina became the latest in a growing number of states to dispatch the “either/or” approach to K-12 reform. In the past, K-12 reformers spent time debating whether to pursue a reform strategy based upon incentives (such as parental choice programs and merit bonuses) or instructional/transparency reforms based upon testing and curriculum. In 2013, North Carolina lawmakers wisely decided not to bother with an “either/or” debate and instead adopted a “both/and” multifaceted strategy to improve public schools.

They adopted “A” through “F” school grades to describe academic performance—a crucial step toward increasing transparency in the system. These grades will replace a multi-measured system detailing whether the school met minimum requirements under the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act with a grade on a universally understood scale.

As parental choice policies represent the most basic method for improving education outcomes, open enrollment, charter school options and private choice options all give parents the opportunity to match the individual needs of their child

with the particular strengths of a school. Every child and every school is unique, meaning the greater variety of schooling options available, the more likely each child will find a school that matches his or her needs.

North Carolina lawmakers had previously taken small steps toward parental choice. In 2011, they removed a statewide cap on the number of charter schools, which had previously been set at 100. And in 2012, they created a personal use tax credit for households with special education students to cover some private school expenses.

However, North Carolina lawmakers went big and broad in 2013, passing two school voucher programs—one for students in low- to middle-income families and the other for children with special needs. Collectively, these programs make North Carolina the top-ranked parental choice state. Students eligible for the North Carolina Opportunity Scholarship program include children previously attending a public school whose families are below 133 percent of the income threshold, qualifying them for a free or reduced-price lunch under the National School Lunch Program.

In North Carolina, 50 percent of students qualify for a free or reduced-price lunch, and another 12 percent have an Individualized Education Plan qualifying them for special education services. Although overlap exists between these two population pools—many special education students also qualify for free or reduced-price lunches, based upon family income—a large majority of North Carolina public school students will qualify for participation.

Between these private choice programs and improvements in the state’s charter school laws giving parents ultimate control over their child’s education, it is clear that bottom-up pressure for public school improvement is on the way.

North Carolina lawmakers also funded an effort to increase the number of Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate courses. State funds will be used to encourage students with the potential to pass college preparatory coursework and will pay for associated testing fees and for teacher professional development.¹

D.C., TENNESSEE AND INDIANA SEE THE BIGGEST GAINS BETWEEN 2011 AND 2013 NAEP

The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) released the 2013 results for fourth- and eighth-grade mathematics and reading assessments. The District of Columbia and state of Tennessee demonstrated statistically significant gains over the 2011 scores in all four exams. Indiana had the third highest overall gains.

Arizona, Colorado, Delaware, the District of Columbia, Indiana, Iowa, Nebraska, New York, Tennessee, West Virginia and Wyoming saw statistically significant gains in fourth-grade mathematics between 2011 and 2013. No state suffered

a statistically significant decline in fourth-grade math scores, and the majority of states saw effectively flat scores during this period.

The District of Columbia, Florida, New Hampshire, Pennsylvania and Tennessee achieved significant gains in eighth-grade mathematics between the 2011 and 2013 NAEP exams. Montana, Oklahoma and South Dakota, however, suffered significant declines in eighth-grade math scores. The vast majority of states saw no significant change in the math performance of their eighth-grade students.

NAEP fourth-grade reading trends between 2011 and 2013 saw a similar pattern, with jurisdictions seeing a significant increase, outnumbering states that saw significant declines by a 6-to-3 margin. Colorado, the District of Columbia, Indiana, Iowa, Maine, Tennessee and Washington showed gains, while Massachusetts, Montana and North Dakota suffered significant declines. The vast majority of states did not see a statistically significant decline or increase.

FIGURE 1 | STATES MAKING STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS ON THE NAEP FOURTH-GRADE MATH EXAM BETWEEN 2011 AND 2013 (ALL STUDENTS)

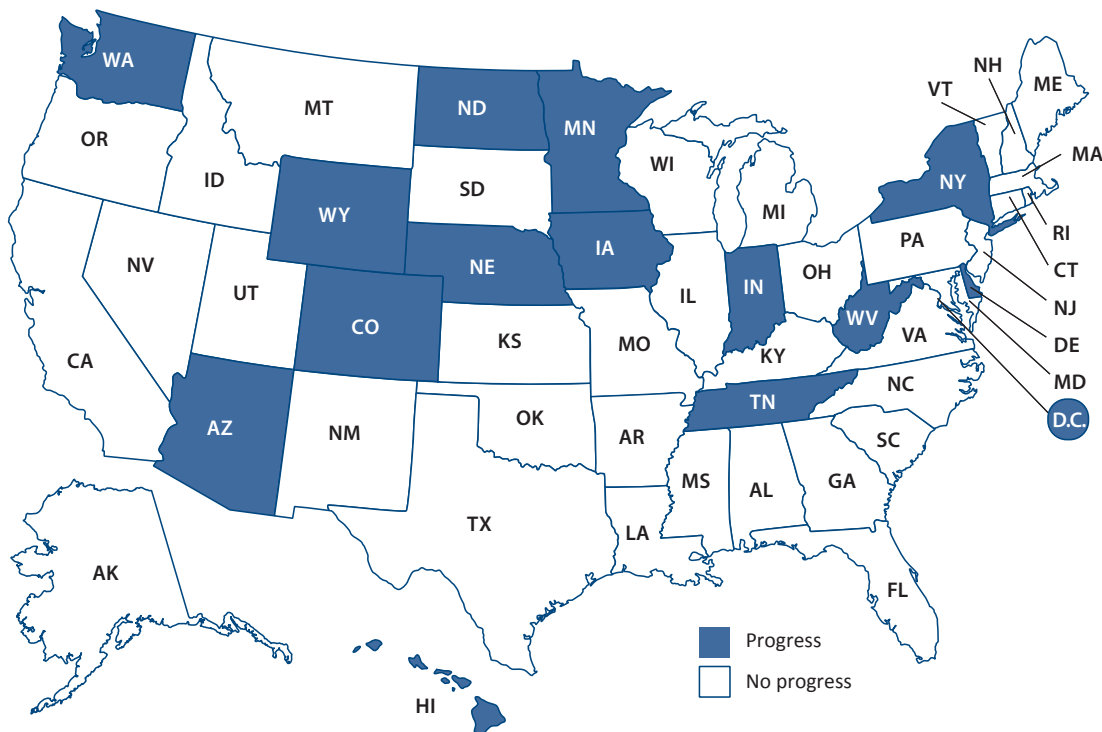
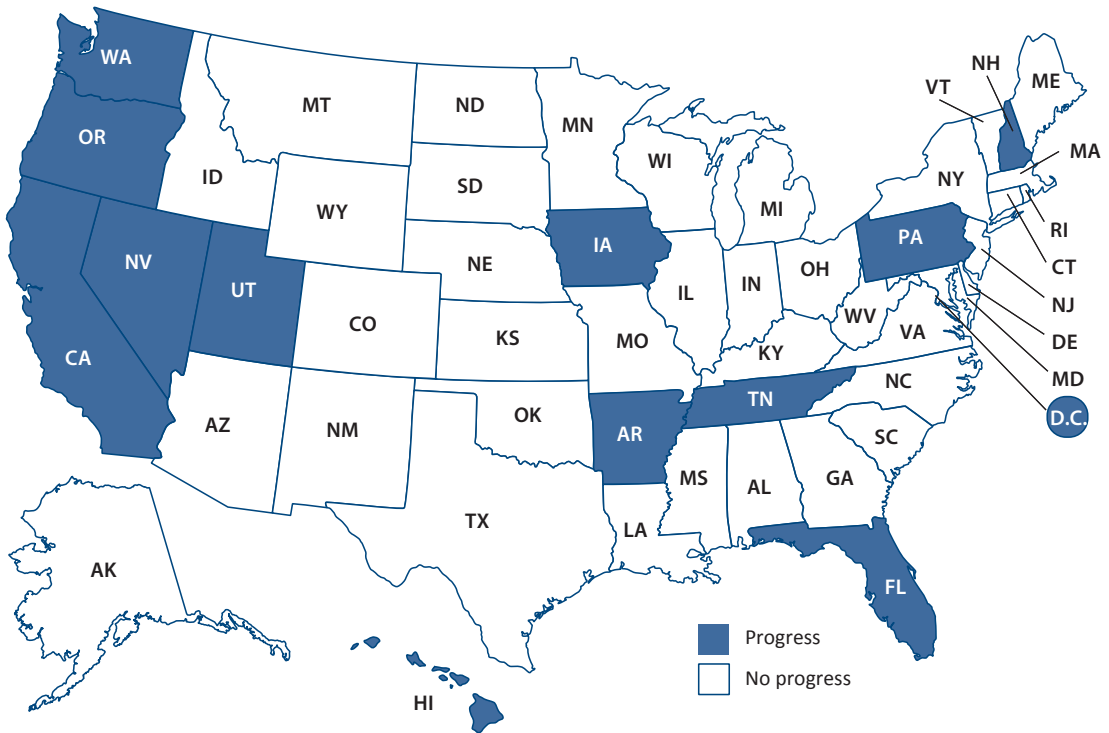


FIGURE 4 | STATES MAKING STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS ON THE NAEP EIGHTH-GRADE READING EXAM BETWEEN 2011 AND 2013 (ALL STUDENTS)



National School Lunch Program’s free or reduced-price lunches. Indiana lawmakers also expanded the eligibility for their broad voucher program and increased the maximum size of the scholarship.

Arizona legislators expanded and improved the Arizona Empowerment Scholarship Account (ESA) Program—the first education savings account program in the nation. Education savings accounts represent the 21st century update to choice programs. The nation’s first pilot ESA program has entered its third year of operation in Arizona, and it allows parents to control an account that can be used for private school tuition, à la carte courses from public school certified private tutors, licensed therapists, online education programs and college or university tuition. If they choose, parents may place a limited amount of ESA funds into a Coverdell Education Savings Account to accumulate interest for the child’s future higher-education expenses. Parents are in charge—down to the last penny—and the model

encourages parents to consider both quality and cost when choosing among providers.

In 2013, Arizona lawmakers expanded the program’s eligibility to kindergarten students otherwise eligible to participate, such as students with special needs, those attending a “D” or “F” rated public school, those in foster care, or dependents of active duty military members. Arizona lawmakers also enacted critical program design improvements by increasing the fiscal oversight of accounts and increasing the funding for accounts.

Ohio lawmakers expanded the EdChoice Scholarship Program to make \$4,250 scholarships available statewide to children in families below 200 percent of the federal poverty level. Program eligibility started with kindergarten students, and a subsequent grade will be eligible each year for the next 12 years (kindergarten only the first year kindergarten and first grade the second year and so forth).

TABLE 1 | STATES MAKING STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS OR DECLINES ON THE NAEP EXAMS BETWEEN 2011 AND 2013 (ALL STUDENTS)

	Fourth-Grade Math	Eighth-Grade Math	Fourth-Grade Reading	Eighth-Grade Reading
Alabama	▬	▬	▬	▬
Alaska	▬	▬	▬	▬
Arizona	↑	▬	▬	▬
Arkansas	▬	▬	▬	↑
California	▬	▬	▬	↑
Colorado	↑	▬	↑	▬
Connecticut	▬	▬	▬	▬
Delaware	↑	▬	▬	▬
District of Columbia	↑	↑	↑	↑
Florida	▬	↑	▬	↑
Georgia	▬	▬	▬	▬
Hawaii	↑	↑	▬	↑
Idaho	▬	▬	▬	▬
Illinois	▬	▬	▬	▬
Indiana	↑	▬	↑	▬
Iowa	↑	▬	↑	↑
Kansas	▬	▬	▬	▬
Kentucky	▬	▬	▬	▬
Louisiana	▬	▬	▬	▬
Maine	▬	▬	↑	▬
Maryland	▬	▬	▬	▬
Massachusetts	▬	▬	↓	▬
Michigan	▬	▬	▬	▬
Minnesota	↑	▬	↑	▬
Mississippi	▬	▬	▬	▬
Missouri	▬	▬	▬	▬
Montana	▬	↓	↓	▬
Nebraska	↑	▬	▬	▬
Nevada	▬	▬	▬	↑
New Hampshire	▬	↑	▬	↑
New Jersey	▬	▬	▬	▬
New Mexico	▬	▬	▬	▬
New York	↑	▬	▬	▬
North Carolina	▬	▬	▬	▬
North Dakota	↑	▬	↓	▬
Ohio	▬	▬	▬	▬
Oklahoma	▬	↓	▬	▬
Oregon	▬	▬	▬	↑
Pennsylvania	▬	↑	▬	↑
Rhode Island	▬	▬	▬	▬
South Carolina	▬	▬	▬	▬
South Dakota	▬	↓	▬	▬
Tennessee	↑	↑	↑	↑
Texas	▬	▬	▬	▬
Utah	▬	▬	▬	↑
Vermont	▬	▬	▬	▬
Virginia	▬	▬	▬	▬
Washington	↑	▬	↑	↑
West Virginia	↑	▬	▬	▬
Wisconsin	▬	▬	▬	▬
Wyoming	↑	▬	▬	▬

TABLE 2 | YEAR-BY-YEAR SCORES FOR STATE CHARTER SCHOOL LAWS 2010-2013
(SOURCE: NATIONAL ALLIANCE FOR PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOLS)

State	2010	2011	2012	2013	Point Change
Alaska	56	62	62	63	7
Arizona	136	133	133	141	5
Arkansas	116	116	122	122	6
California	150	150	150	150	0
Colorado	138	142	142	160	22
Connecticut	106	106	106	110	4
Delaware	121	121	127	127	6
District of Columbia	132	132	132	134	2
Florida	133	147	151	151	18
Georgia	134	134	125	135	1
Hawaii	75	82	82	139	64
Idaho	104	104	101	110	6
Illinois	100	100	117	117	17
Indiana	112	112	148	148	36
Iowa	62	71	71	71	9
Kansas	63	63	63	63	0
Louisiana	128	132	128	151	23
Maine	-	-	163	166	3
Maryland	42	42	42	42	0
Massachusetts	135	148	148	145	10
Michigan	122	122	138	138	16
Minnesota	168	172	172	172	4
Mississippi	-	39	39	39	0
Missouri	119	119	119	132	13
Nevada	109	109	126	126	17
New Hampshire	111	114	120	113	2
New Jersey	104	104	104	114	10
New Mexico	117	117	147	147	30
New York	134	148	148	148	14
North Carolina	107	107	122	125	18
Ohio	106	106	113	117	11
Oklahoma	101	106	106	109	8
Oregon	116	116	120	120	4
Pennsylvania	134	131	131	131	-3
Rhode Island	71	74	108	108	37
South Carolina	117	117	117	141	24
Tennessee	101	101	109	109	8
Texas	120	120	124	124	4
Utah	127	127	127	131	4
Virginia	65	69	69	69	4
Washington	-	-	-	161	N/A
Wisconsin	77	77	77	77	0
Wyoming	87	87	87	87	0

improvements, with changes resulting in an increase in scores anywhere from one to nine points. These include Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Georgia, Idaho, Iowa, Maine, Minnesota,

New Hampshire, Oklahoma, Oregon, Tennessee, Texas, Utah and Virginia.

- The scores for six states remained the same. These include California, Kansas, Maryland, Mississippi, Wisconsin and Wyoming.

post school- and district- level information about performance and grades on the Internet, and schools are required to send a school report card to parents. Tough love is still love: Florida's schools began a steady process of improvement, both on the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test and on NAEP (a source of external validation for the state exam).

The practice of grading schools had many critics in 1999, and some remain today, despite Florida's strong improvement. Far from withering under the glare of public shame, Floridians rolled up their sleeves and began the hard work of improving their underperforming schools. Schools focused their resources on improving academic achievement. Alerted to the problems in their schools, communities rallied to the aid of low-performing schools. Thousands of Floridians volunteered their time to tutor struggling students. Improving academic performance—and thus the school's grade—became a focus.

New York City became the second jurisdiction to adopt school letter grades at the district level. After New York, a growing number of states—including Arizona, Indiana, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Utah—adopted the “A” through “F” grading practice. More recently, a growing number of Atlantic Coast, Midwest and Southern states adopted school letter grades—including Alabama, Arkansas, Ohio, Maine, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina and Virginia.

Few of these states have released multiple years of letter grades, and fewer still have put letter grades in place as a part of a broad comprehensive set of reforms designed to improve public education. Indiana is one of those few states, and their gains on the 2013 NAEP proved quite impressive (see Chapter 2). Some states, such as Utah, saw years pass between the time lawmakers passed “A” through “F” letter grades and when the Department of Education (grudgingly, in the case of Utah education officials) released the first set of grades to the public.

A number of states adopted their “A” through “F” policies as part of negotiating a waiver from NCLB, and others adopted the policy through legislation. School grading policies are not monolithic in nature. For instance, some heavily factor in student academic growth, while other states' policies, such as Louisiana's, do not. Florida began

with more schools earning “D” and “F” grades than “A” and “B” grades and then watched that trend reverse itself over the years, despite raising standards multiple times. Arizona, on the other hand, began with a majority of schools earning “A” and “B” from the outset.

Over time, the variation in these school grading details may increase our knowledge of how best to fashion a system in order to nudge a faster improvement rate for public schools.

MASSIVE OPEN ONLINE COURSES CONTINUED TO RAPIDLY EXPAND IN 2013

Stanford professor Sebastian Thrun created the first Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) in 2011, and the pace of expansion has yet to abate. The short period since 2011 has already featured an explosion in the number of courses, participating universities and MOOC online platforms.

While primarily a higher education phenomenon, the availability of free online courses from some of the finest universities in the world has already moved into the K-12 arena. “K-12 educators are currently exploring the use of open content, learning analytics, competency-based education and personalized instruction, which all point to the role that MOOCs can and will play for learners,” Leslie Conery, interim chief education officer at International Society for Technology in Education, noted. “These trends will continue to grow and become more prevalent as the cost of technology continues to decline and access to both devices and connectivity continues to increase. MOOCs present schools with a great way to supplement and enhance their current curriculum.”⁶

A growing number of providers have been creating MOOCs aimed specifically at high school students. During the 2013 legislative session, Florida lawmakers authorized MOOCs in high school subjects with end-of-course exams now offered for Algebra I and Geometry. The legislation grants high school credit for MOOCs with proctored end-of-course exams by 2015-2016. In the meantime, a variety of university and university/district partnerships have continued to develop high-school MOOCs.⁷

Dhawal Shah, a software engineer and founder of Class Central, a free online aggregator of online educational offerings, has endeavored to

keep track of the rapidly expanding MOOC universe. This is no easy task. In late 2013 he provided the following summary of the MOOC phenomenon:

200+ universities. 1,200+ courses. 1,300+ instructors. 10 million students.

One cannot help but to suspect that this summary went out of date moments after Shah typed it. He predicts an increasing number of universities will grant college credit for MOOCs, a growing number of MOOCs created by corporations will emerge for employee training and new courses will make use of open platform software in 2014 at an even faster pace.⁸

The MOOC revolution remains young and wild, and the full implications for the K-12 system remain unclear. Harvard, Stanford and dozens of other universities have put classes online at costs varying between free and negligible. Innovators have developed solutions to grant college credit when students pass third-party proctored final exams. Much work lies ahead in reformatting our systems of education to incorporate these new developments while keeping the crucial human touch in education. While the future impact of technology on education remains unclear, we can say the following with certainty: We live in an age of wonders.

TAKING ADDITIONAL STEPS IN THE JOURNEY OF A THOUSAND MILES

The K-12 reform movement has had more to celebrate in the past three years than in any recent period. It is important to recognize, however, that even these incredibly hard fought victories represent only the first small steps on a long journey of transforming a public education system that fails to serve the needs of far too many. Americans can and should, in part, judge schools by how much they give to children who are starting in life with the least.

Most American poor children still go to schools in states with weak transparency systems that use fuzzy labels to obscure academic failure. Most low-income students have little to no meaningful choice over what schools they attend. Most poor children attend schools that socially promote them year after year, regardless of

their ability to read or do grade-level work. Poor children attend public schools that do too little to attract highly effective teachers or remove ineffective teachers from the classroom.

Many defenders of the education status quo blame poverty itself for the children's plight. These detractors continually ignore the fact that today's students often have parents, grandparents, great-grandparents and others who themselves attended public schools. The assignment of our public school system in helping to break this cycle of poverty involves the imparting of academic knowledge and skills that are vital to the future success of children. The past failure of the public school system to perform this crucial task does indeed make it more difficult to perform in the present. The current public school system spends and employs people at levels that would stagger the imagination of an American school administrator in decades past, and which inspires envy among the vast majority of school systems around the globe. If the current system cannot get this task done under these fortuitous circumstances, we need to update our system. The only part of this process that is finished is the beginning.

ENDNOTES

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CHAPTER 2

A Decade Of Data On State
Academic Achievement

A Decade Of Data On State Academic Achievement

Until the passage of NCLB, state participation in the NAEP remained optional. NCLB conditioned receipt of federal K-12 funds on participation in NAEP, and not surprisingly, all states decided they should participate. Universal participation in NAEP, which began in 2003, provides the opportunity to examine academic gains through a decade-long trend to see which states have made progress and which have not—and to what degree.

NAEP tests a random sample of students in all 50 states and the District of Columbia on fourth- and eighth-grade reading and mathematics achievement on a regular basis. Since 2003, NAEP has produced new results on a biannual basis: 2003, 2005, 2007, 2009, 2011, and most recently, 2013. Increases or declines of scores between two-year NAEP cycles usually prove modest. Moreover, one should expect a certain level of variation simply based upon the drawing of different samples. Possible variations in scores due to sampling error can be quantified, but NAEP officials work very hard to avoid having “statistical noise” creep into exams in the form of a bad sample. A variety of technical student inclusion issues—such as those for special education and English language learner (ELL) students—can also influence scores.

Readers should also appreciate the complexity of the relationship between state policy and student learning. State policy serves as only a single variable that has the potential to influence academic outcomes. Students learn at home and at school, not in state legislative chambers. Put differently, the positive or negative impact of state policy on student learning begins its journey in state capitals and passes through a sprawling system of public, private

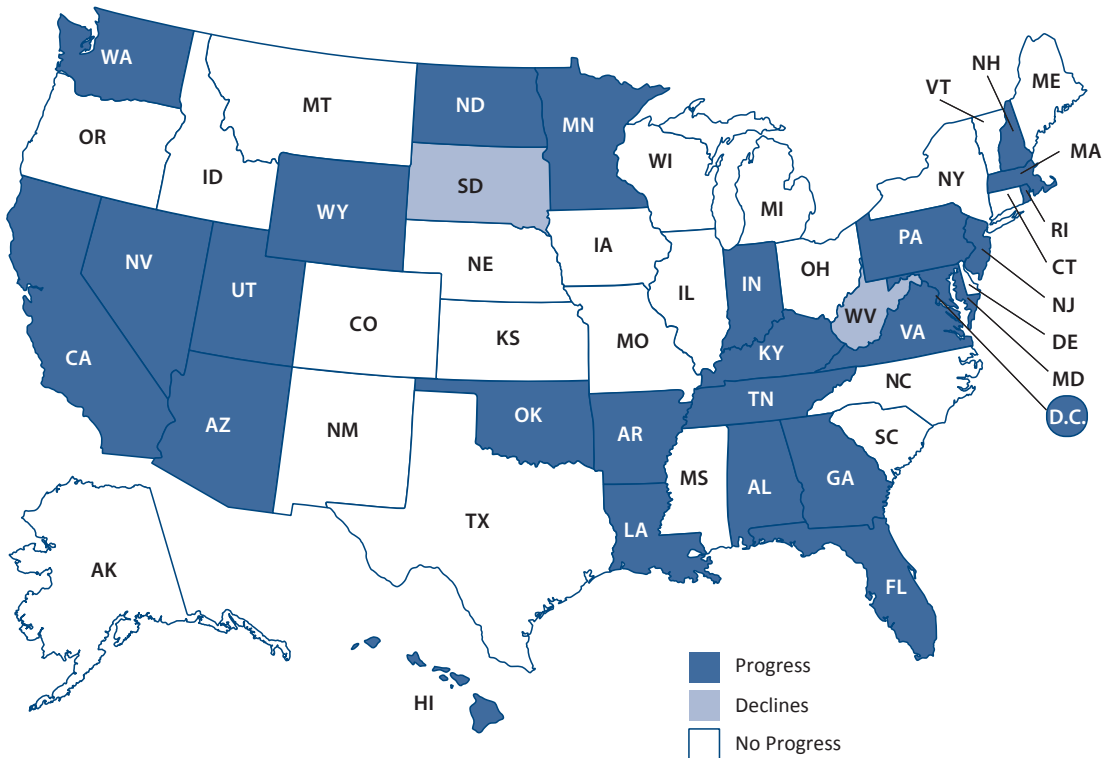
and home-schools. If state policies ultimately fail to meaningfully impact classroom practice, inspire greater activity from students and/or educators or provide new options for students and parents, state policymakers can often find themselves pushing on a string.

In addition, the ability of analysts to comprehensively measure the quality and impact of state policies must be viewed as limited. This *Report Card on American Education* makes use of high-quality studies ranking various elements of K-12 policy. However, implementation of the policies put in place by state legislators is crucial. And the ability of an analyst to measure the quality of implementation efforts lies beyond the measures of these studies. The effectiveness of various efforts to *subvert* state policy remains completely unmeasured.

Sometimes resistance to state policy manifests itself in a nakedly obvious fashion. Tennessee, for instance, has a charter school law that makes districts the primary authorizer of charter schools but includes the important addition of a state appeals process. The appeals process represents an example of a legal feature leading to a higher ranking for a charter school law (and therefore a higher policy grade for a state in the *Report Card on American Education*).

This appeals feature failed to lead to a desirable outcome, however, when the Nashville school district defied recognizing the successful appeal of a highly regarded out-of-state charter network. The district chose to pay a multimillion dollar fine to the state rather than recognize the successful appeal of the charter school network out of their own budget.¹ Ultimately the charter school organization

FIGURE 1 | STATES MAKING STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS OR DECLINES ON THE NAEP FOURTH-GRADE READING EXAM BETWEEN 2003 AND 2013 (ALL STUDENTS)



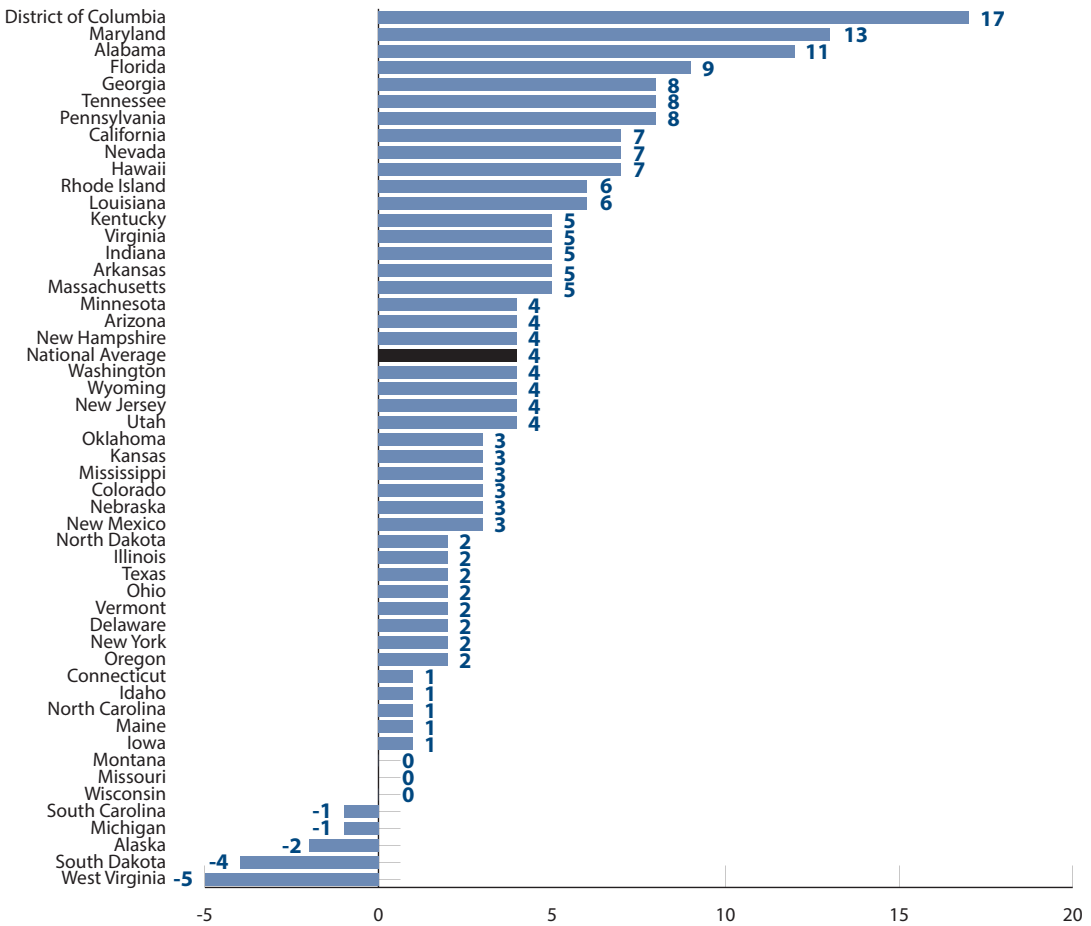
decided to withdraw its application. Analysts would find it impossible to quantify the impact of such an event when judging the quality of a charter school law, even if they were to attempt to do so.

One can feel fairly certain that the payment of a \$3.4 million fine by district taxpayers did nothing to improve academic achievement in Nashville. Moreover, when the wronged charter school organization withdrew their effort to open a school in understandable frustration, the *apparent* quality of Tennessee’s charter school law failed to manifest itself in practice due to a successful act of subversion. It remains to be seen whether other charter operators will bother to go through the expense and trouble of applying for a charter in Nashville, thus possibly creating a divergence between the apparent and the de facto quality of the Tennessee charter school law.

Passive resistance to state policy only rarely proves so obvious. Analysts may praise the quality of state academic standards in a state, but out in the schools, teachers ultimately translate those standards to pedagogy, and practices such as drilling to individual test items on the state accountability exam can arise. States can take action to increase test security, regularly rotate test items and limit item exposure in the hope that teachers will put their focus on academic standards rather than tests. Many states, however, fall short on such measures, evidenced by steadily improving scores on state exams but flat NAEP scores. This dichotomy can indicate that the students have mastered state test items rather than the material. In any case, analysts have a very difficult time in capturing and measuring such subtleties when ranking the quality of state academic standards.

The passage of laws, in short, is only the beginning of education reform. Far from checkers,

FIGURE 2 | NAEP FOURTH-GRADE READING EXAM POINT GAINS BETWEEN 2003 AND 2013 (ALL STUDENTS)



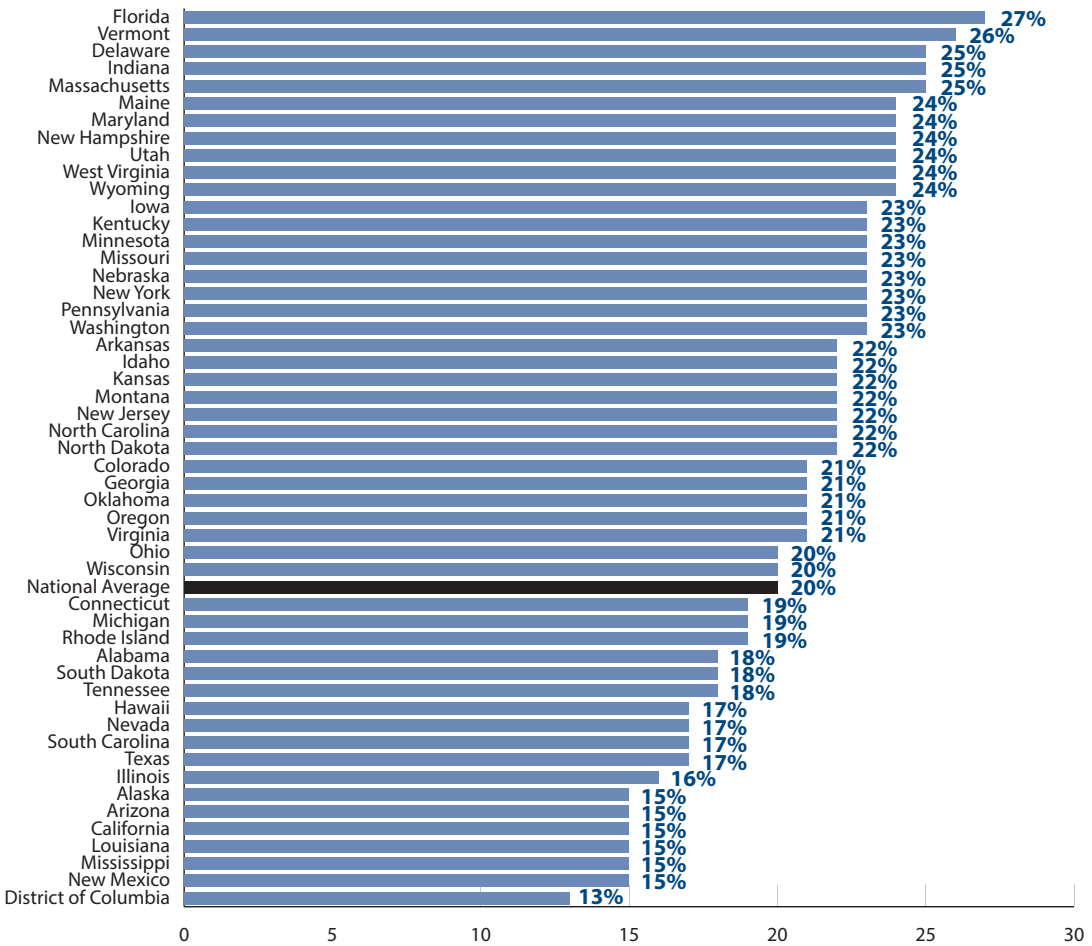
policy-makers are in a complex game of 3-D chess in their efforts to improve public education. In order to have an impact, officials must successfully implement policy—an ongoing struggle of the utmost importance. Analysts cannot capture the quality of implementation efforts.

More broadly still, there are more things impacting state scores than are dreamt of in analyst white papers. A nearly infinite number of possible societal factors *could* impact student test scores but probably largely cancel each other out in the aggregate. People constantly move in and out of states, for instance. If a state were to lose more low-performing students while gaining more high-performing students, the illusion of systemic improvement

could potentially appear. In the absence of statewide long-term gentrification, however, this scenario seems relatively unlikely as people of all income brackets move for a variety of reasons. However, the possibility for every jurisdiction in every period cannot be ruled out.

Mindful of these caveats, time should be taken to examine longer term NAEP trends. Districts, states, and federal authorities continually make adjustments to laws and rules governing the vast American public education system. Isolating with confidence the individual impact of any single policy in this complex maelstrom requires the use of incredibly powerful analytical techniques, such as random assignment studies. Most policies that have been subjected to random assignment testing in recent years

FIGURE 3 | PERCENTAGE OF FREE AND REDUCED-PRICE LUNCH ELIGIBLE STUDENTS SCORING “PROFICIENT” OR BETTER ON THE NAEP FOURTH-GRADE READING EXAM FOR 2013



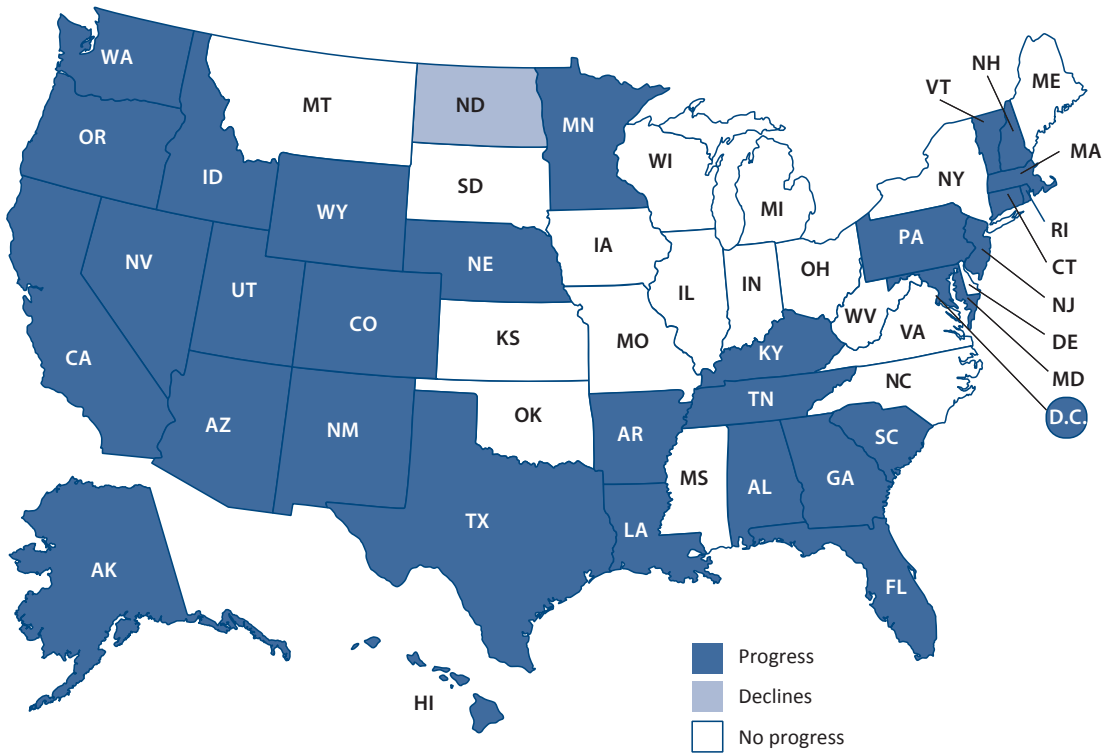
show a dismal record in terms of producing statistically significant and lasting results. Moreover, scholars have subjected only a tiny minority of policies to a random assignment study, and a smaller subset of these show consistently positive results.

Meanwhile, education politics continue to roll along on their merry way, irrespective of rigorous findings on cause and effect. During the 2003 to 2013 period, all states adopted one reform strategy supported by ALEC: state accountability and academic testing. Many states adopted these reforms before 2003—with Florida, Massachusetts, North Carolina and Texas standing as notable early adopters.

Most of the other states were in earlier stages of adopting state standards, testing and transparency measures when a bipartisan majority of Congress passed NCLB. The fact that states adopted testing and accountability systems at different times during the 1990s allowed scholars to statistically analyze NAEP trends across states in an attempt to isolate the impact of adopting a testing system, while holding other factors constant. Such an analysis revealed statistically significant gains associated with the early adoption of testing and accountability, as well as greater progress in closing racial/ethnic achievement gaps.²

Given that all states began testing students

FIGURE 4 | STATES MAKING STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS OR DECLINES ON THE NAEP EIGHTH-GRADE READING EXAM BETWEEN 2003 AND 2013 (ALL STUDENTS)

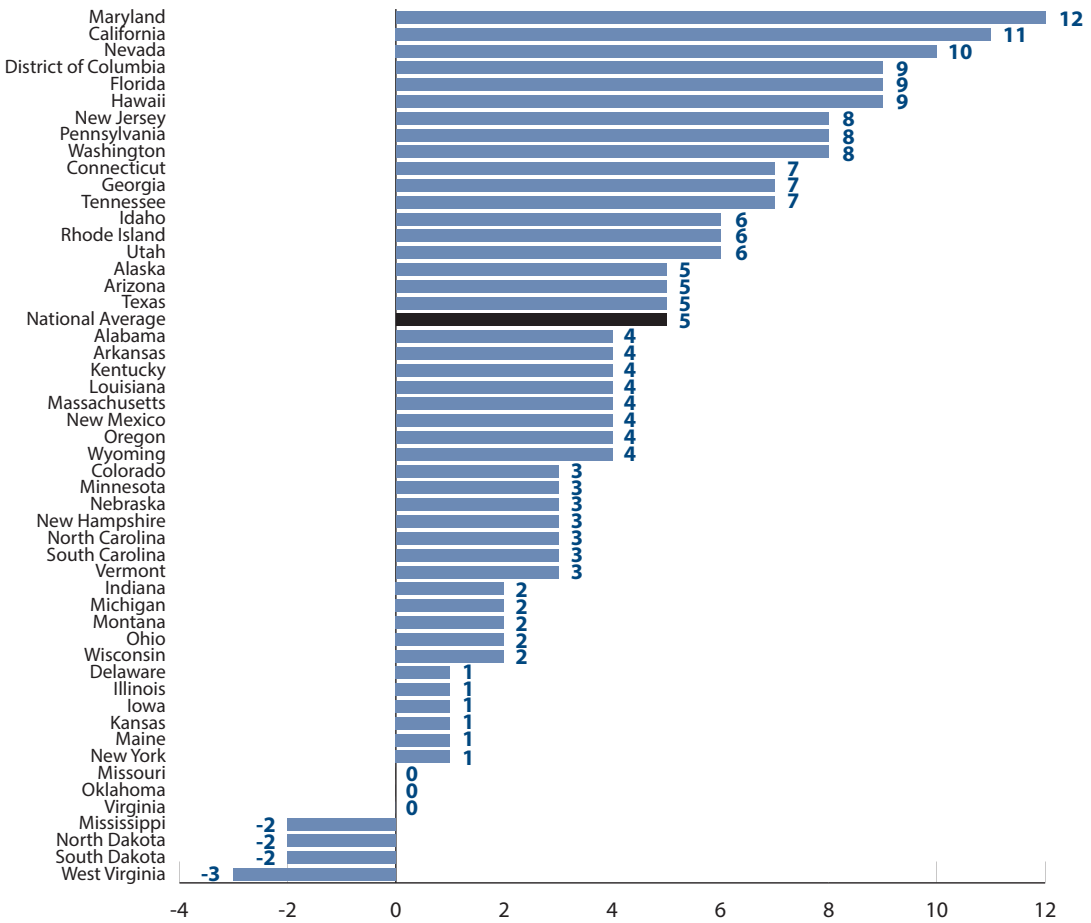


in reading and math in grades three through eight, and once in high school at the outset of the 2003 period (albeit with widely varying standards and accountability systems) it can be inferred that some unquantifiable amount of the NAEP progress reviewed can be attributed to academic testing. As the review will reveal, however, this uniform strategy failed to produce uniform results, with some states seeing consistent gains across subjects and some seeing more moderate progress. This result fits comfortably with the understanding that student learning is a function of many other factors and policies.

State lawmakers have increasingly—but not yet pervasively—adopted the strategy of increasing

parental choice in an effort to improve education attainment. Parental choice not only comes in a variety of forms, it is also imperfectly understood in many K-12 discussions. The first form of parental choice, for instance, lies in the wallets of parents. Thus, some tend to think of states like Florida as private choice leaders and states like Massachusetts as devoid of private school choice. The reality, however, is that Massachusetts public schools have faced a greater competition from private schools than those in Florida for decades due to higher family incomes in the state. Wealthy parents in Massachusetts have had private school choice available for years, despite the lack of strong public policies that would afford this option to all parents. Florida’s still relatively new

FIGURE 5 | NAEP EIGHTH-GRADE READING EXAM POINT GAINS BETWEEN 2003 AND 2013 (ALL STUDENTS)



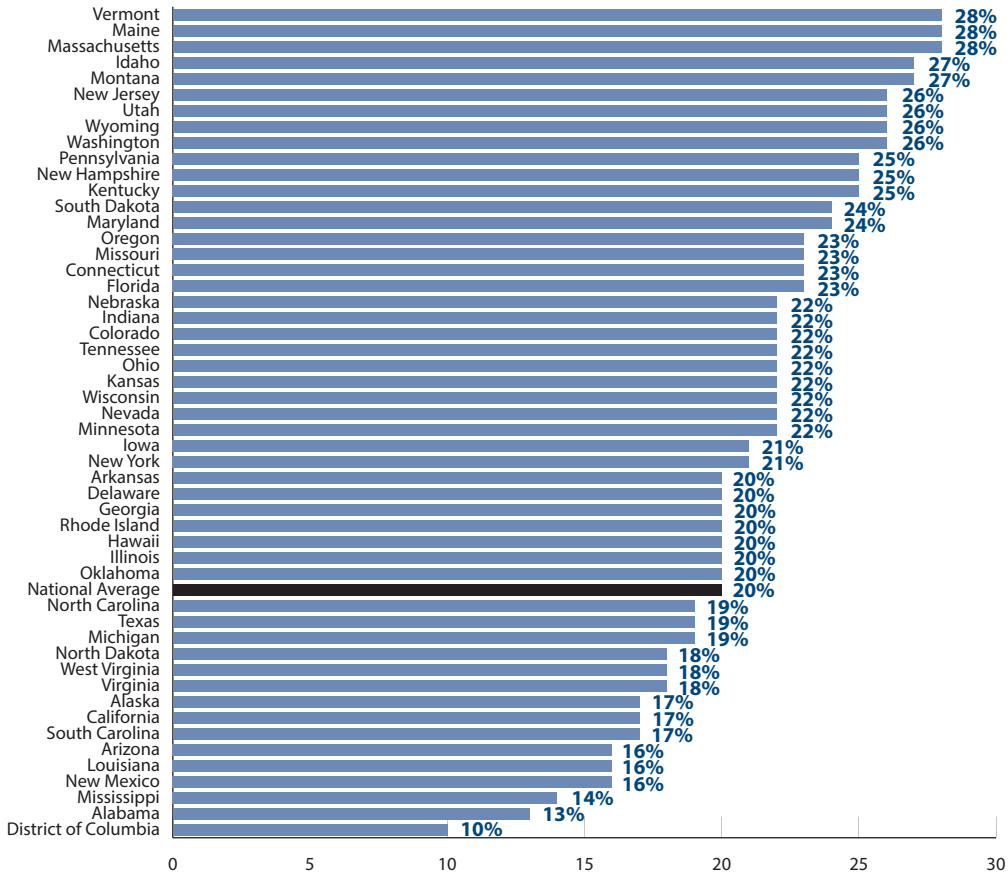
choice programs have yet to equal the amount of private school pressure brought about by Massachusetts’ higher family incomes.

Lawmakers have continued to expand public—and in some cases private—choice options to parents. If lawmakers have yet to pass a private choice program with enough broad and funded student eligibility to have a positive impact on aggregate statewide NAEP scores, it has only happened recently. Early programs with broad student eligibility, such as the Arizona and Florida scholarship tax-credit programs, contained either practical limits or caps on the amount of money raised. To date, these programs have doubtlessly played a vital role in aiding tens of thousands of individual families

and a contributing role with other choice policies, such as charter schools, in expanding the availability of choice.

Despite the presence of robust charter school policies, tax credits, school vouchers (in Florida’s case) and education savings accounts (in Arizona’s case), district enrollment has continued to surge in both Arizona and Florida. The ability of choice policies even in these states should be understood as real (having been measured several times in statistical studies), but modest until such time as the policies are improved and expanded.³ Lawmakers have only recently begun to pass private choice programs with broad levels of statewide eligibility in states like Indiana, Louisiana and North

FIGURE 6 | PERCENTAGE OF FREE AND REDUCED-PRICE LUNCH ELIGIBLE STUDENTS SCORING “PROFICIENT” OR BETTER ON THE NAEP EIGHTH-GRADE READING EXAM FOR 2013



Carolina. The average state will have seen more progress in creating public choice options and the allowing of home schooling than private school choice.

Scholars examining international academic achievement have found the United States as a whole to score relatively low and to have been making average international achievement. In other words, the world is not standing still waiting for the United States to get its K-12 act together. There are countries that spend less, score higher and have made faster academic progress than America. The forthcoming pages, therefore, show which states have made progress from 2003 to 2013 and also the extent of that progress.

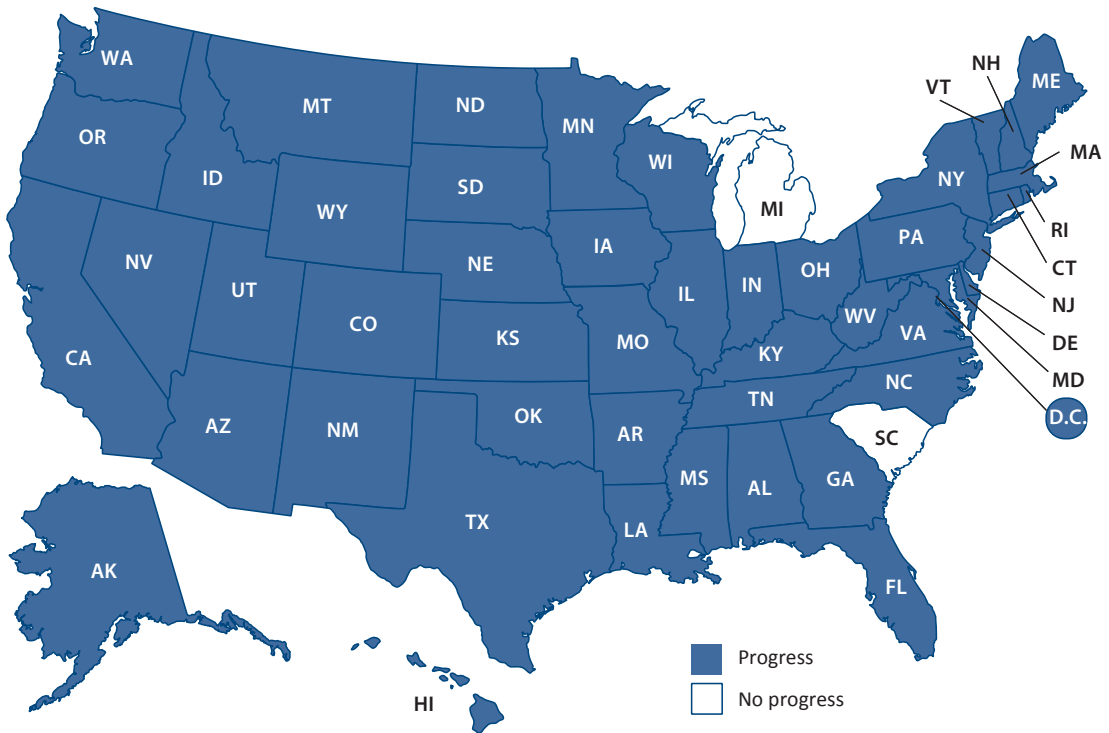
FOURTH-GRADE READING

About half of the states made significant progress on the NAEP fourth-grade reading exam between 2003 and 2013. An almost equal number made no significant progress, and two states suffered a statistically significant decline in scores.

On fourth-grade reading, the states in the Southwest and the Southeast (excepting the Carolinas and Mississippi) demonstrated the most consistent regional progress, with a notable stagnation in most of the Great Plains states and Midwestern states outside Indiana and Pennsylvania.

Figure 2 shows the total point gain (or loss) by state on fourth-grade reading during the 2003 to 2013 period. The national average for

FIGURE 7 | STATES MAKING STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS ON THE NAEP FOURTH-GRADE MATH EXAM BETWEEN 2003 AND 2013 (ALL STUDENTS)



improvement for public schools during this period was four points. A rough rule of thumb is that 10 points approximates one year’s worth of average progress on NAEP. (It would be expected that an average group of fifth graders taking the fourth-grade NAEP reading exam to score about 10 points higher than an average group of fourth graders). Four points of progress over a decade is therefore welcome, but it stands as less than overwhelmingly positive.

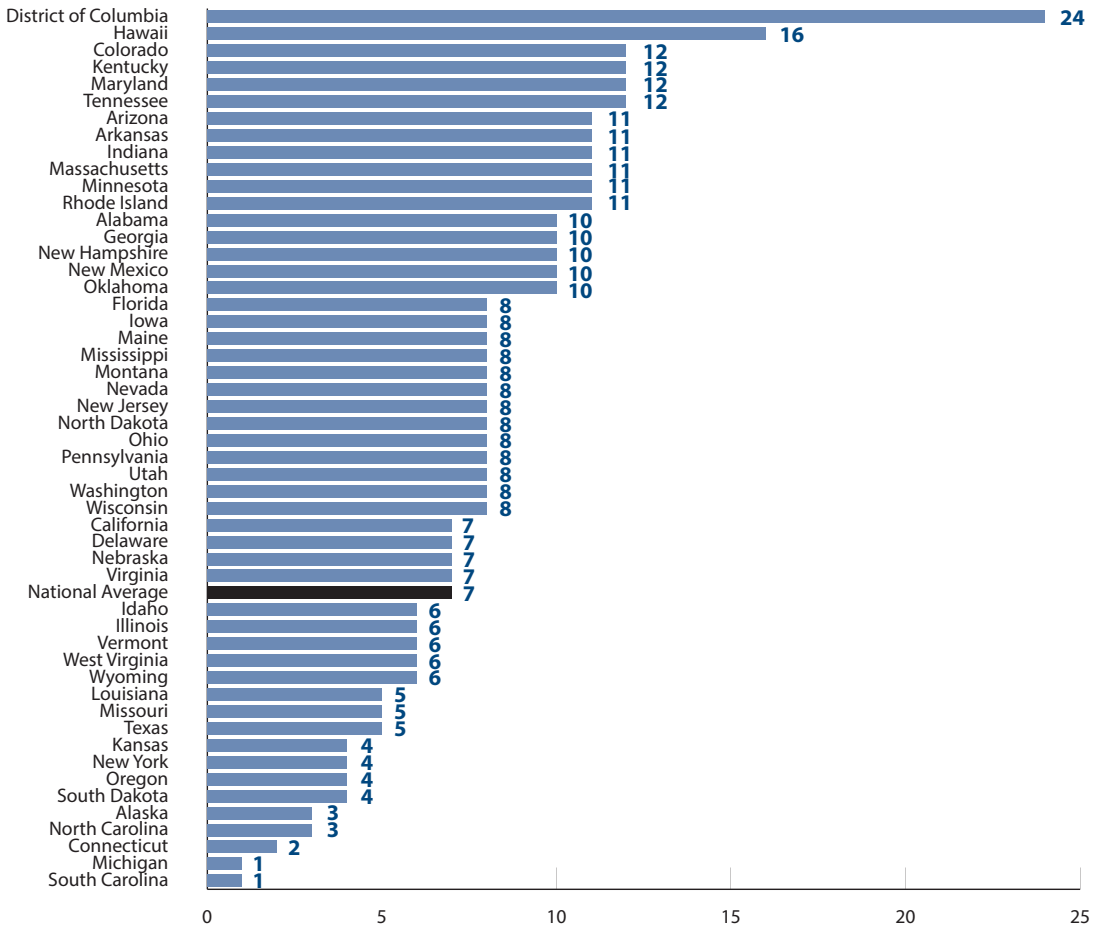
Several states easily surpassed the national average. Jurisdictions doubling or more the national rate of improvement include Alabama, the District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Maryland and Tennessee. Unfortunately, there is a long list of states that made less than half

the national average amount of progress (two points or less). Figure 2 shows the total progress for all students in each jurisdiction. Unlike the analysis done to rank state performance in the next chapter, these charts make no attempt to control for differences in student demographics or special program status.

Alaska, Michigan, Missouri, South Carolina, West Virginia and Wisconsin actually had either declines or zero gains in scores from 2003 to 2013. These declines may or may not be related to policy choices in these states, but educators and policymakers should not feel happy about them in any case.

The 2013 NAEP results are used to rank states according to the percentage of children

FIGURE 8 | NAEP FOURTH-GRADE MATH EXAM POINT GAINS BETWEEN 2003 AND 2013 (ALL STUDENTS)



attaining full grade-level proficiency in fourth-grade reading. Figure 3 ranks states by the percent of students eligible to receive a free or reduced-price lunch under the National School Lunch Program in order to increase comparability among the states, which varies considerably by average income.

Children eligible for a free or reduced-price lunch are more than twice as likely to reach full grade-level proficiency in the highest performing jurisdiction (Florida) compared to the lowest performing jurisdiction (the District of Columbia). Note, however, that only a quarter of

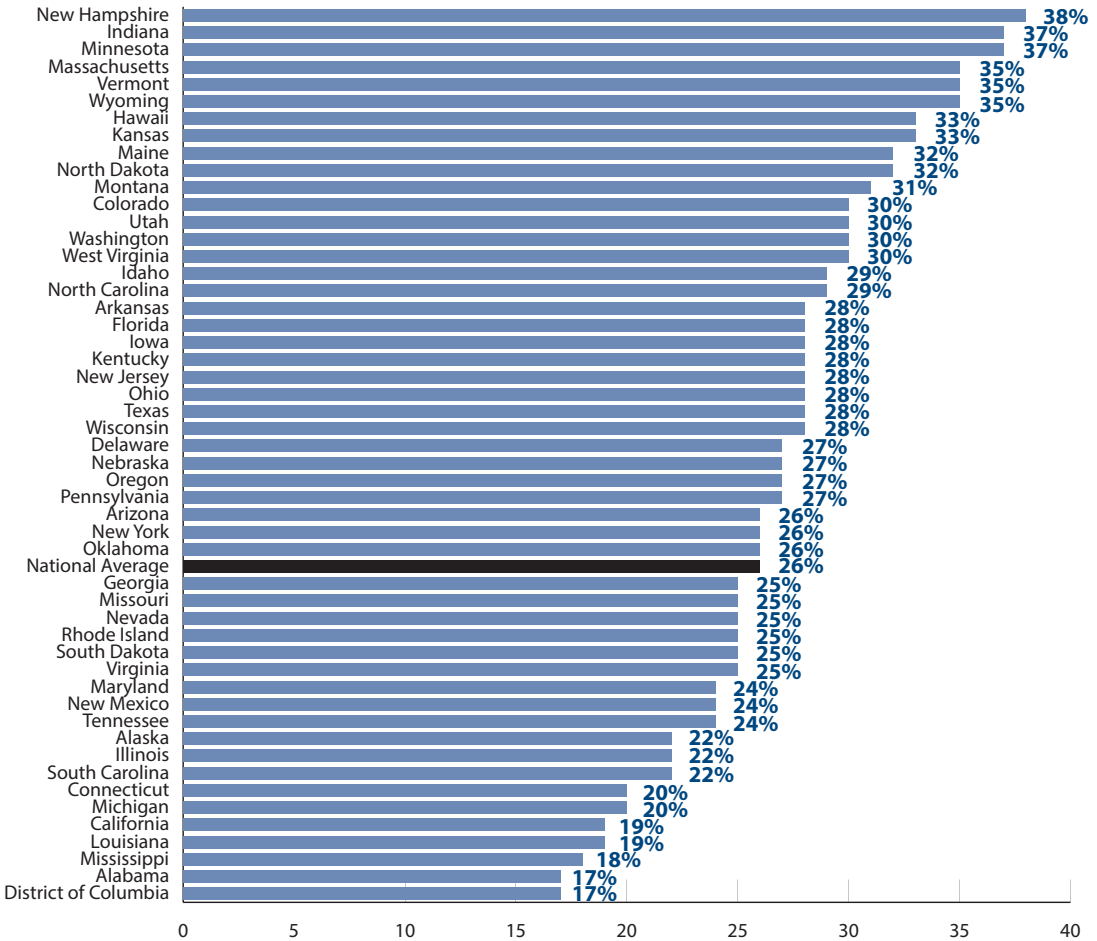
free or reduced-price lunch eligible students have reached full grade level proficiency in four states.

EIGHTH-GRADE READING

Figure 4 presents the NAEP map for eighth-grade reading gains, non-gains and declines from 2003 to 2013.

Western and Southern states generally made statistically significant gains in eighth-grade reading, with the exceptions of Mississippi, North Carolina and Virginia in the South and Montana and Wyoming in the West. States

FIGURE 9 | PERCENTAGE OF FREE AND REDUCED-PRICE LUNCH ELIGIBLE STUDENTS SCORING “PROFICIENT” OR BETTER ON THE NAEP FOURTH-GRADE MATH EXAM FOR 2013



in the Great Plains and Great Lakes region generally did not make progress. The Dakotas, Mississippi and West Virginia actually saw declines in eighth-grade reading scores.

Figure 6 presents eighth-grade reading proficiency by state for free or reduced-price lunch-eligible students. Note that only a small number of wealthy states got almost 30 percent of their free or reduced-price lunch eligible students reading to full grade-level proficiency in 2013.

NAEP reveals that early math skills, too, have been the most amenable to improvement.

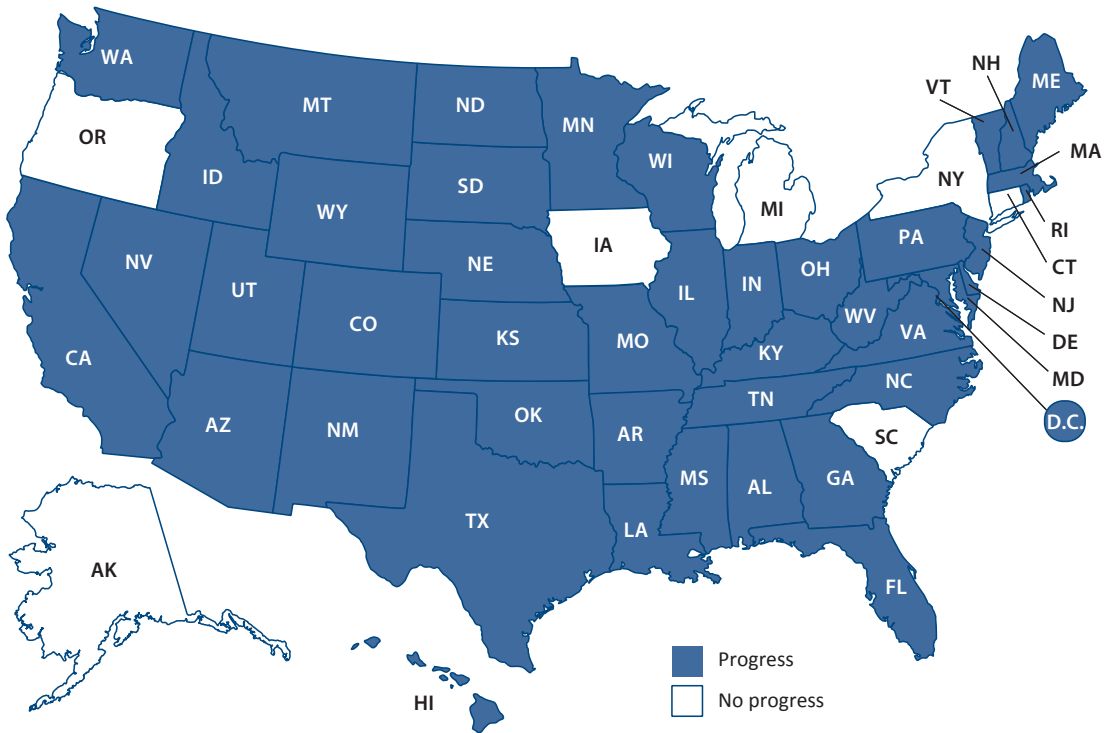
All states other than Michigan and South Carolina made progress during the 2003 to 2013 period, as shown in Figure 7.

FOURTH-GRADE MATHEMATICS

Figure 11 shows that the nation gained widespread significant progress in fourth-grade mathematics. Of the 50 states and the District of Columbia, only Michigan and South Carolina failed to score a significant gain in fourth-grade math between 2003 and 2013.

Variation in fourth-grade math score gains range between the truly remarkable (24 points

FIGURE 10 | STATES MAKING STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS ON THE NAEP EIGHTH-GRADE MATH EXAM BETWEEN 2003 AND 2013 (ALL STUDENTS)



in the District of Columbia) to the truly forgettable (one point in Michigan and South Carolina). Figure 8 presents the state-by-state gains for all students.

Figure 9 presents the proficiency rates for fourth-grade math. Note that on the strength of its extraordinary gains, the District of Columbia moved off last place in fourth-grade math proficiency. In 2003 only 7 percent of all D.C. children scored “Proficient” or better on the fourth-grade math NAEP. By 2013, that number had improved to 28 percent.

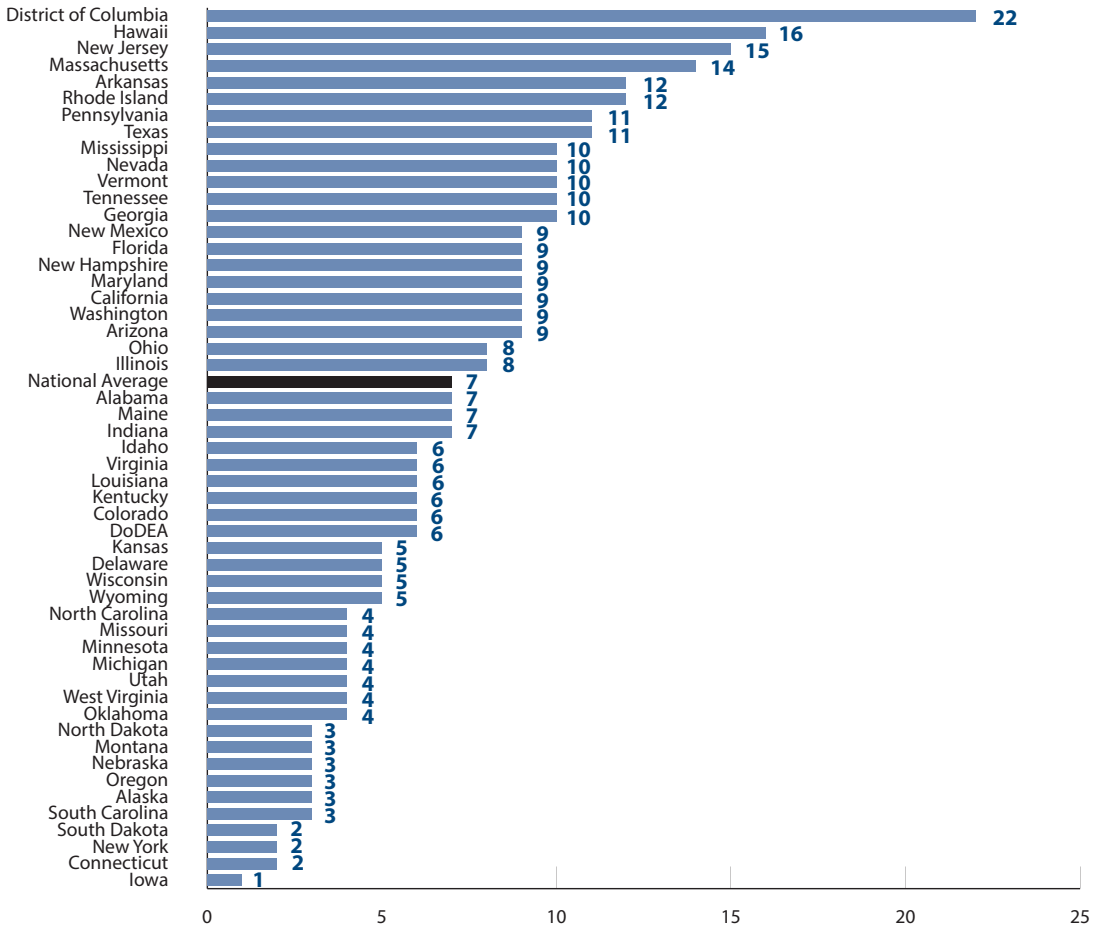
EIGHTH-GRADE MATHEMATICS

The gains on fourth-grade math, however, were not replicated and sustained in all

jurisdictions at the eighth-grade level. Alaska, Connecticut, Iowa, New York and Oregon failed to notch significant math gains between 2003 and 2013, despite fourth-grade math progress. Michigan and South Carolina failed to score progress in either fourth- or eighth-grade math—giving them the undesirable distinction of being the only two states to do so during this period.

In some states, the fourth-grade progress was slow to develop, and thus it can be hoped for future progress in eighth-grade math as those fourth-graders become eighth-graders. Other states, however, seem to have fumbled the ball on math during the middle school years as the number of states making fourth-grade

FIGURE 11 | NAEP EIGHTH-GRADE MATH EXAM POINT GAINS BETWEEN 2003 AND 2013 (ALL STUDENTS)



math progress greatly exceeds those making eighth-grade math progress. Figure 11 shows the scale point gain on eighth-grade math by state/jurisdiction.

Figure 12 shows the percentage of free and reduced-price lunch eligible children scoring “proficient” or better on the 2013 NAEP eighth-grade exam.

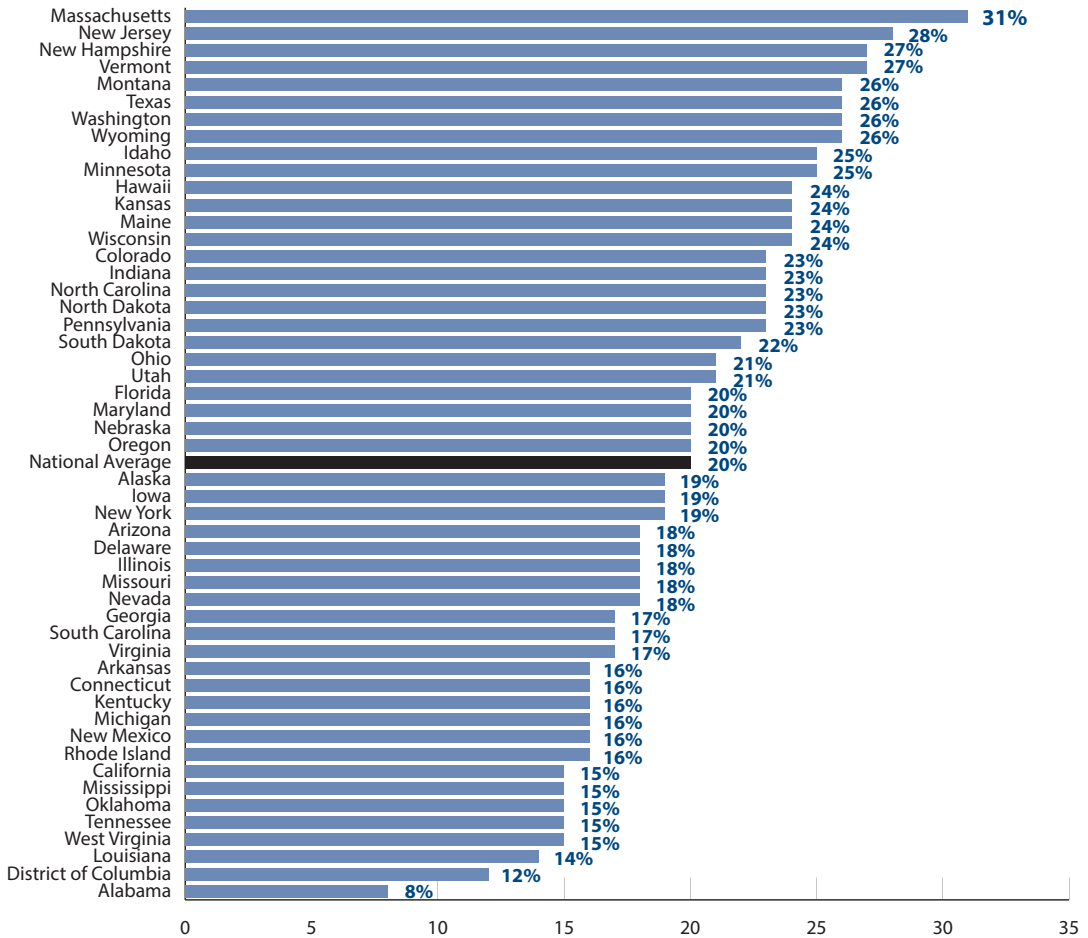
STATES MAKING PROGRESS ON ALL FOUR NAEP EXAMS

As previously discussed, the United States has been making an average amount of academic progress on international examinations, but the country scores modestly overall. Some states are

pulling the cart on this inadequate level of national progress, and others have been riding in the cart. Which states have been driving the most progress?

It is a diverse group of jurisdictions. In alphabetical order: Alabama, Arizona, California, the District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Nevada, Rhode Island, Tennessee, Utah, Vermont and Washington. Some were relatively high performers in 2003 (Massachusetts, Minnesota, Nevada, Rhode Island, Tennessee, Utah, Vermont and Washington), and others were far from it (Arizona, California, D.C. and Louisiana). Some are huge jurisdictions (California and Florida), and others tiny (D.C. and Rhode Island). Some of these

FIGURE 12 | PERCENTAGE OF FREE AND REDUCED-PRICE LUNCH ELIGIBLE STUDENTS SCORING “PROFICIENT” OR BETTER ON THE NAEP EIGHTH-GRADE MATH EXAM FOR 2013



jurisdictions have incredibly diverse student bodies; others, such as D.C. and Vermont, are among the most ethnically homogeneous.

During this period, only three states saw a statistically significant decline in any of the four NAEP exams: North Dakota (eighth-grade math), South Dakota (fourth-grade reading) and West Virginia (fourth-grade reading). Only Michigan saw no significant gain in any of the four NAEP exams during this period.

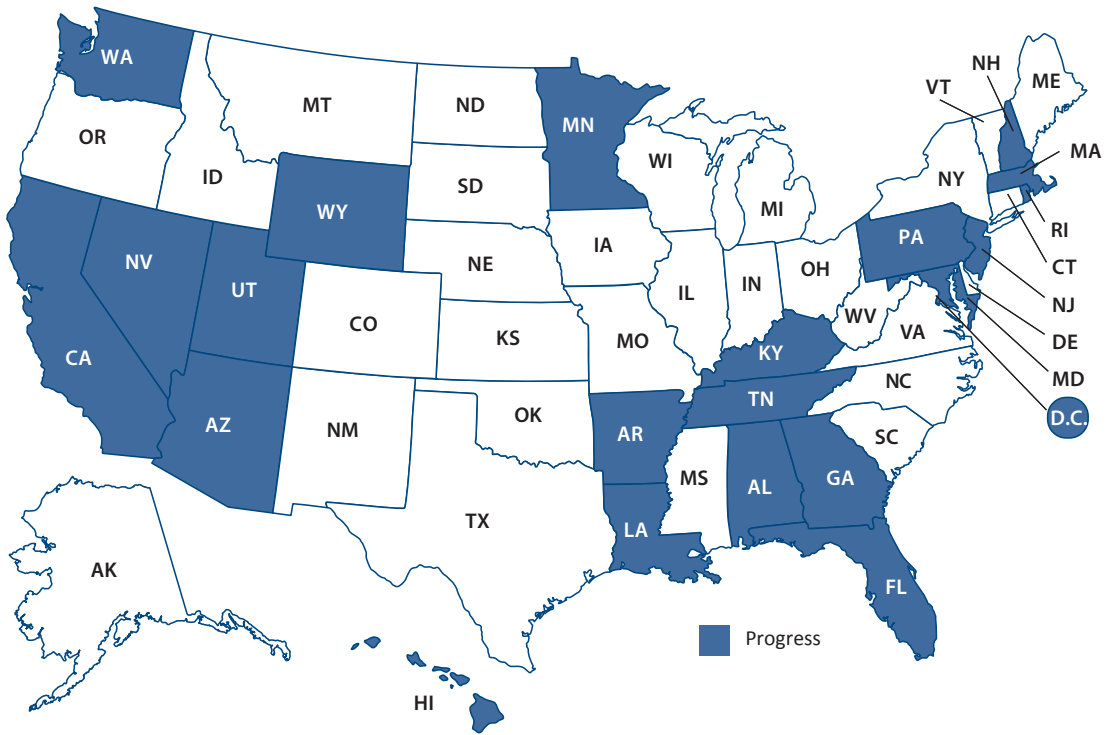
Take note: the District of Columbia can no longer be kicked around anymore. The long-troubled district has already improved enough to get off the bottom of the academic proficiency rankings

on two of the NAEP exams. D.C.’s remarkable improvement will be discussed in greater depth in chapter 4, but for now, simply note that they have obviously been doing something right.

CONCLUSION: SCATTERED PROGRESS WITH MILES TO GO

State academic achievement improved from 2003 to 2013, at least in one subject, with only a single exception: Michigan. That is the good news. Not all the news is good, however. Students in 50 states and the District of Columbia took four separate NAEP exams in 2013. This provided 204 separate opportunities to get a majority of students

FIGURE 13 | STATES MAKING PROGRESS ON ALL FOUR EXAMS



at full grade-level proficiency. Even when students of all economic backgrounds are included (not shown in this chapter for comparability reasons), only a tiny minority of states ever had half or more of their students reach full grade-level proficiency on the most recent NAEP.

Out of the 204 state/D.C. opportunities to get to a majority of students proficient on four 2013 NAEP tests, only six states cleared the bar. All six states to surmount the 50 percent proficiency bar have demographic advantages, and they only passed the bar in fourth-grade math—the subject and grade level that states found easiest to improve. None of them surpassed 60 percent

proficiency, even in this best case.

Among low-income children, these figures show that no state has reached 40 percent proficiency. The United States is seeing progress but far too little, on average, for one of the highest spending and wealthiest nations. America’s taxpayers deserve far more for their investment, and students deserve far more opportunity.

Even still, a decades-long period of academic stagnation has ended in many states. Policymakers must now develop their strategies for accelerating progress.

ENDNOTES

- 1 Cavanagh, Sean. 2012. Available on the Internet at http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/charterschoice/2012/09/tennessees_department_of_education_announced.html.
- 2 Hanushek, Eric A. and Margaret E. Raymond. 2004. Available on the Internet at <http://hanushek.stanford.edu/sites/default/files/publications/hanushek%20Braymond.2005%20jpam%2024-2.pdf>.
- 3 Center for Public Education. 2012. "Charter Schools: Finding Out the Facts: At a Glance. Available on the Internet at <http://www.centerforpubliceducation.org/Main-Menu/Organizing-a-school/Charter-schools-Finding-out-the-facts-At-a-glance/Charter-School-Data-by-State-2010-2011.pdf>.



Education Policy Grades And Academic Performance

Education Policy Grades And Academic Performance

The following pages provide state-by-state profiles of academic progress and educational policies. These profiles provide a snapshot of the state-level policies in place that affect their education systems. These state profiles also provide insights into the academic performance of low-income general education students as measured by NAEP. While there may be districts of excellence within a poorly-performing state, our focus is on state-level policies and ensuring all students within each state are provided with the highest quality education possible.

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

The underlying foundation supporting these policies is ensuring a high-quality education is available for every child. With that in mind, as policies and technologies progress and mature, our grading methodology must evolve to stay relevant and provide a more complete analysis of each state's policies. In this *Report Card*, state education policy grades are composed of the following categories.

POLICY CATEGORIES

For this *19th Report Card on American Education*, education policy grades are divided into six categories: Academic Standards, Charter Schools, Homeschooling, Private School Choice, Teacher Quality and Digital Learning. These categories remain constant from the *18th Report Card*, although individual components of those categories have been updated as described below.

ACADEMIC STANDARDS

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

CHARTER SCHOOLS

Charter schools are innovative public schools that agree to meet performance standards set by governing authorities but are otherwise free from most regulations governing traditional public schools. This autonomy allows for new teaching methods, special curricula and academic programs, and flexible governance policies, such as holding longer school days. The charter school grades illustrate whether a state has a charter school law and, if so, analyze how strong the law is in supporting the success of charter schools.

The Center for Education Reform provides this information in their annual *Charter School Law Ranking and Scorecard*.²

HOMESCHOOLING REGULATION BURDEN LEVEL

Two million students are home schooled each year. With an annual growth rate of approximately 5 percent, this is the fastest growing sector of school options. The homeschooling regulation burden level indicates the regulatory requirements parents face when homeschooling their children. The Home School Legal Defense Association rates the states’ homeschooling oversight in four categories: “none,” “low,” “moderate” and “high.”^{3,4}

PRIVATE SCHOOL CHOICE

A growing body of empirical evidence suggests that private school policies that allow families to choose the best school for their children yield positive outcomes, including improved family satisfaction, higher academic achievement and improved graduation rates. For these reasons, each state is evaluated on whether it has a private school choice program, such as vouchers or scholarships, tuition or scholarship tax credits, or education savings accounts. Several factors determine grades, including statewide student eligibility for private school choice programs and the purchasing power these programs provide for families. This analysis is based on our own review of state school choice policies and is supported by research from the Friedman Foundation for Educational Choice.⁵

TEACHER QUALITY POLICIES

Academic research shows that the greatest determining factor regarding a student’s academic success within school walls is teacher effectiveness. Every student deserves the opportunity to learn from a great teacher. The National Council on Teacher Quality’s 2013 *State Teacher Policy Yearbook* provides grades for whether states identify high-quality teachers, retain effective teachers and remove ineffective ones.⁶

DIGITAL LEARNING

A fast-changing state education policy is digital learning. Different from last year’s *Report Card*

analysis, this policy grade is derived from the Foundation for Excellence in Education’s Digital Learning Now initiative, which produces an annual *Digital Learning Report Card*. States are measured on their progress toward creating a statewide environment that supports high-quality digital learning options for all students.⁷

OVERALL POLICY GRADE

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

POLICY GRADE METHODOLOGY

We calculated states’ education policy grades in the following manner. First, we converted all anal-

Table 1 | Letter Grade Key

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

yses 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 grade point average scale (A=4, B=3, C=2, D=1, F=0). Those scores were tallied and divided by the number of categories in which a score was present. 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.)

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

For ranking each state's academic performance, the focus of this *Report Card* remains on disadvantaged students. Studies have shown that high-income children score better, on average, than children from low-income families. Low-income students can learn, but higher income children tend to learn much more at home and generally enter school with an advantage over their peers. Low-income students, therefore, rely more heavily on the opportunities afforded to them by the educational system. The performance ranking portion of this *Report Card* examines how well states are living up to the task of providing a high-quality education for all students.

When ranking states' academic performances, we ought not 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 California, schools have designated more than 23 percent of their students as ELL, while in West Virginia, less than 1 percent of students are ELL. The fact that California has a rate of non-native English speakers more than 23 times higher than West Virginia's makes a straightforward comparison of states' academic performances problematic.⁸

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 under the National School Lunch Program, which determines eligibility by family income. The ranking system only looks at general education students who

are not enrolled in either special education or ELL 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 among state K–12 populations to a relatively common metric.

While every state has sizeable 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. However, NAEP has 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 among such students from state to state.

High-income states, of course, will have school systems relatively flush with students far above the free or reduced-price lunch 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-free or reduced-price lunch 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 high-income children, special education children, and non-native English speakers is unimportant. 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. *The Report Card* makes no claim that these comparisons are perfect. In fact, we are confident that no perfect comparisons exist. Rather, *The Report Card's* merely claiming 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 their students. Successful inner-city educators refuse to use race as an excuse for poor performance. We do the same in ranking the performance of state school systems.

The Report Card's 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 2013). We examine the performance of low-income children in the general education program, and weight equally the overall performance and the gains over time.

A few caveats regarding NAEP tests apply here: NAEP is given to random samples of students with measurable ranges of sampling error. However, any sampling error should be random in nature, thus often cancelling itself out. (For example, 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.)

Overall, readers should take greater note of whether their state falls on the high, middle or low end of the rankings, rather than 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.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

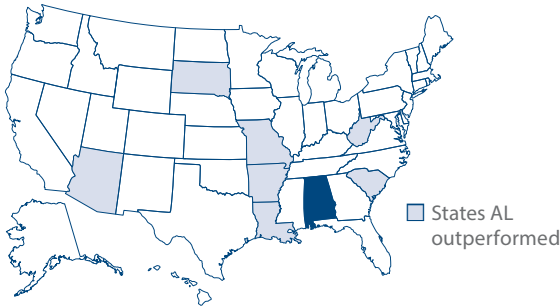
In addition to the policy grades and performance rankings, each state profile contains additional information, such as per-pupil spending levels and student populations. This data is purely for informational purposes and is not included in the grading or ranking of the states.

ENDNOTES

- 1 Peterson, Paul E. and Peter Kaplan 2013. "Despite Common Core, States Still Lack Common Standards." EducationNext. Available on the Internet at <http://educationnext.org/despite-common-core-states-still-lack-common-standards/>.
- 2 Center for Education Reform. 2014. "Laws and Legislation". Available on the Internet at <http://www.edreform.com/issues/choice-charter-schools/laws-legislation/>.
- 3 Home School Legal Defense Fund. 2014. "Research Facts on Homeschooling". Available on the Internet at <http://www.hslda.org/hs/default.asp>.
- 4 Ray, Bran D PHD. 2014. "Research Facts on Homeschooling." Publication of the National Home Education Research Institute. Available on the Internet at <http://www.nheri.org/research/research-facts-on-homeschooling.html>.
- 5 The Friedman Foundation For Educational Choice. 2014. "The ABCs of School Choice." Available on the Internet at <http://www.edchoice.org/School-Choice/The-ABCs-of-School-Choice/ABCs-Pink>.
- 6 National Council on Teacher Quality. 2013. "State Teacher Policy Yearbook". Available on the Internet at http://www.nctq.org/dmsView/2013_State_Teacher_Policy_Yearbook_National_Summary_NCTQ_Report.
- 7 Digital Learning Now. 2013. "Digital Report Card." Available on the Internet at http://digitallearningnow.com/site/uploads/2014/02/DLN_ReportCard_FINAL_2.pdf.
- 8 National Center for Education Statistics. 2013. "Digest of Education Statistics". Available on the Internet at http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d13/tables/dt13_204.20.asp.

Alabama

The Cotton State



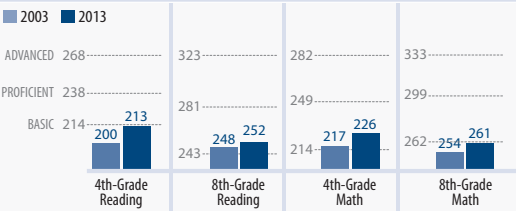
44

2013 NAEP Performance Rank

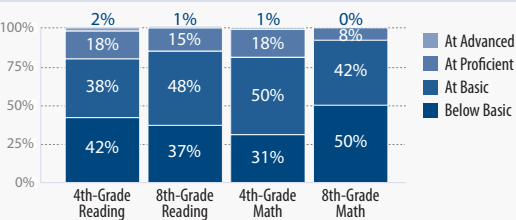
ALEC Historical Ranking 2009 NAEP: 40th | 2011 NAEP: 34th

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

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



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



Supplemental Information

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

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

D+

Education Policy Grade

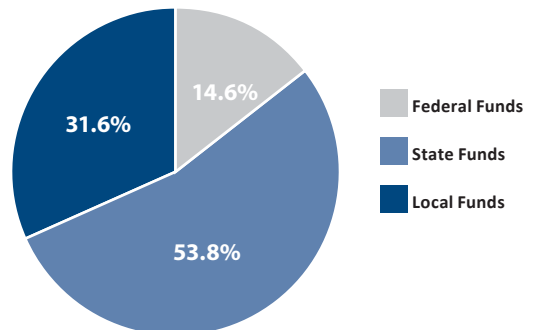
ALEC Historical Grading

2010: C | 2011: D+ | 2012: D+

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

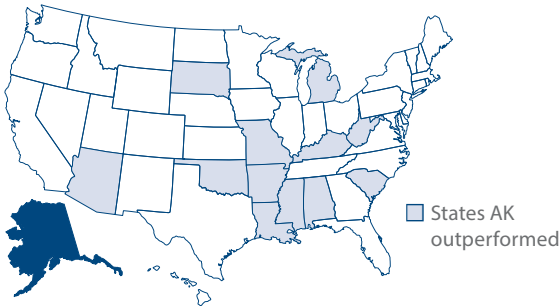
State Academic Standards	F
Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	No
Charter School Law Grade	—
Homeschool Regulation Burden <i>(A=None, B=Low, C=Moderate, D=High)</i>	B
Private School Choice Programs	C
Teacher Quality and Policies: Overall Grade	C-
Delivering Well Prepared Teachers	B
Expanding the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

Funding Sources



Alaska

The Last Frontier



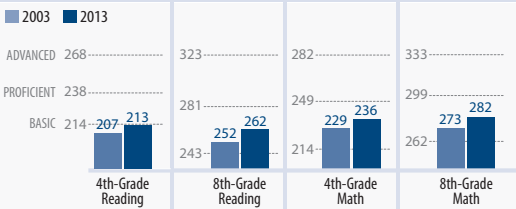
39

2013 NAEP Performance Rank

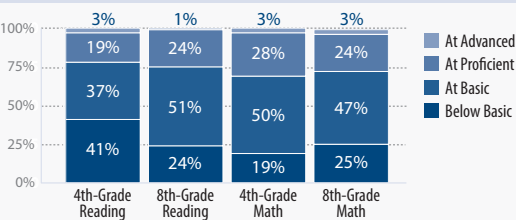
ALEC Historical Ranking 2009 NAEP: 11th | 2011 NAEP: 32nd

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

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



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



Supplemental Information

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

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

C-

Education Policy Grade

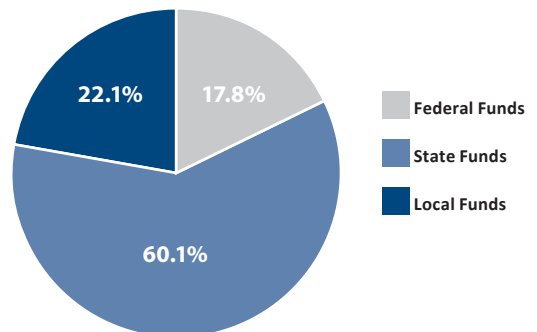
ALEC Historical Grading

2010: C | 2011: B- | 2012: C

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

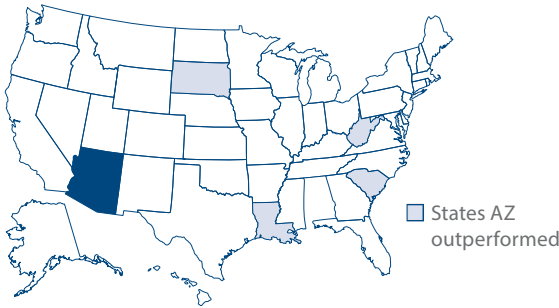
State Academic Standards	D+
Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	D
Home School Regulation Burden (A=None, B=Low, C=Moderate, D=High)	A
Private School Choice Programs	F
Teacher Quality and Policies: Overall Grade	D
Delivering Well Prepared Teachers	F
Expanding the Teaching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

Funding Sources



Arizona

The Grand Canyon State



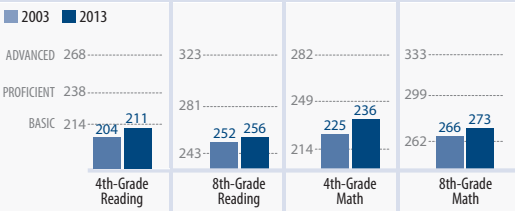
47

2013 NAEP Performance Rank

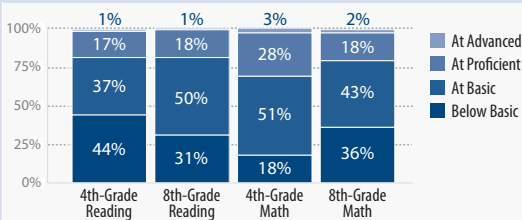
ALEC Historical Ranking 2009 NAEP: 45th | 2011 NAEP: 36th

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

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



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



Supplemental Information

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

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

B-

Education Policy Grade

ALEC Historical Grading

2010: B- | 2011: B | 2012: B+

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

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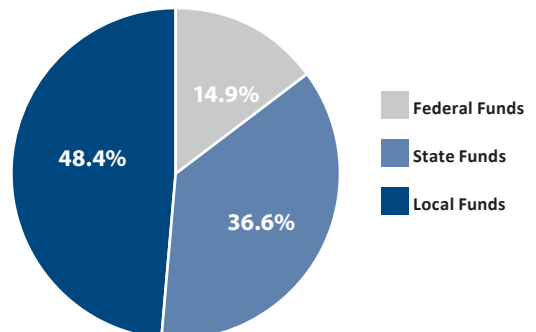
Identifying Effective Teachers	C
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Retaining Effective Teachers	C
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Exiting Ineffective Teachers	D+
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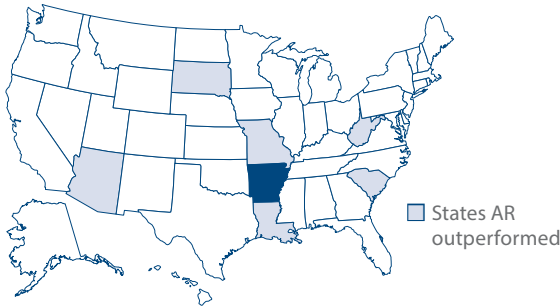
Digital Learning	D+
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Funding Sources



Arkansas

The Natural State



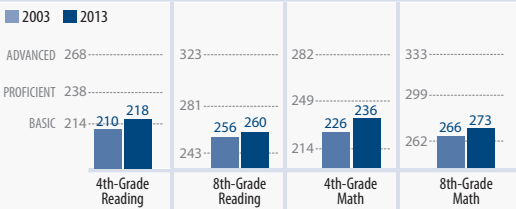
45

2013 NAEP Performance Rank

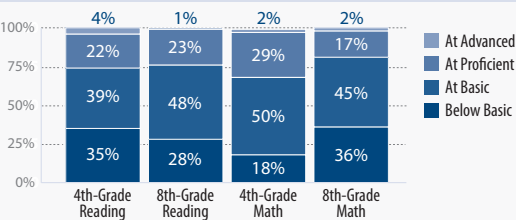
ALEC Historical Ranking 2009 NAEP: 44th | 2011 NAEP: 45th

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

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



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



Supplemental Information

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

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

D+

Education Policy Grade

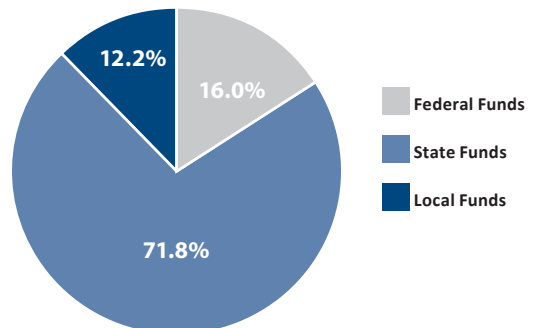
ALEC Historical Grading

2010: B- | 2011: C | 2012: C

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

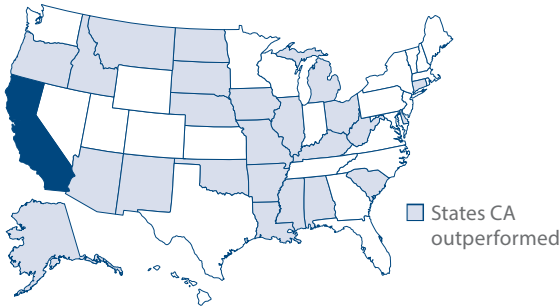
State Academic Standards	D+
Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	D
Homeschool Regulation Burden (A=None, B=Low, C=Moderate, D=High)	C
Private School Choice Programs	F
Teacher Quality and Policies: Overall Grade	B-
Delivering Well Prepared Teachers	C+
Expanding the Teaching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

Funding Sources



California

The Golden State



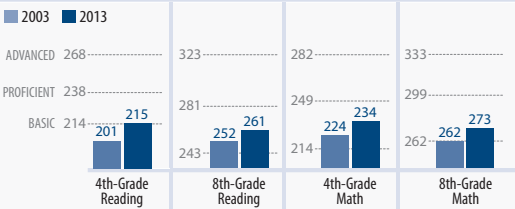
27

2013 NAEP Performance Rank

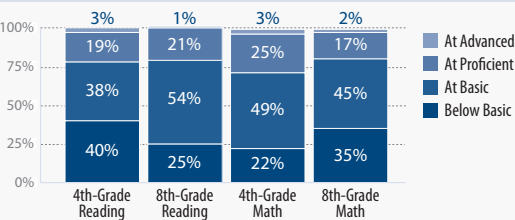
ALEC Historical Ranking 2009 NAEP: 30th | 2011 NAEP: 30th

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

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



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



Supplemental Information

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

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

C

Education Policy Grade

ALEC Historical Grading

2010: C | 2011: B | 2012: C+

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

State Academic Standards	C+
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Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	B

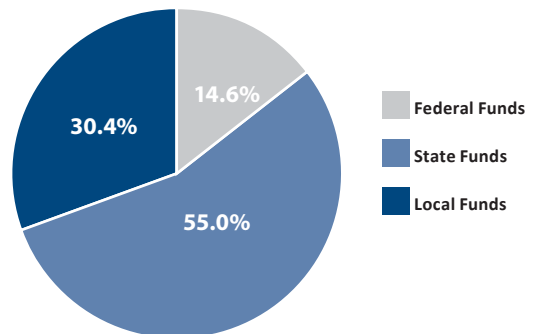
Homeschool Regulation Burden <i>(A=None, B=Low, C=Moderate, D=High)</i>	B
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Private School Choice Programs	F
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Teacher Quality and Policies: Overall Grade	D+
Delivering Well Prepared Teachers	D+
Expanding the Teaching Pool	C-
Identifying Effective Teachers	D-
Retaining Effective Teachers	C+
Exiting Ineffective Teachers	F

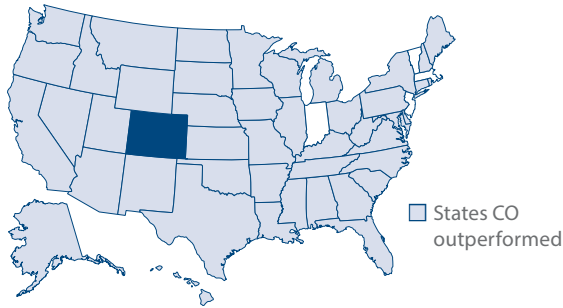
Digital Learning	F
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Funding Sources



Colorado

The Centennial State

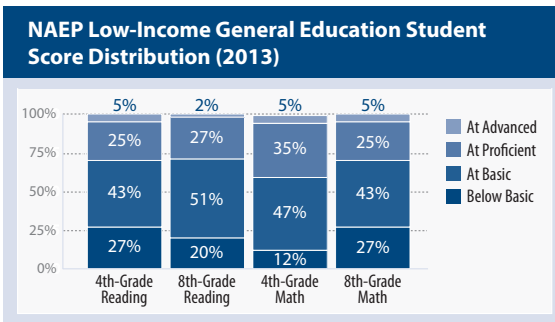
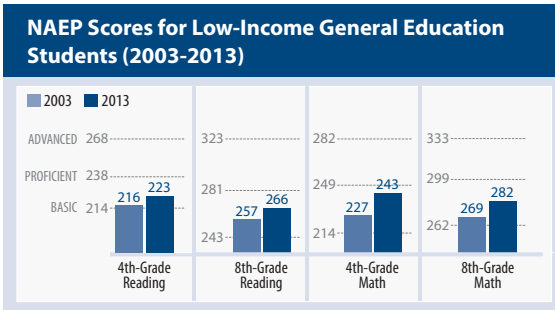


5

2013 NAEP Performance Rank

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

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



Supplemental Information

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

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

C+

Education Policy Grade

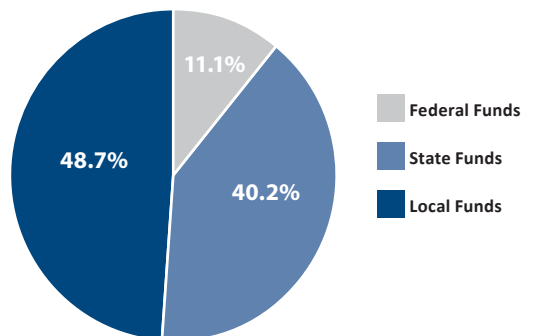
ALEC Historical Grading

2010: B | 2011: B | 2012: C+

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

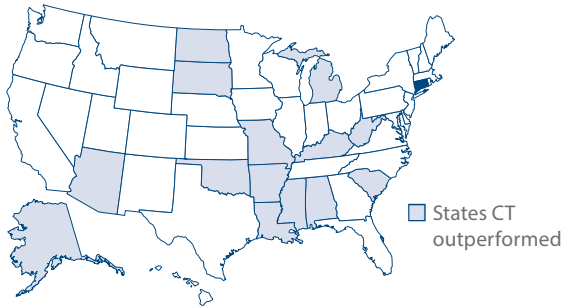
State Academic Standards	B
Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	B
Homeschool Regulation Burden <i>(A=None, B=Low, C=Moderate, D=High)</i>	C
Private School Choice Programs	F
Teacher Quality and Policies: Overall Grade	C+
Delivering Well Prepared Teachers	D-
Expanding the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

Funding Sources



Connecticut

The Constitution State



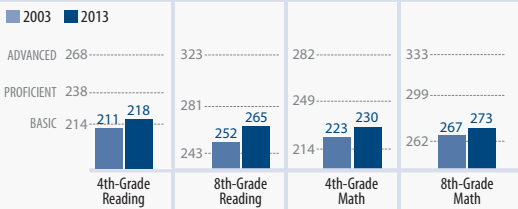
37

2013 NAEP Performance Rank

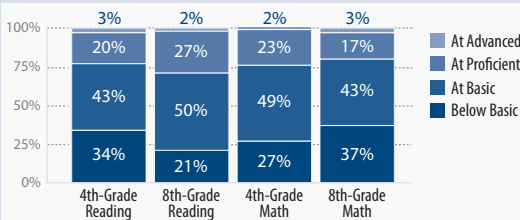
ALEC Historical Ranking 2009 NAEP: 29th | 2011 NAEP: 39th

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

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



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



Supplemental Information

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

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



Education Policy Grade

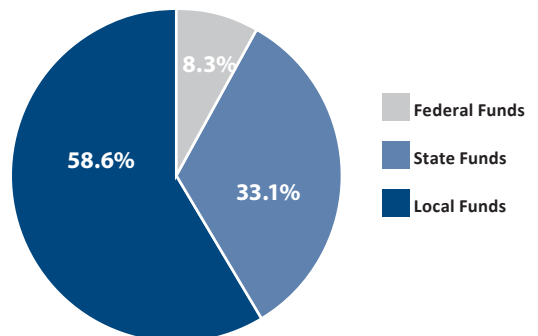
ALEC Historical Grading

2010: C | 2011: C+ | 2012: C-

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

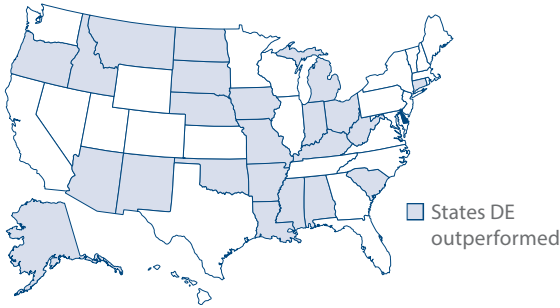
State Academic Standards	C-
Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	C
Homeschool Regulation Burden (A=None, B=Low, C=Moderate, D=High)	A
Private School Choice Programs	F
Teacher Quality and Policies: Overall Grade	B-
Delivering Well Prepared Teachers	B-
Expanding the Teaching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

Funding Sources



Delaware

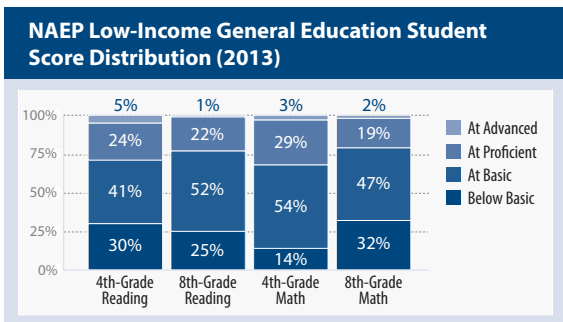
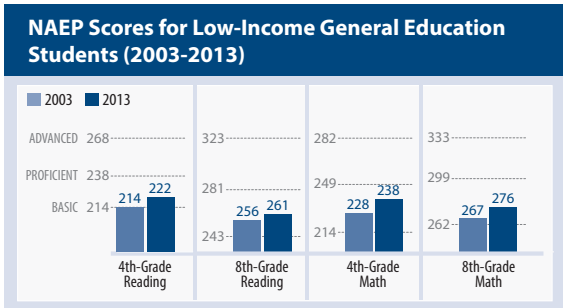
The First State



28

2013 NAEP Performance Rank

ALEC Historical Ranking 2009 NAEP: 19th | 2011 NAEP: 22nd
 Measures the overall scores for low-income general education students (non-ELL and non-IEP) and their gains/losses on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) fourth- and eighth-grade reading and mathematics exams from 2003 to 2013.



Supplemental Information

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

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

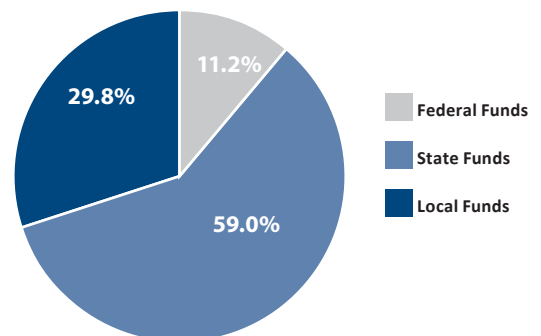
C

Education Policy Grade

ALEC Historical Grading 2010: C | 2011: C+ | 2012: C
 Grades state-level education policies that provide high-quality educational options to all students.

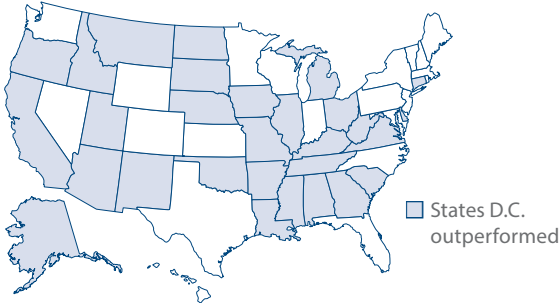
State Academic Standards	B-
Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	C
Homeschool Regulation Burden <i>(A=None, B=Low, C=Moderate, D=High)</i>	B
Private School Choice Programs	F
Teacher Quality and Policies: Overall Grade	C+
Delivering Well Prepared Teachers	C+
Expanding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

Funding Sources



District of Columbia

The Federal City



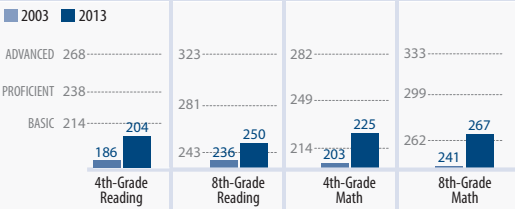
22

2013 NAEP Performance Rank

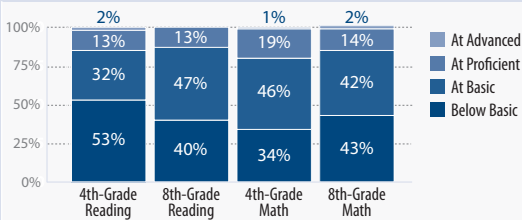
ALEC Historical Ranking 2009 NAEP: 26th | 2011 NAEP: 24th

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

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



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



Supplemental Information

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

Graduation Rate	Average Class Size	Annual Cost Per Student
59.9%	11.86	\$29,029

B-

Education Policy Grade

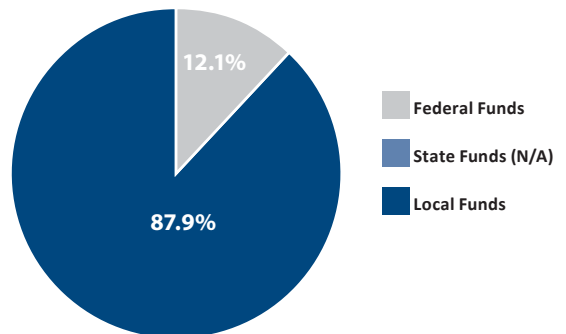
ALEC Historical Grading

2010: C | 2011: B | 2012: B-

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

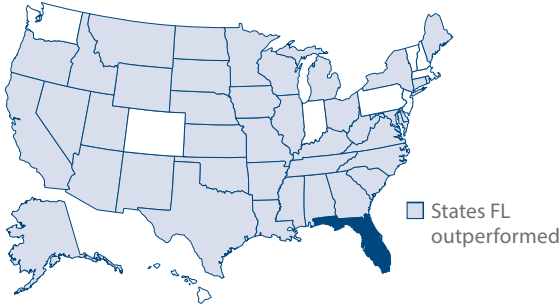
State Academic Standards	C+
Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	A
Homeschool Regulation Burden (A=None, B=Low, C=Moderate, D=High)	C
Private School Choice Programs	B
Teacher Quality and Policies: Overall Grade	D+
Delivering Well Prepared Teachers	D+
Expanding the Teaching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

Funding Sources



Florida

The Sunshine State



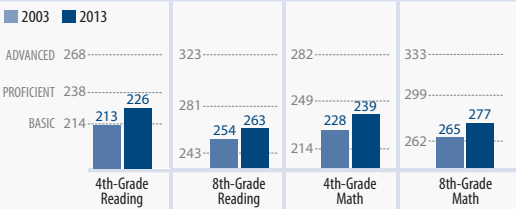
10

2013 NAEP Performance Rank

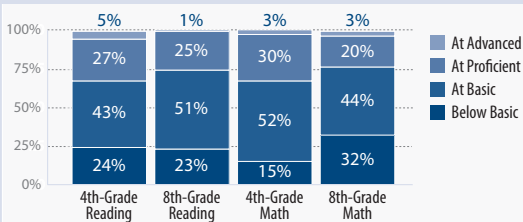
ALEC Historical Ranking 2009 NAEP: 3rd | 2011 NAEP: 12th

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

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



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



Supplemental Information

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

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

B

Education Policy Grade

ALEC Historical Grading

2010: B+ | 2011: B+ | 2012: B

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

State Academic Standards	C
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Charter Schools	
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Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
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Charter School Law Grade	B
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Homeschool Regulation Burden (A=None, B=Low, C=Moderate, D=High)	C
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Private School Choice Programs	A
--------------------------------	---

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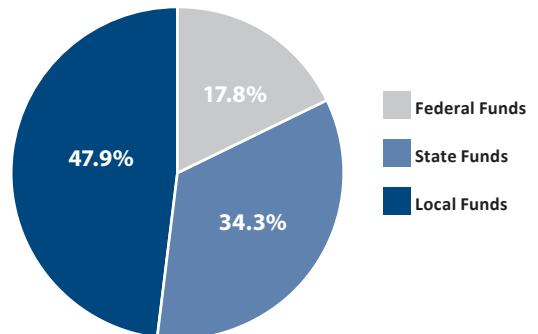
Identifying Effective Teachers	B+
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Retaining Effective Teachers	B+
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Exiting Ineffective Teachers	B-
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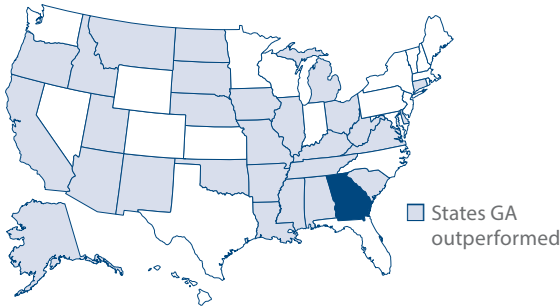
Digital Learning	B+
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Funding Sources



Georgia

The Peach State



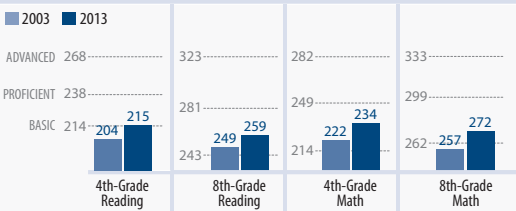
23

2013 NAEP Performance Rank

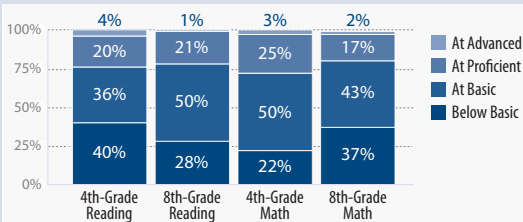
ALEC Historical Ranking 2009 NAEP: 27th | 2011 NAEP: 27th

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

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



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



Supplemental Information

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

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

C+

Education Policy Grade

ALEC Historical Grading

2010: C | 2011: B | 2012: B-

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

State Academic Standards	F
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Charter Schools	
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Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
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Charter School Law Grade	C
--------------------------	---

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

Private School Choice Programs	A
--------------------------------	---

Teacher Quality and Policies: Overall Grade	B-
--	----

Delivering Well Prepared Teachers	C+
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Expanding the Teaching Pool	B
-----------------------------	---

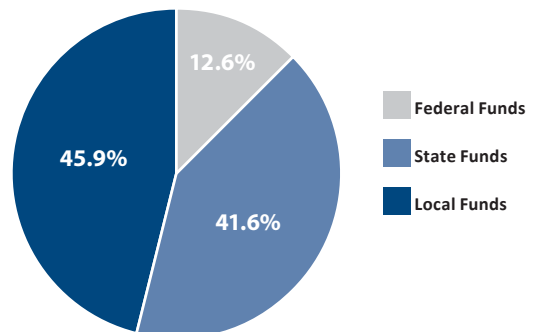
Identifying Effective Teachers	C+
--------------------------------	----

Retaining Effective Teachers	C
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Exiting Ineffective Teachers	B+
------------------------------	----

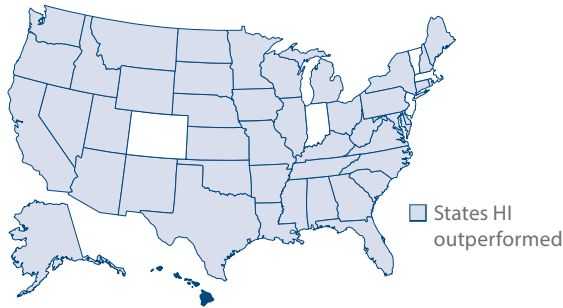
Digital Learning	B
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Funding Sources



Hawaii

The Aloha State



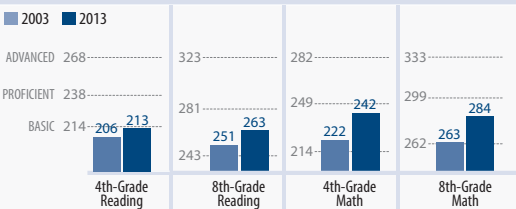
6

2013 NAEP Performance Rank

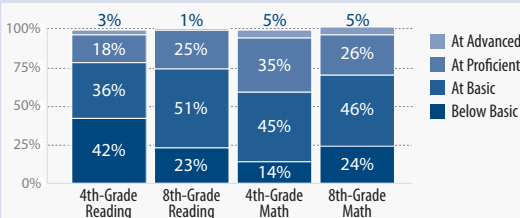
ALEC Historical Ranking 2009 NAEP: 15th | 2011 NAEP: 13th

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

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



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



Supplemental Information

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

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

C-

Education Policy Grade

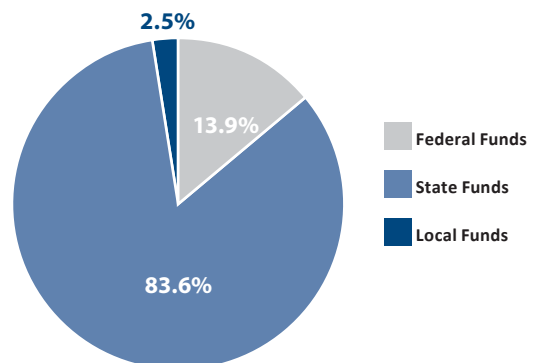
ALEC Historical Grading

2010: C | 2011: C+ | 2012: C-

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

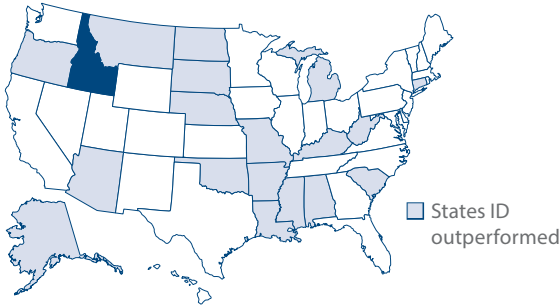
State Academic Standards	C
Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	C
Homeschool Regulation Burden (A=None, B=Low, C=Moderate, D=High)	C
Private School Choice Programs	F
Teacher Quality and Policies: Overall Grade	D+
Delivering Well Prepared Teachers	F
Expanding the Teaching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

Funding Sources



Idaho

The Gem State



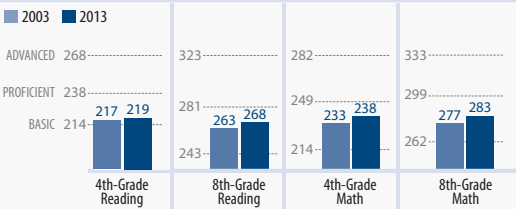
33

2013 NAEP Performance Rank

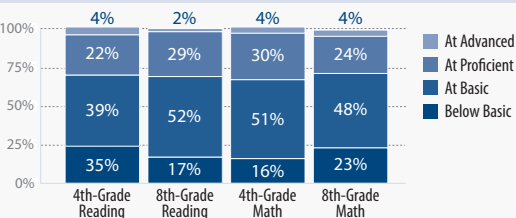
ALEC Historical Ranking 2009 NAEP: 22nd | 2011 NAEP: 29th

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

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



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



Supplemental Information

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

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

Education Policy Grade

ALEC Historical Grading

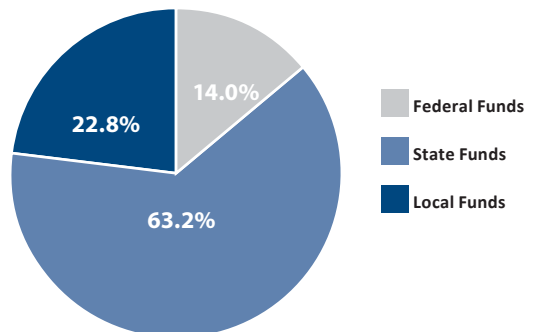
C

2010: B- | 2011: B- | 2012: B-

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

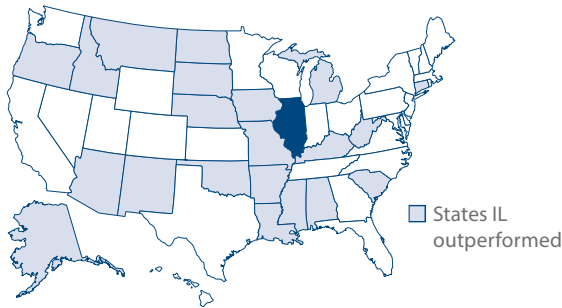
State Academic Standards	D
Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	B
Homeschool Regulation Burden (A=None, B=Low, C=Moderate, D=High)	A
Private School Choice Programs	F
Teacher Quality and Policies: Overall Grade	D+
Delivering Well Prepared Teachers	D+
Expanding the Teaching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

Funding Sources



Illinois

The Prairie State



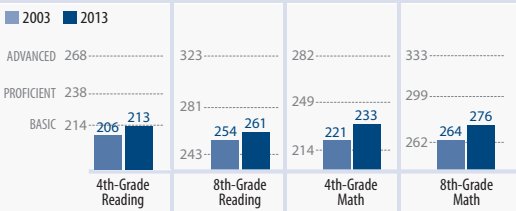
30

2013 NAEP Performance Rank

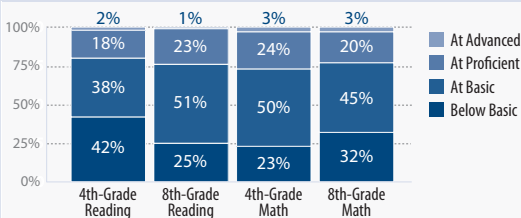
ALEC Historical Ranking 2009 NAEP: 38th | 2011 NAEP: 28th

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

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



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



Supplemental Information

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

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

C

Education Policy Grade

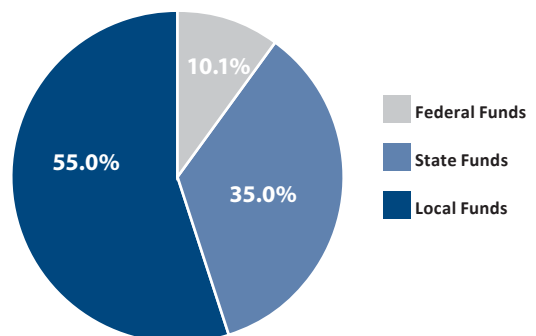
ALEC Historical Grading

2010: C | 2011: C+ | 2012: C

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

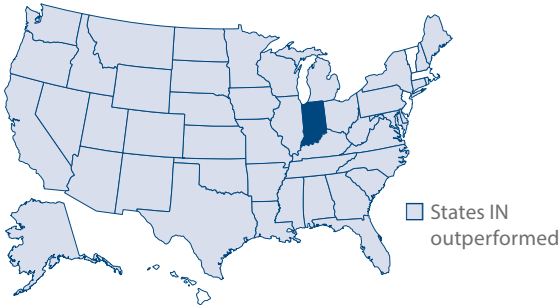
State Academic Standards	D
Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	C
Homeschool Regulation Burden (A=None, B=Low, C=Moderate, D=High)	A
Private School Choice Programs	D
Teacher Quality and Policies: Overall Grade	C+
Delivering Well Prepared Teachers	D+
Expanding the Teaching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

Funding Sources



Indiana

The Hoosier State

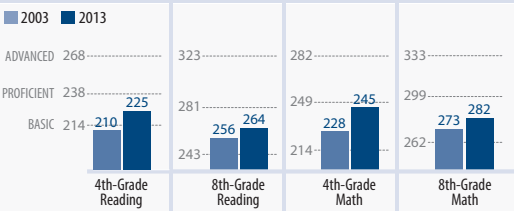


4

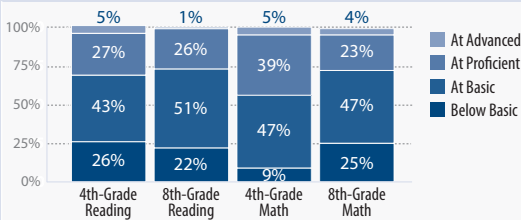
2013 NAEP Performance Rank

ALEC Historical Ranking 2009 NAEP: 13th | 2011 NAEP: 17th
 Measures the overall scores for low-income general education students (non-ELL and non-IEP) and their gains/losses on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) fourth- and eighth-grade reading and mathematics exams from 2003 to 2013.

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



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



Supplemental Information

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

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

B+

Education Policy Grade

ALEC Historical Grading

2010: C+ | 2011: B | 2012: B+

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

State Academic Standards	C-
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Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	A

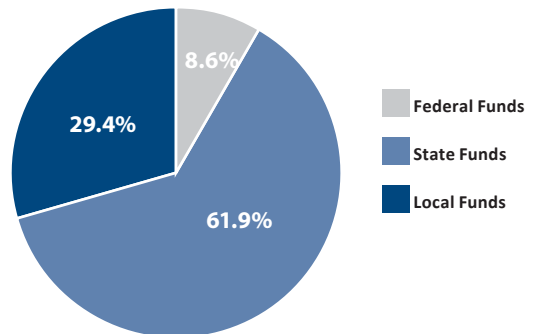
Homeschool Regulation Burden (A=None, B=Low, C=Moderate, D=High)	A
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Private School Choice Programs	A
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Teacher Quality and Policies: Overall Grade	B-
Delivering Well Prepared Teachers	B+
Expanding the Teaching Pool	C-
Identifying Effective Teachers	C
Retaining Effective Teachers	C-
Exiting Ineffective Teachers	B

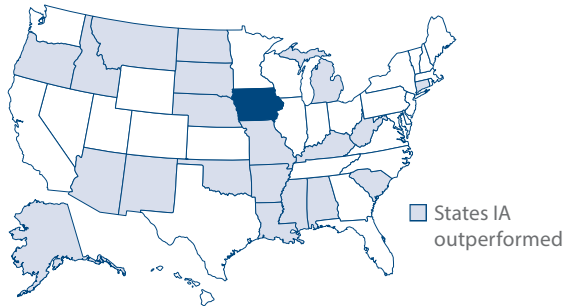
Digital Learning	C
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Funding Sources



Iowa

The Hawkeye State



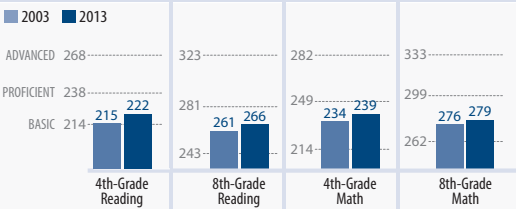
31

2013 NAEP Performance Rank

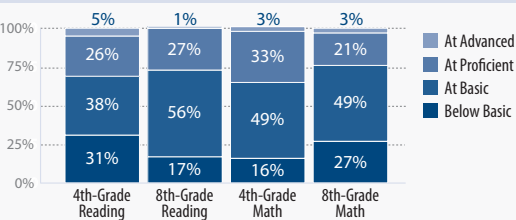
ALEC Historical Ranking 2009 NAEP: 31st | 2011 NAEP: 31st

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

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



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



Supplemental Information

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

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

C

Education Policy Grade

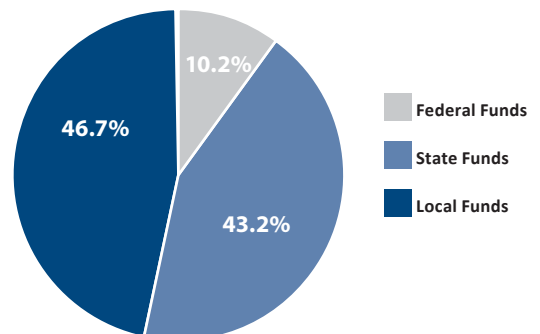
ALEC Historical Grading

2010: C | 2011: C- | 2012: C

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

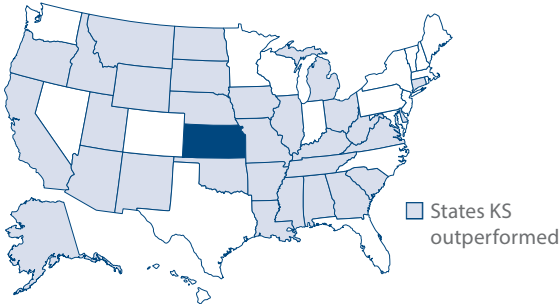
State Academic Standards	D+
Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	F
Homeschool Regulation Burden (A=None, B=Low, C=Moderate, D=High)	A
Private School Choice Programs	D
Teacher Quality and Policies: Overall Grade	D
Delivering Well Prepared Teachers	D+
Expanding the Teaching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

Funding Sources



Kansas

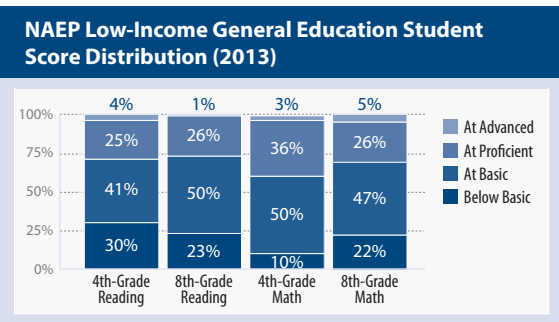
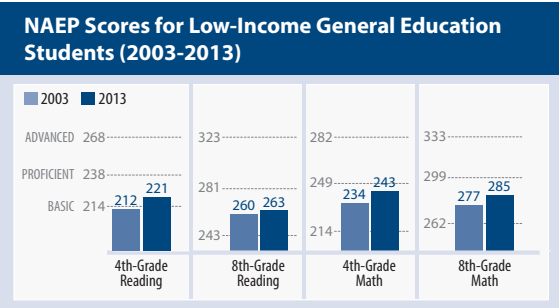
The Sunflower State



20

2013 NAEP Performance Rank

ALEC Historical Ranking 2009 NAEP: 7th | 2011 NAEP: 8th
 Measures the overall scores for low-income general education students (non-ELL and non-IEP) and their gains/losses on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) fourth- and eighth-grade reading and mathematics exams from 2003 to 2013.



Supplemental Information

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

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

D+

Education Policy Grade

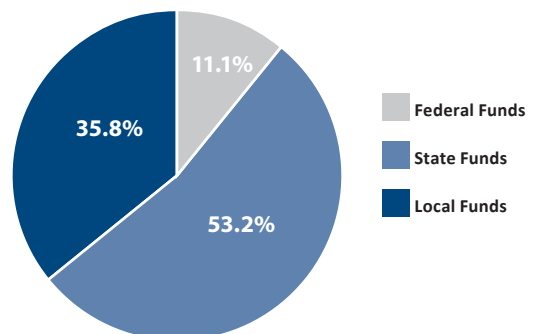
ALEC Historical Grading

2010: D+ | 2011: C- | 2012: C-

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

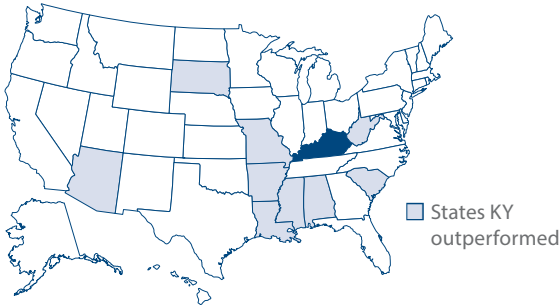
State Academic Standards	D
Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	F
Homeschool Regulation Burden <i>(A=None, B=Low, C=Moderate, D=High)</i>	B
Private School Choice Programs	F
Teacher Quality and Policies: Overall Grade	D
Delivering Well Prepared Teachers	D+
Expanding the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

Funding Sources



Kentucky

The Bluegrass State



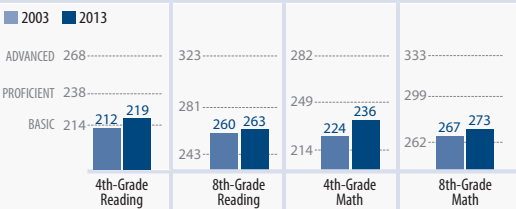
42

2013 NAEP Performance Rank

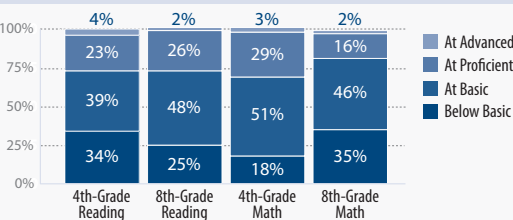
ALEC Historical Ranking 2009 NAEP: 37th | 2011 NAEP: 37th

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

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



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



Supplemental Information

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

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

C

Education Policy Grade

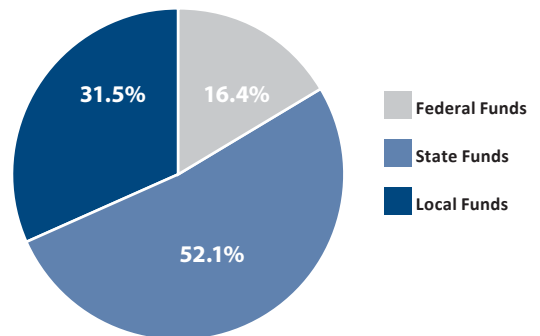
ALEC Historical Grading

2010: C+ | 2011: C | 2012: D+

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

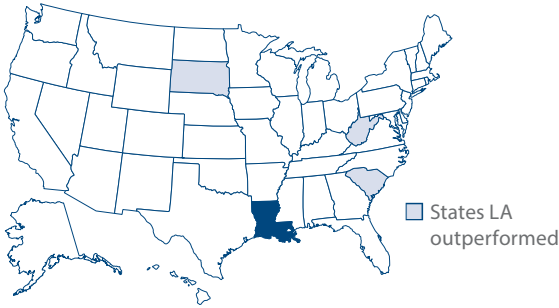
State Academic Standards	C
Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	No
Charter School Law Grade	-
Homeschool Regulation Burden (A=None, B=Low, C=Moderate, D=High)	B
Private School Choice Programs	F
Teacher Quality and Policies: Overall Grade	C
Delivering Well Prepared Teachers	B-
Expanding the Teaching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

Funding Sources



Louisiana

The Pelican State



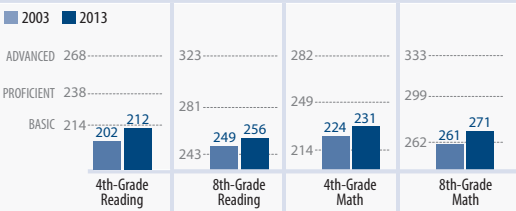
48

2013 NAEP Performance Rank

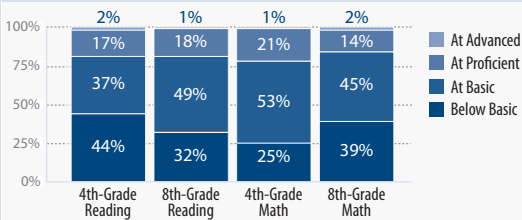
ALEC Historical Ranking 2009 NAEP: 47th | 2011 NAEP: 49th

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

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



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



Supplemental Information

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

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

B-

Education Policy Grade

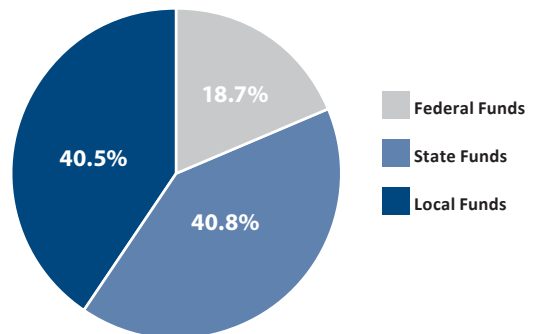
ALEC Historical Grading

2010: B | 2011: B- | 2012: B

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

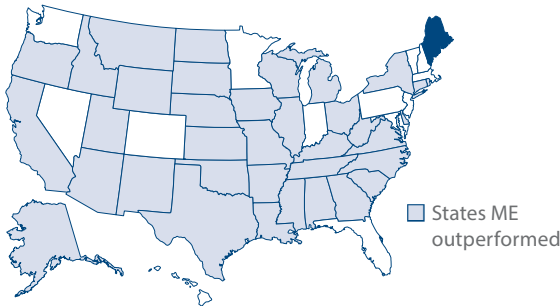
State Academic Standards	D+
Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	C
Homeschool Regulation Burden (A=None, B=Low, C=Moderate, D=High)	C
Private School Choice Programs	A
Teacher Quality and Policies: Overall Grade	B
Delivering Well Prepared Teachers	C-
Expanding the Teaching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

Funding Sources



Maine

The Pine Tree State



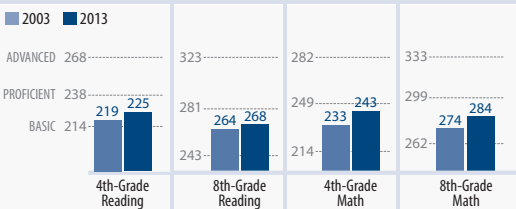
14

2013 NAEP Performance Rank

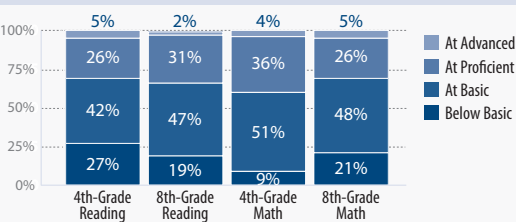
ALEC Historical Ranking 2009 NAEP: 14th | 2011 NAEP: 14th

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

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



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



Supplemental Information

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

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

C

Education Policy Grade

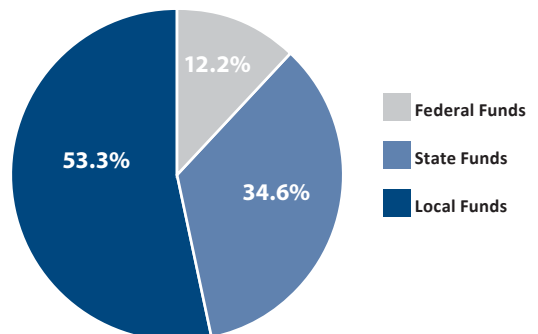
ALEC Historical Grading

2010: D+ | 2011: C- | 2012: C

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

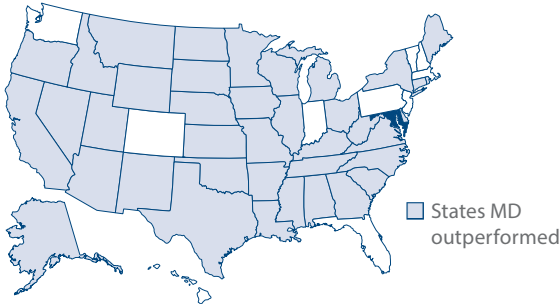
State Academic Standards	B-
Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	C
Homeschool Regulation Burden (A=None, B=Low, C=Moderate, D=High)	C
Private School Choice Programs	D
Teacher Quality and Policies: Overall Grade	C-
Delivering Well Prepared Teachers	D+
Expanding the Teaching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

Funding Sources



Maryland

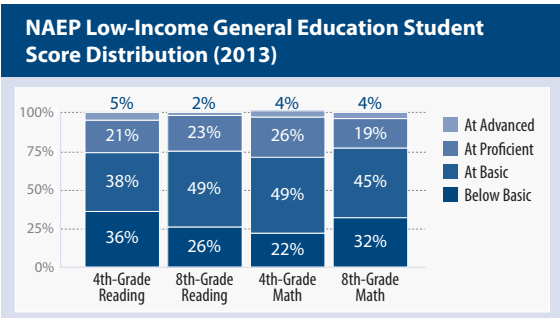
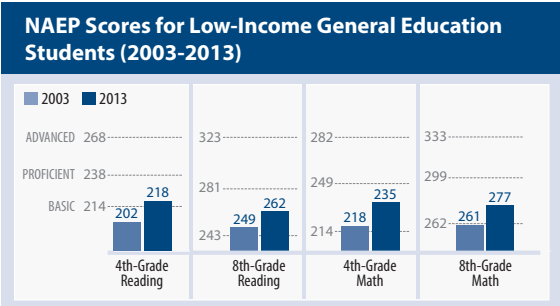
The Old Line State



11

2013 NAEP Performance Rank

ALEC Historical Ranking 2009 NAEP: 20th | 2011 NAEP: 20th
 Measures the overall scores for low-income general education students (non-ELL and non-IEP) and their gains/losses on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) fourth- and eighth-grade reading and mathematics exams from 2003 to 2013.



Supplemental Information

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

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

D+

Education Policy Grade

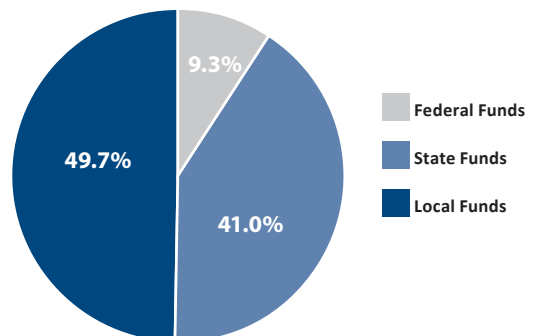
ALEC Historical Grading

2010: C | 2011: C- | 2012: D+

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

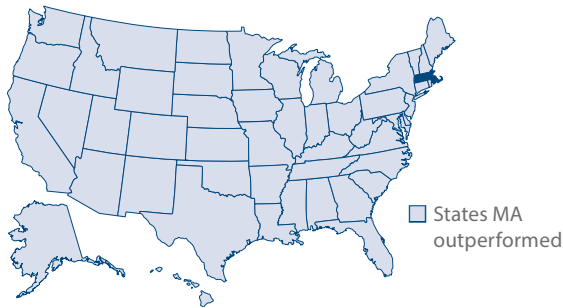
State Academic Standards	C-
Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	D
Homeschool Regulation Burden <i>(A=None, B=Low, C=Moderate, D=High)</i>	C
Private School Choice Programs	F
Teacher Quality and Policies: Overall Grade	D+
Delivering Well Prepared Teachers	D+
Expanding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

Funding Sources



Massachusetts

The Bay State



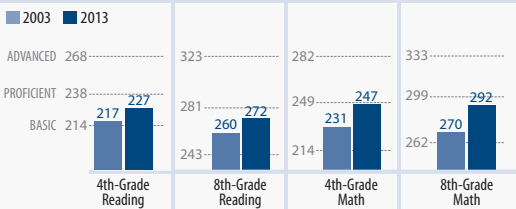
1

2013 NAEP Performance Rank

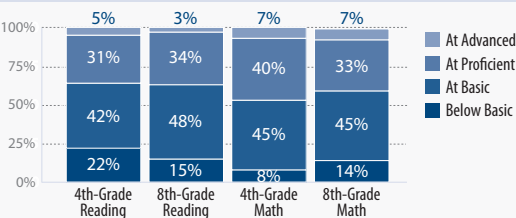
ALEC Historical Ranking 2009 NAEP: 2nd | 2011 NAEP: 1st

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

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



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



Supplemental Information

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

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

C

Education Policy Grade

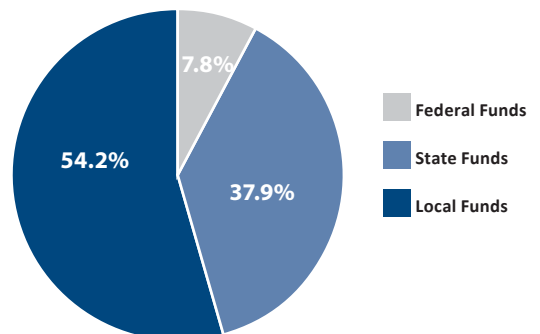
ALEC Historical Grading

2010: C | 2011: B- | 2012: C

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

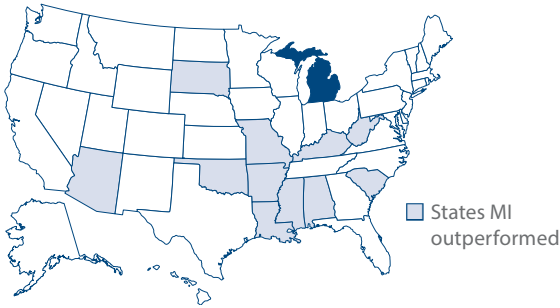
State Academic Standards	A
Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	C
Homeschool Regulation Burden (A=None, B=Low, C=Moderate, D=High)	D
Private School Choice Programs	F
Teacher Quality and Policies: Overall Grade	B-
Delivering Well Prepared Teachers	B-
Expanding the Teaching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

Funding Sources



Michigan

The Great Lakes State



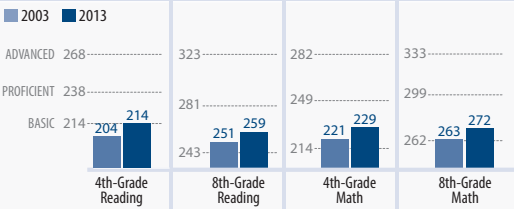
40

2013 NAEP Performance Rank

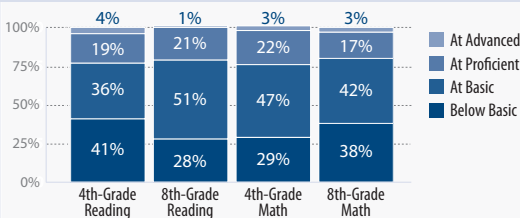
ALEC Historical Ranking 2009 NAEP: 49th | 2011 NAEP: 46th

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

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



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



Supplemental Information

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

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

C+

Education Policy Grade

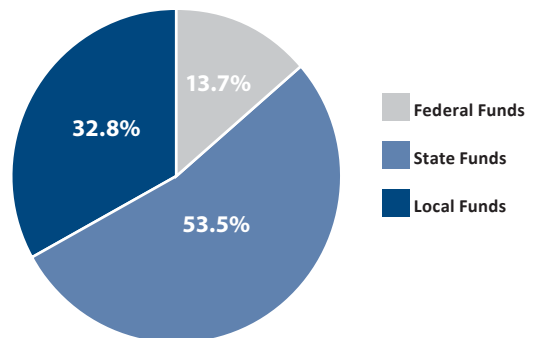
ALEC Historical Grading

2010: B- | 2011: B- | 2012: B-

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

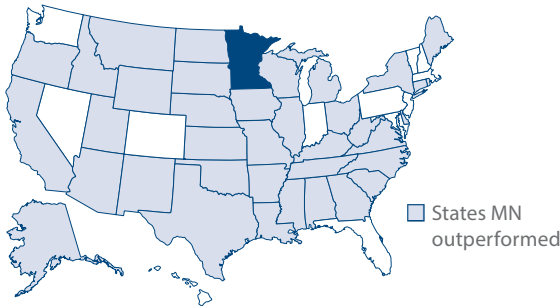
State Academic Standards	D-
Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	A
Homeschool Regulation Burden (A=None, B=Low, C=Moderate, D=High)	A
Private School Choice Programs	F
Teacher Quality and Policies: Overall Grade	B-
Delivering Well Prepared Teachers	D
Expanding the Teaching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

Funding Sources



Minnesota

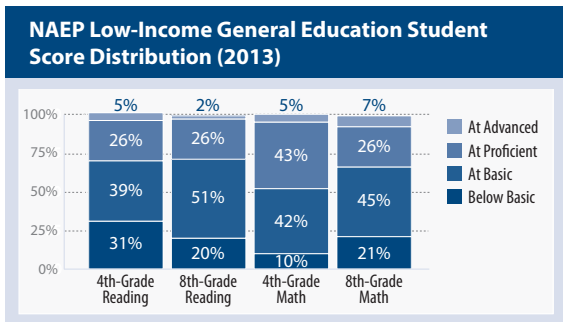
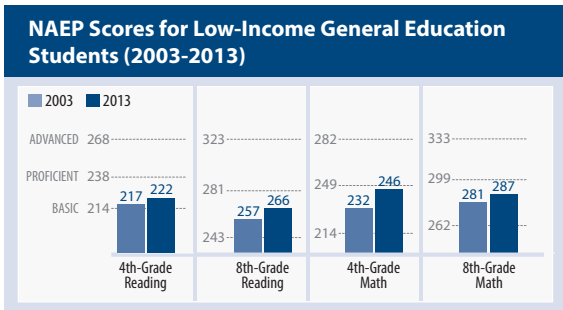
The North Star State



13

2013 NAEP Performance Rank

ALEC Historical Ranking 2009 NAEP: 23rd | 2011 NAEP: 18th
 Measures the overall scores for low-income general education students (non-ELL and non-IEP) and their gains/losses on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) fourth- and eighth-grade reading and mathematics exams from 2003 to 2013.



Supplemental Information

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

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

C+

Education Policy Grade

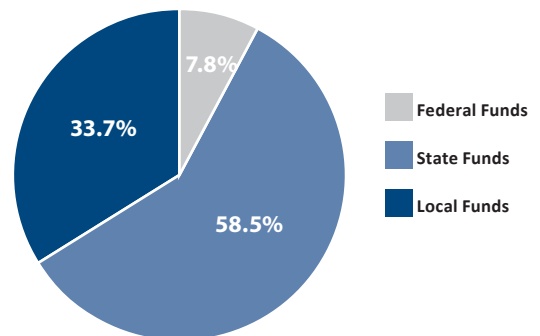
ALEC Historical Grading

2010: B | 2011: B+ | 2012: C+

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

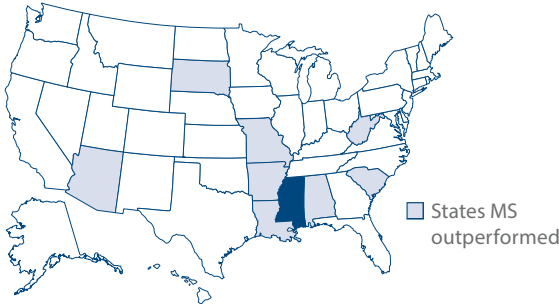
State Academic Standards	B
Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	A
Homeschool Regulation Burden <i>(A=None, B=Low, C=Moderate, D=High)</i>	C
Private School Choice Programs	D
Teacher Quality and Policies: Overall Grade	C-
Delivering Well Prepared Teachers	C+
Expanding the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

Funding Sources



Mississippi

The Magnolia State



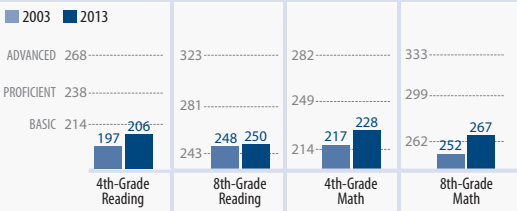
43

2013 NAEP Performance Rank

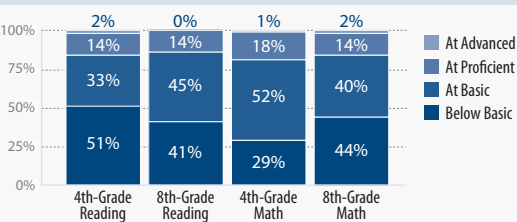
ALEC Historical Ranking 2009 NAEP: 46th | 2011 NAEP: 48th

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

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



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



Supplemental Information

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

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

C

Education Policy Grade

ALEC Historical Grading

2010: D+ | 2011: C | 2012: C

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

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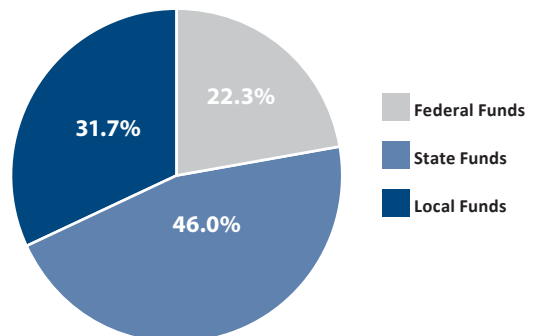
Identifying Effective Teachers	C-
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Retaining Effective Teachers	C
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Exiting Ineffective Teachers	D+
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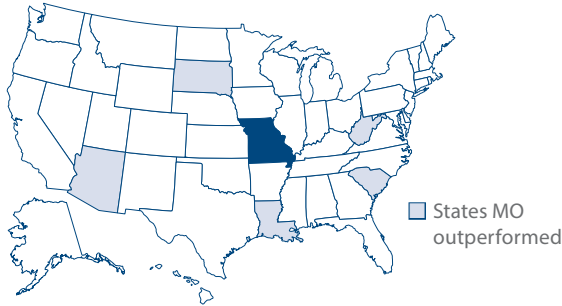
Digital Learning	F
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Funding Sources



Missouri

The Show-Me State

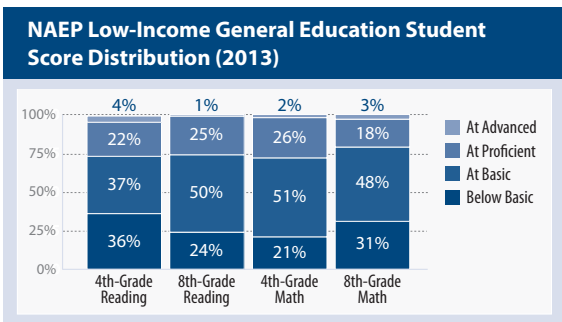
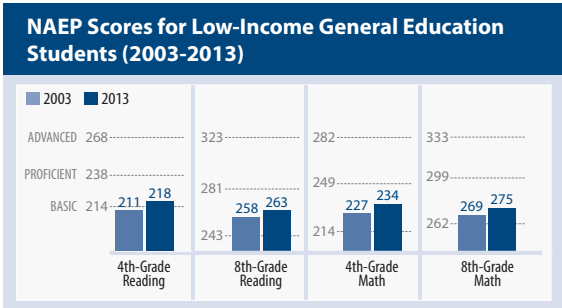


46

2013 NAEP Performance Rank

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

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



Supplemental Information

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

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

B-

Education Policy Grade

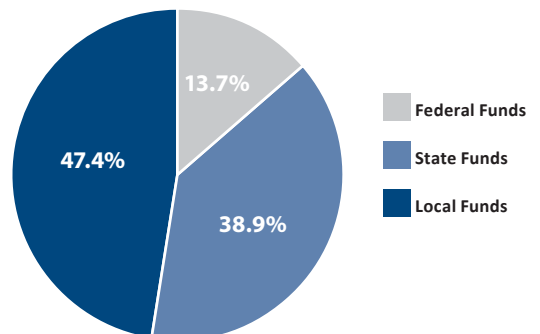
ALEC Historical Grading

2010: B | 2011: A- | 2012: C

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

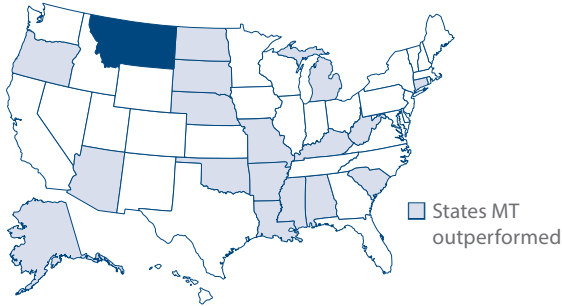
State Academic Standards	A
Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	B
Homeschool Regulation Burden (A=None, B=Low, C=Moderate, D=High)	A
Private School Choice Programs	F
Teacher Quality and Policies: Overall Grade	C-
Delivering Well Prepared Teachers	C-
Expanding the Teaching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

Funding Sources



Montana

The Treasure State

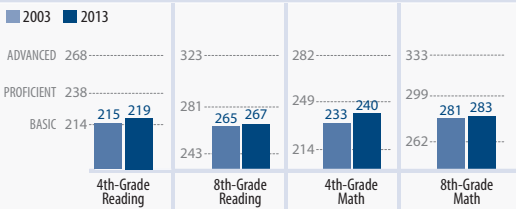


34

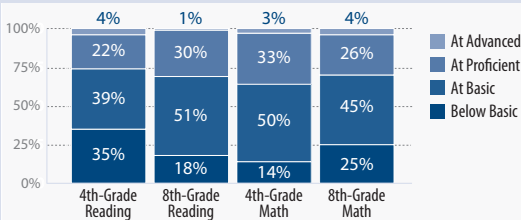
2013 NAEP Performance Rank

ALEC Historical Ranking 2009 NAEP: 9th | 2011 NAEP: 16th
 Measures the overall scores for low-income general education students (non-ELL and non-IEP) and their gains/losses on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) fourth- and eighth-grade reading and mathematics exams from 2003 to 2013.

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



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



Supplemental Information

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

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

D+

Education Policy Grade

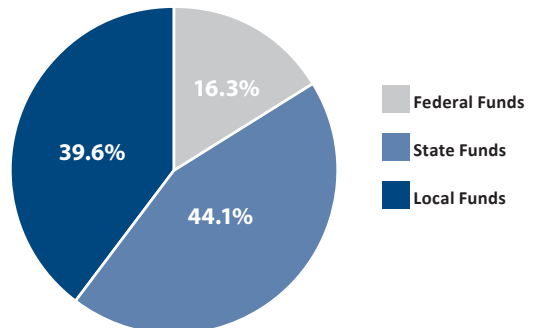
ALEC Historical Grading

2010: D+ | 2011: C | 2012: D

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

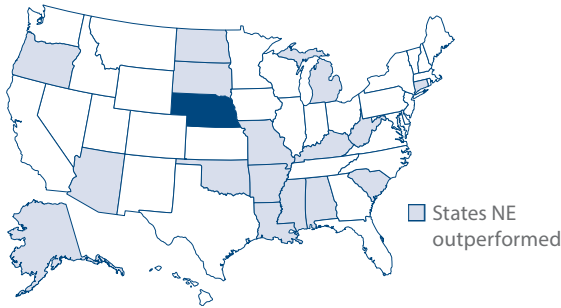
State Academic Standards	C
Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	No
Charter School Law Grade	-
Homeschool Regulation Burden <i>(A=None, B=Low, C=Moderate, D=High)</i>	B
Private School Choice Programs	F
Teacher Quality and Policies: Overall Grade	F
Delivering Well Prepared Teachers	F
Expanding the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

Funding Sources



Nebraska

The Cornhusker State



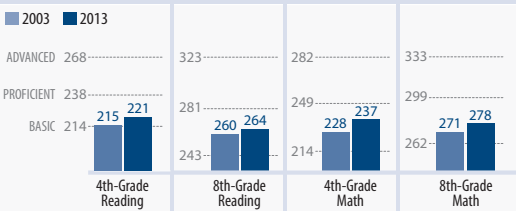
35

2013 NAEP Performance Rank

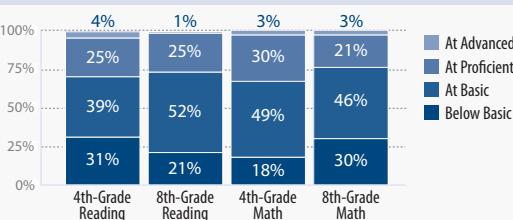
ALEC Historical Ranking 2009 NAEP: 33rd | 2011 NAEP: 42nd

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

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



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



Supplemental Information

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

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

D+

Education Policy Grade

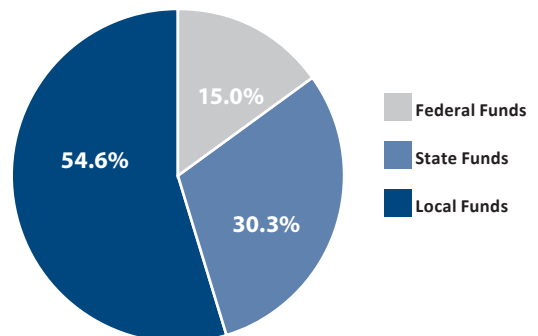
ALEC Historical Grading

2010: D | 2011: D+ | 2012: D

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

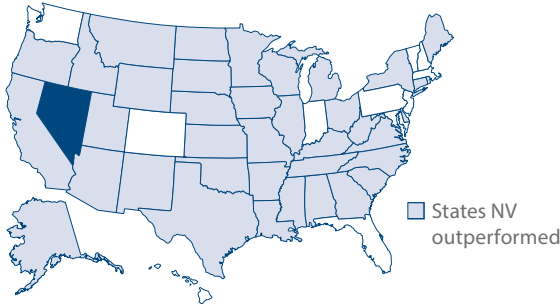
State Academic Standards	C
Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	No
Charter School Law Grade	-
Homeschool Regulation Burden (A=None, B=Low, C=Moderate, D=High)	B
Private School Choice Programs	F
Teacher Quality and Policies: Overall Grade	D-
Delivering Well Prepared Teachers	F
Expanding the Teaching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

Funding Sources



Nevada

The Silver State



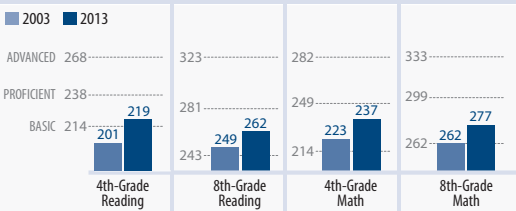
12

2013 NAEP Performance Rank

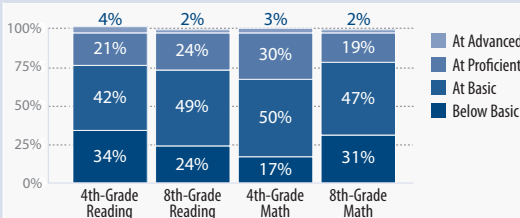
ALEC Historical Ranking 2009 NAEP: 18th | 2011 NAEP: 15th

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

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



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



Supplemental Information

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

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

C

Education Policy Grade

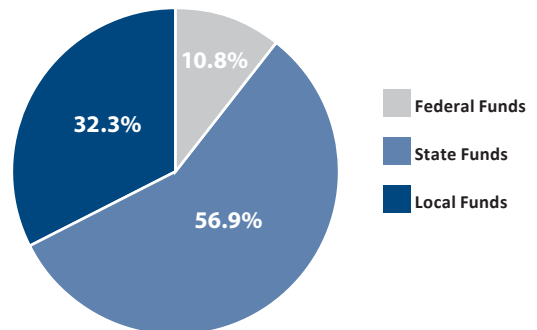
ALEC Historical Grading

2010: C | 2011: C+ | 2012: C+

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

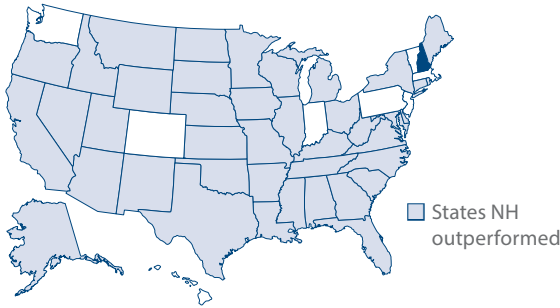
State Academic Standards	C+
Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	C
Homeschool Regulation Burden <i>(A=None, B=Low, C=Moderate, D=High)</i>	B
Private School Choice Programs	F
Teacher Quality and Policies: Overall Grade	C-
Delivering Well Prepared Teachers	D-
Expanding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

Funding Sources



New Hampshire

The Granite State

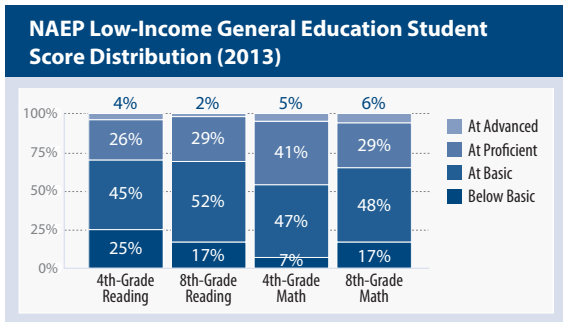
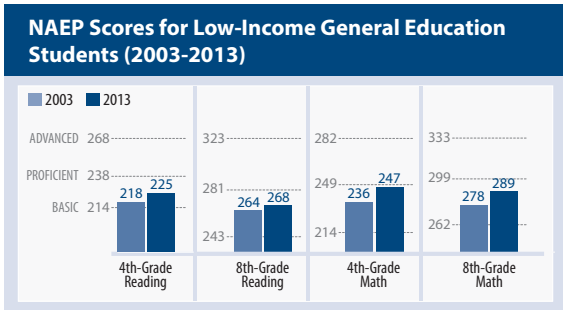


9

2013 NAEP Performance Rank

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

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



Supplemental Information

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

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

C

Education Policy Grade

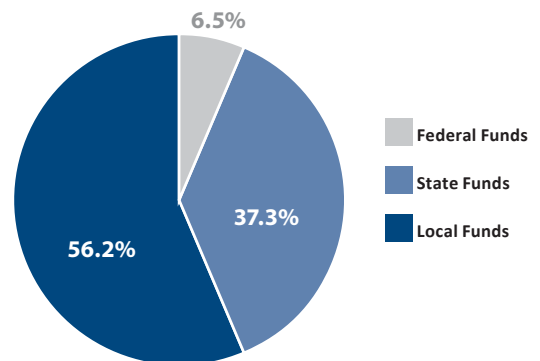
ALEC Historical Grading

2010: C | 2011: C+ | 2012: C

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

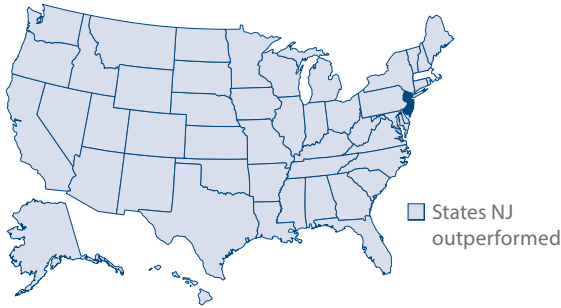
State Academic Standards	B
Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	D
Homeschool Regulation Burden (A=None, B=Low, C=Moderate, D=High)	C
Private School Choice Programs	C
Teacher Quality and Policies: Overall Grade	D
Delivering Well Prepared Teachers	C-
Expanding the Teaching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

Funding Sources



New Jersey

The Garden State



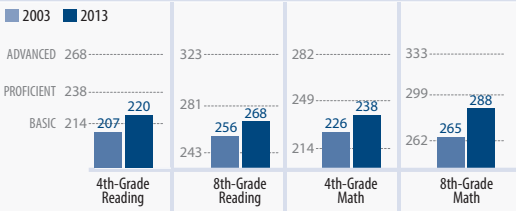
2

2013 NAEP Performance Rank

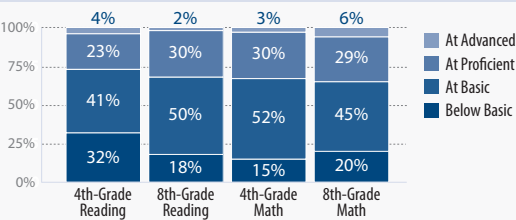
ALEC Historical Ranking 2009 NAEP: 10th | 2011 NAEP: 3rd

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

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



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



Supplemental Information

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

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

C+

Education Policy Grade

ALEC Historical Grading

2010: C | 2011: B- | 2012: C

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

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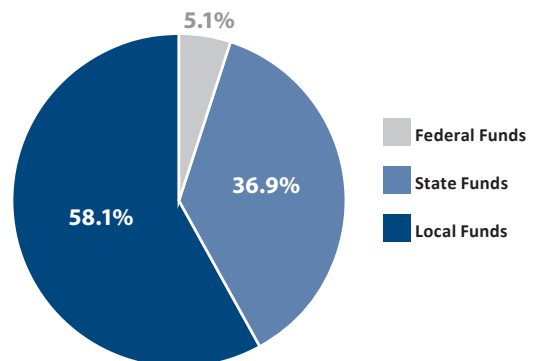
Identifying Effective Teachers	B-
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Retaining Effective Teachers	C
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Exiting Ineffective Teachers	C
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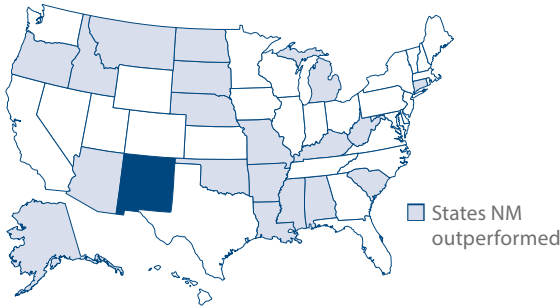
Digital Learning	F
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Funding Sources



New Mexico

The Land of Enchantment

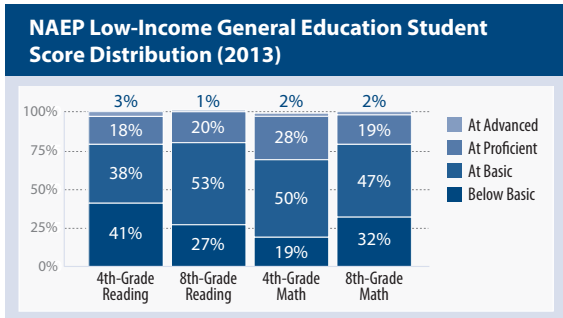
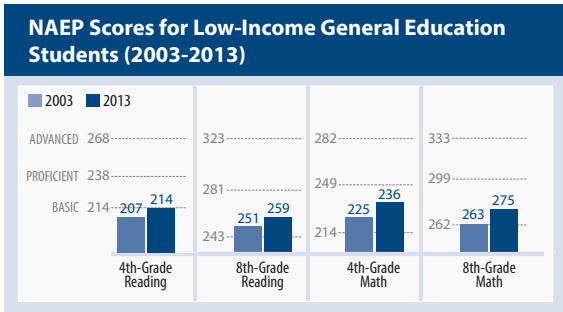


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2013 NAEP Performance Rank

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

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



Supplemental Information

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

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

C

Education Policy Grade

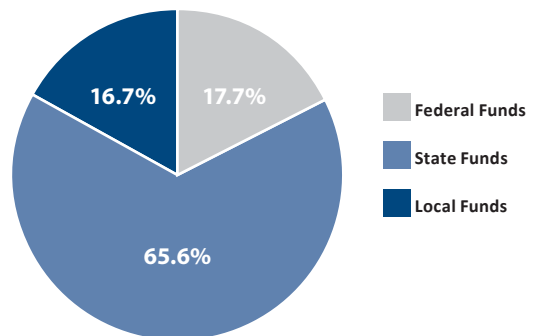
ALEC Historical Grading

2010: B | 2011: B | 2012: C

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

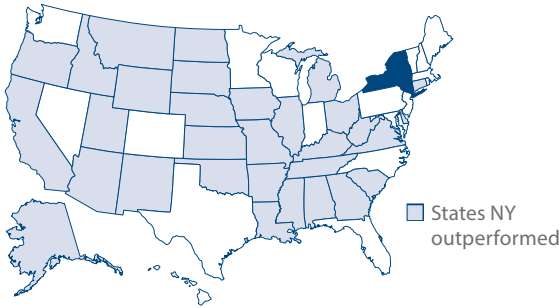
State Academic Standards	B
Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	C
Homeschool Regulation Burden (A=None, B=Low, C=Moderate, D=High)	B
Private School Choice Programs	F
Teacher Quality and Policies: Overall Grade	D+
Delivering Well Prepared Teachers	D
Expanding the Teaching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

Funding Sources



New York

The Empire State

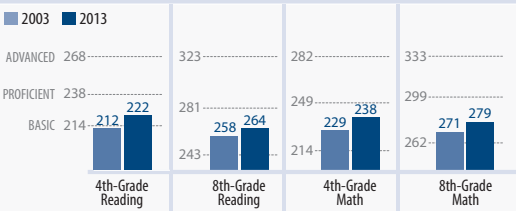


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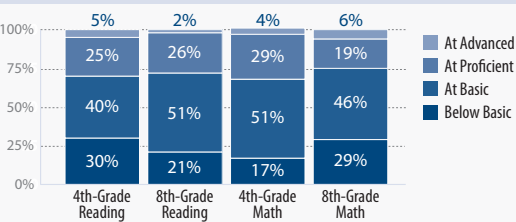
2013 NAEP Performance Rank

ALEC Historical Ranking 2009 NAEP: 5th | 2011 NAEP: 10th
 Measures the overall scores for low-income general education students (non-ELL and non-IEP) and their gains/losses on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) fourth- and eighth-grade reading and mathematics exams from 2003 to 2013.

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



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



Supplemental Information

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

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

C

Education Policy Grade

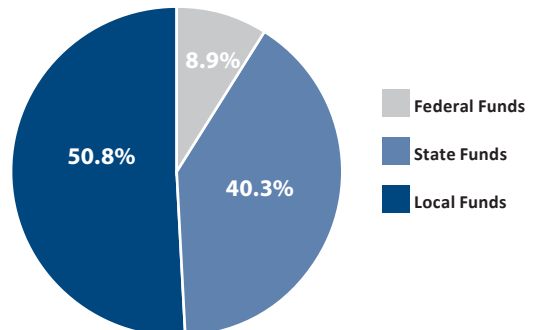
ALEC Historical Grading

2010: D+ | 2011: C- | 2012: C-

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

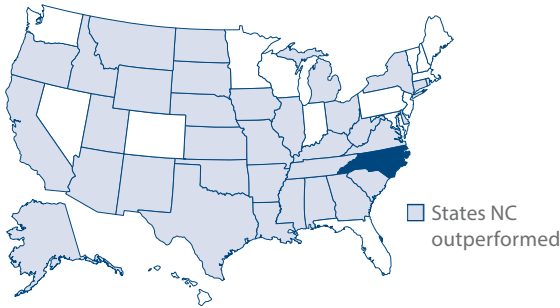
State Academic Standards	B
Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	B
Homeschool Regulation Burden (A=None, B=Low, C=Moderate, D=High)	D
Private School Choice Programs	F
Teacher Quality and Policies: Overall Grade	B-
Delivering Well Prepared Teachers	B-
Expanding the Teaching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

Funding Sources



North Carolina

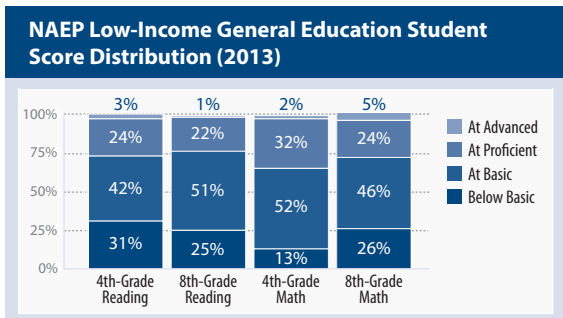
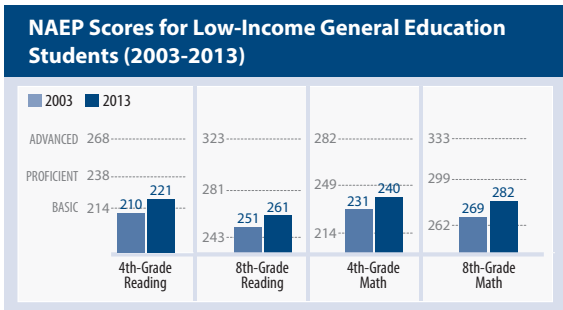
The Old North State



16

2013 NAEP Performance Rank

ALEC Historical Ranking 2009 NAEP: 41st | 2011 NAEP: 7th
 Measures the overall scores for low-income general education students (non-ELL and non-IEP) and their gains/losses on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) fourth- and eighth-grade reading and mathematics exams from 2003 to 2013.



Supplemental Information

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

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

C+

Education Policy Grade

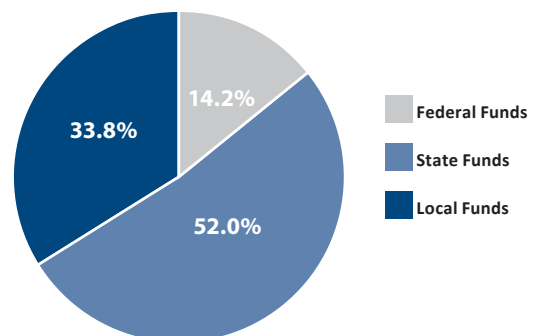
ALEC Historical Grading

2010: C | 2011: C | 2012: C

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

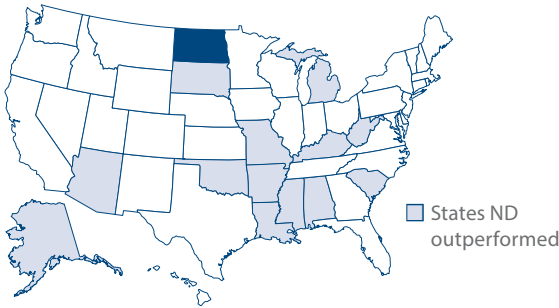
State Academic Standards	C-
Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	C
Homeschool Regulation Burden <i>(A=None, B=Low, C=Moderate, D=High)</i>	C
Private School Choice Programs	A
Teacher Quality and Policies: Overall Grade	C
Delivering Well Prepared Teachers	C+
Expanding the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

Funding Sources



North Dakota

The Peace Garden State



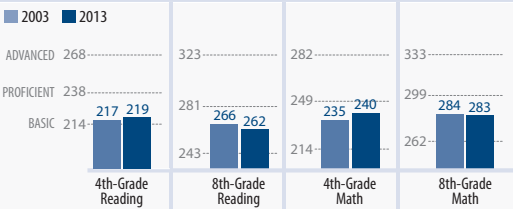
38

2013 NAEP Performance Rank

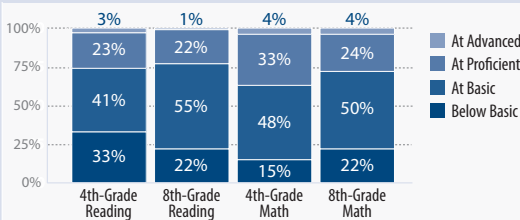
ALEC Historical Ranking 2009 NAEP: 24th | 2011 NAEP: 33rd

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

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



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



Supplemental Information

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

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

D

Education Policy Grade

ALEC Historical Grading

2010: D | 2011: D+ | 2012: D

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

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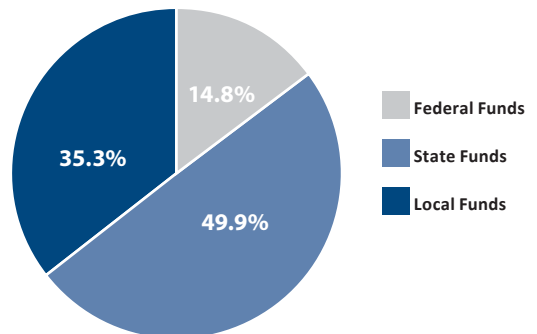
Identifying Effective Teachers	D
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Retaining Effective Teachers	D
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Exiting Ineffective Teachers	D
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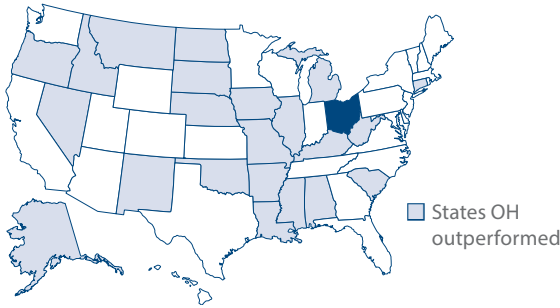
Digital Learning	F
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Funding Sources



Ohio

The Buckeye State

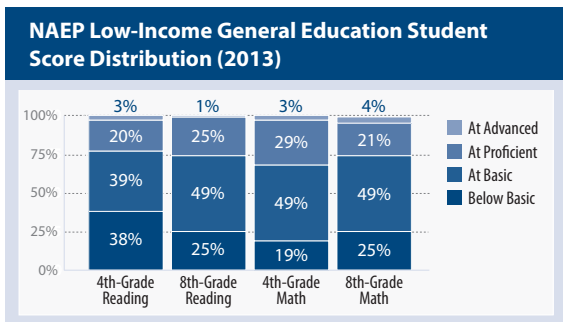
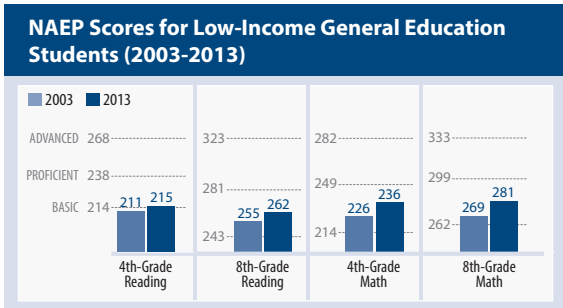


29

2013 NAEP Performance Rank

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

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



Supplemental Information

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

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

C

Education Policy Grade

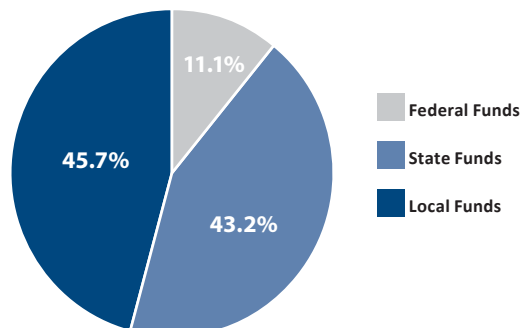
ALEC Historical Grading

2010: B- | 2011: B | 2012: B

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

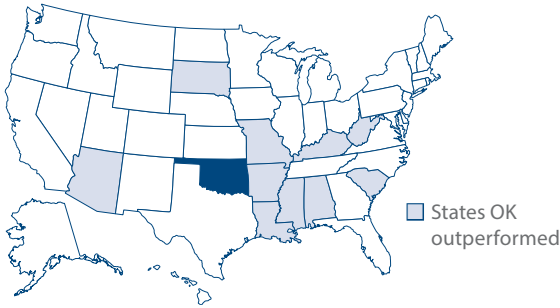
State Academic Standards	C-
Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	C
Homeschool Regulation Burden (A=None, B=Low, C=Moderate, D=High)	C
Private School Choice Programs	C
Teacher Quality and Policies: Overall Grade	B-
Delivering Well Prepared Teachers	C
Expanding the Teaching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

Funding Sources



Oklahoma

The Sooner State



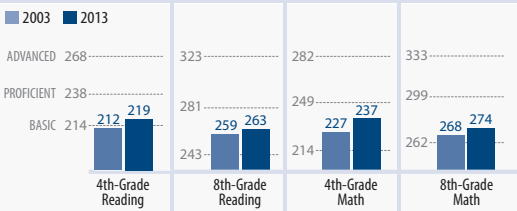
41

2013 NAEP Performance Rank

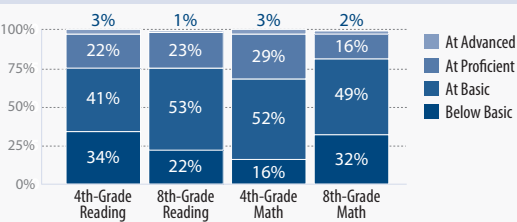
ALEC Historical Ranking 2009 NAEP: 43rd | 2011 NAEP: 43rd

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

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



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



Supplemental Information

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

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

B-

Education Policy Grade

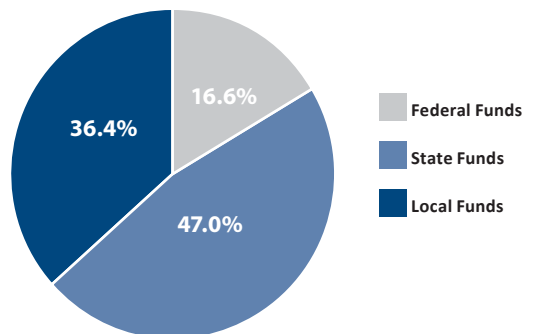
ALEC Historical Grading

2010: C | 2011: B | 2012: B+

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

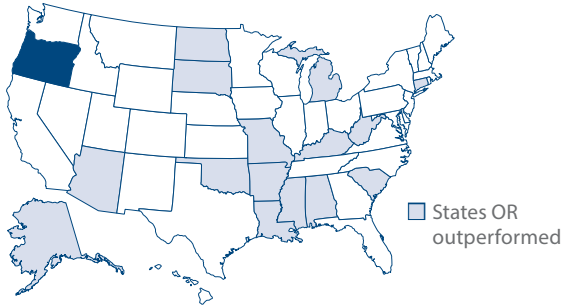
State Academic Standards	C-
Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	C
Homeschool Regulation Burden (A=None, B=Low, C=Moderate, D=High)	A
Private School Choice Programs	B
Teacher Quality and Policies: Overall Grade	B-
Delivering Well Prepared Teachers	C
Expanding the Teaching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

Funding Sources



Oregon

The Beaver State

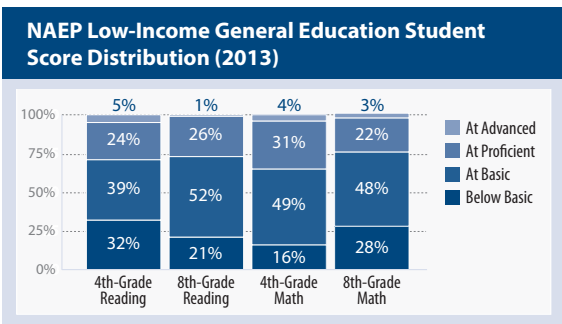
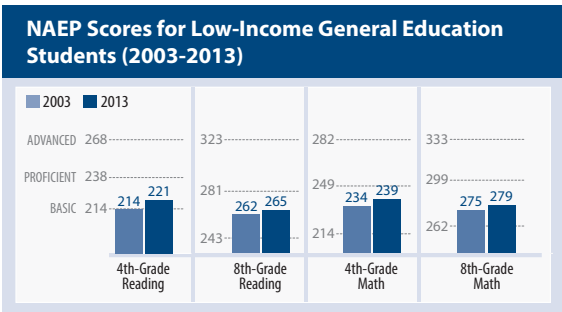


36

2013 NAEP Performance Rank

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

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



Supplemental Information

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

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

C-

Education Policy Grade

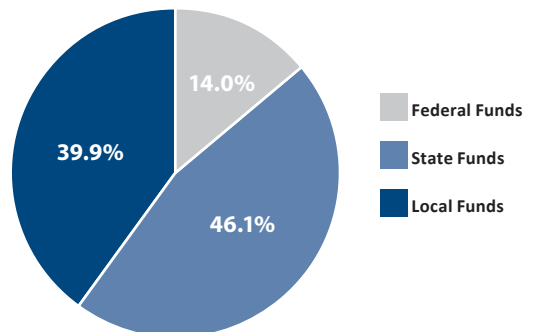
ALEC Historical Grading

2010: C | 2011: C | 2012: C

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

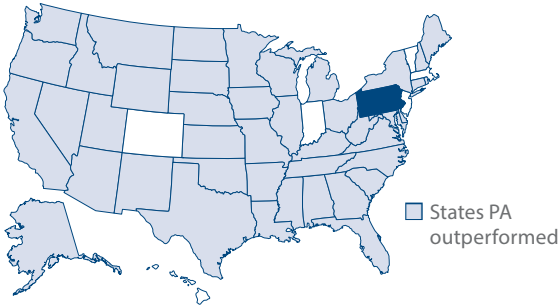
State Academic Standards	C-
Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	C
Homeschool Regulation Burden (A=None, B=Low, C=Moderate, D=High)	C
Private School Choice Programs	F
Teacher Quality and Policies: Overall Grade	D
Delivering Well Prepared Teachers	D
Expanding the Teaching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

Funding Sources



Pennsylvania

The Keystone State



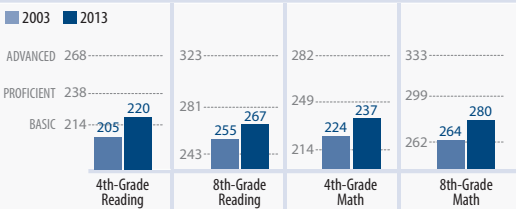
7

2013 NAEP Performance Rank

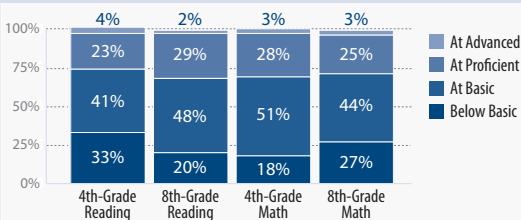
ALEC Historical Ranking 2009 NAEP: 6th | 2011 NAEP: 5th

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

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



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



Supplemental Information

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

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



Education Policy Grade

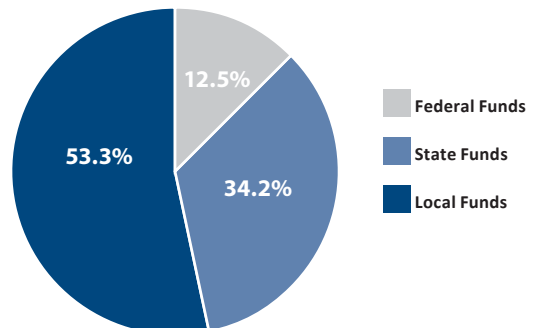
ALEC Historical Grading

2010: C | 2011: C+ | 2012: B-

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

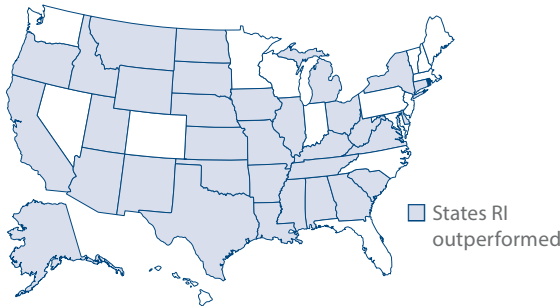
State Academic Standards	C
Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	C
Homeschool Regulation Burden <i>(A=None, B=Low, C=Moderate, D=High)</i>	D
Private School Choice Programs	C
Teacher Quality and Policies: Overall Grade	C-
Delivering Well Prepared Teachers	C
Expanding the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

Funding Sources



Rhode Island

The Ocean State



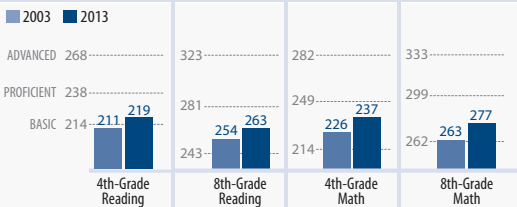
17

2013 NAEP Performance Rank

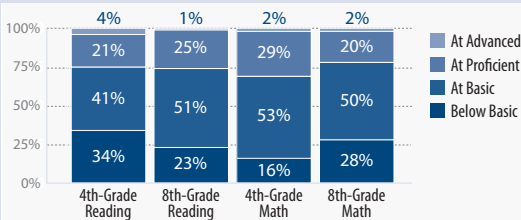
ALEC Historical Ranking 2009 NAEP: 25th | 2011 NAEP: 6th

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

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



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



Supplemental Information

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

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

C

Education Policy Grade

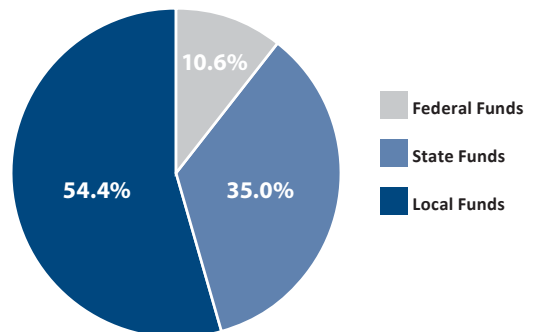
ALEC Historical Grading

2010: D | 2011: C | 2012: D+

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

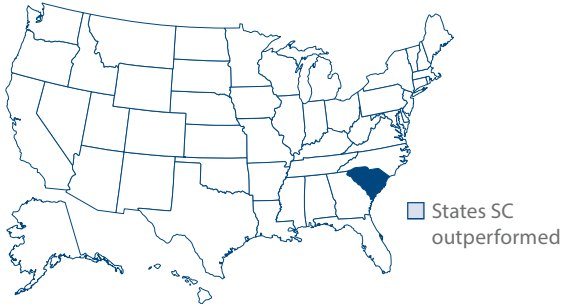
State Academic Standards	C+
Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	D
Homeschool Regulation Burden (A=None, B=Low, C=Moderate, D=High)	D
Private School Choice Programs	C
Teacher Quality and Policies: Overall Grade	B
Delivering Well Prepared Teachers	B+
Expanding the Teaching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

Funding Sources



South Carolina

The Palmetto State



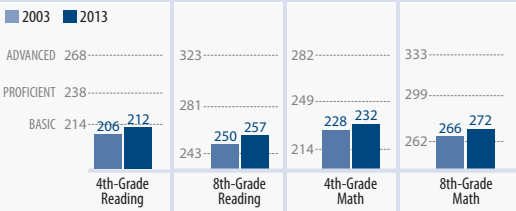
51

2013 NAEP Performance Rank

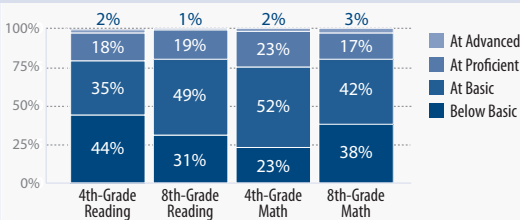
ALEC Historical Ranking 2009 NAEP: 51st | 2011 NAEP: 50th

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

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



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



Supplemental Information

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

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

C+

Education Policy Grade

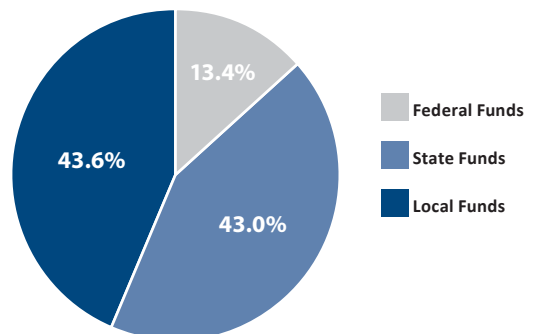
ALEC Historical Grading

2010: B | 2011: C+ | 2012: C

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

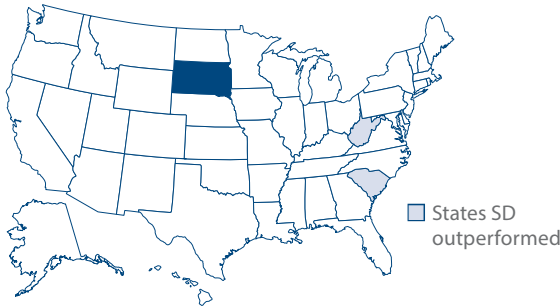
State Academic Standards	D+
Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	B
Homeschool Regulation Burden (A=None, B=Low, C=Moderate, D=High)	C
Private School Choice Programs	B
Teacher Quality and Policies: Overall Grade	C-
Delivering Well Prepared Teachers	C
Expanding the Teaching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

Funding Sources



South Dakota

The Mount Rushmore State



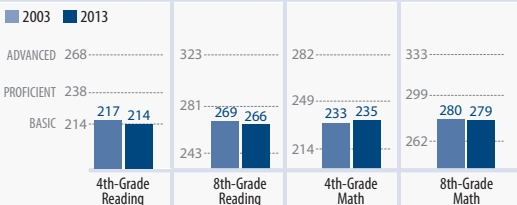
49

2013 NAEP Performance Rank

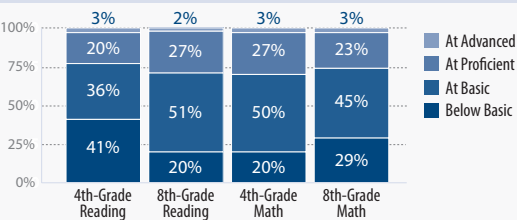
ALEC Historical Ranking 2009 NAEP: 39th | 2011 NAEP: 38th

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

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



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



Supplemental Information

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

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

D+

Education Policy Grade

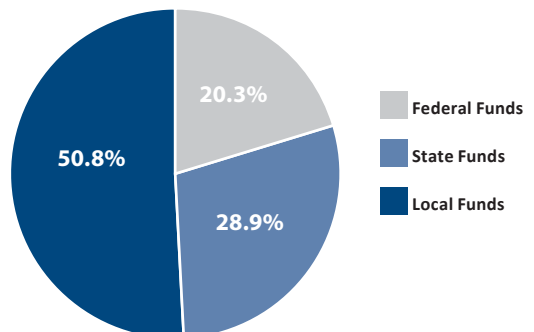
ALEC Historical Grading

2010: C | 2011: C- | 2012: D+

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

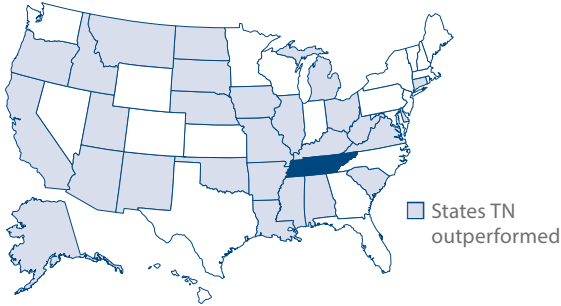
State Academic Standards	C-
Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	No
Charter School Law Grade	-
Homeschool Regulation Burden <i>(A=None, B=Low, C=Moderate, D=High)</i>	C
Private School Choice Programs	F
Teacher Quality and Policies: Overall Grade	D-
Delivering Well Prepared Teachers	D-
Expanding the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

Funding Sources



Tennessee

The Volunteer State



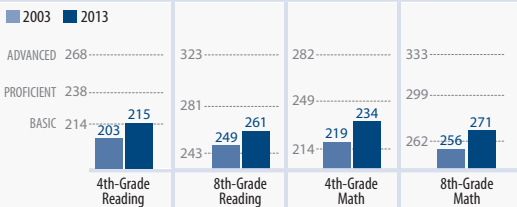
24

2013 NAEP Performance Rank

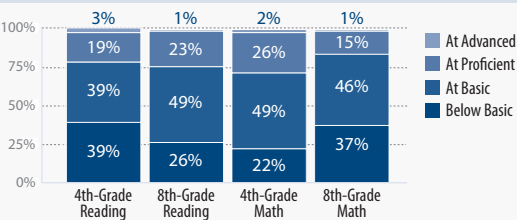
ALEC Historical Ranking 2009 NAEP: 36th | 2011 NAEP: 44th

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

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



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



Supplemental Information

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

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

C+

Education Policy Grade

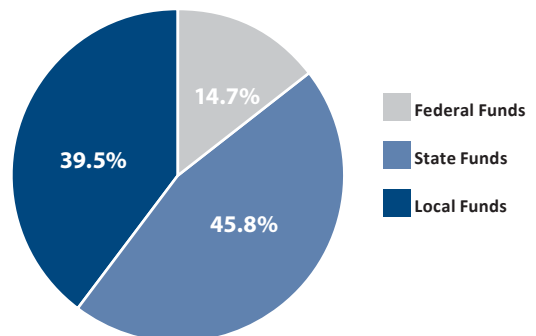
ALEC Historical Grading

2010: D | 2011: C | 2012: C

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

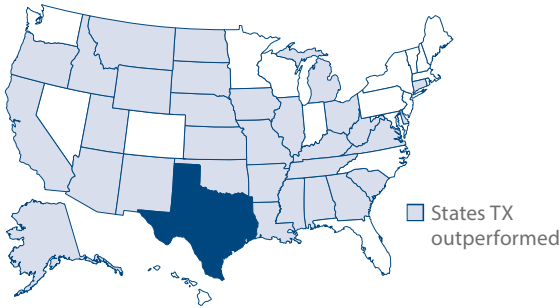
State Academic Standards	A
Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	C
Homeschool Regulation Burden (A=None, B=Low, C=Moderate, D=High)	C
Private School Choice Programs	F
Teacher Quality and Policies: Overall Grade	B
Delivering Well Prepared Teachers	B-
Expanding the Teaching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

Funding Sources



Texas

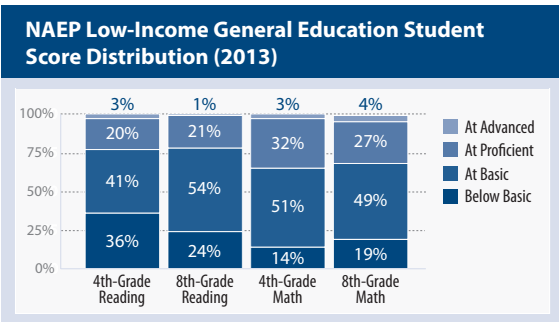
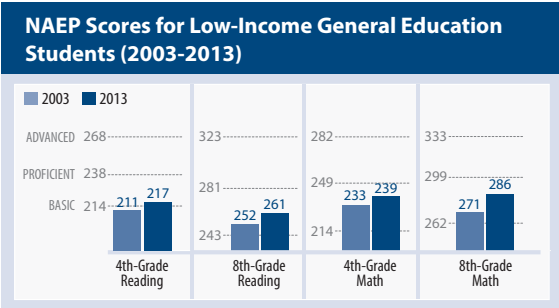
The Lone Star State



18

2013 NAEP Performance Rank

ALEC Historical Ranking 2009 NAEP: 8th | 2011 NAEP: 11th
 Measures the overall scores for low-income general education students (non-ELL and non-IEP) and their gains/losses on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) fourth- and eighth-grade reading and mathematics exams from 2003 to 2013.



Supplemental Information

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

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

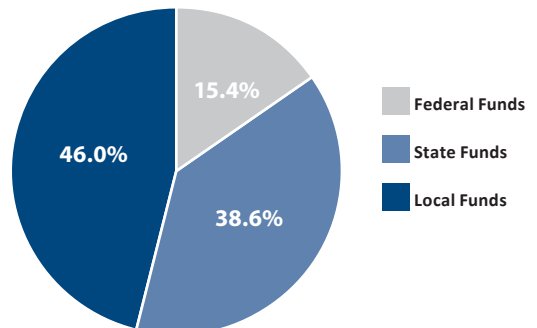
C

Education Policy Grade

ALEC Historical Grading 2010: C | 2011: C+ | 2012: C+
 Grades state-level education policies that provide high-quality educational options to all students.

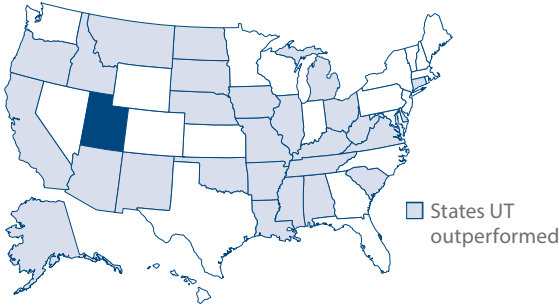
State Academic Standards	D-
Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	C
Homeschool Regulation Burden <i>(A=None, B=Low, C=Moderate, D=High)</i>	A
Private School Choice Programs	F
Teacher Quality and Policies: Overall Grade	C-
Delivering Well Prepared Teachers	B
Expanding the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

Funding Sources



Utah

The Beehive State



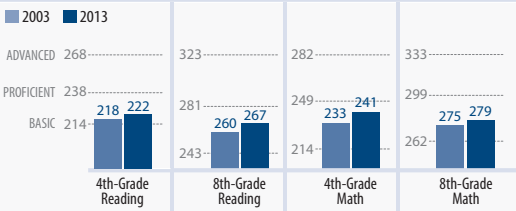
25

2013 NAEP Performance Rank

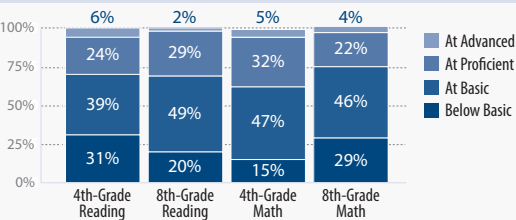
ALEC Historical Ranking 2009 NAEP: 42nd | 2011 NAEP: 41st

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

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



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



Supplemental Information

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

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

B-

Education Policy Grade

ALEC Historical Grading

2010: C+ | 2011: B | 2012: B-

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

State Academic Standards	C-
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Charter Schools	
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Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
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Charter School Law Grade	B
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Homeschool Regulation Burden (A=None, B=Low, C=Moderate, D=High)	B
---	---

Private School Choice Programs	C
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Teacher Quality and Policies: Overall Grade	C
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Delivering Well Prepared Teachers	D+
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Expanding the Teaching Pool	D+
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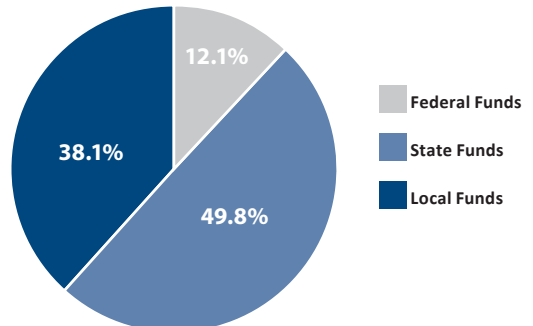
Identifying Effective Teachers	D+
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Retaining Effective Teachers	B-
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Exiting Ineffective Teachers	B-
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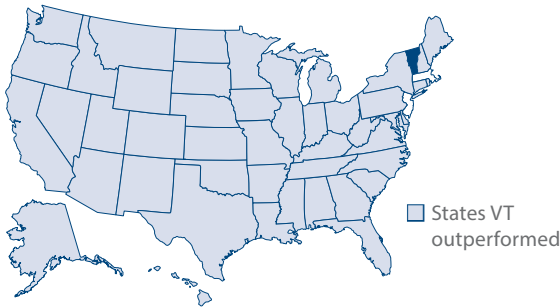
Digital Learning	A-
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Funding Sources



Vermont

The Green Mountain State

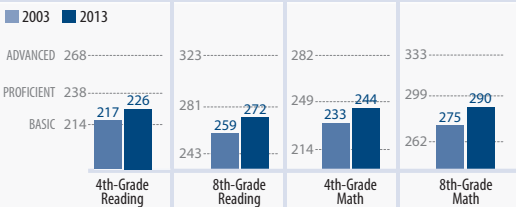


3

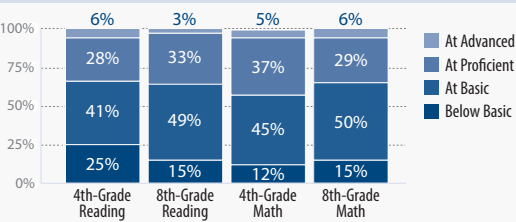
2013 NAEP Performance Rank

ALEC Historical Ranking 2009 NAEP: 1st | 2011 NAEP: 2nd
 Measures the overall scores for low-income general education students (non-ELL and non-IEP) and their gains/losses on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) fourth- and eighth-grade reading and mathematics exams from 2003 to 2013.

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



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



Supplemental Information

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

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

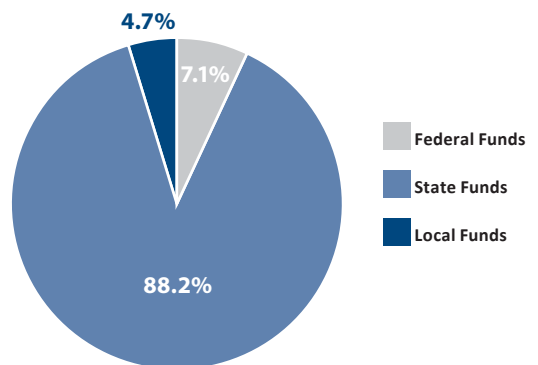
D+

Education Policy Grade

ALEC Historical Grading 2010: D | 2011: D+ | 2012: D+
 Grades state-level education policies that provide high-quality educational options to all students.

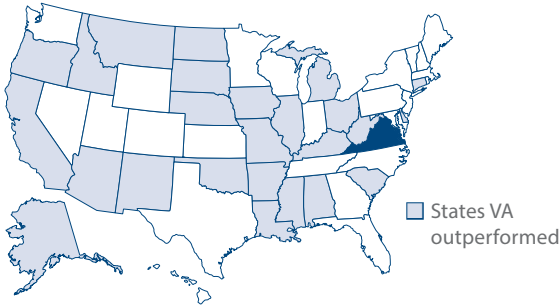
State Academic Standards	B-
Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	No
Charter School Law Grade	-
Homeschool Regulation Burden <i>(A=None, B=Low, C=Moderate, D=High)</i>	D
Private School Choice Programs	D
Teacher Quality and Policies: Overall Grade	D-
Delivering Well Prepared Teachers	C
Expanding the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

Funding Sources



Virginia

The Old Dominion

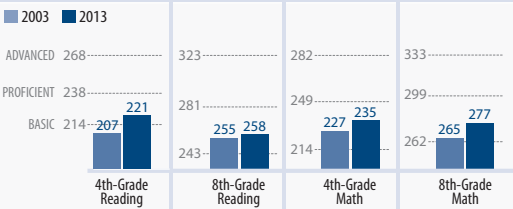


26

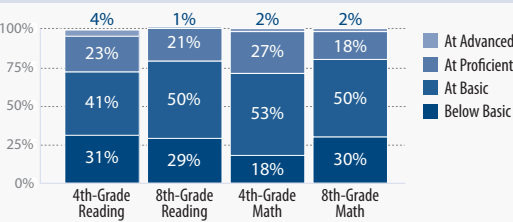
2013 NAEP Performance Rank

ALEC Historical Ranking 2009 NAEP: 12th | 2011 NAEP: 26th
 Measures the overall scores for low-income general education students (non-ELL and non-IEP) and their gains/losses on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) fourth- and eighth-grade reading and mathematics exams from 2003 to 2013.

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



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



Supplemental Information

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

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

C-

Education Policy Grade

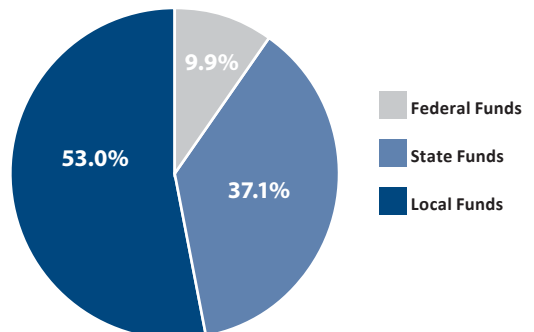
ALEC Historical Grading

2010: C- | 2011: C- | 2012: C-

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

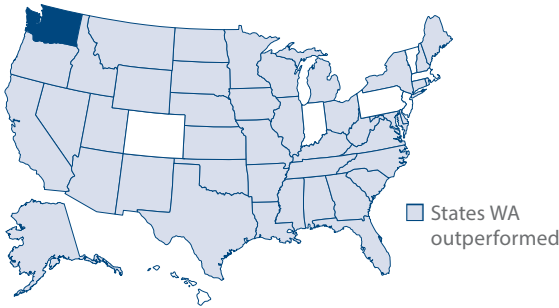
State Academic Standards	D
Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	F
Homeschool Regulation Burden (A=None, B=Low, C=Moderate, D=High)	C
Private School Choice Programs	C
Teacher Quality and Policies: Overall Grade	C+
Delivering Well Prepared Teachers	C+
Expanding the Teaching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

Funding Sources



Washington

The Evergreen State



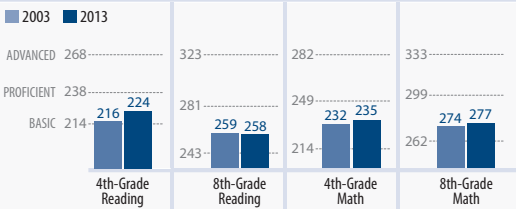
8

2013 NAEP Performance Rank

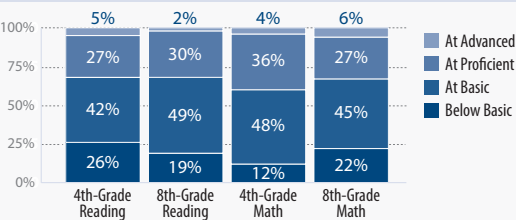
ALEC Historical Ranking 2009 NAEP: 16th | 2011 NAEP: 25th

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

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



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



Supplemental Information

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

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

C

Education Policy Grade

ALEC Historical Grading

2010: C+ | 2011: C | 2012: C

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

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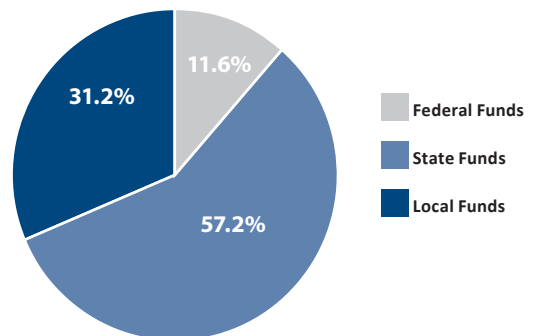
Identifying Effective Teachers	C-
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Retaining Effective Teachers	C-
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Exiting Ineffective Teachers	C-
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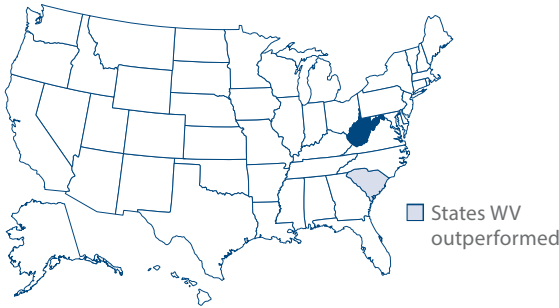
Digital Learning	C
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Funding Sources



West Virginia

The Mountain State



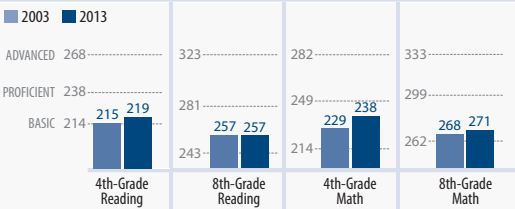
50

2013 NAEP Performance Rank

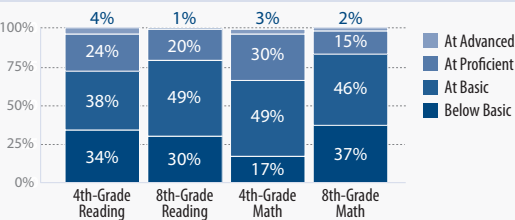
ALEC Historical Ranking 2009 NAEP: 50th | 2011 NAEP: 51st

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

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



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



Supplemental Information

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

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

C-

Education Policy Grade

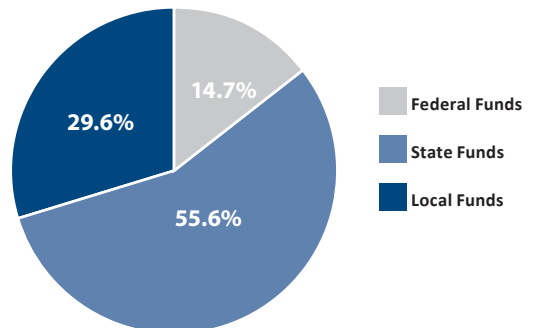
ALEC Historical Grading

2010: C | 2011: D+ | 2012: D+

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

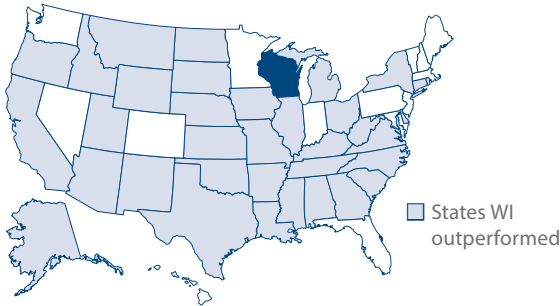
State Academic Standards	B+
Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	No
Charter School Law Grade	-
Homeschool Regulation Burden <i>(A=None, B=Low, C=Moderate, D=High)</i>	C
Private School Choice Programs	F
Teacher Quality and Policies: Overall Grade	C-
Delivering Well Prepared Teachers	C+
Expanding the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

Funding Sources



Wisconsin

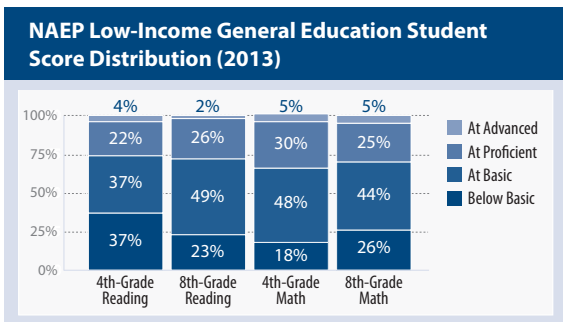
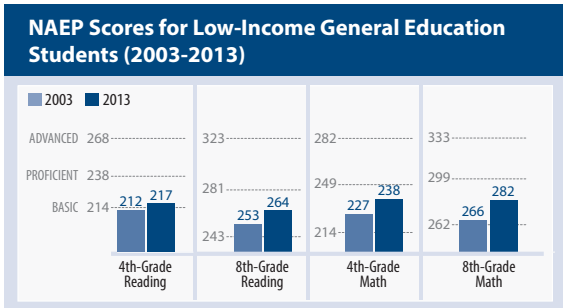
America's Dairyland



15

2013 NAEP Performance Rank

ALEC Historical Ranking 2009 NAEP: 21st | 2011 NAEP: 19th
 Measures the overall scores for low-income general education students (non-ELL and non-IEP) and their gains/losses on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) fourth- and eighth-grade reading and mathematics exams from 2003 to 2013.



Supplemental Information

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

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

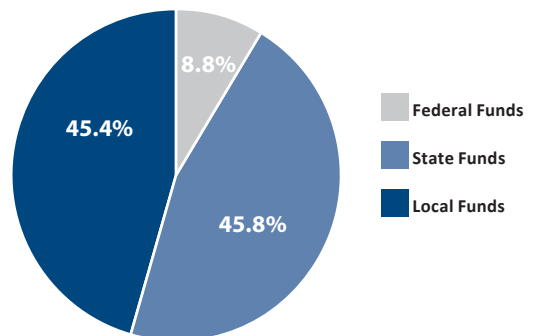
C

Education Policy Grade

ALEC Historical Grading 2010: C | 2011: B- | 2012: B-
 Grades state-level education policies that provide high-quality educational options to all students.

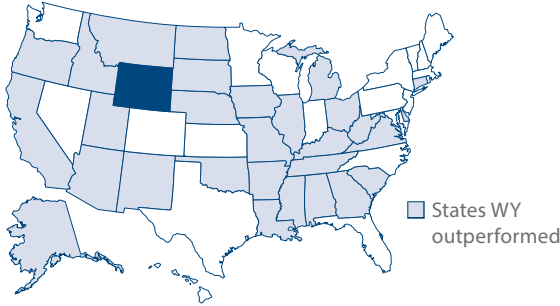
State Academic Standards	C-
Charter Schools	
Charter Schools Allowed	Yes
Charter School Law Grade	C
Homeschool Regulation Burden (A=None, B=Low, C=Moderate, D=High)	B
Private School Choice Programs	C
Teacher Quality and Policies: Overall Grade	D+
Delivering Well Prepared Teachers	C-
Expanding the Teaching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

Funding Sources



Wyoming

The Equality State



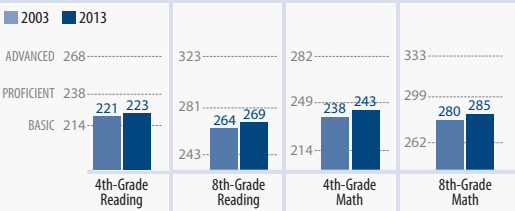
21

2013 NAEP Performance Rank

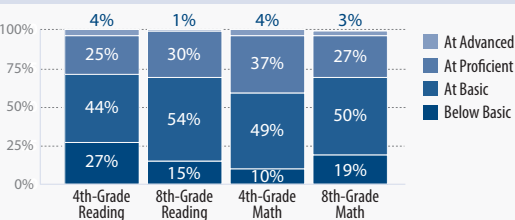
ALEC Historical Ranking 2011 NAEP: 23rd | 2009 NAEP: 28th

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

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



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



Supplemental Information

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

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

C-

Education Policy Grade

ALEC Historical Grading

2010: C | 2011: C+ | 2012: C

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

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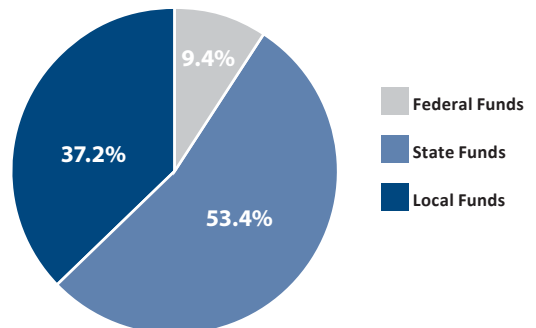
Identifying Effective Teachers	D+
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Retaining Effective Teachers	D
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Exiting Ineffective Teachers	D+
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Digital Learning	D+
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Funding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





CHAPTER 4

*New Approaches To The
Challenges Of Urban Schooling*

New Approaches To The Challenges Of Urban Schooling

Urban communities face a common challenge: Many people have decided to live their lives, seek their fortunes and pay their taxes somewhere else. The population outflow from cities to suburbs and exurbs can be traced to an event in the early 20th century. A young U.S. Army colonel was ordered to move a military caravan from the East Coast to the West Coast. The exercise was meant to evaluate how long it would take to get equipment and forces from one coast to the other in the event of an invasion. The results were not promising. Years later, this former colonel—Dwight D. Eisenhower—became president and spearheaded the creation of the Dwight D. Eisenhower System of Interstate and Defense Highways, which began in 1956, inspired by his Oregon Trail-like ordeal.

The Interstate Highway System has been great for moving goods and services rapidly across the country, but it had the unintended consequence of enabling high levels of economic segregation. James Q. Wilson's book, *Thinking about Crime*, discusses the profound policy consequences of this fundamental change in American life.¹

Wilson detailed how the Interstate Highway System gave people the option of working in a big city but living in a separate, leafy suburban community. Suburbanites took not only their tax base with them, but also an informal but important system of policing. Financially, as cities started to lose more affluent taxpayers, the narrative goes that they either had to cut spending or raise taxes. Whichever of these two options they chose, people didn't like either of them, and more moved to the suburbs, continuing the migration. Throughout the 1960s, minorities faced de jure discrimination in housing, and even those with the means did not enjoy the same access to suburbs.

Regardless of whether cities chose higher taxes or cutting public services, the narrative holds: Cities found themselves drawn in by the gravitational pull of a financial death spiral. Minorities found themselves stuck in declining urban centers.

Detroit stands as the most obvious example of such sad urban decline. A manufacturing juggernaut whose economy was supercharged by World War II production, Detroit had the highest per capita income in the world in the early 1950s, with a booming population, making it the fourth most-populous city in America. But the introduction of the Interstate Highway System led to new municipal jurisdictions and greater tax competition among them. People could work in Detroit but live in Ann Arbor. People and their tax revenue began to bleed out of Detroit.

Detroit's leaders decided to introduce a city income tax in 1961. This, of course, was an optional city income tax, as residents merely needed to move a few miles away to avoid paying it. An increasing number of people with the means to choose lower taxes, lower crime rates and higher performing schools decided to vote with their feet, leaving the metropolitan Detroit area profoundly segregated by both income and race.

There is much more to this sad story, of course, but in many ways it was all downhill after 1961. Today, the population of Detroit is about a third of its peak; the city has gone into bankruptcy, and officials have discussed bulldozing entire neighborhoods in order to make the remaining city more manageable. City services, needless to say, have seen better days. Newspapers, for instance, report that as many as 50,000 wild dogs roam the streets.²

Detroit stands as the starkest example of how *not* to manage new challenges. All cities faced

these sorts of pressures, and some dealt with them much better than others. Some cities have grown and prospered over the past half century despite the advent of suburbia. Downtown Detroit exists, but so does downtown Austin, Tex. Wilson's insights on preventing crime—known as the “broken window theory,” which suggests that one broken window leads to multiple broken windows and corresponding crime—in fact, have enormously increased the attractiveness of many cities. Safer from crime and free of highway commutes, many urban centers began housing revivals in the 1990s as the young and old especially moved into cities. A tantalizing number of cities have experienced a renaissance.

A major barrier to furthering urban revitalization, however, lies in improving schools.

Wilson correctly noted in his analysis that cities losing their tax base could choose to either cut spending (and thus services) or raise taxes, and that citizens tend to dislike either of these. Unmentioned, however, was the possibility that city government might face this challenge by increasing efficiency. Doing more with less gives cities the opportunity to avoid being drawn down the gravity well of the urban decline event horizon.

Most large urban cities in the 1960s and 1970s had appalling low turnout elections with very strong participation by municipal employee interests. This *Report Card* will leave it to the reader to decide whether increasing efficiency was on the urban agenda to the optimal extent during this period. Many cities, in fact, fell into a cycle of decline, and like municipal governments, large urban school districts failed to hold the confidence of parents with the means to move to the suburbs.

Improving urban schooling today faces the same basic problem. Like the rest of the country, urban school districts have proved far more adept at increasing spending and hiring than increasing test scores in recent decades. Like urban municipal elections, school district elections suffer from low visibility and low voter turnout. States have taken strong action to equalize funding between urban and suburban school districts, but the gap between urban and rural achievement persists.

One should not, however, make the mistake of concluding that urban districts have been bereft

of academic progress; some states have succeeded in coaxing academic gains out of urban schools more than others. Moreover, we see some truly exciting reform experiments unfolding in a number of American cities. Students in urban districts today generally learn more than their peers in the past, but they still learn far too little to compete in the 21st century.

The following pages show just how far we must go to provide broad, high-quality education in any city. After looking at urban achievement data from all states, this *Report Card* focuses on individual districts participating in the NAEP Trial Urban District Assessment (TUDA), which measures fourth- and eighth-grade math and reading achievement in specific districts. This *Report Card* will conclude on a hopeful note, showing instances of remarkable progress in some urban school reform efforts.

Bipartisan super-majorities of the U.S. Congress passed the No Child Left Behind Act in 2001. Well over a decade later, we still find academic “warehousing” common and proficiency rare. Fortunately, we have reasons to hope for a better tomorrow.

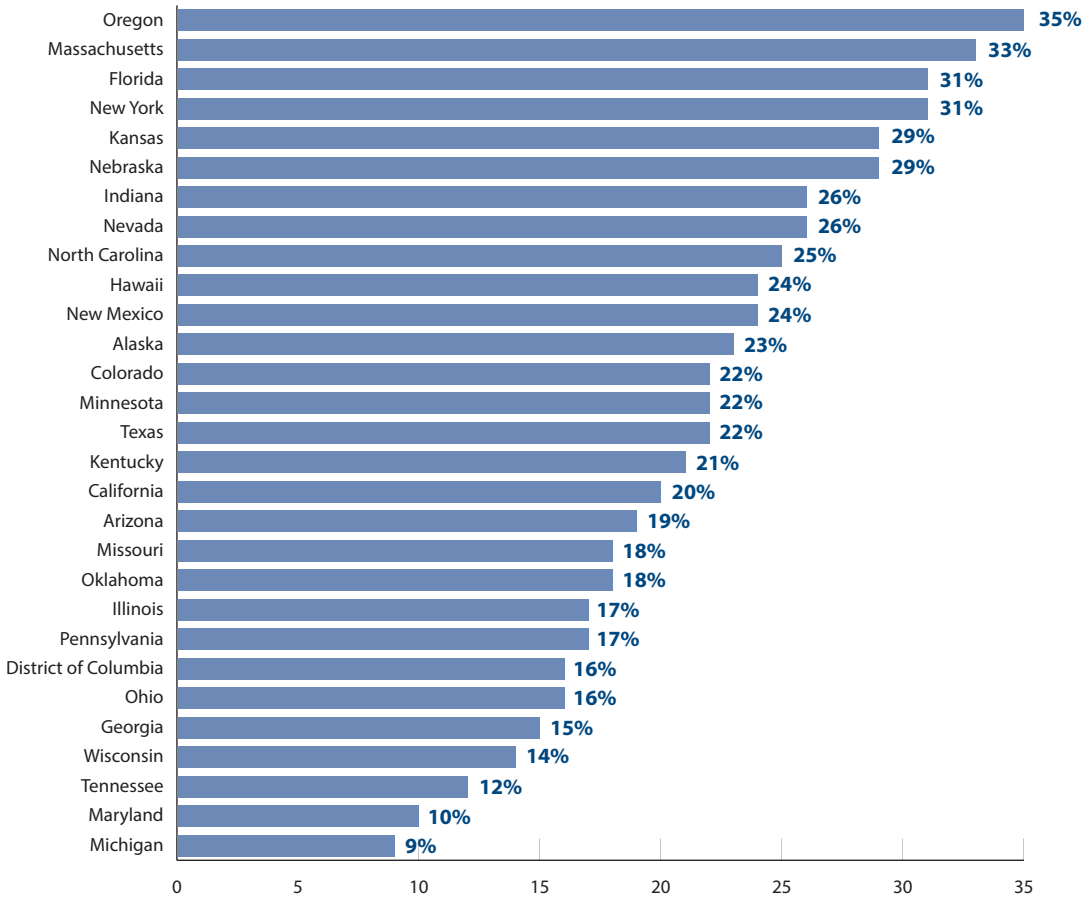
STATE ACADEMIC TRENDS IN URBAN SCHOOLS

NAEP allows users to examine academic achievement by geography and community type. Specifically, NAEP classifies students by locality (“city,” “suburb,” “town” or “rural”) based upon U.S. Census data. Students attending schools in a city with a population of more than 250,000 qualified as a “large city” student.³

Several states lack districts that meet the large city definition, but Figure 1 presents the percentage of low-income urban students scoring “proficient” or better on the 2013 NAEP for the available states. The results incite dismay in every case. Only a small minority of urban children read full-grade-level reading proficiency by the fourth grade anywhere in America. In some states, that small minority is much smaller than average.

The racial achievement gap materializes in the top 10 of Figure 1, which is composed mainly of racially homogeneous states. Florida and New York, however, break the mold. The bottom of the list tells a disappointing tale of woe, most notable, perhaps, for the presence of the otherwise

FIGURE 1 | GENERAL EDUCATION LOW-INCOME STUDENTS ATTENDING LARGE CITY SCHOOLS SCORING “PROFICIENT” OR BETTER ON NAEP FOURTH-GRADE READING, 2013



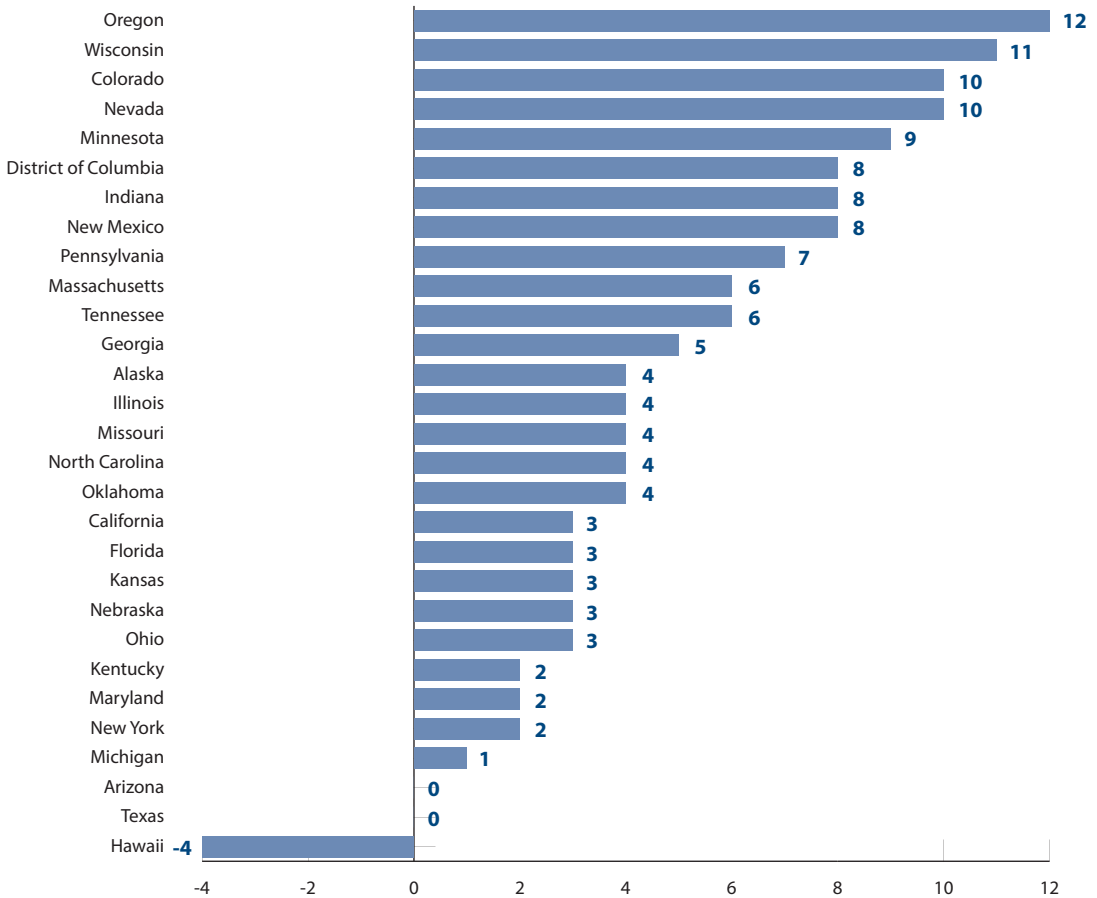
high-performing state of Maryland near the bottom. Michigan ranks dead last for early literacy among low-income urban students.

Every state has miles to go in providing a high-quality education to urban students. Consider the trend: NAEP has data to track urban students since the 2009 NAEP (the furthest the data go back). Figure 2 shows state-by-state results for low-income urban children from the 2009

through 2013 NAEP exams. The numbers presented in Figure 2 were calculated by subtracting the 2009 from the 2013 scores.

Oregon and Wisconsin demonstrated the most progress during this period. Ten points roughly approximate a grade’s worth of average progress, so both Oregon and Wisconsin got their low-income urban students in 2013 reading at roughly the same level at which could have been

FIGURE 2 | GAINS FOR FREE- AND REDUCED-LUNCH ELIGIBLE GENERAL EDUCATION STUDENTS ATTENDING LARGE CITY SCHOOLS ON NAEP FOURTH-GRADE READING, 2009 TO 2013



expected of their 2009 fifth graders. “Large urban district” in Oregon translates to Portland, so bully for them; they are making progress.

DISTRICT-LEVEL NAEP SCORES

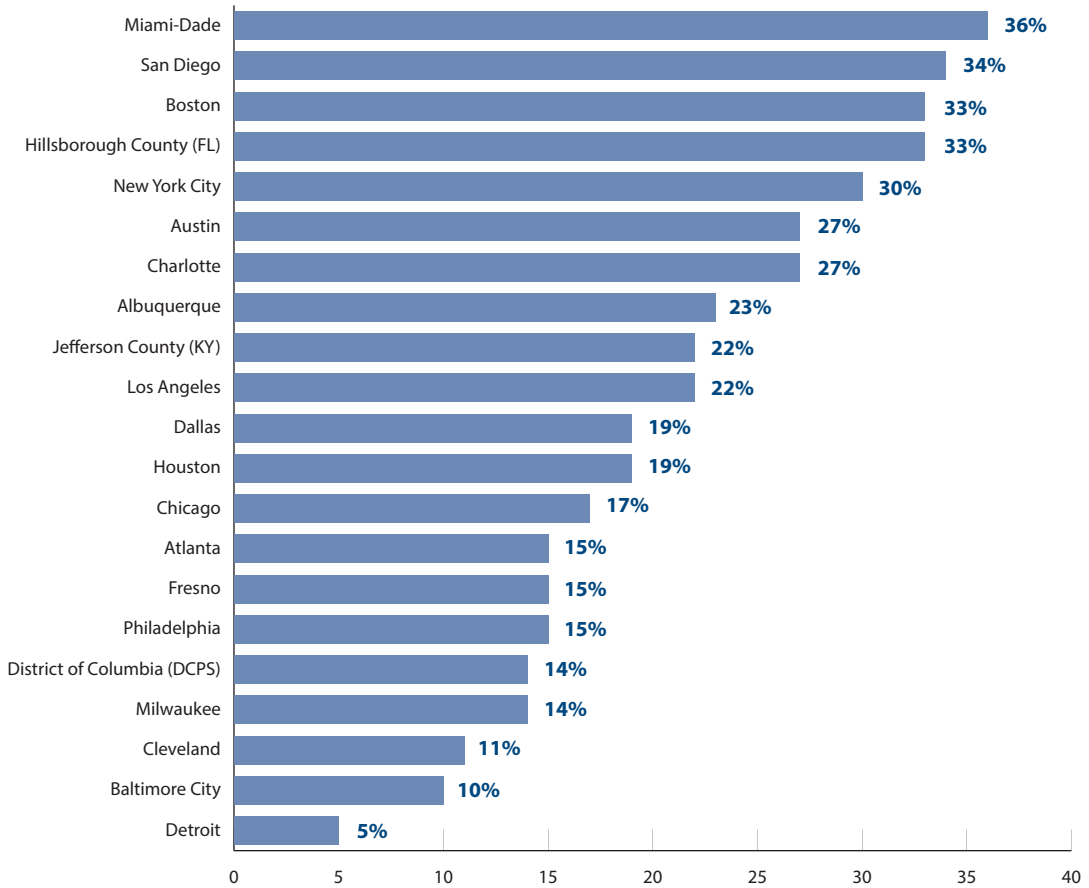
TUDA contains a limited number of districts but has grown in reach over the years.

Figure 3 shows the percentage of low-income general education students scoring “proficient”

or better in fourth-grade reading on NAEP’s TUDA project. This group of students was chosen deliberately in order to maximize comparability among districts.

No urban district should feel remotely satisfied with these results. Note, however, that a low-income child in the general education program is more than seven-times more likely to reach or exceed “proficient” in fourth-grade

FIGURE 3 | LOW-INCOME GENERAL EDUCATION STUDENTS SCORING “PROFICIENT” OR BETTER ON THE TRIAL URBAN DISTRICT NAEP FOURTH-GRADE READING, 2013



reading in Miami than similar students in Detroit. Figure 4 shows the “proficient” or better rates for eighth-grade reading among the same group of students.

Once again, nothing to celebrate in these figures; and again, Detroit’s performance brings up the rear as a near complete academic catastrophe.

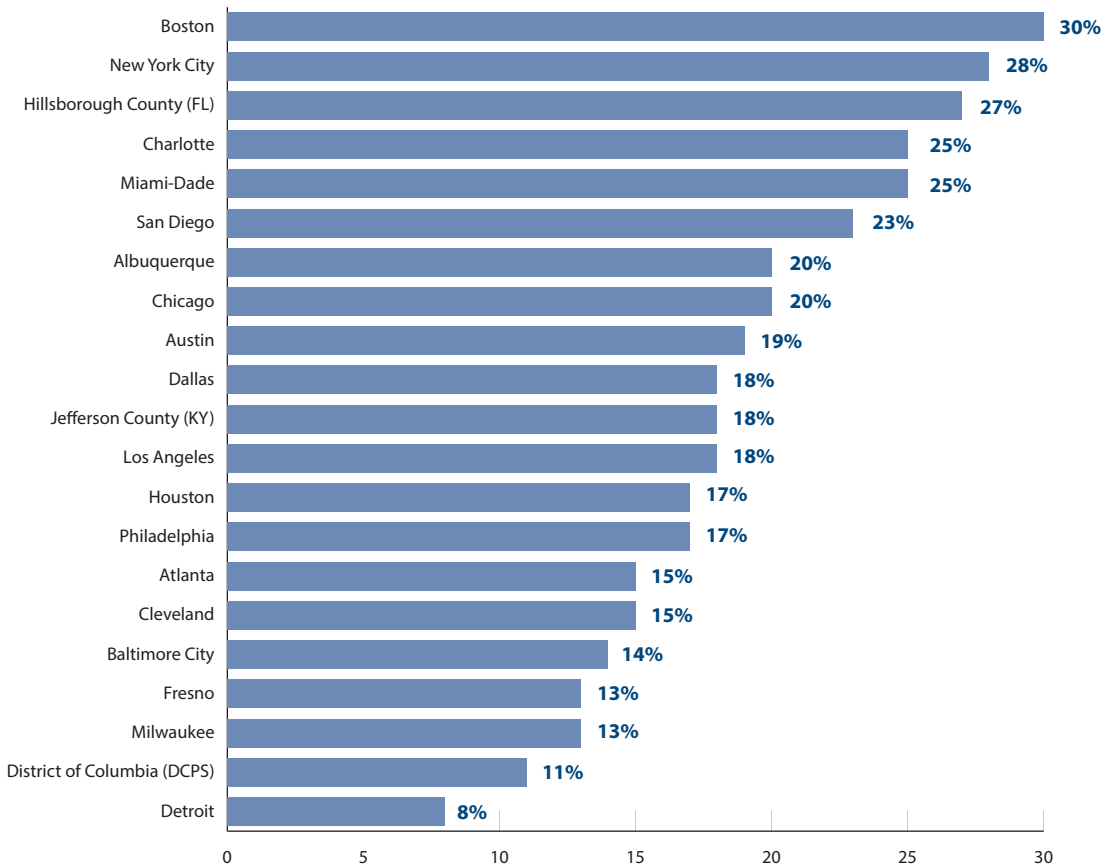
BIG NEWS FROM THE BIG EASY

Louisiana policymakers embraced a new concept to rebuilding the New Orleans school system in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina—the Recovery School District (RSD). Under the model, RSD

reinvented a large number of district schools by making school facilities available to charter school operators through a competitive process. RSD monitors the academic progress of these new charter schools carefully. At the end of the contracted period, RSD can, and has, disallowed operators who failed to meet academic growth targets. RSD then can seek a new operator to run the facility. School operators receive an unmistakably clear message: Either get the job done or make room for another team of educators.

In 2013, the Stanford University report, *Charter School Performance in Louisiana*, demonstrated

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



the remarkable success of this approach.⁴ Charter school students overall were found to have made faster learning gains than district school students, but New Orleans charter school students made even larger gains. New Orleans charter school students learn at a faster pace than their peers at conventional schools and faster than their peers at other charter schools.

Statewide, the study found that a charter school student had the equivalent of an extra 50 days of instruction in reading and 65 more days in mathematics. In New Orleans, the results were even more amazing: New Orleans charter students, on average, had the equivalent of

an additional *120 days in reading and 150 days in math.*⁵

Neerav Kingsland, the leader of New Schools for New Orleans, a non-profit organization that supports the creation of new schools, has articulated the concept of “relinquishment” as a path forward to reforming under-performing public schools. Kingsland believes that the success in New Orleans rests on three basic principles of relinquishment: 1) educators should operate schools; 2) families should choose among these schools; and 3) government should hold schools accountable for performance and equity.⁶

RSDs represent a deeper achievement in the

process of expanding choices for parents than simply passing a charter school law alone. Almost all charter school laws—even the strongest ones—require potential operators to raise millions of philanthropic dollars in order to either rent or build new school facilities. This need for scarce philanthropic funds is a major inhibiting factor to the expansion of charter schools around the country. The RSD model, however, recognizes the tremendous upside potential in terms of increasing the return on the public’s investment in underperforming schools. Facilities represent crucial assets for the educating of children. If and when they are misused to simply warehouse children rather than to educate them, the model turns them over to a new team of public educators in an effort to extract maximum value for children.

Lawmakers in Michigan and Tennessee followed Louisiana’s example in passing RSD legislation. The early results from Louisiana appear very promising, so policymakers in other states should study the model carefully.

CHARTER SCHOOLS LEAD THE WAY IN DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA IMPROVEMENT

The District of Columbia, along with only Tennessee, made statistically significant gains in all four NAEP exams between 2011 and 2013. The academic gains in D.C., however, started long ago, so the D.C. reform strategy merits closer examination.

D.C. has long had a reputation for having one of the nation’s worst performing school systems, despite very high per-pupil spending. A look into D.C.’s academic past reveals just how dysfunctional the public school system had been. Examination of D.C.’s NAEP results for fourth-grade reading reveals that their catastrophically low scores of 1992 got even worse in 1994. In 1992, 70 percent of D.C. students scored below “basic” in fourth-grade reading, and in 1994, 76 percent scored below “basic.”

The 1994 NAEP was the low point—a very low point indeed. That year, 8 percent of D.C. fourth-graders read at a proficient level, and one would have to assume that some of those learned to read at home. Since that nadir, however, D.C. has led the nation in academic gains both in the long-run (1992 to 2013) and the more recent short run

(2011 to 2013) on NAEP.

The Center for Education Reform ranks the Washington, D.C., charter school law as the strongest in the nation.⁷ Passed in 1996, only Louisiana’s RSD may have surpassed it for impact on an urban area. By 2013, 43 percent of D.C. public school students attended charter schools—a rapid transformation in less than two decades.

Washington, D.C., also has a school voucher program, known as the Opportunity Scholarship Program (OSP). Passed by Congress in 2004 with support from D.C. Mayor Anthony Williams, the OSP had 1,638 students attending D.C. private schools in 2013.⁸

NAEP takes new random samples of students in each testing year, allowing the *Report Card* to judge performance over time. NAEP also allows the longitudinal tracking of academic progress of district and charter school students (but not private school students). Comparisons among district and charter students must be made with care. The percentages of students in special programs for children with disabilities and ELL students can potentially impact average scores and may vary across district and charter schools. For instance, if D.C. charter schools have fewer children with disabilities enrolled, fewer ELL students or fewer low-income children enrolled, they could appear to be doing a better job educating students when the truth could be different.

Fortunately, NAEP allows this report to take these factors into account. The following charts show NAEP data that gets as close to an “apples-to-apples” comparison as possible, comparing only the scores of free and reduced-price lunch-eligible students in the general education program. If variation in family income or special program status drives differences between district and charter sector overall scores, it will not have the same impact on the scores presented in the following charts.

This *Report Card* cannot, however, control for other possible sources of bias that might work against charter schools involving new schools and newly transferred students. Organizations tend to not be at their best during their “shake-down cruise,” and schools are no exception. Also, students tend to take a temporary academic hit as they adjust to a new school after transferring. Charter schools tend to be new schools, and thus

are filled with kids who just transferred in—providing a double whammy when looking at any snapshot of performance.

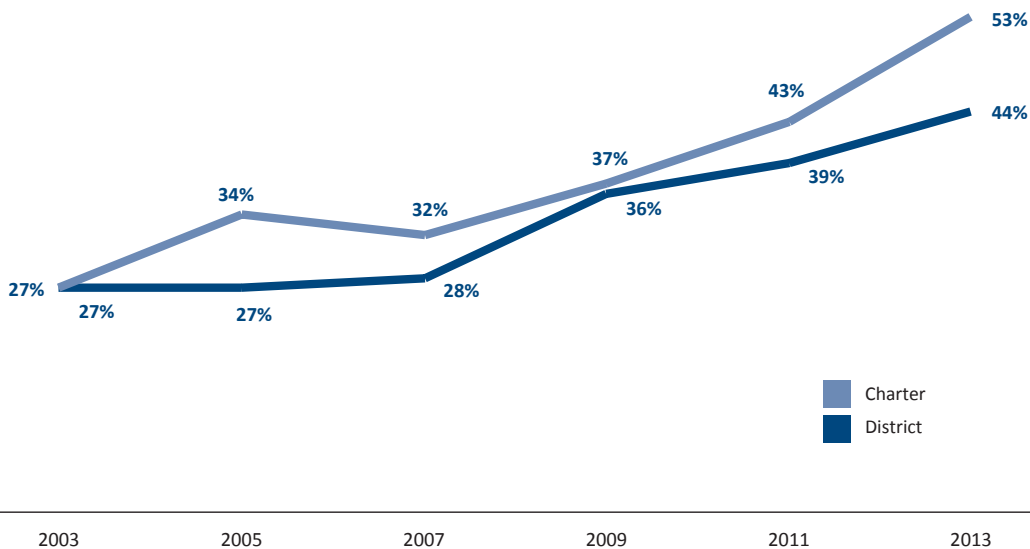
NAEP does not contain any tools for taking the age of the school or length of enrollment into account. Thus, charter schools may be at a bit of a disadvantage—including a very substantial funding disadvantage—in the following charts.

D.C. charters may be fighting with one hand tied behind their backs, but that did not stop them from scoring a knockout on NAEP. D.C. charters widened their advantage in the percentage of children scoring “basic” or better from four

points in 2011 to nine points in 2013.

Note from Figure 1, however, that despite this considerable improvement, only 16 percent of D.C. children scored “proficient” on the 2013 NAEP. While the amount of progress is laudable, the overall performance of D.C. schools is still terribly low—ahead of urban scores in only two states. Despite the recent improvement, only 14 percent of general education low-income students attending D.C. Public Schools (DCPS) scored “proficient”, and only 18 percent among the same sort of D.C. charter schools. Sad though it certainly is, the figure for charter school students

FIGURE 5 | LOW-INCOME GENERAL EDUCATION STUDENTS SCORING “BASIC” OR BETTER ON NAEP FOURTH-GRADE READING, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA CHARTER AND DISTRICT SCHOOLS, 2003-2013



was at 10 percent and district students 5 percent as recently as 2005.

The proficiency figures are still disappointing, but do not despair—a strong trend of kids moving out of the “below” basic category represents a necessary prerequisite for moving more children into full grade-level proficiency. Figure 4 shows

the progress in eighth-grade reading for D.C. district and charter students.

D.C. district students saw a large improvement in eighth-grade reading between the 2011 and 2013 NAEP, but they still found themselves trailing the achievement of D.C. charter students by 9 percent. Figure 5 shows progress in

FIGURE 6 | LOW-INCOME GENERAL EDUCATION STUDENTS SCORING “BASIC” OR BETTER ON NAEP EIGHTH-GRADE READING, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA CHARTER AND DISTRICT SCHOOLS, 2005-2013

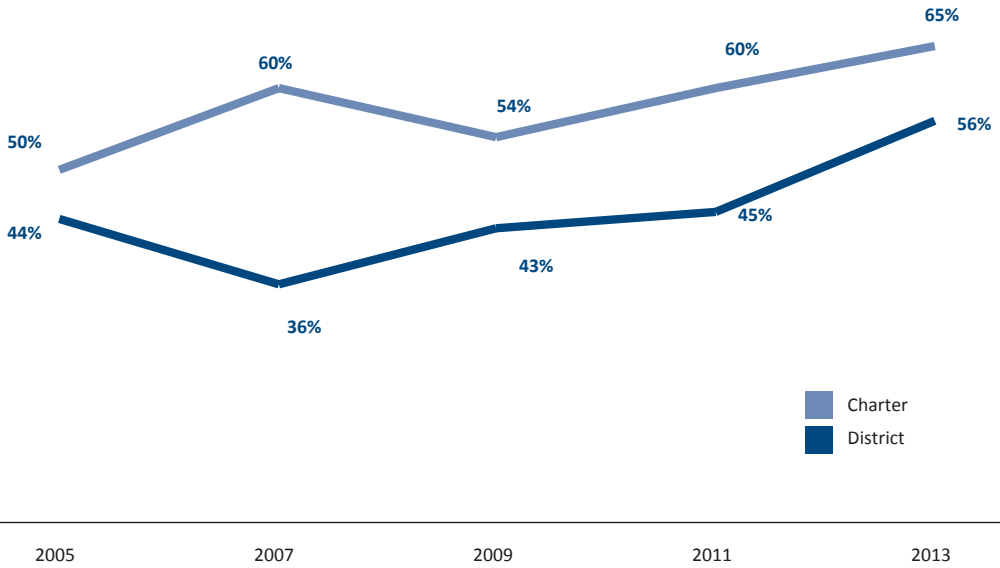


FIGURE 7 | LOW-INCOME GENERAL EDUCATION STUDENTS SCORING “BASIC” OR BETTER ON NAEP FOURTH-GRADE MATH, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA CHARTER AND DISTRICT SCHOOLS, 2003-2013

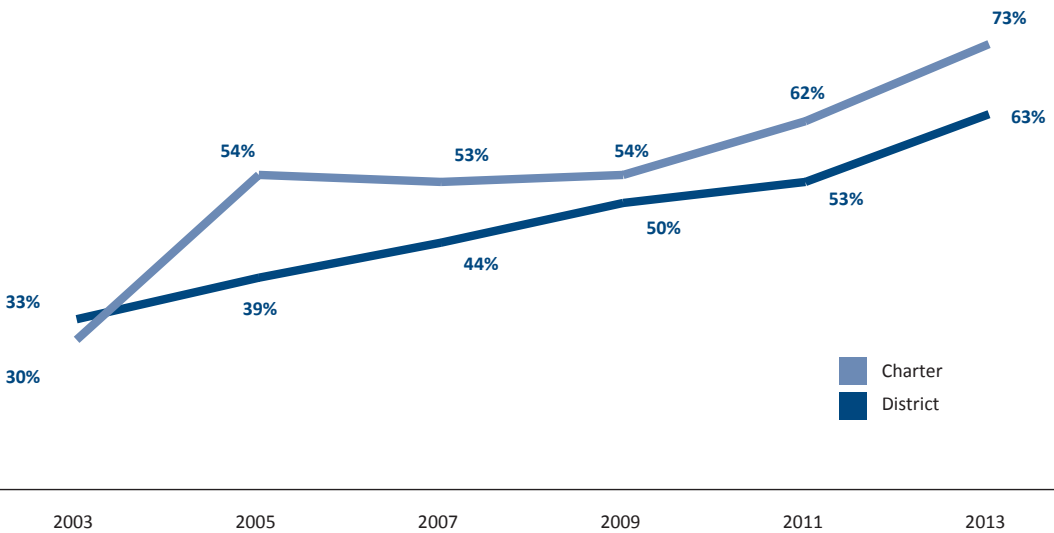
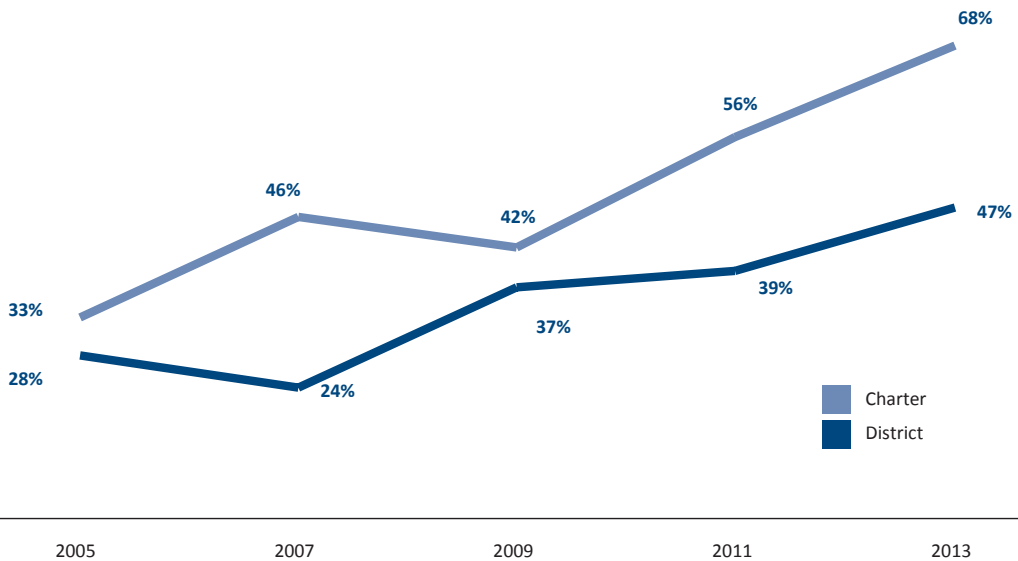


FIGURE 8 | LOW-INCOME GENERAL EDUCATION STUDENTS SCORING “BASIC” OR BETTER ON NAEP EIGHTH-GRADE MATH, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, CHARTER AND DISTRICT SCHOOLS, 2005-2013



fourth-grade math. District students scored a very large gain, but charter students achieved an even larger improvement.

On eighth-grade math, district students demonstrated impressive gains, but D.C. charter students were 19 percent more likely to score “basic” or better.

D.C. charter schools, despite receiving less money per pupil and often struggling to find facilities, have hugely outperformed D.C. traditional public schools, which themselves have been improving. Improvement in traditional schools has proved quite considerable, but it is difficult to quantify how much of it is attributable to competition from charter schools.

Students who actually used their scholarships through D.C.’s OSP had graduation rates 21 percent higher. Researchers found similar results for students who transferred from the lowest performing public schools.

High dropout rates have been the single largest indicator that America’s schools are failing to give every student an equal chance at success in life. Graduating from high school is associated

with a number of critical life outcomes, ranging from lifetime earnings to incarceration rates. Despite countless efforts and attempts at reform, changing the dismal state of graduation rates has been an uphill battle.

In their fourth and final report, reading achievement findings just miss the Department of Education’s threshold for statistical significance. As a result, the spin put out by the Obama administration claims that there is “no conclusive evidence that the OSP affected student achievement.” This is wrong, of course. The third year report *did* find conclusive evidence that the program raised student achievement in reading. A close read of this year’s final (fourth year) report reveals that the sample size of students in the final year was smaller because a number of the students participating in the study had graded out of the program. It’s not surprising, then, that the statistical significance of the reading effects fell just short of the required level. Moreover, the final report found statistically significant achievement gains for three of the six subgroups they examined.

In sum, the evaluations of the D.C. voucher program have shown that low-income students who received scholarships have higher graduation rates, higher student achievement, increased parental views of safety and increased parent satisfaction. There was not one single negative finding over the entire course of the evaluation. That is quite a success for a program that spent a fraction of the per-pupil amount spent in D.C. public schools.

In conclusion, D.C. choice options show stronger academic growth and achieve it at a lower taxpayer cost. DCPS has led the nation in spending while ranking among the worst districts in the nation for decades. It has improved, but charter schools are improving faster.

Moving forward, policymakers should deeply study the Louisiana RSD model as a method to achieve even faster improvement for students in the district. The RSD model seems to represent a better social arrangement for pursuing the interests of the District of Columbia's children. Some serious thought should be given to transforming DCPS into an RSD and expanding the OSP—assuming, of course, that higher academic achievement and graduation rates are valued.

BLOOMBERG ERA ENDS IN NYC WITH SMALL SCHOOL INITIATIVE FOUND A SUCCESS

Michael Bloomberg was elected mayor of New York City in the immediate aftermath of the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, taking office in 2002. With new authority granted to him from the state, Bloomberg gained control over the city school system, a goal that had eluded former Mayor Rudolph Giuliani. Bloomberg, a Republican who later became an independent and was previously a Democrat, was term-limited after serving three terms. His successor, Bill de Blasio, campaigned for office with an overt hostility toward Bloomberg's reforms, especially charter schools.

A large part of Bloomberg's strategy was to create small schools and close underperforming ones. Bloomberg's administration opened 656 new schools (142 of which were charter schools) and closed 96. MDRC, an educational and social policy nonprofit organization, conducted a random assignment evaluation of the small school program. According to MDRC:

Those findings show that the schools, which serve mostly disadvantaged students of color, continue to produce sustained positive effects, raising graduation rates by 9.5 percentage points. This increase translates to nearly 10 more graduates for every 100 entering ninth-grade students.

These graduation gains can be attributed almost entirely to Regents diplomas attained, and the effects are seen in virtually every subgroup in these schools, including male and female students of color, students with below grade level eighth-grade proficiency in math and reading, and low-income students. In addition, the best evidence that currently exists suggests that these small high schools may increase graduation rates for two new subgroups for which findings were not previously available: special education students and English language learners. Finally, more students are graduating ready for college: the schools raise by 6.8 percentage points the proportion of students scoring 75 or more on the English Regents exam, a critical measure of college readiness used by the City University of New York.⁹

Either unaware or unimpressed with higher graduation rates for minority, special education and ELL, de Blasio campaigned on the notion of charging rent to charter schools. Given the high price of real estate in New York City, Bloomberg, on the other hand, made use of empty space in existing school buildings for many small schools, including charters. Known as "colocation," this policy made use of underutilized public assets in order to broaden the choices available to parents.

The Manhattan Institute analyzed the budgets of co-located charter school finances and concluded that de Blasio's rent proposal would have forced 71 percent of co-located charters into deficit in 2011–2012, the last year with available data. The average impacted charter school would have run a \$682,983 deficit, equal to 10.7 percent of budget. The institute found that personnel costs consumed 70 percent of charter school budgets, meaning layoffs would have been unavoidable.¹⁰

It remains unclear at the time of this writing

as to whether de Blasio will follow through on his threat to charge rent to charter schools. His new school chancellor, however, has diverted \$210 million in city funds that had been intended for new charter school facilities to other purposes. In addition, the administration has announced the decision to put charter school applications under additional scrutiny—including several recently approved applications.

“This is an attack on the 99 percent. It’s wrong,” Eva Moskowitz, CEO of Success Academy Charter Schools and a former City Council member, told the *New York Post*. “We need to replicate what’s working, not attack what’s working.”

Ironically, just as this battle over New York City charter schools began to unfold, a groundbreaking study from Harvard University of the long-term results of school vouchers in New York City emerged. In 1997, the New York School Choice Scholarships Foundation Program provided three-year scholarships worth up to a maximum of \$1,400 annually to low-income elementary students. Utilizing the random assignment lottery results and tracking long-term student outcomes through the National Student Clearinghouse, the study determined that African-American students using a voucher attended college at a 24 percent higher rate than lottery losers.¹¹ This is an impressive return on a private \$4,200 investment in three years of elementary school. The savings impresses all the more when you consider that every participating child saved New York taxpayers a much larger sum of money.

Keep an eye on the Big Apple to see how events unfold.

SIGN OF THE TIMES: MAYOR EMANUEL BATTLES TEACHER UNIONS IN THE WINDY CITY

Teacher unions have long served as a strong supporter of the Democratic Party, and it is difficult to find any big city mayors with stronger party credentials than Rahm Emanuel. He served in the Clinton White House as Senior Adviser to the President for Policy and Strategy. After his service in the Clinton Administration, Emanuel served three terms in the U.S. House of Representatives representing Chicago’s Fifth District. Emanuel served as the head of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee when Democrats became the House Majority in 2006, and

then head of the House Democratic Caucus. After Barack Obama won the presidency in 2008, Emanuel served as his chief of staff before running for, and winning, the race for mayor of Chicago, taking office in February 2011.

This might appear as an odd resume for someone who entered into a bitter battle with a teacher union once he became mayor, but these are strange days. Emanuel took over at a troubled time for Chicago. *The Atlantic* summarized the tenure of his long-serving predecessor, Richard Daley:

Richard M. Daley has a lot to show for his 22 years in office. He built the spectacular Millennium Park, began school reform in a system that in the 1980s was considered the worst in urban America, and helped revitalize fading neighborhoods that had long been the backbone of Chicago. But he did much of it on borrowed money, and by 2010 his profligate spending, a declining population, and the economic downturn combined to send the city \$637 million into the red. Low-income kids were still getting shot every day; the schools were still a mess; and grumbling grew louder about the mayor using half a billion a year in economic-development money like a piggy bank for pet projects.¹²

Chicago, as can be seen in the preceding charts, has its fair share of academic problems. In a city where only a small minority of students read proficiently, average teacher compensation exceeds \$75,000 a year—\$10,000 higher than the statewide average. Only 61 percent of students graduate from high-school, and for African-American males, the percentage is only 45 percent.¹³ Emanuel campaigned on a pledge to lengthen the school day in Chicago, noting that Chicago students spent one of the lowest numbers of hours per year in school.

Emanuel, like both Obama and former Chicago school superintendent and current Secretary of Education Arne Duncan, also supported the inclusion of student test scores as a part of teacher evaluations. Extending the school day and including student achievement in evaluating educator performance may seem innocuous, but the Chicago Teachers Union viewed it as a *casus belli* and went on strike for a week during a school

year, leaving hundreds of thousands of students stranded.

The city and the union eventually settled the strike. The teachers' new contract included compromises on increased teacher pay, the rules governing the rehiring of laid-off teachers and the inclusion of student test scores in teacher evaluations. Tensions between the mayor and the union, however, did not end with the strike. The Emanuel Administration moved to close 50 schools. The district reported having 511,000 desks for 403,000 students. Before the closures, the district reported that 140 of its 681 schools were more than half empty.¹⁴ The administration described the moves as long overdue, and in any case needed to find funds to cover the teacher pay increase that settled the strike.

The Chicago Teachers Union leadership apparently believes it's possible to increase pay by 17 percent without any need to economize elsewhere. When the Emanuel campaign announced that they had raised \$5 million for his reelection, it drew a rather frosty response from the union. "He needs every damn dime," said Stacy Davis Gates, political legislative director for the Chicago Teachers Union, relating that the mayor should expect an "all-out battle in his next campaign."¹⁵

CONCLUSION: THE CLOCK IS TICKING

Economically disadvantaged inner-city children would face more than enough challenges in life even if they had abundant access to the nation's most effective schools. Instead, we find districts still largely wedded to unionized industrial factory models. Spending is up, but low achievement remains common. Dropout rates remain high, and waiting lists at the still far-too-scarce high-quality charter schools remain long. Policymakers have been making changes and showing progress with them, but the average urban student may have yet to notice that anything has changed.

At the time of this writing, policymakers in Michigan and Tennessee have adopted RSD legislation. While the RSD model requires a great deal of hard work to attract the talent needed to start the new schools in existing buildings, there's nothing magic about this approach. It creates a clear mechanism for pulling the plug on low-performing schools and for returning large educational assets (mainly buildings) to productive use.

The RSD model fundamentally rethinks the role of a school district and thus represents the most exciting trend in urban education.

Policymakers should, however, not ignore the continuing success of voucher programs. High-quality random assignment studies show a very impressive track record of improving graduation and college attendance rates for disadvantaged urban youth. Policymakers need to seek out as many seats in high-quality schools as possible—and some of them are in private schools.

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TABLE 6 | Change in NAEP Scores for All Students from 2003 to 2013

(Non-IEP, Non-ELL) Average scores

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

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

TABLE 7 | Education Policy Grade Components

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

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

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Listed below are model policies of the ALEC Task Force on Education.

For more information on these model policies, please contact Lindsay Russell, director of the Task Force on Education, at lrussell@alec.org, or view them online at www.alec.org.

The 140 Credit Hour Act

The act imposes a 25 percent tuition surcharge on students who take more than 140 credit hours to complete a baccalaureate degree in a four-year program at any state-supported college or university, or more than 110 percent of the credit hours necessary to complete a baccalaureate degree in a five-year program. This act will also prohibit colleges and universities subject to this act from counting students in their full-time equivalent counts for funding purposes after the students reach the 140 credit hour limit in a four-year program or 110 percent of credit hours necessary in a five-year program.

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. The chapters of this model 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 instruction improvement 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.

The Autism Scholarship Program Act

The Autism Scholarship Program Act provides students with autism the option to attend the public or non-public school of their parents’ choice.

Career Ladder Opportunities Act

The Career Ladder Opportunities 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. Reward systems in the past have often failed because of premature abandonment, so the district must keep the plan in place 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 statewide charter authorizer.

Civic Literacy Act

Many states have enacted legislation to require the teaching of the Declaration of Independence, U.S. Constitution and Federalist Papers during high school years. It is important that all citizens, regardless of origin, are made aware of our nation's political heritage. Indeed, the future of our democratic institutions may be jeopardized if civic illiteracy is permitted to continue unabated. Nevertheless, a reversal of this trend may take place only if legislators enact new laws that provide clear and detailed instructions about curriculum and other related matters, as well as sanctions and appropriate enforcement mechanisms.

The College Funding Accountability Act

Each college or university that requests an appropriation and following reauthorization from the state that exceeds monies received in the prior fiscal year, except for allowances for cost-of-living and population, must submit to an outside financial audit to determine if the additional increase in funding is both necessary and prudent to meet the financial needs of the college or university.

The Collegiate Learning Assessment Act

This model policy requires public colleges and universities to administer the Collegiate Learning Assessment to all students during their freshman and senior years. The schools would also be required to publish the results broken down by academic majors. The act focuses on transparency in student learning outcomes as the first step toward raising public awareness about areas of academic strength and weakness in certain schools and majors. This would guide prospective students toward schools and majors shown to yield significant increases in learning and achievement.

The College Opportunity Fund Act

This model will create a voucher program for students to use to attend the higher education institution of their choice.

Course Choice Program Act

The Course Choice Program created by this act would allow students in public schools and public charter schools to enroll in online, blended and face-to-face courses not offered by the student's school and would allow a portion of that student's funding to flow to the course provider. This act creates an authorization process for providers and identifies provider and course eligibility criteria. This act requires course providers and the state's department of education to regularly report on the key measurements of student success and enrollment. This act gives the state's department of education authority to enter into an interstate course reciprocity agreement, allowing students within the state to take courses from providers located in other states. This model is written in a format to allow for flexibility among individual states' needs. As written, there are options available to tailor funding and student eligibility based on the educational needs of each state.

Credit Articulation Agreements Act

The Credit Articulation Agreements Act would require statewide degree transfer agreements to transfer associate of arts (AA) degrees and associate of science (AS) degrees from one state institution of higher education to another. A student who earns an AA or AS degree that is the subject of a transfer agreement and who is admitted to a four-year institution will be enrolled at the grade level appropriate

with the standard requirements of the four-year institution. However, an institution that admits the student may require the student to complete additional prerequisite courses if necessary for the degree program to which the student transfers, so long as the additional credits do not extend the student's time to degree completion beyond that required for a student who begins and completes his or her degree at the institution.

Early Intervention Program Act

This act creates an early intervention program targeted to at-risk students. It requires the state board of education to select one or more technology providers through a request for proposals process to provide adaptive computer software for literacy or numeracy instruction—or both—and assessments for students in kindergarten through grade three. It also requires the state board of education to report final testing data regarding an interactive computer software program, including student learning gains, to an education interim committee and the governor.

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.

The Family Education Savings Account Act

The Family Education Savings Account Act would create a tax deduction/credit for contributions made by state taxpayers into students' Coverdell education savings accounts, which allow tax-free savings for both K-12 and higher education expenses.

Free Enterprise Education Act

The Free Enterprise Education Act mandates instruction in the free enterprise system, a course that requires an interdisciplinary study of economics, political science, history, geography, culture and current events. This act requires a stand-alone course in the free enterprise system that lasts at least one semester and a passing grade in order for students to receive a certificate or diploma of graduation.

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.

Founding Principles Act

The Founding Principles Act would require that high school students be taught a semester-long course on the philosophical understandings of the nation's founding and the founders' principles, which are the foundation of our form of government for a free people, as incorporated in the Declaration of Independence, U.S. Constitution and Federalist Papers.

Founding Philosophy and Principles Act

The Founding Philosophy and Principles Act recognizes that the survival of the republic requires that the nation's children have a clear understanding of the country's founding philosophy and principles of government, which are found in the Declaration of Independence, U.S. Constitution, Federalist Papers and writings of the founders.

The Full Faith and Credit for Properly Constructed Individualized Education Plans (IEP) Act

Under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, all students are entitled to a free and appropriate public education, and school districts are required to provide services in accordance with an individualized education plan that outlines the particular educational needs and appropriate services for each child.

The Great Schools Tax Credit Program Act

The Great Schools Tax Credit Program Act authorizes 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 non-probationary status in some states. Under the act, teachers can earn tenure after three years of sufficient student academic growth. Tenure is revocable following two 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.

Higher Education Capital Projects Transparency Act

The Higher Education Capital Projects Transparency Act requires a public institution of higher education to develop and promulgate procedures for maximum utilization of existing facilities, to make data on the average weekly usage of classrooms and laboratories available on its Web site in a format clearly comprehensible to the public and to hold public discussion of each proposed capital construction project exceeding \$10 million in total cost. This includes—but is not limited to—evaluation of utilization of existing campus instructional buildings for a period not less than the three years preceding the construction proposal.

Higher Education Scholarships for High School Pupils Act

This policy enables a school district to adopt and offer higher education scholarships for high school pupils to any high school pupil who graduates early and who achieves a score of “proficient” or above on all subjects tested in the statewide assessment. The scholarship would be equivalent to one-half of the total per-pupil expenditure for high school pupils in such school district to be used to defray tuition costs at any public or private institution of higher education within or outside of the state.

The Honest Transcript Act

The Honest Transcript Act looks to correct grade inflation by requiring all public colleges and universities to include on student transcripts the average grade given by the professor for the entire class alongside the individual grade the student received for each class. This would help potential employers learn whether a given high grade-point average signifies superlative talent or merely that the student completed undemanding courses. The policy does not seek to make universities do anything differently; it only asks them to make transparent for students, parents and taxpayers what it is they are doing.

Inclusive College Savings Plan Act

This act will increase opportunities for state residents to invest in the 529 college savings plan.

Indiana Education Reform Package

The Indiana Education Reform Package is inspired by the comprehensive set of K–12 education reforms adopted by the Indiana General Assembly in the spring of 2011 and signed by Gov. Mitch Daniels. This act incorporates several of the key reforms the assembly passed, including the 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.

Informed Student Document Act

To aid students and their parents, the Informed Student Document Act would publish the following outcomes by which a state’s universities can be compared:

1. “Sticker-price” tuition relative to other institutions.
2. Net price, after grants and scholarships, relative to other institutions.
3. Retention rate relative to other institutions.
4. Graduation rate relative to other institutions.
5. Average student debt relative to other institutions.
6. Loan repayment rates relative to other institutions.
7. Employment potential relative to other institutions.
8. Average starting salaries for each academic major (gleaned from national employment surveys).

In addition to posting this information online, all potential applicants to a state college or university would receive this document in their application packet.

The Innovation Schools and School Districts Act

The Innovation Schools and School Districts Act creates a mechanism for schools, groups of schools and districts to adopt plans that try new ways of delivering instruction and/or allocating resources. It creates a new classification of school districts called “Districts of Innovation” that have one or more schools implementing these plans. Districts of Innovation are given a greater degree of autonomy and can waive some statutory requirements.

K-12 Technology-Based Reading Intervention for English Learners Act

The K-12 Technology-Based Reading Intervention for English Learners Act calls on the state department of education to implement a language development software program in grades K-12 to assist those identified as English Language Learners.

The Lifelong Learning Accounts Act

The Lifelong Learning Accounts (LiLA) Act would provide for the creation, administration and operation of the Lifelong Learning Accounts program. Under this program, participating employers match employee contributions into a LiLA, up to an established cap. Third parties are encouraged to match contributions.

Local Government Transparency Act

This act requires that a unit of local government or school district having an annual budget equal to, or more than, \$500,000 must maintain and post on its Web site for the current calendar or fiscal year, as the case may be, and the four years immediately before that calendar or fiscal year the following information: (1) contact information for elected and appointed officials, (2) notice of regular and special meetings, (3) procedures for requesting information from the unit of local government or school district, (4) annual budget, (5) ordinances under which the unit of local government or school district operates, (6) procedures to apply for building permits and zoning variances, (7) financial reports and audits, (8) information concerning employee compensation, (9) contracts with lobbying firms, (10) taxes and fees imposed by the unit of local government or school district, (11) rules governing the award of

contracts, (12) bids and contracts worth \$25,000 or more, (13) campaign contributions made by a vendor and (14) the searchable expenditure and revenue Web site database. This act also provides that any citizen who is a resident of the unit of local government or school district may bring a mandamus or injunction action to compel the unit of local government or school district to comply with the Internet posting requirements.

The Military Family Scholarship Program Act

The Military Family Scholarship Program Act creates a scholarship program to provide all children of veterans and active military personnel the option to attend the public or private elementary or secondary school of their parents' choice.

National Teacher Certification Fairness Act

This act creates a level and open playing field among nationally recognized teacher certification programs.

The Next Generation Charter Schools Act

This act recognizes establishment of charter schools as necessary to improving the opportunities of all families to choose the public school that meets the needs of their children and affirms that the state believes that charter schools serve a distinct purpose in supporting innovations and best practices that can be adopted among all public schools. It also says the state recognizes 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. The purpose of this act is to establish 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.

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 model policy 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 the 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.

The Parental Choice Scholarship Program Act (Means-Tested Eligibility)

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.

Parental Choice Scholarship Program Act (Universal Eligibility, Means-Tested Scholarship Amount)

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.

The Parental Choice Scholarship Program Act (Universal Eligibility)

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.

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.

Resolution in Support of Private-Sector Colleges and Universities

The Resolution in Support of Private-Sector Colleges and Universities recognizes the unique role of private-sector colleges and universities in our nation's system of higher education. The resolution expresses support for laws and regulations that promote fair and equal access to all sectors of higher education.

Resolution on Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act

This act empowers states to tie Title I dollars to students and allow them to carry the money to the school of their choice.

Resolution Opposing Federal Intrusion in State Education Content Standards

Education is inherently a state issue, since those closest to students have always been best equipped to make appropriate educational decisions, including choosing academic content standards. Any federal government action, through administrative fiat or congressional act, to dictate or prescribe a particular set of academic content standards—or to dictate how such standards are implemented—is an intrusion into the states' long-established rights and responsibilities to deliver K–12 education and violates fundamental principles of federalism. This resolution opposes any effort by the federal government to deny the authority of any state to set its own education academic content standards or to attempt to overturn decisions made duly by a state.

Resolution Supporting Training and Continuing Education for Higher Education Governing Boards

This resolution expresses the sense of the legislature regarding the importance and value of continuing education for college and university governing boards.

Resolution Supporting United States History Education

This resolution expresses the sense of the legislature regarding the importance and value of education in U.S. history.

School Board Freedom to Contract Act

This act encourages the establishment of public-private partnerships between school boards and the private sector for outsourcing and delivery of ancillary services under the direction of school boards, when said services/programs can be executed more efficiently and more cost effectively by the private sector.

School Choice Directory Act

This model policy requires the state department of education to produce a catalog of educational options available in the state. The catalog will provide a brief description of all educational choices for students in K-12 as they apply to the state, including (as applicable) open enrollment, charter schools, vouchers, education savings accounts, homeschooling and tax credit scholarships.

School Collective Bargaining Agreement Sunshine Act

For the purpose of transparency, this model policy requires school district boards of education to provide copies of all collective bargaining agreements entered into by such boards to the state board of education and to the largest public library in the school district. Each school board is required to post copies of all current collective bargaining agreements on its Web site—if the district has a Web site. Available for public inspection, the state board of education shall create a repository for all current collective bargaining agreements and post all current collective bargaining agreements on the state department of education’s Web site. Also available for public inspection, the library board of trustees shall create a repository for all current collective bargaining agreements at the library.

Smart Start Scholarship Program

This model policy creates a scholarship program that helps children from low- and middle-income families attend the public or non-public preschool program for 4-year-olds or kindergarten program for 5-year-olds, of their parents’ choice.

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

The Statewide Online Education Act creates a statewide program that provides high school students with access to online learning options, regardless of where the students live. The options are designed to be high quality and allow for maximized learning potential by focusing on student mastery of a subject at their own pace and own time instead of the traditional seat-time learning requirements.

Student Achievement Backpack Act

This model policy provides access by a student’s parent or guardian or an authorized local education agency user to the learning profile of a student from kindergarten through grade 12 in an electronic format known as a Student Achievement Backpack.

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. This allows parents, regardless of income or address, to have a greater array of education options for their children based on their unique, individual needs.

Student Data Accessibility, Transparency and Accountability Act

The Student Data Accessibility, Transparency and Accountability Act would require the board of education or department of education of a state to make publicly available an inventory and index of all data elements with definitions of individual student data fields currently in the statewide longitudinal data system. The state’s education body would be required to create a data security plan, ensuring compliance with federal and state data privacy laws and policies. Certain contracts would be required to include privacy and security provisions. A chief privacy officer will be created within that body whose primary mission includes ensuring department-wide compliance with all privacy laws and regulations. This model policy adds new annual security and privacy reporting requirements to a state’s governor and legislature.

Student Futures Program Act

This act creates a career planning program.

Student Protection Act

This act requires all persons applying for certification or classification as school employees to submit their fingerprints to the state's department of corrections (or its equivalent) and to the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

Substantive Transparency in Education Act

The Substantive Transparency in Education Act requires that each public school make available all current textbooks, curricula, instructional materials and instructional programs for inspection by any parent or guardian of a child enrolled in that school.

Taxpayers' Savings Grants Act

The Taxpayers' Savings Grants Act establishes a program by which willing residents can opt to receive less public funding for their child's education in order to take that funding to a private school. The difference in the amount slated for that child and the amount of the savings grant will be considered taxpayer savings and not allotted to any other program.

Teacher Choice Compensation Act

The Teacher Choice Compensation Act would create a program whereby 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 model policy 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 model policy 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 (AEI) is a community of scholars and supporters committed to expanding liberty, increasing individual opportunity and strengthening free enterprise. AEI pursues these unchanging ideals through independent thinking, open debate, reasoned argument, facts and the highest standards of research and exposition.

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 transformational education reform initiatives and parental choice policies 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 rights of parents.

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 school choice and charter schools, finance and productivity, teachers, urban district reform, leadership and state and federal reform.

Clayton Christensen Institute for Disruptive Innovationwww.christenseninstitute.org

The Clayton Christensen Institute is a nonprofit, nonpartisan think tank dedicated to improving the world through disruptive innovation. Founded on the theories of Harvard professor Clayton M. Christensen, the institute offers a unique framework for understanding many of society's most pressing problems. Its mission is ambitious but clear: Work to shape and elevate the conversation surrounding these issues through rigorous research and public outreach.

Digital Learning Now!www.digitallearningnow.com

Digital Learning Now is a national initiative under the Foundation for Excellence in Education with the goal of advancing state policies that will create a high-quality digital learning environment to better equip all students with the knowledge and skills to succeed in this 21st century economy.

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

Founded and chaired by former Florida Governor Jeb Bush, the Foundation for Excellence in Education is igniting a movement of reform, state by state, to transform education for the 21st century economy by working with lawmakers, policymakers, educators and parents to advance education reform across America.

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, citizenship and governance.

Friedman Foundation for Educational Choicewww.edchoice.org

The Friedman Foundation for Educational Choice works to educate the public and policymakers about school choice, how it works and why it is needed. It provides education, outreach and advocacy support to parents and community groups interested in school choice, offers research and data analysis to those pursuing school choice and develops promotional materials for supporters working to reach more audiences. It was founded by Milton and Rose D. Friedman to advance a system of K-12 education in which all parents, regardless of race, origin or family income, are free to choose a learning environment that is best for their children.

Goldwater Institutewww.goldwaterinstitute.org

The Goldwater Institute's mission is to advance freedom and protect the Constitution. The Goldwater Institute believes in the power of the states to restore America to the founding principles that made it a beacon of opportunity, prosperity and freedom.

Heartland Institutewww.heartland.org

The Heartland Institute'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.

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.

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

The mission of K¹² Inc. 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.

The LIBRE Initiativewww.thelibreinitiative.com

The LIBRE Initiative is a nonpartisan, nonprofit grassroots organization that advances the principles and values of economic freedom to empower the U.S. Hispanic community so it can thrive and contribute to a more prosperous America.

Mackinac Center for Public Policywww.mackinac.org

The Mackinac Center for Public Policy is a nonpartisan research and educational institute that promotes sound solutions to Michigan's state and local policy questions. The center assists policymakers, business people, the media and the public by providing objective analysis of Michigan issues.

Magnet Schools of Americawww.magnet.edu

Magnet Schools of America is a professional association that is driven by its members representing nearly 2,000 magnet schools nationwide, as well as members of the community including parents and families, school district leaders, businesses partners and institutions of higher education.

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 Quality

www.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.

Oklahoma Council of Public Affairs

www.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 21 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 Institute

www.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.

Policy Innovators in Education (PIE Network)

www.pie-network.org

Nonpartisan in ideas and bipartisan in approach, PIE Network groups provide a consistent, evidence-based and credible public voice in the process of education policy-making.

State Policy Network

www.spn.org

The State Policy Network (SPN) 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, policymakers and opinion leaders about market-oriented alternatives to state and local policy challenges.

StudentsFirst

www.studentsfirst.org

StudentsFirst formed in 2010 in response to an increasing demand for a better education system in America. Its 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 Foundation

www.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 Institute

www.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 Center

www.washingtonpolicy.org

The 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 America's largest nonpartisan, voluntary membership organization of state legislators. ALEC provides a unique opportunity for state lawmakers, business leaders and citizen organizations from around the country to share experiences and develop statebased, pro-growth models based on academic research, existing state policy and proven business practices. The ultimate goal of ALEC is to help state lawmakers make government work more efficiently and move government closer to the communities they serve, thereby creating opportunity for all Americans.

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

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

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

ALEC's Nine Task Forces and Issue Areas Include:

TASK FORCE ON CIVIL JUSTICE

- Civil Liability Predictability
- Fairness in Damages
- Discouraging Lawsuit Abuse

TASK FORCE ON COMMERCE, INSURANCE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- Limiting Government Mandates on Business
- Transportation and Infrastructure
- Employee Rights and Freedoms

TASK FORCE ON COMMUNICATIONS AND TECHNOLOGY

- Broadband Deployment
- Consumer Privacy
- E-Commerce

TASK FORCE ON EDUCATION

- Education Reform
- Parental Choice
- Efficiency, Accountability and Transparency

TASK FORCE ON ENERGY, ENVIRONMENT AND AGRICULTURE

- Energy Affordability and Reliability
- Regulatory Reform
- Agriculture and Land Use

TASK FORCE ON HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

- Pro-Patient, Free-Market Health Policy
- Private and Public Health Insurance
- Federal Health Reform

TASK FORCE ON INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

- International Trade
- Intellectual Property Rights Protection
- Federalism

JUSTICE PERFORMANCE PROJECT

- Recidivism Reduction
- Overcriminalization
- Data-Driven Criminal Justice Reform

TASK FORCE ON TAX AND FISCAL POLICY

- Pro-Growth Tax Reform
- Priority-Based Budgeting
- Pension Reform



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