

Where does your state rank on the list of best school systems?

By **Matt Zalaznick** July 25, 2022

New Mexico Ranks #51

"Quality" and "safety" are the two key measures in the 2022 rankings of the states with the best and worst school systems.

Academic performance, funding, class size and instructor credentials are among the other important metrics in [the list](#) released Monday by the personal finance website WalletHub. To determine quality, the 80-point scale considers high school graduation rates for low-income students, projected graduation rate increases over the next 10 years, dropout rate, math and reading scores, advanced placement scores, median SAT and ACT scores, and Blue Ribbon schools per capita.

[Student behavior](#) and technology are the two central safety components. The number of school shootings and other violent incidents, bullying and incarceration rates, students' access to illegal drugs and weapons, injuries suffered by students, and parents' perceptions of how safe their kids' schools are figure into the behavior rating. On the tech side, the rankings look at the existence of digital and remote learning plans and whether states offer guidance on accessible technologies.

Spending is broken down into four categories: states with high spending and high quality, states with low spending and high quality, states with high spending and low quality, and states with low spending and low quality.

Here is WalletHub's 2022 list of the best and worst school systems, with each state's scores:

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1. Massachusetts: 72.79
2. Connecticut: 66.22
3. New Jersey: 64.05
4. Virginia: 61.79
5. Maryland: 60.6
6. Delaware: 60.05
7. New Hampshire: 59.19
8. North Dakota: 58.42
9. Nebraska: 58.12
10. Wisconsin: 58.03
11. Vermont: 56.71
12. Maine: 56.09
13. Utah: 55.53
14. Florida: 55.35
15. Minnesota: 55.21
16. Rhode Island: 55.17
17. New York: 54.86
18. Pennsylvania: 54.32
19. Iowa: 54.25
20. Wyoming: 54.23
21. Kentucky: 53.94
22. Indiana: 53.52
23. Illinois: 53.23
24. Colorado: 52.62
25. Montana: 51.55
26. South Dakota: 51.19

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32. Arkansas: 47.22
33. Kansas: 47.20
34. Ohio: 47.10
35. Missouri: 46.32
36. Georgia: 46.07
37. Idaho: 45.22
38. Michigan: 44.12
39. Nevada: 44.01
40. California: 43.17
41. Hawaii: 42.42
42. Alabama: 39.8
43. Mississippi: 38.65
44. Oregon: 38.07
45. Oklahoma: 38.01
46. South Carolina: 37.31
47. West Virginia: 37.18
48. Arizona: 35.11
49. Louisiana: 34.09
50. Alaska: 33.05
51. New Mexico: 26.07

There are some wrinkles in the ratings. While Massachussetts ranked first for both quality and safety, the state in the second slot, Connecticut, was No. 2 for quality but ninth for safety. New Jersey, No. 3 in quality, rated 21st for safety. WalletHub also noted that the highest state dropout rate (a tie between Arizona, New Mexico and the District of Columbia) was four times greater than in the lowest (Alabama).

School quality can be hard to determine based on funding alone—beyond the districts at

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