

QuickPoint! - Oregon: Improvement Needed on “Education Freedom Report Card”

By **Kathryn Hickok**

The Heritage Foundation annually releases an Education Freedom Report Card, which analyzes and ranks all 50 states and the District of Columbia according to factors related to school choice, academic transparency, regulatory freedom, and education spending. The report seeks to assess what each state does well, identify where it can improve, and help policymakers achieve real reforms.

This year, Florida and Arizona again take first and second place. Both states have long been pioneers in broadly expanding students’ educational opportunities. Louisiana, West Virginia, and Wyoming made notable improvements, due to new Education Savings Account laws.

Unfortunately, Oregon still ranks at or near the bottom in all categories: 51st overall, 47th in education choice, 35th in return on investment, and 31st in academic transparency.

Oregon is also 50th in “teacher freedom.” The report explains: “Zero percent of teachers are alternatively certified, largely required to go through university-based colleges of education in order to enter the K-12 classroom. The Beaver State does not have full reciprocity of teacher licensure with other states.”

Oregon could improve its education freedom ranking by enacting an Education Savings Account program, making it easier for charter schools to open and operate, expanding families’ choices among traditional public schools, and reforming licensure so more good teachers can teach in Oregon. These goals should be at the top of Oregon policymakers’ education reform agendas.

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