

In early 2015, WashACE launched [Opportunity Washington: Priorities for Shared Prosperity](#), a roadmap for expanding Washington’s culture of opportunity statewide.

To use any map effectively, travelers must know where they are, where they’re headed, and how to measure progress. To that end, we introduce the [Opportunity Washington Scorecard](#), a data-driven analysis of state performance in three categories that communities tell us are most important. **Achieve** measures education quality and outcomes. **Connect** measures transportation reliability and efficiency. **Employ** measures economic vitality.

To develop the Scorecard, we examine 50-state data from 16 variables across the three categories. The dials are set so the score of the 10th best state is 100 and the median is 75. From there, the analysis produces a weighted average or “Opportunity Score” for each state. Achieve and Employ data each make up 40 percent of the Opportunity Score; Connect makes up 20 percent.

The data tells us where each state ranks and where Washington can improve. **Our goal is to make Washington a top 10 state overall and in each category.**

Opportunity Scores by State

STATE	SCORE	RANK
MA	117	1
UT	111	2
KS	111	3
NH	105	4
MT	104	5
NE	102	6
DE	101	7
IN	101	8
MO	100	9
VT	100	10
SD	99	11
ND	95	12
CO	92	13
FL	90	14
VA	89	15
CT	88	16
IA	88	17
MD	87	18
MN	86	19
OH	85	20
MI	83	21
NC	82	22
ID	79	23
WA	79	24
TX	75	25
WY	75	26
ME	74	27
WI	74	28
IL	73	29
AZ	72	30
KY	72	31
PA	69	32
CA	66	33
OR	64	34
AR	62	35
NY	62	36
TN	60	37
NJ	60	38
GA	59	39
OK	58	40
NV	55	41
SC	54	42
RI	52	43
MS	52	44
AL	50	45
NM	42	46
LA	41	47
WV	37	48
HI	19	49
AK	3	50



Washington’s Overall Performance 50-State Ranking: **24** • Opportunity Score: **79**

Washington’s Performance: Our state is in a good – though not great – position, ranking 24th among the states based on an opportunity score of 79. Washington comes in just above the median, not in the top 10 overall or the top 10 in any sub-category.

Top Performer: Massachusetts leads the nation with a score of 117. This is driven largely by the state’s education system and private sector investment in research and development.

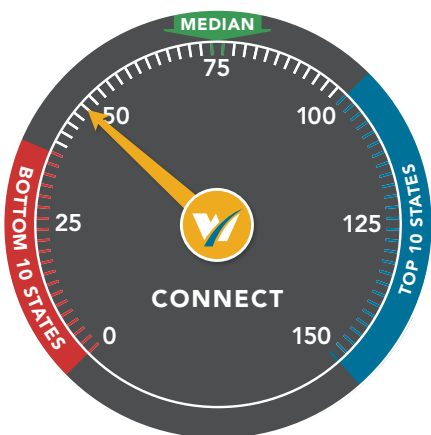


ACHIEVE 50-State Ranking: **18** • Score: **82**

Washington’s Performance: Our state ranks 18th based on an Achieve (education) score of 82. The state performs well in 4th grade reading, 8th grade math, and associate’s degrees awarded. However, the high school graduation rate is well below the median (ranking 40th in the nation). The state also ranks among the bottom half of all states in bachelor’s and advanced degree production.

Top Performer: Massachusetts leads the nation with an off-the-chart Achieve score of 160.

The Data: Measures of education quality include 4th grade reading and 8th grade math proficiency; high school graduation rate; and associate’s, bachelor’s, STEM bachelor’s, master’s, and doctoral degrees awarded.



CONNECT 50-State Ranking: **38** • Score: **48**

Washington’s Performance: Our state ranks well below the median, coming in 38th among all states, based on a Connect (transportation) score of 48. Lawmakers passed a comprehensive transportation package this year that will lead to a safer, more efficient system and should improve Washington’s ranking over time.

Top Performer: Kansas leads the nation with a Connect score of 120.

The Data: Measures of transportation system performance include commute time, bridge quality, and road quality.



EMPLOY Score: 50-State Ranking: **23** • Score: **78**

Washington’s Performance: Our state ranks 23rd with an Employ (economic vitality) score of 78. This position, just above the median, reflects strong private sector R&D investment and entrepreneurial activity coupled with higher-than-average business costs.

Top Performer: Delaware leads the nation with an Employ score of 126.

The Data: Indicators of economic vitality include two business tax measures, the unemployment insurance tax, private sector R&D investment, and entrepreneurial activity.