

Wisconsin Institute for Law & Liberty: Releases Most Comprehensive Analysis of School Performance

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WISCONSIN INSTITUTE
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New Peer-Reviewed Study Ranks Every K-12 School in Wisconsin

April 17, 2018 – Milwaukee, WI – The Wisconsin Institute for Law & Liberty (WILL) released its second annual report comparing school academic performance across Wisconsin, [Apples to Apples](#). In this new peer-reviewed study, control variables—such as student economic status and demographics—are included to level the playing field and make the clearest possible comparisons between schools for policymakers and parents.

Also included for the first time is WILL's Performance Ranking, which ranks the performance of every K-12 school in the state from all sectors while controlling for socio-economic status. The searchable database is available here: <http://www.will-law.org/school-search/>.

Some of the findings include:

- Private schools in the Milwaukee Parental Choice Program (MPCP) outperform Milwaukee Public Schools (MPS). Students in the MPCP were about 4 percentage points more likely to score proficient or above in mathematics and 5 percentage points more likely to score proficient or above in reading.
- This performance advantage is driven by Catholic and Lutheran private schools.
- Both independent and non-instrumentality charters have higher proficiency rates than MPS. Students in non-instrumentality charter schools were about 12 percentage points more likely to be proficient in reading and 15 percentage points more likely to be proficient in math than traditional public school students. Independent charter school students were about 5 percentage points more likely to be proficient in reading and 8 percentage points in math.
- Statewide, schools in the state's voucher programs outperform traditional public schools in reading. No differences were found in math. This is the first time a positive association has been found between choice programs overall in Wisconsin and academic outcomes.
- Rural and small town schools perform worse than urban schools. Rural schools have significantly lower performance on the Forward Exam in both math and reading than urban schools.
- Suburban schools outperform rural, small town, and urban schools

Dr. Will Flanders, author of the report says,

“Our study is the most comprehensive, updated analysis on Wisconsin school performance. With urban and rural education struggling mightily, it is incumbent on policymakers to help replicate the high-performing schools and provide parents with access to better information so they can make more informed choices.”