



# Comparing Kansas: Student Attainment, Student Achievement, and School Spending

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## **Introduction**

This report compares data from a variety of national sources for Kansas with states adjacent to Kansas, peer states (states similar to Kansas in terms of population and student characteristics), and aspiration states (states that perform better than Kansas on a majority of student outcome measures). The data compared includes measures of student attainment, student achievement, and school spending. The focus is on Kansas's values on these statistics compared to the average values for each of the comparison groups, but the full dataset for each individual state included in the analysis is available at [kasb.org/research](http://kasb.org/research) under Publications along with an electronic copy of this report.

## **Summary**

The analysis contained in this report supports the following conclusions:

- Seven states outperform Kansas on a majority of student attainment and achievement measures, meaning Kansas performs eighth in the nation in student outcomes based on these measures.
- Most of the states that outperform Kansas have notably different student populations, adult populations, and/or distributions of population.
- Each of the seven states that outperform Kansas spends more per pupil on education than Kansas does.
- Kansas is not as similar to our neighbors as many would assume.
- Only one of our neighbors outperforms us on a majority of student outcome measures (Nebraska).
- Kansas has higher high school completion rates than our neighbors and all peer comparison groups.
- Kansas outperforms our neighbors and all peer comparison groups on the NAEP, ACT, and SAT exams.
- Kansas spends more per pupil than the average amounts for Adjacent states, but less than the average amounts for all other comparison groups.

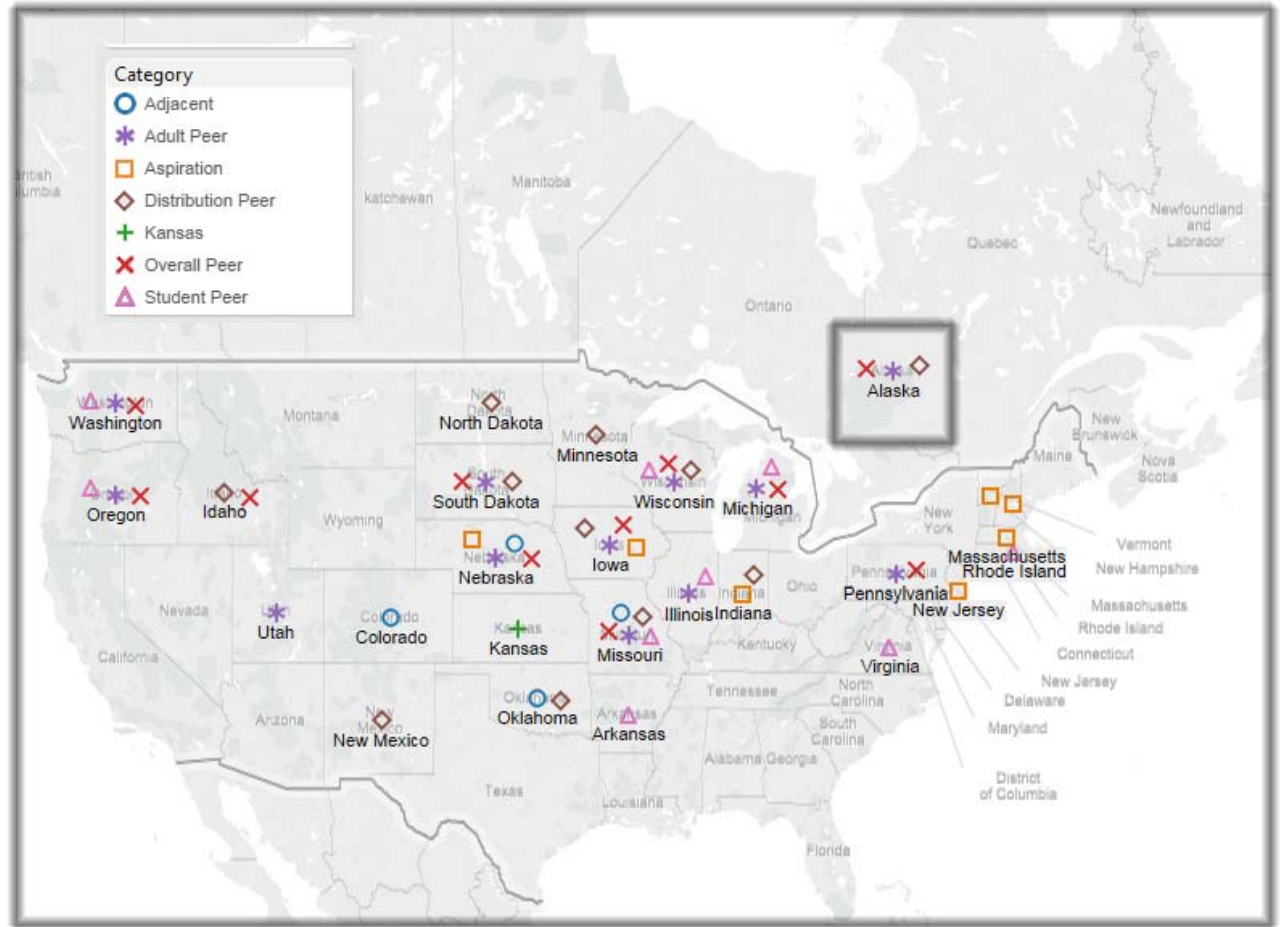
## State Groupings

The following are the groups created for comparison with Kansas and how they were determined.

- **Aspiration States:** States with better student outcomes than Kansas. Defined as those states that exceed Kansas's values on at least 8 of the following 14 measures of student attainment and achievement:
  - Average freshman graduation rate
  - Average cohort graduation rate:
    - all students
    - economically disadvantaged students
    - limited English proficiency students
    - students with disabilities
  - Percent of 18-24 year olds who were high school completers
  - Percent at basic or above on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP):
    - all students
    - National School Lunch Program (NSLP) eligible students
    - NSLP ineligible students
  - Percent at proficient or above on NAEP:
    - all students
    - NSLP eligible students
    - NSLP ineligible students
  - Percent of students meeting all four ACT benchmarks (adjusted for percent participation)
  - SAT mean score (adjusted for percent participation)
- **Adjacent States:** (Neighbors) States that share a border with Kansas.
- **Overall Peers:** States that have a population similar to Kansas overall. Defined as those States that have values within plus or minus one-half a standard deviation of Kansas's value on at least 9 of the 17 measures listed under the three other peer groups.
- **Student Peers:** States that have a student population similar to Kansas. Defined as those States that have values within plus or minus one-half a standard deviation of Kansas's value on at least three of the following five measures:
  - Percent of children at 100% poverty
  - Percent eligible for free or reduced-price lunch
  - Percent served under IDEA
  - Percent in English language learner programs
  - Percent of students who are non-white
- **Adult Peers:** States that have an adult population similar to Kansas. Defined as those States that have values within plus or minus one-half a standard deviation of Kansas's value on at least four of the following six measures:
  - Median household income
  - Percent of population 25 and up with at least a high school diploma
  - Percent of population 25 and up with at least a bachelor's degree
  - Percent of population 25 and up with at least a graduate degree
  - Percent with income below the poverty level in the past 12 months
- **Distribution Peers:** States that have a population divided in to urban and rural areas in a similar way to Kansas. Defined as those States that have values within plus or minus one-half a standard deviation of Kansas's value on at least four of the following seven measures:
  - Percent of the population in:
    - urban areas
    - urbanized areas
    - urban clusters
  - Population per square mile:
    - overall
    - urban areas
    - urbanized areas
    - urban clusters

The following table and map show the states that fall into one or more of the groupings listed above for Kansas:

State	Aspiration	Adjacent	Overall Peer	Student Peer	Adult Peer	Distribution Peer
Alaska			X		X	X
Arkansas				X		
Colorado		X				
Idaho			X			X
Illinois				X	X	
Indiana	X					X
Iowa	X		X		X	X
Massachusetts	X					
Michigan			X	X	X	
Minnesota						X
Missouri		X	X	X	X	X
Nebraska	X	X	X		X	
New Hampshire	X					
New Jersey	X					
New Mexico						X
North Dakota						X
Oklahoma		X				X
Oregon			X	X	X	
Pennsylvania			X		X	
Rhode Island				X		
South Dakota			X		X	X
Utah					X	
Vermont	X					
Virginia				X		
Washington			X	X	X	
Wisconsin			X	X	X	X



This data shows several interesting things, including:

- Only seven states outperform Kansas on a majority of student outcome measures.
- Kansas is similar to 11 other states on a variety of demographic measures overall, is similar to nine states on student population measures, 12 states on adult population measures, and 11 states on population distribution measures, however there are a total of 22 states that Kansas is similar to in at least one of the four peer groupings.
- Only one Adjacent (neighbor) state is also an Aspiration state (Nebraska).
- Our neighbor states are not necessarily our peers; though Missouri appears in all the peer groups, Nebraska only appears in two of the four peer groups, Oklahoma in one, and Colorado in none.

## Attainment

The following table shows the Kansas values for the student attainment statistics included in this analysis, along with the average of the values for the states in each of the comparison groups.

	Kansas	Aspiration	Adjacent	Overall	Peer Student	Peer Adult	Peer Distribution
<b>Average Freshman Graduation Rate (2013)</b>							
All Students	85.7	87.4	84.0	81.4	80.9	81.7	82.7
<b>Average Cohort Graduation Rate (2013)</b>							
All Students	86.0	87.4	84.0	81.5	80.9	81.8	82.9
Economically Disadvantaged Students	76.6	77.9	75.6	70.8	71.2	71.2	72.4
Limited English Proficiency Students	75.0	68.7	62.9	59.8	62.8	60.2	63.4
Students with Disabilities	77.8	70.8	69.2	60.9	60.9	62.2	65.4
<b>18-24 year old high school completers (2013)</b>							
Percent	87.2	88.6	86.2	86.7	86.9	86.8	85.6

This data shows that Kansas has higher high school completion rates than the average for all comparison groups except the Aspiration states, and even has a higher completion rate for Limited English Proficiency Students than the average for the Aspiration states.

## Achievement

The following table shows the Kansas values for the student achievement statistics included in this analysis, along with the average of the values for the states in each of the comparison groups.

	Kansas	Aspiration	Adjacent	Overall	Peer Student	Adult	Distribution
<b>NAEP (2015) - Percent at Basic or Above</b>							
All Students	76.0	81.1	76.3	75.6	74.6	75.8	75.5
NSLP Eligible	65.0	68.3	64.8	62.8	62.4	62.8	63.9
NSLP Ineligible	88.0	89.6	87.5	86.7	86.7	86.8	86.2
<b>NAEP (2015) - Percent at Proficient or Above</b>							
All Students	36.0	43.7	36.0	36.9	36.0	37.1	36.1
NSLP Eligible	22.0	25.9	21.5	21.7	20.9	21.7	22.0
NSLP Ineligible	51.0	55.4	50.5	50.1	50.3	50.3	48.3
<b>ACT (2015)</b>							
Percent Meeting All 4 Benchmarks	32.0	40.3	26.8	32.5	31.9	30.8	30.5
Percent Tested	74.0	43.6	86.3	58.8	61.7	67.1	67.6
Adjusted Rank	12.0	13.9	17.8	22.5	22.3	20.8	22.3
<b>SAT (2015)</b>							
Mean Score	1,748.0	1,596.4	1,740.3	1,635.6	1,652.6	1,677.5	1,661.8
Percent Tested	5.0	53.4	6.8	32.5	30.9	22.3	24.0
Adjusted Rank	16.0	11.7	17.5	21.3	18.8	19.9	22.6

This data shows that Kansas has a higher percent of students in all three groups at basic or above on the NAEP than the average of all comparison groups aside from the Aspiration Group (with the exception of the All Students group in Adjacent states). It also shows that Kansas has higher percents of students at proficient or above in the School Lunch Eligible and School Lunch Ineligible groups than the average of all comparison groups but the Aspiration states (with the exception of the NSLP Eligible group in the Distribution Peer states). However, Kansas's percent of students at proficient or above in the all students group was below or tied with the average of all comparison groups. This suggests that in general Kansas outperforms all comparison groups aside from the Aspiration states on the NAEP exam.

Looking at Kansas's rank on the percent of students meeting all four ACT benchmarks (adjusted for the percent of students in each state taking the exam), Kansas outperforms the average for all comparison groups including the Aspiration states. Looking at the raw percents unadjusted for percent participation, Kansas outperforms the average of all comparison groups aside from the Aspiration states and the Overall Peer states. This suggests that in general Kansas outperforms all comparison groups aside from the Aspiration states on the ACT exam.

Kansas has a higher mean score on the SAT than the average for all comparison groups including the Aspiration states, but has a lower adjusted rank for all comparison groups aside from the Aspiration states, meaning that like the NAEP and ACT, in general Kansas outperforms all comparison groups aside from the Aspiration States on the SAT exam.

## Spending

The following table shows the Kansas values for the school funding statistics included in this analysis, along with the average of the values for the states in each of the comparison groups.

	Kansas	Aspiration	Adjacent	Overall	Student	Peer Adult	Distribution
<b>Actual Dollars (2013)</b>							
Total Revenue Per Pupil	\$11,596	\$15,353	\$10,691	\$12,423	\$12,412	\$12,591	\$11,904
Current Spending Per Pupil	\$9,828	\$13,378	\$9,374	\$10,911	\$10,876	\$11,006	\$10,340
Spending on Instruction	\$6,072	\$8,149	\$5,645	\$6,510	\$6,392	\$6,584	\$6,102
<b>Adjusted for State Cost of Living (2013)</b>							
Total Revenue Per Pupil	\$12,743	\$15,272	\$11,576	\$13,025	\$12,878	\$13,105	\$12,706
Current Spending Per Pupil	\$10,800	\$13,305	\$10,163	\$11,433	\$11,284	\$11,449	\$11,020
Spending on Instruction	\$6,673	\$8,119	\$6,126	\$6,834	\$6,629	\$6,860	\$6,507

This data shows that Kansas spends more than the average amounts for Adjacent states, but less than the average amounts for all other comparison groups (with the exception of adjusted current spending and adjusted spending on instruction for the Student Peer and Distribution Peer states).

Looking to the data in the supplemental file, we can see that Kansas spends less than each state in the Aspiration group across all six measures (with the exception of both measures of spending on instruction for Indiana). This means that each of the seven states that outperform Kansas spend more per pupil on education than Kansas does.