



Accelerating the College and Career Readiness of Montana's Students

IN TODAY'S ECONOMY, ALL STUDENTS MUST GRADUATE FROM HIGH SCHOOL READY TO SUCCEED IN COLLEGE AND THEIR CAREERS

Percentage of Students Graduating from High School Class of 2007¹

	Montana	Nation
All Students	75%	69%
White	79%	76%
Hispanic	49%	55%
Black	44%	51%
Asian	+	79%
American Indian	49%	50%

+Insufficient or no data provided

MORE STUDENTS NEED TO BE PREPARED FOR SUCCESS BEYOND HIGH SCHOOL

Percentage of ACT-Tested High School Graduates Ready For College-Level Course Work in 2010²

	Montana	Nation
All Four Core Subjects	28%	24%
English	74%	66%
Math	51%	43%
Reading	62%	52%
Science	34%	29%

MONTANA AND THE NATION NEED MORE COLLEGE GRADUATES

Montana's College Graduation Rates Versus National Average³

	Four-Year Institution*	National Average*	Two-Year Institution**	National Average**
All Students	43%	56%	37%	31%
White	44%	59%	40%	32%
Hispanic	33%	46%	40%	29%
Black	6%	39%	+	26%
Asian	39%	66%	23%	33%
American Indian	29%	38%	22%	27%

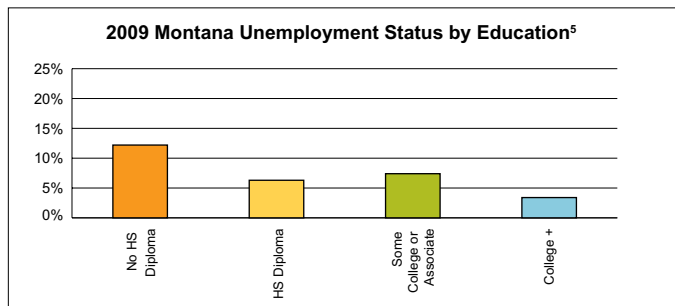
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*Graduation within six years of entrance (Cohort from 2002–2008)

**Graduation within three years of entrance (Cohort from 2005–2008)

Students in Montana who began college but did not return for a second year received a cumulative **\$9 million** in federal grants and a cumulative **\$41.1 million** in state expenditures.⁴

HIGHER LEVELS OF COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS EQUALS HIGHER EMPLOYMENT



Bolster economic vitality: Nearly **3,200** students did not graduate from Montana's high schools in 2010; the lost lifetime earnings in Montana for that class of dropouts total **\$800 million**.⁶

TO ACCELERATE COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS, MONTANA TEACHERS SEE THE NEED FOR FEWER, CLEARER, AND BETTER STANDARDS

Impact of Improving Standards on Academic Achievement from Montana's Teachers View⁷

	Clearer Academic Standards	Common Standards Across All States	Tougher Academic Standards	Fewer Academic Standards
Strong or Very Strong Effect	71%	52%	50%	27%
Moderate Effect	27%	35%	41%	35%
No Effect	2%	12%	8%	36%

THE VAST MAJORITY OF STATES HAVE DECIDED TO IMPROVE THEIR STANDARDS TO SUPPORT COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS

- Forty-eight states participated in the creation of the common core state standards, which build on the best state standards and go further by internationally benchmarking and back-mapping them for grades K–12. **Montana was one of those states.**
- As of April 2011, forty-four states have adopted the common core state standards in mathematics and English language arts. **Montana is not one of those states.**

TO HAVE A CLEAR MEASURE OF COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS, STATE ASSESSMENTS MUST ACCURATELY REFLECT STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT; CURRENT TESTS DO NOT

Montana's Eighth-Grade Proficiency as Measured by Montana State Tests and the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)⁸

	State	NAEP
Reading	81%	38%
Math	60%	44%

- The average gap nationally between state- and NAEP-reported **reading** scores is **41** percentage points. Montana's gap is **43** percentage points.
- The average gap nationally between state- and NAEP-reported **math** scores is **32** percentage points. Montana's gap is **16** percentage points.

MONTANA IS ONE OF FORTY-FIVE STATES WORKING TO CREATE COMMON ASSESSMENT SYSTEMS ALIGNED TO COLLEGE- AND CAREER-READY STANDARDS

Two groups of states have formed to develop these next-generation assessment systems, scheduled to be available during the 2014–15 school year. **Montana is participating in Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortia.** For more information, visit <http://www.k12.wa.us/smarter/>.

CONSISTENT STANDARDS AND ASSESSMENTS MAKE COMMON AND ECONOMIC SENSE

- Ease transition for students who move from state to state.** In 2009, about **4,177** school-aged children moved to Montana from another state; about **3,600** students moved **from** Montana to another state.⁹
- Help states realize economies of scale and improve test quality by working together.** Currently, states spend a combined **\$1.3 billion annually** to develop, publish, administer, score, and report on their own state tests.¹⁰
- Reduce the need for remediation in college.** The need for remediation among students entering Montana's postsecondary institutions unprepared for postsecondary work cost the state nearly **\$9.8 million** during the 2007–08 school year.¹¹

1. Editorial Projects in Education Research Center, *Diplomas Count*, 2010.

2. ACT, "College Readiness by State," 2010.

3. Analysis of data from NCES Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, 2010.

4. M. Schneider, *Finishing the First Lap: The Cost of First-Year Student Attrition in America's Four-Year Colleges and Universities* (American Institute for Research: Washington, DC: 2010).

5. U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2010.

6. Alliance for Excellent Education, "The High Cost of High School Dropouts," unpublished.

7. Scholastic, 2010.

8. NCES, *Nation's Report Card: Reading 2009*; NCES, *Nation's Report Card: Math 2009*; U.S. Department of Education, "EDFacts State Profiles," 2010.

9. U.S. Census Bureau, "American Community Survey," 2009.

10. Stanford Center for Opportunity Policy in Education, 2010.

11. Alliance for Excellent Education, "Saving Now and Saving Later" (Washington, DC: Author, 2011).