



MONTANA: The Case to Adopt Common College- and Career-Ready Standards and Assessments

MONTANA AND OTHER STATES ARE MOVING TOWARD COLLEGE- AND CAREER-READY STANDARDS

- **Montana** last revised its math and English language arts standards in 2010.
- Thirty-one states have aligned their high school graduation standards with college and career expectations. **Montana** is not one of these states.¹
- The Common Core State Standards Initiative builds on the best state standards and goes further by internationally benchmarking standards and back mapping them for grades K–12.
- **Montana** is one of 48 states whose governor and chief state school officer signed the Memorandum of Agreement to develop common core state standards in English language arts and math in June 2009.
- The Montana Board of Public Education has the authority to approve standards.

TEACHERS: IMPROVING STANDARDS HELPS STUDENTS

Montana Teachers' Views on the Impact of Improving Standards on Academic Achievement²

	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%

INCREASING HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES' COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS AND ENSURING THEIR SUCCESS BEYOND HIGH SCHOOL IS CRITICAL FOR MONTANA AND THE NATION

Percentage of ACT-Tested Graduates Ready for College-Level Course Work in 2009³

	Montana	Nation
English	74%	67%
Math	48%	42%
Reading	63%	53%
Science	33%	28%
All Four Subjects	26%	23%

Montana College Graduation Rates⁴

	Four-Year Institution*	National Average*	Two-Year Institution**	National Average**
All Students	43%	56%	35%	32%
White	45%	59%	39%	33%
Black	17%	41%	27%	27%
Hispanic	34%	48%	37%	34%
Asian	41%	66%	36%	34%
Native American	26%	39%	21%	29%

*Graduation within six years of entrance (Cohort from 2000–2006)

**Graduation within three years of entrance (Cohort from 2003–2006)

STUDENT PROFICIENCY REMAINS OVERSTATED ON MOST STATE TESTS⁵

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

	Montana	NAEP
Reading	81%	39%
Math	60%	44%

The average gap nationally between state- and NAEP-reported **reading** scores is **39** percentage points. Montana's gap is **42** percentage points.

The average gap nationally between state- and NAEP-reported **math** scores is **30** percentage points. Montana's gap is **16** percentage points.

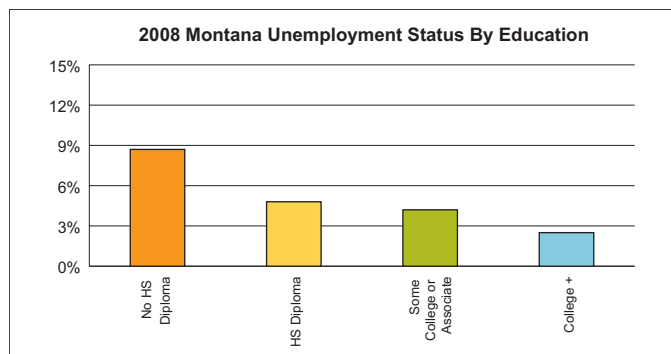
STANDARDS ALONE ARE NOT ENOUGH: COMMON ASSESSMENTS ARE A NATURAL NEXT STEP

- Fifteen states currently administer a common Algebra II exam.⁶ **Montana** is not one of these states.
- Maine, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont are part of the New England Common Assessment Program (NECAP), testing students in grades 3–8 and 11 on reading/language arts, math, and science.
- Presently, more than forty states are in discussion about creating common assessments aligned to the common core state standards. States will decide by mid-June 2010 whether to formally join one or more consortia to compete for \$350 million in federal funding for common assessments.

BY WORKING TOGETHER, STATES CAN SAVE MONEY AND IMPROVE TEST QUALITY⁷

Collectively, states currently spend \$1.3 billion annually to develop, publish, administer, score, and report on tests.

THERE ARE COSTS TO NOT PREPARING STUDENTS FOR COLLEGE AND WORK⁸



COMMON STATE STANDARDS WOULD EASE TRANSITION FOR STUDENTS WHO MOVE FROM STATE TO STATE

In 2006, about **6,755** school-aged children moved **to** Montana from another state and about **5,359** students moved **from** Montana to another state.⁹

BY GRADUATING STUDENTS PREPARED FOR COLLEGE, MONEY CAN BE SAVED ON REMEDIATION

If Montana's high schools graduated all of their students ready for college, the state would save over **\$4.7 million** a year in community college remediation costs and lost earnings.¹⁰

1. Achieve 2010

2. Scholastic 2010

3. ACT 2010

4. National Center for Education Statistics 2007

5. Preliminary SY 2008–09 Consolidated State Performance Report

6. Achieve 2010

7. Stanford Center for Opportunity Policy in Education, 2010

8. U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics 2010

9. American Community Survey 2008

10. Alliance for Excellent Education 2006