
BUILDING AN EFFECTIVE STATE EDUCATION SYSTEM: THERE'S NO TIME TO LOSE

MICHELLE EXSTROM, NCSL EDUCATION GROUP DIRECTOR

JANUARY 8, 2021



ABOUT THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF STATE LEGISLATURES

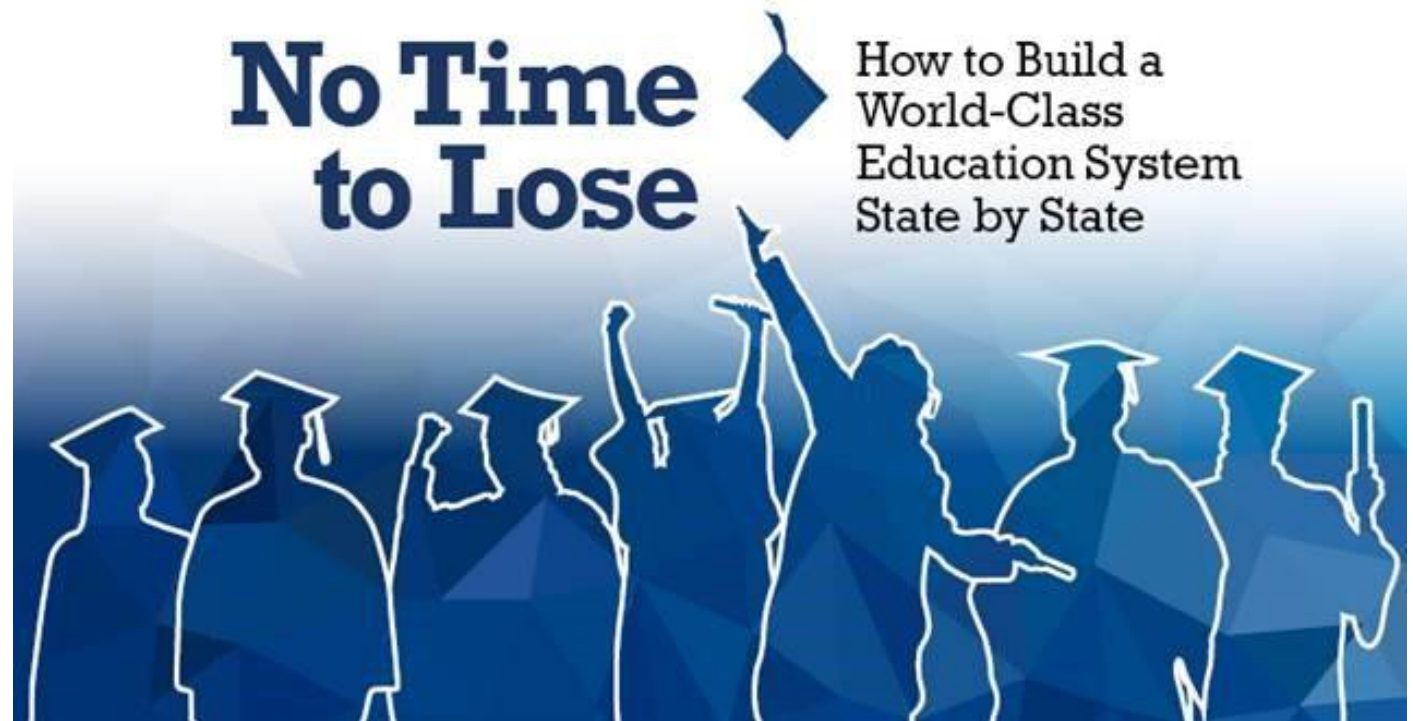
- Instrumentality of all 50 state and territorial legislatures
- Bipartisan
- Provides research, technical assistance and opportunities to exchange ideas
- Advocates on behalf of legislatures before the federal government

NCSL is committed to the success of state legislators and staff. Founded in 1975, we are a respected bipartisan organization providing states support, ideas, connections and a strong voice on Capitol Hill.



STATE LEGISLATORS LEARN ABOUT HIGH-PERFORMING SYSTEMS

- International comparisons are valid
- US students are quickly falling behind
- Our own measures show stagnation
- Much to learn from highest performing systems



MESSAGE FROM NCSL INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION STUDY GROUP

- **Bad news:** Most state education systems are falling dangerously behind the world in a number of international comparisons and on our own National Assessment of Educational Progress, leaving the United States overwhelmingly underprepared to succeed in the 21st century economy.
- **Good news:** The good news is, by studying these other high-performing systems, we are discovering what seems to work. If we get to work right away, we can quickly turn this around as high-performing countries have.



CANNOT IGNORE PISA RESULTS: ALARMS ARE SOUNDING

- Programme of International Student Assessment (PISA) administered by Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)
- Measures 15-year-olds' ability in 79 countries to use their reading, mathematics and science knowledge and skills to meet real-life challenges.
 - **Reading:** understand, use, evaluate, reflect on and engage with texts
 - **Mathematics:** capacity to reason mathematically, using concepts, procedures, facts and tools to describe, explain and predict phenomena
 - **Science:** explain phenomena scientifically, evaluate and design enquiry, interpret data scientifically

PREVIOUS PISA RESULTS: 2000 - 2015

Year (Countries Tested)	U.S. Results		
	Reading	Math	Science
2000 (32)	15	19	14
2003 (41)	18	28	22
2006 (57)	NR	34	28
2009 (65)	17	30	22
2012 (65)	24	36	28
2015 (72)	23	39	25

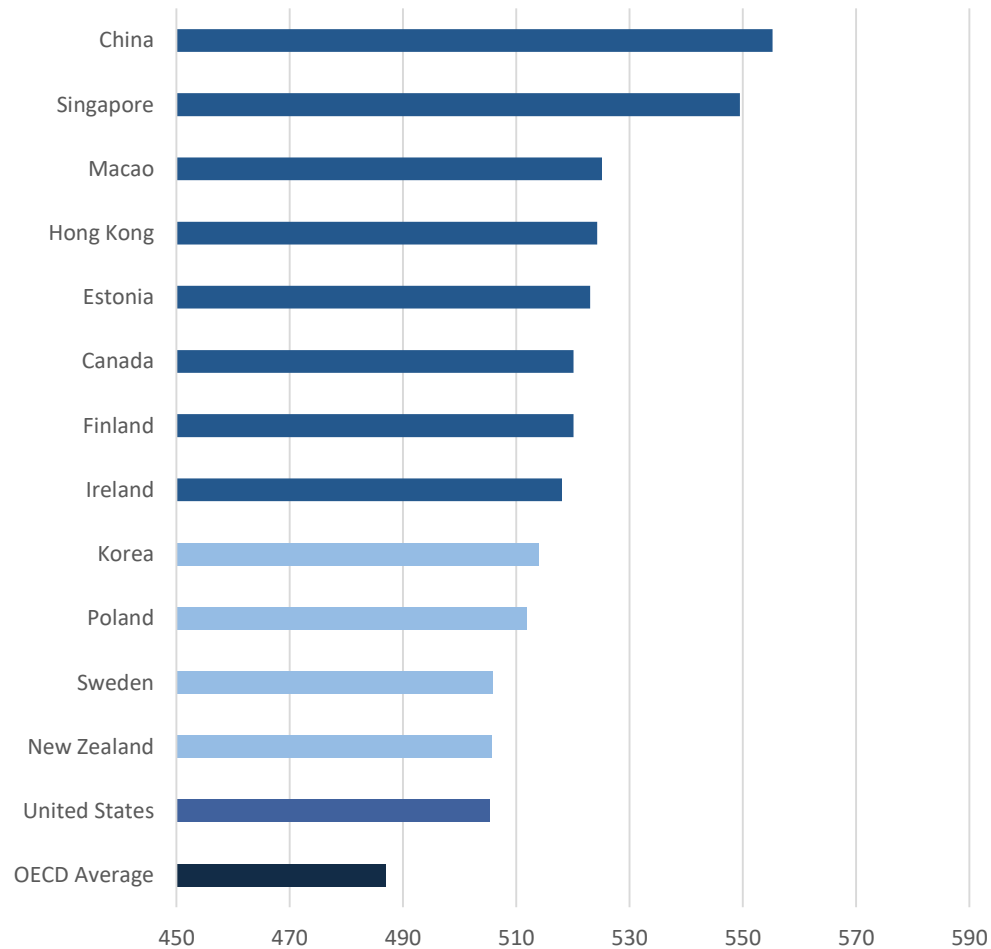
Since 2000, US students have performed well below top performers.

Massachusetts is the exception – As a state that elects to participate on its own, MA student are top performers.

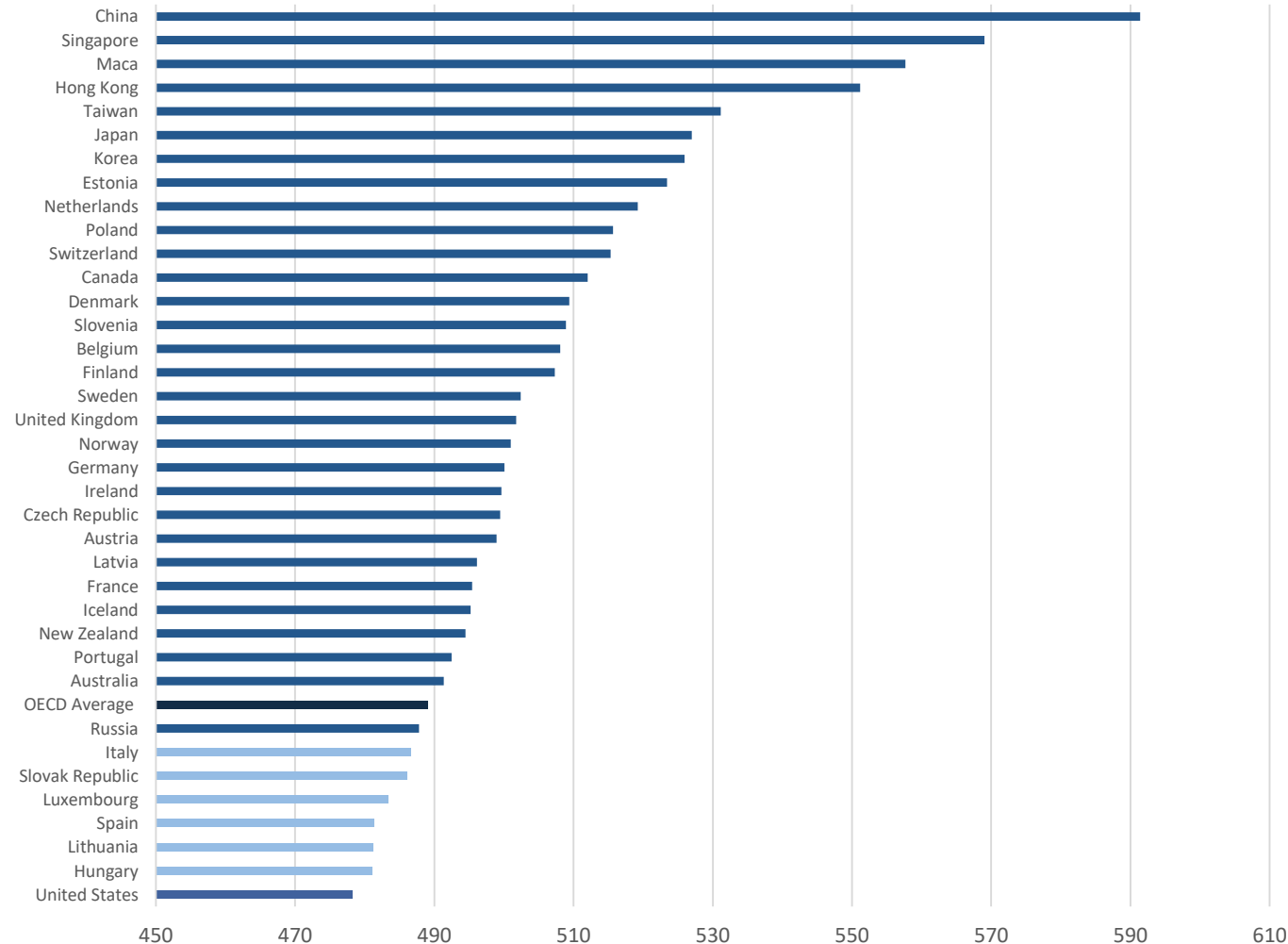
https://www.oecd.org/pisa/publications/PISA2018_CN_USA.pdf



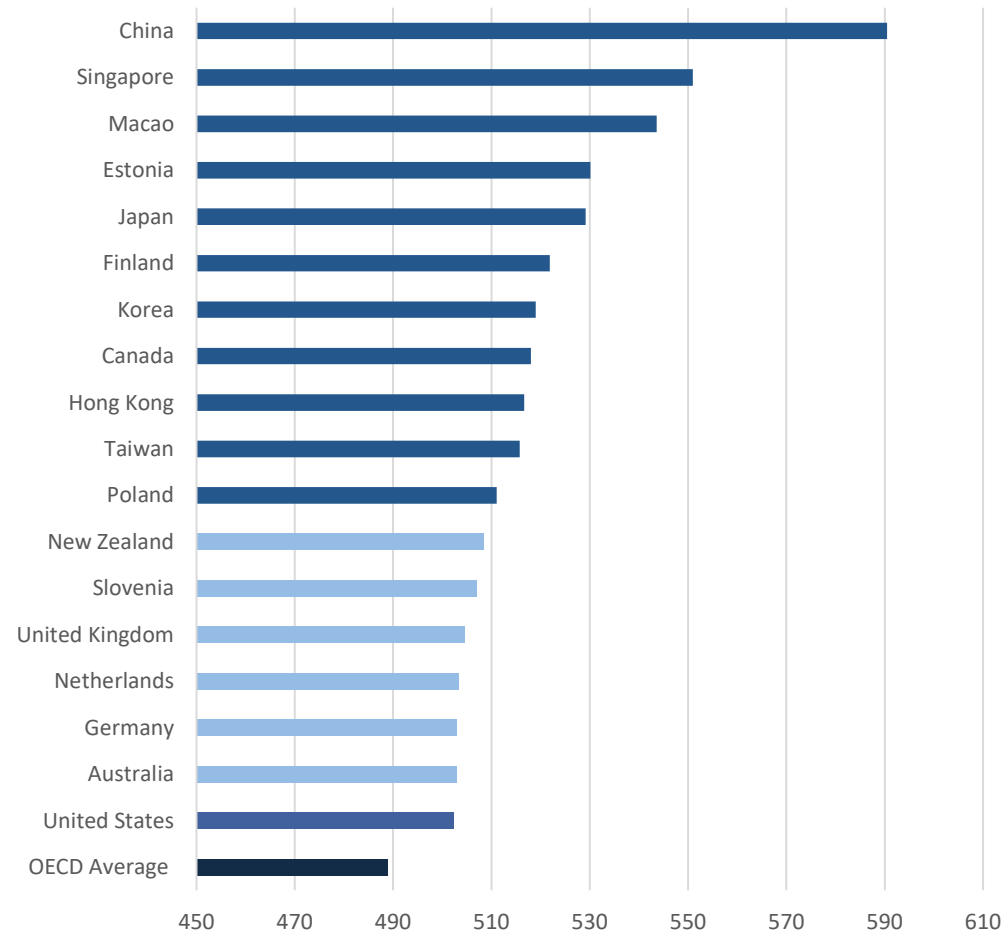
2018 PISA RESULTS (RELEASED IN DECEMBER 2019): 8 SYSTEMS BETTER IN READING



2018 PISA RESULTS (RELEASED IN DECEMBER 2019): 30 SYSTEMS BETTER IN MATH



2018 PISA RESULTS (RELEASED IN DECEMBER 2019): 11 SYSTEMS BETTER IN SCIENCE



WHAT DOES THIS MEAN? OECD BREAKS DOWN THE RESULTS

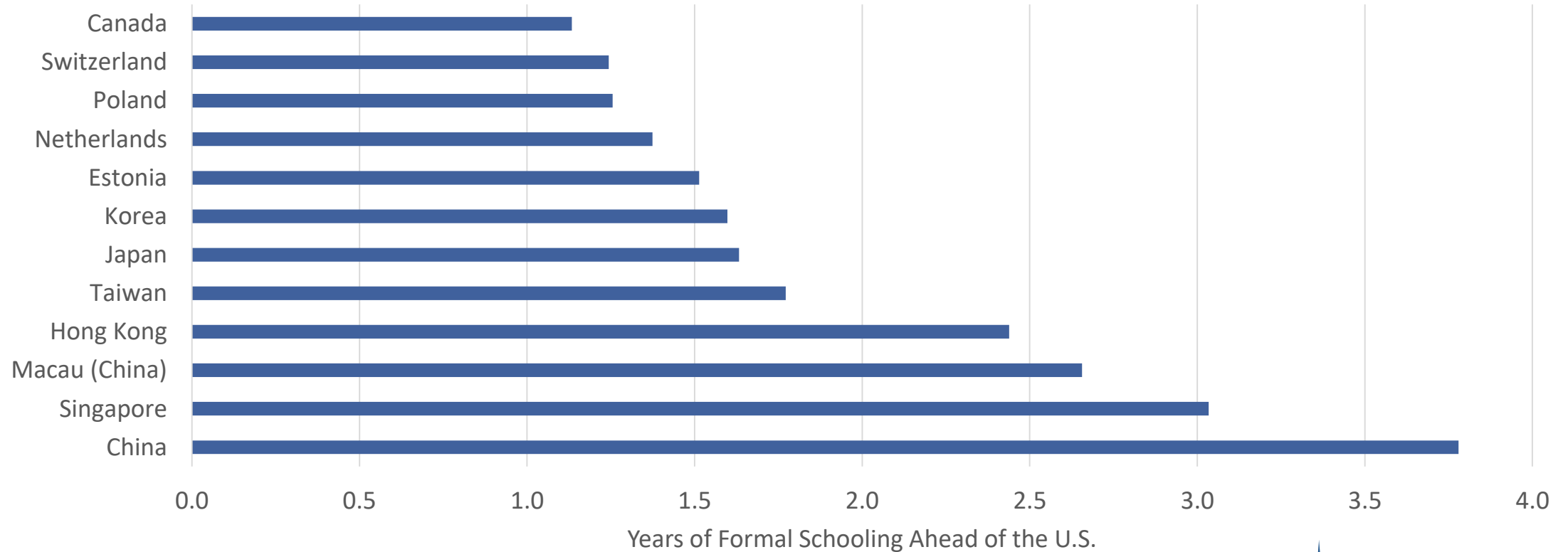
In reading and science:

- Students in small group of consistently high performing countries are **about 1 year ahead** of U.S. students
- Over 80% of U.S. students can: ID a main idea, recognize cause and effect, say if conclusions are warranted
- **Only 14%** can distinguish between fact and opinion
- **Only 9%** can apply scientific knowledge to unfamiliar situations



TOP PERFORMERS 1 – 4 YEARS AHEAD IN MATH

Years Ahead: Math Performance on PISA 2018 Compared to U.S.



NATION'S REPORT CARD SHOWS LITTLE PROGRESS: 2019 RESULTS

- 2019 results show that student performance on reading and math are stagnant and **have not improved in decades**.
- Achievement gap is **widening at an alarming rates**, especially since 2009.
- Read full report, including your individual state results:
 - Blog about results: https://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/blog/mathematics_reading_2019.aspx
 - NAEP Website: <https://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/>
 - Infographic of national performance: https://www.nationsreportcard.gov/mathematics/supportive_files/2019_infographic.pdf
 - Montana Results: https://www.nationsreportcard.gov/profiles/stateprofile/overview/MT?cti=PgTab_OT&chort=1&sub=MAT&sj=MT&fs=Grade&st=MN&year=2019R3&sg=Gender%3A+Male+vs.+Female&sgv=Difference&ts=Single+Year&tss=2015R3-2019R3&sfj=NP&selectedJurisdiction=MT



NCEE'S FRAMEWORK FOR SYSTEMIC EDUCATION REDESIGN



High-performing education systems have four components. Combined, they create a composite picture of a system that performs at world-class levels and that U.S. states and districts should aspire to match. But a system is more than the sum of its parts: the components have to reinforce one another. Effective teachers and principals activate the rigorous and adaptive learning system for students. An equitable foundation of supports ensures that teachers and principals can teach and lead effectively and that all students come to school ready and able to learn successfully. Coherent and aligned governance incentivizes each component to work in tandem, creates accountability for achieving results, and provides a structure to organize the system.

The most important feature of a high-performing education system is not that it contains all of these components. It is that the components are aligned and designed to work together *as a system*.

<https://ncee.org/a-framework-for-policy-and-practice/>



NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF STATE LEGISLATURES

STATES HEED CALL AND TAKE ACTION

MARYLAND

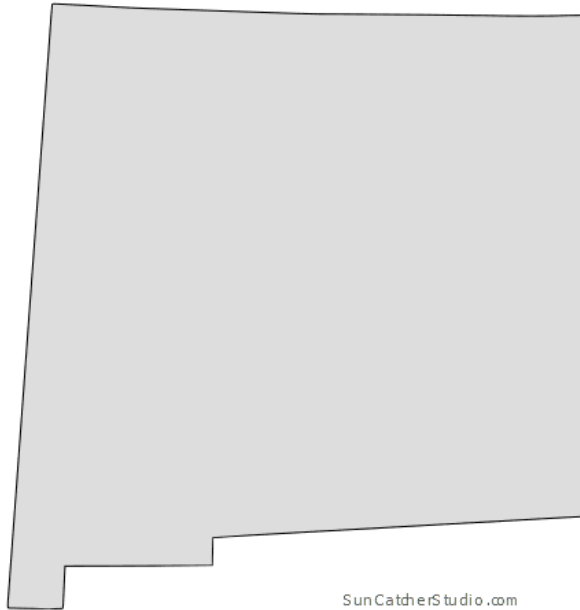


SunCatcherStudio.com

- Created Maryland Commission on Innovation and Excellence in Education
- Benchmarked policies and practices against highest performing systems
- Created a blueprint for complete overhaul of system
- Enacted package of legislation in 2019
- Currently reviewing funding

STATES HEED CALL AND TAKE ACTION

NEW MEXICO



SunCatcherStudio.com

- Legislative Education Study Committee full year study of international comparisons
- Increased funding and emphasis on early learning
- Renewed efforts on teaching
- Reformed accountability system
- Improved CTE system



NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF STATE LEGISLATURES

STATES HEED CALL AND TAKE ACTION

INDIANA



- Key policymakers study international comparisons
- Legislature working with governor to revamp CTE and create apprenticeships based on Swiss VET
- Held statewide summit in Dec 2018
- Working to improve teacher prep

LEGISLATORS ISSUE URGENT CALL TO ACTION: BEGIN NOW, THERE'S NO TIME TO LOSE!

“As state policymakers, it is our responsibility to provide our citizens with a world-class education. We cannot let another generation settle for anything less. Our future workforce, national defense, economic vitality and democratic foundation depend on our ability and willingness to get this done.

If we assemble the best minds in policy and practice, implement what we know works, and commit ourselves to the time, effort and resources needed to make monumental changes, we can once again be among the best education systems in the world. **If they can do it, so can we. But there's no time to lose.”**



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES AND INFORMATION

Websites:

- [2020-21 International Study Group Resources](#)
- [No Time to Lose](#)
- [Learning from the Best](#)
- [Maryland Commission Report](#)
- [NCEE's A Blue Print for the Nation](#)
- [The Nation's Report Card](#)
- [NCEE Webinar on PISA Analysis](#)
- [OECD 2018 Results and Analysis](#)

For Additional Information:

Michelle Exstrom

Education Group Director

303.856.1564

Michelle.Exstrom@ncsl.org

