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## Montana

School Management	D	
Finance	C	
Staffing: Hiring & Evaluation	D	
Staffing: Removing Ineffective Teachers	C	
Data	B	
Pipeline to Postsecondary	F	
Technology	D	
State Reform Environment	?	
Gold Stars		

**School Management.** Montana does a poor job managing its schools in a way that encourages thoughtful innovation. The state has very weak academic standards, and 86% of teachers report that routine duties and paperwork interfere with teaching. In addition, the state does not sanction low-performing schools or have a charter school law.

**Finance.** Overall, Montana earns a middling grade in this category. While the state gets a low mark for the simplicity of its state funding mechanism, 87% of principals report a major amount of control of the school budget. Montana does not have a performance pay program for teachers.

**Staffing: Hiring & Evaluation.** Montana receives a below-average mark for its teacher hiring and evaluation system. Four percent of teachers enter the profession through an alternative certification program, compared with the national average of 13%. Montana also does not require incoming teachers to pass basic skills and subject-knowledge tests.

**Staffing: Removing Ineffective Teachers.** Montana receives an average score on the ability to remove poor-performing teachers from the classroom. Sixty-three percent of principals say that teacher unions or associations are a barrier to the removal of ineffective teachers. In addition, 72% of principals report that tenure is a barrier to removing poor-performing teachers.

**Data.** Montana gets an above-average mark for its state data system. The state has the ability to match individual students' test records from year to year. Although the state publicly reports college remediation data, it does not factor that information into its accountability system.

**Pipeline to Postsecondary.** Montana receives a very low mark for its efforts to improve college and career readiness. Fifty-three percent of its schools report offering dual-enrollment programs, which allow students to earn high school and college credits simultaneously. That is 12 percentage points below the national average of 65%. In addition, only 46% of Montana schools report offering work-based internships.

**Technology.** Montana receives a lower-than-average grade in this category. The state has not established a virtual school and does not offer a computer-based assessment. Montana also needs to significantly improve how it evaluates its return on investments in technology.

**State Reform Environment.** There are few reliable state-by-state data on local education advocacy and research efforts—a reflection of the lack of overall commitment to this issue. As a result, we are unable to issue a meaningful grade. However, Montana supports common academic standards.

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