

# No Time to Lose



How to Build a  
World-Class  
Education System  
State by State



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NATIONAL CONFERENCE *of* STATE LEGISLATURES

# About NCSL

- 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.*



# **NCSL International Education Study Group -- 28 legislators and staff**

- 22 legislators and 6 legislative staff
- Eighteen months of work
  - Consulted experts
  - Studied 10 top performing countries/provinces  
(Alberta, Ontario, Estonia, Finland, Hong Kong, Japan, Poland, Shanghai, Singapore, Taiwan)
- Preparing for Phase II



# NCSL Legislative Study Group Findings: Good News and Bad News

- **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 21<sup>st</sup> 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.





# International Surveys Sound Alarms

## U.S. RANKING ON PISA

The Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) is a comparative study of 15-year-old students' knowledge in key areas including math, reading and science.

YEAR (COUNTRIES TESTED)	U.S. RANKING		
	READING	MATH	SCIENCE
2000 (32)	15th	19th	14th
2003 (41)	18th	28th	22nd
2006 (57)	NR	34th	28th
2009 (65)	17th	30th	22nd
2012 (65)	24th	36th	28th

NCSL Graphic | Source: National Center on Education and the Economy,  
Center on International Education Benchmarking, 2013

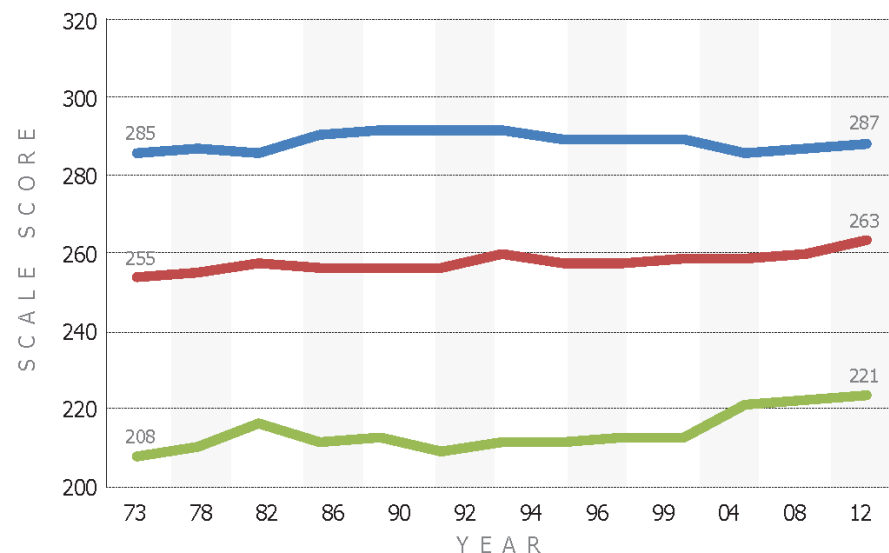
- U.S. rankings are sinking on PISA
- ETS analysis finds U.S. Millennial generation workers ranked last in 2013 OECD PIAAC survey of worker numeracy, literacy and problem solving in 33



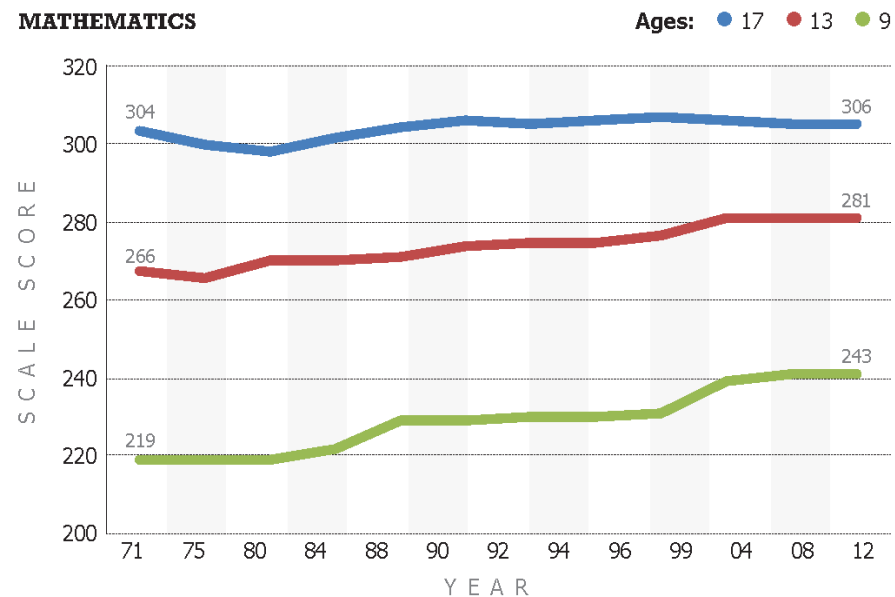
# LONG-TERM NATIONAL ASSESSMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS (NAEP) SCORES

Over the past four decades, high school students in the U.S. have made little progress according to the "Nation's Report Card," administered by the NAEP.

## READING



## MATHEMATICS



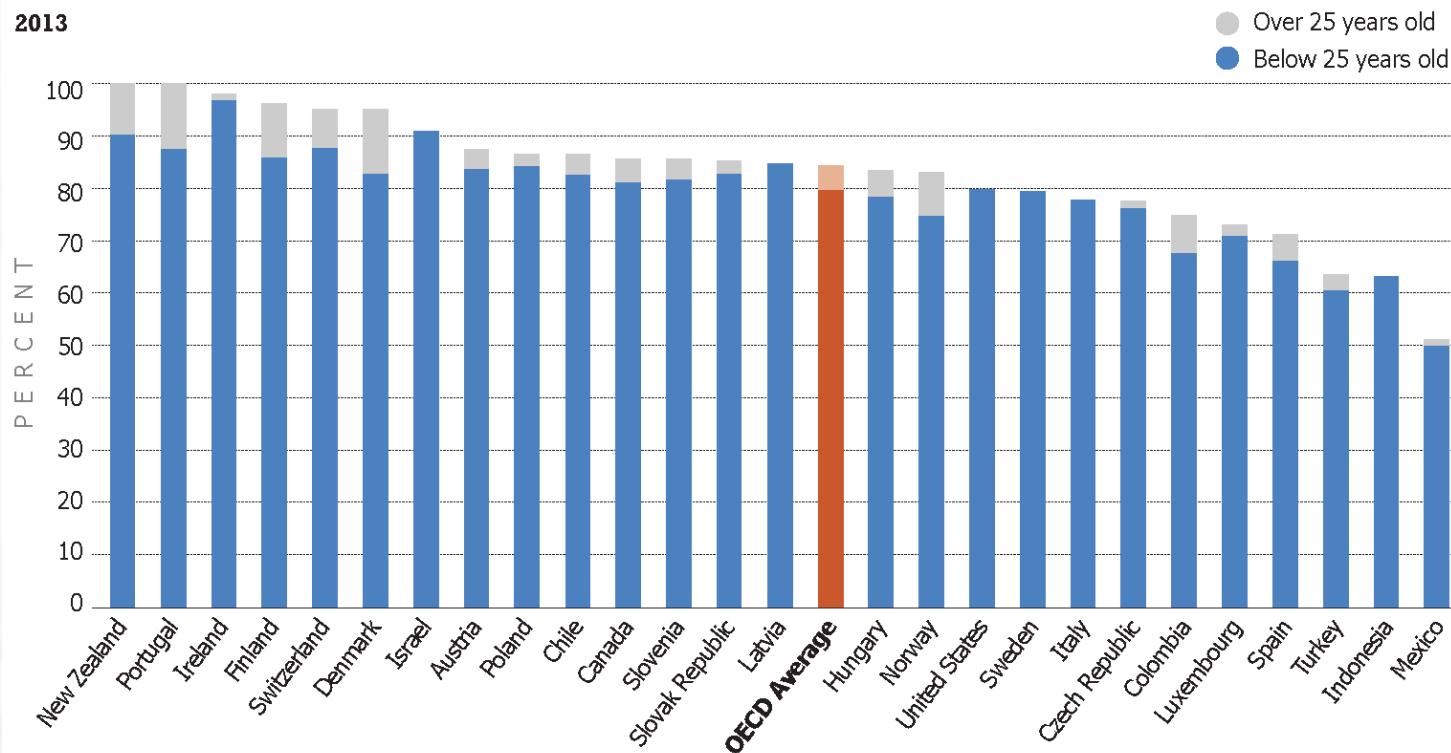
# Our Own NAEP Sounds Alarms: Little to No Progress

# Can the US be Fairly Compared to World Class Education Systems?

## UPPER SECONDARY GRADUATION RATES, 2013

The OECD reports that the U.S. graduation rate is 80 percent, lower than most other high-performing countries. This dispels the assertion that other high-performing countries educate only their elite.

2013



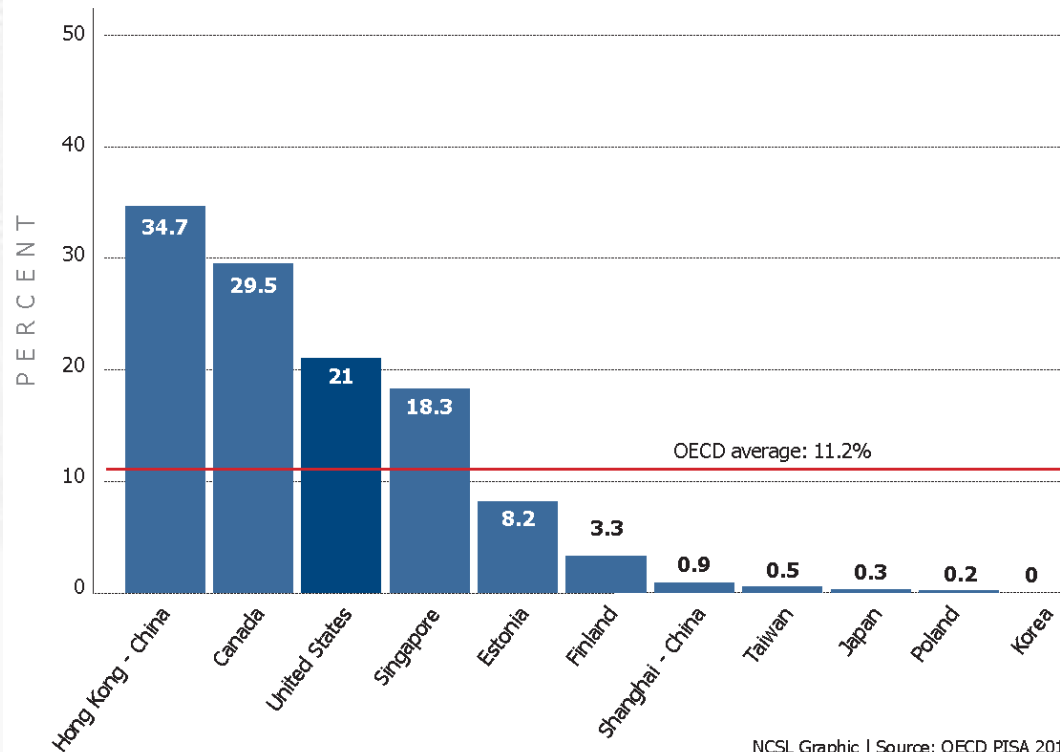
NCSL Graphic | Source: OECD (2015), Education at a Glance 2015: OECD Indicators, OECD Publishing. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/eag-2015-en>, p. 48



# Can the U.S. be Fairly Compared to World Class Education Systems? (continued)

## PERCENT OF STUDENTS WHO ARE IMMIGRANTS

Europe and Asia have experienced an upsurge in immigration over the past several decades, and Asian countries have significant cultural, linguistic, ethnic and religious diversity.



NCSL Graphic | Source: OECD PISA 2012





# Elements of High-Performing Systems:

## Common Element #1

*Children come to school ready to learn, and extra support is given to struggling students so that all have the opportunity to achieve high standards.*



# Elements of High-Performing Systems:

## Common Element #2

*A world-class teaching profession supports a world-class instructional system, where every student has access to highly-effective teachers and is expected to*

*succeed.*

# Elements of High-Performing Systems:

## Common Element #3

*A highly-effective,  
intellectually rigorous system  
of career and technical  
education is available to those  
preferring an applied  
education.*



# Elements of High-Performing Systems:

## Common Element #4

*Individual reforms are connected and aligned as parts of a clearly planned and carefully designed comprehensive system.*



# Action Steps for States

- ✓ **Build an Inclusive Team and Set Priorities.**
- ✓ **Study and Learn from Top Performers.**
- ✓ **Create a Shared Statewide Vision.**
- ✓ **Benchmark Policies.**
- ✓ **Get Started on One Piece.**
- ✓ **Work Through “Messiness.”**

**Invest the Time.**



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# Urgent Call to Action: Begin Now, 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.



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