



Montana

**Innovation and
Excellence in Education**
Working Group of the
School Funding
Interim Commission



The Statutory Charge



The Innovation and Excellence in Education Working Group

The IEEWG is tasked with:

- comparing the education policies of Montana with the policies of high-performing international and domestic educational systems;
- developing recommendations to adapt the appropriate education policies of high-performing education systems for the public education system in Montana;
- developing an implementation plan for the recommendations; and
- publishing its recommendations and implementation plan no later than January 30, 2026.

OBJECTIVES FOR TODAY



**Describe
NCEE's
background
and approach
to policy work**



**Show how work
in other states
will inform the
work of the
Innovation and
Excellence in
Education
Working Group**



**Explore how
the work of the
Working Group
will be
organized**



**Anticipate 1:1
outreach and
opportunities to
surface your
perspectives**



About NCEE



Non-profit
based in D.C.



At the intersection of
education & economy

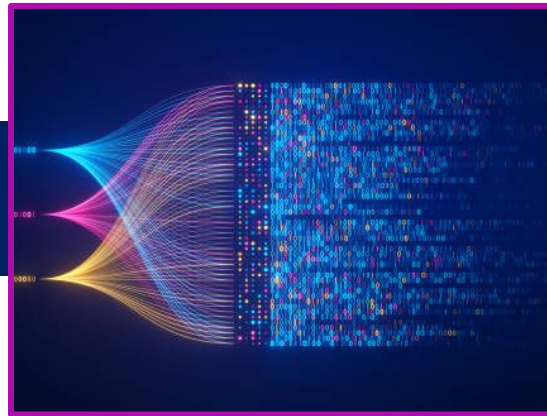


35+ years connecting
global research with
national, state, &
district **policy &
practice**

What We Do



Study the highest-performing and fast-improving education systems globally and in the U.S.



Distill insights and **identify** what is common across them



Use this **analysis** to inform our partnership work with states and districts



Our Approach

Discover

“Look out” through research to discover what top performing and rapidly improving systems do, and then “look in” to analyze their own systems against the insights.

Design

Through a bold, bolder, and boldest framework, stakeholders imagine and scenario plan what their systems could and would do in the face of a changing future, and explore the implications for and with students, schools, and communities across the state.

Deliver

Implement new policies while building feedback loops for ongoing system design and improvement as economies, technologies, and societies continue to evolve.

Designing Future- Ready State Learning Systems

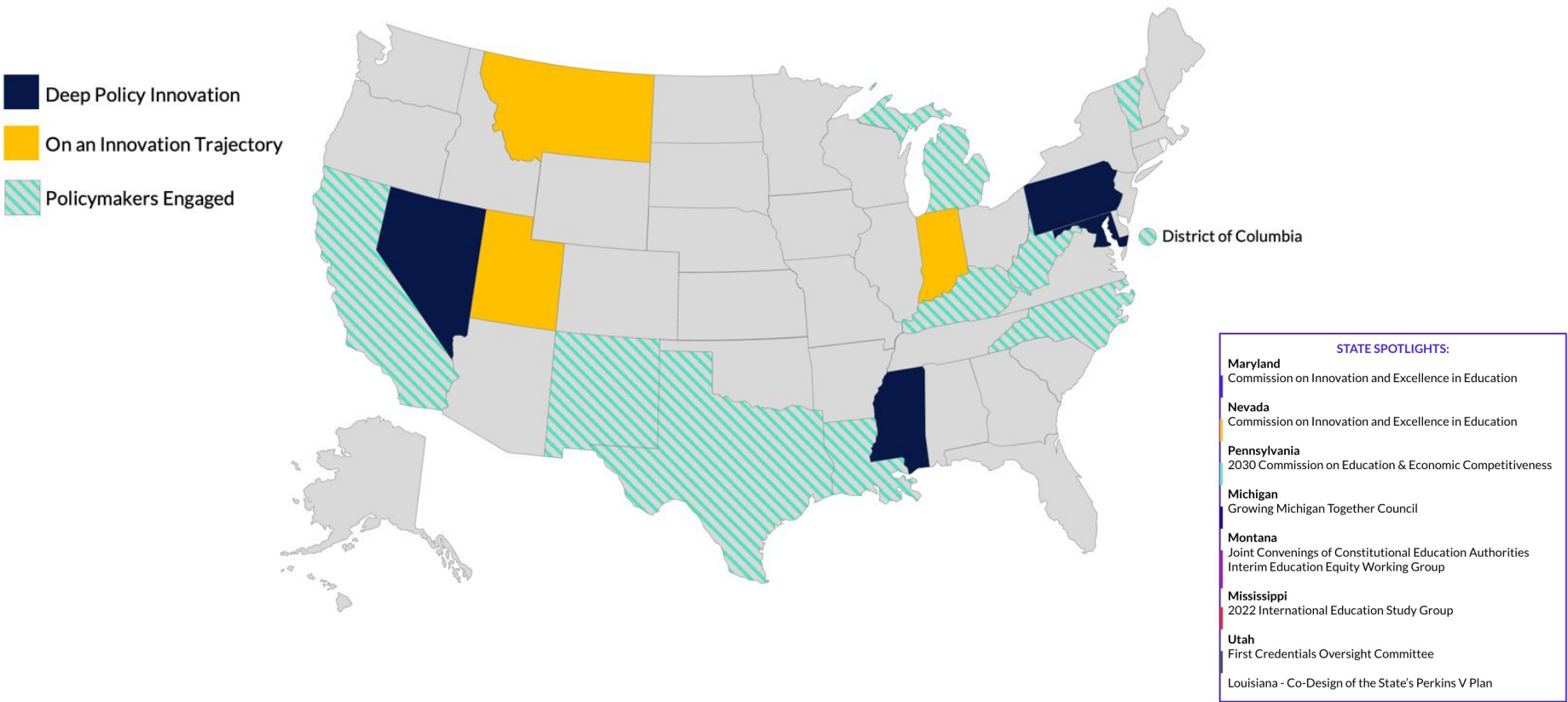


Our Approach:

- **We co-design a future-focused vision and strategic plan for redesigning education** for the future of learning and work, engaging groups of policymakers, practitioners, businesses, youth, and more.
- **We employ two strategies for system transformation:**
 - ◆ **Vertical alignment:** We engage education leaders and policymakers in coordinating and aligning policy and practice changes from schoolhouse to statehouse *and back*—so that practice informs effective policy, and policy sets the conditions for effective practice.
 - ◆ **Horizontal alignment:** We build the field by engaging a broad array of stakeholders across all geographies and sectors—ensuring input, applicability, and effectiveness within different contexts (e.g., urban, suburban, rural), across sectors, and for long-term sustainability.



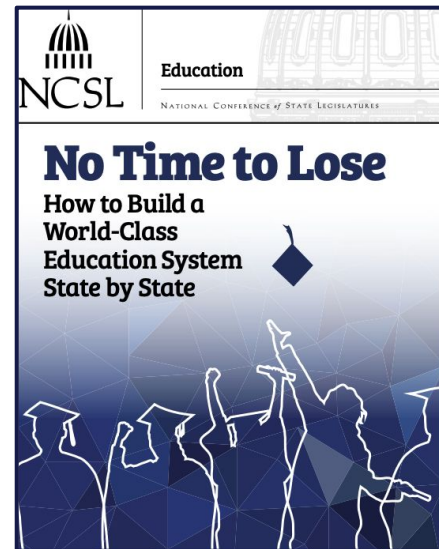
Our Work with States



Spurring National Conversations



Collaboration




Call to Action

2016



Maryland: The Work

- Facilitating state-level conversations with policymakers, educators, leaders, activists, students, and other system stakeholders as part of the Commission on Innovation and Excellence in Education (aka the Kirwan Commission)
 - Aligning work across five Commission subcommittees:
 - Early childhood development and education
 - Preparation of high-quality and diverse teachers and school leaders
 - Rigorous college and career pathways
 - Equitable funding to ensure that all students are successful
 - Effective governance and accountability
 - Supporting the development of a coherent set of policies, resources, and funding to transform Maryland's education system so that every student receives a world-class education
 - Assisting the Accountability and Implementation Board with transforming the legislation into an implementation roadmap
- 

Maryland: The Impact

The Kirwan Commission culminated in several pieces of legislation ([HB1415](#), [SB1030](#), [HB1300](#), [HB1372](#), & [HB1450](#)) that together create an ambitious plan to transform the state's education system so that it is equitable, globally competitive, and aligned vertically and horizontally. Specific policies include:

- **Set a statewide graduation promise:** new 10th grade CCR standard & aligned supports to help all students reach proficiency
- **Integrate early learning:** created a public/private partnership to provide pre-K for all four-year-olds & low-income three-year-olds
- **Expand access to real-world learning experiences:** updated CTE programming aligned with regional economic needs
- **Expand distributed leadership:** launched new career ladder, professional development supports & updated teacher training
- **Invest in system leadership infrastructure:** strategic planning approach that aligns state and local implementation plans & AIB to oversee all BP implementation

Nevada

The Work

- Serve as lead facilitator and consultant to the Commission and Innovation and Excellence in Education, charged with developing a long-term vision and plan to put futures anticipation into practice and vault the state to world-class performance.
- Collaborate with the Department, school districts, the Superintendents' Association, the School Boards Association, and youth board members to support the creation of a shared vision

The Impact

- Translated that vision into policy recommendations and legislative changes that became law through components of bills such as SB 460, AB 539, and SB 571.
- Built a roadmap and implementation plan to a high-performing system that: measures what matters for taxpayers, businesses and communities; advances learner-center, future-ready learning; cultivates high-capacity educators; and bolsters authentic work-based learning environments.

Organizing the MT IEE Work Group



Discover: Look Out:
Learn from
innovation
nationally and
globally



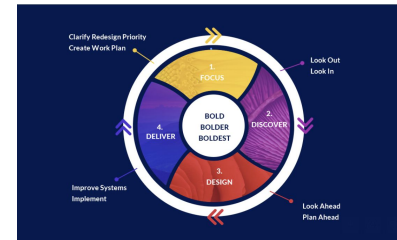
Discover: Look in:
Explore within
Montana; Hear
directly from those
in local
communities;
leverage work
that's already been
done (a la
Constitutional
Players)



Design: Foster
collaboration among
Commissioners from
different; engage in
shared planning



Deliver: Activation
of individual and
collective strategy



Our Timeline

August 2025-January 2026

Mid-Aug through
Mid-Sept

September

October

November-December

January

1:1 calls between
NCEE and
members

Sept 15-16
WG Session 1
Sept 17-22
Roadshow
Round 1

Oct 14-15
WG Session 2
Oct 16-17
Roadshow Round 2

Nov 13-14
WG Session 3
Dec 15
WG Session 4

Jan 13
WG Session 5

A structured feedback loop is employed to collect and integrate input from the across Montana, ensuring many voices inform the development process.

September 15-16, 2025 Goals



Discover: Looking Out

Learn from
high-performing
systems, both globally
and in similar states, to
surface innovations



Discover: Looking In:

Identify strengths
and opportunities
to build on within
Montana



Design:

Align around a core
vision for Montana's
young people and
prioritized policy levers
for Montana, and inform
the Roadshow design



Nathan Driskell

Chief Policy Officer
ndriskell@ncee.org



Janice Case

NCEE Regional Director, West
jcase@ncee.org



[Connect with us](#) to learn more about NCEE's work.



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