

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
STATE OF MONTANA

STEVE BULLOCK
GOVERNOR



ANGELA McLEAN
LT. GOVERNOR

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CONTACT:

Tim Crowe, Communications Director, 444-9844, 594-1060 (mobile)

Governor Bullock's Statement on the passage of the Every Student Succeeds Act

HELENA – Governor Steve Bullock today released the following statement following the successful passage of the federal Every Student Succeeds Act.

"With the passage of the Every Student Succeeds Act, Montana educators will no longer be restricted by the failed requirements of the No Child Left Behind laws, freeing them to better incorporate their creative and innovative talents into the classroom. We know that Montana's public schools and our students are much different than New York, California or Virginia. The ESSA recognizes our ability to determine the best way to support and educate the students of our state, rather than a one-size-fits-all approach written in Washington D.C. Equally important are the provisions the new Act provides to continue supporting preschool education helping to ensure access to free, quality early education to our Montana kids."

The Every Student Succeeds Act is a much-needed policy update that will allow Montana schools flexibility to support innovation in schools and student achievement. It has been endorsed by a vast array of stakeholders, including education advocacy groups, the Chamber of Commerce, NGA, and unions representing teachers.

Specifically, the ESSA:

- **RETURNS POWER TO THE STATES:** Gives Montana the ability to create an accountability system that meets our needs and measure success by more than just student test scores.
Governor Bullock has been a consistent advocate, in all policy areas, for increased state authority and flexibility. (Examples include Clean Power Plan, REAL ID, Medicaid Expansion)
- **FLEXIBILITY:** Gives states a local districts the authority to identify struggling schools and determine what strategies districts can implement to improve. The ESSA also allows additional flexibility to states to direct resources to at-risk students.
As a leader of a rural, geographically large state, Governor Bullock knows that one-size-fits-all approaches rarely are the right answer for Montana.
- **COLLEGE AND CAREER READY:** Allows states to set high standards that align with post-secondary and workforce expectations for our public school graduates.
Through his Main Street Montana Initiative, Governor Bullock has brought together secondary education, post-secondary education and an array of Montana employers to better align expectations and set our students up for success as they transition to college or into the workforce.
- **PRESCHOOL:** Includes language authorizing Preschool Development Grants for states that wish to create or expand high-quality preschool and better align K-12 with pre-k.
Because of the leadership of Governor Bullock and State Superintendent Denise Juneau, Montana currently benefits from one of these competitive Preschool Development Grants, allowing school districts and Head Start programs across the state to serve 6,000 more four-year-olds in high-quality preschool over the next four years.

- INDIAN EDUCATION: Includes support for language immersion programs.

Governor Bullock has worked to preserve tribal languages in the state. In 2015, he continued the investments that began in 2013 to help Montana Tribes implement innovative ways to preserve their and promote native languages. In addition, Bullock signed into law a bill to encourage Indian language immersion in Montana schools. This law will provide schools with resources to expand knowledge of Tribal languages in the state.

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