

ILLINOIS

Faced with an unprecedented set of challenges in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, public education is at a crossroads. To be sure, much has changed since 2020 when the COVID-19 pandemic swept the nation, but pre-pandemic trends provide policymakers with a critical anchor for navigating post-pandemic decisions. This section provides a snapshot of Illinois's K-12 public education resources and outcomes so that policymakers are better equipped to make critical choices that will shape generations to come. Looking forward, they should use this information to ask important questions like what their goals are for students and whether resources are being deployed toward those aims.

SPENDING TRENDS

Illinois's inflation-adjusted education revenue grew from \$13,054 per student in 2002 to \$20,195 per student in 2020, a 54.7% growth rate that ranked 3rd highest in the U.S. During this time, real spending on employee benefits grew by 199.5%—ranking 2nd in the country—going from \$2,024 per student to \$6,062 per student. In 2020, Illinois had \$22,566,182,000 in total education debt, up \$2,934 per student in real terms since 2002.

TABLE 1: SPENDING TRENDS (2002-2020)

Category (Per Student)	2002	2020	Growth Rate	Growth Rank	2020 Rank
Revenue	\$13,054	\$20,195	54.7%	3	7
Support Services	\$4,237	\$6,379	50.5%	9	9
Instruction	\$6,964	\$10,540	51.3%	4	8
Benefits	\$2,024	\$6,062	199.5%	2	4
Capital	\$2,037	\$1,556	-23.6%	42	24
Total Debt	\$8,787	\$11,722	33.4%	26	12

FIGURE 1: REVENUE PER STUDENT BY FUNDING SOURCE (2002-2020)

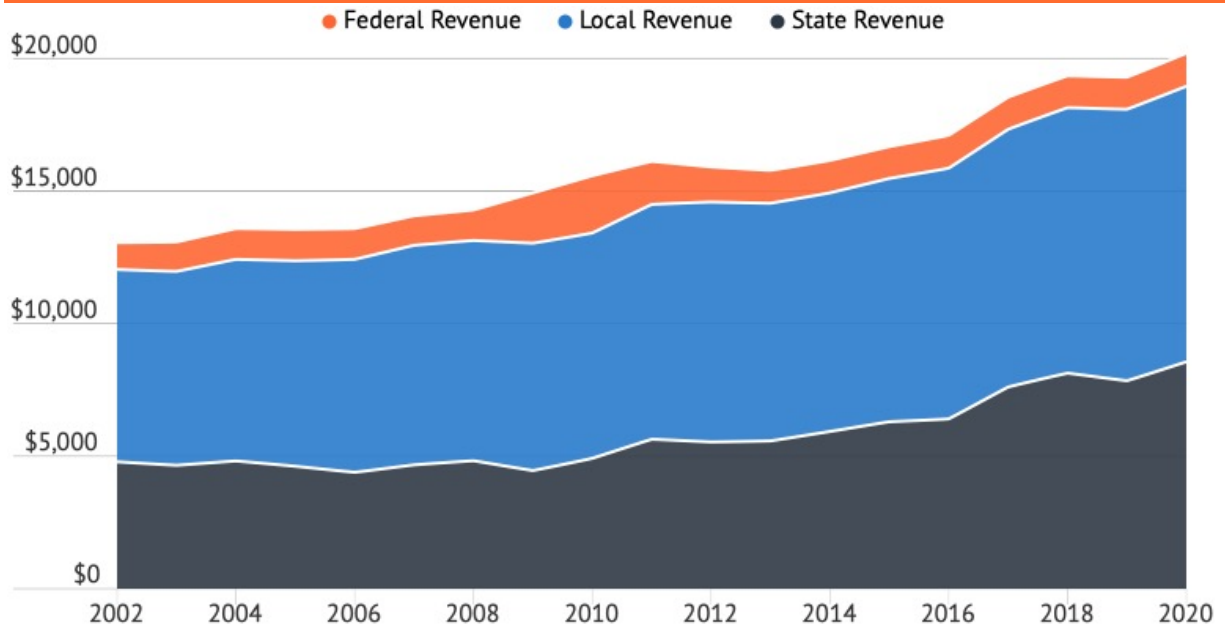
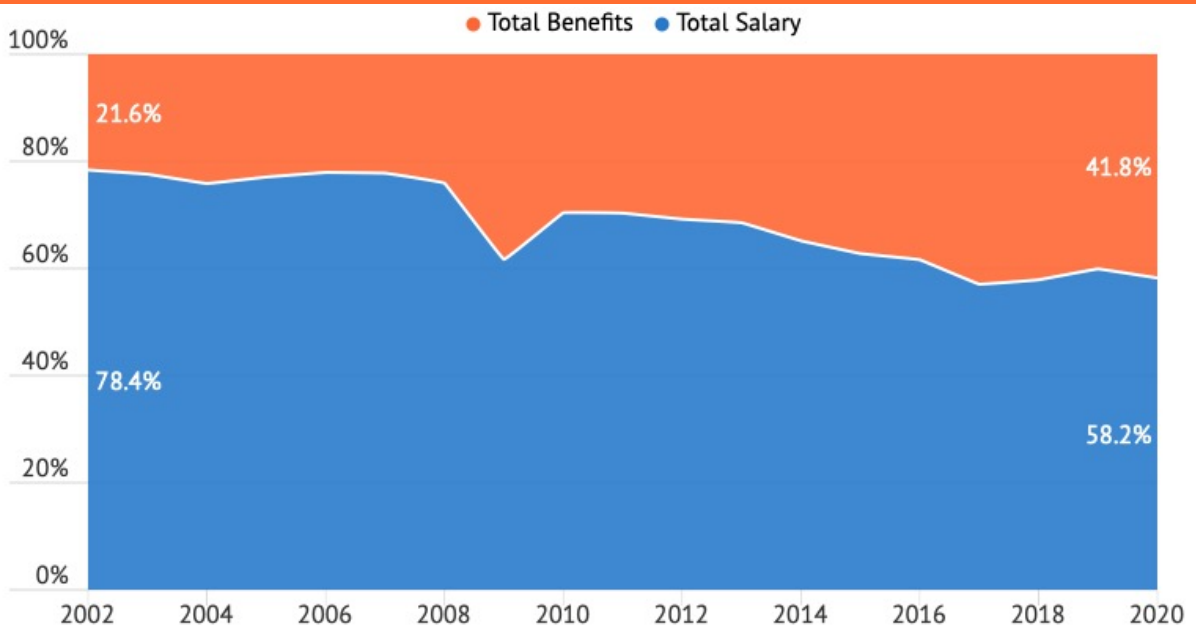


FIGURE 2: K-12 TOTAL SALARY & BENEFITS (2002-2020)



ENROLLMENT AND STAFFING TRENDS

Between 2002 and 2020, Illinois’s student population declined by 6.2%. At the same time, the number of total public education staff grew by 0.7%, with teachers increasing by 2.5% and non-teachers decreasing by 1.2%. The average inflation-adjusted teacher salary in the state went from \$71,384 in 2002 to \$68,083 in 2020, a –4.6% growth rate that ranked 37th in the U.S.

TABLE 2: ENROLLMENT AND STAFFING TRENDS (2002-2020)

Category	2002	2020	Growth Rate	Growth Rank	2020 Rank
Enrollment	2,071,391	1,943,117	-6.2%	41	5
Total Staff	255,529	257,248	0.7%	42	6
Teachers	129,600	132,815	2.5%	33	5
Non-Teachers	125,929	124,433	-1.2%	43	8
Average Teacher Salary	\$71,384	\$68,083	-4.6%	37	11

FIGURE 3: ENROLLMENT AND STAFFING TRENDS (2002-2020)

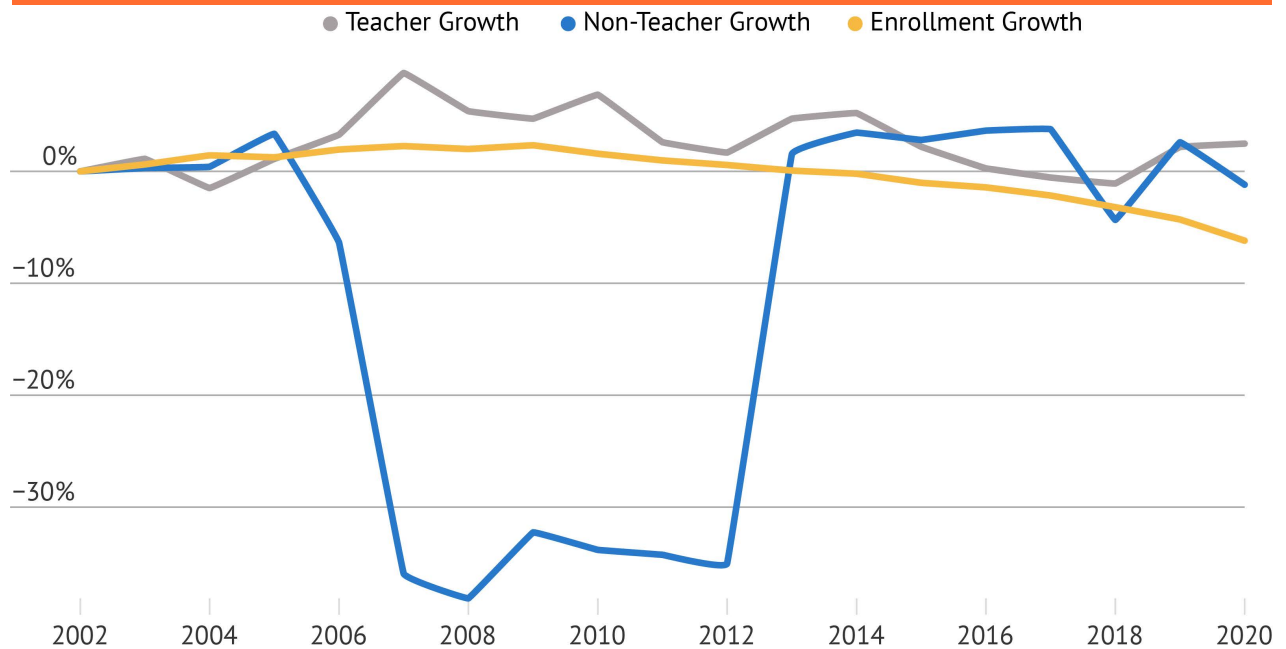
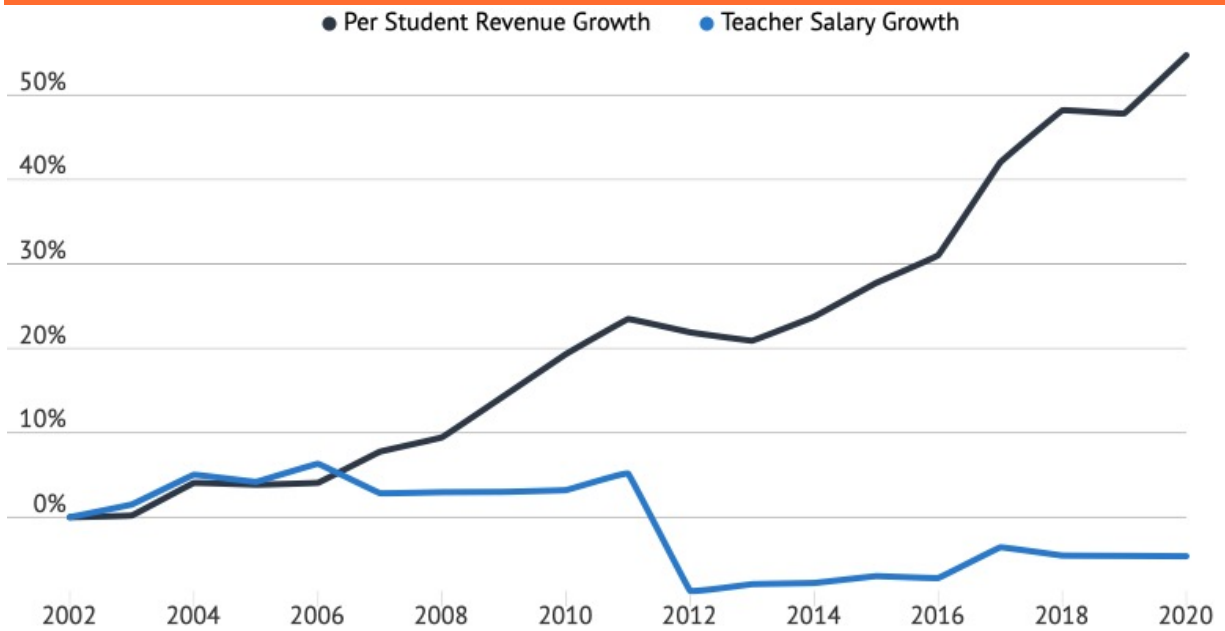


FIGURE 4: TEACHER SALARY GROWTH VS. REVENUE PER STUDENT GROWTH (2002-2020)



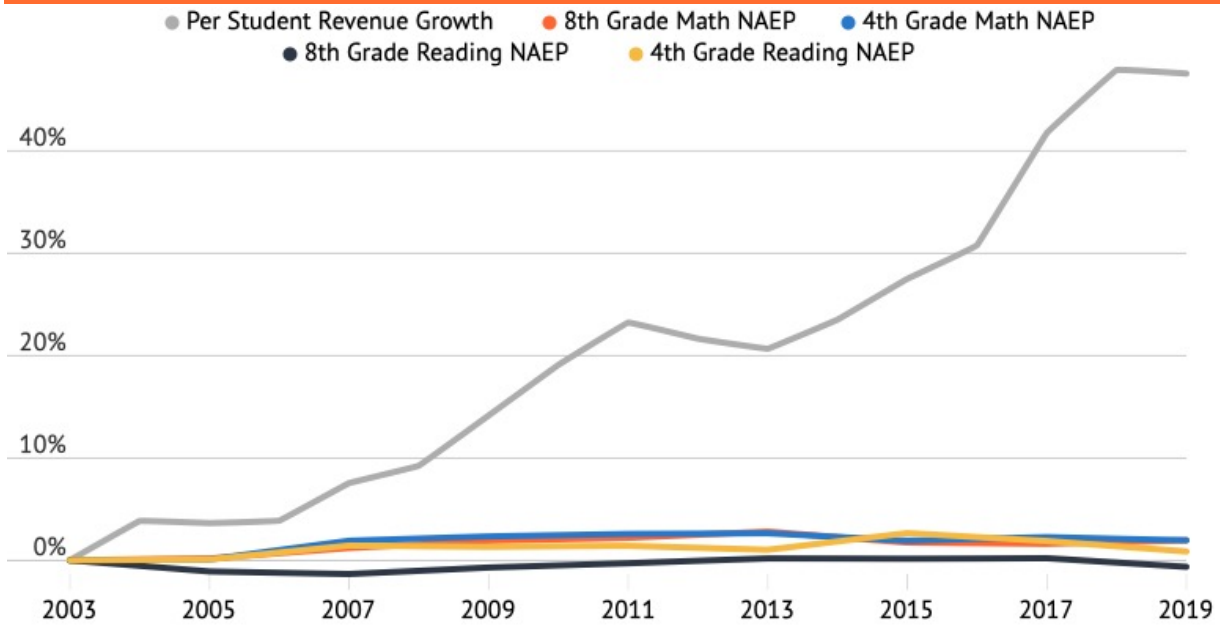
NAEP TRENDS

Between 2003 and 2019, Illinois's 4th grade NAEP reading scores increased by two points (+0.9%), ranking 21st in the U.S., while its 4th grade math scores grew by five points (+1.9%), ranking 31st. During this time, the state's 8th grade reading scores decreased by two points (-0.6%), ranking 29th in the U.S., while its 8th grade math scores grew by five points (+1.9%), ranking 16th.

TABLE 3: NAEP SCORES (2003-2019)

Subject	4th Grade			8th Grade		
	Score Growth	Growth Rank	2019 Rank	Score Growth	Growth Rank	2019 Rank
Reading	2	21	33	-2	29	15
Math	5	31	37	5	16	22

FIGURE 5: NAEP SCORE GROWTH VS REVENUE PER STUDENT GROWTH¹



LOW-INCOME NAEP TRENDS

Between 2003 and 2019, Illinois's low-income 4th grade NAEP reading scores increased by eight points (+3.9%), ranking 8th in the U.S., while its 4th grade math scores grew by 11 points (+5.0%), ranking 5th. During this time, the state's 8th grade reading scores increased by two points (+0.9%), ranking 21st in the U.S., while its 8th grade math scores grew by 13 points (+4.9%), ranking 4th.

TABLE 4: LOW-INCOME NAEP SCORES (2003-2019)

Subject	4th Grade			8th Grade		
	Score Growth	Growth Rank	2019 Rank	Growth	Growth Rank	2019 Rank
Reading	8	8	37	2	21	16
Math	11	5	34	13	4	16

¹ It should be noted that NAEP scores and revenue are inherently different in their potential for growth and shouldn't be expected to move in perfect unison (e.g. a 10% increase in funding shouldn't be expected to result in a 10% improvement in NAEP).

FIGURE 6: NAEP SCORE GROWTH VS REVENUE PER STUDENT GROWTH (LOW-INCOME STUDENTS)¹

