

NEVADA

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 Nevada'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

Nevada's inflation-adjusted education revenue grew from \$10,472 per student in 2002 to \$11,755 per student in 2020, a 12.3% growth rate that ranked 40th in the U.S. During this time, real spending on employee benefits grew by 53.3%—ranking 32nd in the country—going from \$1,623 per student to \$2,487 per student. In 2020, Nevada had \$4,493,469,000 in total education debt, down \$3,106 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 | \$10,472 | \$11,755 | 12.3% | 40 | 41 |
| Support Services | \$2,990 | \$3,691 | 23.5% | 31 | 41 |
| Instruction | \$5,438 | \$5,748 | 5.7% | 41 | 45 |
| Benefits | \$1,623 | \$2,487 | 53.3% | 32 | 35 |
| Capital | \$2,448 | \$1,672 | -31.7% | 45 | 22 |
| Total Debt | \$13,152 | \$10,046 | -23.6% | 48 | 17 |

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

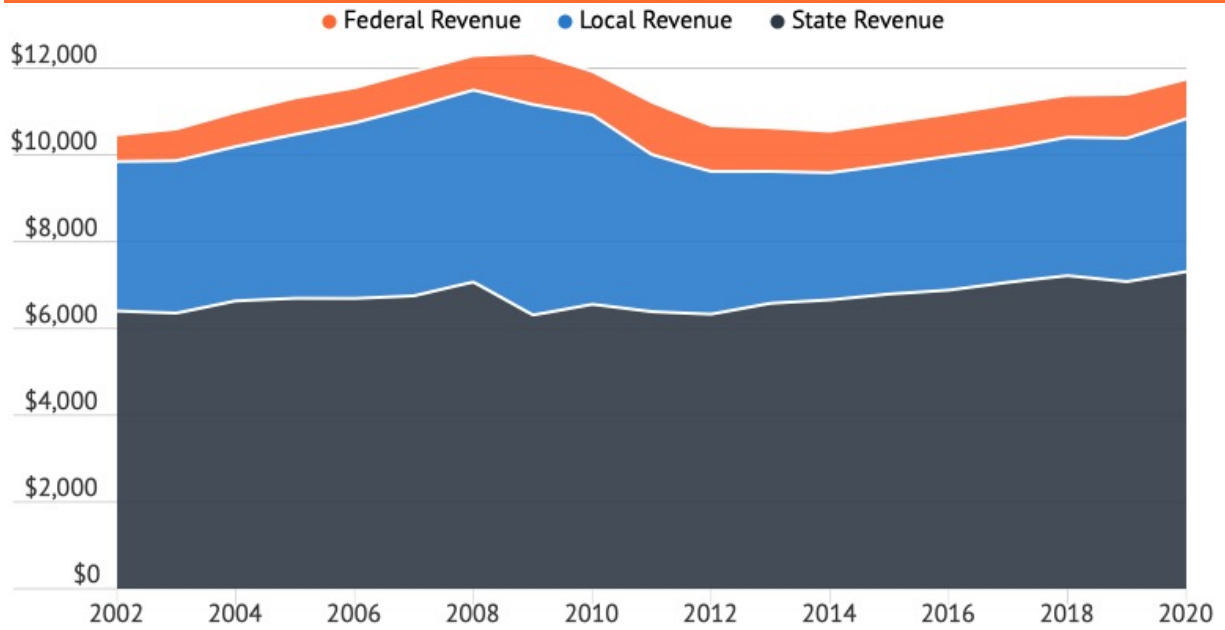
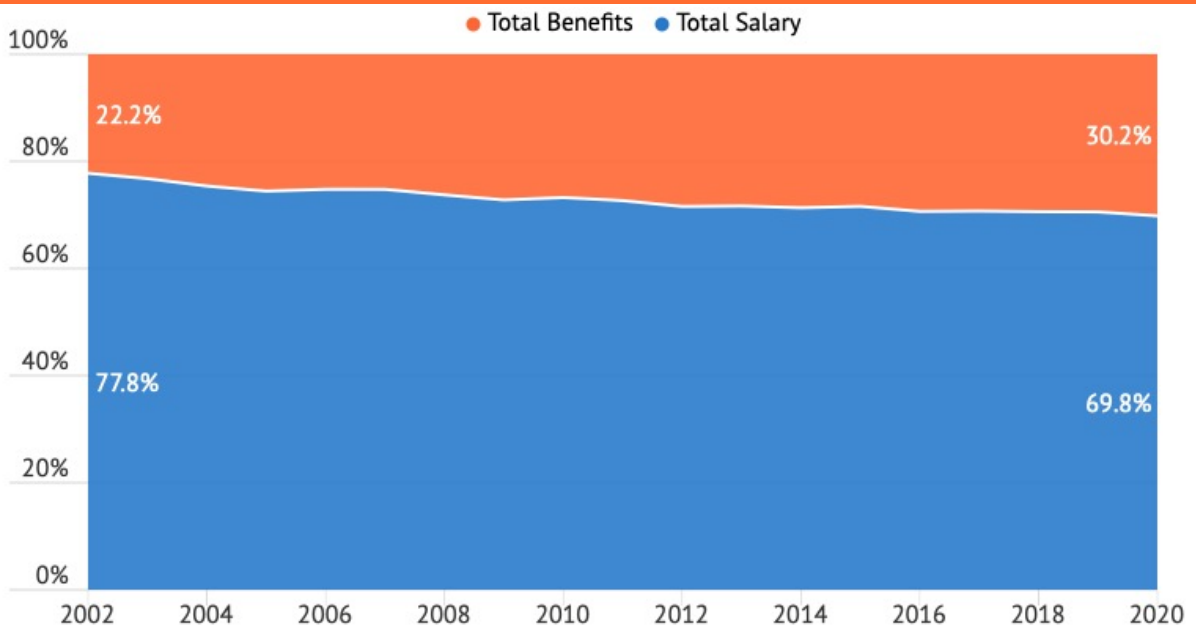


FIGURE 2: K-12 TOTAL SALARY & BENEFITS (2002-2020)



ENROLLMENT AND STAFFING TRENDS

Between 2002 and 2020, Nevada’s student population grew by 39.3%. At the same time, the number of total public education staff grew by 43.4%, with teachers increasing by 32.3% and non-teachers increasing by 58.0%. The average inflation-adjusted teacher salary in the state went from \$58,863 in 2002 to \$56,672 in 2020, a -3.7% growth rate that ranked 33rd in the U.S.

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

| Category | 2002 | 2020 | Growth Rate | Growth Rank | 2020 Rank |
|------------------------|----------|----------|-------------|-------------|-----------|
| Enrollment | 356,814 | 496,934 | 39.3% | 2 | 33 |
| Total Staff | 33,967 | 48,718 | 43.4% | 3 | 35 |
| Teachers | 19,276 | 25,509 | 32.3% | 2 | 35 |
| Non-Teachers | 14,691 | 23,210 | 58.0% | 4 | 36 |
| Average Teacher Salary | \$58,863 | \$56,672 | -3.7% | 33 | 27 |

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

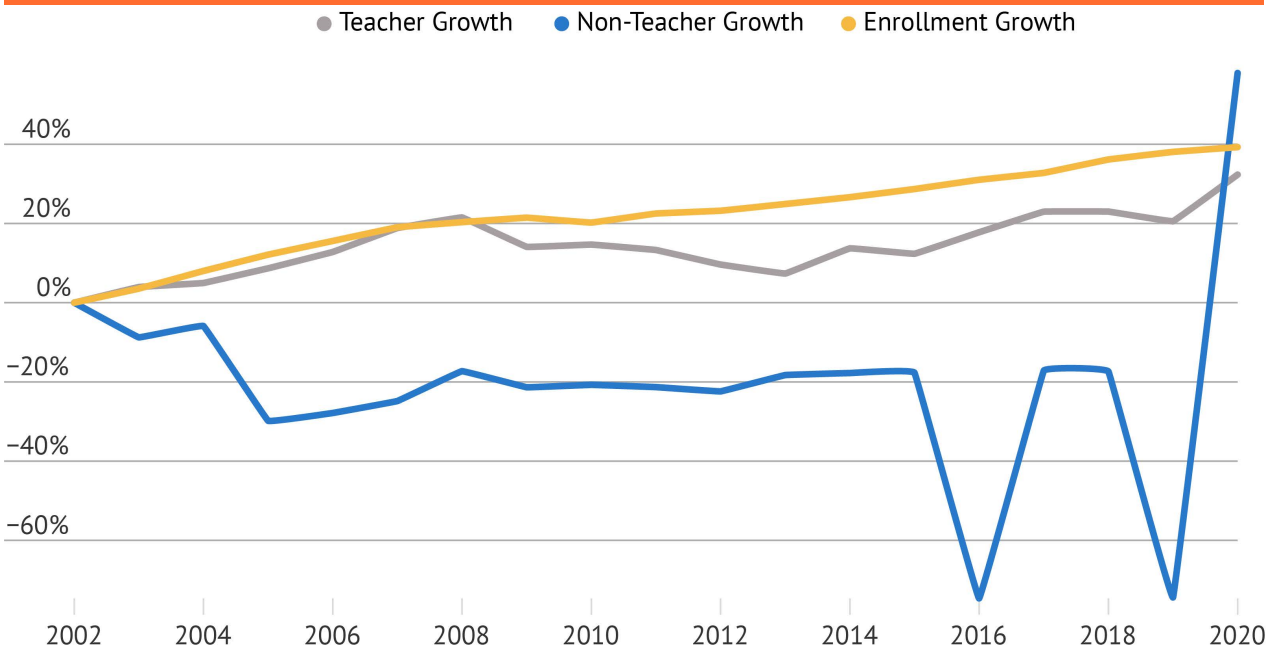
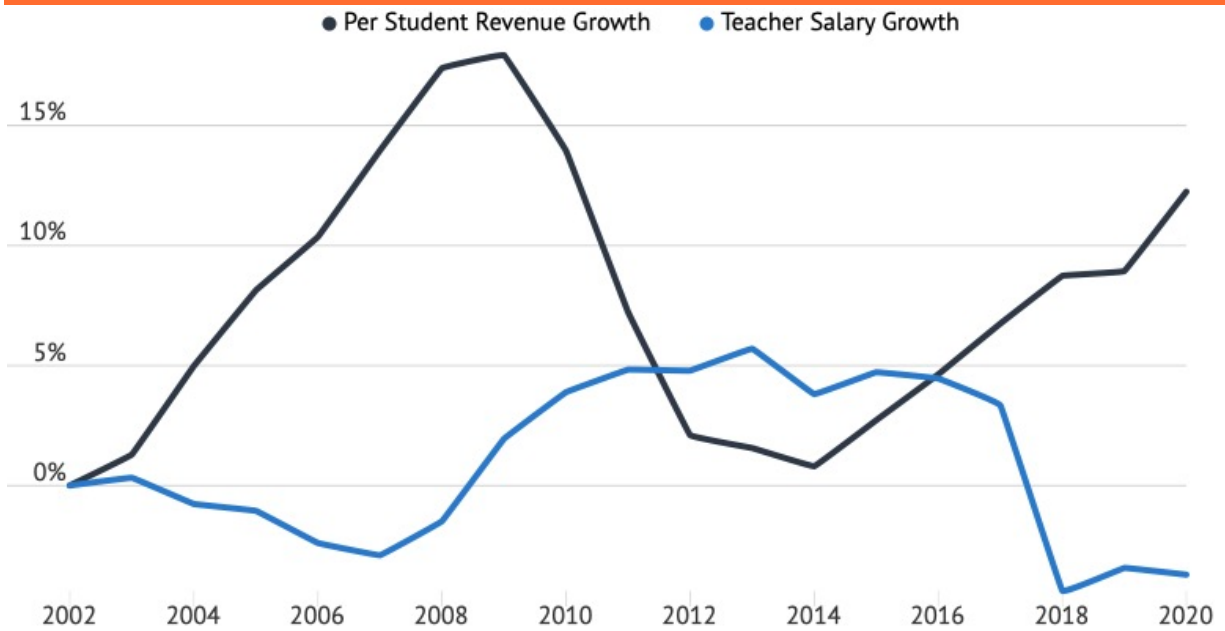


FIGURE 4: TEACHER SALARY GROWTH VS. REVENUE PER STUDENT GROWTH (2002-2020)



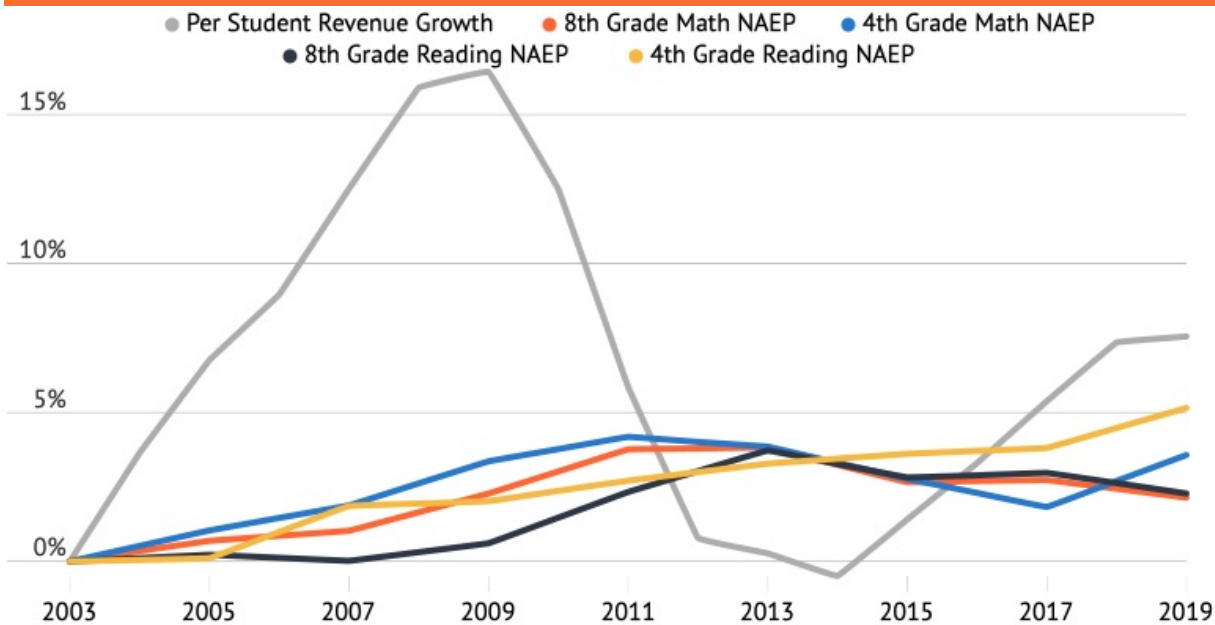
NAEP TRENDS

Between 2003 and 2019, Nevada's 4th grade NAEP reading scores increased by 11 points (+5.1%), ranking 3rd in the U.S., while its 4th grade math scores grew by eight points (+3.6%), ranking 10th. During this time, the state's 8th grade reading scores increased by six points (+2.3%), ranking 4th in the U.S., while its 8th grade math scores grew by six points (+2.1%), ranking 14th.

TABLE 3: NAEP SCORES (2003-2019)

| Subject | 4th Grade | | | 8th Grade | | |
|---------|--------------|-------------|-----------|--------------|-------------|-----------|
| | Score Growth | Growth Rank | 2019 Rank | Score Growth | Growth Rank | 2019 Rank |
| Reading | 11 | 3 | 38 | 6 | 4 | 43 |
| Math | 8 | 10 | 43 | 6 | 14 | 45 |

FIGURE 5: NAEP SCORE GROWTH VS REVENUE PER STUDENT GROWTH¹



LOW-INCOME NAEP TRENDS

Between 2003 and 2019, Nevada's low-income 4th grade NAEP reading scores increased by 19 points (+9.7%), ranking 1st in the U.S., while its 4th grade math scores grew by 13 points (+6.2%), ranking 3rd. During this time, the state's 8th grade reading scores increased by eight points (+3.1%), ranking 6th in the U.S., while its 8th grade math scores grew by nine points (+3.7%), ranking 12th.

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 | 19 | 1 | 7 | 8 | 6 | 33 |
| Math | 13 | 3 | 23 | 9 | 12 | 36 |

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

