

PENNSYLVANIA

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 Pennsylvania'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

Pennsylvania's inflation-adjusted education revenue grew from \$14,435 per student in 2002 to \$21,524 per student in 2020, a 49.1% growth rate that ranked 6th highest in the U.S. During this time, real spending on employee benefits grew by 173.6%—ranking 3rd in the country—going from \$2,068 per student to \$5,656 per student. In 2020, Pennsylvania had \$24,638,068,000 in total education debt, up \$1,276 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	\$14,435	\$21,524	49.1%	6	5
Support Services	\$4,435	\$5,967	34.5%	18	13
Instruction	\$7,855	\$10,577	34.6%	9	7
Benefits	\$2,068	\$5,656	173.6%	3	5
Capital	\$1,833	\$1,530	-16.5%	35	26
Total Debt	\$14,441	\$15,717	8.8%	37	4

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

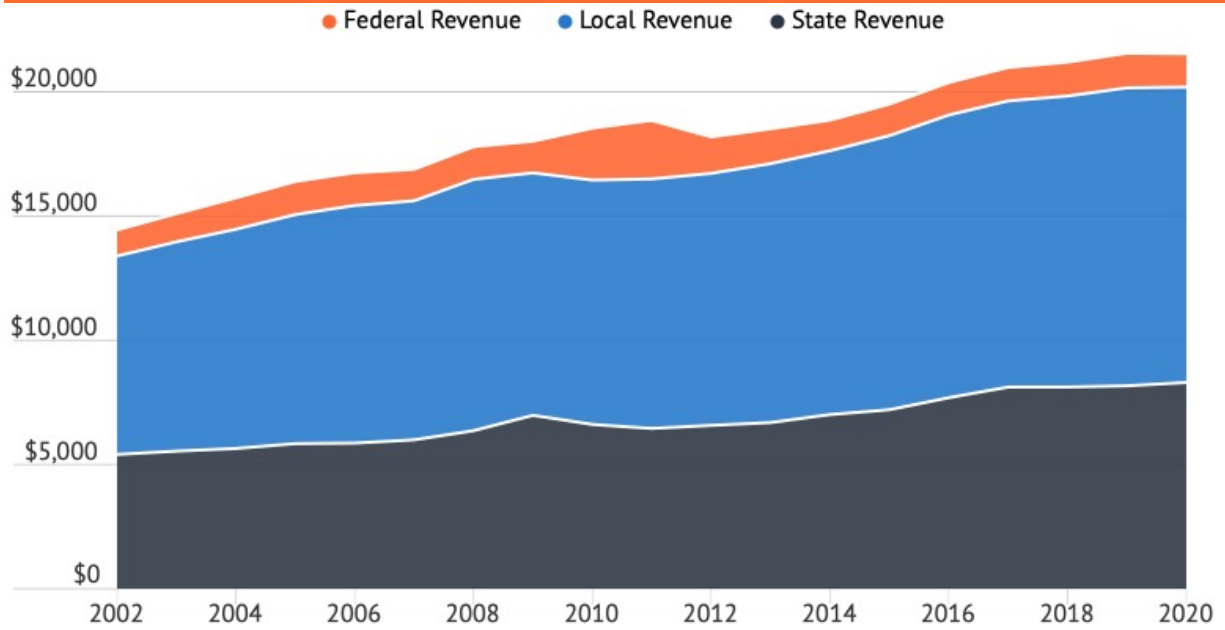
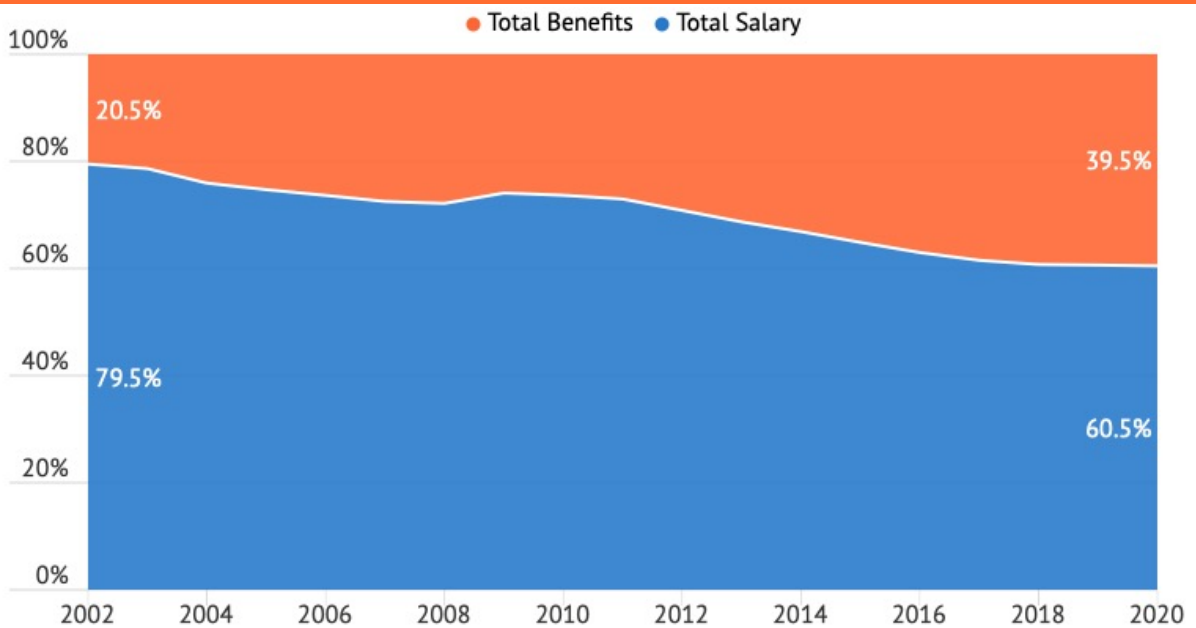


FIGURE 2: K-12 TOTAL SALARY & BENEFITS (2002-2020)



ENROLLMENT AND STAFFING TRENDS

Between 2002 and 2020, Pennsylvania’s student population declined by 4.9%. At the same time, the number of total public education staff grew by 10.2%, with teachers increasing by 4.9% and non-teachers increasing by 15.8%. The average inflation-adjusted teacher salary in the state went from \$73,065 in 2002 to \$70,339 in 2020, a -3.7% growth rate that ranked 34th in the U.S.

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

Category	2002	2020	Growth Rate	Growth Rank	2020 Rank
Enrollment	1,821,627	1,732,449	-4.9%	39	7
Total Staff	229,238	252,559	10.2%	31	7
Teachers	118,470	124,294	4.9%	26	6
Non-Teachers	110,768	128,265	15.8%	31	6
Average Teacher Salary	\$73,065	\$70,339	-3.7%	34	10

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

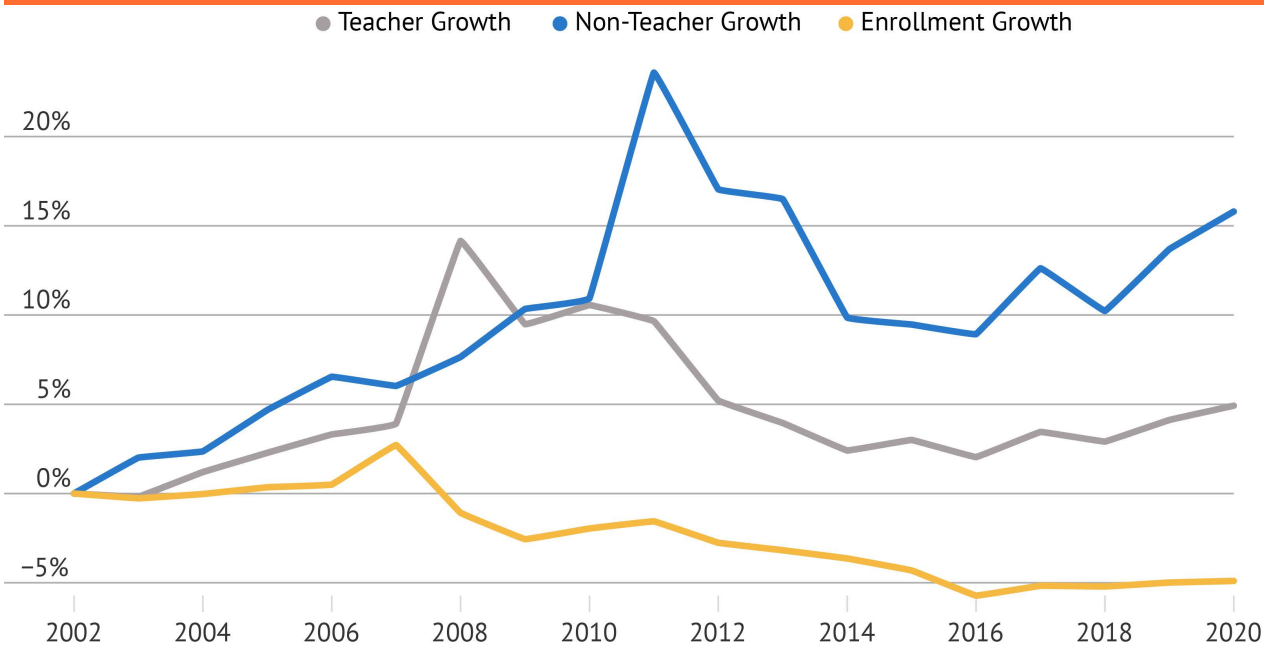
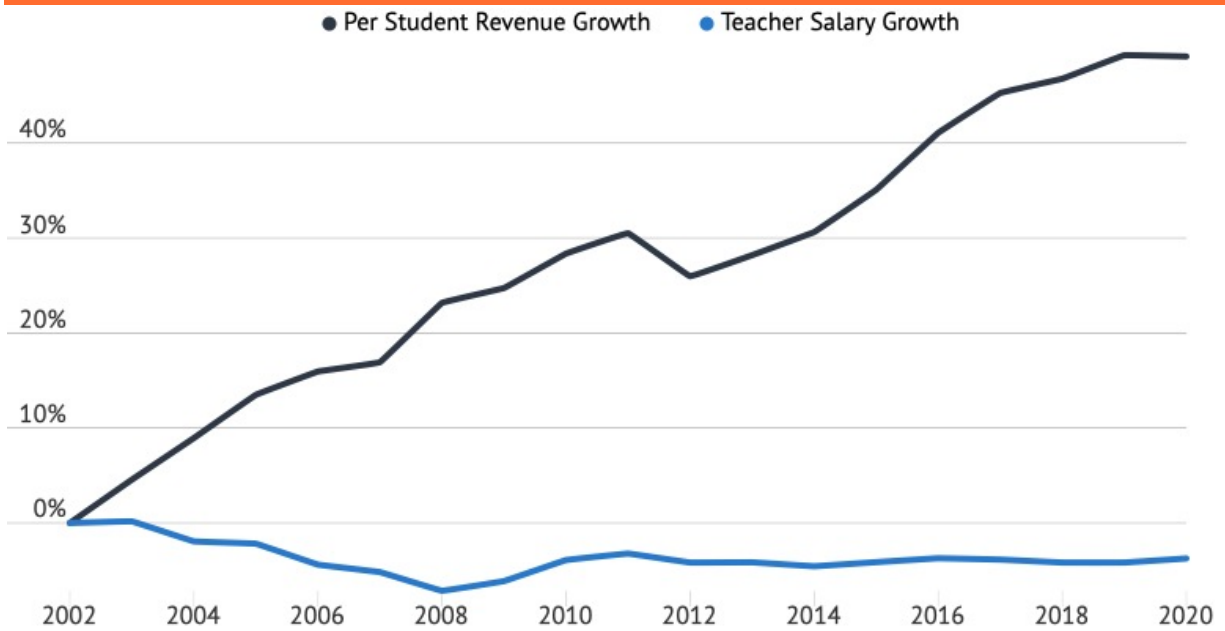


FIGURE 4: TEACHER SALARY GROWTH VS. REVENUE PER STUDENT GROWTH (2002-2020)



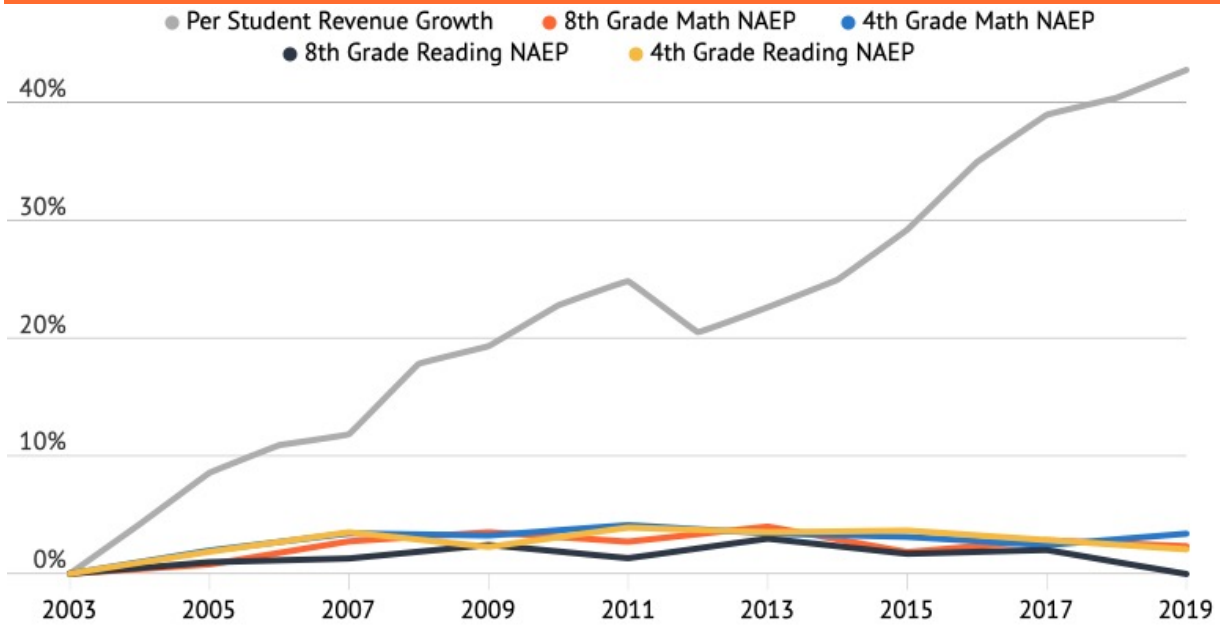
NAEP TRENDS

Between 2003 and 2019, Pennsylvania's 4th grade NAEP reading scores increased by five points (+2.1%), ranking 12th in the U.S., while its 4th grade math scores grew by eight points (+3.4%), ranking 12th. During this time, the state's 8th grade reading scores decreased by zero points (-0.0%), ranking 26th in the U.S., while its 8th grade math scores grew by six points (+2.3%), ranking 12th.

TABLE 3: NAEP SCORES (2003-2019)

Subject	4th Grade			8th Grade		
	Score Growth	Growth Rank	2019 Rank	Score Growth	Growth Rank	2019 Rank
Reading	5	12	10	0	26	18
Math	8	12	9	6	12	16

FIGURE 5: NAEP SCORE GROWTH VS REVENUE PER STUDENT GROWTH¹



LOW-INCOME NAEP TRENDS

Between 2003 and 2019, Pennsylvania's low-income 4th grade NAEP reading scores increased by nine points (+4.5%), ranking 5th in the U.S., while its 4th grade math scores grew by seven points (+3.1%), ranking 21st. During this time, the state's 8th grade reading scores increased by three points (+1.0%), ranking 19th in the U.S., while its 8th grade math scores grew by eight points (+3.1%), ranking 15th.

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	9	5	22	3	19	25
Math	7	21	28	8	15	35

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

