

# VIRGINIA

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 Virginia'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.

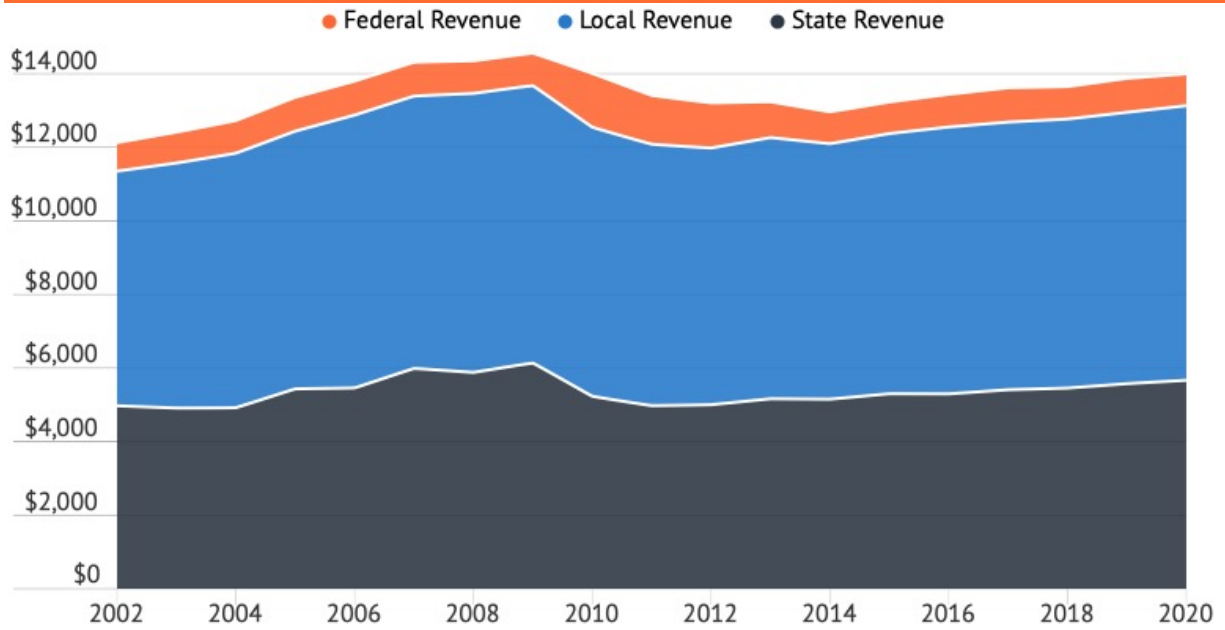
## SPENDING TRENDS

Virginia's inflation-adjusted education revenue grew from \$12,129 per student in 2002 to \$13,998 per student in 2020, a 15.4% growth rate that ranked 36<sup>th</sup> in the U.S. During this time, real spending on employee benefits grew by 76.4%—ranking 22<sup>nd</sup> in the country—going from \$1,872 per student to \$3,303 per student. In 2020, Virginia had \$7,208,550,000 in total education debt, down \$768 per student in real terms since 2002.

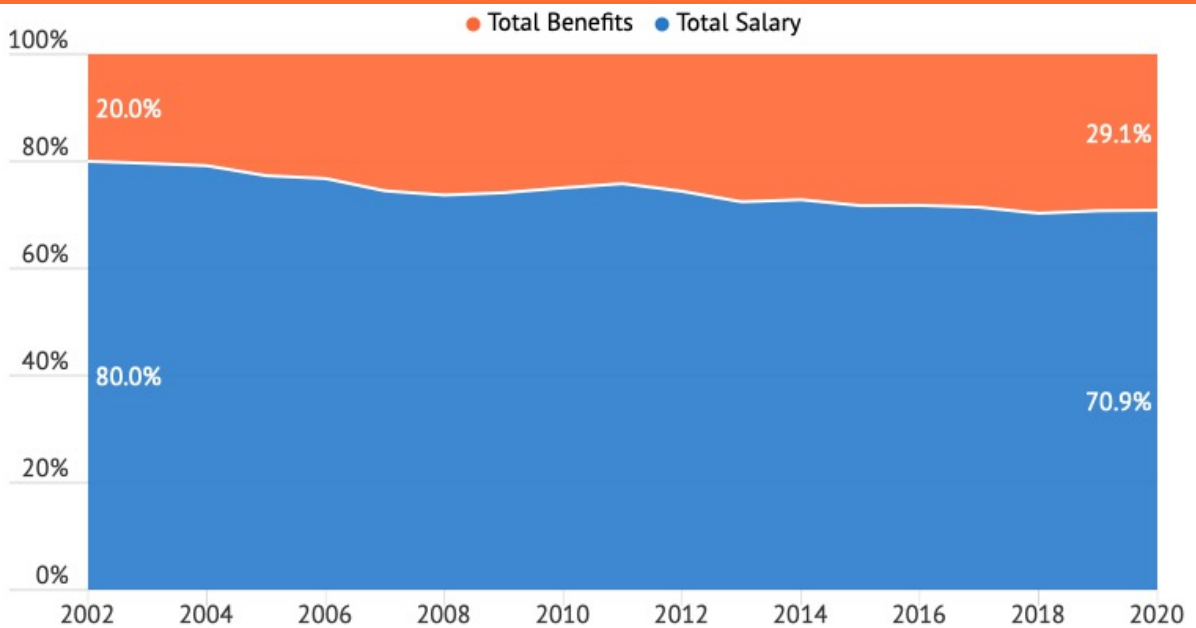
**TABLE 1: SPENDING TRENDS (2002-2020)**

Category (Per Student)	2002	2020	Growth Rate	Growth Rank	2020 Rank
Revenue	\$12,129	\$13,998	15.4%	36	31
Support Services	\$3,733	\$4,607	23.4%	32	24
Instruction	\$6,674	\$7,828	17.3%	25	22
Benefits	\$1,872	\$3,303	76.4%	22	22
Capital	\$1,401	\$1,173	-16.3%	33	36
Total Debt	\$6,326	\$5,559	-12.1%	43	38

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



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



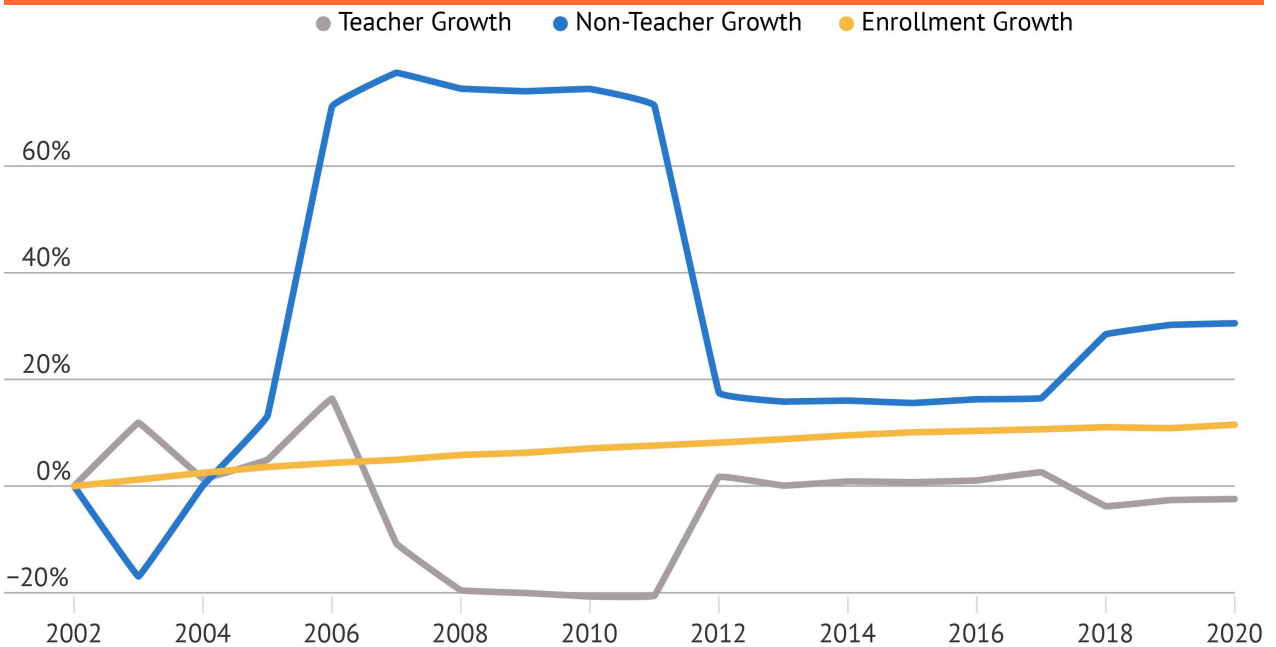
## ENROLLMENT AND STAFFING TRENDS

Between 2002 and 2020, Virginia’s student population grew by 11.5%. At the same time, the number of total public education staff grew by 12.7%, with teachers decreasing by 2.4% and non-teachers increasing by 30.5%. The average inflation-adjusted teacher salary in the state went from \$60,260 in 2002 to \$57,665 in 2020, a -4.3% growth rate that ranked 36<sup>th</sup> in the U.S.

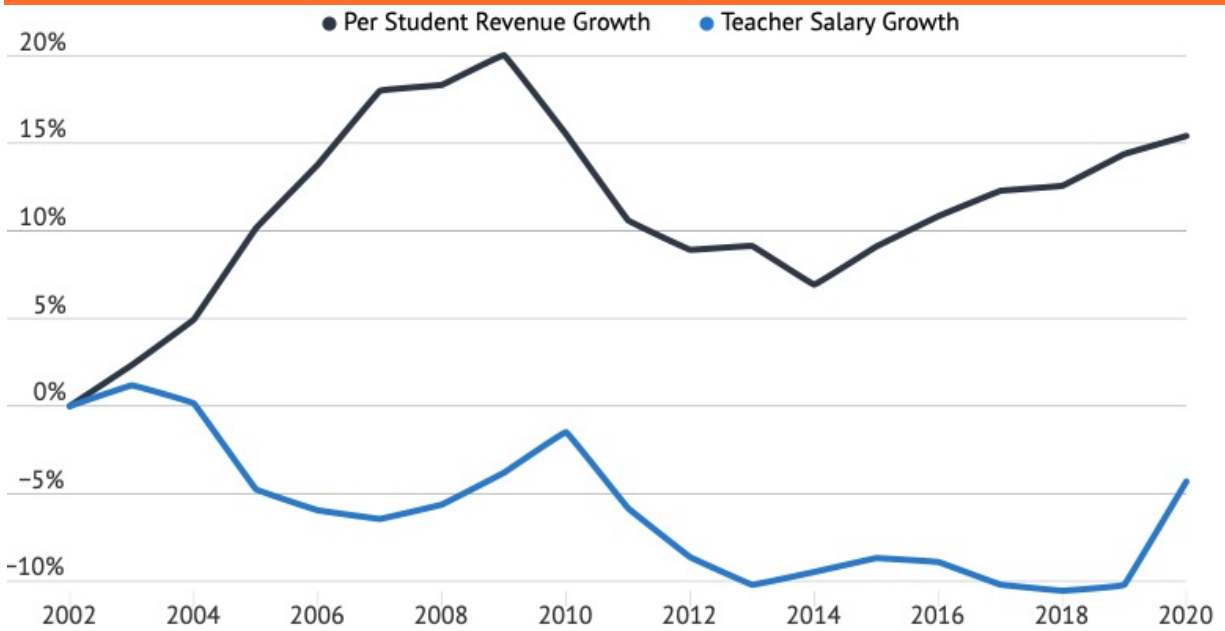
**TABLE 2: ENROLLMENT AND STAFFING TRENDS (2002-2020)**

Category	2002	2020	Growth Rate	Growth Rank	2020 Rank
Enrollment	1,163,091	1,297,012	11.5%	15	12
Total Staff	165,249	186,269	12.7%	26	12
Teachers	89,314	87,147	-2.4%	39	11
Non-Teachers	75,935	99,122	30.5%	15	11
Average Teacher Salary	\$60,260	\$57,665	-4.3%	36	25

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



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



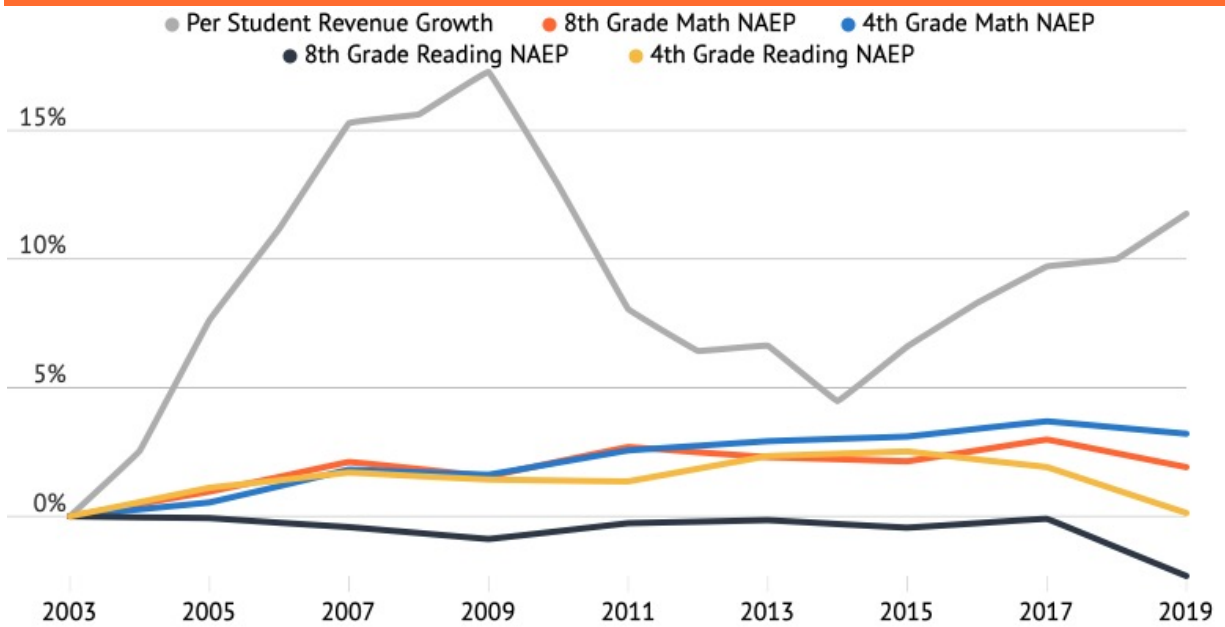
## NAEP TRENDS

Between 2003 and 2019, Virginia's 4<sup>th</sup> grade NAEP reading scores increased by zero points (+0.1%), ranking 29<sup>th</sup> in the U.S., while its 4<sup>th</sup> grade math scores grew by eight points (+3.2%), ranking 13<sup>th</sup>. During this time, the state's 8<sup>th</sup> grade reading scores decreased by six points (-2.3%), ranking 48<sup>th</sup> in the U.S., while its 8<sup>th</sup> grade math scores grew by five points (+1.9%), ranking 17<sup>th</sup>.

**TABLE 3: NAEP SCORES (2003-2019)**

Subject	4th Grade			8th Grade		
	Score Growth	Growth Rank	2019 Rank	Score Growth	Growth Rank	2019 Rank
Reading	0	29	9	-6	48	34
Math	8	13	3	5	17	7

**FIGURE 5: NAEP SCORE GROWTH VS REVENUE PER STUDENT GROWTH<sup>1</sup>**



## LOW-INCOME NAEP TRENDS

Between 2003 and 2019, Virginia’s low-income 4<sup>th</sup> grade NAEP reading scores increased by three points (+1.4%), ranking 25<sup>th</sup> in the U.S., while its 4<sup>th</sup> grade math scores grew by 10 points (+4.3%), ranking 11<sup>th</sup>. During this time, the state’s 8<sup>th</sup> grade reading scores decreased by six points (-2.4%), ranking 48<sup>th</sup> in the U.S., while its 8<sup>th</sup> grade math scores grew by eight points (+3.1%), ranking 14<sup>th</sup>.

**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	3	25	21	-6	48	44
Math	10	11	6	8	14	9

<sup>1</sup> 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)<sup>1</sup>**

