

WEST 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 West 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

West Virginia's inflation-adjusted education revenue grew from \$12,351 per student in 2002 to \$14,163 per student in 2020, a 14.7% growth rate that ranked 39th in the U.S. During this time, real spending on employee benefits grew by 16.9%—ranking 48th in the country—going from \$2,900 per student to \$3,390 per student. In 2020, West Virginia had \$282,362,000 in total education debt, down \$18 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	\$12,351	\$14,163	14.7%	39	30
Support Services	\$3,634	\$4,410	21.3%	35	29
Instruction	\$6,892	\$7,138	3.6%	46	28
Benefits	\$2,900	\$3,390	16.9%	48	21
Capital	\$996	\$936	-6.0%	31	44
Total Debt	\$1,090	\$1,072	-1.7%	39	48

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

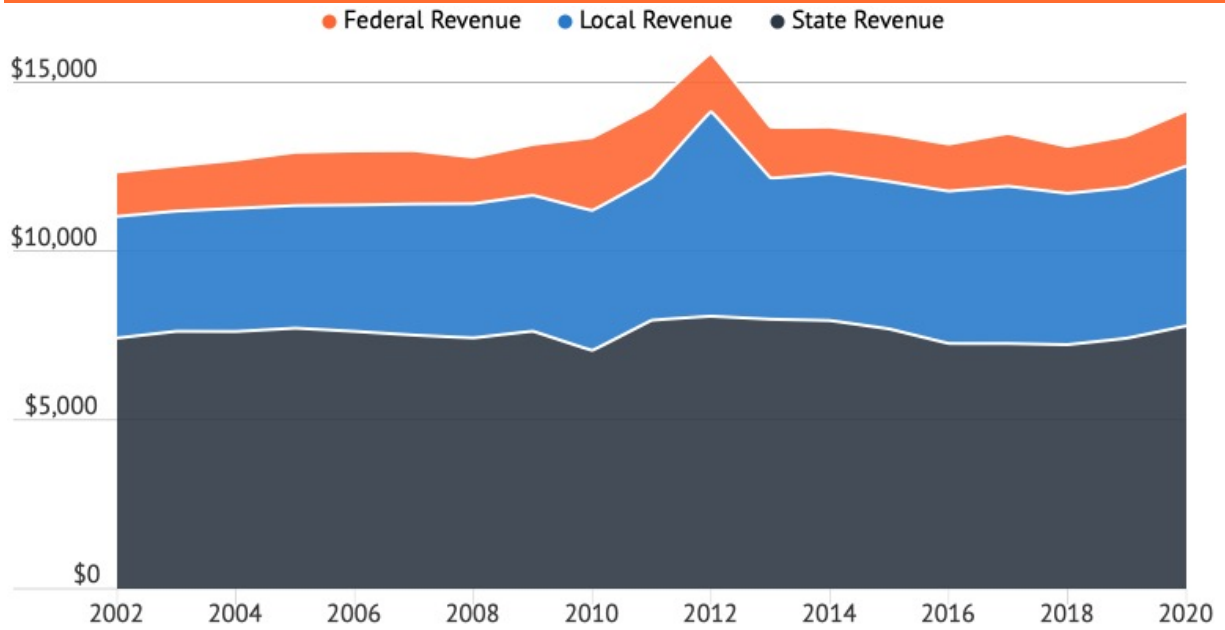
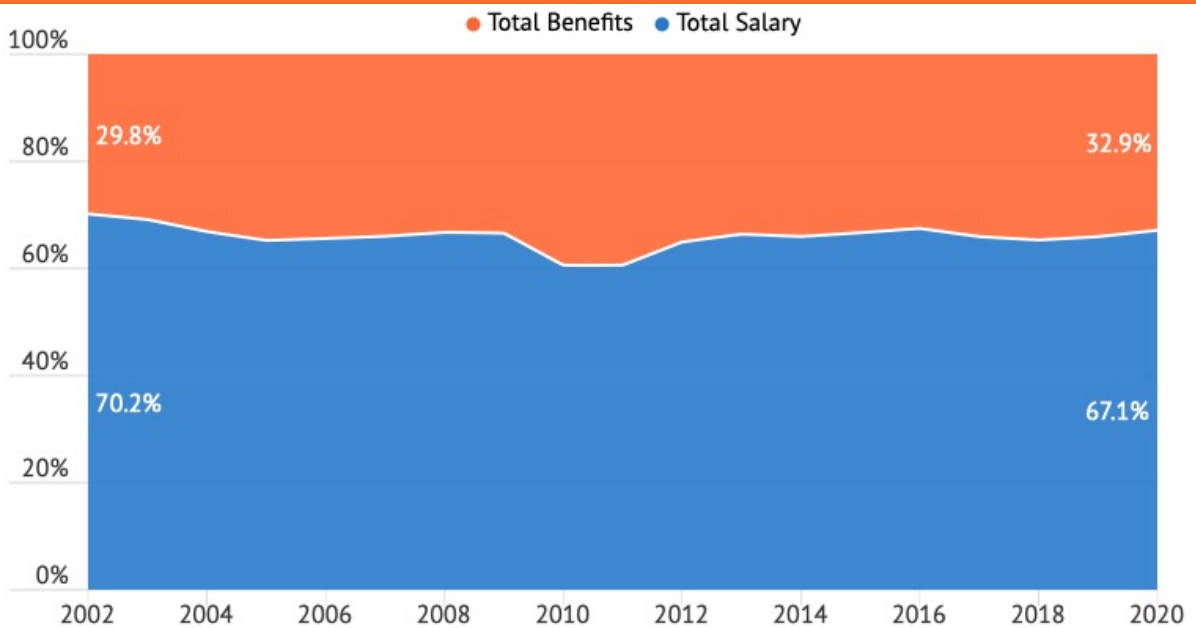


FIGURE 2: K-12 TOTAL SALARY & BENEFITS (2002-2020)



ENROLLMENT AND STAFFING TRENDS

Between 2002 and 2020, West Virginia’s student population declined by 6.9%. At the same time, the number of total public education staff decreased by 1.1%, with teachers decreasing by 6.4% and non-teachers increasing by 5.0%. The average inflation-adjusted teacher salary in the state went from \$53,068 in 2002 to \$50,238 in 2020, a –5.3% growth rate that ranked 39th in the U.S.

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

Category	2002	2020	Growth Rate	Growth Rank	2020 Rank
Enrollment	282,885	263,486	-6.9%	43	39
Total Staff	37,675	37,262	-1.1%	45	38
Teachers	20,138	18,854	-6.4%	43	38
Non-Teachers	17,537	18,408	5.0%	40	38
Average Teacher Salary	\$53,068	\$50,238	-5.3%	39	47

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

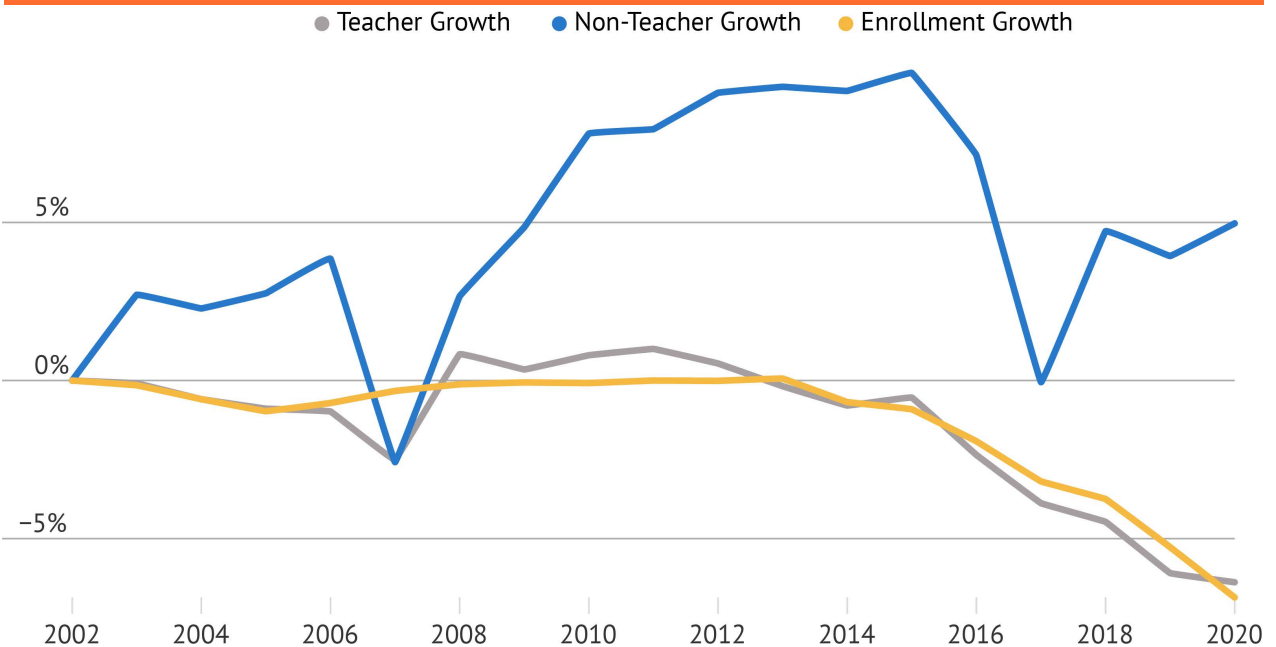
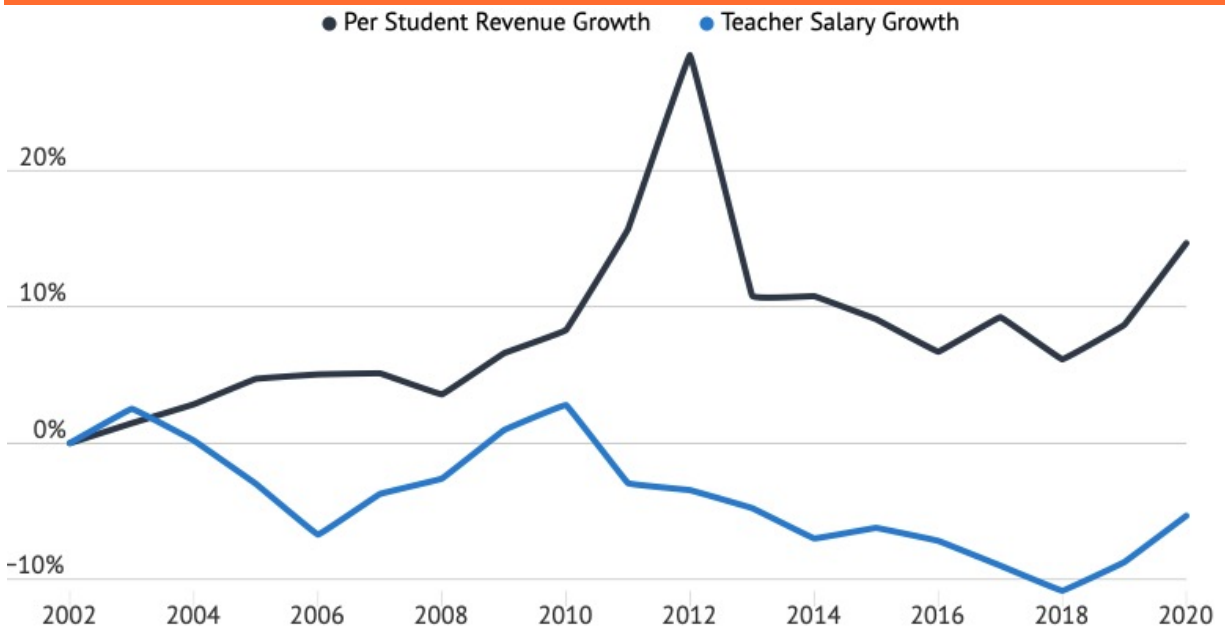


FIGURE 4: TEACHER SALARY GROWTH VS. REVENUE PER STUDENT GROWTH (2002-2020)



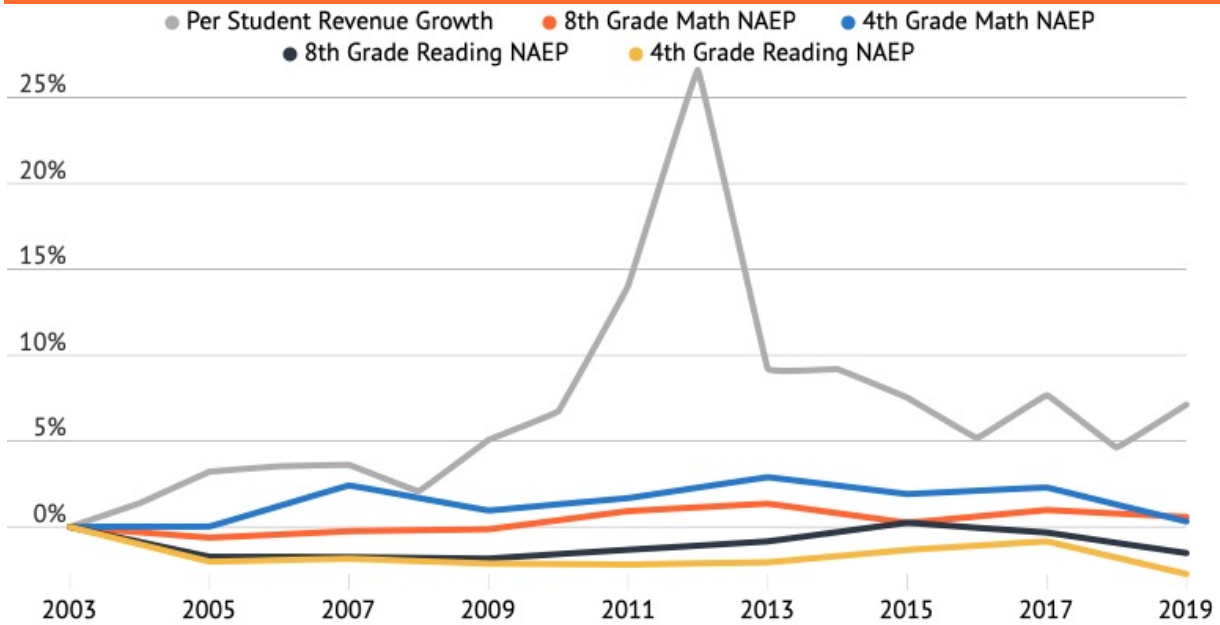
NAEP TRENDS

Between 2003 and 2019, West Virginia's 4th grade NAEP reading scores decreased by six points (-2.7%), ranking 48th in the U.S., while its 4th grade math scores grew by one point (+0.3%), ranking 44th. During this time, the state's 8th grade reading scores decreased by four points (-1.5%), ranking 42nd in the U.S., while its 8th grade math scores grew by two points (+0.6%), ranking 36th.

TABLE 3: NAEP SCORES (2003-2019)

Subject	4th Grade			8th Grade		
	Score Growth	Growth Rank	2019 Rank	Score Growth	Growth Rank	2019 Rank
Reading	-6	48	46	-4	42	47
Math	1	44	47	2	36	47

FIGURE 5: NAEP SCORE GROWTH VS REVENUE PER STUDENT GROWTH¹



LOW-INCOME NAEP TRENDS

Between 2003 and 2019, West Virginia's low-income 4th grade NAEP reading scores decreased by eight points (-3.8%), ranking 49th in the U.S., while its 4th grade math scores fell by three points (-1.2%), ranking 49th. During this time, the state's 8th grade reading scores decreased by four points (-1.6%), ranking 42nd in the U.S., while its 8th grade math scores grew by one point (+0.4%), ranking 38th.

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	49	41	-4	42	38
Math	-3	49	48	1	38	43

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

