

MASSACHUSETTS

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 Massachusetts'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

Massachusetts's inflation-adjusted education revenue grew from \$16,755 per student in 2002 to \$21,276 per student in 2020, a 27% growth rate that ranked 19st highest in the U.S. During this time, real spending on employee benefits grew by 85.2%—ranking 18th in the country—going from \$2,575 per student to \$4,769 per student. In 2020, Massachusetts had \$6,067,137,000 in total education debt, down \$1,220 per student in real terms since 2002.

Table 1 summarizes these and other key spending trends.

TABLE 1: SPENDING TRENDS (2002-2020)

Category (Per Student)	2002	2020	Growth Rate	Growth Rank	2020 Rank
Revenue	\$16,755	\$21,276	27%	19	6
Support Services	\$4,903	\$6,589	34.4%	19	7
Instruction	\$8,869	\$11,714	32.1%	10	5
Benefits	\$2,575	\$4,769	85.2%	18	11
Capital	\$1,738	\$1,348	-22.5%	40	30
Total Debt	\$7,977	\$6,757	-15.3%	44	29

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

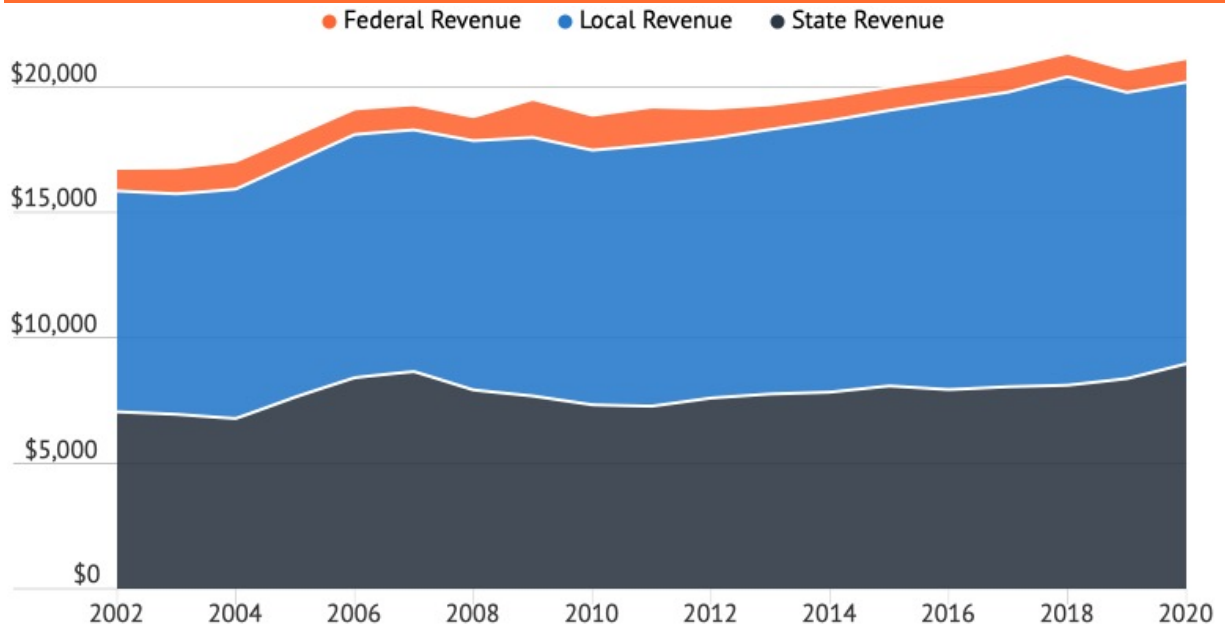
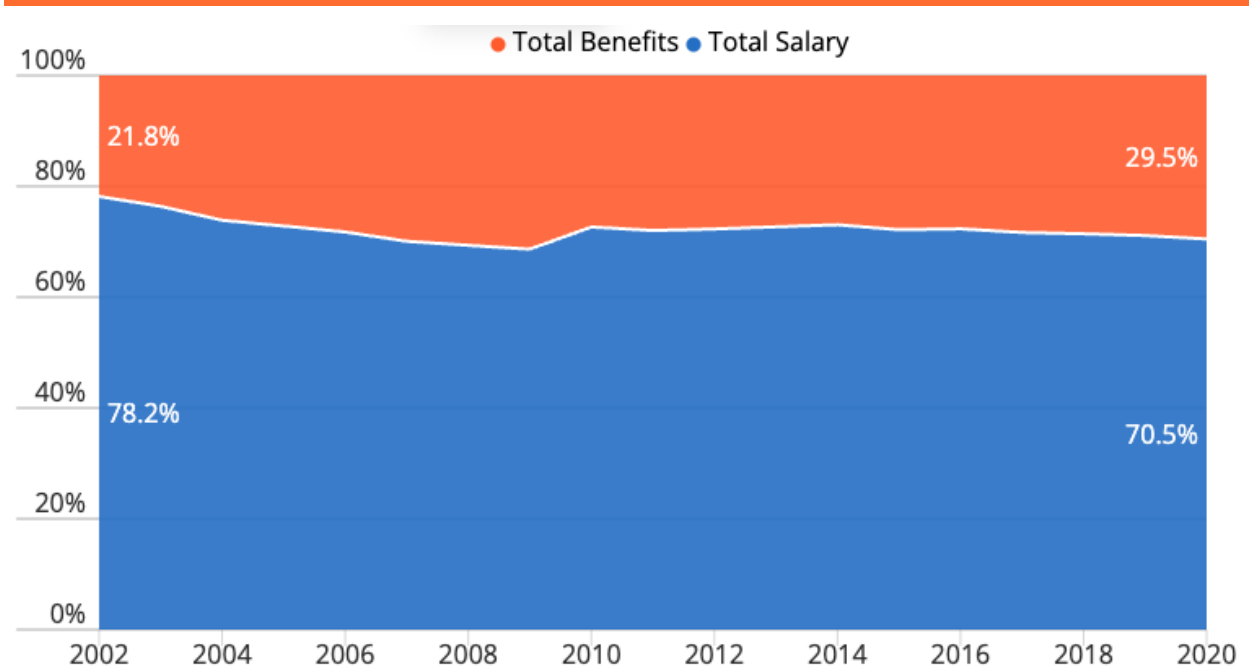


FIGURE 2: K-12 TOTAL SALARY & BENEFITS (2002-2020)



ENROLLMENT AND STAFFING TRENDS

Between 2002 and 2020, Massachusetts’s student population declined by 6.4%. At the same time, the number of total public education staff grew by 9.5%, with teachers increasing by 9.0% and non-teachers increasing by 10.2%. The average inflation-adjusted teacher salary in the state went from \$72,623 in 2002 to \$84,290 in 2020, a 16.1% growth rate that ranked 2nd in the U.S.

Table 2 summarizes these trends.

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

Category	2002	2020	Growth Rate	Growth Rank	2020 Rank
Enrollment	959,021	897,905	-6.4%	38	18
Total Staff	125,629	137,602	9.5%	33	14
Teachers	68,942	75,152	9.0%	21	13
Non-Teachers	56,687	62,449	10.2%	37	17
Average Teacher Salary	\$72,623	\$84,290	16.1%	2	3

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

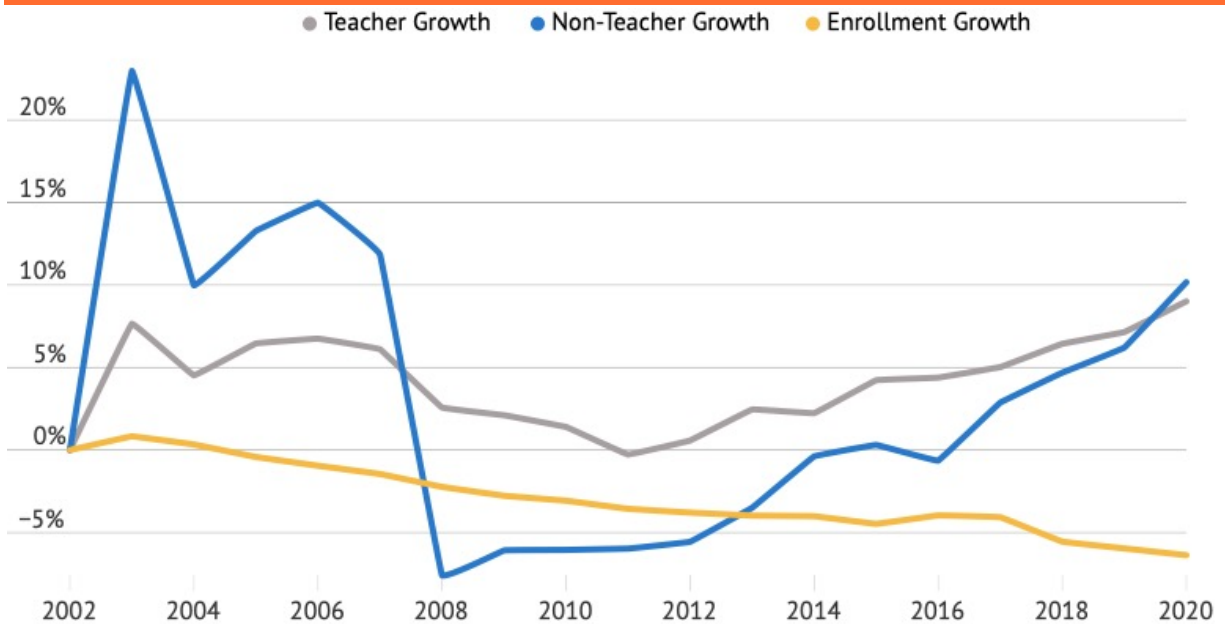
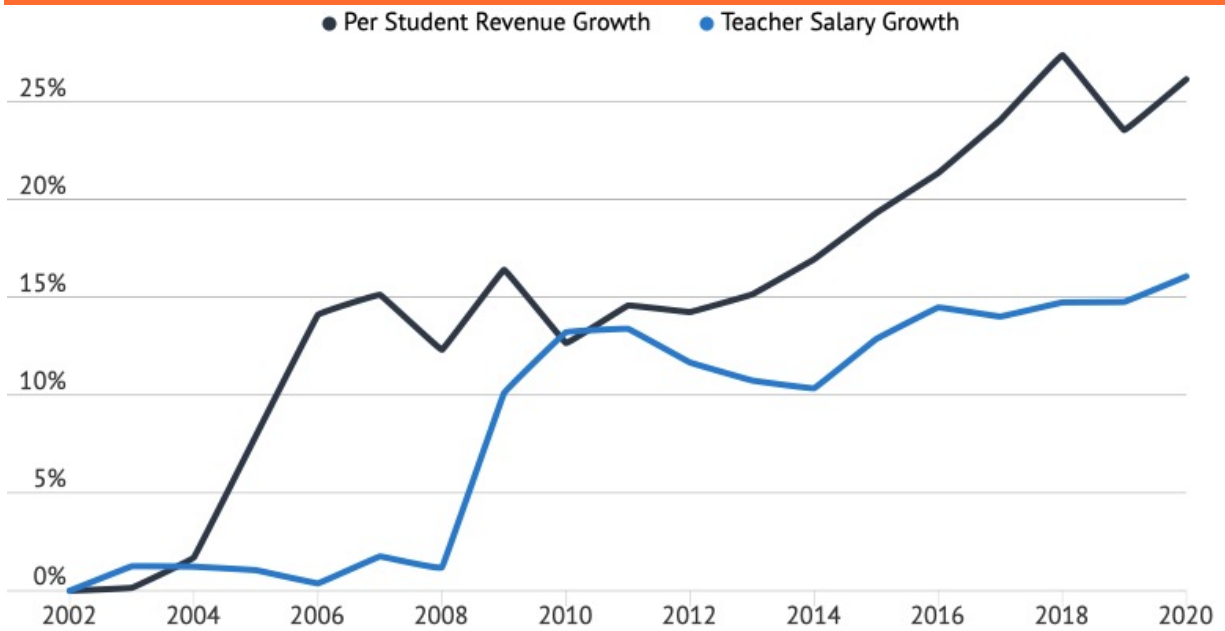


FIGURE 4: TEACHER SALARY GROWTH VS. REVENUE PER STUDENT GROWTH (2002-2020)



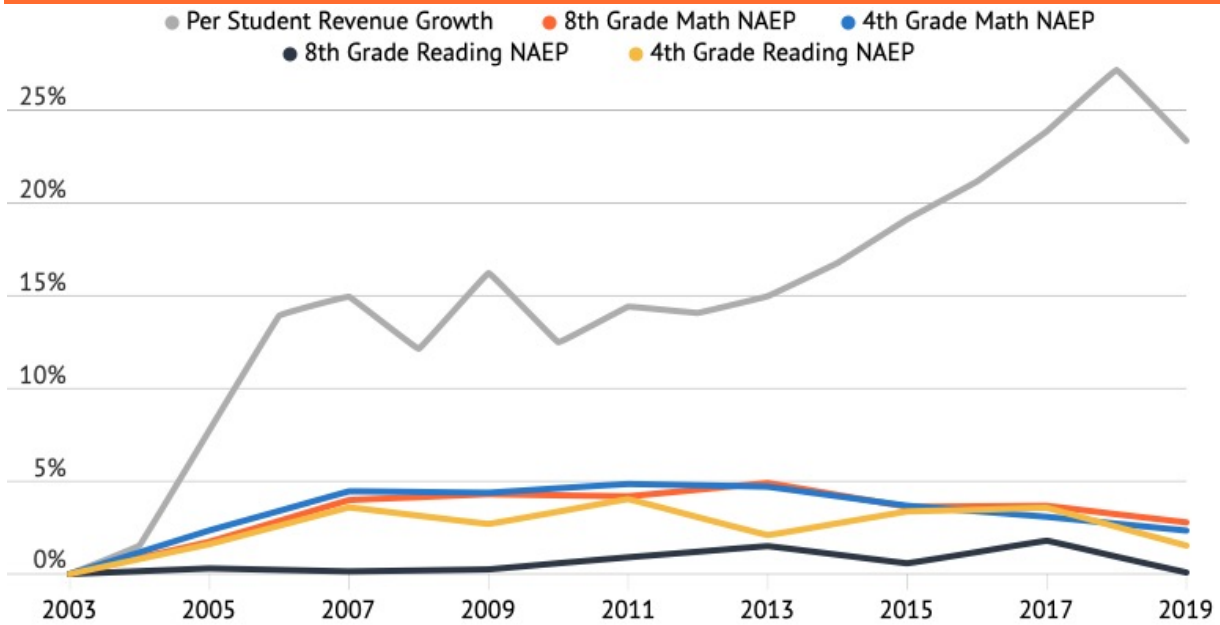
NAEP TRENDS

Between 2003 and 2019, Massachusetts's 4th grade NAEP reading scores increased by three points (+1.5%), ranking 17th in the U.S., while its 4th grade math scores grew by six points (+2.3%), ranking 24th. During this time, the state's 8th grade reading scores increased by zero points (+0.1%), ranking 24th in the U.S., while its 8th grade math scores grew by eight points (+2.8%), ranking 9th.

TABLE 3: NAEP SCORES (2003-2019)

Subject	4th Grade			8th Grade		
	Score Growth	Growth Rank	2019 Rank	Score Growth	Growth Rank	2019 Rank
Reading	3	17	1	0	24	1
Math	6	24	2	8	9	1

FIGURE 5: NAEP SCORE GROWTH VS REVENUE PER STUDENT GROWTH¹



LOW-INCOME NAEP TRENDS

Between 2003 and 2019, Massachusetts's 4th grade NAEP reading scores increased by four points (+1.7%), ranking 21st in the U.S., while its 4th grade math scores grew by five points (+2.1%), ranking 32nd. During this time, the state's 8th grade reading scores increased by three points (+1.0%), ranking 20th in the U.S., while its 8th grade math scores grew by 11 points (+4.3%), ranking 9th.

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	4	21	4	3	20	10
Math	5	32	14	11	9	2

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

