

TEXAS

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 Texas'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

Texas's inflation-adjusted education revenue grew from \$11,473 per student in 2002 to \$13,346 per student in 2020, a 16.3% growth rate that ranked 35th in the U.S. During this time, real spending on employee benefits grew by 24.0%—ranking 45th in the country—going from \$1,044 per student to \$1,295 per student. In 2020, Texas had \$98,129,934,000 in total education debt, up \$8,958 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	\$11,473	\$13,346	16.3%	35	36
Support Services	\$3,364	\$3,719	10.6%	43	39
Instruction	\$5,909	\$6,147	4.0%	45	39
Benefits	\$1,044	\$1,295	24.0%	45	50
Capital	\$1,896	\$2,233	17.7%	22	6
Total Debt	\$10,051	\$19,009	89.1%	13	1

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

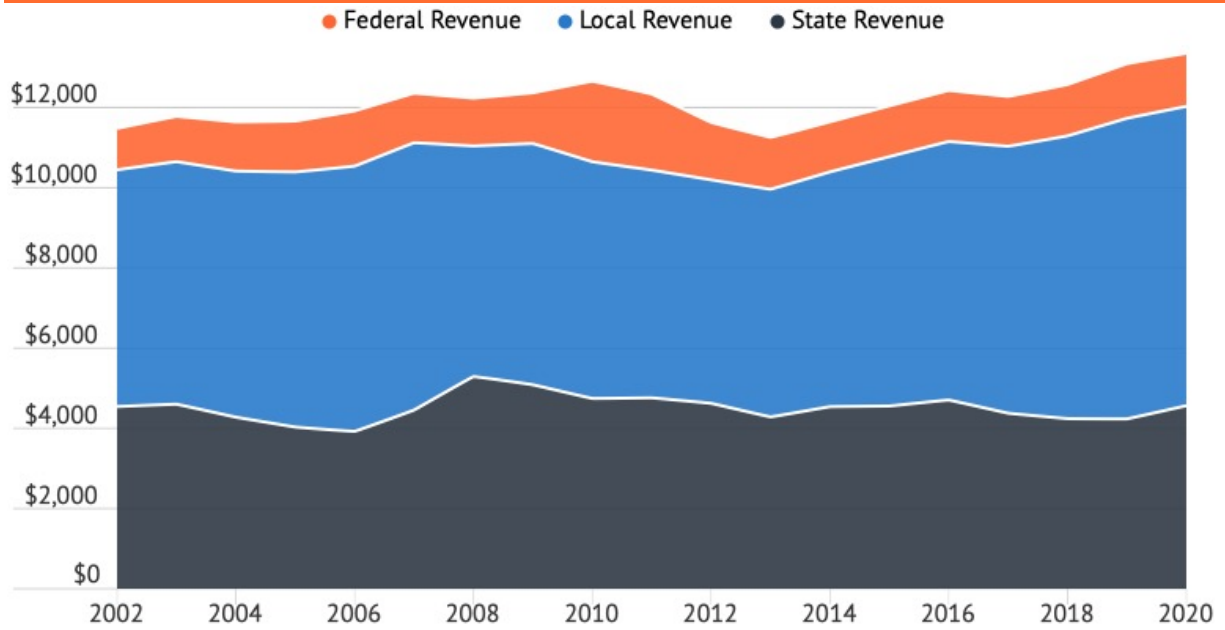
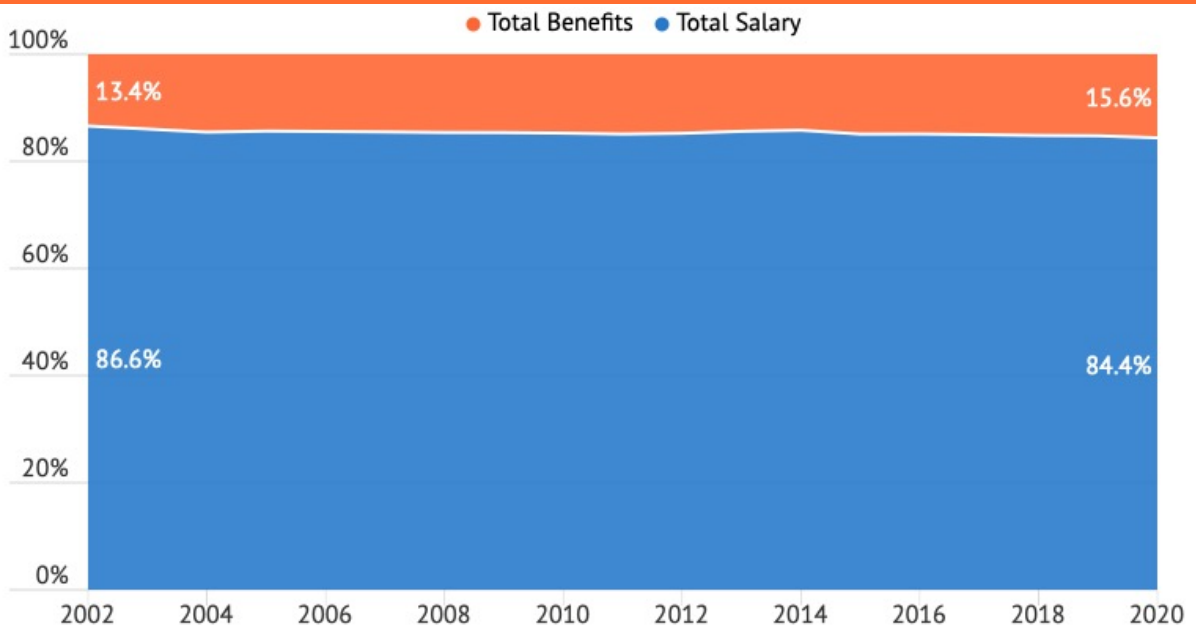


FIGURE 2: K-12 TOTAL SALARY & BENEFITS (2002-2020)



ENROLLMENT AND STAFFING TRENDS

Between 2002 and 2020, Texas’s student population grew by 32.0%. At the same time, the number of total public education staff grew by 26.8%, with teachers increasing by 28.9% and non-teachers increasing by 24.8%. The average inflation-adjusted teacher salary in the state went from \$56,651 in 2002 to \$57,090 in 2020, a 0.8% growth rate that ranked 23rd in the U.S.

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

Category	2002	2020	Growth Rate	Growth Rank	2020 Rank
Enrollment	4,163,447	5,495,398	32.0%	3	2
Total Staff	582,556	738,419	26.8%	7	1
Teachers	282,847	364,478	28.9%	3	1
Non-Teachers	299,709	373,941	24.8%	21	1
Average Teacher Salary	\$56,651	\$57,090	0.8%	23	26

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

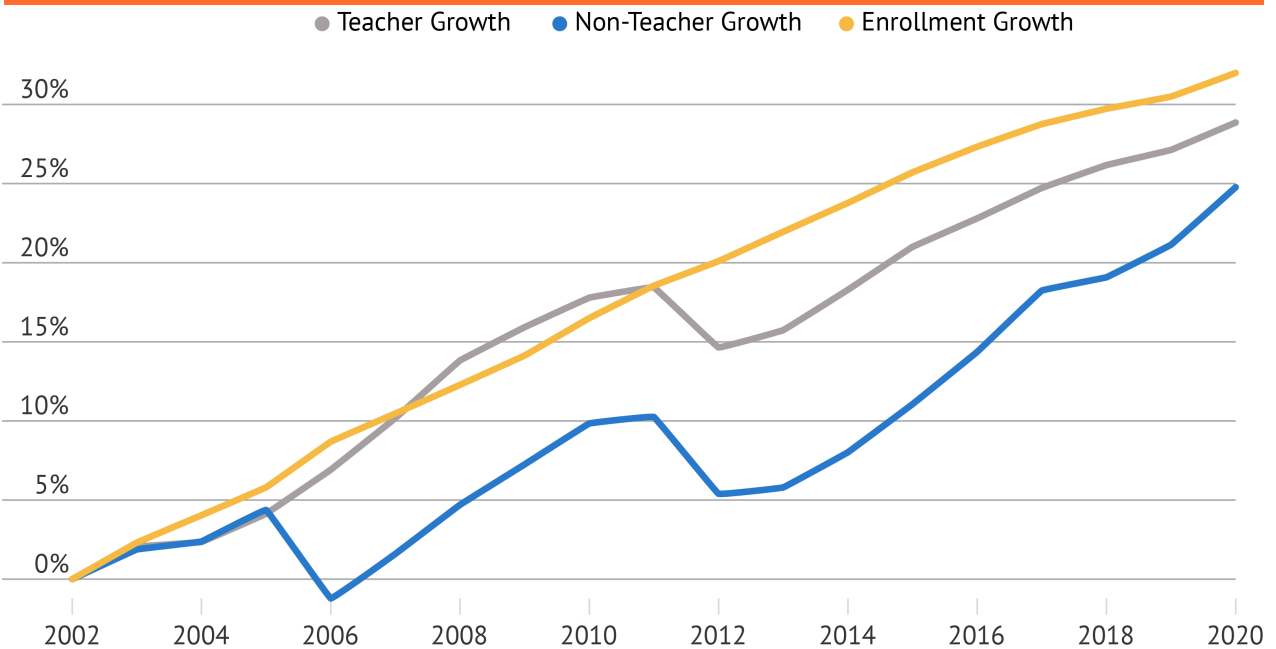
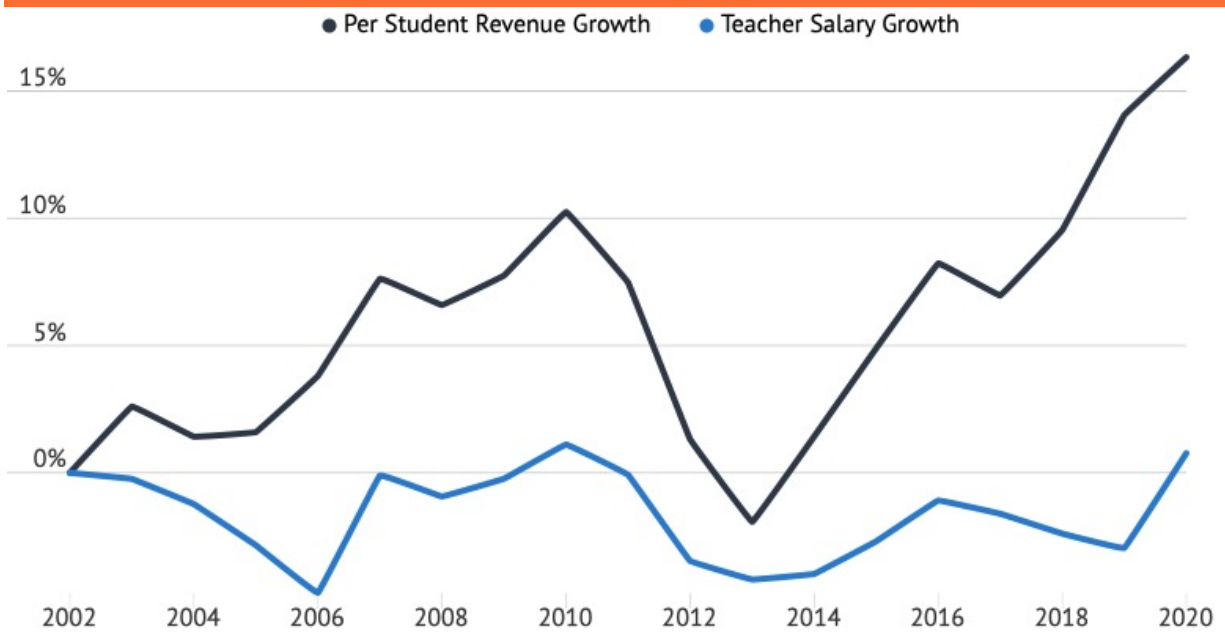


FIGURE 4: TEACHER SALARY GROWTH VS. REVENUE PER STUDENT GROWTH (2002-2020)



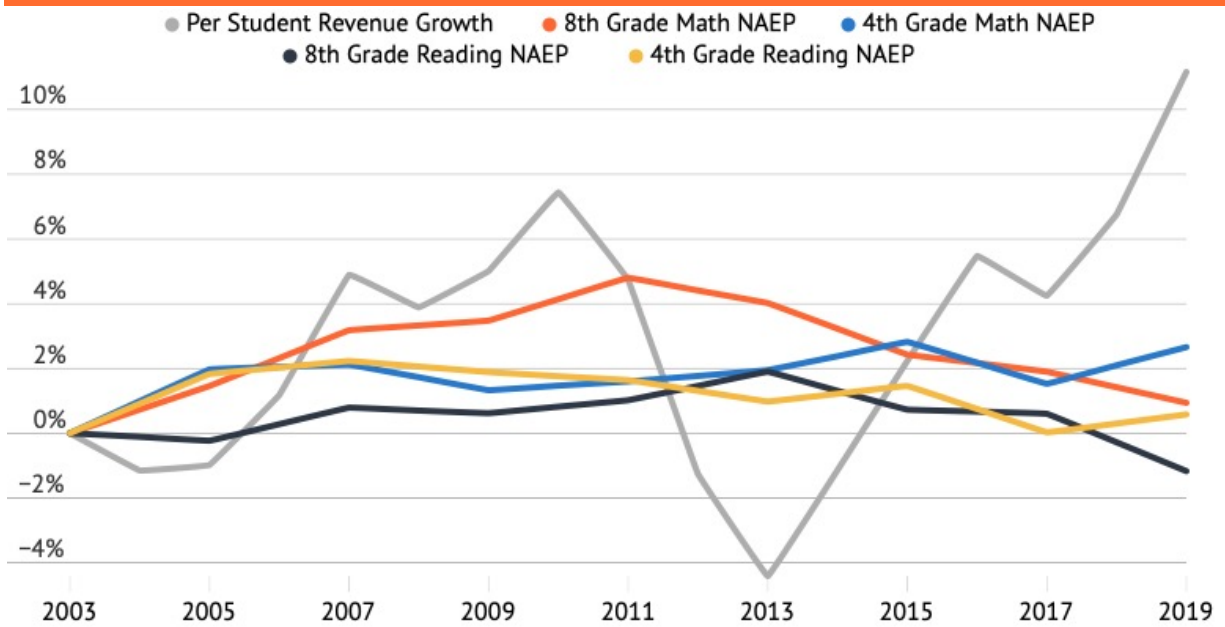
NAEP TRENDS

Between 2003 and 2019, Texas's 4th grade NAEP reading scores increased by one point (+0.6%), ranking 25th in the U.S., while its 4th grade math scores grew by six points (+2.7%), ranking 22nd. During this time, the state's 8th grade reading scores decreased by three points (-1.2%), ranking 35th in the U.S., while its 8th grade math scores grew by three points (+0.9%), ranking 30th.

TABLE 3: NAEP SCORES (2003-2019)

Subject	4th Grade			8th Grade		
	Score Growth	Growth Rank	2019 Rank	Score Growth	Growth Rank	2019 Rank
Reading	1	25	42	-3	35	46
Math	6	22	12	3	30	32

FIGURE 5: NAEP SCORE GROWTH VS REVENUE PER STUDENT GROWTH¹



LOW-INCOME NAEP TRENDS

Between 2003 and 2019, Texas's low-income 4th grade NAEP reading scores increased by one point (+0.4%), ranking 35th in the U.S., while its 4th grade math scores grew by six points (+2.5%), ranking 26th. During this time, the state's 8th grade reading scores increased by zero points (+0.1%), ranking 29th in the U.S., while its 8th grade math scores grew by six points (+2.2%), ranking 22nd.

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	1	35	31	0	29	43
Math	6	26	4	6	22	8

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

