

Billions in the Bank: Public School District Reserve Funds

August 2025



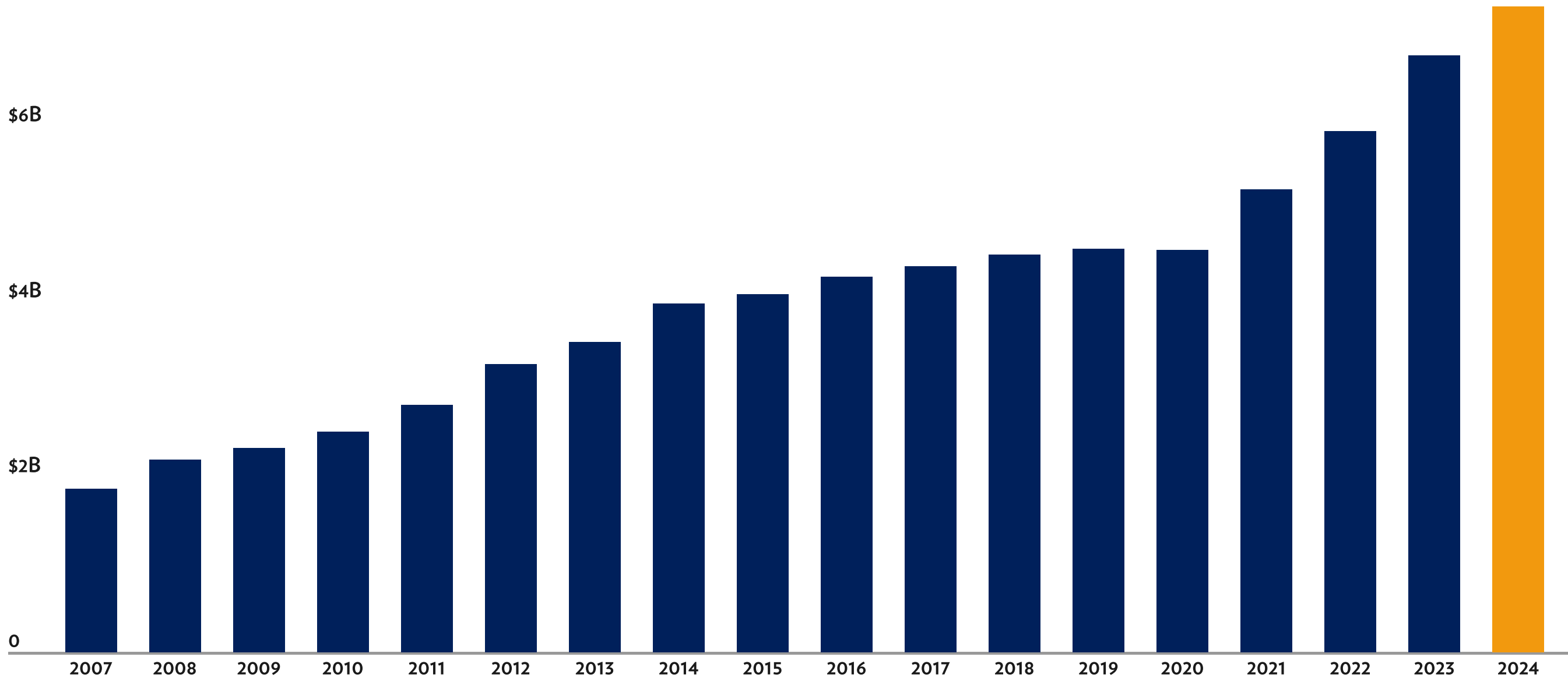
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School District General Fund Reserves

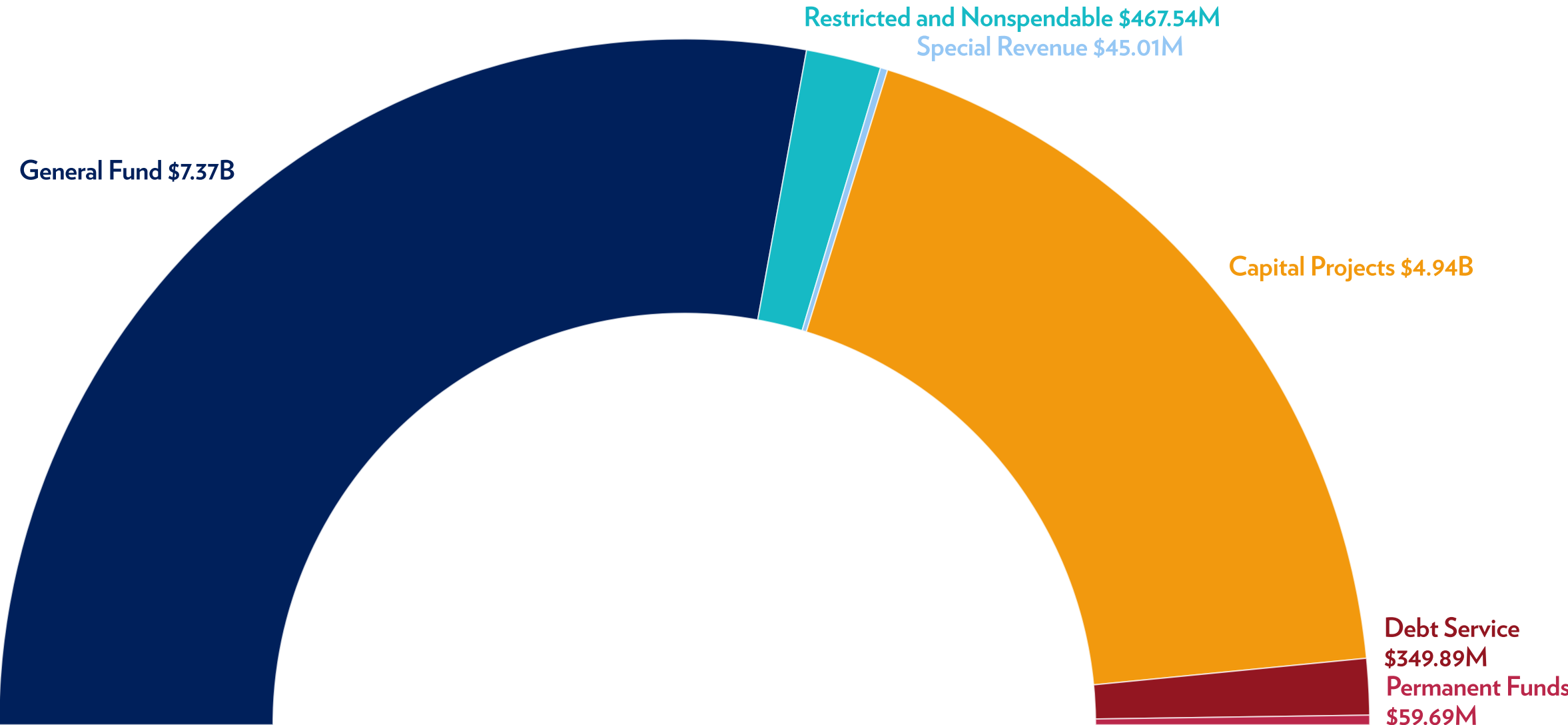
School district general fund reserves rose over the past 17 years, reaching \$7.37 billion



Source: Pennsylvania Department of Education, Detailed Annual Financial Reports, “General Fund Balance 1996-97 to 2023-2024.” General Fund Balance includes Assigned, Committed, and Unassigned funds.

School District Total Reserves

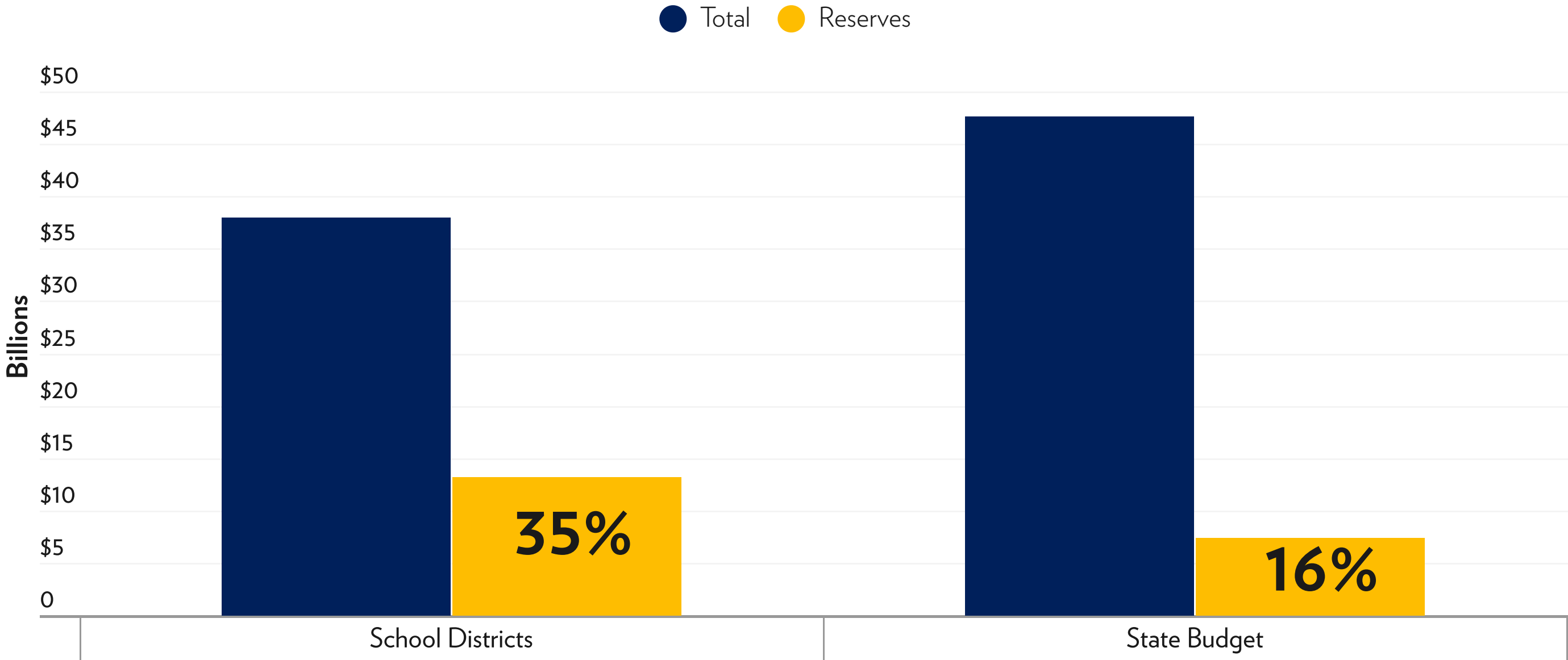
Including Capital Reserves, School Districts have \$13.2 billion in reserves as of 2024



Source: Pennsylvania Department of Education, Detailed Annual Financial Reports, “General Fund Balance 1996-97 to 2023-2024.” General Fund Balance includes Assigned, Committed, and Unassigned funds.

School District Reserves In Comparison

School district reserves account for nearly 35 percent of 2023-24 expenditures.



Source: Pennsylvania Department of Education, Detailed Annual Financial Reports, “General Fund Balance 1996-97 to 2023-2024.” General Fund Balance includes Assigned, Committed, and Unassigned funds. Pennsylvania Treasury, Transparency Portal, Treasury Investment Pools.

Find Your School District's Reserves

 Search			
County	LEA Name	Total General Fund Reserves	Percentage of Total Expenditures
Adams	Bermudian Springs SD	\$6,472,286	18.2%
Adams	Conewago Valley SD	\$9,235,693	11.7%
Adams	Fairfield Area SD	\$9,883,938	43.1%
Adams	Gettysburg Area SD	\$22,785,071	30.0%
Adams	Littlestown Area SD	\$11,796,058	20.1%
Adams	Upper Adams SD	\$7,433,763	16.3%
Allegheny	Allegheny Valley SD	\$10,054,977	38.5%
Allegheny	Avonworth SD	\$8,908,741	22.7%
Allegheny	Baldwin-Whitehall SD	\$26,795,921	28.8%
Allegheny	Bethel Park SD	\$16,393,877	15.0%
Allegheny	Brentwood Borough SD	\$7,956,848	25.4%
Allegheny	Carlynton SD	\$8,999,617	25.8%
Allegheny	Chartiers Valley SD	\$7,105,420	9.1%
Allegheny	Clairton City SD	-\$815,894	-3.7%
Allegheny	Cornell SD	-\$1,333,025	-7.5%
 Download data			

Source: Pennsylvania Department of Education, Detailed Annual Financial Reports, “General Fund Balance 1996-97 to 2023-2024.” General Fund Balance includes Assigned, Committed, and Unassigned funds.

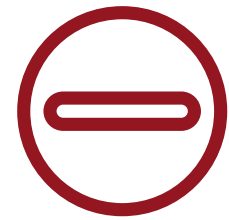
Find Pennsylvania Charter School Reserves

🔍 Search

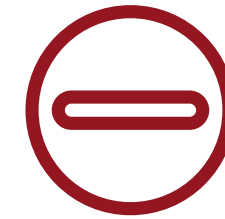
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Allegheny	Cornell SD	-\$1,333,025	-7.5%
Allegheny	Derry Township SD	\$1,531,533	11.0%

📄 Download data

Source: Pennsylvania Department of Education, Detailed Annual Financial Reports, “General Fund Balance 1996-97 to 2023-2024.” General Fund Balance includes Assigned, Committed, and Unassigned funds.



Wrong Way, PA!



Reserve Funds
Enrollment

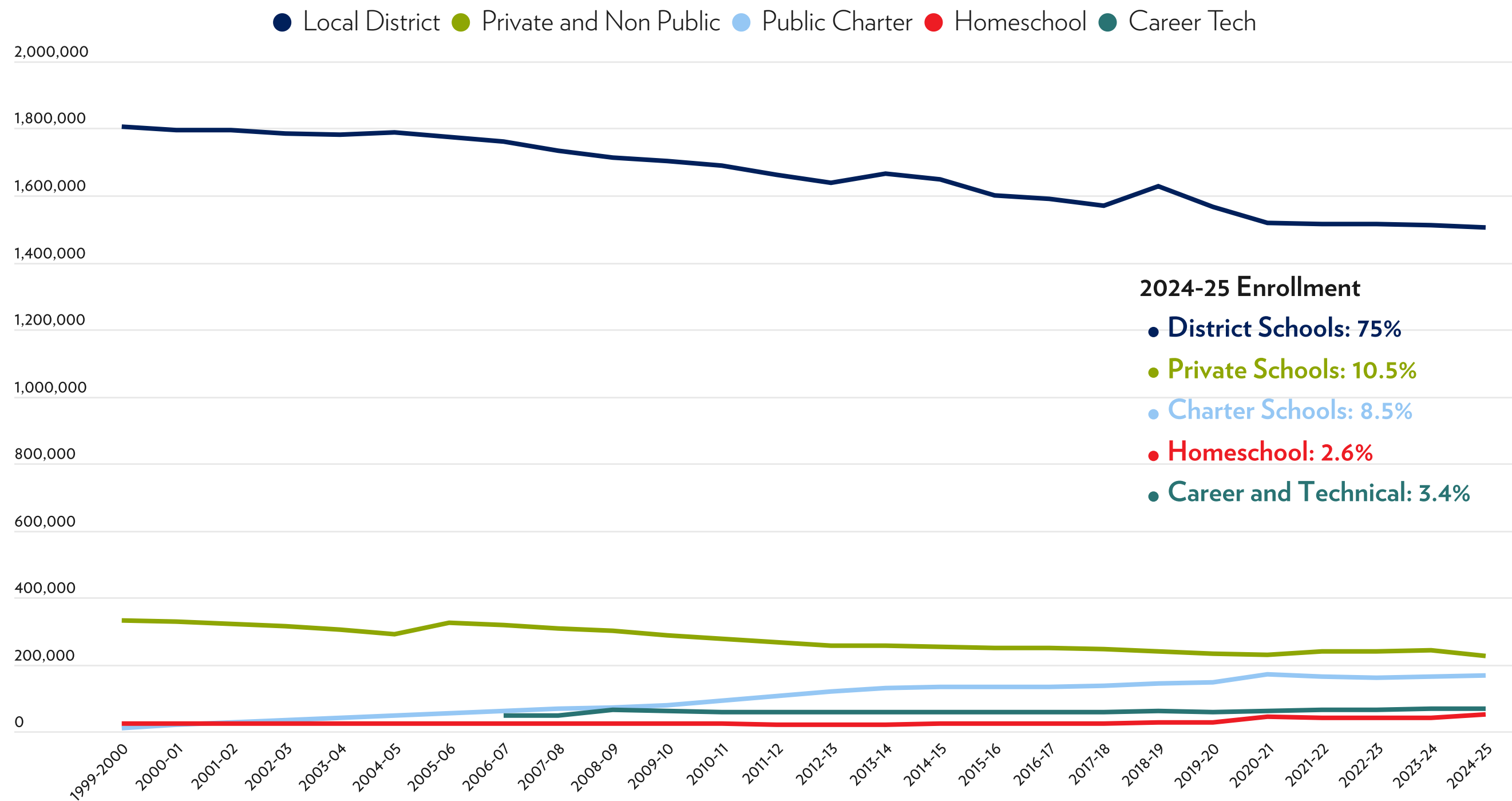
Spending on Public Education

PSSA & Keystone Exam Scores

School Violence

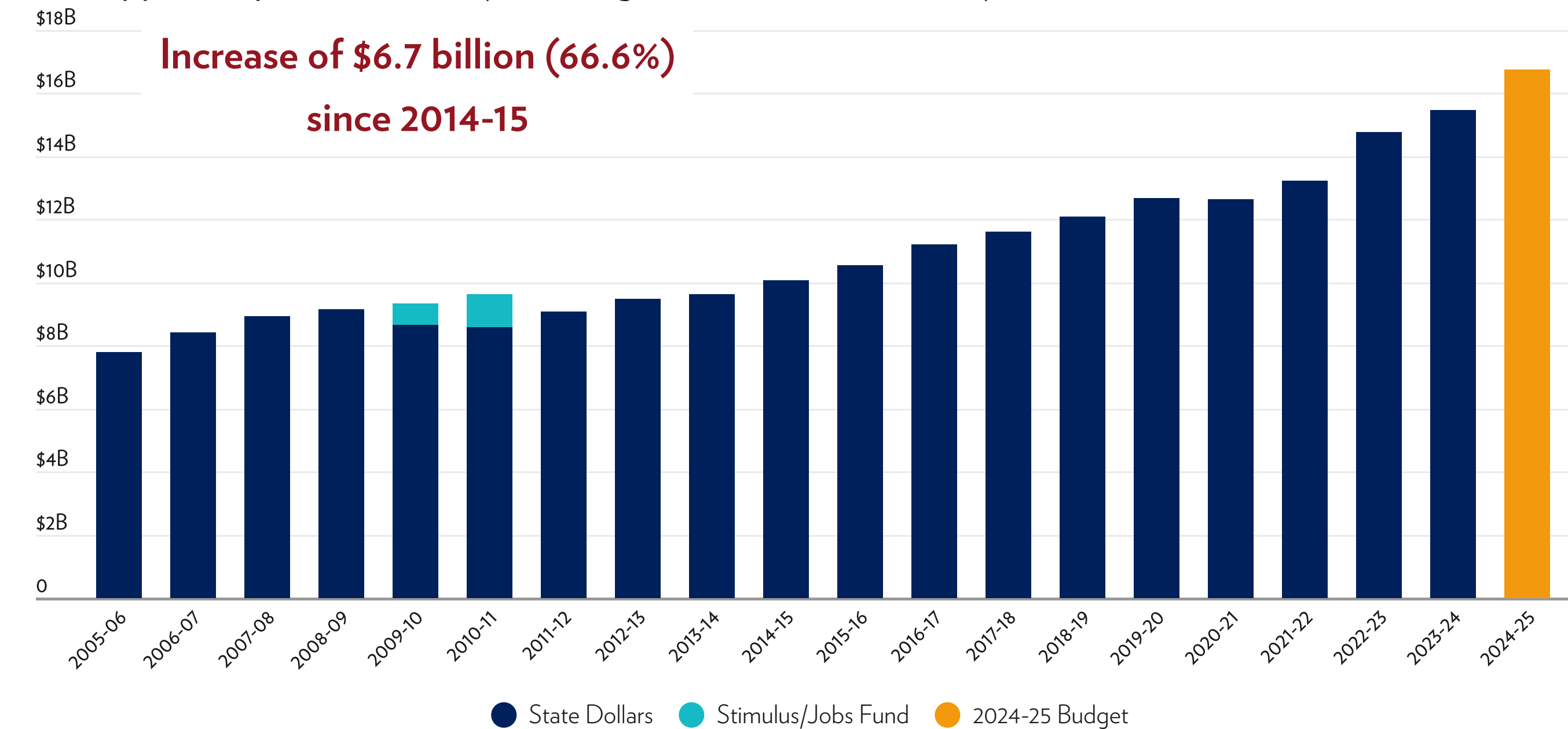


Pennsylvania PreK-12 School Enrollment Trends



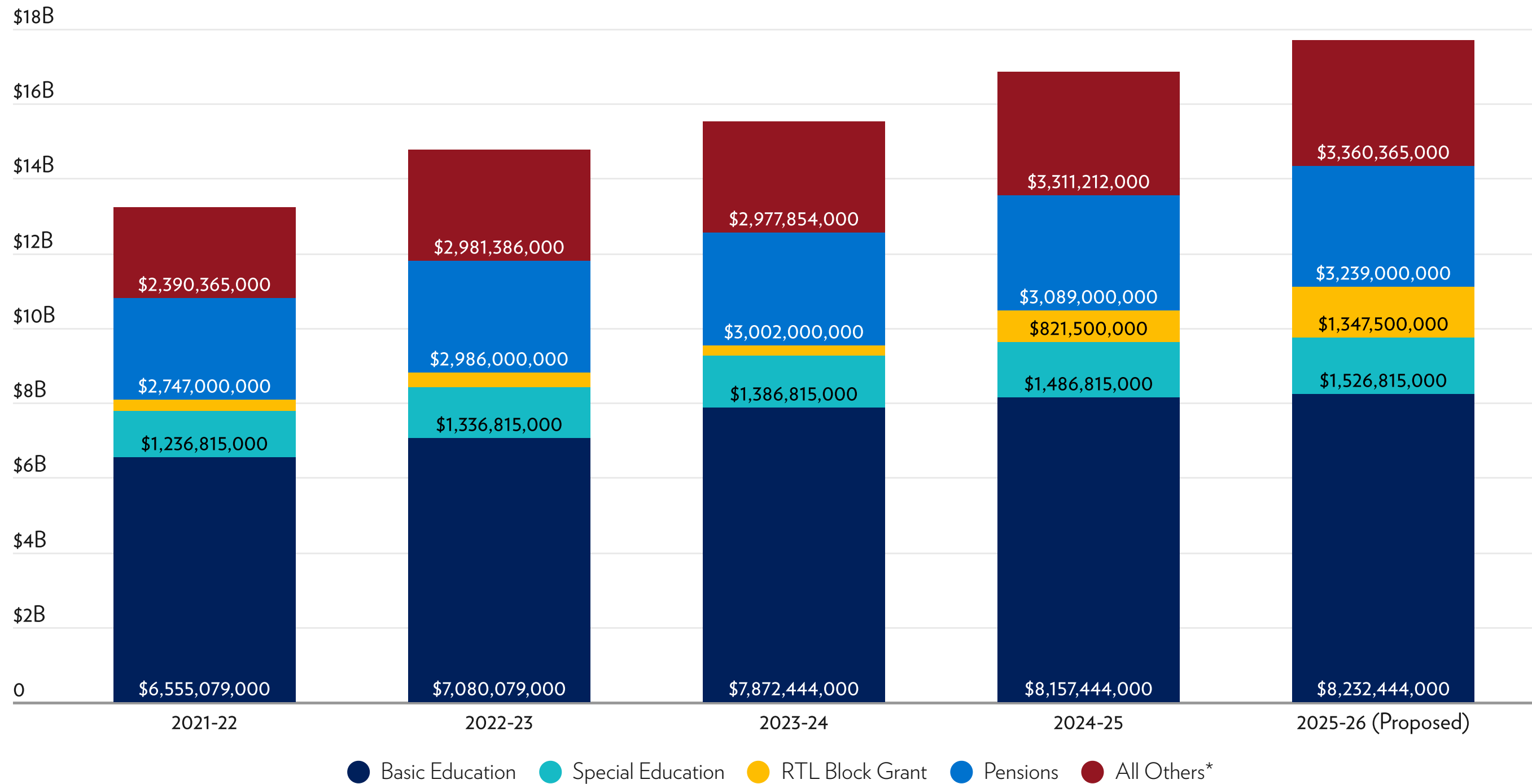
State Support of Public Schools

State support of public schools (excluding local and federal funds) reached \$16.8 billion in 2024-25.



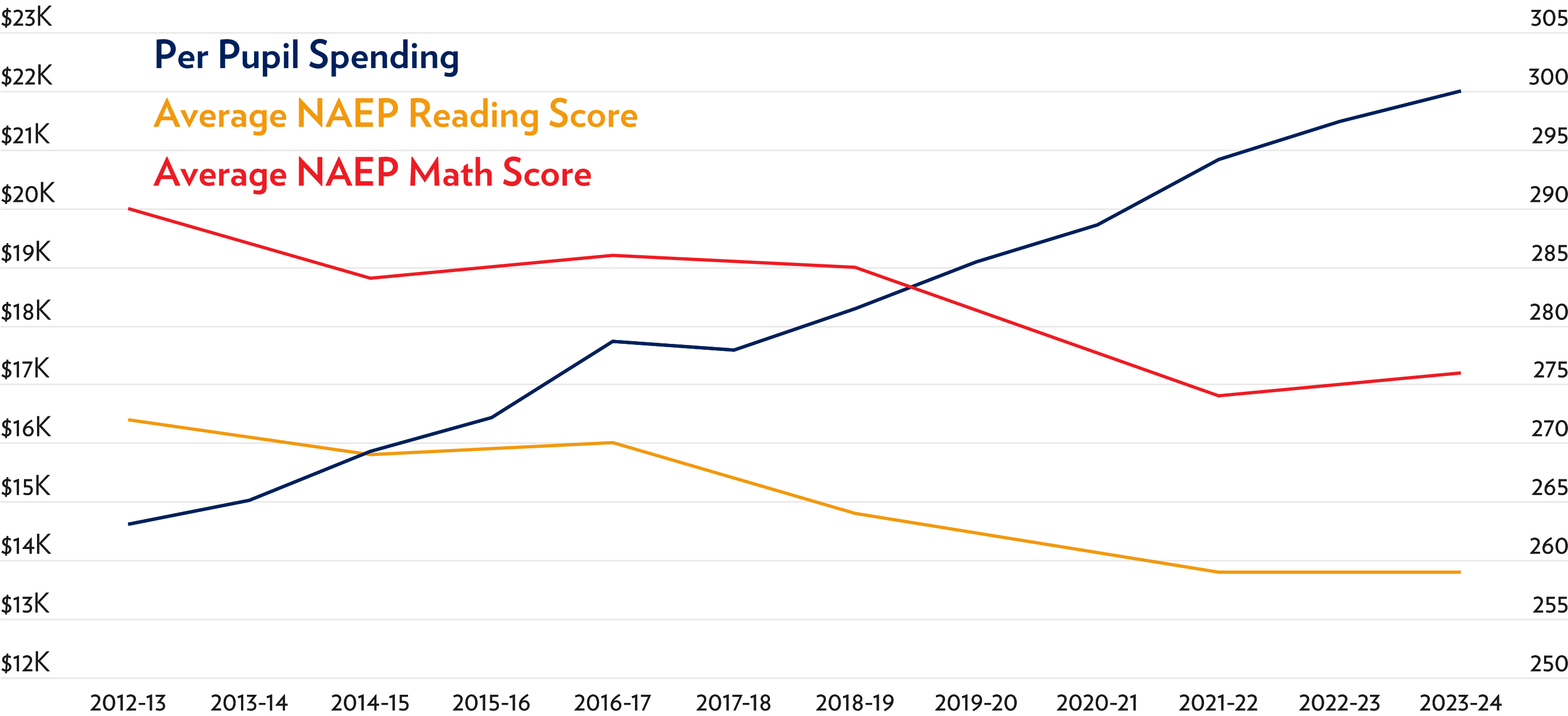
Source: PA Department of Education, Summary of State Appropriations for Education

A Closer Look at State Support of Public Schools



Source: PA Department of Education, Summary of State Appropriations for Education

Per-Pupil Expenditure vs NAEP Grade 8 Scores



Source: <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/school-finances.html>, <https://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/>

PSSA test results decrease for students who were in 3rd grade in 2019.

In 3rd grade, 62% were proficient in English Language Arts vs just 52% by 8th grade.

In math, 56% were proficient in 3rd grade compared with only 29% by 8th grade.

Year	Subject	Grade	Advanced	Proficient	Basic	Below Basic	Proficient and Above
2019	English Language Arts	3	16.5%	45.4%	26.6%	11.4%	61.9%
2020	No Test in 2020	4	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
2021	English Language Arts	5	8.6%	46.4%	34.4%	10.6%	55%
2022	English Language Arts	6	19.4%	36.7%	35.6%	8.3%	56.1%
2023	English Language Arts	7	17.7%	36.8%	41%	4.5%	54.5%
2024	English Language Arts	8	11.7%	40.5%	32.8%	14.9%	52.2%
2019	Math	3	26.7%	29.3%	21.6%	22.4%	56%
2020	No Test in 2020	4	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
2021	Math	5	11.8%	24.3%	32.6%	31.3%	36.1%
2022	Math	6	13.3%	18.9%	28.8%	38.9%	32.3%
2023	Math	7	12.3%	20.9%	27.3%	39.5%	33.2%
2024	Math	8	9.8%	18.8%	26%	45.4%	28.5%



BACKGROUNDER

Persistently Dangerous Pennsylvania Public Schools

Calculating danger based only on arrests ignores student safety.

OVERVIEW

New analysis by the Commonwealth Foundation shows that Pennsylvania violates state and federal law by failing to identify persistently dangerous schools and neglecting to provide safe school choice alternatives for students attending dangerous schools. The analysis combines Right to Know (RTK) data, a 24-year longitudinal study on school safety, news reports, and government data.

KEY POINTS

- Federal and state laws require that students attending persistently dangerous public schools be provided the opportunity to enroll in a safe school within their local or neighboring school district.
 - Yet, RTK record requests show the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) does not identify any "persistently dangerous schools" despite overwhelming evidence of school violence.
 - An independent [24-year longitudinal study](#) of official, publicly available data on Pennsylvania's approximately 3000 public schools [reveals](#):
 - Statewide, 37.3 percent identify as persistently dangerous based on the required reporting of school violence incidents (with or without arrest), with a weighted percentage of these incidents to enrollment at 47.1 percent, or nearly one-half of schools.
 - For the commonwealth's two largest districts, the weighted percentages are more dramatic. The research identifies 71.4 percent of Philadelphia public schools and 89.1 percent of Pittsburgh public schools as persistently dangerous.
 - Lawmakers must ensure all public school students in Pennsylvania are safe during their commute to and from school, safe while at school, and provide school choice options for students attending persistently dangerous schools.
-

Right Way, PA!



Solutions

Lawmakers: Reform Funding Formula

Elected officials: keep your promises!

- › Lifeline Scholarships

School Districts & PDE:

- › Provide a safe school option to kids attending violent schools.



Q and A

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