

How does Vermont differ from other states with small or rural schools?

1. Fund differently

- A variable calculation based on student needs

2. Spend differently

- A desire to go it alone
- In other states, the Agency of Education takes on a bigger role, offloading some of the work placed on small school systems

Preliminary Enrollment, Staffing, and Spending Analysis

October, 2024

Prepared by New Solutions K12 and APA

Purpose of analyses included in this summary

- Build preliminary understanding of the Vermont staffing and spending landscape
- Document high-level trends for stakeholders to respond, ask questions about, and help identify areas for further exploration
- Begin to consider strategies that districts can pursue to reduce costs while maintaining or even improving educational delivery

Note about the data: all data used for this summary was cleaned and analyzed by a mix of Vermont Agency of Education, APA, and New Solutions K12 staff. Efforts by the Agency to ensure the full accuracy and validating of staffing and expenditure data are ongoing.

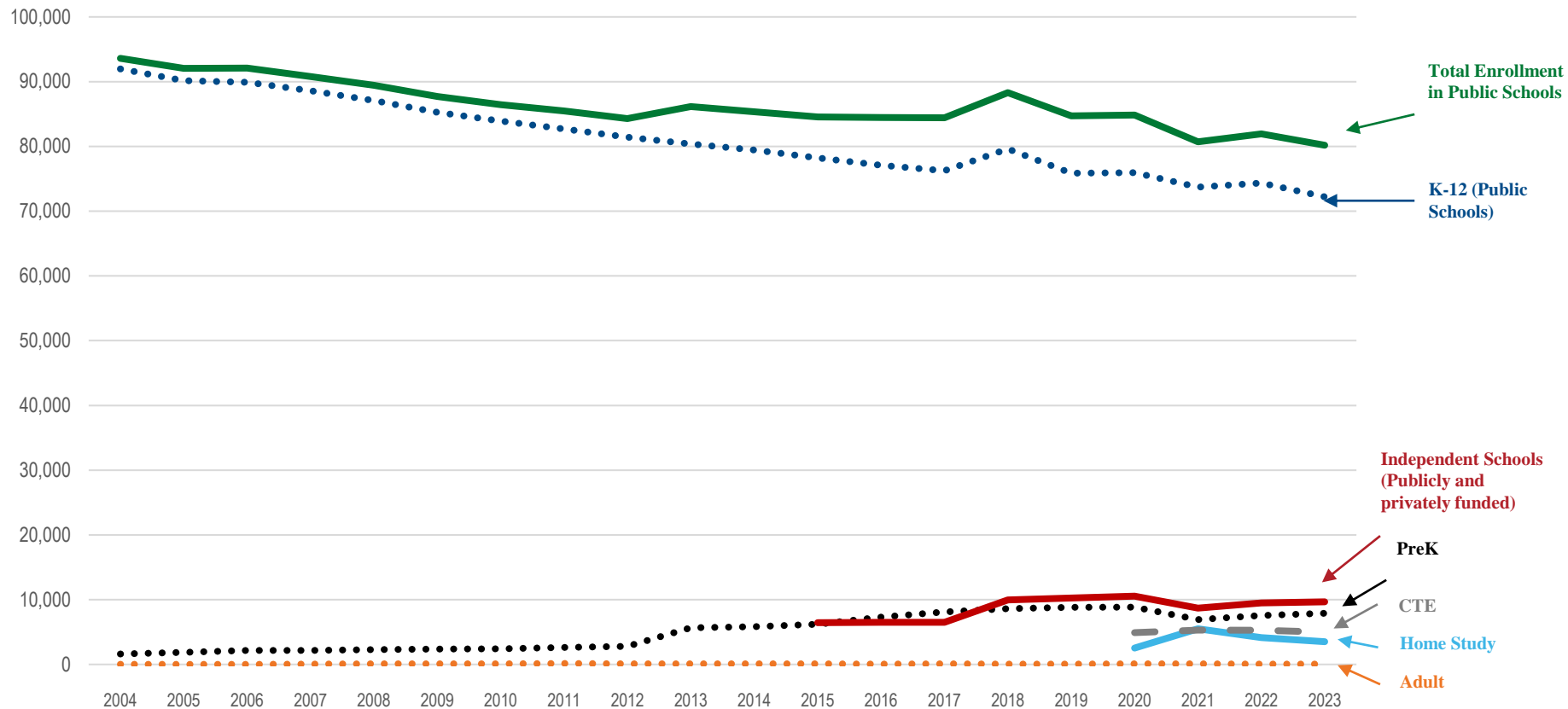
Executive Summary

- **Enrollment:** Public school enrollment has declined in Vermont over the past ~20 years and the state has many relatively small SU/SDs relative to other states. This will put increasing financial pressure on SD/SUs.
- **Staffing:** The smallest SU/SDs in the state have more staff per 100 students across nearly all staff groups than all other sized SU/SDs. To more cost-effectively serve students, SU/SDs can consider exploring alternative staffing strategies, such as shared, part-time, or multi-role staff.
- **Expenditures:** Expenditures per ADM are higher in the smallest SU/SD settings. As expected, staff salaries make up the largest amount of SU/SD spending across SU/SDs, though the amount SU/SDs spend on paraeducators (~10% of total salaries statewide) is higher than in other states. SU/SDs can work towards reducing reliance on paraeducators and reallocating funding to other priorities.

Preliminary Results of Enrollment Analysis

How Students Are Counted

- **Public school enrollment:** How many students are physically present at school (i.e. “butts in seats”)
- **Annual unweighted ADM:** How many students a SU/SD funds in public and independent settings
- **Long-term ADM:** How many students a SU/SD funds in public and independent settings as a 2-year average, including early college and full-year state placed students.
- **Equalized pupils:** How many students are counted in the homestead tax rate calculation after weights are applied based on grade level, economic disadvantage, English Language Learner status, sparsity, and small schools. Weights are based on long-term ADM.

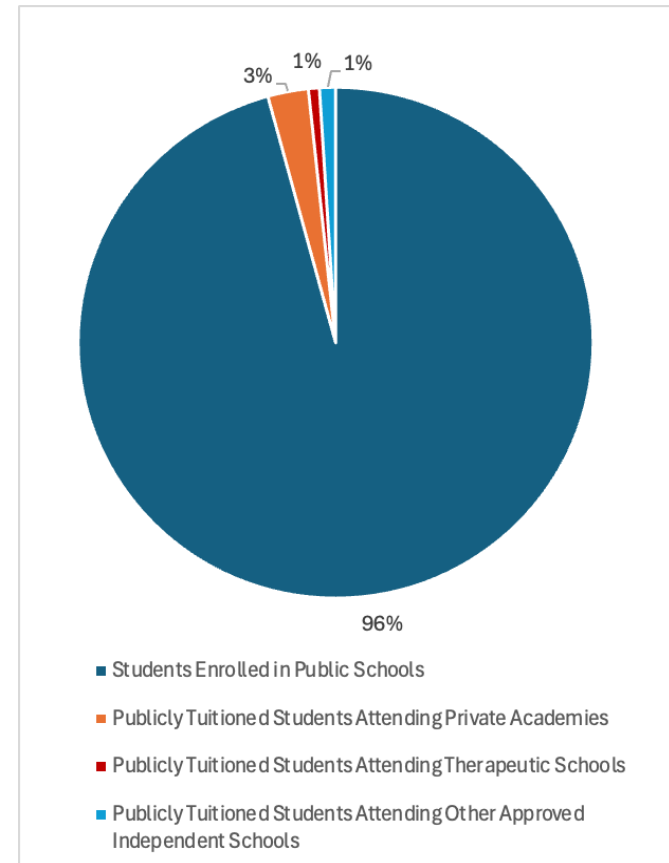


Changes in Enrollment

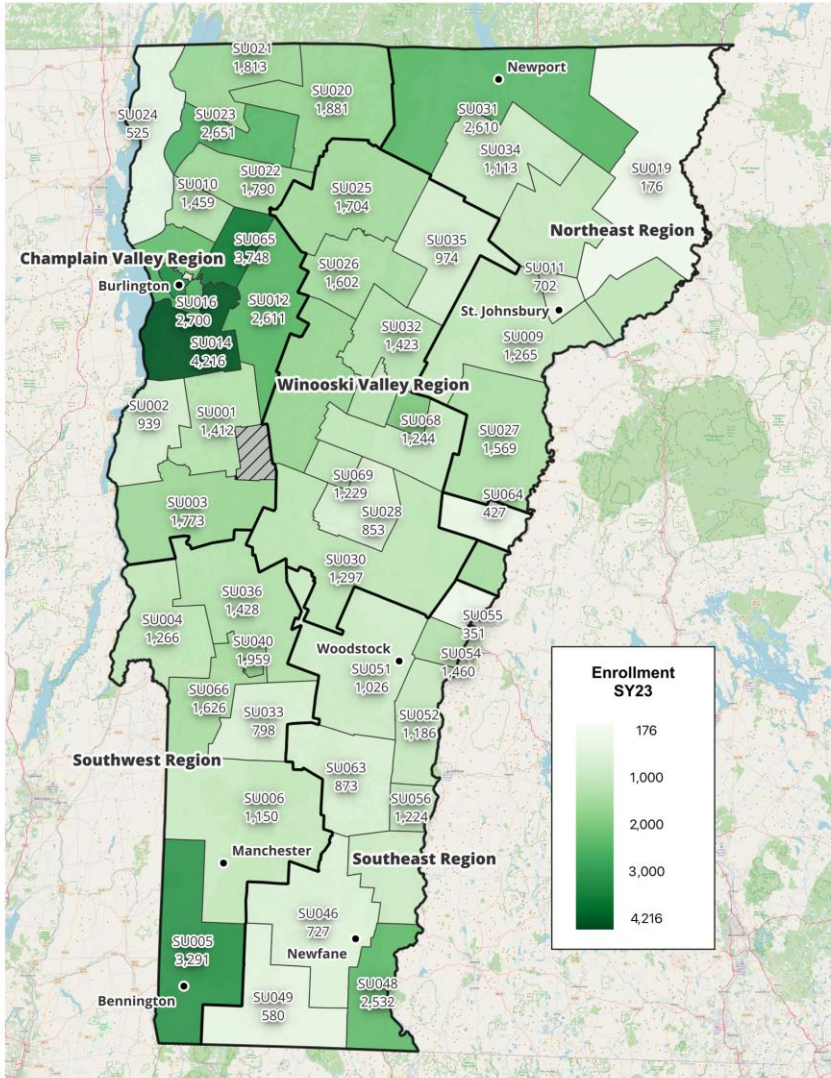
Overall enrollment in K 12 public education has declined 21.5% between the 2003 04 and 2022 23 school years. The biggest changes in enrollment occurred prior to the pandemic.

Publicly Funded Students in Vermont: 2022-23 School Year

Students Enrolled in Public Schools	80,179
Publicly Tuitioned Students Attending Private Academies	2,134
Publicly Tuitioned Students Attending Therapeutic Schools	578
Publicly Tuitioned Students Attending Other Approved Independent Schools	842
Total Publicly Funded Students	83,733



SU Enrollment SY23



SUNION	SU_name
SU001	Mt.Abraham
SU002	Addison NW
SU003	Addison Central
SU004	Slate Valley
SU005	SW Vermont
SU006	Bennington-Rutland
SU007	Colchester
SU009	Caledonia Central
SU010	Milton Town
SU011	St.Johnsbury
SU012	Mt.Mansfield
SU014	Champlain Valley
SU015	Burlington
SU016	S Burlington
SU017	Winooski
SU019	Essex N
SU020	Franklin NE
SU021	Missisquoi Valley
SU022	Franklin W
SU023	Maple Run
SU024	Grand Isle
SU025	Lamoille N
SU026	Lamoille S
SU027	Orange E
SU028	Orange SW
SU030	White River Valley
SU031	North Country
SU032	Washington Central
SU033	Mill River
SU034	Orleans Central
SU035	Orleans SW
SU036	Rutland NE
SU040	Rutland City
SU042	Harwood
SU046	Windham Central
SU047	Windham NE
SU048	Windham SE
SU049	Windham SW
SU051	Mountain Views
SU052	Windsor SE
SU054	Hartford
SU055	SAU #70
SU056	Springfield SD
SU061	Barre
SU063	Two Rivers
SU064	Rivendell Interstate
SU065	Essex Westford
SU066	Greater Rutland County
SU067	Kingdom East
SU068	Central Vermont
SU069	Montpelier Roxbury

- SU public school enrollment in the state ranges between 176 - 4,216 students
- Median SU size of 1,412 students
- *Note: some SUs are responsible for educating more students than presented on this map if they have high rates of tuitioning*

Preliminary Results of Staffing Ratio Analysis

Staffing Analysis

- Staffing per 100 students was examined across 4 types of staff groups:
 - **Teachers:** All teachers PreK-12
 - **Leadership:** Principals, APs, department heads, etc.
 - **Student Support :** School psychologist, interventionist, etc.
 - **Student Service:** Nurse aides, librarians, guidance counselor, etc.

The smallest SU/SDs in the state have more staff per 100 students across nearly all staff groups than all other sized SU/SDs

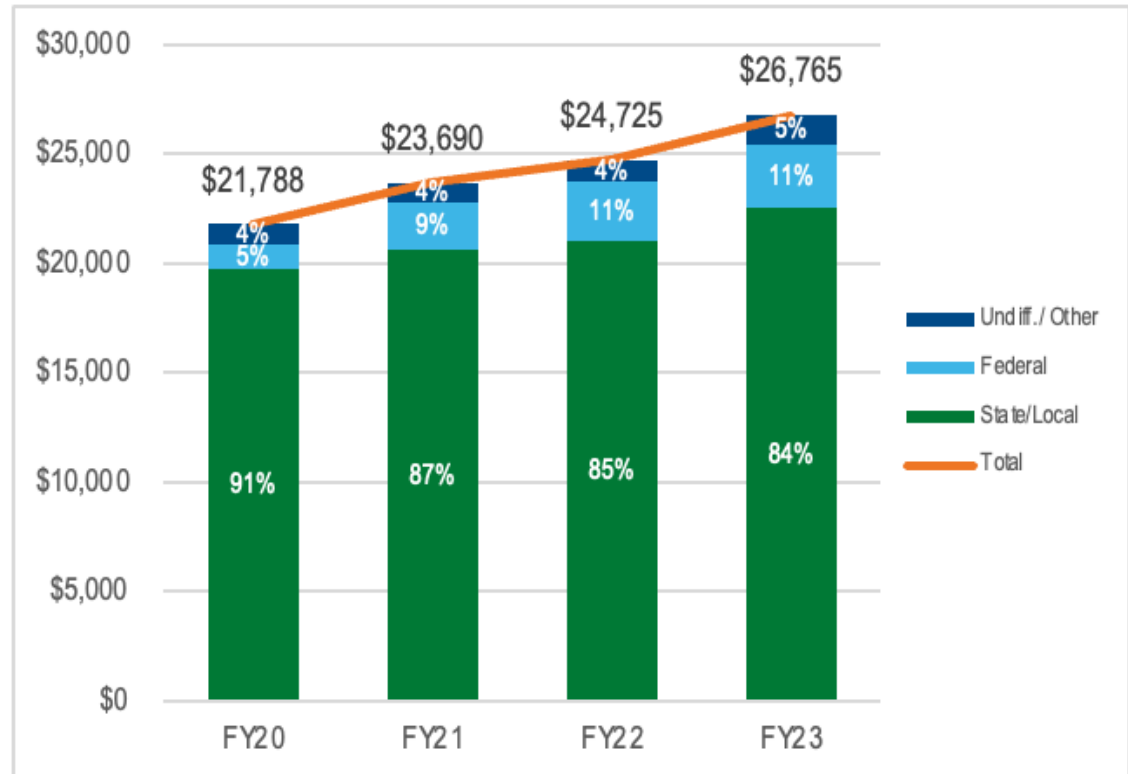
Staff per 100 Students by Role Group, 2023

Enrollment Group	SU Count	Teachers per 100 Students	Leaders per 100 Students	Student Services per 100 Students	Support Services per 100 Students
Group 1 (less than 1,000 students)	13	12.5	2.0	3.1	6.2
Group 2 (1,000- 1,399 students)	12	11.3	1.7	2.8	6.3
Group 3 (1,400-1,999 students)	15	10.8	1.4	2.5	5.5
Group 4 (2,000 students and over)	11	10.5	1.1	2.6	6.2

Preliminary Results of Expenditure Analysis

Total Expenditures per ADM

Since FY20, statewide total expenditures per ADM have increased from \$21,788 to \$26,765; this is in part due to increased federal funding to address the impact of the pandemic.



Average Daily Membership (ADM) is the unweighted, single year count of publicly funded students that an SU/SD is responsible for, including tuitioned students.

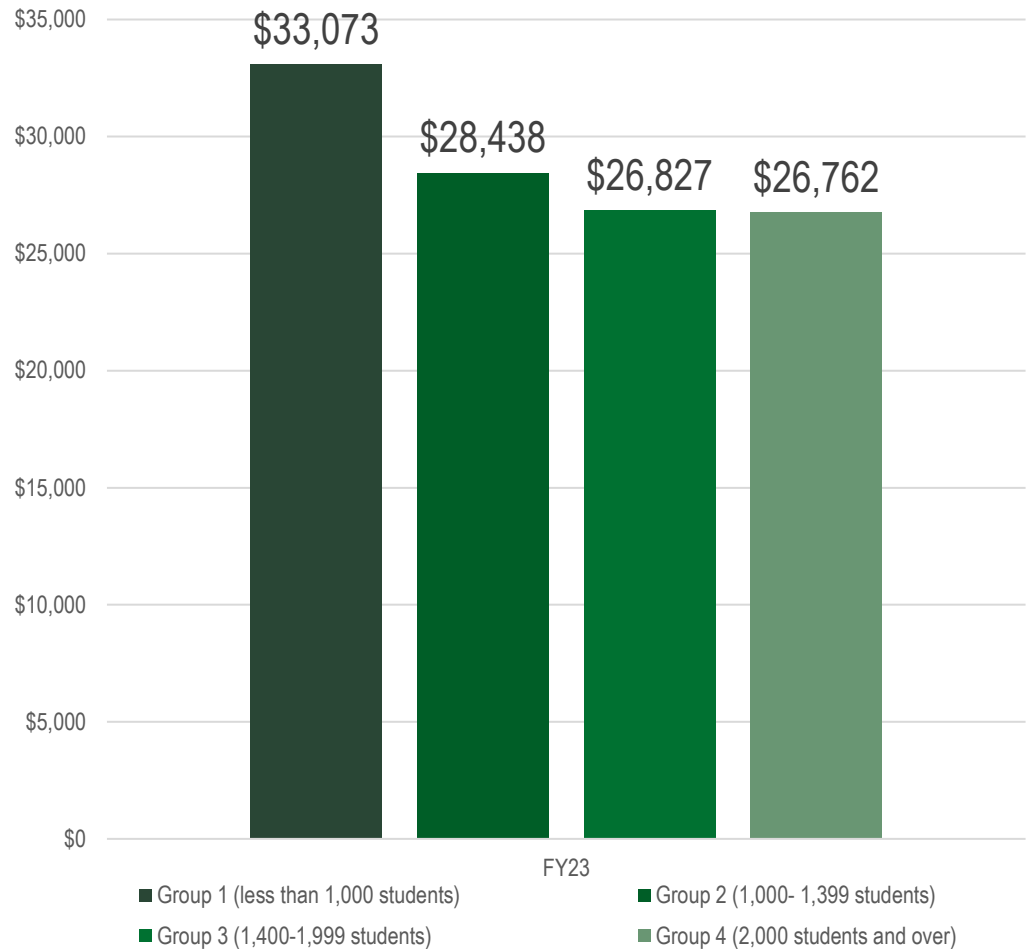
Education Fund Appropriation

Education Fund Outlook for FY25 per Emergency Board Meeting on July 30, 2024

Appropriations (millions of dollars)	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Actual	FY 2025 Projected
Education Payment	1,576.5	1,711.1	1,892.3
E-Board Release of Funds for PCB Remediation	1.1	-	-
Special Education Aid	208.1	235.3	264.6
State-Placed Students	17.5	19.0	20.0
Transportation Aid	21.8	23.5	25.3
Technical Education Aid	31.3	17.0	17.9
Small School Support	8.2	8.3	1.8
Essential Early Education Aid	7.5	8.4	8.7
Flexible Pathways	8.3	9.3	10.4
Universal School Meals	29.0	24.0	20.4
English Learners Services	-	-	2.3
PCB Remediation Grants	-	29.7	-
VSTRS Pension Normal Cost	33.4	42.5	36.0
VSTRS OPEB Normal Cost	15.1	15.4	19.1
One-Time COLA payment	-	3.0	-
H.874 – Community Schools			1.1
Other Uses	3.4	4.8	4.9
TOTAL USES	1,961.2	2,151.3	2,324.7

Total Expenditures per ADM by SU/SD Size Group

Expenditures per ADM are higher in the smallest SU/SD settings. This is likely due to a lack of economies of scale. Also, smaller SU/SD settings tend to serve higher need student populations.



Staff salaries represent nearly half of all expenditures, but have risen at a lower rate than all other expenditure categories

Total statewide expenditures by object code, 2020-2023

Object Code (Mjr)	% of Total Expenditures 2020-2023	% Change 2020 to 2023
Personal Services - Salaries	45%	13%
Other Purchased Services	18%	14%
Personal Services - Employee Benefits	16%	15%
Purchased Professional & Technical Services	5%	28%
Supplies	5%	49%
Purchased Property Services	4%	61%
Debt Service and Miscellaneous	3%	25%
Other Items	2%	38%
Property	1%	38%

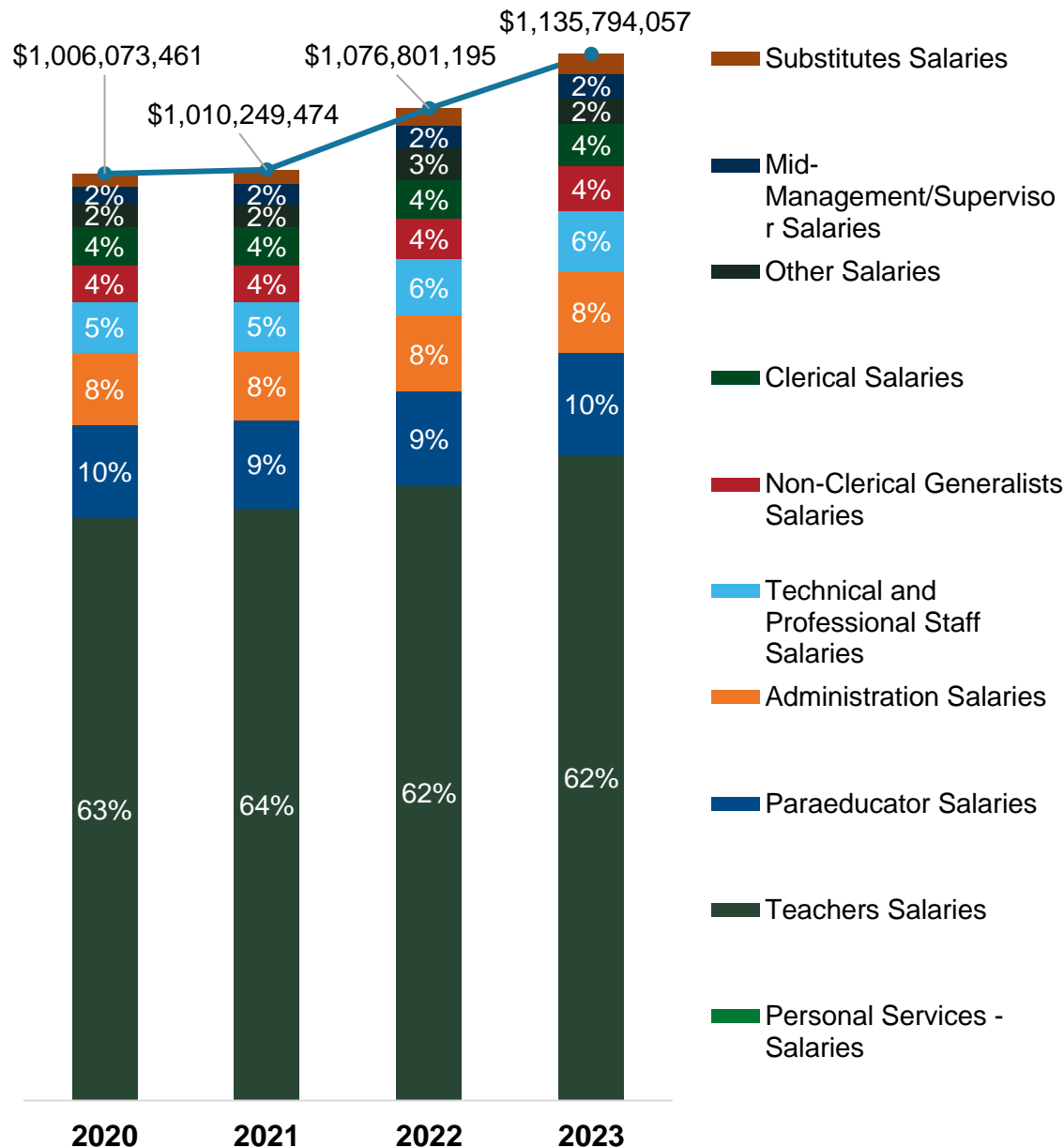
Note: includes expenditure data from two outlier SUs in size group 1; discussion on whether expenditure data from these two SDs in future analyses is pending

Total statewide expenditures for Personal Services - Salaries, 2020-2023

Personal Services Salaries represents ~45% of total expenditures.

Of Person Services Salaries, teacher salaries consistently make up the largest amount (~62%).

Paraeducator salaries account for the second highest portion of salaries (~10%), which is higher than many other states.

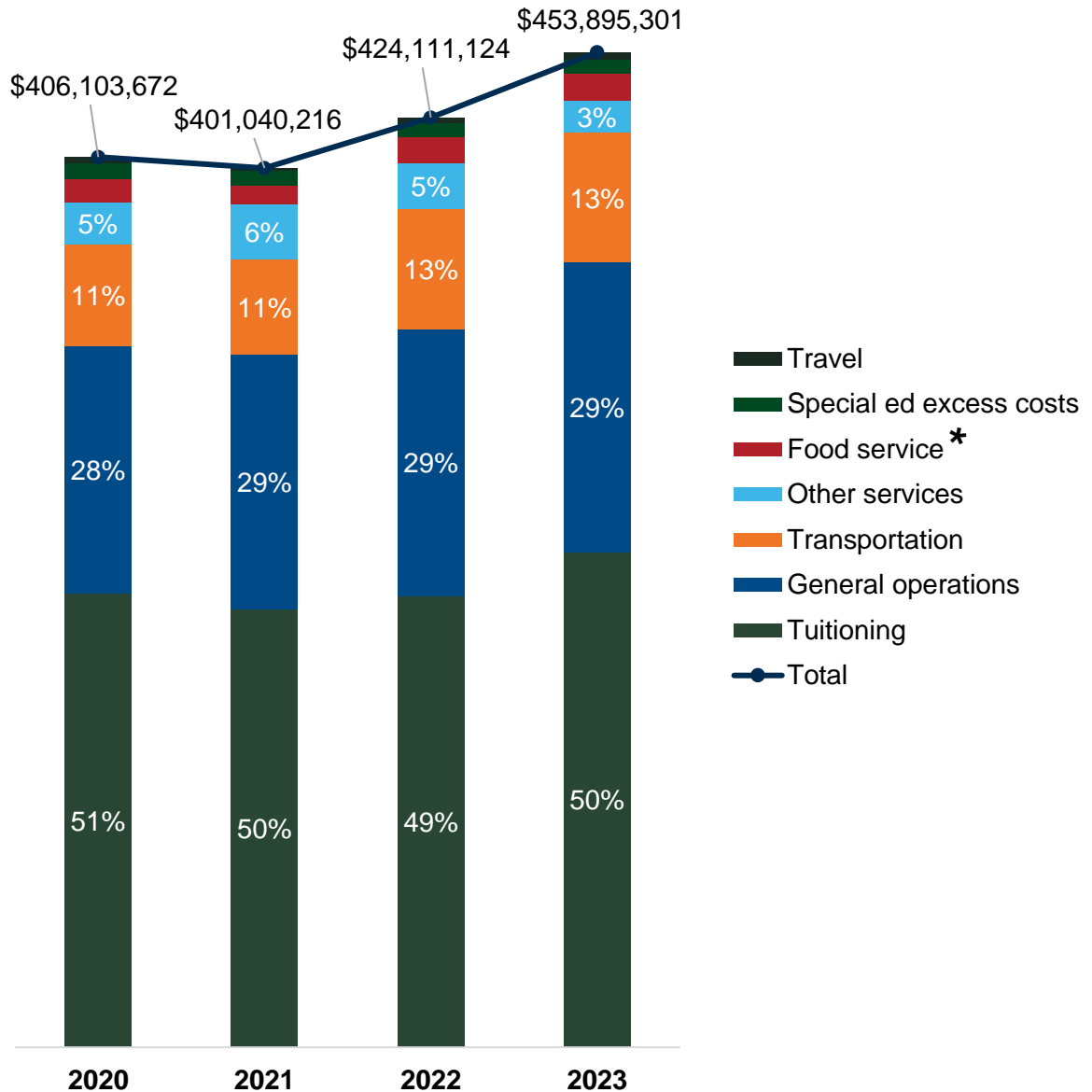


Total statewide expenditures – Other Purchased Services, 2020-2023

Other Purchased Services represents ~18% of total expenditures.

Of Other Purchased Services, Tuitioning accounts for ~50% in a given year, of which ~46% goes to private schools.

Special education excess costs account for 1% of spending. In 2023 this equated to ~\$6 million.



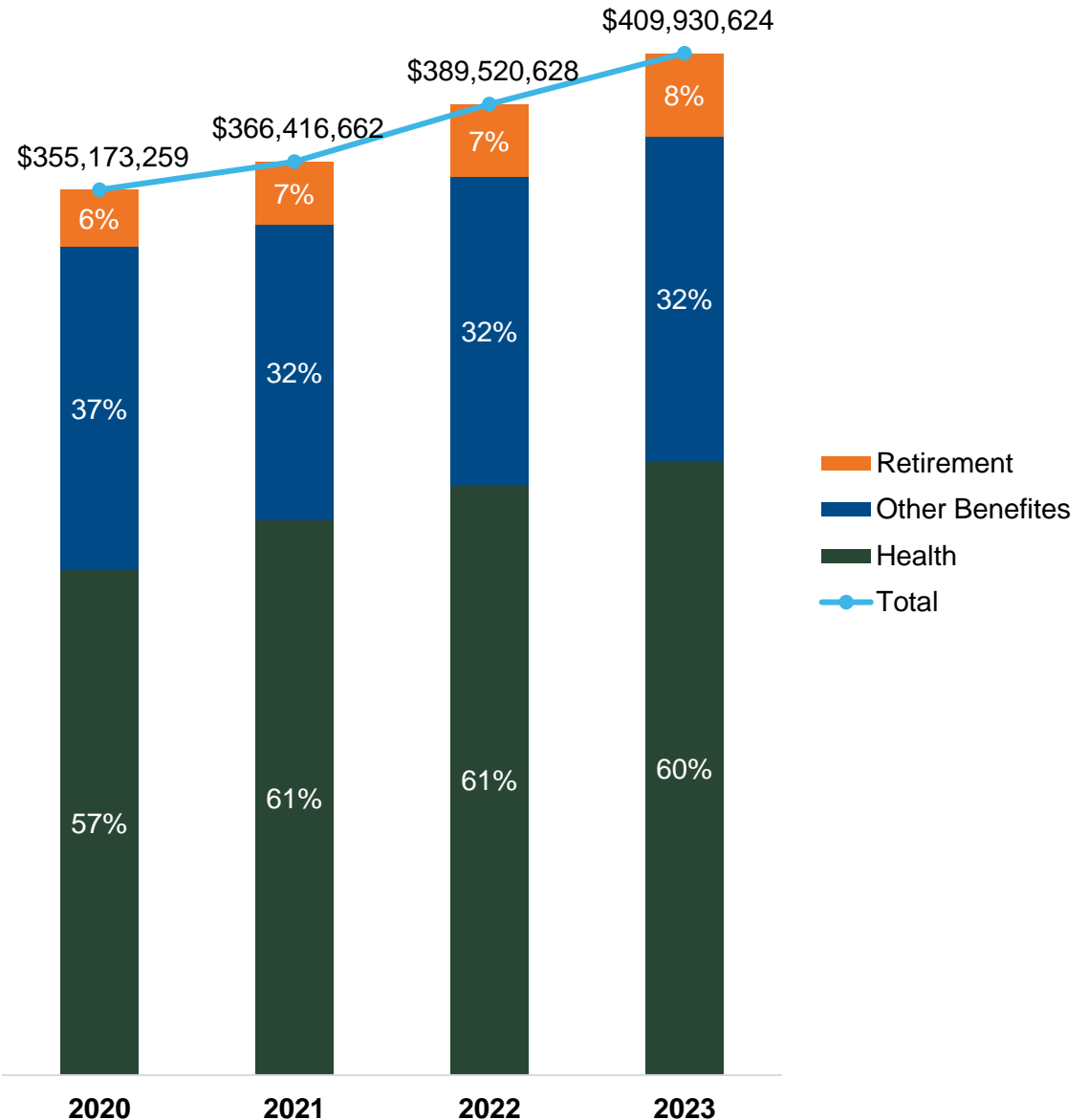
*Contracted costs coded to running a food service program and is not representing the full cost of running the universal school meals program.

Note: includes expenditure data from two outlier SUs in size group 1; discussion on whether expenditure data from these two SDs in future analyses is pending

Total statewide expenditures Personal Services – Employees Benefits, 2020-2023

Personal Services Employees Benefits represents ~18% of total expenditures.

Of Total Personal Services Employee Benefits, health insurance accounts for ~60% in a given year. This equated to \$246 million in 2023.



Total expenditures of smaller SUs grew less between 2020-2023 than expenditures of larger SUs, despite smaller SUs often serving higher need students

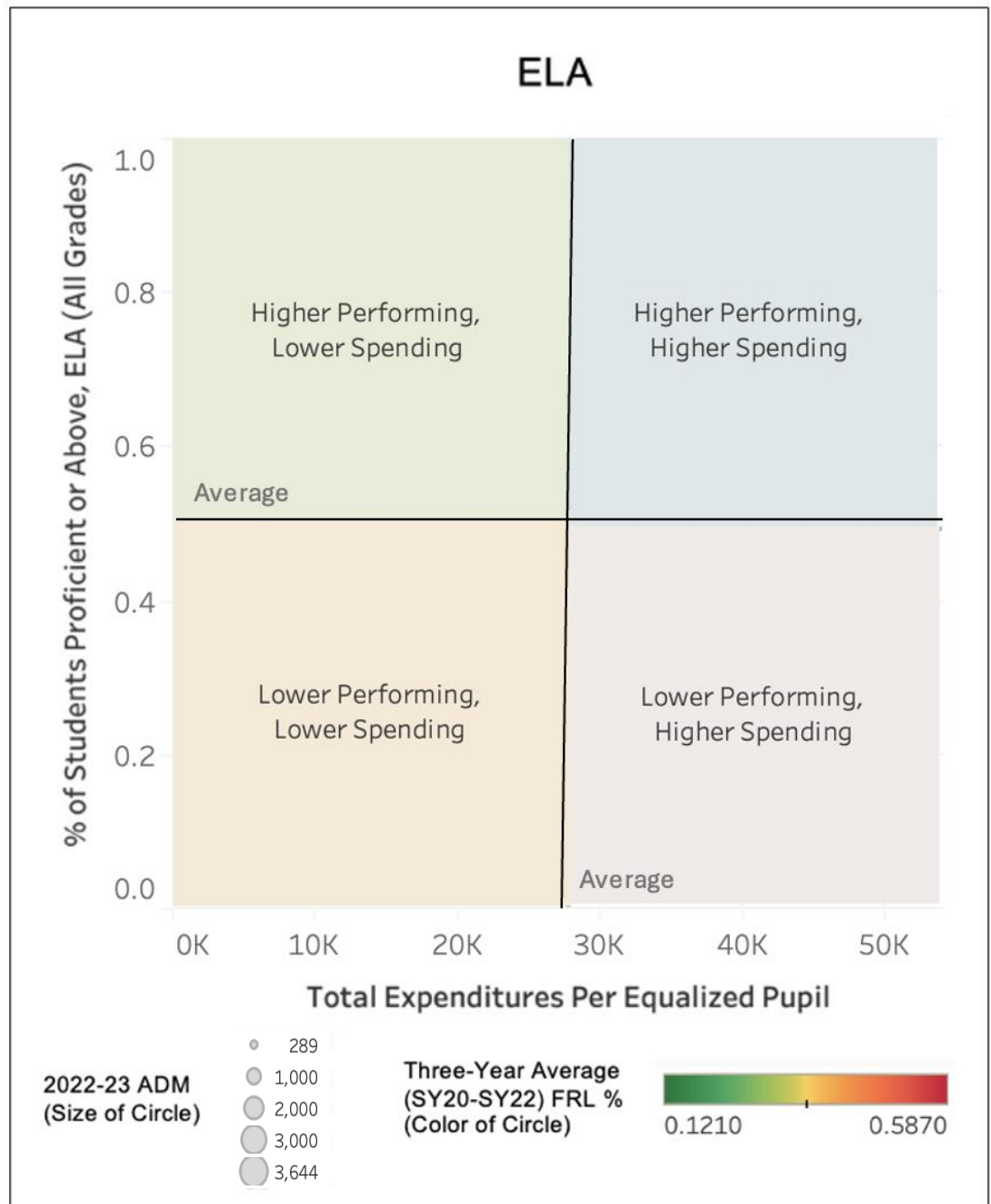
% change in total expenditures by enrollment group, 2020-2023

Enrollment Group	SU Count	% Change 2020-2023
Group 1 (less than 1,000 students)	13	15%
Group 2 (1,000- 1,399 students)	12	17%
Group 3 (1,400-1,999 students)	15	20%
Group 4 (2,000 students and over)	11	21%

Note: includes expenditure data from two outlier SUs in size group 1; discussion on whether expenditure data from these two SDs in future analyses is pending

Expenditures vs. Performance, in the Context of SU/SD Size and Need (FRL)

The following chart brings together expenditure, ELA performance, ADM and FRL data and assigns SU/SDs into quadrants based upon whether their spending and performance is higher or lower than average



Expenditures vs. Performance, in the Context of SU/SD Size and Need (FRL), cont.

- Higher performing, lower spending SU/SDs tend to have less student need as measured by FRL (mostly green circles)
- Lower performing, lower spending SU/SDs tend to have higher student need as measured by FRL (darker orange/red circles)
- Larger settings (larger circles) tend to be lower spending

