

The *NEVADA PLAN* For School Finance An Overview



**Legislative Counsel Bureau
Fiscal Analysis Division**

2017 Legislative Session

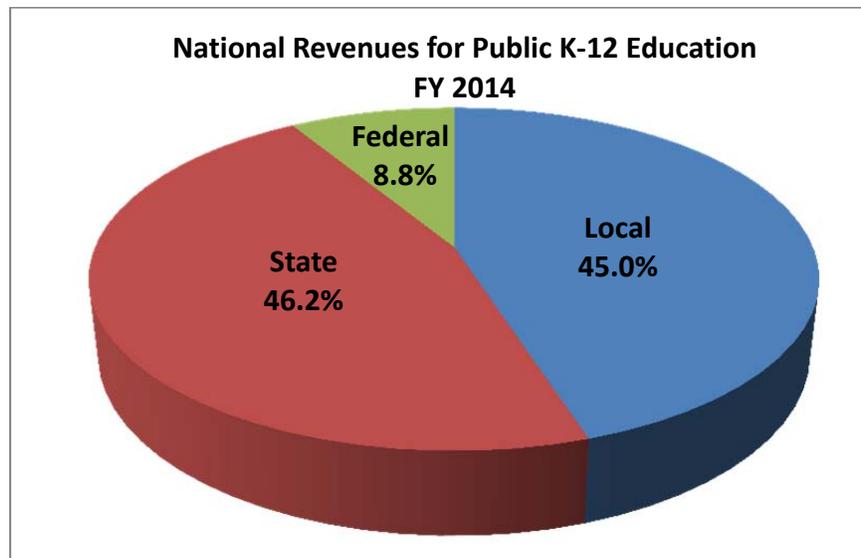


Nevada Plan for School Finance

I. Overview of Public K-12 Education Finance

National Overview

The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) reports that approximately \$623.2 billion was collected in revenues for public elementary and secondary education in the United States in FY 2014 (the most recent year for which data is available). These revenues are used to support the operations of schools, as well as capital construction, equipment costs, and debt financing, and come from a combination of local, state, and federal sources. The greatest percentage of revenues came from state and local governments, which together provided \$568.7 billion, or approximately 91.2 percent of all revenues; the federal government's contribution was \$54.5 billion, or approximately 8.8 percent of all revenues.



Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), "National Public Education Financial Survey (NPEFS)," FY 2014.

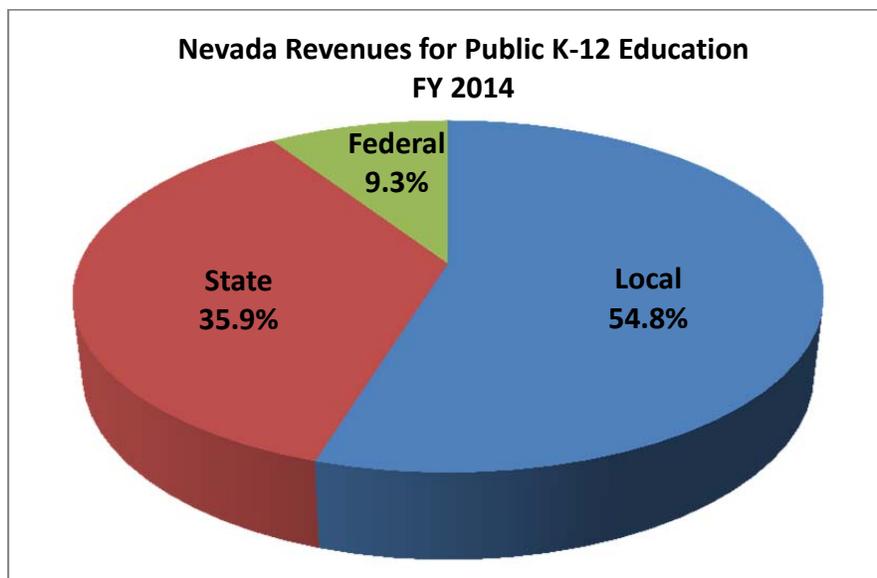
Between FY 2005 and FY 2014, total revenues for public elementary and secondary education in the United States increased by 27.8 percent, from \$487.8 billion in FY 2005 to \$623.2 billion in FY 2014. The largest percentage increase has occurred in revenue provided by local governments, which increased from \$214.4 billion in FY 2005 to \$280.5 billion in FY 2014, a 30.8 percent increase. Over the same time period, state revenue for public K-12 education increased from \$228.6 billion to \$288.2 billion and federal revenue increased from \$44.8 billion to \$54.5 billion, a 26.1 percent and 21.6 percent increase, respectively. See Appendix A for a chart showing changes in national revenues for public elementary and secondary education between FY 2005 and FY 2014.

Due to the differing financing mechanisms utilized in each of the states, there are tremendous differences between the revenue mix used to fund public elementary and secondary education. For example, among states with more than one school district (i.e. all states except Hawaii), local contributions to the public K-12 education funding mix in FY 2014 varied from 4.1 percent in Vermont to 65.5 percent in Illinois. Similarly, state contributions to public K-12 education in FY 2014 varied from 26.0 percent in Illinois to 89.8 percent in Vermont. As a result of these differences in funding mixes, a meaningful comparison across states of public elementary and secondary education revenue is difficult.

Nevada Overview

According to NCES, revenues in support of Nevada’s public K-12 schools for FY 2014 were approximately \$4.3 billion. This represents a decrease of 2.4 percent from FY 2009 when revenues totaled \$4.5 billion, the highest amount over the last ten fiscal years. However, when compared to the FY 2005 total revenue of \$3.39 billion, revenue for public elementary and secondary education in Nevada has increased by 28 percent between FY 2005 and FY 2014. This percentage increase in K-12 public education revenue is equal to the national increase of 28 percent over the same time period. See Appendix B for a chart showing changes in Nevada revenues for public elementary and secondary education between FY 2005 and FY 2014.

Like the nationwide support for education, financial support of Nevada’s public elementary and secondary schools is a shared responsibility. In FY 2014, the local share of public K-12 education revenue totaled 54.8 percent (\$2.4 billion), while revenue from the state totaled 35.9 percent (\$1.6 billion). Total revenue for public elementary and secondary schools in Nevada in FY 2014 was rounded out by a 9.3 percent (\$0.4 billion) contribution from the federal government, which was above the national average of 8.7 percent.



Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), "National Public Education Financial Survey (NPEFS)," FY 2014.

It should be noted that a large portion of the local funding in Nevada is derived from the state-mandated Local School Support Tax (LSST) and Ad Valorem Property/Mining Tax (property tax). As a result, the local share of public K-12 education revenue in Nevada has historically been one of the highest in the nation. However, the Great Recession affected the amount of local revenue collected for public elementary and secondary education, which caused a higher percentage of state funding to flow toward education. In FY 2006, the local share of K-12 public education revenue in Nevada topped out at 66.9 percent, the highest in the nation at that time (excluding the District of Columbia). By FY 2014, the local revenue share had dropped to 54.8 percent, the tenth highest percentage nationally (excluding the District of Columbia). Over the same time period, the state share of public elementary and secondary education revenue in Nevada increased from 25.9 percent to 35.9 percent. See Appendix C for a chart showing the percentage distribution of revenues for public elementary and secondary education in Nevada and the United States between FY 2005 and FY 2014.

Just as there are differences between the national averages and Nevada’s sources of revenue for public education, there are differences between Nevada’s averages and what might be found in any given Nevada school district. For example, due to the wealth created by the mining industry in Eureka County, approximately 2.2 percent of total revenue in the Eureka County School District came from state aid in FY 2016 (the most recent year for which district data was reported to the state). On the other hand, the Lincoln County School District received approximately 70.4 percent of its total revenue from state aid in FY 2016. It is important to note that the funding percentage distribution varies between Nevada school districts as a result of an equity allocation process, which factors in wealth and operating and transportation costs to determine the amount of state support for each school district.

Nevada K-12 Public Education Revenues and Percentage Distribution – FY 2016							
District	Revenues* (Millions of \$)				Percentage Distribution		
	Local	State	Federal	Total	Local	State	Federal
Carson City	\$42.4	\$38.5	\$8.9	\$89.8	47.3%	42.8%	9.9%
Churchill	\$16.9	\$19.6	\$5.1	\$41.7	40.6%	47.1%	12.3%
Clark	\$1,962.7	\$958.7	\$283.3	\$3,204.7	61.2%	29.9%	8.8%
Douglas	\$42.2	\$20.9	\$4.7	\$67.8	62.2%	30.8%	7.0%
Elko	\$74.1	\$43.7	\$6.7	\$124.5	59.5%	35.1%	5.4%
Esmeralda	\$0.9	\$1.7	\$0.2	\$2.8	32.7%	60.6%	6.7%
Eureka	\$10.1	\$0.2	\$0.3	\$10.6	94.6%	2.2%	3.2%
Humboldt	\$25.0	\$10.8	\$3.7	\$39.5	63.3%	27.3%	9.4%
Lander	\$12.1	\$0.9	\$0.7	\$13.7	88.3%	6.4%	5.3%
Lincoln	\$3.6	\$10.9	\$1.0	\$15.5	23.3%	70.4%	6.3%
Lyon	\$29.3	\$52.6	\$9.7	\$91.7	32.0%	57.4%	10.6%
Mineral	\$2.8	\$4.0	\$1.1	\$7.9	35.6%	50.8%	13.6%
Nye	\$20.9	\$31.2	\$7.9	\$60.1	34.8%	52.0%	13.2%
Pershing	\$3.7	\$7.3	\$1.0	\$12.0	30.5%	61.1%	8.4%
Storey	\$5.8	\$1.5	\$0.3	\$7.7	76.4%	19.1%	4.6%
Washoe	\$359.5	\$209.1	\$72.4	\$641.0	56.1%	32.6%	11.3%
White Pine	\$7.5	\$8.7	\$1.4	\$17.6	42.5%	49.4%	8.1%
State Sponsored Charter Schools	\$13.7	\$243.7	\$5.6	\$263.0	5.2%	92.7%	2.1%
Statewide	\$2,633.4	\$1,664.1	\$414.1	\$4,711.6	55.9%	35.3%	8.8%

Source: NRS 387.303 Report, Major Funds tab, FY 2016 (unaudited)

* Revenues exclude bond proceeds, fund transfers, opening fund balance, and all other revenue not categorized as local, state, or federal.

II. History of Legislation Affecting Public K-12 Education Funding in Nevada

For 50 years, changes in Nevada’s tax policy have affected the share of revenue each level of government contributes to fund our schools. This section includes a brief overview and discussion of some of the major tax policy and other changes that have affected public elementary and secondary education funding in Nevada. This section should not be read as an exhaustive history of public K-12 education funding changes, but rather a brief introduction to the major adjustments, reforms, and revisions to education funding in Nevada.

- **1967** – The Legislature approves the creation of the Local School Support Tax (LSST), which is added to the sales and use tax at a rate of 1 percent.
- **1979** – To provide relief to taxpayers, the Legislature approves a reduction in the property tax rate for the support of schools from \$1.50 (70 cents mandatory and 80 cents optional) to 50 cents per \$100 of assessed valuation. General Fund appropriations to the state’s Distributive School Account (DSA) were increased to offset the effects of reducing property tax and removing sales tax on food (see the next bullet concerning the food exemption from the sales and use tax).
- **1979** – Voters amend the sales and use tax to provide for the exemption of food for home consumption.
- **1981** – To reduce the cost of K-12 public education on the State General Fund, the LSST increases from 1 percent to 1.5 percent.
- **1983** – As a result of the 1981 “Tax Shift,” which changed the primary revenue source of local governments from the property tax to the sales and use tax, local governments are hit hard when the national recession causes sales and use tax revenues to fall short of estimates. In response, the Legislature increases the property tax rate by 25 cents (from 50 cents to 75 cents) and places the extra 25 cents inside the *Nevada Plan* formula to offset State General Fund appropriations for K-12 public education.
- **1991** – The LSST rate increases from 1.5 percent to 2.25 percent, which reduces the need for State General Fund appropriations for K-12 public education.
- **1999** – The Legislature moves the Class-Size Reduction (CSR) program to the DSA and funds the program entirely with state General Fund appropriations. Historically, the CSR program had been funded as a categorical grant with revenues from estate taxes and State General Fund appropriations.
- **2001** – As a result of the passage of the federal Economic Growth and Tax Relief Reconciliation Act of 2001, estate tax revenues in the DSA begin to decline.

• • •
*“The Legislature declares
that the proper objective of
state financial aid to public
education is to ensure each
Nevada child a reasonably
equal educational
opportunity.”*
NRS 387.121
• • •

Nevada's allowable "pick-up tax" credit is reduced by 25 percent in 2002, 50 percent in 2003, 75 percent in 2004, and repealed in 2005. During the same time period, Nevada also realizes a reduction in revenue from the estate tax because of changes to the exemption threshold, which increased from \$675,000 in 2001 to \$1 million in 2002, and to \$1.5 million in 2004.

- **2009** – Due to the Great Recession, the Legislature temporarily increases the LSST rate by 0.35 percentage points (from 2.25 percent to 2.60 percent) for the period beginning July 1, 2009, through June 30, 2011.
- **2009** – Initiative Petition (IP) 1, though not signed by the Governor, becomes law pursuant to Article 4, Section 35, of the Nevada Constitution. The initiative imposes an additional tax on the gross receipts from the rental of transient lodging in certain counties. Pursuant to the language of the initiative, the proceeds from this tax are credited to the State General Fund between July 1, 2009, and June 30, 2011.
- **2011** – The Legislature votes to maintain the LSST rate at 2.60 percent and extend the sunset to June 30, 2013, at which time the rate would revert back to 2.25 percent.
- **2011** – Pursuant to the language of IP 1, beginning July 1, 2011, the proceeds of the transient lodging tax are supposed to be credited to the State Supplemental School Support Account to be distributed proportionally among all school districts and charter schools in the state to improve student achievement and to retain qualified teachers and non-administrative employees. However, the Legislature approves the transfer of all IP 1 revenue over the 2011-13 biennium (FY 2012 and FY 2013) from the State Supplemental School Support Account to the DSA.
- **2011** – The Legislature approves Senate Bill 11, which instructs the Legislative Commission to appoint a committee (known as the Committee to Study a New Method for Funding Public Schools) to conduct an interim study concerning the development of a new method for funding public schools in Nevada. After contracting with a consultant to assist with the study, the committee makes various recommendations, including, but not limited to, a bill draft request to include the definition of the data modules of the school finance formula and the basis for the allocation of special education funding in statute; a recommendation that the state consider moving to a weighted-funding formula that considers individual needs and characteristics of student populations; and a recommendation that the state consider alternatives to the single count day approach for determining enrollment for apportionment purposes.
- **2013** – The Legislature votes to maintain the LSST rate at 2.60 percent and extend the sunset to June 30, 2015, at which time the rate would revert back to 2.25 percent.
- **2013** – The Legislature votes to transfer all IP 1 revenue from the State Supplemental Support Account to the DSA for the 2013-15 biennium (FY 2014 and FY 2015).

- **2013** – The Legislature approves Senate Bill 500, which creates the Task Force on K-12 Public Education Funding to conduct a review of the consultant’s report to the Committee to Study a New Method for Funding Public Schools; survey the weighted pupil public education funding formulas used in other states; and develop a plan for revising and implementing the state’s public education funding formula in a manner that equitably accounts for the needs of, and the costs to educate, students based upon their individual educational needs and demographic characteristics, including students from low-income families, students with disabilities, and students who have limited proficiency in the English language. Recommendations from the Task Force on K-12 Public Education funding include, but are not limited to, implementing a weighted student funding model that would apply a weight of not less than 1.5 for students identified as English Learners (ELs) or at-risk of low academic achievement and replacing the unit-funding methodology for students with disabilities with a weighted student-funding model that would apply a 2.0 weight to all students with disabilities.
- **2015** - The Legislature votes to continue the transfer of the IP 1 revenues as a revenue source in the DSA budget for the 2015-17 biennium (FY 2016 and FY 2017).
- **2015** - The Legislature votes to permanently increase the LSST rate from 2.25 percent to 2.60 percent.
- **2015** - The Legislature concurred with the Governor’s recommendation to complete the expansion of the state’s Full-Day Kindergarten (FDK) program to all school district and charter school kindergartens by FY 2017. Historically, the state funded kindergartners as six-tenths of one pupil for attending a half-day kindergarten program. However, in accordance with Section 11 of Senate Bill 508, which among other things amends NRS 387.1233, students attending full-day kindergarten will be counted and funded as 1.0 full-time pupils beginning in FY 2018. The state-funded FDK program is optional; therefore, some school districts and charter schools may continue to elect to operate half-day kindergarten programs.
- **2016** – Ballot Question 2 is approved by Nevada voters and authorizes the sale of recreational marijuana in the state, with a 15 percent excise tax on wholesale sales. Revenue from the excise tax, less the cost of carrying out the provisions of the measure, is to be deposited in the DSA budget.

III. The Nevada Plan

The 1967 Legislature approved Senate Bill 15 (*Statutes of Nevada, 889*), which revised the method the state uses to finance elementary and secondary education in the state’s public schools and created the *Nevada Plan*. In creating the *Nevada Plan*, the Legislature declared “that the proper objective of state financial aid to public education is to ensure each Nevada child a reasonably equal educational opportunity.”

The *Nevada Plan* is a statewide, formula-based funding mechanism for public K-12 education. Stated as a formula, the *Nevada Plan* calls for state financial aid to school districts to equal the difference between school district basic support guarantee and local available funds produced by mandatory taxes minus all the local funds attributable to pupils who reside in the county but attend a charter school or a university school for profoundly gifted pupils (*Nevada Revised Statutes* [NRS] 387.121).

The *Nevada Plan* does not include targeted, formula-based funding for individual student differences. However, the state does provide student-specific categorical funding outside the *Nevada Plan*, for programs including, but not limited to, Class-Size Reduction, Career and Technical Education, Adult High School Diploma, Special Education, English Learner, Victory and Turnaround Schools (low-income students), and Gifted and Talented Education (GATE).

How the Nevada Plan Works

Under the *Nevada Plan*, the state develops a guaranteed amount of funding for each of the local school districts and charter schools. The revenue, which provides the guaranteed funding, is derived from both state and local sources. On average, this guaranteed funding contributes approximately 80 percent of school districts' and charter schools' general fund resources. *Nevada Plan* funding for school districts and charter schools consists of state support received through the DSA and locally collected revenues from the LSST, and one-third of the proceeds from the 75-cent property tax imposed pursuant to NRS 387.195.

To determine the level of guaranteed funding for each school district and charter school,

● ● ●
A basic per-pupil support amount for each school district is established in law each legislative session, which establishes a guaranteed level of funding based upon the demographic characteristics of each school district.
● ● ●

a basic per-pupil support amount for each district is established in law each legislative session. The amount is determined by a formula that considers the demographic characteristics of each school district. Average operating and transportation costs, as well as a wealth adjustment, are also considered to determine the basic per-pupil support amount for each school district. The wealth adjustment is based on a district's ability to generate revenues in addition to the guaranteed funding. It should be noted that the basic per-pupil support amount for charter schools varies and is determined by the school district of origin for each student. For example, a virtual charter school that

enrolls students from multiple Nevada school districts will receive differing basic per-pupil support amounts for each student depending on the home school district of each student.

The corresponding basic per-pupil support amount is then multiplied by a school district's or charter school's weighted apportionment enrollment. In accordance with changes approved by the 2015 Legislature, beginning in FY 2016, the official enrollment for apportionment purposes (Average Daily Enrollment or ADE) is reported quarterly by each school district and charter school on or before October 1, January 1, April 1, and July 1, for the immediately preceding quarter of the school year. Currently, the number

of disabled three- and four-year-olds, and kindergarteners is multiplied by 60 percent and added to the total number of all other children who are enrolled in grades 1 through 12, net of transfers, to derive the total weighted apportionment enrollment. Beginning in FY 2018, kindergarteners are counted as a 1.0 full-time student along with children enrolled in grades 1-12.

Special Provisions Related to Enrollment Changes

To protect school districts and charter schools during times of declining enrollment, the *Nevada Plan* contains a hold-harmless provision. Historically, if the enrollment of a school district or charter school was less than the prior year's enrollment, funding from the DSA was apportioned to the school district or charter school based on the enrollment from the immediately preceding school year. In addition, for cases of significant enrollment decrease (when a school district or charter school's enrollment was less than or equal to 95 percent of the prior year's enrollment), the highest enrollment number from the immediately preceding two school years would be used for purposes of apportioning funding from the DSA.

These provisions were revised by the 2015 Legislature with the passage of Senate Bill 508. This legislation, later codified in NRS 387.1223, only allows school districts and charter schools with current enrollment of less than or equal to 95 percent of the prior school year's enrollment to utilize the enrollment number from the immediately preceding school year for purposes of apportioning funding from the DSA. It should be noted that the hold-harmless provision does not apply to school districts or charter schools that deliberately cause a decline in the enrollment by eliminating grade levels, moving into smaller facilities, or other means.

Special Education Funding

Prior to FY 2017, state funding for special education was provided on a "unit" basis, with the amount per unit established by the Legislature and intended to fund licensed personnel providing a program of instruction in accordance with minimum standards prescribed by the State Board of Education. With the passage of Senate Bill 508, the 2015 Legislature implemented a change in the methodology for distributing state funding for students with disabilities beginning in FY 2017. The new methodology requires state funding for students with disabilities to be distributed proportionally to each school district and charter school largely based upon the number of students with a disability, not to exceed 13 percent of the total pupil enrollment for the school district or charter school. Funding for students with disabilities is provided in addition to each school district's or charter school's basic per-pupil support amount.

In addition, the 2015 Legislature approved a General Fund appropriation of \$5.0 million in FY 2017, to establish a Special Education Contingency program, for which the State Board of Education was required to adopt regulations for the application, approval and disbursement of money to reimburse school districts and charter schools for extraordinary program expenses and related services for pupils with significant disabilities.

Determining State Aid

The difference between the total guaranteed support (as approved by the Legislature) and local resources is state aid, which is funded through the DSA. Revenue received by the school district from the LSST derived from in-state sales and from one-third of the proceeds from the 75-cent property tax is deducted from the school district's or charter school's total basic support guarantee to determine the amount of state aid the district or charter school will receive. If local revenues from these two sources are less than anticipated, state aid is increased to cover the shortfall in total guaranteed support. Conversely, if these two local revenues exceed projected levels, state aid is reduced.

In addition to revenue guaranteed through the *Nevada Plan*, school districts receive other local revenues considered "outside" the *Nevada Plan* that are not built into the state guarantee. Local revenues outside the *Nevada Plan* include two-thirds of the proceeds from the 75-cent property tax; the share of basic governmental services tax distributed to school districts; franchise tax revenue; interest income; tuition revenue; unrestricted federal revenue, and other local revenues. Because these other local revenues are not guaranteed, state aid is not increased or decreased based on actual realized revenue from local revenue sources outside the *Nevada Plan*. Charter schools are allocated outside revenues proportionally by the district in which a charter school is located.

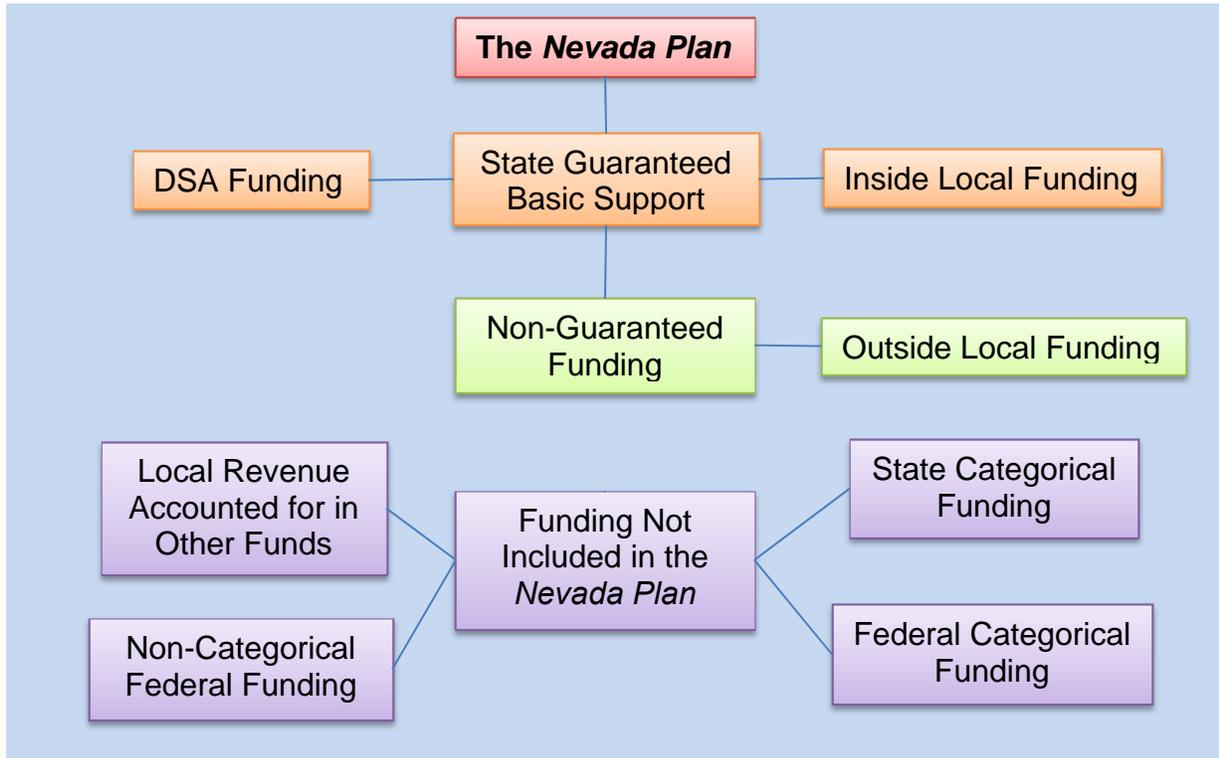
In addition to revenues both "inside" and "outside" the *Nevada Plan*, school districts and charter schools may receive "categorical" funds from the state, federal government, and private organizations that may only be expended for designated purposes. Examples include the state-funded Class-Size Reduction program, Early Childhood Education, Career and Technical Education, and Education Technology. The 2015 Legislature expanded categorical funding for education in the 2015-17 biennium through new initiatives, including the Read by Grade Three program, Social Worker or Other Licensed Mental Health Worker Grant program, Nevada Ready 21 Technology Plan, College and Career Readiness Grant program and the GATE program.

Examples of federally-funded programs include the Title I program for disadvantaged pupils, Every Student Succeeds Act, the National School Lunch program, and Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Categorical funds must be accounted for separately in special revenue funds by school districts and charter schools. Funding for capital projects, which may come from the sale of general obligation bonds, "pay-as-you-go" tax levies, or fees imposed on the construction of new residential units, are also accounted for in separate funds (Capital Projects Fund, Debt Service Fund).

• • •
If local revenues from the Local School Support Tax and one-third property tax are less than anticipated, state aid is increased to cover the shortfall in total guaranteed support. Alternatively, if these two local revenues exceed projected levels, state aid is reduced.
• • •

IV. Components of the Nevada Plan

The *Nevada Plan* is made up of various funding components. The following chart illustrates the combination of funding components that make up the *Nevada Plan*, as well as other K-12 education funding sources that are not part of the *Nevada Plan*:



The list below outlines the various revenue components:

DSA Funding

- State General Fund appropriations
- A share of the annual slot tax
- Investment income from the Permanent School Fund
- Federal mineral land lease receipts
- Out-of-state LSST revenue that cannot be attributed to a particular county
- Transfers of IP 1 (2009) room tax revenues
- Medical marijuana excise tax (75 percent)
- Beginning in FY 2018, recreational marijuana excise tax and license fees (less the cost of administration)

“Inside” Local Funding

- LSST
- One-third of the proceeds from the 75-cent property tax

“Outside” Local Funding

- Two-thirds of the proceeds from the 75-cent property tax
- Share of basic governmental services tax distributed to school districts
- Franchise taxes
- Interest income
- Tuition
- Rent
- Opening General Fund balance

Non-Categorical Federal Funding

- Impact received in lieu of taxes for federally impacted areas
- Forest reserves

Federal Categorical Funding

- Nutrition Education (e.g., National School Lunch Program)
- Title I Program
- Special Education Programs
- Vocational Education Programs
- Other School Improvement Programs, including programs under the federal Every Student Succeeds Act

Other Funding

- Capital Projects – General Obligation Bonds
- “Pay as You Go” Debt Service

V. Biennial DSA Budget Preparation

To prepare a biennial budget for Nevada’s public schools, estimated General Fund and Special Education expenditures for charter schools and each of the 17 school districts funded by state or local revenues are combined into a single, statewide budget for each year of the upcoming biennium.

It is important to recognize that the DSA budget does not include the entire funding for K-12 public education, but rather includes only the state’s portion of the school district and charter school operating funds that provide the basic support guarantee and other state-supported programs. Federal categorical funds, such as those received through Title I or IDEA, as well as most state categorical funds, are not included in this budget, but do contribute significantly to the total amount of funding available to local schools.

Schools’ opening fund balances and projected local revenues considered outside the funding formula, are then deducted from the total statewide operating expenditures. Because outside local revenues are deducted from the funding formula at this point, they are not built into the state guarantee.

Next, the costs of programs that are not allocated to schools based on enrollment, such as the costs of special education programs, are subtracted to yield statewide basic support, which is divided by the estimated (weighted) enrollment for the year to

determine the guaranteed statewide average basic support per pupil for each fiscal year in the upcoming biennium. In summary, the estimated need, minus local revenues “outside” the *Nevada Plan*, is divided by the number of pupils to determine a statewide average basic support per pupil that will be guaranteed by the combination of state DSA funding and local revenues “inside” the *Nevada Plan*.

From the statewide average basic support per pupil, the Nevada Department of Education calculates a separate basic support per pupil figure for each school district, using a formula that considers the economic and geographic characteristics of each school district. The dollar amount of basic support differs across school districts due to variations in the cost of living, differences in the costs of providing education as a result of school size, and the cost per pupil of administration and support services. The funding formula also recognizes each school district’s transportation costs by including 85 percent of actual, historical costs adjusted for inflation. A wealth adjustment, based on each district’s ability to generate revenue in addition to the guaranteed level of funding, is also included in the funding formula.

• • •

The estimated need to operate the school districts and charter schools, minus local revenues “outside” the Nevada Plan, is divided by the number of pupils to determine a statewide average basic support per pupil that will be guaranteed by the combination of state DSA funding and local revenues “inside” the Nevada Plan.

• • •

Since funding through the *Nevada Plan* is based on a guaranteed amount of basic support per pupil set forth in law during each legislative session, the only way to increase the total amount to be received through the *Nevada Plan* is if enrollment increases. Conversely, if enrollment fails to meet projections, schools will receive less money than expected, because a given dollar amount per pupil is guaranteed only for those pupils enrolled, except for cases of significant enrollment decreases for which the hold-harmless provision would apply.

The funding for additional programs that are not allocated to schools on the basis of enrollment (e.g., Class-Size Reduction programs) is then added to the total regular basic support guarantee amount to arrive at the total required support. This figure represents the amount of funding, through a combination of inside local revenues, State General Fund appropriations, and other non-General Fund state revenues, that the school districts and charter schools will receive.

To determine the state’s share of the total guaranteed support, projected local revenues considered inside the funding formula are deducted. The remaining amount is the state’s share, and after subtracting the amount of non-General Fund state funding sources, the state’s General Fund obligation is established. Because the total guaranteed support is made up of both inside local revenues and State General Fund appropriations, if actual realized inside local revenues are higher than projected, State General Fund appropriations are reduced. Alternatively, if actual realized inside local revenues are less than projected, State General Fund appropriations are increased to meet the guaranteed support amount.

The chart below illustrates the steps that are taken to prepare the DSA budget and determine the state's General Fund obligation:

Total Operating Expenditures, Including Salaries and Benefits

Minus

Projected Outside Local Revenue

Equals

Guaranteed Regular Basic Support

Plus

Cost of Additional Programs
(e.g., Special Education, Class-Size Reduction)

Equals

Total Required Support

Minus

Projected Inside Local Revenue

Equals

Total State Share

Minus

Miscellaneous State Revenues (e.g., Slot Tax)

Equals

State's General Fund Obligation

To understand how this calculation is performed with actual data, the following table summarizes the elements (in millions of dollars) that are the basis for the DSA, as recommended by the Governor and as approved by the 2015 Legislature, for the 2015-17 biennium. It should be noted that while the Total Required State Support is

guaranteed by the state, only the portion of the table below Total State Share is included in the DSA budget.

	The Nevada Plan			Legislatively Approved			Percent Change
	Governor Recommended (Millions)			(Millions)			
	FY 16	FY 17	2015-17 Biennium	FY 16	FY 17	2015-17 Biennium	
Total Operating Expenditures	\$ 3,332	\$ 3,437	\$ 6,769	\$ 3,353	\$ 3,458	\$ 6,811	0.6%
Less: Projected Local Revenues Outside the DSA	\$ (647)	\$ (670)	\$ (1,317)	\$ (647)	\$ (661)	\$ (1,308)	-0.7%
Less: Non-Basic Support Programs	\$ (139)	\$ (169)	\$ (308)	\$ (139)	\$ (169)	\$ (308)	0.1%
Total Regular Basic Support*	\$ 2,545	\$ 2,598	\$ 5,143	\$ 2,567	\$ 2,628	\$ 5,195	1.0%
Plus: Programs Other Than Basic Support	\$ 313	\$ 349	\$ 662	\$ 295	\$ 331	\$ 626	-5.4%
State Guarantee							
Total Required State Support*	\$ 2,858	\$ 2,947	\$ 5,805	\$ 2,862	\$ 2,959	\$ 5,821	0.3%
Less: Local "Inside" Revenues	\$ (1,441)	\$ (1,525)	\$ (2,966)	\$ (1,445)	\$ (1,520)	\$ (2,965)	0.0%
Distributive School Account							
Total State Share*	\$ 1,417	\$ 1,422	\$ 2,839	\$ 1,417	\$ 1,439	\$ 2,856	0.6%
Less: Miscellaneous DSA Revenues	\$ (316)	\$ (328)	\$ (644)	\$ (318)	\$ (330)	\$ (648)	0.6%
General Fund Support Before Transfer	\$ 1,102	\$ 1,094	\$ 2,195	\$ 1,099	\$ 1,109	\$ 2,208	0.6%
Less: Transfers of Categorical Funding**	\$ (2)	\$ (2)	\$ (4)	\$ (5)	\$ (7)	\$ (12)	
General Fund Support	\$ 1,100	\$ 1,092	\$ 2,191	\$ 1,094	\$ 1,102	\$ 2,196	0.2%

* Totals may not balance due to rounding
 ** Categorical funding to be transferred to the Other State Education Programs account (BA 2699) and Remediation Trust Fund (BA 2615)

Source: Nevada Legislative Appropriations Report, 78th Legislature, Fiscal Years 2015-16 and 2016-17, November 2015.

To determine the statewide average basic support per pupil, the total regular basic support amount is divided by the estimated weighted enrollment for each fiscal year in the upcoming biennium. It is important to note that the guaranteed basic support per pupil should not be confused with expenditures per pupil. Other resources not considered within the *Nevada Plan*, include but are not limited to, two-thirds of the proceeds from the 75-cent property tax, governmental services taxes, franchise taxes unrestricted federal funding and state and federal categorical funding, are also available to support schools' operating costs. For example, in FY 2014 the statewide average basic support for Nevada was \$5,590 per pupil; however, according to the National Center for Education Statistics, the average expenditure per pupil in Nevada was \$8,275 in FY 2014 (excluding capital outlay and debt service).

VI. The Nevada Plan – A School District Example

To better understand how the *Nevada Plan* works, a step-by-step summary is provided below. The bolded number(s) at the end of each step corresponds to step(s) of a numerical example of a hypothetical school district that is presented following the step-by-step summary.

1. **Enrollment** – The count of pupils for apportionment purposes is the number of children enrolled in grades kindergarten through 12 reflected in regular or special education programs reported to the Nevada Department of Education during the quarterly average daily enrollment. Disabled or gifted and talented children under the age of five are counted (weighted) as six-tenths of one pupil since they attend school for less

than a full day. In instances of significant declining enrollment, the hold-harmless provision described in NRS 387.1223 may be applied **(1)**.

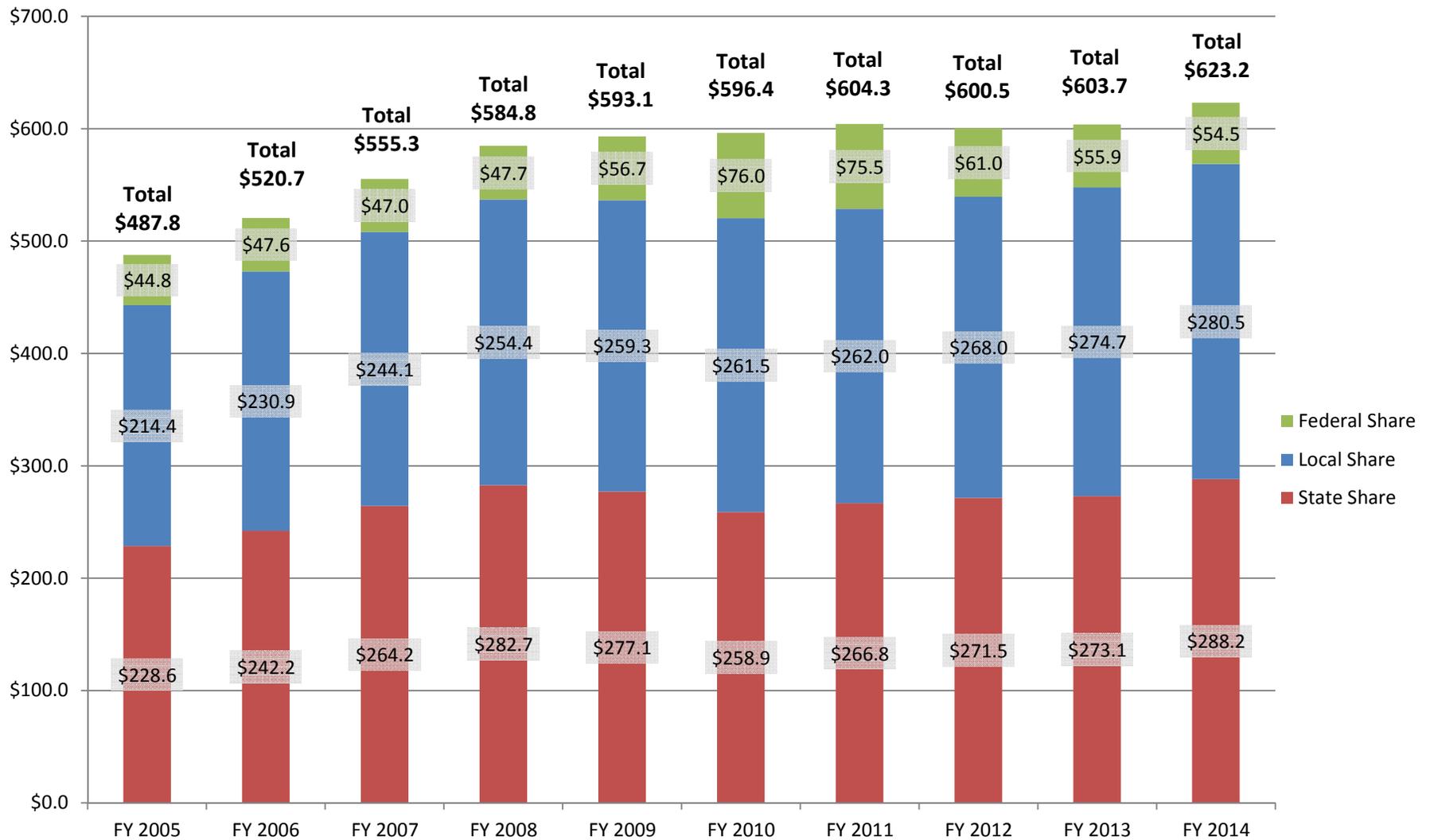
2. Guaranteed Regular Basic Support – The weighted enrollment total is multiplied by the legislatively approved per-pupil support guarantee for the school district to determine the school district’s guaranteed basic support **(2 and 3)**.
3. Inside Local Resources – Revenue received by the school district from the LSST and one-third of the proceeds from the 75-cent property tax is deducted from the school district’s total guaranteed basic support to determine the amount of state aid the district will receive. If actual realized local revenues from these two sources are less than projected, state aid is increased to cover the total basic support guarantee. On the other hand, if revenues come in higher than projected, state aid is reduced. The difference between the total guaranteed support and local resources is state aid, which is funded through the DSA **(4 and 5)**.
4. Other State-Funded Programs – An amount for any specific programs funded by the Legislature through the DSA, such as special education funding and the Class-Size Reduction program, is added to the school district’s total state aid to determine the total amount of revenue the school district will receive from the DSA. Pursuant to Senate Bill 508 that was approved by the 2015 Legislature, the proportion of special education funding allocated to a district is largely based on the number of students with a disability **(6 and 7)**.
5. Outside Local and Federal Resources – Sources of revenue outside the funding formula, such as two-thirds of the proceeds from the 75-cent property tax and unrestricted federal funding, are added to the total guaranteed support and the amount provided for other legislatively-approved programs to determine the school district’s total available resources **(8 through 14)**.

The following numerical example illustrates the guaranteed funding process based on the revenue of a hypothetical school district and also shows other revenue outside of the guarantee, making up the total resources included in a school district’s operating budget.

Basic Support Guarantee		
1	Number of Pupils (Weighted Apportionment Enrollment*)	8,000
2	X Basic Support Per Pupil	<u>\$ 5,700</u>
3	= Guaranteed Basic Support	\$ 45,600,000
	- Local Resources	
4	2.60 percent LSST	(\$ 18,800,000)
	1/3 of the proceeds from 75-cent property tax	<u>(\$ 4,600,000)</u>
5	= State Responsibility	\$ 22,200,000
	+ Other State Programs funded through the DSA	
6	Special Education Allocation: \$2,900,000	<u>\$2,935,000</u>
	Class-Size Reduction Funding: \$35,000	
7	= Total Revenue from Distributive School Account (DSA)	\$ 25,135,000
Resources in Addition to Basic Support		
8	2/3 of the proceeds from 75-cent property tax	\$ 9,200,000
9	Governmental Services Tax (GST)	\$ 2,000,000
10	Federal Revenues (Unrestricted)	\$ 150,000
11	Miscellaneous Revenues	\$ 10,000
12	Opening Fund Balance	<u>\$ 2,000,000</u>
13	Total Resources in Addition to Basic Support	<u>\$ 13,360,000</u>
14	Total Resources Available (Add lines 3, 6, and 13)	\$ 61,895,000

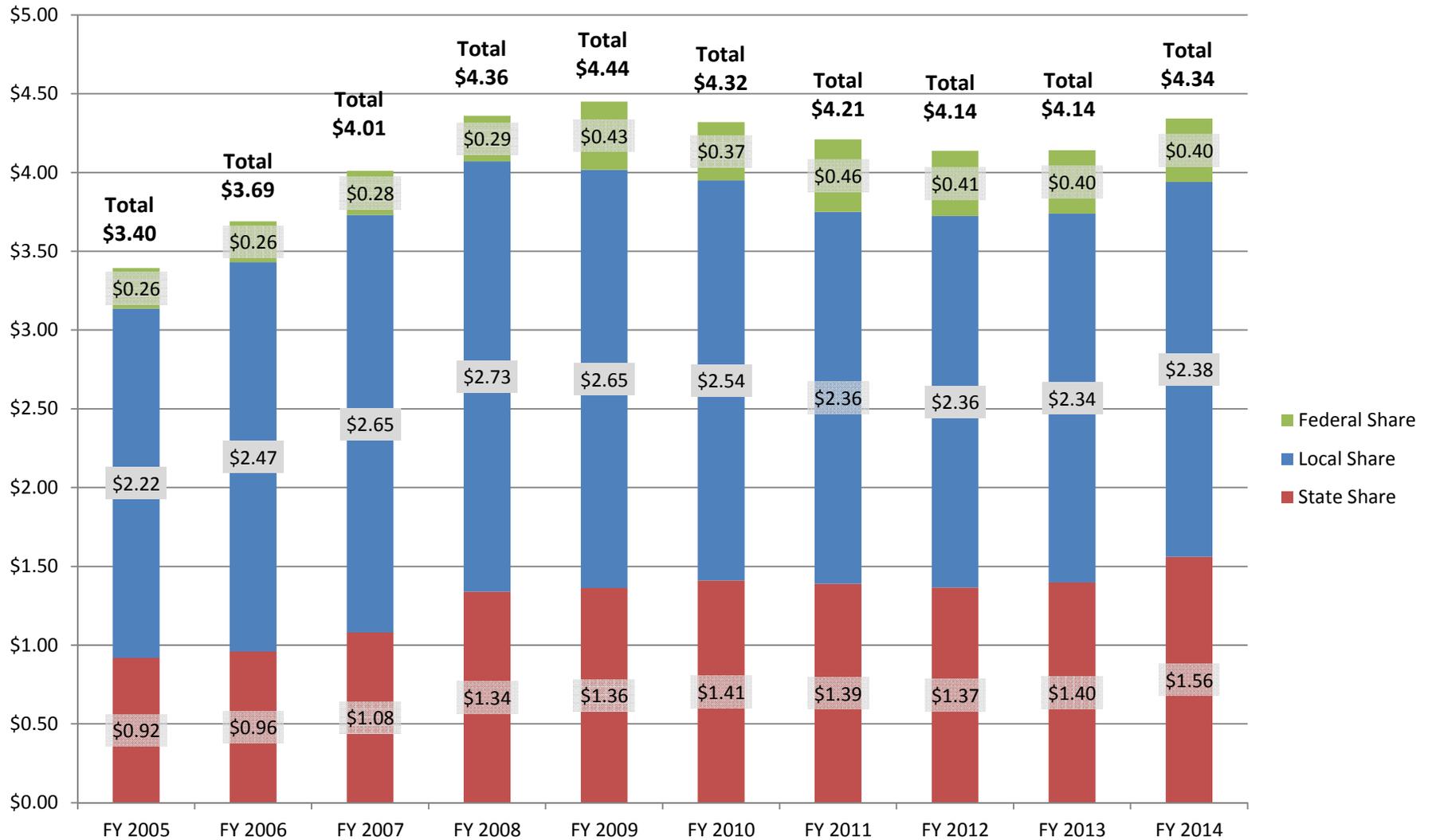
*Beginning in FY 2018, weighted apportionment enrollment includes a full count of pupils enrolled in grades kindergarten through 12, six-tenths of the count of 3- and 4-year-olds who are receiving special education, and a full count of disabled minors age 5 and over receiving special education (NRS 387.1223).

United States Revenues for Public Elementary and Secondary Education (Billions of Dollars, by Source, FY 2005 - FY 2014)



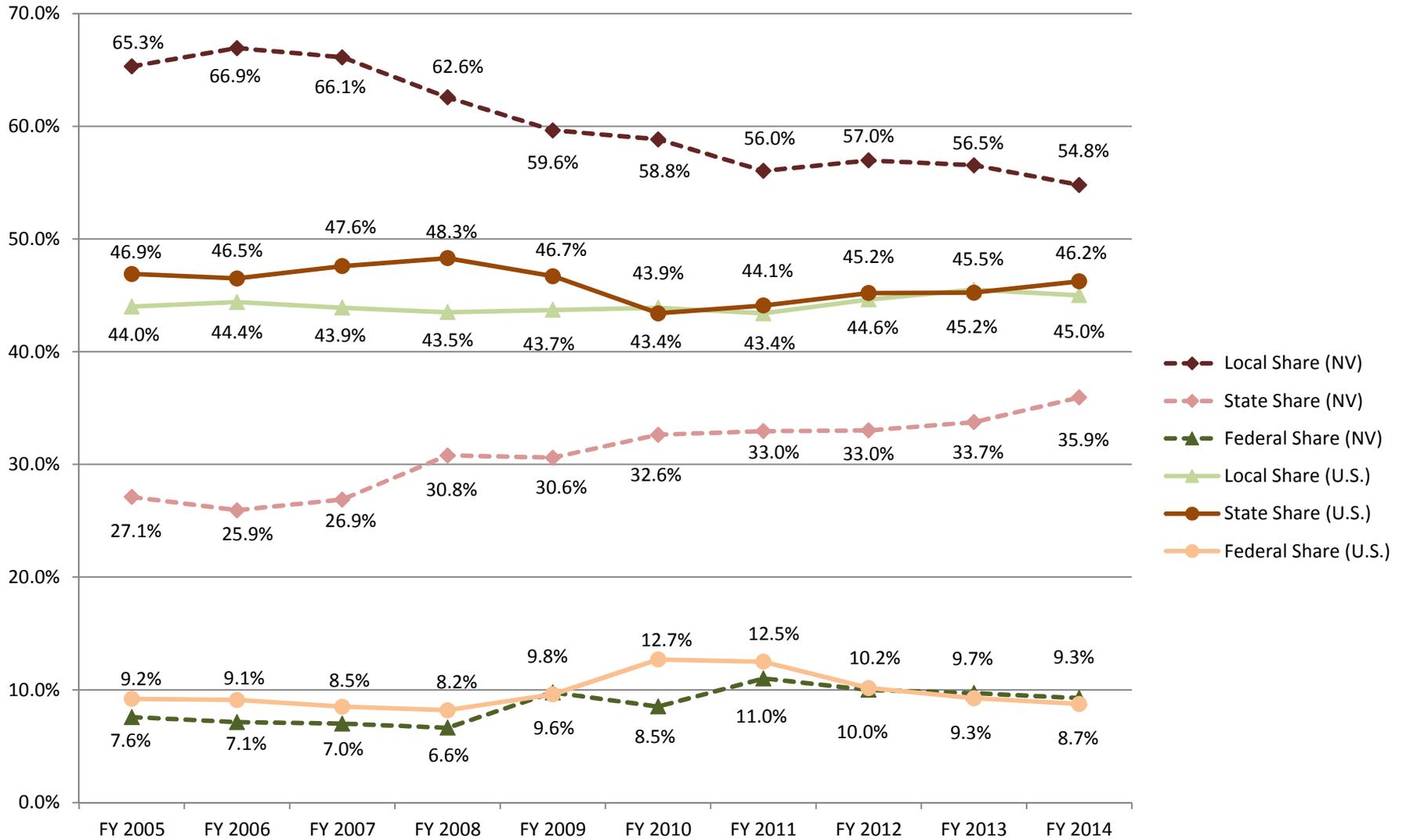
Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD),
"National Public Education Financial Survey (NPEFS)," Fiscal Years 2005-2014

Nevada Revenues for Public Elementary and Secondary Education (Billions of Dollars, by Source, FY 2005 - FY 2014)



Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD),
"National Public Education Financial Survey (NPEFS)," Fiscal Years 2005-2014

Percentage Distribution of Revenues for Public Elementary and Secondary Education in the United States and Nevada, FY 2005 - FY 2014



Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD),
"National Public Education Financial Survey (NPEFS)," Fiscal Years 2005-2014