

VI. PUPIL-TO-TEACHER RATIOS

BACKGROUND

A key reform initiative for the past decade is Nevada's program to reduce pupil-to-teacher ratios, commonly known as the Class-Size Reduction Program. Following a review of the topic by a 1988 interim legislative study, the 1989 Legislature enacted the Class-Size Reduction Act (Assembly Bill 964, Chapter 864, *Statutes of Nevada 1989*). The measure was designed to reduce the pupil-to-teacher ratio in public schools, particularly in the earliest grades where the core curriculum is taught.

The program was scheduled for implementation in several phases. The first step reduced the ratios in selected kindergartens and 1st grade for the 1990-1991 school year. The following phase was designed to improve 2nd grade ratios, followed by 3rd grade reductions and broadening kindergarten assistance. The 1991 Legislature made funds available for the 1991-1992 school year to reduce the ratios in 1st and 2nd grades and selected kindergartens to the 16 to 1 ratio. Due to budget shortfalls late in 1991 and the continuing state fiscal needs, the 3rd grade phase was delayed until Fiscal Year 1996-1997 when partial funding was provided at a 19 to 1 ratio. Those funding formulas continued throughout the 1999-2000 biennium.

After achieving the target ratio of 15 pupils to 1 teacher in the primary grades, the original program proposed that the pupil-to-teacher ratio be reduced to 22 pupils per class in grades 4, 5, and 6, followed by a reduction to no more than 25 pupils per class in grades 7 to 12. With the exception of a pilot program in Elko County, only the primary grades (K-3) have been addressed.

In 2003, Senate Bill 8 of the 20th Special Session continued to address Class-Size Reduction. The bill appropriated approximately \$108.9 million in 2003-2004, and \$117.1 million in 2004-2005 for continued support of the program. The measure specifies that the funds will pay the salaries and benefits for teachers hired to reduce pupil-teacher ratios. These funds will provide for at least 1,887 teachers in the first year of the biennium and 1,953 teachers in the second year. The measure continues the flexibility previously allowed for the use of funding for 1st through 3rd grades. This flexibility allows school districts to carry out alternative programs for reducing the ratio of pupils per teacher, or to implement

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remedial programs that have been found to be effective in improving pupil achievement.

For the first time, the bill provided flexibility in implementing pupil-teacher ratios in grades 1 through 6 for school districts other than Clark and Washoe. Pupil-teacher ratios would be limited to not more than 22 to 1 in grades 1 through 3, and not more than 25 to 1 in grades 4 through 6. Any school district implementing alternative pupil-teacher ratios would be required to evaluate the effectiveness of the alternative program on team-teaching, classroom discipline, and the academic achievement of pupils and report to the 2005 Legislature.

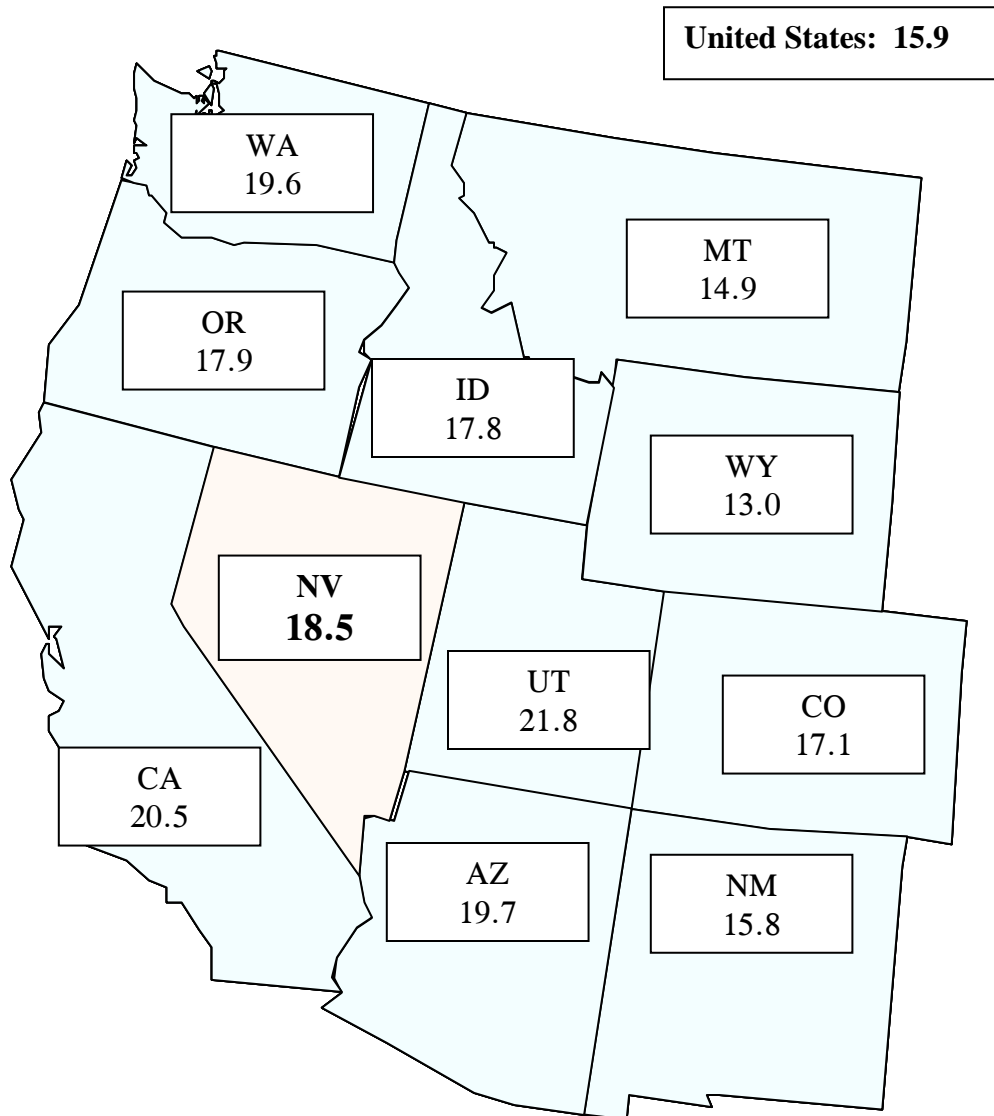
Finally, the bill required the Clark and Washoe County School Districts to study current class sizes during the 2003-2005 interim to determine alternative pupil-teacher ratios that may improve the academic achievement of pupils, decrease classroom discipline issues, and/or decrease or eliminate team teaching in grades 1 and 2. These school districts are required to report to the 2005 Legislature concerning any recommendations for revised pupil-teacher ratios, including the costs that would be associated with implementing the revised ratios.



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PUPIL-TEACHER RATIO FOR GRADES PRE-KINDERGARTEN THROUGH 12, SCHOOL YEAR 2001-2002 NEVADA AND WESTERN STATES



Source: NCES, *Education Statistics Quarterly* "Early Estimates: SY 2002-2003."

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STATEWIDE PUPIL-TEACHER RATIOS

Statewide Pupil-Teacher Ratios Fiscal Years 1998 - 2004											
Grade	FY 1998-1999	FY 1999-2000	Difference FY 1999 and FY 2000	FY 2000-2001	Difference FY 2000 and FY 2001	FY 2001-2002	Difference FY 2001 and FY 2002	FY 2002-2003	Difference FY 2002 and FY 2003	FY 2003 and FY 2004	Difference FY 2003 and FY 2004
Kindergarten	22.7	23.7	1.0	23.6	(0.1)	23.7	0.1	22.5	(1.2)	23.2	(0.7)
1st Grade	15.8	15.9	0.1	16.0	0.1	16.1	0.1	16.2	0.1	16.1	(0.1)
2nd Grade	15.8	15.9	0.1	16.2	0.3	16.3	0.1	16.5	0.2	16.3	(0.2)
3 rd Grade	19.0	19.1	0.1	19.0	(0.1)	19.2	0.2	20.1	0.9	19.5	(0.6)

Note: Elko County School District's pupil-teacher ratios are not included in the statewide ratios shown in this table.

Source: School District Reports to the Nevada Department of Education, 2004.

Source: 2004 Variance Report, Nevada Department of Education

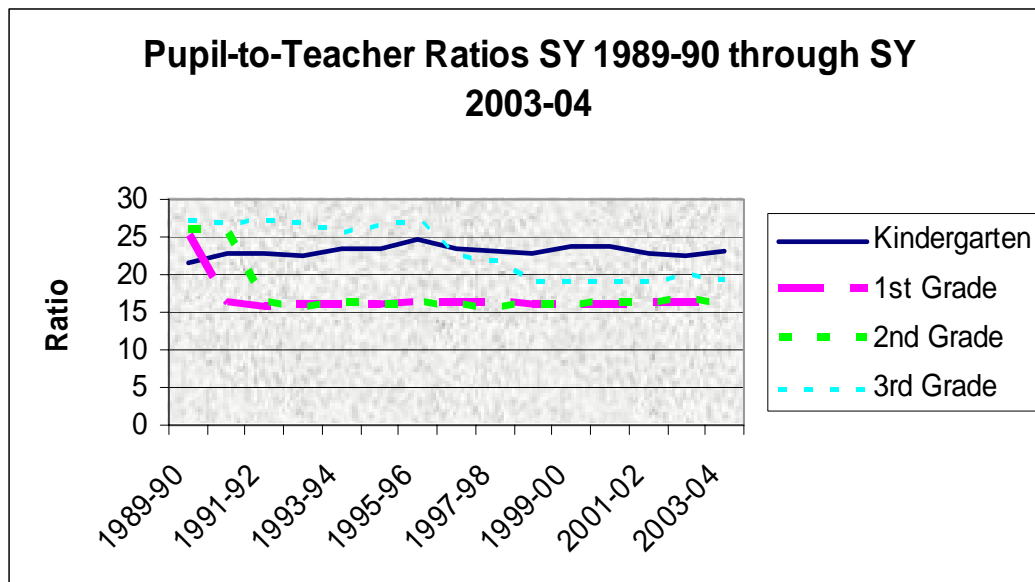
Pupil-Teacher Ratios for School Year 2003-2004 By Grade for Nevada and School Districts				
School District	Kindergarten	First	Second	Third
Carson City	21.0	15.5	15.1	18.4
Churchill	20.4	15.9	16.7	20.1
Clark	24.4	16.5	16.5	19.9
Douglas	23.6	16.1	16.4	19.2
Elko*				
Esmeralda	2.0	5.0	4.0	9.0
Eureka	10.0	8.5	4.3	8.0
Humboldt	17.8	13.0	13.5	19.5
Lander*				
Lincoln	13.6	11.4	13.3	18.0
Lyon	20.4	15.6	16.5	18.8
Mineral	16.0	11.8	16.7	11.8
Nye	17.6	17.3	17.0	18.0
Pershing	12.2	12.5	15.3	13.3
Storey	28.0	15.5	17.0	16.0
Washoe	21.1	14.9	15.9	18.8
White Pine*				
STATE	23.2	16.1	16.3	19.5

*Elko, Lander, and White Pine School Districts have been allowed to establish ratios of 22 to 1 in Grades 1 through 6.

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CSR—RATIOS GRADES K-3

GRADE	1989-90	1990-91	1991-92	1992-93	1993-94	1994-95	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-00	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04
Kindergarten	21.5	22.9	22.8	22.4	23.3	23.5	24.6	23.4	23.2	22.7	23.7	23.6	22.7	22.5	23.2
1 st Grade	25.4	16.11	15.6	15.8	16	15.9	16.2	16.1	16.1	15.8	15.9	16	16.1	16.2	16.1
2 nd Grade	25.9	25.6	16.32	15.6	16.1	15.9	16.2	16	15.7	15.8	15.9	16.2	16.3	16.5	16.3
3 rd Grade	27.1	27	27.2	27.03	25.5	26.63	27.23	22.6	21.8	19	19.1	19	19.2	20.1	19.5



Source: Nevada Department of Education, 2004.



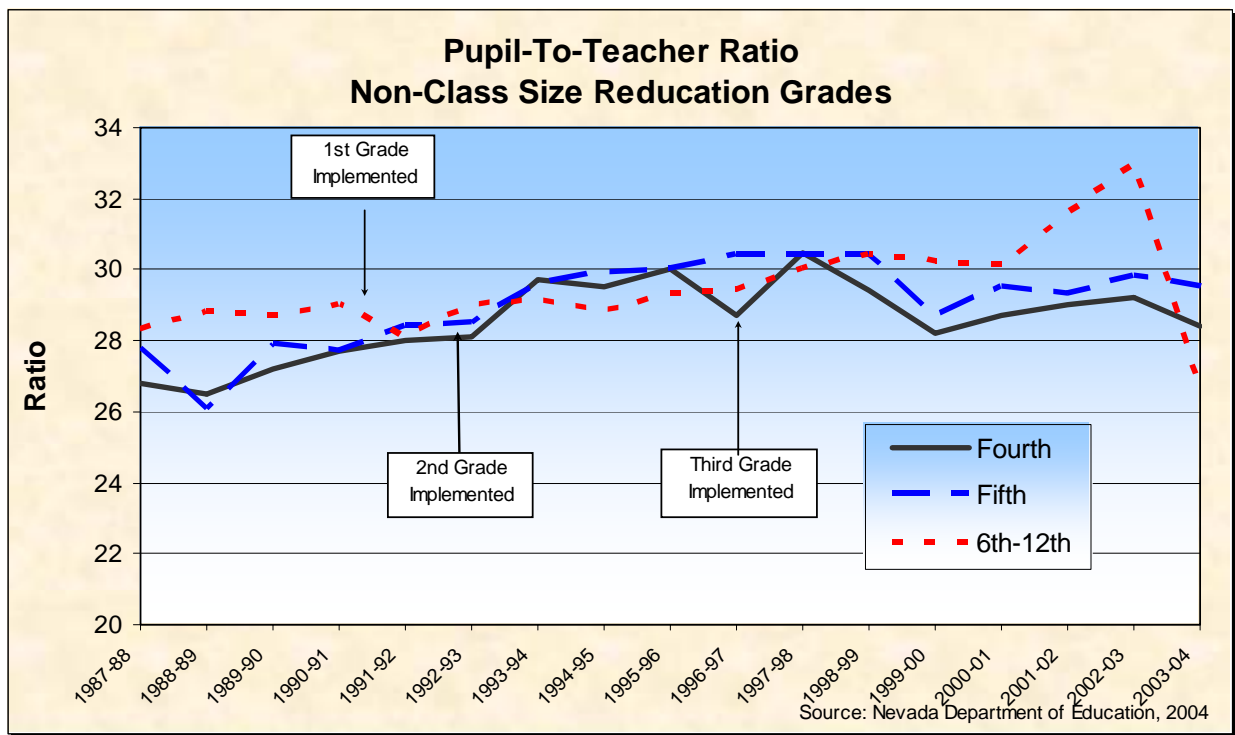
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CSR—RATIOS GRADES 4–12

Nevada Pupil-to-Teacher Ratio Grades 4 Through 12 SY 1989-90 Through 2003-04

Grade	1989-90	1990-91	1991-92	1992-93	1993-94	1994-95	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-00	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04
Fourth	27.2	27.7	28	28.1	29.7	29.5	30	28.7	30.5	29.4	28.2	28.7	29.0	29.2	28.4
Fifth	27.9	27.7	28.4	28.5	29.6	29.9	30	30.4	30.4	30.4	28.7	29.5	29.3	29.8	29.5
6 th - 12 th	28.7	29	28.1	29	29.1	28.8	29.3	29.4	30	30.4	30.2	30.1	31.6	33.0	26.5

Source: Nevada Department of Education, 2004.



Source: Nevada Department of Education, 2004.

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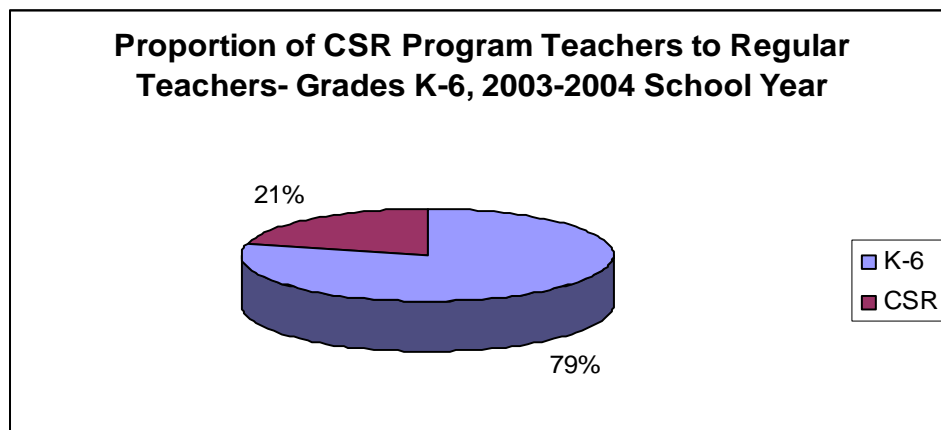
CSR TEACHERS

Number of Class-Size Reduction Teachers (FTE) Hired for School Year 2003-2004 by Grade, for Nevada and School Districts				
School District	Kindergarten	First	Second	Third
Carson City	2	20	16	9
Churchill	1	8	12.25	3
Clark	11	547	564	353
Douglas	.50	5	6	3
Elko*				
Esmeralda	0	0	0	0
Eureka	0	0	0	0
Humboldt	0	6	4	4
Lander*				
Lincoln	0	1	0	0
Lyon	.50	8	10.50	7.75
Mineral	1	0	2	.50
Nye	.50	5	7	3
Pershing	.25	2	1	1
Storey	0	1	0	2
Washoe	5	128	96	57
White Pine*				
STATE	21.75	731	718.75	443.25

* Elko, Lander, and White Pine Counties were allowed to establish pupil-teacher ratios of 22:1 in grades K through 6. Additional teachers listed below:

	K	First	Second	Third	Fourth	Fifth	Sixth	Total
Elko	0	14	11	8	5	9	8	55
Lander	.25	2	1	.25	0	0	0	3.5
White Pine	2	1.25	2	1	0	0	0	6.25
Additional CSR Teachers 64.75								

Source: 2004 Variance Report, Nevada Department of Education



Source: Nevada Department of Education.

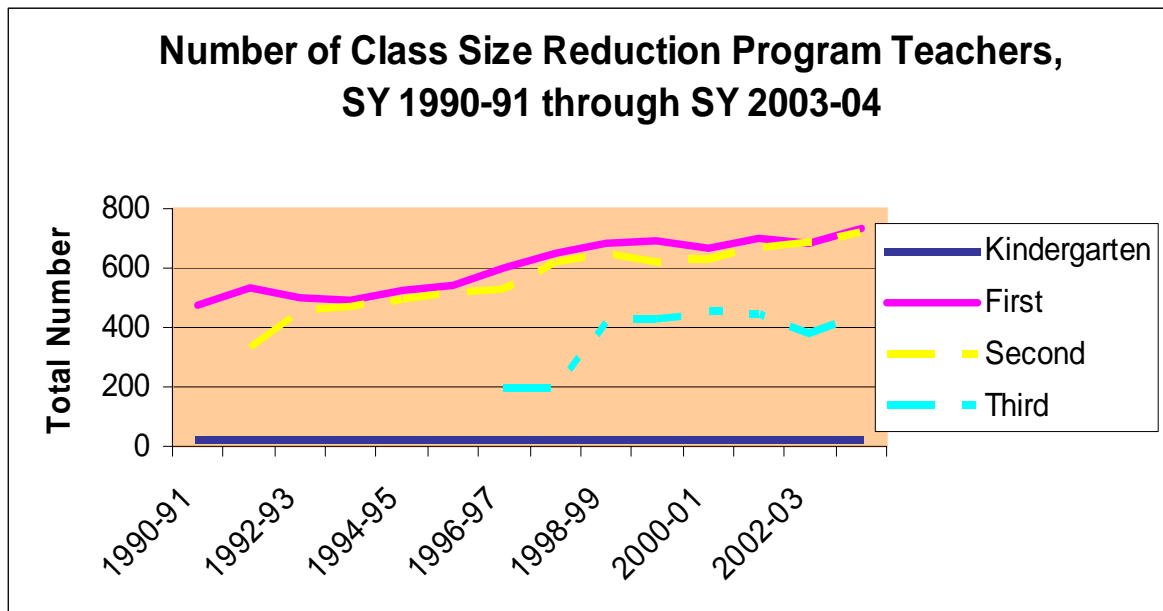
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CSR TEACHERS

**NUMBER OF CSR PROGRAM TEACHERS HIRED
BY GRADE, BY SCHOOL YEAR (1990-91 TO 2002-03)**

Grade	1992-1993	1993-1994	1994-1995	1995-1996	1996-1997	1997-1998	1998-1999	1999-2000	2000-2001	2001-2002	2002-2003	2003-2004
Kindergarten	23.5	23.5	23.5	23.5	23.5	23.5	23.5	23.5	22.5	21.75	21.5	21.75
First	498.5	489.5	521.5	539.5	599	653.3	681.3	690.8	663.0	697.0	686	731
Second	458.5	468	489	517	524.5	615.8	644.8	617.8	625	664.5	686.5	718.75
Third				0	195	194.3	415.3	428.8	448.5	445.25	375.25	443.25

In FY 2004, Nevada employed 1,982.5 CSR teachers. The growth in the numbers of these teachers reflected on these charts is a function of student growth in existing CSR grades, plus the addition of other grades as the program was phased in.

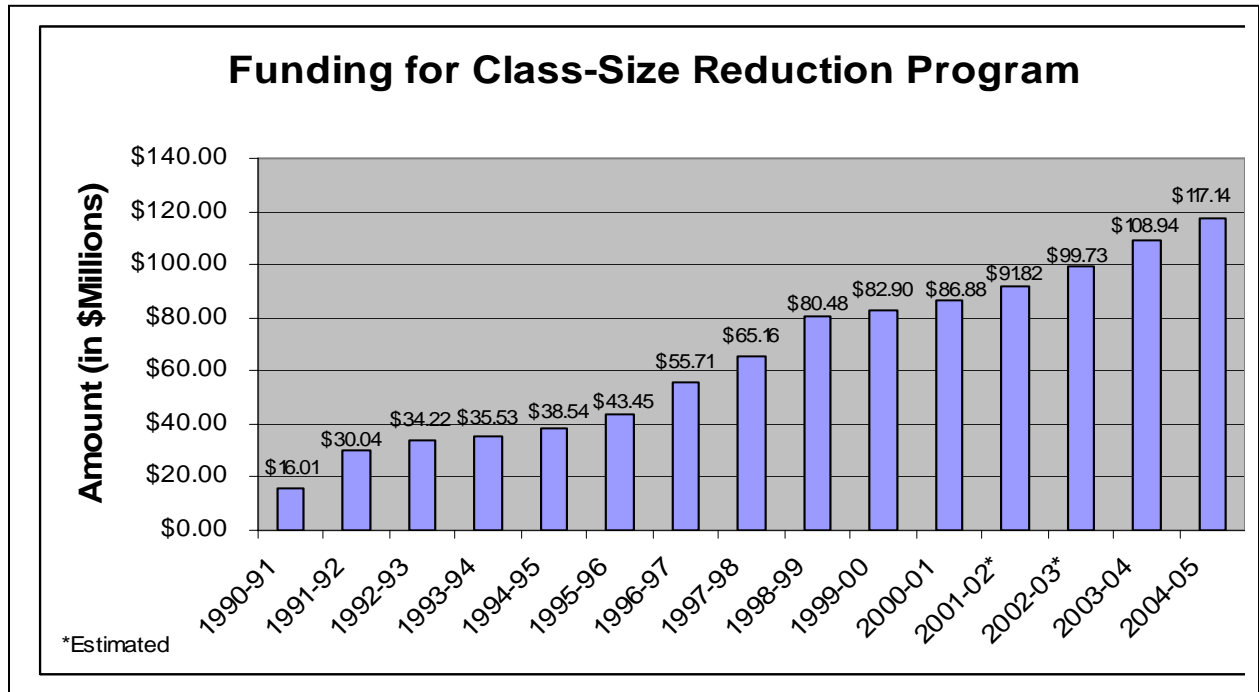


Source: 2004 Variance Report, Nevada Department of Education.

Note: The actual funding allocation for Nevada's CSR Program is calculated by projecting student growth, figuring in the number of teachers districts would have hired to keep pace with that growth under the old ratios, then calculating the number of additional teachers needed to reduce the pupil-to-teacher ratio to the funded level (currently 16 to 1 for grades 1 and 2; 19 to 1 for grade 3). The CSR appropriations bill typically specifies the number of teachers to be hired, by grade. The measure also specifies the amount of the appropriation, by grade, based upon that estimated number of teachers multiplied by actual average of new hire salaries and benefits.

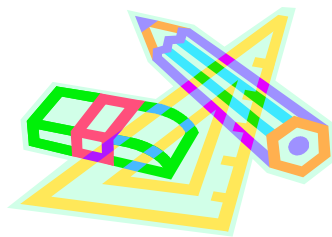
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CSR EXPENDITURES



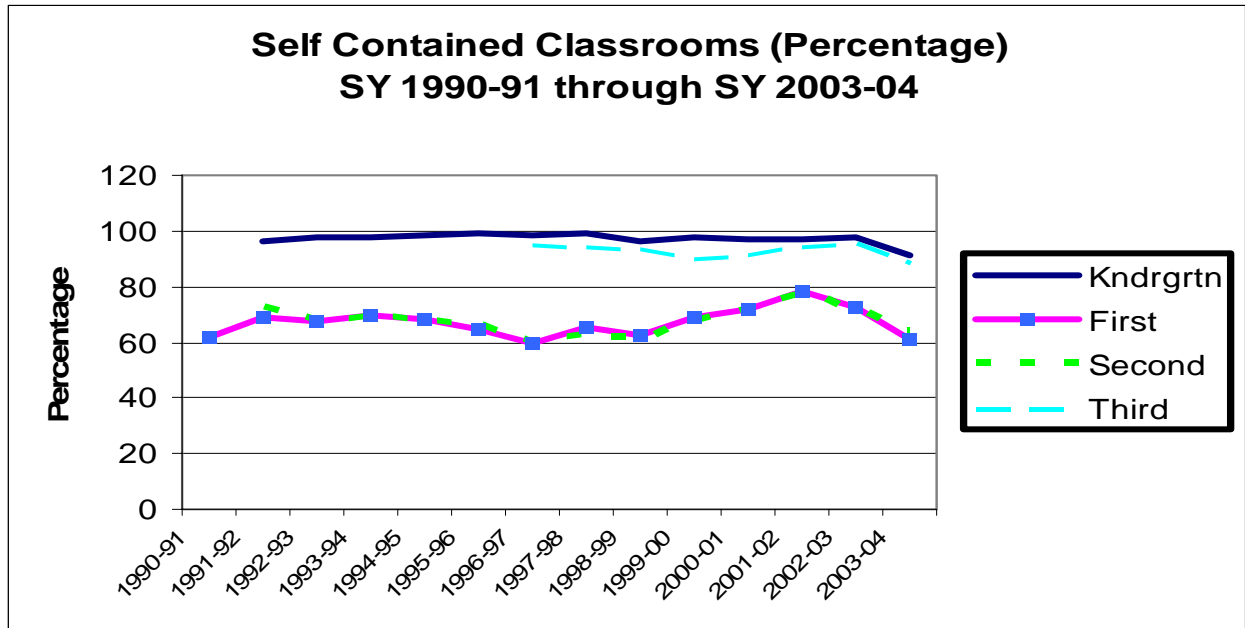
Source: Nevada Department of Education and Fiscal Analysis Division, Legislative Counsel Bureau, 2004

Note: By the end of the 2004-2005 Fiscal Year, Nevada will have expended approximately \$899.5 million for the direct costs of funding the CSR Program, excluding any local capital expenditures or other local costs.



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CSR—CLASSROOM CONFIGURATION



Sources: 2004 Variance Report, Nevada Department of Education.

The table below lists the percentage of “self-contained” Kindergarten, 1st, 2nd, and 3rd grade classrooms, where one teacher is alone in the room with the students.

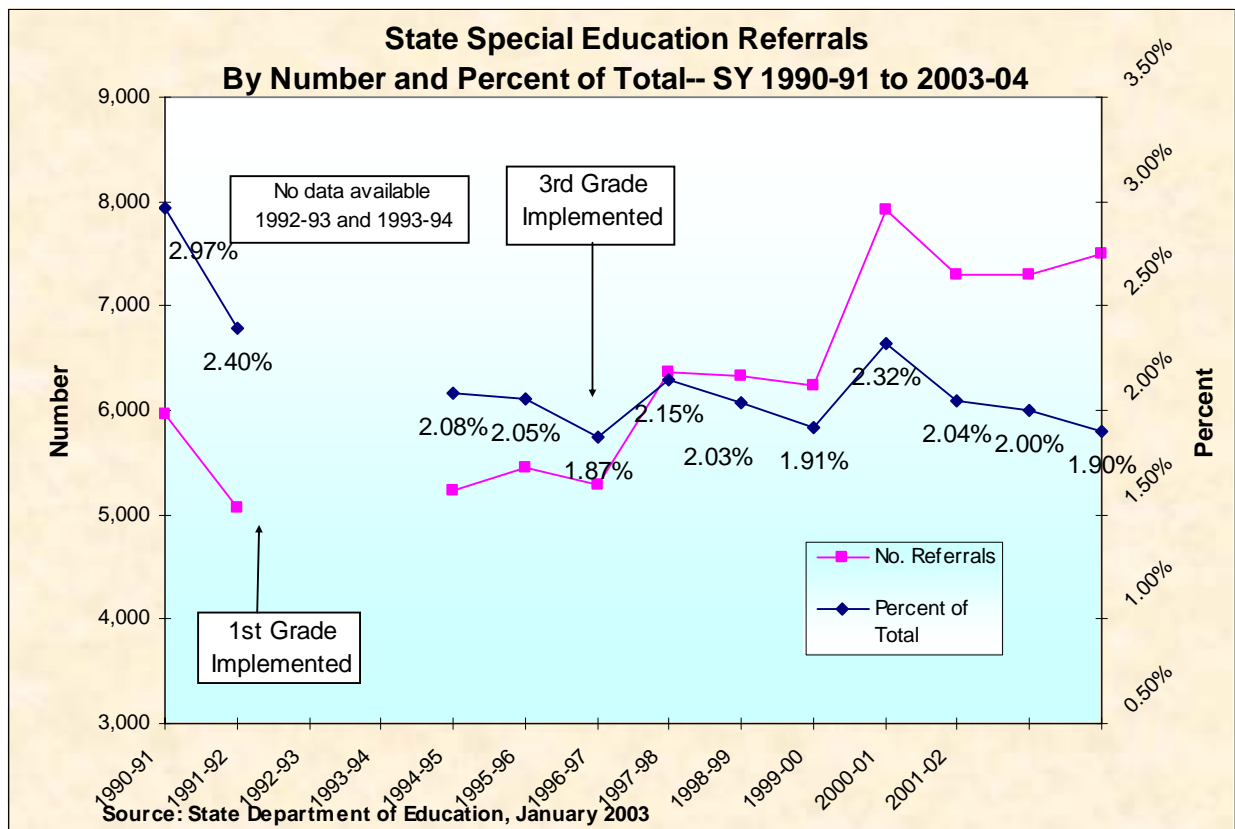
	1990-91	1991-92	1992-93	1993-94	1994-95	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-00	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04
Kindergarten		96.1%	98%	97.7%	98.5%	99.1%	98.5%	99.1%	96.5%	97.9%	97.2%	96.8%	97.5%	91.3%
First	61.5%	68.7%	67.3%	70%	68.2%	64.7%	59.4%	65.2%	62.2%	69.1%	72%	78%	72.9%	61.3%
Second		72.6%	67.4%	69%	68.4%	66.2%	59.6%	62.8%	60.8%	67.5%	71.6%	77.3%	71.8%	63.6%
Third							94.5%	93.8%	93.3%	90%	91.5%	94%	95.7%	88.7%

Source: Nevada Department of Education

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CSR—SPECIAL EDUCATION REFERRALS

The following table displays the total statewide special education referrals for all ages and grades:



Note: The data are not separated by grade or by whether the pupil was part of a federal program to identify children with disabilities beginning at ages 3 and 4.

Source: Nevada Department of Education.



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ELKO DEMONSTRATION PROGRAM

Elko County School District Effect of Alternative Class-Sizes 2002-03 School Year

Alternative Plan

- Student-to-Teacher Ratio (grades 1-3): 22:1
- Student-to-Teacher Ratio (grades 4-6): 25:1

VARIABLE	2001-02 SCHOOL YEAR	2002-03 SCHOOL YEAR
Team Teaching	Eliminated	Eliminated
School Violence – Elementary Schools	98	58
Academic Achievement 3 rd Grade Math	46.3% Proficient	48.9% Proficient
Academic Achievement 3 rd Grade Reading	51.2% Proficient	53.0% Proficient
Academic Achievement 5 th Grade Math	43.6% Proficient	44.1% Proficient
Academic Achievement 5 th Grade Reading	47.6% Proficient	48.4% Proficient

Source: Elko County School District: Class Size Reduction Report, December 2003.