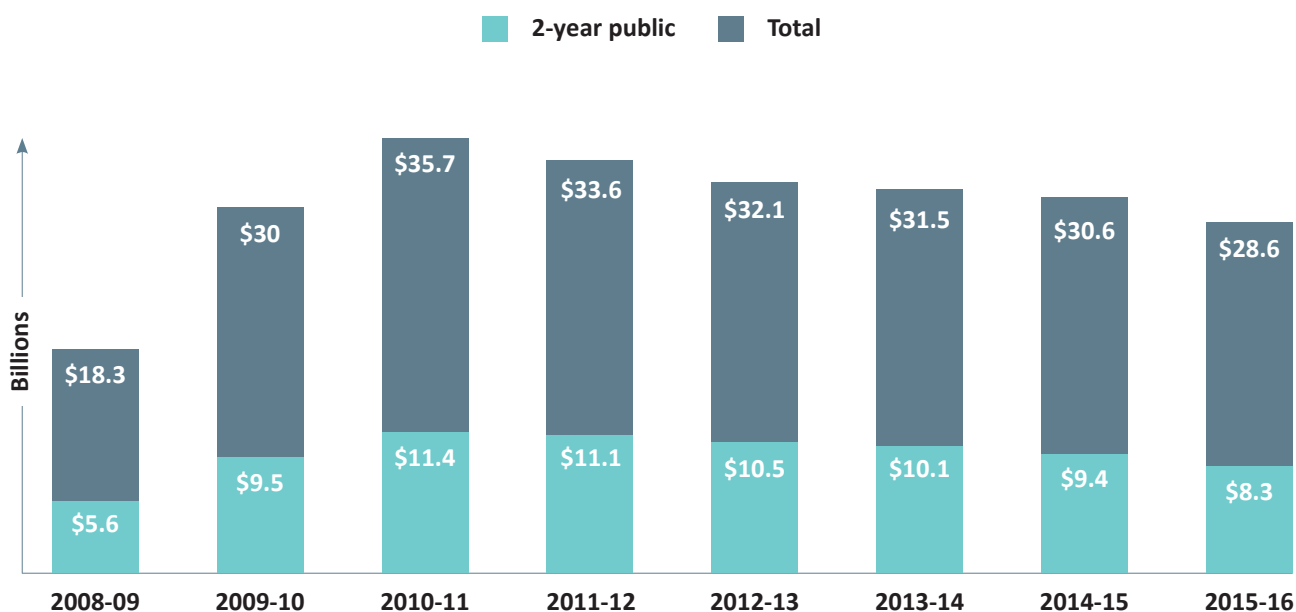




## Trends in Pell Grant spending

Pell Grant expenditures have declined since the peak of the recent recession.

### Pell Grant expenditures at public two-year institutions, 2008-09 to 2015-16



**Source:** U.S. Department of Education, "Federal Pell Grant Program Annual Data Reports, "Federal Pell Grant Program End of Year Reports, Table 19, 2008-2009 through 2015-2016," June 2017.



The Pell Grant program received an unprecedented funding boost in 2010-11 to expand college access in the wake of the economic downturn that started in 2008. Total program spending, as well as spending at two-year institutions, has gradually declined since then, although levels are still above those of the 2008-09 academic year. The number of Pell recipients over the same period mirrored the levels of program expenditures, peaking at more than 9 million in 2010-11 and 2011-12, and dropping below 8 million in 2015-16. The same trend held for Pell recipients at public two-year institutions, cresting at more than 3.4 million in 2011-12 and dipping to 2.5 million in 2015-16. Two-year institutions' share of total Pell Grant funds in 2015-16 was 29 percent, compared to 31 percent the previous year. Similarly, the percent of Pell recipients enrolled at public two-year colleges fell to 32 percent in 2015-16 from 34 percent in 2013-14. The average grant award, however, was higher in 2015-16 than the previous year across all institutions as well as public two-year institutions.

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