

WHERE DO YOUR UNION DUES GO?

A LOOK AT NYSUT SPENDING IN THE 2019-2020 SCHOOL YEAR



AMERICANS FOR
FAIR TREATMENT

The New York State United Teachers (NYSUT) is deeply in debt because of its pension and retiree healthcare liabilities. The union's debt could put pressure on union leadership to either increase membership or increase dues. The union promised millions of dollars to its own staff, including \$650 million in pension and retiree healthcare liabilities. That amount is almost two-and-a-half times the amount the union brings in annually in revenues, around \$266 million in the 2019-20 school year. Last year, the union had to spend \$50 million, or 20% of total spending, on benefits for current and retired union officials in an effort to chip away at this enormous pension and retiree healthcare debt.

During the 2019-2020 school year, NYSUT collected \$138 million in dues from school employees, a 3% increase from the year before, despite only a 1% increase in membership. The increase in revenue is due in part to an increase in membership fees, which increased about \$4 per member. NYSUT is affiliated with both the National Education Association (NEA) and American Federation of Teachers (AFT) so members must pay dues to both entities.

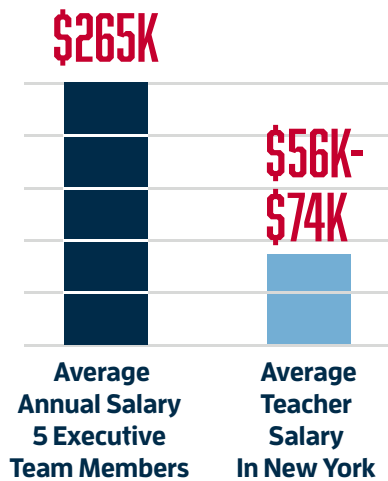
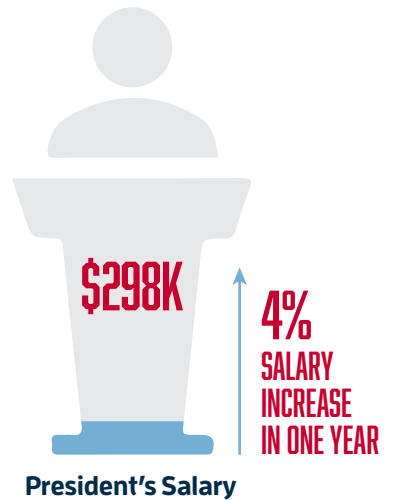
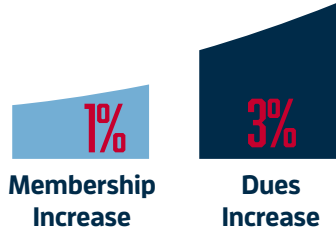
Even with its massive debts, NYSUT chose to increase the president's salary to \$298k, a 4% increase. That's just one of the reasons the union spent 8% more on Union Administration than the year before.

NYSUT spent 370% more on the purchase of investments and fixed assets during the 2019-2020 school year than the year before.

NYSUT paid \$1.4 million to national unions, including the American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO), AFT, and NEA, in addition to \$12.8 million to United Federation of Teachers (UFT).

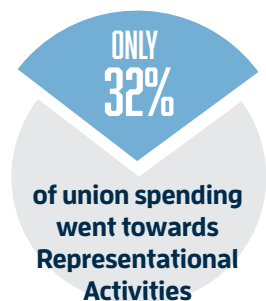
Based on NYSUT's own financial reporting, just 32% of the union's spending went to "representational activities," the category of spending most directly related to labor representation, such as collective bargaining negotiations, handling grievances, and arbitration proceedings. \$2 million, or about 2.4% of representational activities was spent on hotels, transportation, and conference services. 11% was spent on office space and other general overhead, which leaves 19% of representational activities spent on such things as legal defense for members or consulting.

About 35% of NYSUT's overall spending went towards running the union, not member representation. This paid for union officials' salaries and union employee health and retirement benefits, including payments toward the union's large pension liabilities. This also includes: general overhead, such as building security guards, multiple union leadership conferences, and the purchase of investments and fixed assets. The average annual salary for the over 400 union officials who work for NYSUT is \$128k, which doesn't include benefits. The average annual salary for the five executive team members is \$265k, while the average teachers' salary in New York is between \$56k and \$74k.



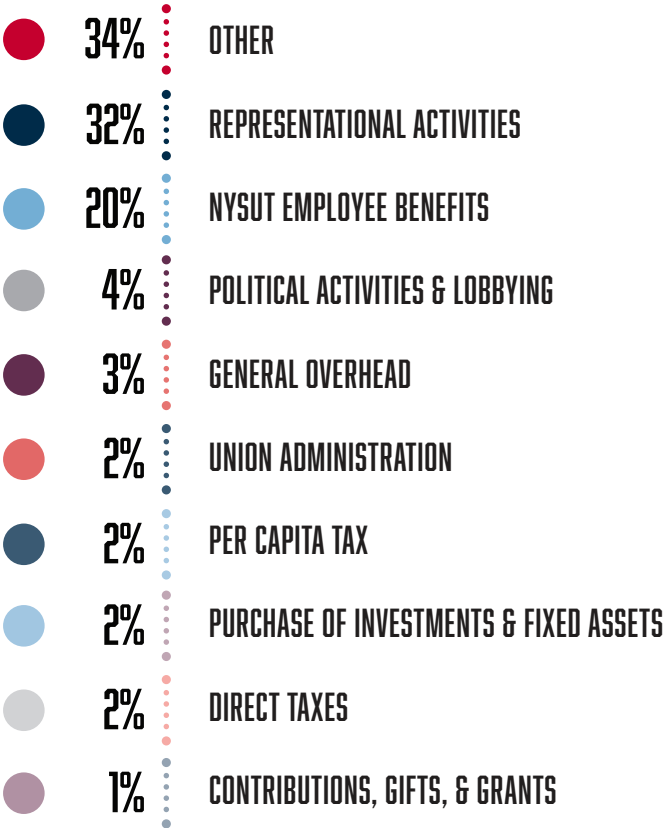
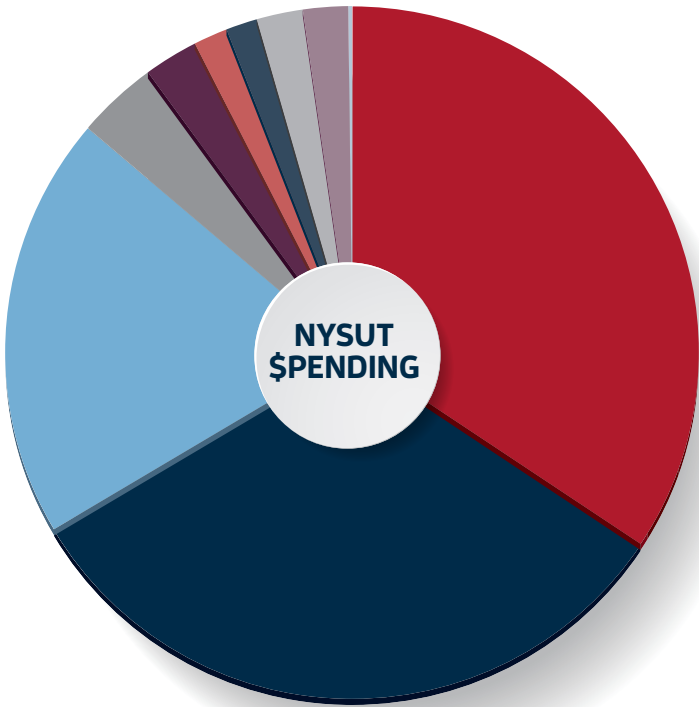
NYSUT MEMBER DUES PAY FOR POLITICS

The Janus v. AFSCME Supreme Court decision relieves nonmembers of the obligation to pay any fees to the union as a condition of public employment. However, for teachers who remain NYSUT members, **Janus changes NOTHING about how union dues are spent: they can still be used for political purposes.**



THE BIG PICTURE

NYSUT member dues pay for politics



In 2019-2020, **NYSUT classified over \$9 million of its spending as “political activities and lobbying,”** but a closer examination of its LM-2 reveals additional spending that appears political. According to federal law, member dues can be used for a variety of political activities, such as get-out-the-vote drives, election mailers, lobbying of legislators, and public marketing campaigns. This spending must be itemized and reported annually to the U.S. Department of Labor on an “LM-2” financial report.

NYSUT’s Political Expenditures Included:

RECENT POLITICAL DONATIONS

\$3.4M

Professional Staff Congress (PSC), the union that represents 30,000 faculty and staff at the City University of New York (CUNY) and the CUNY Research Foundation.

\$1.6M

Various local unions to influence school board and municipal elections, including helping self-described socialist candidate India Walton defeat Buffalo's incumbent mayor in a Democratic primary.

\$490K

Red Horse Strategies, a public relations and political consulting firm that runs ads and issue advocacy for progressive candidates and organizations, including organized labor and Andrew Cuomo for Governor.

\$300K

Strong Economy for All Coalition, a coalition of New York unions and other community organizations that advocate for higher taxes.

\$140K

Fiscal Policy Institute, a left-leaning think tank in Albany focused on economic policy. It is connected to a national network of progressive research organizations.

\$121K

Visuality, a media strategy and production team that developed NYSUT's Member Action Center (MAC) to "harness the power of one-click activism."

\$53K

\$53K to the SUNY Research Foundation to sponsor labor-friendly research.

\$44K

Working Families Party, a labor-funded progressive political party that runs candidates in local and state races.

\$10K

NYS Labor-Religion Coalition, a Democratic organization that unites faith, labor, and community leaders in a statewide movement for social, racial, and economic justice.

\$5K

Coalition of Black Trade Unionists, the leading progressive voice for black workers within the labor movement.

ABC-3455-EFG-235



\$9M+
spent on **political, legislative, and advocacy** work in 2019-2020