

WHERE DO YOUR UNION DUES GO?

A LOOK AT PSEA SPENDING 2021 - 2022



AMERICANS FOR
FAIR TREATMENT

According to the **Pennsylvania State Education Association's (PSEA)** latest federal filing, the union spends \$1 out of every \$5 of member dues representing teachers, support staff, and other members. The rest of the membership dues money goes towards running the union, politics, and lobbying.

In the run-up to the 2022 election season, the PSEA put over \$550,000 of members' dues into a campaign spending account called the "Fund for Student Success." While money from the account cannot be given to political candidates, the fund has no correlation to students or their success. In 2022, all the funds in the account were given to PA Alliance Action, a political committee that donates to progressive Democratic campaign super PACs, and the Democratic Governors Association.

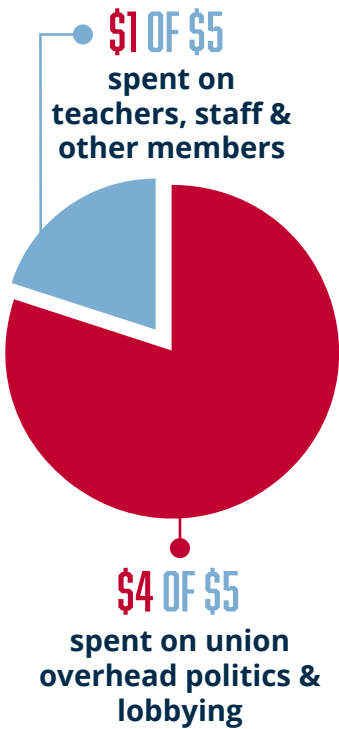
The PSEA also paid its own employees to engage in politics, **spending \$1.73 million on salaries and overhead related to political activities.**

The PSEA spends a significant amount of money on overhead, and it also carries a lot of debt, most of it in the form of **money owed to union staff** for their pensions, retiree healthcare, and accrued vacation time. The union has \$32.2 million in liabilities, which is almost half of the money it brings in yearly from dues. The union spent \$16 million on benefits for its employees, accounting for nearly a quarter of the union's total expenses. As the union struggles to make payments on its debt, it will likely look to raise dues or add new members.

PSEA AND NEA SPENDING 2021-2022

During the 2021-2022 school year, the PSEA collected \$65.4 million in dues from school employees, about \$600,000 higher than last year, despite having 1,270 fewer members. This is due in part to higher dues, which have gone up \$11 since last year. Since 2012, **teachers' dues have increased 15 percent.** When counting what teachers pay to the state and national unions, dues are now \$764 for the 2021-22 school year. This does not include the varying dues several district locals may charge.

PSEA members who pay dues to PSEA and the National Education Association fund a web of progressive organizations and politics. At the state level, PSEA continues to spend only about a fifth of its revenue on activities that directly affect its members, while a significant portion of the rest goes to overhead. During the 2021-2022 school year, PSEA spent 4.3 percent of its members' regular dues on political activity, including money spent on lobbying and donations to political organizations. By comparison, the NEA uses much more of members' regular dues for politics. Both PSEA and NEA also collect and spend political money using their respective Political Action Committees (PACs).



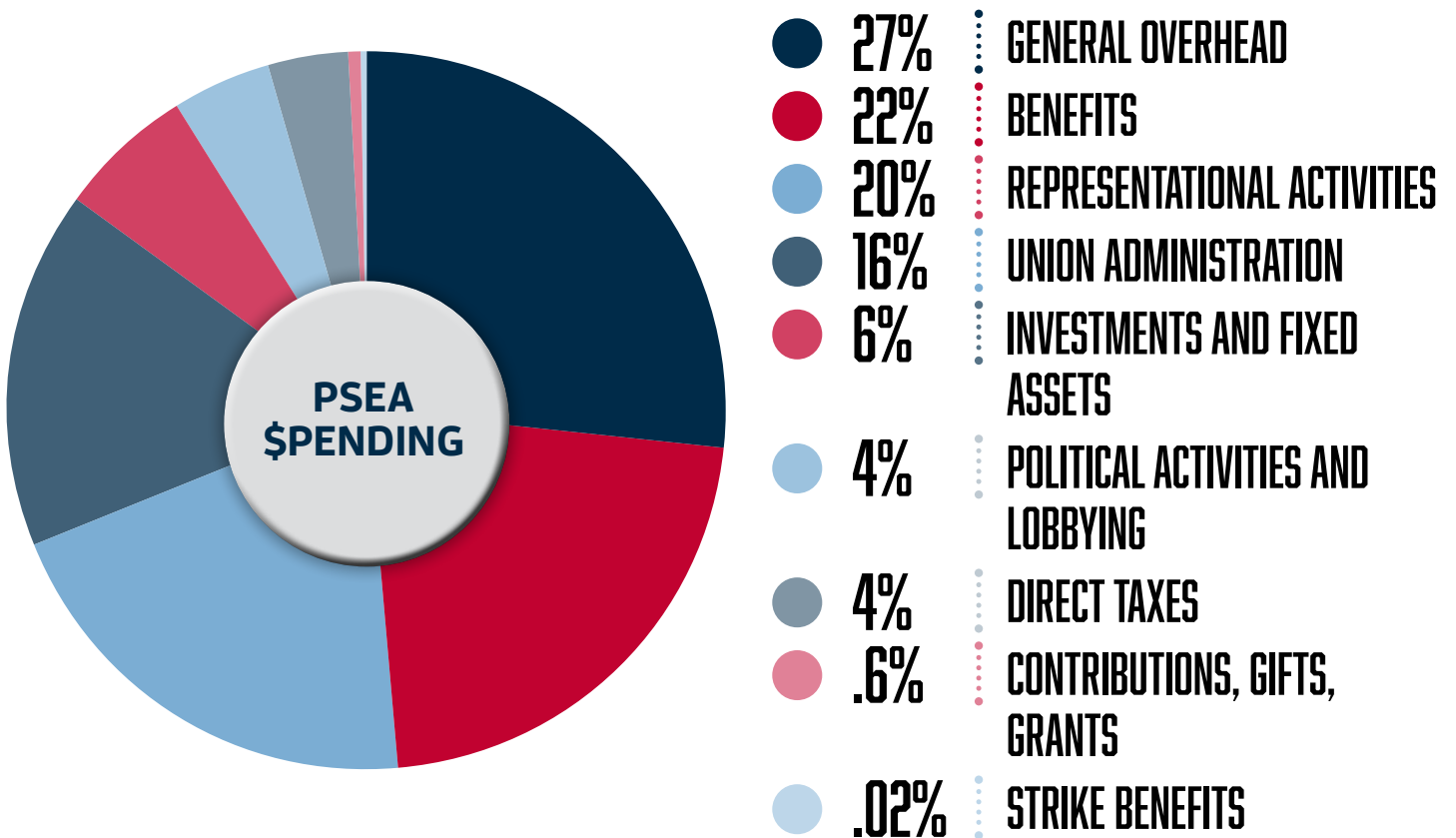
\$65.4M
in dues collected from school employees in the 2021-2022 school year



PSEA DUES MONEY PAYS FOR POLITICS

Based on the PSEA's own financial reporting, **just 20 percent** 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. About **71 percent** of the PSEA's overall spending went to running the union: salaries; union employee health and retirement benefits including payments toward the union's large pension liabilities; general overhead (including expenses such as building security guards); multiple union leadership conferences; and purchase of investments and fixed assets (the last includes land, buildings, and cars).

In 2021-2022, the PSEA spent \$3.2 million of membership dues on "political activities and lobbying." 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.



SO HOW WERE PSEA DUES SPENT ON POLITICS?

All told, the PSEA has spent \$43.6 million of members' dues money on "political activities and lobbying" since 2010.

\$1.7M on union officer and employee compensation for their political and lobbying activities;

\$550K for the internal PSEA account "Fund for Student Success," a 527 independent expenditure committee, which is a political organization able to raise unlimited funds to influence "an issue, policy, appointment or election, be it federal, state or local."

\$285K on political mailings and advocacy materials -- including items such as social media marketing on Facebook and robocalls -- targeting members in 2021-2022;

\$159K on lodging, venue, and vendor expenses for political training and the PSEA's lobbying day;

\$112K to vendors for their work creating and distributing the union's election survey;

\$50K to PR consulting firm Shelly Lyons, billed as a contribution to the progressive CLEAR Coalition;

\$40K to Harrisburg lobbying firm Long Nyquist;

\$41K to Keystone Research Center, a progressive policy institute in Pennsylvania that advocates for policies that lead to higher taxes and more government spending;

\$30K to Pennsylvania Spotlight, a progressive news organization;

\$25K to PA Alliance Action, a political committee that donates to progressive Democratic campaign super PACs

JOIN US TO DEFEND THE LABOR RIGHTS OF AMERICA'S PUBLIC-SECTOR WORKERS

833-969-FAIR (3247) AmericansForFairTreatment.org

AFFT AMERICANS FOR FAIR TREATMENT