

WHERE DO YOUR UNION DUES GO?

A LOOK AT NEW YORK UNITED FEDERATION OF TEACHERS (UFT) IN 2021-2022



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The **United Federation of Teachers (UFT)** represents teachers in the New York City public school system. The union is made up of 190,836 members, 67,935 of whom are retired. As a union that represents public and private sector employees, UFT files a LM-2 financial disclosure form with the United States Department of Labor. So, what does this filing reveal about the union?

From 2019 to 2021, UFT's revenue remained relatively steady. After bringing in \$234 million in 2019, the union saw a dip in revenue, only collecting \$225 million in 2020. In 2021, the most recent reporting year, the union brought in \$236 million. In this span, membership dues accounted for between 76 and 80 percent of the union's revenue. Dues revenue was at a high of \$189 million in 2019 and dipped to \$179 million in 2021. Outside of membership dues, the UFT brings in most remaining revenue through the sale of U.S. Treasury Securities. On the LM-2 filing this is classified as a sale of an investment or fixed asset.

While revenue has remained steady, expenditures have steadily increased. Expenditures jumped from \$215 million in 2019 to \$240 in 2021. Revenue exceeded expenditures in 2019 and 2020, but the union spent \$4 million more than it took in during 2021. Financial irresponsibility like this has added up over the years for UFT. The union's net position is

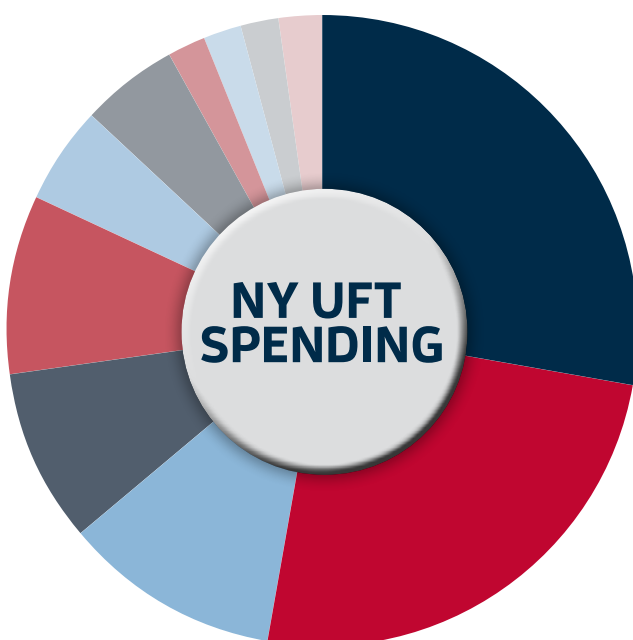
currently **44 million in the red**, almost double what it was in 2019. Post-retirement obligations, also known as pension benefits, are UFT's biggest liability, totaling nearly \$89 million as of the 2021 filing. This may explain why union president Michael Mulgrew saw a \$17,000 pay decrease from 2020 to 2021. Despite the pay decrease, Mulgrew still brought in \$339,298 in 2021, over five times the average salary for a New York City public school teacher.



Going deeper into the union's expenditures, per capita tax paid to affiliated unions was consistently the highest expense for the union. Per capita tax accounted for around 28 percent of expenses in each year from 2019 to 2021. The UFT is affiliated with the New York State United Teachers (NYSUT). The NYSUT is uniquely affiliated with both the National Education Association and the American Federation of Teachers.

UFT's second highest expense was general overhead, which includes expenses such as rent, utilities employee cell phones, and computer software. Of note, the union spent just over \$11 million dollars on rent for 7 properties in 2021. Representational activities accounted for around 10 percent of spending each year. UFT also spent 8 to 12 percent on purchasing investments and fixed assets and between 6 and 9 percent on union employee benefits.

NYUFT SPENDING 2021



28%	PER CAPITA TAX
25%	GENERAL OVERHEAD
11%	REPRESENTATIONAL ACTIVITIES
9%	BENEFITS
9%	PURCHASE OF INVESTMENTS AND FIXED ASSETS
5%	LOANS MADE
5%	UNION ADMINISTRATION
2%	POLITICAL ACTIVITIES AND LOBBYING
2%	CONTRIBUTIONS, GIFTS, GRANTS
2%	DIRECT TAXES
2%	TO AFFILIATES OF FUNDS COLLECTED ON THEIR BEHALF

Spending on political activities and lobbying has increased by almost \$1 million since 2019, reaching \$5.06 million in 2021. About \$2.1 million of this went to employees and officers as compensation for their political activity and lobbying efforts. Other expenditures were focused on



mailers, videos, and other forms of media for political advocacy outreach to members. The union gave \$132,000 to Eleanor's Legacy, an organization that encourages pro-choice Democratic women to run for public office. UFT also made a \$405,423 transfer to the union's political arm, the UFT COPE fund.

\$132K

Eleanor Roosevelt Legacy, an organization that encourages pro-choice Democratic women to run for public office

\$104K

Hart Research Associates, a political research firm that works with organized labor and progressive candidates and organizations

\$2,179M

UFT union staff payments for political activity conducted during the workday

\$951K

to various firms for printing and direct mail outreach to members

\$235K

to various firms for digital outreach to members

\$69K

for video production related to the union's political activity

\$405K

UFT COPE Local, the political arm of the UFT

\$614K

Stroock, Stroock and Lavan for legal fees

According to New York State campaign finance reporting, the UFT COPE fund has made \$6.9 million in campaign contributions since 2000. In 2021, the UFT COPE fund gave \$4.2 million to NY4KIDS Inc, an independent expenditure committee **chaired by UFT executives**. The group spent \$3.7 million in support of Scott Stringer. Stringer received a whopping 5.5 percent of the vote in the 2021 New York City Democratic primary election for mayor. Aside from direct contributions to candidates, UFT COPE endorses candidates for statewide



office and state legislature seats. In the 2022 election cycle, UFT endorsed all four Democratic candidates for statewide office. **The union also endorsed 179 Democrats out of the 212 state legislature seats up for election.** The union also makes recommendations for federal races, recommending members vote for Chuck Schumer in the United States Senate race and all 26 Democratic candidates running for the United States House of Representatives

As previously mentioned, the UFT is associated with NYSUT, NEA, and AFT. Given that over one quarter of UFT membership dues are transferred to affiliates, members should be aware of how those affiliates spend the dues money they receive. For more information on UFT's affiliates, see the below links:

[NYUFT: Where do your union dues go?](#)

[NEA: Where do your union dues go?](#)

[AFT: Where do your union dues go?](#)

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