

United Teachers of Dade

WHERE DO YOUR UNION DUES GO?

A LOOK AT UNITED TEACHERS OF DADE SPENDING IN FISCAL YEAR 2025 (Jul 1, 2024 – Jun 30, 2025)

In the year ending June 2025, United Teachers of Dade forwarded \$4.4 million, roughly 42 cents of every dollar it spent, straight to its affiliated unions.¹ United Teachers of Dade is the Miami-Dade local of the Florida Education Association (FEA), the state teachers' union, which is tied to a state political committee that has spent \$6.9 million on Florida politics since 2015.

UTD itself took in \$10.2 million and spent \$10.5 million in FY 2025, running a \$269,092 deficit.² After the pass-through to affiliates, its next largest use of money was its own payroll: \$3.9 million in salaries, benefits, and payroll taxes.³

The larger political numbers sit with the state parent, not the local. The FEA Advocacy Fund has reported \$6.9 million in political contributions since 2015, with \$6.0 million of it going to the Florida Democratic Party and Democratic-aligned committees and \$817,000 to Republicans.⁴ UTD also books its own political line items, including a \$123,011 legislative fund and a \$109,833 election expense in FY 2025 alone.⁵ The candidates the fund bankrolls include Carlos Guillermo Smith, now a Florida state senator, whose campaigns it gave \$3,000 and who voted against Florida's Fairness in Women's Sports Act, offering amendments to keep biological males eligible for girls' and women's sports, and who called the child-custody provisions of Florida's 2023 gender-transition bill 'fascist.'⁶⁷ UTD does not register its own lobbyists in Tallahassee; its state legislative lobbying runs through the FEA, which appears as a registered principal while UTD does not.⁸

Meanwhile the union's leadership is well paid. UTD reported eight employees and officers above \$100,000 in FY 2025, led by its president at \$246,324.⁹ Revenue has fallen roughly 21% from its \$12.9 million peak in FY 2020 to \$10.2 million in FY 2025, declining in four of the last five years.¹⁰

In sum, United Teachers of Dade functions as a collection point that routes the bulk of its members' dues upward to its parent unions, while paying its own officers six-figure salaries and drawing down its reserves.

FINANCIAL POSITION

United Teachers of Dade ended FY 2025 with \$13.1 million in total assets against \$3.0 million in liabilities, leaving \$10.1 million in net assets.¹¹ The union spent more than it took in, with expenses

of \$10.5 million exceeding revenue of \$10.2 million, a \$269,092 deficit that reduced net assets from \$10.5 million a year earlier.¹²

Item	Amount
Total Revenue	\$10,185,378
Total Expenses	\$10,454,470
Revenue Less Expenses	-\$269,092
Total Assets	\$13,107,157
Total Liabilities	\$2,995,870
Net Assets	\$10,111,287

SPENDING BREAKDOWN

United Teachers of Dade spent \$10.5 million in FY 2025, and the single largest category was not representation of Miami-Dade educators. It was \$4,404,826 in payments to affiliates, 42.1% of everything the union spent, forwarded to the Florida Education Association and the national AFT and NEA.¹³ That pass-through is the defining feature of UTD's budget: before it spends a dollar on its own members, more than four in ten dues dollars leave the local entirely.

The second largest use was compensation. Salaries, benefits, pension contributions, and payroll taxes totaled \$3.9 million, 37.4% of spending.¹⁴ The remainder covered occupancy (\$300,000), office expenses (\$350,868), and a set of itemized programs that include \$144,474 in organizing, \$123,011 for a legislative fund, and \$109,833 in election expenses.¹⁵

Category	Amount	% of Total
Payments to Affiliates (FEA/AFT/NEA)	\$4,404,826	42.1%
Salaries, Benefits & Payroll Taxes	\$3,906,061	37.4%
Office Expenses	\$350,868	3.4%
Occupancy	\$300,000	2.9%
Grants	\$241,938	2.3%
Legal Fees	\$156,512	1.5%
Organizing Expense	\$144,474	1.4%
Other Professional Fees	\$144,211	1.4%
Conferences & Meetings	\$134,224	1.3%
Legislative Fund Expense	\$123,011	1.2%
Election Expense	\$109,833	1.1%

Event Expense	\$86,331	0.8%
Information Technology	\$84,570	0.8%
Accounting Fees	\$81,676	0.8%
Travel	\$79,010	0.8%
Insurance	\$65,244	0.6%
Advertising & Promotion	\$24,854	0.2%
Depreciation & Amortization	\$14,420	0.1%
All Other Expenses	\$2,407	0.0%

What Do These Categories Mean?

Payments to Affiliates: Per-capita dues forwarded to the parent unions, the Florida Education Association and the national AFT and NEA.
Salaries, Benefits & Payroll Taxes: Compensation of officers and staff, pension contributions, health and other benefits, and payroll taxes.
Office Expenses: General administrative costs such as supplies, printing, postage, and telephone.
Occupancy: Rent, utilities, and facilities costs for the union's offices.
Grants: Grants and other assistance paid to domestic organizations and individuals.
Legal Fees: Payments to outside legal counsel.
Organizing Expense: An itemized expense for member organizing and recruitment.:
Other Professional Fees: Payments to consultants and other outside service providers not separately itemized.
Conferences & Meetings: Costs of conferences, conventions, and meetings.
Legislative Fund Expenses: An itemized expense the union reports for its legislative and lobbying activity.
Election Expense: An itemized expense the union reports tied to elections.
Event Expense: An itemized expense for union events.
Information Technology: Computer systems, software, and IT services.
Accounting Fees: Payments to outside accountants and auditors.
Travel: Travel costs for officers, staff, and members.
Insurance: Insurance other than employee benefits.
Advertising & Promotion: Advertising and promotional costs.
Depreciation & Amortization: The accounting write-down of buildings, equipment, and other capital assets over time.
All Other Expenses: Miscellaneous expenses not separately itemized elsewhere.

POLITICAL SPENDING

United Teachers of Dade is not a bystander in Florida politics. On its own 990 it reported \$123,011 in a legislative fund and \$109,833 in election expenses in FY 2025, and it maintains a registered political footprint through its parent union.¹⁶ But the far larger political numbers belong to its state parent. The FEA Advocacy Fund, a separate political committee tied to FEA, is what appears in Florida campaign-finance records.¹⁷

PAC POLITICAL SPENDING

The FEA Advocacy Fund is a separate political committee tied to the Florida Education Association. Since 2015 the fund has reported \$7.8 million in total spending, of which \$6.9 million went to political contributions and \$816,956.75 to vendors such as direct-mail and printing firms. Those vendor payments buy services rather than support candidates, and are excluded from every partisan figure that follows.¹⁸

The partisan tilt is decisive. Of the \$6.9 million in contributions, \$6.0 million — 88.1% of every dollar that went to a recipient with an identifiable party — went to the Florida Democratic Party and Democratic-aligned committees, spread across the fund's political contributions.¹⁹ The single largest recipient was the Florida Democratic Party at \$1.1 million, and nine of the fund's ten largest recipients are confirmed Democratic party or Democratic-aligned committees. The fund also routed \$817,000, or 11.9%, to Republican-aligned committees, a modest hedge in a state where Republicans control the legislature.²⁰

The fund's individual candidate recipients illustrate the ideological direction of that money. Among them is Carlos Guillermo Smith, now a Florida state senator, whose campaigns the FEA Advocacy Fund financed with \$3,000.²¹ Smith holds one of the most aggressive records in the Florida Legislature on gender ideology. He voted against the state's Fairness in Women's Sports Act and filed amendments that would have kept biological males eligible to compete in girls' and women's sports.²² As the Legislature moved in 2023 to bar puberty blockers, cross-sex hormones, and gender-transition surgeries for minors and to give state courts temporary emergency jurisdiction to take custody of children receiving that care, Smith said of the proposed custody provision: 'Parents would be charged with felonies [and] thrown in prison. This is fascist.'²³

Recipient	Amount	Party
Florida Democratic Party	\$1,149,400	D
Committee for Progressive Leadership	\$795,000	D
Building the Bay PC	\$412,500	D
Florida 2020	\$395,000	D
Florida Democratic Legislative Campaign Committee	\$352,000	D
TOTAL — TOP 5	\$3,103,900	

FLORIDA STATE LOBBYING

Unlike its parent union, United Teachers of Dade does not lobby the Florida Legislature under its own name. A review of the Legislature's 2026 lobbyist registration list returns no principal record for United Teachers of Dade; the Florida Education Association, by contrast, appears as a registered legislative principal.²⁴

What UTD does report is its own money for the effort. Its FY 2025 Form 990 books a \$123,011 legislative fund expense, and the union forwards \$4.4 million a year in per-capita dues to the Florida Education Association, which is the entity registered as the lobbying principal in Tallahassee.²⁵

In short, United Teachers of Dade's statehouse influence is exercised through the Florida Education Association rather than through lobbyists registered to the local. The verifiable record shows UTD booking its own legislative-fund expense and paying per-capita dues to FEA, while the registered state lobbying is conducted in the parent union's name.

TOP COMPENSATION

United Teachers of Dade reported eight employees and officers with total compensation above \$100,000 in FY 2025, even as it ran a deficit and forwarded 42% of its budget out the door to affiliates.²⁶ President Karla Mats received \$246,324 and Secretary-Treasurer Mindy Grimes-Festge received \$228,672; a second officer listed as president, Antonio White, received \$221,298, reflecting a leadership transition during the year.²⁷

Officer	Title	Total Compensation
Karla Mats	President	\$246,324
Mindy Grimes-Festge	Secretary-Treasurer	\$228,672
Antonio White	President	\$221,298
Michael F. Molnar	Director	\$174,076
Joseph M. Minor	Director	\$154,325
Valda McKinney	Member Organizer	\$140,744
Kristi Alger	Finance & Operations	\$134,778
Elsa Lopez	Communications	\$134,182

EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

On top of salaries, United Teachers of Dade spent \$442,825 on employee benefits and contributed \$216,596 to pension plans in FY 2025, a combined \$659,421 in staff benefits.²⁸

Benefit Type	Amount
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Other Employee Benefits	\$442,825
Pension Plan Contributions	\$216,596
TOTAL BENEFITS	\$659,421

YOUR RIGHT TO LEAVE

Miami-Dade educators are not required to fund any of this. Under *Janus v. AFSCME*, no public-sector employee can be compelled to pay union dues or fees as a condition of employment.²⁹ To learn more about your rights, visit americansforfairtreatment.org or call (833) 969-FAIR.

Data sourced from United Teachers of Dade's IRS Form 990 (EIN 59-0661561) for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2025, and from Florida Division of Elections filings for the FEA Advocacy Fund (2015-2026): \$7,758,606.75 in total spending, \$6,941,650 in political contributions (88.1% Democratic / 11.9% Republican of the \$6,857,150 in party-identified contributions) and \$816,956.75 to vendors, which are excluded from the partisan split.

NUMBERS TO HIGHLIGHT

Key statistics from United Teachers of Dade's FY 2025 990 filing

42.1% Of UTD's FY 2025 spending forwarded to affiliates (FEA/AFT/NEA).

\$4.4M Sent up to parent unions in a single year.

\$6.9M Political contributions by the FEA Advocacy Fund, a separate political committee tied to FEA, since 2015.

88.1% Share of party-identified PAC dollars going to Democrats — \$6.0M against \$817,000.

\$1.15M To the Florida Democratic Party, the fund's single largest recipient.

\$246,324 Total compensation for UTD President Karla Mats.

8 UTD employees and officers paid over \$100,000 in FY 2025.

-\$269,092 UTD's FY 2025 operating deficit.

\$232,844 UTD's own legislative-fund and election expenses booked in FY 2025.

¹ IRS Form 990 (EIN 59-0661561), Part IX, Line 21 (Payments to affiliates), fiscal year ending June 30, 2025.

² IRS Form 990 (EIN 59-0661561), Part I, Lines 12, 18, and 19, fiscal year ending June 30, 2025.

³ IRS Form 990 (EIN 59-0661561), Part IX, Lines 5 through 10, fiscal year ending June 30, 2025.

⁴ Florida Division of Elections, FEA Advocacy Fund committee filings, 2015-2026

⁵ IRS Form 990 (EIN 59-0661561), Part IX, Line 24 (Other Expenses: 'LEGISLATIVE FUND EXPENSE' and 'ELECTION EXPENSE'), fiscal year ending June 30, 2025.

⁶ Florida CS/HB 1475 (2021), Sex-specific Student Athletic Teams or Sports; passed the House 77-40; Rep. Carlos Guillermo Smith offered amendments to preserve transgender-athlete eligibility and voted against the bill.

⁷ Florida SB 254 (2023), restricting gender-transition procedures for minors and adults and authorizing state courts to take temporary emergency jurisdiction over children subjected to such care; of that provision Smith said, 'Parents would be charged with felonies [and] thrown in prison. This is fascist.' (Florida news coverage, April 2023).

⁸ Florida Legislature, 2026 Registrations by Lobbyist Name (floralobbyist.gov); the Florida Education Association appears as a registered principal, United Teachers of Dade does not.

⁹ IRS Form 990 (EIN 59-0661561), Part VII, Section A, fiscal year ending June 30, 2025.

¹⁰ IRS Form 990 (EIN 59-0661561), Part I, Line 12, fiscal years ending June 2020 through June 2025.

¹¹ IRS Form 990 (EIN 59-0661561), Part X, Lines 16, 26, and 33, fiscal year ending June 30, 2025.

¹² IRS Form 990 (EIN 59-0661561), Part I, Lines 18, 19, and 22, fiscal year ending June 30, 2025.

¹³ IRS Form 990 (EIN 59-0661561), Part IX, Line 21 (Payments to affiliates), fiscal year ending June 30, 2025.

¹⁴ IRS Form 990 (EIN 59-0661561), Part IX, Lines 5 through 10, fiscal year ending June 30, 2025.

¹⁵ IRS Form 990 (EIN 59-0661561), Part IX, Lines 16 and 24 (Other Expenses, itemized), fiscal year ending June 30, 2025.

¹⁶ IRS Form 990 (EIN 59-0661561), Part IX, Line 24 (Other Expenses: 'LEGISLATIVE FUND EXPENSE' and 'ELECTION EXPENSE'), fiscal year ending June 30, 2025.

¹⁷ IRS Form 990 (EIN 59-0661561), Part IX, Line 21, fiscal year ending June 30, 2025.

¹⁸ Florida Division of Elections, FEA Advocacy Fund committee filings, 2015-2026

¹⁹ Florida Division of Elections, FEA Advocacy Fund committee filings, 2015-2026

²⁰ Florida Division of Elections, FEA Advocacy Fund committee filings, 2015-2026

²¹ Florida Division of Elections, FEA Advocacy Fund committee filings, 2015-2026

²² Florida CS/HB 1475 (2021), Sex-specific Student Athletic Teams or Sports; House vote 77-40; Smith's amendments and No vote recorded in the House Journal.

²³ Florida SB 254 (2023); Smith quoted on the bill's child-custody provision: 'Parents would be charged with felonies [and] thrown in prison. This is fascist.' (Florida news coverage, April 2023).

²⁴ Florida Legislature, 2026 Registrations by Lobbyist Name (floralobbyist.gov): no principal entry for United Teachers of Dade; Florida Education Association listed as a registered principal.

²⁵ IRS Form 990 (EIN 59-0661561), Part IX, Line 24 ('LEGISLATIVE FUND EXPENSE') and Line 21 (Payments to affiliates), fiscal year ending June 30, 2025.

²⁶ IRS Form 990 (EIN 59-0661561), Part VII, Section A, and Schedule J, fiscal year ending June 30, 2025.

²⁷ IRS Form 990 (EIN 59-0661561), Part VII, Section A (Mats, Grimes-Festge, White), fiscal year ending June 30, 2025.

²⁸ IRS Form 990 (EIN 59-0661561), Part IX, Lines 8 and 9, fiscal year ending June 30, 2025.

²⁹ Janus v. AFSCME, Council 31, 138 S. Ct. 2448 (2018).