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## State of the Teachers' Unions: Money and Membership

By Stephen Sawchuk

The National Education Association and the American Federation of Teachers remain powerful players in the K-12 policy arena. With nearly 4 million members in total, they are deeply engaged in elections and in policy. (Five of the unions' state affiliates have merged.)

Though often lumped together, the two unions differ in the individuals they represent, their governance, and even their internal workings. In the NEA, state affiliates hold much power and often form coalitions to support or oppose initiatives. The AFT's direction is a function of internal parties or "caucuses." It is dominated by its New York City affiliate and its strongest caucus, but challengers are growing more vocal.

July is convention time for the two national teachers' unions. [Visit the Teacher Beat blog](#) for on-the-ground coverage of the NEA Representative Assembly in Denver, running from July 2 to 5, and the AFT convention, which runs from July 11 to 14.

### POLITICAL ORGANIZATIONS

Both unions have set up separate political organizations to support campaigns and craft issue-based political ads. Unions also engage in other political activities that do not require them to spend from these separate organizations. Those activities including lobbying, direct communication with members, and spending on ballot initiatives.

NEA

Fund for Children and Public Education

Advocacy Fund (Super Pac)

AFT

Committee on Political Education

Solidarity Fund 527

■ PAC: Political action committees donate directly to candidates or to political parties, subject to federal and state contribution limits. PACs are funded through voluntary donations, not dues.

■ Depending on their setup and on state and federal campaign-finance laws, these committees fund independent expenditures and/or issue-based ads.

### CAMPAIGN SPENDING

The following figures represent the national unions' political spending on federal, state, and local candidates and ballot initiatives. Spending includes both PAC dollars and independent expenditures. Contributions to outside-spending groups are not included.

The national figures are dwarfed by the spending of the unions' state and local affiliates, which have their own political organizations.

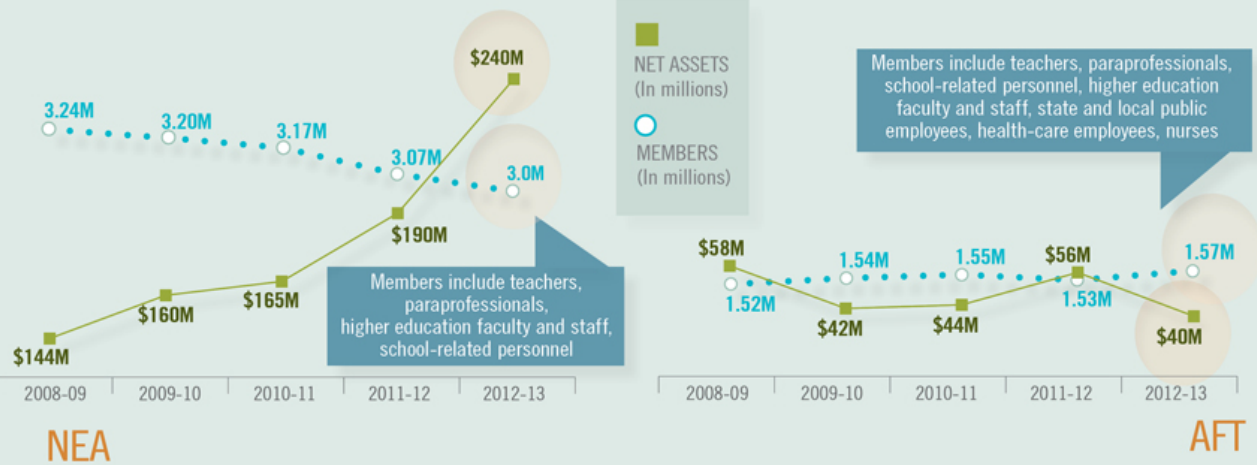


### MEMBERS AND ASSETS

Expected President-Elect **Lily Eskelsen Garcia**

Current President **Dennis Van Roekel**  
Salary: \$306,286

President **Randi Weingarten**  
Salary: \$401,578



## GOVERNANCE

NEA



### 2014 Elections

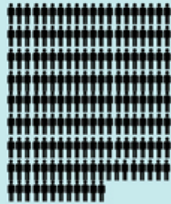
NEA executive committee members and board members are term limited to two three-year terms. Dennis Van Roekel is term-limited out; the union's new president is expected to be Lily Eskelsen Garcia, the union's current vice president.

**Executive committee**  
Includes the president, vice president, and secretary-treasurer, plus six other elected members. Members are elected individually.



### Board of Directors

172-member board is proportional to the number of members in each state affiliate.



### Representative Assembly of some 9,000 delegates

is proportional to the number of members in each state and local affiliate.

AFT



### 2014 Elections

The AFT does not have term limits. It elects its officers every two years. Current President Randi Weingarten is expected to keep her seat.

**Executive Council**  
consists of three officers, the president, secretary-treasurer, and executive vice president,



and 43 vice presidents.



### The 3,000 delegates to the AFT's biennial convention

are proportional to the membership of state and local affiliates. Delegates elect a slate of candidates, rather than a series of independent candidates

**Sources:** U.S. Department of Labor; Center for Responsive Politics; National Institute on Money in State Politics | **Design:** Linda Jurkowitz