

Frequently Asked Questions about Political Action Contributions

What is the MEA PAC?

The MEA PAC is the state political action committee for members of the Michigan Education Association. It is funded by voluntary contributions from MEA members across the state and is not affiliated with any political party. The goal of the MEA PAC is to support and strengthen the commitment of the government and citizens of Michigan to excellence in public education at all levels. Forty percent (40%) of the dollars contributed to MEA PAC are rebated to coordinating council PACs and can be used to support recommended candidates in local elections like school board, city council, county commission, twp board, etc.

What is the NEA Fund?

The NEA Fund for Children and Public Education is the federal political action committee for members of the National Education Association. NEA members and staff from all 51 state affiliates make voluntary contributions to the NEA Fund.

What do these PACs do?

The NEA Fund makes contributions to recommended candidates for President, the U.S. House and Senate and also some candidates for state office. The MEA PAC makes contributions to recommended candidates for state wide offices, state senate and state house. PAC money is contributed to political party committees who support those candidates and PAC can also pay for independent communications aimed at the general public urging voters to vote for or against particular state and federal candidates.

Why should I contribute to PAC?

School employees are affected each day by decisions made by politicians. The tests students must take, the number of students in the classroom, the school calendar, the hours you work, the amount of funding available to support school lunch programs, after-school programs and programs for students with special needs, your benefits and salary – these are ALL impacted by elected officials. If we join together at the state and national level, we can elect legislators who will work with and for us when making decisions that impact your work, your students, your schools and your communities.

I already pay dues – why should I pay more?

Dues dollars are used to fund the operation of our local, county, state and national associations. Federal and State laws prohibit **ANY** dues dollars from being direct contributions to candidates. Your **voluntary** political contributions go into a separate account to be used for those purposes.

Should school employees as a group really be involved in politics?

Elected politicians have a great deal of control over school employees. We need public officials who are responsive to our concerns. Thus, we must be involved in electing our political officials. As a group, we can do more than we can as individuals.

Who decides how the PAC funds are used?

A committee of MEA/NEA members (who are PAC contributors) screens and interviews candidates and makes a recommendation to our members.

What determines if a candidate gets our recommendation and financial support?

Candidates are asked questions about their beliefs and positions on issues related to education legislation, collective bargaining, benefits, retirement and similar issues. A candidate's position on social issues, such as gun control, reproductive rights are not considered in the interview and do not impact a recommendation.

I have heard that only Democratic candidates are supported by MEA. Is that true?

PAC funds have been used to support both Democrats and Republicans. The criteria for a recommendation are the candidate's stand and performance on education issues, not his or her political party. MEA/NEA is the party of education!