

REPORT for AY 23  
INVESTIGATIVE BUDGET COMMITTEE  
by Chair, Rala Diakite (Fitchburg State University)

The investigative Budget Committee met monthly this past year. Starting in May, and throughout the summer, the focus was on training that would give committee members tools with which to better understand and examine university finances. In May, we had an NEA training on how to read University audited reports and related materials. In June and July, we organized interactive workshops led by MSCA members on how to find and organize data using the IPEDS (Integrated Post-Secondary Education) and Cthru (The Massachusetts Office of the Comptroller's financial records platform for statewide spending) databases. In September and October, we attended the second part of the NEA training organized by MTA with an NEA financial expert Gregg Gascon, which was a hands-on interactive seminar called "Understanding your University Finances for Bargaining and Organizing. Members outside the committee were invited and included at these presentations, and information was shared back to campus chapters. Starting in the Fall the committee began to develop a list of issues to identify and explore within our own institutions that could be useful for bargaining, such as ARPA monies, reserves, salaries of administrators, debt burden, ratios of administrators, faculty and students, and change over time in university spending, as well as the student retention, and hiring and retention of diverse faculty and librarians. In the Spring, the committee viewed presentations by its members on topics we had chosen to investigate. NEA financial expert Gregg Gascon completed an in depth financial report, the first of several - on one of the state universities; he presented this to committee members, also with the goal of showing methods by which audited financials can be examined. In the upcoming year, the committee hopes to continue this work of promoting financial literacy among our campus chapters, preparing reports and information requests for upcoming bargaining, and sharing information on our activities in the MSCA *Perspective*.