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Active Certified and Active Non-Certified Member Elections

The PSERS Board of Trustees will conduct two elections this fall. One is for an active certified member and one for an active non-certified member, each to serve a three-year term on the Board beginning January 1, 2016.

Members desiring to run for election for the active **certified** member seat must:

- Be an active certified member of the System (*Certified* voting status designated on the annual *Statement of Account*).
- Submit an affidavit and nominating petition with 500 or more valid signatures of other PSERS active certified members.
- Submit a completed biographical form.

Members desiring to run for election for the active **non-certified** member seat must:

- Be an active non-certified member of the System (*Non-certified* voting status designated on the annual *Statement of Account*).
- Submit an affidavit and nominating petition with 250 or more valid signatures of other PSERS active non-certified members.
- Submit a completed biographical form.

To receive a nomination packet and more information on the duties and responsibilities of Board members, interested members may write to:

Shirley Jones
PSERS Election Coordinator
5 North 5th Street
Harrisburg, PA 17101

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Public School Employees' Retirement Board Re-Elects Chairman and Vice Chairman

PSERS
5 N 5th Street
Harrisburg PA
17101-1905

Toll-Free
1.888.773.7748
Local Calls
717.787.8540
FAX
717.772.3860

Phone Hours
Weekdays
(except holidays):
8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Website Address:
www.psers.state.pa.us
Email Address:
ContactPSERS@pa.gov

PSERS is happy to provide visually impaired readers with our publications in large print or a CD. Please contact PSERS to request either of these free services.

PSERS is proud to be an equal opportunity employer supporting workforce diversity.

Melva S. Vogler re-elected Chairman and James M. Sando re-elected Vice Chairman of PSERS' Board of Trustees.

The Board of Trustees of the Public School Employees' Retirement System (PSERS) recently held its annual organizational meeting at its headquarters in Harrisburg. Melva S. Vogler, of Hawley, Wayne County, was re-elected Chairman of the PSERS' Board of Trustees and James M. Sando, of North Wales, Montgomery County, was re-elected Vice Chairman.

The Board unanimously re-elected Ms. Vogler to a one-year term as Chairman. Ms. Vogler has been a member of PSERS' Board since 1994. She represented active members on the Board for twenty years and was recently elected to serve as the representative for PSERS retired members. She has served as Chairman since January 2007.

Ms. Vogler is a graduate of Susquehanna University. She also earned a Master's Degree from Marywood College and received her supervisory certificate from the University of Scranton. She retired from Wallenpaupack Area High School in 2013.

She currently serves on the Pennsylvania State Education Association (PSEA) Staff Pension Board and was a member of PSEA's Board of Directors from 1988 until August 2004 and served on its Budget Committee from 1991 through August 2004. She also is a member of the National Council on Teacher Retirement (NCTR) Legislation Committee. In addition, she was a member of the Executive Board of the NCTR from November 2003 through November 2009 and served as the President of NCTR. She also served on the National Institute on Retirement Security Board and on the Executive Committee of the Council of Institutional Investors. Ms. Vogler is currently a member of PSEA-Retired and Pennsylvania Association of School Retirees.

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Board Re-Elects... (continued from page 2)

The Board also unanimously re-elected James M. Sando to a one-year term as Vice Chairman. Mr. Sando serves as one of three Board members elected to represent the active certified contributing members of the System. He has been a Board Member since 2007.

Mr. Sando earned a Bachelor's Degree and Master's Degree in Education from East Stroudsburg University. He has been a teacher at Shady Grove Elementary in the Wissahickon School District for 28 years.

Mr. Sando has been on the PSEA Board of Directors since 1999, and currently serves as President of Mideastern Region. He served on the North Wales Borough Zoning Hearing Board from 2010 to 2011 and was elected to the North Wales Borough Council for a term that began in January 2014.

Additionally, Mr. Sando is the President of the National Council on Teacher Retirement (NCTR) where he has previously served as President-Elect, Secretary-Treasurer, a member of its Executive Committee and a member of its Trustee Education Committee. He is on the Executive and Steering Committees of the Trustee Leadership Forum for the Initiative for Responsible Investment at the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. Mr. Sando is also the Vice-Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Bucks and Montgomery Counties Health Care Consortium, providing health care for 20 school employers and over 10,000 members.

Active Certified and Active Non-Certified Member Elections (continued from page 1)

Please be sure to specify in your request that you want information on the active **certified** or active **non-certified** member seat.

Your completed affidavit, nominating petition, and biographical form must be returned to Shirley Jones at the PSERS Headquarters address by 4:30 p.m. on June 19, 2015. Late receipt will disqualify any candidate from the election ballot.

PSERS Board of Trustees Meeting Schedule

June 11, 2015

August 4, 2015

October 5, 2015

PSERS Board meetings are held in Harrisburg at PSERS, located at 5 N 5th Street. In addition to these Board meetings, Committee meetings are held throughout the year. All PSERS Board meetings are open to the public.

For exact meeting times or if you would like to attend and require an accommodation to participate, please call Barbara Book, PSERS Executive Office at 1.888.773.7748, extension 4617.

Foundations For Your Future Programs

As a part of its educational outreach, PSERS provides *Foundations for Your Future* seminars for active members. FFYF programs are designed to give public school employees an overview of their retirement benefits. Each program lasts approximately 90 minutes. A complete list of seminars is found on the PSERS website under Regional Offices, Retirement Overview (FFYF), and Schedule. Your employer will also have information of FFYF programs in your area.

If a meeting is scheduled at a school and that specific school has closed or dismissed early because of inclement weather, the meeting will be cancelled. You should check the PSERS website to make sure the date and/or location of the meeting has not changed due to weather conditions or other unforeseen circumstances.

In addition to physically attending an FFYF program, you can preview our presentation at any time by going to the PSERS website under Regional Offices, then Retirement Overview.

Termination Date VS. Retirement Date

Your termination date and your retirement date may seem like interchangeable terms but are clearly defined by PSERS and may have a major impact to your retirement benefit. Your **termination date** is the last day of work or unpaid leave with your employer. Your **retirement date** will be the day after your termination date if PSERS receives your *Application for Retirement* (PSRS-8) within 90 days of your termination date unless you choose to vest your account until a later date. If your application is not received within 90 days of your termination date, your retirement date will default to the date PSERS receives your application or an alternate date of your choice, whichever is later.

If you are planning to leave employment, please remember to inform your employer of your plans. Failure to notify your employer that you have resigned will delay the processing of your retirement benefit. Make sure to investigate your employer's guidelines for retiring, terminating, and resigning.

It is also important to remember that notifying your employer of your plans to retire does not automatically begin the retirement process with PSERS. You must complete and submit to PSERS an *Application for Retirement* (PSRS-8) to initiate the retirement process.

For more information, refer to the "Options When Leaving Employment" section of the *Active Member Handbook* (PSRS-9540), found on the PSERS website under Publications.

Attending Exit Counseling Meetings

Each year nearly 12 percent of all retirement applications submitted to PSERS contain errors which cause delays in processing retirement benefits. Attending an *Exit Counseling* session will help ensure you to understand your options and to avoid errors when completing the necessary forms. *Exit Counseling* is offered as a free service to anyone retiring in the current school year. Don't wait until the last minute to schedule a session or pass up your chance to attend.

Before you call to schedule *Exit Counseling*, you must request a staff-prepared retirement estimate by completing a *Request for Retirement Estimate* (PSRS-151). The form is found on the PSERS website under Forms, or by contacting the PSERS Member Service Center at 1.888.773.7748.

PSERS also strongly suggests for all members who are planning on retirement to attend a *Foundations for Your Future* (FFYF) seminar. More information on FFYF programs is found on page 4 or on the PSERS website under Regional Offices.

Planning for retirement is one of the most exciting and complicated decisions you will make. Allow PSERS to make this process just a bit less stressful by taking advantage of the free resources available to all our members. Attending *Exit Counseling* may prevent you from making a mistake that will forever negatively affect your retirement benefit.

Weather-Related Closings and Service Credit

During the winter months, members may experience weather-related school closings that adversely impact working the necessary time to obtain one (1) year of service credit with PSERS. Salaried or per diem employees must work 180 days and hourly employees must work at least 1,100 hours to earn one (1) full year of service. If the member works to make up those days that were cancelled due to inclement weather, the service will be included in the school year (July 1 and June 30) in which the member actually worked. For example, when PSERS' service credit is calculated, any time worked after July 1, 2015, to make up days worked for school year 2014-2015, will be included in school year 2015-2016.

Some employers may petition the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) for a waiver to reduce the number of days that constitute a full school year. PSERS, however, operates under different legislation than PDE and does not consider the waiver when calculating PSERS service credits. If a member does not work the 180 days or 1,100 hours required to obtain one (1) full service credit from July 1 to June 30, he or she will receive partial service credit for that year.

Pension Forfeiture

A PSERS member, who qualifies to receive retirement benefits, is guaranteed a monthly lifetime annuity. The right of a person to receive such benefits from PSERS, however, is subject to forfeiture as provided by the Public Employee Pension Forfeiture Act (“Pension Forfeiture Act”). The Pension Forfeiture Act states that all service and benefits payable to a PSERS member must be forfeited if the member is convicted of, or pleads guilty or no contest to any of the crimes listed under the Pension Forfeiture Act when the crime is committed through the member’s position as a public employee or when the member’s public employment places the member in a position to commit the crime(s).

If a member is already receiving a monthly annuity when convicted of, or pleads guilty or no contest to any of the crimes listed under the Pension Forfeiture Act, the annuity will stop. The member is entitled to his or her contributions; however, a member’s contributions and interest may be used to pay any court ordered restitution, provided the monies have not been withdrawn by the member.

The following are the Pennsylvania crimes listed under the Pension Forfeiture Act:

- Theft by deception
- Theft by extortion
- Theft of services
- Theft by failure to make required disposition of funds received
- Forgery
- Tampering with records or identification
- Misapplication of entrusted property and property of government or financial institutions
- Bribery in official and political matters
- Threats and other improper influence in official and political matters
- Perjury
- False swearing
- Unsworn falsification to authorities
- False reports to law enforcement authorities

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Pension Forfeiture... (continued from page 6)

- Witness or informant taking a bribe
- Tampering with or fabricating physical evidence
- Tampering with public records or information
- Intimidation of witnesses or victims
- Retaliation against witness, victim, or party
- Obstructing administration of law or other governmental function
- Official oppression, speculating or wagering on official action or information
- The following crimes when committed by a school employee against a student: rape, statutory sexual assault, involuntary deviate sexual intercourse, sexual assault, aggravated indecent assault, indecent assault, and indecent exposure

The Pension Forfeiture Act also includes all Federal criminal offenses that are substantially the same as the above listed crimes.



You can preview an FFYF presentation any time by going to the PSERS website under Regional Offices, then Retirement Overview. Here

you will also find a complete list of FFYF seminars scheduled in your area.

Updating Your Address

It is important to make sure that you always keep your address up to date with PSERS. Throughout the year, PSERS mails newsletters and other important, time-sensitive information to its members.

If you are currently working in a Pennsylvania public school, report any change of address to your employer. Your employer will submit the information to PSERS. If you left employment and have deferred receiving your retirement benefit until later, submit your address change to PSERS in writing.

Mail your information to:

PSERS
5 N 5th Street
Harrisburg PA 17101-1905

You must include your signature and at least the last four digits of your social security number in the letter to assure proper identification of your account.

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5 N 5th Street
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Important Information from the
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania