

**REGULAR MEETING**

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

**OF**

**THE PUBLIC SCHOOL RETIREMENT SYSTEM OF MISSOURI**

**AND**

**THE PUBLIC EDUCATION EMPLOYEE RETIREMENT SYSTEM OF MISSOURI**

**April 19-20, 2026**

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Beth Knes, Chair  
Dr. Eric Park, Vice Chair  
Allie Gassmann  
Katie Webb  
Chuck Bryant  
Dr. Nate Moore  
Amanda Perschall

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

**OTHERS PRESENT**

Dearld Snider, Executive Director  
Craig Husting, Chief Investment Officer  
Sarah Swoboda, Chief Operating Officer  
Mike Moorefield, Chief Counsel  
Brandon Robertson, Chief Financial Ofcer.  
Jeff Hyman, Director of Internal Audit  
Nicole Hamler, Director of Member Serv.  
Stacie Verslues, Director of Emp. Serv.  
Lisa Scheulen, Chief Technology Officer  
Jake Woratzeck, Chief Info. Sec. Officer  
Susan Wood, Dir. of Communications  
Michelle Vareho, Dir. of Human Res.  
Jennifer Martin, Director, Board Admin.

**Sunday, April 19, 2026**

**Meeting Convened**

The Public School and Education Employee Retirement Systems of Missouri (PSRS/PEERS) Board of Trustees convened on April 19, 2026 at 6:15 p.m. at the PSRS/PEERS office at 3210 W. Truman Blvd., Jefferson City, Missouri. In attendance were Board members Beth Knes, Dr. Eric Park, Allie Gassmann, Katie Webb, and Amanda Perschall. Also present were Executive Director Dearld Snider, Chief Operating Officer Sarah Swoboda, Chief Investment Officer Craig Husting, Chief Counsel Mike Moorefield, Chief Financial Officer Brandon Robertson, Deputy Chief Financial Officer Tory Brondel, Director of Human Resources Michelle Vareho, Chief Information Security Officer Jake Woratzeck, Chief Technology Officer Lisa Scheulen, Director of Executive and Board Administration Jennifer Martin and various other PSRS/PEERS staff members.

**Safe Assets**

Craig Husting and Jessica Wilbers from the PSRS/PEERS investment staff reviewed the Systems' Safe Assets portfolio, including program objectives, guidelines, and long-term results. The 10-year annualized return for the Safe Assets composite for the period ended March 31, 2026, was 1.1%.

**Private Equity/Private Credit**

John Tuck, Dan Case, Ben Frede, Anthony Vikhter, Paul Katzfcy, and Connor Quinn from the PSRS/PEERS investment staff provided education on the Private Equity and Private Credit programs. Additionally, the team provided long-term investment

results. The five-year annualized return for the Private Equity composite for the period ended Dec. 31, 2025, was 12.8% and the five-year annualized return for the Private Credit composite for the same period was 10.9%.

**Public Comment** None

**Adjournment** Katie Webb moved that the meeting adjourn. Amanda Perschall seconded the motion. Voting “Aye” –Knes, Park, Gassmann, Webb, and Perschall; “Nay” – Nonc. The motion carried unanimously.  
PSRS5302  
PEERS3537

**Monday, April 20, 2026**

**System Operations**

**Meeting Convened**

The Public School and Education Employee Retirement Systems of Missouri (PSRS/PEERS) Board of Trustees convened on April 20, 2026 at 8:30 a.m.at the PSRS/PEERS office at 3210 W. Truman Blvd., Jefferson City, Missouri. In attendance were Board members Beth Knes, Dr. Eric Park, Allie Gassmann, Katie Webb, Chuck Bryant, Dr. Nate Moore and Amanda Perschall. Also present were Executive Director Dearld Snider, Chief Operating Officer Sarah Swoboda, Chief Investment Officer Craig Husting, Chief Counsel Mike Moorefield, Internal Auditor Jeff Hyman, Director of Communications Susan Wood, Director of Member Services Nicole Hamler, Director of Employer Services Stacie Verslues, Chief Financial Officer Brandon Robertson, Director of Human Resources Michelle Varcho, Chief Information Security Officer Jake Woratzcek, Chief Technology Officer Lisa Scheulen, Director of Exccutive and Board Administration Jennifer Martin and various other PSRS/PEERS staff members.

**Approval of Minutes for February 2, 2026 Meetings** Beth Knes moved that the minutes from the February 2, 2026 meeting be approved. Amanda Perschall seconded the motion. Voting “Aye” –Knes, Park, Gassmann, Webb, Bryant, Moore, and Perschall; “Nay” – None. The motion carried unanimously.  
PSRS5303  
PEERS3538

**Order of Business** The order of business was approved with no changes.

**Certification of Election Results** Jennifer Martin from PSRS/PEERS shared the trustee election results. This was an uncontested election with Allie Gassmann winning the open PEERS position and Amanda Perschall winning the open PSRS position. Their terms will run from July 1, 2026, through June 30, 2030. Dr. Moore moved to approve the certified election results. Katie Webb seconded the motion. Voting “Aye” –Knes, Park, Gassmann, Webb, Bryant, Moore, and Perschall; “Nay” – None. The motion carried unanimously.  
PSRS5304  
PEERS3539

**Election of Chair** Dr. Park re-nominated Beth Knes to serve as Chair of the Board for the period July 1, 2026 through June 30, 2027. Dr. Moore seconded the motion. Voting “Aye” –Knes, Park, Gassmann, Webb, Bryant, Moore, and Perschall. “Nay” – None. The motion carried unanimously.  
PSRS5305  
PEERS3540

**Election of Vice Chair**

PSRS5306  
PEERS3541

Beth Knes re-nominated Dr. Eric Park to serve as Vice Chair of the Board for the period July 1, 2026 through June 30, 2027. Allie Gassmann seconded the motion. Voting “Aye” –Knes, Park, Gassmann, Webb, Bryant, Moore, and Perschall. “Nay” – None. The motion carried unanimously.

**Set Interest Credit Rate for June 30, 2027**

Each June 30, interest is credited to the accounts of active members at the rate set by the Board of Trustees. If a member requests a refund of their contributions, any accumulated interest is paid as part of this refund. If a member retires from the Systems, the amount of interest credited to the member’s account does not affect the retirement benefit calculation, but if there is an unused balance in the member’s account at the death of the member and any Joint-and-Survivor benefit plan beneficiary, the remainder is paid in a lump sum to the residual beneficiary. Robertson presented information on the current interest rate environment and historical interest rates. Staff recommended the interest rate credited to the accounts of active members remain at 3.5% effective for fiscal year 2027 (July 1, 2026 – June 30, 2027). This rate will be used throughout the fiscal year to facilitate necessary member account corrections and will be used to credit active member accounts on June 30, 2027. Katie Webb moved that the interest credit rate be set at 3.5% effective June 30, 2027. Allie Gassmann seconded the motion. Voting “Aye” –Knes, Park, Gassmann, Webb, Bryant, Moore, and Perschall. “Nay” – None. The motion carried unanimously.

PSRS5307  
PEERS3542

**Set Purchase Interest Rate for FY 2026**

Robertson noted that according to Board Regulation (16 CSR 10-4.012 (4)), prior to July 1 each year, the Board of Trustees shall establish a "purchase rate" of interest based on the actuarially assumed rate of return on invested funds of the Retirement Systems. The purchase interest rate shall apply to any amount due for reinstatement of service or for the purchase of service, except as otherwise specified by law. Staff recommended the purchase interest rate be set at the current assumed rate of return of 7.3%. Katie Webb moved that the purchase interest rate be set at the current assumed rate of return of 7.3%. Allie Gassmann seconded the motion. Voting “Aye” –Knes, Park, Gassmann, Webb, Bryant, Moore, and Perschall. “Nay” – None. The motion carried unanimously.

PSRS5308  
PEERS3543

**Other**

Dearld Snider with PSRS/PEERS presented a plaque to Monica Cain for her dedication and service to PSRS/PEERS. Cain will retire effective June 1, 2026.

**Investments**

**Ongoing Investment Activity**

Craig Husting from PSRS/PEERS and Michael Hall from Russell provided a market overview including detailed investment returns for several stock and bond indices for the five-year period and fiscal year through March 31, 2026. Husting provided a broad overview of the PSRS/PEERS portfolio structure, including an estimated asset allocation for PSRS/PEERS as of March 31, 2026. Husting stated that the PSRS/PEERS preliminary (unaudited) investment return for the fiscal year so far (July 1, 2025, through March 31, 2026) was approximately 5.4%.

**Approve Changes to Investment Policy**

The Investment Policy was originally adopted in 1995. The investment staff periodically conducts a full review of the Investment Policy and recommends changes to the Board. The last full review was conducted in August 2025.

Husting discussed policy changes made due to the new asset allocation that was adopted by the Board in February 2026. Specifically, the changes permit 3% asset

allocation leverage. Additionally, there were changes made to the *Public Risk Asset Implementation Manual*. The section on approved investment strategies was clarified to reflect current practices.

The Personal Trading Policy was also updated to reflect that only non-commercially available securities must be pre-cleared (prior to trading) by staff.

PSRS5309  
PEERS3544

Beth Knes moved to accept the proposed changes to the Investment Policy as recommended by staff. Katie Webb seconded the motion. Voting “Aye” –Knes, Park, Gassmann, Webb, Bryant, Moore, and Perschall. “Nay” – None. The motion carried unanimously.

## **Report of the** **Actuary** **Experience Study** **Review**

The 2026 study covers experience from July 1, 2020, to June 30, 2025. The Board will consider the findings to decide on any changes to actuarial assumptions and methods selected by the Board and described in its funding policy. Those assumptions and methods will then be used in future actuarial valuations and analysis. No Board decisions are required today; adoption of any changes is scheduled for June 2026

### Key Areas Reviewed

The study examines four main areas:

1. **Economic Assumptions:** Inflation, expected return on assets, cost-of-living adjustments (COLAs), and payroll growth.
2. **Demographic Assumptions:** Individual salary increases, mortality (life expectancy), retirement, withdrawal (turnover), and disability.
3. **Other Assumptions:** Administrative expenses, member contribution interest, refund of contributions, return of unpaid contributions, form of payment, and beneficiary assumptions.
4. **Actuarial Methods:** Actuarial cost method, asset smoothing, unfunded liability amortization, and Actuarially Determined Contribution (ADC) rate calculation methods.

### Major Findings and Recommendations

#### 1. Economic Assumptions

- **Inflation:** The long-term inflation assumption is recommended to increase from 2.0% to 2.25%, reflecting forecasts from investment advisors and economists. A slightly higher rate is used for the next five years to account for recent inflation trends.
- **Expected Return on Assets:** The assumed long-term investment return remains at 7.3%, consistent with investment advisor recommendations presented in April.
- **COLA:** The cost-of-living adjustment is recommended to be 2% for January 2027, then gradually decrease to a long-term rate of 1.45%. This is based on inflation projections and the Board’s policy.
- **Payroll Growth:** Payroll growth assumptions are increased to reflect the increase in the underlying inflation assumption and recent trends in real salary growth. For PSRS, the recommended assumption is 2.60%; for PEERS, 3.00%.

## 2. Demographic Assumptions

- **Salary Increases:** Assumptions are adjusted upward to reflect the increase in underlying inflation assumption and recent trends in real salary growth, but tempered by state-level revenue and education funding considerations.
- **Mortality:** This assumption is updated to use the latest large-scale public pension mortality study and resulting tables, with adjustments based on the actual experience of PSRS and PEERS members.
- **Retirement Rates:** This assumption was increased at certain age and service milestones, particularly when members first become eligible for unreduced benefits. This aligns with observed higher retirement rates at these points.
- **Withdrawal and Disability:** Withdrawal (turnover) rates are generally increased to reflect higher-than-expected departures, while disability rates are decreased due to fewer observed cases.

## 3. Actuarial Methods

- **Asset Smoothing:** The method for valuing assets is refined to use market value as the basis for expected returns (versus the actuarial / smoothed value), which may increase volatility but better reflects actual market conditions and industry practice.
- **Amortization Period:** The period for paying down unfunded liabilities is shortened from 30 years to 20 years, aligning industry trends addressing intergenerational equity and negative amortization.

## Financial Impact

- **PSRS:** Utilizing the June 30, 2025, actuarial valuation for comparison, the recommended changes increase the actuarial accrued liability by \$953 million and the normal cost by \$44 million. The funded status decreases from 89.1% to 87.9%, and the ADC rate rises from 27.13% to 28.58%.
- **PEERS:** Utilizing the June 30, 2025, actuarial valuation for comparison, the recommended changes increase the actuarial accrued liability by \$82 million and the normal cost by \$6 million. The funded status drops from 89.9% to 89.1%, and the ADC rate rises from 12.93% to 13.23%.

## Timeline and Next Steps

- The Board is encouraged to review the findings and provide direction on any additional analysis needed. Formal adoption of new assumptions is planned for the June 2026 meeting
- Final reports and recommendations will be available in June 2026, with any adopted changes reflected in the June 30, 2026, actuarial valuation.

## In Summary

Periodic experience studies ensure that the retirement systems' actuarial valuations and financial projections are based on the current economic data and member behaviors. The recommended changes are designed to keep the systems on a sound financial footing, reflecting both recent experience and best practices. The Board's review and eventual adoption of these recommendations will help maintain the long-term sustainability of benefits for Missouri's public school and education employees.

## **Management**

### **Report**

#### **Employer Services Update**

Stacie Verslues from PSRS/PEERS provided a comprehensive overview of the full reporting lifecycle that school districts follow from the moment an employee is hired until retirement and even into post-retirement employment. Verslues introduced the key individuals involved in the process, including the Employer Services team and district payroll staff, and explained the foundational steps of enrollment, the process of payroll reporting, as well as the importance of ongoing education, including webinars and conferences, to help districts stay current with reporting requirements. Additional focus is placed on mid-year and end-of year audits, where the Employer Services team reviews salary accuracy, service credit, insurance reporting, and outstanding action items to maintain compliance. Finally, Verslues outlined the critical responsibilities related to retirement, such as reporting final pay and termination dates promptly, understanding Final Average Salary Cap rules, and properly tracking members who return to work after retirement.

Verslues highlighted the collaborative, detail-oriented nature of employer reporting and emphasized that the Employer Services team supports districts at every step to ensure accuracy, timeliness, and smooth transitions for all members.

#### **Legislative Update**

Mike Moorefield from PSRS/PEERS and government relations consultant Doug Nelson presented the April legislative update.

Moorefield and Nelson gave the Board an overview of the proposed state budget and other notable legislation moving through the General Assembly with four weeks left in the 2026 legislative session.

Moorefield and Nelson discussed PSRS/PEERS' priority tracked legislation. This includes three bills that could affect Investment Mandates/System Governance. Other priority bills PSRS/PEERS is tracking are HB 2091, which expands PEERS Critical Shortage Employment; IIB 2095 and SB 1779, which modifies the statutorily mandated COLA cap; HB 2144, which increases the PSRS death benefit; HB 2396, which changes WAR limits; HB 3079, which moves speech language pathologists to PSRS; and SB 1258, which raises the multiplier for PSRS retirees with at least 33 years of service to 2.6%.

#### **Key Accomplishments**

Sarah Swoboda reviewed key accomplishments since the February Board Meeting.

Staff initiatives focused on strengthening culture and operations, including "Coffee and Culture with Dearly," which helps new hires learn about the mission, values, and leadership vision of PSRS/PEERS.

Operational updates included completing the Accounting Suite project and conducting a successful IT disaster recovery exercise that tested major systems and firewall redundancy, and receiving a strong, positive cybersecurity assessment from an external penetration testing firm.

The organization also rolled out Microsoft Copilot to all staff, pairing new AI tools with required training to ensure responsible and effective use. Additional

achievements included hiring a new building engineer, Kevin Evers, and advancing website accessibility work aligned with WCAG standards.

On the investment side, teams launched an automated document-ingestion system using Canoe AI, reducing manual processes and improving workflow efficiency.

Lastly, investment team member John Tuck was recognized as a 2026 “Next Elite” by Markets Group for excellence in the investment field. Together, these accomplishments reflect continued progress in operational readiness, staff development, technology modernization, and investment excellence.

#### **CPI-U Update**

Mr. Snider discussed the calculation of the Consumer Price Index (CPI) calculated by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). PSRS/PEERS’ regulation requires that the time period for the CPI calculation is from June to June. Based on the values provided by the BLS, the CPI-U is up 2.37% through March 31, 2026. The CPI-U for April 2026, will be released on May 12, 2026.

#### **Public Comment**

None

#### **Other**

None

#### **Closed Session**

PSRS5310  
PEERS3545

Katie Webb moved that the meeting continue in closed session to legal matters under Sections 610.021 (1), (13), (14) and 169.020.17, RSMo. Amanda Perschall seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken. Voting “Aye” –Knes, Park, Gassmann, Webb, Bryant, Moore, and Perschall; “Nay” – None. The motion carried unanimously.

The following motions were made in closed session:

PSRS5311/PEERS3546 – Minutes from February 2, 2026, Closed Session (Knes, Park, Gassmann, Webb, Bryant, Moore, and Perschall; voting to approve the previous closed session minutes.)

PSRS5312/PEERS3547 – Internal Auditor Evaluation (Knes, Park, Gassmann, Webb, Bryant, Moore, and Perschall voting to approve the Board completed IA evaluation.)

PSRS5313/PEERS3548 – Internal Auditor Compensation (Knes, Park, Gassmann, Webb, Bryant, Moore and Perschall voting to approve the new salary for IA.)

PSRS5314/PEERS3549 – ED Evaluation (Knes, Park, Gassmann, Webb, Bryant, Moore, and Perschall voting to approve the Board completed ED evaluation.)

PSRS5315/PEERS3550 – ED Compensation (Knes, Park, Gassmann, Webb, Bryant, Moore, and Perschall voting to approve the new contract and salary for ED.)

PSRS5316/PEERS3551 – Board Self-Evaluation (Knes, Park, Gassmann, Webb, Bryant, Moore, and Perschall voting to approve the Board completed self-evaluation.)

PSRS5317/PEERS3552 – Move back to Open Session (Knes, Park, Gassmann, Webb, Bryant Moore, and Perschall; voting to move back to open session.)

#### **Adjournment**

PSRS5318  
PEERS3553

Beth Knes moved that the meeting adjourn at 2:30 p.m. Katie Webb seconded the motion. Voting “Aye” –Knes, Park, Gassmann, Webb, Bryant, Moore, and Perschall; “Nay” – None. The motion carried unanimously.

Prepared by  
Jennifer Martin



---

Ms. Beth Knes, Chair



---

Dearld Snider, Executive Director