

2020 PSRS Board of Trustees Candidates

Dr. Kyle Collins



The PSRS/PEERS system is one of the most important and attractive benefits available to Missouri public school employees. It is a defined benefit system that can provide a lifetime of financial security to retirees. There are a number of reasons it is critical to ensure this benefit is available to current and future members.

First, PSRS/PEERS is a prime recruitment tool and one of the best financial incentives we can offer to individuals considering a career in public education. The employee's contribution is matched by the district and begins the employee on the path to saving for retirement. Second, PSRS/PEERS can provide a lifetime of financial security to its beneficiaries. As the son of a retired educator, I can attest to the fact that a defined benefit, along with a yearly cost of living adjustment, is indispensable for retirees. My mother retired in 1993 and has counted on her retirement benefit for the past twenty-seven years. Lastly, the PSRS/PEERS system has been one of the best managed and well-funded benefit plans of its type in the country. It provides peace of mind to the employee that the money set aside for their retirement is invested in a practical and prudent manner.

As a PSRS/PEERS Board Member, I would work hard to ensure the economic health of this important benefit system and to listen to the issues and concerns of both current and retired public school employees. I believe that my twenty-three years of experience in public education has provided me with the perspective to work with lawmakers and others to protect PSRS/PEERS and to help educate interested parties about the benefits of our retirement system.

I would sincerely appreciate your vote.

Darren Farmer



I believe in public education, and I believe Missouri's PSRS/PEERS retirement system is a vital resource to our state. It is our responsibility to ensure that the decisions the Board of Trustees makes are sound for all members of the system. As a classroom teacher, I believe that all education professionals must have a voice in education, including in our retirement.

I have been in education for 22 years as an agriculture education teacher and earned my bachelor's and master's degrees in agriculture education. I serve on the MSTA Legislative IMPACT Committee that works to recruit, elect and retain legislators that support public education. Outside of the classroom, I have held leadership positions in the Missouri Vocational Agriculture Teachers Association at the area, district and state levels. I have been proud to lead at the local level and in the community of educators we have in the state. It's an honor to be endorsed by the Missouri State Teachers Association, the Missouri Association of School Administrators, Missouri Vocational Agriculture Teachers Association, and the Missouri Association for Career and Technical Education as well as a recommended candidate by the Missouri NEA.

The opportunity to lead as a teacher is what interested me in serving as a PSRS/PEERS trustee. I have attended and followed PSRS/PEERS Board meetings and understand how vital it is that the retirement system works well for all members, from future and current teachers, to retirees. I know the importance of protecting our retirement from economic as well as political issues, especially during uncertain times that have recently hit our economy.

I would appreciate your vote; it would be an honor to serve you on the Board. I believe that because of the strong involvement and advocacy of Missouri's current and retired educators, the PSRS/PEERS retirement system will remain strong for generations to come.

Dr. Melinda Moss



Missouri is blessed to have a strong retirement system, an asset in attracting and retaining quality educators. We must have board members who can effectively preserve as well as articulate the benefits that PSRS/PEERS provides to its members and toward the health of the state.

We are facing a difficult time in our history. Prior to working in education, I worked for Edward D. Jones during the Black Monday of 1987, holding investors' hands as the market crash in Hong Kong spread to Europe and then the United States. I later entered education and during the great recession of 2007-2009, I worked many hours as a school superintendent to assure our community that education employees and our local school would get through the volatile housing market and downturn of local assessed valuations.

Throughout my journey in education, first as a special education teacher, counselor, principal and now as superintendent at Joplin Public School, I have understood that leadership decisions must encompass all stakeholders. Quality decisions are made when there are clear and open lines of communications. It's always been my goal to listen, evaluate and consider, and then make decisions with as much information from as many parties as possible. That is the philosophy I will use as a trustee to maintain the financial strength of PSRS/PEERS.

I am ready to lead all members of the system, and I believe it's especially important to have female leadership on the board. I'm proud to be endorsed by the Missouri Association of School Administrators, Missouri State Teachers Association, Missouri Vocational Agriculture Teachers Association, and the Missouri Association for Career and Technical Education as well as a recommended candidate by the Missouri NEA.

I humbly offer my experience and background to make the best decisions possible to ensure a quality retirement for all education professionals for the long term.

Dr. Aaron Vitt



Our students are our future. As educators, it is our mission to build a foundation for a positive future. By serving on the PSRS/PEERS Board, I will work to ensure the fiscal security of the PSRS/PEERS system for the betterment of both active and retired teachers alike. I realize our system is under attack and I will work tirelessly to protect the system that serves not only our teachers and support staff but ultimately serves our students and communities by providing the best education possible to the children of the great state of Missouri.

Success of any organization is built on relationships. As an educator with 28 years of experience I have experience listening to multiple sides of an issue and can work with a diverse range of people to make decisions that are fair and in the best interests of all. By building relationships with our legislators and taxpayers we can educate them on the impact our pension system has on attracting and retaining quality teachers and support staff and providing a lifetime of financial security to retirees. The pension system is also vital to building strong Missouri communities. A seat on the PSRS/PEERS board is one of commitment and I will responsibly serve all educators and support staff and retirees of the PSRS/PEERS System.

I look forward to working hard as an advocate for ALL of the members of our pension system with your vote.