



Links

TRSL's member bulletin

The link
to your
financial future

Retirement system receives 2009 valuation report

Results of the 2009 TRSL valuation report reflect the challenging market environment experienced by all investors last year. The retirement system ended fiscal year 2008-09 with a negative 12.3 percent actuarial rate of return and assets valued at \$12.7 billion.

Each year, TRSL receives from its actuary a valuation report that contains current and historical, financial and demographic information about the retirement system. This information is used to determine the funding necessary to pay retirement benefits for current and future retirees.

Actuarial financial information, including investment returns, is distinct from market returns. Actuarial returns are "smoothed" over a four-year period to remove the dramatic up-and-down swings that financial markets can experience. Through smoothing, the retirement system can better meet the long-term funding needs of the retirement plan.

As expected, the global downturn also impacted the System's funding level. At the close of fiscal year 2008-09, the System's funded ratio is 59.1 percent. This represents the percentage of funds TRSL has on hand to cover the present value of every dollar expected to be paid in future retirement benefits.

The System's actuarial rate also determines how much interest Deferred Retirement Option Plan (DROP) accounts will earn for members who were eligible to participate in DROP *before* January 1, 2004. This year these DROP accounts will not earn any interest because of the negative actuarial rate. A 2002 state attorney general opinion prevents DROP accounts from being debited in the event of a negative actuarial rate of return.

Members who were eligible to participate in DROP *on or after* January 1, 2004, earn interest based on the monthly liquid asset money market rate of return. Interest for these DROP accounts is typical to interest earned on passbook savings accounts.

As a long-term investor, TRSL recognizes there will be up-and-down markets, and maintains a well diversified portfolio to minimize risk.

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Oaks selected by special appointment as District 5 representative on TRSL Board

By special appointment, the TRSL Board of Trustees designated Penny D'Shay Oaks to fill the seat for District 5 representative on the board.

Oaks, who teaches eighth grade Social Studies at Vidalia Junior High School in Concordia Parish, begins her special appointment this month. She will serve until the special election of a District 5 representative is held later this year.



D'Shay Oaks

Oaks said that she is looking forward to serving District 5 and protecting the interests of all TRSL members.

Also new to the board is Kathy Hattaway. She took the oath of office along with Ms. Oaks at the January TRSL Board meeting. Hattaway was elected last summer to represent school food service employees. She supervises the Child Nutrition Program at the Central Community School System in East Baton Rouge Parish.

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New procedure saves resources and trees

In our continuing effort to conserve resources and keep costs down, we're changing the way our summer workshops are announced.

Instead of mailing individual workshop schedules to more than 88,000 active members, we will publish a single schedule in the April issue of "Links" along with the registration form. This measure will save on paper, printing, and postage!

The schedule and registration form will still be posted on TRSL's website under "Workshops," so look for it there, too.

These workshops are recommended for members within five years of retirement or DROP eligibility. Speakers provide a complete overview of TRSL benefits, a common sense approach to financial planning, and information on Social Security.

To attend any of our workshops, please complete and submit a general workshop registration form which can be found on our website at www.trsl.org.

Register one of three easy ways:

FAX:
225/925-4035

E-MAIL:
retire.edu@trsl.org

MAIL:
TRSL Retirement Education
PO Box 94123
Baton Rouge, LA 70804-9123

NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION: Check TRSL data

This year, resolve to keep your pertinent TRSL information current!

Secure the appropriate TRSL forms from your employer or our website, www.trsl.org.

- ✓ *Active Member Change of Address Authorization (Form 2AC)*
- ✓ *Beneficiary Designation (Form 3)*



Want to save money? Try Saver's Credit!

Saving for your retirement can make tax time a little easier. Read on to find out how planning for your future can help you now through Saver's Credit.

What is Saver's Credit?

It's a tax credit that can help offset the cost of the first \$2,000 you may voluntarily contribute to IRAs, 401(k)s, 457 plans, and certain other retirement plans for qualifying individuals.

The Saver's Credit applies to individuals with incomes up to \$27,750 (\$41,625 for a head of household) and married couples with incomes up to \$55,500. The taxpayer must also be at least age 18, not a full-time student, and not

claimed as a dependent on another person's tax return.

The credit is a percentage of the qualifying voluntary contribution amount, and provides the highest rate for taxpayers with the least income, as shown in the chart below.

The Saver's Credit can be used in addition to other tax benefits that may result from retirement contributions. For example, most workers at these income levels may deduct all or part of their contributions to a traditional IRA.

Contributions to a 401(k) plan are not subject to income tax until withdrawn from the plan.

Please visit www.irs.gov for further information.

Credit Rate	Income: Married, joint	Income: Head of household	Income: Others
50%	up to \$33,000	up to \$24,750	up to \$16,000
20%	\$33,001 - 36,000	\$24,751-27,000	\$16,501-18,000
10%	\$36,001-55,500	\$27,001-41,625	\$18,001-27,750

Taking control of your retirement planning in six easy steps!

Because it's never too early to start thinking about your future, here are a few steps that can put you on the right track for your retirement planning.

1. Become knowledgeable about your benefits.

TRSL offers retirement planning workshops for every stage of your career, as well as one-on-one counseling. For a list of workshops, see the retirement education workshop schedule located on our website at www.trsl.org.

2. Monitor your TRSL account

Sign up for online MEMBER ACCESS if you haven't done so already. You'll have 24-hour access to your account information enabling you to make sure it is always current and accurate.

To sign up for MEMBER ACCESS, please visit our MEMBER ACCESS page located on our website at www.trsl.org.

3. Purchase service credit if applicable

You may be eligible to purchase service credit for certain types of past employment and leaves of absence. Doing so may increase the amount of your retirement benefit and/or enable you to retire sooner. See our handbook, *Purchases and Transfers of Service Credit*, on the publications page of our website at www.trsl.org for more information.

4. Gain an understanding about important membership benefits for you and your loved ones

If you have at least five years of TRSL service credit, you may be eligible for survivor benefits, disability benefits, and lifetime benefits for your beneficiaries. Learn more by referring to our publications, *TRSL Member Handbook*, *Death and Survivor Benefits*, and *Disability Retirement*, all located on our publications page at www.trsl.org.

5. Learn about your health care benefits

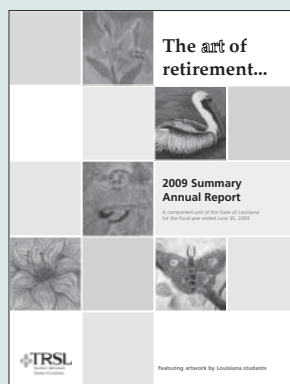
While TRSL doesn't manage health insurance, we recommend you become familiar with what is offered through your employer. Talk to your employer or visit the Office of Group Benefit's website at www.groupbenefits.org for more information concerning your health and other insurance options.

6. Evaluate your personal finances

You may want to supplement your TRSL benefit with additional retirement income. Consulting a financial advisor on managing other assets can be a worthwhile endeavor.

If you have any specific questions concerning your retirement, please contact us at 225-925-6446 or toll free (outside the Baton Rouge calling area) at 1-877-ASK-TRSL (1-877-275-8775).

2009 Summary Annual Reports mailed!



The report is an overview of the more thorough *Comprehensive Annual Financial Report* which can be viewed on our website at www.trsl.org.

Retirement system receives 2009 valuation report

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Even with the cyclical nature of the financial markets, the System's 20-year actuarial rate of return is 8.25 percent.

In membership, the number of retirees and survivors increased to 62,417 in 2009 from 61,070 in 2008.

TRSL also experienced the third straight year of growth in active members: active membership increased to 88,206 in 2009 from 85,979 in 2008.

This marks the first time the System has exceeded the pre-Katrina active member level.

TRSL at a Glance as of 6/30/09

Valuation assets	\$12.7 billion
TRSL actuarial rate	-12.31%
20-year average actuarial rate	8.25%
DROP interest rate*	0%
Funded ratio	59.1%
Membership:	
Active members	88,206
Retirees and beneficiaries	62,417

*For members eligible to participate before January 1, 2004.

We are here to help you! Contact us:

Physical address:

8401 United Plaza Blvd, Suite 300
Baton Rouge, LA 70809-7017

Mailing address:

PO Box 94123
Baton Rouge, LA 70804-9123

Telephone: 225-925-6446

Toll free (outside Baton Rouge area):

1-877-ASK-TRSL
(1-877-275-8775)

Fax: 225-925-6366

TDD: 225-925-3653

E-mail: web.master@trsl.org

Website: www.trsl.org

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In addition to the District 5 special election, upcoming elections in 2010 include those for District 1 and District 7, Colleges & Universities, Superintendents, and Retirees. If you are interested in serving on the TRSL Board of Trustees and would like to be considered for one of these trustee positions, be sure to look for the call for candidates and qualification guidelines which will be sent out in February.



We'd love to hear from you!

Send us your comments, questions, and story suggestions to web.master@trsl.org.

This public document was published at a cost of \$5,252.47. Ninety-four thousand, seven hundred copies of this document were published by the Teachers' Retirement System of Louisiana, Post Office Box 94123, Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70804-9123, to inform TRSL members of news, laws, and policies that affect them. Printing of this material was purchased in accordance with the provisions of Title 43 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes.

TRSL terms definitions you can use

Beneficiary — if no survivor benefits are payable, receives the contributions remaining in a member's account upon the member's death; not required to be related to the member.

To view or update your beneficiary information, log in to MEMBER ACCESS on the TRSL website at www.trsl.org.