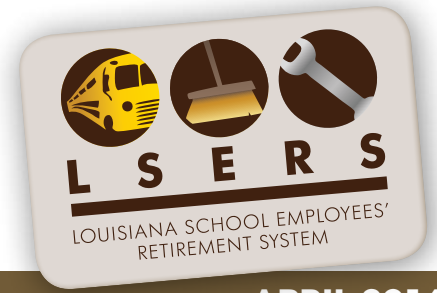


CROSSROADS



A Publication of the Louisiana School Employees' Retirement System

APRIL 2016

Many bills affecting LSERS members being heard in on-going Legislative Session

Bills that will provide a COLA of up to 2 percent for eligible LSERS retirees, along with house-keeping bills for LSERS, are presently moving through the session of the Louisiana Legislature, which kicked off on March 14.

The two bills that will provide a COLA for eligible retirees of LSERS, along with the other state retirement systems, are **Senate Bill 2** by Senator Peacock and **House Bill 32** by Representative Jones. The Board of Trustees voted to **support** both of these bills.

The LSERS Board of Trustees also requested, and Senator Peacock, Chairman of the Senate Committee on Retirement, has authored the following bills:

Senate Bill 6, which removes the requirement to transfer certain ex-member's balances to the Pension Accumulation Fund in the event the system does not receive a response from the notice of rights submitted to the member. Elimination of this practice will result in more accurate pricing of liabilities.



Senate Bill 7, which removes the requirement that a member shall be an "active, contributing" member in order to be eligible to purchase service credit. The bill also removes the requirement of purchasing a minimum of 90 days of service.

Senate Bill 8, which removes the word "systematic" relative to DROP disbursement requirements in order to allow the Board to consider additional options to our retirees for withdrawing their funds.

The Board of Trustees also requested, and Representative Pearson, Chairman of the House Committee on Retirement, has authored **House Bill 16**, which requires LSERS to fund its non-investment administrative expenses by including them in the normal cost calculation of the system's employer contribution rate, rather than amortizing the cost over 30 years.

However, Senator Peacock has also filed **Senate Bill 5**, which
(Continued on page 2)

Brown unopposed for Active Member District 3 seat

Congratulations to Ms. Penny Brown, who was unopposed in her candidacy for the District 3 Active Member seat. In January of 2017, Ms. Brown will replace Ms. Judith McKee, who has served the Board of Trustees honorably for 12 years. Ms. Brown has been a bus operator for 15 years. She is from Caldwell Parish and she strives to follow in the footsteps of Ms. McKee in serving each of the members she represents to the best of her ability.

DROP interest rate approved

The Public Retirement Systems' Actuarial Committee (PRSAC) met on Tuesday, December 1, 2015 and approved the Deferred Retirement Option Plan (DROP) interest rate of 11.13% for fiscal year ending June 30, 2015. This rate applies to DROP accounts for members who were eligible to participate in DROP before January 1, 2004. Interest will be reflected on the April 2016 Quarterly Statement.

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GATHER AROUND THE TABLE
FOR A BIT OF FAMILY FUN!



Spring Word Search

Q S I I H N B L O S S O M B U A Y I A I
N P W N U N K I A A Q Z I U G S D Z P E
E R V X Q G R E E N T T G N E A J K R E
W I P I C N I C F I Q S N N I M R Z I D
L N F X W E G S I R M P M Y A A M D L B
E G L W J F W T F R I R A T V Y C Q E F
A B O K R L L W F A F I R F B O J I E N
V R W K S R B H N I P N C T E E M K A T
E E E D R U O D N N K G H K I T E S S D
S A R M S J N T F B S U N L A Z D S T D
P K S S D V B S K O O E T W F V D H E G
S E A S O N B I H W T V E A A J S H R T
Y B F W Z F L X R I X X E D T U L I P K
Z U A A V R K L V D N W G G S T Q S G G
A H Q R I O L Z C V S E G C W E W S F R
X Z J M S P S A P R I L F O O L D W A B

ANSWERS ON PAGE 4

Should you consider a Power of Attorney?

Occasionally, a LSERS retiree asks a family member to call the retirement system for clarification of a letter received or for guidance on benefits. Unfortunately, the LSERS staff cannot release personal benefit information to that family member without the retiree's permission, unless the caller is named on a Power of Attorney (POA).

A POA is a valuable and relatively inexpensive document, generally created and signed in front of two witnesses and a Notary Public, which gives a designated person the authority to act in your best interests. You may designate the POA as "general," granting broad powers to control your financial, health, legal, and other matters, or "special," granting power for only specific situations.

Though it's unpleasant to think about, there may come a time when you aren't able to make important decisions for yourself. Whether it's after a serious accident, a major illness, or even just a temporary time away, you can make a plan now and designate someone to make critical decisions on your behalf. Many people choose to have a trusted friend(s) or family member(s) named as a POA in case of emergency, hospitalization or unexpected admission to a nursing facility.

The POA is a powerful document. Once you appoint someone as your POA, that person may act on your behalf with or without your consent. We strongly encourage you to consult with a lawyer before you finalize the decision to execute a POA.

Many bills affecting LSERS members

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(Continued from page 1)
applies to all four of the state retirement systems and requires payment of the system administrative expenses annually. **Senate Bill 5** was amended in committee to provide that the change shall not be implemented in a year when there will be an increase in employer contribution rates. The

board voted to **support Senate Bill 5**.

Many other bills have been filed which affect LSERS members and their retirement, including a large "Pension Reform" package filed by Rep. Ivey. His package includes resolutions and companion bills that would remove the

guarantee of certain retirement benefits as well as establish hybrid benefit plans and tiered plans for new hires. The Board voted to **oppose** these bills and LSERS staff is carefully tracking them.

The Legislative Session must come to a close no later than 6:00 pm on June 6, 2016.

LSERS members are urged to educate themselves on these bills by going to www.legis.la.gov and contact their legislators about them.

Keep your retirement benefits safe

Don't be scammed out of your hard earned benefits. The Office of Financial Institutions (OFI) offers free information and services for Louisiana residents regarding securities investing, including fraud prevention.

Please visit their website at www.ofi.la.gov to view the resources available to protect Louisiana retirees.

The Office of Financial Institutions (OFI) is Louisiana's securities regulator, and they also investigate investment scams. Con artists target retirees for scams. Check with OFI before investing to make sure both the promoter and the security are each registered with OFI. Failure to register with OFI can be a red flag of possible fraud.

If the promoter is registered with OFI, they offer a FREE background check (i.e., a *CRD Report*) to verify credentials.

OFI offers a FREE speaker to groups throughout Louisiana on fraud awareness and prevention. OFI's website also offers monthly updates on investor alerts and other resources.

Are you on
Facebook?
So are we!

We would love to connect! Our page is frequently updated with share-worthy information about your retirement system – LSERS! Like us on Facebook now by clicking the "Like" button next to our name on our Facebook page!
Go to: www.Facebook.com/Louisiana School Employees' Retirement System

Did You Know?

Life changes affect survivor benefits...

Any minor child who is currently receiving survivor benefits may continue to receive these benefits as long as he or she meets the eligibility requirements. Once a child turns 18, (s)he must remain unmarried and be a full-time student in order to receive the monthly survivor benefit. This remains true until age 23. Once a person turns 23, (s)he is no longer eligible for survivor benefits. Prompt notification to LSERS, of any change in student or marriage status, throughout the year, is critical for accurate recordkeeping. The person receiving the benefit is responsible for any overpayment on their account. Each semester the student should promptly complete and send Form 13S "Student Certification" to LSERS' office.

Benefits cannot be paid before 1st...

LSERS does not have authority to issue payment prior to the 1st of the month even in the event that your benefit date falls on a weekend or Federal Reserve holiday.

Contributions can stay with LSERS...

If you stop working in a position that made you eligible for membership in LSERS, you may be able to leave your contribution in LSERS and receive a retirement benefit based on that contribution. To qualify, you must have reached vesting status. Should you choose to leave your contribution in LSERS, rather than receiving a refund of all your contributions, you can begin receiving a retirement benefit upon reaching eligibility for the regular retirement benefit. Please contact LSERS for more information.

Get your LSERS retirement info any time you want

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Did you know that you can view your retirement information at any time online through a secure portal? This portal offers members access to their personal information while allowing the convenience for updating information such as name, address, phone numbers, federal tax withholdings, etc.

Active members can view their employment and salary histories along with named beneficiaries and annual member statements. Active members are also able to calculate their estimates of benefits to plan for their future retirement.

Retirees can view their payment and COLA histories, along with details about individual DROP or IBRP accounts. They can also access their tax Form 1099-R's that were issued and adjust their federal income tax withholdings.

Please go to www.lasers.net and select the Login icon to gain access to your account.

Putting for your pension

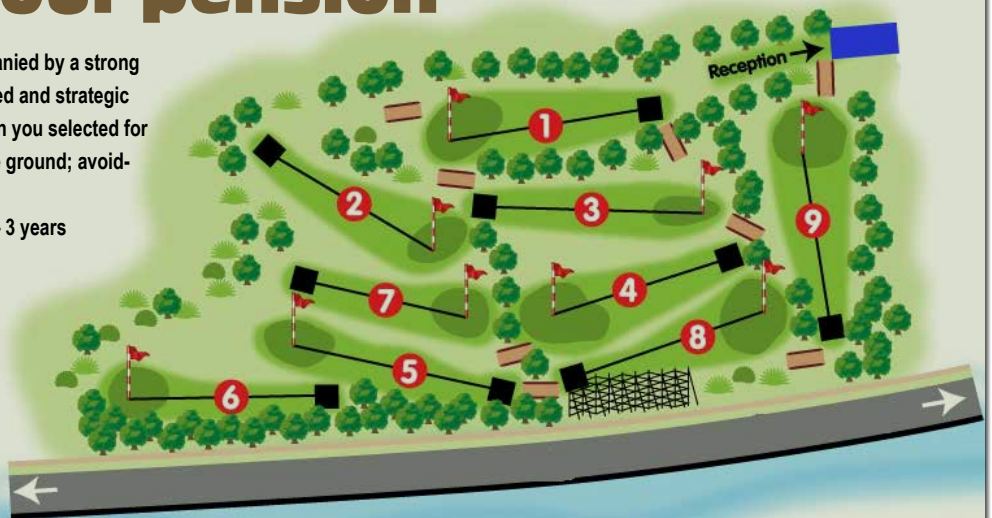
O.K. Champ! Your approach to Hole 3 was accompanied by a strong crosswind in addition to low-lying tree limbs. Your skilled and strategic approach to hit a punch shot was impressive! The 5-iron you selected for the shot (your member statement) kept you closer to the ground; avoiding the obstacles.

The effective playing length of Hole 4 is between 1 – 3 years out from retirement. Don't be a sandbagger! Listen to your caddy and take your best shot to get an estimate. This will surely prepare you to locate the flagstick at Hole 5.

Retire or not retire? That is the question! Tally your score after shooting at Hole 5. Contact LSERS and a clubhouse rep (staff member) will be happy to go over your strategy at Hole 4, explain the plans available, and provide expert coaching skills to assist you in the application process. This will help you secure the trophy at the 9th!

The best round yet is Hole 6. A hole-in-one would be great here by choosing the optimal monthly benefit option. Examine this putting green very closely! You get only ONE shot to select your option, so make it count!

A few pointers: You can calculate your own estimate any time you wish – 24/7 – by registering for your online account access at www.lasers.net click on "Login", "Member Registration", and follow the prompts. A wealth of information is available to you to improve your game on the main website such as Fact Sheets and Your Membership handbook. As always, a LSERS club house rep eagerly awaits if you need further assistance. See you at the 7th!



- | | |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1 Start Career | 6 Choose Retirement Option |
| 2 Enroll in LSERS | 7 Begin Estimated Benefits |
| 3 Review Member Statements | 8 Retirement Reached |
| 4 Get Estimate (1-3 years out) | 9 Relax, enjoy, have fun! |
| 5 Apply (6 months out) | |

Getting to LSERS is Simple

LSERS office is off Essen Lane between I-10 and I-12. The street address is 8660 United Plaza Blvd., Baton Rouge.

From I-10, exit on Essen Lane. Turn right if coming from the south and left if coming from downtown or the north. Turn right on United Plaza Blvd. LSERS is the first building on the left.

From I-12 east, exit on Drusilla Lane and turn left. Turn right on Jefferson Highway and left on Essen Lane. Take the second entrance to United Plaza Blvd. on the left. LSERS is the first building on the left. From I-12 west, exit on Essen Lane. Take a right on Essen Lane, then the second entrance to United Plaza Blvd. on the left. LSERS is the first building on the left.

Louisiana School Employees' Retirement System
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Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70804-4516

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Philip B. Walther, Vice Chair
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Kathy Landry, Vice Chair Pro Tem
4th Retirement District, 337.477.6161

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2nd Retirement District, 985.630.0164

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Judith McKee
3rd Retirement District, 318.649.7696

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Secretary of State, 225.922.2880

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State Treasurer, 225.342.0010

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Carolyn N. Forbes
LSERS Assistant Director

Lauren Bailey
Executive Counsel

Christopher Saik
Chief Investment Officer

Alison Kessler
Executive Staff Officer

ANSWERS TO SPRING WORD SEARCH PUZZLE ON PAGE 2

KITES
SEEDS
APRIL
WARM
BLOSSOM
BIRDS

RAINBOW
SPRING
BUNNY
GREEN
MAY
PICNIC

MARCH
SEASON
SUNSHINE
TULIP
EGG
SPRING BREAK

BEEES
NEW LEAVES
GARDEN
APRIL FOOL
FLOWERS
EASTER

**Location: LSERS Building, 8660 United Plaza Blvd. - First Floor
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70809-7004**

Telephone 225.925.6484, Toll-free 1.800.256.3718

Office Hours: 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday-Friday

Visit LSERS' website at: www.lasers.net

Board Meeting Schedule

Board Meetings: May 23 & 24, August 22 & 23, December 5 & 6

Investment Meetings: June 20, July 18, & October 3

Special Meetings: June 20 and October 3

**For a complete listing of all board meeting dates and times, visit our website
at: www.lasers.net**

LSERS Member Change of Address

Updating your mailing address can easily be done by any of the following methods:

- ◆ Login and access retirement account information at www.lasers.net and update address online.
- ◆ Submit updated information via the Contact Us page on the website.
- ◆ Send a letter or Change of Address Form (Form 2AC) to the LSERS mailing address.

CHECK MAILING DATES

Regular monthly benefit checks are mailed on the last working date of the month and DROP/IBRP checks are mailed on the last working date of the month before the 5th of the month.

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