



**MRTA**

Missouri Retired Teachers Association  
and Public School Personnel

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## **2023 MRTA Legislative Platform**

**“MRTA is independent, non-partisan, and does not endorse political candidates.”**

### **RETIREMENT SYSTEM LEGISLATION AND POLICY**

1. MRTA strongly supports the PSRS/PEERS of Missouri COLA statute. Cost-of-living adjustments are vital to the financial stability and security of our retirees.
2. MRTA will advocate for the restoration of the Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA) the PSRS/PEERS Board of Trustees has reduced twice in the past twelve years. MRTA supports the restoration of the 2011 COLA Policy levels for PSRS/PEERS of Missouri retirees.
3. MRTA will advocate for PEERS retirees COLA eligibility to be consistent with the PSRS statute.
4. MRTA supports a Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA) increase for the retirees of the PSRS of the City of St. Louis (last increase was in 2006) and the PSRS of Kansas City, MO (last increase was in 2008).
5. MRTA is opposed to any pension reductions for our active or retired teachers and education personnel (reducing the COLA, tiered plans, etc.).
6. MRTA will advocate for the preservation and protection of the strong financial integrity and transparency of PSRS/PEERS.

### **STATE LEGISLATIVE ISSUES OF INTEREST TO MRTA**

1. MRTA will work to protect the Missouri public pension retirement plans as defined benefit plans rather than defined contribution plans.
2. MRTA will support the current independent governance and decisions of the Boards of Trustees of the following public education retirement systems: PSRS/PEERS Retirement System of Missouri, PSRS of Kansas City, Missouri, and PSRS of the City of St. Louis.
3. MRTA supports the current statute mandated by Missouri law requiring the same health insurance premium cost and coverage for retirees as active public school employees.
4. MRTA will advocate for “equal and adequate” funding of the Foundation Formula through a revision of the 2012 Standard Adequacy Target, which was capped at 2005 levels, to align with the current market and inflation levels. Missouri is currently ranked 50<sup>th</sup> in revenue spent on public

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schools at 30.7% while the national average is 40.1% on total revenue spent.

5. MRTA will oppose any legislation that would reduce state tax revenue for public school funding.
6. MRTA will oppose vouchers, education tax credits, education scholarships, or any other use of tax dollars for nonpublic schools.
7. MRTA will oppose the statewide expansion of charter schools, support requiring the use of certificated teachers in virtual and charter schools to be members or retirees of PSRS, and support accountability for virtual and charter schools equal to that of public schools.
8. MRTA supports the recruitment and retention of public school teachers and educational staff. Teachers and educational staff matter most when it comes to student success.
9. MRTA will advocate for legislation to fully fund an increase in beginning teacher pay and average teacher salaries. Missouri is currently ranked 50<sup>th</sup> in beginning teacher pay and 45<sup>th</sup> in average teacher salaries.
10. MRTA will support the current statute which provides the Missouri state income tax exemption for public education retirees that MRTA was instrumental in passing in 2007 (HB 444).

#### **FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE ISSUES OF INTEREST TO MRTA**

1. MRTA will support legislation to repeal/modify the WEP (Windfall Elimination Provision) and GPO (Governmental Pension Offset) provisions of Social Security.
2. MRTA will oppose mandatory Social Security for new educator members of PSRS of Missouri.
3. MRTA will oppose privatization of Social Security. PEERS of Missouri, PSRS of St. Louis, and PSRS of Kansas City, Missouri benefit greatly from Social Security. MRTA does not support a reduction in current benefit levels.
4. MRTA supports accessible, cost-effective healthcare and prescription medications to promote financial security for all.
5. MRTA supports efforts that would encourage the recruitment and retention of teachers by decreasing student loan debt.