

Protect Your Pension Secure Your Health Care

Vote for Conni Ramser and Mark Meuser for the STRS Board

Connie Ramser and Mark Meuser are OEA's endorsed candidates for the STRS Board. Both candidates have a record of leadership and a firm understanding of the issues confronting STRS and what they mean for active teachers. They are running for the STRS Board to assure accountability, protect teachers' pension benefits and help secure affordable health care for current and future STRS retirees.

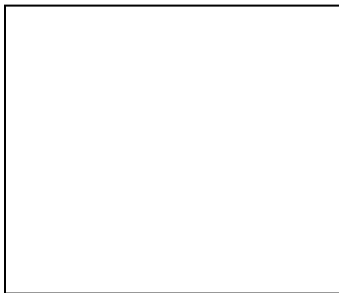
Conni Ramser is an intervention specialist at Jackson Memorial Middle School in Stark County and former member of the OEA Executive Committee. Conni currently serves as Vice Chair of the STRS Board and is seeking reelection. Mark Meuser is a math teacher at Gahanna Lincoln High

School in Franklin County and also serves as President of the Gahanna Jefferson Education Association.

Our endorsed candidates have pledged to hold the line on STRS spending, and, as an additional measure of accountability, are calling for STRS to put the entire budget and expenditures online for members to see. In the area of health care, both candidates support a proposal developed by STRS and the Health Care Advocates to seek a dedicated revenue stream to secure the STRS retiree health care program. Additionally, Conni and Mark are opposed to reductions in the guaranteed pension benefit, including the incentive to work 35 years, and will fiercely defend pension

benefits against legislative attacks.

Members can vote by mailing back their ballot or vote via telephone or the internet. Votes must be received by May 1, 2006. . The STRS Board has eleven members and only five are elected by active teachers. In the last Board election only 12% of those eligible cast their vote. Teachers' security in retirement depends on a financially strong pension system and one of the best ways to assure that is by electing strong advocates for teachers to the STRS Board. Remember to vote for Conni Ramser and Mark Meuser for the STRS Board and encourage your colleagues to vote as well.



Conni Ramser



Mark Meuser

STRS Election Important!!!

Editorial by Chris Swank

It is very important for you, the active members, to participate in this year's STRS election.

As a retired member of OEA I have become very concerned as the active elected teachers have lost the majority on the STRS Board while the retired are demanding more and more. Your retirement is at risk; ours is not; ours is guaranteed. What is not guaranteed are the health care benefits, and those costs are sky rocketing.

STRS is a mature system meaning that retirees are receiving more money in benefits than what is collected yearly. This means that in order for ALL to receive Health Benefits, now and in the future, we need to work together to support legislation that would create a dedicated health care revenue stream. We need to stop focusing on past mistakes that have been corrected by the present board. Our focus should be on solving the health care funding problem, and I believe that Conni and Mark will be part of that focus.

Retirement Systems Post Strong Returns in 2005

Thanks to strong financial markets and investment performance that outperformed their benchmarks, OPERS, SERS, and STRS each posted high investment returns for calendar year 2005.

OPERS announced an investment return of 9.25% for the defined benefit plan in 2005, beating its benchmark by 1.07% and surpassing its actuarially assumed rate of 8%. At the end of 2005, the market value of OPERS assets was approximately \$69 billion.

SERS announced investment returns of 10.76% for 2005, outperforming its benchmark by 1.35% for the year. These returns exceeded the SERS's actuarially assumed rate of 8.25%. At year's end, the market value of assets for SERS was approximately \$9.8 billion.

STRS posted the highest investment returns of the three systems in 2005 with a return of 12.08%, exceeding its benchmark by 1.48%. At the end of 2005, the market value of STRS assets was \$63.4 Billion.