

# TRS NEWS

TEACHER RETIREMENT SYSTEM OF TEXAS \* MARCH 2011

## Brian Guthrie named TRS executive director *Will assume new position September 1*



GUTHRIE

The TRS Board of Trustees has announced the appointment of Brian Guthrie as the new executive director of TRS. The trustees voted unanimously to offer the position to Guthrie at their Feb. 7, 2011 board meeting.

Beginning Sept. 1, 2011, Guthrie will oversee administration of the pension plan for TRS -- the sixth largest public pension fund in the United States -- which serves active and retired Texas public education employees. He will also lead the TRS-administered health benefit programs, TRS-ActiveCare and TRS-Care. Guthrie has served as TRS deputy director since September 2008.

Ronnie Jung, who last year announced plans to step down as executive director, will continue serving as head of TRS until Sept. 1. After that time, he has agreed to serve as an executive liaison to the board through Jan. 31, 2012 to assist Guthrie and the trustees during a period of transition.

"Brian brings valuable experience to this important position," stated TRS Board of Trustees Chair David Kelly. "His background in state government, legislative relations, budgeting, and finance position him well to serve as executive director. Brian's recent achievements in the areas of pension administration and enterprise technology uniquely qualify him to lead the agency forward."

Guthrie's selection followed an extensive search process that began in June 2010 when trustees authorized the hiring of the Korn/Ferry International executive search firm to identify candidates for the position.

## Retirement plan rule changes to affect members, retirees

At its December 2010 meeting, the TRS Board of Trustees adopted several rule changes affecting TRS members and retirees. These changes were the result of two processes that converged in 2010. First, in early 2010, TRS Deputy Director Brian Guthrie started a project known as the "Rules Convention" to make TRS

rules easier to understand and simpler to administer. Second, state law requires TRS to review its rules every four years to make sure they have not become obsolete. After providing public notice of the proposed changes and listening to comments from membership groups, the board adopted

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## TRS Board election now under way

Of the nine trustee positions that comprise the TRS Board of Trustees, three have terms expiring on August 31, 2011. One position, currently held by Chairman David Kelly, is a direct appointment of the governor. A second position, currently held by Linus Wright, will be appointed by the governor from a list of the top three candidates following a TRS retiree nominating election now under way. The third position, currently held by Philip Mullins, will also be appointed by the governor following a similar election process, now in progress, for active higher education members. All three appointments will be for six-year terms that will expire on August 31, 2017.

Three candidates have qualified to run in the active higher education election, and three candidates have qualified to run in the retiree election. Biographical information on each of these candidates appears on pages 3-4 of this issue. Eligible active higher education members and retirees may now cast their ballots in their respective elections.

TRS has contracted with VR Election Services (VRES) of Carrollton, Texas, to manage this year's election process. Each retiree ballot will contain the names of the three candidates seeking to be appointed to the retiree position on the board. Also, ballots mailed to active higher education members will feature the names of

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## TO MEMBERS

From Executive Director Ronnie G. Jung

Change is in the air as you receive this update from TRS. Not only is the Texas Legislature in session, making a concerted effort to keep government funded and running during difficult times, but there many other developments to share with you. Please take time to read this issue carefully. It addresses issues that will directly impact you.

As we move through the final months of the current legislative session, we will continue providing information to elected officials to help them make informed decisions regarding your pension and health care benefits. The best way to ensure that you know of new TRS-related laws is to register now for *MyTRS*. Simply visit the TRS website and sign up to receive an e-mail message summarizing new laws soon after the session ends.

Last November, our trustees approved a series of changes to

make TRS rules easier for you to understand and simpler for us to administer. You can find the full text of these rules on the TRS website; however, this issue summarizes them for you. We strongly encourage you to read this article because of the broad scope of the changes. They directly impact membership eligibility, the Optional Retirement Program, requirements for earning and transferring service credit, the TRS retirement application process, employment after retirement, Qualified Domestic Relations Orders (QDROs), creditable compensation, limits on compensation increases, and more. By familiarizing yourself with these changes, you can best ensure that you are knowledgeable about your benefits and how best to access them.

Two board elections are now under way - one to nominate a candidate to fill the retiree position on our board and the other to nominate a candidate to fill the higher education seat. If you are eligible to vote in either election, you will find a ballot enclosed in your newsletter.

Members and retirees often tell us how much they value their TRS benefits. However, many people don't realize how TRS significantly impacts the state and local economies, fuels economic development, adds value to public education, and enables the cost-effective delivery of benefits. Not only does this issue document the value added by TRS, but it also describes our new video on this topic, which is featured on our website with a companion brochure.

Like other health care program administrators, we have been forced to address rising health-care costs and the limited state resources available to offset them. While we do everything possible to

contain costs, it has become necessary to pass along some increased costs in the form of premium and plan design changes, beginning Sept. 1. The article in this issue provides a summary of this information, and our website provides more details.

Every year, TRS prepares financial highlights for the past year, which saw very strong investment performance, with our market value reaching \$94.9 billion by Aug. 3. Not only have we come a long way in erasing most losses incurred during the economic downturn, but we continue to see our market value rise, recently passing the \$106 billion mark. You can view our FY 2010 financial highlights in more detail on the TRS website. We expect even more positive news when our 2010 calendar year numbers are finalized.

Last but not least, I'd like to congratulate Brian Guthrie on his recent appointment as executive director, a position that he will begin when I step down on Sept. 1. Brian is a hard-working, knowledgeable, and talented individual. I know he will serve all of us well. Serving you for nearly 15 years has been my greatest honor. No job could be more gratifying than this one, and I thank you, our trustees and staff for the support you have given me over these years.

TRS News is published by  
Teacher Retirement System of Texas  
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Austin, Texas 78701-2698  
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www.trs.state.tx.us

### BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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**- RONNIE G. JUNG**  
Executive Director

The Teacher Retirement System of Texas does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age or disability in employment or the provision of services. A copy of the complete TRS plan is available at the above address during normal business hours.

### Watch TRS Board meetings live

You don't need to be in Austin to watch TRS Board of Trustees meetings in real time. You can now stay abreast of important TRS developments by watching meetings live from virtually any location. Meetings are webcast in real time and then archived to the TRS website for later viewing on demand.

To view a webcast, visit [www.trs.state.tx.us](http://www.trs.state.tx.us) and click on "Watch Live/On Demand Webcasts of TRS Board Meetings."

## Board election

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three candidates who have qualified to run in that election.

Space on both ballots has also been provided for write-in candidates. Eligible retirees and active higher education members will have the opportunity to vote via the Internet or by mail. Instructions for both methods of voting

are included with this year's ballots.

Only retirees and TRS members whose most recent credited service was performed for a higher education employer are eligible to vote in their respective elections by returning their ballots to TRS. Ballots and postage-paid return envelopes are included with this newsletter.

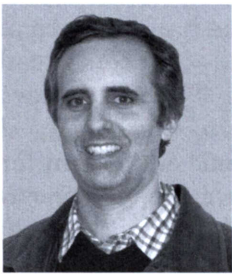
Ballots must be returned in en-

velopes postmarked or delivered to TRS by **April 30, 2011. Internet votes must also be cast by 5 p.m. (CDT) that day.** Names of the three candidates who receive the most votes in each election will be submitted to the governor who will then appoint one of those individuals to fill each of the six-year terms beginning as early as September 1, 2011.

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Fax: (936) 261-1742  
tkcharleston1@gmail.com

## Higher Education Candidates

### *Julien N. Devereux*



Julien N. Devereux is managing editor in the Communications Office at the University of Texas School of Law. He has

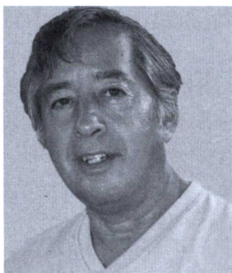
more than 12 years of experience as an editor, writer, and manager, including five years as managing editor of architecture and design magazine *Metropolis*. He has been managing editor at the Law School, editing and writing for its website and alumni magazine, *UT Law*, since 2008. He is a member of the Texas State Employee's Union and is active on its UT Organizing Committee. He is married with two children and lives in Austin.

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jdevereux@law.utexas.edu

### *Joe Angulo*



University of Texas-Pan American - 16 years as technical staff assistant V in Electrical Engineering department.

Three years on Staff Senate Council, two years on Parking and Traffic Advisory Committee and one

year on Wellness Advisory Board. TSEU member for 7+ years. Attended three General Assemblies. Participated in three Lobby Days and Mini-lobby days, University Caucus meetings, and the drive to elect Philip Mullins to the TRS Board. Active in the local Cope activities during elections.

Angulo states he would be a good trustee by staying informed and putting his best effort for professional and quality decisions to benefit state employees and the union.

joe147@yahoo.com

### *Karen Charleston*



An Austin native, Ms. Charleston has been employed with Prairie View A&M University for 25 years, holding

a Bachelor of Arts degree in Music Education from Huston-Tillotson University. While working in the Physical Plant Administration, she researched, prepared and successfully presented seven PVAMU buildings listed on the National Register. Her current assignment is with Space Management, reporting to the state the CBM 11/14 of space inventory. She is a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha and Tau Beta Sigma sororities, PVAMU Institutional BioSafety Committee, and past member of PVAMU Staff Advisory Council (2005-2009), and president of the local TSEU chapter.

## Retiree Candidates

### *George Lynn Britton, Jr.*



Mr. Britton is a retired mathematics teacher and is currently serving as a School Board Trustee for Northside ISD in San

Antonio. He has served as vice president and finance chairman for Northside ISD, and is the current finance/budget chairman for Alamo Service Connection. Mr. Britton is the chairman for Bexar County/CoSA Commission for Elderly Affairs, member of CoSA Board of Adjustments, Lackland AFB Community Council on Restoration Board, Phi Delta Kappa, and the Salvation Army Advisory Board. He is the past president of the CoSA Educational Facilities Corporation Board and past Texas and National Governor for Mu Alpha Theta.

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## Board election

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### Anita Smith Palmer



E i g h t teaching certifications, 30 years teaching experience, bachelor's and master's degrees from

Southwestern Oklahoma State University and post-graduate studies at Texas Tech University, Midwestern State University, and Cuernavaca Mexico Center for Bilingual Studies have prepared Palmer for life's challenges. She has made presentations at Johns Hopkins University and Federal First Grants, taught Pre-K to graduate level, served on the Texas Reading Proclamation Committee, State Textbook Committees for Reading and Bilingual Language Arts, State Board of Vocational Nursing, State Board of Nursing, Olney Hamilton Hospital Foundation, and Texas Retired Teachers Association's local, district, and state boards.

Tel: (940) 687-2244

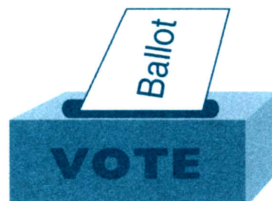
## Dr. William W. Ishee, Jr.



With 42 years of service, Bill retired from Klein. He served as a teacher, counselor and principal in Spring

Branch for seven years. The last 35 years establishing/developing Human Resources as Klein grew. Education: BA-UH, M.Ed-SHSU, Ed.D-TAMU, MBA-OLLU. Nationally certified as a Senior Professional Human Resources and mediator, Bill has worked with all classifications of employees. Bill has served on TEA committees, held the presidency of School HR Associations at the local, state and national level, and leadership positions with Boy Scouts. He is married to Marie, a retired teacher. They have one son.

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## Rule changes

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new provisions affecting several important areas of TRS participation.

We want you to know about changes that may affect you. This article gives you a summary of the most important changes. You can find the full text of all TRS rule changes on the TRS website, [www.trs.state.tx.us](http://www.trs.state.tx.us). Most of the changes are effective April 1, 2011; however, some changes will be implemented starting with the 2011-2012 school year, as indicated below.

**Membership eligibility – Rules 25.1 & 25.6.** You must work at least one-half or more of the standard full-time work load to be eligible for TRS retirement plan membership. Currently, if there is no full-time equivalent for a position, an employee in a *certified* position must work at least 20 hours per week to be eligible for membership; a person in a *non-certified* position must work at least 15 hours per week to be eligible for membership. Starting in the 2011-2012 school year, if there is no full-time equivalent for a po-

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## TRS-ActiveCare premiums, plan design changes to go into effect on Sept. 1

This fall, several plan changes will go into effect for those participating in TRS-ActiveCare, the health care program administered by TRS for employees and dependents in 1,109 participating entities in Texas. All changes will become effective on Sept. 1, 2011.

The changes were approved by TRS trustees at their February 17 board meeting, and were necessary due to increasing medical and prescription drug costs, decreasing reserves in the TRS-ActiveCare trust fund, and requirements resulting from recent federal health care legislation.

This fall, there will be a 9.5 percent increase in TRS-ActiveCare premiums for the four Preferred Provider Organization (PPO) plan options, along with benefit adjustments. About 3 percent of this increase is due to expanded benefits required under new federal health care laws.

Participants who choose TRS-ActiveCare Health Maintenance Organizations (HMOs) will also see changes this fall. While the rates in the FIRST-CARE and Valley Baptist HMOs will rise, those participating in the Scott & White HMO will actually see their premiums go down. All three HMOs are implementing benefit changes beginning Sept. 1st.

Two enrollment periods will be held for TRS-ActiveCare: April 18-May 20 and Aug. 1-31, 2011.

For further details on the changes that will go into effect this fall, please visit the TRS website, [www.trs.state.tx.us](http://www.trs.state.tx.us). Supplies of the 2011-2012 Enrollment Guide will be distributed to participating school districts and other participating entities the week of April 11th and will be posted on the TRS website.

# TRS members now benefiting from MyTRS

In November, TRS unveiled *MyTRS*, the new, improved online access portion of the system's website. By using *MyTRS* passwords of their own choosing, more than 80,000 members can now plan for retirement, keep track of their personal accounts and receive communications from TRS.

Registration for *MyTRS* is easy and does not require you to enter your full social security numbers online. Online services previously available without a password, such as registering for a group benefit presentation or requesting a bill for withdrawn service, now require registering with *MyTRS*.

Members and retirees can register for *MyTRS* by visiting the TRS website to create their own passwords online. *Retirees will also receive information to help them register when they receive their tax notification letters from TRS in early March.*

After registering with *MyTRS*, members and most benefit recipients can do the following:

## Members

1. Obtain personalized retirement estimates using unaudited data on file with TRS.
2. View and/or print a copy of your most recent annual statements.
3. View your account balance, including current-year contributions received to date by TRS.
4. Request a bill for reinstatement of withdrawn service.

5. Obtain information on your withdrawn, unreported, military or out-of-state special service credit purchases that are already in progress.

6. Register for group benefit presentations held around the state.

## Benefit Recipients

1. View and/or print a copy of your most recent 1099-R.
2. View and calculate personalized withholding tax amounts using data on file with TRS.
3. View a summary of your current annuity payments.
4. View a summary of health benefit premiums paid in the prior two years by deduction from your TRS annuities.

## Members and Benefit Recipients

1. Subscribe to fast electronic delivery of selected TRS print publications rather than having them mailed.
2. Receive important TRS announcements, including meetings, webcasts, presentations and other events.
3. Learn about legislative changes impacting the TRS retirement and health care plans before that information reaches other members by mail.

For more details, please visit the TRS website at [www.trs.state.tx.us](http://www.trs.state.tx.us).

## TRS – A Great Value for all Texans

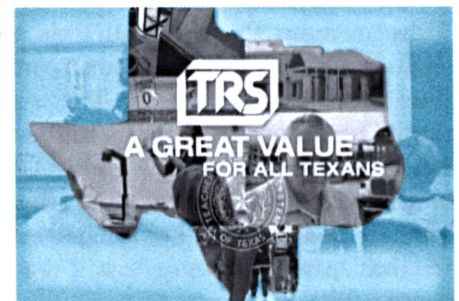
More than 1.3 million people participate in TRS and derive value as TRS members, annuitants and beneficiaries. However, TRS provides an even greater and more far reaching impact that benefits all Texans by adding significant dollars to the state and local economies. Recently, TRS published an updated brochure titled *TRS – A Great Value for all Texans* and produced a companion video to illustrate how the system impacts the state.

The brochure and video explain how TRS adds value to state and local economies, fuels economic development, brings value to public education, and ensures the efficient and cost-effective delivery of benefits.

Facts in the brochure and video

include the following:

- One out of every 20 Texans is a member of TRS.
- TRS has grown dramatically since its inception in 1937 from 38,000 members to more than 1.3 million participants today.
- More than \$6.2 billion in benefits were paid to Texas residents in 2010.
- Since 1937, TRS has distributed more than \$83 billion in pension benefits.
- TRS retirement benefits generated an estimated \$640 million in state revenues and \$260 million in local government revenues in 2010.
- TRS has investments in 96 percent of the companies identified as the 100 largest publicly traded employers in Texas, based



on 2009 data.

- In 2009, TRS retirees in the Texas Retired Teachers Association contributed almost 5.8 million volunteer hours with an estimated value of \$120 million to Texas communities.
- TRS' most significant source of funding – 59.8% of its revenue – comes directly from investment income.

To learn more, see the brochure and video on the TRS website, [www.trs.state.tx.us](http://www.trs.state.tx.us).

## Rule changes

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sition, a person must work at least 15 hours per week, regardless of whether the position is a certified or non-certified position. This membership eligibility requirement will apply to all positions, including bus drivers. If there is a full-time equivalent, the employee must work at least one-half of the full-time work load, but in no case less than 15 hours.

Additionally, an employee must be expected to work at least 4½ months in order to be eligible for membership; the 4½ month period can cross into a second school year. Even if it is close to the end of the school year when you are hired and there is not enough time left for you to work the required amount of time in that school year to receive a year of service credit (see Rule 25.131 below), membership in TRS is mandatory from your first date of employment. If you are hired for a definite period of less than 4½ months, that is considered temporary employment that is not eligible for membership.

**Optional Retirement Program – Rule 25.172.** The Optional Retirement Program (ORP) is a defined contribution retirement plan available in lieu of TRS to eligible employees of Texas higher education institutions. The rule change clarifies when a person who elected ORP and participated in that program may again become a TRS member. Specifically, if you make a valid ORP election, then you become employed in a state agency that is not a TRS-covered employer, and then you later become employed in an institution of higher education, you may not use the intervening state employment as grounds to become a TRS member when returning to employment in higher education.

**Service Required for TRS Credit – Rules 25.131 and 25.132.** Once your employment makes you eligible for TRS mem-

bership, you must work a specified length of time to earn a year of TRS service credit. Under the rule changes, you must work in a TRS-eligible position or receive paid leave from a TRS-eligible position *at least 90 days* during the school year in order to receive a year of service credit.

The only exception is in the last school year of service before retirement. If you work less than 90 days in that school year, but you work or receive paid leave for *a full fall semester* in accordance with the employer's calendar, you may receive a year of TRS service credit. If your employer's calendar does not use a semester basis, the 90 work day standard applies.

Days that your employer is scheduled to be closed for business are not treated as work days unless the days are paid holidays or unless you were charged with paid leave during the closing. Holidays that are not included in the required number of work days for an employer are not counted as paid holidays or paid leave days; thus, such holidays would not be treated as work days.

Remember, even if you are paid during the summer months between school terms when no service is rendered, those days are not counted as work days to meet the 90-day requirement.

**TRS-creditable compensation – Rules 25.21, 25.24, 25.25, and 25.28.** Certain kinds of compensation are not TRS-creditable. This means the compensation should not be reported to TRS, member contributions are not owed on it, and it will not be used in the calculation of your TRS benefits. The following types of compensation were not creditable before the rule change, but the rule now lists these *specific* types of non-creditable compensation for clarification:

- Cell phone allowances
- Signing or retention bonuses
- Payments received under the educator excellence awards

program under Subchapter O of Chapter 21, Education Code that are not paid for *service* by the member

- Amounts paid under a settlement agreement if the employer has not obtained a written determination from TRS concerning the eligibility of the payment

Additionally, the rules now address differential pay. Differential pay is paid by some employers to employees who leave public school employment to serve in the military; the pay is the difference between their regular salary and their military pay. Differential pay is not creditable if it is *less than 50%* of the compensation for service in a full-time position. Differential pay that is at least 50% of the compensation for full-time service in the membership eligible position may be reported to TRS at the discretion of the employer.

Also, starting with the 2011-2012 school year, performance pay will be credited to the year in which it is paid. Currently, it is credited to the year in which it is *earned*. Performance pay earned during the school year in which you retire or any previous school year but paid *after* you have begun receiving retirement benefits will not be creditable.

If you work in a combination of positions that together qualify as service eligible for membership, you must make contributions on *all* eligible compensation.

**Percentage Limit on Compensation Increases – Rule 25.31.** There is a limit on the amount of compensation that TRS will credit in the last school years before retirement. For grandfathered members (see below), the limit applies to the last three years of compensation before retirement. This rule was amended to provide that, for non-grandfathered members, the limit will apply to the last *five* years before retirement. Generally, the rule allows no more than a 10% increase

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## Rule changes

*Continued from page 6.*

from year to year, or \$10,000 per year, whichever is greater. Currently, there are some exceptions. However, starting with the 2011-12 school year, *all* compensation increases will be subject to the limit, *with no exceptions*.

**Verification of Compensation or Service – Rules 25.45, 25.121, and 25.123.** TRS will not accept verification, salary reports from the employer, or member contributions for unreported compensation or service credit *after* a member has retired and the first monthly annuity payment has been issued. The rule changes also allow TRS to obtain additional documentation on reported service as needed and to obtain verification from the Texas Commissioner of Education if a public school employer is no longer in operation.

**Substitute service credit – Rule 25.4.** If you wish to purchase substitute service credit, you must obtain employer verification of your service and salary. However, it will no longer be *mandatory* to purchase credit for substitute service that has been verified. You may choose not to purchase the credit, even after you have had it verified.

**Military Service Credit – Rule 25.61.** Although an eligible member may purchase up to five years of TRS service credit for military service, you may not establish this credit if you already have credit for the same military service in another Texas public retirement system. The rule changes also address members who transfer service credit between TRS and the Employees Retirement System of Texas (ERS), limiting military service credit to a total of five years.

**USERRA Service Credit – Rules 25.75 and 25.77.** If you are eligible to establish veteran's (USERRA) service credit in TRS, you now have *up to five years* after

the date of your re-employment or application for re-employment to make your deposits with TRS. If you have a service-related injury, a longer period may be available under USERRA. Also, if you choose not to establish USERRA service credit, TRS will treat your USERRA service as if it were credited in TRS, when required by the federal USERRA law. Such USERRA service would be used only to determine *eligibility for* TRS-administered benefits but would not be used to calculate the *amount of* the benefit payable.

**ERS/TRS Service Transfer – Rule 25.113.** If you are a TRS member who also has ERS service credit, you may be eligible to combine your service credit under either TRS or ERS at retirement. The rule changes address how your salary average will be calculated if you have less service under either ERS or TRS than required for a typical final average salary calculation. The changes also address how military service credit and out-of-state service credit may be established when you use the ERS/TRS service transfer program. Finally, the rule changes also explain how a grandfathered TRS member will be treated after retiring under the ERS/TRS transfer program.

**Work Experience Service Credit – Rule 25.161.** Clarifying language was added to the rule on eligibility to purchase up to two years of work experience service credit. Specifically, you must be a certified career or technology education teacher, and the work experience must be required for certification in a career or technology field.

**State Personal or Sick Leave Credit – Rule 25.162.** Clarifying language was added to the rule on eligibility to purchase one year of service credit for unused personal or sick leave at retirement. Specifically, you must have at least 10 years of service credit for actual service with one

or more TRS-covered employers and retire from a TRS-covered employer.

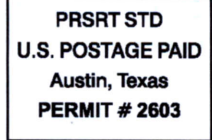
**Installment Payments for Purchased Service Credit – Rule 25.188.** If a member dies while making installment payments for service credit, the member's beneficiary may complete the payment for the credit in a single lump sum that must be received no later than 12 months after the date of death of the member.

**“Grandfathered” members – Rule 29.1 and 51.12.** Changes to these rules clarify the criteria for a member to be considered “grandfathered” and thus eligible for a three-year salary average, eligible for a Partial Lump Sum Option (PLSO) with Rule of 80, and for certain early retirement benefits. To be grandfathered, you must have met one of the following requirements on or before August 31, 2005, *while a member of TRS*: you attained age 50, or the sum of your age and amount of service credit in TRS equaled 70 or greater, or you had at least 25 years of service credit in TRS.

**Deadline to Complete the Retirement Application Process – New Rule 29.7.** If you start the retirement application process but you do not complete the process within 12 months of the date that would be your effective date of retirement if you successfully submitted all forms and information that TRS requires, then your application is void. You may submit a new application with a new effective date of retirement, but benefits will not be payable for the months in which the previous application was pending but incomplete.

**Employment after Service Retirement (substitute or one-half time) – Rules 31.13 and 31.14.** If you are a retiree who works as a substitute and on a one-half time basis in the same month, you will forfeit your monthly retirement annuity if

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CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

Rule changes

Continued from page 7.

your combined work exceeds one-half time. Currently, the TRS rule provides that you may work without forfeiture of your annuity if the *total amount of time* that you work in the substitute and half-time positions in the month does not exceed *the amount of time* per month for work on a one-half time basis. Under the amendments, the combination of the *number of days* of substitute service and *days of work* on a one-half time basis in the same calendar month cannot exceed the *number of days available that month* for work on a one-half time basis. Work for any part of a day as a substitute or on a one-half time basis will count as a full day. The amendments are effective starting with the 2011-2012 school year.

Also, paid time off, including sick leave, vacation leave, and compensatory time for overtime worked, counts as employment. The paid time off must be included in determining the amount of time available to work in a calendar month. Your employer must report the paid time off as employment for the calendar month in which it is taken.

Employment after Service Retirement (bus driver) – Rule

**31.18.** A service retiree who retired before September 1, 2005 and is working under the bus driver exception may work as much as full time on other work. However, the retiree must actually drive *each day* at least one route that complies with TEA guidelines.

**Employment after Disability Retirement (substitute or one-half time) – Rules 31.32 and 31.33.** If you are a disability retiree, to avoid forfeiture of your annuity, total substitute service and half-time employment may not exceed 90 days during any school year. Substitute service and half-time employment may be combined in the same calendar month only if the total number of days that you work in those positions in a month do not exceed the number of days available that month for work on a one-half time basis. Working any part of a day as a substitute counts as working one day.

**Employment after Disability Retirement (three month one-time only trial basis) – Rules 31.34.** If you are a disability retiree working under the three-month, one-time only trial basis, the trial work period may occur in one school year or may occur in more than one school year, but the total amount of time of the

trial period must not exceed three months and the months must be consecutive.

**Qualified Domestic Relations Orders (QDROs) – Rule 47.17.** For participants who have a court order dividing benefits, such as in connection with a divorce, the rule addresses how payments to an alternate payee will be calculated in different situations requiring payment of the actuarial equivalent of the amount awarded under a qualified domestic relations order.

**Conclusion.** This article summarizes the key changes. To learn more about the topics listed above, please visit the TRS website. As always, the state laws and board rules governing TRS are the final authority on how TRS must administer the retirement plan. The laws and rules will prevail over any summary of the plan terms that TRS provides to you.

**\*\* See our latest video\*\***

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