

2012 KPERS Project

Goal: to PRESERVE the state retirement system as a DEFINED BENEFIT plan and to ENSURE it is appropriately funded to provide earned benefits in the future.

Strategy: to provide all Johnson County legislators with overwhelming visual evidence of the number of public school employees in Johnson County who support preserving and strengthening KPERS.

Tactic: to have every public school employee in Johnson County sign a petition of support provided in each public school district building as well as Johnson County Community College and the Kansas School for the Deaf.

Timeline: Petitions will be available the week of January 16-20 at all 12 De Soto schools, as well as the District Service Center and District Administration Office.

Location of Petitions: If you work in one of the 12 USD 232 schools, you will find the petition with one of the DTA Building Reps in your school. You can find out who the DTA Building Reps are by clicking on the "Contact Us" button on the left side of the home page. Most buildings have more than one building rep, so just make contact with one of them to find the petition for your building.

If you work at the District Administration Office, the petition can be found at Dena Wilkerson's desk (front desk receptionist).

If you work out of the District Service Center, the petition can be found at Arlene Smith's desk.

KPERS Petition: Questions and Answers

What is a pension?

- A pension is deferred compensation.
- The compensation is deferred until your retirement. It is pooled with other members of your pension group, invested for growth, and then it is returned to you upon retirement.
- It is not a gift from the state or from the tax payers; it is part of your total compensation.

Who are KPERS members?

- All public employees in Kansas, including **every** Unified School District employee, are KPERS members.

What is a defined benefit plan?

- A defined benefit plan is one in which the benefit is defined.
- An employee receives a set monthly amount upon retirement. The amount received is based upon the participant's salary and length of service with the district.
- The retiree continues to receive that amount every month for the rest of his/her life.

What is a defined contribution plan?

- A defined contribution plan means the amount of the contribution is defined instead of the benefit. Employees and/or the employer contribute into a retirement account where it is invested.
- The account grows through contributions and investment earnings until retirement.
- In a DC plan, there is no guarantee as to how much you will receive when you retire. If poor investment choices are made you might not have as much money as you contributed.

Why am I being asked to sign a petition?

- The Kansas legislature commissioned a study of the current KPERS system to address a large unfunded liability (deficit) in the current system.
- The commission has received numerous recommendations to place future public employees in a defined contribution plan.
- The commission has also received testimony that diverting future employees to a defined contribution plan will make the unfunded liability (deficit) larger.

What will happen with this petition?

- Copies of the petition from around Johnson County will be copied and sent to all Johnson County legislators once the legislative session starts.

Am I required to sign the petition?

- No. Your participation is voluntary.