

Some History of the Teacher Retirement System

Did you know?

In 1917 the Ford Motor Company introduced the Model T Roadster. Woodrow Wilson was president and the U.S. declared war on Germany. The first **teacher retirement system** in Washington State was created. Within this system individual school districts - by majority vote - could establish a **retirement fund** vested with the county where the school district resided. Funding was provided by withholding from teacher pay. After 30 years of service and contributions, teachers could receive an annual retirement pension of \$480, to be paid in quarterly instalments of \$120.

Six years later in 1923, the first **State fund for pensions** was created and in 1937 the **WA State Teacher's Retirement System** was created. Within this system retirement funds were collected from individual teacher contributions and appropriations from the pension fund.

These achievements were the result of the work of many teachers and other school employees who persistently communicated with their legislators to advocate for these provisions.

In 1947, four groups of teachers from Seattle, Tacoma, Vancouver and Spokane met in Wenatchee and officially launched the **WA State Retired Teachers Association**. These teachers felt an urgent need for a state wide organization to better guard the interests of retired teachers and support the advancement of retirement systems. In 2000, the name of the association was changed to **Washington State School Retirees' Association** to include certified, classified and administrative school employees.

Currently the Association has over 16,000 members in 30 Units across the State. They have legislative representatives who work diligently

each legislative session - and with committees between sessions - to advance retirement benefits for school employees.

Pension payments become increasingly important when we grow older and begin to lose our independence. The pension provides security when we need in-home care and services, assisted living or nursing home care.

So why should I join?

Join to say "Thank you!" to all the teachers and other school employees who came before you and who helped to provide you with the secure pension you have - or will have when you retire!

So why should I join?

Join to "Pay it forward!" so that school employees who come after you may also enjoy a generous and secure retirement pension.