



NYSTRS.org

Electing & Reporting Retirement System Delegates

A Guide for Potential Delegates/Alternates and NYSTRS Participating Employers

Introduction

New York State Teachers' Retirement System (NYSTRS) participating employers oversee the election of delegates to serve two-year terms. Delegates have two main functions:

1. To elect a teacher member to the Retirement Board at the Annual Delegates Meeting; and,
2. To serve as a liaison between NYSTRS and the delegate's co-workers.

Although not required, each delegate should also have a corresponding alternate, who would carry out these duties if the delegate were unable to serve.

This information sheet is provided to answer your questions about the delegate selection and reporting process. Call NYSTRS at (800) 348-7298, Ext. 4785 with any additional questions.

Delegate Responsibilities

Question	Answer
What are the duties of a delegate?	Delegates attend a two-day annual meeting held in October or November where a teacher member is elected to the NYSTRS Board. The delegate may also act as a liaison between NYSTRS and the members of their school district/college.
What are the duties of an alternate?	Alternates serve as backups to their corresponding delegates. The alternate may attend the Annual Meeting, but may only vote if NYSTRS is informed prior to the meeting that the delegate will not attend and the appropriate change has been made in NYSTRS' Employer Secure Area. Should the delegate vacate his/her position for any reason, the alternate would automatically assume the delegate position and the alternate position would remain vacant until the next regular election. (Note: Delegates and alternates are elected as a ticket and cannot be split.)
How long of a term does a delegate/alternate serve?	The delegate/alternate serve a two-year term. The term during a regular election year (odd-numbered year) begins on August 1 and runs for two years ending July 31 of the following odd year. Delegates elected via special election serve out the remaining year of the two-year term served by a delegate elected through a regular election.

Election of a Delegate/Alternate

Question	Answer
When is a delegate election held?	Regular elections of a delegate/alternate are held between March 1 and June 1 of odd-numbered years, with results to be submitted to NYSTRS by July 1. Special elections are held in even-numbered years, but only employers with openings in both the delegate and alternate positions of a ticket are eligible to participate. Special elections must be held between March 1 and October 1, with results submitted by October 6.
How is entitlement for a delegate and alternate determined?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The number of delegates and alternates to which a NYSTRS participating employer is entitled to is based upon the number of active NYSTRS members contractually employed at the district or college. • The number of delegate/alternate tickets an employer is eligible to fill can be viewed within the Convention Delegates application of NYSTRS' Employer Secure Area (ESA). Employers should check this area each March to determine entitlement and/or vacancies to be filled.

Question	Answer
What defines eligibility to be elected as a delegate or alternate?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Both delegates and alternates must be in-service, full-time (e.g., per-annum) employees who are NYSTRS members. • Delegates and alternates are elected as a ticket and cannot be split. In other words, an alternate for “Delegate A” may not serve in place of “Delegate B” if the latter is unable to attend the meeting.
Who runs the election?	It is the Chief School Administrator’s responsibility to hold the election or designate someone to do so. Many schools/colleges have the election run by their local union. The only area mandated by the Education Law in the running of an election is that the election be held between the dates of March 1 and June 1 and that the results of the election be conveyed to NYSTRS no later than July 1.
What procedure is used for running a delegate election?	The Education Law does not mandate an election process, and NYSTRS has no authority to mandate how elections are run. It is left to the discretion of each school district/college to establish appropriate procedures.
Can a retired member who works part-time as a teacher participate?	No, they cannot participate in an election or become a delegate/alternate. To participate in any capacity, a person must be an active member of NYSTRS.
If a delegate does not have an alternate, can they still be elected?	Yes. It is not mandatory for a delegate to have an alternate. However, should a delegate retire or vacate the position and there is not an alternate, the delegate position would remain vacant until it could either be filled during the special election or during the next regular election.
What if the number of nominated delegates/alternates equals the number of delegates a school district/college is entitled to; is it necessary to hold an election?	No election is necessary in this case. This is considered an uncontested election and the names of the delegate(s) and alternate(s) may be entered into the electronic system for submission. The date of election should be the date the interested delegate(s) and alternate(s) names were submitted to you.
What if there are fewer people nominated than the number of delegates the school district/college is entitled to?	If your school district/college does not receive enough interested members to equal the number of delegates, you may submit the names of those interested. Should the school district/college receive any interested members for the vacant delegate position(s) at a later date, these vacancies may be filled the following year during the special election. Regular elections are held in odd-numbered years and special elections are held in even-numbered years. A special election is held to fill any vacant delegate positions which may have been vacated either due to retirement, resignation, lack of interest previously, etc.
What happens if a delegate and alternate position are both vacant?	Any vacancies in the delegate/alternate position(s) following a regular election may only be filled during a special election, held in even-numbered years. A special election begins March 1 and continues through October 1 with results to be submitted through October 6 of even-numbered years. The term runs from when the delegate/alternate names are submitted to the end of the original delegate’s 2-year term (July 31 of odd-numbered year). If an alternate position is vacated and the delegate remains, the vacant alternate position may not be filled.
Why does a BOCES have two district numbers?	A BOCES needs to hold an election for NYSTRS members employed by their district as well as oversee an election for their component districts. In their capacity overseeing the component district election, they are considered a supervisory district and have a separate district number. As a supervisory district, the BOCES is responsible for overseeing an election for those component districts employing fewer than 75 NYSTRS members. In this instance, a single election takes place at the supervisory level, with delegate entitlement based on the cumulative number of NYSTRS members employed by the under-75 component districts. Component districts employing 75 or more NYSTRS members are eligible to hold their own elections. They will be contacted independently by NYSTRS and the supervisory district will not be responsible for reporting election results for them.

Submitting of Election Results

Question	Answer
How are election results reported to NYSTRS?	Results must be reported electronically through the Employer Secure Area at NYSTRS.org. In addition to having web access, the person reporting must be a registered ESA user with Convention Delegates privileges.
How does someone obtain the rights to enter election results?	The Chief School Administrator or Security Administrator at your school is the assignor of these rights. One of these individuals must, through ESA, specifically designate someone the rights to access the Convention Delegates application. Only those with this right can enter election results.
What information is needed to enter election results?	The following information will need to be entered: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Date of election (see election timelines). • NYSTRS EmplID for the delegate(s) and, if necessary, the corresponding alternate(s). • School email address for each delegate and alternate.
When in ESA, where is the election results entry page?	To report Convention Delegate election results, after logging in select CDS and then Convention Delegates from the following page. The delegate entry page will populate showing the number of vacancies available to fill. Delegates and alternates are elected as a ticket and cannot be split.
What is the EmplID asked for when entering the delegate and alternate information?	EmplID (or Employee Identification number) is a unique seven-digit number assigned to each NYSTRS member. If this information is not provided to the person reporting election results to NYSTRS, either (1) obtain it from the employer's Business or Payroll office, or (2) once logged on to the Convention Delegates application, use the delegate's or alternate's Social Security number to search for their EmplID.
What if the person who previously reported election results is no longer employed here, or we want to appoint someone else to that role?	Contact your employer's Chief School Administrator or Security Administrator. Only they can assign rights.
What happens if I have problems logging on?	Contact NYSTRS at (800) 348-7298, Ext. 2908 or at convdel@nystrs.org and someone will assist you.
We entered our election results online. Is there anything else the district is required to do?	No. Meeting details and other pertinent information will be emailed directly to elected delegates and alternates in September. However, we urge employers to review Administrative Bulletin 2011-4 (Annual Delegates Meeting - Attendance, Salary and Expense Issues), found under the Administrative Bulletins tab on the Employers page at NYSTRS.org.

Annual Delegates Meeting

Question	Answer
Is it mandatory for a delegate or an alternate to attend the Annual Delegates Meeting?	No, it is not mandatory. However, if neither attends, the school district/college which they represent will not be entitled to a vote for the teacher member of the Board up for election that year.
Who pays Annual Delegates Meeting expenses?	Under a Comptroller's ruling, local school districts/colleges cannot pay expenses for meeting attendance; therefore, the expenses are the responsibility of the delegate/alternate. (Also see a State Education Department opinion and a ruling by the Commissioner of Education.) Delegates should contact their local bargaining units about possible reimbursement. You may also refer to Administrative Bulletin 2011-4 (Annual Delegates Meeting - Attendance, Salary and Expense Issues), found under the Administrative Bulletins tab on the Employers page at NYSTRS.org.

Question	Answer
If an alternate chooses to attend the meeting along with their delegate, does NYSTRS need to be notified?	An alternate may attend the meeting in addition to the district’s voting delegate they were elected with. The employer’s Convention Delegates User must indicate this by changing the meeting status within CDS from “Not Attending” to “Attending/Visitor.”
If NYSTRS is notified prior to the annual meeting that a delegate will not be attending and their corresponding alternate will be there in their place, will the alternate have voting rights?	Yes. As long as NYSTRS has been notified prior to the Annual Delegates Meeting or the meeting status has been changed online (delegate to “Not Attending;” alternate to “Attending/Voting”), the alternate will have voting rights.
Where is the Annual Delegates Meeting held?	The Annual Delegates Meeting is held at the Saratoga Springs City Center in Saratoga Springs, New York.
What are the dates of the Annual Delegates Meeting?	They vary annually, but by law the meeting must be held in October or November. Traditionally, the two-day meeting is held on a Sunday and Monday. However, scheduling conflicts with the venue and/or area hotels sometimes require the use of alternate days. In either case, delegates are given many months’ advance notice to adequately plan their travel and accommodations. See the Delegates page for the latest meeting information.
Should a delegate be unable to attend, can any one of the district’s alternates attend and vote at the Annual Delegates Meeting for them?	No. Delegates and alternates are elected as tickets and may not be split. An alternate may not cast a vote for a delegate they were not elected to serve with.