



**New York State  
Teachers'  
Retirement  
System**

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**PRESS RELEASE**  
For Immediate Release

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## **Little Joins NYSTRS Board of Trustees**

**ALBANY, N.Y. (Sept. 10, 2024)** – Donald A. Little III, a teacher at the Syracuse City School District, was appointed to the New York State Teachers' Retirement System (NYSTRS) Board of Trustees. Mr. Little is one of three active teacher members on the Board.

New York State Commissioner of Education Dr. Betty A. Rosa appointed Mr. Little to fill the remainder of the three-year term vacated by Elizabeth A. Chetney, who stepped down from the Board in March to serve on the outreach team of New York State United Teachers (NYSUT). Mr. Little will need to be elected by NYSTRS delegates to complete the term that ends Jan. 31, 2027. The election will be held Nov. 4 as part of the Annual Delegates Meeting.

Juliet C. Benaquisto of the Schenectady City School District and Eric J. Iberger of the Bayport-Blue Point Union Free School District are the other active teacher members on the Board. David P. Keefe of Hempstead is the retired teacher representative and serves as president of the Board.

NYSTRS' Board sets policy and oversees operations for the Retirement System. The 10 members of the Board serve without compensation and represent various constituents, including active and retired teachers, school administrators, school boards, and financial experts. They are responsible as fiduciaries to protect the long-term value of the System's investment portfolio and provide benefit security for its nearly 449,000 active members, retirees and beneficiaries.

Mr. Little has taught history at the Syracuse City School District since 1999, where he also serves as second vice president of the Syracuse Teachers Association. He was selected to participate in the 2024 Fulbright-Hays Seminars Abroad Program in Japan, studying and developing curriculum.

A longtime NYSTRS delegate prior to joining the Board, Mr. Little is an adjunct professor at SUNY Oswego. He has served NYSUT in several capacities, including his current role as vice chair of the Pension & Retirement Committee.

Mr. Little received his bachelor's degree in secondary education and master's degrees in American history and education from SUNY Oswego.

Ms. Chetney, who has taught at the Baldwinsville Central School District for 32 years, had been a member of NYSTRS' Board since 2019. She served on nearly every committee of the Board, most recently serving as chair of the Disability Review Committee and as a member of the Executive,



Investment, and Risk committees.

“On behalf of NYSTRS’ staff, I thank Beth for her service on the Retirement Board and her commitment to providing retirement security to our members,” said NYSTRS Executive Director and Chief Investment Officer Thomas K. Lee. “We welcome Donald to the Board and look forward to the insight he will bring to the Board as a longtime educator and advocate for New York’s teachers.”

## **ABOUT NYSTRS**

Established in 1921, NYSTRS provides retirement security to New York State public school teachers and administrators (excluding New York City). The System serves nearly 449,000 members and beneficiaries. Over 80% of NYSTRS’ more than \$8.2 billion annual benefit payroll is distributed to New York residents.

NYSTRS is one of the most secure and well-funded public pension plans in the country. The System’s funded ratio is 98.6% based on the actuarial value of assets. NYSTRS’ 10-year and 30-year rates of investment returns, net of fees, were 8.5% and 8.3%, respectively, as of the fiscal year ended June 30, 2023. These results are top decile compared to peer public pension plans.

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