

Audit Committee

Aug. 15, 2024

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Introductions

- Robert Vance, CAE
- Phil Licata, CISA, IT Controls Manager
- Kimberly VanGundy, CPA, Investment Audit Specialist
- Bonnie Wild, Internal Auditor



General Purpose

- To provide a midyear update on Internal Audit Department activities
- To provide an opportunity to discuss Internal Audit or Audit Committee interests
- To identify Audit Committee requests for future deliverables

Internal Audit Agenda

Presenting

- Refresh on Internal Audit purpose
- Review the 2024 Interim Internal Audit Summary
- Provide an update on other significant administrative activities





• Mission

- Provide independent, objective assurance and consulting services designed to add value and improve STRS Ohio's operations
- Help STRS Ohio accomplish its objectives by bringing a systematic, disciplined approach to evaluating and improving the effectiveness of governance, risk management and control processes

Objectives

 Provide independent assurance to the STRS Ohio Board, Audit Committee, and management that STRS Ohio's assets are safeguarded, operations are efficiently managed, and compliance is maintained with prescribed laws and STRS Ohio policies

Internal Audit Agenda

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- Review the 2024 Interim Internal Audit Summary
- Provide an update on other significant administrative activities



Internal Audit Summary



Reporting

- Summaries are the primary tools used to provide audit activity updates
- Interim and annual summaries are produced on a routine schedule
- The information represents a collaboration of efforts between the management team, staff and the Internal Audit Department
- Layout and basic design remain fairly fixed to meet the Ohio Retirement Study Council uniformity requests

Internal Audit Summary

- Specific Audit Updates
 - Audit-specific feedback provided:
 - Findings
 - Recommendations
 - Control effectiveness
 - Follow-up
 - Other Disclosures
 - Risk acceptance
 - Cooperation



Internal Audit Agenda

Presenting

- Refresh on Internal Audit purpose
- Review the 2024 Interim Internal Audit Summary
- Provide an update on other significant administrative activities



Other Significant Administrative Activities

- Procedures updates
- Quality Assurance and Improvement Program
- Audit Universe update
- Audit Plan update
- Status reporting
- New standards (effective 2025)



IPPF Standards Conformity Tracking



Counts by Conformity Section/Standard Standard 1321 - Use of "Conforms with the International Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing" Standard 1322 - Disclosure of Nonconformance Standard 2000 - Managing the Internal Audit Activity Standard 2010 - Planning Standard 2020 - Communication and Approval Standard 2030 - Resource Management Conformity Standard 2040 - Policies and Procedures Generally Conforms Standard 2050 – Coordination and Reliance Standard 2060 - Reporting to Senior Management and the Board Standard 2070 - External Service Provider and Organizational Responsibility for Internal Auditina Standard 2100 – Nature of Work Standard 2110 - Governance Standard 2120 - Risk Management **Generally Conforms** 53 (100%) Standard 2130 - Control

Section/Standard Description

Where the chief audit executive has or is expected to have roles and/or responsibilities that fall outside of internal auditing, safeguards must be in place to limit impairments to independence and objectivity.

When the chief audit executive concludes that management has accepted a level of risk that may be unacceptable to the organization, the chief audit executive must discuss the matter with senior management. If the chief audit executive determines that the matter has not been resolved, the chief audit executive must communicate the matter to the board.

When nonconformance with the Code of Ethics or the Standards impacts the overall scope or operation of the internal audit activity, the chief audit executive must disclose the nonconformance and the impact to senior management and the board.

When nonconformance with the Code of Ethics or the Standards impacts a specific engagement, communication of the results must disclose the:

Interpretation

• Organizational independence is effectively achieved when the chief audit executive reports functionally to the board. Examples of functional reporting to the board involve the board:

- Approving the internal audit charter.
- Approving the risk-based internal audit plan.
- Approving the internal audit budget and resource plan.
- Receiving communications from the chief audit executive on the internal audit activity's performance relative to its plan and other matters.
- Approving decisions regarding the appointment and removal of the chief audit executive.





Purpose

- Serve as an independent assurance partner to aid in STRS Ohio's risk mitigation efforts

• Audit Summary

- Full senior management and staff cooperation
- No material items or reports of management assuming unacceptable risk

Administration

- Compliance with the Institute of Internal Auditor's *Standards* drives the various Internal Audit administrative goals





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State Teachers Retirement System of Ohio

Board Presentation Client Service Plan Year Ending June 30, 2024

Crowe LLP

August 15, 20<mark>2</mark>4





- Crowe Presenters and Client Service Team
- Roles and Responsibilities
- Scope and Deliverables
- Approach
- Timeline
- Planning Communications and Considerations
- Questions and Discussion

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Crowe Presenters and Client Service Team



Christine Torres Engagement Partner



Jen Aras Concurring Partner

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Crowe LLP

- Audit Process
 - The Ohio Auditor of State (OAS) works with Independent Public Accountants (IPAs) to fulfill the responsibility of auditing all public entities in Ohio. OAS selects the audit firm through an RFQ/RFP process.
 - Currently in the 4th year of a 5 year audit contract

Crowe LLP

Founded in 1942 in South Bend, Indiana, leading to 82 years in business

More than 5,500 personnel and 35 US locations

Industry Experience includes:

- California State Teachers' Retirement System
- Florida Retirement System
- South Carolina Retirement System
- Ohio Police & Fire Pension System
- Tennessee Valley Authority Retirement System
- Over 250 government entity retirement plans (cities, villages, counties)

Crowe Client Service Team

Role	Name	Definitio
Engagement Partner	Christine Torres	Christine is the auditor in charge of statements.
Concurring Partner	Jen Aras	Jen oversees management of the or with the Engagement Partner.
Audit Senior Manager	Ron Gasink	Ron oversees the execution of certa performed over contributing entities
Audit Manager	Robyn Moroz	Robyn is the on-site engagement m progress of all significant areas of the
Other Specialists and Contractors	Harvest Investments	Harvest will be used to assist in the of investments.

ion of Role

f the audits of the STRS financial

overall engagement working closely

tain procedures required to be s.

manager overseeing the day-to-day the audits

e determination of the fair market value

Roles and Responsibilities

Those Charged with Governance

- Oversight of external auditor, including scope, approach and planned timeline
- Oversight of the reporting and integrity of published financial information
- Continued education due to changing requirements and information

Management

- Preparation and fair presentation of financial statements in accordance with Generally **Accepted Accounting Principles** (GAAP)
- Design, implementation and maintenance of internal control structure related to the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements

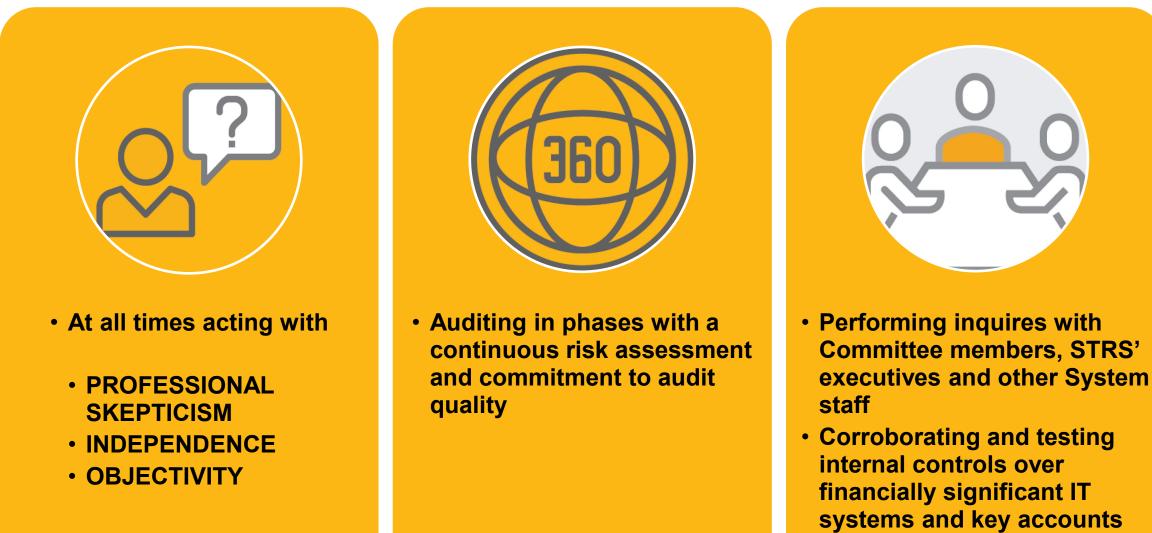
Crowe

 Performance of audits under **Generally Accepted Auditing** Standards and Government Auditing Standards

Scope and Deliverables

- Independent Auditor's Reports
 - State Teachers' Retirement System of Ohio
 - Other Pension and OPEB Information specified captions
- Independent Auditor's Report on Internal Control Over Financial Reporting and on Compliance and Other Matters Based on an Audit of Financial Statements Performed in Accordance with *Government Auditing Standards*
- Required Communications to Those Charged with Governance
- Management Comment Letter, if applicable

Approach



Accumulation and Evaluation of Results

- Performing substantive testing over significant risks and key audit areas
- Existence and fair value of investments
- Total pension liability
- Contributions
- Potential management override of controls

Timeline



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Investment Testing

All investments are not the same – we do not test them the same

Investments are segregated into different "buckets" based on risk and samples are further selected from these "buckets"



Within Crowe we have specialists for the different "buckets"



These buckets include:

Real Estate Alternatives Fixed Income/Equities

Planning Communications and Considerations

- Concept of materiality in planning and executing the audits
- Addressing significant risks of material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error
- Crowe's responsibility to communicate evidence of fraud and significant matters
- Use of the work of internal audit
- Views of the Board and areas that warrant particular attention
- Key considerations for FY2024 audit

Independence Considerations

There are no non-attest services performed by Crowe in the current audit.

We wish to report that we are not aware of any relationship between Crowe LLP and the State Teachers Retirement System of Ohio (STRS) that, in our professional judgment, may reasonably be thought to impair our independence.

Accordingly, and relating to our audit of the June 30, 2024 financial statements of STRS, we are independent certified public accountants with respect to STRS within the meaning of the applicable pronouncements of the Independence Standards Board under Rule 101 of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants' Code of Professional Conduct, its interpretations and rulings and Government Accounting Standards Yellow Book Independence Standards.

Questions and Discussion

Christine TorresJen ArasPhone 630.706.2074Phone 916.492.5119Christine.torres@crowe.comJen.aras@crowe.com

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ACA Performance Update

STRS Ohio Management and Audit Committee

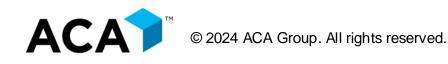
August 2024



ACA Group ("ACA")

is the leading governance, risk, and compliance (GRC) advisor in financial services.

We empower our clients to reimagine GRC and protect and grow their business.





Performance

Our team is the world's largest group of professionals dedicated solely to GIPS® compliance and associated services. We specialize in providing GIPS standards verification and performance-related services to investment managers across the globe.

Performance consulting services

- GIPS compliance services •
 - Gap analysis
 - Pre-verification consulting ٠
 - Firm-wide verification ٠
 - Performance examinations ٠
- Managed performance services •
- Secondments (Staff Augmentation) •
- Focused performance review (Project based consulting) •
- SEC Marketing Rule Assessment •
- Fundraising & Reporting support for private markets •
- Performance track record attestations

Education & consultations

- Discounted access to ACA conferences •
- Annual planning meeting (in person or remote) •
- Flat fee year-round retainer style consulting •
- Educational webcasts •
- **Regional roundtables** •
- related questions



Access to our U.S. based regulatory consultants for performance advertising

Our Practice



Client types:

Institutional equity and fixed income, credit, hedge fund, fund of funds, real estate, retail, & asset owners

Current and Past CFA Institute involvement:

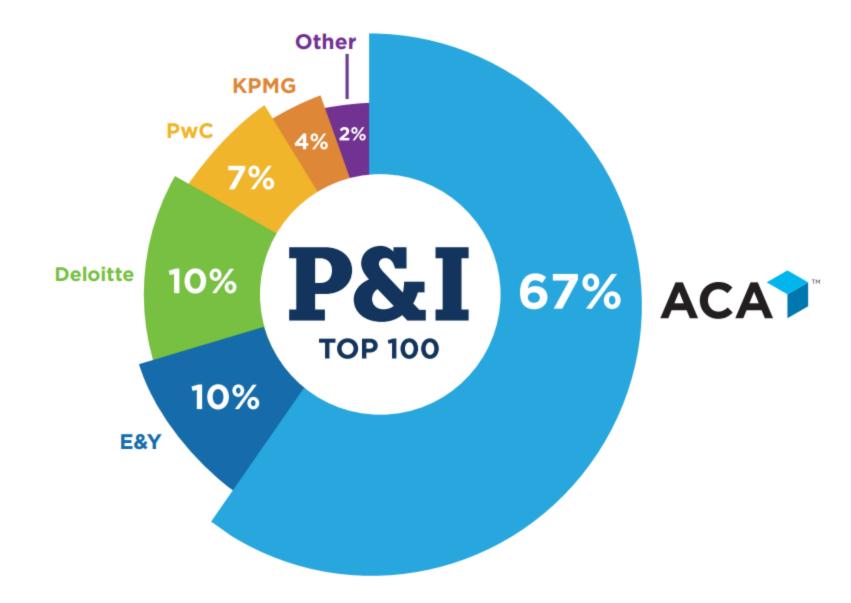
The GIPS Executive Committee, GIPS Verification Subcommittee, GIPS Promotion & Awareness Subcommittee, FMP Technical Committee, GIPS Overlay Working Group, USIPC (the US Country Sponsor of the GIPS standards), UKIPC (the UK Country Sponsor of the GIPS standards), CIPM Standard Setting, GIPS Real Estate Working Group, and the OCIO Working Group Advisory Board



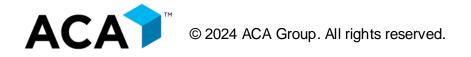


Our Market Share

ACA has the largest market share of verified firms in P&I's Top 100 list.



P&I top 100 list compared to eVestment database as of 8/31/2021.



STRS Ohio Team

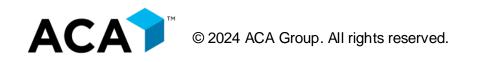
Name	Title	Years Experience
Julia Reyes	Partner	18
Gretchen Salisbury	Director	17
Tomas Arciniega	Senior Principal Consultant	6
Dylan Miller	Consultant	4



e	Role
	Relationship Manager
	Account Owner
	Lead Consultant
	Consultant

Best Practices for Performance Reporting

- > The Global Investment Performance Standards (GIPS®) are globally recognized and considered to be industry best practice
- > Asset owners often require investment managers to comply with the GIPS standards
- > Asset owners have begun claiming GIPS compliance for the following reasons: • the desire to hold themselves to the same standards as their external managers; • the need to provide full and transparent performance information and related disclosures in line with industry best practices to the public and oversight board; and • an improved compliance framework inclusive of standardized policies and procedures related to
- - performance.
- > Asset owners claim compliance to demonstrate a culture of compliance and strong internal controls

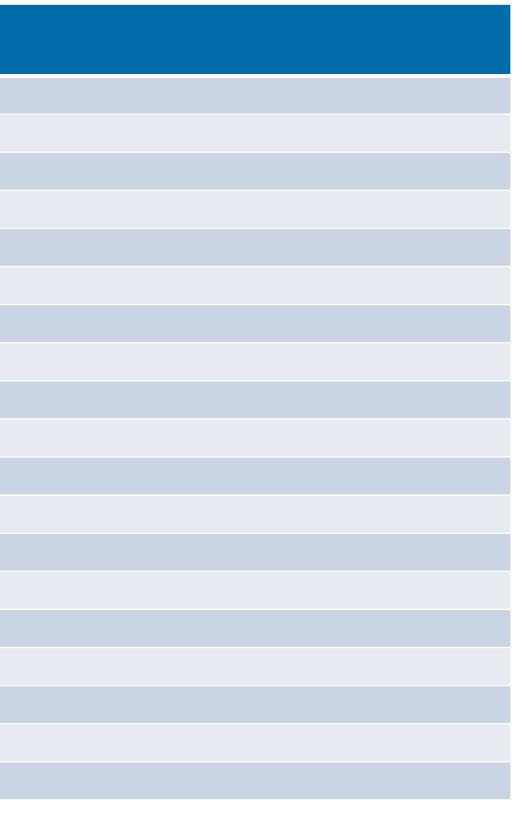


Asset Owners Claiming Compliance with the GIPS® Standards

Organization	Country
California Public Employees' Retirement System	USA
California State Teachers' Retirement System	USA
Missouri Education Pension Trust	USA
South Carolina Retirement System Investment Commission	USA
State Teachers Retirement System of Ohio	USA
Texas Municipal Retirement System	USA
Pension Reserves Investment Management Board	USA
AFL-CIO Building Investment Trust	USA
AFL-CIO Housing Investment Trust	USA
Green Mesa Capital, LLC	USA
United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund (UNJSPF)	USA
Vestcor Inc.	Canada
AIA Group	Hong Kong
Folketrygdfondet	Norway
Oman Investment Authority	Oman
Ministry of Defence Pension Fund	Oman
Hassana Investment Company	Saudi Arabia
Saudi Central Bank (SAMA)	Saudi Arabia
Suva	Switzerland

Note: 3 entities chose to remain private





STRS Ohio History and Background

> STRS Ohio has been verified since July 1, 2006

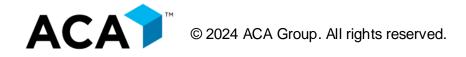
- Performed annually for the fiscal year July 1 June 30
- Performance Examination conducted on the Total Fund for the same periods

> ACA has issued no formal, written recommendations for improvement to STRS Ohio since the early years of GIPS compliance (circa 2006)

Periodic updates managed through ongoing discourse to ensure claim of compliance is maintained/enhanced

> STRS Ohio was an early adopter of the GIPS Standards

- GIPS Standards for Asset Owners model
- Additional measure of oversight and governance
- Industry best practice among investment managers
- Commitment to the highest standard of performance calculation and presentation



Process

As a verifier, we must verify that STRS Ohio has established policies and procedures for complying with the GIPS related to total fund maintenance and the calculation, presentation, and distribution of performance that are designed in compliance with the GIPS standards, as well as whether these policies and procedures have been implemented on an asset owner-wide basis.

- \succ STRS Ohio must have policies and procedures for all applicable provisions of the GIPS standards including valuation, return calculation, and presentation and reporting
- > Involves rigorous testing, including the methodologies and validation to third-party support, of the STRS Ohio Total Fund performance calculation inputs, resulting return, and reporting
- > Asset owners have discretion to assign assets to underlying external managers. No requirement for the external managers to be GIPS compliant themselves – burden of GIPS compliance rests with the asset owner
- > Deviation from required provisions would result in STRS Ohio not being GIPS compliant
 - > Must meet <u>ALL</u> requirements to be GIPS compliant



Areas of Testing – STRS Ohio

- Initial Data Review
- Performance Calculations Inputs and Calculation Methodology
- Sample Selection
- Presentation and Reporting
- Benchmark Returns
- Policies and Procedures



Sample Size – STRS Ohio

Performance Calculations

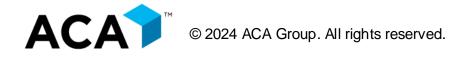
- All asset class-level returns are replicated based on documented methodologies and rolled up to the Total Fund level
- 3 months of total fund level calculations and valuation reconciliations
- 3 months of asset class level calculations and valuation reconciliations
- I month of capital calls/distributions reconciled back to third-party fund administrator

> Valuations

- 15 external real estate property values, including debt values, are reconciled against external third-party appraisals.
- 47 alternative investment fund valuations are reconciled using quarterly partner capital reports and capital call/distribution notices from STRS third-party private fund administrator.
- 9 derivative reconciliations against third-party custodian

> Reporting

- All stats in GIPS Report are replicated and/or tied back to internal STRS documentation
- Annual review of STRS GIPS Policies and Procedures to recommend enhancements/check for proper application
- All GIPS Report disclosures checked against ACA's testing to check for accuracy



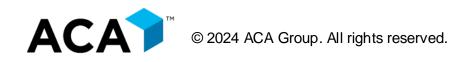
Returns

<u>Gross Returns</u> reflect the deduction of:

> All external investment management fees and costs, including carried interest and other fund expenses, for alternative investments and real estate > Brokerage commissions and other trading related expenses \succ Applicable foreign withholding taxes on dividends, interest, and capital gains

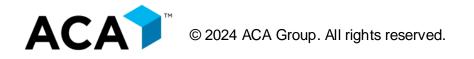
<u>Net Returns</u> are Gross Returns reduced by:

- > All internal and external management fees and costs
 - Consistently range from 11-14bps per year for past 10 years
- > Required by the GIPS standards for asset owners to represent the true return an investor can expect to receive after all fees and expenses



Verification and Performance Examination

- > A Verification and Performance Examination enables a practitioner to express an opinion that, in all **material respects**, the firm has designed policies and procedures to construct composites, calculate and present performance in accordance with the GIPS standards
- \succ The objective of a financial statement audit is to enable the auditor to express an opinion as to whether the financial statements are prepared, in all material respects, in accordance with generally accepted accounting principals
- > Both a verification and an audit are conducted on a sample basis, follow robust industry standards, and are designed to provide reasonable but not absolute assurance
- Level of liability for a verifier and an auditor are essentially the same \succ
- > CPA firms conducting Verifications must follow AICPA SOP 20-01 (refer to next slide) which directs practitioners to follow verification and performance examination procedures within the GIPS standards



AICPA Statement of Position 20-1 Reporting Pursuant to the 2020 Edition of the Global Investment Performance Standards

Engagement Objectives

19. Practitioners are required to conduct verifications and performance examinations in accordance with attestation standards established by the AICPA. In addition, the GIPS standards specify that these engagements must be conducted in accordance with required verification or performance examination procedures. This SOP is not intended to provide all the required procedures set forth in the GIPS standards or cover all the requirements in the applicable attestation standards established by the AICPA.

20. For a verification, the practitioner's objective is to express an opinion on whether, in all material respects, the firm's policies and procedures related to composite and pooled fund maintenance, as well as the calculation, presentation, and distribution of performance, have been

a. designed in compliance with the GIPS standards, and

b. implemented on a firm-wide basis.

21. For a performance examination of a specific composite, the practitioner's objective is to express an opinion on whether, in all material respects, the firm has a. constructed the composite and calculated the composite performance in compliance with the GIPS standards, and

- b. prepared and presented the GIPS Composite Report in compliance with the GIPS standards.

22. For a performance examination of a specific pooled fund, the practitioner's objective is to express an opinion on whether, in all material respects, the firm has

a. calculated the pooled fund performance in compliance with the GIPS standards, and

b. prepared and presented the GIPS Pooled Fund Report in compliance with the GIPS standards.

23. For a performance examination of a specific asset owner total fund or composite, the practitioner's objective is to express an opinion on whether, in all material respects, the asset owner has

a. constructed the [total fund or composite] and calculated the [total fund or composite] performance in compliance with the GIPS standards, and

b. prepared and presented the GIPS Asset Owner Report in compliance with the GIPS standards.



Total Fund Benchmark

ACA reconciles the underlying benchmark performance using independent third-party sources and independently recalculates blended benchmarks

Full Reconciliation:

Strategy	Benchmark
Domestic Equities	Russell 3000 Index
Liquidity Reserves	ICE BofA US 3-Month Treasury Bill Index
Real Estate	85/15 blend of NCREIF Property Index (NPI) and FTSE NARE
International Equities	80/20 blend of MSCI World ex-U.S. 50% Hedged Index (Net)
	 Return stream from STRS used in blend calculation for he
Alternative Investments	Blend of underlying policy weights PE/Opportunistic Diversifie
	 Private Equity Benchmark is the Cambridge Associates Pri The Opportunistic/Diversified blended benchmark consists Portfolio weight multiplied by the Cambridge Associates Pr Diversified Investments Portfolio multiplied by the HFRI Fu
Fixed Income Blend	Blend of Bloomberg U.S. Universal and Bloomberg U.S. Interr Core Fixed Income and Liquid Treasury portfolios



EIT Equity REITs Index (replication of blend) and MSCI Emerging Markets Index (Net)

edged component

ed (47.4%/52.6% effective 7/2022)

rivate Equity and Venture Capital Index s of the actual Opportunistic Investments rivate Credit Index plus the actual weight of the und of Funds Composite Index

rmediate Treasury using actual daily weights of

Total Fund Benchmark, continued

- \succ The Total Fund blended benchmark is calculated monthly using a blend of the asset class benchmarks based on the Total Fund's policy weights for the respective asset classes
- > Industry norm is a blended benchmark based off either actual or target asset class weights and the corresponding asset class benchmarks
- > For Alternative asset classes, we often see a variety of benchmarks used
 - Actual portfolio return
 - Peer universe data including private market benchmarks
 - Published public benchmarks



Deliverables

Verification Report

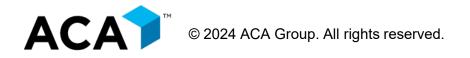
In our opinion, for the periods from July 1, 2006 through June 30, 2024, the Asset Owner's policies and procedures for complying with the GIPS standards related to total fund maintenance, as well as the calculation, presentation, and distribution of performance, have been, in all material respects:

- Designed in compliance with the GIPS standards, and
- Implemented on an asset owner-wide basis.

Performance Examination Report

Also, in our opinion, the Firm has, in all material respects:

- Calculated the Total Fund's performance for the periods from July 1, 2006 through June 30, 2024 in compliance with the GIPS standards; and
- Prepared and presented the accompanying GIPS Total Fund Report for the periods from July 1, 2014 through June 30, 2024 in compliance with the GIPS standards.
- Additionally, in our opinion, the accompanying Supplemental Information for the period from July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024 has been calculated and presented, in all material respects, in compliance with industry performance standards as described in the Supplemental Information accompanying notes.
- Recommendation Letter



GIPS Total Fund Report

State Teachers Retirement System of Ohio Total Fund July 1, 2014 through June 30, 2024

Fiscal Year	Gross Return (%)	Net Return (%)	Benchmark Return (%)	% of Externally- Managed Assets (%)	Total Composite Assets (\$ millions)
2024	10.66	10.53	10.75	34	95,278
2023	7.68	7.55	7.62	36	90,063
2022	-3.61	-3.73	-5.62	36	87,616
2021	29.28	29.16	27.98	34	94,832
2020	3.14	3.01	3.07	31	77,080
2019	7.13	6.99	7.30	30	78,851
2018	9.57	9.43	8.94	30	77,750
2017	14.29	14.15	13.52	29	75,060
2016	0.92	0.78	0.67	30	69,861
2015	5.45	5.33	5.08	28	74,173

State Teachers Retirement System of Ohio ("STRS Ohio") claims compliance with the Global Investment Performance Standards (GIPS®) and has prepared and presented this report in compliance with the GIPS standards. State Teachers Retirement System of Ohio ("STRS Ohio") has been independently verified for the periods from July 1, 2006 through June 30, 2024. An asset owner that claims compliance with the GIPS standards must establish policies and procedures for complying with all the applicable requirements of the GIPS standards. Verification provides assurance on whether the asset owner's policies and procedures related to total fund and composite maintenance, as well as the calculation, presentation, and distribution of performance, have been designed in compliance with the GIPS standards and have been implemented on an asset-owner-wide basis. The Total Fund has had a performance examination for the periods July 1, 2006, through June 30, 2024. The verification and performance examination reports are available upon request.



Conclusion

- > The GIPS standards are globally recognized and considered to be industry best practice
- Asset owners claim compliance to demonstrate a culture of compliance and strong internal controls
- STRS has been verified since 2006
- The GIPS standards require net returns for asset owners which are net of all costs, including carried interest
- ACA replicates returns and benchmarks based on asset owner's established policies using data that is supported by independent third-parties
- > ALL requirements to be GIPS compliant have been met
- For fiscal year 2024, ACA has verified that STRS Ohio has calculated and reported Total Fund performance in accordance with the GIPS standards





ACA Group

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Fiduciary Audit Update

Aug. 15, 2024

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- Funston Advisory Services (FAS) was engaged by the Ohio Retirement Study Council (ORSC) to conduct a fiduciary performance audit of STRS Ohio, which was completed in May 2022
- FAS made formal presentations to both the ORSC and the State Teachers Retirement Board in June 2022
- STRS Ohio staff prepared an implementation roadmap to track progress on the FAS recommendations
 - Board and staff discussed the recommendations at the Board Education & Planning Session in November 2022
 - The board chair established an Ad Hoc Governance Committee to review board-related recommendations
 - Staff presented an implementation update in August 2023



- Current status out of 172 total recommendations:
 - Complete 63 recommendations (including 10 board-related)
 - In progress 51 recommendations (including 9 board-related)
 - Planned 24 recommendations
 - Disagree/Disagree in part five recommendations
 - Board decision still required 29 recommendations
 - Board governance, strategic planning, risk management
 - Governance consultant will assist with board's review



- Increased engagement with members and constituent groups through regular town hall meetings and proactive media outreach
- STRS Ohio's fee validation provider, Albourne, conducted a complete assessment of calendar year 2022 private fund fees and carried interest, which was reported to the board in December 2023
- Defined Contribution (DC) Program director was hired in January 2024 and Meketa was retained as the board's DC Program investment consultant
- Board reviewed committee structures with its governance consultant and approved four new committee charters
- Completion of the external review of internal audit functions



- Staff will continue to review and implement systems, policies, and other changes recommended by FAS, as appropriate
- RFP has been issued for new board governance consultant to assist with recommendations related to Board Policies, strategic planning, education and enterprise risk management
- Staff will continue to provide regular updates on the implementation roadmap at future Audit Committee meetings





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