



Henry County Retired Teachers Association

<http://www.henrycountyrta.weebly.com>

Charlotte Shrider, President

735 Sheffield

Napoleon, Ohio 43545

419-599-1356

March 13, 2018

HCRTA Members,

At our March meeting, Robin Rayfield, Executive Director of the Ohio Retired Teachers Association was present to give an update on ORTA, its recent restructuring, and the services it provides. He noted one of the main concerns was protecting the retirement checks and medical benefits for Ohio teachers. In response to questions about the COLA suspension and on how HCRTA members can help he encouraged members to call STRS. When members fail to call and express their concerns then STRS thinks there is no concern.

The contact number for STRS is 888-227-7877. Gary Russell is the Deputy Director at STRS. Here are some talking points.

- The COLA was reduced in 2013 and suspended in 2017. Since then my bills have continued to go up and I need you to raise the amount of my retirement check.
- The COLA was suspended due to the financial difficulties and actuarial changes. The change in full retirement from 30 years to 35 years has reduced the rate of retirements and increased the length of time members are paying in to STRS. Since then I have read that STRS financials have significantly improved.
- I read that STRS staff got a 4% raise. While it is important to retain experienced staff, if your financial situation has improved enough to give staff raises then retirees should be included. Fair is fair.

As STRS begins to look at the potential for “benefit enhancements” hopefully, a sense of fairness will be a part of the conversation.