

ARKANSAS PUBLIC EMPLOYEES'  
RETIREMENT SYSTEM

# STRATEGIC PLAN



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**YEAR ONE  
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

MARCH 2026





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## OVERVIEW

Year One of the APERS Strategic Plan focused on strengthening the System's long-term financial sustainability, enhancing the member experience, stabilizing and developing the workforce, and laying a secure foundation for future system modernization. Through disciplined governance, strong investment performance, targeted cost controls, expanded education and outreach, and improved organizational practices, APERS delivered measurable progress across all strategic goals.



# STRATEGIC FOUNDATION

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## **NAME:**

*Arkansas Public Employees' Retirement System*

## **LOCATION:**

*124 W Capitol Ave, Suite 400, Little Rock, AR 72201*

## **MISSION:**

*APERS' mission is to deliver secure retirement benefits and exceptional service to our members.*

## **CORE VALUES:**

- A** CCOUNTABILITY
- P** ROFESSIONALISM
- E** XCELLENCE
- R** ESPECT
- S** ERVICE

# GOAL 1 - STRENGTHEN THE FUNDED STATUS

During Year One, APERS focused on **reinforcing long-term financial sustainability** through a disciplined funding policy, strong fiduciary governance, and continued investment oversight. These efforts were designed to align the System with best practices while supporting progress toward **reducing unfunded liabilities**.

## YEAR ONE FUNDING AND GOVERNANCE

- Peer-state employee contribution benchmarking completed
- Quarterly retirement benefit education implemented for Trustees
- Investment returns exceeded assumptions for both APERS/ASPRS and AJRS
- APERS private market strategy expanded and delivered strong early performance

These actions reflect a proactive approach to funding discipline and governance, ensuring that policy decisions are informed by peer analysis, education, and long-term risk considerations.

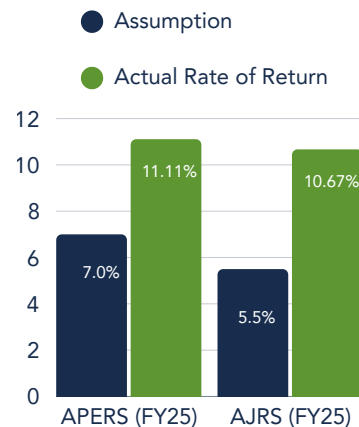
**\$650,000+ IN**

**COST SAVINGS**

**\$454,000** - Pension Administration Contract Savings (FY2026-2027)

**\$200,000** - Banking Services Contract Savings

## INVESTMENT PERFORMANCE EXCEEDED ASSUMPTIONS



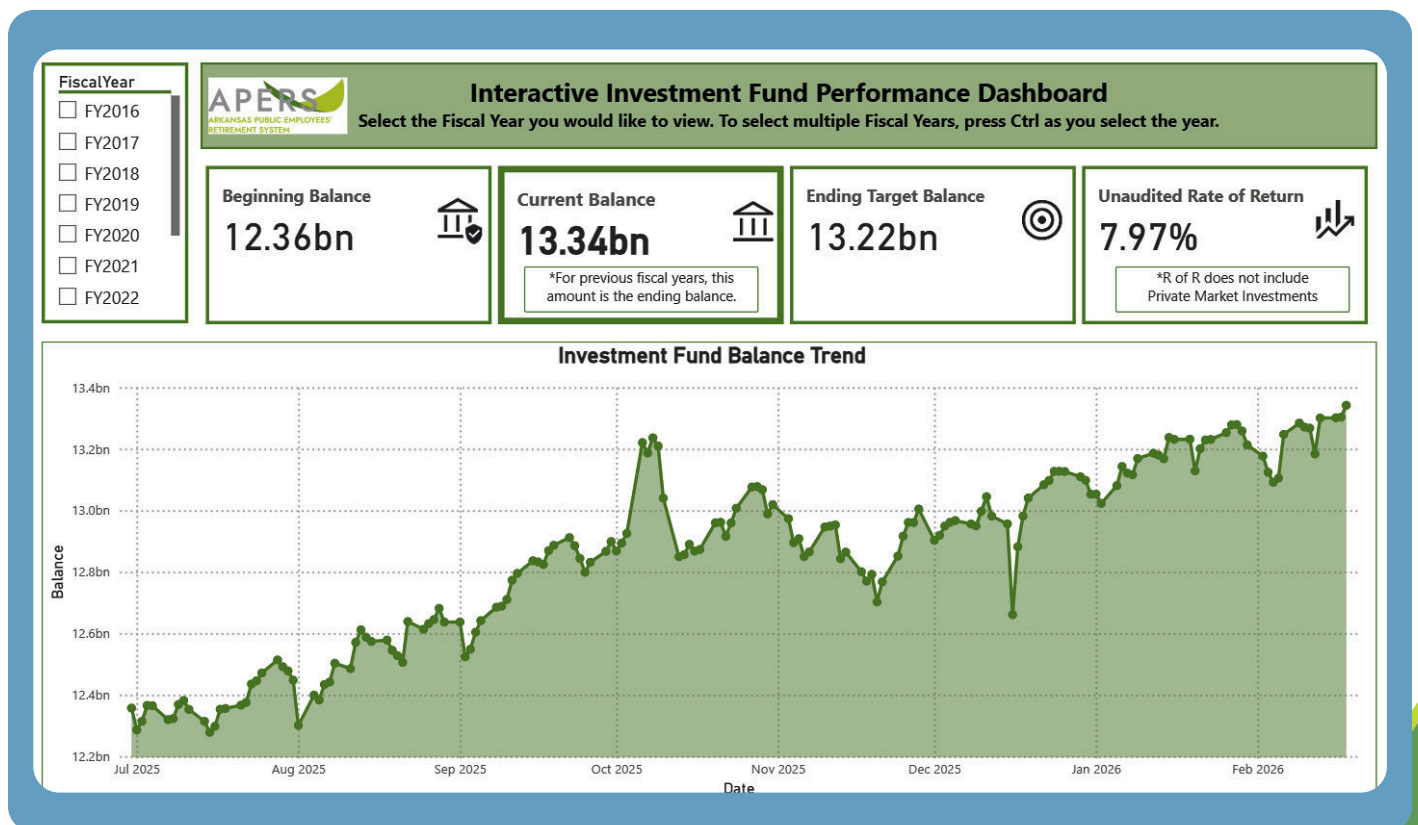
Consistent outperformance of assumed rates of return strengthens the System's funding position and provides added stability against future market volatility. Expanded diversification within private markets further supports long-term return objectives.

# Key Performance Indicators

The investment performance dashboard offers daily monitoring of fund balance and returns, featuring:

- **APERS Fund Balance KPI:** Automatically updates daily for the Executive Team, providing insights for quick investment decisions.
- **Historical Performance Analysis:** Includes data since FY2016 to identify long-term trends and performance patterns.
- **Market Influence Tracking:** Allows the investment team to link daily market events to portfolio performance, fostering institutional knowledge.
- **Unaudited Rate of Return Monitoring:** Tracks real-time returns for equity investments, ensuring alignment with expected performance.

**Impact:** This dashboard enhances the Executive Team's visibility into investment performance, enabling proactive responses to market changes while supporting the goal of exceeding the assumed rate of return.



# GOAL 2 - ENHANCE THE MEMBER EXPERIENCE

APERS made significant strides in improving how members and retirees **access information, engage with the System, and receive service.** Year One emphasized education, responsiveness, and digital accessibility to better **meet members where they are.**

## EDUCATION AND OUTREACH



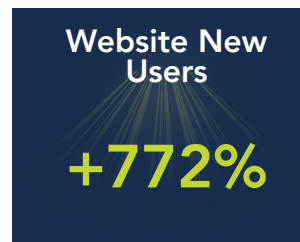
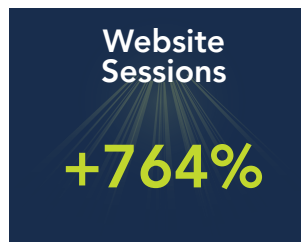
in-person educational seminars



virtual trainings delivered statewide

**PLUS** Expanded targeted training partnerships with judicial, law enforcement, human resources organizations, and other employer agencies

## DIGITAL GROWTH MOMENTUM



*This growth reflects **strong momentum** in digital communication and demonstrates **increased member engagement** with APERS resources and educational content.*

## MEMBER EXPERIENCE SURVEYS

**79%** of members resolved questions in one interaction

**43%** preferred education via website or video

**Welcome to APERS** video developed

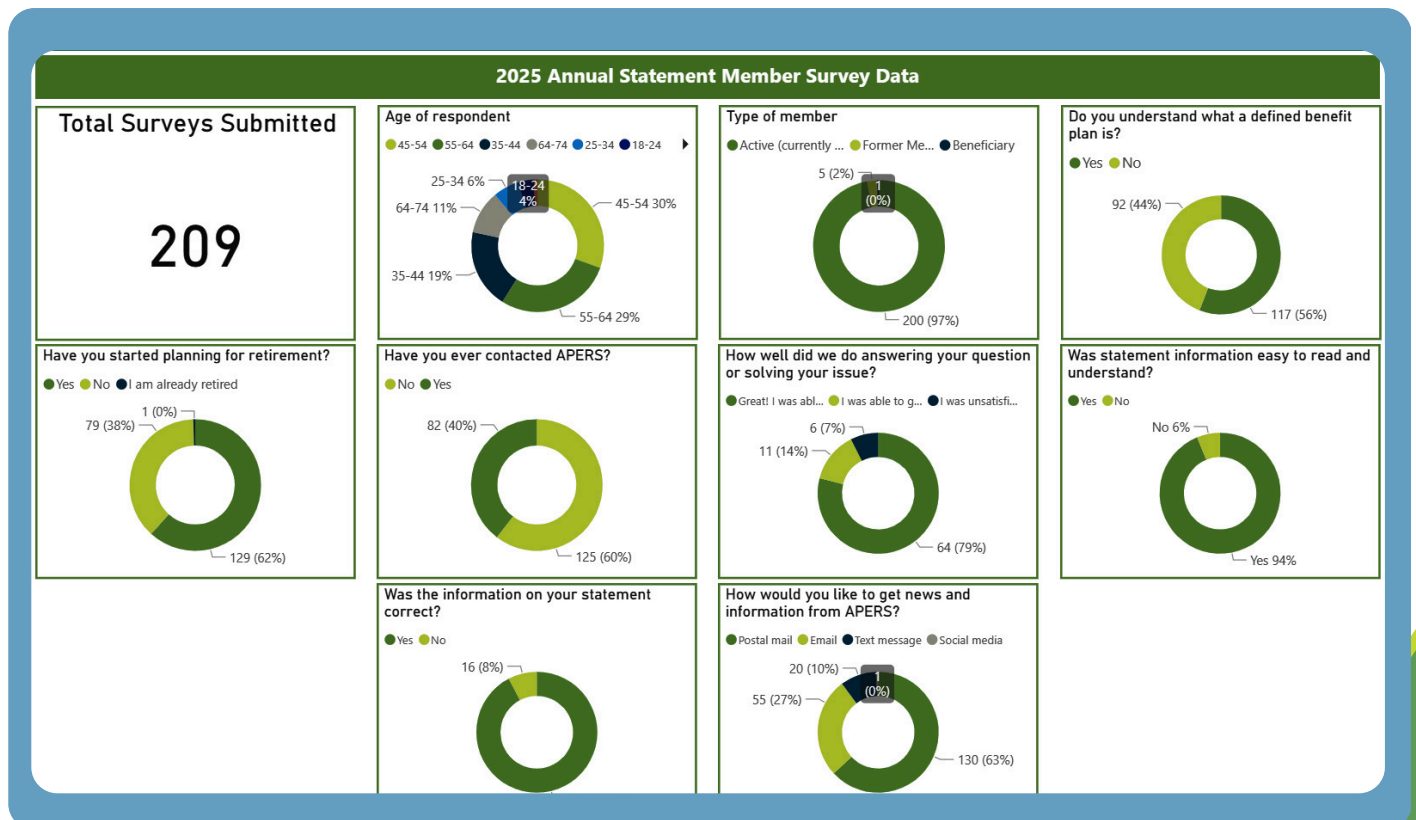
Member feedback played a central role in shaping new education tools and refining service delivery, reinforcing APERS' commitment to continuous improvement.

# Key Performance Indicators

Our member experience dashboards assess satisfaction and engagement through:

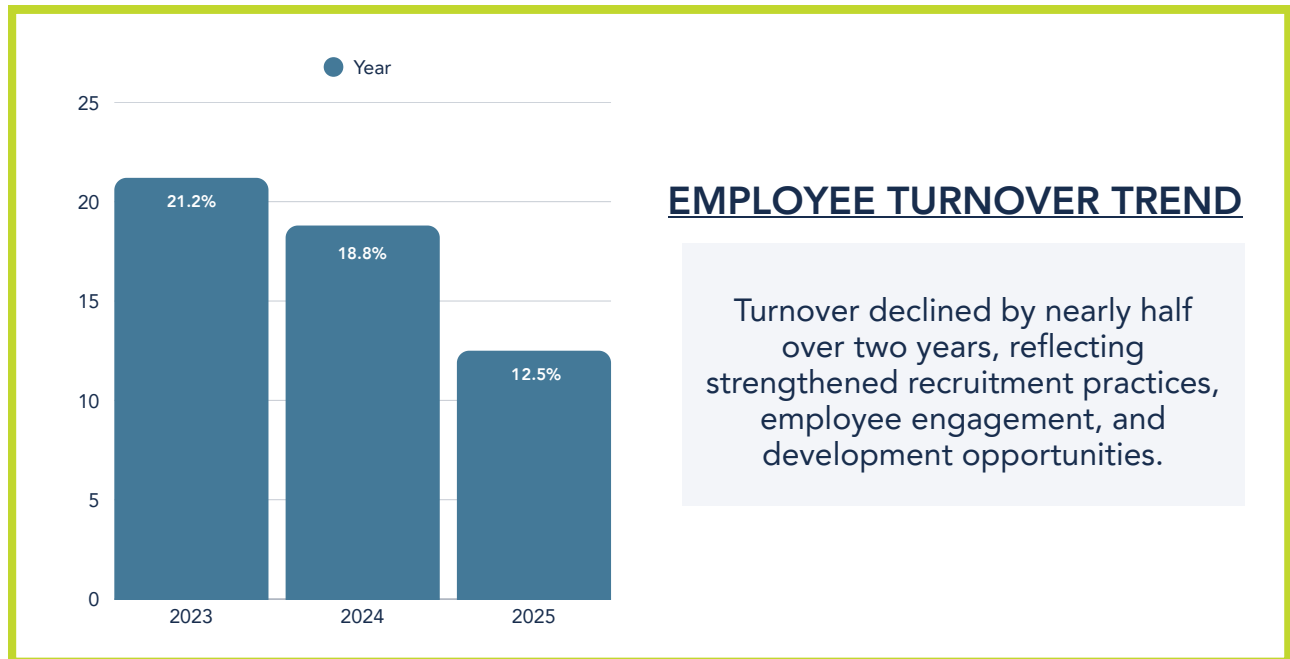
- **Annual Member Statement Survey KPIs:** Measure response rates, satisfaction scores, and feedback to evaluate understanding of APERS benefits and communication effectiveness.
- **Retirement Seminar Survey Analytics:** Collect real-time feedback, with 100% of attendees reporting increased retirement knowledge.
- **Digital Engagement Metrics:** Track member preferences to optimize information delivery.

**Impact:** Insights from these dashboards inform education and outreach strategies, like the "Welcome to APERS" video initiative, addressing the 43% of members unclear about APERS pensions. Analyzing feedback ensures our services meet member needs.



# GOAL 3 - FOSTER AND RETAIN A HIGHLY SKILLED WORKFORCE

A stable, knowledgeable workforce is essential to **delivering consistent service** and **maintaining institutional expertise**. During Year One, APERS focused on retention, professional development, and knowledge continuity.



## WORKFORCE AND ONBOARDING HIGHLIGHTS

### Workforce Stability and Development

- Revamped the intranet to support transparent communication
- Updated job descriptions aligned with the state pay plan
- Succession planning for key leadership roles

### Onboarding and Knowledge Continuity

- Structured onboarding with executive engagement
- 100% completion of mandatory 90-day new hire/supervisory check-ins
- 114 benefit training documents are housed in a centralized digital library

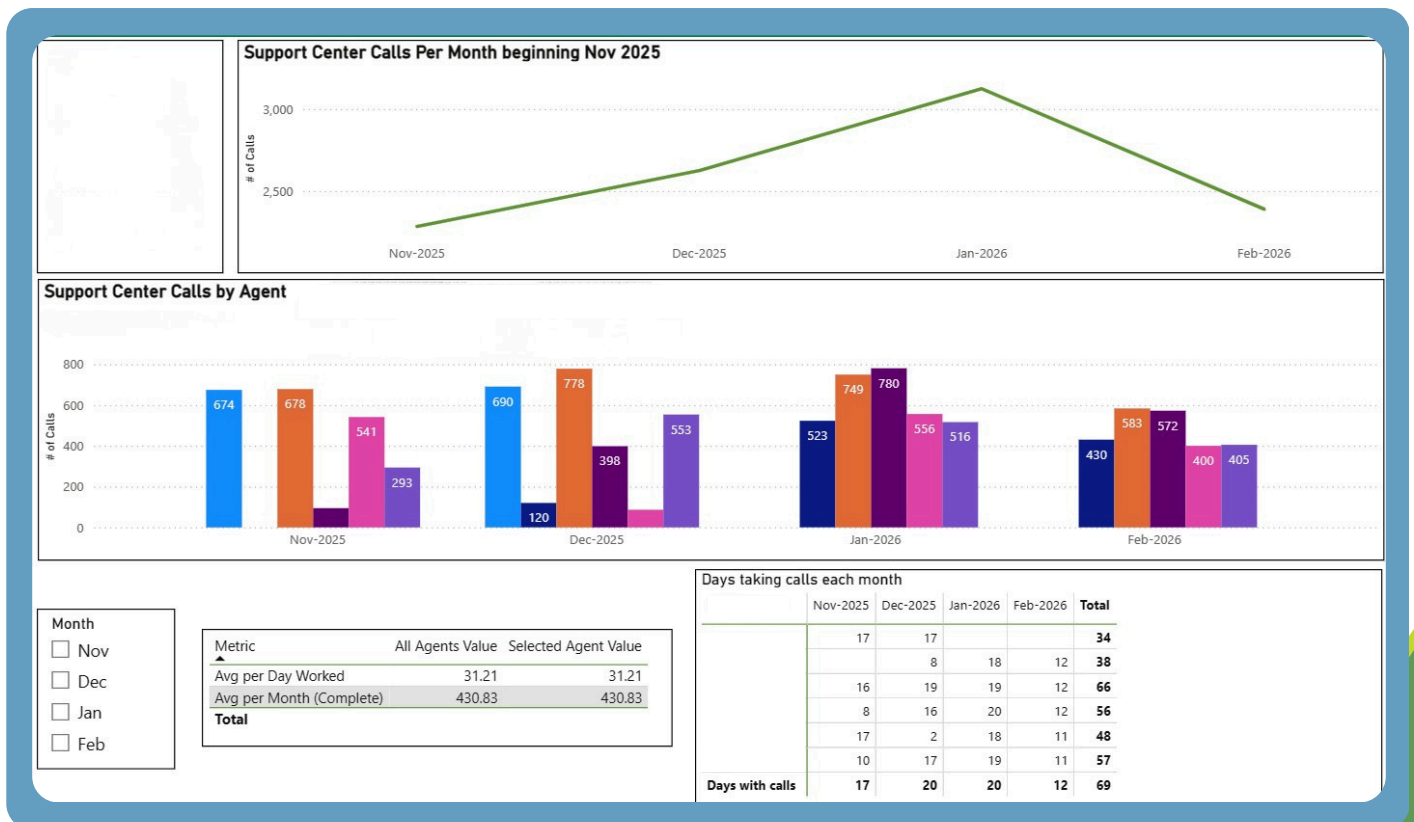
These initiatives help ensure continuity of operations, support employee success, and reduce organizational risk.

# Key Performance Indicators

Dashboard Support enhances retention metrics by offering objective performance data and workload insights:

- **Individual Performance Dashboards:** Track productivity, identify training needs, and provide data-driven feedback during 90-day check-ins.
- **Team Workload Distribution Analytics:** Reveal workload imbalances, track productivity variations, and inform targeted training investments.
- **Productivity Metrics by Day and Month:** Measure workflows processed daily, allowing fair comparisons and revealing performance trends.
- **Cross-Team Performance Benchmarking:** Standardize metrics to identify best practices, high performers, and support knowledge transfer for succession planning.

**Impact:** These dashboards provide a data foundation for planning staffing requests, performance evaluations, and succession planning, particularly for Benefits leadership assessment.



# GOAL 4 - OPTIMIZE SECURITY, INTEGRITY, AND USABILITY OF INFORMATION SYSTEMS

Year One focused on **establishing a secure and well-governed foundation** for long-term pension administration system modernization while **strengthening cybersecurity and fraud prevention measures**.

## MODERNIZATION AND SECURITY STATUS

### COMPLETED YEAR ONE

- V3locity Master Services and Support Agreement executed
- Multi-factor authentication implemented
- Monthly fraud monitoring controls established
- Internal security audit completed

- Core system enhancements and reporting dashboards
- Member self-service upgrades

### UPCOMING YEARS TWO & THREE

This phased approach ensures that technology modernization efforts are **implemented responsibly** while maintaining data security and system integrity.

## FRAUD MONITORING



# Key Performance Indicators

Our fraud detection and security monitoring dashboards are integral to our cybersecurity initiatives and data integrity goals:

- **Fraud Activity Dashboard:** This dashboard effectively showcases fraud monitoring activities, such as changes in banking information, patterns of online account creation, contribution refunds, and shifts in demographics. It delivers monthly query results for the Assurance staff to review, supporting our balanced approach to member convenience and security. It also facilitates the swift identification of suspicious patterns that warrant further investigation.
- **Transaction Pattern Analysis:** This feature detects anomalies in transaction patterns, unusual volumes of similar activities, and outlier behaviors that could signify security threats or system misuse. It aids in proactive risk management by highlighting potential issues before they escalate.
- **Productivity Metrics:** This tool offers a clear evaluation of the work being undertaken by the assurance team.

**Impact:** Our fraud detection capabilities effectively balance member convenience with security, safeguarding APERS assets and member data while upholding the trust that is vital to our mission.



# YEAR ONE IMPACT SUMMARY

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## YEAR ONE AT A GLANCE

Funding policy aligned with best practices

Investment returns exceeded assumptions

\$650,000+ in cost savings identified

Significant growth in member engagement

Turnover reduced by nearly half

Secure foundation established for IT modernization

## CONCLUSION

Year One of the APERS Strategic Plan delivered measurable progress across all strategic goals. The System is well positioned to build on this momentum in Years Two and Three, continuing to strengthen financial sustainability, enhance the member experience, support a stable workforce, and advance pension administration system modernization in service of Arkansas's public employees and retirees.

# WHAT'S NEXT?

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## YEAR TWO PRIORITIES

- Continue strengthening Board education to support fiduciary oversight.
- Evaluate long-term administrative office needs and present data-driven recommendations regarding leasing versus ownership, alongside continued review of existing vendor contracts for cost savings and service improvements.
- Strengthen operational and financial oversight through targeted audits focused on efficiency, payroll accuracy, and benefit overpayment identification and recovery.
- Expand real-time member and retiree feedback through QR-code tools and use insights to guide service improvements and educational content development.
- Develop employer-focused resources, including enrollment videos and Member Self-Service guides, to support consistent onboarding and early adoption of digital tools.
- Broaden educational outreach through additional videos and expanded in-person and virtual sessions for employers, active members, and retirees.
- Formalize succession planning and leadership development through senior-level planning workshops, 360-degree supervisor performance reviews, enhanced onboarding and training surveys, and digitalized exit interviews.
- Finalize the Statement of Work for the V3locity pension administration system and begin official system migration and upgrade activities with strong project governance, cybersecurity controls, and cross-functional oversight.



**APERS**  
ARKANSAS PUBLIC EMPLOYEES'  
RETIREMENT SYSTEM



**ASPRS**  
ARKANSAS STATE POLICE  
RETIREMENT SYSTEM



**AJRS**  
ARKANSAS JUDICIAL  
RETIREMENT SYSTEM