

Pension

This section is provided to supplement the budget document. The Pension Plan represents a significant expense for Harford County Public Schools. The employees of the school system are covered by one of the following cost-sharing multiple-employer retirement/pension systems:

- Teachers' Retirement System of the State of Maryland;
- Teachers Pension System for Teachers of the State of Maryland;
- Employees' Retirement System of the State of Maryland; or,
- Employees Pension System of the State of Maryland.

Each plan provides pension, death, and disability benefits to plan members and beneficiaries. The Plans are administered by the State Retirement Agency. Responsibility for the administration and operation of the Retirement/Pension System is vested in the Board of Trustees. The State Personnel and Pensions Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland established the Pension System. The Pension System issues a publicly available financial report at www.sra.state.md.us.

FUNDING POLICY

The State Personnel and Pension Article require active members to contribute to the Retirement or Pension System at the rate of 5 percent or 7 percent of their covered salary depending upon the retirement option selected. This is administered through an employee payroll deduction that HCPS forwards to the State Retirement Agency.

The combined State contribution rate for 2014 of covered payroll is established by annual actuarial valuations. The rate is sufficient to fund normal costs and amortize the unfunded actuarial accrued liability over a 40-year period, as provided by law, from July 1, 1980.

The State pays a substantial portion of the school system's annual required contributions to the Teachers' Retirement System on behalf of the school system. The actual pension contribution by the State on behalf of our employees in the Teachers Retirement and Pension Systems is based on the approved budget of the State. The State of Maryland contribution and the HCPS school system contribution is related to the number of current employees, new employees and the contribution to the Alternate Contributory Pension Plan. The State contribution decreased in FY 2013 due to a legislative funding mandate approved in the FY 2013 legislative session which shared pension costs with the 24 counties.

Prior to FY 2013 the State of Maryland funded all teacher pension contributions for the 24 school districts. The State of Maryland addressed their ongoing structural deficit by sharing teacher pension costs with the counties. The cost sharing was structured over a four year implementation period beginning in FY 2013. Harford County's share cost of the teacher's pension cost for the four year period starting in FY 2013 will be: \$5,529,741, \$7,009,102, \$8,966,815 and \$10,309,396 respectively. In FY 2013 Harford County fully funded the increased pension cost of \$5.5 million and will fund an additional \$1.5 million in FY 2014.

For FY 2014 the HCPS school system contribution for the Employees Retirement & Pension system is expected to increase by \$1,288,329 or 3.2%. The increase in these costs was due primarily to the additional costs of \$1,479,361, related to the sharing of teacher's pension costs from the State of Maryland and a decrease of \$191,032 for non-teaching positions.

State Retirement And Pension System Information					
	Actual FY 2010	Actual FY 2011	Actual FY 2012	Budget FY 2013	Budget FY 2014
Contribution Sources:					
State Aid to Local School Systems *	31,578,248	34,323,976	33,360,568	30,575,369	30,575,369
HCPS Teachers Retirement Pension System **				5,529,741	7,009,102
HCPS Employees Retirement & Pension System ***	1,968,143	2,849,311	3,653,488	3,677,974	3,486,942
Total Contributions	\$33,546,391	\$37,173,287	\$37,014,056	\$39,783,084	\$41,071,413
Total Expenditures	\$33,546,391	\$37,173,287	\$37,014,056	\$39,783,084	\$41,071,413

* The State of Maryland employer contribution for the Teacher Retirement system, hereafter referred as the Teacher System

** The HCPS employer contribution for the Teacher system

*** The HCPS employer contribution for the Employee Retirement & Pension system, referred to as the Employee system

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ANNUAL PENSION COST

The school system will make the employer required annual contributions to the Employee's Pension Systems as well as those related to positions in the Teacher's Pension Systems funded through federal and state restricted programs. For FY 2014, the Board's annual pension cost of \$3,486,942 is equal to its required and actual contribution. This required contribution was determined as part of the June 30, 2012 actuarial valuation using the entry age actuarial cost method.

The actuarial assumptions included¹:

- 7.75 percent investment rate of return, compounded annually;
- The member contribution rate was increased for members of the Teacher's Pension System and Employee's Pension System from 5% to 7%, and from 4% to 6% in fiscal year 2012 and 7% in fiscal year 2013
- In addition, the benefit attributable to service on or after July 1, 2011, will be subject to different cost-of-living adjustments (COLA) that is based on the increase in the Consumer Price Index and capped at 2.5% or 1.0% based on whether the market value investment return for the preceding calendar year was higher or lower than the investment return assumption used in the valuation (currently 7.75%)

In the 2001 legislative session, the Legislature changed the method used to fund the two largest Systems of the MSRPS, the Teachers Combined System and the State portion of the Employees Combined System, to a corridor method. Under this funding approach, the State appropriation is fixed at the prior fiscal year's rate, but adjusted to reflect the cost of any legislative changes, as long as the actuarial funded status of these Systems remains in a corridor of 90% funded to 110% funded. Once the ratio falls outside this corridor, the appropriated or budgeted rate will be adjusted one-fifth of the way toward the underlying actuarially calculated rate, with the exception of the cost of/or the savings from legislative changes, which are fully recognized regardless of whether the Systems are within or outside of the corridor.

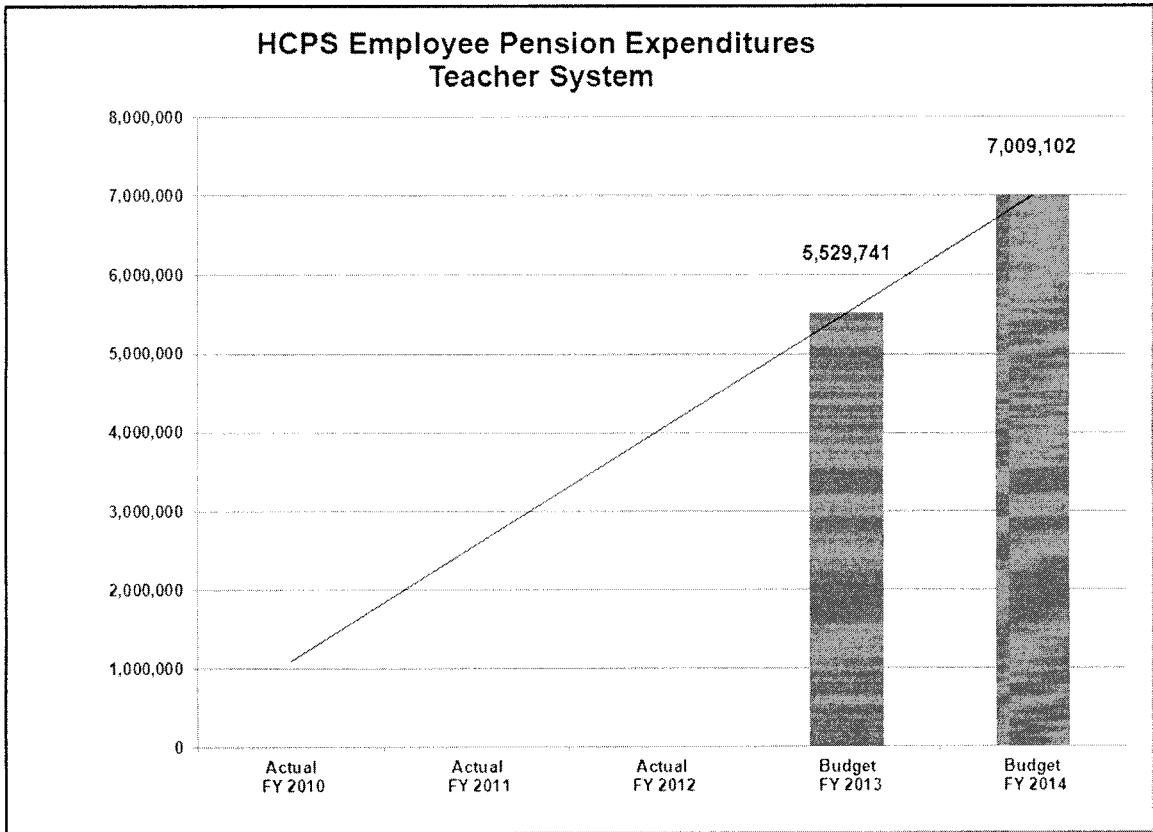
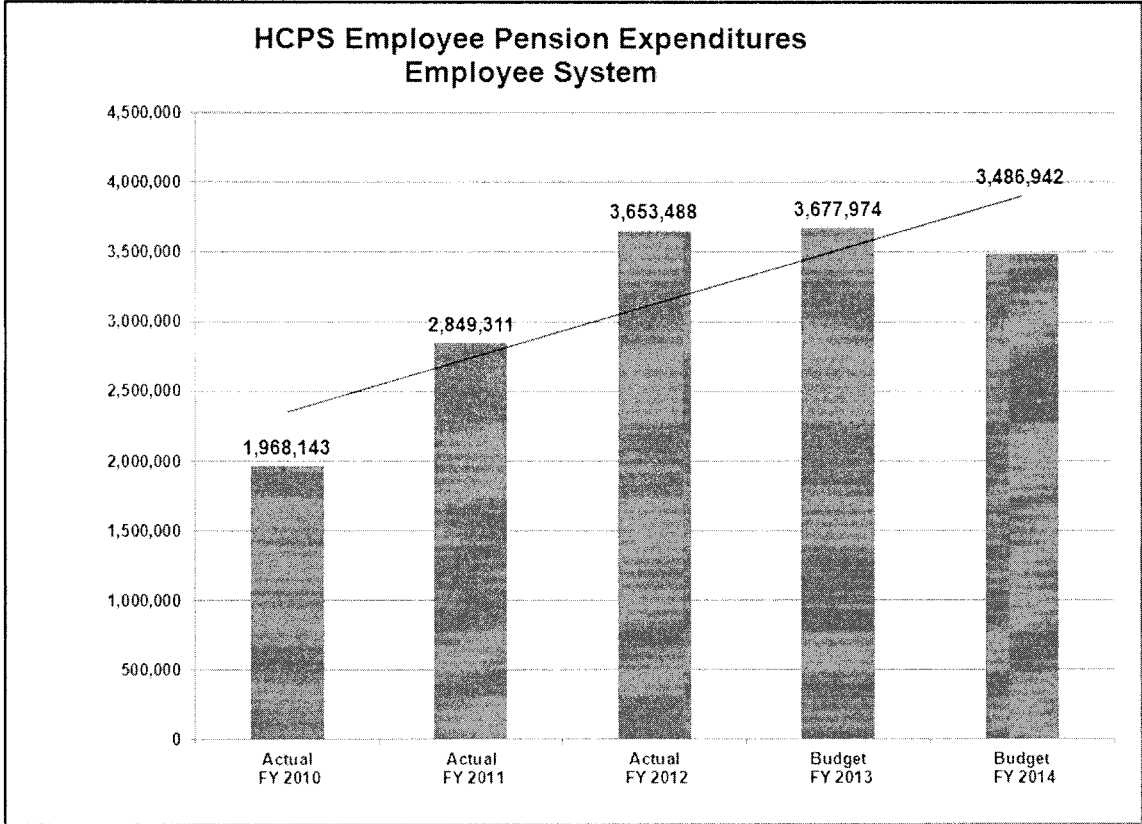
The employer contribution rate for FY 2014, based on an actuarial valuation for June 30, 2012, is 11.47% for the Employees Retirement System and 6.47% for the Employees' Pension System.

The State of Maryland contributes 14.71% for employees within the Teachers Retirement and Pension Systems per rates published in December 2012. These rates are subject to change as a result of the May 2013 General Assembly special session.

Charts on the following page represent a trend line increase in the retirement and pension payments made by Harford County Public Schools as well as payments made by the State of Maryland on behalf of our employees who are members of the Teachers Retirement & Pension System.

¹ Maryland State Retirement System 2011 CAFR – Actuarial Section

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