



## Teachers' Retirement System of the State of Illinois

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Letters to the Editor  
Chicago Sun-Times  
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To the editor:

The problem with the April 18 article in the Sun-Times regarding Teachers' Retirement System, written by staff from the Better Government Association, is not the facts they chose to include. The problem is the facts they chose to leave out.

The Better Government Association began asking TRS in November of 2011 about the fees paid by the System to money managers that are hired to invest our members' money. TRS answered all of their questions.

Since November, TRS has consistently told the BGA that between 2001 and 2010, for every \$1 spent by TRS on fees, the System received \$10 in investment income. Fees totaled \$1.3 billion during that decade. Investment income in the same period totaled \$10.937 billion.

That fact – never stated in the BGA article – contradicts the BGA's main conclusion that TRS "reaped only a paltry annual return" for the fees paid.

The headline over the article asks "...For What?" The answer to that is simple: the strong investment returns earned by TRS on behalf of our members over the years. We always stress that the most important investment statistic is the return after all fees have been subtracted from total revenues. This allows us to compare our actual results against expectations on the basis of what matters – funds that are available to help pay the benefits that have been earned by our members. I doubt that the BGA, the Sun-Times or any of the self-identified experts quoted in the story would argue that delivering an average annual return of 9.3 percent over thirty years is not a job very well done.

Sincerely,

Dick Ingram  
Executive Director  
Teachers' Retirement System