

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Contact: Heidi Brennan
518.447.2911
heidi.brennan@nystrs.org

News Release**NYSTRS Appoints Ekland to Senior Advisor Role**

ALBANY, N.Y. (August 1, 2022) — The New York State Teachers' Retirement System (NYSTRS) is pleased to announce the appointment of Emily Ekland to senior advisor to the executive director and chief investment officer. She succeeds Beth Bonacquist who previously retired.

In her role as senior advisor, Ms. Ekland is responsible for strategic planning efforts across the Retirement System, as well as special projects.

Prior to joining NYSTRS, Ms. Ekland worked in the Division of Small Business and Technology Development at Empire State Development where she helped early-stage companies and small businesses leverage a comprehensive portfolio of entrepreneur resources. She started her career at the Government Law Center where she researched innovation ecosystems across the state and nationally. Ms. Ekland later joined a business incubator for biomedical startups where she worked in technology transfer and commercialization, supporting researchers and entrepreneurs bringing new technology to the market.

Ms. Ekland has a law degree from Albany Law School and a bachelor of arts degree from Russell Sage College.

Ms. Bonacquist, who retired in October 2021, served the System for 26 years including eight years on the executive staff. She was a well-respected leader and mentor.

“Strategic planning is critical to the System’s long-term success,” said NYSTRS Executive Director & Chief Investment Officer Thomas K. Lee. “Emily’s public sector experience in this regard, coupled with her work assisting private sector entities in growing their enterprises, will serve her well in this position. We welcome her to our executive team.”

NYSTRS is one of the most secure and well-funded public pension plans in the country. Using an actuarial value of assets, the System is 99% funded. Our 10-year and 30-year rates of investment returns, net of fees, were 10.1% and 9.2%, respectively, as of the fiscal year ended June 30, 2021. These results are top decile compared to peer public pension plans.

The System provides retirement, disability and death benefits to eligible New York State public school teachers and administrators. Over 80% of NYSTRS’ more than \$7.7 billion annual benefit payroll is distributed to New York residents.

#