



Memorandum

To	Ohio Retirement Study Council
From	RVK, Inc.
Subject	Executive Summary: December 31, 2021 Investment Performance
Date	May 12, 2022

Outlined below please find a summary of significant observations, key attributes, and performance metrics of Ohio's six¹ public retirement plans for the period ended December 31, 2021. The purpose of this analysis is to facilitate an objective "apples-to-apples" comparison of the six plans relative to each other, similar benchmarks, and peer group data consisting of similarly sized public pension plans.

While much of the discussion in this summary focuses on results from the trailing two-quarter period, we strongly encourage the Council to place significant weight on long-term results to better assess the management of the State's various pension plan assets. Though the six investment programs share many similarities, it is important to be aware of the crucial differences that may affect performance when reviewing this analysis. Each plan has unique long-term investment objectives and therefore distinct asset allocations in order to meet these objectives. Investment execution approaches also vary as it relates to active/passive and internal/external management.

The full results of our analysis are contained within our Investment Performance Analysis Report and we hope this Executive Summary will help in your review of that data. The information received by RVK, to the best of our knowledge, is complete and appropriate.

Total Fund Returns and Risk

Returns for the Ohio plans ranged from 4.15% to 8.40% for the second two quarters of 2021. Inflation remained a top concern among investors as the year-over-year change in the CPI reached 7.0% according to the December reading, the highest level in 30 years. Nevertheless, consumer demand and the ability of companies to pass along increasing costs have buoyed corporate profits. Employment data has indicated mixed progress and has been complicated by releases missing expectations, only to be revised higher in subsequent reports. However, strong wage growth and a declining unemployment rate reflects incremental improvement in labor conditions. Headlines were dominated by the emergence of the omicron variant which early studies suggest spreads more quickly, but causes fewer hospitalizations. Continued vaccination efforts and the development of new treatments countered concerns regarding the increased spread of the virus. GDP growth estimates for 2022 were impacted with forecasts trending lower, but most continue to reflect healthy growth expected next year. For instance, the IMF released a 2022 GDP growth forecast of 4.9% in October representing a decline of 0.1% from its July estimate. In response to the current environment, the Federal Reserve has started to reduce measures taken during the pandemic. The tapering of bond purchases began in November and accelerated in December, a trend expected to continue in 2022. In response to these conditions, Treasury yields have trended upwards and credit spreads widened in the quarter.

¹OPERS health care plan is not a pension plan and therefore has significantly different characteristics including a shorter focus asset allocation with more liquidity than the pension plans. For purposes of this study, the OPERS health care plan has been included in the results.

The dispersion in results among the State’s retirement plans is driven by differences in asset allocation, asset class structure and investment manager selection, though it is not possible with the data available to RVK for us to weight each factor.

During the year of 2021, six out of six plans outperformed or kept pace with their custom total fund benchmarks. Each plan will have different investment objectives and goals and the “Total Fund Benchmarks” will reflect this. Total Fund over/under performance can come from differences in actual allocations or investment manager results.

Figure 1: Total Fund Performance (dark shade) vs. Total Fund Benchmarks (light shade)



- Total Fund Benchmark is a target allocation index based on the targeted asset class percentages and appropriate asset class indexes for each individual plan
- Market values shown are in millions (\$000,000)
- Performance shown is gross of fees
- PERS (DB): Public Employees Retirement Syst Defined Benefit Pension Plan
- PERS (HC 115): Since the PERS HC is a health care trust (now under HC 115), it has adopted a more conservative asset allocation policy versus the PERS (DB) Fund, with an emphasis on capital preservation, since 2005.
- STRS: State Teachers Retirement System
- OP&F: Ohio Police & Fire Pension Fund
- SERS: School Employees Retirement System
- HPRS: Highway Patrol Retirement System

Asset Allocation

Overall, the six plans all exhibit characteristics of increasingly diversified, institutional quality portfolios. Exposures to public equities (capital appreciation or “growth” assets) make up the largest component for each plan. Within equities, allocations to US equity investments have generally declined over the past ten years while allocations to alternatives, particularly hedge funds and private equity, have increased. The charts in Figure 2 show a 5-year asset allocation “lookback” for each plan and how they have moved to today’s portfolio and target.

PERS (HC 115) currently has the largest allocation to US equity at 28.2%. None of the six plans have a higher exposure to US equities than peer median (peer median: 28.8%). PERS (HC 115) has the largest fixed income allocation at 33.2%. The average total allocation to hedge funds, private equity, and other alternatives among the six plans is 18.1%. Relative to peer median allocations (All Public Plans > \$1B), four of six plans have higher strategic exposures to international equities (peer median: 16.1%) Five of six plans have higher allocations to real estate than peer median (peer median: 7.2%).

As of June 30, 2021, HPRS added a Global Equity Target Allocation of 24.0%. HPRS has a 22.6% allocation to Global Equity as of December 31, 2021.

Figure 2: Asset Allocation Changes (5 Years)



- Cash Equivalents for PERS (DB) consists of cash, additional annuity, and other pension assets. Cash Equivalents for PERS (HC 115) consists of cash. OPERS typically holds 30bps of cash (invested in OPERS STIF) for liquidity needs.

The table below highlights recent target allocation changes since our last report.

Figure 3: Changes to Target Allocations Since 6/30/2021

	Domestic Equity	International Equity	Global Equity	Fixed Income	Real Estate	Hedge Funds	Private Equity	Other Alternatives	Cash Equivalents
PERS (DB)	-0.10%	---	---	---	---	---	---	0.10%	---
PERS (HC 115)	-0.10%	---	---	---	---	---	---	0.10%	---
STRS	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
OP&F	0.56%	-0.80%	---	---	---	---	---	0.24%	---
SERS	---	---	---	---	1.00%	-4.00%	1.00%	2.00%	---
HPRS	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

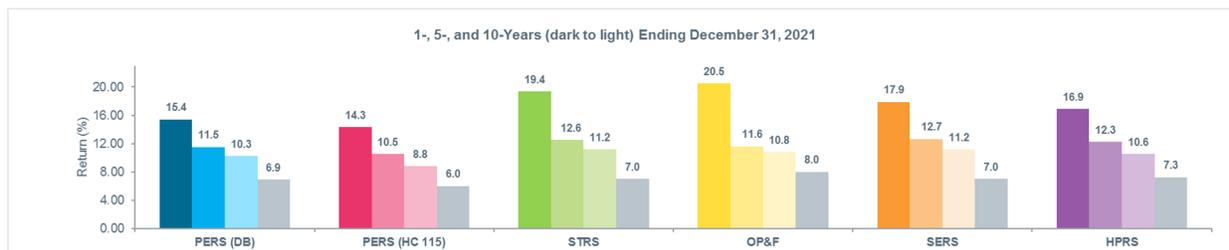
Detailed asset allocation targets as of 12/31/2021 can be found in the full Investment Performance Analysis. PERS (DB & HC 115) have completed phasing out their dedicated hedge fund allocations.

Figure 4: Annual Asset Class Performance

The table below highlights calendar year performance for key asset classes.

Index (Asset Class)	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	
S&P 500 (US Large Cap)	16.0	18.2	38.8	13.7	15.0	21.3	37.3	8.3	31.5	20.0	28.7	Highest Return  Lowest Return
Russell 2000 (US Small Cap)	7.8	17.3	32.4	12.5	1.4	12.0	25.0	0.0	25.5	18.4	27.1	
MSCI EAFE (Int'l Developed)	2.1	16.3	22.8	6.0	0.6	11.8	21.8	-4.0	22.0	18.3	22.2	
MSCI EM (Int'l Emg Markets)	-4.2	16.0	13.9	4.9	-0.3	11.2	14.6	-4.4	18.4	10.9	14.8	
Barclays US Agg Bond (Fixed Income)	-5.7	10.9	9.0	3.4	-0.8	8.8	7.8	-11.0	8.7	7.8	11.3	
NCREIF ODCE (Real Estate)	-12.1	4.8	-2.0	-2.2	-4.4	2.7	7.6	-11.2	8.4	7.5	6.2	
HFRI FOF (Absolute Return)	-13.3	4.2	-2.6	-4.9	-14.9	1.0	3.5	-13.8	7.7	1.2	-1.6	
Bloomberg Cmnty (Commodities)	-18.4	-1.1	-9.5	-17.0	-24.7	0.5	1.7	-14.6	5.3	-3.1	-2.5	

Figure 5: Fund Performance (Gross) vs. Actuarial Rate of Return (Gray)



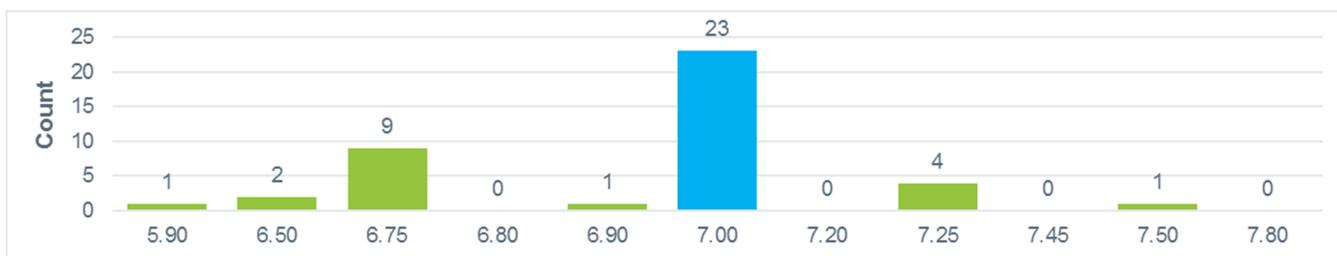
Over the trailing 10-year period, all six plans have outperformed their current actuarial assumed rate of return as shown by Figure 5. STRS and SERS lowered their ARoR to 7.00 effective 7/1/2021.

Figure 6: Historical Actuarial Rates of Return



Over the past ten years, the median actuarial rate of return for public funds within the RVK universe has declined (see Figure 6). Actuarial rates for five of the six Ohio plans are above the RVK universe median. Figure 7 shows the dispersion of actuarial rates of return around the median of 7.00%.

Figure 7: RVK Public Fund Report Survey Actuarial Rates of Return – As of 12/31/2021



RVK prepares a proprietary Public Fund Report with over 70 participating public funds across the U.S. Participating public funds are surveyed semi-annually. This data is preliminary for 12/31/2021 and is subject to change.

Longer-term performance remains strong as all six plans have outperformed or kept pace with their custom benchmark over the trailing 7-year period (see Figure 8).

Figure 8: Long-Term Fund Performance (dark shade) vs. Total Fund Benchmarks (light shade)



Plan sponsor peer group benchmarking is another way to compare performance results of Ohio’s retirement plans, however there can be a wide range in investment objectives and different benefit plan structures. For example, the PERS Health Care Fund’s objective of capital preservation leads to a larger allocation to fixed income. Relative to peers, five of the six plans equaled or outperformed the All Public Plans > \$1B median over the trailing 5-year period and five of the six plans outperformed the median peer over the trailing 10-year period (see Figure 9).

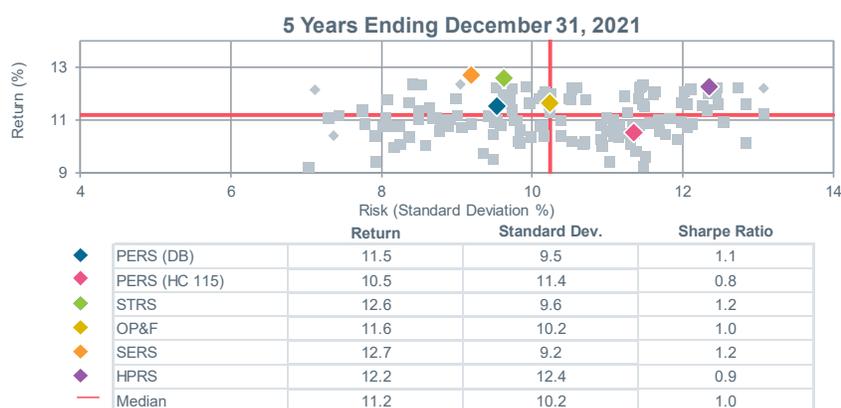
For 2021 four out of six funds have exceeded or equaled the greater than \$1B peer group median. Four of the six funds rank above the same median for the 3-year trailing period.

Figure 9: Fund Performance vs. Public Plans

	Market Value (\$000,000)	2 Quarters		1 Year		3 Years		5 Years		7 Years		10 Years	
		Return %	Rank	Return %	Rank	Return %	Rank	Return %	Rank	Return %	Rank	Return %	Rank
PERS (DB)	109,334	6.1	(28) (44)	15.4	(53) (77)	14.9	(55) (68)	11.5	(45) (65)	9.5	(40) (59)	10.3	(37) (46)
PERS (HC 115)	14,470	4.4	(68) (87)	14.3	(64) (85)	14.9	(56) (71)	10.5	(77) (90)	8.2	(86) (95)	8.8	(86) (95)
STRS	99,321	7.1	(18) (28)	19.4	(12) (19)	16.6	(21) (29)	12.6	(14) (19)	10.4	(8) (10)	11.2	(11) (15)
OP&F	19,618	8.4	(2) (2)	20.5	(9) (16)	15.6	(43) (57)	11.6	(41) (60)	9.9	(19) (28)	10.8	(18) (25)
SERS	18,718	7.4	(10) (17)	17.9	(23) (37)	16.2	(27) (40)	12.7	(12) (15)	10.6	(6) (6)	11.2	(9) (11)
HPRS	1,138	4.2	(71) (90)	16.9	(37) (53)	17.5	(10) (11)	12.3	(20) (30)	9.7	(29) (43)	10.6	(27) (36)
> \$1B Peer Median		5.1		15.6		15.1		11.3		9.2		10.0	
> \$10B Peer Median		6.0		17.1		15.6		11.9		9.7		10.3	

While additional analysis is needed to fully understand the risk posture of each plan, the risk and return charts shown below suggest four of six plans have generated more return for each unit of risk exposure (as measured by standard deviation) than the median peer over the trailing 5-year period. Three plans to varying degrees have exhibited more asset risk relative to peers over the trailing 10-year period (see Figure 10). Peers may have different risk/return results for a variety of reasons, including but not limited to: objectives and goals, target allocations, time of allocation changes, investment restrictions, asset class exposures, or investment management execution.

Figure 10: All Public Plans > \$1B Risk and Return



³Grey boxes on scatterplot charts represent members of the peer universe.



³Grey boxes on scatterplot charts represent members of the peer universe.

Asset Class Returns and Risk

The following section includes information on all “major” asset classes. Broad market benchmarks are included for illustrative purposes. Additional details, including system-specific benchmark performance, are available within our Investment Performance Analysis.

Traditional Asset Classes:

Traditional asset classes typically make up a portfolio’s core allocation and include investments in stocks and bonds, with characteristics of capital appreciation (growth) from stocks and capital preservation (safety) from bonds. Depending on the type of investment, real estate may fall within traditional or alternative categories and exposures can have income, inflation protection, and/or capital appreciation characteristics.

US Equity

The US equity portfolios for five of six plans outperformed their respective benchmarks during 2021. Six of six plans outperformed the peer median over the same period (see Figure 11). Absolute performance over the past 10 years has been strong, with all six plans outperforming the peer median over all trailing periods Three years and longer.

Figure 11: US Equity Performance

	2 Quarters		1 Year		3 Years		5 Years		7 Years		10 Years	
	% Return	Rank	% Return	Rank	% Return	Rank	% Return	Rank	% Return	Rank	% Return	Rank
PERS (DB)	9.5	(24)	26.3	(34)	25.5	(28)	17.9	(20)	14.4	(24)	16.1	(22)
PERS (HC 115)	9.5	(24)	26.3	(34)	25.5	(28)	17.9	(20)	14.4	(24)	16.1	(23)
STRS	9.0	(41)	26.5	(32)	27.3	(5)	18.9	(3)	15.1	(8)	16.4	(15)
OP&F	12.1	(4)	30.1	(5)	28.2	(3)	20.0	(1)	16.4	(1)	17.5	(1)
SERS	9.6	(24)	24.9	(43)	25.7	(22)	17.9	(20)	14.4	(24)	16.3	(16)
HPRS	10.6	(14)	27.4	(26)	27.0	(7)	18.0	(19)	14.7	(14)	16.5	(13)
R 3000 Index	9.2		25.7		25.8		18.0		14.6		16.3	
Peer Median	8.3		24.4		24.7		17.0		13.6		15.3	

⁴OP&F is benchmarked to the Wilshire 5000

International Equity

The international equity portfolios for six of six plans outperformed their respective benchmarks during 2021. STRS earned the highest absolute performance during the period with a return of 13.2% (see Figure 12). Six out of six funds outperformed their respective benchmarks over the 10-year period.

Figure 12: International Equity Performance

	2 Quarters		1 Year		3 Years		5 Years		7 Years		10 Years	
	% Return	Rank	% Return	Rank	% Return	Rank	% Return	Rank	% Return	Rank	% Return	Rank
PERS (DB)	-0.7	(57)	9.0	(62)	15.5	(59)	11.7	(48)	8.5	(44)	9.1	(41)
PERS (HC 115)	-0.7	(57)	9.0	(62)	15.5	(59)	11.7	(48)	8.5	(44)	9.1	(40)
STRS	1.6	(29)	13.2	(19)	13.7	(83)	10.0	(87)	8.1	(55)	9.3	(28)
OP&F	0.4	(40)	11.8	(31)	15.7	(57)	10.6	(74)	7.8	(68)	8.8	(58)
SERS	-0.2	(51)	10.8	(45)	16.7	(42)	12.0	(43)	8.9	(30)	9.3	(25)
HPRS	-8.2	(100)	1.9	(100)	15.0	(65)	10.8	(66)	7.4	(77)	8.2	(74)
MSCI ACW Ex US IMI	-1.0		8.5		13.6		9.8		6.9		7.6	
Peer Median	-0.2		9.6		16.2		11.6		8.4		8.9	

⁵MSCI ACW Ex US IMI may not be the direct benchmark for all the applicable systems international equity exposure, but it is included as a broad benchmark for illustrative purposes.

Fixed Income

Domestic fixed income markets finished 2021 down -1.6%, as measured by the Bloomberg US Aggregate Bond Index. During the period, six out of six plans outperformed or kept pace with their respective benchmarks. One out of six plans outperformed the peer median. All six plans outperformed the broad market index over the 10-year trailing period, as shown by Figure 13. HPRS fixed income composite returned 4.4% versus 3.1% for the Bloomberg US Aggregate Bond Index, the highest absolute and relative return earned among the six plans over the 10-year time period

Figure 13: Fixed Income Performance

	2 Quarters		1 Year		3 Years		5 Years		7 Years		10 Years	
	% Return	Rank	% Return	Rank	% Return	Rank	% Return	Rank	% Return	Rank	% Return	Rank
PERS (DB) Core FI	0.2	(66)	-1.0	(86)	5.5	(71)	4.0	(77)	3.4	(80)	3.4	(79)
PERS (HC 115) Core FI	0.2	(66)	-1.0	(86)	5.5	(71)	4.0	(77)	3.4	(80)	3.4	(79)
STRS Core Fixed Income	0.1	(69)	-0.8	(82)	5.5	(73)	4.1	(76)	3.7	(69)	3.6	(73)
OP&F Core FI	0.4	(50)	-3.0	(97)	4.0	(94)	3.5	(89)	3.3	(82)	3.3	(83)
SERS	0.0	(84)	-0.6	(75)	6.5	(26)	4.8	(34)	4.1	(43)	4.3	(33)
HPRS	1.5	(22)	3.6	(4)	7.0	(10)	5.8	(2)	5.1	(3)	4.5	(25)
B US Agg Bond Index	0.1		-1.6		4.8		3.6		3.0		2.9	
Peer Median	0.4		0.2		5.8		4.6		4.0		4.0	

⁶Bloomberg US Agg Bond Index may not be the direct benchmark for all the applicable systems fixed income exposure, but it is included as a broad benchmark for illustrative purposes.

Real Estate

Of the five plans with exposure to core and value-added real estate, returns ranged from 13.7% to 24.2% during 2021. PERS (HC 115)'s REITs (real estate investment trusts) composite increased by 46.0% over of 2021. Over the trailing 10-year period, returns ranged from 10.6% to 13.2% for plans with core and value-added real estate (see Figure 14).

Figure 14: Real Estate Performance

Core and Value-Added Real Estate							
	2 Quarters	1 Year	3 Years	5 Years	7 Years	10 Years	10 Years Standard Deviation
	% Return	% Return	% Return	% Return	% Return	% Return	
PERS (DB)	13.7	17.1	9.0	8.2	10.0	11.7	7.7
STRS	12.8	20.6	9.6	8.3	9.0	10.6	7.8
OP&F	15.8	24.2	10.6	11.1	12.2	13.2	8.4
SERS	12.1	18.5	10.4	10.6	11.0	11.7	7.6
HPRS	7.6	13.7	8.9	10.5	9.5	10.8	9.7
NCREIF ODCE Index (Net) (AWA)	14.6	21.0	8.2	7.7	8.6	9.4	2.4
REITs							
PERS (HC 115)	18.7	46.0	16.8	9.7	8.5	10.7	9.2
DJ US Sel RE Securities	18.7	45.9	16.8	9.7	8.5	10.7	N/A

⁷NCREIF ODCE Index (Net) (AWA) may not be the direct benchmark for all the applicable systems real estate exposure, but it is included as a broad benchmark for illustrative purposes.

Alternative Asset Classes:

Alternative investments are typically added to a portfolio to provide further diversification of assets, enabling investors to reduce expected portfolio volatility without sacrificing return potential. Exposures may include hedge funds, private equity, private real estate, commodities, and opportunistic exposures to equity or fixed income segments/securities. As compared to traditional asset classes, alternative investments can be less transparent (although this is improving), less liquid (potential fund lock-up periods or staged withdrawals), and more expensive (although costs are generally decreasing). Investment managers rely on manager skill, extensive research, and sourcing of opportunities to add value, all which lead to unique characteristics and higher costs.

As with any investment, alternative investments are also subject to a variety of risks, including, but not limited to: operational, complexity, leverage, liquidity, concentration, volatility, headline, fraud, and regulatory. A thorough and ongoing due diligence process is needed to mitigate these risks. Figure 15 shows the correlation between broad market benchmarks for alternatives (private real estate, REITs, hedge funds, private equity) and traditional asset classes (public equities and fixed income).

Figure 15: Alternative Asset Class Index Correlation

	NCREIF ODCE Index	DJ US Select RE Sec Index	HFRI FOF Comp Index	Cambridge US PE Index (Qtr Lag)
S&P 500 Index (Cap Wtd)	0.16	0.76	0.85	0.11
Russell 2000 Index	0.09	0.74	0.81	0.08
MSCI EAFE Index	0.07	0.68	0.88	0.12
MSCI Emg Mkts Index	-0.08	0.55	0.85	0.00
Bloomberg US Agg Bond Index	-0.19	-0.03	-0.22	-0.21
NCREIF ODCE Index	1.00	0.20	0.10	0.60
DJ US Select RE Sec Index	0.20	1.00	0.51	0.27
HFRI FOF Comp Index	0.10	0.51	1.00	0.12
Cambridge US PE Index (Qtr Lag)	0.60	0.27	0.12	1.00

⁸Correlations are based on 15 years of performance ending December 31, 2021.

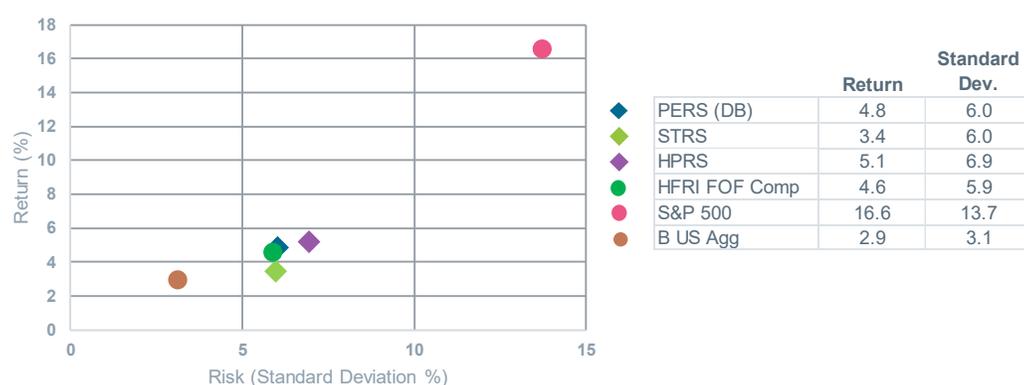
Hedge Funds

Hedge Fund exposures are typically intended to provide attractive risk-adjusted returns and diversification benefits to a portfolio over the long-term. These attributes are often obtained via investments that rely on manager skill rather than specific asset class exposures, and allow for flexibility of allocations and tools.

Composite returns during the 10-year trailing period range from 6.0% to 6.9% among the five plans with dedicated hedge fund composites. Over the trailing 10-year period one out of five hedge fund allocations equaled or outperformed their respective benchmarks.

Figure 16: Hedge Funds Performance

10 Years Ending December 31, 2021



⁹PERS (DB) has no Hedge Fund target allocation and remaining assets are liquidating.

Private Equity

Private Equity investments typically attempt to achieve returns above public market returns while providing some diversification benefits. Private equity investments provide a way to access companies, industries, and strategies not easily available to public markets and allows skilled managers to effect meaningful change to businesses, thus improving value.

Five of the six plans have dedicated exposure to private equity. Over the trailing 10-year period, the time-weighted returns for these allocations have ranged from 12.6% to 19.8% per annum. Although we prefer to measure private equity performance using since inception money-weighted returns (IRR), we have included time-weighted performance in our full Investment Performance Analysis for illustrative purposes.

Figure 17: Private Equity Performance

	10 Years Ending December 31, 2021				
Plan	PERS (DB)	STRS	OP&F	SERS	HPRS
% Return	16.8	19.8	18.2	19.3	12.6
Benchmark % Return	18.1	N/A	18.2	17.6	18.8

¹⁰HPRS's private equity portfolio did not begin in earnest until after 2008. Therefore, longer period trailing returns may not be relevant.

¹¹STRS adopted a new benchmark, which is the Cambridge Associates Private Equity and Venture Capital Index, one quarter lagged to be consistent with external fund reporting, effective July 1, 2021, and therefore does not have 10 years of benchmark performance history.

Additional Investments

We have included additional asset class composites which are not shared across the majority of the six plans within our Investment Performance Analysis.

Considerations

After careful analysis, we put forth the following considerations for the Ohio Retirement Study Council:

1. Be mindful of target asset allocation for each fund and the goals they are attempting to achieve. Currently all the funds are diversified across multiple asset classes and exhibit characteristics of prudent investor diversification.
 - ➔ The determination of a fund's asset allocation is the single most important investment decision and is a major determinant of long-term return and the volatility risk of asset values. Creating a diversified portfolio of asset classes enables the investor to achieve a potential higher rate of return while minimizing volatility of the portfolio. A fund following a smoother, less volatile path compounds value at a faster rate.
 - ➔ Don't assume that all of the plans should have the same asset allocation. Differences in their liabilities, funding status, the risk tolerance of their fiduciaries and other factors will likely produce legitimate differences in their respective asset allocations.
2. Monitor the change in asset allocation over time.
 - ➔ Target allocations should be formally reviewed (by the Board) every few years with potentially more frequent informal reviews (by Staff). From each review there can be multiple reasons for adopting new targets (with generally gradual shifts) – from a rare occurrence of the overarching goal of the investment program changing to potential consideration of significant, longer-term economic or market changes to the possibility of opportunities to improve the risk/return tradeoff.
3. While this and subsequent reports we deliver to the council will focus on recent information in return and risk taken at each of the funds, we strongly encourage you to once again focus on the 3 and 5-year risk and return results to better gauge the stewardship of the State's pension assets.

All performance shown is gross of fees, with the exception of externally managed real estate, hedge fund, and private equity investments. Total Fund performance shown is gross of fees but is net of embedded fees, including carried interest, incentives or promotion fees, on externally managed real estate and alternative investments. Peer group ranks are measured in percentiles.