**Disclaimer:** The GASB 68 Employer Template Note Disclosures provided by the North Dakota Teachers’ Fund for Retirement (TFFR) is intended to provide participating employers with general guidance in accounting and financial reporting matters. The materials do not constitute, and should not be treated as, professional advice regarding the use of any particular financial reporting technique. Every effort has been made to assure the accuracy of these materials. However, TFFR participating employers and auditors should independently verify all statements made before applying them to a particular situation, and should independently determine the consequences of any particular technique before implementing.

**NOTE: Items in yellow will be input by employer or employer auditor each year. The text in red gives direction to where the information can be found.**

**Employer Name**

**Notes to the Financial Statements**

**for the Year Ended June 30, 2024**

**Summary of Significant Accounting Policies**

*Pensions*. For purposes of measuring the net pension liability, deferred outflows of resources and deferred inflows of resources related to pensions, and pension expense, information about the fiduciary net position of the Teachers’ Fund for Retirement (TFFR) and additions to/deductions from TFFR's fiduciary net position have been determined on the same basis as they are reported by TFFR. For this purpose, benefit payments (including refunds of employee contributions) are recognized when due and payable in accordance with the benefit terms. Investments are reported at fair value.

**General Information about the Pension Plan**

*North Dakota Teachers’ Fund for Retirement*

The following brief description of TFFR is provided for general information purposes only. Participants should refer to NDCC Chapter 15-39.1 for more complete information.

TFFR is a cost-sharing multiple-employer defined benefit pension plan covering all North Dakota public teachers and certain other teachers who meet various membership requirements. TFFR provides for pension, death, and disability benefits. The cost to administer the TFFR plan is financed by investment income and contributions.

Responsibility for administration of the TFFR benefits program is assigned to a seven-member Board of Trustees (Board). The Board consists of the State Treasurer, the Superintendent of Public Instruction, and five members appointed by the Governor. The appointed members serve five-year terms which end on June 30 of alternate years. The appointed Board members must include two active teachers, one active school administrator, and two retired members. The TFFR Board submits any necessary or desirable changes in statutes relating to the administration of the fund, including benefit terms, to the Legislative Assembly for consideration. The Legislative Assembly has final authority for changes to benefit terms and contribution rates.

***Pension Benefits***

For purposes of determining pension benefits, members are classified within one of three categories. Tier 1 grandfathered and Tier 1 non-grandfathered members are those with service credit on file as of July 1, 2008. Tier 2 members are those newly employed and returning refunded members on or after July 1, 2008.

*Tier 1 Grandfathered*

A Tier 1 grandfathered member is entitled to receive unreduced benefits when three or more years of credited service as a teacher in North Dakota have accumulated, the member is no longer employed as a teacher and the member has reached age 65, or the sum of age and years of service credit equals or exceeds 85. TFFR permits early retirement from ages 55 to 64, with benefits actuarially reduced by 6% per year for every year the member’s retirement age is less than 65 years or the date as of which age plus service equal 85. In either case, benefits may not exceed the maximum benefits specified in Section 415 of the Internal Revenue Code.

Pension benefits paid by TFFR are determined by NDCC Section 15-39.1-10. Monthly benefits under TFFR are equal to the three highest annual salaries earned divided by 36 months and multiplied by 2.00% times the number of service credits earned. Retirees may elect payment of benefits in the form of a single life annuity, 100% or 50% joint and survivor annuity, ten or twenty-year term certain annuity, partial lump-sum option or level income with Social Security benefits. Members may also qualify for benefits calculated under other formulas.

*Tier 1 Non-grandfathered*

A Tier 1 non-grandfathered member is entitled to receive unreduced benefits when three or more years of credited service as a teacher in North Dakota have accumulated, the member is no longer employed as a teacher and the member has reached age 65 or has reached age 60 and the sum of age and years of service credit equals or exceeds 90. TFFR permits early retirement from ages 55 to 64, with benefits actuarially reduced by 8% per year from the earlier of age 60/Rule of 90 or age 65. In either case, benefits may not exceed the maximum benefits specified in Section 415 of the Internal Revenue Code.

Pension benefits paid by TFFR are determined by NDCC Section 15-39.1-10. Monthly benefits under TFFR are equal to the three highest annual salaries earned divided by 36 months and multiplied by 2.00% times the number of service credits earned. Retirees may elect payment of benefits in the form of a single life annuity, 100% or 50% joint and survivor annuity, ten or twenty-year term certain annuity, partial lump-sum option or level income with Social Security benefits. Members may also qualify for benefits calculated under other formulas.

*Tier 2*

A Tier 2 member is entitled to receive unreduced benefits when five or more years of credited service as a teacher in North Dakota have accumulated, the member is no longer employed as a teacher and the member has reached age 65 or has reached age 60 and the sum of age and years of service credit equals or exceeds 90. TFFR permits early retirement from ages 55 to 64, with benefits actuarially reduced by 8% per year from the earlier of age 60/Rule of 90 or age 65. In either case, benefits may not exceed the maximum benefits specified in Section 415 of the Internal Revenue Code.

Pension benefits paid by TFFR are determined by NDCC Section 15-39.1-10. Monthly benefits under TFFR are equal to the five highest annual salaries earned divided by 60 months and multiplied by 2.00% times the number of service credits earned. Retirees may elect payment of benefits in the form of a single life annuity, 100% or 50% joint and survivor annuity, ten or twenty-year term certain annuity, partial lump-sum option, or level income with Social Security benefits. Members may also qualify for benefits calculated under other formulas.

***Death and Disability Benefits***

Death benefits may be paid to a member’s designated beneficiary. If a member’s death occurs before retirement, the benefit options available are determined by the member’s vesting status prior to death. If a member’s death occurs after retirement, the death benefit received by the beneficiary (if any) is based on the retirement plan the member selected at retirement.

An active member is eligible to receive disability benefits when: (a) a total disability lasting 12 months or more does not allow the continuation of teaching, (b) the member has accumulated five years of credited service in North Dakota, and (c) the Board of Trustees of TFFR has determined eligibility based upon medical evidence. The amount of the disability benefit is computed by the retirement formula in NDCC Section 15-39.1-10 without consideration of age and uses the member’s actual years of credited service. There is no actuarial reduction for reason of disability retirement.

***Member and Employer Contributions***

Member and employer contributions paid to TFFR are set by NDCC Section 15-39.1-09. Every eligible teacher in the State of North Dakota is required to be a member of TFFR and is assessed at a rate of 11.75% of salary as defined by NDCC Section 15-39.1-04. Every governmental body employing a teacher must also pay into TFFR a sum equal to 12.75% of the teacher’s salary. Member and employer contributions will be reduced to 7.75% each when the fund reaches 100% funded ratio on an actuarial basis.

A vested member who terminates covered employment may elect a refund of contributions paid plus 6% interest or defer payment until eligible for pension benefits. A non-vested member who terminates covered employment must claim a refund of contributions paid before age 70½. Refunded members forfeit all service credits under TFFR. These service credits may be repurchased upon return to covered employment under certain circumstances, as defined by the NDCC.

***Pension Liabilities, Pension Expense, and Deferred Outflows of Resources and Deferred Inflows of Resources Related to Pensions***

At mm/dd/yyyy(employer’s fiscal year-end), the Employer reported a liability of $$$ (from Appendix B, Column 2 in TFFR GASB Report) for its proportionate share of the net pension liability. The net pension liability was measured as of mm/dd/yyyy, (date of TFFR GASB Report) and the total pension liability used to calculate the net pension liability was determined by an actuarial valuation as of that date. The Employer's proportion of the net pension liability was based on the Employer's share of covered payroll in the pension plan relative to the covered payroll of all participating TFFR employers. At mm/dd/yyyy, (date of TFFR GASB Report) the Employer's proportion was X.XXXXXX percent, (from Appendix B, Column 1 in TFFR GASB Report) which was an increase or decrease of X.XXXXXX (employer will select increase or decrease and calculate change) from its proportion measured as of mm/dd/yyyy (one year prior to date above).

*[If there had been a change of benefit terms that affected the measurement of the total pension liability since the prior measurement date, the Employer should disclose information required by paragraph 80e of Statement 68.]* ***(TFFR will provide if applicable.)***

*[If changes expected to have a significant effect on the measurement of the Employer’s proportionate share of the net pension liability had occurred between the measurement date and the reporting date, the Employer should disclose information required by paragraph 80f of Statement 68.]*

For the year ended mm/dd/yyyy, (employer’s fiscal year-end) the Employer recognized pension expense of $$$ (from Appendix B, Column 13 of TFFR GASB Report). At mm/dd/yyyy, (employer’s fiscal year-end) the Employer reported deferred outflows of resources and deferred inflows of resources related to pensions from the following sources (from Appendix B, Columns 14 - 22 of TFFR GASB Report with the exception of employer contributions subsequent to the measurement date):

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Deferred Outflows of Resources** | **Deferred Inflows of Resources** |
|  | | |
| Differences between expected and actual experience | $ X,XXX | $ X,XXX |
| Changes of assumptions | X,XXX | X,XXX |
| Net difference between projected and actual earnings on pension plan investments | X,XXX | X,XXX |
| Changes in proportion and differences between employer contributions and proportionate share of contributions | X,XXX | X,XXX |
| Employer contributions subsequent to the measurement date (see below) | \*,\*\*\* | - |
| Total | \*$ X,XXX | $X,XXX |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |

$\*,\*\*\* reported as deferred outflows of resources related to pensions resulting from Employer contributions subsequent to the measurement date will be recognized as a reduction of the net pension liability in the year ended mm/dd/yyyy (employer’s subsequent fiscal year-end). (Because valuation/measurement date will generally be one year prior to employers’ fiscal year end, this amount will be the actual employer contributions **(do not include employer paid member contributions)** paid during the fiscal year for which this disclosure applies - employers’ responsibility to calculate – this amount is reflected on your annual Employer Summary Report provided by TFFR each August).

Other amounts reported as deferred outflows of resources and deferred inflows of resources related to pensions will be recognized in pension expense as follows (from Appendix B, Columns 23 - 28 of TFFR GASB Report – years will need to be rolled forward one year from dates in report):

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Year ended June 30:** |  |
| 2025 | $ X,XXX |
| 2026 | X,XXX |
| 2027 | X,XXX |
| 2028 | X,XXX |
| 2029 | X,XXX |
| Thereafter | X,XXX |

***Actuarial assumptions*.** The total pension liability in the July 1, 2023 actuarial valuation was determined using the following actuarial assumptions, applied to all periods included in the measurement:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | | |
| Inflation | | | 2.30% |
| Salary increases | | | Composed of 3.80% wage inflations, plus step rate promotional increases for members with less than 30 years of service |
| Investment rate of return | | | 7.25%, net of investment expenses,  including inflation |
| Cost-of-living adjustments | | | None |

For active and inactive members, mortality rates were based on the PubT-2010 Employee table, projected with generational improvement using Scale MP-2019. For healthy retirees, mortality rates were based on 104% of the PubT-2010 Retiree table for retirees and to 95% of the PubT-2010 Contingent Survivor table for beneficiaries, both projected with generational improvement using Scale MP-2019. For disability retirees, mortality rates were based on the PubNS-2010 Non-Safety Disabled Mortality table projected with generational improvement using Scale MP-2019.

The actuarial assumptions used were based on the results of an actuarial experience study dated March 19, 2020. They are the same as the assumptions used in the July 1, 2023, funding actuarial valuation for TFFR.

The TFFR Board is responsible for establishing investment policy for the fund assets under NDCC 15-39.1-05.2. Benefit payments are projected to occur over a long period of time. This allows TFFR to adopt a long-term investment horizon and asset allocation policy for the management of fund assets. Asset allocation policy is critical because it defines the basic risk and return characteristics of the investment portfolio. Asset allocation targets are established using an asset-liability analysis designed to assist the Board in determining an acceptable volatility target for the fund and an optimal asset allocation policy mix. This asset-liability analysis considers both sides of the plan balance sheet, utilizing both quantitative and qualitative inputs, in order to estimate the potential impact of various asset class mixes on key measures of total plan risk, including the resulting estimated impact of funded status and contribution rates.

The long-term expected rate of return on TFFR investments was determined using a building-block method in which best-estimate ranges of expected future real rates of return (expected returns, net of investment expense and inflation) are developed for each major asset class. These ranges are combined to produce the long-term expected rate of return by weighting the expected future real rates of return by the target asset allocation percentage and by adding expected inflation. Best estimates of arithmetic real rates of return for each major asset class included in the TFFR target asset allocation as of June 30, 2023, is summarized in the following table:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Asset Class | Target Allocation | Long-Term Expected Real Rate of Return |
| Global Equities | 55% | 6.2% |
| Global Fixed Income | 26% | 3.0% |
| Global Real Assets | 18% | 4.4% |
| Cash Equivalents | 1% | 0.9% |

***Discount rate*.** The discount rate used to measure the total pension liability was 7.25% as of June 30, 2023. The projection of cash flows used to determine the discount rate assumed that member and employer contributions will be made at rates equal to those based on the July 1, 2023, Actuarial Valuation Report. For this purpose, only employer contributions that are intended to fund benefits of current plan members and their beneficiaries are included. Projected employer contributions that are intended to fund the service costs of future plan members and their beneficiaries, as well as projected contributions from future plan members, are not included. Based on those assumptions, TFFR’s fiduciary net position was projected to be available to make all projected future benefit payments of current plan members as of July 1, 2023. Therefore, the long-term expected rate of return on TFFR investments was applied to all periods of projected benefit payments to determine the total pension liability as of June 30, 2023.

***Sensitivity of the Employer's proportionate share of the net pension liability to changes in the discount rate*.** The following presents the net pension liability of the TFFR employers calculated using the discount rate of 7.25% as of June 30, 2023, as well as what the employers’ net pension liability would be if it were calculated using a discount rate that is 1-percentage-point lower or 1-percentage-point higher than the current rate: (from Appendix B, Columns 4-6 TFFR GASB Report)

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **1% Decrease (6.25%)** | **Current Discount Rate (7.25%)** | **1% Increase (8.25%)** |
| Employer's proportionate share of the net pension liability | $X,XXX | $X,XXX | $X,XXX |

***Pension plan fiduciary net position*.** Detailed information about the pension plan's fiduciary net position is available in the separately issued TFFR financial report. TFFR’s Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) is located at <https://www.rio.nd.gov/sites/www/files/documents/PDFs/RIO/Reports/annualreport2023.pdf>

[If significant changes had occurred that indicate that the disclosures included in the pension plan's financial report generally did not reflect the facts and circumstances at the measurement date, the Employer should disclose additional information, as required by paragraph 79 of Statement 68.] ***(TFFR will provide if applicable.)***

**Payables to the pension plan**

[If the Employer reported payables to the defined benefit pension plan, it should disclose information required by paragraph 122 of Statement 68 – employers’ responsibility to calculate.]

**Schedules of Required Supplementary Information**

**Schedule of Employer’s Share of Net Pension Liability**

**ND Teachers’ Fund for Retirement**

**Last 10 Fiscal Years\***

(from Appendix B and Page 5 of TFFR GASB Report – insert 2023 column into existing table)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | 2022 |
| Employer’s proportion of the net pension liability (asset) | XX.XXXXXX% Appendix B, Column 1 |
| Employer’s proportionate share of the net pension liability (asset) | $X,XXX Appendix B, Column 2 |
| Employer’s covered payroll | $X,XXX Appendix B, Column 3 |
| Employer’s proportionate share of the net pension liability (asset) as a percentage of its covered payroll | XXX.XX% Calculate, 2 divided by 3 |
| Plan fiduciary net position as a percentage of the total pension liability | XXX.XX% Schedules of Required Supplementary Information – Schedule of Changes in the Employers’ Net Pension Liability and Related Ratios (Page 5 of the TFFR GASB Report) |

\*Complete data for this schedule is not available prior to 2015.

**Schedule of Employer Contributions**

**ND Teachers’ Fund for Retirement**

**Last 10 Fiscal Years**

(Employers should enter **actual** Employer Contribution information from the last completed fiscal year - insert 2024 column into existing table.)

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | 2024 | |
| Statutorily required contribution | $X,XXX | Amount entered on page 4 of this document for the employer contributions subsequent to the measurement date |
| Contributions in relation to the statutorily required contribution | ($X,XXX) | Same amount as above |
| Contribution deficiency (excess) | $X.XXX | Should be zero |
| Employer’s covered payroll | $X,XXX | Total Retirement Salary found on TFFR Employer Summary Report |
| Contributions as a percentage of covered payroll | XX.XX% | Contributions divided by payroll |

[Employer has data and the option to display a 10-year history.]

**Notes to Required Supplementary Information**

**for the Year Ended June 30, 2024**

***Changes of benefit terms.***

(TFFR will provide if applicable.)

***Changes of assumptions.*** Amounts reported in 2021 and later reflect the following actuarial assumption changes based on the results of an actuarial experience study dated March 19, 2020.

* Investment return assumption lowered from 7.75% to 7.25%;
* Inflation assumption lowered from 2.75% to 2.30%;
* Individual salary increases were lowered;
* Rates of turnover, retirement and disability were changed to better reflect anticipated future experience;
* The post-retirement healthy mortality table was updated to 104% of the PubT-2010 Retiree table for retirees and to 95% of the PubT-2010 Contingent Survivor table for beneficiaries, both projected with generational improvement using Scale MP-2019;
* The disabled mortality was updated to the PubNS-2010 Non-Safety Disabled Mortality table projected with generational improvement using Scale MP-2019; and
* The pre-retirement mortality table was updated to the PubT-2010 Employee table projected with generational improvement using Scale MP-2019.

Amounts reported in 2016-2020 reflect the following actuarial assumption changes based on the results of an actuarial experience study dated April 30, 2015.

* Investment return assumption lowered from 8% to 7.75%.
* Inflation assumption lowered from 3% to 2.75%.
* Total salary scale rates lowered by 0.25% due to lower inflation.
* Added explicit administrative expense assumption, equal to prior year administrative expense plus inflation.
* Rates of turnover and retirement were changed to better reflect anticipated future experience.
* Updated mortality assumption to the RP-2014 mortality tables with generational improvement.