

Putnam Strategic Intermediate Municipal Fund

Class Y: PAMYX Class A: PPNAX

Commentary | as of March 31, 2026

Key Takeaways

- **Markets:** In the first quarter of 2026, new issuance of municipal (muni) bonds exceeded the average seen in the past few years (Source: Barclays). The war in the Middle East which began at the end of February, continued throughout March, dominating market sentiment during the month. By quarter-end, the yield on the benchmark 10-year US Treasury (UST) note moved 15 basis points (bps) higher to 4.32%, and the yield on the 30-year UST bond increased by seven bps to 4.91%. The March US Federal Reserve (Fed) Federal Open Market Committee meeting left rates unchanged, and the statement and press conference emphasized uncertainty related to the Iran war. The Fed indicated that it would look through any initial oil supply shock effect on inflation to focus on core developments, while also noting a likely dragging effect on the economy; ultimately the Committee retained an easing bias.
- **Contributors:** Underweight allocation to municipal bonds with five years to maturity. Overweight allocations to bonds with no external credit rating, and to BBB rated bonds. Security selection in AA and BB rated bonds.
- **Detractors:** Overweight allocation to municipal bonds with 10 or more years to maturity. Overweight allocation to BB rated bonds.
- **Outlook:** Municipal bond valuations continue to appear attractive, particularly on a tax-adjusted basis. In a more challenging environment, strong bottom-up research and disciplined security selection will be essential to identifying relative value and preserving portfolio quality.

Performance Review

- Over the quarter, **Putnam strategic Intermediate Municipal Fund outperformed its benchmark**, the Bloomberg 3-15 Year Blend Municipal Bond Index.
- **The fund's yield curve positioning detracted from relative performance** during the quarter, primarily driven by our overweight to muni bonds with 10 or more years to maturity. However, positive contributions from our underweight to muni bonds with five years to maturity partially offset some of the losses.
- **Rating allocations lifted relative returns** for the period, led by our overweight to bonds with no external credit rating, along with overweight exposure to BBB rated bonds, while an overweight to BB rated bonds curbed returns. **Security selection was a strong contributor to relative results**, mainly due to selection in AA and BB rated bonds.

Outlook

- The robust demand witnessed at the start of 2026 has begun to soften amid rising market uncertainty, while supply has persisted at a record-setting pace. Looking ahead to 2026, demand will play a crucial role as supply is projected to reach historical highs, primarily driven by infrastructure capital requirements that can no longer depend on previous government stimulus programs alone. The muni-bond yield curve shifted higher during the quarter.
- Fundamentals remain stable but slower economic growth will constrain revenue expansion across many sectors, particularly with respect to tax revenues. Rainy-day funds remain healthy at the state and local government levels, which should bolster fiscal resilience despite ongoing expense growth.
- Following the market pullback in March, municipal bond valuations have strengthened and continue to appear attractive, particularly on a tax-adjusted basis. Yields remain above five-year averages, allowing investors the opportunity to lock in compelling income. In a more challenging environment, strong bottom-up research and disciplined security selection will be essential to identifying relative value and preserving portfolio quality.

Morningstar Rating™

Overall Rating as of March 31, 2026

★★★★★ (5-Star) Class Y

★★★★ (4-Star) Class A

As of 03/31/2026 the fund's Class Y shares received a 5 star and Class A shares received a 4 star overall Morningstar rating™, measuring risk-adjusted returns against 255, 233 and 176 Muni National Intermediate funds over the 3-, 5- and 10-year periods, respectively. A fund's overall rating is derived from a weighted average of the performance figures associated with its 3-, 5- and 10-year (if applicable) rating metrics. The number of funds in the category for the Overall Rating are listed under the 3-year period.

Fund Characteristics

	Fund
Distribution Frequency	Monthly
30-Day SEC Yield (Class Y)—With Waiver	3.56%
30-Day SEC Yield (Class Y)—Without Waiver	3.56%
Taxable Equivalent Yield (Class Y)—With Waiver	6.01%
Taxable Equivalent Yield (Class Y)—Without Waiver	6.01%

Average annual total returns and fund expenses (%) - as of March 31, 2026

Class	CUSIP	Ticker	Without Sales Charge							With Maximum Sales Charge							Expenses		Sales Charges		Inception Date
			3-Mo	YTD	1-Yr	3-Yr	5-Yr	10-Yr	Inception	3-Mo	YTD	1-Yr	3-Yr	5-Yr	10-Yr	Inception	Gross	Net	Initial Charge	CDSC	
Class Y	746872886	PAMYX	0.21	0.21	4.77	3.78	1.75	2.70	5.05	0.21	0.21	4.77	3.78	1.75	2.70	5.05	0.65	0.65	—	—	9/9/1985
Class A	746872308	PPNAX	0.15	0.15	4.51	3.52	1.50	2.45	5.11	-2.10	-2.10	2.16	2.74	1.03	2.22	5.05	0.90	0.90	2.25	—	9/9/1985
Benchmark 1	—	—	-0.34	-0.34	4.60	2.86	1.11	2.14	—	-0.34	-0.34	4.60	2.86	1.11	2.14	—	—	—	—	—	—
Benchmark 2	—	—	-0.34	-0.34	4.60	2.86	1.11	2.26	—	-0.34	-0.34	4.60	2.86	1.11	2.26	—	—	—	—	—	—

Benchmark(s)

Benchmark 1=Bloomberg 3-15 Year Blend Municipal Bond Index

Benchmark 2=Putnam Strategic Intermediate Municipal Linked Benchmark

Performance data quoted represents past performance, which does not guarantee future results. Current performance may be lower or higher than the figures shown. Principal value and investment returns will fluctuate, and investors' shares, when redeemed, may be worth more or less than the original cost. Performance would have been lower if fees had not been waived in various periods. Total returns assume the reinvestment of all distributions and the deduction of all fund expenses. Returns with sales charge reflect a deduction of the stated maximum sales charge. An investor cannot invest directly in an index, and unmanaged index returns do not reflect any fees, expenses or sales charges. Returns for periods of less than one year are not annualized. All classes of shares may not be available to all investors or through all distribution channels. For current month-end performance, please visit franklintempleton.com.

The fund began offering Class Y shares on 1/2/2008 and the fund began offering Class A shares on 9/20/1993. Performance quotations have been calculated as follows: (a) Class Y periods prior to 1/2/2008 are based on the fund's Class B performance, which has not been adjusted for the lower operating expenses; had it been adjusted, performance would be higher; for Class A periods prior to 9/20/1993 are based on the fund's Class B performance, which has not been adjusted for the lower operating expenses; had it been adjusted, performance would be higher. (b) For periods after the share class offering, performance for the specific share class is used, reflecting the expenses and maximum sales charges applicable to that class.

The total annual operating expenses are as of the fund's prospectus available at the time of publication. Actual expenses may be higher and may impact portfolio returns.

What are the Risks?

All investments involve risks, including possible loss of principal. Fixed income securities involve interest rate, credit, inflation and reinvestment risks, and possible loss of principal. As interest rates rise, the value of fixed income securities falls. **Active management** does not ensure gains or protect against market declines. An investor may be subject to the federal **Alternative Minimum Tax**, and state and local taxes may apply. These and other risks are discussed in the fund's prospectus.

Glossary

A **basis point (bp, or bps)** is one one-hundredth of one percent (1/100% or 0.01%).

The **yield curve** shows the relationship between yields and maturity dates for a similar class of bonds.

Important Information

The information provided is not a complete analysis of every material fact regarding any country, market, industry, security or fund. Because market and economic conditions are subject to change, comments, opinions and analyses are rendered as of the date of this material and may change without notice. A portfolio manager's assessment of a particular security, investment or strategy is not intended as individual investment advice or a recommendation or solicitation to buy, sell or hold any security or to adopt any investment strategy; it is intended only to provide insight into the fund's portfolio selection process. Holdings are subject to change.

The **Putnam Strategic Intermediate Municipal Linked Benchmark** represents the performance of the Bloomberg Municipal Bond Index through August 27, 2020, and the performance of the Bloomberg 3-15 Year Blend Municipal Bond Index thereafter. The **Bloomberg 3-15 Year Blend Municipal Bond Index** is an unmanaged index composed of investment-grade municipal securities ranging from 2 and 17 years in maturity.

Source: Bloomberg Indices.

Important data provider notices and terms available at www.franklintempletondatasources.com. All data is subject to change.

The **30-day SEC yield** is calculated using the net income (interest and dividends) per share earned over a trailing 30-day period (annualized), divided by the fund's share price at the end of that period. It may not equal the fund's actual income distribution rate, which reflects the fund's past dividends paid to shareholders.

Morningstar Rating™: Source: Morningstar®, 03/31/2026. For each mutual fund and ETF with at least a 3-year history, Morningstar calculates a Morningstar Rating™ based on how a fund ranks on a Morningstar Risk-Adjusted Return measure against other funds in the same category. This measure takes into account variations in a fund's monthly performance, and does not take into account the effects of sales charges and loads, placing more emphasis on downward variations and rewarding consistent performance. The top 10% of funds in each category receive 5 stars, the next 22.5% receive 4 stars, the next 35% receive 3 stars, the next 22.5% receive 2 stars and the bottom 10% receive 1 star. The weights are: 100% 3-year rating for 36-59 months of total returns, 60% 5-year rating/40% 3-year rating for 60-119 months of total returns, and 50% 10-year rating/30% 5-year rating/20% 3-year rating for 120 or more months of total returns. While the 10-year overall star rating formula seems to give the most weight to the 10-year period, the most recent 3-year period actually has the greatest impact because it is included in all three rating periods. The fund's Class Y shares received a Morningstar Rating of 4, 5 and 5 and fund's Class A shares received a Morningstar Rating of 4, 4 and 4 star(s) for the 3-, 5- and 10-year periods, respectively. Franklin Templeton provides this fund's Morningstar Rating™ for Class Y and Class A shares only. Other share classes may have different Morningstar ratings. The information contained herein: (1) is proprietary to Morningstar and/or its content providers; (2) may not be copied or distributed; and (3) is not warranted to be accurate, complete, or timely. Neither Morningstar nor its content providers are responsible for any damages or losses arising from any use of this information.

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Before investing, carefully consider a fund's investment objectives, risks, charges and expenses. You can find this and other information in each prospectus, or summary prospectus, if available, at www.franklintempleton.com. Please read it carefully.