



**Association canadienne des enseignantes et des enseignants retraités  
The Canadian Association of Retired Teachers**

**OPTIONS**

**The Newsletter of ACER-CART**

**Winter 2019**

**Editor: Martin Higgs**

**PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

**Bill Berryman**

I would like to extend a sincere thank you to Martin Higgs and his Communications Committee for the production of the Summer This newsletter provides a vital communication link to ACER-CART Executive and Directors who then provide up-to-date information to our 140,000 members.

I would also like to congratulate the Alberta Retired Teachers' Association, la Société des Enseignants et enseignants retraités francophones du Nouveau-Brunswick, the British Columbia Retired Teachers' Association, the Yukon Retired Teachers' Alumni, the Retired Teachers' Association of Newfoundland and Labrador and the Prince Edward Island Retired Teachers' Association for their successful Annual General Meetings which have taken place since the last publication of Options. I understand that each meeting promoted and enhanced the interests and well-being of their membership and provided an opportunity for fruitful discussion and rich social interaction.

I would now like to update you on the following ACER-CART initiatives as a follow up to our 2018-2019 priorities as approved at the June 2-3, 2018 Annual General Meeting.

***Federal Minister of Seniors the Honourable Filomena Tassi***

On behalf of ACER-CART I wrote a letter of congratulations to the new Minister of Seniors and provided her with a copy of the Elder Abuse pamphlet. She also received a copy of SHIFT– Nova Scotia's Action Plan for an Aging Population and our 2018-2019 priorities from Darrell Samson, Member of Parliament for Sackville-Preston-Chezzetcook. I have also written a second letter to Minister Tassi inviting her to speak at the 2019 Annual General Meeting Dinner on June 7, 2019. I also sent a letter of congratulations to Sherry Romando, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Seniors, providing her with information on the Organization and indicated that ACER-CART advocates for all Canadian seniors, not solely retired teachers in Canada.



## ***Pharmacare Consultations—Dr. Eric Hoskins Advisory Council on the Implementation of National Pharmacare***

ACER-CART was very privileged to have representatives from Ontario, Nova Scotia and Newfoundland and Labrador invited to participate in “roundtable” discussions in their respective provinces with the Advisory Council. I attended the September 19, 2018, meeting in Halifax with thirty other participants which included health care providers; the pharmaceutical industry; private insurance companies; pharmacists; and business, labour and patient groups. Over three hours participants were asked to respond to the following questions:

1. How should pharmacare be delivered and who should be covered?
2. What drugs should be covered?
3. How should pharmacare be paid for?

I was not surprised by the many divergent opinions of participants due to the groups they represent. I was very forceful in advocating for a single payer universal national pharmacare program with the principles of universality, accessibility, comprehensiveness, public administration and portability. I also urged the participants that there needs to be some evidence based comprehensive national formulary with one negotiator.

On September 20, 2018, I wrote a letter to the Advisory Council on behalf of ACER-CART and emphasized the development of a universal, national pharmacare plan with the establishment of a national pharmaceutical formulary. I would like to thank Marg Urquhart and her Health Services Committee Committee for providing the research for the letter and in particular the eleven suggestions on how to implement the plan.

## ***Vibrant Voices***

ACER-CART was invited to affiliate with the Retired Teachers of Ontario and the National Association of Federal Retirees in sponsoring Leadership Alignment Session for Canada’s Vibrant Voices—2019 Federal Election in Toronto on November 16, 2018. Representing ACER-CART at the conference was Gordon Cumming, Gerry Tiede, Martin Higgs, Roger Régimbal and myself.

Eight organizations were invited and the conference was designed to help every organization reach alignment on one to three key areas of opportunity to advocate together in the October 21, 2019, Federal Election. The vision was to align, collaborate and champion a national campaign with one vibrant voice.

The twenty participants spend considerable time discussing possible campaign issues and agreed on the following key priorities for the October election:

- 1) National Pharmacare Program
- 2) National Health Care Strategy for Seniors
- 3) Pension/Retirement Income Security

Information will be tabulated from this powerful conference and will be provided to each organization to follow up and for final decision on the next step. The ACER-CART Executive

will be determining our course of action at the Executive telephone conference call on January 10, 2019.

### ***Eastern Canadian Retired Teachers Organization (ECRTO)***

Retired teacher representatives from Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, New Brunswick (anglophone and francophone) and Quebec participated in the biannual conference at the Hotel on Pownal in Charlottetown October 24-25, 2018. The conference provided an opportunity to meet and to share our current practices and learn from each other. There were three excellent guest speakers who provided information relevant to the six organizations and the needs of seniors. The guest speakers were and the topics presented are as follows:

- 1) Dr. Steven Wong–Rediscover the Sounds of Life
- 2) Dale Weldon–Comparing the Atlantic Provinces Retired Teachers’ Group Insurance Plans
- 3) Olive Bryanton–Growing Old Gracefully

Marg Urquhart led a small group discussion with each group responsible to answer three questions. The group discussion results from ECRTO are being compiled by PIERTA President, Cynthia MacDonald.

The twenty-five participants were pleased to hear Jan Langelier, President of the Quebec Provincial Association of Retired School Administrators, offer her association as host of the 2020 ECRTO conference in Montreal. All organizations are looking forward to attending this first ECRTO conference hosted in Quebec.

### ***Protocol 7***

At the June 2018 AGM the following motion was passed.

That the provincial Members who together comprise ACER-CART remain committed to develop guidelines to advocate and promote the issues impacting education sector retirees and seniors in Canada while concurrently promoting the specific benefits and services of their association to education sector retirees focused within their own provincial or territorial jurisdiction.

At the September executive meeting, the draft document was reviewed and adopted, subject to the approval of the AGM. Even though the adoption of protocols is the responsibility of the executive, it was felt that the final word should be that of the AGM since it mandated us to develop it.

If you have not already done so, please review the protocol which Roger sent out and if you have any comments or suggestions please send them back and he will then inform the executive.

### ***Report on CTF AGM - July 2018***

Gordon Cumming represented ACER-CART at the Canadian Teachers’ Federation Annual General Meeting. He reported that the various agendas flowed smoothly, thanks to every meeting aspect being anticipated and well scripted. The meeting was run by two independent

speakers one being our own Roger Régimbal. He was masterful in steering the proceedings through all the nuances of the Agenda, and his knowledge of Roberts' Rules was up to the challenge of a generation of "parliamentarians" spread through the various delegations. An event of interest was the return of the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation to membership after a twenty year absence. Priority Discussions included the following topics:

- ✓ Adequate Resourcing of Schools, particularly to support effective inclusion.
- ✓ Violence in the Workplace
- ✓ Indigenous Education
- ✓ Mental Health
- ✓ Labour Rights and Unionization

In addition to these discussion group priorities, the organization also included Gender Equity, Poverty, Privatization, Environment and Climate Change, Rights and Freedom from Discrimination, and Section 43 of the Criminal Code (Protection of our Members) as topmost advocacy priorities for 2018-19.

### ***Ontario changes:***

RTO/ERO has now completed its governance changes. There are now nine directors, elected for staggered terms to set up a rotation plan so that three members will come up for election each year from now on. Their terms will be for three years. Martha Foster remains as Chair of the Board. At its Planning Session, the new Board received a briefing from a Governance Consultant on emerging trends and best practices in corporate and Board governance so the Board would have a clear understanding of its role. RTO/ERO is currently undergoing a branding exercise with input from members and various stakeholders to see what changes might be made to increase membership and influence in the future.

The Ontario election brought in a new government which, among other controversial decisions, has rolled back millions earmarked for mental health, cancelled money allocated for school repairs and returned to the sex-ed curriculum of twenty years ago. There looks to be a lot of turmoil ahead in the education field for the next few years.

### ***Pension Review***

Various governments are currently looking at potential changes to pension plans. Whenever we get or create the opportunity for input, we must insist that pension plans are not company assets but Deferred Income. This needs to be a contractual obligation that in most cases was made long before liabilities to lenders, and certainly before dispensing of resources to shareholders. Legislation is needed to recognize the primacy of indebtedness to pension plans. These assets do not belong to the company, but to the employees. Supervision of Pension Plans needs to extend to all plans to ensure their financial accountability. Transparency must be assured so that employees know where and how their assets are being maintained.

If and when Pension Plans consider changes to plan design and benefits, the Retirees must have equal voice. The investment of those who contributed for their whole career to build a plan is more than equal to those who are beginning to invest in this "Deferred income." Retirees have to be recognized as active partners in their shared future.

***From the Executive Director***

I have received many inquiries asking the dates of the 2019 AGM. The AGM will take place in Ottawa on June 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> 2019.

Why so late? Our bylaws state the AGM shall be held on the first Friday of June and the following Saturday. There will be an information and a discussion session on the 6<sup>th</sup> in the afternoon. You will receive more information in mid January.

***From the Editor***

As this will be the first issue of Options for 2019 I would like to extend a healthy and prosperous New Year to the ACER-CART family and hope everyone has an enjoyable holiday with family and friends. Rest and relax as I believe it is going to be a very busy and interesting 2019!