 **RETIRED TEACHERS’ ASSOCIATION OF MANITOBA**

**MEMBER REPORT**

**Mission Statement**

The mission of RTAM is to serve and advocate for all retired teachers.

**Vision Statement**

The vision of RTAM is the economic well-being of retired teachers through appropriate member services and strong partner relationships.

**Values and Principles**

RTAM values belief in mutual respect, diversity of opinion, tolerance of different viewpoints, integrity and transparency while working collaboratively towards a common goal.

As of March 31, 2018, total membership in RTAM is 9,737. The RTAM Board of Directors presently consists of seventeen members and our part-time Executive Director and Member Services Coordinator both provide direction and assistance from the RTAM office.

We have completed our first year of the five pillar Strategic Plan initiated to organize operations and to establish short and long-term goals. With this and the expanded office support, we are moving from a working board to a governance model. Within the parameter of our strategic plan, issues and activities of RTAM for the 2017/2018 year were as follows:

1. **ADVOCACY**

With the goal to build better relationships with the provincial government, RTAM representatives met with government leaders to discuss issues of relevance and concern-such as: the disbursement of the restricted surplus, the effects of the end of Bill 45 on our COLA, the appointment of a retired teacher to the Teachers’ Retirement Allowances Fund (TRAF) Board, and the impact of *The Pension Benefits Act* Review Board’s recommendations. Meetings were held with the Honourable Ian Wishart, Minister of Education and Training, Wab Kinew, the Leader of the Official Opposition (NDP) and with Dougald Lamont, the Liberal party leader.

RTAM Directors and members hosted a Meet and Greet event at the Manitoba Legislative Building on April 10, 2018, to exchange greetings and discussion points in a social setting. We continue to communicate issues with our elected officials to bring awareness for retired teachers and seniors.

With the goal to strengthen our relations with active teachers through The Manitoba Teachers’ Society (MTS), RTAM has provided several contributions:

* Representatives developed a joint RTAM and MTS agreement as to the disbursal of the restricted surplus fund accumulated during the term of Bill 45. This was accepted by TRAF and sent on to the government.
* The MTS 100th Anniversary Committee has included two RTAM representatives as they organize activities for this celebration.
* RTAM and MTS worked collaboratively on a joint submission in response to *The Pension Benefits Act* Review Committee’s recommendations.
* MTS has authorized observer status to RTAM Director representation at MTS regional meetings held throughout the province.
* It was with pleasure that, by invitation, the RTAM Board of Directors held its March 2018 meeting at McMaster House (the MTS building). We were greeted by the MTS President, Vice President and treated to a lovely lunch.
1. **COMMUNICATION**

We continue to support the delivery of relevant RTAM and seniors’ information and items of interest through our Keep In Touch (KIT) magazine, which is distributed quarterly.

We are working towards improving the RTAM website and are considering modernizing our database so as to establish effective, relevant, and up-to-date communication with our members and the public.

1. **GOVERNANCE**

To improve our meeting and committee effectiveness, we are in the process of a complete review and update of our Policy Manual, as well as the reestablishment of the executive function of the Officer’s Committee.

Also, toward this goal, the Board and Staff participated in a Meeting Effectiveness Workshop in January.

Through the Membership and Chapters Committee, we continue to look at establishing area representation and revitalizing the Board with the recruitment of new members.

1. **MEMBER SERVICES**

Developing improvement and modernization under the communications pillar, as well as office efficiency through the effectiveness of the Executive Director and Member Services Coordinator will contribute to membership support.

As this report is being written, we are in the process of organizing our Annual General Meeting, held in May, for the Board, Chapter Presidents and RTAM members.

The Benefits Committee met and consulted with our broker, Johnson Inc., regarding the renewals of the Premier Travel Plan, the Extended Health Care Plan and the Dental Plan with the best interests of the members and sustainability of the plans as priorities. The Benefits Committee also hosted a seminar for itself and the RTAM board on insurance underwriting.

In collaboration with The Winnipeg Foundation, a $50,000 endowment fund was established in October 2013 to fund the RTAM Student Award Program. The Educational Advocacy and Wellness Committee has responsibility for the annual administration of the RTAM Student Award Program. For 2018, five awards of $600 each were made to relatives of RTAM members who were high school graduates, entering their first year of a post-secondary program.

1. **WELLNESS**

In order to advocate for retired teachers specifically and seniors in general, we are pleased to continue to widen our contacts in this regard. We are one of the members of the Manitoba Seniors Coalition, which is the unification of several groups concerned with seniors’ issues.

Relevant and timely workshops that provide information on topics of interest to seniors, designed and offered by RTAM’s Educational Advocacy and Wellness Committee, are held throughout the province during the year.

In addition, it is significant that our affiliation with ACER-CART provides RTAM with a national voice. We were pleased to support the Canadian Labour Congress by forwarding the petition urging the Federal Government to initiate a National Pharmacare program. Also, the Canadian Coalition for Retirement Security, with whom ACER-CART and the Manitoba Seniors Coalition are affiliated, provided a submission in response to *The Pension Benefits Act* Reform Committee’s recommendations.

In conclusion, this is a condensed view of the ongoing work undertaken by RTAM on behalf of the retired teachers of Manitoba in 2017/2018.

Respectfully Submitted

JoAnne Hoyak

RTAM Vice President and Chair, Pension Committee

ACER-CART Delegate

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