**RETIRED TEACHERS’ OF ONTARIO**

 **LES ENSEIGNANTES ET ENSEIGNANTS RETRAITÉS DE L’ONTARIO**

**2019 ACER-CART AGM**

**Major Concerns & Initiatives:**

**Federal Level:**

* As we prepare for the Federal election, we are excited to be working with ACER-CART, The National Association of Federal Retirees (NAFR) and seven other senior centric, national in scope organizations to make the federal parties not only aware of our collective issues: income security, a national senior strategy and pharmacare, but to answer to them.
* **Bill C-27**, An Act to amend the Pension Benefits Standards Act, 1985, is still a concern for us as well. Although if it comes to pass, it does not affect us directly, it could be the ‘thin edge of the wedge’. We have met with NAFR on this issue.

**Provincial Level**:

* Enhancing our external relationship has been very much a focus of what we do and we continue our liaising with organizations that deal with senior issues but also organizations that serve the needs of our future members.
* We continue our political advocacy under the name Vibrant Voices. Our three specific areas that we addressed with our MPPs in October were: geriatric training, age friendly communities and elder abuse.

**Main Activities**

* We continue implementing our **Strategic Plan**, with our three main strategic goals are: to improve the lives of members and seniors, to be the trusted voice for the broader education community and to expand the membership base. It is the focus of all we do.
* We are reaching out to RTO/ERO members that are no longer resident in Ontario. We already have two districts in British Columbia, and are currently setting up districts for the Prairies, Atlantic Canada and Quebec.
* We are at the end of two year branding exercise and by the time you read this report the question will have been put to the Annual Meeting as to a name change.
* Also, at the Annual Meeting, a motion to change the fee structure from a proportion of teachers’ pensions and an average of that for members who were not pension members, to a flat fee will have been voted on.
* We continued to support the fundraising efforts being undertaken by our **Charitable Foundation** which aims to raise funds to increase the numbers of professional and support staff qualified and trained in geriatric care as well as to support research and programs that improve the quality of life of our members and seniors in Canada. Last October saw an intense campaign to raise the awareness of the deleterious health and mental health effects of social isolation on seniors.

**History**

Established in 1968, RTO/ERO is in its 51st year of providing excellent programs and services to its 78,000 members. While the majority of these members are retired teachers, RTO/ERO welcomes all retired employees who have worked in some aspect of the education system, including school and board administrative and support staff, early childhood educators, child care workers and college/university faculty and support staff. We also have an increasing number of individuals joining who are still actively employed. We continue to aggressively market to these sectors.

Our Executive Director leads a dedicated team of eight senior staff and eighteen administrative support staff in our Central Office. RTO/ERO is currently governed by a nine member Board, with the possibility of two voluntary external experts. We own our Health Plan which is managed by members through the Benefits Committee and administered by Johnson Inc. There are almost 100,000 insured individuals in our group insurance program, which includes members and their dependents.

**Communication**

We strive to keep our membership appraised of all that happens with both hard copy and electronic versions of all our publications.

* *RENAISSANCE*, our award winning bilingual magazine, is published four times a year and sent directly to members’ residences except for the many who opt to receive it electronically on their mobile devices.
* *LIAISON*, a bilingual newsletter sent directly to Board Members, advisory committee members, and district executive members, is published several times a year. It is also available for all members to read in the Members’ Centre of our provincial website.
* The Chair’s Newsletter, which comes out every six weeks, is a report on the activities of the Board.
* We have produced a number of Webinars to keep our members updated on current issues and are on highly engaged on most social media platforms

**Committees**

RTO/ERO has five standing committees, chaired by a Board member: Audit, Benefits, Governance, Human Resources and Nomination. Our advisory committees are: marketing and Communications, Member Services (retirement planning, recruitment, travel, goodwill and estate planning), Political Advocacy and Service to Others (scholarships and grants).

RTO/ERO annually provides grants to various community organizations in which District members are involved. The organizations apply for support and their requests are adjudicated by a committee of members; annually up to $100,000 is awarded. Additionally, Districts may recommend charitable organizations to which a $10,000 donation is provided by RTO/ERO to one selected by the Board. This year this donation will be given to Sault Search and Rescue (SSAR). We also provide $30 000 in scholarships of university students.

Martha Foster
Chair/ Présidente

RTO-ERO