



RETIRED TEACHERS ORGANIZATION OF THE NOVA SCOTIA TEACHERS UNION

MEMBER REPORT 2023

Major Concerns of our Organization

Federal Concerns

This year, we have been monitoring many of the issues related to seniors in Canada. We welcomed the New National Long Term Care Standards, and we are hopeful that this will provide guidance for what Canadians want and expect long term care to look like. Many seniors are concerned by the threat of electronic intrusion and the Federal Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act (PIPEDA), this act is intended to give individuals control on how their personal digital information is handled in the private sector.

Issues such as Pharmacare, Seniors Strategy and a National Dementia Strategy are still on our radar and we will continue to watch their progress through the coming months.

Provincial Level

Our Seniors Advisory Council (SAC) has continued to be focused on the concerns of seniors in the province. We are pleased to see the progress being made in the Long-Term care in our province. SAC has, for the last few years, advocated for the high-dose flu vaccine for all seniors over 65, free of charge and it was finally approved in the provincial budget.

There is a sincere effort to elevate the standards of long term care by the Department of Seniors and Long term Care; some progress has been noted.

Like most provinces, we are concerned by various aspects of lives for seniors, housing, food insecurity, the increasing cost of living and last but certainly not least, health care.

Relationship with the Nova Scotia Teachers Union (NSTU)

We continue to enjoy a strong and mutually beneficial relationship with the NSTU. During the past year, we have been waiting for the non-binding recommendations of the Pension Review Panel and while these recommendations have not been released, the Sponsors Board, made up of the Provincial Government and the NSTU, have been studying the report.

A meeting is anticipated in late June with the leadership of the NSTU, RTO, Nova Scotia Community College Academic Union, and Public School Administrators Association of Nova Scotia, to provide an update on the work of the sponsors work.

We have participated in their Annual Council and Pension Symposium as well..

Branch and Provincial Activities

Strategic Planning

In August 2022, the RTO Executive met for their annual Strategic Planning Session, the topics we discussed are noted below.

Membership /Recruiting – We continue to promote our organization to active teachers through our pre-retirement seminars, packages hand delivered to retiring teachers in June of the year they retire, a table at NSTU Annual Council, a display board in the NSTU building and making copies of our newsletter, *The Retired Teacher*, available in the reception area of the NSTU building. We have continued to hold meetings in the various regions of the province to promote the benefits of membership to our current members.

Reducing our carbon footprint - We continue to seek ways to minimize our footprint by holding several meeting during the year via Zoom to reduce the amount of fuel and emissions we are using . We have reduced our paper consumption by distributing reports and documents electronically prior to the meetings.

Members Equity - Over the past number of years, we have accumulated surplus funds and have been investing these in GIC's. During the pandemic when interest rates were lower, we renewed for one year with the expectation things would improve in the future. This year, we met with the CEO of the Teachers Plus Credit Union and developed an Investment Policy to layout how investments would be managed going forward.

Service Provider/ Service Contract - Following the AGM 2022 the Executive, with the help of the NSTU professional staff, developed a Request for Proposals seeking an individual or group to assist with the various financial tasks associated with the organization. The successful RFP was received from ***SimpliCanada*** and we entered into a contract effective March 1st, 2023.

Our newsletter, ***The Retired Teacher*** has been produced three times this year we were able to share the various events which were carried out across the province. Members have a choice of digital or paper copy. Our focus this year has been on updating our contact information list for all Branches and their individual members.

The Annual Golf Tournament was held in September at Mountain Golf Club in East Mountain, Nova Scotia with approximately 80 golfers participating.

We were able to hold our annual Curling bonspiel in March, hosted by the Cumberland Branch at the Amherst Curling Club with teams from across the province participating.

At our Legacy Foundation AGM on April 25th, we awarded 14 grants amounting to \$7 000.00 to organizations and programs supporting children in the province.

We held our 2023 Annual General Meeting May 17th and were pleased to have almost 80 members participate. In addition to the regular AGM business, eleven resolutions were presented. The discussion was lively, and it was encouraging to see the members coming together to strengthen our organization.

Other areas of interest for our RTO this year include:

- We continued to see an increase in the number of applications for Branch Initiative Program grants. These grants support Branch activities which engage members in programs and events which encourage active, healthy lifestyles.
- The provincial body made a donation of \$5000.00 to Ukraine relief and Branches matched the effort with more than \$2000.00 in donations from across the province.
- A donation of \$5 000.00 was contributed to the Red Cross for Hurricane Fiona Relief. Parts of our province were devastated by this severe weather event.
- Promoting the Carepath program which provides supplemental support to our members and is free to all members of our health plan.

We continue to appreciate the opportunity to work, through ACER-CART, with our various colleagues across the country. Together we endeavor to “advance, promote, and protect the welfare of our members.”

Respectfully submitted,

Alyson Hillier
May 2023.