



## **PRESIDENT'S REPORT 2023-24**

The business of the organization was brought to an immediate halt when the Executive received a letter dated October 19, 2023, from Martha Foster, Chair of the Retired Teachers' Ontario Board of Directors, indicating that the RTO/ERO was withdrawing its membership and associated funding in ACER-CART effective January 1, 2024.

After receiving letters of resignation from Martin Higgs and Martha Foster, the Executive met on November 1, 2023, and agreed that ACER-CART would continue to be a strong and effective organization with sufficient investments and annual dues from eleven organizations. At the next meeting on December 1, 2023, the Executive began preliminary discussion on changes to the corporate documents, possible changes in the governance structure and future of the Annual General Meetings as we move forward.

The Executive met face-to-face in Toronto on January 14-15, 2024 and five motions were adopted with the changes suggested from the December meeting. These changes in the corporate documents and governance structure and future Annual General Meetings will need to be adopted under the Legislation Committee report at the Special AGM on Thursday, June 6<sup>th</sup> at 1:00 PM.

There were two other important decisions approved at the January meeting. The Executive believes that "political action" is vital and necessary to achieve our priorities and actions if we hope to "move the needle" on retired teachers and seniors' issues. The Executive decided that the Table Officers would now be members on the Political Advocacy Committee along with the four original members. The Chairs of the ACER-CART Committees will provide up-to-date reports to this committee and the Political Advocacy Committee could request other committees to provide research or position papers on issues. For example, the Health Services Committee was requested to provide information on the New Mode Pharmacare Campaign and is presently working on providing information on "aging in place." The Executive selected Lawrence Hrycan from the Alberta Retired Teachers Association as the first chair and Lawrence has done a superb job in his role this year.

Another decision at the January meeting was on a request from Linda McAuliffe, President of the National Pensioners Federation. The Executive approved a motion to work collaboratively with the Federation on national projects/issues affecting seniors in Canada. This has already happened with both parties sharing information on each others Pharmacare campaigns.

Another decision of the new Executive was to provide more information to the Directors, Alternates, Presidents and Executive Directors throughout the year rather than the one-shot

AGM in the past. If the organization wishes to be vibrant and relevant under the new structure, it is necessary to keep these officials “in the loop.” There were ZOOM meetings with these officials on February 1, 2024, and April 10, 2024. As President I am committed to plan at least three such meetings in the future years as this will be our major communication vehicle to provide information to the members.

I would like to thank all members serving on our four standing committees—Health Services, Communications, Pension and Retirement Income and Legislation—for their amazing work over the past year on the ACER-CART priorities and action plans. I was particularly impressed with the numbers on the New Mode Pharmacare campaign and there will now be followed up on the inequities in the Canadian Dental Care Plan.

Lastly, I want to give a sincere thanks to Sharon, Marilyn, Gerry and Roger who have provided tremendous leadership to the organization after the Ontario withdrawal. I would also like to thank the Directors and Presidents who have provided information from the Directors meetings to their members. Your Executive is excited and looking forward to working under the new structure and complete the Strategic Plan over the next year.

Bill Berryman  
President, ACER-CART