East Coast Retired Teachers Organization.

It has been my pleasure to Chair this Committee. It has been an exceptional year, yet we have been very productive.

Our committee met three times, each time by Zoom which was hosted by NSRTO and facilitated by Alyson Hillier. Our meetings were held on September 19, January 16 and April 9.

At our meetings, all five provinces in the Eastern Division were represented.

During the course of the year, some of our representatives were replaced. Martin Higgs left the committee after Ontario officially withdrew from the organization. Linda Leblanc was replaced by Francoise Beaulieu, Kathleen Malicus was replaced by Jan Langelier and Rod Campbell will replace Noreen Bonnell at the next AGM.

Our current representatives are Alyson Hillier, and Ambrose White of Nova Scotia ,New Brunswick is represented by Noreen Bonnell, Luc Handfield , Francoise Beaulieu and Bob Fitzpatrick. Prince Edward Island is represented by Phyllis Horne and Lise Morin. Quebec is represented by Katherine Snow and Jan Langelier. Newfoundland and Labrador will be represented by Sharon Penney. The ACER-CART Executive will be represented by Bill Berryman. Roger Regimbal attends in his capacity of Executive Director.

Each of our meetings featured a time for our member organizations to share their experiences both good and bad.

The following were identified as challenges and opportunities individual organizations are embracing.

Opportunities

:Meeting structures are changing so that large group member engagement tends to be predominantly social events with the business of the association taking up a small portion of the event. More and more organizations are leaving the day to day running of the organization to an elected executive.

: Newsletters are published 2-3 times per year. Electronic means are increasingly becoming the main mode of communication within organizations. Facebook pages are being introduced by some groups. Website security and design are being evaluated.

: Fostering and maintaining relationships with the Teacher Organizations in their home province .

: Meeting with Provincial and Federal Government Officials to promote our concerns.

: Some organizations have members of the Pensions Committee .

: Most RTO’s reported an increase in pensions , though none were a great increase .

: We continue to make contact with newly retired and retiring teachers through Retirement Seminars

: Retired teachers are being actively sought to act as substitutes

: Many offer monies or grants to local branches to assist with planned events

: All continue to advocate for their members.

: Some member organizations have initiated awards to recognize outstanding service to the community or the organization

Challenges

: Not all Member organizations have realized a pension increase and inflation is eroding any increases.

: Membership recruitment remains an issue.

: Johnson’s insurance moving towards online access is causing havoc for some members who have little connectivity or incomplete knowledge of using a computer to access services.

: Membership fees are often inadequate some member organizations see the need for an increase.

: Hacking and data breaches have affected teachers and retired teachers.

The ECRTO investigated policies on ageing in place in the Atlantic in the eastern area provinces. They developed a list of nine criteria that they would see as being important in the development of an ageing in place policy. This list of recommendations will be shared with the health services committee

The ECRTO remains committed to ACER-CART despite the withdrawal of Ontario. Each Provincial Retired Teachers Association expressed a strong commitment to the ideals , goals and mission ofACER-CART, and support the executive in their decision to ensure that ACER-CART continues to be active and relevant.

I would be remiss if I did not take this opportunity to thank Alyson Hillier for arranging all our zoom meetings, and acting as host each time. Despite some turnover during the year, our committee has remained committed to the goals and mission of ACER-CART. I thank each one for their continued work to better the lives of our retired teachers.

Sharon Penney

East Coast Representative.