

Welcome to a New School Year, have you thought about Retirement?

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While this may seem like a long away event to young teachers, the largest effect that you can have on savings and retirement is in your first year of teaching. The closer that you get to retirement, the less you can influence your financial situation.

This is not to say that you should not be doing things to plan for retirement if it is five years away, you can always get ready. It reminds me of one of my favourite truths, "The best time to plant a tree was twenty years ago, the second best time is now".

Many workers that are nearing retirement have the opportunity to attend pre-retirement workshops, sometimes put on by the employer, their association, or from the many businesses that provide retirement services. But I have often talked to teachers five years away from retirement that have attended a "pre-retirement" event, to hear them say "I wish I knew this twenty years ago". So, here is why this is best to think about now, no matter where you are in your career.

All NWT teachers have a defined benefits pension plan. You can estimate your retirement income based on your average salary, and the number of years you have (or will have) worked. Though the plans are not exactly the same for each of the bargaining groups, they are similar. No matter which plan you are in, you will be receiving less income than you do when you are working. You need to be aware of this, so you can live comfortably. The other thing that all members have is some room to make contributions above the pension plan provided by the employer. Money that you put into your plan when you are 23 will be worth a great deal more than the money you contribute when you are 53.

Some other things to consider:

- Canada Pension Plan and Old Age Security will become part of your retirement income; find out what it will be? (it is being reformed as I write this)
- Pay off all major bills before retirement (Mortgage, car loans...). Bill payments will take a larger percentage of your disposable income once pension income starts.

- Convert your savings to income. If you have private RRSP plans, get advice on how to best convert them to income to live on.
- Estate planning, insurance, and power of attorney are all important to get settled before you need them.
- Create a budget with the new information. Pension payments are often referred to as fixed income, as they rarely change (some pension plans have provision to increase with the cost of living).

It is never too early to plan for retirement; it is actually part of the work cycle. Compound interest needs time to be most effective, give yourself some time, start saving now.

Government of
Northwest Territories

Welcome Back! **ABC** Teachers, Principals and School Staff!

The beginning of a new school year is here and with it brings excitement and anticipation of new learning and discovery. There is also excitement because education in the North continues to change.

A picture of learning today from around the world shows it happening beyond the walls of a classroom. This is also true of the Northwest Territories. Students and teachers across the NWT are reaching beyond classroom walls and connecting with their community in meaningful ways. The Department of Education, Culture and Employment (ECE), along with partners such as the NWTTA, parents, community members and you - our educators - have been examining improvements to the education system through the NWT Education Renewal initiative.

Strengthening school-community relationships, promoting teacher and student wellness, and enhancing teacher learning opportunities and supports are all part of Education Renewal. These directions, along with others, are critical starting points for education renewal to take place.

ECE is proud to support school communities and will do so with continued collaboration with many partners like the NWTTA. I look forward to meeting you and I wish you all a safe and happy return to school!

Honourable Alfred Moses
Minister of Education, Culture
and Employment

