Called to this Vocation

Become a Catholic School Trustee on October 16, 2017

Trustee Election Guidebook 2017

Called to this Vocation
Dear Lord,

We feel your presence in every aspect of our lives. You enter our thoughts and actions, let us be alive to your voice in our hearts and in our minds.

Guide us, Lord, as we enter into this 2017 election season. When we are faced with difficult choices, fill our decisions with your will for us and your desire for the betterment of the world.

Be with us as we call for your assistance to navigate this political terrain, let us open ourselves to your voice and be always ready and willing to embrace the beacon of your light.

We ask this through the Father, Son and Holy Spirit

Amen
Called to Serve as Catholics

Alberta’s boasts a publicly-funded educational system where Catholic education holds a distinct role.

This role has strong historic roots, existing prior to the creation of the province, and was constitutionally enshrined in the Alberta Act, 1905. The Alberta government is committed to providing Alberta students with an exceptional education system that offers them choice of attending a Catholic school.

Catholic education is a unique partnership between the school, home and parish. Together this triad seeks to develop a student’s whole person by integrating academic excellence and faith. The central focus of Catholic education is Jesus Christ.

Catholic schools are distinctive faith communities that grow the spiritual, academic and physical needs of students through the integration of the Alberta Education curriculum with Gospel values and sacramental life. Christ is the centre of the Catholic school and his presence and teaching permeate the school building.

Catholic schools offer an integrated curriculum of faith formation and academic development in an effort to form the student’s whole person.

This booklet is meant to explore the unique place that Catholic schools have in Alberta. In addition, it will define the role of the Catholic school trustee and inform Catholic school electors of their unique role in the Catholic partnership between school, home, and parish. This booklet is intended only as an introduction and guide. For additional information, please contact your local Catholic school board, Alberta Education, the Alberta Catholic School Trustees’ Association, or the Alberta School Boards Association.
My dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

The Risen Jesus continues to say, “Come, follow me” (Mk 10:21).

Accepting his invitation means no longer choosing our own path. Following him means immersing our own will in the will of Jesus, truly giving him priority, giving him pride of place in every area of our lives: in the family, at work, in our personal interests, in ourselves. It means handing over our very lives to Him, living in profound intimacy with Him, entering through Him into communion with the Father in the Holy Spirit, and consequently with our brothers and sisters. This communion of life with Jesus is the privileged “setting” in which we can experience hope and in which life will be full and free.

The heart and soul of Catholic education is Jesus Christ, and our school system finds its very reason for existence in its communication of the Christian message. As evangelizers we are called to bring Christ’s message into both old and new places in our communities. Some of the members of the faith community are called to discern whether they should offer themselves as candidates for the special ministry of Catholic trusteeship. This entails a commitment to putting the values of our faith into practice in the daily life of the school with a view to the multi-dimensional growth and development of our young people and the enrichment of the larger society.

All Catholic Separate school boards are both “Catholic” and “Separate”, the first adjective being an ecclesiastical designation and the second being a legal designation in civil law. Catholic trustees are called upon to adhere to the principles and intent of both Canon Law and Civil Law. In this way the authority, responsibility and jurisdiction of Catholic Separate school trustees...
is considerably complicated compared to their non-Catholic Public school counterparts, which are called upon only to adhere to the constraints of civil law.

This booklet reminds us all of our mission. I commend the Alberta Catholic School Trustees’ Association for developing and publishing this document. It will help to focus our attention on the importance of Catholic education in the province of Alberta.

Frederick Henry
Bishop Emeritus of Calgary
Past ACSTA Liaison Bishop

The Catholic school finds its true justification in the mission of the Church; it is based on an educational philosophy in which faith, culture and life are brought into harmony. Through it the local Church evangelizes, educates, and contributes to the formation of a healthy and morally sound lifestyle among its members. The Holy Father affirms that “the need for the Catholic school becomes evidently clear when we consider what it contributes to the development of the mission of the People of God, to the dialogue between the Church and the human community, to the safeguarding of freedom of conscience....” Above all, according to the Holy Father, the Catholic school helps in achieving a double objective: “Of its nature it guides men and women to human and Christian perfection, and at the same time helps them to become mature in their faith. For those who believe in Christ, these are two facets of a single reality.”

(Religious Dimension of Education #34)
Path to the Voting Booth

Please consult the *Local Authorities Election Act* and the *School Act* for all information. These acts are available on the ACSTA website (www.acsta.ab.ca), the Alberta Government website, and the Alberta School Boards Association website.

**STEP ONE:**

Who can run as a Catholic trustee?

**Candidates**

- Must be eligible to vote in the election
- Must be of the *same faith* as those they seek to represent on the Separate school board. You must profess to be Catholic to run for a Catholic School Board
- Must be a resident of the local separate jurisdiction for the six consecutive months immediately preceding nomination day
- Not otherwise ineligible or disqualified (as outlined in Sections 22, 23, 24 of the *Local Authorities Election Act*)

**STEP TWO:**

After deciding to run as a Catholic trustee, you must file your nomination papers. This is usually done at your local school division office, but can also be at the municipal office. Check with you school division.

**Nomination papers are due:**

**September 18, 2017 between 10 am and 12 pm.**

Please confirm this information with your local school board office as local authorities may set different dates and times and locations.

Also consult them for the number of signatures needed on your nomination papers and who is eligible to sign your nomination papers.
A note on Residency and Faith

Where there is no Separate board in a geographical area, a person of any faith may run for the school board. Where there is a Separate and Public board in the same geographical area, people having the same faith as the Separate board are only eligible to run for the Separate board. Those that are not Catholic are only eligible to run for the Public board.

In these sections, Roman Catholic includes all members of the Roman Catholic Church and all of the Eastern Catholic churches which recognize the Pope as the head of the Church.

Path to the Voting Booth

STEP THREE:

Campaigning

Now is your chance to get your ideas heard and have valuable conversations with people about Catholic education. Start Campaigning! Please note that you should not campaign in your local, or any other church.

STEP FOUR:

Who is eligible to vote?

- You must be at least 18 years old
- You must be a Canadian citizen
- You must be a resident of Alberta for the six consecutive months immediately preceding election day
- You must be a resident in the area on election day for at least six months
- To vote for a Catholic Trustee, you must be Catholic

The success of Catholic schools depends on everyone in the faith community. While some are called to run as candidates for trustee, others are called to be supporters of Catholic education.

Whether it is in the classroom, home, or parish, every member of the faith community has a responsibility to ensure the vibrancy of our Catholic schools today and far into the future. An election is an opportune time for the community to have its say in Catholic education.

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Election Day
October 16, 2017

Head to the voting booth!
What do School Trustees do?
from the Alberta School Boards Association
See Link: http://www.asba.ab.ca/being-a-school-trustee/

Alberta school boards help shape the future of local communities by governing the education of young people. The provincial government, through the minister of education, grants school boards the authority to make decisions regarding the direction and quality of local public education. Accountability to the public is entrenched through the election of local school board trustees every four years. The school board election is October 16, 2017.

School Board Responsibilities
It’s up to school boards to ensure all children in the community receive a quality education. Specific school board responsibilities include:

- Communicating, informing and involving parents, staff, and the community-at-large in school board decisions and activities.
- Adopting an annual budget that achieves jurisdiction priorities.
- Setting goals and priorities for the jurisdiction that achieve provincial education standards, meet the needs of students and reflect the community’s wishes.
- Making and enforcing policies that set out standards and expectations regarding the actions of administration, teachers, and students.
- Lobbying the municipal and provincial governments on education issues of importance to the jurisdiction.
- Adjudicating policy or decision appeals.
- Hiring and evaluating the superintendent.

The Role of Trustees
A key responsibility for trustees is to stay in touch with community stakeholders so that they understand, and reflect in their decision-making, what all citizens value and want from their local public schools. It is important to note that trustees may represent a school, neighbourhood or community, they make decisions based on the needs of the entire jurisdiction. As elected officials, trustees have these roles:
What do School Trustees do?  
from the Alberta School Boards Association  
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**Communicators:** Trustees ensure the community has a say in what children learn by communicating effectively with stakeholders and ensuring their concerns and wishes are heard.

**Planners:** Trustees develop plans to deal with student needs and to actively participate in the economic and social strength of local communities.

**Policy makers:** Trustees create policies to guide administration and staff. They also evaluate the impact of these policies and make adjustments where necessary.

**Advocates:** Trustees address and seek resolution of public education issues of importance to students, parents, and the community at large.

**Educators:** Trustees play a key role in developing tomorrow’s citizens because they have the ability to make independent decisions that impact the direction and quality of public education.

**Adjudicators:** Trustees hear and make judgments concerning local education decisions, procedures or policies that individuals, groups or the public feel are unfair or improper.

**Lobbyists:** Trustees communicate with municipal and provincial governments to ensure those who influence funding and other resources hear the voice of the local community.

**Legislators:** Trustees make decisions that have the status and impact of law – for example, decisions governing and enforcing the conduct of students and staff.

**Politicians:** Trustees are elected every four years to govern the local public education system on behalf of the community. The democratic process ensures the public is engaged in the public education system.
Catholic schools are governed by locally-elected Catholic school boards comprised of Catholic trustees. They are a vital link between the school, the church, the community, and the government, and they provide an essential Catholic oversight of the school division or district. The Catholic school trustee, answering the vocation of trusteeship, is a steward for Catholic school and Catholic education. This vocation is a call from the Church and the community to bring together faith and political life to share in the central mission of the Church: passing our Catholic faith on to our children.

To be a Catholic school trustee represents a dual challenge: trustees must ensure that students are provided an education, while at the same time ensuring that Catholic principles and values are reflected in policies and practices of the school board, thus establishing an education system that is permeated by faith. In practice, this plays out in trustees being accountable to both government legislation, as well as Canon Law (Church Law).

Through legislation, the government delegates much of its authority for the governance of education to locally elected boards. Catholic school boards are also accountable to the bishop in their diocese. This means that they understand and respect the role the bishop has in ensuring that Catholic teaching is respected, promoted and cared for in the diocese they represent, as well as in the local Catholic schools.
What does a Catholic School Trustee Do?

† As Catholic trustees, Catholic education is entrusted to us. We must hold within ourselves a deeper understanding of and commitment to the nature of Catholic education.

† As Catholic trustees, we ensure that the essence of Catholic education, formed through partnership of home, school and parish, is recognized and supported in the political arena.

† As Catholic trustees, we ensure the support and encouragement of our teachers and school staff by providing them with opportunities for faith formation.

† As Catholic trustees, we ensure that our educational leaders are able to examine their unique role in shaping the faith life of their school.

† As Catholic trustees, we ensure that our students are seen as individuals and given the chance to study in a learning environment permeated by Gospel values and sacramental life.

† As Catholic trustees, we are evangelizers of the good news of Christ in all aspects of our lives.

† As Catholic trustees, we are stewards of our Catholic faith; with care, we tend to it in our own lives and we foster it in the lives of all whom we encounter.

Catholic school trusteeship is a unique vocation which serves the Church and the community. The Catholic school trustee plays an integral part in ensuring that Christ is the heart and soul of every Catholic school. The uniqueness of Catholic education lies in the fact that its purpose and end is holiness.
ACSTA Member Boards

Catholic Education Association of Yukon (CEAY)
Calgary RCSSD No. 1
Christ the Redeemer CSRd No. 3
Conseil scolaire FrancoSud
Conseil scolaire Centre-Est No. 3
Conseil scolaire Centre-Nord
Conseil scolaire du Nord-Ouest No. 1
East Central Alberta CSSRD No. 16
Edmonton CSSD No. 7
Elk Island CSRd No. 41
Evergreen CSRd No. 2
Fort McMurray RCSSD No. 32
Grande Prairie RCSSD No. 28
Greater St. Albert RCSSD No. 734
Holy Family CRD No. 37
Holy Spirit RCSRD No. 4
Lakeland RCSSD No. 150
Living Water CRD No. 42
Lloydminster RCSSD No. 89
Medicine Hat CSRd No. 20
Red Deer Catholic Regional Schools
St. Paul ERD No. 1
St. Thomas Aquinas RCSRD No. 38
Yellowknife Catholic Schools

For more information on Catholic schools in Alberta, Northwest Territories, and Yukon, please contact the Alberta Catholic School Trustees’ Association or your local Catholic school board.

ACSTA
Alberta Catholic School Trustees’ Association
Celebrate, preserve, promote and enhance Catholic education

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