

## 2024 Trustees Election Questionnaire Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools

**The Catholic Church** considers that elected democratic office is a position of immense responsibility, to be held in high trust and exercised with great humility, wisdom, and responsibility, in the interest of the common good.

*This is particularly true with respect to those who seek to govern publicly-funded Catholic Schools. Education is of first importance for the future of our society, and Catholic education, properly conducted, can be of unique importance in passing our faith to future generations. Few endeavors offer comparable opportunities to integrate faith into the entire range of personal and social values for future generations.*

*The Church teaches that the ultimate purpose of this life is to seek the truth, which is God. “God is the ultimate end of his creatures and for no reason may the common good be deprived of its transcendent dimension.” This truth is most effectively communicated to our children by their families, parishes, and schools.*

*Please confirm your name and GSCS region, and preferred contact information:*

**Candidate’s name:** Day, Kate

**Region (circle one):** GSCS @ Large

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**Phone:**

**Social Media Handle(s):**

### YOUR VISION FOR SERVICE AS A TRUSTEE

Catholic schools are not alternate public schools. In addition to the curriculum presented by secular schools, Catholic schools provide religious instruction, impart Gospel values and display religious symbols, and serve as a critical part of the Church’s mission to evangelize youth. Catholic and non-Catholic parents freely choose to send their children to Catholic schools with the full expectation that they will be socialized into a faith community in which the person and message of Jesus is central to instruction in all subject areas.

The distinctiveness of Catholic schools arises from their teaching students to incorporate the person and the message of Jesus Christ in all aspects of their lives, while our secular society looks to the individual human being as the measure of all things. Catholic schools provide the spiritual and transcendent dimension which says that God is ultimately the measure and meaning of life.

**Q. 1. What draws you to the vocation of service as a Catholic school trustee?**

I am a recently retired Special Ed teacher, and considered that my vocation . It was the joy of my life to work with students, staff and families, I would like to continue this service in a different capacity, as Trustee.

**Q. 2. What do you hope to accomplish as a Catholic school trustee?**

GSCS excels at equity and inclusion, and I would like to grow and build that. Inclusion and equity done well requires that supports for teachers in the classroom, and for students and their families are in place: literacy supports, OT, SLP, mental health, EAs, etc. I hope to be able to advocate to whatever government is elected for improved and sustainable funding for schools.

**Q. 3. What experience do you have that qualifies you to serve as a Catholic school trustee?**

I was a Special Education teacher working with students in our high schools for over 20 years. I was so lucky to work with so many excellent teachers, EAs, administrators and families. I also co-founded and facilitated Meitheal (may'hel), a school based mental health team that served the mental health needs of students with mild to moderate ID (a very underserved population). I recieved a Champion of Human Rights award from the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission for that work. Meitheal is an Irish word, with social justice roots, meaning “coming together as a group to do what one couldn't do alone”, and facilitating that team taught me that when we works together, good things can happen. My mentor, Dr. Bruce Gordon found this word to name our team, and was a man of high integrity, compassion and humility. I will channel that in my work as Trustee.

[you are invited to attach a copy of your resume]

*Catholic school trustees are called to express their personal faith in full communion with and participation in the faith life of the Catholic Church.*

**Q.4. In your view, what are the most important contributions Catholic education can make to the lives of children, and the communities they will become part of?**

The most important contributions that Catholic Education provide are a world-class, high quality education AND the knowledge and understanding that they are loved because they are God's children, NO MATTER WHAT. They carry that knowlege into the world, and share it. The education is sound, and the love is unconditional, and that gives them strength.

**Q. 5. Please describe the nature of your devotion to Christ and the Catholic Church, including ways in which you witness to your faith in your daily life.**

I considered my work to be a vocation, where I did witness and could witness my faith in action every day. When I retired... I missed that, and would like to witness in a different way, as Trustee.

**Q.6. As a trustee, how do you propose to ensure that the sacramental needs of Catholic students are supported by the Catholic school system?**

I apologize that I am not more informed about how the sacramental needs are met in elementary schools, but I do know how important Mass and retreats are to creating a culture of family in high schools. I completely support the connection between priest, parish, and school community that the sacraments complete.

**Q.7. In addition to ensuring that students are taught the Catholic notion of incorporating faith into all aspects of our lives, trustees are responsible for ensuring that students are encouraged to do their very best in taking in the full range of provincial educational curricula. How do you see yourself assisting in that process?**

I am 100% in favour of our provincial educational curricula, and our students having access to all the opportunities available. Our students have a right to be able to learn, and try, and experience the full range of curricula available.

**Q.8. In order to ensure that Catholic schools and the communities they teach in remain true to the Catholic faith, it is important that Catholic school boards and individual trustees remain in contact with their local parishes and bishops. What is your plan for remaining in touch?**

As trustee, I plan to attend school events and Masses, as well as sacraments and retreats, if invited. I believe that the connection, communication and cooperation between schools, parishes/bishops and trustees make us all better.

**Q.9. In what ways do you envision yourself advocating for the continuing rights of Catholics to educate their children in publicly-funded Catholic schools?**

This is so important and so dear to my heart. As a Catholic school teacher, I had the privileged of seeing how important this right is for kids and staff.

Our schools provide two important roles. They provide a world class high quality education from skilled professional and para-professional staff, so that our students can achieve and thrive in the world at their level.

And, our schools provide the strength and peace to our kids that comes from knowing they are loved unconditionally, without judgment. They are loved by God, and the action of that love comes from our ability as Catholic educators to share that unconditional love every day. This makes me think about something Pope Frances talked about that I will share here from an article:

Christ's heart is aflame with infinite love, and Christ desires to be loved and consoled in return, the pope said, especially by loving and serving one's neighbors and those who are most marginalized. Jesus associated with "the lowest ranks of society," he wrote, introducing the "great novelty of recognizing the dignity of every person, especially those who were considered 'unworthy.'"

That "infinite love" is alive in our schools for all families who choose to send their children.

**Q.10. Trustees are responsible to students and parents for ensuring that the fullness of Catholic values, beliefs and teachings are passed on to our children, and for helping to ensure that our children carry those values and teachings into the broader community. How do you propose to ensure that you yourself are aware of the full range of matter you will be expected to impart to students?**

This is the work! And I commit to doing the work.

**Q.11. As elected public officials, trustees are accountable to their constituents for prudent, wise, and equitable use of resources, in an open and accountable fashion. In what specific ways do you propose to discharge that duty?**

In a very small but meaningful way, I would like to move the Board meetings to a time more convenient for staff and families who wish to attend. The Board serves them, after all.

And in a large way, I think that the board could do more to communicate how/why decisions are made a budgetary level. I can only imagine how heart-rending making budge decisions has been during these times of austerity . As a teacher, I saw how the difficult decisions had a real-life impact in classrooms. Telling the story of “why” some of the difficult decisions are made -inadequate funding for student needs- may be a way to advocate for more resources, as the community of families, schools and trustees can speak as one voice.

I hope these responses help! Thank you for the opportunity!

*[It is a requirement that candidates for the office of Catholic separate school trustee be Catholic. Many voters, including particularly parents of school children, seek assurance that trustees they elect are active, dedicated Catholics. If you have a letter of reference from your pastor, or other documentary assurance, we invite you to attach it. Please note, however, that this is not a requirement for posting of your response.]*