

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: Sandra Molyneux

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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 believe God has called me to serve in this way. I believe that I have skills and experience that have been developed over my adult life that would serve the Catholic School Board well and I am ready to serve. I believe we have a very unique opportunity and responsibility in Saskatoon to ensure that Catholic education continues to flourish.

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

I hope to support an environment in our schools that is focused on knowing, loving and serving God.

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

I have 23 years of federal public service experience in policy development, performance monitoring and reporting and program development and implementation. I have 3 years of experience as a member of our children's high school Catholic School Community Council. I have been Vice Chair for this Committee for the past 2 years and continue in this role today. My education was focused on assisting youth at risk and I graduated with a Child and Youth Work Diploma.

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 contribution in my view is helping kids encounter Christ and develop a personal relationship with God. Through this relationship they will discover the gifts and talents they have been given to serve their community and the world.

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 grew up in a devoted Catholic family and attended Catholic elementary and high schools in Manitoba. I had a profound encounter with Jesus during a retreat when I was in High School. I volunteered with the National Evangelization Team for 2 years when I graduated high school. I have been a member of my local Parish since moving to Saskatoon 18 years ago. I strive to place Jesus at the centre of my life.

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?

Both our elementary school and our high school have enjoyed a great partnership with our parish. Our parish believes it is part of their responsibility to serve the schools in our neighbourhood. In this way, our Parish has supported the sacramental needs of the students in our schools. I believe this is a great model that should be supported in all our schools where possible. I also believe the chaplaincy role in our high schools should be supporting the sacramental life of our students. I would like to see this role grow in our high schools and encourage increased relationship between parish and schools wherever possible.

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 believe this area needs to be accomplished in close collaboration with the Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools' senior leadership team (executive council). I hope to develop a good working relationship with the senior leadership team who have expertise in this area. I will also work at building relationships with school administration and teachers who are at the front lines of working with students and who understand first-hand what is required to support student in their academic achievements.

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?

I am an active member of our parish and attend weekly mass. I have also been a volunteer at our parish in various capacities for many years and believe it is important to develop a strong relationship with our pastor. I am also involved in Diocesan wide activities. I have met the Bishop on several occasions and would never hesitate to reach out and discuss issues with him, as I believe he is a strong supporter of our school division.

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?

I believe the best way to advocate for this right is to continue to ensure that we are offering a unique option for families to choose for their children's education. If we are not different, there is no need for a separate system.

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?

As a parent myself I believe I understand the responsibilities of passing on Catholic values, beliefs and teachings to the next generation. I take this role seriously and consider all decisions impacting young people from this perspective. Since I am still raising kids I believe I understand the wide range of issues that our kids are dealing with on a daily basis and I prayerfully consider my responses and actions every day.

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?

As a public servant I have been accountable to the public for the decisions I have made throughout my career. I am well versed in ensuring decisions are made in a fiscally responsible manner and in reporting the results of these decisions to the public.

Q.12. In closing is there a short comment or favourite biblical quote you would like to share?

A scripture I believe is appropriate to this election and which I take seriously in raising my children is Proverbs 22:6 “Train up a child in the way he should go: And when he is old, he will not depart from it.”

[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.]