

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: Mireau, Annette

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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 had never previously considered running as a Catholic School Board Trustee, however I was approached by three different people asking me to run. I discerned that the Lord was calling me to use the gifts that these individuals saw in me to serve Him in this capacity, if I am elected.

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

By myself, I know I can accomplish nothing, but I am relying on the Holy Spirit. Working with my colleagues, I hope to accomplish exactly what GSCS indicates in its Belief Statement to “help all children reach their full potential *spiritually*, academically, physically, socially and emotionally.”

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

My seven children all attended school in Saskatoon, so I feel I have some first-hand experience of school matters through involvement with my children’s day-to-day school activities for a period of 26 years. Some committee experiences I have are serving on the parent-teacher association at my children’s school, my parish council, and on the board of FacetoFace Ministries.

My work as a nurse has honed my skills in prioritizing needs and problem-solving, which I believe could be an asset to this board. Likely due to this career, I have frequently been accused of being very practical. For the past 7 years, I have been involved volunteering with All Sons and Daughters Ministries, and working with their kinship families has made me aware of some unique and varied educational challenges existing in our city.

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?

I believe that educating children to love God and their neighbour through the teachings of the Catholic Church is the greatest gift we can give them. If we teach them to rely on God’s grace to guide and inform their lives, they will become whole persons that use their gifts for the greater glory of God and in service of their communities 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.

My Catholic faith is the most important thing in my life and I strive to allow Christ to guide my every decision. My devotion to Christ is fostered by daily prayer, daily mass, frequent confession and participating in various faith studies and retreats. I serve on the Our Lady of Lourdes Parish Council and bring communion to the sick. I have been volunteering with All Sons and Daughters Ministries for many years and was a past board member for FacetoFace Ministries. I also help with Mass at Luther Care once per month, and am part of the leadership team for a women’s Bible study group at Holy Spirit Parish.

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 believe that we need to provide teachers with quality instruction and resources regarding the sacraments. In recent years, we have access to diverse, authentically Catholic and high-quality resources from ministries and organizations that teach specifically on the sacraments, such as Cat Chat Ministries, FacetoFace Ministries, Formed, Halo and so many more. If our teachers are well educated and equipped, this will allow them to foster deeper faith and a sense of the importance of the sacraments in the life of students.

By God's grace, as a desire for the sacraments in the school system grows, naturally, GSCS can collaborate with the Diocese of Saskatoon to ensure that students and faculty have frequent access to the sacraments through their parishes and schools. A closer collaboration of parishes with their affiliated schools would be an ideal way to ensure that the sacramental needs of the students are supported.

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 in the importance of striving for academic excellence. To this end, a focus on efficient use of both financial and educational resources, especially in-classroom supports such as educational assistants, is one of my goals. I will advocate for the use of high quality and proven teaching methods and resources so that our students have the best chance of success. At the end of the day, all these resources need to be assigned to best benefit the students in classrooms.

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 mentioned in my response to question #5, I will continue to be a daily communicant, participate in my parish council and volunteer within the church and the broader community. By being involved with various people and organizations, I could provide a listening ear to Catholics in the city and advocate for their needs and concerns regarding catholic education.

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?

First and foremost, listening to Catholic parents and families' concerns and questions will be a major priority of mine. Whether by email or in person, I intend on addressing every concern honestly and directly, and I am committed to communicating and representing these items to the appropriate boards and levels of government.

Secondly, transparency is a vital issue in Catholic education, and Catholic parents have the right to be kept abreast of events and changes in schools and in classrooms. This will be an important part of my advocating for Catholics; they will not be left in the dark regarding education issues that are affecting 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?

One major priority of mine will be to stay informed of ongoing developments in the schools that I will be representing, not just of the broader happenings of the school board. I intend on accomplishing this by attending the parents' association meetings of my schools. This will help me to keep up to date on issues important in individual schools, but also give more opportunity for contact with parents of children in those schools.

The second priority of mine in this area will be to ensure that I am well-informed on curriculum being taught in classrooms and on outside programming being brought in. It is vital that these materials remain faithful to the Catechism and to the Magisterium of the Catholic Church.

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 previously mentioned, I will be focusing on listening to and being accessible to the families at the schools that I will be representing. In my mind, the primary consideration in the use of public funds is knowing and supporting the interests of these families.

Another important goal in this area is, again, transparency. Communicating financial decisions clearly and regularly, as well as producing thorough documentation, will be a crucial step in maintaining the trust of the public, and using resources responsibly.