

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: **Jukes, Chelsea**
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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 am passionate about our community and dedicated to service. For the past 4 years I have been the Treasurer of the École St. Peter School Catholic School Community Council (CSCC) and now that all four of our children are enrolled in GSCS, I believe I have more to offer a wider audience. My post-secondary education in business and my professional background in Human Resources leadership with particular focus on organizational development will lend well to the various committees trustees are asked to participate in. As a mother of children currently enrolled in both elementary and high school learning environments, and as a working professional, I bring an informed voice to board deliberations that will ensure the current Catholic school experience is represented.

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

My goal is to bring the current voice of Catholic parents and their students to the forefront of board deliberations and discussions to improve the quality of idea generation and ultimately solutions that not only work for the division, but the front-line employees: teachers, administrators and educational support staff. When their needs are met, so to will our children's and families.

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

I have grown up in the Catholic faith and have been intimately connected to education. My maternal grandfather was a fourth-degree grand knight of the KoC and my Grandma was very involved in CWL. My earliest and fondest memories are with them in the beautiful Holy Family Parish in Radville, SK. My Grandma and Mom were both educators with my Mom's career spanning high school English teacher to working with at-risk youth and alternate education in my hometown of Moose Jaw, SK, to Guidance Counselor, Vice Principal, Principal and now, retired, serves as Trustee with the Prairie South School Division. Growing up the daughter of such an involved educator provided me significant understanding of our Saskatchewan school system and has served me well as I navigate the education of my own children in Saskatoon. My childhood Church, St. Joseph's Parish, in Moose Jaw was the backdrop for my Catholic Confirmation and most joyous Sacrament of Marriage to my husband, Tim. Together we are raising our four children, ages 5, 7, 9, and 15, as part of St. Philip Neri Parish in Saskatoon. My post-secondary education was in business, and I spent the first two years of my career working at USask. Over the last almost 18 years I have worked in Human Resources leadership, guiding and supporting business leaders within our organization. These roles are very similar to the role of Trustee in that we guide and advise leaders on the various challenges and opportunities available.

[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?

It is my inherent belief that a childhood that provides a faith foundation only serves to enrich the wider community our children become part of. Faith, hope, love, service, compassion, tolerance, truth, and care are only but a few of the qualities and attributes a Catholic education can contribute to the lives of our children.

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.

As a small child attending Holy Family Parish in Radville, I vividly remember being in awe of the vaulted ceiling and soaring dove flying high over the parishioners – marveling at how the dove could be suspended just so! From attending Children’s Liturgy to my emotional First Reconciliation, joyous First Communion and proud Confirmation, I have used these early sacraments as the foundation for my faith journey. When my now husband and I decided to marry it was important to both of us to do so as part of the Catholic Church. 3 of our 4 families are Catholic and it was an honour to ask our family to be present for our Sacrament of Marriage at St. Joseph’s Parish in Moose Jaw, SK. When we moved our young family to Saskatoon, my lifelong best friend called St. Philip Neri her parish and so it became ours. From Baptism to Reconciliation, First Communion and even one Confirmation (thus far!) we are proud of the faith journey our children are on. I love attending Sunday mass when our busy family schedule permits. It always leaves me with a deep sense of gratitude and community. Coming from a large extended family has also meant a fair amount of loss and my Catholic faith has always grounded me in understanding and belief in life everlasting.

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?

This is a collaborative approach that begins first with family participation, but also with schools and divisions fostering strong connections with local parishes. In my experience it would be a benefit for families to be provided more information regarding sacramental preparation opportunities with the various parishes to ensure students who may not otherwise be active in a parish have an opportunity to participate. As a parent I have not been provided this information from the two elementary schools I have had children enrolled in; I sought this out myself through our family parish. I do believe sacraments are family-oriented milestones, but our schools can help encourage family participation in sacramental preparation merely by making families aware of the typical timing of sacraments and what is required if they so choose to participate. This could include parent information sessions or handouts provided / available to parents. Even though we have many students attending our GSCS schools who are not Catholic, I do think it is important to foster a school environment where students feel encouraged to participate in sacraments and live out their faith openly. Making sacramental life a celebrated part of school life helps students feel that their faith is valued and supported and may encourage others to participate in a safe and positive environment.

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 an advocate for high-quality teaching and learning resources and providing a wide range of opportunities for our students of all academic levels and interest. This can only be achieved if we are investing in our teachers, so they are able to deliver on the objectives and in turn, our students benefit academically and spiritually. Extracurricular programs, enrichment activities, and experiential learning opportunities that allow students to explore their talents beyond the classroom are important as well. Programs in STEM, the arts, leadership, and athletics can help students develop diverse skills while reinforcing Catholic values like teamwork, resilience, and respect for others. I think we have an opportunity to explore the current agreement we have with teachers on the extracurricular aspect of our school offering. If we offer fair value for their contributions outside the classroom we may be able to deliver on offering a wider range of learning opportunities to better meet the needs of students including the very gifted academic students who currently may not have all their education needs met or potential tapped

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 I have shared, I strive to attend Sunday mass and make it part of our regular weekly schedule. This year I have put my name forth to assist with our parish's Children's Liturgy program. I also subscribe to our parish newsletter and make a point to read each week to stay abreast of the needs of our parish and wider Catholic community. I particularly enjoy the insight into the gospel readings ahead of mass and how Fr. Doug can turn the learnings into a message that resonates with even the most lay person. I will combine the learnings from these to frame responses and contributions that align with our faith.

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?

By informing and reminding parents, students, educators, and legislators about the history and constitutional rights underpinning publicly funded Catholic education. Many people may not realize that Catholic education is constitutionally protected. This awareness is essential in maintaining support for Catholic schools as a vital component of the public education 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?

It's essential to commit to continuous personal growth, community engagement, and collaboration with educators and faith leaders. In addition to regularly participating in my parish and keeping abreast of the wider Catholic community in the Diocese of Saskatoon, I am committed to maintaining open lines of communication with our teachers and administrators in our Catholic schools who have direct insights into the needs of students as well as other families of students in our schools. By collaborating and understanding those on the front lines I will be better informed on the needs of our schools and thus more equipped to advocate and support those needs in board and committee deliberations. I am

also committed to being present at various events hosted by our school community and share back to constituents to encourage their participation as well.

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 part of my campaign platform and to share with constituents more about what I will personally bring to the role and why they should entrust their vote to me, I created an acronym: TRUST. Transparency, Respect, Unity, Service and Tenacity. Transparency: I am open, honest, and forthcoming in communication. I believe in willingly sharing information and being upfront about my intentions. You can rely on my integrity. Respect: I value the opinions, feelings, and rights of others. Consideration of other people's viewpoints and boundaries allows a path to create mutual understanding and build strong, trusting relationships. Unity: Unity reflects a commitment to collaboration and bringing people together. I prioritize teamwork to foster cooperation among stakeholders to find solutions all sides can proudly take ownership of. Service: I want to contribute to the well-being of our school community. I believe in service without expectation. When those we serve feel their interests are genuinely cared for we are more likely to gain buy-in and meet our objectives. Tenacity: I am persistent, even in the face of opposition and will remain committed to finding and see things through to the end. Transparency, Respect, Unity, Service, and Tenacity - attributes to inspire trust, as they demonstrate honesty, regard for others, collaboration, selflessness, and dedication. TRUST is the foundation in which I will frame my contributions to the board and Saskatoon constituents.

[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.]