

2022 Questionnaire

Ontario Catholic School Trustees

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, district and ward, and preferred contact information:

Candidate’s name: Anthea Murrell

School District: Algonquin and Lakeshore Catholic District School Board

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YOUR VISION FOR SERVICE AS A TRUSTEE

Adapted from OCSTA’s “Becoming a Catholic School 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 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 makes the human

person 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 was asked by my pastor and then a member of the community. I explored the role, spoke to family and friends, all of whom encouraged me to consider it. I then made a retreat with St. Teresa of Avila and discerned a call to serve in this way, given my skills and experience as well as the time and energy I have at this time in my life, one year into retirement.

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

To serve as a witness to the Truth and to use my background in language, literacy and learning skills to increase effective and successful access to the curriculum for all students, supporting school staff as needed.

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

I completed a 33-year career as a speech language pathologist. I've worked in 4 school systems with students, parents and families, and Teachers and Educational Assistants to assist and advocate for students with special needs such as speech, language, literacy and learning challenges. I've also sat on other boards and committees in the community and within the school board to support healthy development of children and families. Further information can be accessed at www.antheamurrell.ca.
[we invite you 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?

To develop an ongoing personal relationship with Jesus Christ which includes understanding the grace in the Sacraments and developing a strong moral compass for self-care, in relationships and as a good citizen. This includes Catholic values which should be imbued in all aspects of student life.

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 am a daily communicant, regular adorer in our Perpetual Adoration Chapel, and lector. I have also been a Children's Liturgy Instructor and member of the Seminarian Formation Committee, when asked by our pastor. I've been a member of the CWL for decades.

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?

Increase staff and student understanding of the beauty and power of the Mass and other Sacraments; strengthen the parish-school connection and the home-parish connection; increase the presence of

clergy in schools; provide opportunities of students to assist at Mass within the church building where they can be exposed to appropriate reverence for the Eucharist; ask local priests and the Bishop for ideas.

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 all their studies, covering the full range of provincial educational curricula. How do you see yourself assisting in that process?

New information has come to light in the past few years on the best ways that all students can increase literacy (reading and spelling) skills. We now know that learning to read with ease is an essential human right. I would advocate for implementation of many recommendations in the recent Ontario Human Rights Commission Right to Read report. Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and Response to Intervention (Rtl) are other approaches that increase timely support for students who struggle in school. Only evidence-based approaches should be in use for the best use of school staff and parent support.

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 hope to continue to be a daily communicant in parishes around the school district. I have met the Bishop twice and would be open to having more regular contact with him at his convenience.

Q.9. Some have proposed that separate Catholic schools be abolished. In what ways do you envision yourself advocating for the continuing rights of Catholics to educate their children in separate Catholic public schools?

Catholic education is a right in the Constitution and is crucial in developing a strong moral foundation in the future adults, and some leaders, of our society. Though both public and Catholic school systems aim for academic excellence, only the Catholic school system provides religious instruction, teaches Catholic values and includes a faith community where students are exposed to peers and adults actively living as Christians, supporting each other on their faith journey.

I would do what is necessary at the board and Ministry levels to protect Catholic education.

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?

I regularly take workshops provided by priests on morality, the Sacraments, Scripture. I attend Scripture study groups using resources from the Augustine Institute. I read about the lives of the Saints and their writings. I make a retreat at least once a year. I plan to continue these practices.

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?

I have been a manager in the public health system accountable for a large budget. During those years, I believe I demonstrated equitable use of resources over 5 clinics in two counties in an open and accountable manner. I believed that use of public funds should be public knowledge, and I would advocate for the same in the school board. There should be nothing to hide if good decisions are being made.

Q.12. It is a [statutory requirement that candidates](#) for the office of Catholic public school trustee be Catholic. Please attach a copy of a letter of reference from your pastor confirming your Catholicity, or other evidence, if available.

[attach letter of reference]

Pressing SUBMIT will cause a copy of this document to be returned to Catholic Conscience, for posting on our website for use by voters in choosing trustees. Should you wish later to revise or withdraw your responses, please contact us at info@CatholicConscience.org.

SUBMIT

Thank you for helping to improve

our electoral process and our schools!