

## 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:* Roberta Skoko

*School District:* Niagara Catholic District School Board

*Ward:* West Niagara (Grimsby, Lincoln, West Lincoln)

*E-mail:* robertaskoko@outlook.com

*Phone:* 905.401.0174

*Social Media Handle(s):* ‘Catholic et Cetera’ @catholicetcetera

### 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 have two young children approaching schooling age, and with the current state of our Catholic school system, I am not comfortable sending them. I plan to implement a much deeper and concrete focus on Catholic education.

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

I would like to assist teachers of all faith levels with programs and materials to ensure our Catholic faith is being taught daily and taught well. I also want to support parents as the first educators of their children on matters of morality.

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

I am an Ontario College certified teacher (OCT), currently working toward my *Master of Theological Studies* with St. Augustine Seminary.

[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?**

Catholic education should equip students with the beauty and Truth of our faith, so they may enter the world with a formed conscience. Sainthood is the greatest benefit to any community.

**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 experienced a reversion to the Catholic faith when I was in my early 20s (visit my “Catholic et Cetera” YouTube Channel for my full testimony). My life has never been the same... I am a devoted Catholic living the Sacramental life, in Communion with the Church in all of her wisdom.

**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?**

Proper catechesis is severely lacking. I want to provide solid faith formation materials (i.e. *Ascension Press* and the like), with assessments included, to ensure that faith formation does not rest on the faith knowledge of the educator. I also plan to support school relationships with local pastors.

**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?**

I will visit schools and speak to classes about the benefits of striving to be the “best version of yourself.” We have varying and unique gifts and talents, and our homes, schools, and communities benefit when we are full alive (emotionally, academically, spiritually, etc.). Annual guest speakers with follow-up initiatives will also aid in inspiring students to strive for greatness. This is also included in the faith formation I have in mind.

**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 will make sure to meet with each pastor (I already know many) to assess the current relationships with the schools. Each will be different. From my experience, Niagara Catholic administration is open to strong relationships with the parish priests, so with better faith formation and deeper engagement, my hope is that each pastor will be a regular presence in the schools. Trustees should check in monthly to see where they can be of support.

**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?**

Without the return of proper Catechesis, I agree that there is no use for our Catholic school system. This is precisely why I am running for trustee; I will fight to bring a healthy pulse to 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?**

There is no better course of action than to implement mandatory and effective faith formation material (videos, engagement, assessments) at all grade levels. Trustees will follow up that assessments are being done. This will not only benefit students, but it will greatly assist teaches with planning, simultaneously evangelizing everyone in the room.

**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?**

We keep a detailed and impressive budget at home, and I plan to do the same in this role; every penny will be accounted for, and deep thought, communication, and and consultation will occur with every decision.

**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](mailto:info@CatholicConscience.org).

SUBMIT

Thank you for helping to improve our electoral process and our schools!

**ROBERTA SKOKO**  
Email: robertaskoko@outlook.com  
Phone: 905.401.0174

111 Peach Tree Lane  
Grimsby, ON  
L3M 5B9

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## EDUCATION

St. Augustine Seminary, Scarborough, ON  
**Master of Theological Studies**

September 2016-Present

Brock University, St. Catharines, ON  
**Bachelor of Education**  
Pre-service Education—Intermediate/Senior Division  
*Official member of the Ontario College of Teachers*

September 2011-May 2012

Brock University, St. Catharines, ON  
**Bachelor of Arts (Honours)**  
English Language and Literature  
Minor in Dramatic Arts

September 2007-April 2011

## CLASSROOM AND TEACHING RELATED EXPERIENCE

**Student Teacher**  
*Notre Dame College Secondary School, Welland, ON*

**Student Teacher**  
*Saint Paul Secondary School, Niagara Falls, ON*

**Student Teacher**  
*Holy Cross Secondary School, St. Catharines, ON*

**Classroom Volunteer**  
*St. Francis Secondary School, St. Catharines, ON*  
Religion Classroom Volunteer (Grade 9, 11, 12)  
Resource Center Volunteer (Grade 9-12)  
Dramatic Arts Classroom Volunteer (Grade 9-12)  
ESL Classroom Volunteer (Grade 9-12)  
Essential English Class Volunteer (Grade 11/12)

February-June 2013  
September-October 2011  
February-December 2010  
September-December 2010  
March-June 2010

## EMPLOYMENT EXPERIENCE

**Occasional Teacher**  
*Halton Catholic District School Board, 802 Drury Lane, Burlington, Ontario*

September 2018-Present

- Fulfilling all requirements of an occasional teacher as per the expectations of the board and each individual school.



**Youth Ministry Coordinator**

September 2016-September 2020

*St. Francis Xavier Church, 5650 Mavis Rd, Mississauga, ON*

- Implemented and led EDGE and Life Teen programs for elementary and high school students with the intention of raising intentional disciples for Christ.
- Maintained strong school involvement with the purpose of inviting students to parish-run programs and parish life, while fostering strong relationships with school staff, helping bridge the home/school/parish triad.
- Other Youth Ministry responsibilities included: Sacramental Preparation (“Chosen” Confirmation Program); Steubenville Toronto with teens; Lift Jesus Higher Rally with Grade 7+; organized and implemented annual Winter Retreat; financials; managed website; recruited and supported volunteers; organized fundraisers; leadership training for teen and adult volunteers.

**Youth Ministry Coordinator**

September 2013-August 2016

*Branches Catholic Ministry, 43 Maywood Ave, St. Catharines, ON*

- Directed youth ministry programs for elementary and high school students both at parish and school levels through St. Mary of the Assumption Parish in St. Catharines and St. Ann Parish in Fenwick.
- Educated students in the teachings of the Catholic faith, guiding them through various methods of meditation and prayer, while forming a strong sense of community with their peers.

**PROFESSIONAL WORKSHOPS**

- Equity and the Inclusive Classroom
- Technology in the Classroom
- Building Futures
- Teachers Helping Teachers

**PUBLICATION**

Mulder B., Stickles L., & Plantic R. (2012). *Forest in my room: Teacher study guide*. St. Catharines, ON: Carousel Players.

**CERTIFICATES AND OTHER QUALIFICATIONS**

**Additional Qualification Course—Special Education Part I**

Completed December 2013

- Forming Catholic teachers in their Catholic faith.

**Additional Qualification Course—Religious Education Part I**

Completed July 3-July 13, 2012

- Forming Catholic teachers in their Catholic faith.

**EQAO Practice Literacy Test Evaluator**

February 2012

- In partnership with Saint Michael Catholic High School, through Brock University.

**ST. DENIS ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH**  
*A Catholic Centre of Excellence*

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27 August 2022

**Letter of Good Standing within the Catholic Church**

To whom it may concern,

I am writing on behalf of Mrs. Roberta Skoko, who is currently running as candidate for Trustee in the Grimsby area.

It is my firsthand experience and knowledge that Roberta is a practicing Catholic, which includes but is not limited to, faithful attendance at Holy Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation. Additionally, Roberta and her family are currently registered parishioner of St. Denis Roman Catholic Church.

Roberta has been an involved in the Church since her return to regular practice in 2009. She is the former Niagara Youth Minister for St. Mary of the Assumption Parish in St. Catharines for 3 years; as well at St. Ann Parish in Fenwick for 1 year. Roberta worked in youth ministry at St. Francis Xavier Parish in Mississauga for 3 years.

Recently, Roberta and her family has moved back to the Niagara Region and has expressed an interest in becoming more involved within the parish community here at St. Denis. She is currently working toward her *Master of Theological Studies* through St. Augustine Seminary.

Roberta's qualification as a certified Ontario teacher, commitment to her Catholic faith, her academic achievement, her dedication to Catholic education, and her special ability to work with children and young adults offers you an excellent candidate for English Catholic Trustee. With her numerous years of experience, I believe she will prove to be an asset to the Niagara Catholic District School Board of Trustees.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me directly either by phone: 905-359-0583 or by email: [pastor@stdenischurch.ca](mailto:pastor@stdenischurch.ca)

Sincerely yours in Christ,



Reverend Father Stephen Joseph Bruzzese  
Pastor