

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: Chris Saunders

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Ward: 4 and 7

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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 educated by the Jesuits and was very impressed with their dedication to education. I see more than 40 years after leaving high school the influence a good Catholic Education had on me and my classmates. I want to help lay the same solid foundation for our current and future students.

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

Specifically in the Halton Catholic Board I want to refocus our trustees onto Education and preparing our students for the exciting and challenging world out there. We need to stop interest groups from using our board as a platform to push their agendas. I want to restore the focus on Catholic values.

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

I had three Children graduate from the HCDSB and I'm a Graduate of Brebeuf Collegiate in Toronto. I have a professional Accounting designation which is essential in understanding complex financial statements as well as an MBA in Human resources. I manage over 125 staff in a Government Agency that is Diverse and within a strong Union Environment. These skills will help me work with Staff, Parents and Students to move this board out of its current dysfunctional state and into the world class learning environment it will be.

[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 gives children a rock solid moral base upon which all the important life decisions are made. This will make them better citizens and caring members of any community they will live in. _____

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 have been a practicing Catholic in a Catholic family my whole life. The words of Christ and his Apostles are what guides me every day. I'm a member of the Knights of Columbus because I believe in volunteering, I'm doing Christ's Work. I believe in James 2:24 that it is not by Faith alone that you serve Christ, you must be his apostle on earth. _____

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 have already reached out to the local Parishes and Priest to start a relationship that needs to be strengthened in our schools. The meaning of the sacraments needs to be discussed and taught to our students through our clergy and the on site Chaplains and Deacon's. Teachers also must be on board so that these important sacraments are enhanced and celebrated by the whole community.

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?

100 percent involved and a leader. All full and comprehensive education is vital to the development of children today. Education is the primary reason for me entering this race. Education is the only way a society can move forward . I want to develop plans to enhance programs for all our students and bring in new programs to prepare them for the complicated world ahead.. _____

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 have already reached out to all the Parish Priests in our area prior to beginning this race to discuss their goals and objectives for the coming years and how they want to work with schools. I will continue this contact plus contact our local bishop and Archdiocese. I also hope to engage other local church groups and parent advisory groups to ensure we are intouch in meeting their needs. I'm also a member of the Knights of Columbus and want to maintain relationships with other external Church groups.

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?

To keep Catholic Schools Viable we need to stay true to our values and distinguish our selves from the public system or risk being viewed as the same and combined with them.

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 matters you will be expected to impart to students?

I will be meeting everybody and every organization that wants to meet with me or I think will help me develop a fulsome picture of the needs and requirements of our students. This includes Students, Parents, the Church and any other groups who want to meet to discuss our schools. _I have to invest time and be prepared to listen than take action through our board and schools,

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 want to develop a regular newsletter and hold bi annual constituency meetings to discuss issues of concern. I will also use my experience as a Chartered Accountant to ensure resources and reportings are done correctly and accurately. Full transparency is the only way to run a program with as large a budget as this board. I will invite any interested party to board meetings to see and be involved in the proces.

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!