



# SCSBA



## *Saskatchewan Catholic School Boards Association*

**June 20, 2017**

**Dear parents/guardians and friends of Catholic Education;**

Since my last communication regarding the Theodore court case ruling, there have been significant developments that I hope will bring a certain degree of stability for you with respect to your educational choice.

First, and most importantly, on May 19, the Government of Saskatchewan and the Saskatchewan Catholic School Boards Association appealed the court decision. The appeal process is expected to take several years. The government's use of the notwithstanding clause of the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms* will stand for a minimum of five years. Unanimous support in the Legislative Assembly (including the opposition NDP) is a strong indication that you, as parents and the first educators of your children, will maintain your choice in education for the foreseeable future.

Second, all eight Catholic boards in the province have worked together to explore how we may fund the appeal. As important as appealing the decision is, it puts added financial pressure on boards as we try very hard to limit the impact of this year's budget on classrooms. Boards of education are struggling with significant budget restrictions for next year, so the eight boards have joined together to ask for your help to defray the costs.

I invite you to help by financially supporting the appeal. The initial target is \$125,000 which addresses the costs to the Saskatchewan Court of Appeals. Should the case go to the Supreme Court of Canada, raising an additional \$125,000 would be necessary. Donating is a tangible way for you to support Catholic education. To put this in perspective, a \$3 donation for each of the approximately 40,000 students who attend Catholic schools in the province would achieve our initial target. Additional details and information on how to donate, including an online donation form, can be found at <https://www.catholicedspirit.ca>. Tax receipts can be issued for donations. Thank you for considering this request.

We have been offering Catholic education (not just education to Catholics) for over 125 years in the province of Saskatchewan. By the grace of God and the guidance of the Holy Spirit, we have weathered many storms. I have faith and hope that this current situation will be no different. I also hope this news eases any lingering uncertainty about the ability of people of other faith traditions to attend Catholic schools. I assure you that Catholic school divisions across the province remain open to admit your children regardless of your religious affiliation. Parents who have a genuine desire to access a Catholic education for their children will continue to be welcome to register your children in Catholic schools in the fall and for many years to come.

Thank you all for your continued support, and I invite you to please continue to pray for Catholic education in Saskatchewan.

Blessing in Christ,

Paula Scott, President