

Governance of Catholic Schools in Saskatchewan

Preamble:

Catholic rate payers in Saskatchewan are entrusted with certain denominational school rights, powers and privileges enshrined in the Canadian Constitution and the Saskatchewan Act of 1905. One of those denominational rights of all Catholic rate payers is the ability to elect Catholic trustees to govern Catholic School Divisions.

Catholic Trustees Stewards for our Schools

- The Catholic school trustee has a specific and unique vocation. This vocation is a call from the Church and the community to bring together faith and political life to share in the central mission of the church: passing our Catholic faith on to our children.
- Catholic schools exist to offer Catholic parents a distinct system of education for their children. Through the democratic process, the trustees of a Catholic school board are empowered by the Catholic community to fulfill both the educational requirements set by the government and the vision of the faith community.
- This presents Catholic trustees with a unique dual challenge. They must ensure that students are provided an education which includes literacy skills, the ability to interpret and communicate information, the skills to analyze quickly and creatively, and the knowledge for effective problem solving. In addition, a Catholic school board must ensure that Catholic values and principles are reflected at all times in its policies and practices and witnessed in each of their schools. It is the work they do in the boardroom which will directly affect the permeation that takes place in Catholic schools in their jurisdiction.
- The ability to fulfill both roles without compromise is paramount for Catholic school trustees. Their position as leaders in the faith community requires an understanding, a willingness to grow and a commitment to bear daily witness to the faith.
- To meet this challenge, Catholic trustees in Saskatchewan are entrusted with certain denominational school rights, powers and privileges enshrined in the Canadian Constitution. They exercise these rights with the guidance of parish and diocesan authorities.
- One of those denominational rights of all Catholic rate payers is the ability to elect Catholic trustees to govern Catholic School Divisions.

Roles and Responsibilities of Catholic Trustees

- The Catholic school trustee has a multitude of roles and responsibilities, none of which can be taken lightly. All school boards in Saskatchewan are agents of the Provincial government and accountable to the Minister of Education.
- Catholic trusteeship is a unique vocation which serves the church and the community, both Catholic and non-Catholic. The Catholic school trustee plays an integral part in ensuring that Christ is the heart and soul of every Catholic school. The uniqueness of Catholic education lies in the fact that its purpose and end is holiness. This is the legacy of which Catholic school trustees proudly take charge.
- Catholic school boards are also accountable to the Bishop of their diocese. Canon Law 806(1) states that “the diocesan Bishop has the right to watch over and inspect the Catholic schools situated in his territory, even those established or directed by members of religious institutes. He has also the right to issue directives concerning the general regulations of Catholic schools ...”. We are blessed in Saskatchewan to have tremendous support from our bishops and a wonderful working relationship with them.
- Through policies and programs, the Catholic school trustee is instrumental in setting the environment for the formation of our children.
- Catholic trustees are also responsible to their electorate for ensuring that the Catholic community's beliefs and principles are reflected in the school division's policies and programs.
- Catholic trustees develop policies which guide administration and staff in achieving school division goals and ensure that our Catholic teachings are permeated throughout the school division.
- The most significant role of a trustee is to walk the talk in and outside the boardroom. A Christian lifestyle and a personal commitment to the Catholic faith are basic and essential to the trustee's and the school divisions public credibility.