

Catholic School Board Trustee Election Protocol in Parishes

Municipal elections in Alberta are held every four years, at which the trustees for Catholic school boards are elected by Catholic voters. This protocol is to assist candidates as well as parish priests and other parish personnel in supporting the election of Catholic school trustees.

Guiding Principles

1. We strongly encourage Catholics to vote in Catholic school board elections.
2. The sanctity of sacred space in our churches is to be honoured and safeguarded at all times, including during election campaigning.
3. As a Catholic community, we have a responsibility to support and promote Catholic education.
4. We understand Catholic school trusteeship as a call to service and ministry in the community.
5. This protocol seeks to treat equally all candidates seeking election as Catholic school board trustees.

Nominations

1. No Candidate is to initiate campaigning in parishes before the nomination process is closed.
2. Pastors are not to sign nomination applications for prospective candidates.
3. Those intending to run in an upcoming campaign are not to present themselves as possible candidates or seek support for their nomination in the context of parish Masses or other parish activities.

Candidate Availability

1. Once the nomination process is completed prior to the school board election date, the parish priest may grant permission to the candidates to be present before and after Mass, provided they do not interfere with the coming and going of parishioners.
2. It is expected that the candidates will approach parishioners in a discreet and respectful manner.
3. The parish priest will determine the exact location(s) where candidate(s) may stand to greet parishioners.
4. The parish may also hold an all-candidates forum in the parish hall (cf. Guiding Principles #2 above) to allow voters to meet and discuss issues with potential trustees.

Circulation of Electoral Campaign Materials

1. Candidates or their representatives may circulate campaign literature to parishioners from locations agreed to by the parish priest. This is to be done in a discreet and respectful manner, so that parishioners do not feel harassed.

2. Parish priests may wish to include brochures from all candidates as an attachment to the parish bulletin.
3. No candidate's literature is to be placed on the windshield of parishioners' vehicles.
4. No candidate's election signage is to be placed on church property.

Ministries

Candidates currently serving in church ministries are permitted to continue this ministry while standing for election as a Catholic school trustee.