

Trustee Candidate: Ed Wiper

* Candidate profiles are published as submitted.

Who are you, and why are you running to be a trustee in Red Deer Catholic?	My name is Ed Wiper, and my family lives on our farm between Olds and Sundre. Over the years, five of our children have attended Holy Trinity Catholic School, with our youngest currently in Grade 6. I’ve been actively involved in supporting Catholic education in our area—first through the initial census project in Olds that led to the formation of the Catholic School Division, and more recently by helping to bring the Harmattan area into the Division. Recently, members of our community approached me to consider running for trustee in the upcoming election. Their encouragement prompted a period of careful reflection and discernment. After thoughtful consideration, I believe I can contribute meaningfully in this important role and would be honoured to serve.
How should Catholic school trustees balance their responsibility to uphold and witness to the Catholic faith with their duty to represent a diverse community that may include people of other faiths or no faith at all?	As a Catholic, I believe that we are all sons and daughters of God, and therefore each person deserves to be treated with love, dignity, and respect. When this principle guides our actions, I believe it is entirely possible to represent a diverse community—especially when decisions are made with care, thoughtfulness and a commitment to fairness, rather than on impulse
Given limited resources and competing priorities, how should Catholic trustees decide between funding faith formation programs (e.g., chaplaincy, retreats, sacramental preparation) and other pressing needs such as classroom supports, technology, or staffing?	This is a question I don't feel fully equipped to answer at this time, as I have not yet gone through the school board budgeting process myself. However, based on my previous board experience with Mountain View Credit Union and later with connectFirst Credit Union, I understand the importance of making decisions with the broader picture in mind. One of the key challenges we faced there was how to sustain services in rural areas despite declining membership, while the majority of growth was happening in urban centers. I see your example here as a similar tension in education, and I recognize that addressing it will require careful research, thoughtful reflection, and a balanced approach before arriving at any decisions.
What do you see as the biggest challenge to the long-term sustainability of Catholic education in Alberta? What role should trustees play in ensuring Catholic schools remain distinct, valued, and viable within a pluralistic society?	I believe many people don't realize that in Alberta, Catholic Education is part of the public education system—not a private or charter alternative. Unfortunately, it's often misunderstood or incorrectly grouped with private schools. What’s also not widely recognized is how having separate Catholic school divisions creates meaningful options and opportunities for students, contributing to overall educational quality in the province. As Trustees, we have a vital advocacy role in promoting and protecting the value that Catholic Education brings to Alberta's public system.
Do you support public education in Alberta? What is the role of private education and/or charter schools in Alberta?	I fully support public education and believe it should remain the foundation of our education system in Alberta. While there may be circumstances where private education better serves a student’s specific needs, this should not come at the cost of weakening the public system. Public education is the default option for all Albertans, and those who choose private education do so with the understanding that it may involve additional personal expense.
As an RDCRS Trustee, how would you advocate for improvements to classroom learning conditions in light of current per-student funding levels? In your response, please also address the biggest challenges facing publicly funded Catholic education today, how these issues should be addressed, and the role of the Board in resolving them.	As a Trustee, I recognize that my voice carries more weight at the political table than just that of a parent. Therefore, I believe it’s essential to engage in candid discussions with our MLA’s as part of my role. Additionally, with my experience in the Credit Union sector, I’ve seen firsthand the impact of strategic lobbying—when specific, well-defined talking points are presented to government officials. I’m eager to learn whether this approach is being utilized at both the RDCRS level and across the province, particularly among all Catholic school boards.
As an RDCRS Trustee, how would you balance the perspectives provided by Senior Administration with other important viewpoints (e.g., teachers, parents, and community members) in your decision-making? In addition, how would you build relationships and work collaboratively with the Alberta Teachers’ Association at both the Local and Provincial levels?	As a Trustee, I understand that my role is one of oversight—‘noses in, fingers out.’ This means it is my responsibility to gather information from all sources, ask tough questions of administration, and ensure decisions are made in the best interest of our students and their learning environment. However, it is equally important that I refrain from delving into the specific details of day-to-day operations, which fall under the purview of local teachers and staff. I am committed to maintaining open lines of communication with local ATA representatives to better understand how board decisions impact their work and the overall educational experience. Regarding the provincial level, I am still exploring the networking opportunities that may be available to strengthen those connections..
Why should voters pick you in addition to the other qualified candidates?	I am deeply committed to supporting Catholic Education and working alongside our schools to foster the best possible learning environment for our students. With prior board experience, I am confident in my ability to transition smoothly into the role of Trustee and make a meaningful contribution.

Are there any other comments / ideas / thoughts that you want to share?	I have spent 35 years working with youth as an officer with the Royal Canadian Air Cadets in Olds. Over the years, I've witnessed firsthand the profound impact we can have on young people when we focus not only on educating them, but also on instilling positive values that shape their character and future.
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