

Trustee Candidate: Ashley Hunter

* Candidate profiles are published as submitted.

Who are you, and why are you running to be a trustee in Red Deer Catholic?	I am a parent of 3 kids in the Catholic school system as well as a social worker in the community. I am running for trustee because I have always been taught if you want a change make it yourself.
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?	When you look at the base of Catholic faith compared to the base teachings of other faiths, they are similar. Jesus welcomed all and shared his word, and gave freedom to his followers to make choice. In a diverse community, we can still share our word, but accept those who chose not to follow and not judge for this choice and accept that others will have different opinions.
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?	We would need to look at need, priority, and what is best for the children. Is there alternative options to consider? what is the benefits and risks (short term and long term). ... I am a big believer in making a educated decision and I ask a lot of questions. I also have a lot of experience in Ethics and recognize that problems need to be considered and assessed from all directions.
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 think the biggest challenge would be distinguishing our school from the public and private schools. Making a name for ourselves as a safe place for children to attend where they feel welcome. I would like for children to graduate from the catholic system to be highly educated but also decent humans who make a difference in the world.
Do you support public education in Alberta? What is the role of private education and/or charter schools in Alberta?	I support public education in Alberta. I think that private and charter schools provide an additional level of choice, but I also feel that the government should regulate all schools so that all children get the same basic education, and that all teachers should belong to the ATA. Just like nurses, social workers, dietitians... teachers should be monitored by a college to make sure there is a consistency and quality of service.
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.	I would like to advocate for class size caps depending on grade level, as well as increase TA support. If we can get a cap to class size so that teachers can manage the class on their own, then we can focus on getting TA help to support children with additional needs. As per the other concerns, I feel I need to do more research into this, and see what the schools and families feel are the biggest challenges, as this may vary depending on community and school. I would then take this information, and as a team come up with a plan on how to advocate for change that is feasible and realistic.
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?	I have been a union rep for the last 4 years in my current role. I understand that agencies like the ATA and Senior Administration usually want to provide what others want, but are limited by rules, regulations, and budgets. As a Trustee my role will be to listen to both sides, help identify other options, advocate for change if needed, and maintain open communication. Often the most important part is making sure everyone is heard and there needs and wants are respected.
Why should voters pick you in addition to the other qualified candidates?	I feel that my life and work experience will bring a new perspective that is respectful and honest.
Are there any other comments / ideas / thoughts that you want to share?	