



Board of Education
Regular Meeting of the Board
Monday, May 4, 2026 - 1:00 p.m.
Boardroom (420 22nd Street East)

AGENDA

1.0 Welcome

- 1.1 Call to Order – Chair
 - 1.2 Land Acknowledgement
 - 1.3 Opening Prayer – Trustee T. Jelinski
 - 1.4 Adoption of the Agenda
 - 1.5 Commissioning Service – Fr. Stefano Penna
 - New Trustee Induction and Signing of Declaration of Office
 - 1.6 Declaration of Conflict of Interest
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2.0 Approval of Minutes

Minutes of the March 30, 2026 Regular Meeting of the Board of Education

3.0 Delegations and Special Presentations

4.0 Post Meeting Assignments

5.0 Consent Items

The Chair will ask for a motion to receive the items, which are starred, and to approve all recommendations contained therein. Prior to approving the motion, any trustee may request a star(s) be removed.

6.0 Discussion/Decision

- 6.1 Catholic Education Week
 - 6.2 Preventative Maintenance & Renewal (PMR) – Four Year Plan Approval
 - 6.3 St. Joseph High School Conservation Easement Agreement – Meewasin Valley Authority
 - 6.4 Wards vs At Large Electoral System
 - 6.4.1 Package of Supplemental Ward vs At Large Materials
 - 6.5 Board Policies for Approval
 - 6.5.1 Policy 4.0 Director of Education’s Role
 - 6.5.2 Policy 4.1 Delegation to the Director of Education
 - 6.5.3 Policy 4.4 Monitoring School Division Performance
 - 6.5.4 Policy 3.0 General Governance Commitment Policy
 - 6.5.5 Policy 3.2 Governing Style
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7.0 Correspondence

- 7.1 Expressions of Gratitude – posted on Bulletin Board
 - 7.2 Reading File – copies circulated at meeting
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8.0 Reports and Good News

- 8.1 Report of the Director of Education
 - 8.2 Board Activity
 - 8.3 Board Linkage
 - 8.4 Board Linkage – Catholic School Community Councils
 - 8.5 Convention Reports
 - 8.6 Committee/Partnership Reports
 - Joint Operations – Trustees F. Possberg and T. Jelinski
 - Together in Faith and Action – Trustees S. Zakreski-Werbicki and M. Christopher
 - Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools Foundation – Trustees B. Elliott and T. Jelinski
 - māmawohkamātowin Partnership (Saskatoon Tribal Council) – Chair D. Boyko and Trustees T. Jelinski and M. Raney
 - nākatēyimitowin Educational Partnership (CUMFI) – Chair D. Boyko and Trustees K. Day and S. Zakreski-Werbicki
 - Division Committee on Reconciliation and Healing – Chair D. Boyko and Trustee K. Day
 - Columbus Bosco Homes – Trustee O. Fortosky
 - 8.7 Saskatchewan Catholic School Boards Association – Trustee B. Elliott
 - 8.8 Saskatchewan School Boards Association
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9.0 Committee of the Whole

10.0 Closing Prayer – Trustee T. Jelinski

11.0 Adjournment

12.0 Sign of Peace



**Minutes of a Regular Meeting of the Board of Education for St. Paul's RCSSD
#20 held in the Boardroom at 1:30 p.m. on Monday, March 30, 2026.**

Board Present In-person: Board Chair, D. Boyko, Vice-Chair T. Jelinski, M. Christopher, K. Day, B. Elliott, O. Fortosky, F. Possberg, M. Raney, S. Zakreski-Werbicki

Board Present Virtually: Trustee B. Elliott

Board Regrets: Trustee M. Raney

Executive In-person: Director of Education F. Rivard; Chief Financial Officer/Deputy Director J. Lloyd; Superintendents K. Cardinal, T. Fradette, S. Gessler, L. Giocoli Clark, T. Hickey, K. Kowal, R. Martin, and T. Shircliff.

Executive Regrets: Superintendent of Learning Services, T. Fradette

Resources: Communications Consultant, D. Kunz; Board Secretary, Executive Assistant to the Director of Education and Corporate Governance Advisor, B. Cutts.

Invited Guests: GSCS Elementary School Counsellor, Jeannie Bosch. Regrets were noted from Learning Assistance Teacher, Doug Herrick.
From Saskatchewan Polytechnic: Program Head & Research Chair, Linda Martin and Recreational Therapist Student, Kaitlyn Fenske.

Attendance Notes: One trustee seat is vacant at the time of this meeting.

The meeting was called to order by Chair Boyko at 1:31 p.m., welcoming all during this holy week with acknowledgement of the guests and partners joining today. Trustee B Elliott was noted as present virtually as the meeting was called to order. The Chair began by acknowledging that we are on Treaty 6 Territory, traditional territories of First Nations including Cree, Dene, Nakota, Lakota, Dakota and Saulteaux—and homeland of the Métis Nation. We pay our respect to the First Nation and Métis ancestors of this place, and we reaffirm our relationship with one another in the spirit of Reconciliation.

The opening prayer was led by Trustee S. Zakreski-Werbicki

Adoption of Agenda

Motion: Moved by Trustees K. Day and M. Christopher, that the agenda be approved as circulated.

All in favour/none opposed/no abstention

CARRIED

UNANIMOUS

Declaration of Conflict of Interest

- The Chair called for any declaration of conflict of interest based on the materials provided for this meeting. No conflicts of interest were noted.

Approval of Minutes

- Chair called for the motion to approve the minutes of the March 2, 2026, meeting. The motion was moved and seconded and opened for discussion. Hearing none, the minutes of the March 2, 2026 regular meeting were approved as circulated.

Motion: Moved by Trustees Fortosky and Jelinski, that the minutes of the Regular meeting of March 2, 2026 be adopted as circulated.

All in favour/none opposed/no abstention

CARRIED

UNANIMOUS

Consent Items

- No consent agenda items were included with the March 30, 2026 meeting materials.
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Discussion/Decision

6.1 Collaborative Partnership: Saskatchewan Polytechnic Therapeutic Recreation Program

- The Chair called for Superintendent of Learning Services, Tammy Shircliff, to lead the presentation and review of materials provided. For the past 15 years, Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools has cultivated a high-impact partnership with the Saskatchewan Polytechnic Therapeutic Recreation Program. This collaboration has evolved from a traditional practicum placement model into a sophisticated, research-driven integrated service delivery model.
- Invited guest presenters GSCS Elementary School Counsellor, Jeannie Bosch and Saskatchewan Polytechnic: Program Head and Research Chair, Linda Martin and Recreational Therapist Student, Kaitlyn Fenske contributed to the presentation.
- The presentation highlighted targeted therapeutic interventions to build student internal capacity and functional independence in the four critical domains of emotional regulation, social development, adaptive activity, and sensory readiness.
- Upon conclusion of the presentation, trustee questions were asked and answers were provided around the process of how students are selected for the program; wait times to get in; and duration of length students remain within the program.
- Trustees applauded the work of the program, remarking on the importance of this long standing partnership, both for the students and teachers who also benefit.

Motion: Moved by Trustees that the Board of Education received the information as presented highlighting the partnership between the Saskatchewan Polytechnic Recreational Therapy Program and Greater Saskatoon Catholic School Division.

All in favour/none opposed/no abstention

CARRIED

UNANIMOUS

6.2 Approval of the Name for the New Holmwood High School

- The Chair called for Superintendent T. Hickey and R. Martin to present on the approval agenda item for the naming of the new Holmwood Catholic high school.
- A review of the consultative process, methodology and timeline was provided, which included committee composition and community engagement. The focused discernment of the committee was noted, including the importance of our Catholic identity as considered throughout this naming process. Thanks was given to the committee as this will prove to be a milestone in our GSCS history.
- Following the presentation and reporting, no comments or questions were noted from the trustees.

Motion: Moved by Trustees M. Christopher and K. Day that the Board of Education approve the official name as St. Pier Giorgio Frassati for the new high school currently in the design and construction phase in the Holmwood area of the City of Saskatoon.

All in favour/none opposed/no abstention

CARRIED

UNANIMOUS

6.3 Financial Statements

- The Chair called for Deputy Director / Chief Financial Officer, J. Lloyd to provide a review of the materials for the accounts paid and the financial statements.
- Highlights of the reporting noted the decrease in international student revenue, with explanations provided and the anticipated impacts to transportation due to rise in fuel prices. Noted overall is that we are trending at a good position.
- Following the reporting, no comments or questions were noted from the trustees.

Motion: Moved by Trustees that the Board of Education approves the accounts paid for the periods January 1, 2026 to January 31, 2026 and February 1, 2026 to February 28, 2026, and receive the financial statements for the period ended February 28, 2026.

All in favour/none opposed/no abstention

CARRIED

UNANIMOUS

6.4 Relocatable Classrooms Tender Awards

- The Chair called for Superintendent of Facility Services, R. Martin, to provide a review of the materials for the relocatable classroom tender awards.
- The review noted that in March 2026, our school division issued four Request for Tenders. Details were provided on the range of responses received and thanks were given to our partnerships involved in this process. Highlighted was the impacts of a full year of tariffs and the tight labour market, as well as the demands on contractors at this time which has caused higher tender pricing than expected.
- Following the reporting, no comments or questions were noted from the trustees.

Motion: Moved by Trustees B. Elliott and K. Day that the Board of Education receive the information presented in the report and award the tenders as follows:

Tender #1 to Con- Tech General Contractors for the tendered price of:

- Holy Cross High School - \$2,423,999 plus PST and GST

AND

Tender #2 to KIM Constructors Ltd for the tendered price of:

- St. Joseph High School - \$2,660,000 plus PST and GST

AND

Tender #3 to Westridge Construction Ltd. for the tendered price of:

- Bethlehem High School - \$1,689,100 plus PST and GST

AND

Tender #4 to Westridge Construction Ltd. for the tendered price of

- Father Robinson School - \$712,300 plus PST and GST

All in favour/none opposed/no abstention

CARRIED

UNANIMOUS

6.5 2026 Education Property Tax Mill Rate

- The Chair called for Deputy Director / Chief Financial Officer, J. Lloyd to provide a review of the materials regarding the 2026 education property tax mill rate.
- With reference to the bylaw enacted in 2018, which requires an annual resolution prior to May 1st of each taxation year, the 2026 provincial mill rates for each property class were noted, including that the provincial government announced on March 18, 2026, that the education property tax mill rate would not change for 2026.
- Following the reporting, no comments or questions were noted from the trustees.

Motion: Moved by Trustees F. Possberg and S. Zakreski-Werbicki that the Board of Education for St Paul's R.C.S.S.D. No. 20 pass a resolution exercising its constitutional right to levy education property tax and set education property tax mill rates, and in doing so the aforementioned school division hereby sets education property tax mill rates as follows:

By adopting the potential provincial education property tax mill rates as set by the Lieutenant Governor in Council for the 2026 taxation year.

All in favour/none opposed/no abstention

CARRIED

UNANIMOUS

6.6 Student Transportation Services

- The Chair called for Deputy Director / Chief Financial Officer, J. Lloyd to provide a review of the report on student transportation services. The report highlighted that Saskatoon Public Schools (SPSD) and Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools jointly posted a request for proposal, as a negotiated process for these services, which include 154 routes over a six-year term with options to extend.
- The responses received are reviewed and ranked by an evaluation committee using a set criterion, which resulted in the recommendation put before the board for approval.
- Also highlighted was that through the negotiations clauses have been updated regarding the age of the buses and the fuel surcharge. In addition there will now be cameras in each bus. Operationally, a process will be implemented in alignment with our access to information requirements regarding this camera footage.
- Following the reporting, no comments or questions were noted from the trustees.

Motion: Moved by Trustees K. Day and M. Christopher that the Board of Education award the contract for the provision of Student Transportation Services to FirstCanada ULC for a term of six years with the option to extend for four years, based on the results of the evaluation process.

All in favour/none opposed/no abstention

CARRIED

UNANIMOUS

6.7 Transportation Monitoring Report

- The Chair called for Deputy Director / Chief Financial Officer, J. Lloyd to provide a review of the transportation monitoring report.
- Our school division offers transportation services to 6,740 students daily. Rural students who attend a GSCS school in the town of Biggar, and the cities of Humboldt, Warman, and Martensville are jointly transported with the public-school divisions in each of the respective areas. The summary provided highlighted the transportation statistics as of February 28, 2026.
- Trustees discussed the length of ride times and asked further questions on the other transportation services provided for those schools who serve students from around the city with language programs. Utilizing these alternative transports was confirmed as providing a reduction of drive times particularly when there are few students to be transported from one location or area to a school.

Motion: Moved by Trustees M. Christopher and T. Jelinski that the Board of Education approve the Transportation Monitoring Report as presented.

All in favour/none opposed/no abstention

CARRIED

UNANIMOUS

6.8 Vendor Hosted Website Solution for K-12 Education

- The Chair called for Deputy Director / Chief Financial Officer, J. Lloyd to provide a review of the vendor hosted website solution for K-12 education. The reporting reviewed the request for proposal and process of evaluation of the proposals received. An explanation of the criteria and evaluation ranking was noted. Resulting from the process was administrations recommendation to continue with our current provider.
- Upon conclusion of the reporting the Chair noted appreciation for this review and confirmation of the continuation of services.

Motion: Moved by Trustees O. Fortosky and B. Elliott that the Board of Education award the contract for the Vendor-Hosted Public Facing Website Solution for K-12 Education to Concept Interactive Inc. for the estimated amount of \$207,000 plus applicable taxes.

All in favour/none opposed/no abstention

CARRIED

UNANIMOUS

6.9 Nitōhtem Partnership Signing

- The Chair called for Superintendent of Learning Services, K. Cardinal, to present on the plans for the nitōhtem partnership signing with Wanuskewin. The report confirmed that the partnership agreement, as approved earlier this academic year for signing, has been designed to be signed together on Earth Day with the significance of the day and location provided. Students will be included to ground the partnership in a real way. Details and a rationale were provided on the schools selected to take part.
- Trustee questions focused on the revisions made to the agreement since the previous signing and discussions explained the process for the development and provision of the agreement to the board.

Motion: Moved by Trustees S. Zakreski-Werbicki and M. Christopher that the Board receives the plans for the signing of the revised nitōhtem Memorandum of Understanding between Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools and Wanuskewin Heritage Park Authority.

All in favour/none opposed/no abstention

CARRIED

UNANIMOUS

6.10 Holmwood Joint Use High School Pile Load Testing

- The Chair called for Superintendent of Facility Services, R. Martin, to provide the Holmwood joint use high school pile load testing report review.
- The partnership for this joint request for proposal was noted along with an overview of the rationale for the process and budget allocation for the project. Details on the importance of pile load testing were included and risk mitigations. Based on having this test completed, the actual data is used in the design which provides an overall benefit.
- Trustees asked for further information regarding the number of test holes and the overall geotechnical survey undertaken. Confidence was provided that the testing and survey would flag any concerns with the site.

Motion: Moved by Trustees F. Possberg and T. Jelinski that the Board of Education award the contract for the pile load testing for the Holmwood Joint Use High Schools to Keller Foundations Ltd. for the contract price of \$294,040.00.

All in favour/none opposed/no abstention

CARRIED

UNANIMOUS

6.11 Approval of the 2026-2027 Board Priorities & Goals

- The Chair spoke to the process for the review and approval of the board priorities and goals as a yearly requirement. The priorities and goals coming forward for approval are resulting from the work completed at the March 6th strategic working retreat of the board. Upon approval, the process steps to be completed by administration were reviewed.
- The Chair noted the good work of the board, applauding the good foundation which the board builds upon annually to ensure continual improvement.

Motion: Moved by Trustees B. Elliott and M. Christopher that the Board of Education approve the 2026-2027 board priorities and goals.

All in favour/none opposed/no abstention

CARRIED

UNANIMOUS

7.0 Correspondence

7.1 Expressions of Gratitude – none.

7.2 Reading File – none.

8.0 Reports and Good News

8.1 Report of the Director of Education

- The report provided and presented by the director of education, F. Rivard, included highlights from events since the previous board meeting report. These included the GSCS Feast and Round Dance, hosted by awâsisak kâ-nîmîhtocik St. Francis School; the Byzantine Leadership and Zealous Evangelization (BLAZE) conference for high schools; the Saskatoon Police Services diversity breakfast; the Byelection meet and greet of the trustee candidates; and the Order of Gabriel Dumont silver medal investiture event, whereat partner Shirley Isbister, President of CUMFI (Central Urban Métis Federation Inc.), received the Order of Gabriel Dumont Silver Medal.
- Trustees reflected on the events they personally attended as well, sharing the good work witnessed through our partnerships and events.

8.6 Committee/Partnership Reports

- The Chair called for the reports from our committees and partnerships, for those committees who have met since the previous reporting period.

- Joint Operations – Trustees F. Possberg and T. Jelinski:
 - The next meeting is scheduled for April 30, 2026.
- Together in Faith and Action – Trustees S. Zakreski-Werbicki and M. Christopher
 - No report at this time as the meeting occurs this week.
- Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools Foundation – Trustees B. Elliott and T. Jelinski
 - The Annual Report of the Foundation has been distributed electronically. Fellow trustees were encouraged to review this annual report and to continue to help as the Foundation seeks sponsor and donor contributions.
- māmawohkamātowin Partnership (Saskatoon Tribal Council) – Chair D. Boyko and Trustees T. Jelinski and M. Raney
 - Next meeting scheduled for March is pending rescheduling due to schedule conflicts.
- nākatēyimitowin Educational Partnership (CUMFI) – Chair D. Boyko and Trustees K. Day and S. Zakreski-Werbicki
 - The meeting was held March 3, 2026. The trustees noted with appreciation the good work of St. Michael School principal S. Cole and Métis education program lead S. LaMontagne for the leadership and support of Métis education and the preservation of the Michif language.
- Division Committee on Reconciliation and Healing – Chair D. Boyko and Trustee K. Day
 - Trustees reported on the important work being done with this committee on the drafted anti-racism policy. Remarks included that this is needed for the whole school division and does not belong to one desk, as there is a need to focus on accountability by all.
 - The director reiterated the importance of this work, and that from a provincial level we do not have a policy like this at any of our Catholic schools. Other school divisions will be learning along with us. Anti-racism applies to many cultures, and as the work continues, we will work with the board, critical friends and other school divisions in western Canada as well. This has a large teaching piece for not only students but adults as well.
- Columbus Bosco Saskatoon – Trustee O. Fortosky
 - Trustees were reminded of the core programs of Columbus Bosco Saskatoon, being not only the Farm School Program, but also the Parent and Tot programs.
 - The Annual Joe Kammermayer fundraiser dinner is taking place on April 23, 2026; all are encouraged to attend or donate a cake to the annual cake auction.
- Saskatchewan School Boards Association (SSBA) – Trustee B. Elliott
 - The updates noted the request for quarterly meetings with the SSBA executive, which will bring multiple school divisions together at select locations. Trustees discussed this meeting format and plans to attend.

➤ Other Trustee Event Reporting:

- Trustee M. Christopher noted attendance at the St. Mark Science Fair, commenting on the need to have a better process or platform access to receive school-based event information. Discussions reviewed potential options, such as school newsletters (which not every school has).
- Chair D. Boyko noted a positive email received regarding the fence build at St. Mary's Wellness and Education Centre.
- Trustees and executive council shared some experiences volunteering at the St. Mary's warm up shelter, noting the shelter closure for the season as the current funding does not keep this shelter open year-round. The shelter will open again in Fall 2026.

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- *Public attendee, W. Stus, departed from the public gallery at 2:58 p.m.*
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9.0 Committee of the Whole

Motion: Moved by Trustee Tim Jelinski that the Board move into committee at 12:01 p.m.

All in favour/none opposed/no abstention **CARRIED** **UNANIMOUS**

Motion: Moved by Trustee S. Zakreski that the Board move out of committee at 1:28 p.m.

All in favour/none opposed/no abstention **CARRIED** **UNANIMOUS**

10.0 Closing Prayer

- Closing prayer was provided by Trustee S. Zakreski-Werbicki.
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11.0 Adjournment

Motion: Moved by Trustee F. Possberg that the meeting be adjourned at 3:08 p.m.

All in favour/none opposed/no abstention **CARRIED** **UNANIMOUS**

Secretary

Chair

1.5 Trustee Commissioning Service



Board Priority:

- Celebrating and Promoting Catholic Identity

TRUSTEE COMMISSIONING SERVICE

May 4, 2026

Fr. Penna: Let us begin with the sign of our faith: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, ✝ and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Love of God, and the Fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

All: And with your spirit.

Fr. Penna: Sisters and brothers, Jesus Christ has commissioned each of us to “go and make disciples”. Drawing strength from our union with Christ through his Church, we serve and lead while encouraging others to grow and use their gifts for building up the body of believers. Today, we give thanks for Giovanni Yousif’s willingness to heed Christ’s call as a Catholic school trustee, and we pray for God’s guidance and blessing on his public ministry.

(Please stand)

Fr. Penna: A reading from Holy Gospel according to Mark. (Mark 9:33-37)

Jesus and the disciples came to Capernaum; and when he was in the house Jesus asked them, “What were you arguing about on the way?” But they were silent, for on the way they had argued with one another who was the greatest.

Jesus sat down, called the twelve, and said to them, “Whoever wants to be first must be last of all and servant of all.” Then he took a little child and put it among the disciples; and taking it in his arms, Jesus said to them, “Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me, welcomes not me but the one who sent me.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

All: Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.

(Please be seated)

Short Reflection on the Scripture – Fr. Penna

Fr. Penna: Please stand.

My brother in Christ, we are united by our common commitment to the students, parents, and staff of Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools. Catholic schools play a vital role in the teaching ministry of our Church. As trustee, you will collaborate with administration, staff, parents, parishes and other community partners to create Catholic communities of learning, compassion, and care. Like previous generations of trustees, you are called to accept the unique role of assisting our Bishops in the education of our children and youth.

With this in mind, I now ask you to respond to the following:

Will you work collaboratively to govern the affairs of Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools in accordance with the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ and in communion with the Catholic Church?

Trustee: I will.

Fr. Penna: Will you hold sacred the God-given dignity and rights of all who come to us?

Trustee: I will.

Fr. Penna: Will you accept and respect the position of trust that parents and guardians have placed in you to assist them in the Catholic education of their children?

Trustee: I will.

Fr. Penna: Guided by your faith in Jesus, will you commit to working in a spirit of respect, trust, and compassion as you strive to fulfill the responsibility of your office?

Trustee: I will.

Fr. Penna: On behalf of Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools and our shepherd, Bishop Mark, I welcome you to this ministry. May God our Father look with love on your worship, your words, and your witness as you give glory through your servant leadership. And may God bless all of your efforts done in his name: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Trustees: Amen.

Fr. Penna: Let us pray together:

All: Father, thank you for the gift of Catholic education.
May we always be mindful that we are your children,
and that all we have comes from you.
Help us to be good stewards of your blessings.

Jesus, our teacher and savior,
the Good News of your life, death, and resurrection
is proclaimed daily in our schools.
Help us to respond to your call to make disciples
with renewed energy and purpose.
Let us see you in our sisters and brothers
and serve each other with meek and humble hearts.

Holy Spirit, our guide and advocate,
bless us with your gifts,
so that our schools may be living signs of your love.
May we grow ever closer to you
as we work together to build your kingdom.

Blessed Trinity, hear and answer our prayer. Amen.

Fr. Penna: And may almighty God bless you and all of the work that you do in the name of the Father, and of the Son, † and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Let us go forward from this day in peace to love and serve the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.



Rooted Growing Reaching Transforming

6.1 Catholic Education Week



Board Priority:

- Celebrating and Promoting Catholic Identity

Presented by: Superintendent of Learning Services, T. Hickey and
Religious Education Coordinator D. Lich

Catholic Education Week (May 10 – 17, 2026)

This Board Priority is described as follows:

- To strengthen the Catholic dimension of our school division, as we support the faith journey of each individual:
 - Providing shared experiences, learning opportunities, and closer connections between parish, home, and school – to enrich the faith lives of students, families, and all school community members.
- To be proactive in building understanding of Catholic Education.

Background Information:

Catholic Education: Pilgrims of Hope – On the Path to Holiness

“As God who called you is holy, be holy yourselves.”

1 Peter 1:15-16

L'éducation catholique: Pèlerins de l'espérance – sur le chemin de la sainteté

« À l'exemple du Dieu saint qui vous a appelés, devenez saints, vous aussi. »

(1 Pierre 1, 15-16)

Catholic Education Week is a meaningful opportunity to highlight and celebrate the distinctiveness of Catholic education across Saskatchewan's eight publicly funded Catholic school divisions. This week invites us to journey together in faith, recognizing our lives as a path shaped by faith, community, and a deepening relationship with God – Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Each day of the week is marked by a sub-theme:

- Monday: Peace Be with You
- Tuesday: God Loves You
- Wednesday: Christ Saves You
- Thursday (World Catholic Education Day): The Holy Spirit Lives in You
- Friday: Together on the Journey

Materials are being prepared by CECAS (Catholic Education Coordinators Association of Saskatchewan) for use in all Catholic school divisions in Saskatchewan, and will include the following:

- Media materials for dioceses/school boards
- Daily social media 'blasts'(twitter-length)
- Daily prayers and reflections for both elementary and high schools (version française disponible pour les écoles d'immersion)
- Liturgy of the Word for World Catholic Education Day

Schools are also encouraged to celebrate the week through additional school-based activities at their discretion.

Recommendation:

That the Board of Education receive the information in the Catholic Education Week Report as presented.

6.2 Preventative Maintenance and Renewal Plan



Board Priority:

- Building Relationships and Partnerships
- Promoting Stewardship

Presented by: Superintendent of Facility Services, R. Martin

Background Information:

Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools will receive \$4,950,000.00 in Preventative Maintenance and Renewal (PMR) funding as part of the 2026-2027 provincial budget. This is the same amount of PMR funding that was received in the 2025-2026 provincial budget.

PMR funding allows the board to take a strategic approach to on-going maintenance and replacement of school building components. School divisions are permitted to re-prioritize projects within the plan and respond to emerging or unforeseen facility demands during the year. The following four-year PMR plan requires board approval and submission to the Ministry of Education prior to proceeding with the PMR projects listed.

The board is required to submit a 2026-2027 plan to match funding, but this does not reflect all ongoing or deferred PMR costs. The estimated annual costs of 2027-2028 and beyond is more reflective of what PMR funding should be.

2026 – 2027 School Year	
Project Type	Estimated Cost
Roofing Systems	\$3,595,000
Mechanical and Electrical Systems	640,000
Minor Renovations / Facility Requests and Maintenance - Materials and Supplies	600,000
Interior Improvements – Flooring Replacements, Gym Floor Refinishing	115,000
TOTAL	\$4,950,000

2027 – 2028 School Year	
Project Type	Estimated Cost
Roofing Systems	\$4,728,640
Mechanical and Electrical Systems	500,000
Exterior Finish – windows, ramps, drainage	600,000
Minor Renovations / Facility Requests and Maintenance - Materials and Supplies	600,000
Interior Improvements – Flooring Replacements, Gym Floor Refinishing	55,000
Facility Modernization – St. John, St. Maria Goretti	20,000,000
TOTAL	\$26,483,640

2028 – 2029 School Year	
Project Type	Estimated Cost
Roofing Systems	\$3,678,968
Mechanical and Electrical Systems	2,476,419
Exterior Finish – windows, ramps, drainage	1,025,296
Minor Renovations / Facility Requests and Maintenance - Materials and Supplies	600,000
Interior Improvements – Flooring Replacements, Gym Floor Refinishing	365,289
Facility Modernization – St. Edward, St. Michael	20,000,000
TOTAL	\$28,145,972

2029 – 2030 School Year	
Project Type	Estimated Cost
Roofing Systems	\$1,672,500
Mechanical and Electrical Systems	369,237
Exterior Finish – windows, ramps, drainage	268,250
Minor Renovations / Facility Requests and Maintenance - Materials and Supplies	600,000
Interior Improvements – Flooring Replacements, Gym Floor Refinishing	700,000
Facility Modernization – Bishop Klein, Bishop James Mahoney	20,000,000
TOTAL	\$23,609,987

Recommendation:

That the Board of Education approve the four year (2026-2030) Preventative Maintenance and Renewal Plan.

6.3 St. Joseph High School Conservation Easement Agreement - Meewasin Valley Authority



Board Priority:

- Building Relationships and Partnerships
- Promoting Stewardship

Presented by: Deputy Director / Chief Financial Officer, J. Lloyd

Background Information:

The St. Joseph High School Conservation Easement Agreement between Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools and the Meewasin Valley Authority, as signed February 2001, created a perpetual conservation easement agreement between the school division and the Meewasin Valley Authority (Meewasin) to protect a 2.87-hectare naturalized area surrounding St. Joseph High School. The original intent of the agreement was to preserve and enhance native habitat, maintain biodiversity, and support outdoor ecological education. In reality, the amount of protected land has been reduced over time due to the continued installation of relocatable classrooms to the school and the leased land for the Cathedral of the Holy Family.

With the signing of the original agreement, Meewasin granted ongoing rights to access, monitor, restore, and manage the protected land, while the School Division retained ownership with the understanding that GSCS must comply with the strict land-use restrictions that prohibit development, non-native species introduction, chemical use, topographic alteration, and other activities that would harm the natural ecosystem.

The School Division also maintained responsibility for maintenance, taxes, insurance, and adherence to environmental laws. It was understood that should the Division breach the agreement, Meewasin has enforcement authority, including the ability to remedy issues and recover costs. Additionally, each year the school division has paid Meewasin a landscape management fee for the maintenance of the conservation areas.

Considering the ongoing costs and requirements of this agreement and that the school division already employs students each summer to maintain landscaping across the division, administration is recommending that this agreement comes to an end this school year.

Administration has maintained a positive relationship with Meewasin throughout the review of this agreement, which has included discussions with Alan Otterbein, Director of Development for Meewasin and confirmed that Meewasin will support the transition of the conservation efforts to the school division. Meewasin has also offered to provide training to facility staff with the School Division. This reflects the amenable arrangements that would support the termination of this agreement between our two organizations.

If the termination of the agreement is approved by the board, this transition of conservation efforts will occur prior to June 1, 2026.

Recommendation:

That the Board of Education approve the termination of the Conservation Easement Agreement with Meewasin Valley Authority.

6.4 At-Large and Ward System Review



Board Priority:

- Celebrating and Promoting Catholic Identity
- Improving Student Learning and Achievement
- Building Relationships and Partnerships
- Promoting Stewardship

Presented by: Director of Education, F. Rivard

Background Information:

As a part of the March 2025 Board Retreat, newly elected Trustees participated in a post-election debrief with the goal to improve our election processes based on the November 2024 election experience. The notes from the election review were intentioned to assist with preparations and processes for the anticipated 2028 municipal elections. Resulting from this review, the board further requested historic information regarding the ward system and the at-large system specific to previous Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools board deliberations on the electoral process. The Board received this historic review report in May 2025.

At the December 15, 2025, board meeting, a board motion moved that *The administration prepares and presents a report outlining the implications, benefits, challenges, and procedural requirements associated with transitioning from the current At-Large electoral process to a Ward System electoral process for the 2028 Civic Election*. This public report intends to provide the board with the information requested.

Community Consultation

Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools is committed to governance practices that are transparent, inclusive, and responsive to the communities we serve. The structure of trustee elections plays an important role in how representation, accountability, and voice are experienced within a Catholic school division.

As the Board considers the implications of a potential transition from the current At-Large electoral system to a Ward-based system for the 2028 Civic Election, it is important that this work be informed by a clear understanding of community perspectives. After discussing the information within this report, should the board wish to continue to explore a change in electoral system, a community consultation process should take place.

A community consultation process is intended to ensure that trustees, parents, staff, diocesan partners, and community members have access to accurate information and meaningful opportunities to share their insights. Below are the suggested steps, in order, that administration proposes to be included in a community consultation process.

A) Meeting with the Bishops of the Diocese and Eparchy

- a. As elected officials, trustees are called to represent the views and beliefs of their constituents as well as safeguard the integrity of Catholic education, ensuring Gospel virtues are upheld in their decision-making.
- b. Should the board decide to proceed with a consultation, administration suggests that the board prioritize a meeting with the bishops of both the diocese and the eparchy prior to a more fulsome community consultation. Doing this would help the board better understand these perspectives further to the letters received from our bishops by administration, which are provided for reference as follows:
 - Attachment 6.4.1: January 12, 2026 Bishop Hagemoen Letter to GSCS Trustees
 - Attachment 6.4.2: January 7, 2026 Bishop Smolinski Letter to F. Rivard

B) Information Evenings

Currently, administration has not received any public request to review the electoral system. These information evenings would be based on requests made to trustees during the most recent (November 2024) election campaign.

- a. Following a meeting with the bishops, information sessions to inform our community would be needed so that community members and partners are better prepared to provide robust feedback to the board. The consultation meeting intent and hoped for outcomes will need to be clearly outlined to the public to maximize engagement.
- b. A second consideration is the purpose for the community consultation, which will need to be framed as a way to inform community about options and seek their feedback. It would need to be clear that the outcome of the consultation would not be a vote, rather one piece of input data used to inform the board's decision.
- c. Two information sessions of approximately 60-90 minutes are suggested for the fall of 2026, and should align with the following suggested parameters:
 - One session on each side of the City of Saskatoon
 - Recorded or virtual consideration
 - Overview of the board role – governance vs administration
 - Overview of the two electoral systems – including pros and cons
 - Sharing the current electoral context in GSCS and Saskatchewan Catholic Boards
 - Share the historical review process undertaken to date within GSCS
 - Present options including status quo and two possible ward scenarios
 - Small group feedback of benefits and challenges to the division

d. Community Survey

- An on-line community survey would be sent out for additional feedback. This survey will include summarizing documents and/or a pre-recorded information session.
- The survey would be shared with GSCS families, staff, the diocese, and the eparchy. This would include our families and partners in Humboldt, Biggar, Warman, and Martensville. The intent is to allow any Catholic voters to have input into this survey. It is important to note that reaching Catholic voters who are not closely affiliated with the schools, the diocese or the eparchy will be challenging.
- Suggested Survey Questions:
 1. Confirmation that they are eligible Catholic voters
 2. Their role (parent, clergy, community member, staff, etc.)
 3. Where do you currently reside (City and neighbourhood or RM)?
 4. Do you support the board moving from the current At-Large electoral system to a Ward electoral system? Why or why not?
 5. If a Ward system were implemented, would you support:
 - i. Creating seven (7) City of Saskatoon Wards to avoid having to blend current subdivisions (Warman Martensville / Warman, Humboldt and Biggar) into Saskatoon Wards?
 - ii. Blend current sub-divisions (Warman & Martensville / Warman, Humboldt and Biggar) into three (3) of the current ten City of Saskatoon Wards.
 6. Other comments

Review of At-Large and Ward Electoral Systems

At-Large Electoral System

Description: Trustees are elected by Catholic voters across the entire sub-division. All trustees represent the whole Catholic community, not a defined geographic area.

Pros

- Subdivision-wide perspective: Trustees are accountable to the entire electorate, encouraging decisions that prioritize the overall mission and wellbeing of the division.
- Mission-first governance: Particularly aligned with Catholic education, where trustees represent the Church's educational mandate, not solely local interests.
- Flexibility in representation: Trustees can advocate for any school, family, or issue across the division without geographic constraint.
- Simpler administration: No need to draw or periodically revise ward boundaries.
- Broader candidate pool: May increase the diversity of skills, experience, and leadership backgrounds.

Cons

- Campaign barriers: Running division-wide may favour candidates with greater name recognition, networks, or resources.
- Geographic imbalance: Trustees may reside disproportionately in certain areas, even if elected fairly.
- Less localized accountability: Voters may feel unclear about “which trustee is theirs.”

Ward-Based Electoral System

Description: The Saskatoon sub-division is divided into geographic wards. Trustees are elected by and represent a specific ward.

Pros

- Clear local representation: Each geographic area has a designated trustee, which can strengthen community connection and accountability.
- Lower campaign barriers: Smaller electorates may make it easier for new or diverse candidates to run.
- Fairness: Communities may feel more equitably represented across the city or division.
- Stronger local advocacy: Trustees may have deeper awareness of issues specific to their ward.

Cons

- Risk of parochialism: Trustees may feel pressure to prioritize ward interests over division-wide or mission-driven decisions.
- Mission tension: Catholic boards represent a faith community, not just geography; ward structures may unintentionally shift focus toward civic rather than ecclesial representation.
- Boundary challenges: Drawing wards can be complex and contentious, particularly with changing enrolment and population patterns.
- Unequal influence: Differences in ward size or engagement can create perceived imbalances in voice.
- Reduced flexibility: Trustees may feel constrained when advocating outside their ward.
- The approved number of seats by the Ministry of Education only allows for ten trustees. As the city population increases, more wards are likely to be added, therefore, ward elected trustee representation would need to be reconsidered.

Key Governance Consideration

Neither system is inherently better or worse. Each reflects a different understanding of representation:

- At-Large systems emphasize collective responsibility and mission alignment.
- Ward systems emphasize geographic voice and localized accountability.

The question for the Board is not simply one of structure, but of which model best supports Catholic governance, equitable representation, and effective stewardship in the local context.

Procedural Requirements

City of Saskatoon

In their review of the *The Local Government Election Act* (LGEA) and *The Education Act*, the City confirmed that there are no civic requirements specific to the number of wards that a board determines. When asked regarding logistics to move to a ward system, the easiest would be a mirror of the Saskatoon civic wards. Scenarios where multiple civic wards are combined to create school division wards increase administrative complexity leading to an increase in election administration costs and increases risks of voter confusion.

If the board was to move to a ward system that required subdivisions outside Saskatoon to combine with existing civic wards, the City suggests that if a subdivision falls outside of city boundaries, the school division should consider having those outside subdivisions report to one specific already established ward, taking into consideration the population representations for the ward. For example, all voters that reside outside of city boundaries within the school division will vote at polling station XXX in Ward X. Finally, the City shared that notice should come by January 2028 to facilitate a change towards system.

Ministry of Education

The process to apply for the alteration of boundaries of subdivisions in accordance with section 7 of *The School Division Administration Act* is as follows:

1. Determine the boundaries of the subdivisions for the city of Saskatoon.
 - a. At this time, GSCS has three (3) existing subdivisions, plus seven (7) At-Large for the City of Saskatoon.
 - b. The board may choose to use the city wards or amalgamate according to needs specific to GSCS.
 - c. Consultation with your voters is recommended.
2. GSCS would be required to draw a map of the subdivision lines, including boundaries of each subdivision to be clearly noted.
3. A public board approval of the changes to be made to the boundaries is required.
4. GSCS would submit a formal request to the Minister through the Legislative Services and Privacy Unit, Ministry of Education (ed.legservices@gov.sk.ca). As a part of this request, GSCS would be required to include the map, evidence of the Board approval, the implications of the change, what the benefits are, etc. for the request.
5. The ministry would consider the request, have a new draft map created, prepare a draft Minister's Order and other documentation, as required.
6. The package would be submitted to the Minister for his consideration.
7. The ministry would communicate the Minister's decision to the Board.

There are several sections within *The School Division Administration Act, 2015* that speak to elections. Excerpts from *The School Division Administration Regulations* as confirmation by the legislation requirements cited below.

- Section 4(1) is irrelevant at this point. GSCS is an established school division and has been divided already. This would only be relevant to a new school division.
- Section 5(3)(b) and the January 1st date is also irrelevant, as GSCS has too large of a population to allow for the election of more than one person per subdivision. This would be more for a smaller school division that had only a few subdivisions but wanted a larger board.
- Section 6(1)(a) is relevant for GSCS. No school division may have more than 10 board members, unless as per sections 7(7) and 7(3)(b), the number of board members is increased due to the creation of a subdivision that consists of one or more Indian reserves or parts of Indian reserves, if the board of education has entered into an agreement with the Indian reserve or the Government of Canada.
- If the GSCS board wants to have more than 10 subdivisions, one of these must include one or more Indian reserves (or part thereof), and the board must have entered into an agreement with the reserve(s) or the Government of Canada. If that is not the case, then the limit would be 10.

It is important to note that the ministry has requested two (2) months to complete the work in numbers 4-7. Since this approval is needed prior to moving to the city of Saskatoon's required items, the board would need to submit this formal request by October 2027 to facilitate a change for the November 2028 elections.

- Attachment 6.4.3: School Division Administration Regulations Verifications.

Ministry of Government Relations

The Ministry of Government Relations is responsible for [The Local Government Election Act, 2015 \(LGEA\)](#). This Act establishes how local elections, including those for school divisions, are conducted, but does not address the process for establishing wards. The establishment of Wards is set out in [The School Division Administration Act](#). The LGEA does not contain any additional requirements related to that process. If GSCS implements a ward system prior to the next local election in 2028, certain requirements under the LGEA will be different than under our current at-large model.

These include the locations for posting of election notices; the placement of polling areas and polling locations; criteria for collecting nomination signatures; and the form of the ballots used.

Saskatchewan School Boards Association (SSBA) Legal Review

- 1) There are no concerns noted as long as the process from the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Government Relations are followed.
- 2) It was confirmed that Sections 4 and 5 of the *School Division Regulations* would not be relevant to a possible electoral change as those are specific to new school divisions.

Historical Review of At-Large and Ward Systems

The review of electoral systems is not new to Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools. This topic has come to the board on several occasions since the 1980s. Over the years the decision to have an At-Large system was based on a few key elements:

- The Catholic population was not evenly distributed in the city.
- The configuration and population of Catholic schools would not be evenly distributed in relation to civic wards.
- Trustees have a twofold mandate, one from the electorate, the other from the bishops who delegate teaching responsibility to a group of people chosen by that electorate.
- Trustees must feel a sense of responsibility to represent as wide a community as possible rather than small segments.

The following appendices intend to bring forward the documented discussions from the past 45 years. Please consider the following appendices as supplemental information for review.

- Appendix A: The Ward System for City School Divisions – Saskatchewan Teachers Federation (June 1980)
- Appendix B: Saskatoon Public School Division Consultation Results – 1996
- Appendix C: Samples of newspaper clippings 1997
- Appendix D: Saskatoon Catholic Report on the merits of two systems 1998
- Appendix E: Saskatoon Catholic Schools - A Position Paper on the Ward System - January 5, 1981
- Appendix F: Principals Association Position Paper December, 1, 1981
- Appendix G: Submission to the Saskatchewan Educational Boundaries Commission by Saskatoon Catholic Board of Education December 1, 1981
- Appendix H: Four Wards Proposal of 1981
- Appendix I: Letter from Bishop James Mahoney Catholic High School Parent Council (2000)
- Appendix J: Response letter to Bishop James Mahoney Catholic High School Parent Council from the Director of Education
- Appendix K: Map of Saskatoon GSCS schools according to current electoral boundaries
- Appendix L: GSCS Statistics by Ward, with Parish information and Enrolment Data (May 2025)
- Appendix M: City of Saskatoon Ward Map with Parish Information by Ward
- Appendix N: City of Saskatoon Ward Map with Subdivisions Amalgamated into Wards
- Appendix O: City of Saskatoon Ward Map, Proposed Seven Amalgamated Wards

Correspondence

During past electoral system reviews, boards would have received multiple communications either endorsing the At-Large system, the Ward system or suggesting other options. Provided following is a chart outlining the various communications that are in our archives. It is important to note that communications sent directly to division administration have not been included as these may not have been intended for public consumption. Any communications to the board or elected officials have been determined as public.

Ward vs At-Large System - Archived Correspondence Review Arranged by Date

<u>Organization or Person:</u>	<u>Date:</u>	<u>General Direction:</u>
<u>Sent By:</u> H. Leier, SK Provincial Convener of Education, CWL Canada	<u>Addressed to:</u> D. McArthur, Minister of Education June 14, 1980	against ward system
Rev. L.A. Kennedy, President St. Thomas More College	Hon. Roy Romanow, Dep. Premier & Att. Gen January 7, 1981	against ward system
R.L. Kleiter, Pastor of Parish of the Holy Spirit	Dear Sir (government) January 8, 1981	shares concerns with ward system, but would support ward system, if it respected parish boundaries
P. Renihan, Secretary, St. Anne's Parish Council	D. McArthur, Minister of Education February 3, 1981	strongly opposed to ward system
Rev. D. Phaneuf, Pastor, Holy Family Parish	letter sent to MLAs, Premier & Min. of Ed. February 13, 1981	against ward system
M.J. Olauson, Principal on behalf of Holy Family Parish Council	W. Podiluk, Director of Education February 18, 1981	against ward system
J.P. Mahoney, Bishop of Saskatoon	Hon. A. Blakeney, Premier February 20, 1981	against ward system
J. Simonot, Chair, St. Philip's School Community Association	Hon. Douglas McArthur, Min. of Education March 26, 1981	against ward system
W.M. Owchar, President Knights of Columbus - Saskatoon	P. Hamel, Saskatoon Catholic Board November 23, 1981	full support of four zone proposal
J.P. Mahoney, Bishop of Saskatoon	I.J. Wilson, SK Ed. Boundaries Commission November 30, 1981	support for four zone proposal
St. Michael's Catholic Women's League, H. Bitz, President	P. Hamel, Saskatoon Catholic Board December 2, 1981	supports four zone/ward proposal of Podiluk
Catholic Section; Saskatchewan School Trustees Association	Hon. G Devine, Premier Hon. G. Currie, Minister of Education May 20, 1982	Opposes wards - Supports At-Large system
Director of Education, W. Podiluk	Hon. G. Currie, Minister of Education May 19, 1982	request to repeal the ward system (ward system had been legislated)

Ward vs At-Large System - Archived Correspondence Review Arranged by Date

<u>Organization or Person:</u>	<u>Date:</u>	<u>General Direction:</u>
<u>Sent By:</u> L.S. Frison, Chairman, Regina Catholic Schools	- <u>Addressed to:</u> Hon. G Devine, Premier Hom. G. Currie, Minister of Education	May 10, 1982 Supporting At-Large system; expressed concern for ward system
G. Makahonuk, President CUPE Saskatchewan	Mayor Henry Dayday	November 4, 1993 strongly supports ward system, representing CUPE SK

Board Composition – Saskatchewan School Boards Association Information

The Saskatchewan School Boards Association (SSBA) legal team is a resource that the board should consider using if the decision is made to change electoral systems.

As the board considers electoral systems, the composition of wards will come up. As a reminder to the board, on January 9, 2006, a news release indicated that GSCS welcomed three new board members, as a part of the school board amalgamations. GSCS added to the seven-trustee board subdivision 1 (Rural areas around Saskatoon, including Martensville and Warman), 2 (Humboldt), and 3 (Biggar). With the amalgamations, the division at that time consisted of 40 elementary and high schools in Saskatoon and a total of four elementary schools in Biggar, Humboldt and Viscount. Since 2006, our total student enrolment has grown from 14,987 students, to over 23,000 students, this reflects an increase in enrolment of over 8,000 students.

More recently, the SSBA has advocated to the Saskatchewan Government on behalf of school divisions to increase the participation of Indigenous candidates in the electoral process. Legislation, as it stands, does not enable a “spot” or seat for Indigenous trusteeship.

Below are two appendices that evidence this work.

Appendix 1: SSBA Letter to Minister McMorris and Minister Duncan – June 30, 2022

Appendix 2: SSBA Consultation on Increasing Indigenous Trusteeship through *The Local Government Election Act, 2015* and *The Local Government Election Regulations, 2015* - June 2022

Current Saskatchewan Catholic School Boards

Saskatchewan currently has eight Catholic school divisions. Below are the electoral systems used during the 2024 board elections.

- [Light of Christ School Division](#)
 - Five (5) trustees elected At-Large for the city of North Battleford (5 seats)
 - One (1) trustee elected in the Unity Subdivision
 - One (1) trustee elected in the Spiritwood Subdivision

- [Regina School Division](#)
 - Seven (7) trustees elected At-Large

- [Greater Saskatoon Catholic School Division](#)
 - Seven (7) trustees elected At-Large for the city of Saskatoon
 - One (1) trustee elected in Subdivision # 1 (Rural areas around Saskatoon, including Martensville and Warman),
 - One (1) trustee elected in Subdivision # 2 (Humboldt)
 - One (1) trustee elected in Subdivision # 3 (Biggar)

- [Prince Albert Catholic School Division](#)
 - Six (6) trustees elected At-Large for the city of Prince Albert
 - One (1) Trustee elected for Subdivision 2 (Rural)

- [Lloydminster Catholic School Division](#)
 - Seven (7) trustees elected At-Large

- [Holy Trinity School Division](#)
 - Four (4) Trustees elected At-Large for the city of Moose Jaw
 - One (1) Trustee elected for the city of Swift Current
 - One (1) Trustee elected for the town of Shaunavon

- [Holy Family School Division](#)
 - Two (2) trustees elected At-Large for the city of Weyburn
 - Two (2) trustees elected At-Large for the city of Estevan
 - One (1) Trustee elected for Subdivision 2 (Town of Radville & Radville Rural)
 - One (1) Trustee elected for Subdivision 3 (Spruce Ridge Rural)
 - One (1) Trustee elected for Subdivision 4 (Queen Elizabeth Rural)
 - One (1) Trustee elected for Subdivision 5 (Town of Milestone)
 - One (1) Trustee elected for Subdivision 6 (Village of Wilcox)

- [Christ the Teacher School Division](#)
 - Three (3) Trustees elected At-Large for the city of Yorkton
 - Two (2) Trustees elected At-Large for the city of Melville
 - One (1) Trustee elected for Subdivision 1 (Theodore & surrounding rural area)
 - One (1) Trustee elected for Subdivision 2 (Geographic area surrounding Melville)
 - One (1) Trustee elected for Subdivision 3 (Rural area surrounding Yorkton)

Current GSCS Stats

Appendix: M is a visual representation of the current City of Saskatoon Wards. On the map are the Catholic parishes and GSCS schools. The chart below provides an overview of our division enrolment data if the current ward system was adopted at this point in time. **Appendix L** provides the comprehensive data that the following chart was based upon.

Ward:	GSCS Schools:	Parishes by Ward:	Total Student Enrolment
Ward 1	Four total : FIL, PAU, EDW, MIC, VOL	4	1,081
Ward 2	Six total: FRE, DOM, JOH, MAY, CYB, EDF	5	1,668
Ward 3	Five total: ROB, VAC, MAG, MAK, BET	1	2,981
Ward 4	Five total: KLE, GER, PET, LOR, GOR	1	2,186
Ward 5	Five total: OBR, TER, ANG, ANN, GEO	1	2,256
Ward 6	Three total: MAT, BMH, OSK	4	1,048
Ward 7	Four total: VAN, FRA, KAT, PHI	1	1,967
Ward 8	Four total: POC, LEG, AUG, FRB	1	1,007
Ward 9	Five total: PJP, BER, LUK, THE, HCH	3	3,380
Ward 10	Four total: RBI, FAM, NIC, JOE	1	3,370
Sub 1	Two total: HMA, HTR	7	872
Sub 2	Three total: HAU, HDO, HCI	2	554
Sub 3	One total: BGA	1	175

**Data does not include home school enrolment.*

Civic Wards in Saskatoon

The City of Saskatoon has 10 civic wards. The Cities Act prescribes that a review be done at least once every three election cycles. The last review was in 2023. Wards are designed to have proportional representation. If the population of any one ward varies by 10 per cent or more from the average ward population, a review must be conducted, according to The Cities Act. As the city population grows, it is expected that reviews will happen regularly, so residents are fairly represented on council. The addition of new wards is a possibility in the future, but there are no plans to increase the number of wards at this time.

- Implementation of changes must be made at least 180 days before the next election for it to take effect in that next election.
- The city's Municipal Wards Commission reviews and recommends changes to ward boundaries.
 - In recent history, reviews were conducted in 2003, 2012, 2016, 2020, and 2023.
 - As an example, 2023 review identified that Ward 2's population was below the acceptable variance, while Ward 7's population exceeded it, prompting boundary adjustments.
- Another review is anticipated as early as 2027.
- If the city's population continues to grow, the Municipal Wards Commission or the administration may recommend to council an amendment to [Bylaw 7372, The Ward System](#) [Bylaw, 1993](#) to consider increasing the number of wards so that residents are represented fairly on council.

Possible Ward Scenarios

Should the board decide to move to a Ward system, the number and composition of the Wards would need to be decided. Below are initial scenarios that could be considered. All scenarios assume a board of 10 trustees as this is the maximum number of trustees allowed as stated in *The School Division Administration Act*. In the scenarios below, should the City of Saskatoon increase from 10 wards and if the GSCS board wishes to increase their board to match the ward number, there would need to be a request to the Ministry for an amendment to *The School Division Administration Act*.

Scenario #1 – 10 Saskatoon Wards Blended with 3 Subdivisions

- This would require blending our current three subdivisions into current Saskatoon Wards to create a more balanced school and student population representation.
 - An initial suggestion could be to combine:
 - Ward 5 with GSCS subdivision 1 (Rural areas around Saskatoon, including Martensville and Warman),
 - Ward 8 with GSCS subdivision 2 (Humboldt)
 - Ward 3 with GSCS subdivision 3 (Biggar)
 - Changes to the City of Saskatoon's Wards may require future GSCS Ward changes.
 - Changing Ward boundaries may create challenges operationally during elections.
 - Will our previous subdivisions have the same local representation?
- Appendix N: City Ward Map reflecting the combining of wards as noted, including enrollment totals.

Scenario #2 - 10 GSCS Trustees – Create 7 GSCS Saskatoon wards and keep the same Sub-divisions

- This would increase the size of the Saskatoon wards in the number of schools, students and sometimes parishes.
 - This would ensure our current subdivisions remain unchanged.
 - This would require blending Civic wards to reduce the number by three. This may need to be changed should the City add wards.
- Appendix O: City of Saskatoon Ward Map with Seven Wards (example of amalgamation of ten wards into seven wards).

Recommendation:

That the board of education directs administration to prepare for the 2028 Trustee election using the current At-large system that includes 3 subdivisions.

Or

That administration to proceed with a consultation process and report back on the results of the consultations at which time the board will determine the path forward.



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January 12, 2026

TO: Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools (GSCS) Board of Directors

c/o Francois Rivard
Director of Education
Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools
420 22nd Street East
Saskatoon, SK, S7K 1X3

Dear GSCS Board of Directors.

I am responding to the request that I review the “At Large and Ward System Review” document and provide my feedback.

I begin by declaring that I prefer the current “At-Large” system versus the “Ward System” for electing GSCS Board of Trustee candidates.

My reasons are as follows:

1) While both systems have their features and relative deficiencies, I believe there may be greater problems with the “Ward System” - especially in terms of meaningful and strong engagement of the trustees regarding appropriate governance and committee discernment about the overall issues. Many of these come out of our much larger urban context.

2) I do not have the impression that the current “At Large” system is not functioning well, including in terms of the issue of representation of the wider community outside the City of Saskatoon. If this was ever to be determined to be the case, there may be another intermediary strategy to consider before changing the entire electoral system.

3) While the “Ward System” may have features that may seem to better address wider community representation, the expectation that this will therefore provide meaningful and engaging responsibility does not necessarily follow. This is always a challenge, and needs to be a targeted issue. Expecting the Ward system to rectify an unclear problem regarding “wider representation” in fact may create greater difficulties – such as trustees from smaller regions trying to engage in all of the developing and challenging issues of the larger school system.

4) Achieving representation from various cultural groups that make up the population of our schools is always important. In addition to be officially a bilingual country, we also continue to commit ourselves to the Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in building relationship with our Indigenous community.

I am grateful to see in our Catholic school system that we are doing a pretty good job from a governance perspective of addressing our very multi-ethnic and multi-cultural environment AND, at the same time, always staying committed to and building on our identity and mission as a Catholic educational system. As we continue to see many other cultural and ethnic groups come to Saskatoon and seek education through GSCS, this will continue to be a wonderful challenge I know we all look forward to.

5) In terms of other voices, I might suggest to considering to include the following:

- a. The chair-persons or designated members of various Parish Pastoral Councils;
- b. Pastors and/ or other clergy involved in pastoral care of our Catholic schools;
- c. Parents of families who have children/ youth in our GSCS schools.

Of course, any of these suggestions would require some way to choose individuals who have some awareness of the governance structure and general administrative responsibilities and activities of the Board of Trustees. Perhaps this can be supported through a specially prepared pre-recorded video commentary aimed at providing a general overview and scope of Trustee responsibilities, key governance and administrative features and priorities.

I take this opportunity to thank you all for your diligence on this issue, and for your service as Trustees.

Sincerely in Christ,



✠ Mark A. Hagemoen



UKRAINIAN CATHOLIC
EPARCHY OF SASKATOON

УКРАЇНСЬКА КАТОЛИЦЬКА ЕПАРХІЯ САСКАТУНУ

214 Ave M South, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, S7M 2K4

306-653-0138 ext. 224 Fax: 306-665-2569 Email: bishopms@skeparchy.org

January 7, 2026

Ref: 2026-01-07-01-MS

Re: ward system for future trustee elections

Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools
Board of Education
420 22 St E, Saskatoon, SK S7K 1X3

Christ is born!

Dear GSCS Board of Education,

I am writing to you today to state my preference for an at-large system of electing trustees for GSCS as opposed to a ward system.

The reasons for this opinion come mainly from a concern for families who send their children to Bishop Filevich Ukrainian Bilingual School. Parents who send their children to Bishop Filevich Ukrainian Bilingual School live all around Saskatoon; therefore, they might be a lack of representation and understanding of these families' needs by a trustee representing where a family lives but not where their children attend school. I also don't see the current system as being inadequate.

God bless your good work and the many difficult decisions you have to make. Know that I will support you in whatever decision you come to on this issue.

Yours in Christ,

Bishop Michael Smolinski, C.Ss.R.

Bishop Michael Smolinski, C.Ss.R.
Bishop of the Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy of Saskatoon



As cited within the board paper regarding the At-Large and Ward System Review, the following excerpts are provided for reference from *The School Division Administration Regulations* document, being the Chapter E-0.2 Reg26 (effective September 1, 2027) as amended by Saskatchewan Regulations 27/2018 and 85/2023.

The School Division Administration Regulations

being

[Chapter E-0.2 Reg 26](#) (effective September 1, 2017) as amended by Saskatchewan Regulations [27/2018](#) and [85/2023](#).

Reference 1: Section 4(1) and excerpt

- Section 4(1) is irrelevant at this point. GSCS is an established school division and has been divided already. This would only be relevant to a new school division.
- This section is found on page 3 of the publicly available pdf document.

PART 2

Establishment of School Divisions and Subdivisions

School divisions and subdivisions

4(1) If a school division comprises an area greater than 1 295 square kilometres, the minister shall divide the school division into any number of subdivisions that may be required for the purposes of the election of the members of the board of education.

Reference 2: Section 5(3)(b) and excerpt

- Section 5(3)(b) and the January 1st date is also irrelevant, as GSCS has too large of a population to allow for the election of more than one person per subdivision. This would be more for a smaller school division that had only a few subdivisions but wanted a larger board.
- This section is found on page of the publicly available pdf document.

Election of subdivision representatives

- 5(1) If a school division is divided into subdivisions pursuant to clause 4(5)(b):
- (a) subject to subsection (3), one person is to be elected as a member of the board of education from each subdivision; and
 - (b) the other members of the board of education are to be elected at large from the area of the school division located inside the city or town.
- (2) If a school division is divided into subdivisions pursuant to clause 4(5)(c):
- (a) subject to subsection (3), the electors of each subdivision of the city or town shall elect one member as the member of the board of education for that subdivision; and
 - (b) the members of the board of education to be elected from the area of the school division located outside the city or town are to be elected at large by the electors resident in the area located outside the city or town.
- (3) Notwithstanding subsection (1) or (2), if a school division is divided into subdivisions pursuant to clause 4(5)(b) or (c), the minister may approve a request from the board of education to allow for the election of more than one representative from each subdivision to serve as members of the board of education if:
- (a) the board of education submits the request to the minister in writing;
 - (b) the request is received by the minister on or before January 1 of the year in which an election of members of the board of education is to be held; and

Reference 3: Section 6(1)(a) and excerpt

- Section 6(1)(a) is relevant for GSCS. No school division may have more than 10 board members..., unless as per section 7(7) and 7(3)(b), the number of board members is increased due to the creation of a subdivision that consists of one or more Indian reserves or parts of Indian reserves, if the board of education has entered into an agreement with the Indian reserve or the Government of Canada.

Order establishing school division - first election

- 6(1) Every minister's order made pursuant to section 42 of the Act establishing a school division must:
- (a) subject to subsection 7(7), state the number of members that constitutes the board of education, which shall be not less than 5 nor more than 10; and

Reference 4: Section 7(7) and excerpts

- ... unless as per section 7(7) or ...

Alteration of boundaries of school division or subdivision

7(1) Subject to subsection 54(2) of the Act, the minister may, by order, alter the boundaries of a school division or a subdivision:

- (a) on the petition of one or more electors with respect to parcels of land owned or leased by the elector or electors;
- (b) on the request, separately or jointly, of two or more boards of education with respect to land that is within, or contiguous to, the school divisions concerned;
- (c) on the request of a board of education; or
- (d) if the minister considers it to be in the interests of education to do so.

(7) If a subdivision is created pursuant to clause (3)(b), the number of members of the board of education is to be increased by one member for that subdivision notwithstanding the maximum number of members permitted pursuant to clause 6(1)(a).

- ... 7(3)(b), the number of board members is increased due to the creation of a subdivision that consists of one or more Indian reserves or parts of Indian reserves, if the board of education has entered into an agreement with the Indian reserve or the Government of Canada.

Alteration of boundaries of school division or subdivision

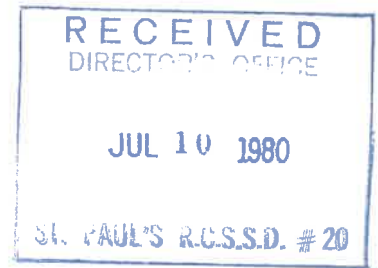
7(1) Subject to subsection 54(2) of the Act, the minister may, by order, alter the boundaries of a school division or a subdivision:

- (a) on the petition of one or more electors with respect to parcels of land owned or leased by the elector or electors;
- (b) on the request, separately or jointly, of two or more boards of education with respect to land that is within, or contiguous to, the school divisions concerned;
- (c) on the request of a board of education; or
- (d) if the minister considers it to be in the interests of education to do so.

(2) If a school division includes most or all of a city or town and the limits of that city or town are altered to include lands that are not within the school division, the boundaries of the school division are deemed to be similarly altered to include those lands.

(3) The minister may, by order:

- (a) create a subdivision and provide for the election and term of office of a member to represent the subdivision on the board of education;
- (b) create a subdivision consisting of one or more Indian reserves or parts of Indian reserves if the board of education has entered into an agreement with an Indian band or with the Government of Canada;**
- (c) transfer any subdivision created pursuant to clause (b) from one school division to another school division if the council of one of the Indian bands or the councils of the Indian bands in the subdivision and the school divisions to be affected by the transfer agree to the transfer;
- (d) disestablish a subdivision; or
- (e) renumber subdivisions.



THE WARD SYSTEM FOR CITY SCHOOL DIVISION ELECTIONS

A Submission

by the

SASKATCHEWAN TEACHERS' FEDERATION

to

Professor Dan de Vlieger

June, 1980

Professor de Vlieger:

We note with interest that you have been appointed by the Minister of Education, Hon. D. McArthur, to conduct a study into the feasibility and advisability of adopting the ward system in the election of Boards of Education in Saskatchewan cities.

The Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation is the professional organization representing all elementary and secondary school teachers -- about 11,400 in total -- in the Province of Saskatchewan. We therefore are keenly interested in all matters affecting the organization and administration of public education. We are pleased to have this opportunity to provide comments on the issue which you have been assigned to study.

* * * * *

The essence of the "ward" system is, of course, not new to governmental elections. The "constituency" has existed in provincial and federal government elections since Confederation. In local government, a kind of "constituency" has been utilized when the size of the area or the size of the population is relatively large. Examples include the sub-units of the Larger School Units (1945-1978) and, in recent years, the division system adopted in Saskatchewan's two largest cities.

It is of interest to note that on two occasions in Saskatchewan's history, provincial government plans to alter the basis of local government were met with opposition from the existing local governments. In 1945, a plan was announced to reorganize more than 5,000 local school districts into sixty larger school units. In the mid-1970's, a plan was announced to introduce the ward system for municipal elections in Regina and Saskatoon.

On both these occasions, the change was opposed by the existing local governments; but both times the plan, when put to a vote of the people after it had had a trial period, was strongly endorsed.

We believe that public education in Saskatchewan should continue to be administered by fiscally autonomous boards of education. We would not, for example, support the introduction of a county system. There is, however, a need for a considerable degree of parallelism between local municipal government and local school government. It would be foolish, for instance, to operate dual systems for property tax collection. It appears to us that, in cities that have a ward system for municipal elections, there would be considerable merit in also having a ward system for electing the board of education. If the same wards were to be used for both municipal and education elections, however, it would be essential that the ward boundaries be devised with both purposes in mind. Therefore, it would be highly desirable that a boundaries commission that established or revised the ward boundaries would include persons well acquainted with both the municipal and the educational requirements and realities.

It is obvious that a ward system would not be practicable in every school division in Saskatchewan. A few of the divisions are so small as to be wholly contained within a town or village, operate only one school, and employ fewer than one dozen teachers. A ward system in such a school division would clearly be out of the question. Even the smaller cities may not have the size in population or area to justify the change.

In general, therefore, we would support the introduction of the ward system for education in the two largest cities, and in such other cities where the ward system may subsequently be introduced for municipal purposes.

- 3 -

In the last few years we have observed two occurrences that have influenced our thinking on this issue. The first is that, since wards have been introduced for municipal purposes in Regina and Saskatoon, the people elected to city councils appear to be drawn from a wider cross-section of the society; we see this development as desirable. Our other observation is that some school board elections in the two cities have become almost unmanageable from the viewpoint of the elector. The most extreme example was the ballot in the last election in the Regina Public School Division -- over two dozen candidates for the seven positions! It appears to us that, in large cities, the existing system for school board elections awards an undue advantage to the incumbent.

Respectfully submitted,

SASKATCHEWAN TEACHERS' FEDERATION

Karen M. Rongve,
President.

Stirling McDowell,
General Secretary.



**Saskatoon
Board of
Education**

Caring to Learn - Learning to Care

6.4.4
Appendix B: Saskatoon Public School Division Consultation Results 1996
Regular Meeting of the Board, May 4, 2026

405 Third Avenue South, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan S7K 1M7
Tel: (306) 683-8200 • Fax: (306) 683-8207

P.J. Dickson, Director of Education

October 8, 1996

MEMORANDUM:

TO: Board Trustees

FROM: Director of Education

**RE: "A WARD SYSTEM
FOR THE
SASKATOON PUBLIC SCHOOL BOARD":
CITIZENS' ADVISORY COUNCIL REPORT**

A report on "A WARD SYSTEM FOR THE SASKATOON PUBLIC SCHOOL BOARD" has been prepared by the CITIZENS' ADVISORY COUNCIL. The report fulfils the request from the Saskatoon Board of Education to gather parents' views on the use of a ward system for the election of Trustees.

The report will be presented by a CAC Committee chaired by Dalton Tamney, who authored the report. A copy of the report is included in this file.

Recommendation

That the Saskatoon Board of Education receive from the Citizens' Advisory Council a report entitled A WARD SYSTEM FOR THE SASKATOON PUBLIC SCHOOL BOARD; and extend appreciation to the Citizens' Advisory Council for the comprehensive endeavour in providing the report.

PJD:la

Attachment

P. J. Dickson (Mrs.),
DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION,
SASKATOON BOARD OF EDUCATION.



**Saskatoon
Board of
Education**

Caring to Learn - Learning to Care

P.J. Dickson, Director of Education

MEMORANDUM:

October 1, 1996

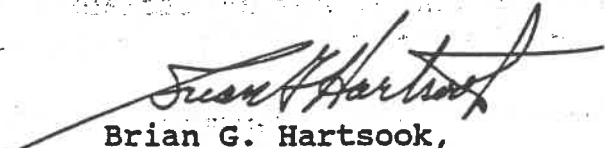
TO: Director of Education

**FROM: Superintendent of
Planning and Communication**

RE: C.A.C. REPORT - THE WARD SYSTEM

Last year the Citizens' Advisory Council undertook a study of the ward system for election of School Board Trustees. The study was conducted at the request of the Board. Attached is a copy of the C.A.C. report.

Judy Edwards and Dalton Tamney will be available to speak to the report at the October 15 Board Meeting.


**Brian G. Hartsook,
SUPERINTENDENT OF
PLANNING AND COMMUNICATION.**



**Saskatoon
Board of
Education**

Caring to Learn - Learning to Care

6.4.4
Appendix B: Saskatoon Public School Division Consultation Results 1996

Regular Meeting of the Board May 4, 2026

405 Third Avenue South, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan S7K 1M7

Tel: (306) 683-8200 • Fax: (306) 683-8207

P.J. Dickson, Director of Education

June 12, 1996

Board of Trustees,
Saskatoon Board of Education,
405 Third Avenue South,
SASKATOON, Saskatchewan.
S7K 1M7

Dear Mrs. Hnatyshyn:

Please find attached the report from the Citizens' Advisory Council committee on Ward/At Large Voting Systems. This committee was chaired by Dalton Tamney, who authored the report.

The Citizens' Advisory Council executive requests that the Board accept the report "A Ward System for the Saskatoon Public School Board".

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Judy Edwards,
PRESIDENT,
CITIZENS' ADVISORY COUNCIL.

A WARD SYSTEM FOR THE SASKATOON PUBLIC SCHOOL BOARD

BACKGROUND

In the Fall of 1995, the Trustees of the Saskatoon Public School Board asked the Citizens' Advisory Council (CAC) to gather parents' views on the use of a ward system for the election of Trustees. The Council accepted the task and formed a Ward Study Committee of members to carry it out. No funds or additional resources were offered or assigned.

METHODOLOGY

The Committee, in consultation with the CAC Executive, decided that the best approach would be a survey of school parents utilizing a questionnaire (Attachment 1). However, we further determined this should be preceded by an information meeting, possibly in conjunction with a Parents' Association meeting, at which parents could hold a full discussion, led by the CAC representative, of the pros and cons of a ward system. After the discussion, the CAC representative would distribute the questionnaire with a request that parents return it to the school secretary by 26 April 1996. We presented this approach to the CAC members at the 19 February 1996 general meeting. We recognized that since each Parents' Association operates somewhat differently, only the CAC representative from that school would be in a position to know the best method of reaching the parents. While we suggested a possible approach, the ultimate decision on how to do this was left to them. We only insisted that the wording of the questionnaire not be changed.

The Committee recognised that the CAC representatives would need an information package to help them with any discussion. Such a package was developed based on a study entitled "A Ward System as the Basis for School Board Elections: A Feasibility Study," prepared by Professor Dan de Vlieger in September 1980 for the Saskatchewan Minister of Education. We summarized the eighty-six page report to about seven pages, (Attachment 2) and prepared a list a pros and cons of a ward system (Attachment 3). In addition, we provided a sample insert into a school newsletter (Attachment 4) as an example for those who wished to inform the parents of a meeting using this means. A complete package, including an explanatory note (Attachment 5), was sent to the CAC members for the 25 March general meeting. At that time we again reviewed the process with them.

A major concern of the Committee was that the information package and the questionnaire be as unbiased as possible. We took great care to make sure it was easy to read and understand and did not prejudice the response. The CAC executive, the Lakeview Parents Association and the CAC general meeting of 19 February 1996 tested the questionnaire with these objectives in mind.

The committee was aware of the weaknesses of the methodology it chose. We knew that the method of distributing the questionnaires through the Parent Associations would not be consistent. Similarly, we knew that the amount of information and discussion available to the parents in each school prior to their response to the questionnaire would vary greatly. In addition, we would not know how many questionnaires were distributed thus we would have no idea of the response rate. We also had no way of determining the views of those who chose not to respond.

In order to be statistically valid the proper approach would have been to take a stratified random sample from a list of parents in predetermined geographic areas of the city, send each parent in the sample an information package and a questionnaire and follow up by telephone with the non-respondents. The method employed was chosen in the absence of the time and resources that would be needed to conduct such a survey.

The approach taken, however, was not dramatically different than that used by the Board when it was attempting to gauge the views of parents towards a balanced school year. In that case, parents were called to a special meeting at which they were asked to vote on their preference for or against a balanced school year with a minimum of discussion or prior information and with no chance to give it any thought before deciding. That approach was also not statistically valid for many of the same reasons as this survey. Nonetheless the Board did take action based on the views gained from the survey. We decided that a similar approach would be appropriate in this case.

RESULTS

Choice of System

In order to gain some added insight into the results of the survey questionnaire, we decided to present them on a geographic basis. The city was divided into five geographic areas. The selection of the areas was based partly on convenient boundaries, the location and number responding schools and on groupings of neighbourhoods. This division does not claim to represent possible wards, catchment areas or a demographic analysis of the areas involved. The five areas, as shown on the accompanying map, are:

AREA 1: NORTH

Bounded by Warman Road on the west, 33rd street on the south, the South Saskatchewan River on the east and the city limits on the north. This area contains the following schools, from which surveys were received: Marion Graham Collegiate, Brownell, Lawson, River Heights and North Park Wilson. Student enrollment in these schools as at February 1996 was 2,621. Only one school did not submit responses.

AREA 2: SOUTH EAST

This area is bounded by Circle Drive on the west, Highway 16 on the south, the city limits on the east and Attridge Drive and McOrmond Drive on the North. The schools in this area from which parents submitted surveys were: Forest Grove, Dr. John G. Egnatoff, Evan Hardy Collegiate, College Park, Wildwood, Lakeview and Lakeridge. Enrolment in these schools was 3,708. Two schools did not respond.

AREA 3: SOUTH

The south and west boundary of this area is Highway 16 from Highway 11 to the South Saskatchewan River and along the river to College Drive. The north boundary is College Drive and the west boundary Circle Drive. Eight schools out of 14 are represented in the survey are Greystone Heights, Brevoort Park, Holliston, Nutana Collegiate, John Lake, Prince Phillip, Brunskill and Aden Bowman Collegiate. Enrollment in these schools was 3,475

AREA 4: WEST CENTRAL

Bounded by Circle Drive on the north and west, 11th Street on the south and the South Saskatchewan River and Idylwild Drive on the east. The six schools out of eleven represented are Mayfair, Henry Kelsey, Caswell, Bedford Road Collegiate, Mount Royal and King George. Their total enrollment was 3,468.

AREA 5: WEST

This area is bounded by the city limits on the west and south, 37th Street on the north and Circle Drive and Dundonald Avenue on the east. Six out of 8 schools are represented in this area, Montgomery, Fairhaven, James L. Alexander, Lester B. Pearson, Vincent Massey and Dundonald. Enrollment in these schools is 2,659.

The results of the questionnaire on preferences for an at-large or ward system are as follows:

AREA 1 NORTH	At Large	Ward	Total
Brownell	0	16	16
Lawson Heights	1	7	8
Marion Graham	2	6	6
North Park Wilson	1	5	6
River Heights	1	5	6
Sub Total	5	39	44

AREA 2 SOUTH EAST	At Large	Ward	Total
College Park	0	7	7
Dr. John G. Egnatoff	1	15	16
Evan Hardy Coll.	1	0	1
Forest Grove	3	22	25
Lakeridge	5	15	20
Lakeview	0	6	6
Wildwood	0	2	2
Sub Total	10	67	77

AREA 3 SOUTH	At Large	Ward	Total
Aden Bowman	4	10	14
Brevoort Park	2	2	4
Brunskill	0	16	16
Greystone	3	15	18
Holliston	0	5	5
John Lake	0	9	9
Nutana	0	6	6
Prince Philip	0	10	10
Sub Total	9	73	82

AREA 4 EAST CENTRAL	At Large	Ward	Total
Bedford Road Coll.	4	13	17
Caswell	9	21	30
Henry Kelsey	2	2	4
King George	6	6	12

Mayfair	0	8	8
Mount Royal Coll.	10	52	62
Sub Total	31	102	133

AREA 5 WEST			
Dundonald	0	1	1
Fairhaven	2	10	12
James L. Alexander	0	22	22
Lester B. Pearson	3	18	21
Montgomery	0	1	1
Vincent Massey	0	3	3
Sub Total	5	55	60
Total	60	336	396

Respondent Comments

While the tabulation of the selections of either an at-large or ward system presents a quantitative view of the responses, a review of the comments offered by the respondents gives a sense of the reasons for their selection. However a record of the respondents' various comments does not lend itself to a simple tabular form. Nonetheless a close review of the comments did reveal some patterns. Based on this, we created a number of categories into which the comments could be placed. They are organized according to the responses for either a ward or at-large system.

At-Large System

Due to the small number of responses favouring an at-large system, the number of comments offered is also small. However, some of the comments did appear to deal with some common themes.

The first category deals with the concern that a ward system would lead to conflict amongst different areas of the city along with politics and special interest groups becoming part of the school system. Six respondents offered their comments on this concern.

A second grouping consists of comments supporting a city wide election system which offered better representation as a whole, a greater sense of city community and an opportunity to chose candidate from a much larger segment of the

population. These concerns were expressed by five respondents.

Two respondents felt the ward system would not work because many students do not attend school in the neighbourhoods in which their parents live.

One response suggested that Trustees be limited to terms of 5 to 8 years. This comment was also made by some parents who preferred the ward system.

One respondent felt that the wards would still be too large for adequate representation while another felt that the voters are too apathetic to use a ward system.

Ward System

Consistent with the larger number of respondents preferring a ward system, the comments offered were more numerous. Here too a number of consistent themes were obvious. The most common themes appear to cover two general areas, the role of the Trustees and the voting process.

Trustees Role

By far the most common comment was the view that a ward system would enhance communications between parents and the Board while providing greater accountability and better representation. This view was expressed by 36 respondents.

Seven comments dealt with better representation from all parts of the city, particularly from the less advantaged areas i.e. those with a high Aboriginal population.

Nine respondents felt that a ward system was preferred only as long as the costs related to Trustee operation did not increase. Several of these felt that the number of Trustees should not exceed the current seven.

One respondent was of the opinion that costs would go down if 10 Trustees were elected as the workloads would decrease.

Even with a ward system, one respondent felt that Trustees must keep the whole school system in mind when making decisions.

Two suggestions were made that the term of Trustees be limited.

Voting System

The most prevalent advantage cited by the respondents on this theme was the ease of knowing the candidates in the election. This was expressed by 15

respondents. One other comment suggested that a limit be placed on the number of candidates.

Ten respondents felt that the candidates should live in the ward they seek to represent and a further comment said that all Trustees should have children in the school system. One other respondent, however, did not feel that candidates had to live in the ward.

One respondent felt that voters should be able to vote for candidates in any or all wards while another suggested a combination of a ward and at-large system.

Less costly campaigns and more effective campaigning were given by three respondents as advantages of the ward system while a further four felt it would stop voters from selecting Trustees based on the familiarity of their names. This was related to comments from other respondents who felt that the ward system would eliminate the tendency for only wealthy candidates to be elected. One other respondent felt that the influence of special interest groups would be diluted.

Two related comments dealt with generating greater voter interest and reducing lost votes.

Voting simplicity was the concern of two other respondents, one who wanted the school system to use the same wards as the City and another who wanted all elections, City Councillors, Health District Board and School Board to be held at the same time.

A small number of comments did not seem to specifically deal with either of the foregoing themes so they are noted separately.

- problems with the at-large system are serious
- neither system satisfactory but there are no alternatives
- shake up the status quo
- results of survey should be sent to Parent Associations and summarized in the

school newsletters.

ANALYSIS

As previously noted, the results of this survey are not statistically valid. The wide variation in the number of responses from each school that did respond and from the lack of response of any kind from 18 schools attests to the variation in distribution of the questionnaires. Similarly, the amount of information and discussion available to the parents in each school prior to their response to the questionnaire did vary greatly. We have received anecdotal information noting that prior discussion varied anywhere from nothing to in depth, and that questionnaire distribution ranged from special newsletters sent home with students, giving them to parents during teacher interviews to handing them out during book fairs. In addition, as expected, we do not know how many

questionnaires were distributed thus we have no idea of the response rate nor the views of those who chose not to respond.

Some observations can be made however. One observation is that, of those who responded, 84% overall preferred a ward system for the election of Trustees. Also out of 32 schools from which responses were received, parents from 26 preferred a ward system by 75% or more.

One interesting observation is the number of comments from respondents who felt that better communications with, representation from and accountability of Trustees would be a positive outcome of a ward system. This, along with the greater ease of getting to know the candidates and making an informed choice during an election, were the most common views offered by those favouring a ward system. These were reinforced by further comments suggesting that candidates live in the ward in which they are seeking election.

Another observation is the consistency in the percentage of respondents, which ranged from 87% to 89%, who favour a ward system in four of the five areas. One area, AREA 4 WEST CENTRAL, did not follow that pattern. Its percentage was only 76.7% which is substantially lower than the others. This area also had the lowest response rate in terms of represented schools, 6 out of 11. We leave it to the reader to speculate as to the reasons for this apparent anomaly. We would need a more detailed description of the demographics of all the areas plus know what methods of distributing the questionnaires were used to get a better understanding of the different pattern in this area.

CONCLUSIONS

Despite the statistical shortcomings, we feel that the survey does indicate a strong interest amongst parents of students in the Public School system in the establishment of a ward system to elect School Board Trustees. Had more questionnaires been distributed and more discussion taken place at the Parent Association level, we firmly believe the results would exhibit the same pattern. Based on the pattern of responses from across the city we also believe that the strength of this interest is city wide with only one area showing less enthusiasm than the others. Even so this one area still was overwhelmingly in support of a ward system. On that basis the interest would appear to cross ethnic, social, cultural and economic boundaries.

Due to the lack of statistical validity, our conclusions cannot be defended from a statistical standpoint. If the Trustees wish to obtain a statistically valid view of the opinions of the parents of children in this school system, resources will have to be made available to undertake a properly conducted survey. This should be done professionally to ensure accuracy and validity.

The Committee, however, does note that the process used to gauge parents' opinions on the balanced school year issue was conducted in a similar fashion. Its results were likewise not statistically valid but the subject was deferred apparently based on a few

very vocal comments from people not associated with parents or students. On that basis the results of this survey should receive equal consideration from the Trustees as its validity is at least the same as that of the balanced school year exercise.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Citizens' Advisory Council recommends that the Trustees accept this report and take further steps toward investigating a change in the current system of electing the Saskatoon Public School Board. These steps would have to include looking into the question of the number of Trustees, whether the wards of the city or the district health board would suit the needs of the School Board or if new ward boundaries would be required and how much this might cost. The impact on operating costs would also have to be taken into consideration. It would also need an examination of the current and future roles of the Trustees given possible changes to the school system and the prospect of "school councils" emerging. This would likely include discussions with the Saskatchewan Department of Education, the Chamber of Commerce, city administration and the Saskatoon District Health Board and the Saskatchewan Association of School Councils as well as ongoing dialogue with the Citizens' Advisory Council.

In order to accurately gauge public opinion on the matter, a properly structured and managed survey would have to be undertaken. The Council does not feel that such a survey would yield results substantially at variance from what is presented in this report and would not be worth the substantial expense.

Attachment 1

A WARD SYSTEM FOR THE SASKATOON PUBLIC SCHOOL BOARD

The Saskatoon Public School Board has asked the Citizens' Advisory Council to determine whether there is any interest among the parents of students in the Saskatoon Public School system in establishing a ward system for the election of Trustees to the School Board. This brief questionnaire is intended to allow you to express your opinion on this subject. The results of this questionnaire will be compiled into a report which will be presented to the Board for its consideration.

The current, or at-large, system is one where the seven candidates receiving the greatest number of votes from a single list of candidates for the city are elected as Trustees. Each voter currently votes for up to 7 candidates or casts up to 7 votes.

In a ward system the city is divided into a number of geographic areas. Voters in each area, or ward, elect their own School Trustee. This is how City Councillors are currently elected. The candidate receiving the greatest number of votes of the candidates running in a ward becomes the Trustee for that ward. The Board consists of the Trustees elected from each ward.

Given a choice of systems for the election of Trustees to the Saskatoon Public School Board, would you prefer

_____ the At-large System - city wide election where all candidates compete for the seven trustee positions on the Board.

_____ the Ward System - each city ward (region) elects one Trustee to the Board

Do you have any further comments on this subject you would like to make?

Name of school _____

Please return this form to your school secretary by 26 April 1996.

Attachment 2

The Ward System as the Basis for School Board Elections

A Feasibility Study

Professor Dan de Vlieger
23 September 1980

A Summary as it Pertains to Saskatoon

I. Introduction

Local government electoral system in western Canada largely influenced by "reform movement" that originated out of the U.S. shortly after the turn of the century. The reform movement generally saw one of the chief causes of corruption at the local level was the power of aldermen elected on a ward basis. The basic assumptions of the Canadian reformers was that the ward system 1) produces parochially-oriented public officials; 2) only the more well-to-do should have the right to vote and 3) having good men in office equals good government.

II. The Briefs

Professor de Vlieger invited briefs from a number of organizations in the province including all 22 school divisions in the cities and from the public at large. A total of 64 briefs were received. Overall while all 19 of the school boards responding were opposed to a ward system, 14 of the 19 responses from private individuals favoured such a system. Two members of the Saskatoon School Board voted against their Board's rejection of the concept of a ward system and the Roman Catholic School Division in Regina declined to send in a brief. Some of the organizations opposed to the ward system had direct ties to the city school boards while those in favour of the system were dominated by community associations.

The major arguments put forward were:

OPPOSED

Technical Objections

- boundaries between wards for council and school board elections will not be identical thus causing voter confusion;(5)
- increases costs because of more ballot printing; (2)
- Increased costs; (1)
- public and separate school supporters not evenly distributed thus not possible to

draw ward boundaries satisfactory to all;(4)

- some wards have more schools/pupils than others;(3)
- decreases coverage by media of school board elections.(2)
- decreases interest by the general public; (3)
- decreases voting power; (3)
- decreases interest among potential candidates (4)
- increases parental involvement; (1)
- increases interest from non-parents (1)
- increases chances of incumbents being re-elected (1)
- eliminates educational services on a city-wide basis (1)

Objections on Principle

- partisan politics a likely consequence;(10)
- trustees would only be concerned about effect of board decisions on people in their own wards as opposed to school system as a whole;(20)
- board decisions would no longer be reached by consensus, more conflicts;(5)
- right of voters to choose among a large number of candidates would be taken away;(2)
- "candidates with desirable qualities could find themselves pitted against each other in one ward while in other wards the choice would only be between candidates who are all undesirable.";(2)
- newly developed areas would not be represented by a trustee and therefore neglected by board;(4)
- ward based community groups or special interest groups would try influence trustees views;(5)
- at-large elections provide ideal opportunity for special interest groups to have their views considered;(2)
- opportunities for people to give boards advice already sufficient or more than sufficient; (4)
- lessening of accountability;(1)

Miscellaneous Objections

- ward system alright in cities larger than 30,000; (8)
- just opposed; (4)
- desirable for rural areas but not for cities; (2)
- a chairman of a board under a ward system would have to be elected on an at-large basis; (2)
- no one favours it; (4)
- no school board has asked for it thus it can't be desirable; (2)
- if anyone favours it, it should be introduced after a local referendum requiring an extraordinary majority; (4)

IN FAVOUR

Perceived weakness of the at-large system

- results in over-representation of certain sectors of the city or its population, school board is not representative but biased and elitist; (6)
- boards in major cities give preferred treatment to better off areas(7)
- candidates and trustees can't possibly come to know educational problems in city as a whole:(4)
- boards not equally responsive to needs in all parts of the city; (4)
- in elections incumbents or "name" candidates are unduly favoured; (5)
- elections too expensive for candidates with modest means; (6)
- results in lack of voter interest; (2)

Apparent strengths of ward system

- geographically based elections customary for other elections [rural areas (2), council elections (4), federal and provincial elections (3)] they should be used for school board elections; (9)
- voters will have real, not phony, choice between candidates;(4)
- More public awareness of and interest in school board elections;(4)
- board trustees collectively will have a much better knowledge of the whole city; (6)
- trustee becomes a communication channel between administration and ordinary citizen;(9)
- board as a whole more responsive; (4)
- trustees more accountable; (4)
- all areas of the city would be represented not just looked after;(6)
- would better reflect the complex make-up of the community;(5)

OTHER VIEWS

- randomize placement of candidates and rotate this placement; (4)
- hold school board elections at different times than council;(3)
- limit number of terms for trustees;(4)
- staggered terms for trustees;(2)
- ward boundaries based on pupil populations;(1)
- polling places to be the same for all elections, local, federal or provincial;(2)
- no comment or opinion;(6)

UNDERLYING ATTITUDES

Many of the briefs opposed to the ward system for election of trustees may be called "formalistic", i.e. they express a fear that external pressure groups such as political parties, special interest groups and community associations, could influence the trustees. They would also cease to be concerned about the system as a whole and respond only to concerns of their ward. This approach presumes that accountability of the trustee is tested at election time and that the role of the elector is finished until the

next election once their vote is cast. At that time the elector has passed authority over to the elected representative. This approach is coupled with a "certain degree of disdain for the ability of the ordinary citizen to understand the complexities of the task of the representative".

Proponents of a ward system tend to reflect a view of the nature of their representatives as "descriptive". A board of ward based trustees is more accurately a reflection of the make up of a community. Representatives are agents of the electorate and the emphasis is one of continued interaction whereby the electorate is given an opportunity to choose a champion or spokesperson from among the available candidates.

III. Size and Social Complexity

One trustee in a large city in Saskatchewan is on average responsible for the educational requirements of a population (10,650) that is only slightly smaller than the total population of a smaller city (11,066) whose educational requirements are the concern of two complete school boards.

SIZE AND DIFFERENCES IN SOCIAL LIFE.

Social makeup and social interaction is very different in Saskatoon than it is in a city the size of Swift Current. Whereas the social life in smaller urban centres is characterized by people "knowing" one another at least by virtue of recognition and reputation, in the larger urban centres, it is characterized by anonymity, not expecting to be recognized as identifiable individuals outside their own neighbourhoods or work. The political consequences of this difference is that a decision to vote for a particular candidate in a larger centre is to link that person to one or more issues that a voter sympathizes with, or on the recognition that the candidate belongs to a district, social or ethnic group with which the voter can associate. Voters in larger urban centres much more frequently see their choice as being determined by issues as opposed to personal attributes. The anonymity of candidates in larger centres presents them with the problem of getting themselves known. They stand a much better chance if they:

- have already attained prominence
- have the financial resources necessary to promote their candidacy by extensive use of the media.
- have a name not readily identifiable as typical of a generally despised minority
- have been positively linked to a popular issue.

Not surprisingly prospective candidates spent a great deal of time getting their names known long before they seek political office. When the typical anonymity of candidates in large urban centres is linked with a non-partisan, multi-member voting system, electoral behaviour is characterized by:

- low turnout
- do not use all available votes
- make their choice on the basis of position on the ballot, length of candidates name, or ethnic or religious identifiability.

DIFFERENCES IN SIZE AND SPATIAL ORGANIZATION

In the larger cities social stratification is geographically much more apparent and recognized. The experience of members of these strata in urban existence are usually totally different. In other words they don't really share the same community.

SIZE AND SOCIAL DIVERSITY

Larger cities have more people of different kinds, a greater variety of social groups which is not present to the same degree in smaller urban communities.

IV. Turnout and Urban Electorates

Turnout can be used to compare the difference in the number of votes cast by the same electorate on the same date between aldermanic, mayoralty and school board candidates. Far fewer votes are cast by the electorate when it is faced with the task of having to cast a multiple vote for a particular set of municipal offices than when it is simply a question for them of casting one vote for one specific office. Also voter turnout in municipal election contests is much lower than in federal and provincial elections. Municipal politics does not rank very high among urban Saskatchewan voters.

In the larger urban centres of the province, turnout was consistently higher when electors had to cast a single vote for one specific position, e.g. mayor, than where the voter had the use of a multiplicity of votes to be distributed among several candidates.

In these same centres voting turnout was consistently lower for school trustee candidates than it was for aldermanic candidates.

In Saskatoon and Regina the turnout for the aldermanic vote increased significantly when in 1973 the basis of voting changed from voting for a multiplicity of available positions to a single aldermanic position.

Regardless of the system used for aldermanic positions, the turnout rate for trustee positions is consistently lower.

When elections for some local offices take place at different time than those for other local offices, public interest, as measured by turnout, declines even further than the already low rate of turnout generally obtained in Saskatchewan municipal elections.

The extent by which local government bodies are regarded as legitimate becomes problematic when the percentage of the population voting is consistently low.

An Ontario study of 21 municipalities looking at four factors related to turnout concluded that whether an election is ward based or at-large was the only factor of significance. This is consistent with the experience in Regina and Saskatoon after the introduction of the ward system.

V. Spoiled Ballots, Scarcity of Candidates and At-Large Elections

Notable differences are to be observed between elections in which the contest is for a single position and those in which voters are asked to choose several people simultaneously for that same public office.

PROPORTION OF REJECTED VOTES

The proportion of votes that are rejected in municipal elections is generally higher than it is for provincial and federal elections. In at-large elections, especially in those in which there are a large number of names printed on the ballot relative to the number to be elected, there are many people whose ballots are rejected.

TYPE OF ELECTION AND NUMBER OF CANDIDATES

In an election in which the contest is for a single position, the individual voter is normally confronted with fewer names on the ballot than in those election in which he is asked to vote a multiplicity of available positions. But the actual value of the vote does not change if the at-large voter uses all his available votes. A single vote for a single position is equal to seven votes for seven positions. One of the claims in favour of the at-large system is that more candidates will make themselves available than in ward systems. This claim is not supportable. Evidence shows:

- the at-large electoral system is wasteful of votes
- a considerable portion of the voting public is deceived by this particular mode of elections into thinking that their votes contribute to the process of electing public officials whereas in fact their votes were wasted.
- ward based elections on a system-wide basis are likely to attract as many, if not more, candidates.

VI. Electoral Systems: Some Variations

One should place emphasis on the desirability the type of electoral system in place that is related to they type of representation that the electorate wants. The retreat from the ward system as the basis for local elections and its replacement with the at-large system is an example of a clear and effective means of denying a particular minority group which had become interested in exercising it legal right to vote, any representation. An examination of local elections in 19 US cities concluded that in cities with:

- at-large systems the black share of council seats declined as a proportion of the black population increased
- ward systems the black share of council seats generally increased proportional to the relative size of the black population.

Some alternatives are:

- second ballot (can be used if there are a plethora of candidates and additional costs and time not a factor.)
- single non-transferable vote (in an at-large system, minority representation possible provided it is organized and electorally disciplined.
- cumulative vote (tends to lead to a wastage of votes because of more electors inadvertently spoiling their ballots in the process of attempting to divide their votes correctly)
- single transferable vote (tends to lead to selection of candidates who are least objectionable to majority of electors and eliminates those individuals who are strongly favoured by a significant minority.

- multi-member ward system (does not differ significantly from an at-large system)
- combined at-large and ward-based system (likely to be confusing to electors and result in less citizen participation)

VII. Conclusions and Recommendations

CONCLUSIONS

Councils and school boards elected on the basis of at-large elections tend to be less responsive voters' wishes than ones elected on a district basis. In an at-large situation individual trustees may not feel particularly worried about the effect a decision against the wishes of some group could have on his or her chances of re-election, in effect probably based on the underlying concept of formalistic representation. At-large electoral systems are likely to be more prone to wasted votes and irrational voting than are ward based systems and tend to exhibit a tendency to underchoose candidates who names have alien ethnic connotations or who appear last on the ballot. It also tends to encourage an attitude of non-accountability. What is considered to be the responsibility of all becomes the responsibility of no one. The at-large system typically makes trustees unrepresentative.

A ward system will not produce a school board that is a precise reflection on a small scale of the community in which it is situated. Trustees elected on the basis of a ward system will likely be somewhat less unrepresentative of the community than those elected on an at-large basis. A greater responsiveness of a trustee to the desires and wishes of a particular group may result in being responsive to short term demands to ensure his political survival without regard to the long term consequences. Local interests and system-wide interests are equally important in the decisions that trustees have to make. A trustee elected on a ward basis will likely be much more of, and attentive to, the desires and complaints of his constituents.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- in the larger and medium sized cities, establish a ward-based electoral system for electing trustees for both public and separate school boards.
- ward boundaries for school trustees elections to be coterminous with ward boundaries for aldermen(councillors) in Regina and Saskatoon.
- establish uniform legislation governing establishment of boundaries for both school board and civic election purposed to ensure that the following principles be adhered to:
 - i - wards be as equal to one another in population as practical
 - ii - boundaries are drawn in such a way as to make for compact and contiguous geographical units.

Attachment 3

WARD SYSTEM PROS AND CONS

PROS

- A shorter, less complex, ballot will encourage more rational voting, candidates will more likely be known to voters and will make choice easier.
- Higher voter turnout and reduced vote wastage
- Encourage more candidates
- Campaign cost will be lower and within the means of less well off candidates
- More voter interest and public awareness
- Voters will be better able to judge candidates abilities and their stand on issues
- More consistent with elections for city councillors, MLAs and MPs
- Trustee becomes communication channel between electors and Board.
- Trustees would become more accountable to electors they represent on an ongoing basis rather than once every four years.
- All areas of the city would be represented
- Minority groups would have a greater opportunity to be represented
- Better reflect the complex make-up of the community, removes possibility of biases and elitism resulting from election.

CONS

- Possibility that partisan politics will result from candidates linking with political parties
- Trustees will not be concerned with school system as whole but only with their own wards
 - In order to ensure political survival because of close, ongoing relationship with voters, trustees might be prone to make short term decisions that do not take long term consequences into consideration
 - Board deliberations might involve more conflict and consensus
 - Ward based special interest and community groups would try to influence trustees' views.
 - Increased cost of holding elections
 - Would have to either
 1. increase number of trustees to that of city councillors in order to match city wards, thus increasing operating costs for Board,
 2. reduce number of trustees to match Saskatoon District Health Board wards thus increasing workload on trustees, or
 3. create new wards.

Attachment 4

A WARD SYSTEM FOR SCHOOL BOARD ELECTIONS?

Are you satisfied with the current system of electing public school board trustees or do you want to see a change in electoral system? The Saskatoon Public School Board has asked the Citizens' Advisory Council (CAC) to learn the interest of the parents in a ward system to elect Trustees. The CAC has accepted the task and is asking the various Parents Councils and Home and School Associations to make this the subject of a meeting at which it will be discussed.

The Lakeview Parent Council will be raising the subject at its meeting Tuesday, 2 April at 7:30 PM where we will review the pros and cons of a ward system. Following a discussion, we will distribute a questionnaire to parents asking what their preference would be. We will compile the questionnaires into a report that we will submit to the Board by 25 June 1996. **This will be your opportunity to express your views on the electoral system for School Board Trustees. We urge you to participate in this meeting.**

Attachment 5

AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE INTEREST OF PARENTS IN A WARD SYSTEM FOR THE SASKATOON PUBLIC SCHOOL BOARD

The Saskatoon Public School Board has asked the Citizens' Advisory Council (CAC) to determine the interest of the parents in a ward system to elect Trustees to the Board. The CAC has accepted the task and has formed a small committee to survey the parents and prepare a report for the Board.

The committee has developed a process for this task, approved by the CAC executive, which involves CAC members and their Parent Councils (Home and School Associations). In order to obtain the views of as large a cross section of parents as possible, the committee is asking the CAC members to put this item on the agenda of their next Parent Council meeting and strongly promote it through the school newsletter or whatever means the Parent Council has in communicating with its members. We suggest that the subject be discussed with the parents attending the meeting after which they would be asked to fill out a questionnaire and return it to their school secretary by 26 April 1996. These results will be delivered to the School Board offices at which time the committee will begin compiling the results and preparing a report for presentation to the Board by 25 June 1996.

If the Parent Council wishes to devise an alternate means of getting the questionnaire into the hands of parents from their school, such as a direct mailing, we certainly have no objection. The above process is a suggestion. Our main objective is to get responses from as many parents as possible. This may require some extra promotion of the meeting where this topic will be discussed or sending the questionnaire home with students if the Parents Council meeting is not well attended. We leave that to your discretion.

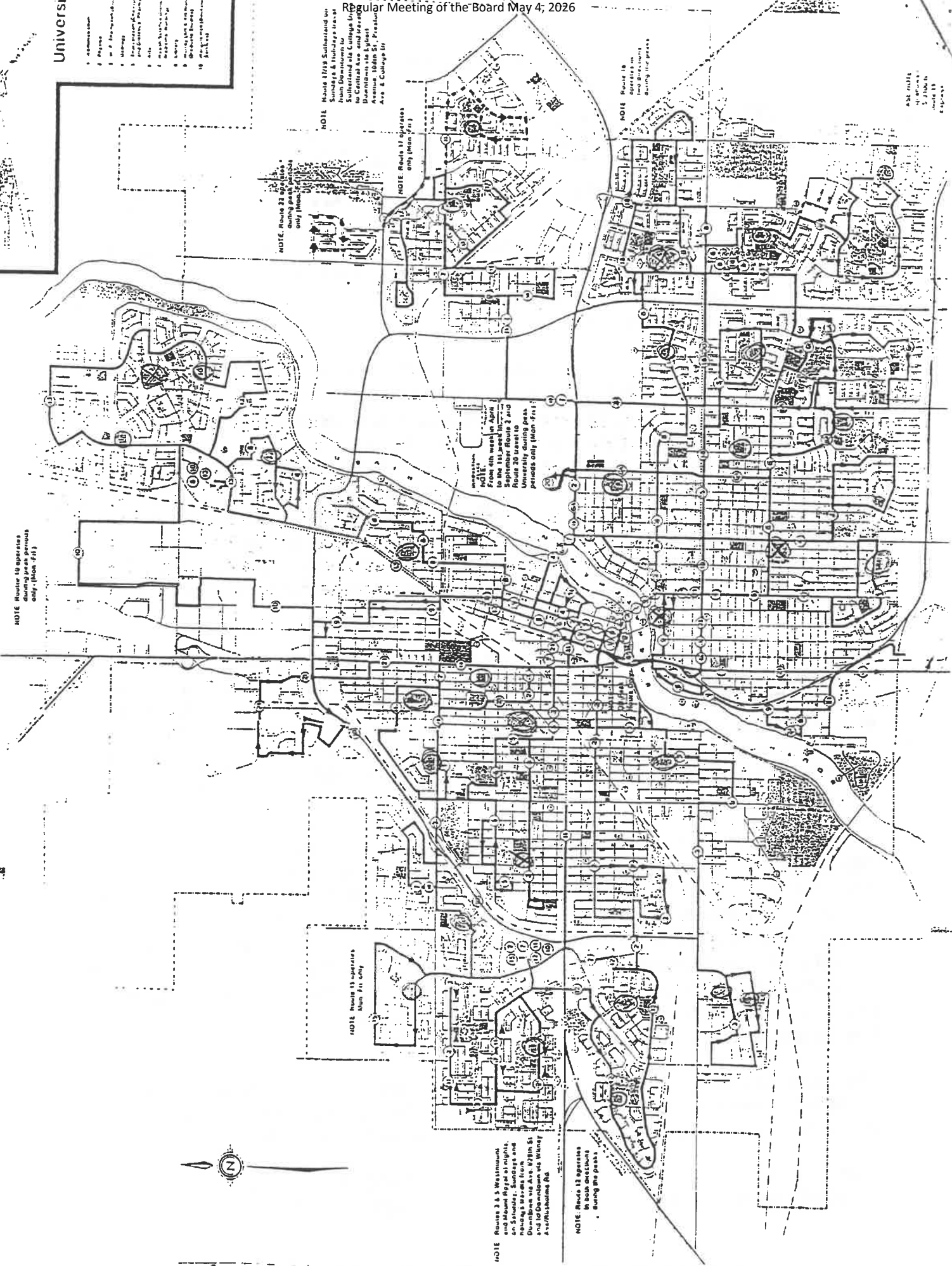
In order to assist the CAC members with the discussion, we have prepared an information package which is attached. This package consists of the questionnaire, a summary of a detailed report entitled "The Ward System as the Basis for School Board Elections, A Feasibility Study" which was prepared for the Saskatchewan Department of Education by Professor Dan de Vlieger in 1980, and a listing of the possible pros and cons of a ward system based on that study. We recommend that the CAC member lead the discussion with the parents, presenting the information in the package as a basis of informing those in attendance of the relevant issues. Our hope is that the parents will then be able to make an informed choice.

The responses could either be made right at the meeting or the questionnaire taken home for further consideration. The only deadline is that the responses must be delivered to your school secretary by the end of the school day on Friday, 26 April.

If you have any questions on the foregoing, we will attempt to provide answers at the next CAC meeting on 25 March where this will be an agenda item.

Universiti

- 1. Administration
- 2. Finance
- 3. Academic Services
- 4. Student Services
- 5. Support Services
- 6. Library
- 7. Physical Education
- 8. Music
- 9. Art
- 10. Career Guidance
- 11. Health Services
- 12. Transportation
- 13. Safety
- 14. Maintenance
- 15. Security
- 16. Information Technology
- 17. Facilities
- 18. Planning
- 19. Community Relations
- 20. Other



NOTE: Route 17 is suspended in South & East Downtown from Downtown to Critical Ave. and travels Downtown via Light Rail, Preston Ave & College St.

NOTE: Route 23 operates during peak periods only (Mon-Fri)

NOTE: Route 17 operates only (Mon-Fri)

NOTE: Route 18 operates in South & East Downtown during peak periods.

SEE NOTE 11-13-14-15-16-17-18-19-20-21-22-23

NOTE: Route 10 operates during peak periods only (Mon-Fri)

NOTE: From 4th week in April to the 1st week in October, Routes 2 and 3 operate during peak periods only (Mon-Fri)

NOTE: Route 13 operates Mon-Fri only

NOTE: Routes 3 & 4, Westwood and Mount Royal routes, on Saturdays, Sundays and holidays travel from Dunlop via Ave. 9/30th St and 10th Downtown via Waverly & Northbourne Ave.

NOTE: Route 12 operates in both directions during the peak.



Catholic trustee proposes move to ward system

Trustee Andy Dziadyk wants his colleagues on the Saskatoon Catholic school board to consider moving to a ward system.

Dziadyk submitted a notice of motion at this week's board meeting that the question be put to voters in the next civic election. The matter will likely be debated by the board at its next noon hour meeting March 26.

Dziadyk believes a ward system for school governance makes sense for the same reasons it does to for city council.

Last month, the public school board voted to put the question of a ward system to its voters this fall.

May 22/97



ANDY DZIADYK

. . . ward system is better

Catholic voters to have say on ward system proposal

**By Murray Lyons
of The StarPhoenix**

The Saskatoon Catholic board of education is going to ask its electorate this fall whether it favors a ward system for electing trustees.

The board endorsed a motion Wednesday by trustee Andy Dziadyk to ask its supporters that question.

Only trustee Joan Smith opposed Dziadyk's motion at an afternoon board meeting.

The decision parallels one made a month ago by the public school system.

The Catholic system has not decided on the form of the question being put to its voters.

The board's governance committee and administration is to report in a month whether the question should be worded as a plebiscite or in some other form.

The public board is going to ask the question as a non-binding plebiscite.

Smith said no one has raised the ward issue with her in her three years as a trustee.

She said there are too many unanswered questions such as the size of wards, how the boundaries would be drawn and possible extra costs.

Dziadyk said a ward system would help improve interest in education.

"People in the ward can identify with that board member," he said, adding it would promote one-to-one contact.

He also said the ward system would make it easier for candi-

Mar 11/98
**Ward system not top priority,
says Saskatoon school board**

**By Murray Lyons
of The StarPhoenix**

Trustees with the Saskatoon public school board say they haven't forgotten the plebiscite last fall which showed voters here support a ward system.

But they say it hasn't been the board's top priority this winter, especially with the next election nearly three years away.

Education Minister Pat Atkinson said this week she would introduce legislation requiring implementation of the ward system where the public has supported it in a plebiscite.

The Regina public board voted in 1996 against implementing wards despite a public plebiscite two years earlier supporting the matter.

Atkinson said Tuesday the change won't be retroactive to Regina's 1994 vote, but it will be to Saskatoon's vote last fall, meaning the public board will be required to institute a ward system.

Saskatoon board chair Lindsay Fast said Atkinson's comments surprised board members here, but he added that members had every intention of looking at the issue anyway in light of the plebiscite results.

"When we put out the question we gave as much information as we could," Fast said. "We had very nearly 80 per cent of the population wanting the ward system."

Trustee Elaine Hnatyshyn said she is not against the ward system, but has some questions about the result since the public and the trustees didn't specify what form of a ward system was being proposed.

Hnatyshyn said the 80 per cent support

level is misleading as only about 20 per cent of the population voted in the election.

Of those, Hnatyshyn said the plebiscite result was closer to 60 per cent in favor with the remainder split between those who were opposed and those who didn't bother to vote on the plebiscite.

Hnatyshyn said Atkinson should have advised boards in advance if she was going to require them to adhere to plebiscite results.

Hnatyshyn said combining a health board election with city council and school boards last fall proved to be confusing enough to voters because health wards didn't correspond geographically to the city wards.

Creating another set of wards for the school system would be an added confusion, she said.

Fast said the board has spent most of its time since the election preparing to make a decision on the choice of a new central office building versus redeveloping the Gathercole building. It's also been preparing the annual budget and getting newly elected trustees up to speed, he said.

Trustee Linda Holmes, who campaigned as a ward system supporter, said she expects the ward issue to get studied after this year's budget is over.

Holmes isn't concerned it appears the minister is telling the local board what to do. She said the results of the plebiscite were four to one in favor of the ward system in almost all parts of the city.

Last year, the Catholic school board opted not to put the question of the ward system directly to voters but study the matter through other forums.

Ward systems may be forced on school boards

LeaderStar News

REGINA — The government will introduce legislation forcing school boards to adopt the ward system if a majority of voters support the change in a plebiscite, says Education Minister Pat Atkinson.

The proposed amendment to the Education Act will be of particular interest to public school board supporters in Regina and Saskatoon, who have voted in favor of switching to a ward system from the current at-large system.

In Regina, 69 per cent of people who voted in a 1994 public school plebiscite said they preferred the ward system. However, the school board disregarded the result and voted in 1996 to maintain the existing system.

Last fall, 80 per cent of those who voted in public school elections in Saskatoon favored the ward system. The school board has not decided whether to approve the change.

Under the proposed legislation, "if citizens want a ward system, the school board will be obliged to implement the ward system", Atkinson said.

The Education Act amendment will also give the government the legislative authority it needs to offer pre-school programs at the province's 26 community schools.

Atkinson said while pre-school programs already exist, the Justice Department noted the act does not currently apply to three and four year olds unless they are in special needs programs.

March 10/98

Catholic board proposes 4 zones, 2 trustees in each

By Paul Morgan
of the Star-Phoenix

A Saskatoon Catholic school board committee, trying to make the best of a ward system it doesn't like, has come up with a plan to elect two trustees in each of four zones in the city.

Trustees Wednesday received a proposal calling for creation of zones — two west of the South Saskatchewan River and two on the east side — which would be roughly equal in student population and number of electors, while taking into account the parish boundaries which the board had argued must be considered in any ward scheme.

The provincial government last spring passed legislation establishing ward-based elections for Saskatoon and Regina school systems, to begin in 1982, but Education Minister Doug McArthur said he would let the educational boundaries commission recommend the number and size of wards to be instituted in the two cities' Catholic school systems.

The two public school systems are to follow municipal ward



Walter Podiluk

boundaries, thereby increasing their membership to 10 trustees from seven.

The Catholic board, while commenting favorably upon the plan devised by three trustees and education director Walter Podiluk, deferred a decision until the Sept. 16 meeting. The board will also try to arrange a meeting with the boundaries commission after Sept. 21.

Trustee Joan Patola, a commission member, said the three-person group will meet Tuesday with the Regina Catholic board, which she expects will also have a map of its desired ward system to present.

The commission also hopes to discuss the matter with the two cities' public school boards, although no dates have been set, she said.

While the Saskatoon committee took civic ward boundaries into consideration, some cutting across those lines was necessary, although at no place do the proposed zones cut through existing polling districts, Podiluk said.

The plan has the advantage of not excluding Ukrainian Catholic parishes while it focuses on Latin rite parishes, he said. It also provides for expansion within each zone.

"Each zone contains a mix of older and newer schools as well as still-undeveloped neighborhoods."

Zone 1, in western Saskatoon, would encompass such neighborhoods as Fairhaven, Confederation Park, Dundonald and Massey Place, along with much of Mount Royal and Pleasant Hill. Schools within its bounds include St. Mark, Father Vachon, Bishop Roborecki, Bishop Klein, St. Gerard, St. Goretta and St. Mary.

Zone 2 would take in Montgomery Place, Riversdale, City Park, Mayfair, McNab Park and all northern neighborhoods. St. Dominic, St. John, St. Edward, St. Michael, St. Paul, St. Anne, St. George and Sister O'Brien schools lie within this zone.

Zone 3, on the east side, would include Avalon, older Nutana areas, University, and Sutherland, along with Greystone-Grosvenor and College Park districts. St. Frances, Bishop Murray, Cardinal Leger, St. Augustine, Holy Family and Georges Vanier schools would be governed.

Zone 4, the southeast corner, would include all residents east of Clarence Avenue and south of Eighth Street. The schools in this zone are St. Philip, St. James, St. Matthew, St. Thomas, Bishop Pockock and St. Bernard.

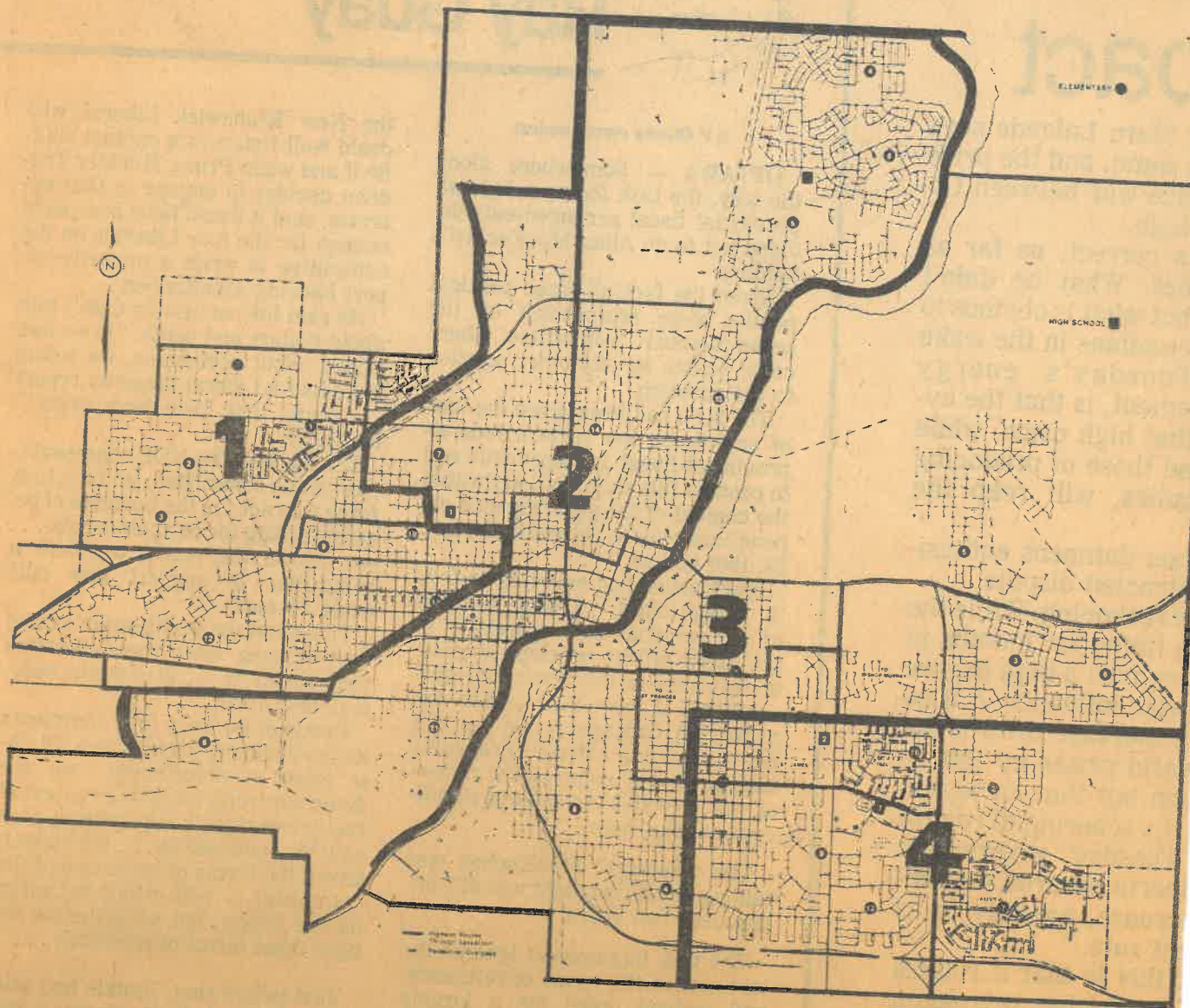
The number of electors would range from 5,800 in Zone 4 to 6,600 in Zone 2. Enrolment figures would vary between 1,850 in Zone 2 and 2,550 in Zone 1.

The eight-member board thus elected would choose its own chairman, as the city's seven-person boards do now.

Seven of the city's 10 aldermanic wards would be preserved intact in the Catholic board plan. Zone 1 would take in wards 2 and 3, Zone 2 would have wards 1 and 5, while ward 4 would be split between the two.

On the east side, Zone 3 would encompass wards 6 and 10, and Zone 4 would include all of ward 7.

Thursday, September 3, 1981 Sa



Proposed ward boundaries for Catholic School trustee elections

Catholic board proposes 4 zones, 2 trustees in each

By Paul Morgan

Archived Newspaper Clippings on GSCS Ward vs At-Large Systems

SP Opinions

Ward system deserves vote

It's a step in the right direction that Saskatoon's public school trustees are at least considering a plebiscite on whether to change school board elections from the current at-large system to a ward format.

If they decide to go ahead, the plebiscite would be held in conjunction with the municipal election in October.

It would have been preferable if trustees had taken the initiative to implement a ward system immediately on their own. It would have saved voters the onerous task of having to again wade through a confusing mass of candidates in October, as was the case in the 1994 election.

In Saskatoon's at-large system, voters elect seven trustees from the overall list of candidates. In 1994, that meant public school board voters had to choose from among no fewer than 27 candidates. The Catholic school election, with 16 candidates, was only marginally better. Under a ward system, voters would only have had to select from among a handful of candidates — probably three or four.

In an at-large system, name recognition gives incumbents a distinct advantage over newcomers when there is such a large slate from which to choose. As a result, there is little incentive for trustees to switch to a ward system. That trustees are even considering this move is positive.

In a ward system, a new candidate has at least a fighting chance to make herself or himself known to voters, since there is only a small area of the city to canvass.

The advantage to incumbents in an at-large vote was borne out by results of the 1994 election, when only one trustee seeking re-election on either the public or Catholic board lost (and that only after a recount).

Meanwhile, on city council — which returned to a ward system after several years' absence — three incumbents went down to defeat.

This is not to say that other school board incumbents would have (or should have) been defeated had a ward system been in place in 1994, only that it is a much fairer system for all candidates. It ensures more accountability among incumbents who must

Archived Newspaper Clippings on GSCS Ward vs At-Large Systems

incumbents went down to defeat.

This is not to say that other school board incumbents would have (or should have) been defeated had a ward system been in place in 1994, only that it is a much fairer system for all candidates. It ensures more accountability among incumbents who must rely on performance, not name recognition, for reelection. Equally important, it gives voters a trustee who is directly responsible for their area.

There was a public push in 1993 for a ward system for school boards but it was rejected by trustees. As Catholic board chair Modest Kowal said at the time, "Generally the school systems are viewed as a concern to all the electors. We don't want to run the risk of a dominant ward."

That argument just doesn't wash. City councillors, health board members, MLAs and MPs all are involved in a type of "ward" system and all manage to put the "whole" ahead of individual "parts." Also, by having trustees responsible for specific areas, there would be much less chance of a "dominant ward" developing than in the current system, should several trustees happen to live in the same area.

It would be handy, and less confusing to voters, if the school boards could adopt the same ward boundaries as city council. However, there are 10 wards and 10 councillors but only seven trustees on each of the two school boards.

It is unlikely that council would ever vote to reduce its size to seven wards and seven members to conform to the school board numbers. Former councillor Mark Thompson pushed for a smaller council back in 1993 but the idea was rejected. There would also likely be public opposition to increasing the school board size to 10 members to match the civic wards.

One alternative, then, would be a separate set of wards for the school boards and city council, as is now the case in a number of municipalities. City Clerk Janice Mann says it would mean a little more work for election staff but would not be difficult to accomplish.

If Saskatoon trustees indeed go ahead with a plebiscite, let's hope they show more respect for voters than their counterparts in Regina. A similar vote was held in the Queen City in 1994, with about 70 per cent of voters favoring a ward system. In their wisdom, Regina trustees thumbed their noses at the people who elected them and decided to retain the at-large system.

So much for accountability.

Steve Gibb, Lee MacShane, Scott Balda, and Janice Thompson

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Archived Newspaper Clippings on GSCS Ward vs At-Large Systems

Catholic board reconsiders plebiscite on ward system

Catholic school trustees will consider a recommendation that the issue of a ward system for electors be dealt with through a broad community consultation rather than a plebiscite.

The board's governance committee made the recommendation because the issue is too complex to be

addressed in a simple plebiscite question, they state in a report going to the board tonight.

An "information exchange" would be a better way for stakeholders to address the series of questions needed to determine whether trustees should be elected on an at-large basis or to

represent specific wards.

The committee recommends a consultation similar to the one used by the board in examining the school year.

If it is determined change is needed, electors would then have a say in what should be changed and how it should be changed, the report states.

Friday, May 2, 1997 S

Catholics won't put ward system to vote

The question of whether Catholic school trustees will be elected to represent wards will not be on the ballot in next fall's civic election.

The school board decided this week it will seek a consensus from its supporters on whether it will adopt a ward system.

As a result, the Catholic board will not place a plebiscite question on the ballot this October asking for direct vot-

er input on the question.

The public school board earlier this year decided to hold a plebiscite on the ward question.

This October's election will see each of the boards elect seven trustees from across the city.

Catholic trustee Andy Dziadyk favors the ward system, but the board's governance committee decided it would em-

ploy the same consultation process it used last year in considering changes to the school year.

The board at that time set up information meetings to discuss the issue.



Dziadyk

Archived Newspaper Clippings on GSCS Ward vs At-Large Systems

Time school boards went to ward system

Holding a plebiscite on the ward system with public school board elections this month is the third best thing the board could have done for the city.

The best thing would have been to stop talking about the change and simply implement the system. Had that been done earlier, the current crop of candidates would be running in wards for this election and both they and the voters would be much better served.

The second best thing would have been to hold a binding referendum rather than a plebiscite. Had that been the choice, what happened in Regina couldn't happen here. Regina voters favored the ward system by a 70 per cent margin in a plebiscite, but the school board still voted to retain the open system. That was a slap in the face for the democratic process as well as common sense.

It's curious how so many local government members continue to fear and oppose the ward, or division, system of elections. After years of practical experience in rural and urban municipalities, it has been demonstrated clearly that the bogey men opponents cite ad nauseam simply aren't there.

After wards were legislated into existence for city council elections in the province in the 1970s by the NDP, the Grant Devine Tories couldn't wait to get rid of them in the '80s, even though urban voters made it clear they wanted to keep the system in place for councils and extend it to school boards as well.

And even after the Tories were sent back to oblivion, ward system critics continued to resist its re-establishment.

Incredibly, the silly things that were said about wards 25 years ago were dredged up again. The ward system was some sort of plot by radicals trying to take over local governments; slates would sweep into power (always the looniest of lefties) and civic government

would become a hotbed of socialist ideology.

Why nobody ever said anything about a slate of wild-eyed rightists was beyond me. That was just as much of a possibility, if there was anything to the slate argument. Of course there wasn't, as years of elections have shown. Civic governments continue to be hotbeds of pragmatism, capable at any time of making decisions that fall anywhere and everywhere across the political spectrum.



Verne CLEMENCE

The point of the ward system first, last and always was and is to make local government more accessible, to both candidates and voters. Running in the open system with 50 or more opponents, trying to make yourself known to a population of 200,000,

is a daunting, and expensive, proposition.

Creating 10 divisions changed the dynamics substantially, and ever since wards were put in place, the makeup of city councils has more accurately reflected the general population. A seat on council is now not just something to which only the rich or the well known can aspire.

And of course the representation is more broadly based, even though candidates do not have to reside where they run. The winners know they have citywide responsibilities, but they're accountable to a specific segment of the population and that tends to focus the mind.

The same old tired arguments from the '70s have been made against wards for the school systems. It's past time for the change, and doubtless that is what voters are going to tell the public board. If it falls in line, the Catholic board, which first promised, then rejected a plebiscite for this fall, should see the light as well. With senior governments offloading more and more responsibilities onto locally elected bodies, the question of their makeup and adequacy becomes more urgent.

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SASKATOON CATHOLIC BOARD OF EDUCATION

REPORT

DATE: March 30, 1998

TO: K. McDonough, Director of Education

FROM: N. Prokopchuk, Supervisory Assistant

RE: **EXAMINATION OF QUESTION - ELECTION BY WARD SYSTEM**

The attached report provides an overview of the main issues surrounding the question of election by open boundary vs. ward system. It includes background information, current research findings and information from several school systems in Canada which have dealt with this issue in recent years.

A recommendation which gives possible choices for Board follow-up has also been included at the end of this report.

INTRODUCTION

In the spring of 1997, a notice of motion was made to the meeting of the Catholic Board of Education by one of its trustees. The motion read as follows:

*Moved that the Catholic Board of Education refer to the electorate the following question:
"Should the Catholic Board Elections be conducted on the basis of a ward system?"*

The motion was referred to the Board Governance Committee. After studying the issue, it was agreed by the Committee that there is a series of questions which need to be asked of electors if a change to a ward system is to be contemplated in the future.

Acting on the observations of the Governance Committee, the Board of Education determined that a process for examining this question with electors should be explored.

This report provides information which will assist the Board in its discussion regarding the process to be used.

WARD SYSTEM vs. OPEN BOUNDARIES: BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- In 1981, the provincial government proposed a ward system for urban school boards in Regina and Saskatoon. The Saskatoon Catholic Board studied the issue and expressed concern with regard to the following points:
 - a) the incongruence of civic wards with the location of Catholic parishes, schools and the Catholic electorate
 - b) the fragmenting effect of unequal distribution on the interests, motivation and involvement of trustees and their electorate
 - c) possible interference with the main mandate of Catholic trustees, which is to serve their electorate and to take directives for Catholic education from their Bishops*
 - d) erosion of a sense of responsibility to the broader Catholic community, rather than to select segments of that community predetermined by civic boundaries.
- At that time, the Catholic Board proposed that, if it became necessary to move to a ward system, its electorate be divided into four wards which were better-suited to the needs of the system and its supporters.
- The four wards were designed with a conscious effort to create equitable distribution of schools, student numbers, resources to be provided, local parishes and neighborhoods (a blend of Latin Rite and Byzantine Rite, as well as older and newer communities). A particular effort was made to leave existing civic ward boundaries and poll boundaries intact.

** Catholic trustees are accountable to all parents who support the ideals and purposes of the Catholic School System and not to any one particular group of parents. In addition, they are accountable to their Bishops with regard to instruction of children in religious values and truths.*

- It was stressed that the four proposed wards would create trustee accountability to certain parishes, school neighborhoods and the Catholic electorate* in each particular vicinity.
- With the change in provincial government in 1982, the question of wards for urban school divisions was dropped.
- The question resurfaced again in 1993 when the City of Saskatoon was required by legislation to return to the ward system. At that time, the Hospital Board also requested the creation of health wards.
- At a meeting of representatives from the City of Saskatoon, the Health Board and the two Saskatoon school divisions, it was agreed that:
 - a) the Hospital Board, which expressed the need for a smaller number of wards, would create five health wards, comprised of two city wards each
 - b) the City of Saskatoon would remain at an even number of ten wards to facilitate the Hospital Board's creation of five health wards.
 - c) the School Boards would remain with their current open boundary system.
- In 1997, a motion was put forth by a Catholic Board trustee to review the question of election of Catholic Board members through a ward system.
- The Board Governance Committee recommended that the Board should consider developing a process for involving electors in examining the question. It was also noted that establishing communication with electors who do not have children in our schools (approximately 70% of the Catholic electorate) would pose some challenges.
- A 1996 study initiated by the Trustees of the Saskatoon Public School Board revealed a favorable reaction to election of trustees through a ward system. While the process itself was somewhat flawed and the target group limited, their findings raised several issues which are worth noting. The findings of the Public Board study are summarized in **Appendix A.**

** It should be noted that while Catholic schools and parishes represent part of the Catholic community, they do not represent the Catholic electorate in its entirety. This electorate is comprised of Catholic school supporters from a broader spectrum of the civic community, such as business, industry, corporations or trade, as well as others, such as seniors and those confined to their residences or care homes.*

CURRENT ELECTORAL SYSTEMS: A SUMMARY OF FINDINGS*

There are three main systems followed in North America at the present time. These are:

- **AT-LARGE SYSTEMS** in which all eligible voters within the city boundaries may cast their ballots on one list of candidates
- **WARD SYSTEMS** in which a city is divided into smaller areas, called wards, and voters living in each ward vote only for the candidates who wish to be elected to represent that area.
- **MIXED SYSTEMS** which include some members elected at-large and some by ward.

There are few credible evaluations which indicate that one system is far better or worse than another. Surveys have shown that each system has its merits and challenges, as indicated by the summary charts which follow. The success of each system largely depends on the individual city, its experiences, demographics, socio-economic and socio-cultural factors.

AT- LARGE SYSTEMS

Positive aspects	Negative aspects
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Creates more efficient, professional governance.2. Reduces power of ward 'bosses', those who wield control over individual areas.3. Focuses on the needs of the community as a whole, not just particular areas.4. Promotes long-term planning.5. Directs more concentration on city-wide concerns and issues.6. Promotes decision-making which reflects the needs of the community as a whole, not particular lobby groups.7. Promotes the selection of better-qualified candidates, since they must have gained the confidence of the entire city.8. Creates a simpler system of administration.9. Makes the election process easier for voters to understand.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Leads to boards or councils which under-represent minority groups.2. Makes campaigning more costly for the candidates, who must focus on gaining city-wide recognition.3. Favors the election of candidates with greater financial resources.4. Reduces the chances for ordinary citizens to feel comfortable running for available positions.

* *A summary of Chapter Four: Systems for electing city government, taken from the research report Election Systems and Municipal Government, Vol. 1. City of Vancouver. June 1996.*
See **Attachment** for reprint of the entire chapter.

WARD SYSTEMS

Positive Aspects	Negative Aspects
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Ensures a greater balance of representation from all geographic areas of a city.2. Brings politics 'closer to the people'.3. Ensures that candidates will be known by voters in their area, and will need to be knowledgeable about the area they want to represent.4. Ensures greater accountability of candidates to the voters.5. Promotes higher voter turnout.6. Reduces the expenses associated with at-large campaigns.7. Promotes greater accessibility to the political process by a wider range of people and groups.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Tend to perpetuate and even accentuate divisions within the city or particular areas.2. Promotes a parochial outlook, with candidates worrying about lobbying for their own areas rather than the good of the whole community.3. Presents the possibility of having elected candidates who would not necessarily have been chosen by the broader community.4. Limits the voice of minority groups in the broader community; marginalizes certain groups, especially if they are not being well-represented by the elected candidate.

It is generally agreed by both opponents and proponents of wards that creating wards can be difficult, both technically and politically. Ideal wards are impossible; therefore it becomes a challenge to create workable boundaries, equitable representation guidelines and acceptable limitations.

MIXED OR PARTIAL WARD SYSTEMS

Positive Aspects	Negative Aspects
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Provides the best of both worlds in a situation where the choice of one system over the other is problematic.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Creates two 'classes' of candidates, with ward candidates perceived as having less clout or prestige than those elected at-large.

Studies suggest that mixed systems present a form of compromise for cities facing serious representational controversies. The main source of these controversies is the need to increase the representation of minority groups or groups which have been marginalized for various reasons.

ALTERNATE ELECTORAL SYSTEMS

Other options could be explored, keeping in mind the provincial legislation guidelines on electoral systems.

COMPARISONS WITH OUT-OF-PROVINCE URBAN CENTERS

School Board	Civic Wards	School Board Elections
Calgary Catholic	14 No health wards	School wards are comprised of several combinations of existing civic wards. Five Catholic wards are combinations of two civic wards each, one Catholic ward is equally matched with a civic ward, while another is a combination of three civic wards, for a total number of seven. Imbalance with regard to parish and school locations. <i>Enrolment: 38,970</i>
Calgary Public	14	School wards have been created by pairing city wards in a way which attempts to equalize numbers of schools and combine different communities (for example, an industrial area with an affluent area; a somewhat transient area with a middle class neighborhood). Seven wards in total. <i>Enrolment: 98,161</i>
Edmonton Catholic	6 One civic health district	School wards match existing civic wards. They are generally imbalanced in terms of school numbers (one ward has 19 schools, another only 6) and parishes. City wards are being readjusted for the upcoming election. <i>Enrolment: 32,188</i>
Edmonton Public	6	School wards match existing civic wards. The same type of imbalance exists as with the Catholic System. It is hoped that the changes being proposed for civic wards will correct the imbalance to some degree. <i>Enrolment: 76,186</i>
Vancouver	No wards	Open boundaries. Summary of city survey and findings are given on a separate page.
Ottawa	Large wards	Recent provincial changes have resulted in the amalgamation of school boards into large wards comprised of several cities.

COMPARISONS WITH SASKATCHEWAN URBAN CENTERS

School Board	School Board Elections
Regina Catholic	Open Boundaries. No major issues have arisen. <i>Enrolment: 11,163</i>
Regina Public	Open Boundaries <i>Enrolment: 24,175</i>
Prince Albert Catholic	Open Boundaries. Trustees take on a liaison role for certain areas, but they are responsible to all electors. <i>Enrolment: 2,724</i>
Prince Albert Public	Open Boundaries. <i>Enrolment: 8,245</i>

CITY OF SASKATOON - COMMENTS FROM THE CITY CLERK'S OFFICE

The City Clerk, Janice Mann, has indicated that the provincially-legislated return to the ward system for municipal elections was a positive change for the City of Saskatoon. The number of people running for City Council under the open boundary system was becoming somewhat unmanageable (90 candidates in the last open boundary election). She also indicated that no studies or formal reports have been done by the City of Saskatoon regarding the election issue, as there has not been a perceived need to explore the issue further.

The City Clerk shared her concerns regarding the question of elections by ward for the two local school boards, indicating that in her view, municipal elections and issues are not the same as those in education. Using her background knowledge of the electoral process and the Saskatoon electorate, the City Clerk raised two issues worth noting. The first issue centered on the confusion of electors if the number of candidates presently on each of the two city school boards (seven) does not match the number of city wards (ten) and health wards (five). The second issue was a concern about the implication of such a change for the City of Saskatoon's electoral procedures. Ms. Mann stressed the desire for collaboration or consultation between the City Clerk's Office and the school boards before any such change would take place.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION OFFERED BY OUT-OF-PROVINCE SCHOOL BOARDS

Calgary Catholic Schools

- Change from open boundaries to the ward system took place in 1989. Wards were mandated by the provincial government, therefore this system of election was not an issue of choice for the school systems in Alberta. This was a political issue of accountability for the government of the day. For the sake of convenience, Calgary school boards decided to use the city ward divisions to create school districts. This has resulted in some imbalance, with regard to school locations and numbers. Unfortunately, location of parishes and Catholic electors did not factor into the equation at all for the Catholic School Board. The planning officer indicated that they have no system of data collection in place which indicates to them where the Catholic electors reside. School board officials settled on a basic presumption that proportions of Catholic school supporters would be somewhat similar in various parts of the city.
- Candidates usually live in the ward in which they are seeking election. There does not seem to be a problem with regard to unequal distribution of schools in particular wards; candidates are aware of these statistics beforehand. There are guidelines in place which govern how Catholic candidates are to conduct their campaigns (i.e. candidates may hand out leaflets/information after a mass on one designated Sunday; parishes make church halls available for a meeting of electors with candidates).
- Voter apathy does not seem to be linked to either the ward or open boundary system of elections, in the opinion of the planning officer. For example, Calgary experienced very poor voter turnout in the last election, with only 24% of voters showing up at the polls. Voter turnout seems to be driven by various other factors.
- One of the consequences of the ward system has been a tendency for trustees to be less global (system-oriented) and more localized (ward-oriented) in their thinking. The planning officer finds it very difficult to bring larger issues which impact on the entire system to the board table. For example, he said that it is sometimes difficult to move forward with plans for the construction of a new school because individual trustees want priority to be given to the buildings/other needs in their ward first.
- As a cost saving measure, Calgary is contemplating a move to 4-year elections vs. 3-year elections. There are also issues surrounding the inservice of new trustees every three years; a four-year term would give trustees more time to become familiar with their role, responsibilities and the educational issues which impact on school systems.

Edmonton Catholic Schools

- Both Catholic and Public school wards continue to be imbalanced. Although the city changed their wards to try to balance out the school wards to some degree, this remains a problem. (i.e. 19 schools vs. 6 schools in one case, 16 schools vs. 8 schools in another)
- Health wards are not an issue as they encompass the whole city, and representatives are delegated rather than elected.
- Trustees usually live in the area for which they seek election, but this is not a requirement. Electors cast ballots for their own ward candidates only, not system wide. Problems ensued with the even number of wards (6). One more trustee was chosen, using the next highest number of votes as the deciding factor. This trustee became a trustee-at-large, not an elected trustee. From the seven members, a chair was chosen.
- For the last election, Edmonton Catholic received a request to have one rural ward - Vegreville, join its school board. This brought the number of trustees to seven without the trustee-at-large arrangement. The regionalization experiment has proven to be quite costly in terms of travel and communication, but the arrangement continues.
- The School Board Office carries out its work in much the same way as before, while the trustees operate in the ward mode.
- Election protocol has been outlined. The Trustees' Office works with Bishops and priests to set up electors' meetings with the candidates in church halls or basements, and one Sunday is designated for distribution of brochures at all churches after the Liturgy. In the case of two particular schools which draw students from all parts of the city, all candidates gather for a meeting with electors.
- Voter apathy has been alleviated by one 'bad' year when two trustees were voted in by acclamation. Since that time, there have been several candidates in each ward, and voters do exercise their right to vote. Trustees who aren't popular are simply not put into office. In the last election, a huge turnover resulted in 7 new trustees.
- In an effort to attend to the issue of minority representation, the board uses liaison groups and designates a trustee to each group. Each liaison group has a voice through their trustee.
- It was noted that the main negative factor in the ward system for Edmonton Catholic Schools is the tendency of trustees to look at their position on the board from an area perspective rather than a system perspective. It is true that they can connect with their school much easier now, but they do tend to be pressured by the electorate in their area to lobby for local needs. Socio-economic needs in certain areas occupy the agenda to a greater extent than other larger issues for the school system as a whole.

Ottawa Catholic School Board

- Boundaries are now quite broad; they encompass several cities and are sub-divided into large zones.
- A province-wide amalgamation of school boards has brought with it many problems and adjustments.
- An exhaustive study was done approximately one year ago. Information on this study will be made available upon request.

City of Vancouver

- The entire city and its district school boards continue to be governed by an open boundary system. A concise report on the question of wards was commissioned by Vancouver City Council and completed in June of 1996. The findings have been summarized in **Appendix B**.
- In reviewing the question of at-large, ward or mixed systems of election, City Council agreed on a specific plan of action. Council decided that an opinion question would be put forward to its electors. Wording of the opinion question was considered a crucial issue. Prior to the election, Council also agreed that the following two items would be provided to electors.
 - 1) a review of background information and statistics
 - 2) provision of information to the electors through brochures (translated into several languages) and human resources.
- The extensive process yielded a broad spectrum of responses. As a result, an open boundary system continues to be used by the city.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that this report be received by the Board of Education at its regular meeting and that the following approaches to an exploration of the issue be considered:

1. Random telephone survey - the survey would ask electors if there is interest in pursuing the question of a ward system for Catholic School Board elections,

OR

2. Focus/Target group approach - A random segment of the electorate would be asked to share their views on the same question.

Further, it is recommended that the approach chosen by the Board be pursued, following the decision of the Government of Saskatchewan on proposed legislation regarding electoral systems.

APPENDIX A

Ward Study Committee - Saskatoon Public Board of Education

*Summary of Findings**

Positive Aspects of a Ward System

For Trustees:

- enhanced communication between parents and the Board
- a sense of greater accountability to the needs of a particular area
- better representation from each part of the city

For Voters:

- ease of knowing the candidates in the election
- possible alleviation of re-election on the basis of familiarity of names or position in community
- less costly campaigns
- reduction in voter apathy

Other Comments for Consideration:

- change to ward system is desirable only if there is no additional cost involved to electors
- term of trustees should be limited
- candidates should live in the area they seek to represent
- candidates should have children in the school system

Positive Aspects of Open Boundaries

For Trustees:

- better opportunity for representation as a whole, promoting a greater sense of community
- more realistic reflection of school attendance outside local neighborhoods

For Voters:

- provides a measure of security with regard to voter apathy in any particular area
- opportunity to choose candidates from a larger segment of the population
- no conflict among different areas of the city
- no conflict in terms of politics or special interest groups from particular areas

Other Comments for Consideration:

- term of trustees should be limited to 6 or 8 years

** Responses were gathered from a survey distributed to parents through the each school's regular Parent Association Meeting. Information reflected the opinions of a small segment of the school electorate - namely, parents with school-age children who attended the meeting. As noted by the Ward Study Committee, the method chosen was statistically invalid, but it was valuable in that some insights into the issue were gained.*

APPENDIX B

Elections Systems and Municipal Government: Volume 1 *Highlights of a report for the City of Vancouver* *June 1996*

Vancouver's city council members are elected at-large by all eligible citizens who choose to vote in city-wide elections. The Board of School Trustees is also elected at-large and is entirely independent of the rest of municipal government. It looks after the City's primary and secondary schools as well as its adult education programs.

In 1996, a public opinion question sought the opinion of voters regarding change to Vancouver's open boundary system of elections. A city-wide discussion followed. Several issues dominated the discussion, indicating that voters were somewhat resistant to change. These issues are summarized below.

- 1. Ensuring equitable representation** - The basic democratic slogan "one person, one vote" can, under some forms of organization, lead to voting results that seem clearly unfair. There is general acceptance of the idea that a governing system must also provide for representation of certain "communities of interest" determined by geographic areas, neighborhoods, ethnic or cultural communities, or others. Finding an election system which does not exclude or under-represent particular groups is difficult, but important.
- 2. Accountability of representatives** - If the representative is very much like the people in the area who have elected him or her (i.e. lives in the area, has similar interests, background or economic status), accountability seems to be a lesser issue. The representative's decisions or opinions will likely reflect the will of the majority of electors. In some cities, where communities are diverse, decisions made by the elected representative do not necessarily reflect the will of the various groups of electors in a given area.
- 3. Voter participation** - A great deal of debate exists with regard to structure of governance and voter turnout. It is generally difficult to predict how changes to the election system will affect the degree of voter participation over time.
- 4. Coping with growth and other forms of change** - Legislative or budgetary changes at the federal or provincial levels definitely have an effect on the way cities and their councils operate and the resources made available to them. In addition, changes in demographic, economic and environmental factors have an impact on the size of the elected council (and therefore the election system), the council's intergovernmental relationships, the legal framework under which it operates, and the budget. These changes must be looked at globally.

5. “Fit” with other functions of a city - Attention should be given to how an election system impacts on the other functions of a city. Voter participation may suffer in elections which include multiple ballots for a variety of elected bodies. It is also argued that more people are likely to vote in one “big” election rather than a number of separate, smaller ones.

6. Cost and efficiency - The financial strain on cities with regard to administering elections, campaigning, size of councils and the efficiency with which they can conduct their business is of increasing concern to all voters. One election for all seems to be the preferred choice.

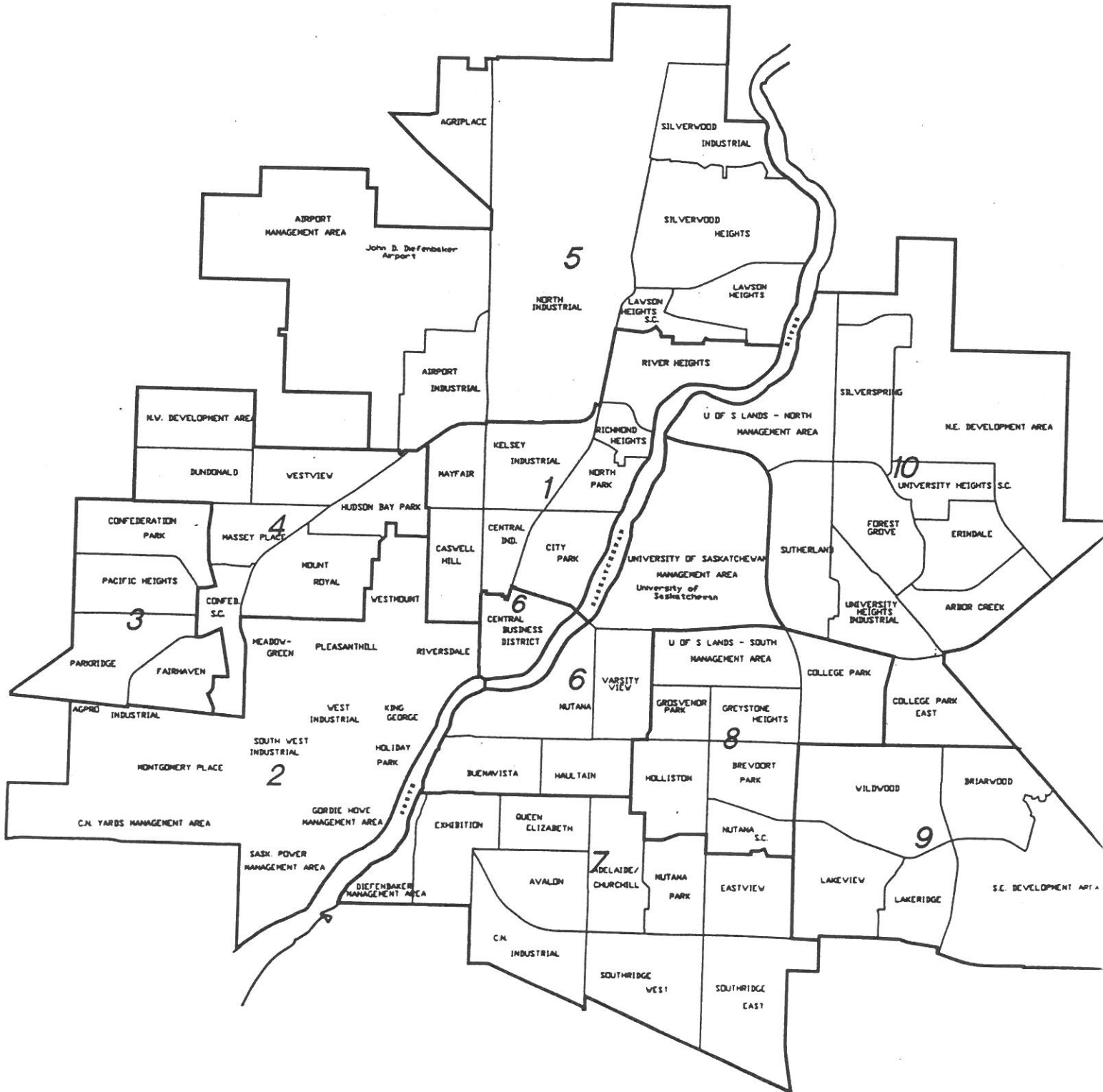
It was determined that none of the issues listed above could be considered independently of each other.

It was concluded that different systems may work in different cities for various reasons, depending on the dynamics of each city. Such factors as geography (how spread out a city is), ethnic and cultural composition, socio-economic makeup (income, education, employment levels) or local political traditions have a great impact on electoral systems. Each city should examine its particular needs and use these needs as the determining factor for its choice of electoral system.

Saskatoon Catholic Schools: Distribution of Schools/Parishes By City Ward

WARD 1	WARD 2	WARD 3	WARD 4	WARD 5
St. Michael St. Paul St. Anne - <i>Sts. Martyrs- Canadiens</i> - <i>St. Michael's</i>	St. John St. Mary St. Dominic St. Edward E. D. Feehan Saskatoon French School - <i>Our Lady of Czestochowa</i> - <i>Our Lady of Lourdes</i> - <i>St. John Bosco</i> - <i>St. Mary's</i> - <i>St. George's Cathedral (Ukr. Catholic)</i>	St. Marguerite St. Mark Father Vachon Bishop Roborecki - <i>St. Patrick's</i>	St. Goretti St. Gerard Bishop Klein St. Peter - <i>St. Peter the Apostle</i>	St. Angela Sister O'Brien St. George Bishop Mahoney - <i>St. Anne's</i>
WARD 6	WARD 7	WARD 8	WARD 9	WARD 10
Bishop Murray Joe Duquette St. Philip St. Frances - <i>St. Frances Xavier</i> - <i>St. Paul's Cathedral</i> - <i>St. Philip Neri</i> - <i>Sts. Peter & Paul (Ukrainian Catholic)</i>	Georges Vanier St. Thomas St. James	Sion Holy Cross St. Matthew Cardinal Leger - <i>St. Joseph's</i>	Bishop Pocock St. Bernard St. Luke - <i>Holy Spirit</i>	St. Augustine Holy Family St. Volodymyr Father Robinson St. Joseph - <i>Holy Family</i> - <i>St. Augustine</i> - <i>Dormition of the Blessed Mother (Ukr. Catholic)</i>

City Map: Ward Boundaries



ATTACHMENT

Chapter Four: Systems for electing city government. *Election Systems and Municipal Government, Vol. 1.* City of Vancouver. June 1996.

Chapter 4.

Systems for electing city government

This chapter describes the ways that most city governments are currently elected in North America and reviews the debate about the merits of different systems. The information here is not intended to recommend any particular option, but to show how they are presented by their opponents, proponents, and academic observers. The following chapter deals with how these systems are applied in “real life,” using the cities included in our survey as examples.

City councils in North America are elected according to three main systems:

- **at-large systems** in which all eligible voters within the city boundaries vote on the same list of candidates
- **ward systems** in which a city is broken down into smaller areas (wards), and voters living in each ward vote on their own list of candidates who wish to represent their ward on council. Wards may be single- or multi-member.
- **mixed systems** which include some members elected at large and some by ward.

In most municipalities, whether using a ward system or not, the mayor is elected at large and independently from the rest of council. In others, the mayor may be a councillor who is elected by other councillors, or the councillor with the highest popular vote.

Urban politics is far from being a laboratory in which government systems can be tested against one another, and there are few credible evaluations which conclusively show which system might be “best” or “worst” for even one city — never mind all cities. Each system has its proponents and opponents, and individual cities’ experiences with different systems have been highly varied, as the survey results in the next chapter indicate.

Nonetheless, it is of value to set out some of the major arguments which have been made in this long-running debate, as well as to describe the systems themselves.

At-large elections

At-large elections became popular as part of the urban reform movement earlier in this century, which sought to create more efficient, professional city governments and reduce the power of ward “bosses.” Those in favour of the at-large system often argue that city-wide election results in a city council which views the city’s needs as a whole, and from a long-term view. Councillors are said to be better able to concentrate on city-wide issues, particularly budgetary ones, and make balanced decisions about services affecting all parts of the city such as public transport, policing and fire services, and libraries. The argument is occasionally made that the system may elect better qualified candidates since they must have the confidence of the entire city. The system is administratively simple compared to the alternatives, and easy for voters to understand.

One of the main arguments against the at-large system, particularly if it is combined with “winner-take-all” voting, is that it leads to city councils which under-represent minority groups. (See, among other treatments of the subject, the *1995 Report of the Elections Task Force to the Board of Supervisors, City and County of San Francisco* which is included among the documents reproduced in Volume II.)

Another argument against at-large elections is that city-wide campaigning is more expensive than it would be if candidates ran on a ward basis. This is said to favour the election of candidates with greater financial resources and reduce the feeling of ordinary citizens that they might ever be able to run for office.

In recent years, there has been some experimentation by at-large cities in the United States with alternative voting methods such as preferential and cumulative voting. These have been in order to increase the chances of minority candidates to win seats on council, usually in smaller cities where specific minorities have been under-represented politically.

Ward elections

Electing councils by ward or district became widespread in the 19th century. Unlike at-large elections which have historically under-represented even large communities or minority groups, particularly under winner-take-all conditions, wards ensure greater balance of representation for all geographic areas of a city.

Those in favour of the system argue that it brings politics “closer to the people,” that voters in wards know more about the candidates they have to choose from, and that the person-elected will be more knowledgeable about the needs and concerns of voters. The accountability of councillors is increased because voters know who “their” representative is and can monitor his or her voting record. Ward elections ensure that different parts of a city are represented on council and may lead to a higher turnout of voters. Ward campaigns are held to be less expensive than at-large campaigns for the individual candidate since the number of people and the physical area a candidate must address is much smaller. This, it is argued, makes participation in politics more accessible to a wider range of people and groups.

One political scientist summarizes the arguments against wards as follows:

[Opponents of wards] claim that ward elections tend to perpetuate and even accentuate divisions within the municipality. It is argued that a ward council is very parochial in outlook with councillors worrying about their individual bailiwicks wherein they must seek re-election rather than being concerned about the good of the whole community. It is also argued that some representatives get elected on a ward basis who would not have been chosen if they were running over the entire municipality (Tindal, p. 102–103.)

There are also arguments against particular kinds of wards. It is argued that in single-member wards, voters who do not agree with their representative may feel that no one on council speaks for them at all. Multi-member wards, particularly those combined with cumulative voting systems, are said to remedy this problem but may be perceived by voters as too complicated. On the other hand, multi-member wards are used in some American cities specifically as a way of increasing the chances of electing minority candidates to council.

Both opponents and proponents of wards agree that creating wards can be a difficult business, both technically and politically. A participant in a ward re-division exercise in Ontario illustrated the challenge of creating workable ward boundaries as follows:

If Kingston could be divided into equal wards, they would all have equal population, be united around similar communities of interest (i.e., schools and community centres), and each be composed of citizens with similar socio economic factors. The boundaries would be easily recognizable, preferably multi-lane streets or other barriers to neighbourhoods. The lines would also have been in existence for some considerable time so that residents would be familiar with them and feel a sense of allegiance to their wards. The municipality would also be static so that population growth will not upset this perfectly balanced arrangement.

Ideal wards are impossible. The question is how far from the ideal is acceptable? (Williams, p. 1.)

Mixed or partial ward systems

Mixed systems are used in an increasing number of cities in the United States, according to figures collected by the International City/County Management Association. A study based on these figures suggests that mixed systems may be a “reasonable form of compromise for jurisdictions facing representational controversies” (Renner, p. 67). Again, the main source of these controversies is the need to increase the representation of minority groups.

The main argument in favour of mixed systems is that they provide the best of both worlds: the “close to the people” benefits of the ward system and the city-wide outlook of at-large elections. Opponents assert that mixed systems create two “classes” of councillor, with those elected at-large having more prestige and clout than those elected by wards.

For further information

In response to a request for information in our survey, a number of municipalities sent some very helpful documentation. One of the most in-depth was a 1995 report from San Francisco called *A Report of the Elections Task Force to the Board of Supervisors, City and County of San Francisco*. The report discusses a number of options for reforming San Francisco's electoral system and voting methods with a view to increasing representation and accountability.

From Kitchener, we received Robert Williams' succinct and clearly written "Some Criteria for Revising Kitchener's Ward System," which provides an excellent introduction to the considerations that go into creating acceptable ward boundaries.

The already-mentioned book by C. R. Tindal, *Local Government in Canada*, gives a general overview of the ward/at-large debate as it has been framed in Canada since the 1970s.

For a broad overview of trends in municipal governments in the United States since 1981, see Tari Renner and Victor S. DeSantis's "Contemporary Patterns and Trends in Municipal Government Structures" in the International City/County Management Association's *Municipal Yearbook*, 1993.

SASKATOON CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

A POSITION PAPER
ON THE
WARD SYSTEM

PRESENTED TO
THE HONOURABLE DOUGLAS McARTHUR
MINISTER OF EDUCATION

by
THE BOARD OF EDUCATION
ST. PAUL'S R.C.S.S.D. #20

JANUARY 5, 1981

THE WARD BASIS FOR THE
ELECTION OF SEPARATE SCHOOL TRUSTEES

A. INTRODUCTION

The Board of Education for the Saskatoon Catholic Schools is pleased that the Honourable Douglas McArthur, Minister of Education, has provided this opportunity for representatives of the Board to meet with him for the purpose of reviewing the implications of the ward system for the election of separate school trustees. The Board appreciates the Minister's sensitivity to the possibility of some special effects of the ward system on a denominational-minority school jurisdiction.

In addition to identifying these unique implications, the Board also wishes to identify some of the concerns which may be shared by individuals and representatives of other groups.

The Board also wishes to draw attention to the fact that concern about the introduction of the ward system for the Saskatoon Catholic Schools was expressed by persons who are members of the Catholic community in Saskatoon, and also those who are representatives of organizations within that community. Most particularly, it wants to draw attention to the positions expressed by the Saskatoon Catholic Principals Association, the Catholic Women's League, and St. Paul's Cathedral.

The Board wishes to emphasize that it does not express its concerns regarding the ward system because of any general opposition to this basis of elections at the local level. Rather, it wishes to question its suitability for a Catholic school jurisdiction.

B. SPECIFIC IMPLICATIONS FOR A CATHOLIC SCHOOL DIVISION

There exist special circumstances which apply to a Catholic School Division and which are not found, as a general rule, in a school division which serves a more diverse population in terms of personal values and philosophies:

1. Expectations of the Total Community. The Catholic School System, in addition to its obligations to provide a solid academic program, must reflect the expectations and aspirations of the total Catholic community. Therefore, it is suggested that the whole community should have the opportunity "to have a say" as to all those who can best support, articulate, and enhance the unique purposes of the Catholic Schools.

The strength of the Catholic School System in terms of fulfilling its obligations to the Catholic community (as well as, maintaining a unique identity in the total community) is dependant on this.

2. Trustee Accountability. It is also important to be mindful of the twofold mandate which trustees in the Catholic School System must fulfill. The one mandate comes from the electorate within the Catholic school jurisdiction. The other comes from the Bishop of the Diocese who delegates his teaching responsibility to a group of people chosen by that electorate.

It is especially important that trustees elected to a Catholic Board of Education must first feel a sense of responsibility to the total community rather than to specific segments of it.

A trustee in a Catholic-Separate school system must be

accountable to all the parents who support the ideals and purposes of the Catholic School System and not to any one group of parents. As well, he is accountable to the Bishop of the Diocese for carrying the very special mandate of the Church to instruct the young in religious values and truths.

3. Boundaries. If there is a justification for the introduction of a ward or zone basis for the selection of trustees to a Catholic Board of Education, it would be much more legitimate to take into account certain existing structures within the Catholic community. Most particularly, the significance of parish boundaries and parish organizations should be taken into account. Indeed, such representation could contribute to a closer relationship between the Church and the Catholic schools in the community. (

The identification of ward boundaries with parish boundaries would suggest the importance of candidates being supportive of the ideals of Catholic education. The same assurance cannot be provided through the application of city ward boundaries which were created with entirely different considerations in mind.

4. Population Distribution. In the establishment of ward boundaries, an attempt is made to ensure an equal distribution of the population throughout the wards. The distribution of the numbers on the basis of ethnic, religious, or other such factors cannot be a consideration in the call of city wards and elections. However, this is an important consideration for Catholic school trustee elections.

The ratio of the Catholic population to the total population varies from ward to ward. Factors such as the location of

parish churches, separate elementary schools, a Catholic high school, serve to determine the concentration of Catholics in a particular area. The point is that a trustee from one ward may be representing a significantly smaller number of ratepayers than a trustee from another ward.

C. SOME ADDITIONAL CONCERNS

Our Board of Education also wishes to briefly identify certain additional concerns which have already been expressed in a brief to Professor de Vlieger or which have been stated by individuals or representatives of other groups in the community. It also wishes to provide some information which is peculiar to the Saskatoon Catholic School System.

Specifically, the concerns of the Board of Education are the following:

1. That the existing ward boundaries in Saskatoon bear no resemblance to any existing parish or school attendance area boundaries.

Some wards include sections of four different parish areas, yet no one parish is completely located within that ward. We also have the example of a ward cutting through four elementary school attendance areas and not including any one such attendance area in its entirety within the boundaries of the ward.

Those elected on the basis of city wards are not representative of existing structures which are important for communication.

2. That there is an inequitable distribution of the school aged population throughout the wards.

Ward Four has only one elementary school located within it. The total elementary school enrolment is approximately 200 students. On the other hand, Ward Five has six schools and a total enrolment of approximately 1,000 students.

The interests and motivations of a person representing Ward Four would be significantly different from the one representing Ward Five with its expanding neighborhoods and growing population.

It is suggested that this kind of situation may detract from a global overview of the needs of the school system.

3. That the justifications which apply to the existence of wards for the election of City Aldermen may be inappropriate for the election of school trustees.

The most significant difference between the two local Governments is that in the case of City Council, the operation is completely centralized. However, in the case of school boards, there are facilities and personnel distributed throughout the wards. At the same time, this distribution is not equitable.

There may be some justification for the concern that there will be a seeking of equality with respect to the distribution of resources, regardless of the practicality of the situation.

It is believed that the dynamics of decision making will be very different. For example, regardless of justifications, the closing of schools might become more difficult. In addition, decisions such as those concerning the location of high schools will be compounded by having Board members representing small segments of the city.

THE WARD SYSTEM
A STATEMENT OF POSITION
SUBMITTED TO
THE SASKATCHEWAN EDUCATIONAL
BOUNDARIES COMMISSION

BY
THE SASKATOON CATHOLIC SCHOOLS
PRINCIPALS' ASSOCIATION

December 1, 1981

The Catholic School Principals' Association supports the four ward proposal as outlined by the Catholic School Board in its submission to this commission. As an association we would like to highlight some of our concerns:

- 1) One of the civic wards has only one Catholic elementary school within its boundaries. This school has a student population of less than 200 students. It is therefore obvious that an elected trustee from this ward would represent very few people.
- 2) Catholic rate payers are not equally distributed throughout the city. They tend to cluster in certain areas, especially around church parishes. This also means that the Catholic school student population is inequitably distributed under the civic ward system.
- 3) The civic ward system cuts through some parish boundaries effectively separating school and church.

The nature of our school system i.e., the close liaison between church and school is very important. The identity each school has with its neighboring church is significant with respect to the "Catholic dimension" of our educational program. Many of our schools serve more than one parish as well, therefore we would like to see the school and the parishes it serves, sharing the same ward.

- 4) Attendance boundaries should focus on the school as a community centre. We feel that if the parish and school shared the same ward this would be greatly enhanced.
- 5) Older areas are separated from newer areas in the civic ward system. Having a mixture of both is important for the vitality of our school system with respect to social and educational issues.

PRINCIPALS' POSITION

We would like to see the introduction of the four ward system as proposed by the Catholic School Board with two trustees from each ward. This would satisfy the legislation for numbers of board members and would allow for the following:

- a) A more equitable distribution of elementary schools in each ward, (6 - 8) and a High School serving a pair of wards on either side of the natural boundary - the river.
- b) A more equitable distribution of students in each ward - (1500 - 1800).
- c) A more equitable distribution of parishes. The elementary schools serving more than one parish are all in the same ward, allowing for better communication between Parish Council, School Council and ward electors.
- d) The election of two trustees in each ward provides for the sharing of responsibilities for the interests of the schools, and the electors in each ward. Having two trustees enhances the concept of a "global perspective" on their part, i.e., they would have the opportunity to share the issues of the ward and be able to deliberate concerns of special interest groups.
- e) It may encourage more people to run because school and parish concerns would be "tied" together. Parish Councils, Home and School Associations, School Councils would be encouraged to run candidates thereby enhancing the democratic political process.

SUMMARY

The major issue for us, then, is that our schools, our students, and our parents have equal opportunity for representation at the Board level. The civic ward system does not allow for this; the four ward proposal does.

A SUBMISSION
TO THE
SASKATCHEWAN EDUCATIONAL
BOUNDARIES COMMISSION

BY THE
BOARD OF EDUCATION
FOR
ST. PAUL'S R.C.S.S.D. #20
SASKATOON, SASKATCHEWAN

December 1, 1981

A. SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR CATHOLIC SCHOOL DIVISIONS

Shortcomings of Civic Wards

The introduction of the ward system for the election of trustees to Boards of Education has been justified on the basis that it will result in a more equitable and responsive representation of electors on the board. The board accepts that this must be one of the major reasons for the change in the basis of school elections.

Due to peculiarities associated with a minority school system, the use of existing or some future civic wards as the basis would not effectively achieve this end. Civic wards are established with a view to providing an equal distribution of the total population. It is evident that in the case of a Catholic school system, separate school electors are not distributed evenly throughout the civic wards.

Factors which determine where Catholics may be situated are frequently related to the location of certain facilities and institutions. These include the location of the parish church, the Catholic elementary school, and the Catholic high school. For instance, we see higher ratios of Catholics in such areas as Eastview, East College Park, and Massey Place.

Importance of Existing Structures

Whatever new procedures are established for the election of trustees, it is important that the denominational character of the Catholic schools is never undermined. That character is always enhanced by a close identity of

the schools and the school jurisdiction with the church and its institutions in the community.

Presently, there is a considerable amount of identification that exists between the parishes and the elementary schools. This applies to both the majority Latin rite of the church and the minority Ukrainian-Byzantine rite. It is important that the election of trustees contributes to a closer relationship between the church and the Catholic schools in the community.

It is a contention of the Board of Education that ward boundaries should take into consideration existing parish boundaries to as great a degree as possible.

Trustee Accountability

Trustees elected to a Catholic Board of Education must always be mindful of a twofold mandate which they must fulfill. One mandate comes from the electorate within the Catholic school jurisdiction; the other comes from the Bishop of the diocese who delegates his teaching responsibility to a group of people chosen by that electorate.

It is important that trustees elected must feel a sense of responsibility to as wide a community as possible rather than to small segments of it.

It is the position of the Board of Education that the teaching mandate of the church can better be fulfilled by trustees elected from wards that reflect the existing structures within the church and the Catholic community.

B. A FOUR WARD PROPOSAL

Taking into account some of the special considerations associated with a minority Catholic school system, the Board of Education proposes the establishment of four large wards with two trustees elected from each of them.

The Board would suggest the following justifications for its proposal:

1. It would take into consideration parish boundaries and provide for some logical groupings of parishes for the purpose of communications, elector involvement, and selection of candidates for the board of education.
2. It would take into account attendance area boundaries which are significant in terms of focusing attention on the school as a community centre serving both the student and adult populations.
3. It would result in four wards with a much more equal distribution of the student population which has to be served, as well as the number of electors who are entitled to vote in board elections.
4. It would avoid the complete exclusion of the Ukrainian-Byzantine rite parishes in the city in the consideration of boundaries. Indeed, these parishes can identify with these wards much more readily than they could with any civic wards.
5. It would provide for each ward to contain a mix of older and newer schools, as well as still undeveloped neighborhoods. This would avoid the need for constant review of boundaries as population shifts.

C. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

The Board proposes boundaries for four major wards. This is done more by way of illustration than as a highly concrete proposal. It would ask the Educational Boundaries Commission to investigate a somewhat different alignment if this enhanced the proposal.

The Board recognizes that under no circumstances must boundaries cut through civic polls.

D. RECOMMENDATIONS

- That the Boundaries Commission seriously consider the four ward proposal for the election of trustees to the Saskatoon Catholic Board of Education.
- That the Educational Boundaries Commission, after further consultation with the Board of Education if required, examine some modifications of the proposed boundary lines if this is deemed advantageous.
- That the Educational Boundaries Commission give favorable consideration to the election of two trustees from each of the four major wards.
- That the Educational Boundaries Commission recommend to the Minister of Education the four ward system with two trustees from each ward as the basis for the election of trustees to the Saskatoon Catholic Board of Education.

E. ATTACHMENTS

1. Description of each of the four wards.
2. An outline map showing the four wards.

WARD 1

Schools

- St. Mark
- Father Vachon
- Bishop Roborecki
- Bishop Klein
- St. Gerard
- St. Goretti
- St. Mary

Parishes

- St. Mark
- St. Peter the Apostle
- St. Mary
- St. George
- Our Lady of Czestochowa

Enrolment

- Elementary - 1,950
- High School - 600

Population - 6,500

WARD 11

Schools

- St. Dominic
- St. John
- St. Edward
- St. Michael
- St. Paul
- St. Anne
- St. George
- Sister O'Brien

Parishes

- St. John
- St. Michael
- St. Paul
- St. Martyrs Canadiens
- St. Anne
- St. George Ukrainian

Enrolment

- Elementary - 1,450
- High School - 400

Population - 6,600

WARD III

Schools

- St. Frances - St. Joseph
- Bishop Murray - St. Patrick
- Cardinal Leger
- St. Augustine
- Holy Family
- Georges Vanier

Parishes

- St. Francis
- St. Joseph
- Our Lady of Lourdes
- St. Augustine
- Holy Family
- SS. Peter & Paul
- St. Mary's Ukrainian

Enrolment

- Elementary - 1,510
- High School - 600

Population - 6,500

WARD IV

Schools

- St. Philip
- St. James - St. Charles
- St. Matthew
- St. Thomas
- Bishop Pocock
- St. Bernard

Parishes

- St. Philip
- Holy Spirit
- SS. Peter & Paul

Enrolment

- Elementary - 1,320
- High School - 700

Population - 5,800

THE FOUR ZONES

- I. Schools - St. Mark, Father Vachon,
Bishop Roborecki, Bishop
Klein, St. Gerard, St.
Goretti, St. Mary
- Parishes - St. Peter the Apostle, St.
Mary's, St. George, Our
Lady of Czestochowa
- Population - 6,500
- II. Schools - St. Dominic, St. John, St.
Edward, St. Michael, St. Paul,
St. Anne, St. George, Sister
O'Brien
- Parishes - St. John, St. Michael, St. Paul,
Canadian Martyrs, St. Anne,
St. George
- Population - 6,600
- III. Schools - St. Frances, Bishop Murray,
Cardinal Leger, St. Augustine,
Holy Family, Georges Vanier
- Parishes - St. Frances, St. Joseph, Our
Lady of Lourdes, St. Augustine,
Holy Family, SS. Peter & Paul,
St. Mary's (Ukrainian)
- Population - 6,500
- IV. Schools - St. Philip, St. James, St.
Matthew, St. Thomas, Bishop
Pocock, St. Bernard
- Parishes - St. Philip, Holy Spirit,
SS. Peter & Paul
- Population - 6,000

IMPLEMENTATION

OF THE

WARD SYSTEM

FOR

CATHOLIC BOARD ELECTIONS

AN ALTERNATIVE FOUR ZONE PROPOSAL

THE WARD SYSTEM

1. Legislation passed in 1981 required the establishment of wards for the election of trustees to the Catholic Board of Education.
2. Prior to the introduction of the legislation, the Board expressed concerns about the suitability of civic wards for Catholic Board elections.
3. The Board's concerns were prompted by the following:
 - Inequality in the distribution of the Catholic population throughout the civic wards.
 - The disparity in the distribution of population and educational resources throughout the civic wards.
 - The lack of consideration for parish boundaries.
4. The Minister of Education introduced changes which permit the Catholic Board to establish wards that are more appropriate for purposes of electing trustees.

THE ZONE PROPOSAL

- The four zone proposal as an alternative to city wards was made on the basis of the following considerations:
1. Provision of some logical grouping of parishes to respect existing boundaries.
 2. Taking into account school attendance area boundaries.
 3. Provision of a more equal distribution of the student population.
 4. Consideration of an approach which could result in continued representation from the Eastern rites.
- #### BASIS FOR ELECTION
1. Each zone would elect two representatives to the Board resulting in a Board of eight members.
 2. The Chairman would be selected from among the eight members.

ST. PAUL'S R.C.S.S.D. #20
420 - 22nd Street East, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan
S7K 1X3 Phone: (306) 668-7000 Fax: (306) 668-7179

November 23, 2000

A. W. Balon, President
Bishop James Mahoney Parent-School Council
139 Chitek Crescent
Saskatoon, SK S7K 5B6


Dear Archie:

At its November 22, 2000 regular meeting, the Saskatoon Catholic Schools Board of Education received the request from the Bishop James Mahoney Parent-School Council to adopt a ward system for the next election of trustees, October 2003.

Questions about the adoption of a ward system were addressed to the trustee candidates at the October 18, 2000 forum. The Board, therefore, has referred this topic to its regular planning meeting agenda.

A recommendation will be made to a regular meeting of the Board within the next few months. I will inform the Bishop James Mahoney Parent-School Council of the date of that meeting as soon as it is known.

Sincerely,



Jerry Zimmer
Director of Education

October 14, 2000

Board of Trustees
St. Paul's R.C.S.S.D. #20
420 – 22nd Street East
Saskatoon, SK
S7K 1X3

Dear Board:

The following motion was passed at our regular monthly Parent-School Council meeting held on October 2, 2000:

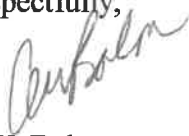
“M/S Ed Cechanowicz/Lois Spizawka Passed
- Draft and forward a letter from the ratepayers and members of the BJM Parent-School Council to the elected Board of Trustees of the St. Paul's Roman Catholic Separate School Division #20. The letter is to request that the Board of Trustees adopt the Ward System for the next election of trustees slated for October, 2004.”

Our desire is based on direct representation and accountability to the ratepayers within a specific area. The merits need not be reviewed, as we are aware that the topic is not new to the Board.

We would ask that you respond as to the direction and process that will be taken so that we may proceed as necessary to ensure that the Ward System is in place for our next election.

Once again, thank you for your ongoing efforts at ensuring quality education for our children. We look forward to your response and would appreciate it by December 20, 2000.

Respectfully,



A.W. Balon
President, Bishop James Mahoney
Parent-School Council

ST. PAUL'S R.C.S.S.D. #20
420 - 22nd Street East, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan
S7K 1X3 Phone: (306) 668-7000 Fax: (306) 668-7179

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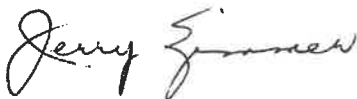
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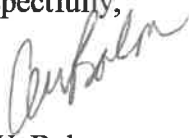
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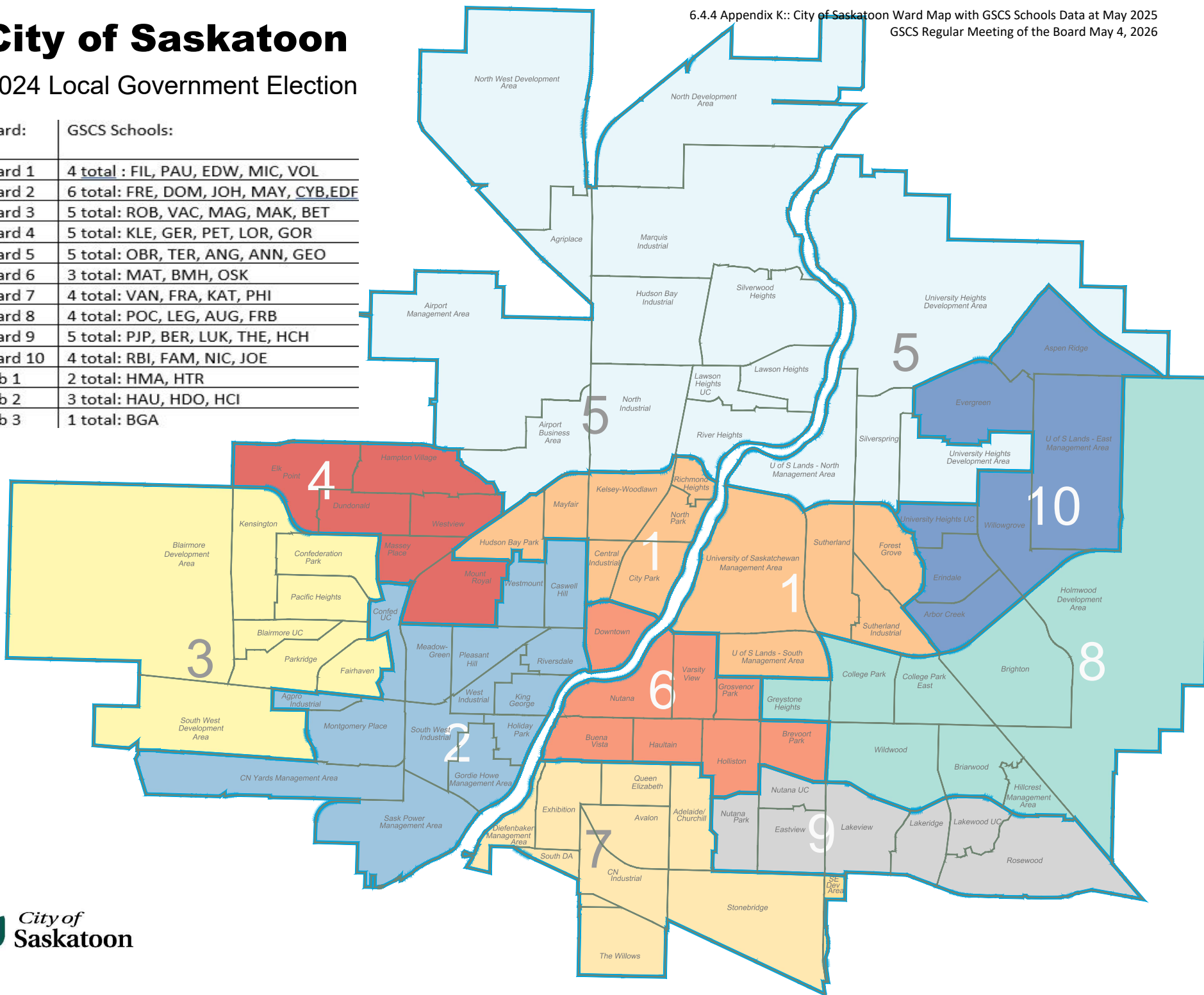


A.W. Balon
President, Bishop James Mahoney
Parent-School Council

City of Saskatoon

2024 Local Government Election

Ward:	GSCS Schools:
Ward 1	4 total : FIL, PAU, EDW, MIC, VOL
Ward 2	6 total: FRE, DOM, JOH, MAY, CYB, EDF
Ward 3	5 total: ROB, VAC, MAG, MAK, BET
Ward 4	5 total: KLE, GER, PET, LOR, GOR
Ward 5	5 total: OBR, TER, ANG, ANN, GEO
Ward 6	3 total: MAT, BMH, OSK
Ward 7	4 total: VAN, FRA, KAT, PHI
Ward 8	4 total: POC, LEG, AUG, FRB
Ward 9	5 total: PJP, BER, LUK, THE, HCH
Ward 10	4 total: RBI, FAM, NIC, JOE
Sub 1	2 total: HMA, HTR
Sub 2	3 total: HAU, HDO, HCI
Sub 3	1 total: BGA



APPENDIX L

Appendix L: GSCS School Enrolment Data by Ward and Parish (May 2025 Data)

<u>GSCS Saskatoon Schools</u>	<u>Ward at 2024 Election</u>	<u>Parishes in Ward</u>	<u>Student Enrolment Apr 2025 by School</u>	<u>Student Population - Ward Total</u>
Bishop Filevich Ukrainian Bilingual School	Ward 1	St. Martyr's Canadiens	263	Ward 1 student total: 1,081
École St. Paul	Ward 1	St. Michael Parish	145	
St. Edward	Ward 1	St. Thomas More Parish	160	
St. Michael	Ward 1	Dormition of the Blessed Mother of God (Ukrainian Catholic)	156	
St. Volodymyr	Ward 1		357	
École Saskatoon French School	Ward 2	St. Mary	216	Ward 2 student total: 1,668
St. Dominic	Ward 2	Our Lady of Guadalupe	218	
St. John	Ward 2	Our Lady of Czestochowa	174	
St. Mary's Wellness & Education Centre	Ward 2	St. John Bosco	382	
Cyber School	Ward 2	St. George Ukrainian Catholic Cathedral	170	
E.D. Feehan Catholic High School	Ward 2		508	Ward 3 student total: 2,981
Bishop Roborecki	Ward 3	St. Patrick's Parish	338	
Father Vachon	Ward 3		419	
St. Marguerite	Ward 3		392	
St. Mark	Ward 3		458	
Bethlehem Catholic High School	Ward 3		1374	Ward 4 student total: 2,186
Bishop Klein	Ward 4	St. Peter the Apostle	334	
École St. Gerard	Ward 4		362	
École St. Peter	Ward 4		550	
St. Lorenzo Ruiz	Ward 4		732	
St. Maria Goretti	Ward 4		208	Ward 5 student total: 2,256
École Sister O'Brien	Ward 5	St. Anne Parish	214	
École St. Mother Teresa	Ward 5		504	
St. Angela	Ward 5		306	
St. Anne	Ward 5		191	
St. George	Ward 5		184	Ward 6 student total: 1,048
Bishop James Mahoney High School	Ward 5		857	
École St. Matthew	Ward 6	Our Lady of Lourdes	474	
Bishop Murray High School	Ward 6	St. Joseph Parish	156	
Bishop Murray High School - CNYC		Sts. Peter & Paul Ukrainian Catholic Parish	15	
Bishop Murray High School - FSP			20	Ward 6 student total: 1,048
Bishop Murray High School - ODP			22	
Oskāyak High School	Ward 6	St. Paul's Co-Cathedral	361	

<u>GSCS Saskatoon Schools</u>	<u>Ward at 2024 Election</u>	<u>Parishes in Ward</u>	<u>Student Enrolment Apr 2025 by School</u>	<u>Student Population - Ward Total</u>
Georges Vanier	Ward 7	St. Frances Xavier Parish	393	Ward 7 student total: 1,967
St. Frances	Ward 7		393	
St. Kateri Tekakwitha	Ward 7		915	
St. Philip	Ward 7		266	
Bishop Pocock	Ward 8	St. Augustine Parish	186	Ward 8 student total: 1,007
École Cardinal Leger School	Ward 8		454	
St. Augustine	Ward 8		224	
St. Frances (Bateman)	Ward 8		143	
Pope John Paul II	Ward 9	St. Philip Neri Parish	194	Ward 9 student total: 3,380
St. Bernard	Ward 9	Sacred Heart Chaldean	300	
École St. Luke	Ward 9	Holy Spirit Parish	415	
St Thérèse of Lisieux	Ward 9		778	
Holy Cross High School	Ward 9		1693	
École Father Robinson	Ward 10	Cathedral of the Holy Family	617	Ward 10 student total: 3,370
Holy Family	Ward 10		567	
St. Nicholas	Ward 10		755	
St. Joseph High School	Ward 10		1431	
École Holy Mary - Martensville	Subdivision 1 Rural Areas including Martensville & Warman	Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish, Martensville	426	Subdivision 1 student total: 872
Holy Trinity - Warman		St. Alphonse - Viscount	446	
		Sts. Donetien & Roatien (Prud'homme) La Paroisse des St. Denis (St. Denis) St. Phillippe Néri (Vonda) St. John the Theologian (Prud'homme, Ukrainian Catholic) Sacred Heart (Vonda, Ukrainian Catholic)		
St. Augustine - Humboldt	Subdivision 2 City of Humboldt	All Saints Ukrainian Catholic Church	317	Subdivision 2 student total: 554
St. Dominic - Humboldt		St. Augustine Catholic Church	237	
Humboldt Collegiate Institute				
St. Gabriel - Biggar	Subdivision 3 Town of Biggar	St. Gabriel the Archangel	175	Subdivision 3 student total: 175

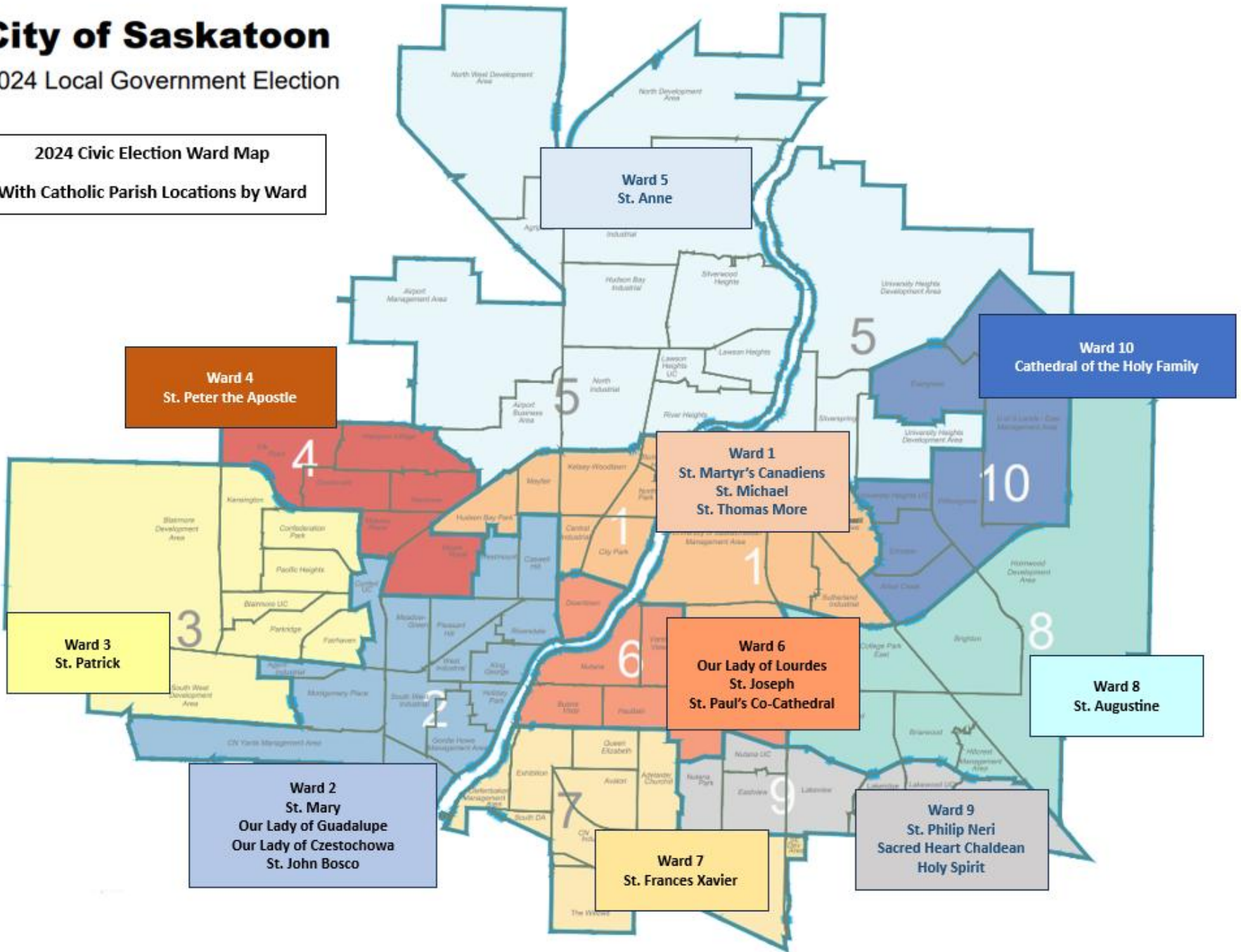
Data Notes:

- Total student enrolment is 23,107 students at April 29, 2025. At this time, St. Frances was still at two locations, which were two separate wards.
- The ward and subdivision data used in the above chart does not include students that are home schooled (335 students) and international Online school students (227 students).

City of Saskatoon

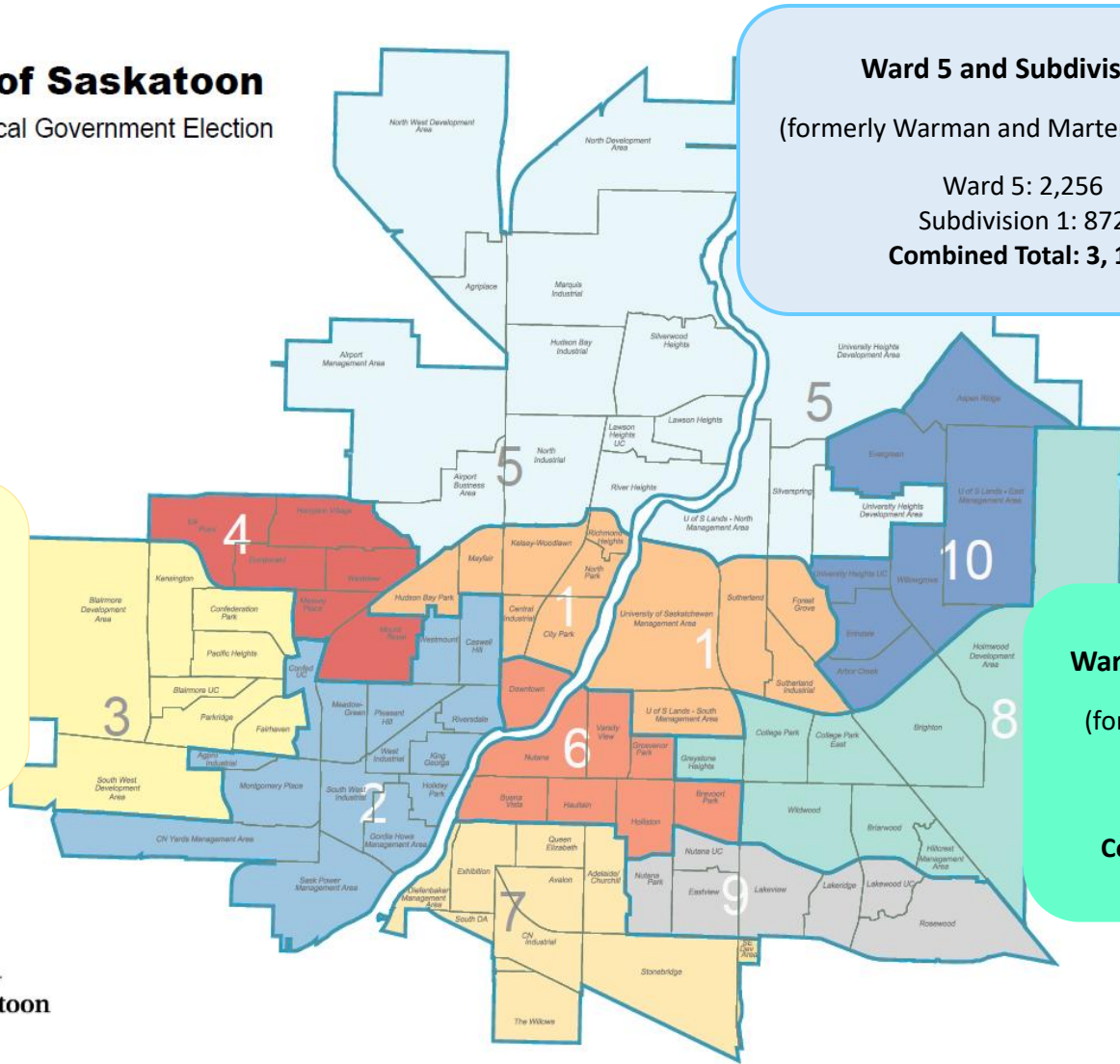
2024 Local Government Election

2024 Civic Election Ward Map
With Catholic Parish Locations by Ward



Appendix N: City of Saskatoon Ward Map with Greater Saskatoon Catholic School Subdivisions 1, 2, and 3 joining relevant wards by proximity.
 GSCS Regular Meeting of the Board May 4, 2026

City of Saskatoon
 2024 Local Government Election



Ward 3 and Subdivision 3
 (formerly Biggar area)

Ward 3: 2,981
 Subdivision 3: 175
Combined Total: 3,156

Ward 5 and Subdivision 1
 (formerly Warman and Martensville areas)

Ward 5: 2,256
 Subdivision 1: 872
Combined Total: 3,128

Ward 8 and Subdivision 2
 (formerly Humboldt area)

Ward 8: 1,007
 Subdivision 2: 554
Combined Total: 1,561

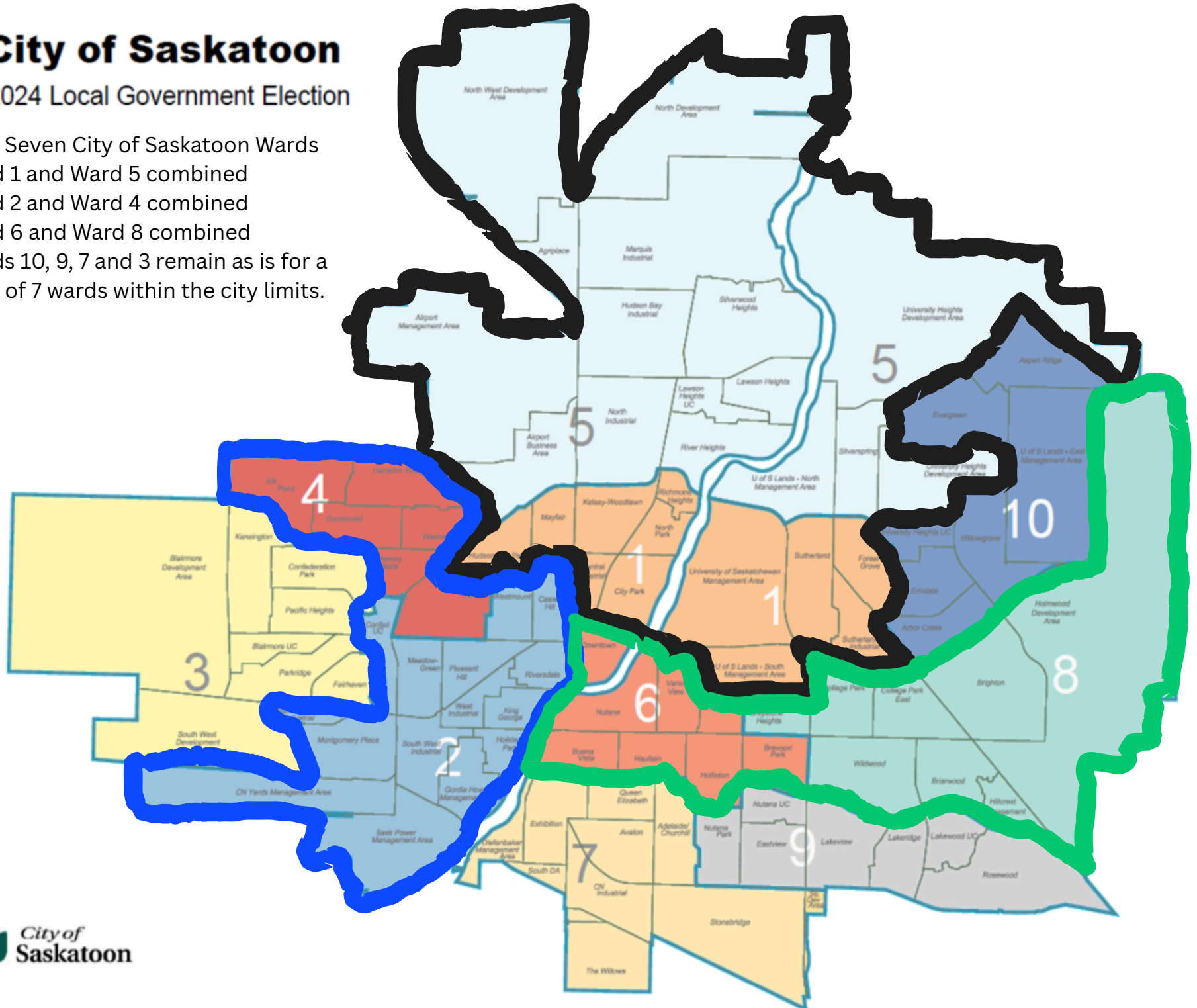


City of Saskatoon

2024 Local Government Election

DRAFT Seven City of Saskatoon Wards

- Ward 1 and Ward 5 combined
- Ward 2 and Ward 4 combined
- Ward 6 and Ward 8 combined
- Wards 10, 9, 7 and 3 remain as is for a total of 7 wards within the city limits.





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June 30, 2022

Hon. Dustin Duncan
Minister of Education
Legislative Building
Room 361, 2405 Legislative Dr.
Regina, Saskatchewan, S4S 0B3

Hon. Don McMorris
Minister of Government Relations
Legislative Building
Room 306, 2405 Legislative Dr.
Regina, Saskatchewan, S4S 0B3

Sent via email: minister.edu@gov.sk.ca

Sent via email: minister.gr@gov.sk.ca

Dear Minister Duncan and Minister McMorris,

As follow-up to our meetings last fall where we discussed an important issue for school divisions related to the *The Local Government Election Act, 2015* (LGEA) – there was indication that legislative review and changes to Local Government Elections Act could be considered.

Many boards of education would benefit from and are requesting greater legislative and regulatory flexibility in their efforts to encourage the participation of Indigenous candidates in school board elections. A considerate review of *The Local Government Election Act, 2015* (LGEA) and *The Local Government Election Regulations, 2015* (LGER) could lead to more creative and flexible solutions for boards of education to enable Indigenous representation on school boards.

At the 2020 SSBA Fall Assembly, the following resolution was adopted: AGM-20-03 BE IT RESOLVED that the Saskatchewan School Boards Association engage education sector partners and First Nations and Métis educational authorities, as appropriate, to call on the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Government Relations to review and renew the Local Government Elections Act (LGEA) and Regulations with the intent of creating more opportunities for the election and participation of Indigenous school board trustees.

The SSBA conducted consultations with boards of education from March through May this year, culminating in the attached report. This report includes a cross-jurisdictional scan, a summary of what was heard from boards through the consultation, the key themes that emerged, and a recommendation.

This is a complex matter that boards of education have been working on for years. While specific legislative change isn't proposed, the report does outline incremental steps towards enabling legislation to facilitate innovation at the local level that will allow for conversation and collaboration between locally elected boards of education and Indigenous communities to seek solutions to this matter.

The SSBA is committed to supporting the ongoing efforts of boards of education in their interest to encourage and engage Indigenous voice in education governance.



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As follow-up to our initial discussions and to support any upcoming review we submit the attached for your consideration. We welcome any follow-up questions and the opportunity for further discussion on this matter.

On behalf of the SSBA Executive and our member boards we sincerely thank you for your willingness to meet on this matter and for your consideration of potential enabling legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dr. Shawn Davidson".

Dr. Shawn Davidson
SSBA President

CC: Jaimie Smith-Windsor, SSBA Vice-President
Darren McKee, SSBA Executive Director
Greg Miller, Deputy Minister of Government Relations
Donna Johnson, Deputy Minister of Education

Attachment:

Saskatchewan School Boards Association Consultation on Increasing Indigenous Trusteeship through *The Local Government Election Act, 2015* and *The Local Government Election Regulations, 2015*



**Saskatchewan School Boards Association Consultation on Increasing Indigenous Trusteeship through
*The Local Government Election Act, 2015 and The Local Government Election Regulations, 2015***

June 2022

Background

School boards are elected to govern Kindergarten to Grade 12 education in their school divisions and are essential members of local government. They ensure that the wishes of the community are reflected in the division's schools and make decisions that shape education in Saskatchewan. The importance of having local elected representation that includes Indigenous voice, which has traditionally not been present, has been raised as an area of focus.

Supporting the election of Indigenous trustees in the province of Saskatchewan is important to strengthening education governance, advancing reconciliation and, ultimately, improving student achievement and outcomes. As a precursor to the 2020 school board elections in Saskatchewan, some boards of education considered how best to support the democratic election of Indigenous trustees. Similarly, the Indigenous Constituency of the Saskatchewan School Boards Association (SSBA) has placed high priority on identifying opportunities and challenges related to encouraging Indigenous trusteeship in the province.

Many boards of education would benefit and are requesting greater legislative and regulatory flexibility in their efforts to encourage the participation of Indigenous candidates in school board elections. A considerate review of *The Local Government Election Act, 2015* (LGEA) and *The Local Government Election Regulations, 2015* (LGER) could lead to more creative and flexible solutions for boards of education to enable Indigenous representation on school boards.

At the SSBA 2020 Annual General Meeting, Resolution 20-03 was passed with 88.6% in favour that the SSBA engage education sector partners and First Nations and Métis educational authorities, as appropriate, to call on the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Government Relations to review and renew the LGEA and LGER with the intent of creating more opportunities for the election and participation of Indigenous school board trustees.

A significant barrier to supporting Indigenous trusteeship is the existing legislation and regulations, which allow only one option for considering Indigenous representation on provincial school boards. The process, outlined in Part V of the LGER is as follows:

- a board of education may form an Indian Reserve subdivision consisting of one or more reserves; and,
- the reserve(s) forming the subdivision undertake an election of a board member who will then represent an Indian Reserve on a board of education.

The existing LGEA and LGER restrict, more than they enable, boards of education to make provisions for Indigenous trustee candidacy in elections and representation on school boards. Some challenges to the LGEA and LGER school divisions may face:

- some divisions have a high number of First Nations that neighbour their division, making the creation of a subdivision on neighbouring First Nations problematic;
- some divisions, especially urban, attract First Nations students from throughout the province, and while they may have partnerships with a First Nation or Tribal Council in close proximity, not all First Nations inclusive of the student population are represented;
- some First Nations are 'neighbours' with more than one division and have students attending more than one school division;

- many First Nations have established their own education systems and governance systems, and they may choose not to participate in the provincial education system or would like to appoint an elected official;
- there is no mechanism for boards to appoint a member from a First Nation, Tribal Council or existing Advisory Group;
- a subdivision cannot functionally be formed on band-owned land within a city or municipality because there would not be eligible electors (i.e. commercial land);
- those living on non-assessable lands are disenfranchised from participating in school division elections as an elector or candidate even if their children attend a provincial school;
- while Indigenous candidates may run 'at-large' or in a subdivision of a school division, Indigenous trustees continue to be underrepresented on most school boards, and specifically urban boards; and,
- there is no mechanism in place to address the inclusion of Métis representation on boards.

Methodology

In February 2022, the SSBA distributed a discussion paper to all boards and encouraged them to have internal discussions focusing on the following four questions:

1. How does the current state relate to your division?
2. Do you have any formal relationships/partnerships with First Nations or Métis organizations?
3. How does the current legislation fit within your division?
4. What potential solutions do you see for addressing the legislative challenges?

From March to May 2022, the SSBA held consultations with member boards to assess their current state and gather insight as to the challenges from their divisions. Boards were asked to consider the above four questions and the while the focus was on the questions, the process was conversational which led into other discussions specific to local context. The consultation process included the SSBA receiving feedback in the following ways:

- by email submission, which included those boards that felt that had no comments on the matter;
- by attending Board meetings;
- and, in some cases, by meetings with Board Chairs and Directors.

In total, 22 boards provided insight into this report. A session was also offered for the SSBA Indigenous Constituency, which consists of all self-identified First Nations, Métis, and Inuit school board members in Saskatchewan, to gain insight into Indigenous perspectives on this matter. In all cases, the SSBA facilitated and documented the discussions.

Jurisdictional Scan

A jurisdictional scan of Alberta, Manitoba, British Columbia, and Ontario legislation was completed to gain further insight into how other provinces address the matter. The topic was addressed in either Education Acts or Local Government/Authorities Election Acts. Like in Saskatchewan, to be an elector or candidate for a trustee in a school division you must be a rate payer, live within the school division ward/boundary, and Government of Canada land is excluded from the candidate/voter process unless a formal education agreement is in place between the First Nation and the province. In Alberta and

Ontario, and northern school divisions in Manitoba, trustees can be appointed. Ontario is the only province that allows for more than one First Nations trustee appointment.

Alberta - if the board has entered into an agreement(s) with a First Nation(s), the board by resolution or the Minister at the request of the board or in consultation with the board and the First Nation, may appoint a trustee to the board from the First Nation(s). The appointed person(s) is in the same position as those who have been elected and is in addition to the number of trustees of the board specified by the Minister.

Manitoba - if a First Nation(s) enters into an agreement with the Government of Manitoba, the Minister may make the First Nation(s) into a separate ward of the school division. Before a ward is created the Minister considers if there is a school located on the First Nation and whether it provides education in all grades; the number of students attending school off reserve and in the school division warrants the band being represented on the school board; and the historical relationship between the First Nation(s) and the school board, including whether the band was represented on the board previously. A First Nation can be included in only one school division and the trustee is elected and not appointed. The minister may appoint a trustee upon the establishment of a northern school division.

British Columbia - legislation has no specific mention or provision for the inclusion of trustee from a First Nation. A First Nation with Treaty lands may enter into an agreement with the province for education services or form a municipality and could participate as a candidate or elector. British Columbia legislation is quite complex due to the history of First Nations people in the province, the large number of First Nations and school boards, and having unceded land. In addition to the *Local Government Act* and *School Act*, there is also the *Vancouver Charter*, the *Community Act* and the *First Nations Jurisdiction over Education* in British Columbia all providing differing scenarios for First Nations engagement in local governance.

It should be noted as well that at the 2022 British Columbia School Trustees Association's Annual General Meeting, a motion was passed exploring how First Nations representation can form a part of each board of education. This demonstrates that the importance of the inclusion of Indigenous trusteeship and how best to support that process is an area of focus for other jurisdictions as well.

Ontario - there is a section in the regulations that speaks to First Nations representation on school boards. First Nation representation on a school board is determined first by the existence of one or more education services agreements and considers the number of Indigenous students attending the board's schools. The First Nations trustee is appointed to a school board by the First Nation. Depending on the number of First Nations students attending the board's schools, there may be one or two First Nations trustees appointed to the board. A person appointed to the board to represent the interests of Indigenous students is deemed to be an elected member of the board, with all the rights and responsibilities of the position.

Jurisdictional Analysis

Reviewing other jurisdictional legislation does not offer a clear solution that would address all the challenges that were raised through the consultation process, but it does offer some potential areas for change that could be adopted by Saskatchewan that would increase the number of Indigenous trustees.

Saskatchewan could consider a model like Alberta, where a trustee representing a First Nation is in addition to the prescribed number of trustees by legislation. This model may result in some larger boards in some divisions, but there are already instances of this such as Horizon School Board, which has a higher number of trustees due to historical First Nation representation. This approach would allow for the current representation of wards/sub-divisions to be unaffected by the inclusion of First Nations trustees.

Another area for consideration is in the way in which Ontario and Manitoba determine a board seat(s) by the number of the First Nations' students attending the division's schools. This would be beneficial for those First Nations that have a high number of students attending school in a division and aim to promote equity at the board table. This approach may not benefit those First Nations that may have a low student population but have no on-reserve school options. It also would not address the urban context where there may be a high number of Indigenous students but from many First Nations across the province.

Ontario and Alberta respect the autonomy of First Nations by allowing the First Nation to appoint their trustee. Appointment from a First Nation(s) may be problematic for those boards that have students from multiple First Nations and would not be relevant in those divisions that have no First Nations near or a very low Indigenous student population.

A notable difference from Saskatchewan is that no other jurisdiction reviewed combines multiple First Nations into a single sub-division and has one elected trustee. The recognition of First Nations sovereignty is something that needs to be respected but translating that to school division governance is complex. It may not be feasible for boards to add a seat for every First Nation that has students attending in the division.

While there are some potential solutions that increase Indigenous trustees for some rural boards, urban boards, divisions with students from a high number of First Nations, and those divisions with a low Indigenous population or no First Nations located within the division, may not see the same benefit. Further, no legislation addresses a mechanism for the inclusion of the Métis.

While the initial request was to examine the LGEA and LGER, further review showed that *The School Division Administration Regulations, 7(4)* allows for boards to alter the boundaries to include a First Nation or parts of a First Nation with whom they have an agreement and not create a subdivision. Boards may wish to take this approach, but it would be problematic in those cases where a First Nation borders neighbours more than one division. Again, this approach may not be a solution for urban boards, nor does it address Métis representation.

Summary/Findings

Local Context

As expected, when engaging with boards on how the LGEA/LGER affects their division, answers varied widely due to not only differences in context such as urban, rural, Catholic, North, and South but also as to legacy arrangements with First Nations since school board amalgamations in 2006 (e.g., Horizon School Division). The **urban context** often has students from a high number of First Nations and while there are instances of formal partnership agreements, such as Whitecap Dakota First Nation and

Saskatoon Public Schools, the Indigenous student population in that division is represented by First Nations throughout the province. In the case of Saskatoon, there is one elected Indigenous trustee. Regina urban divisions currently have no Indigenous trustees. The legislation is problematic for some urban boards as well as there are many Indigenous peoples from multiple First Nations and Métis locals and no mechanism for there to be a designated seat for an Indigenous candidate.

The **rural context** may have multiple First Nations within the school division's boundary, whose students attend various schools in the division such as Prairie Valley School Division. While there is a seat for one First Nation in the school division's boundary which has been in place since amalgamation, there is no mechanism to engage the other 15 First Nations within the school division's boundary in school board governance. Engaging all the First Nations within the school division's boundary, in the example of Prairie Valley School Division, would lead to what is likely to be an ineffective size of board. Applying the current legislation is not feasible for those divisions that have a high number of culturally diverse First Nations located within their boundaries. There are also instances like Chinook School Division where there are no First Nations and a low Indigenous population.

In the **northern context**, northern boards, like Northern Lights School Division has a board comprising 100% Indigenous trustees but has students from 14 First Nations and 14 Métis locals that are not all represented at the table.

Relationships with First Nations, Tribal Councils and the Métis Nation/Métis Locals were also varied; some exist at the school level, but not at the governance or administration level. It is also worth noting that while there are multiple agreements and partnerships, only a few school divisions have formal co-governance agreements.

In summary, Indigenous representation on boards is varied. Some boards have designated seats for a First Nation(s) on the board which were acquired through a past amalgamation. Previous practice had designated a board spot for a First Nation if the students from the First Nation had no other option but to attend a provincial school. In some urban settings Indigenous trustees were elected at-large or have run in a ward and were successful in being elected.

General Themes

Theme 1: No Changes

It should be noted that a few boards did not support changing the LGEA/LGER as they already had Indigenous trustees through either sub-division elections, at-large or historically since amalgamation. Some had no First Nation(s) located within their division and few Indigenous students and felt it was not applicable. Others felt the current structure provides a sufficient option for boards to support Indigenous trusteeship.

Theme 2: Funding

Many boards expressed willingness to having additional Indigenous trustee(s) but were concerned with the cost of doing so, citing the cuts to school board governance budgets since 2016. It was noted multiple times that the Government of Saskatchewan should provide funding to support any changes

that are implemented. Some boards expressed concern that the addition of Indigenous trustee(s) would come down to funding appropriately from the province and without that, it may not pass board approval.

Theme 3: Disenfranchisement of First Nations People

The LGEA/LGER excludes those Saskatchewan citizens that reside on non-assessable lands, and this disenfranchises those individuals from participating in the election of school boards. Non-assessable lands include First Nations reserve lands including Treaty-land entitlement located in a city or town, resort properties and provincial and national parks.

The issue around disenfranchisement comes from the wording of assessable lands. If that was removed, or the wording changed, First Nations people living on-reserve land would be able to participate in school division elections either as a candidate or an elector. There currently is no mechanism to elect from a First Nation without the creation of a subdivision. This is problematic in towns/cities that have urban reserves or, First Nations land located within the town as well as those instances where there is no or limited education programming on the First Nation and students must attend a provincial school.

Theme 4: Appointing Indigenous Trustees

As expected, the discussion around increasing Indigenous trustees raised the topic of appointment but generated no clear consensus on a preference. While most boards expressed the need for Indigenous representation on all boards in Saskatchewan, some boards felt that appointment of Indigenous trustees would undermine the democratic election process. Others felt appointment would be appropriate due to the under representation of Indigenous voice at the board table, First Nations students having to attend a provincial school, and to address barriers for Indigenous candidates. It was suggested that the appointment from a First Nation could be a democratically elected First Nations Councilor responsible for education. Another suggestion was to have a self-declared Indigenous seat and an Indigenous candidate with the highest number of votes would get the seat. It was also noted that the appointment of a single Indigenous trustee may not be feasible in divisions where there are multiple, culturally diverse First Nations.

Some boards felt that a First Nation or the board itself should be able to appoint an Indigenous member; some have been approached by First Nations/Tribal Councils requesting a seat at the board table. Other boards have engaged with First Nations and were told they did not want a designated seat for their First Nation on the board as that would be seen as tokenism. Some pointed out that appointment of an Indigenous trustee could cause conflict as they may not be seen or treated as an equal board member, especially if there are not full voting rights associated with the appointment.

Also mentioned was the appointment of a non-voting member or having an Indigenous/Elder Advisory Council. It was further suggested that an Indigenous/Elder Council could elect one member to sit on the board as a member with full voting rights. While some boards felt this would address the lack of Indigenous voice, other boards felt that providing advice to the board to consider is not the same as having an equal Indigenous trustee voice at the table and that it would not provide enough voice to make changes for Indigenous students.

Also of note, Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association (SUMA) passed a resolution at their 2022 annual general meeting to advocate the Government of Saskatchewan for the legislated ability for

municipal councils to appoint non-voting Elder advisors to their councils in any upcoming amendments to The Cities Act, The Municipalities Act, and The Northern Municipalities Act. SUMA's provided rationale for the resolution noted that Indigenous peoples continue to be underrepresented in political discourse; a moral duty to foster Truth and Reconciliation with Indigenous peoples; and that their member municipalities serve and represent all residents of Saskatchewan's urban and northern municipalities.

Suggested Solutions from Boards

Potential suggestions were that boards should have an at-large Indigenous seat or that all neighbouring First Nations be combined into a single sub-division. While a geographical or population-based approach to creating a subdivision in a division may be seen as a solution to Indigenous representation on school boards, it can be problematic as such an approach does not respect the sovereignty of individual First Nations.

It was noted that if the issue is about Indigenous representation on school boards, then a seat on the board should be specific to Indigenous representation, without boundaries of non-assessable land and without the challenges of how some wards/sub-divisions are designed that perpetuate patterns of inequity. A problem with creating a geographic subdivision is also that this may exclude the potential for Métis representation and engagement in decision-making at the board table. One way to address these concerns would be an Indigenous trustee at-large for the division.

A few boards raised the need for more informal tactics than appointment or a designated seat. They felt a simple way to increase representation would be to do some shoulder tapping within the Indigenous community for candidates. One board noted that this method had been successful in the past resulting in the election of an Indigenous trustee.

Also identified in these consultations was that the provincial/Indigenous co-governance relationships could be the first step with policy to follow. Some boards pointed out electoral representation should respect funding, by rate payers through their taxes and First Nations through their tuition fees, and those voices should be proportional and fair. Reciprocal governance agreements such as tuition agreements may be an area of interest for boards as the new funding model does not require the involvement of Indigenous Services Canada. Forging new relationships between school boards and First Nations could include conversations around engaging Indigenous voice at the board table. This would also support Government of Saskatchewan's direction, as supported by Goal #3, shared management of the provincial education system by ensuring respectful relationships and equitable partnerships with First Nations and Métis peoples at the provincial and local level (*Inspiring Success: First Nations and Métis PreK-12 Education Policy Framework, 2018*) and *Building Partnerships (2003)*.

While some of the suggestions outlined in this paper would address the inclusion of First Nations trustees, the options provided do little to address Métis representation. Métis people do not face the same residence restrictions that some First Nations people do but even without that, there still is a lack of Métis trustees apart from the Northern boards. With federal investments to education funding for Métis students in recent years, Saskatchewan should begin to consider what options there can be to engage with Métis peoples to seek solutions to engaging their voice at the board table.

Conclusion

Many boards noted that the current legislation and its one-sized approach is too prescriptive and does not address the complexities of local contexts. Removing the language in the legislation that restricts boards to the creation of a sub-division and then having one representative would be a welcomed revision. **It is recommended** that revisions to the legislation be made with a view to enable varied approaches or creative solutions to be worked out collaboratively between boards of education and Indigenous communities that reflect the local context, respect school board autonomy, and respect the sovereignty and diversity of First Nations and Métis peoples. As described in this document, this could include such solutions as an at-large seat, or the appointment of an Indigenous member(s) to the board. The addition of Indigenous seat(s) should not take away from the critical role of locally elected school boards and their governance structures in place but would address the necessary addition of Indigenous voice at the board table.

As discussed in this paper, this is a complex issue that most boards have been trying to resolve for many years. The ideal scenario would have First Nations and Métis represented as Nations, participate in local governance as voting members on boards of education. The creation of enabling legislation would allow for conversation and collaboration between locally elected boards of education and Indigenous communities to seek solutions to this matter - an evolution towards local voice that includes Indigenous voice. The short and mid-term period will look different for boards of education, but long-term there would be a shift towards increased Indigenous trusteeship. The SSBA is proactive and deliberate in creating this change and can take a leadership role in supporting school divisions and Indigenous communities that are willing to move forward in this work.

6.5 Board Policies for Approval



Board Priority:

- Promoting Stewardship

Presented by: Board Chair, D. Boyko and Director of Education, F. Rivard

Background Information:

Further to the ongoing board policy review process, as reviewed and discussed at the March 6, 2026 Board Strategic Retreat and April 20, 2026 Planning Meeting of the Board, administration is bringing forward five board policies for final review and approval.

Each of the five policies, noted following as attachments, have received a stepwise review by the board which included updating each policy into common language aligning with our Catholic virtues, the board's governance style, and updated formatting and compliance with applicable legislation, with an additional comparison check to like school divisions in Saskatchewan and Canada.

- Attachment 6.5.1: Policy 4.0 Director of Education's Role
- Attachment 6.5.2 Policy 4.1 Delegation to the Director of Education
- Attachment 6.5.3 Policy 4.4 Monitoring School Division Performance
- Attachment 6.5.4 Policy 3.0 General Governance Commitment Policy
- Attachment 6.5.5 Policy 3.2 Governing Style

Recommendation:

That the Board of Education review the Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools board policies as revised and provide approve each individual policy being:

Policy 4.0 Director of Education's Role

AND

Policy 4.1 Delegation to the Director of Education

AND

Policy 4.4 Monitoring School Division Performance

AND

Policy 3.0 General Governance Commitment Policy

AND

Policy 3.2 Governing Style.



Board of Education Policy Manual

4 Board-Director Relationship

4.0 Director of Education's Role

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to define the Director of Education's role, clarify language use, and establish the formal governance relationship between the Board of Education and the Director of Education. This Board's delegation of authority transparently defines how the Director is held accountable when acting on behalf of the Board in managing the educational affairs of the school division. It ensures that the Director's responsibilities are exercised within the framework of Board-approved policies and in alignment with the expectations set out under *The Education Act, 1995*, which requires boards to administer and manage the educational affairs of the division through proper delegation and oversight.

Statement(s) of Policy

1. The Director of Education, as Chief Executive Officer, is accountable to the Board of Education acting as a body corporate.
 - a. Synonymous use of the title Director of Education or Chief Executive Officer is acceptable in policy documentation for the Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools Board of Education.
 - b. As a body corporate, the Board of Education is a legally recognized entity distinct from its members, with its own rights and liabilities. Decisions are made on behalf of the entity, through the civically elected trustees rather than directly by every member. The Board of Education is a single, independent, legal unit.
2. The board will enact their oversight of the Director of Education through written policies, delegating interpretation and implementation to the director.
3. As Chief Executive Officer, the director will serve on behalf of the board as the liaison with officials of the Ministry of Education with the principle of full and timely disclosure to the board.

References

- *The Education Act, 1995*
- *Policy 3.1 Board of Education Job Description*
- *Policy 4.3 Director of Education Job Description*
- *Policy 5.0 Procedures for the Monitoring of the School Division’s Performance*

Board Reviewed and Process Instituted

Board Approved Policy/Process Instituted

December 3, 1996 December 3, 1996

Date Reviewed Dates Amended:

December 3, 1996	April 28, 2008 June 21, 2010
November 20, 2023	May 14, 2012
November 24, 2025	April 3, 2017 November 20, 2023
March 2, 2026	November 24, 2025



Board of Education Policy Manual

4 Board-Director Relationship

4.1 Delegation to the Director of Education

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to define how the Board delegates authority to the Director of Education as its Chief Executive Officer, ensuring that operational decision-making is exercised under Board-approved policies while the Board maintains strategic oversight in accordance with *The Education Act, 1995*.

Statement(s) of Policy

The Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools Board of Education delegates full operational authority to the Director of Education as the Board's sole employee, empowering them to manage all day-to-day operations within Board policy and provincial legislation, while holding them accountable for results, compliance, and advancing Catholic education. All Board of Education authority delegated to staff is delegated through the Director of Education. All accountability of staff is through the Director of Education.

1. The Board delegates to the Director of Education the authority to manage the day-to-day operations of the school division within the parameters of Board policy and provincial legislation. The Director is accountable for achieving the Board's strategic priorities and for ensuring compliance with all Board policies, provincial legislation, and regulatory requirements.
2. The board will enact their oversight with the director of education through the establishment of its Board Priorities and Goals. The board will align and/or limit the latitude the director of education may exercise in practices, methods, and conduct with the Executive Limitations policies. The director of education is authorized to establish all further administrative policies and practices that are intended to achieve the Board Priorities and Goals and Executive Limitations policies in alignment with the board of education Policy 2.7 Decision Matrix.
3. In accordance with board governance policies the board may change its Board Priorities and Goals and Executive Limitations policies, thereby shifting the boundary between board and director domains. By so doing, the board changes the latitude of choice given to the director. The Director may use any reasonable interpretation of Board policy in exercising delegated authority but will be held accountable to upholding the mission and values of the school division.
4. Decisions of the board acting as a body corporate are binding upon the director of education.

References

- *The Education Act, 1995*
- *Policy 2.7 Decision Matrix*
- *Policy 3.1 Board of Education Job Description*
- *Policy 4.3 Director of Education Job Description'*

Board Reviewed and Process Instituted

Board Approved	Policy/Process Instituted
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December 3, 1996	December 3, 1996
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Date Reviewed	Dates Amended:
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November 20, 2023	April 28, 2008
March 2, 2026	May 14, 2012
	November 20, 2023



Board of Education Policy Manual

4 Board-Director Relationship

4.4 Monitoring School Division Performance

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish a clear and systematic process for the Board to monitor the performance of the school division and evaluate the Director of Education in accordance with Board-approved policies and the Board's statutory responsibility to oversee the educational affairs of the division under *The Education Act, 1995*.

Statement(s) of Policy

Assessment of the Board of Education's performance and the Director of Education's performance is to be derived from monitoring of the school division's performance against Board Priorities and Goals, Executive Limitations, Governance Process, and the Board-Director relationship. Best practice in corporate governance, as an evolving aspect, is to be considered with any assessment completed

1. The Board of Education is accountable to the electors for the operation of the school division and is committed to performance assessment of the board and director of education. This assessment provides an opportunity for the director of education and board to become aware of their effectiveness.
2. The purpose of monitoring is to determine the degree to which board policies are being fulfilled. Information which does not do this will not be considered to be monitoring.
3. Upon the choice of the board, any policy can be monitored by one of three methods:
 - a) Internal Report: documentation of compliance to board policy.
 - b) External Report: documentation of compliance to board policy by an external evaluator. Such reports must assess performance against policies of the board, not those of the external party.
 - c) Direct Board Inspection: a board inspection of documents, activities, or circumstances.
4. The board will determine the frequency and method of monitoring. The most current schedule of board monitoring is contained in Section 5 of the Policy Manual, which provides the procedures for the monitoring of the school division's performance (Policy 5.0) and the Operational Reserves monitoring (Policy 5.1)
5. Notwithstanding the schedule of board monitoring, the board may elect to assess its policies and practices at any time it deems necessary.

6. The Board Policy Manual, which includes all board policies and outlines the Board Priorities and Goals, Executive Limitations, Governance Process, and Board-Director Relationship, will be reviewed in its entirety by the board of education over a four-year cycle commencing at each election year, in a process defined and approved by the newly elected board, in collaboration with the Director of Education.

References

- *The Education Act. 1995*
- *Policy 2.7 Decision Matrix*
- *Policy 3.1 Board of Education Job Description*
- *Policy 4.3 Director of Education Job Description*
- *Policy 5.0 Procedures for the Monitoring of the School Division’s Performance*

Board Reviewed and Process Instituted

Board Approved	Policy/Process Instituted
December 3, 1996	December 3, 1996

Date Reviewed	Dates Amended:
November 20, 2023	June 21, 2000
March 2, 2026	April 28, 2008
	November 20, 2023



Board of Education Policy Manual

3 Governance Process

3.0 General Governance Commitment Policy

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to affirm the Board's commitment to effective governance rooted in Catholic identity, strategic leadership, accountability to electors, and continual improvement in alignment with provincial legislation and recognized governance practices in Saskatchewan.

Statement(s) of Policy

The Board of Education, on behalf of the electors who are served in the greater Saskatoon area including the City of Saskatoon, Biggar, Humboldt, Viscount, Martensville and Warman, governs with a faith-centred and strategic perspective, continuously strengthening its governance practices, processes, and capability to express Catholic virtues and the school division's mission and vision.

Rationale and Authority

In response to the legal responsibility as given to the Board of Education by the Province of Saskatchewan, the board is required to set strategic direction, supervise the educational affairs of the school division, and exercise general oversight, as mandated under *The Education Act, 1995*. The Saskatchewan School Boards Association (SSBA) Governance Handbook reinforces that boards must govern strategically, approve the strategic plan, set risk appetite, establish policies, and oversee the system rather than manage operations.

Saskatchewan boards of education are democratically elected and represent diverse geographic communities. A governance commitment policy reinforces the Board's obligation to maintain accountable, transparent, strategic governance on behalf of these electors.

By referencing continual strengthening of governance processes, this policy aligns with the provincial expectation that boards regularly assess and improve their governance capacity.

References

- *Education Act, 1995*

Board Reviewed and Process Instituted

Board Approved	Policy/Process Instituted
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November 13, 1996	November 13, 1996
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Date Reviewed	Dates Amended:
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October 16, 2023	October 6, 1998
March 2, 2026	(correction)
	April 28, 2008
	June 21, 2010
	June 13, 2011
	May 14, 2012
	May 4, 2017
	October 16, 2023



Board of Education Policy Manual

3 Governance Process

3.2 Governing Style

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to articulate the Board's governance philosophy, conduct, and practices. It ensures the Board fulfills its responsibilities in a manner aligned with The Education Act, 1995, and provincial governance requirements.

Statement(s) of Policy

The Board of Education will govern with a faith-centered, strategic and policy-focused, approach, emphasizing collective decision-making and the long-term success of the school division on behalf of the electors it serves. The Board will model governance excellence rooted in Catholic virtues, legislative authority, and established provincial governance standards. The Board is committed to continuous self-evaluation of its governing approach.

Rationale and Authority

The Board adopts this governing approach to ensure it fulfills its statutory responsibility to provide strategic leadership, set direction, and oversee the educational affairs of the school division in accordance with *The Education Act, 1995*. This governing style supports accountability to electors, promotes consistent and mission-aligned decision-making, and ensures governance excellence consistent with Catholic virtues and provincial requirements.

This policy is established under the Board's authority as defined in *The Education Act, 1995*, which grants boards the responsibility to administer and manage the educational affairs of the school division and to govern through reporting and resolutions.

References

- *The Education Act, 1995*

Board Reviewed and Process Instituted

Board Approved	Policy/Process Instituted
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November 13, 1996	November 13, 1996
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Date Reviewed	Dates Amended:
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October 16, 2023	April 28, 2008
March 2, 2026	

Lent and Easter:

Our students and staff have journeyed through Lent in prayer, fasting and almsgiving. Each of these pillars intend to bring us closer to God by preparing our hearts and minds for Easter. We now sing "Alleluia" and celebrate the 50 days of the Easter season.

Saskatoon Police Services (SPS) Cadet Graduation – April 2, 2026:

It was a pleasure to celebrate the student cadet graduates on April 2 at the Saskatoon police station. The Cadet Orientation Police Studies (C.O.P.S.) program is a workplace program hosted and administered by the SPS Equity and Cultural Engagement Unit. This is an accredited, eight-week police study program that selects high school students from around the city and provides first-hand experience of law enforcement.

Easter Breakfast at Bishop Filevich:

Bishop Filevich parent volunteers and staff hosted the annual Easter Breakfast on April 13. Song, prayers and fellowship were all part of the gathering. A special thank you goes out to the many clergy that were able to attend.

Understanding Your Faith Teaching Mass and Final Class:

On April 14th over 140 staff members gathered at St. Patrick Parish to take part in a teaching mass led by Father Tumback. After mass, clergy and staff shared a meal together. This was the last session of the Understanding Your Faith program for the for the 2025-2026 academic year.

Junior Blaze:

The first Junior BLAZE (Byzantine Leadership and Zealous Evangelization) program took place on April 18 at Bethlehem Catholic High School. Under the guidance of Viktoriia Marko and led by BLAZE alumni, Grade 8 students participated in talks led by Ukrainian Catholic clergy and Youth Ministers, team and trust building activities, practical leadership skills workshop as well as prayer and testimonies.

nitōhtem Partnership Agreement:

A formal renewal of the nitōhtem Partnership Agreement this year culminated with the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signing event which took place at Wanuskewin on April 22. This renewal reflects the collaborative relationship that has been established between GSCS and Wanuskewin Heritage Park. Cree for "my friend," the nitōhtem agreement reflects both organizations' shared commitment to learning, land and stewardship.

Saskatoon Peace and respect Awards – April 22 – Grade 5 students:

24 incredible Grade 5 students were honoured by the Saskatoon Police Service with Peace & Respect Awards. These awards shine a light on the strength of young people and their ability to shape a culture grounded in kindness, inclusion, and respect. These awards are another example of the partnership between Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools, the Saskatoon Police Service and Saskatoon Public Schools.

Columbus Bosco Saskatoon Joe Kammermyeyer Memorial Dinner:

April 23 was an opportunity to celebrate the long-standing partnership between GSCS and Columbus Bosco Saskatoon at the Joe Kammermyeyer Memorial Dinner. This fundraising event supports both the Farm School Program as well as the Family Learning Centers. Guests were treated with a video featuring the work at the Farm School as well as words of thanks from a mother who has been accessing the support through the Family Learning Centers. Members of Joe's family were also present and his granddaughter shared a few words of thanks to the partners as well as memories of the legacy of her grandfather.

Saskatoon Industry Education Council (SIEC) Culinary Supper – April 23:

The Saskatoon Industry Education Council annual culinary supper was held on April 23, 2026. Guests were treated to an exceptional meal, prepared and served by students in this program. The culinary program is just one of the many programs offered by the SIEC. GSCS has a strong partnership with this organization.

Rock For Rap:

A successful fundraising event took place on April 24 for one of our community partners, RAP (Restorative Action Program). The groovy 70's themed evening raised funds for the incredible programs RAP offers to support high school students.

Teen-Aid Fundraiser:

On April 26 GSCS was pleased to attend and support Teen-Aid Saskatoon at their annual fundraiser. Teen-Aid has been a partner with both the Diocese of Saskatoon and GSCS for many years.

Faces of Holocaust Survivors Exhibit – April 29:

GSCS was honoured to be invited to and participate in the Grand Opening of the Here to Tell: Faces of Holocaust Survivors Exhibit on April 29. This commemorative and educational photography exhibit sheds light on each of the survivors' Shoah (Hebrew word for the Holocaust) experiences, while also providing a glimpse into their lives lived post-war.

Bishop's Dinner:

GSCS was pleased to join in with the larger Catholic community and participate in the 2026 Bishop's Dinner. Not only were guests able to enjoy excellent food and wonderful fellowship, they also were treated to a concert by Catholic singer-songwriter Sarah Kroger.

Student Action for a Sustainable Future (SASF):

The SASF student showcase event held on April 30th included GSCS students who are currently participating in this program from five of our elementary schools. Projects that these thirteen classes have been working on this year were focussed on topic areas such as biodiversity, energy, food, transportation, waste, and water.

LIT Up Foundations Learning and Skills Saskatchewan:

Foundations Learning and Skills Saskatchewan held it's annual LIT UP fundraising dinner on April 30. It is a pleasure to support our long-term partner at Foundations in their work to support students and adults in developing literacy and learning skills. The work Foundations does to support student literacy in our schools is a gift to our families.