

DATE: November 6, 2018

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: Trustee Cheryl Johner

SUBJECT: Motion re: Options When Voting For School Board Trustees

REFERENCE: [Trustees' Handbook – Section 5.2.2 – Notices of Motion](#)
[Local Authorities Election Act – Sections 21\(3\), 48\(2\)\(3\)](#)
[School Act – Sections 44, 246](#)

ISSUE

Notice of motion was served at the October 23, 2018, Board meeting.

BACKGROUND

This motion is intended to bring fairness, transparency, democracy, and enhance public oversight of Alberta taxpayer expenditures, and to ensure that we keep church and state appropriately separated.

Since the Catholic system is fully-funded (just like public schools and public libraries and public recreation centers) they should have the same accountability to all of the citizens providing their funding.

Tax-paying Albertans should all get a say in who is elected to publicly funded school boards across Alberta.

Until unification of elected school boards takes place, allowing true democracy to flourish is the least that all of us should be required, public or Catholic.

RELATED FACTS

- Only one denomination of one religion in our province has their own publicly funded separate school system.
- Albertans are allowed one ballot to vote for school trustee and must be a baptized Catholic in order to vote or seek election for a Catholic school board.
- If non-Catholics are enrolling their child in a Catholic school, or their children are split between public and Catholic schools, they are not allowed to vote for the Catholic policymaker setting the budget, busing and buildings for their district.
- This concept is being discussed across Canada. It was a topic of debate in the recent Ontario elections. Within the debate about whether Ontario should continue to fund Catholic education, [there was discussion](#) around the policies which restrict voting for Catholic school board trustees to only those individuals who are in full communion with the Roman Catholic Church.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Edmonton Public School Board seek the support of the Alberta School Boards Association and the Public School Board's Association of Alberta to advocate to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and provincial government officials to amend the law to allow citizens to vote for both public and Catholic school trustees during municipal elections.

OPTIONS

1. Approve the recommendation.
2. Provide feedback and request changes to the recommendation for approval.

CJ:cj