



April 28, 2021

Dear Catholic Parents & Parishioners,

Supporting Catholic Education Through the Declaration of Property Taxes.

Did you know that Catholic school boards have retained a vital connection with their supporters through the declaration of school property taxes?

Catholics are responsible for the formation and support of a Catholic separate school division. Catholic electors need to be aware of the right to support Catholic schools through property taxes. *This letter is being shared with all parents and parishioners to be sure we reach all Catholic electors.*

Prior to 1995, the declaration of property taxes in all communities was the manner in which people stayed invested in education in their own community. In 1995, this practice was discontinued by public school boards, but has remained a practise of grassroots democracy by Catholic separate school boards for the reason it was intended: staying connected to supporters of Catholic education in their community. It is the action of declaring property taxes to support Catholic education that signals to the government and the local school board that Catholic education is, indeed, valued and supported. Be assured that funding is no more or no less than other public schools; it is the action of support that validates an important message. All education is funded through education property taxes, grants, and general provincial revenue.

Taxes declared in support of the Catholic separate school division benefit the children we serve. The Constitution Acts of Canada and the Alberta Education Act stipulate that individuals who are Catholic must direct their education taxes to Catholic separate school boards where they exist.

To ensure your property taxes are supporting your Catholic separate school, you must declare your school support as "separate" on your annual property assessment notice and tax bill. If a declaration of school support is not filed by a property owner, the property assessment and tax bills show the school support going to the public school division. If your support designation is incorrect, it should be corrected by completing and submitting a School Support Declaration form, obtained from your local city, town or municipal office. A change in school support does not take effect until the following calendar year.

Thank you for advocating for your faith-based schools and your right to support them with your local taxes. If you have any questions please contact your local Catholic school trustee.

Yours in Catholic Education,

Michelle Lamer,
Board Chair