

**SCSBA Key Messages Related to Dan Perrins Report**  
**Online Written Submission to the Educational Governance Panel**  
**January 22, 2017**

**Please note:**

The SCSBA would like to make the following points related to the Perrin's report and the process related to transformational change in educational governance.

- Catholic boards appreciate the work that Dan Perrins has done in preparing this report. We particularly appreciate him taking the time to speak to each of the Catholic boards as part of the process.
- It is clear that Catholic boards are not included in the major governance options presented by Mr. Perrins, as outlined in his report, but the SCSBA will be very interested in the final decision made by the government related to the proposed options for governance of Public school divisions within the province.
- Catholic school boards are very concerned about the effects of the changes the Government of Saskatchewan is considering in education, including further forced amalgamations of school divisions and the elimination of democratically and locally elected school boards.
- Catholic boards support locally elected school boards and our Public school division partners in education, in the delivery of a high quality education to the students that we serve.
- Catholic school divisions strongly support the concept of locally elected Catholic trustees elected by Catholic rate payers. The right of Catholic rate payers to elect Catholic trustees to govern Catholic schools is enshrined in the Saskatchewan Act of 1905.
- The right for publicly funded Catholic education is enshrined in Section 93 of the Canadian Constitution Act 1867, Section 17 of the Saskatchewan Act, 1905 and in Section 29 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedom.
- In addition to the traditional role of trustees in our province as outlined in the Education Act, Catholic trustees play a significant role in ensuring that the Catholic identity of the school division is clearly aligned with the teachings of the Catholic church by working closely with the local diocese and Bishop.
- The right for Catholic rater payers to determine the governance of Catholic schools is enshrined in Section 93 of the Canadian Constitution Act 1867, and in Section 17 of the Saskatchewan Act, 1905.
- When the government announces plans for Public school division governance, the SCSBA will facilitate a conversation/process with Catholic boards to discuss the future of Catholic school division governance within the province.
- The role of the SCSBA in this process will be to support the eight autonomous Catholic boards in making decisions related to the future of Catholic Education in this province.
- Catholic boards are willing to explore opportunities to become more efficient and effective and are prepared to enter into discussion related to the governance items raised in the Perrins report in pages 20/21.

- In 2006 the Government of Saskatchewan recognized the fact that Catholic school divisions could not be mandated to amalgamate and were not included in the government's amalgamation plan. However the SCSBA facilitated a year long process of working with the fourteen Catholic school divisions within the province which resulted in the number of Catholic school boards being voluntarily reduced to eight.
- Over the years Catholic school divisions have voluntarily amalgamated based on the desire to meet the needs of their students in providing a high quality Catholic education.
- Catholic school trustees question the value of the possibility of forced school division amalgamations given the belief that the cost of amalgamation would far out-strip any savings. The last government mandated amalgamations in the education sector happened in 2006 and there is no clear evidence that those amalgamations resulted in cost savings. Recent research from the University of Western Ontario (Timothy Cobban, 2014) shows that amalgamation does not save money.
- Catholic trustees continue to understand the need to be fiscally responsible to Catholic rate payers and to the Government of Saskatchewan.
- There is a rich history of Catholic boards sharing many different services with Public boards. This sharing continues today in many areas and Catholic boards are willing to explore opportunities in which they may become more efficient.
- Catholic school divisions will continue to work together to find efficiencies in all areas of operations.