

# Meet the Mountain View School Division trustee candidates

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## Herald Staff

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Voters in three wards of Mountain View School Division will head to the polls at the end of the month to select four trustees to fill vacancies at the board table.

On Oct. 30, voters in Ward 1 (Roblin) will choose two new trustees, while those in Ward 2 (Gilbert Plains, Grandview and Ethelbert) will elect one trustee and voters in Dauphin will select one new Ward 4 trustee.

Often it can be difficult to get the information you need to make an informed choice in the ballot booth and the further you head down the levels of governance, the more difficult that quest can be.

With no formal candidate forums or debates announced, the Dauphin Herald and the Roblin Review partnered with the Manitoba Teachers' Society to ask the candidates six questions so voters can get a better idea of exactly who is hoping to help shape the local education system

Questions asked included:

1. Reflecting on your life experience, what has prepared you to run for school trustee?
2. If you are elected, what would your priorities be as a Mountain View School Division trustee?
3. What would you do to make those priorities a reality?
4. There has been a great deal of talk about racism and discrimination at the board level in Mountain View. How would you work to combat the hurtful misinformation that has been spread in recent months, commit to Reconciliation and repair the harm caused to students and families in the division?
5. What would being a school trustee mean to you?
6. How can voters reach you to discuss further?

Eight of the nine candidates responded. Their candidates' unedited answers follow, sorted in order of where their name will appear on the ballot.

## Ward 1



### Conrad Nabess

1. I've had the privilege of a diverse and fulfilling career, both professionally and personally, which has prepared me to serve as a school board trustee. As a father of four, all of whom have either started or graduated from Mountain View School Division, I have firsthand experience with the challenges and opportunities our children face. Being a business professional has given me extensive boardroom experience, where I've developed skills in governance, decision-making, and leadership. Additionally, my involvement with numerous boards—either through volunteerism or by invitation—has allowed me to contribute to both people-focused and organizational development initiatives.

Born in Dauphin, and as an Indigenous person who currently lives in a rural community, I bring a broad understanding of the unique challenges our students face. These experiences have shaped my commitment to creating an inclusive and equitable learning environment, ensuring all voices are heard and valued.

2. My primary focus will be on student success, equity, and fostering a safe, inclusive learning environment for all. I will work to ensure that every student, regardless of background, has the tools and opportunities they need to thrive academically, socially, and emotionally. Additionally, I'll prioritize responsible fiscal management, ensuring that our schools receive the resources they need while being accountable to the community.

Another key priority is strengthening partnerships between schools, families, and the community, with particular attention to Indigenous voices and the rural context, which I understand well. Building strong relationships among all stakeholders will help foster an inclusive, community-driven approach to education.

3. To make these priorities a reality, I will work collaboratively with fellow trustees, educators, and the community to develop policies that reflect our shared values and goals. I will actively listen to the concerns of parents, students, and staff, ensuring

that decisions made at the board level are informed by those they affect the most.

I will advocate for transparent communication and accountability, ensuring that the board's actions are clearly aligned with the needs of the students and the broader community. Additionally, I will ensure that the school division's budget is managed prudently so that resources are allocated where they will have the greatest impact on student learning and well-being.

4. As someone who understands the impact of discrimination and systemic racism on Indigenous and marginalized communities, I am deeply committed to combating racism in all forms. The first step is to listen - engaging with those who have been affected by racism, understanding their experiences, and ensuring their voices are heard at the board level.

I will advocate for education and training around anti-racism and cultural competency, not just for students, but for staff and board members as well. Reconciliation is a personal priority, and I believe it is essential to embed its principles into the very fabric of our school policies and practices. I will work to foster an environment of inclusion, where diversity is celebrated, and all students and families feel safe and respected.

5. Being a school trustee is about service and stewardship. It would be an honor to represent the families and students of Mountain View School Division. For me, this role is about more than just policy; it's about creating a positive, lasting impact on the future of our children and our community. I take this responsibility seriously because the decisions we make today will shape the opportunities for tomorrow's students.

I am committed to ensuring that every child has access to a quality education and a supportive learning environment. To serve as a school trustee would be a continuation of my passion for helping people and organizations thrive, and it would allow me to contribute to the long-term success of our school division.

6. I believe in being accessible and open to the community. Voters can reach me via email at [nabess4trustee@gmail.com](mailto:nabess4trustee@gmail.com). Additionally, I plan to attend local events and meetings where I can hear from the community firsthand. I encourage anyone with questions, concerns, or ideas to reach out - I'm here to listen and work together to build a better future for our children and schools.



### **Floyd Martens**

1. I have years of trustee experience and many years of serving families and communities. I have experience working with boards on a local, provincial and national scale. I have engaged in many conversations, formally and informally, with parents, community members, the educational community, and students. I am prepared to bring my abilities to the board table again.

2. If elected, my priorities will be on the educational needs of all students. On allocating resources, setting policy, and focusing on issues within the school board's decision-making authority.

3. The board's priorities require a majority of the board to agree. I will do my best to focus the board's attention on the issues that the board can decide on, those within our purview. School

boards are governed by the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Learning. This means some directions in education are set by the provincial government. Boards can advocate with the minister, however, once that direction is set boards need to comply. It is what the public expects. It is the "trust" part of trusteeship. I will do my best to raise those issues by asking questions that focus on these priorities.

4. Repairing misinformation is difficult and requires intentional efforts through presenting accurate information. Rebuilding trust with those who have their trust broken, requires listening, humility, and honesty. It is not easy, but I am committing to do what I can to help repair the harm.

5. I desire to serve my community and those around me. This is another opportunity to do so. If I am elected, I would do my best to serve.

6. Voters can best reach me at: [fmartens@mts.net](mailto:fmartens@mts.net)



### **Rebeca Gryba**

1. My life experiences, both within and beyond the school system, have given me valuable perspectives that will serve me well as a trustee. Having recently navigated the education system myself, I have firsthand insights into the challenges and opportunities facing students today. This close connection allows me to understand what works and what might need improvement. Additionally, I was raised with a Christian upbringing, which shaped my values and principles, emphasizing the importance of service, integrity, and compassion. My home environment has always fostered critical thinking, teaching me the importance of asking thoughtful questions and making informed decisions. These experiences equip me to bring a fresh, informed perspective

to the role of school board trustee, and I'm excited about the opportunity to contribute to the future of our division.

2. If elected as a Mountain View School Division trustee, my priority will be to foster a respectful, safe, and inspiring learning environment where every student feels valued, supported, and empowered to reach their full potential. I am committed to representing the voices of all members of our community—parents, students, and staff—within the division's boundaries. By focusing on inclusivity and collaboration, I will work to ensure that our schools remain places where students can thrive academically and personally.

3. To make these priorities a reality, I believe continuous learning and staying informed about educational research, legislation, and new initiatives are essential. By actively engaging with the latest developments in education, I can bring valuable insights to the board, ensuring that we make well-informed decisions. I will make it a priority to share this knowledge with my fellow trustees, so we can collectively guide the division toward effective and forward-thinking solutions that benefit all students. The challenges facing our division are not new, but I believe it's time for a fresh perspective. The school division is in the position it is now due to trustees who have held on to outdated approaches for too long. My commitment is to be a voice for the future, bringing a renewed sense of purpose and forward-thinking ideas. Education is not static, and neither should our leadership be

4. I believe it's crucial for our community to engage directly with the school division, rather than relying on second-hand information from media sources, especially when that information is not based on facts from the division itself. Misinformation can be harmful and often distorts the reality of situations. I encourage Mountain View School Division residents to assess news releases and presentations directly from the division to form their own informed opinions. To commit to reconciliation, we must foster open and transparent communication while working together to build a respectful and inclusive environment for all students and families

5. Being a school trustee means having the opportunity to make a difference for the future of education, which is a responsibility I don't take lightly. I believe that by working together, we can create a positive, lasting impact on our children's futures.

6. You can reach me at [rebecagryba@icloud.com](mailto:rebecagryba@icloud.com) or DM me on facebook at Rebeca Gryba.

## Ward 2



**Scott Lynxleg**

1. I have a deep, personal connection to our local education system. Having grown up in the area, I attended school in Grandview from Grades 1 to 10 before graduating from Roblin Goose Lake High. My commitment to education continues through my family - my three children attended school in Grandview, and today, my grandchildren are enrolled in Grandview School, with my daughter attending DRCSS. I was raised to value education and mutual respect, and I've always been actively involved in my children's and grandchildren's learning journeys, emphasizing the importance of education and lifelong learning.

With over 30 years of experience in governance and finance, I bring a wealth of knowledge in team collaboration and a strong understanding of board policy functions. My career has focused on fostering partnerships, co-ordinating projects with communities, and building capacity - all with a commitment to advancing reconciliation. I am eager to use my experience to strengthen our local education system and ensure that the needs of our children remain our top priority.

2. My priorities would be focused on:

- Putting students first - Ensuring that the success and well-being of children are the top priorities, with decisions made in their best interests.
- Fostering a respectful workplace - Encouraging teamwork and valuing input from all staff members.
- Board collaboration and development - Strengthening board responsibility and fulfilling the obligations of serving as a trustee. transparency and accountability - Ensuring open communication with students, staff, parents, the community, and government partners.
- Practicing fiscal responsibility -Managing resources wisely to ensure sustainability and effectiveness in education.

3. I am committed to fostering a collaborative environment where the insights and perspectives of all board members and parents are actively sought and valued. By working together, maintaining open minds, and respecting one another, we can make decisions that truly benefit our children and the entire division. Regular engagement and input from parents, staff, and board members are essential to this process, ensuring transparency and inclusivity. I also look forward to leveraging the expertise of the governance panel and the resources provided by the Manitoba School Board Association to guide our efforts.

4. First step would be to present the "TRUTH" or true facts about "reconciliation" and be respectful to all people. In my job,

I stress that the first step of reconciliation is accepting what actually happened (TRUTH) and how we can move forward in learning from the past and understanding that we are all equal. In committing to reconciliation, I would gather and present the actual facts and present them to the parents/staff/board in a way that they have an understanding of how it was and still is affecting the parents/students of residential school. I would offer more opportunities to the parents/staff/board to learn more about the realities and how it affects the children today.

Reconciliation doesn't end with one workshop, one presentation, or a day of events, it's an everyday learning experience for all of us.

The first step in reconciliation is presenting the truth - acknowledging the real facts about our history with respect for all people. In my role, I emphasize that reconciliation begins with accepting what truly happened, particularly regarding residential schools, and understanding how we can move forward by learning from the past. It's vital to recognize that we are all equal, and reconciliation is about healing and moving forward together.

To genuinely commit to reconciliation, I would ensure that accurate facts are shared with parents, staff, and board members to help them understand how the legacy of residential schools still impacts families and students today. I also aim to create more opportunities for ongoing education and dialogue, deepening everyone's understanding of these realities.

Reconciliation isn't something that can be achieved through a single workshop, presentation, or day of events. It's a continuous learning journey that we must engage in daily.

As a First Nations person, I've experienced firsthand the profound and lasting effects of residential schools on my own family and community. This lived experience strengthens my dedication to fostering understanding and advancing meaningful reconciliation. In addition, following the guidelines of the Indigenous Education Policy outlined by the Government of Manitoba is crucial to leading by example and creating a path forward.

5. To me, being a school trustee means being a voice for all children and ensuring they have a safe, supportive space to learn - free from barriers and issues that have no place in the classroom.

As a trustee, it's vital to represent the interests of all children and parents. With real-life experience in this division, I'm committed to strengthening the board by working collaboratively to support every child.

Accountability and transparency are key. I believe in listening to the input of students, parents, and staff, and working together to prioritize the needs of our children.

Respect in the workplace and in life is essential. All staff should feel heard and valued, and we must lead by example, showing our children the importance of getting along and respecting one another.

It would be a privilege to serve as a trustee, and I would be honored to represent the needs of the Mountain View School Division school communities.

6. If you would like to contact myself, please see the contact information. Facebook, Scott Lynxleg – MVSD Ward 2 2024 or by email at dslynxleg@gmail.com.

## **Carter Taylor-Luke**

1. From a young age, I've naturally gravitated toward leadership roles, serving as a role model to my peers and others in my community. These experiences have taught me that good leadership requires listening, collaboration, and staying true to one's values. I believe the best decisions come from a balance of wisdom, logic, and reason—qualities I've cultivated throughout my life. These principles, along with a deep sense of responsibility, make me confident that I'm well-prepared to serve as a school trustee.

2. If elected as a Mountain View School Division trustee, my focus will be on providing a safe and respectful learning environment, while maintaining the core values of public education. I believe that a strong foundation in reading, writing, and arithmetic is essential, and by fostering emotional intelligence and critical thinking, students will naturally develop a deep understanding of inclusivity, anti-racism, and other important social values. Additionally, I stand for protecting parental rights and maintaining open lines of communication with parents regarding their children's education and activities. My goal is to ensure that education remains centered on academic excellence and personal growth, preparing students for successful futures.

3. To make these priorities a reality, I will prioritize clear and open communication between trustees, staff, parents, and the broader community. It is essential that everyone's voice is heard and respected. Through transparency and dialogue, we can create effective policies and solutions that truly enhance the educational experience for our students. By fostering these strong communication channels, we'll build a more united and successful school division.

4. Recent conversations about racism and discrimination within the division have been influenced by misunderstandings and, in some cases, public pressure and media narratives. I believe the best way to tackle these challenges is through open, fact-based dialogue and addressing issues directly with clarity and accuracy. Rather than allowing external advocacy to shape our

discussions, I am committed to fostering an environment where facts and sound reasoning guide our decision-making. It's crucial for parents, staff, and community members to be well-informed so we can work together to create a division where every student is respected, valued, and given the tools to succeed.

5. As a school trustee, my role would be to make a meaningful difference in the lives of our students and the future of education. This position is about ensuring that every decision made serves the best interest of our children, preparing them to thrive both academically and personally. I look forward to contributing to this important mission.

6. I am Carter Taylor Luke, and you can reach me at [ctaylorluke@gmail.com](mailto:ctaylorluke@gmail.com)



### **Ashleigh Yaskowich**

1. As the parent of three children, two of which have graduated through the MVSD, and the third in elementary school, I feel the need to be involved in the education of my children.

I have served on many committees and boards over the years including both adult and youth sports, performing the duties of secretary, president, public relations and program director.

I found coaching baseball and bowling very rewarding so I volunteered at my children's school as much as I could.

I'm currently involved with the PAC at my daughter's school.

2. We need to shift our focus back to education. Categorizing children by race, gender, orientation etc., is not the answer. We need to evaluate the learning styles of students instead, whether it be reading, writing, seeing, hearing or doing, and ensure that schools and teachers have the necessary resources to teach all of our children equally.

I've decided to run for Ward 2 because of my rural background and I firmly believe that rural voices need to be heard. I feel that rural parents and their children are sometimes "left out" when it comes to planning, decision-making and direct communication.

I want to bring the opinions and views from the rural parents and community members to the table and help rural voices be heard.

3. I am readily available to sit down and communicate with parents, school staff, parent advisory councils and community members to get their valued feedback, good or bad and listen to what they have to say. I plan to ensure that all voices are heard and we, as a board, are doing right by the students of Ward 2.

I believe we can make MVSD as good as it once was and even better by working together for the children.

4. Discrimination of any kind should never be tolerated, whether in school or within the community. I believe that every child has independent needs when it comes to learning, whether that be about themselves or the core subjects taught in school.

We should focus less on topics such as gender, orientation, race, flags, library books, etc, and get back to what our mission statement is. We need to let kids be kids and focus on their education.

5. Being a school board trustee, means that I will listen to your concerns and suggestions when it comes to education. I will bring your voices to the table and address each of the Ward 2 communities and their needs. Each community in Ward 2 has different challenges and triumphs when it comes to education.

Being a school trustee means I am trusted to ensure that all voices are heard and we, as a board, are doing right by the students of Ward 2. We are responsible for making decisions that affect the most important people in your lives, your children and grandchildren, nieces and nephews etc.

6. I can be reached at [ayaskowich@outlook.com](mailto:ayaskowich@outlook.com) or through my Facebook Page, Ashleigh Yaskowich for School Board Trustee Ward 2.

## **Ward 4**

### **Jaime Paterson**

1. I have lived in Dauphin for the past 25 years and attended schools within Mountain View School Division from Grade 7 to Grade 12. I graduated from the University of Manitoba in 2017 with a Bachelor of Social Work Degree while completing my degree I worked as an educational assistant for Mountain View School Division and have since worked in the Dauphin and surrounding communities collaboratively with different agencies focusing mostly on social services front. I have gained many community relationships, sat at many tables with diverse groups of people. I have 3 school aged children that currently attend schools within Mountain View School Division.

I have implemented policy throughout my career as well identified and utilized resources within our community. I have been

a part of different boards and worked as a team member. I have been able to take the lead on events and partnering with different organizations or agencies.

2. First, my main priority would be to provide a safe and inclusive environment for all children and parents or guardians within Mountain View School Division as every child matters no matter their race, gender, sexual orientation or any other ways our children may feel best represents themselves.

Education is a priority, making sure that schools are equipped with proper resources to meet these requirements will provide much success for both the student and educator.

Working together as a board with input on division priorities to ensure that the strategic planning process has accountability for the division.

Cultural proficiency would be a priority that I feel the division should work towards.

Community engagement at the board level.

3. Creating an inclusive environment is a big task but can be accomplished by small movements. I would ensure our parents are able to speak freely and respectfully about what they believe their children need. The main way to create a safe space is to ask those in the space so I would like to ask educators who are with our children everyday as well. What are some things our children are saying they might need in their educational spaces? We must get feedback from those involved in education, especially our children, as people are experts of themselves. I would like to have more community engagement, gather more input from the community members and take that information to identify main priorities as seen firsthand.

4. First, Mountain View School Division needs to take responsibility for the wrongdoings and recognize the recent events that have taken place. We cannot move forward with reconciliation until the issue at hand is addressed by the division.

Second an apology to all family's needs to take place. The misinformation shared regarding the presentation about Indigenous people where Indigenous people were referred to as Indians and was stated that residential schools were a good thing needs to be retracted. This presentation was an example of residential school denialism and a major misrepresentation of basic facts about residential schooling to undermine the truth and reconciliation efforts.

After the above takes place, as a school trustee I would be willing to work and aide in repairing the harm caused to students and families by working towards board culture development and learning as a board what is required to be part of a culturally safe environment for all. I would want to see cultural proficiency as a top priority for the division to foster safety and cultural humility within all school division work.

I will respectfully say the things that need to be said with courage and humility. I am open minded, and I would walk with my teachings to guide and support policies that are in the best interest of all children. I believe that we will have to move forward from this act, and we will need an opportunity for healing from the harm that the board has done.

The recent event that took place at McKenzie Middle School for Truth and Reconciliation Day was part of healing for the children. It was a beautiful event to see students within the division participating, learning and taking part in activities with meaning.

5. Becoming a school trustee would mean that we would have Indigenous representation on the school board, this is very important because it helps to broaden social perspectives, combat stigmatization and promote better understanding that leads to respect of all individuals.

6. Voters can reach me via personal email [jaimep17@hotmail.com](mailto:jaimep17@hotmail.com) and I will try my best to respond in a timely manner.



**Jarri Thompson**

1. My life experiences have uniquely prepared me to run for school trustee. As a dedicated volunteer with initiatives like Citizens on Patrol and H.O.P.E, I have actively engaged with my community and contributed to various events. With a few years of experience as an Educational Assistant and my current role in social services, I am deeply familiar with the challenges faced by families, particularly those in low socioeconomic situations. Additionally, my involvement on committees such as the Anicinabe Housing Corporation and the Community Safety and Well Being Advisory Board has equipped me with valuable insights into collaborative problem-solving. As a parent of two school-aged children and a spouse of a teacher, I am deeply invested in the educational landscape and committed to advocating for the needs of our students and families.

2. If elected as a trustee for the Mountain View School Division, my top priorities would be to improve student outcomes, ensure equity, and promote well-being and inclusion across our schools. I believe that every student deserves the opportunity to succeed.

3. To make my priorities a reality, I would focus on building strong partnerships with external organizations that can help support our schools. This would include working closely with early childhood programs and post-secondary institutions

to create smoother transitions for students and their families as they move through the K-12 system and beyond. By collaborating on professional learning opportunities for myself as a trustee, for teachers and by sharing resources, we can ensure that everyone is equipped to help our students succeed.

4. To combat racism and discrimination at the board level in Mountain View, I believe in standing strong encouraging transparency and open dialogue. It's

important to take the time to understand what issues belong in our schools and which belong in the wider community. Simply shutting down conversations isn't the answer; we need to engage. I would encourage current board members to connect with the families they serve and listen to their experiences, especially regarding the impacts of residential schools and the treatment of the LGBTQ2+ community. By opening their minds and actively participating in the community, board members can begin to repair the harm that has been done. Ultimately, the strongest change will come from building relationships between the community and the candidates running in their wards...so I encourage the community to ask questions of their candidates.

5. Being a school trustee would mean a great deal to me personally. I would feel honored that the residents of Ward 4 have faith and trust in my ability to represent their voices. It would be a responsibility I take seriously, striving to ensure that all perspectives are heard and considered in decision-making. I would be committed to advocating for our students' needs and working collaboratively to foster a positive and inclusive educational environment for everyone in our community.

6. They find me on Facebook at Jarri Thompson for School Board Trustee, or by email at [jvmt28@gmail.com](mailto:jvmt28@gmail.com).