



# Songhees Nation

1100 Admirals Road  
Victoria, BC  
V9A 2P6

April 1, 2025

RE: Support for Electoral Area Representation in School Board Elections

Dear Honourable Minister Beare, Minister of Education and Child Care:

On behalf of Chief and Council of Songhees Nation, I am writing to voice our support for the adoption of an electoral area model for school trustee elections within our region. Additionally, we would like to emphasize the necessity for the appointment of designated seats on the Board of Education for the two Local Nations on whose territories the Greater Victoria School District resides.

The current electoral model creates disproportionate representation of communities on the school board. An electoral area model would ensure that school trustees are elected from specific areas within the district, allowing for more localized representation and fostering greater accountability to the communities they serve. It will also provide a platform for Songhees and Esquimalt Nations to have our voices more directly heard in educational matters that impact our children, our families, and our culture.

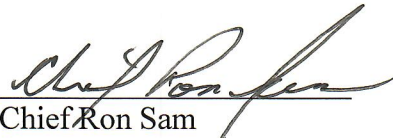
The Province of BC has committed to implementing the Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (DRIPA) Action Plan. The inclusion of representatives from Indigenous communities in important education related decisions that affect our communities is a step towards reconciliation. Ensuring that there is fair and equal representation on the school board is vital in addressing the unique needs and perspectives of our students.

As a community deeply invested in the education and well-being of our children, we believe that this model will create a more inclusive and equitable process for all families and communities within the district. We believe that the implementation of this model will enhance collaboration between the school district and Songhees and Esquimalt Nations, promoting an educational environment that values and respects Indigenous cultures and perspectives. It is our hope that the Ministry of Education and Child Care will support the transition to an electoral area model, as well as the designation of Indigenous representation on school boards. By adopting this model, we can help bridge the gap between the public education system and Indigenous communities, fostering mutual understanding, respect, and a stronger partnership in shaping the educational experiences of all students.

We stand ready to support this important step toward creating a more inclusive and representative educational system for all and ensuring that the inherent rights of Indigenous peoples are upheld in the education system.

We appreciate your consideration and your ongoing commitment to improving education for our students. We look forward to working together towards further strengthening our relationship in the spirit of trust and reconciliation.

Sincerely,



Chief Ron Sam  
Songhees Nation

Cc: Sherri Bell, Official Trustee, School District No. 61  
Hon. Darlene Rotchford, MLA Esquimalt-Colwood  
Hon. Diana Gibson, MLA Oak Bay-Gordon Head  
Hon. Grace Lore, MLA Victoria-Beacon Hill  
Hon. Lana Popham, MLA Saanich-South  
Hon. Nina Krieger, MLA Victoria-Swan Lake  
Township of Esquimalt  
Town of View Royal  
District of Highlands  
District of Oak Bay  
District of Saanich  
Esquimalt Nation  
City of Victoria

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