



**Council Member Motion**  
**For the Committee of the Whole Meeting of May 22, 2025**

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| <b>To:</b>      | Committee of the Whole   | <b>Date:</b> | May 13, 2025 |
| <b>From:</b>    | Mayor Alto   |              |              |
| <b>Subject:</b> | Request to Support Pursuit of a “Trustee Electoral Area” Model in SD61 |              |              |

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**Background**

On January 30, 2025, BC School District 61’s Board (SD61) was replaced with an Official Trustee, Sherri Bell.

Last month, the Township of Esquimalt voted unanimously to “ask the Honourable Lisa Beare, Minister of Education and Child Care, to direct School District 61 to create an inclusive and collaborative task force to consider a Trustee Electoral Area election model for the Minister’s ultimate consideration of approval for implementation in time for the 2026 Local Government/Board of Education elections.”

The Township of Esquimalt suggests that the previous SD61 Board struggled with governance issues, and that now is an opportune time to advocate directly to the Minister of Education on the need for a change in how SD61 Board Trustees are elected.

Six municipalities and two Indigenous Nations share one amalgamated SD61 School Board with a system of nine school trustees elected at-large. The now-vacated previous Board had no residents from the municipalities of Esquimalt, Oak Bay, View Royal, Highlands or Songhees or Xwsepsum Nations.

So-called “ward systems” exist in some school districts in BC when the local district serves more than one municipality, including School Districts 62, 63, and 64 within parts of the Capital Regional District. This model is referred to as the “Trustee Electoral Area” election model whereby local government areas each separately elect their own School Trustee representative(s) to help geographically represent included communities.

The Minister of Education has the authority to approve and implement a “Trustee Electoral Area” election model for electing school board trustees in any school district.

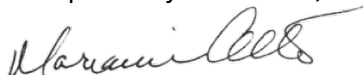
The Township of Esquimalt has asked the City of Victoria Council to join its campaign to urge the Minister to implement a “Trustee Electoral Area” election model for SD61.

The Official Trustee has organized an opportunity for a preliminary conversation with the municipalities and the Nations on May 28, to which the mayor has been invited. That meeting will explore related issues and options, and is the next step in the Official Trustee's consideration of the matter.

### **Recommendation**

That Council direct the mayor to participate in the May 28 meeting organized by the Official Trustee, and any other consultation facilitated by Official Trustee Bell on this matter, and to report back on issues and options arising therefrom.

Respectfully submitted,



Mayor Marianne Alto