

Preet Chaggar

From: Erin Glasgow <Erin.Glasgow@songheesnation.com>
Sent: Friday, April 25, 2025 12:37 PM
To: ECC.Minister@gov.bc.ca
Cc: Rosa Horne; Ron Sam; McCrea, Jennifer ECC:EX; Francine L'Hirondelle
Subject: (External Email) Letter of Support for Electoral Area Representation
Attachments: Songhees Letter to Minister Beare_Electoral Area.pdf

This email sent from outside the District of Saanich. Use caution if message is unexpected or sender is not known to you.

Dear Honourable Minister Beare,

On behalf of Songhees Nation Chief and Council, please see the attached letter of support for the transition to an Electoral Area Model for the Board of Education of Greater Victoria School District No 61 elections.

həyŋxʷqə Thank you

Erin Glasgow
Director of Education
Songhees Nation
250-386-1043 EXT 319



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

Preet Chaggar

From: Jennifer Downie <jdownie@oakbay.ca>
Sent: Tuesday, April 8, 2025 10:38 AM
To: ecc.minister@gov.bc.ca
Cc: Sid Tobias (mayortobias@viewroyal.ca); officialtrustee@sd61.bc.ca; Darlene.Rotchford.MLA@leg.bc.ca; Grace.Lore.MLA@leg.bc.ca; Gibson.MLA, Diana; Lana.Popham.MLA@leg.bc.ca; Nina.Krieger.MLA@leg.bc.ca; Jerome Thomas; Ron Sam; corporate.services@esquimalt.ca; Council; info@songheesnation.com; Victoria (External Email) Support for a Trustee Electoral Area Election Model for SD 61 - District of Oak Bay
Subject:
Attachments: Ministry of Education and Child Care - April 7 2025 .pdf

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Minister Beare

Attached, please find correspondence from Mayor Kevin Murdoch, District of Oak Bay, re: Support for a Trustee Electoral Area Election Model for School District 61.

Kindly confirm receipt of this email.

Kind regards,
Jennifer

Jennifer Downie

Executive Assistant to the Mayor and CAO
District of Oak Bay
250-598-3311 ext. 7429
[Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#) | [Instagram](#) | [LinkedIn](#)



We acknowledge that the land on which we gather is the traditional territory of the Coast and Straits Salish Peoples. Specifically, we recognize the Lekwungen-speaking Peoples, known today as the Songhees and Esquimalt Nations, and that their historic connections to these lands continue to this day.



THE CORPORATION OF THE DISTRICT OF OAK BAY
MUNICIPAL HALL – 2167 OAK BAY AVENUE – VICTORIA, BC V8R 1G2
PHONE 250-598-3311 FAX 250-598-9108 WEBSITE www.oakbay.ca

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

Via email: ecc.minister@gov.bc.ca

April 7, 2025

Honourable Lisa Beare
Ministry of Education and Child Care
PO Box 9045, Stn Prov Govt,
Victoria, BC V8W9E2

Dear Minister Beare:

Re: Support for a Trustee Electoral Area Election Model for School District 61

At the Oak Bay Council meeting held March 24, 2025, Council received correspondence from the Township of Esquimalt dated March 19, 2025 and resolved: *“THAT the Mayor draft a letter to the Province in support of Esquimalt’s request to explore Trustee Electoral Area options for School District 61.”*

On behalf of Council, I would like to express our support for the Township of Esquimalt’s request that the Ministry of Education and Child Care consider the implementation of a Trustee Electoral Area election model for School District 61, following comprehensive consultation with the communities served by the School District. The District of Oak Bay believes that an inclusive and collaborative task force would ensure that a proposed model reflects the diverse needs and perspectives of those it serves.

We respectfully request that the Ministry consider this task force and any proposed changes in advance of the 2026 Local Government and School Board Elections, ensuring sufficient time for consultation and planning. Thank you for your time and consideration. We look forward to your response and to the opportunity to collaborate on this important initiative.

Yours sincerely,

Kevin Murdoch, Mayor
District of Oak Bay

*c. 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*

*Esquimalt Nation
Songhees Nation
Township of Esquimalt
Town of View Royal
City of Victoria
District of Saanich*

Preet Chaggar

From: Jennifer Cochrane <jcochrane@viewroyal.ca>
Sent: Friday, March 21, 2025 4:34 PM
To: ECC.Minister@gov.bc.ca
Cc: Sid Tobias; officialtrustee@sd61.bc.ca; 'Darlene.Rotchford.MLA@leg.bc.ca'; Diana.Gibson.MLA@leg.bc.ca; Grace.Lore.MLA@leg.bc.ca; Lana.Popham.MLA@leg.bc.ca; Nina.Krieger.MLA@leg.bc.ca; Jerome@esquimaltnation.ca; corporate.services@esquimalt.ca; info@highlands.ca; administration@oakbay.ca; Council; info@songheesnation.com; Victoria
Subject: (External Email) Support for a Trustee Electoral Area Election Model for SD 61 - Town of View Royal
Attachments: 2025 03 21 Hon Lisa Beare re Support for a Trustee Electoral Area Election Model for SD 61.pdf

This email sent from outside the District of Saanich. Use caution if message is unexpected or sender is not known to you.

Good afternoon Minister Beare,
On behalf of Mayor Tobias, please see the attached.
Best regards,

Jennifer Cochrane

Executive Assistant | Office of the Mayor & CAO
Town of View Royal | 45 View Royal Avenue | Victoria, BC V9B 1A6
Direct: 250.708.2255 | Main: 250.479.6800
viewroyal.ca | [Facebook](#) | [Bluesky](#) | [Instagram](#)

Get involved in shaping the future of View Royal. Share your input on View Royal 2050: Our Future View at engage.viewroyal.ca.



TOWN OF VIEW ROYAL

45 View Royal Avenue, Victoria, BC, Canada V9B 1A6

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March 21, 2025

Honourable Lisa Beare
Minister of Education and Child Care
PO Box 9045 Stn Prov Govt
Victoria, BC V8W 9E2

Via Email: ECC.Minister@gov.bc.ca

Dear Minister Beare,

Re: Support for a Trustee Electoral Area Election Model for SD 61

On behalf of Council, the Town of View Royal wishes to express its strong support for the Township of Esquimalt's request for the Ministry of Education and Child Care to consider and approve the implementation of a Trustee Electoral Area election model for School District 61 (Greater Victoria).

We believe that equitable and localized representation is foundational to effective and accountable school governance. The current at-large system fails to adequately reflect the distinct voices and educational priorities of the many unique communities within SD 61, including municipalities such as View Royal, as well as the Esquimalt and Songhees Nations.

In support of this effort, the Town of View Royal urges the Ministry to direct the establishment of an inclusive and collaborative task force—led by SD 61 and including representation from all six member municipalities, as well as the Esquimalt and Songhees First Nations. Their inclusion is vital to ensuring that Indigenous perspectives are fully recognized and embedded in the governance of our public education system.

A Trustee Electoral Area model that is fair, geographically representative, and reflective of the diversity of communities in SD 61 will strengthen our shared commitment to equity, reconciliation, and good governance. We respectfully ask that the Ministry consider this change in advance of the 2026 Local Government and School Board Elections.

Sincerely,

Sid Tobias, MSM, CD, MA
Mayor

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
Esquimalt Nation
Township of Esquimalt
District of Highlands
District of Oak Bay
District of Saanich
Songhees Nation
City of Victoria

Preet Chaggar

From: Sue-Anne Carter <Sue-Anne.Carter@esquimalt.ca>
Sent: Wednesday, March 19, 2025 12:20 PM
To: Council
Subject: (External Email) Letter from the Township of Esquimalt
Attachments: 2025 03 19 - Letter to Saanich-Trustee Electoral Area election model.pdf; Appendix A - Election Systems for CRD School Districts.pdf; Appendix B - List of BC School Districts with Trustee Electoral Areas.pdf

This email sent from outside the District of Saanich. Use caution if message is unexpected or sender is not known to you.

Good morning,

Please find attached a letter from the Township of Esquimalt regarding the Trustee Electoral Area election model and Esquimalt Council's request for equitable representation.

With kind regards,

Sue-Anne Carter, *(She/Her)*
Executive Assistant | Office of the Mayor and CAO
Lekwungen Territory
Township of Esquimalt | Administration
Tel: 250-414-7101 | www.esquimalt.ca

**Honoured & privileged to work on the lək'wəŋən traditional territory
and respectfully acknowledge the people of the Songhees Nation and
Kosapsun Nation. Nətsəmat (We are all One) həyšx'qə.**



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CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF ESQUIMALT

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Telephone (250) 414-7100
Fax (250) 414-7111

File No. 0550-11

March 19, 2025

District of Saanich
Mayor and Council
770 Vernon Avenue
Victoria, BC V8X 2W1

Via email to: council@saanich.ca

Dear Mayor and Council:

Re: Trustee Electoral Area election model

Further to the Township's letter to your council dated September 27, 2024 regarding our request of the Greater Victoria School District No. 61 (SD 61) to give consideration of a new Trustee Electoral Area election model in place of at-large elections for school board trustees, I am writing to provide you an update.

At the November 25, 2024, SD 61 School Board meeting, the Township of Esquimalt's letter was placed on the board's agenda. There was very little discussion among the now terminated board other than to suggest that our request instead be sent to the Minister of Education and Child Care for consideration.

In response, I am informing you that the Township of Esquimalt Council passed the following motion at our March 4, 2025 Special Council meeting:

"WHEREAS: The vast majority of B.C. School Districts that serve multiple municipalities have implemented a Trustee Electoral Area election model whereby local communities each separately elect their own School Trustee representative(s) to help optimize fair and equitable school board representation among the various municipalities,

AND WHEREAS: Part 4 – Division 1 – Section 30 of the BC School Act grants authority to the Minister of Education to approve and implement a more fair and equitable Trustee Electoral Area election model for electing school board trustees,

AND WHEREAS: the previously elected Greater Victoria School District 61 Board of Education has now been terminated, and a new Board of Education will not be elected until October 2026



CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF ESQUIMALT

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THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Township of Esquimalt 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.

AND THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Township of Esquimalt author letters to School District 61 official trustee Sherri Bell, the City of Victoria, District of Saanich, District of Oak Bay, Town of View Royal, District of Highlands, the Songhees Nation and Kosapsum (Esquimalt) Nation, as well as area MLAs within School District 61 to inform them of the Township's request to the Minister of Education and Child Care."

Under Part 4 - Division 1 - Section 30 of the BC School Act, the Minister is granted the authority to allow for a Trustee Electoral Area election model for electing school board trustees. Many school districts across British Columbia that serve multiple municipalities have already adopted this model, allowing each community to elect its own School Trustee representative(s) to promote fair and equitable representation on the school board.

The Township of Esquimalt believes that an SD 61-led task force—designed to be inclusive and collaborative with the communities served by SD 61—would be the most effective way to explore, define, and propose designated Trustee Electoral Area boundaries. This proposal could then be submitted for the Minister's consideration and implemented in time for the 2026 Local Government elections.

We ask that your council consider joining us in making the same request to the Minister of Education and Child Care to consider implementing a Trustee Electoral Area model based on consultation with all our communities for the school district in which we all share.

Sincerely,



Mayor Barbara Desjardins

Attachments:

Appendix A - Election Systems for CRD School Districts

Appendix B - List of BC School Districts that Elect Trustees Proportionally by Community/Trustee Electoral Areas

Appendix A: Election Systems for CRD School Districts.

There are four school districts within the CRD which elect school board trustees as follows:

Greater Victoria School District #61:

- 9 trustee positions elected 100% At-Large.
- No local community/geographic representation guaranteed.

Sooke School District #62:

- 7 trustee positions elected separately from two Trustee Electoral Areas:

Trustee Electoral Areas	Number of Trustees
Belmont Zone – Langford, Colwood, Metchosin and a portion of Highlands	Four
Milnes Landing Zone - Sooke, Port Renfrew	Three
TOTAL	Seven

Saanich School District #63:

- 7 trustee positions elected separately from four Trustee Electoral Areas:

Trustee Electoral Areas	Number of Trustees
District of North Saanich	Two
Town of Sidney	One
District of Central Saanich	Two
Partial District of Saanich	Two
TOTAL	Seven

Gulf Islands School District #64:

- 7 trustee positions elected separately from five Trustee Electoral Areas:

Trustee Electoral Areas	Number of Trustees
Salt Spring Island	Three
Galiano Island	One
Pender Islands	One
Saturna Island	One
Mayne Island	One
TOTAL	Seven

Appendix B: List of BC School Districts that Elect Trustees Equitably By Community/Trustee Electoral Areas:

In B.C., there are 60 public school districts of which 44 serve multiple municipalities with representation elected equitably by community with the Trustee Electoral Area model. The remaining 16 school districts predominately serve only one municipality and, therefore, appropriately elect school trustees at-large within their single municipality (e.g. Vancouver District 39, Burnaby District 41, Richmond District 38, etc.).

In contrast to School District 61, almost all other B.C. school districts that serve more than one municipality have implemented an equitable election by the Trustee Electoral Area system including as follows:

SCHOOL DISTRICT	Equitable Separated Trustee Electoral Areas for Electing School Trustees
District 5 - Southeast Kootenay	<u>Five Electoral Areas:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Cranbrook • District of Sparwood • City of Fernie • District of Elkford • Regional District of East Kootenay Rural Area
District 6 - Rocky Mountain	<u>Five Electoral Areas:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Kimberley • Town of Golden • District of Invermere • Village of Canal Flats • Village of Radium Hot Springs
District 8 - Kootenay Lake	<u>Six Electoral Areas:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Nelson • Town of Creston • Salmo, Taghum & Blewett • Village of Kaslo & North Rural Zone • Slocan Valley / Bonnington • South Rural Zone
District 10 - Arrow Lakes	<u>Four Electoral Areas:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ward system with trustees elected by 4 separated geographic zones
District 20 – Kootenay Columbia	<u>Six Electoral Areas:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ward system with trustees elected by 6 separated geographic zones

District 22 - Vernon	<u>Three Electoral Areas:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Vernon • District of Coldstream • Village of Lumby
District 23 - Central Okanagan	<u>Four Electoral Areas:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Kelowna • City of West Kelowna • District of Lake Country • District of Peachland
District 27 – Cariboo Chilcotin	<u>Seven Electoral Areas:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ward system with trustees elected by 7 separated geographic zones
District 35 - Langley	<u>Two Electoral Areas:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Township of Langley • City of Langley
District 36 - Surrey	<u>Two Electoral Areas:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Surrey • City of White Rock
District 42 - Maple Ridge/Pitt Meadows	<u>Two Electoral Areas:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Maple Ridge • City of Pitt Meadows
District 43 - Coquitlam	<u>Four Electoral Areas:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Coquitlam • City of Port Coquitlam • City of Port Moody • Villages of Anmore and Belcarra
District 44 – North Vancouver	<u>Two Electoral Areas:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District of North Vancouver • City of North Vancouver
District 46 - Sunshine Coast	<u>Three Electoral Areas:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upper Sunshine Coast • Central Sunshine Coast • Lower Sunshine Coast
District 48 - Sea to Sky	<u>Five Electoral Areas:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District of Squamish • Resort Municipality of Whistler • Village of Pemberton • Regional District Area C • Regional District Area D

District 49 - Central Coast	<u>Two Electoral Areas:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ward system with trustees elected by 2 separated geographic zones
District 50 - Haida Gwaii	<u>Five Electoral Areas:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ward system with trustees elected by 5 separated geographic zones
District 51 - Boundary	<u>Five Electoral Areas:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Grand Forks • Christina Lake • Kettle Valley East • Kettle Valley North • Kettle Valley West
District 52 - Prince Rupert	<u>Two Electoral Areas:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Prince Rupert • Village of Port Edward / Rural
District 53 - Okanagan Similkameen	<u>Four Electoral Areas:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Town of Osoyoos • Town of Oliver • Village of Keremeos • Okanagan Falls
District 54 - Bulkley Valley	<u>Four Electoral Areas:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Town of Smithers • Town of Houston • Village of Telkwa • Lake Kathlyn/ Evelyn/ Moricetown
District 57 - Prince George	<u>Three Electoral Areas:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Prince George • District of Mackenzie • Robson Valley
District 58 – Nicola Similkameen	<u>Two Electoral Areas:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Merritt • Town of Princeton
District 59 - Peace River South	<u>Four Electoral Areas:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Dawson Creek • District of Chetwynd • District of Tumbler Ridge • Pouce Coupe & Rural Areas

District 60 - Peace River North	<u>Five Electoral Areas:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ward system with trustees elected by 5 separated geographic zones
District 62 - Sooke	<u>Two Electoral Areas:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Belmont Zone • Milnes Landing Zone
District 63 - Saanich	<u>Four Electoral Areas:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partial District of Saanich • Town of Sidney • District of Central Saanich • District of North Saanich
District 64 - Gulf Islands	<u>Five Electoral Areas:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Salt Spring Island • Galiano Island • Pender Islands • Saturna Island • Mayne Island
District 67 - Okanagan Skaha	<u>Three Electoral Areas:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Penticton • District of Summerland • Rural Zone Area
District 69 - Qualicum	<u>Four Electoral Areas:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ward system with trustees elected by 4 separated geographic zones
District 70 - Pacific Rim	<u>Two Electoral Areas:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alberni Valley • West Coast
District 71 - Comox Valley	<u>Five Electoral Areas:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Courtenay • Town of Comox • Village of Cumberland • Area A • Area C
District 72 - Campbell River	<u>Three Electoral Areas:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater Campbell River • Quadra • Sayward Valley

District 73 - Kamloops/Thompson	<u>Five Electoral Areas:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Kamloops • District of Barriere • District of Logan Lake • District of Clear Water • Village of Chase/Sun Peaks
District 74 - Gold Trail	<u>Seven Electoral Areas:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ward system with trustees elected by 7 separated geographic zones
District 75 - Mission	<u>Two Electoral Areas:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Mission • Fraser Valley Regional District
District 78 - Fraser/Cascade	<u>Three Electoral Areas:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ward system with trustees elected by 3 separated geographic zones
District 82 - Coast Mountains	<u>Five Electoral Areas:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Terrace • City of Kitimat • District of Stewart • Village of Hazelton • Thornhill Community
District 83 - North Okanagan/Shuswap	<u>Four Electoral Areas:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Salmon Arm • City of Armstrong/ District of Spallumchen • City of Enderby/ District of Sicamous • Rural Zone Area
District 84 - Vancouver Island West	<u>Four Electoral Areas:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Village of Zeballos • Village of Gold River • Village of Tahsis • Kyuquot Community
District 85 - Vancouver Island North	<u>Three Electoral Areas:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ward system with trustees elected by 3 separated geographic zones

District 87 - Stikine	<u>Five Electoral Areas:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Town of Atlin • Dease Lake • Iskut • Lower Post • Telegraph Creek
District 91 - Nechako Lakes	<u>Six Electoral Areas:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District of Vanderhoof • District of Fort St. James • Village of Burns Lake • Village of Fraser Lake • Village of Granisle • Grassy Plains/Francois Lake
District 92 - Nisga'a	<u>Five Electoral Areas:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Laxgaltsap • Gitlaxtaamiks • Gitwinksihlkw • Gingolx • Nass Camp