

To:

From: Trustee
Hudson Campbell

Re: _____

Date: January 17, 202

subsequent establishment of the Ontario Student Trustees' Association (OSTA) further exemplifies the success of this initiative, where democratically elected student representatives from diverse school systems across the province actively engage in addressing pressing issues and advocating for province-wide changes. While student trustees in BC currently hold a more advisory role, the proposed motion aims to allow for voting members on the board, aligning with the successful aspects of the Ontario model.

Currently, several British Columbian School Boards have implemented non-voting student trustees with success, including SD46 Sunshine Coast⁴, SD08 Kootenay Lake⁵, and SD39 Vancouver⁶. However, the School Act in British Columbia lacks legislative provisions similar to Ontario, leaving a critical gap in student representation and participation in decision-making processes.

The need for this motion is grounded in the recognition that student voice is integral to public education. Enabling a student presence at the decision-making table ensures that boards are well-informed for effective decision-making, with students advocating for necessary resources

Legislative Framework for Voting Student Trustees

6.

Category: Boards of Education

Motion #:	6 : A20246	Sponsor:	Maple Ridge-Pitt Meadows <i>and</i> Fraser Valley Branch
Meeting:	AGM 2024	Action:	<i>not specified</i>
Category:		Outcome:	<i>not specified</i>
Disposition:	Defeated		

Motion as Adopted:

BE IT RESOLVED:

Motion as Presented:

BE IT RESOLVED:

That the BCSTA advocate for the amendment of the *School Act* by the Province of British Columbia to establish Student Trustee positions with full voting rights.

Rationale:

The BCSTA, recognizing the importance of student input in effective decision-making, has passed two motions since 2014 advocating for the legislative implementation of Student Trustees: Motion 18: A201418 and Motion 11 A201811. Despite these efforts, substantive action by the province has yet to be taken. This proposal seeks to strengthen student voices in alignment with Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, emphasizing the need for student representation.

Inspired by Ontario's successful model dating back to 1977, the introduction of voting student trustees onto BC Boards of Education aims to provide a structured platform for gathering student input. Under this proposal, each secondary school within a school district would establish a student council. These councils would serve as forums for student engagement and discussion on educational matters within the school community. From these student councils, representatives would be internally elected to form a district student council, ensuring diverse and broad representation from across the district. This district student council would then internally elect their student trustee, who would serve as the voice of the student body on the Board of Education, ensuring a representative and democratic process.

While some British Columbian School Boards have implemented non-voting student trustees with success, legislative provisions similar to Ontario are lacking, resulting in a critical gap in student representation. The proposed motion seeks to bridge this gap by advocating for an amendment to the *School Act* to grant school districts the discretion to establish student trustee positions with full voting rights. Enabling a student presence at the decision-making table ensures informed decision-making and advocacy for issues directly impacting students' educational experiences. Beyond

representation, student trustees empower students by providing a platform for free expression, fostering civic engagement, while increasing student participation in educational governance.

The introduction of voting student trustees onto BC Boards of Education is a necessary step towards a more inclusive and dynamic education system. By aligning our actions with our words, student voices will actively contribute to decision-making processes, enriching the educational experience for all stakeholders.

Reference(s):

Begin, M., Caplan, G. L., & Ontario. Royal Commission on Learning. (1995, January). *For the Love of Learning: Report of the Royal Commission on Learning. For the Love of Learning Report.* Government of Ontario .

Ontario Provincial Parliament . (2022, June). Ontario Regulation 516/22 (Education Act) (2022-06-01)