

news release

October 22, 2008

Alberta's Chief Electoral Officer is building future voters!

EDMONTON, October 22, 2008 – Lorne Gibson, Alberta's Chief Electoral Officer, today announced the official launch of "*Building Future Voters*" - a comprehensive resource package for Teaching and Learning about Citizen Participation, Elections and Democracy.

Building Future Voters resources were developed by Elections Alberta in response to numerous requests from Alberta educators to provide learning resources that will assist social studies teachers and students in Grades 6, 9 and 12. The belief that young Albertans are more likely to participate in elections if we encourage them to explore the relevance of democracy and government in their own lives is widely embraced by the public.

Building Future Voters is now available to educators across Alberta involved in the Social Studies Program as a teaching support resource. Lorne Gibson was delighted with the enthusiastic support of teachers and students involved in the field testing conducted last year.

"It's all about planting seeds," said Lorne Gibson, Chief Electoral Officer. "When these seeds take root, they will produce greater democratic participation in years to come." Gibson added, "Democracy is most vibrant when all people participate – people of all backgrounds and all ages. We have developed these resources to assist educators in encouraging involved citizenship and active participation among youth that lasts a lifetime."

"It is my hope that "Building Future Voters" will be the critical first step in the development of political and democratic awareness in youth and become an invaluable teaching tool for educators," Gibson said. "Learning will continue as the resource offers youth the understanding and the tools they need to continue this important dialogue with parents, elected officials and others."

Elections Alberta is an independent office of the Legislative Assembly that provides non-political administration of the electoral process.

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Additional details about *Building Future Voters* can be downloaded from our website at <http://www.elections.ab.ca/Public%20Website/education.htm>.

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