

news release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 3, 2016

ELECTIONS MANITOBA ENCOURAGES FUTURE AND FIRST-TIME VOTERS TO PARTICIPATE IN PROVINCIAL ELECTION

Three hands-on programs invite young Manitobans to engage in the electoral process during the upcoming provincial election. **CitizenNext**, the **Student Information Officer** program, and **Your Power to Choose** are designed to foster the habit of electoral participation among children and youth.

“By providing opportunities for young people to participate this election, we hope to play a role in engaging the next generation of voters,” said Chief Electoral Officer Shipra Verma. “It’s never too early to learn about democracy.”

CitizenNext invites parents to bring their children with them when they vote. Children will be welcomed at advance and election day voting places where they will receive a “Future Voter” sticker. Kids can display the sticker on a **Future Voter Pledge Card** that they can print out from the CitizenNext.ca website or receive at the voting place. The card shows the year the child will be eligible to vote and indicates their commitment to do so when the time comes.

The CitizenNext.ca website also includes information, games and activities that teach young people about the electoral process and why it’s important to vote.

The Student Information Officer (SIO) program offers grade 11 and 12 students a chance to work on election day. The role of SIOs is to greet voters at the voting place and direct them to their correct voting station. SIOs are paid \$11.00 an hour and also attend a paid training session. Applications and information are available on the Elections Manitoba website. Students under 18 years of age must also submit a release form signed by their parent or guardian.

Your Power to Choose (YPTC) is a long-standing program of Elections Manitoba developed in partnership with Manitoba educators. Through YPTC, facilitators deliver interactive in-class workshops to students from grade 4 and up, as well as to adult learners. The workshops introduce participants to the history of elections, the current electoral process, and conclude with a mock election, in which students take on the roles of election workers, candidates and voters. Educators are invited to find out more and register for a workshop on the Elections Manitoba website.

-30-

Elections Manitoba is the independent office of the Legislative Assembly responsible for the administration of provincial elections and by-elections.

Media spokesperson:

Alison Mitchell, Manager of Communications and Public Information

For media inquiries, contact:

Estefania Wujkiw, Media Information Officer

Phone: 204-945-5755

Email: ewujkiw@elections.mb.ca

Download Elections Manitoba's new mobile app, Manitoba Votes 2016, available for Apple, Android and Blackberry.