



Kids Voting Minneapolis
612-227-9440
www.kidsvotingminneapolis.org

FACT SHEET

What is Kids Voting Minneapolis?

A nonpartisan, nonprofit community-based organization, ***Kids Voting Minneapolis*** prepares students for a lifetime of voting. *Kids Voting* provides a K-12th grade curriculum that is taught in the classroom and exposes students to the concepts of citizenship, civic responsibility, democracy and the importance of political participation. Students cast a *Kids Voting* ballot on Election Day at Minneapolis polling places, voting on many of the same candidates and issues that adults do. By combining innovative classroom activities with an authentic voting experience, students gain the knowledge, skills and the confidence to become active citizens.

How It Started

Kids Voting was born upon the return of three prominent Arizona businessmen from a 1988 fishing trip to Costa Rica, a country that typically enjoys 90% voter turnout. The men were inspired by the strong local custom of children accompanying their parents to the polls. And they were motivated to act because of the growing trend of low voter turnout in the United States. They developed a school-based pilot project that has since grown into the national *Kids Voting USA* organization. It now serves more than four million students in 29 states and Washington D.C. *Kids Voting Minneapolis* is an affiliate of the state and national organization.

Kids Voting Minneapolis Helps K-12th Grade Students:

- Learn about their voting rights and responsibilities and the importance of civic participation
- Experience the voting process by going to their neighborhood polling place with their parents/guardian on Election Day and casting their vote
- Become part of an active, engaged, and well-informed electorate
- Begin a lifetime of citizenship and regular voting

2006 Goals

- Maximize student participation in the 2006 Kids Voting election
- Increase voter registration of 18 year-olds
- Increase adult voter turnout throughout Minneapolis, especially in communities traditionally underrepresented in the electoral process

Kids Voting Minneapolis Results

- More than 7,600 students, representing over 100 public, charter, and parochial schools, cast ballots at 97 neighborhood polling places in the 2004 Presidential Election
- More than 2,900 youth from 111 schools cast ballots in the 2005 City Election
- Over 400 volunteers helped students cast ballots
- 50,000 K-12 students are eligible to participate in *Kids Voting Minneapolis*

Support for *Kids Voting Minneapolis*

Organizations providing financial and/or in-kind support include Best Buy Children's Foundation, Ciceron, Data Recognition Corporation, GMAC-RFC, Grotto Foundation, Minneapolis Central Labor Union, Minneapolis Community and Technical College, MoneyGram International, Rotary Club of Minneapolis, State Farm Insurance Companies, and the Star Tribune Foundation.

Other assistance provided by Becketwood Cooperative, IBEW Local 160, Jewish Community Action, Minnesota Council of Nonprofits, League of Women Voters of Minneapolis, Minneapolis Park Board, Minneapolis Public Library, Minneapolis Public Schools, National Council of Jewish Women, Sabathani Community Center, Southwest Journal/Downtown Journal, the Star Tribune, Target Corporation and Temple Israel.

Kids Voting is supported by Minneapolis Mayor R.T. Rybak, Secretary of State Mary Kiffmeyer, Governor Tim Pawlenty and Senators Norm Coleman and Mark Dayton.

What People Are Saying About *Kids Voting Minneapolis*

"Kids Voting made democracy come alive for my students. Our class had great discussions around the candidates and the issues." 3rd grade teacher

"One election judge told a Somali girl, who came to the poll with her mother, that she could vote and "her whole face lit up." She was very happy and proud to vote!"
Volunteer

"I'm only one month away from my 18th birthday so I just missed being able to vote in this election. I'm glad I was able to vote through Kids Voting." 12th grade boy

"My mom is Canadian so she can't vote. That's why I followed the election very closely."
2nd grade girl

"Thank you for making the election important for the kids and giving them a voice."
Parent

Community Involvement is Key. Elect to Get Involved!

***Kids Voting Minneapolis* needs volunteers throughout the year.** Year-round volunteers build school participation, fundraise, recruit volunteers and plan for Election Day. Join us as we prepare for state, county, and school board elections on November 7, 2006. Sign up now at www.kidsvotingminneapolis.org.