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For Immediate Release

Students' Votes are In

Students from across the District School Board of Niagara are participating in Student Vote, an initiative aimed at increasing students' interest in the democratic process. During the final days of the campaign, students coordinated their own elections, complete with Deputy Returning Officers and Poll Clerks. They even had an opportunity to cast a ballot for a candidate in their school's riding.

On voting day at DSBN in addition to going to classes, students also be headed to the polls. Students at Central Public School in Grimsby prepared themselves for the vote by inviting all of their local candidates to speak. Down the street at Nelles Public School, students learned about the issues and some interesting trends have developed. "We have a conservative camp in the Grade 4/5 class," reports Principal Janice Slade, "But the Grade 6 class is leaning toward the Green Party."

The program complements the secondary school civics and history curricula, and in many DSBN secondary schools, including El Crossley, Welland Centennial and Niagara District Secondary Schools and Ridgeway-Crystal Beach High School, civics and history students are gaining valuable experience from organizing the elections. The program not only teaches a habit of electoral and community participation, it also helps to develop students' civic literacy and ultimately increases voter turnout rates.

Laura Secord Secondary School students have participated in the last four elections, with the successful candidate of the election predicted each year. As a result, local candidates have followed the Laura Secord voting patterns with interest!

Cherrywood Acres, Steel Street, Dalewood, Ferndale, Westmount, Col. John Butler Mathews, and Valleyway Public Schools are all participating in today's vote as well. Principal Poppy Gilliam says, "Mirroring the provincial electoral process is a wonderful way for students to learn about politics!"

Results from the school polls will be released alongside the traditional election counts. Central Public School Principal, David Redekop explains the merits of the program, "We believe this is helping our students to become informed and participating citizens."

Media Inquiries:

Kim Yielding, Manager, Communications and Public Relations
District School Board of Niagara
905-641-2929 ext. 4160
kim.yielding@dsbn.edu.on.ca
191 Carlton Street
St. Catharines, Ontario L2R 7P4

