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## **Students across Nebraska participate in election programs**

LINCOLN – Over 100,000 elementary, middle and high school students across Nebraska are getting a taste of the election process by participating in student vote programs this year.

Nebraska Student Vote, sponsored by the secretary of state's office and the Omaha World-Herald, drew 78,233 students from 479 schools in this year's program. Students in the program voted Oct. 25-28 in a mock election.

Lincoln radio station KFOR operates a separate student vote program for 60 Lincoln area schools, and the program's mock election on Nov. 1 was expected to draw some 30,000 students.

Combined, the Nebraska Student Vote and KFOR programs reached about 90,000 students during the 2002 election.

Results in the Nebraska Student Vote mock election showed students favored Republican George W. Bush for president and Republicans Jeff Fortenberry, Lee Terry and Tom Osborne to fill Nebraska's three congressional seats.

In addition to the mock election, students benefited from civics instruction and readership of the Omaha World-Herald as part of Nebraska Student Vote.

"The real winners in this program are not the candidates who received the most votes, but the students who participated," said Secretary of State John Gale.

"This program teaches students some of the basics of government, increases their understanding of democracy and gives them experience in voting," he added. "The program is a valuable tool to instill the importance of voting in our youth."

As of midday on Oct. 29, results from the Nebraska Student Vote mock election showed the following:

-- In the president's race, President Bush had 67 percent of the vote, Democrat John F. Kerry had 28 percent and five other candidates split the rest of the vote.

--In the 1<sup>st</sup> Congressional District, Fortenberry had 63 percent, Democrat Matt Connealy had 31 percent and the Green Party's Steven R. Larrick had 6 percent.

--In the 2<sup>nd</sup> Congressional District, the incumbent Terry had 64 percent of the vote, Democrat Nancy Thompson had 29 percent and two other candidates had the rest of the vote.

--In the 3rd Congressional District, the incumbent Osborne had 84 percent of the vote and three other candidates split the rest of the vote.

Partial voting results from Nebraska Student Vote ([www.nestudentvote.com](http://www.nestudentvote.com)) were reported to the National Student/Parent Mock Election program ([www.nationalmockelection.org](http://www.nationalmockelection.org)) on Oct. 28

"In past years, the interest in voting has been alarmingly low for the 18 to 23 age group," Gale said. "If present trends continue, a large share of our children and youth will not vote when they become eligible. Our excellent partnership with the Omaha World-Herald will help Nebraska reverse this trend."

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