Centre for Family Literacy

**Election Campaign Candidate Information**

This package is meant to be used by the Centre for Family Literacy’s staff, leadership, board members, learners and Centre supporters who are willing to spread the message about literacy to candidates running in the next provincial and federal elections.

The goal is to ensure funding for literacy programs in Alberta is a priority.

The postcards can be handed out to candidates who door knock. Use *“Literacy Develops in Families First”* and/or *“Many of Alberta’s social and economic problems are rooted in low literacy”*.

Generally when candidates canvass your neighbourhood they send someone to the door to let you know the candidate is in the area and to ask if you’d like to speak with them. You should invite them to visit and use the speaking points as a guide to respond. Let the candidate give their pitch then use the notes to inform the candidate about Alberta’s literacy issue and what you’d like them to do if elected.

Try to use your own words to get the message across rather than reading the notes word for word. Take their information and give them a literacy postcard.

Some candidates may stop by your house when you’re not home. Use the letter to reach out to the campaign team using the candidate’s email. Or you could mail the letter along with a postcard.

The *“Low literacy is holding back your business”* card can be given to business leaders you know who would be receptive to learning about how improved literacy can help their organizations become more productive.

*… Door Knocker Speaking Points on next page*

**Door Knocker Speaking Points**

*For all candidates coming to the door.*

I’m interested in knowing your party’s position on literacy and what you know about it.

Did you know? (Use some of these as required)

* 45% of adult Albertans do not have the literacy skills they need to function fully in our society.
* Adults with higher literacy skills work more, experience less unemployment, earn more, and rely less on government assistance
* People with low literacy skills are twice as likely to be unemployed for six or more months
* Raising every Canadian adult to Level 3 literacy would result in an annual savings of $542 million in social assistance alone
* Parents are a child’s first teacher and from the day they are born, parents are teaching their child key skills for success in school and life. The years from birth to age five are critical for literacy and language development.

Proper funding of literacy programs in this province are important to me and the organization I work for (sit on board, support etc.)

I’ll take your information and I’d like you to take something from me. (Give them one or more of the cards) This card provides a little message about the impact improved literacy rates would have on our society.

I think addressing the literacy issue in Alberta should be a priority mandate if you and your party are successful.

I look forward to you being an advocate for this important issue.

Thank you for dropping by and listening to what I have to say.

*… Letter to candidates on next page*

**Letter to Candidates**

*To be sent to the current sitting MLA in your riding who is running again, and to those seeking office in your riding. It can be a written letter or sent via email to the candidate’s campaign office.*

Dear

With the spring election campaign now underway I’m taking a moment to bring to your attention the literacy issue that is preventing Albertans from reaching their full potential and putting future generations at risk of the same fate.

Did you know?

* 45 % of adult Albertans do not have the literacy skills they need to function fully in our society.
* Parents are a child’s first teacher and from the day a child is born, parents are teaching key skills critical for literacy and language development.
* Adults with higher literacy skills work more, experience less unemployment, earn more, and rely less on government assistance.
* People with low literacy skills are twice as likely to be unemployed for six or more months.
* Raising every Canadian adult to Level 3 literacy would result in an annual savings of $542 million in social assistance alone.
* Children whose parents have low literacy skills are more likely to get poor grades and drop out.

A significant number of literacy programs are provided by not-for-profit organizations who have seen reductions in government funding for several years.

Addressing the literacy issue in Alberta should be a priority for future governments and I hope you will be an advocate for this important issue should you be successful.

All the best for your campaign,

Name and contact information