

NEWS FROM THE ND SECURITIES COMMISSIONER

For Immediate Release – February 1, 2001

STOCK MARKET GAME BOOSTS FINANCIAL LITERACY TO NORTH DAKOTA STUDENTS

Bismarck, ND – With popularity in investing at an all-time high, the financial “literacy” of America’s youth is at a surprising low. According to a recent National survey, one of the most effective ways to teach kids about money and investing is through interactive classroom tools such as The Stock Market Game. The Stock Market Game (SMGWW), a popular online educational tool available to North Dakota teachers and students and coordinated by the North Dakota Office of the Securities Commissioner, is a ten-week simulation of Wall Street trading that provides a framework for teaching students in grades 4-12 about the American economic system. “Offered in the fall and spring semesters, SMGWW is played on the Internet and is designed for classroom use as a motivational tool to increase understanding of the stock market, the costs and benefits involved in economic decision-making, the sources and use of capital and other related economic concepts,” said Diane Kambeitz, North Dakota Coordinator for The Stock Market Game.

The National Survey, conducted by the Jump\$Start Coalition, found a marked decline in financial literacy among high school seniors in every category studied, including income, money management, saving, investing, spending and credit issues. The survey also indicated that even purchasing securities in a teen’s name and parents discussing money matters in front of teens did little to increase financial literacy.

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However, the survey found that students who participated in the stock-market simulation scored better on the survey (55.1%) than did students who completed an entire course in money management (51.4%) or an entire course in economics (51.0%). “This survey is an important validation of the impact The Stock Market Game has on both students and teachers. By making education and economics fun, The Stock Market Game helps students learn more effectively and take control of their financial futures,” said Kambeitz.

“The Stock Market Game is a great vehicle for teaching everything from finance to math, to current events, to politics, to saving money, to working in cooperative groups. I would encourage any teacher to get involved in SMG,” said James Schutz, Elementary Teacher at Washington Elementary School in Fargo.

Anne Bower, Business Education Teacher at Discovery Jr. High School in Fargo says, “I have worked the stock market into my keyboarding class by giving students vocabulary words to type and doing research on the Internet on stocks to purchase for the game. The game also teaches teamwork. It is for all students.”

“SMGWW is one of the best teaching tools I use in my high school economics classes. It allows for hands-on learning of the stock market while keeping it very fun for the students,” says Dave Michaelson, Economics teacher in Dickinson.

SMGWW is a free resource to North Dakota schools coordinated through the Office of the Securities Commissioner. The Stock Market Game was created and is provided by the Securities Industry Foundation for Economic Education, an affiliate of the Securities Industry Association. The game is played nationwide and in foreign countries.

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The spring game begins on February 12, 2001. Teachers interested in playing the game should contact Diane Kambeitz at the Office of the Securities Commissioner at 1-800-297-5124 (local 328-4698) or visit the SMGWW website at www.smgww.org.

“The Stock Market Game is an opportunity for students to not only learn about the market and how it affects our economy, but also to think about wise investing and saving for their financial futures,” concluded Kambeitz.

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