

June, 2008

To: Chairs of School Boards  
Superintendents/Directors of Education  
Principals of Schools (Grades K to 12)  
Social Studies and Science Teachers  
Presidents of Advisory Councils for  
School Leadership/Parent Councils  
First Nations Education Authorities

**Software  
Acquisition  
Announcement**

**RE: ESRI Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Software for K-12 Schools**

Dear Colleagues:

I am pleased to inform you that Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth has acquired a new provincial site licence for ESRI Canada GIS software versions *ArcView 9.2* and *ArcView 9.3* for use by students and educators. These are the the most recent versions of this popular GIS software. The software is available in both English and French. This acquisition enables schools to upgrade from *ArcView 3.3* and *Arcview 8.3* covered under a previous agreement. There is no direct cost to schools, divisions, or educators for the use of this software for educational purposes.

Under the agreement with ESRI Canada, schools can continue to use *ArcView 3.3* and *8.3* as long as they wish while students and teachers become fully comfortable with the new version. The new versions of the software continue to use the *ArcCanada 3.0 Data Sets* which were available under the previous agreement.

*ArcView 9.2* has already been released by ESRI and will be available for distribution at the beginning of the 2008-2009 school year (please see attachment for details on how to acquire the new software). Please note that *ArcView 9.3*, developed for Windows Vista, has not yet been released but will be available to Manitoba schools once it is available.

The enclosed Memo from ESRI Canada provides important information about hardware and technical requirements, migrating from 3.x to 9.x, data, lessons, online training opportunities, and answers to frequently asked questions.

**What is GIS?**

GIS stands for Geographic Information Systems. A Geographic Information System is a combination of elements designed to display, store, retrieve, and manipulate geographic data - information about places. *ArcView GIS* software permits students to produce high-quality maps, provides the mechanism for analyzing relationships between geographic

entities and allows the explorer to interact with dynamic maps on the computer screen. This promotes critical thinking as students engage with real-world problems and propose real-world solutions. Although there are many interdisciplinary connections for GIS, social studies and science teachers will find the software most useful. For examples of applications of GIS in education visit: <<http://www.esri.com/industries/k-12/index.html>>.

The Manitoba Social Studies Foundation for Implementation documents include numerous references to the use of GIS as a tool to enhance student understanding. For more information about GIS in Manitoba curricula please visit <<http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/cur/gis/index.html>>

If you have any questions or require further information, please contact:

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Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth is pleased to be able to offer the new GIS software to schools. I hope that you will this use exciting opportunity to enrich the learning experiences of your students.

Sincerely,

Aileen Najdich

Director

**Attachment**

### **Attachment: Distribution of ArcView GIS 9.2 Software**

Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth (MECY) will be distributing the software to participants at a series of workshops and orientation sessions planned during the 2008-2009 school year.

- **Summer Institute**

The annual Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth Summer Institute, August 19-22, 2008, offers two sessions related to GIS. For information and registration details please visit <http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/proflearn/index.html>

- **ESRI Canada/MECY Orientation Sessions**

Two one-day orientation sessions will be offered in during the week of the Special Area Group (SAG) conferences in November.

- Brandon: Wednesday, November 26, 2008. Please see the LIFT Program for information and registration details.
- Winnipeg: Thursday, November 27, 2008. Please see the Manitoba Social Science Teacher (MSSTA) SAG program for information and registration details.

- **MSSTA Special Area Group (SAG) Conference, Winnipeg**

The Manitoba Social Science Teachers Association conference program includes both workshops and orientation sessions related to GIS. The conference takes place on November 28, 2008 at River East Collegiate. Please see the SAG program distributed to schools for information or visit <http://www.mssta.mb.ca> for updates.

- **LIFT (Learning Information for Teaching) Conference, Brandon**

The LIFT conference, hosted by the Brandon Teachers Association also on November 28, 2008, includes a workshop related to GIS. Please see the LIFT program distributed to schools or visit <http://www.brandonteachersassociation.com> for updates.

- **Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth Regional Orientation Sessions**

Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth is planning a series of regional orientation sessions around the province during the 2008-2009 school year. Further information will be circulated to schools in the fall of 2008 and posted on the following MECY web sites: <http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/proflearn/index.html> and <http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/cur/gis/index.html>

- **Distribution to select schools**

Schools listed in the MECY database as having implemented GIS into subject curricula will be mailed copies of the new ArcView 9.2 software by September, 2008.