

# Presidential Election One Year Away



A year from now, on November 4, 2008, Americans will elect a new president. But a lot has to happen between now and Election Day.

The U.S. has two major political parties: the Democrats and the Republicans. Right now, eight main Democrats and eight Republicans are running for president. But each party can choose only one person.

Starting in January 2008, voters across the U.S. will help narrow down the field of candidates until one person in each party has been chosen to run for president. In some states, voters will narrow the field by voting in elections called *primaries*. In those *primary states*, people will vote by secret ballot for the person they would like to be their party's presidential candidate.

Some states hold *caucuses* instead of primaries. During a caucus, people who are members of a political party meet to talk about the candidates and vote for the person they want to run for president.

## **NEWS WORD BOX**

political parties  
Democrat Republican  
ballot convention  
primary caucus

Next summer, after all the states are done voting, members of the two main parties will hold national *conventions*. At those conventions, large groups of party members will make the final decision. They will choose their party's candidate for president in the 2008 election. The Democrats will hold their convention in Denver, Colorado, from August 25–28. The Republicans will meet in Minneapolis/St. Paul, Minnesota, from September 1–4.

## **MORE FACTS ABOUT THE 2008 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION**

- More than 200 people are running for president. Many of those people are members of the two big parties, but others represent smaller political parties.
- More primaries will take place on February 5 than on any other date. More than 20 states will hold primaries that day, which is called "Super Tuesday."

## **THINK ABOUT THE NEWS**

Imagine you had a chance to meet the candidates for president. What *one* question would you most want to ask all of them?