April 24, 2019

MEMORANDUM

TO: City and County Superintendents of Education

FROM: Eric G. Mackey
State Superintendent of Education

RE: 2019 FOCUS Rally Events

The Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE) is pleased to announce the opportunity for middle and high school students to participate in one of two FOCUS rallies in 2019. FOCUS is a youth-led program seeking to promote community and school involvement in the planning of prevention of high-risk behaviors.

The ALSDE, in collaboration with FOCUS and selected community partners, will hold two rallies this year. The first rally will be held on September 10, 2019, at the Bryant Conference Center in Tuscaloosa, Alabama. The second rally will be held on September 18, 2019, at the Shooco Springs Conference Center in Talladega, Alabama.

The FOCUS Rallies will feature a keynote address by a nationally known youth speaker. In addition to breakout sessions for Grades 9-12, there will be middle school breakout sessions for age-appropriate presentations by outstanding high school peer helpers and adults. Key breakout session topics will address the importance of building relationships, vaping, underage drinking, opiate epidemic, common mental health issues among adolescents, HIV/STIs, Internet safety, Homeland Security’s "See Something Say Something," and teen pregnancy.

Further details regarding the agenda, presenters, and registration are located online at www.thefocusprogram.com. Educators may receive professional development credit by registering at https://pdweb.alsde.edu. The PD Title Number is SDECT0191 for both rallies. Social Work CEUs will be provided by the Alabama State Board of Social Work Examiners.

Questions regarding these events may be directed to Mrs. Sue Jones, FOCUS Director, by telephone at 256-453-0655 or by email at sjoness@thefocusprogram.com or Mrs. Wanda Langley, Education Specialist, by telephone at 334-694-4877 or by email at wlangley@alsde.edu.

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