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MEMORANDUM

TO: School District Superintendents

FROM: Hershel Lyons

DATE: December 21, 2018

SUBJECT: Florida Tobacco Prevention Training for Educators

Contact Information:

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DPS: 2018-173

In September 2018, the U.S. Food & Drug Administration Commissioner, Dr. Scott Gottlieb, declared an epidemic of e-cigarette use among teenagers. The 2018 Florida Youth Tobacco Survey documents a dramatic and significant increase in electronic vapor product use from 14.3% to 26.3% among 11 to 17 year-old students over the last five years. In the continued effort to reduce and prevent tobacco and e-cigarette use among school-aged children, the Florida Department of Education administers the Florida Tobacco Prevention Training for Educators through the School Board of Palm Beach County.

This distance-learning course is a no cost, professional development opportunity for all certified Florida teachers, school counselors and school nurses. Registration is open now through April 26, 2019. Participants have 24-hour access, seven days a week and may take up to June 6, 2019, to complete the course. Educators may choose a 30-hour or 60-hour course option. Districts may award participants who complete one of the courses 30 or 60 in-service points towards recertification. In addition, a 20-hour Continuing Education Unit course is now available for school nurses.

Florida teachers and students have benefited greatly from this program since it launched in 2010. Evaluation results show both teachers and students increased their knowledge, and students changed their attitudes and behavior regarding tobacco use. Tobacco use by students interferes with their academic achievement and is associated with other drug use. Over the past three years, almost 2,000 Florida educators from more than 55 districts across the state have completed this course and taught approximately 60,000 students tobacco prevention.

I encourage your district to take advantage of this professional development opportunity. Registration can be accessed at <http://www.tobaccopreventiontraining.org/>. For more information, please contact Rikita Patel at Rikita.Patel@fldoe.org or by phone at 850-245-5056.

HL/rp

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