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TO: District School Superintendents
School Principals

FROM: John L. Winn

DATE: February 22, 2006

SUBJECT: Florida Missing Children's Day Statewide Essay Contest Deadline- April 10, 2006

The Florida Department of Education's goal of *Highest Student Achievement* is one of the top priorities for K-12 schools. In order to reach this goal, the Department recognizes that students learn best in a school environment that is safe, healthy, and drug free. In order to support this goal, the Office of Safe and Healthy Schools and the Florida Missing Children Information Clearinghouse Advisory Board are sponsoring the 2006 Florida Missing Children's Day (FMCD). This special ceremony remembers past and present missing children and recognizes those citizens who work hard to bring children home safely. This year's ceremony will be held on Monday, September 11, 2006, at the Florida Capitol in Tallahassee.

To create awareness among the children of Florida, an essay contest again is being held in conjunction with FMCD. I want to encourage all elementary students in the fifth grade to participate in this contest, with each school selecting one winner. The chosen essay from your school will be submitted to the Missing Children Information Clearinghouse Advisory Board. One essay will be selected as the statewide winner. The winner will be invited to Tallahassee to read the essay on the steps of the Capitol. The winner will also receive a trip to Tallahassee with his or her parent, a check for \$250, and a trophy. This year's theme is, "How Can I Be Safe on the Internet?"

District School Superintendents
School Principals
February 22, 2006
Page Two

A contest poster and the guidelines for the essay contest are enclosed. Entries of the winning essay from each school must be submitted by April 10, 2006, to:

Ms. Pat Rutherford or Ms. Dawn Mikola
Florida Missing Children Information Clearinghouse
Florida Department of Law Enforcement
Post Office Box 1489
Tallahassee, Florida 32302-1489

The essay entry may also be faxed to (850) 410-8599. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Ms. Pat Rutherford or Ms. Dawn Mikola at 1-888-356-4774. We look forward to welcoming the statewide winner to Tallahassee.

JW:lp

Attachments