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DPS:2010-125

MEMORANDUM

TO: District Superintendents

FROM: Dr. Frances Haithcock

DATE: June 25, 2010

SUBJECT: **FINAL SPACE SHUTTLE FLIGHT: OPPORTUNITY FOR FLORIDA SCHOOL DISTRICT PARTICIPATION IN FLIGHT EXPERIMENTS**

The National Center for Earth and Space Science Education, a 501(c)(3) non-profit, in partnership with American Aerospace Advisors, just launched the Student Spaceflight Experiments Program (SSEP). It offers entire school districts an experiment design competition at middle and high school levels to fly a REAL experiment aboard the last scheduled flight of the Space Shuttle—an experiment truly designed and proposed by classes of students. The competition is delivered within the context of a school district-wide engagement program in STEM education and may reach thousands of your students, their teachers, and their families. This is a historic opportunity for students, schools, and school districts.

The SSEP Program website is http://ssep.ncesse.org.The website contains comprehensive information on program objectives, customizing to community need, and how to participate. The timeline for each district or school to apply to participate and secure funding support is very short, so your district would need to explore this opportunity now, given the program would need to be implemented at the beginning of the academic year. The program is tied to the NASA launch schedule.

The timeline, level of participation, and funding requirements can be found at http://ssep.ncesse.org/how-to-participate. Dr. Jeff Goldstein, Center Director, National Center for Earth and Space Science Education, is personally available for a phone conversation, as well as a telecom, with you and your district's lead staff on science and technology education if that would be useful in answering questions, providing a sounding board for how you might participate and build community-wide buy-in. His cell number is (301) 395-0770.

Finally, please let us know if our Bureau of Curriculum and Instruction can assist in any way.

FH/mty