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NEWS MEDIA ADVISORY

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**More than 860 expected to attend 11th annual
Safe and Healthy Schools Conference tomorrow!**

The **State Superintendent's Eleventh Annual Safe and Healthy Schools Conference** starts tomorrow morning at the Clarion Meridian Conference Center, 737 South Meridian, in Oklahoma City.

More than 860 educators, law enforcement officials, counseling professionals, school security officers, and other school administrators, parents, community coalitions, youth organizations, nurses, local school board members, and others have preregistered to participate in this one-day conference. Workshops are presented by professional educators and nationally-known health, safety, and security experts and authors, with a special track for school nurses on communicable diseases.

"Among the highlights of our yearly focus on student health and school safety are the presentations by students in youth groups," said State Superintendent Sandy Garrett. Presentations on how to initiate the following student-led groups in schools are planned from:

- "2M2L" (Too Much To Lose) on prevention of underage drinking;
- Positive Peers, a chapter of the Students Against Violence Everywhere (SAVE) program, of Chandler schools;
- Rougher Alliance for Intelligent Decisions (RAID) team members from Muskogee schools; and
- SWAT (Students Working Against Tobacco) teams.

Experts will share information and resources related to health education, school crisis planning and recovery, youth empowerment programs, Internet safety, and prevention of bullying, cyberbullying, gang involvement, prescription drug abuse, and teen dating violence. Also scheduled are sessions on physical education activities, ethics in coaching, parent educational resources, and a community suicide prevention toolkit. Attendees will learn about school safety assessments from fire and police personnel and about HIV AIDS prevention from health professionals. Forty exhibitors are planning to share the latest in school health and safety products, programs and services.

Organizers will accept on-site registration tomorrow beginning at 8 a.m. and the conference will start at 9 a.m. Attendees will receive 5 hours of training credit for law enforcement professionals (CLEET), certificates for staff development credit for teachers, and continuing education units for Licensed Professional Counselors (LPC), Licensed Marriage and Family Counselors (LMFT), and Licensed Alcohol and Drug Counselors (LADC).

The conference is provided with federal funding from the Title IV Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act and the Twenty-First Century Community Learning Centers (after school programs) grant funding.

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