

September 8, 2005

Dear Colleague:

As you are aware, OELA's *Fourth Annual Celebrate Our Rising Stars Summit* will be held in Washington, D.C. from Wednesday, November 30 through Friday, December 2, 2005.

The purpose of this letter is to request your assistance in encouraging the local educational agencies (LEAs) of your State to send parents, parent liaisons, and parent leaders to the Summit. Attached please find a letter from the Director of OELA to LEAs, particularly sub-grantees under Title III, NCLB. The letter discusses the value and benefits of parental involvement in the Summit and the authority to use grant funds for this purpose.

Please review the attached letter, and disseminate it to your LEAs and other appropriate individuals in your State. The letter is subject to your modifications, if necessary, to address the State's individual objectives regarding parental involvement.

It was pleasing to note that during the OELA Summits of 2003 and 2004 parents were integral and significant participants, who added a great deal to the sessions, and were able to return to their respective communities as better prepared parent leaders.

The theme of this year's Summit builds on the focus of the previous Summits. It is "From Essential Elements to Effective Practices." Consistent with this theme, parents will be included in essentially all of the sessions that are designed to address best educational practices from an "integrated" perspective. That is a perspective that demonstrates how teachers, administrators, parents, and the community can link together as partners in the educational process.

More details on the parents' role both during and subsequent to the Summit will be found in the attached letter, which you are requested to share throughout your State.

As a means to follow-up this correspondence, you will receive a telephone call from James Lockhart, OELA's Senior Specialist for Parental Involvement, or another member of our staff. The calls will commence during the month of September (2005) to answer any related questions and to share ideas on how to make this event as meaningful to parent delegates as it will be to all participants.

For details and registration information on the 2005 “Celebrate Our Rising Stars” Summit, you are encouraged to access the NCELA website: <http://www.ncela.gwu.edu>

Thank you for your support in promoting parental involvement during, and subsequent to the OELA Summit.

Sincerely,

Kathleen Leos
Assistant Deputy Secretary
and Director