

Dear Friends of Alabama CEC,

I hope that the new school year finds you well and excited for another year of changing the lives of children. The Alabama Federation of the Council for Exceptional Children has had an exciting year. Our 2009 Superconference was a success, but the attendance was down as a result of the difficult financial situations many schools faced due to budget cuts last year. Many teachers expressed difficulties in being released from their school responsibilities and obtaining money to attend the AFCEC conference.

In light of the current financial difficulties faced by school districts and individuals, Alabama CEC has tried to find ways to encourage greater participation in professional development opportunities for teachers throughout the state of Alabama. Therefore, this year, Alabama CEC will partner with the Alabama State Department of Education in sponsoring the Mega-Conference July 19-23, 2009 in Mobile, Alabama. This is an amazing opportunity for the Alabama Federation for the Council for Exceptional Children to expand our membership and acquaintances throughout the state of Alabama. As a part of this opportunity, we will have a membership drive, silent auction to support grants for classroom teachers, a professional development strand, and our annual meeting where we will present awards to teachers, administrators and students from across the state.

Another great opportunity for special educators throughout the state of Alabama is the 2010 International CEC Superconference. The International CEC Superconference is just a few hours north in my old home of Nashville, Tennessee at the Gaylord Opryland April 21-24, 2010. This is a rare occasion where the International CEC conference is so close to Alabama, and I encourage all of you to try to attend. There will be many experts in the field of special education who will be training on such topics as Response to Intervention (RTI), Positive Behavior Supports (PBS), differentiating instruction, giftedness, Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA), Curriculum-Based Measurement (CBM), teaching students with a variety of disabilities, strategies, content enhancement techniques, and many more outstanding specialized professional development opportunities for the teachers in the state of Alabama. I am excited to attend this conference and I know you will be glad if you attend, as well.

AFCEC is always looking for ways to partner with universities, school districts and teachers throughout the state of Alabama so if you have suggestions, please forward those to me. You are our greatest supporters, and I am so thankful for your continuous encouragement over the past year and in the year to come. I am looking forward to another great year with AFCEC.

Sincerely,

Mandy Hilsmier

AFCEC President