

Dear School Personnel:

4-H Capitol Experience is an annual four-day conference for teens throughout Michigan who are interested in public policy and government. This year the conference will be held Sunday, March 19 through Wednesday, March 22, 2017, in Lansing. During Capitol Experience, through experiential learning, teens will:

- Discover how to influence public policy decisions
- Explore careers in public policy
- Learn about the public policy process at the state level
- Learn how decisions at the state level influence what happens in local communities
- Network with teens and professionals from across Michigan.

This conference also provides participants the opportunity to visit with representatives from community agencies, a spokesperson for a state executive agency, a lobbyist, a legislative aide and to tour the State Capitol Building. Participants will also select a public policy issue to focus on throughout the conference.

4-H Capitol Experience is not only a great opportunity for youth to take an active role in state government but the conference also reinforces the concepts taught in high school classes through hands-on activities. The Michigan State Content Standards for Social Studies Education reinforced by 4-H Capitol Experience include:

**C1. CONCEPTUAL FOUNDATIONS OF CIVIC AND POLITICAL LIFE**

- **1.1 Nature of Civic Life, Politics and Government** – Explain the meaning of civic life, politics, and government through the investigation of such questions as: What is civic life? What are politics? What is government? What are the purposes of politics and government?

**C3. STRUCTURE AND FUNCTIONS OF GOVERNMENT IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

- **3.3 Structure and Functions of State and Local Governments** – Describe how state and local governments are organized and what they do through the investigation of such questions as: What are the structure and functions of state and local government?
- **3.5 Other Actors in the Policy Process** – Describe the roles of political parties, interest groups, the media, and individuals in determining and shaping public policy through the investigation of such questions as: What roles do political parties, interest groups, the media and individual play in the development of public policy?

**C6. CITIZENSHIP IN ACTION**

- **6.1 Civic Inquiry and Public Discourse** – Use forms of inquiry and construct reasoned arguments to engage in public discourse around policy and public issues by investigating the question: How can citizens acquire information, solve problems, make decisions and defend positions about public policy issues?
- **6.2 Participating in Civic Life** – Describe multiple opportunities for citizens to participate in civic life by investigating the question: How can citizens participate in civic life?

By emphasizing these standards, 4-H Capitol Experience supports what Michigan students learn in school with hands-on experiences. Plus, it prepares teens to be responsible citizens who use knowledge of government and politics to make decisions about governing their community. We hope that after attending 4-H Capitol Experience, teens will be better able to construct and express their positions on a public policy issue and use their knowledge to make a difference in their communities.

For more information visit the conference Web site at [http://4h.msue.msu.edu/4h/4\\_h\\_capitol\\_experience](http://4h.msue.msu.edu/4h/4_h_capitol_experience).

Sincerely,



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