

**CHOICE AND CHARTERS, NOT VOUCHERS
OR TUITION TAX CREDITS**

Alternatives within the public school system are needed, such as public charters and inter-district school choice (open enrollment). Alternative educational systems that have public oversight and conform to state and federal laws and regulations are acceptable. Tuition tax credits could lead toward a more segregated and segmented educational system that could ultimately have a damaging impact on our democracy.

TAX ISSUES

AESA strongly opposes the repeal of the current exemption for state and local taxes from federal taxation. This proposed repeal would dramatically impair the capacity of the states and local school systems to support essential state and local services, including the educational programs and reforms required by IDEA and NCLB.

For a complete list of specific federal legislative issues supported by the membership of AESA, go to http://www.aesa.us/Legis/leg_news.html

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2006 : **FEDERAL**
: **LEGISLATIVE**
: **AGENDA**

Prepared by the
AES A Governmental
Relations Committee
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Adopted by the
AES A Executive Council
February 7, 2006

Educational Service Agencies (ESAs) provide services and programs to meet the needs of local schools and school districts. Currently, there are more than 550 ESAs in 44 states. With the recent growth in the demand for services, more people are asking about these public entities, which are playing an ever-increasing role in our public education system. ESAs are public entities created by state statute, to provide educational support programs and services to local schools and school districts within a given geographic area.

The role of ESAs is to provide high quality, cost-effective support programs for local schools and districts. By working cooperatively, districts can share costs and leverage resources rather than fund duplicative programs. This enables local districts to direct more resources to the classroom.

Because of state constitutions, laws, rules and regulations the names of ESAs vary across the nation. Examples include: Area Education Agency (AEA), Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES), Cooperative Education Service Agency (CESA), County Office of Education (COE), Educational Cooperative (EC), Education Service Agency, (ESA), Education Service Center/ Cooperative/Commission (ESC), Education Service District (ESDC), Education Service Unit (ESU), Intermediate Service Center (ISC), Intermediate School District (ISD), Intermediate Unit (IU), Regional Educational Cooperative (REC), Regional Education Service Agency (RESA), Regional Office of Education (ROE), Regional Resource Center (RRC), or Service Cooperative (SC). The common characteristic is the delivery of high quality, cost-effective support programs for local schools and districts.

AESA'S MISSION STATEMENT:

The Mission of AESA is to support and strengthen regional educational service agencies by:

- Serving as a national voice for educational service agencies;
- Providing professional growth opportunities, technical assistance, advocacy and research;
- Helping member agencies promote, distribute, and leverage their knowledge, products, and services: and
- Assisting in the establishment of educational service agencies

AESA'S FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE POSITIONS 2006

109TH CONGRESS

INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT (IDEA)

AESA lauds the reauthorization of IDEA (P.L. 108-446). AESA remains committed to the federal government paying its full mandated share of the costs to implement IDEA, and will work towards a full implementation of IDEA through the regulatory process.

MEDICAID

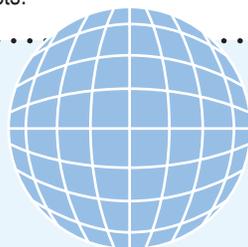
Medicaid reimbursement is an important part of the services that ESAs and their LEAs provide to eligible students throughout the country.

E-RATE PROGRAM

The E-rate program provides important leveraging funds for education technology to schools and libraries throughout the country. ESAs work in cooperation with local schools and libraries and are also eligible to receive program discounts.

REAUTHORIZATION OF THE HIGHER EDUCATION ACT

The reauthorization of the Higher Education Act presents the members of AESA the opportunity to offer suggested changes to the law. ESAs are in a position to assist institutions of



higher education (IHE) with technical assistance, professional training, and other services needed by educators to comply with NCLB, IDEA and the Perkins Vocational and Technical Education Act. Many programs within Title II of the HEA could be delivered by ESAs in consortium with or independent of IHEs. Data show that instructional programming delivered by ESAs is more cost effective with much lower overhead costs.

WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACT

The Workforce Investment Act (WIA) provides for a one-stop delivery system with employment and training services for job seekers and businesses. As with all aspects of education, WIA should be part of a seamless system of articulation from K-12, adult and post secondary education, and business connections to strengthen readiness for high school and post-secondary school or work.

REAUTHORIZATION OF THE CARL D. PERKINS VOCATIONAL AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION ACT

ESAs are in a position to assist school districts with technical assistance, professional training, and other services needed to comply with the law. Signed into law August, 2006.

OTHER AESA FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE POSITIONS

ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION ACT

AESA supports the intent of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) and encourages a full analysis of the Act and seeks modifications in the Reauthorization, which will strengthen local and regional flexibility and provide adequate federal funding to accomplish the goals of ESEA.

HIGH SCHOOL REDESIGN

AESA supports redesign of high schools to reflect contemporary educational, social, and economic conditions at the state and local level. AESA believes that the federal government should support the directions of the states and local school districts in their efforts to achieve high school redesign.

HEAD START AND OTHER EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS

The federal government rightly funds numerous early childhood (birth through age five) programs. ESAs often operate these programs on behalf of local communities and/or local school districts. Research demonstrates that quality early childhood education and development programs improve student achievement and closes the learning gap, especially for high-poverty children, and are wise investments of public tax dollars.