



# Online News

[www.aesa.us](http://www.aesa.us)

## **AESA Online News** **May 16, 2008**

**In this edition:**

### **Federal Advocacy Alerts**

1. **Action needed: Medicaid reimbursement Senate support**
2. **Action needed: Extend Loan Forgiveness to ESA teachers**
3. **AESA federal positions brochure online**

### **AESA News**

4. **AESA seeks AYP information on "Needing School Improvement" technical support and services**
5. **Management information request**
6. **Summer CEO Forum Registration**
7. **Annual Conference Registration**

### **Business Member Announcements**

8. **Spectrum K-12 / CASE release national RTI survey results**
9. **Teachscape**
10. **Conover Company waives MECA program multiple site license fee**

### **US Department of Education Announcements**

11. **NCLB rule meetings in Kansas City and Seattle**
12. **Free Teacher-to-Teacher (T2T) summer workshops**
13. **What Works Clearinghouse releases "Turning Around Chronically Low-Performing Schools" guide**

### **Federal Advocacy Alerts**

#### **1. Action needed: Medicaid reimbursement Senate support**

Action is needed by ESAs to contact their two U.S. Senators to urge support of the emergency supplemental appropriations bill that will be scheduled for a floor vote in the Senate next week. The emergency supplemental appropriations bill includes the HR 5613 language to extend the Medicaid moratorium passed by Congress last year through April 2009. If action to extend the moratorium does not pass, the current moratorium will end on June 30 and the regulations will take effect on July 1.

Yesterday (Thursday, May 15), the House passed the emergency supplemental appropriations bill 266-166, and the Senate Appropriations Committee passed its markup of the supplemental budget. The emergency supplemental

appropriations bill markup is scheduled for a full vote before the Senate next week.

Brian Talbott, AESA executive director, urges ESAs to contact their senators urging support for HR 5613 in the emergency supplemental appropriations bill. It will allow ESAs and LEAs to continue to receive reimbursement for the health-related transportation, administrative and outreach services provided for Medicaid-eligible students. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has issued regulations to end the program. Last year Congress passed a moratorium on implementing those regulations. That moratorium ends June 30. HR 5613 extends the moratorium to June 30, 2009.

Along with the AESA, groups opposing the HHS regulations and supporting HR. 5613 include the AASA, NSBA, NEA, The National Governors Association, the National Association of State Medicaid Directors, and the American Public Human Services Association.

It is the adopted position of AESA that Medicaid reimbursement is an important part of the support services that both ESAs and LEAs provide to eligible students throughout the country. AESA's position, adopted by the Governmental Relations Committee and approved by the AESA Council, is strongly opposed to steps that have been taken by the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services to eliminate reimbursement for school-based transportation and administration costs. The AESA seeks to extend the moratorium to protect schools from any changes being proposed by CMS until a suitable Congressional solution can be found.

## **2. Action needed: Extend Loan Forgiveness to ESA teachers**

AESA's Governmental Relations Committee is urging ESAs to contact their Members of Congress and Senators to urge support to extend current federal loan forgiveness programs, the Family Federal Education Loans (FFEL) and Federal Direct Loans, to educational service agency teachers in the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act. It is especially important that ESAs with House and Senate education committee members make contacts urging support.

The issue is that the current law limits loan forgiveness to teachers in "schools" but that definition does not include teachers working for ESAs. Extending the loan forgiveness will allow teachers employed by ESAs who have the same certification standards as LEA classroom teachers to qualify for the same benefit as those LEA teachers in "schools."

The AESA Governmental Relations Committee stresses that immediate contact is important because the House and Senate are currently negotiating final agreement on the bill in conference committee.

## **3. AESA federal positions brochure online**

AESA's tri-panel "2008 Federal Legislative Agenda" brochure is now available online as a pdf document download at [http://www.aesa.us/Legis/2008\\_Federal\\_Legislative\\_Agenda.pdf](http://www.aesa.us/Legis/2008_Federal_Legislative_Agenda.pdf) .

The brochure may be printed locally for use in meetings with Members of Congress and candidates, distributed to local superintendents, and provide speaking points for presentations on federal issues.

The brochure includes positions on: Title I, Title II, Title III, Title IV, Title V, Title VI, and Title VII for reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act; reauthorization of the Higher Education Act; Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA); E-Rate; Medicaid; Choice and Charters – Not Vouchers or Tuition Tax Credits; Early Childhood Programs; Workforce Investment Act; Secure Rural Schools and Communities Self Determination Act; Children's Health Care; School Safety; and Qualified Zone Academy Boards.

The positions are the work of the AESA Governmental Relations Committee and have been approved by the AESA Council. The full AESA Federal Legislative Agenda is available for download at [http://www.aesa.us/Legis/2008\\_Federal\\_Agenda.pdf](http://www.aesa.us/Legis/2008_Federal_Agenda.pdf) .

#### **AESA News**

#### **4. AESA seeks AYP information on "Needing School Improvement" technical support and services**

In preparation for a new round of reauthorization and appropriations discussions for the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (No Child Left Behind) with Congress and the US Department of Education, AESA is requesting information from ESAs. AESA would like to know which ESAs are providing technical support or services for schools that have not made state-defined adequate yearly progress (AYP) for two consecutive school years and have been identified as needing school improvement. Please send the information to AESA Executive Director Brian Talbott at [btalbott@aesaa.us](mailto:btalbott@aesaa.us) or leave a message at the AESA office at (703) 875-0739.

#### **5. Management information request**

AESA has received a request from a member ESA asking if they have used a consultant for an ESA management pay study or if they know of a successful consultant who does ESA management pay studies, and they are satisfied with their results, to provide their contact information. If you are able to assist, please contact AESA CFO Peter Young at either [pyoung@aesaa.us](mailto:pyoung@aesaa.us) or call him at (203) 481-4063 with the consultant's contact information.

#### **6. Summer CEO Forum registration online**

This year's AESA Foundation's annual Summer CEO Conference theme "Building ESA success through design and innovation" will address questions such as:

- How does an organization know it needs design or innovation?
- What is the practical difference between design and innovation?
- What roles does leadership play in design and innovation?
- Why are design and innovation so critical for ESAs right now?
- How do you prepare your organization for design and innovation?

The working conference will also include breakout sessions, descriptions from ESAs in two states about how they are redesigning programs for a statewide system of ESAs, and a report from Ted Stilwill, former Iowa Commissioner of Education now with Learning Point Associates of Chicago on recent research on how ESAs in the Great Lakes area are becoming part of their State Systems of Support (SSOS).

The Summer CEO Conference will be July 21-24 at the Vail Marriott in Colorado. CEOs are encouraged to bring a team of agency leaders to the conference. More information about the Summer CEO Conference and online registration are available at: <http://www.aesa.us/CEOConf2008.html> . You may book hotel rooms at the negotiated rate of \$179 per night by calling the Vail Marriott (800) 648-0720. Specify the AESA CEO Conference to obtain the negotiated conference rate.

### **7. Annual Conference registration open**

Online registration for the 2009 AESA Annual Conference, December 3-6 at the J.W. Marriott Desert Ridge Resort, Phoenix, Arizona, is now open. You can access the online registration at <http://www.aesa.us/AnnConf2008.html> .

The theme for this year's conference is "Preparing Students ... Delivering Success." The conference will feature keynote speakers and ESA peer-to-peer presentations on the theme in strands that include: Demonstrating Results, Delivering Success, Technology – Transforming Learning, Tools for Collaboration, and Measuring Success.

### **Business Member Announcements**

#### **8. Spectrum K-12 / CASE release national RTI survey results**

In March 2008, Spectrum K12 School Solutions and the Council of Administrators of Special Education (CASE) conducted a survey of K-12 district administrators to gauge the level of adoption of Response to Intervention (RTI). The survey objectives were to determine:

- How widely Response to Intervention (RTI) has been adopted in U.S. school districts and the percentage of schools in each stage of adoption.
- The structure in school districts for introducing and implementing the RTI program, including who is championing RTI.
- The type of model in use in districts (two, three or four-tier) and the areas that are most often used as focal points.
- Respondent opinions (or observed changes) about the effectiveness of RTI implementation, and a description of the data gathering methods.

- Funding for RTI.

The report that follows analyzes data from the 424 respondents who completed the survey in the period from Friday, March 7 through Tuesday March 18, 2008. The margin of error for this survey is plus or minus 4.6% at the 95% confidence interval.

A similar survey was conducted by Spectrum K12 School Solutions in March 2007. Where possible, results from the two surveys have been compared in the Key Findings section to identify changes in Response to Intervention adoption rates over a one-year period.

### **9. Teachscope Higher Education announces ESA revenue share opportunity**

Teachscope an AESA Business Member, in partnership with regionally accredited Colleges/Universities, has launched 10 online graduate courses and four online masters degree programs for certified K-12 Teachers. The program provides lead generation revenue for ESAs in compliance with federal Title IV regulations. Course topics include: Elementary and Middle level Mathematics, Reading & Literacy, Curriculum, and Instruction & Assessment.

Teachscope is actively seeking ESA partnerships to help promote awareness and enrollments in these research-based, innovative courses. If you are interested in learning more about the revenue share partnerships, please contact Mike Soules, Teachscope Higher Education general manager at 805/807-1030 or e-mail [msoules@teachscope.com](mailto:msoules@teachscope.com). To learn more about Teachscope, its higher education offerings, and the list of universities providing accreditation please visit [www.teachscope.com](http://www.teachscope.com).

### **10. Conover Company waives MECA program multiple site license fee**

The Conover Company, an AESA Business Member, has announced that it will waive site license fees for multiple sites contracting for its Microcomputer Evaluation of Careers and Academics (MECA) system. MECA is an age-appropriate transition, career exploration, career assessment, and vocational assessment system related to training, education, and employment. The Conover Company states that the MECA system may assist in connecting transition programs with NCLB requirements by creating annual goal statements using your state's standards. To learn more, you may go to the MECA program website at <http://www.conovercompany.com/products/meca/Index.html> or contact Caroline Dixon (800) 933-1933.

## **US Department of Education Announcements**

### **11. NCLB rule meetings in Kansas City and Seattle**

The U.S. Department of Education has completed two regional meetings, and has two more scheduled in the next week, regarding new NCLB rules it is attempting to implement. The AESA believes this is an attempt to implement

rules prior to reauthorization of NCLB by Congress. Upcoming regional meetings are scheduled from 9 am – Noon and 2 – 5 pm local time:

- **Kansas City, MO.** Monday, May 19. Sheraton Kansas City Sports Complex, Hotel, Royal Ballroom, 9103 East 39th Street, Kansas City, MO. 64133
- **Seattle, WA.** Thursday, May 22. W Hotel, Great Room 1, 1112 4th Avenue, Seattle, WA 98101

Regional meetings were held earlier this month at Boston and Dunwoody, GA.

### **12. Free Teacher-to-Teacher (T2T) summer workshops**

Educators are encouraged to register for one of U.S. Department of Education's free Teacher-to-Teacher (T2T) summer workshops, where teachers and researchers will share successful strategies in conference and breakout sessions to raise student achievement. The workshops, co-hosted by other federal agencies and programs, are being held at Denver, CO; Nashua, NH; Houston and Fort Worth, Texas; New York; Newport News, VA; New Orleans, LA; Lakewood, WA; Philadelphia, PA; Twenty-Nine Palms and Santa Monica, CA; and Washington DC. For more information or to register for a free workshop, go to: <http://www.t2tweb.us/Workshops/About.asp> .

### **13. What Works Clearinghouse releases "Turning Around Chronically Low-Performing Schools" guide**

The What Works Clearinghouse ( <http://whatworks.ed.gov/> ), a central source of scientific evidence for what works in education, has released its latest practice guide, "Turning Around Chronically Low-Performing Schools." The guide offers four specific recommendations to improve student performance and indicates the quality of the evidence that supports the recommendations. The guide may be downloaded from the U.S. Department of Education website at: [http://whatworks.ed.gov/pdf/Turnaround\\_pg\\_04181.pdf](http://whatworks.ed.gov/pdf/Turnaround_pg_04181.pdf) .