



Online News

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AESA Online News

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In this edition:

AESA News

1. AESA Governmental Relations Committee meeting January 12-13
2. Save the dates: Summer CEO Conference and 2009 Annual Conference
3. E-Rate application window open through February 12
4. Annual Conference evaluation is available online

ESA News

5. Florida Education Channel wins major award
6. Wood County ESC in Ohio recognized for drug and alcohol prevention services

AESA Business Partners and Members News

7. IRS to implement January 1 403(b) regulations, extends written Plan Documentation date

US Department of Education Announcements

8. What Works Clearinghouse releases two reports for Beginning Reading
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AESA News

1. AESA Governmental Relations Committee meeting January 12-13

The AESA Governmental Relations Committee meeting January 12-13 will develop the AESA federal legislative agenda for 2009, which will include reauthorization of No Child Left Behind and other important issues including Medicaid Reimbursement and other categorical programs. The strength of the AESA federal positions comes from its grassroots development. We seek to have one representative from each state at this meeting.

For more information, including determining if your state is represented and housing if you would like to fill a vacancy, send an email to pyoung@aesas.us. The AESA guaranteed rate for the hotel expires on Sunday, Dec. 21. Attendees are asked to arrive on Sunday for a full program on Monday. The meeting will end by 2 pm Tuesday. There is no fee for this event. Meals on Monday and half day on Tuesday are provided.

2. Save the dates: Summer CEO Conference and 2009 Annual Conference

The AESA Council and AESA Foundation have set the dates and locations for two of the year's premier leadership events. The 2009 Summer CEO Conference hosted by the AESA Foundation will be July 20-23 at the Embassy Suites Hotel, Napa, California. The 2009 Annual Conference will be December 2-5 at the Austin Convention Center, Austin, Texas.

3. E-Rate application window open through February 12

The filing window for FY 2009 E-Rate applications opened on Dec. 2 and will remain open until 11:59 pm Eastern Time on February 12, 2009. Please advise your school districts of the filing period to receive discounts on Internet and telephone connectivity. The Universal Service Administrative Company that oversees the Schools and Library program suggests filing early to ensure you have time to review and correct any forms if necessary. It also suggests filing online to take advantage of automatic calculations for eligibility. For more information, please go to the Universal Services' Schools and Library website at: <http://www.usac.org/sl/default.aspx> .

4. Annual Conference evaluation is online now

We invite everyone who attended the 2008 Annual Conference at Phoenix to help us make the 2009 Annual Conference at Austin an even greater success. The 12-question 2008 Annual Conference evaluation is now online and may be accessed from the AESA website at www.aesa.us . We encourage ESA chief executive officers who attended to complete the survey, and to let all board members and staff to attended know that the evaluation is posted online. The 2009 conference committee will use input from this survey in planning next year's event.

ESA News

5. Florida Education Channel wins major award

The Florida Education Channel, operated by the Panhandle Area Education Consortium (PAEC) at Chipley, one of Florida's three ESAs, has won the Aurora Award in the Education Documentary category. The Aurora Awards are an international competition that recognizes excellence in the film and video industries. The Florida Education Channel won for its "Teachers Doing Real Science in the Real World" program. It was a documentary that featured teachers in the Science Collaboration: immersion, inquire innovation (SC:iii) program as they followed scientists in their field of study, learning and engaging in eight real world scientific research projects. The documentary may be viewed online at <http://www.paec-sc-iii.org/realscience.htm> on the Florida Education Channel's Dish Network channel, or purchase from the Florida Learns Network at <http://www.paec.org/AboutPAEC/departments/clearinghouse/> .

The Aurora Awards recognize work that is not normally allowed to compete on a national level by focusing on non-national commercials, regional or special interest entertainment, and corporate sponsored film and video. Past winners include Walt Disney Pictures, Walt Disney World, Warner Brothers, US Department of Interior, US Department of Veteran Affairs, Sony, Toyota, Disney Cruise Lines, Discovery Communications, Rutgers University, National Geographic, NCAA, Ross, Microsoft Corporation, American Express, Mayo Clinic, and Dell.

6. Wood County ESC in Ohio recognized for drug and alcohol prevention services

The Wood County Educational Service Center at Bowling Green, Ohio received the Ohio Department of Education's Alcohol and Drug Addiction Services as a 2008 Exemplary Program for Prevention Services. The award cites programs that demonstrated effectiveness through outcomes set by the state and that meet local needs. The Wood County ESC Juvenile Justice Detention Program, which won the award, is a collaborative that also includes Wood County Alcohol, Drug Addiction, Mental Health Services Board, and the Wood County Juvenile Justice Center.

AESA Business Partners and Members News

7. IRS to implement 403(b) regulations January 1, extends written Plan Documentation date

Great American Plan Administrators, an independent company of AESA Business Partner Great American Financial Resources, reports that the IRS released a notice on December 11 that while it will NOT delay the January 1, 2009 effective date for final section 403(b) regulations, an extension to complete a written Plan Document has been granted. Great American Plan Administrators states that this means that organizations will still need to administer plans in accordance with the new regulations beginning in January, but a finalized written Plan Document is not required until December 31, 2009. When adopted, the written Plan Document must be effective January 1, 2009. By December 31, 2009, the employer must use its best efforts to correct retroactively any failure of plan administration to conform to the final terms of the written Plan Document. Accordingly, in most cases, it will still make sense to adopt a Plan Document as soon as possible.

Great American Plan Administrators provides ESAs and the school districts they serve with full compliance of the IRS mandated changes to the administration of tax sheltered individual annuity 403(b) and deferred compensation 457 plans that take effect January 1, 2009. Great American Plan Administrators will provide no cost administration of those programs, including third party plan administration provided regardless of the program vendor that will meet the IRS mandated changes. Great American Plan Administrators, as required by law, maintains a separate program staffing, financial, and records keeping from Great American Financial Resources and its other subsidiaries. Its reporting structure to GAFRI is through the legal department to ensure full compliance with these guidelines. In addition, it ensures data separation from GAFRI and its other subsidiaries by maintaining its program on separate servers and a separate network.

For additional information, visit www.gapladata.com, email AESAGAPlan@gafri.com, or call Lana Woodring at 800 695-1471.

US Department of Education Announcements

8. What Works Clearinghouse releases two reports for Beginning Reading

The National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance within the Institute of Education Sciences has released two new What Works Clearinghouse (<http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/>) intervention reports in the Beginning Reading topic area. The first report looks at Lindamood Phonemic Sequencing (LiPS), a program designed to teach students skills to decode words and to identify individual sounds and blends in words. The program uses activities to engage students in discovering the lip, tongue, and mouth actions needed to produce specific sounds and identify and order the sounds into words. This report has been updated to include reviews of 12 studies that have been released since 2005.

To view, download, and print the intervention report as a PDF file, please visit: http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/reports/beginning_reading/add_lips/

The second intervention report is on Houghton Mifflin: Invitations to Literacy program, an integrated K-8 reading and language arts program that is structured around themes. The philosophy behind the program is that literacy instruction should stimulate, teach, and extend the communication and thinking skills that will allow students to become effective readers, writers, communicators, and lifelong learners.

To view, download, and print the intervention report as a PDF file, please visit: http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/reports/beginning_reading/hm_invitations/