



Online News

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AESA Online News

October 28, 2008

To submit topics for the AESA Online News, send an email to: info@aesas.us

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AESA News

1. Annual Conference registration fees increase by \$100 on November 1 – Room rates go up on November 10

Registration for the Dec. 3-6 2008 AESA Annual Conference at the J.W. Marriott Desert Ridge Resort, Phoenix, AZ will increase by \$100 on November 1. You may register now at the lower rate by going to the AESA website at:

http://www.aesa.us/AnnConf2008_Registration.html

When you complete your online registration for the conference, you will then be referred to an online hotel reservation page linked to the registration. You can access the online registration at <http://www.aesa.us/AnnConf2008.html>. AESA has a limited number of rooms still available in its negotiated rate of \$199 per night. That room rate is guaranteed for AESA through Sunday, November 9. The rates revert to the hotel regular room rates on Monday, November 10. The AESA rate is a significant discount from the hotel's regular room rates of \$350 - \$450 and up per night.

The hotel reservations are tied to online registration, which must occur before you are directed to the room reservation system. The AESA room rate cannot be made directly with the hotel's web-based reservation system or by phone. The computerized system requires conference registration before it will accept hotel reservations.

For additional information regarding the conference, visit the AESA website at:
www.aesa.us

2. Annual Conference Table Talk breakouts feature ESA generated topics

This year's AESA Annual Conference will feature three strands of topics based on feedback from ESAs: Research Conversations, Exploring Professional Development for specific types of ESA staff, and Issue and Discussion Groups. The Table Talk sessions will be held from 2:45–3:45 pm on Friday, December 5.

The topics in Research Conversations are:

- ESA Voluntary Accreditation/Accountability Standards
- The Role of Educational Service Agencies in Supporting Alternative Teacher Certification Programs
- ESA Online Education Needs Survey

The topics in Exploring Professional Development for specific types of ESA staff are:

- Curriculum/Staff Development
- Human Resources
- Public Relations
- Special Education

The topics in Issue and Discussion Groups are:

- ESA Involvement in School Climate Programs
- e-Rate Issues
- Board / Superintendent Evaluations
- Effective Boardmanship

3. AESA Rockers set to Rock the House at Annual Conference

Back by popular demand at the 2008 Annual Conference will be the AESA Rockers, a band made up of current and former ESA executives and staff. The appearance of the AESA Rockers at the 2007 Annual Conference was planned as a one-time event. However, by popular demand they will return as the Friday night entertainment. (We are not making this up ... we really had dozens of inquiries about if they would be playing, and we interpreted that to mean everyone wanted them to play).

Tickets to the AESA Rockers are \$15. Tickets may be purchased at the conference registration booth or may be included in your online registration payment at:

http://www.aesa.us/AnnConf2008_Registration.html

4. Register online for the NAMTC Technology Leadership Summit

Registration for the National Association of Media and Technology Centers 10th Annual Leadership Summit on December 2 and 3 at Phoenix is available online when registering for both the AESA Annual Conference and NAMTC Leadership Summit from the AESA website at:

http://www.aesa.us/AnnConf2008_Registration.html

If you or your staff want to register for only the NAMTC Leadership Summit, you may download a pdf registration form from the AESA registration website listed above and fax it to: 203 483-7550.

. The day-and-a-half event will provide insights into the rapidly changing technologies that are influencing instructional strategies. Phil Fawcett, principal program manager for Microsoft Research, will be the keynote speaker for NAMTC's closing session. Registration for the NAMTC Leadership Summit is \$200.

AESA encourages those planning to attend the 2008 Annual Conference to include the 10th NAMTC Leadership Summit in their schedule, and to have the NAMTC members continue attendance through the conference in order to leverage the professional development opportunities of integrating the content of both events into their agency planning and operations.

5. AESA Survey: Online Education Needs – Results will be released at the Annual Conference in Phoenix

We encourage chief executive officers of ESAs who have not yet completed the AESA web-based survey of ESA Online Education Needs to do so soon. The survey will close on October 31. Results of the survey will be analyzed in November and the survey results and report will be released at the 2008 AESA Annual Conference at Phoenix. The survey is funded by Walden University, an AESA Business Partner. The survey, data analysis, and the survey report are being conducted independently by AESA staff. Based upon the completed returns, it has taken respondents about 10 minutes to complete the survey.

The survey information will provide a national perspective on ESA partnerships and working agreements with local technical schools, community colleges, and colleges and universities. It will also provide data on curricular and degree needs, along with information about the status of online program access.

The website for the survey is:

https://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=MT82GBL0TcF_2f3vEpASrq6Q_3d_3d

6. AESA/Actpoint E-Rate application roadmap

AESA has published an ActPoint roadmap for ESA E-Rate applications. The Schools and Library program of the Universal Services Fund, commonly known as "E-Rate" is administered by the Universal Service Administrative Company under the direction of the Federal Communications Commission. The application process contains 11 steps from the initial forms through receipt of funding.

This RoadMap documents those 11 steps and provides access to the appropriate forms and federal guidelines for each step in the process. The E-Rate ActPoint Roadmap is provided free to ESAs as an example of how ActPoint can simplify everyday decisions. ActPoint is a product of AESA Business Partner TransACT.

With ActPoint, you can transform complex regulations, policies and procedures into simple action items. ActPoint allows you to create clear and credible documentation of compliance activities for audit purposes. ActPoint automates the transfer of organizational knowledge, guidance, rules, regulations and procedures directly to the front lines for better decision-making. ActPoint puts unprecedented leverage into the hands of senior administrators charged with transforming an overwhelming mass of rules into reliable action plans for front-line staff. Moreover, it allows those tasks to be performed efficiently by personnel, regardless of organizational level or computer proficiency.

The E-Rate ActPoint Roadmap was developed by AESA from the Schools and Library program notices and in collaboration with E-Rate consultant Shirley Bauer, Ed.D. She is available to consult with ESAs or districts on their applications. She notes that the program is currently accepting Form 470, but has not yet announced the formal application window. Dr. Bauer suggests agencies should currently be making sure that their technology plans, and those of their school districts that will be applying for E-Rate discounts, are updated and approved to reflect any services that will be requested through the program.

The E-Rate Roadmap may be accessed through any web browser at:
<http://www.actpoint.com/RoadMapPE/?r=5827870>

For more information about ActPoint, please visit:
www.actpoint.com

If you would like assistance in the E-Rate application process, you may contact:
Shirley Bauer, Ed.D.
605 348-3302
sleebauer@earthlink.net

ESA News

7. AESA Past President Bill McKinney honored with Golden Deeds Award

Dr. Bill McKinney, executive director of the Region 4 Education Service Center in Houston and past president of the Association of Educational Service Agencies, will receive the coveted Golden Deeds Award from the Administrative Leadership Institute (ALI) in the College of Education and Human Development at Texas A&M University on November 19.

The Golden Deeds Award is considered the highest recognition for distinguished service to education in Texas and is given to an individual from any profession who has consistently supported Texas students and teachers through his/her positive impact on public education.

McKinney, president of AESA in 2004-2005, has been executive director of Region 4 ESC since 1988. Region 4 ESC serves 54 school districts, representing more than one million students and 83,000 teachers. An educator for 40 years, he has filled a number of educational roles, including math teacher, principal, director of research and evaluation, assistant superintendent, and superintendent. He has served as a board member of the Texas Business and Education Coalition and the Sam Houston Area Council Boy Scouts of America.

8. Willamette ESD teacher named 2008 Oregon History Teacher of the Year

Ernie Sowards of Willamette Educational Service District at Salem, has been selected as the 2008 Oregon History Teacher of the Year. He teaches history at William Lord High School in the Willamette ESD Juvenile Corrections Education Program.

The Oregon State Department of Education presented him with the award, a check for \$1,000, and a generous donation of materials in his name for the school's library from the Gilder Lehrman Institute in New York.

Willamette ESD Superintendent Maureen Casey said he is the agency's third teacher/staff of the year winner. Last year Willamette ESD School Nurse Carol Cochran, R.N., was named Oregon's School Nurse of the Year, and went on to be selected as the 2007 National School Nurse of the Year in competition with the other 49 state winners. Also last year Jim Nezol, Willamette ESD teacher of the blind and visually impaired, was selected as the National Braille Teacher of the Year.

New Business Members:**9. Netchemia**

Netchemia partners with AESA and educational service agencies to deliver SchoolRecruiter, a web-based applicant tracking and hiring management solution, netRTI, a web-based response to intervention management solution, and netIEP, a web-based special education management solution. Netchemia serves nearly 250 school districts across the country. Make sure to stop by the Netchemia booth at the Annual Conference to welcome them to AESA. For more information and an online demonstration of SchoolRecruiter, please visit:

<http://www.netchemia.com/>

10. Questar Assessment Inc.

Questar Assessment Inc. is a dynamic and resourceful educational assessment organization that distinguishes itself from its competitors by being extremely flexible, innovative, and responsive to specific, yet constantly evolving, client needs. While Questar AI in the “assessment business,” its successes depend upon our clients’ successes. Questar AI’s philosophy is to partner with its clients to promote and enhance student learning through informing, supporting, and guiding instructional decisions. The highly experienced professionals of its TASA (Touchstone Applied Science Associates), Questar (Questar Educational Systems), BETA (Beck Evaluation and Testing Associates), and ADI (Achievement Data Inc.) divisions have come together to form Questar Assessment, Inc., a testing partner that creates quality educational solutions for state and local education agencies and their testing programs. For more information, please visit:

<http://www.questarai.com/>

US Department of Education Announcements: New What Works Clearinghouse reports

All of these, and other reports, are available at the What Works Clearinghouse website at:

<http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/reports/>.

11. Middle School mathematics report

The What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) has released a report on MathThematics. It states: “Program Description: MathThematics is a mathematics curriculum for grades 6 through 8 that combines activity-based, discovery learning with direct instruction. The textbook for each grade level has eight instructional modules, with each module focused on a theme. Open-ended questions and projects are utilized throughout the curriculum to assess problem-solving skills and the ability to communicate mathematically.”

“Research: The WWC identified seven studies of MathThematics that were published or released between 1983 and 2008. Five studies are within the scope of the review and have an eligible design, but do not meet WWC evidence standards. Two studies do not establish that the comparison group was comparable to the treatment group prior to the start of the intervention. Three studies have confounding factors, such as combining with other interventions, or having only one unit of analysis in one or both conditions, which makes it impossible to attribute the observed effect solely to MathThematics. One study is out of the scope of the review because the study does not use a comparison group. One study is out of the scope of the review, as defined by the Middle School Math protocol, because the study does not include math achievement as an outcome.

“Effectiveness: No studies of MathThematics that fall within the scope of the Middle School Math review meet WWC evidence standards. The lack of studies meeting WWC evidence standards means that, at this time, the WWC is unable to draw any conclusions based on research about the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of MathThematics.”

The report is available at:

<http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/reports/middle%5Fmath/maththematics/>

12. Accelerated Reader intervention report

The What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) has released a report on Accelerated Reader. According to the report:

“Overview: The Accelerated Reader program is a guided reading intervention in which teachers are closely involved with student reading of text. It involves two components, the Accelerated Reader software and Accelerated Reader Best Classroom Practices (formerly called Reading Renaissance). The Accelerated Reader software is a computerized supplementary reading program. Accelerated Reader relies on independent reading practice as a way of managing student performance by providing students and teachers feedback from quizzes based on books the students read. Accelerated Reader Best Classroom Practices are a set of recommended principles on guided independent reading (or teachers’ direction of students’ interactions with text) that ensure Accelerated Reader is implemented with integrity.

“Research: Two studies of Accelerated Reader meet the What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) evidence standards. One of the studies evaluated 572 students from grades K to 3 attending 11 schools in a southern school district in the United States. The second study included 32 students in grade 3 attending one school in the Pacific Northwest. Based on these two studies, the WWC considers the extent of evidence for Accelerated Reader to be medium to large for comprehension and small for reading fluency and general reading achievement. No studies that meet WWC evidence standards with or without reservations examined the effectiveness of Accelerated Reader in the alphabets domain.

“Effectiveness: Accelerated Reader was found to have no discernible effects on reading fluency, mixed effects on comprehension, and potentially positive effects on general reading achievement.”

The report is available at:

http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/reports/beginning_reading/arr/

13. Early Childhood intervention report

The What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) has released a report on Ready, Set, Leap!®. According to the report:

“Program description: Ready, Set, Leap!® is a preschool curriculum that focuses on early reading skills, such as phonemic awareness, letter knowledge, and letter–sound correspondence, using multisensory technology that incorporates touch, sight, and sound. Teachers may adopt either a theme-based or a literature-based teaching approach, and for each approach, the curriculum provides lesson plans, learning objectives, and assessment tools.

“Research: Two studies of Ready, Set, Leap!® meet the What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) evidence standards. The two studies included 540 preschool children enrolled in 38 preschools in New Jersey. Based on these two studies, the WWC considers the extent of evidence for Ready, Set, Leap!® to be medium to large for oral language, print knowledge, and phonological processing, and small for early reading/writing and math. No studies that meet WWC evidence standards with or without reservations examined the effectiveness of Ready, Set, Leap!® in the cognition domain.

“Effectiveness: Ready, Set, Leap!® was found to have no discernible effects on oral language, print knowledge, phonological processing, early reading/writing skills, and math.”

The report is available at:

http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/reports/early_ed/rs/