



# Online News

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AESA Online News

January 30, 2009

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**AESA News**

**1. E-Rate filing deadline is Thursday, February 12**

The FY2009 E-Rate application filing period will close at 11:59 p.m. EST on Thursday, February 12, 2009. Traditionally, a high percentage of Forms 471 are received during the final week of filing. Applicants are urged to file early so that:

- They have an opportunity to review your work and make corrections if necessary.
- They can re-file the form if an error is made cannot be corrected.
- USAC has your information and can start reviewing your application.

Agencies or school districts seeking assistance with completing forms and filing may consider using the services of AESA's newest Business Member, Funds for Learning, at [www.fundsforlearning.com](http://www.fundsforlearning.com). Funds for Learning is the nation's leading E-Rate Compliance Services firm.

**2. ESA On-Line Needs Study published to AESA website**

The AESA research report, *Educational Service Agency Online Needs Study*, released at the 2008 Annual Conference is published to the AESA website at: [www.aesa.us](http://www.aesa.us). This study constitutes an initial step by AESA to quantify online education needs of Educational Service Agencies beyond the "ongoing need" identified by the Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning in early 2008. That report, *The Role of Educational Service Agencies in Supporting Alternative Teacher Certification Programs*, is also available for download from the AESA website.

AESA thanks its corporate partner Laureate Education for coordinating with Walden University, a member of the Laureate Universities Network, for its ongoing support and for funding both of these research studies.

### **3. Dr. Joseph Marinelli named 2008 Justus A Prentice Award winner**

Dr. Joseph Marinelli, District Superintendent, Wayne/Finger Lakes BOCES at Rochester, New York, received the 2008 Justus A. Prentice Award at the AESA Annual Conference at Phoenix. The award was for outstanding contributions through executive leadership in the advancement of regional educational service agency programs at the regional, state, and national levels.

Dr. Marinelli has demonstrated national leadership in the recognition of the vital role educational service agencies play in carrying out federal policy and programs. Dr. Marinelli was a member of the AESA Council for seven years, and president of the Association in 2003-2004, during which time he authored AESA's Strategic Thinking, Planning, and Implementation Guidelines and Timelines. He also authored AESA's Policy on Committees including standing committees and subcommittees.

Dr. Marinelli has had an active role in AESA's federal presence over the past decade and continues today. He chaired the Legislative Committee, now known as the Governmental Relations Committee, from its creation in 1997 through 2003 when he became president of AESA. He led the creation of AESA's strategic initiative on federal advocacy in 1999. He continued as New York's committee member through 2005. He was instrumental in developing the committee's work to define ESAs in all laws related to education. He also chaired the first three AESA sponsored federal legislative conferences beginning in 2000 when it was transformed into the proactive "Educators Call to Action: Federal Advocacy Conference." Marinelli has been a spokesperson and a leader of delegations of ESA state leaders who met with the U.S. Secretary of Education to promote ESAs and their role in supporting local district efforts to improve student performance.

Under Dr. Marinelli's leadership, his BOCES is recognized statewide and nationally for its innovative and high-quality professional development, leadership development, instructional technology, early literacy, youth development, and other school improvement initiatives and enrichment and career ladder programs for students in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.

His BOCES has partnered with government, business, and higher education to enhance the economic development/high-tech nature of the Greater Rochester/Finger Lakes region. He received the Distinguished Service to Youth Award from the Finger Lakes Council, Boy Scouts of America in 2005, and the Distinguished Citizen Award in 2008 for the four-county region of the Finger Lakes.

### **4. Dr. Milton Chen receives 2008 E. Robert Stevens Award**

Dr. Milton Chen, Executive Director, The George Lucas Education Foundation, San Rafael, California received the E. Roberts Stevens Award at the 2008 AESA Annual Conference at Phoenix. The award is presented for outstanding contributions that advance understanding of regional educational agencies through research, writing, and/or publications at the regional, state, and national levels.

Dr. Milton Chen, through his work as the Executive Director of the George Lucas Educational Fund (GLEF), and through the publication of Edutopia Magazine and other media resources, is enhancing and furthering the educational support programs provided by Educational Service Agencies.

In the area of professional staff development, Edutopia provides significant resources on best practices in the area of teacher training and effective professional development programs. In support of curriculum development, Edutopia is a leading resource in helping teachers and schools develop and implement successful project-based learning for students that meet high academic standards and effectively engage students in the learning process.

As ESAs support schools and school districts in effectively integrating technology into the curriculum, Edutopia serves as a national leader in identifying successful models of technology integration across the curriculum, including assistive technology that can change the way students with disabilities communicate, learn, and play.

Dr. Chen and the George Lucas Educational Foundation have been the conveners of important educational summits and workshops. An example is the 2006 summit called "Closing the Achievement Gap: The Power of Leadership," a two-day meeting convened at the GLEF offices at Skywalker Ranch for 15 California school superintendents that addressed issues and strategies related to closing that gap.

The abilities of Dr. Chen and the editorial direction of Edutopia to identify best practices and institute pilot projects that provide educators with new information and techniques has enriched learning environments and advanced the objectives of ESAs to provide effective educational support programs that assist schools and school districts.

In addition, Dr. Chen served as a guest advisor on the California Arts Education Strategic Task Force convened in 2007 by the California County Superintendents Educational Services Association (CCSESA) and the California Alliance for Arts Education (CAAE). The Task Force, chaired by State Superintendent of Public Instruction Jack O'Connell and Secretary of Education David Long, developed recommendations focused on much-needed policies and initiatives to support implementation of the arts in the core curriculum so that every student is engaged in a rich visual and performing arts education.

#### **5. Sen. Darrell Steinberg receives 2008 Walter G. Turner Award**

California state Senator Darrell Steinberg was named recipient of the 2008 Walter G. Turner Award at the AESA Annual Conference at Phoenix. The Walter G. Turner Award is presented annually and recognizes outstanding accomplishments of contributions to education and to AESA.

Senator Darrell Steinberg is the president pro tempore-elect of the California State Senate. He represents the 6th District, which includes the capital city of Sacramento, and parts of Elk Grove and Citrus Heights. He chairs the Senate Select Committee on High School Graduation, chairs the Senate Natural Resources and Water Committee, and serves on the Senate Judiciary Committee, the Health Committee, the Budget and Fiscal Review Committee, and the Budget Subcommittee No. 2 on Resources. Before election to the Senate in 2006, he served three terms in the State Assembly.

In nominating Senator Steinberg, the California County Superintendents Educational Services Association stated, "Senator Steinberg has a legislative record that we believe demonstrates his interest in and creative approach toward meeting the needs of at-risk youth, many of whom are served in educational service agency programs operated by our county superintendents of schools."

The Association's nomination cited Senator Steinberg's "...continuing commitment to pursuing creative goals and solutions that can dramatically reduce the number of students who drop out of

school, a commitment shared by California county superintendents and, we believe, by educational service agencies across the country.”

Among his legislative measures supporting California education are:

- SB 219, Pupil Achievement and the California Academic Performance Index (API) that addressed dropout and graduation rate data for each school and required API scores of individual students placed in alternative school settings are included in the placing school's API calculations.
- SB 405, Career Counseling, strengthening counseling and academic monitoring to foster academic preparedness for career and higher education opportunities after graduation.
- SB 1251, Graduation Rate Calculation, that recognized students may take longer than four years to graduate and credited schools for the purposes of their API for students graduating in the 5th or 6th years.
- SB 1425, Pupil Data, which clarified roles, responsibilities, and privacy requirements relating to the collection, sharing, and use of education data in California.
- SB 1629, Early Childhood Education, which established the Early Learning Quality Improvement System Commission to develop a framework for improving the quality of child development.

#### **6. US Academic Decathlon seeks judges, proctors for Memphis**

The US Academic Decathlon Program began as a program of ESA member Orange County Office of Education, California, in 1968 under the direction of Dr. Robert Peterson, former Orange County Superintendent of Schools. The competition went statewide in California in 1979, and has been a national event since 1982. The program has grown over the years to where it is now classified as the Premier Academic Competition in the United States: [www.usad.org](http://www.usad.org) .

The USAD program is recruiting 162 volunteers as speech and interview judges and 20 proctors for the April 22-25 2009 National Competition at Memphis, TN. The judge volunteers would need to be available on April 23 from 8 am – 5 pm. Training will take place in the morning, with judging in the afternoon. The proctors would need to be available on April 23 and 24 from 6:30 – 11:30 am. Persons interested in being a judge or proctor may contact Mylene Chafe, USAD director of operations at [mylene@usad.org](mailto:mylene@usad.org) .

Currently forty states participate in the National Competition, with over two-thousand schools participating across the nation. A unique aspect of Academic Decathlon is that it is designed to include students from all academic abilities from grades nine thru twelve. Each nine-member team consists of three “A”(Honor), three “B”(Scholastic) and three “C or below” (Varsity) students. Each student competes in ten events, which are Economics, Essay, Art, Interview, Language and Literature, Math, Music, Science, Social Science and Speech. Each year the Science or Social Science topic is designated as the Super Quiz topic.

The ten-event academic program strives to foster a greater respect for knowledge, to promote wholesome inter-school academic competition, and to further develop student communication skills. A new theme of study is established every year with topics that are relevant and challenging. Gold, silver, and bronze medals are awarded for individual events and total scores. Overall individual winners are recognized as well as champion teams. This very broad base of awards allows for major recognition of academic accomplishment. The USAD curriculum also addresses a number of National Content and Curriculum Standards, see: <http://usad.org/Curriculum/Standards.asp> .

In many schools, tryouts for team positions occur in the fall after summer study sessions. Thus, substantially more than nine students can be involved in each school's program. Teams advance through local, regional and state levels of competition. The state champions compete at the

National Competition. USAD currently also hosts the Small, Medium and International Online National Competitions to bring learning, growth and recognition to more schools and students.

The National Competition is hosted in a different state each year. The 2009 National Competition will be held in Memphis, Tennessee. Over 300 volunteers, including staff from many of the USAD sponsoring organizations, are involved as judges and proctors for the competition.

#### **AESA Business Partners News:**

##### **7. Promethean becomes newest AESA Business Partner**

Promethean, a global leader and innovator in interactive learning technology that empowers teachers to engage, educate, assess, and motivate learners, is AESA's newest Business Partner. AESA accepts a limited number of Business Partners, which must undergo a legal and fiscal due diligence and enter into a contractual relationship with AESA regarding the services it will provide.

Through this partnership Promethean has created a Certified Learning Academy for ESAs through which agencies may have staff certified as Promethean trainers, earn revenue, and host professional development activities. This year the partnership will also provide access to an Innovation in Education webcast series with internationally recognized K-12 thought leaders.

Promethean's interactive learning technology is developed by and for education professionals. Its award-winning products help teachers to prepare digital lessons quickly and easily. The technology enables creation, customization, and integration of text, images, quizzes and tests, web, video and audio content, to more easily capture students' attention and accommodate different learning styles. For more information, on Promethean technology and educator resources, visit <http://www.prometheanplanet.com>.

##### *Innovation In Education Series thought leaders webcasts*

Promethean, in partnership with Cisco, is pleased to announce the Innovation in Education series. These informative sessions will feature the top thought leaders in K-12 education and are designed as a forum to discuss educational practices and solutions that work, stimulate creative thinking, and inspire transformation in education to meet the needs of the 21st Century Learner. Guests in the series will include Alan November, Dr. Robert Marzano, Debra Pickering, Grant Wiggins, Marc Prensky, Ron Clark and other education thought leaders.

The series will be available online beginning Monday, February 2 with its first guest, Alan November. To register for this free webcast series, please go to: [www.prometheanplanet.com/tls2009](http://www.prometheanplanet.com/tls2009).

##### *Promethean Certified Learning Academy for ESAs*

Created specifically for Education Services Agencies, the Promethean's Certified Learning Academy is designed to increase access to enhanced learning opportunities made possible through interactive technologies. As a member of the Certified Learning Academy an ESA will be recognized for delivery of quality Promethean training and support services that empowers teachers to engage, educate, assess, and motivate students.

Program benefits include:

- New Professional Development offerings
- Recognition for providing quality training on Promethean products and concepts
- Quarterly product updates
- Promotions specifically designed for program members
- Opportunities to host special events
- Pre-launch information on all new Promethean products
- Opportunities for earned revenue

For more information about the Promethean Certified Learning Academy, please send an email to: [us.academy@prometheanworld.com](mailto:us.academy@prometheanworld.com) .

*World's largest interactive whiteboard community*

With over 255,000 members, Promethean's free online community provides Activclassroom teachers around the world the ability to share new and innovative lessons, access a wide variety of professional development materials, and connect with fellow Activclassroom teachers from around the Planet. It is available at <http://www.prometheanplanet.com> .

**AESA Business Members News:**

**8. Funds for Learning provides E-Rate compliance services**

Funds For Learning, the nation's leading E-rate Funding Compliance Services firm, is AESA's newest Business Partner. Its mission is to provide high quality solutions for the needs of E-rate stakeholders.

Funds For Learning is:

**PROVEN:** Celebrating 10 years of providing comprehensive E-rate solutions

Established in 1997, Funds For Learning was formed as the Federal Communications Commission issued its first regulations concerning the E-rate program. Created solely to provide high-quality E-rate support services, Funds For Learning provides support to both applicants and service providers, from technology companies to public and private schools, school districts and libraries.

**EXPERIENCED:** Bringing over 70 years of combined E-rate experience

Funds For Learning provides comprehensive E-rate solutions to nearly 500 customers, with offices in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, Orlando, Florida, and the Washington, DC area. Our staff, with extensive knowledge about E-rate compliance, can assist you in navigating the E-rate process.

**QUALIFIED:** Securing funding commitments in excess of \$370 million

Funds For Learning has earned a national reputation for our comprehensive work and depth of understanding of the E-rate program. Having provided services since the beginning of the E-rate program has made Funds For Learning your best partner in E-rate compliance.

**RECOGNIZED:** Winner of EdNET's Prestigious "Pioneer Award"

The Heller Reports, a QED company and leading provider of education market news and events, recognized Funds For Learning for its significant contributions to the advancement of the education technology industry by awarding Funds For Learning the 2004 EdNET Pioneer Award.

**RESPECTED:** Invited to Serve on the USAC Waste, Fraud, and Abuse Task Force

In 2003, the Schools and Libraries Division created the Task Force on the Prevention of Waste, Fraud, and Abuse in which Funds For Learning was asked to be a participant. The members of this task force represented a wide array of E-rate stakeholders. The goal of the task force was to identify areas of improvement and to recommend specific actions to combat waste, fraud, and abuse by both service providers and applicants.

Why choose Funds For Learning?

Funds For Learning is committed to the long-term success of the E-rate program. We aim to help all E-rate stakeholders understand and effectively utilize the Universal Service Funding Program for Schools and Libraries and to comply with all of its rules. Through a variety of web-based tools and compliance services, we provide training, answer questions concerning E-rate policies, and

interact with USAC on the client's behalf concerning invoice payments, service substitutions, and eligibility questions.

For more information, visit: [www.fundsforlearning.com](http://www.fundsforlearning.com)

### **9. Microsoft sponsors free Digital Citizenship and Creative Content curriculum.**

Students interact with music, movies, software, and other digital content daily. Do they understand the rules surrounding the appropriate use of these digital properties, and why these issues are relevant?

The Digital Citizenship and Creative Content curriculum is a turnkey instructional program made available free through Microsoft sponsorship. The curriculum has received the ISTE Seal of Alignment to the K-12 National Education Technology Standards for Students and the AASL Standards for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learner.

It was designed to raise awareness and foster better understanding of the rights connected with creative content. In addition, it helps instill in students a personal respect for creative materials in a way that changes their behaviors and perceptions about digitally delivered content. Only through education, can students gain an understanding of the relevance of and a personal respect for creative rights and grow to become good digital citizens.

The curriculum resources offer a comprehensive set of cross-curricular classroom activities that are divided into four separate thematic units. Each unit consists of 4-6 standalone yet complementary lesson plans that provide a variety of ways to engage students in the learning experience. It is not necessary to implement all of a unit's activities to achieve a meaningful learning experience. This program was designed for grades 8-10, but easily adapts for use in grades 6-12. It aligns with AASL Standards for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learner and covers subject areas that include Civics, Computer Science, Debate, Economics, Fine Arts, Government, Journalism, Language Arts, Drama, and Video Production.

To learn more about the Digital Citizenship and Creative Content program and to download the free curriculum, go to: <http://www.digitalcitizenshiped.com> .

### **US Department of Education Announcements: New What Works Clearinghouse reports**

#### **10. WWC releases report on Earobics®**

The What Works Clearinghouse this month released a report Earobics® is an interactive software that provides students in pre-K through third grade with individual, systematic instruction in early literacy skills as students interact with animated characters.

Earobics® Foundations is the version for prekindergarten, kindergarten, and first grade. Earobics® Connections is for second and third graders and older struggling readers. The program builds children's skills in phonemic awareness, auditory processing, and phonics, as well as the cognitive and language skills required for comprehension. Each level of instruction addresses recognizing and blending sounds, rhyming, and discriminating phonemes within words, adjusting to each student's ability level. The software is supported by music, audiocassettes, and videotapes and includes picture/word cards, letter-sound decks, big books, little books, and leveled readers for reading independently or in groups.

The research cited indicated two studies of Earobics® meet What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) evidence standards and two studies meet WWC evidence standards with reservations. The four studies included 246 students from grades K through 3 in Los Angeles, California; southwest Florida; Anchorage, Alaska; and Chicago, Illinois.<sup>3</sup>

Based on these four studies, the WWC considers the extent of evidence for Earobics® to be small for alphabets and reading fluency. No studies that meet WWC evidence standards with or without reservations examined the effectiveness of Earobics® in the comprehension or general reading achievement domains.

According to the What Works Clearinghouse, the effectiveness of Earobics® was found to have positive effects on alphabets and potentially positive effects on reading fluency.

For more information, go to:

[http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/reports/beginning\\_reading/earobics/index.asp](http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/reports/beginning_reading/earobics/index.asp) .