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Federal Advocacy Alerts

1. Update: Medicaid reimbursement signed, another year of advocacy ahead

Extension of the temporary provision to extend the Medicaid moratorium through June 30, 2009 was included in the supplemental war funding bill signed by President Bush on July 2. The domestic spending language of the supplemental war funding bill included the moratorium that prohibits the Health and Human Services' Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services from implementing six proposed Medicaid rule changes, including one that would have eliminated reimbursement for transportation to school and school-based care for Medicaid-eligible children to ESAs and school districts.

"This is an important provision that required hard work at the local level. We have heard from

Senators and Congressmen that they received positive comments for the need to continue the moratorium from ESA leaders throughout the country,” said AESA Executive Director Brian Talbott. “We encourage all ESAs to thank their federal legislators for their support,” he said.

“However, this is still a temporary fix that will expire next year. AESA, along with other concerned groups, will continue to work throughout the coming year for a Congressional solution to make the temporary moratorium a permanent law,” said Talbott. He said Medicaid, along with other pressing federal issues, will be agenda items for the AESA Educators’ Call to Action Conference in Washington, DC this September.

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

2. Update: ESA teacher loan forgiveness included in Higher Ed bill

Extension of the current federal loan forgiveness programs for teachers in school districts to include teachers for ESAs is included in both the House and Senate Higher Education Act conference report scheduled for floor votes this week. It is expected to be signed by the president.

The current law limits loan forgiveness to teachers in “schools” but that definition does not include teachers working for ESAs. The new language for eligible partnerships for loan forgiveness states that an entity in a partnership “may include ... an educational service agency.”

The provisions for extending loan forgiveness are included in four sections of Higher Education Act conference report: Section 429, Family Federal Education Loans; Section 430, Service in Areas of National Needs; Section 454, Federal Direct Loans; and, Section 465, Cancellation for Public Service – Perkins Loans.

AESA Executive Director Brian Talbott cited the contacts by local ESAs with their members of Congress as important in supporting the direct efforts of the New York BOCES that initiated the efforts and of Mary Kusler, AASA assistant director of government relations and AESA’s contracted federal relations liaison in working out the ESA language.

Talbott added, “Not only does this immediately help teachers working for ESAs, but it also greatly enhances the ability of ESAs to recruit teachers who will work in programs included in the loan forgiveness program.”

Details of the program will be included in the August Online News, and will included in presentations at the AESA’s September 15-17 Educators’ Call of Action Conference. Registration for the conference is now open. For more information, see the Educators’ Call to Action article in this issue of the AESA Online News.

AESA News

3. AESA National Awards nominations due August 29th

AESA’s three national awards to recognize individuals for outstanding contributions to educational service agency programs at the regional, state, and national levels will be presented at the 2008 Annual Conference at Phoenix. Nominations for those awards are now open, and will close on August 29. The nomination information, guidelines, and annual awards cover sheet are available from the AESA website at:

http://www.aesa.us/About/2008AwardsPacket_final.pdf

The three awards are:

- **Justus A. Prentice Award**, given to an individual for contributions through executive leadership in the advancement of educational service agency programs at the regional, state, and national levels. Nominees have included past or present educational service agency executives and staff. The Justus A. Prentice Award was presented to Twyla Barnes, superintendent, Educational Service District 112, Washington.
- **Walter G. Turner Award**, given to an individual citizen who has made outstanding contributions in the advancement of educational service agency programs at the regional, state, and/or national levels. Nominees could include board members, state/national legislators, and local/state/national educators, and professional association staff. The 2007 Walter G. Turner Award was presented to state Rep. Arlene Setzer, Ohio, and U.S. Sen. Jay D. Rockefeller, West Virginia.
- **E. Robert Stevens Award**, given to an individual for research, writing, and/or publishing of information that advances the understanding of educational service agency programs at the regional, state, and/or national levels. The work(s) may include, but is (are) not limited to, articles, monographs, dissertations, a book chapter, or a book. Nominees could include any individual whose work(s) meet(s) the intent of this award. The 2007 E. Robert Stevens Award was presented to Susan Leddick, president, Profound Knowledge Resources, Inc., Montana.

4. **AESA Executive Council nominations due September 12th**

Nominations for AESA Executive Council members from the Eastern, Central, and Southern Regions are now open and will close on September 12. Each year three Council members are elected to a four year term, with one region having a bye. This year the Western Region does not elect a new member. The AESA Executive Council is the governing body of the association, and meets four times annually in the spring, summer at the CEO Summer Conference, fall at the Educators' Call to Action Conference, and winter at the AESA Annual Conference. Newly elected Council members will begin their term at the spring 2009 meeting. Ending their terms on the Council are: Doug Garman of Ohio, Eastern Region; Vickie Markavitch of Michigan, Central Region; and Linda Lowe of North Carolina, Southern Region.

States in the regions with a nomination this year are:

- **Central:** Illinois, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Wisconsin.
- **Eastern:** Connecticut, Indiana, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Vermont.
- **Southern:** Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, North Carolina, South Carolina, Texas, Virginia, and West Virginia.

The nomination packet is available from the AESA website at:

http://www.aesa.us/About/2008-2009_Call_for_Nominations_Executive_Council.pdf

5. **Educators' Call to Action Conference registration online now**

Registration for the September 15-17 Educators' Call to Action: Federal Advocacy Conference is now available online. This year the conference will be headquartered at the Arlington Residence Court Hotel, 1200 N Courthouse Road, Arlington, VA. It is conveniently located near the Metro, allowing easy transportation from the conference to appointments set up by ESAs to meet with their federal legislators. John Hough, chair of the AESA Governmental Relations Committee, suggests that ESAs invite local school district superintendents to register, attend, and participate in those meetings. "It is very effective when your Senator, Congresswoman, or Congressman sees the ESA and local school district together talking about the same issue," he said.

Included on the program agenda are morning presentations and concurrent sessions on Tuesday, September 16 and Wednesday, September 17. Tuesday afternoon is left open for ESAs to schedule their appointments with federal legislators. The presentations include:

- An overview of Supreme Court decisions and other district court decisions in the past year relating to education.
- Concurrent sessions on reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (also known as No Child Left Behind), appropriations for federal education programs, reauthorization of other education laws including the Higher Education Act and its ESA provisions, and appropriations for federal education programs.
- Presentations of the AESA Walter G. Turner Award to U.S. Sen. John D. Rockefeller IV of West Virginia (invited), and the AESA Congressional Service Award to U.S. Sen. Edward Kennedy (invited).

The Arlington Court Hotel is located two blocks from the Arlington Court House Metro Station on the Orange Line. The hotel provides complimentary shuttle service to/from the Metro station. For service, call the hotel at (703) 524-4000. The hotel is a 15-minute cab ride from the Washington Reagan National Airport (DCA), which is also served by Metro and SuperShuttle.

To more information and to register for the conference, log onto the AESA website www.aesa.us or go directly to the online registration form at:
http://204.186.159.151/aesa-issi/aesa/members_online/members/aesalogin.asp?tp=registration/register.asp¶m=action%3Daddlog%26meet%3DLC08

6. 2008 Annual Conference registration and room reservations available online

Hotel reservations for the 2008 AESA Annual Conference at the J.W. Marriott Desert Ridge Resort, Phoenix, Arizona, are tied to the online registration process. Because the AESA conference block of rooms has fills the hotel, it will not be taking reservations by phone or through its website. The conference dates are December 3 – 6.

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> .

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.

7. 2008-2009 Executives in Residence named

Six applicants have been selected for the 2008-2009 AESA Executives in Residence program. The program is a yearlong, performance-based opportunity that includes a strong mentor component by CEOs of the council and host organizations to provide access to a variety of leadership experiences to the participants. The program uses a cohort model providing national networking and communication, begins in July of each year at the AESA Foundation CEO Conference, and includes participation at each national AESA event along with time at an ESA selected by the participant for a to “job shadow” opportunity an ESA CEO in a new working and leadership environment.

The 2008/2009 cohort of Executives in Residence includes:

- Loy Dale, Executive Director, School and Agency Operations Educational Service District 112, Washington
- Doris Delaney, Deputy Director, Region 4 ESC, Texas
- Tom Goodney, Deputy Superintendent, ESC Franklin County, Ohio
- Troy Lange, Director of Special Education, Mountain BOCES, Colorado

- Deborah Myers, Executive Director, Organizational Development Hamilton County ESC, Ohio
- Trace Pickering, Programs-Services Administration, Grant Wood AEA 10, Iowa

The 2007/2008 Executives in Residence cohort is in the process of completing their activities. That cohort includes:

- Maria Cashman, Associate Administrator, Grant Wood AEA 10, Iowa
- Beverly Knox-Pipes, Assistant Superintendent, Genesee ISD, Michigan
- Karen Schwartzrock, Human Resources Director, ESD 112, Washington
- Wanda Sommers Wall, Education & Innovations Director, South Central Service Coop., Minnesota

ESA News

8. Two Ohio Educational Service Centers approve merger

The Educational Service Center of Franklin County and the Delaware-Union Educational Service Center have agreed to merge and create the Educational Service Center of Central Ohio. The merger is effective Jan. 1, 2009. The Delaware-Union ESC Governing Board approved the merger agreement at its meeting July 10. The Delaware County and Union County ESCs merged Jan. 1, 1993 to form the DUESC. The ESC of Franklin County Governing Board is expected to approve the agreement at its meeting July 11.

The new agency will retain administrative leadership from the ESC of Franklin County of Superintendent Bart Anderson and Treasurer Alan Hutchinson. Ohio law requires that all employee contracts from both organizations will be honored.

“After careful review, we are excited to pair these organizations and increase services available to school districts in Delaware, Franklin, and Union counties,” said Joyce Galbraith, president of the Franklin County ESC Governing Board. Delaware-Union ESC Governing Board President Teri Morgan shared similar optimism. “The ESC of Central Ohio will have a strong foundation of talent and resources to best serve the students of all of our school districts,” Morgan said. “Our plan is to be able to provide school districts whatever they may need to improve education in the most cost-effective and student-focused way possible.”

The ESC of Central Ohio will serve 25 school districts in the three counties with a total enrollment of about 205,000 students. The combined agency will total nearly 1,000 employees.

AESA Business Member Announcements

AESA Business Members win major awards

9. InnerLink: TeamPrepared named District Administrator Magazine Reader’s Choice

Selected as District Administration magazine’s 2007-2008 Reader’s Choice award for its leading safety product for schools, providing secure web-based facility mapping, inventory, planning, and other features that meet or exceed federally required standards. TeamPrepared is the bridge between schools and those who serve them in a crisis. This secure web-based solution improves schools’ security and preparedness based on guidelines provided by emergency planning experts with the FBI, Secret Service, Jane’s Information Group, and the U.S. Department of Education. Application training is conducted collaboratively with the school and first responders serving the community. Adoption of the TeamPrepared planning and solution provides compliance with the National Incident Management System (NIMS) standard adopted by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and federally mandated for public facilities, including schools.

www.theinnerlink.com

10. Lightspeed Systems: Total Traffic Control 7 gains three citations

Lightspeed Systems’ Total Traffic Control 7 has been selected this month by CRN magazine as

one of the “Emerging Tech Vendors” in its annual list of channel-friendly companies. The companies selected by CRN magazine were selected for providing superior technology and higher margins over more-established information technology vendors. The selection follows on Lightspeed being selected as the Redmond Readers’ Choice Award for 2007 as the best bandwidth/traffic monitoring product, and eSchool News Readers’ Choice Award in 2006 as the Best School Network Administration Software. Specifically developed for K-12 school districts, TTC simplifies the administrator’s daily tasks by keeping diverse and transient groups safe online while complying with federally mandated requirements of No Child Left Behind (NCLB), the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA), and E-Rate Security. TTC's core functionality includes Internet filtering, spam management, bandwidth management, extensive reporting, anti-virus, message archiving, and layered security. Total Traffic Control provides the most comprehensive and flexible network security available for educational networks. TTC v7.0 incorporates several new features and functionality including instant message and email archiving required by federal law for public agencies ; and, is the only Internet filter fully integrated with the award-winning netTrekker d.i.® educational search product, ensuring no netTrekker site, all educator-vetted and aligned with state standards, will ever be blocked.

www.lightspeedsystems.com

New AESA Business Members:

11. EverGreen Data Continuity, Inc.

EverGreen Data Continuity’s Emergency Management Plans for Educational Institutions has removed the complexity and cost of managing educational emergency preparedness plans. Its EverSafe collaborative web-tools are easily configured to include existing emergency management data or build new plans using our pre-populated templates in its secure, disaster hardened web-hosted facilities. All plans include document sharing, discussion boards, scheduling, FEMA and NOAA links, and the inclusion of maps, floor plans, and much more. EverGreen guarantees its EverSafe emergency preparedness planning solution meets FEMA’s National Incident Management System (NIMS) compliance requirements. Plans can easily be implemented with assistance from your administrators, students, or your regional educational services agency.

<http://www.evergreen-data.com>

12. ImageNow from Perceptive Software

ImageNow from Perceptive Software is an enterprise document management, imaging and workflow software. It creates a direct and effortless connection between you, your colleagues and the documents you need to simplify daily business activities. The “Top 20 Year-End Best in KLAS Awards” has named ImageNow “Best in KLAS” in document management and imaging in the healthcare industry, and the number seven ranked overall healthcare software product.

ImageNow brings that sophistication to the varied and complex document management of programs operated by ESAs and school districts, including those required for compliance with federal and state laws and regulations.

<http://www.imagenow.com>

13. Infinite Campus

Infinite Campus has developed a set of integrated applications for state departments of education, regional consortia, and local school districts to manage student information. Integration is the key to the Infinite Campus approach. With a turnkey solution that can be tailored to meet the needs of individual stakeholders, Infinite Campus customers are able to experience the benefits of their technology investment more quickly and at a lower total cost of ownership than any other approach. Infinite Campus has successfully implemented its solutions for customers of all sizes for more than 13 years. Today, Infinite Campus applications manage more than 4 million students in 42 states. Infinite Campus customers range from districts with fewer than 100

students to those with more than 100,000 as well as regional consortia, state departments of education, and the federal government.

<http://www.infinitecampus.com>

14. Literacy First

Literacy First is a research-based, systematic, systemic, and comprehensive reform process that accelerates reading achievement of all students in grades PreK to 12. This nationally validated process is approved for use and implemented in Reading First schools, as well as in Comprehensive School Reform grant schools with proven success.

The Literacy First Process closes the reading gap of all AYP subgroups as demonstrated on nationally normed assessments, causes teachers to be more “consciously competent” about the reading process, refines teachers’ instructional skills, strengthens principals’ instructional leadership skills, and offers flexible models to scale from individual schools to larger school districts customizes to meet the needs of any school no matter its needs or size

<http://www.literacyfirst.com>

US Department of Education Announcements

What Works Clearinghouse releases two new quick reports

The National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance within The Institute of Education Sciences has released two new Quick Review reports from the What Works Clearinghouse:

15. The Advantage of Abstract Examples in Learning Math

This study examined whether college students are better able to apply knowledge of simple mathematical concepts when they are taught the concepts using abstract symbols or concrete examples.

<http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/quickreviews/abmath/>

16. Making a Difference? The Effects of Teach for America in High School

This study examined whether having a Teach For America (TFA) teacher instead of a non-TFA teacher affects the academic performance of high school students. The study analyzed data from 23 North Carolina school districts that hired at least one TFA teacher from 2000 to 2005. The sample included 69 TFA teachers.

<http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/quickreviews/tfa/>