



Online News

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AESA Online News

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AESA News

1. **AESA mourns loss of Dr. Michael C. O'Laughlin, Monroe 2-Orleans BOCES of NY**
Dr. Michael C. O'Laughlin, superintendent of the Monroe 2 – Orleans BOCES of Spencerport, NY, died on May 23 after a brief illness. He began his career as a fourth-grade teacher, was a principal and for seven years a local district superintendent of the Kendall Central School District before joining Monroe 2 – Orleans BOCES in 2007, The Monroe 2 – Orleans BOCES News, with links to other articles, is <http://www.monroe2boces.org/news.cfm> .

On June 5, former AESA President Joseph J. Marinelli, superintendent of nearby Wayne-Finger Lakes BOCES, has been named the Monroe 2-Orleans BOCES interim superintendent while the New York State Education Department begins the process for moving forward.

2. Summer CEO Conference features Executives in Residence panel, ARRA Stimulus Funding, research, and more!

The July 20-23 AESA Foundation's Summer CEO Conference at the Embassy Suites in Napa, California will include a panel on the Executives in Residence program and discussions of several other programs. Discussion highlights include the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act (Stimulus Funding), ESAs and Economic Development, Research Reports, Field Notes, the development of an AESA White Paper – What ESAs Can Do With and For the Obama Administration, and much more.

Participants on the Executives in Residence panel will include two of this year's five participants, Doris Delaney of Region 4 in Texas and Troy Lange of Mountain BOCES in Colorado, and one of last year's participants, Maria Cashman of Grant Wood AEA in Iowa. AESA Council Member Cliff Carmody, executive director of South West / West Central Service Cooperative of Minnesota and a member of the first class of executives, will facilitate the panel discussion.

Online registration is available at the AESA website: www.aesa.us.

3. Ron Clark, Ed Barlow will keynote Annual Conference

Ron Clark, the 2000 Disney American Teacher of the Year, and Ed Barlow, president of Creating the Future, will keynote the 2009 Annual Conference at Austin, Texas, Dec. 2-5.

Clark, whose work with disadvantaged students in rural North Carolina and in inner city Harlem gained international attention, was the subject of the made-for-TV movie, "The Ron Clark Story" with Matthew Perry playing the lead role. He has been named by Oprah Winfrey as her first "Phenomenal Man." When Disney discontinued sponsorship of the Teacher of the Year program, AESA Business Partner Great American Financial Resources became the program sponsor. Great American Financial Resources is sponsoring Clark's appearance at the Annual Conference.

Barlow captivates his audiences with his intuitive and well-studied perspectives as a motivational futurist. His insights into the process of change and expert facilitation skills have also been used to design and facilitate think tank and strategic planning activities in a variety of settings.

The Annual Conference will also feature a leadership summit preconference organized by the National Association of Media and Technology Centers and concurrent sessions by ESAs in five strands:

- ESA Board Members
- ESAs Responding to the Current Economic Crisis
- Delivering and Measuring Success
- Collaboration/Community Partnerships
- Technology

Registration for the Annual Conference is now open at the AESA website: www.aesa.us.

4. Executives in residence deadline extended to July 1

The deadline for the highly successful Executive in Residence Program by the Membership Services Committee of AESA has been extended to July 1. Complete information and applications for the program are available at the AESA website: www.aesa.us.

The Executives in Residence is a year-long program for professional development for ESA Leaders. It includes a strong mentor component by CEOs of the AESA Council and host organizations, a variety of leadership experiences, and works in a cohort model providing national networking and communications.

Participants selected for the Executives in Residence program are involved in a one or two week residency at an ESA or ESAs selected nationally to work directly with the CEO and relevant leadership on local issues, attend the AESA CEO Conference, "Call to Action" Legislative Conference, AESA Annual Conference, and AESA Council meetings as well as participate in email, telephone, and video conferences with their cohort.

5. Nominations open for AESA's four national awards

The Association of Educational Service Agencies sponsors four national awards, including the Brian L. Talbott Award created by the AESA Council this spring. The awards recognize individuals for outstanding contributions to educational service agency programs at the regional, state, and/or national levels. (Individuals currently serving on the AESA council are not eligible for nomination.) All nominations must be postmarked by August 8, 2009. Complete information about the awards and the application packets are available at the AESA website: www.aesa.us. The four awards are:

- ***Justice A. Prentice Award***

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. Criteria for this award:

1. Advancement of the goals and philosophies of educational service agencies.
2. Outstanding accomplishments and innovative practices.
3. Exercise of leadership.
4. Service to educational service agencies.

- ***Walter G. Turner Award***

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. Criteria for this award:

1. Advancement of the goals and philosophies of educational service agencies.
2. Outstanding accomplishments and innovative practices.
3. Exercise of leadership.
4. Service to educational service agency community.

- ***E. Robert Stephens Award***

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. Criteria for this award:

1. Advancement of the goals and philosophies of educational service agencies.
2. Scholarly nature of the work(s).
3. Impact of the research, writing(s) and/or publication(s) on educational service agencies.

- ***Brian L. Talbott Award***

To an individual or agency for contribution in the area of technological innovation and support to local districts and educational service agencies. Criteria for this award:

1. Advancement of the goals and philosophies of educational service agencies.
2. Evidence that agency/person has provided innovative technology support to constituent schools in the areas of instruction and/or business management that has caused positive improvement; and/or
3. Evidence that the agency/person has effectively used technology for enhancing the agency's own operation and accountability.

6. Registration open for September 14-16 Washington D.C. Educators' Call of Action: Federal Advocacy Conference

The Educators' Call to Action: Federal Advocacy Conference is a unique and important opportunity for you to explore the hot issues being discussed on Capitol Hill and speak directly with your Senators and Representatives about the issues that are important to your local districts and educational service agency. The conference is strategically timed so that you will be on the Hill just before final decisions about education funding are made. This year is especially critical as it will be the time that reauthorization bills are being debated. Please make appointments with your Congressional delegation prior to coming to Washington D.C. for Tuesday afternoon.

All activities, other than appointments with Senators and Representatives, will take place at the Arlington Residence Court (ARC), 1200 N. Courthouse Road, Arlington, VA. The closest metro stop is two blocks away at the Court House Metro Station on the Orange Line. If you are flying into Washington Reagan National Airport (DCA) you can take the Metro, Super Shuttle, or a cab to the hotel. It is a 15-minute cab ride to the Arlington Residence Court. The ARC provides shuttle service to/from the Metro Orange Line for those interested in this service. Call (703) 524-4000.

Please make your hotel reservations before August 31, 2009, by calling (703) 524-4000. Let them know you are attending the AESA Educators' Call to Action conference to receive the special conference room rates of \$209 for a studio suite or \$229 for a one bedroom suite per night (rate includes breakfast and dinner at the hotel).

Log on to www.aesa.us for more information.

7. AESA Back Office Services survey results

AESA has posted the results of the survey on Back Office Services sent out on May 11, 2009. Despite the short timeline we were very pleased to have received responses from seventy-eight ESAs. The results provide critical information for our national database and confirm a trend perceived by AESA. The survey results are available at the AESA website: www.aesa.us.

8. Aflac part of AESA's All American Line Up

Aflac is pleased to be a part of the new All American Line Up, a group of services brought to you along with Great American Financial Resources, Great American Plan Administrators, and miSolution. Serving more than 10,000 elementary and secondary schools in the U.S. as of June 2009, Aflac provides a wide range of voluntary insurance policies, as well as Section 125 plan administration and other value-added services. Schools making Aflac insurance policies available may benefit in the following ways:

- Voluntary policies at no direct costs. With 100 percent of premiums paid by employees, schools have the opportunity to make additional benefits options available at no direct cost to the district. With an expanded array of insurance policies, district employees can choose policies that suit their particular needs.
- Ease of administration. Aflac policies and services are designed to be easily administered. The Aflac team can help coordinate all aspects of enrollment and billing, meeting with each district employee to review benefits options and facilitating online premium billing services. Aflac can also provide enrollment services for a district's base benefits plans, minimizing the resources required during enrollment.
- Potential tax savings. Many Aflac policies can be paid with pre-tax dollars, providing potential tax savings for both the district and its employees through a Section 125 plan. To ease the burden of administering a Section 125 plan, Aflac provides complete administration services, including plan documents, salary redirection agreements, regulatory monitoring and non-discrimination testing support. Aflac can also provide cost-effective processing of flexible spending account contributions and reimbursements.

Working together with Great American Plan Administrators, Aflac provides districts a streamlined solution for voluntary insurance, Section 125 administration, 403(b)/457, and plan administration services.

To learn more and take advantage of these benefits, contact your AESA All American Line Up representative at (541) 359-9270, or email AllAmericanLineUp@gafri.com.

For residents of Arizona, Idaho, and Pennsylvania, the information contained in this article may not be applicable. For residents of New York, coverage is available from American Family Life Assurance Company of New York (Aflac New York). Aflac is not licensed in the state of New York.

Business Partner News

9. New Business Partner: CAS

Computer Automation Systems (CAS) of Mountain Home, AR, is AESA's newest Business Partner, having completed due diligence by AESA legal counsel and negotiated a contract for services. CAS will be a sponsor at this year's Summer CEO Conference in Napa, CA, and the Annual Conference in Austin, TX.

In 1996, Computer Automation Systems introduced SEAS™ as a special education management system. At the time, its main focus was helping teachers complete compliant IEPs for their special education students. Over the years, SEAS has evolved into a full special education management system with many components – just as special educators have many more responsibilities than just completing an IEP. SEAS is now used by over 2,000 school districts, charter schools, educational service agencies, and state departments of education nationwide.

It is the mission of CAS to help school districts manage all aspects of their special needs programs. CAS supports its clients with over 100 associates whose only focus is solving problems for its customers.

The CAS solutions include:

- K-12 Special education automation, management and reporting
- Medicaid reimbursement services and other revenue recovery services
- Remotely delivered Professional Development content
- Achievement plans for all special populations
- State-level special education monitoring automation and reporting

CAS has been awarded state contracts in:

- Early childhood / Early intervention
- IEP Management
- Medicaid automation and claiming
- DOC Special education management

CAS takes very seriously our obligation to help the district's staff become knowledgeable and seasoned users of our family of educational solutions. Rather than walk away after implementation, the SEAS University Knowledge Center provides ongoing live, one-on-one technical support and customer service support, innovative online, on-demand learning tools, and state- and regional-specific conferences. All of these options combine to create a total knowledge center platform for your staff.

- ***SEAS University provides online professional development***

Take advantage of the professional development opportunities on SEAS University. Leading national speakers discussing the latest industry topics allow your staff to obtain continuing

education credit, while being exposed to best practices. Additionally, state of the art online learning tools at SEAS University offer 'just-in-time, on-demand' video lessons that your staff can access at any time.

• ***SEAS provides automated Medicaid claiming using any IEP software***

SEAS offers a full-service School-Based Medicaid claiming solution that can be used as a stand-alone interface solution (for customers using another company's IEP software program or a district-grown IEP program) or can be integrated with our SEAS Special Education software for a fully integrated compliant solution. The SEAS solution is easy-to-use and offers districts both online claiming and paper claiming processing, but – more importantly – offers your district a full array of services:

- Training, including how to insure your IEPs include the elements necessary for Medicaid compliance
- Eligibility identification
- Full reporting capability
- Reconciliation of all claims
- Audit support

Customers using the SEAS integrated solution find that they can document their services once and insure both IEP accountability and compliant Medicaid claiming. The SEAS Medicaid team has been serving school districts for over 21 years. Check out what its customers say about SEAS at youtube.com/user/SEASCAS .

For more information about the Computer Automation Systems programs for ESAs, contact Lydia Brasch, Educational Service Agency Program Director, at (402) 380-3691 or toll free (877) 221-7327 or lydia.brasch@computerautomation.net . For more information about CAS, got to www.computerautomation.com .

New Business Members

10. Romexsoft USA Inc. provides web based planning services with planLYNX™

Romexsoft USA Inc. (RUSA) provides a comprehensive web-based planning solution for education called planLYNX™. This web-based system assists schools and agencies with robust planning in the arenas of School Improvement (strategic planning), Curriculum, Response to Intervention, Event Planning, Project Planning, Human Resources Planning and more. This system will provide schools and other agencies with a single comprehensive solution for the myriad of planning uses while adopting to any existing planning process. Agencies can benefit from an additional revenue stream through bundling of their consulting services with planLYNX™. For more information go to: <http://www.planlynx.com> and request a live demonstration.

Business Members News

11. Take the free Aligned Thinker's Journey assessment of your time management

In just a few minutes online you can have a free assessment of your time management skills with suggestions of areas for attention from the Aligned Thinker's Journey customized for ESAs at: www.SSAinternational.com/TimeManagementAssessment . Superintendents, CEOs, and others interested in the full journey may subscribe at special ESA discounts. Agencies interested in becoming certified coaches can participate in a royalty-sharing program. For more information contact Dr. R. James Steffen at coachdrjim@ssainternational.com . To read the first few chapters of his new book, "Aligned Thinking: Make Every Moment Count" go to www.ssainternational.com and click on "sample chapters."

U.S. Department of Education

12. Secretary of Education addresses Race to the Top fund assurances

(From the U.S. Department of Education) -- Over the last two weeks, Secretary Duncan delivered two of four major policy speeches on priorities for the "Race to the Top" Fund. Under the *American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA)*, states must offer assurances that they are making progress in four critical areas of reform: adopting rigorous standards that prepare students for success in college and the workforce; recruiting and retaining effective teachers, especially in classrooms where they are needed most; turning around low-performing schools; and building data systems to track student achievement and teacher effectiveness. States must report on their progress toward completing these assurances in their applications to receive formula funding under the \$48.6 billion State Fiscal Stabilization Fund (SFSF). The Department will evaluate states' success in meeting assurances when reviewing states' applications for competitive grants under the \$4.35 billion "Race to the Top" Fund.

First, on June 8, at the fourth annual conference of the Department's Institute of Education Sciences, the Secretary told education researchers that supporting states' efforts to build warehouses of data on student achievement is a top priority. "I am a deep believer in the power of data to drive our decisions," he said. "Data gives us the roadmap to reform. It tells us where we are, where we need to go, and who is most at risk." The Secretary specifically urged researchers to work on improving accountability models based on the growth of student test scores and developing fair models of compensating teachers and other school staff based on the achievement of their students. Ultimately, he added, the data should be used to ensure that students are on track to graduation and success in college. "Hopefully, some day, we can track children from preschool to high school, from high school to college, and from college to career," he stated. "We must track high-growth children in classrooms to their great teachers, and great teachers to their schools of education." For more information, please go to: <http://www.ed.gov/news/pressreleases/2009/06/06082009.html>.

Then, on June 15, during an address at the 2009 Governors Education Symposium in North Carolina, the Secretary urged the nation's governors and state education leaders to continue the movement toward adopting internationally benchmarked standards for K-12 education. He also applauded the 46 states and three territories that agreed this month to develop common standards, announcing the Department will commit up to \$350 million of the "Race to the Top" Fund to support the states in the creation of rigorous assessments that are linked to those common standards. "With higher standards that are common across states, we can share best practices and collaborate on curricula," he noted. "We can learn together about how to improve teacher preparation and development so that far more teachers can help students master challenging standards. This can accelerate all of your [education] reform work." Regarding assessments, "You will create these tests. You will drive the process. You will call the shots," he said. "We just want tests that are aligned with rigorous standards and that accurately reflect what is happening in the classroom so that teachers, parents, and students can trust the results." For more information, please go to: <http://www.edgovblogs.org/duncan/2009/06/higher-standards-better-tests-race-to-the-top/>.

The Secretary will shortly deliver two more major policy speeches. He will discuss turning around low-performing schools on June 22 at the National Charter School Conference (Washington, D.C.). He will discuss teacher quality on July 2 at the National Education Association's Annual Meeting (San Diego).

"Race to the Top" grants will be made in two rounds. States that miss in the first round may reapply for the second round. The Secretary has laid out the following timeline:

- Late July 2009 -- the Department will publish a notice of proposed rulemaking in the *Federal*

Register, inviting public comment for 30 days on the proposed grant application and evaluation criteria.

- October 2009 -- notice inviting applications will be published in the *Federal Register*.
- December 2009 -- Phase 1 applications will be due.
- March 2010 -- Phase 1 grants awarded.
- June 2010 -- Phase 2 applications will be due.
- September 2010 -- Phase 2 grants awarded.

13. What Works Clearinghouse releases 10 reports

The What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) offers a range of publications that evaluate research on early childhood education interventions and instructional strategies designed for use with 3- to 5-year-old children. New early childhood education intervention reports from the WWC look at *Doors to Discovery*[™] and *Bright Beginnings*.

- *Doors to Discovery*[™] focuses on the development of children's vocabulary and expressive and receptive language through a learning process called "shared literacy," where adults and children work together to develop literacy-related skills. Literacy activities, organized into thematic units, encourage children's development in a number of areas identified as the foundation for early literacy success. See how the WWC rated the research on this intervention at http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/reports/early_ed/doors2disc/.
- *Bright Beginnings* is an early childhood curriculum, based in part on *High/Scope*[®] and *Creative Curriculum*[®], with an additional emphasis on literacy skills. The curriculum consists of nine thematic units designed to enhance children's cognitive, social, emotional, and physical development. Special emphasis is placed on the development of early language and literacy skills, and parent involvement is a key component of the program. Read the WWC report on *Bright Beginnings* at http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/reports/early_ed/brightbegs/.

Improving adolescent literacy has emerged as an important challenge being tackled by educators. The What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) is expanding its reviews of research into this area.

- *SuccessMaker*[®] is the first WWC adolescent literacy intervention report looks at a set of computer-based courses used to supplement regular classroom reading instruction in grades K–8. Using adaptive lessons tailored to a student's reading level, *SuccessMaker*[®] aims to improve understanding in areas such as phonological awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, and concepts of print. The studies in this WWC review looked at 9- to 16-year-old students. Read the report now at http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/reports/adolescent_literacy/successmaker/.

Three new quick reviews are also available:

- *Impacts of Comprehensive Teacher Induction: Results from the First Year of a Randomized Controlled Study* — A study that examined the effects of comprehensive teacher induction programs on the job retention of new teachers and the academic achievement of their students. <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/publications/quickreviews/tsinduction/>.
- *Effects of Social Development Intervention in Childhood 15 Years Later* — A study that examined the long-term effects of the *Seattle Social Development Project*, an elementary-school-based intervention designed to improve students' social skills and engagement. <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/publications/quickreviews/ssdp/>.
- *The Enhanced Reading Opportunities Study: Findings from the Second Year of Implementation* — A study that examined whether supplemental literacy classes improve the reading skills of struggling ninth-grade readers. <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/publications/quickreviews/ssdp/>.
- As the WWC continues its work to connect educators with the tools needed to make informed decisions, visit our website often at <http://www.whatworks.ed.gov/> and check your inbox for updates and new releases throughout the year.

The What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) has released a new report in the area of English language learners this week.

- *Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP)*, is a framework for planning and delivering instruction in content areas such as science, history, and mathematics for English language learners. Using the *SIOP* framework, teachers modify the way they teach so that the language they use to explain concepts and information is comprehensible to these students. The WWC identified eight studies of *SIOP* that were published or released between 1983 and 2008. Read the *SIOP* intervention report now at http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/reports/english_lang/siop/.

The What Works Clearinghouse has released two new intervention reports in the area of Dropout Prevention.

- *Summer Training and Education Program (STEP)* is a summer employment, academic remediation, and life skills program intended to lower school dropout rates by reducing summer learning loss and preventing teen parenthood. The program serves low-income 14- and 15-year-olds who have tested below grade level in either reading or math. See how the WWC rated the research on *STEP* now at <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/reports/dropout/step/>.
- The *Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program (CCVYP)* offers secondary school students who are considered at risk of dropping out the opportunity to serve as tutors in elementary schools. By having these students serve as tutors, the program aims to improve their basic academic skills and self-esteem, with the goal of keeping them enrolled in school. Read the WWC's *CCVYP* intervention report now at <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/reports/dropout/ccvyp/>.

To see other reports and topic areas offered, visit the What Works Clearinghouse at <http://www.whatworks.ed.gov/>.