



# Online News

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AESA Online News

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## **AESA News**

1. Assistant Secretary for Elementary and Secondary Education will highlight AESA's Educators' Call to Action Conference, September 20-22

Assistant Secretary for Elementary and Secondary Education Dr. Thelma Melendez will be the keynote speaker at the AESA Educators' Call to Action Conference, September 20-22, at Washington, DC. Bruce Hunter, AASA Associate Director for Advocacy, Policy, and Communications will kick off the conference presentations with his observations and analysis of "Current Political Trends."

The AESA Council will also present Mary Kusler with an AESA Special Service Award. For several years she has been a presenter at the AESA Annual Conference, Educators' Call to Action Conference, and at state and regional ESA meetings. This summer she changed jobs and will no longer be representing AESA on the Hill. She is now the National Education Association's

Manager of Federal Advocacy. The AESA Council voted at its summer meeting to recognize her work on behalf of ESAs and rural schools with this special award. Mary has also agreed to be a presenter, providing her insights on "Reauthorization of ESEA and Other Legislative Priorities" session.

The agenda for the Educators' Call to Action Conference starts with a reception on Monday, September 20 at the conference hotel, the Arlington Residence Court. Dinner is provided at the hotel.

On Tuesday, September 21 the morning agenda includes the presentation of the AESA Special Service Award, and presentations on Current Political Trends with Bruce Hunter, AASA Associate Director for Advocacy, Policy, and Communications; Reauthorization of ESEA and Other Legislative Priorities with Mary Kusler, NEA Manager of Federal Advocacy; Education Appropriations and Funding with Noelle Ellerson, AASA Assistant Director, Policy Analysis and Advocacy; and a Buffet Lunch. In the afternoon ESAs will have their own schedule with appointments made by ESAs with their Senators and House members.

On Wednesday, September 22 the morning agenda includes a review of the Congressional visits, keynote by Assistant Secretary of Elementary and Secondary Education Dr. Thelma Melendez; the Annual Courts Review with Claire Sullivan and Chris Lott of Hogan Lovell US, LLC; and closing remarks.

The conference will adjourn at 11:45 am to allow return travel on Wednesday afternoon.

You may register for the conference online at the AESA website:  
<http://www.aesa.us/Conference/ECA2010/ECACConf2010.html>

AESA still has rooms available at its guaranteed rate of \$199 per night. You may make hotel reservations by calling 703 524-4000 and reference the AESA ECA Conference to receive the guaranteed rate.

## **2. AESA's 25<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference: Meeting Challenges ... Celebrating Success**

AESA has selected the breakout presentations for the December 1-4 Annual Conference at Savannah, Georgia. Over 90 applications were received and reviewed by a team of ESAs from across the United States to select the presentations that will run throughout the conference in four strands.

The conference stands are:

- ESA Board Members setting direction through policy, leadership, and innovation
- ESAs assisting schools in meeting the four U.S. Department of Education principles:
  - Achieving equity in teacher distribution/certification
  - Improving the collection and use of data
  - Improving the quality of standards and assessment
  - Improving struggling schools
- Technology leading us into the future through student, financial, online learning, data warehousing, student learning systems, personal learning networks, and global networking.
- Innovative ESA programs that meet challenges and demonstrate success

Registration for the conference and hotel rooms may be done from the AESA website at [www.aesa.us](http://www.aesa.us).

### **3. AESA Technology Services Survey**

AESA is asking its member agencies to assist in its alignment of programs and services by completing a five question online survey about technology services. AESA asks that superintendents and chief executive officers complete the survey, or forward this request to their technology director to complete. The survey should take from 10-15 minutes to complete. It asks for contact information and questions regarding what certified technology services the agency provides. Data from the survey will assist AESA with developing interagency collaboration in common programs and aligning its work with Business Partners, Business Members.

The link to the AESA Technology Services Survey is:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/2KGJVBS>

### **Business Partners News**

#### **4. Extended Medicaid reimbursement funding available to school districts**

In times of budget tightening, even the smallest of school districts can benefit from the money that they can collect from valid Medicaid reimbursement for providing special education related services.

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) increased the funding for Medicaid reimbursement to school districts for providing necessary related services to special education students whose families are eligible for Medicaid. On August 10, 2010, President Obama signed the Education Jobs and Medicaid Assistance Act, which extended the increased Medicaid reimbursements for an additional six months through June 2011.

This means that school districts will realize higher reimbursements for providing the same levels of service to their special needs students.

In the past, some school districts have avoided participation in Medicaid reimbursement program because of the fear of additional administration and clerical work. Others have opted not to participate because “claiming” was not a special education function and the required claiming services were provided by “billing companies” – organizations that had no capability to correlate the reimbursement program with the special education accountability.

Computer Automation Systems (CAS), an AESA partner, provides Medicaid reimbursement claiming services that are completely integrated with special education automation solutions. Because CAS works with over 2,000 school districts nationwide to manage their special needs programs, CAS knows that tying documented, auditable Medicaid reimbursements to IEP related services is of paramount importance to school districts.

As an AESA partner, CAS works with ESAs nationwide to find partnership opportunities that allow the ESA to co-deliver valuable services such as Medicaid reimbursement services to their school district constituents. Find out more information about how you can partner with CAS to provide these necessary to your constituent districts and help them this additional revenue by contacting Lydia Brasch, Service Agency Program Director for Computer Automation Systems at [Lydia.brasch@seasweb.net](mailto:Lydia.brasch@seasweb.net) or by calling 402 380-3691. The CAS website provides more information at [www.computerautomation.com](http://www.computerautomation.com).

#### **5. Sign up now for Nova Southeastern’s ESA Master’s and Doctorate degree cohort program in Organizational Leadership**

Nova Southeastern University (NSU) Master’s and Doctorate Programs in Organizational Leadership are customized for ESA members and constituents. Join a national cohort of ESA colleagues for a Master’s or Doctorate program that addresses your educational and business needs and unique non-profit leadership role.

Through this program ESA staff, or education leaders interested in an advanced degree with an emphasis on ESAs may:

- Find the course content you have been seeking including classes that incorporate the topics of entrepreneurship, non-profit accountability, accreditation, operations, and investing as well as techniques for influencing statutes and political agendas.
- Develop strategic action plans using cutting-edge education and business models that will organize, motivate and guide others to achieve organizational and team goals.
- Benefit from leadership perspectives of the information age and the success of international education and educators.
- Enroll in a program that was designed for you, with the guidance and support of your AESA leadership. Attend an international University that was voted #1 Online University in 2008 and 2009 by Online Education Database (<http://oedb.org/rankings>), is the 6<sup>th</sup> largest not-for-profit accredited university in the country and has the most innovative, accessible, and technologically advanced programs in the nation.

For more information about the Nova Southeastern program, contact AESA Executive Director Brian Talbott at [btalbott@aesas.us](mailto:btalbott@aesas.us) or call 509 935-7300.

### **New Business Members**

#### **6. Footsteps2Brilliance provides early learning connections between home and school**

Footsteps2Brilliance is an early learning solution designed to accelerate reading, language arts, science, and mathematics learning in children ages 3 through 8 by connecting school and home, and making it easy for parents to reinforce academics in a fun and entertaining way.

For parents, Footsteps2Brilliance uses a proprietary mobile gaming platform that is deployable to every mobile phone to create "high tech scavenger hunts" that reinforce key academic skills. For teachers, it has developed a social networking platform with standards-based games that may be tailored to local curricula making teaching more effective and engaging.

The Footsteps2Brilliance early learning solution encourages users to become creators as well as consumers of knowledge that can be customized to meet specific needs. For more information please contact Ilene Rosenthal, CEO, at 202 338-1223 or email [ilene@footsteps2brilliance.org](mailto:ilene@footsteps2brilliance.org).

#### **7. eGenio connects students, teachers, parents, and schools**

eGenio Education Solutions was founded in 2009 in Cleveland, Ohio, to create an Integrated Learning Environment™ that connects students, teachers, parents, and schools in one place where they can collaborate and communicate.

eGenio delivers innovation to K-12 classrooms: a comprehensive solution that easily combines administration tools, lesson planning tools, collaboration tools, with a content resource and management center, all in one integrated platform. The eGenio platform is designed with applications including, assessment, lesson building and learning activity applications; or unleash the power of eGenio's framework / application design with its open API. ESAs and school districts may create and personalize applications to meet their specific challenges, individual needs, and dreams. To learn more contact: [info@egenio.com](mailto:info@egenio.com).

### **Business Members News**

#### **8. EthicsGame.com webinars address anti-Bullying, Plagiarism, Cheating and Whistle-blowing (alcohol use) curricula**

EthicsGame.com, an AESA business member, provides practical, real life curricula designed around dilemmas students face, including: Bullying, Plagiarism, Cheating, and Whistle-blowing (alcohol use) that can help schools meet requirements many states are adopting to address these topics.

EthicsGame.com is hosting two free webinars in September. The dates and times are:

- Wednesday, September 8: 3 pm Eastern, 2 pm Central, 1 pm Mountain, Noon Pacific, and 11 am Alaska.
- Wednesday, September 22: 3 pm Eastern, 2 pm Central, 1 pm Mountain, Noon Pacific, and 11 am Alaska.

To register for one of the sessions and receive directions regarding how to access the webinar email Dr. Chris McCale at [cmccale@ethicsgame.com](mailto:cmccale@ethicsgame.com).

The EthicsGame.com curricula are research-based and have been rewritten for middle school and high school students based on the successful Ethics Game program currently used by over 100 universities across the nation including California State University, Minnesota State University, Ohio University, Regis University, Seton Hall University, University of Denver, University of Florida, University of Nebraska, and University of Texas.

EthicsGame.com addresses these dilemmas the form of online topic-based simulations for high school and middle school students, faculty, and for leadership development programs. Simulations are self-paced, online learning experiences that immerse students in the complexity of solving real-world ethical dilemmas. Appropriate for use in classroom, online, blended, and accelerated instruction, these robust, in-depth simulations integrate easily into an existing curriculum.

The Value to Educational Service Agencies is that with EthicsGame.com, ESAs can help their constituents in the following ways:

- Train the Trainer curriculum: ESA staff can become certified trainers of the EthicsGame.com curriculum, which can be added to the ESA's professional development services offerings.
- School Professional Development: Once certified, ESA trainers can provide professional development for their schools' principals, teachers, and/or staff.
- Student curriculum: ESAs can further the dialogue by offering schools a turnkey, ethics web-based curriculum for their students.
- Communications Package: Through EthicsGame.com's communications package, schools can share informative columns 8-times annually through their existing parent website portal or parent newsletters.

ESAs receive reduced AESA member pricing for becoming certified trainers, as well as 30%-55% royalties for professional development, student curriculum, and/or communications support to their schools' teachers, staff and parents. For more information go to [www.ethicsgame.com](http://www.ethicsgame.com) or contact Dr. Christina McCale at [cmccale@ethicsgame.com](mailto:cmccale@ethicsgame.com).

### **Institutional Members News**

#### **9. McREL's "Power Walkthrough" provides ESA professional development for principals**

McREL's Power Walkthrough® software and workshop helps school leaders turn their regular classroom observations into "power walkthroughs" by using a PDA, Tablet PC, Blackberry, or iPhone device loaded with McREL's Web-based software.

McREL, the regional laboratory headquartered at Denver, is an AESA Institutional Member and has collaborated with AESA on research projects regarding ESAs, including "The role of Educational Service Agencies in supporting alternative teacher certification programs Phase 1" and "The role of Educational Service Agencies in supporting alternative teacher certification programs Phase 2." Both studies are available on the AESA website at:

<http://www.aesa.us/research.html>.

Strategies from McREL's popular books, *Classroom Instruction that Works* (CITW) and *Using Technology with Classroom Instruction that Works*, are the basis for this classroom observation software. In just a three- to five-minute visit, it is easy to observe and document teachers' use of effective instructional strategies, level of student engagement, use of technology, and other teacher practices that research has shown to influence student learning. After multiple visits to classrooms throughout the building, administrators are able to see aggregate patterns in classroom practice, coach teachers, and plan needs-driven professional development.

Tim Waters, McREL president and chief executive officer, said McREL will waive the training fee for ESA professional development staff to take the three-day training of trainers workshops for Power Walkthrough. The only cost to ESAs will be travel and expenses to the training of trainers workshops at Denver. ESAs may also choose to have McREL provide the training of trainers on-site locally. The only cost to ESAs would be travel and expenses for the McREL staff. McREL will pay the cost of time for the workshop leader. ESAs will be able to retain all revenue from Power Walkthrough trainings done for school district and building staff they train after being certified.

For more information about Power Walkthrough, please contact Lisa Maxfield at [lmaxfield@mcrel.org](mailto:lmaxfield@mcrel.org), call 303 632-5561, or visit the website at <http://www.mcrel.org/service/174/>.

#### **10. Learning Point offers free online course content from Intel®**

Learning Point Associates, a regional laboratory headquartered at Naperville, IL., the national training agency for Intel Teach Elements, will provide a new series of free professional development for Educational Service Agencies and school districts.

Learning Point Associates is an AESA Institutional Member and has collaborated with AESA and ESAs on numerous research projects including "Educational Service Agency accountability and accreditation: Is a national system Needed?" and "A network for educational change in the Great Lakes Region: A view through the lens of Educational Service Agencies." The studies are available on the AESA website at: <http://www.aesa.us/research.html>. Intel is an AESA Business Member.

Intel Teach Elements a series of high interest, visually compelling professional development courses that you may offer to PK-12 teachers in your service area. Courses are convenient for busy teachers and practical for all levels of expertise in the topic. Course content is free to your agency, either online and or on CD. Your agency may charge normal and customary professional development fees to teachers who take Elements courses from your agency. Elements courses provide deeper exploration of 21st century learning concepts. Flexible facilitation materials are provided to support your face-to-face, online, or hybrid delivery.

Assessment in 21st Century Classrooms and Project-Based Approaches are available now at [www.intel.com/teachers](http://www.intel.com/teachers). Future courses include Collaboration in the 21st Century Classroom (see a preview and get a "Facilitator's Kit" at ISTE 2010), Leadership, and Thinking Critically with Data.

For more information about the Intel Teach Elements, to attend a Webinar, or to learn more about the Elements series and how you may obtain the free online course content contact Pam Jacobs at [Pamela.Jacobs@learningpt.org](mailto:Pamela.Jacobs@learningpt.org).

### **U.S. Department of Education**

#### **11. What Works Clearinghouse Reports and Reviews**

The US Department of Education's What Works Clearinghouse released these reports in August:

- Early Childhood Education for Children with Disabilities Report: Lovaas Model  
[http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/reports/ece\\_cd/lovaas\\_model/index.asp](http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/reports/ece_cd/lovaas_model/index.asp)

- Quick Review looks at Mathematics Teacher Professional Development Program  
<http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/publications/quickreviews/QRReport.aspx?QRId=154>
- WWC rates study of Student Incentive Programs  
<http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/publications/quickreviews/QRReport.aspx?QRId=152>
- Intervention Report: Concept-Oriented Reading Instruction (CORI)  
[http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/reports/adolescent\\_literacy/cori/index.asp](http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/reports/adolescent_literacy/cori/index.asp)
- WWC Looks at research on Accelerated Reader  
[http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/reports/adolescent\\_literacy/accel\\_read/index.asp](http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/reports/adolescent_literacy/accel_read/index.asp)
- Reading mastery subject of new WWC Report  
[http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/reports/adolescent\\_literacy/reading\\_mastery/index.asp](http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/reports/adolescent_literacy/reading_mastery/index.asp)