



AESA Online News **April 21, 2008**

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1. URGENT: Immediate Action Needed to Continue Medicaid Moratorium

A House vote on H.R. 5613 to extend the Medicaid moratorium through April 2009 is scheduled to be held on Tuesday, April 22 or Wednesday, April 23. Brian Talbott, AESA executive director, urges ESAs to contact their U.S. House member urging their support of H.R. 5613, which will allow ESAs and LEAs to continue to receive reimbursement for the health-related transportation, administrative and outreach services provided for Medicaid-eligible students. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has issued regulations to end the program. Last year Congress passed a moratorium on implementing those regulations. That moratorium ends June 30. HR 5613 extends the moratorium to June 30, 2009.

Along with the AESA, groups opposing the HHS regulations and supporting HR. 5613 include the AASA, NSBA, NEA, The National Governors Association, the National Association of State Medicaid Directors, and the American Public Human Services Association.

Following approval of H.R. 5613 by the House Energy and Commerce Committee, the committee's ranking Republican, Rep. Joe Barton of Texas, stated in media reports that he had been told the Secretary of Health and Human Services would recommend that President Bush veto HR 5613 if it reaches his desk. However, Barton, who supported extending the Medicaid moratorium, stated, "His veto would be overridden and I would vote to override the veto" because, "Very few people support the regulations. Members of the House are elected every two years, and the president is about to become a private citizen. We like to be re-elected."

According to the House Committee on Energy and Commerce, Reps. John D. Dingell, D-MI, committee chairman, and Tim Murphy, R-PA introduced H.R. 5613. The bill is titled, "Protecting the Medicaid Safety Net Act of 2008." According to the Committee, it would place a temporary one-year moratorium on seven Administration-imposed Medicaid regulations that would make significant cuts to the program over the next five years. According to the Congressional Budget Office (CBO), nearly \$20 billion in funding is at stake during this five-year period.

H.R. 5613 addresses the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) issued regulations that would reverse long-standing Medicaid policies and eliminate federal payments for a variety of critical Medicaid functions. The rules affect payments to: public safety net institutions; coverage of rehabilitation services for people with disabilities; outreach and enrollment in schools as well as specialized medical transportation to school for children covered by Medicaid; graduate medical education payments; coverage of hospital clinic services; case management services that allow people with disabilities to remain in the community; state provider tax laws; and appeals filed through HHS.

2. AESA News

Positive Behavioral Supports

Is your ESA the lead or providing support for Positive Behavioral Supports in your state or region? If so, please let us know by emailing pyoung@aesa.us. Some of our members are anxious to be in touch with others working on this with the goal of sharing information and possibly creating a table talk session at the AESA Annual Conference.

AESA Executives in Residence Program deadline extended to May 15

The deadline for the highly successful Executive in Residence Program by the Membership Services Committee of AESA has been extended from May 1 to May 15. Applications for the program are available at the AESA website: http://www.aesa.us/Exec_Residence/execinres.html .

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 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.

Current participants are: Maria Cashman, Associate Administrator, Grant Wood AEA, Iowa; Beverly Knox-Pipes, Assistant Superintendent, Genesee ISD, Michigan; Karen Schwartzrock, Human Resources Director, ESD 112, Washington; Wanda Sommers Wall, Education and Innovations Director, South Central Service Cooperative, MN

Year 3 Participants were: Dennis Mathews, Associate Superintendent, ESD 112, Vancouver, WA; Tim Merlino, Chief Financial Officer, ESD 112, WA; Julie Staley, Federal Programs Manager, SE Regional Resource Center, Juneau, AK

Year 2 Participants were: David Kwiatkowski, Director of Special Education, CESA 8, Gillett, WI; Andy Pachacek, Managing Director of Financial Services, ESC, Houston, TX; Mike Smoczyk, for Career and Technical Education, Metro 916, White Bear Lake, MN

Year 1 Participants were: Cliff Carmody, Deputy Executive Director, (now Executive Director), SW/W Central Service Cooperative, Marshal, MN; Jada Rupley, Associate Superintendent, ESD 112, Vancouver, WA.

Call for Presentations – AESA Annual Conference December 3-6, Phoenix DEADLINE for Submission extended to May 15, 2008

Responding to requests from ESAs, the AESA has extended the deadline for online submission of proposals for presentations at the December 3-6 Annual Conference from May 1 to May 15.

The AESA is soliciting proposals in five content strands within the theme of this year's Conference, "Preparing Students ... Delivering Success."

The five strands are:

Demonstrating Results. This strand focuses on governance strategies for ESA board members, CEO's and personnel that will enhance their agency. Entrepreneurship, improving staff quality, leadership skills development, and policy will be profiled through this strand.

Delivering Success. Presentations may profile best practices, successful strategies, model services online and distance learning, telecommuting, next generation workforce, funding, along with public and private business models.

Technology: Transforming Learning. This strand will feature successful uses of technology resulting in direct benefits to ESAs, local school districts, and student performance.

Tools for Collaboration. Presentations will highlight sessions to build common agendas, enhance communication, marketing and public relations, and strengthen collaboration with businesses, schools, state and federal agencies, and institutions of higher education.

Measuring Success. ESAs may present opportunities to build accountability and evaluate programs and services, meet standards and increase student performance, strengthen educational practices, and professional development.

One of the greatest strengths of our Annual Conference is the opportunity to learn from each other. We invite your ESA to submit a proposal for a breakout session. Invitations to submit have been mailed to each ESA CEO. Further information is available at www.aesa.us. Proposals must be submitted online! Share what your agency is doing and help all of us to learn. Questions? Send an email to pyoung@aes.us.

The website to submit an application to present is: http://204.186.159.151/aesa-issi/aesa/members_online/submissions/substart.asp.

3. New AESA Business Members

Three new companies have joined AESA as Business Members: EDmin, InnerLink, and Knowledge Delivery Systems.

EDmin

www.edmin.com

With years of experience working with Educational Service Centers in Ohio and RESAs in Mississippi, EDmin has joined the AESA to extend its solutions that impact student achievement and improve school improvement planning efforts nationwide. EDmin's work has established partnerships that enable the ESAs to re-brand their own services with the data management, content resources, and alignment services provided by EDmin to reflect the individual ESAs and school districts' needs. Additionally, through EDmin's portal services, ESAs can provide a wide variety of services and content through single sign-on, a benefit districts have embraced since it enables solutions to be linked to one another. EDmin's flagship product, INFORM®, is a role-based, decision support tool for educators that includes the ability to both scale both up and down to meet the demands and enrollments of the schools it serves. For more information about EDmin and INFORM, contact Sage Ann Scheer, Ph.D., Vice President and General Manager-INFORM at 619-253-1691 or through e-mail at sscheer@edmin.com.

InnerLink

www.theinnerlink.com

InnerLink provides a secure web-based security and emergency preparedness system that links schools directly with emergency first responders in compliance with the National Incident Management System standards adopted by the Department of Homeland Security, as well as an interactive health and safety curriculum that helps schools comply with the federal requirements for a coordinated school health program. InnerLink is an innovative health, safety, and preparedness company that focuses on the overall wellness of our communities. InnerLink has developed a rich mix of products – from safety, preparedness and recovery solutions to health, nutrition and fitness products for schools and communities. InnerLink's leading safety solution, **TeamPrepared™**, is the bridge

between schools and those who serve them in a crisis improving schools' security and preparedness. It features comprehensive site assessments, planning tools and best-practice templates for all hazards. Most recently, **TeamPrepared** received District Administration Magazine's 2007-2008 Reader's Choice award. InnerLink offers AESA members the opportunity to enhance their community presence and ability to serve by joining forces with InnerLink's **TeamPrepared** solution. Our partners increase the scope of their offerings while advancing their mission through evidence-based programs that have a sustainable and collaborative approach. Join the ranks of innovative educators that are bringing advanced tools and practices into each school's emergency planning and response process. For more information, contact Bill Gleason, Emergency Planning Consultant at (717) 381-4281 or email wgleason@theinnerlink.com .

Knowledge Delivery Systems

www.kdsi.org

Knowledge Delivery Systems provides dynamic online professional development courses for K-12 educators, aligned to state standards. Teachers can use these courses for continuing education, in-service, or graduate credits towards salary differentials and career advancement. Knowledge Delivery systems can provide ESA's the ability to offer its members districts a much needed service at a cost effective rate to meet the requirements each teacher has while creating a new stream of revenue for the ESA. Knowledge Delivery Systems will set up an ESA's own website portal branded to its ESA and enable them to offer pre-created award winning video based online professional development workshops and graduate courses developed by the countries foremost educational experts such as Carol Ann Tomlinson, Jay Mctighe, and Rick Wormeli. This will effectively enable an ESA to over night be able to offer online courses without the typical large expenses that are associated with creating these courses. Knowledge Delivery Systems will also work with an ESA to develop their own workshops created by their curriculum staff into online courses that can be reoffered to their member districts, allowing an ESA to create its own online academy. For more information contact, Evan Erdberg, Director of New Business and Partnerships, Knowledge Delivery Systems, (800) 728-0032 ext. 122, or email evan@kdsi.org.

4. From Our Business Partners

AESA Business Partner Summit Energy in the news

AESA Business Partner Summit Energy, a well-regarded, international, independent energy management firm, assists ESAs working with natural gas suppliers in deregulated states lock in optimum rates, predict market changes, manage risks, and budget for long-term energy price stability.

Recognized as an international leader in the energy business, Summit Energy is regularly sought out for its positions and comments by media such as The Wall Street Journal, USAToday, CNN, CNBC, Forbes, Investors Weekly, Bloomberg Media, and Investors Business Daily.

Copies of those articles and broadcasts, including the most recent article “How Buyers Survive the Energy Cost Crunch” in the April issue of Purchasing Magazine, are available at Summit Energy’s website:

<http://www.summitenergy.com/in-the-news/in-the-news.html>

Summit Energy, which manages over \$14 billion in annual energy spending, was selected as an AESA Business Partner as an independent and unbiased advocate, always focused on the best interests of its customers which include large and small industrial, commercial, governmental and educational clients.

For more information, about Summit Energy, please contact: Gabe Smith, 502-429-3800. Summit Energy Manager of Client Development at 502 429-3800 or email gasmith@summitenergy.com.

AESA partner provides full compliance with IRS mandated rule changes

The IRS has mandated changes to the administration of tax sheltered individual annuity 403(b) and deferred compensation 457 plans effective January 1, 2009. The AESA and Great American Plan Administrators, an AESA Business Partner, are announcing a new program for ESAs and the school districts they serve to provide no cost administration of those programs that will meet the IRS mandated changes.

The program offers full compliance with the mandated changes, at no charge, regardless of the program providers through the third party plan administration of Great American Plan Administrators. The program will also provide:

- Updates on IRS regulations,
- Monitoring IRS limits,
- Accountability for the agency or district for loan and distribution processing, and
- Plan document preparation.

Additionally, the no cost plan administration provides consultation with the Great American Plan Administrators’ staff regulatory attorney. The program includes secure electronic transfer of information. Great American Plan Administrators will work with the ESAs or school districts at no cost to align necessary data for the electronic transfer. The program also provides both employer and employee education and training.

For more information:

- Visit the AESA/Great American Plan program website at: <http://www.gapladata.com/aesa.asp>
- View a three-minute web-based video describing the program at: <http://new.gafri.com/publicsite/swf/asea/player.html>
- Send an email requesting information to: aesagaplan@gafri.com
- Contact Lana Woodring, Great American Plan Administrators, (800) 695-1471, ext. 11761.

TERC announces ESA Using Data Partnership Program

An AESA Business Member, TERC of Cambridge, MA, has announced it has developed a Using Data Partnership Program for Educational Service Areas. The Using Data program will allow participating ESAs to have their staff trained in the scientifically research based program so that they may train and facilitate educators to effectively and without bias use the data generated from state tests, SIS systems, formative tests, portfolios and other data sources to make the best decisions for improving learning for all children. Because Using Data is a process and not a vendor-specific product, it may be used for all types of data analysis. TERC teamed with the National Science Foundation and other educational institutions over a five-year period of research, field tests, and contracted engagements with foundations, states, educational service agencies, and school districts to develop the Using Data process now being offered to ESAs. For more information contact Jake Schlumpf, Using Data/TERC Director of Education and Business Alliances, at 617 547-0430, ext 648, email jake_schlumpf@terc.edu or visit the Using Data website at www.usingdata.terc.edu.

TransACT® launches Section 504 Compliance Collection

The AESA has worked with TransACT Communications, an AESA Business Partner, to help develop a Section 504 Compliance Collection and negotiate a discount for your school districts and opportunity to earn revenue for your agency. ESAs may incorporate the Section 504 Compliance Collection into its special education services, or other service programs, with an AESA negotiated discount valid through May 31, 2008 for either a consortia or open enrollment.

Focusing exclusively on the K-12 education market since 1994, TransACT serves Educational Service Agencies, school districts, and State Departments of Education primarily through its multilingual parent notifications for Titles I, III, IX, X, IDEA 2004, and OCR.

For more information on the Section 504 Compliance Collection, TransACT, or its new ActPoint product, contact Rick Passovoy, President/CEO of TransACT Communications, Inc., at 425 977-2100, email rick@transact.com, or visit the Section 504 Compliance Collection website at www.transact.com/504.

5. From the DoE

U.S. Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings announced she will take administrative steps to ensure all states use the same formula to calculate how many students graduate from high school on time, and how many drop out. Secretary Spellings stated the data would be made public so that people nationwide can compare how students of every race, background, and income level are performing. Please see the [press release](#) for more information. Her remarks came at a press conference hosted by America's Promise Alliance for the release of their new report, [Cities in Crisis: A Special Analytic Report on High School Graduation](#). This report documents large disparities between graduation rates in urban districts and neighboring suburban districts. Notably, in several instances, the disparity is more than 35 percentage points. In response, the

alliance is sponsoring a campaign which will feature summits in all 50 states and 50 key cities over the next two years. Nationwide, about one in three high school students drops out before graduating.