

AESA NEWS

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Association of Educational Service Agencies

November 2002



**Building
Tomorrow.
The Future
Is Here.**

WE'RE READY FOR YOU!

2002 AESA CONFERENCE, EXHIBITION, AND SHOWCASE

Dallas, Texas | December 4-7

EVERYBODY WHO'S ANYBODY WILL BE THERE...

INCLUDING

U.S. Secretary of Education Rod Paige

Texas Commissioner of Education Felipe Alanis

Futurist David Thornburg

Political News Photographer David Hume Kennerly

IT'S YOUR FINAL CHANCE TO REGISTER!

MAKE THIS CONFERENCE YOUR TOP PRIORITY...

We've got work to do, and the momentum is building. If the future of education is your agency's top priority (and we know it is), you must **BE THERE** to engage in important dialogue about our hope for education, and share what your agency is doing to assure success. The United States, Canada, and Europe will all be represented in Dallas.

The future is **HERE...**

Register and make travel arrangements **ONLINE**. Log on to www.aesa-serves.org and click on the "Conference" icon. Make travel arrangements from the conference site by clicking the "Travel, Leisure, Hotel" icon.

AESA NEWS

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AESA Foundation makes first gift to enhance technology

Responding to a request from the AESA council, the AESA Foundation has provided funding that will enhance the organization's ability to maintain its financial records and to facilitate conference registrations. The total to be provided is \$30,800.

AESA felt that resources could be saved if we were to bring 'in-house' the registration processes for our various conferences. To do this, we would need a technology system that would allow members and others to continue to register via the Internet and to make payment by credit card. Further, it is important to have the registration and payment information linked directly to the organization's financial records.

Such a system was available through Integrated Software Solutions, Inc. (ISSI) of Vienna, VA. The two major components of the system are the Membership Package (IMPak) and the Accounting Package (APak). Anita Talbott and Peter Young, AESA staff, who use these products, report that they are mastering the systems and are pleased to see how much information can be obtained.

The AESA Foundation board was pleased to respond to the need by providing the necessary funding. The grant will be paid out over a three-year period, matching the financial arrangement with Integrated Software Solutions.

In discussing the grant, the AESA Foundation board did note that this sum would cut into the principal of the fund. However, it was agreed that this need was significant and the use of some funds provided by corporate donors would be appropriate for this project.

Your contributions help ensure the future of AESA

Members and friends of AESA are reminded that the AESA Foundation exists to provide a source of funding that will sustain AESA's highest priorities and expand programs and services. Donations to the AESA Foundation by individuals and agencies are tax deductible. Such donations make an excellent way to recognize retirements or key events within an agency.

For further information on giving to the AESA Foundation, contact Dr. Ronald S. Fielder, AESA Foundation President at Grant Wood AEA, 4401 Sixth St., SW, Cedar Rapids, IA, 52404 or via e-mail at rfielder@aea10.k12.ia.us.

Meet the

In December, ballots will be mailed to each member agency CEO/superintendent for the AESA council elections. Following is biographical information about each candidate. We urge you to vote in this important election.

As most of you know, this past year the membership voted to expand council representation to four regions and extend council terms of office from three to four years.

Through a change in association bylaws, a Southern Region was added to the council. In order to maintain 12 council members and have four-year terms of office, each region will elect council members three out of four years.

This year the Eastern Region has the bye and will not have a nominee. As a result the national candidates come from the Central, Southern, and Western regions.

Eastern. Connecticut, Indiana, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania.

Central. Illinois, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Nebraska, Wisconsin.

Southern. Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, North Carolina, South Carolina, Texas, Virginia, West Virginia.

Western. Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Kansas, Montana, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington, Wyoming.

candidates for AESA executive council

Central Region Candidate

Lee Warne

Lee Warne is the Executive Director of the Southwest/West Central Service Cooperatives, District #991, Marshall Minnesota. The SW/WC Service Cooperatives serves 66 public school districts in Minnesota. Lee served as the deputy executive director for four years and has been the executive director since 1996. Lee also has served as superintendent of schools, high school principal, and teacher over the past 30 years.



Lee has been an active leader in Minnesota education. He is president of the Minnesota Rural Education Association and past chair of the Minnesota Service Cooperative Directors. Lee also has served in other leadership positions and has received recognition from professional and state associations while maintaining an active role in community organizations.

Lee believes the role of educational service agencies continues to grow. He is committed to a collaborative approach to addressing members needs and will bring this approach to his service for AESA.

Southern Region Candidate

Judith H. Miller

Position/Employer: Executive Director, East MS Center for Educational Development, Inc. (EMCED); Interim Chair and Assistant Professor of Educational Leadership, Division of Education, Mississippi State University, Meridian, MS.



Career History: Interim Chair-Division of Education, Mississippi State University—Meridian Campus, Meridian, MS (2001-2002); Assistant Professor and Program Coordinator Educational Leadership, Mississippi State University (1995-present); Executive Director, EMCED Regional Service Center, Meridian, MS (1995-present); public school teacher and administrator, Meridian Public Schools, Meridian, MS (1980-1995).

Education: B.S. and M.Ed., University of West Alabama, Livingston, AL; Ph.D., University of Southern Mississippi, Hattiesburg, MS.

Career Highlights: Led extensive work with rural school districts in the areas of technology, team building and strategic planning. Developed and implemented Project Right Start, a new teacher induction program. Extensive experience in grantsmanship.

Western Region Candidates

R. Stephen Aguirre

R. Stephen Aguirre, Executive Director of High Plains Regional Education Cooperative (HPRC) in Ranton, NM; with the cooperation of eight superintendents, offers direction, support and leadership to children throughout northeastern New Mexico including special education and regular education assistance, Federal funding, Medicaid in the Schools program, cooperative purchasing and consolidated grants, Accountability Data System (ADS), technical assistance, and professional development activities.



Aguirre is committed to providing quality, research-validated, effective practices to students and schools in the HPRC regional service area and to the advancement of rural education. Aguirre's efforts have brought recognition throughout the region and state.

Besides the executive director position, Aguirre has been an associate school psychologist, licensed practicing clinical counselor, teacher, and secondary counselor. Career highlights include 1999-2000 MITS co-chairman, IDEA State Advisory council member, New Mexico representative for regional service centers, and Focus Monitoring Team member (advises the MN SDE on special education compliance and accreditation).

Edward L. Schmitt

Dr. Edward L. Schmitt is the superintendent of Oregon's largest ESD providing comprehensive services to eight districts in Multnomah County including the Portland Public Schools. He oversees a budget of \$70 million. He is currently serving as president of the Oregon Association of Education Service Districts and is a leader of the Oregon Public Education Network. He has degrees from Northern Iowa, Drake University, and Iowa State University, and has worked as a teacher, principal, college instructor, district administrator, and superintendent in both Iowa and Oregon.



Ed Schmitt is a distinguished educational leader who has won the support of his colleagues in both metropolitan settings and in the most isolated reaches of Oregon because he solves problems by looking for the good of the whole and not just his own needs. He is thoughtful, well organized, visionary, articulate, and most of all, reflects a sincere interest in his communication with others.

Strategic Energy helps schools navigate the complex and changing environment of energy deregulation

Early last year, we spoke to you in this forum about electricity deregulation. While some areas were enjoying great success, other regions were in the throes of a nationally publicized energy crisis. The great promise of competition-induced cost reduction has in some cases been hampered by poor restructuring plans and complicated by politics. California's debacle offers many lessons for the rest of the states. Among these lessons, the most important may be that it pays to do thorough research and really understand the challenges of the new environment.

In the new environment of retail electricity choice, savings are important. As more states open electricity supply to competition, more schools will look for guidance through an incredibly complex set of rules and opportunities. ESAs play an important role in ensuring that our schools benefit from this new purchasing paradigm. First, ESAs can do the legwork to identify the best suppliers. That is critical because, after several years of experience with deregulation, schools have seen some suppliers stand the test of time while many have exited the market.

The best suppliers are able to bill customers accurately in a timely manner. The best suppliers know their business well enough to stay in the market. The best suppliers are financially stable and can handle the enormous requirements for credit to back their wholesale purchases. Most importantly, the best suppliers are profitable.

ESAs can negotiate arrangements with suppliers that bring additional benefits to members. Today, I want to offer examples of ESAs that are providing leadership and a valuable service to schools through these electricity programs. Each one has characteristics that make it as unique as the part of the country in which it resides. The one common thread is their partnership with Strategic Energy, AESA's National Energy Partner.

The Energy Management Consortium, administered by all nine Western Pennsylvania Intermediate Units, is the longest continuously running program in the nation. Since 1997, it has saved over \$10 million and locked in low supply rates through 2005.

Ohio's School Pool, founded in part by the Hamilton County Educational Service Center, has been in operation since January 2001. This program is a partnership with the Ohio School Boards Association, Ohio Association of

Business Officials and Buckeye Association of School Administrators. Annual savings exceed \$2 million, and it continues to grow as the state's retail choice program matures.

Over the last 18 months, AESA members have started several more programs on behalf of their schools. The Lower Pioneer Valley Educational Collaborative (Massachusetts) initiated its group electricity purchasing cooperative in August 2001. This program is open to a comprehensive variety of public entities including school districts, municipalities, county jails and various non-profit organizations. This program is poised to grow as regulatory and market conditions permit.

Texas Region IV (Houston) and VI (Huntsville) Educational Service Centers launched their Energy for Schools program in January 2002, when Texas' deregulation program commenced. It has grown to the largest schools aggregation program in the state in terms of volume of power consumed. First year savings are expected to be approximately \$34 million relative to utility costs.

ESAs in other states including Oregon and Connecticut are in the formative stages of electricity purchasing programs. Anticipating the sweeping changes a competitive electricity environment would impose, AESA selected Strategic Energy in early 1999. What initially sold Strategic Energy is their unique approach to working with schools. Strategic Energy takes the time up-front to educate school personnel about deregulation, and then takes a professional service approach to objectively manage electricity supplies for customers, similar to the way money managers manage investments and pension funds.

Strategic Energy is an established energy purchasing management and supply firm. While other supply firms and some school consortia have come and gone, Strategic Energy and its ESA partners have thrived, delivering millions of dollars in electricity cost savings and bringing budget certainty to schools.

Schools look to ESAs for answers on how to make the most of the new deregulation reality. Through AESA, the expertise of Strategic Energy is available to your ESA so that your schools can experience the benefits that come with choice.

For more information contact Tom Lynskey, National Sales Manager- Education, Strategic Energy at (412)394-6555 or better yet, visit him at AESA's National Conference in Dallas, December 4-6.