

AESA NEWS

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AESA applauds national award winners



The Honorable Rod Paige, United States Secretary of Education, receives Walter G. Turner Award

In 1976, Dr. Walter G. Turner worked toward creating a national organization that would impact Federal legislation and promote the value of ESAs. Now, more than 25 years later, Secretary Rod Paige's vision and leadership has opened the door for ESAs to be recognized as vital links in state and national efforts to take students to the highest levels of academic achievement.

As a visionary school reformer, Dr. Paige is creating a culture of achievement, improving student performance, developing safe schools, and enhancing the quality of education. He was instrumental in passage of the No Child Left Behind Act, the most fundamental reform of Federal education policy in history. By directly utilizing ESAs and AESA, he is making sure that "no child is left behind."

The Walter G. Turner Award recognizes contributions in the advancement of educational service agency programs.



Dr. Ronald Fielder, Chief Administrator at the Grant Wood Area ESA, Cedar Rapids, Iowa, receives Justus A. Prentice Award

For more than 10 years, Dr. Fielder has been in the forefront of activities that have promoted and supported ESAs. While serving on the AESA council, he stood out as a member whose ideas consistently pushed the agency into areas of service that were previously not considered.

Seizing upon opportunities for collaboration and capacity building, Dr. Fielder has virtually catapulted area education agencies into major roles in the Iowa educational system and in community planning. Through his leadership and solid relationships with state entities, the Iowa Legislature passed a bill establishing an accreditation process for Iowa's area education agencies that firmly positions AEAAs as the leader in school improvement for the state's educational system.

The Justus A. Prentice Award recognizes contributions through executive leadership in the advancement of ESA programs.



Dr. Lee Christiansen, retired AESA Executive Director, receives E. Robert Stephens Awards

As a longtime advocate of regional service, Dr. Christiansen has continually maintained ESAs are best positioned to work with districts and agencies in ways that truly make a difference in the education programs for all students. During his four-year tenure as AESA executive director, the organization witnessed outstanding growth and participation as membership and annual conference attendance more than tripled. Dr. Christiansen initiated *Perspectives*, the AESA journal of research and opinion about educational services agencies.

Most recently, Dr. Christiansen spent a year sorting, analyzing, and gathering AESA history to prepare a document entitled, *History—Association of Educational Service Agencies*. The publication was a gift to the AESA membership on its 25th anniversary and remains a valuable resource for understanding the history and importance of ESAs.

The E. Robert Stephens Award recognizes research, writing, and/or publishing information that advances the understanding of ESAs.

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Plan now for 2003 conference

The time is right to start planning to attend the 2003 AESA Annual Conference and Exhibition at Marco Island, Florida, December 3-6, 2003. Make your reservations now to ensure your stay at one of the two conference hotels. The Marco Island Marriott will host the conference, with the backup hotel being the Hilton Marco Island, which is a lovely facility just five doors down the beach.

Call the Marco Island Marriott Resort at 800-GET-HERE (800-438-4373). Or, the Hilton Marco Island can be reached at 800-HILTONS (800-445-8667) or by calling the hotel directly at (239)394-5000. The conference rate at both hotels is \$161 per night, and includes resort fees and rebates to defray conference expenses. When making your reservations, state your arrival date and that you will be attending the AESA conference.

Information on the call for presentations, exhibitor prospectus, agenda, and on-line registration will be available in the spring.

IMPORTANT: Please reserve only the number of rooms your agency will need for this event. You are responsible for making and (if you must) canceling your own hotel room(s). Even if you cancel your room(s) within the hotel's stated policy, AESA is required to pay for any rooms that are not resold because those rooms are part of the AESA guaranteed room block. Therefore, AESA will bill any agency or individual who has reserved a room in the block and cancels after September 1, 2003, unless the room is resold.

Membership directories now available

The AESA 2003 membership directory was mailed the last week in December. This year the annual directory was sponsored and printed by Canter, a partner of AESA. This handy reference tool was mailed in an oversized envelope with a return address from Canter and Associates in Los Angeles, California. There were two directories in each envelope. AESA appreciates Canter's assistance with publishing and mailing the directory on our behalf!

Additional copies can be purchased for \$5 each plus shipping and handling. Send requests to Anita Talbott at abtalbott@aol.com. Also, send any corrections to the above e-mail address.

Court overturns requirements affecting libraries

A three-judge panel of the US District Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania ruled on May 21, 2002, that Sections 1712(a)(2) and 1721(b) of the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) (applying to libraries) are facially invalid under the First Amendment and permanently enjoined the government from enforcing those provisions. The court found unconstitutional section 254(h)(6), which set out a requirement that a library receiving E-rate discounts have a technology protection measure for its computers with Internet access. Thus, public libraries receiving E-rate discounts are not required to filter their computers with Internet access.

It is important to note that the decision did not address CIPA requirements as they apply to schools. Those requirements remain in full force and effect, and schools will continue to be required to meet CIPA requirements as spelled out in the FCC regulations in order to receive funds from the Schools and Libraries Universal Service Support Mechanism.

AESA annual conference, a Dallas sensation

The 2002 AESA Annual Conference and Exposition in Dallas, Texas, was an enormous success. From the opening ceremonies, where guests were given a Texas-size welcome by a 180-piece marching band, to the closing brunch, this conference was truly extraordinary!

Where else can AESA members see and hear inspirational song and dance by some of the nation's finest student groups? Where else can we be commended and assured by the U.S. Secretary of Education Dr. Rod Paige that the work of ESAs across the country is vital to the success of our nation's educational system? Where else can we work together to build tomorrow for the 40.7 million students we serve, or visit with friends and colleagues from around the world? You had to be in the Big D to experience all this!

AESA president Twyla Barnes and the staff of ESD 112 in Vancouver, Washington, went above and beyond the call of duty to prepare for this conference. Special thanks also go to the Texas regional educational centers, especially Joe Farmer, executive director of Region X Education Service Center in Richardson, Texas, and his staff for all the hard work and support they provided during and prior to the conference.

Gathering...

The Wednesday evening welcome reception featured lively music, great food, and plenty of networking opportunities. Attendees mingled in the exhibit hall with conference vendors, who were sponsors of more than 100 booths featuring exceptional products and services. New this year was a grand prize giveaway for having a "Passport" stamped by vendors. Thanks to HP, Microsoft and Motion Computing for donating those prizes. Lucky attendees won computer software, a hand-held computer, and a new Tablet PC.

In addition to the outstanding student marching band, Pulitzer Prize winning photographer David Hume Kennerly kicked-off the conference on Thursday morning in grand style. He shared a powerful and compelling documentary of life around the world and evoked memories that have shaped American life. His work with the children of New York City was inspiring. Following Kennerly's address, attendees had the opportunity to purchase his book—several hundred copies sold within minutes!

Learning...

An early season snow storm raged over the eastern half of the country, and Secretary Paige spent hours attempting to fly into Dallas to address the attendees. When word came that he couldn't make his Friday morning keynote, the conference staff—with assistance from Region X ESC in Richardson, TX, and ESD 101 in Spokane, WA—arranged a satellite connection with the U.S. Department of Education. Secretary Paige was able to address conference attendees live, over a satellite feed. What usually takes weeks of planning was pulled together in less than 17 hours! Dr. Paige's inspiring message was an exuberant affirmation of the role of ESAs in No Child Left Behind and a national call to action. ESAs will act as the communication link between the U.S. Department of Education and local school districts. ESAs also will be called upon to assist in the implementation of the new law.

Futurist David Thornburg challenged everyone's thinking with a discussion about why today's students think differently than students of the past. His insights into technology and its impact helped participants to understand how education must change to meet the needs of today's students.

Texas Commissioner of Education Felipe Alanis delivered an emotional message at Saturday's brunch about the importance of public education and the job ESAs do on behalf of local districts. His personal speaking style and words of encouragement proved a powerful closing to a great conference.

Attendees participated in more than 80 sessions, ranging from accountability, retooling with technology, teaching and learning, and governance.

Networking... and support!

Also new to the conference this year was a Welcome Center, where guests could enjoy refreshments, check e-mail, sign up for leisure tours, collect information, and relax in front of the Christmas tree. Sponsored by Apple Computer, the center was a popular hub of conference activity.

AESA thanks the sponsors who made this conference possible. Without their assistance it is estimated that the registration fee would triple to cover expenses. Special thanks to 4GL School Solutions, Apple Computer, Canter, Chancery, Hewlett Packard, HOSTS Learning, Horace Mann, Strategic Energy, Learning 24/7, Tremco, and Voyager Expanded Learning.

Mark your calendars now for Marco Island, Florida, December 3-6, 2003. More information can be found on-line at www.aesa-serves.org.

eSchoolMall and AESA form business partnership to enhance the joint buying power of ESAs nationwide

eSchoolMall becomes preferred provider of administrative e-procurement software for ESAs within AESA's extensive national membership.

AESA is partnering with eSchoolMall (tm), the market share leader of procurement solutions (easyPurchase and easyBid) for K-12 schools, to provide electronic group purchasing power to AESA members.

eSchoolMall's easyBid and easyPurchase software provides a complete procurement solution that elevates the buying power of schools and service agencies to the next level. Additionally, eSchoolMall will work with AESA to offer members the option of integrating these tools with their current back-office and financial software systems in order to realize greater efficiencies in the accounting process. AESA's members will benefit from this relationship as they move from a primarily paper-based and time consuming manual procurement process to eSchoolMall's efficient and cost-effective e-Procurement process for securing the goods and services they need to operate their schools.

"We are coordinating our partnership with AESA through the efforts of Mike Winkler, eSchoolMall's National Sales Director for Purchasing Cooperatives. Mike has extensive experience in the mission and goals of AESA member organizations," says Dan Corazzi, president and cofounder of eSchoolMall.

eSchoolMall is a proven leader in providing procurement solutions to the education market, with well over 1000 educational entities already using its software. The eSchoolMall solution electronically unites the classroom, the school business office, and the ESA cooperative with their selected vendor community to ensure the highest degree of efficiency in purchasing goods and services. eSchoolMall's core purpose is to apply technology to make it easier for schools to go about their business of educating students.

AESA is pleased to be partnering with eSchoolMall in offering members a cost-effective and fully integrated electronic procurement solution. We believe that easyPurchase and easyBid will be powerful tools for our members to utilize in their efforts to optimize their cooperative purchasing power.

"We are especially pleased to be working with an organization such as AESA, and we are confident that our procurement solutions will provide AESA members with the tools they need to streamline their purchasing processes and, at the same time, command better economic pricing through the use of our electronic bidding solution," says Andy Flanagan, CEO and cofounder of eSchoolMall.

For information about eSchoolMall, contact Michael Winkler at (877) 969-7246 x 208 or mwinkler@eschoolmall.com

AESA/Microsoft software grant program enters second year with much to celebrate

The AESA/Microsoft Software Grant Program is entering its second year with much to celebrate. Last year, more than 55 grant applications were received and awarded. Computer labs in over 150 educational service agencies—housing over 5,000 computers—received free training software. This year, grant recipients will receive computer software and support materials applicable for K-12 classroom learning, management, and curriculum development, and the licenses to use the software in dedicated teacher training labs (physical or mobile).

Holly M. Jobe, the IMS director at the Montgomery County Intermediate Unit (MCIU) in Pennsylvania says, "Our three training labs (PC, Mac, and mobile) now have current versions of software as a result of this program. Through the grant MCIU was able to create state-of-the-art technology professional development facilities to provide a quality program using software that is being shipped with new machines. As a public entity that depends on state and school district contributions for funding, keeping the latest versions of software in the training labs is a challenge. This grant provided us with resources to maintain pace with our school clients."

AESA encourages one statewide application on behalf of all the services agencies in your state. If your state's ESAs are not already organized (many states did this last year), please start to do so now. The completed guidelines and application materials are available at www.aesa-serves.org. The Deadline for submitting completed applications is March 31, 2003. If you have questions, please e-mail Kari Arfstrom, AESA associate director at karfstrom.aesa@aesa.org.