

AESA NEWS

Volume 23, Number 3

Association of Educational Service Agencies

June 2003

ESAs are leading the leaders



The place: South Lake Tahoe, California, at the Embassy Suites Hotel.
The dates: July 30, 31, and August 1, 2003.

The topic: AESA's Summer Executive Briefing and Conference, *ESAs Leading the Leaders*. You won't want to miss the AESA CEO summer conference. It promises to be the best of the best! Built around the compelling best-seller, *The Tipping Point*, by Malcolm Gladwell, attendees will learn how to apply the three rules of "epidemics" to ensure enthusiastic and successful adoption and implementation of No Child Left Behind. Learn about "The law of the few," or how only exceptional people are capable of spreading the message. Understand "the stickiness factor" and the "power of context," or how to package NCLB to make it appealing and compel others to take action.

This year's conference will feature as keynote speaker, John D. Couch, vice president of education for Apple Computer, inc. With 30 years of experience as a computer scientist and an advocate for technology in education, Couch's presentation promises to be insightful. Apple will also provide senior staff from its education, marketing, and strategic planning groups to assist in facilitating the NCLB workshop sessions.

After hours, attendees and their families and guests will enjoy a dinner cruise on the Tahoe Queen. You will also want to take advantage of the art galleries, beaches, biking, fishing, golfing, hiking and horseback riding—to name just a few of the activities that are available in the area. And, through Apple's generous sponsorship, spouses and guests will take part in hands-on learning of iPhoto, a software application that allows one to import, organize, edit, and share digital photos. This is a great opportunity to document your fabulous Tahoe experience!

Register on-line now at www.aesa.us. The registration brochure was mailed to every ESA member in early May. You can download a form from the Web site. You may also mail your registration to AESA, 801 N. Quincy Street, Suite 750, Arlington, VA, 222-3-1730.

Canter & Associates, along with Apple Computer, Inc., are official conference sponsors. *Leading the Leaders* is being coordinated and hosted by Dr. Colleen Wilcox, county superintendent of schools for Santa Clara County in California.

The challenge to lead coupled with the capacity to serve — by Dr. Terry Nelson

Educational service agencies, or ESAs, serve many capacities and take on various roles in meeting the needs of their customers. The nature of the work varies from district to district, but the overall mission remains the same. In carrying out assigned responsibilities ESAs often struggle with the notion of leading, when by virtue of name we are expected to provide service. The challenge of leading a premiere service agency is finding the

appropriate balance of service while providing quality leadership for member districts. In assessing and addressing the needs of the customer it becomes increasingly apparent that the needs of individual districts vary considerably. The focus of this article is to present several ideas for discussion and support in the quest of ESAs to meet the individual needs of school districts through appropriate leadership and quality service.

(Please turn to page 3.)

AESA NEWS

AESA News is published for members of the Association of Educational Service Agencies, 801 N. Quincy Street, Suite 750, Arlington, VA 22203-1730; phone: (703) 875-0739; FAX: (703) 807-1849; (btalbott.aesa@aasa.org). Contact editor Kelly LaGrutta kellag@msn.com with your comments.

Executive Council

President

Joe Marinelli

President-Elect

Tim Gavigan

Past President

Twyla Barnes

Central Region

Wayne Bell
Nebraska (308)237-5927

Jayne Crisp
Kentucky (270)762-6978

Tim Gavigan
Wisconsin (414)546-3000

Lee Warne
Minnesota (507)537-2240

Eastern Region

David Calchera
Connecticut (860)455-0707

Joe Marinelli
New York (315)332-7284

Terry Nelson
Georgia, (706)556-6225

Southern Region

Judith Miller
Mississippi (601)484-0301

Western Region

Twyla Barnes
Washington (360) 750-7500

Bill McKinney
Texas (713)744-6534

Edward Schmitt
Oregon (503)257-1504

Colleen Wilcox
California (408)453-6511

Staff

Brian Talbott, Executive Director
(703)875-0739

Kari Arfstrom, Assoc. Director
(703)875-0739

Canter & Associates partners with AESA

AESA is pleased to announce a business partnership with Canter & Associates, a nationally acclaimed provider of exemplary professional development materials for educators and administrators. The partnership was officially launched at the 2002 AESA convention in Dallas, after Canter successfully completed AESA's rigorous due diligence process. It is already proving to be vigorous collaboration as Canter is currently working with over 25 educational service agencies and anticipates that many more ESAs will come on board in the near future.

According to Brian Talbot, AESA executive director, "Our relationship with Canter is a win-win situation. Our members will have some of the best professional development resources in the nation available to them via this partnership. In addition, through our business agreement, ESAs will be entitled to discounts on Canter products as well as participation in a revenue-sharing program that supports customized cooperative marketing for each ESA."

Canter has become the nation's largest provider of professional development, offering a complete spectrum of resources. Canter partners with accredited universities and leading education experts to develop and deliver quality programs including master's degrees, graduate courses, and award-winning books and videos. In addition, Canter's WebEd provides ESAs with just-in-time on-line training in 15 diverse topic areas.

"With passage of the NCLB, AESA and constituent ESAs are more important and relevant than ever," said Mike Soules, Canter's vice president of business development. "Canter is thrilled with our partnership and looks forward to many years of collaboration with AESA. We know that together we can provide ESAs with research-based, long-term professional development that has been proven to get results."

AESA members are invited to contact Mike Soules at (800) 733-1711.

Excellent testimony provided to FCC on E-Rate

Goeff Craven, technology group manager at Central Susquehanna Intermediate Unit (CSIU) in Lewisburg, Pennsylvania, provided expert testimony to the FCC on the E-rate program on behalf of AESA.

Since the first year of the E-rate program, the intermediate units in Pennsylvania have provided assistance to local school districts. During the current funding year, CSIU assisted over 40 school districts, in addition to providing statewide support for districts purchasing E-rate eligible equipment through a stateside consortium. Of the 40 school districts, the discounts range from 40% to 80%, and the discount requests range from \$3,000 to \$350,000 depending on the size of the school.

CSUI's experience has been that major telecommunications companies and Internet service providers are experienced with telecom regulations and understand the E-rate program guidelines. There have been many improvements to the program and the FCC and the Schools and Libraries Division are to be commended for their efforts and dedication.

In his concluding comments Craven shared that the E-rate program has been very successful in bringing technology resources to schools, especially in rural areas. Without E-rate discounts many rural schools would not be able to sustain high-speed Internet service or be able to extend that service throughout the district without a financial hardship. With initiatives such as No Child Left Behind, building upon this technology infrastructure is critical to providing equal educational opportunity.

AESA thanks Geoff Craven for representing ESAs across the country.

The challenge to lead... continued from page 1

In the state of Georgia the work of 16 regional ESAs is focused on enhancing the capacity of others to **learn**, to **lead**, and to **improve**. Georgia's regional educational service agencies, or RESAs, adopted two primary directions: 1) Provide leadership and support to promote student achievement, and 2) Provide professional and technical support for member systems/schools seeking assistance. The Central Savannah River Area Regional Educational Service Agency (CSRA RESA) is a state affiliated agency, which provides direct services to school districts in a 12-county area. The mission of the agency is to provide services and experiences that result in increased student learning. Our vision is that all schools are exemplary places for all students. An overall focus of our agency is to build the capacity of member systems to improve student achievement. Staff members also provide direct assistance to students through model lessons and participation in other programmatic efforts. Another equally important purpose of our agency is to serve as a conduit promoting seamless educational programs throughout the region. CSRA RESA serves as a catalyst promoting positive educational endeavors not only in the region but also throughout the state.

The CSRA RESA is service driven, customer centered, and results oriented. The preceding sentence is not mere words, but serves as the conceptual guide in framing and carrying out the work of the agency. Needs of member districts are assessed throughout the year through formal and informal processes. We consider ourselves to be members of the district team and our success is aligned with the success of our member districts.

Three areas where we are attempting to address the needs of our districts is in the development of future teachers and leaders, providing quality professional learning activities, and providing direct assistance to schools identified as low performing. The ability to recruit and retain certified personnel is often a problem in small rural districts. This is brought on by several factors, which include salary differentials, lack of cultural and social activities, and lack of resources to support professional learning and student success. Through our Teacher Alternative Preparation Program we currently have individuals teaching in all twelve of our districts with a sizeable number of the candidates teaching in rural districts. We are also working with districts in

preparing aspiring administrators.

In the area of professional learning we offer courses to meet state requirements, and work with districts to initiate study groups to focus on action research and best practices. To support our school improvement efforts we conduct diagnostic visits with leadership teams and other stakeholders, and provide professional learning activities to support improvement efforts. We also tested 689 paraprofessionals using the state developed assessment to meet federal requirements as outlined in the No Child Left Behind Act.

Future directions and strategic actions have been developed to meet the needs of our member districts. This consists of continuous school improvement planning, implementation of instructional best practices, providing specific professional learning, and serving as a communication link and clearing-house regarding federal and state mandates.

At CSRA RESA we operate from a belief and plan of action that centers around four pillars which are results, impact, service, and knowledge. Specific programs and services are developed and implemented to meet identified needs and lead districts as they work to ensure success for all students. Through an alternative preparation program for teachers, support and technical service in school improvement efforts, leadership development activities, and various shared services; we are meeting identified goals.

The premise of this article centered around the role of leadership and service. Perhaps the answer to this quandary lies in the fact that ESAs should take the lead in supporting member districts as they strive to provide a meaningful and engaging education for all students. Leadership and service should coexist and are not mutually exclusive. Through quality leadership and applicable support services ESAs can partner with school districts providing quality educational experiences to ensure that no child *is* left behind.



Submitted by Dr. Terry L. Nelson, Executive Director, Central Savannah River Area Regional Educational Service Agency, Dearing, GA 30808; (706) 556-6225; tnelson@csrarésa.org. Dr. Nelson represents the Eastern region on the AESA council.

Nominations now open for national awards program recognizing contributions to ESAs

AESA is proud to support three national awards to recognize outstanding contributions to ESAs as follows:

Justus A. Prentice Award

This award recognizes an individual for contributions through executive leadership in the advancement of ESA programs at the regional, state, and/or national levels. Nominees have included past or present ESA executives and staff. Criteria include: advancement of the goals and philosophies of ESAs, outstanding accomplishments and innovative practices, exercise of leadership, and service to ESAs.

Walter G. Turner Award

This award recognizes an individual citizen who has made outstanding contributions in the advancement of ESA 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 include: advancement of the goals and philosophies of ESAs, outstanding accomplishments and innovative practices, exercise of leadership, and service to the ESA community.

E. Robert Stephens Award

This award recognizes an individual for research, writing, and/or publishing of information that advances the understanding of ESA 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 include: advancement of goals and philosophies of ESAs, scholarly nature of the work(s), and impact of the research, writing(s) and/or publication(s) on ESAs.

Nominations must be postmarked by **August 22, 2003**, and recipients will be recognized at the AESA Annual Conference and Exposition in Marco Island, Florida, December 3-6, 2003. Application forms are available on-line at <http://www.aesa.us/awards.html> or by mail upon request by contacting the AESA office at (703) 875-0739. Awards are based on merit and may or may not be given annually.

Calendar of events

Summer CEO Executive Briefing and Conference

Wednesday, July 30 - Friday, August 1, 2003
Embassy Suites Hotel, South Lake Tahoe, California
To register: www.aesa.us
For hotel reservations call (800) 988-9894

Educator's Call to Action Legislative Conference

Wednesday, September 10 - Friday, September 12, 2003
Hyatt Regency Washington on Capitol Hill
400 New Jersey Avenue NW, Washington D.C.
To register: www.aesa.us (Available mid-June)
For hotel reservations call (800) 233-1234

AESA Annual Conference and Exposition

Wednesday, December 3 - Saturday, December 6, 2003
Marco Island Marriott Resort, Marco Island, Florida
To register: www.aesa.us (Available mid-June)
For hotel reservations call either hotel listed below and request a reservation in the AESA room block.
Marco Island Marriott Resort (conference host hotel)
(800) 438-4373 or 800-GET-THERE; or
Hilton Marco Island (a few doors down the beach)
(800) 455-8667 or 800-HILTONS or direct (239) 394-5000

A note about room cancellations: Please reserve only the number of rooms your agency will need for these events. 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 the AESA-designated cancellation date, unless the room is resold.

AESA has a new address. Please remember to update your records

Association of Educational Service Agencies
801 N. Quincy Street, Suite 750
Arlington, VA 22203-1730
Phone: (703) 875-0739
FAX: (703) 807-1849
www.aesa.us