

Dear AESA Members,

I am sad about so many things in the world at this moment, and having to inform you that we are canceling our conference this year is one of them. The Executive Council felt that with the rising coronavirus numbers, and the people considered high-risk for COVID-19 complications who would be automatically excluded, we could not hold our in-person conference. Thanks to the relationship our Interim Executive Director, Sandra Spickard-Prettyman, has built over the years, the hotel has agreed to cancel without significant penalties. In good faith reciprocity, we are looking into having future AESA conferences at this same hotel.

The AESA Executive Council engaged in lengthy discussions about holding a virtual conference. However, in our investigations (of other similar-sized organizations that have made such decisions) we felt that wouldn't be in the best interest of the organization or the members. Instead, **we are going to hold a smaller virtual un-conference**; exact dates and more information will be forthcoming. This is being organized by the President-Elect and Program Chair Paula Groves Price; if you are interested in assisting with the planning of this, please contact her at aesa2020conference@gmail.com.

We are still reviewing all proposals, and we will be informing you officially of the review so you can list all accepted proposals on your CVs. Although the theme will be distinct, you are welcome to submit those or related presentation proposals again next year for consideration in the AESA 2021 conference.

We are committed to continuing to create community for and with our members; thus, be on the lookout for announcements of AESA community events such as virtual AESA critical conversations and virtual AESA happy hours. If you have ideas for other community-oriented happenings you would like to see implemented, please contact me directly with your ideas at aesapresident@gmail.com. We are counting on you to renew your AESA membership this year (the yearly membership cycle starts the day you renew, if you have questions about your AESA membership status, please contact Pamela Konkol at pamela.konkol@cuchicago.edu). Memberships include a subscription to the *Educational Studies* journal, provide voting privileges, create access to AESA community building events, and help defray ongoing association costs. Although sustained membership is always important, it is even more important in this uncertain time. Thank you in advance for supporting AESA by keeping your membership current as we move forward.

We will be holding elections as usual this year; a link to vote will be distributed in early September. Paula Groves Price and I will present a collaborative, combined presidential address at the AESA 2021 conference.

We appreciate our AESA community and the work that you do. We need our critical, imaginative, equity-minded work now more than ever. We look forward to seeing you all at the AESA 2021 conference in downtown Portland, Oregon, November 3-7, 2021.

We will keep you updated about the annual AESA election, the 2020 AESA virtual unconference, and upcoming virtual events.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Silvia C. Bettez". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Silvia C. Bettez
AESA President