Gustavo Balderas, D.Ed.
Superintendent
Beaverton School District
Beaverton, Oregon

Member:
- AASA, 2011–2015 and 2019–present
- AASA Executive Board, 2021–present
- Washington Association of School Administrators, 2020–2022
- Association of California School Administrators, 2011–2015

Current Position: Superintendent
Beaverton School District
Beaverton, OR
2022–present

Previous Position: Superintendent
Edmonds School District
Lynnwood, WA
2020–2022
Post-Secondary Education:
D.Ed., University of Oregon, Eugene OR, 2014
M.S., Portland State University, Portland OR, 2007
B.A., Western Oregon State College, Monmouth OR, 1990

AASA and other activities:
- President, Association of Latino Administrators and Superintendents (ALAS), 2022–present
- Commissioner, Learning 2025: National Commission on Student-Centered, Equity-Focused Education, AASA, 2021–2022
- Panelist, COVID 2022, The Washington Post Live with Dr. Anthony Fauci and Superintendent Debra Duardo, 2021
- Member, AASA COVID-19 Recovery Task Force, 2020
- Superintendent of the Year, Oregon and AASA, 2020
- Latino Educator of the Year, Oregon Association of Latino Administrators, 2020
- Moderator, AASA Leading for Equity Webinar: Why Leadership Matters for Ensuring All Children Have Choice, Opportunity, and Access, 2020
- Presenter, AASA/Howard University Urban Superintendents Academy, 2020
- Advisor, AASA Aspiring Superintendents Academy for Latino and Latina Leaders, 2019–present
- Founder, Oregon Association of Latino Administrators, 2002

Why are you seeking election as AASA’s president-elect?

As a school superintendent I have always been driven to mentor aspiring leaders and support my superintendent peers to best serve all students. I bring a breadth of perspective, from my own rural public school experience growing up in a migrant farmworker family, learning English and living in extreme poverty, to serving as a superintendent of rural, suburban and urban school districts in three states (California, Oregon and Washington) and experiencing how issues impact public schools similarly and differently in each district setting. I would be honored to represent and support superintendents across the country as AASA’s president-elect.

If nominated and elected, what will be your No. 1 priority?

Our public schools have a moral imperative to serve every student, and must have strong, skilled leadership to meet that mission. As president-elect my top priority would be leadership sustainability in the superintendent ranks. Supporting current and aspiring superintendents today helps ensure tomorrow’s schools will have the leadership they need.
Sample article for AASA magazine:

Stronger Together: Support Your Local Superintendent

Public education has been under pressure during the last few years, since before COVID-19. Some have used our education system as a political football, with the game’s losers always our students and schools. Political pressure and coordinated controversy have negatively impacted school districts nationwide. It takes only a quick web search or a chat with fellow superintendents to spotlight issues and incidents, from massive misinformation, to questioning of state learning standards, to disrupted board meetings.

These concerns have greatly impacted education leaders across the country. We are facing an exodus of experience that will take time to recover from. Many colleagues have left superintendent positions during these challenging times, some of their own accord, others due to a change in board composition. Our departing leaders’ service should be respected and remembered, especially their steadfast leadership through the pandemic. We also have talented new leaders who have stepped into their first superintendent seats and will continue to step up into new leadership roles. These leaders need to be supported to succeed in times that are truly unprecedented.

Tenured superintendents can all remember that person who helped you when you first took the superintendent role. The person who was just a call away when you had a question or wanted a sounding board or another perspective on a tricky situation. Many of us still have these individuals on our speed-dial list. As we gained experience and built expertise, it came time for us to pay forward the support and mentorship we’d received, and be that person a phone call away for another superintendent.

As the pressure cooker continues and brings more leadership changes, peer support is more needed than ever. A unique upside from the pandemic is that technology advances have made such connections easier than ever, with video calls enabling more frequent mentoring meetings and colleague connections. Many such connections formed over COVID, and their benefits have remained as the pandemic has waned. To this day I have biweekly meetings with superintendents across my state to brainstorm ideas and share perspectives on situations we’re dealing with. Collegial support is a must. Busy as we are, we need to take time to reach out to our colleagues, to see how they are doing and what supports they need.

We also need to reach out and give a hand up to aspiring administrators. Having a deep leadership bench will be more and more critical in the coming years. As veteran educators become eligible to retire and leave our profession, we need to have a strong group of developing leaders ready to take school district helms. We superintendents have a unique opportunity and obligation to seek out those who want additional responsibilities, support their aspirations and help prepare them to lead. Beyond personal mentorship, we can also put structures in place to support the next generation of leaders. Some districts have aspiring leadership academies, some offer executive coaching for their district office leaders, others
provide release time to shadow leaders across levels or in other school districts. All these efforts are needed to support our aspiring administrators and our next line of school superintendents.

Each of us have our “why,” our reason we work so tirelessly for our communities and our students, our reason we have dedicated our lives to this profession we care so deeply about. Whatever brought us to this work, we are dedicated to doing what’s best for not just one student or one classroom or one school, but for all students. For all our students, we need strong leaders to support school systems so kids will succeed.

So please remember, the next time you have a minute, pick up your phone and connect with a colleague. Whether you call to just say hello or see if you can help with a challenge they’re facing, both you and your colleague will be thankful you did.
Dear Associate Executive Director Noelle Ellerson Ng,

It is with great enthusiasm that I am submitting my intention to seek the office of AASA President-Elect. Over my 33-year education career I have had the opportunity and honor to lead in our public schools at all levels and in multiple states. This has given me a perspective that can provide support to AASA staff, the Executive Committee, and the broader membership as we continue to provide the support needed for our school leaders during a difficult time in our history.

Education has been to me what it has been to so many, a way to better oneself and to provide service to others. My family were migrant workers who traveled from Mexico to work the agricultural seasons in the West Coast states. My parents stayed in the United States after I was born and I went through the public school system in rural Oregon. Education allowed me to dream, it allowed me to flourish, and it allowed me an opportunity that so many around the world do not have. Our public education system is the backbone to our democracy. It is truly the great equalizer. I am living proof of that, as are so many others with stories similar to mine. I am incredibly committed to do everything I can to support our public education system to continue to provide our children the same opportunities I had.

I am truly honored to sit on the AASA Executive Committee with so many phenomenal leaders from across the United States. I look forward to our collective work ahead with our new Executive Director as we continue to advance our public education agenda.

Respectfully,

Gustavo Balderas
Superintendent
Beaverton School District
November 28, 2022

Dear Craig:

I am seeking nomination to become a candidate for the position of president-elect of AASA, The School Superintendents Association.

Compliance with the AASA electoral process requires that I ask the Coalition of Oregon School Administrators (COSA) not to endorse or promote my candidacy or urge my election.

This does not preclude COSA from noting that AASA has an election and noting all of the candidates, including me. AASA’s electoral process was reformed because, like the national political electoral process, it had become too expensive and prolonged. The Executive Committee of AASA adopted the new rules regarding endorsements of candidates to make the campaigns more consistent with standards of conduct and ethics of school administrators, by having all campaigning done through AASA publications and at the AASA National Conference on Education.

Individual active members may communicate with other AASA active members, about a single candidate and support of that candidate by letter, fax or electronic transmission. Any cost of the mailings, faxes, or electronic transmissions must be the responsibility of the individual and cannot be that of the candidate or other third party. No enclosure, attachment or brochure may be distributed with the letter, fax or electronic transmission.

A member may discuss a candidate on a personal, one-to-one individual basis with another member. Endorsement of candidates by a state association, caucus, committee, group or corporation could result in sanctions against me, including a 10 percent deduction from my vote total.

Please call me if you have any questions about AASA election rules or the information you plan to publish. Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

As always Craig, thank you and the COSA team for your support,

Gustavo Balderas
Superintendent of Schools
Beaverton School District
AASA Election: President-elect Candidate Pledge

I have read the rules and procedures contained within the AASA Election Guidelines and I agree to obey the AASA election rules, in spirit and in word.

[Signature]  November 28, 2022
Signature        Date

Address  Beaverton School District
1260 NW Waterhouse Avenue
Beaverton, OR 97006

Office Telephone:   (503) 356-4401

FAX Number:     (___)_______________________

Email Address:  gustavo_balderas@beaverton.k12.or.us

The AASA Election Guidelines are posted on the AASA website at www.aasa.org