Paul D. Houston Receives American Education Award from AASA

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TAMPA, Fla. - The American Association of School Administrators today awarded Paul D. Houston the American Education Award for his dedication to American public education and students nationwide. Houston, who has served as executive director of AASA since 1994, will retire from that position in June 2008. Houston received the award during AASA's National Conference on Education in Tampa, Fla.

The American Education Award was founded in 1928 to honor outstanding American citizens who have led distinguished careers and served as role models and teachers to others. The presentation of the award is one of the highlights of AASA’s annual conference.

"Paul Houston is one of the nation’s leading advocates for public education and the welfare of children," said AASA President Sarah D. Jerome, superintendent of schools in Arlington Heights, Ill. "Through his leadership and his writing, he reminds us of our moral obligation to serve all children, especially those who are most vulnerable. He has charged school leaders to get schools ready for children, to get children ready for school, and to get children ready for democracy. He invites us to dream about what schools can be and should be about. AASA is honored to present him with this award."

Houston has had a long and distinguished career in public education. Prior to joining AASA as executive director, Houston was superintendent of schools in Princeton, N.J.; Tucson, Ariz.; and Riverside, Calif. He also served as an assistant superintendent in Birmingham, Ala., and as a teacher and building administrator in North Carolina and New Jersey. He served in an adjunct capacity for the University of North Carolina, Harvard University, Brigham Young University and Princeton University.

He received a bachelor’s degree from the Ohio State University, a master’s degree from the University of North Carolina, and a doctorate of education from Harvard University.

Houston has established himself as one of the leading spokespersons for American public education through his extensive U.S. and international speaking engagements, published articles and media interviews.

He has published more than 200 articles in professional journals. He co-authored the books Exploding the Myths (1993), The Board-Savvy Superintendent (2002) and The Spiritual Dimension of Leadership (2006). His monthly columns from The School Administrator magazine have been collected and published in his books Articles of Faith & Hope for Public Education (1996), Outlook and Perspectives on American Education (2003) and the forthcoming No Challenge Left Behind: Transforming American Education Through Heart and Soul (2008). Houston is co-editor for a series of books on the soul of educational leadership with Corwin Press, which includes the titles Engaging

Houston's dedication to improving public education has been recognized by numerous organizations. In 1991, he was honored by the Council of Great City Schools for his leadership in urban education when he received the Richard R. Green Leadership Award. In 1997, he was awarded an honorary Doctorate of Education from Duquesne University. The Hope Foundation honored Houston with the Courageous Leadership Award of 2000. The Horace Mann League presented Houston with the league's 2001 Outstanding Educator Award. He was cited as an articulate spokesperson for strong and effective public education.

Past winners of the American Education Award include former Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor (2007); children's advocate Marian Wright Edelman (2006); administrator, educator and social activist and Dorothy I. Height (2005); educational researcher and theorist John Goodlad (2004); former Sen. Paul Wellstone (2003); writer and educator Jonathan Kozol (2001); broadcast journalist Walter Cronkite (1983); and President Lyndon B. Johnson (1966).

About AASA
AASA (www.aasa.org), founded in 1865, is the professional organization for more than 13,000 educational leaders across the United States. AASA’s mission is to support and develop effective school system leaders who are dedicated to the highest quality public education for all children. AASA’s major focus is standing up for public education.