Four Finalists Selected for the 2009 National Superintendent of the Year Program

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ARLINGTON, Va. – The American Association of School Administrators has announced four finalists in the 2009 National Superintendent of the Year program. The program, co-sponsored by ARAMARK Education, ING and AASA and now in its 22nd year, celebrates the contributions and leadership of public school superintendents. AASA will announce the 2009 National Superintendent of the Year on Feb. 20, 2009, at the National Conference on Education in San Francisco, Calif.

The four finalists for 2009 National Superintendent of the Year are:

- **Suzanne Freeman**, superintendent of the Trussville, Ala., City Schools
- **Beverly Hall**, superintendent of the Atlanta, Ga., Public Schools
- **Stu Silberman**, superintendent of the Fayette County, Ky., Public Schools
- **Gene White**, superintendent of the Indianapolis, Ind., Public Schools

The four national finalists were chosen from 49 Superintendent of the Year finalists. The finalists will be in Washington, D.C., on Jan. 13, 2009, where they will be interviewed by a national blue-ribbon selection panel of educators, businesspeople and government officials at the National Press Club.

“The National Superintendent of the Year program is an opportunity to recognize the best in school system leadership,” said AASA Executive Director Daniel A. Domenech. “As a former superintendent, I appreciate all the work these outstanding leaders have accomplished to effectively lead their school systems and help all children learn.”

“ARAMARK is proud to continue the support of this extraordinary program in its 22nd year,” said Dennis Maple, president, ARAMARK Education. “Congratulations to all the superintendents for their commitment and focus on creating a positive learning environment for today’s youth and their continued effort to elevate student achievement.”

“We are proud to sponsor the National Superintendent of the Year program,” said Rhonda Mims, president of the ING Foundation. “Partnering with the AASA to recognize and honor the tremendous leadership of public school superintendents who are helping to advance student achievement aligns with our mission and commitment to education and educators across the country.”

Freeman has been superintendent of Trussville City Schools, which serves 4,160 students, since 2004. She previously served as superintendent of Cullman City, Ala., Schools. She received her bachelor’s degree from Asbury College and her master’s and doctoral degrees from Auburn University.

Hall has been superintendent of Atlanta Public Schools, serving 50,000 students, since 1999. She
previously served as state district superintendent of Newark, N.J., Public Schools. She received her bachelor’s and master’s degrees and an advanced certificate from Brooklyn College. She received her doctoral degree from Fordham University.

Silberman has been superintendent of Fayette County Public Schools since 2004. He previously served as superintendent of Daviess County Public Schools in Owensboro, Ky. He received his bachelor’s and master’s degrees from the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga, and completed post-master’s studies at the University of Alabama.

White has been superintendent of the Indianapolis Public Schools since 2005. He previously served as superintendent of Metropolitan School District of Washington Township in Indianapolis, Ind. He received his bachelor’s degree from Alabama A&M University, his master’s degree from the University of Tennessee, his administration certificate from Purdue University, and his education specialist and doctoral degrees from Ball State University.

The annual Superintendent of the Year program is open to all U.S. public school superintendents as well as superintendents of American schools abroad and Department of Defense Education Activity School superintendents who plan to continue in the profession.

The applicants were measured against the following criteria:

- Leadership for learning – creativity in successfully meeting the needs of students in the school system.
- Communication – strength in both personal and organizational communication.
- Professionalism – constant improvement of administrative knowledge and skills, while providing professional development opportunities and motivation to others on the education team.
- Community involvement – active participation in local community activities and an understanding of regional, national and international issues.

A $10,000 college scholarship will be presented in the name of the National Superintendent of the Year to a student in the high school from which the superintendent graduated, or the school now serving the same area.

The National Superintendent of the Year will receive a jacket emblazoned with the National Superintendent of the Year emblem and, with the three other national finalists, will be recognized at the AASA National Conference on Education on Feb. 20, 2009, during the ceremony announcing the National Superintendent of the Year.

The 49 state-level and overseas winners will also be honored at the AASA National Conference on Education. In addition, they will be invited to participate in the AASA State Superintendents of the Year Forum in October 2009. The three-day forum will provide an opportunity for leaders to gather and discuss pertinent education issues. AASA will publish a white paper summarizing the discussions from the forum in early 2010. Note: A white paper from the 2008 forum will be released at the 2009 National Conference on Education. The white papers from previous forums are available on the AASA website at www.aasa.org/publications.

The state 2009 Superintendents of the Year are:

- Alabama: Suzanne K. Freeman, Trussville City Schools, Trussville
- Alaska: Norman Eck, Northwest Arctic Borough School District, Kotzebue
- Arizona: Virginia B. McElveea, Deer Valley Unified School District 97, Phoenix
- Arkansas: Jerry Guess, Camden-Fairview School District 16, Camden
- California: Thelma Melendez De Santa Ana, Pomona Unified School District, Pomona
- Colorado: J. Tim Mills, Mesa County Valley School District 51, Grand Junction
- Delaware: Kevin E. Carson, Woodbridge School District, Bridgeville
For more information about the National Superintendent of the Year program, please contact Darlene Pierce at dpierce@aasa.org or 703-875-0736.

About AASA
The American Association of School Administrators, 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. For more information, visit www.aasa.org.