

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact:

Kitty Porterfield, AASA, 703-774-6953, kporterfield@aasa.org
Karen Cutler, ARAMARK Education, 215-238-4063, cutler-karen@aramark.com
Kelly Banaszak, ARAMARK, 215-238-3559 Banaszak-Kelly@aramark.com
Audria Belton Benn, ING, 770-980-5715, audria.benn@us.ing.com

Four Finalists Selected for the 2012 National Superintendent of the Year Program

**Finalists selected from 49 state-level winners;
Program celebrates 25th year**

ALEXANDRIA, Va., January 3, 2012 – The American Association of School Administrators has announced four finalists in the 2012 National Superintendent of the Year program. The program, co-sponsored by ARAMARK Education, ING and AASA is celebrating its 25th year honoring the contributions and leadership of public school superintendents. AASA will announce the 2012 National Superintendent of the Year on Feb. 16, 2012, at the National Conference on Education in Houston, Texas.

The four finalists for 2012 AASA National Superintendent of the Year are:

- **Diane L. Frost**, superintendent, Asheboro City Schools, Asheboro, N.C.
- **Heath Morrison**, superintendent, Washoe County School District, Reno, Nev.
- **Lorraine Lange**, superintendent, Roanoke County Public Schools, Roanoke, Va.
- **Susan Smith Bunting**, superintendent, Indian River School District, Selbyville, Del.

"AASA is pleased to recognize these four outstanding superintendents," said AASA Executive Director Daniel A. Domenech. "Their dedication to transforming schools, providing quality education for all students and working with the school community to advance student success represents the best in school system leadership today."

"We congratulate the four Finalists, all of the State winners and AASA for their ongoing leadership, innovation and commitment to excellence in education," said Dennis Maple, President, ARAMARK Education. "As a founding sponsor of the National Superintendent of the Year program, all of us at ARAMARK are happy and proud to be celebrating its Silver Anniversary, and we thank all of the talented superintendents who have been dedicated to

advancing student achievement and creating positive student learning environments over the past 25 years.”

"ING is proud to sponsor the 25th anniversary of the National Superintendent of the Year program and extends our congratulations to the national finalists and all the state winners," said Rhonda Mims, president of the ING Foundation. "We are committed to education, and honoring the superior leadership of our public school superintendents for their efforts in advancing student achievement and positively influencing our youth is one way we can support excellence in education."

The four national finalists were chosen from 49 State Superintendent of the Year finalists. The finalists will be at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C., on Jan. 10, 2012, where they will be interviewed by a national blue-ribbon selection panel of educators, businesspeople and government officials. The finalists are:

Diane L. Frost, superintendent, Asheboro City Schools, Asheboro, N.C.

Diane Frost is currently in her 35th year in public education, with the past 20 years in Asheboro City Schools. She was named Assistant Superintendent in 1995 and Superintendent in 2000. Strategic planning and community engagement are hallmarks of Dr. Frost's tenure with Asheboro City Schools. Leading the district through multiple strategic planning processes has unified the community around setting high expectations for all students and providing the tools needed to accomplish this goal. Her collaborative leadership style, creativity, and fierce determination to produce globally competitive students have resulted in a sharply narrowed mathematics achievement gap and a record-high graduation rate (84%).

Frost earned her bachelor and master degrees from the University of Nebraska and Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. Both universities have honored her with their Alumni Achievement Award. She served on the governing board for the American Association of School Administrators and is the NC State Textbook Commission chairman, appointed by the Governor.

Heath Morrison, superintendent, Washoe County School District, Reno, Nev.

Heath Morrison has been superintendent for Washoe County School District since 2009. Despite the fact that Nevada's once-booming economy was in steep decline, Morrison led the community in the development of the District's five-year strategic plan. Between 2009 and 2011, the District's graduation rate jumped from 56 percent to 70 percent with increases in every student subgroup. The district also has achieved significant test score gains and has narrowed the achievement gap in many subject areas.

Morrison holds a Ph.D. in Educational Policy and Planning and a Master of Educational Administration from the University of Maryland and a Bachelor of the Arts in government from the College of William and Mary. Before coming to Nevada, Morrison was community superintendent for the Down County Consortium in Montgomery County Public Schools, Md. Morrison has been the recipient of numerous awards and honors including the 2012 Leadership through Communication Award from AASA, NSPRA, and Blackboard Connect and the Distinguished Educational Leader Award from the *Washington Post*.

Lorraine Lange, superintendent, Roanoke County Public Schools, Roanoke, Va.

Lorraine Lange began her educational career in 1969 as a special education teacher. Lange was named superintendent of Roanoke County Public Schools in June 2006. She led the effort to develop and implement a laptop initiative which has helped close the socioeconomic gap and level the playing field so all high school students have access to the same technological resources by assigning a laptop to every high school student personalized to meet their needs. The success of this program is evidenced by the school system's On-Time Graduation Rate: 91.8 percent for 2010, up 2 percent from 2009 and exceeding the statewide average of 86.6 percent.

Lange holds a Bachelor's Degree from Roanoke College, a Master's Degree from Hollins University and a Doctorate from Virginia Tech. She has held the positions of kindergarten teacher, assistant principal, principal, supervisor of language arts K-12, associate director of instruction, assistant superintendent of instruction and deputy superintendent of instruction. She is a former adjunct professor at Hollins University and Roanoke College where she taught aspiring teachers

Susan Smith Bunting, superintendent, Indian River School District, Selbyville, Del.

Susan Bunting is currently serving in her sixth year as superintendent of the Indian River School District. Bunting has articulated a clear vision that has molded the district into an exemplary system with programs that school and district leaders from Delaware and surrounding regions have sought to replicate. Under her leadership, Indian River was selected as one of the original participants in Delaware's Vision 2015 initiative and has become a trailblazer in Delaware's Race to the Top. In 2011, IRSD's students scored first, second, and third in reading, math, science and social studies in the Delaware Comprehensive Assessment System, and all fourteen IRSD schools are ranked "Superior" in Delaware's accountability system.

Bunting earned her B.S. in psychology and elementary education from The American University, a Masters in Education from Salisbury University, and a Doctorate in Education Leadership from the University of Delaware. Additionally, she attended Harvard's Principals' Academy and completed the Executive Leadership Program at the University of Virginia's Darden School of Business. She received the University of Delaware's Outstanding Alumni Award in 1999 and 2008, AASA's Civic Star Award and NSBA's Magna Award in 2003, and Delaware Superstar in Education recognition in 2000, 2006, 2009, and 2010.

The annual Superintendent of the Year program is open to all U.S., Canadian, and International 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. 16, 2012, during the ceremony announcing the National Superintendent of the Year.

The 49 state-level, Canadian and international winners will also be honored at the AASA National Conference on Education. The winners are:

State	Name	School District
Alabama	Larry E. DiChiara	Phenix City Public Schools
Alaska	Jim Nygaard	Cordova School District
Arizona	Calvin Baker	Vail Unified School District
Arkansas	Kay Johnson	Greenwood School District
California	Sandra Sanchez Thorstenson	Whittier Union High School District
Colorado	Charlotte Ciancio	Mapleton Public Schools
Connecticut	Diane Ullman	Simsbury Public Schools
Delaware	Susan Smith Bunting	Indian River School District
Florida	Wallace P. Cox	School Board of Highlands County
Georgia	Emily Lembeck	Marietta City Schools
Idaho	Mary Vagner	Pocatello/Chubbuck School District 25
Illinois	Peter Flynn	Freeport School District 145
Indiana	Jerry Thacker	Penn-Harris-Madison School Corporation
Iowa	Kathleen S. Mulholland	Linn-Mar Community School District
Kansas	Michael Mathes	Seaman Unified School District 345
Kentucky	Lu Settles Young	Jessamine County Schools
Louisiana	Wayne R. Savoy	Calcasieu Parish Public Schools
Maine	Suzanne T. Godin	South Portland School Department
Maryland	Karen Salmon	Talbot County Public Schools
Massachusetts	Maureen LaCroix	Bedford Public Schools
Michigan	Tina A. Kerr	Coldwater Community Schools
Minnesota	Lynn Christopher Richardson	Northfield Public Schools ISD 659
Mississippi	Malcolm Kuykendall	Tishomingo County School District
Missouri	Terry Adams	Wentzville R-IV School District
Montana	Daniel T. Farr	Sidney Public Schools
Nebraska	Bill Mowinkel	Northwest Public Schools

Nevada	Heath Morrison	Washoe County School District
New Hampshire	Elaine F. Cutler	Litchfield School District
New Jersey	Roy R. Montesano	Ramsey Public Schools
New Mexico	J. Mike Phipps	Artesia Public Schools
New York	Henry L. Grishman	Jericho Union Free School District
North Carolina	Diane L. Frost	Asheboro City Schools
North Dakota	Richard J. Buresh	Fargo Public Schools
Ohio	Gene T. Harris	Columbus City Schools
Oklahoma	Robert Everett	Newcastle Public Schools
Oregon	Ronald D. Wilkinson	Bend-La Pine Schools
Pennsylvania	Patrick T. O'Toole	Upper St. Clair School District
Rhode Island	Donna M. Ottaviano	North Providence School District
South Carolina	Joseph R. Pye	Dorchester School District 2
South Dakota	Mark Greguson	Chester Area Schools
Tennessee	Kathleen M. Airhart	Putnam County School System
Texas	Jeffrey Turner	Coppell Independent School District
Utah	Jim Johnson	Iron County School District
Vermont	Jeanne Collins	Burlington School District 15
Virginia	Lorraine S. Lange	Roanoke County Schools
Washington	Patricia Anne Banks	University Place School District 83
West Virginia	Larry Edwin Parsons	Preston County Schools
Wisconsin	Kristine A. Gilmore	D.C. Everest Area School District
Wyoming	Paul Grube	Sweetwater County School District 1
Canada	Linda Fabi	Waterloo Region District School Board, Ontario
Canada	Curtis Brown	South Slave Divisional Educational Council, Northwest Territories
International Schools	Richard Spradling	American School of The Hague, Netherlands

About AASA

The American Association of School Administrators, founded in 1865, is the professional organization for more than 13,000 educational leaders in the United States and throughout the world. The mission of AASA is to advocate for the highest quality public education for all students, and develop and support school system leaders. For more information, visit www.aasa.org. Follow AASA on twitter at www.twitter.com/AASAHQ. Become a fan of the AASA Facebook page at www.facebook.com/AASAPage.

About ARAMARK Education

ARAMARK Education provides a complete range of food, facility, uniform and other support services to more than 500 K-12 school districts in the U.S. It offers public and private education institutions a family of dining and facility services including: on-site and off-site breakfast and lunch meal programs, after-school snacks, catering, nutrition education, retail design and

operations, maintenance, custodial, grounds, energy management, construction management, and building commissioning. For more information on ARAMARK's K-12 food service programs, please visit www.aramarkschools.com.

About ARAMARK

ARAMARK is a leader in professional services, providing award-winning food services, facilities management, and uniform and career apparel to health care institutions, universities and school districts, stadiums and arenas, and businesses around the world. The company is recognized as the industry leader in FORTUNE magazine's "World's Most Admired Companies," and as one of America's Largest Private Companies by both FORTUNE and *Forbes* magazines. ARAMARK seeks to responsibly address issues that matter to its clients, customers, employees and communities by focusing on employee advocacy, environmental stewardship, health and wellness, and community involvement. Headquartered in Philadelphia, ARAMARK has approximately 255,000 employees serving clients in 22 countries. Learn more at the company's Web site, www.aramark.com, or www.twitter.com/aramarknews.

About ING

ING is a global financial institution of Dutch origin offering banking, investments, life insurance, and retirement services to over 85 million residential, corporate and institutional clients in more than 40 countries. With a diverse workforce of about 115,000 people, ING is dedicated to setting the standard in helping our clients manage their financial future. For more information, visit www.ing.com/us.

About the ING Foundation

The ING Foundation's mission is to improve the quality of life in communities where ING operates and its employees and customers live. Through charitable giving and employee volunteerism, the foundation focuses on programs in the areas of financial literacy, children's education, diversity, and environmental sustainability. For more information, visit www.ing-usafoundation.com.

#####