

AASA Honors Veteran Educators For Distinguished Service At National Conference On Education

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Nashville, Tenn. – Feb. 18, 2022 – [AASA, The School Superintendents Association](#), honored four outstanding educators, including the immediate past president of the association, with its Distinguished Service Awards. A ceremony to recognize these individuals was held today during AASA's [National Conference on Education](#).

The 2022 honorees were Sheldon H. Berman, retired superintendent; Jim Mahoney, former executive director, Battelle for Kids; Jule Walker, retired superintendent; and Kristi Wilson, superintendent, Buckeye (Ariz.) Elementary School District and immediate past president of AASA.

“The 2022 AASA Distinguished Service honorees are nothing short of outstanding professionals who have dedicated their careers toward serving public education and the young learners of our country,” said Daniel A. Domenech, executive director, AASA. “Our recipients have proven track records and continue to represent the field of education in a variety of ways on behalf of school districts, communities and most of all, our students. I thank them for being champions for children.”

The Distinguished Service Award honorees are recognized by AASA for bringing honor to themselves, their colleagues and their profession; rendering exemplary service to their state or

national professional association; and contributing to the education field through writing, public advocacy or other activities.

Sheldon H. Berman



Berman served as superintendent of four districts in three states — Hudson, Mass.; Jefferson County (Louisville), Ky.; Eugene, Ore.; and Andover, Mass. — spanning 28 school years. He provided leadership in state superintendent associations, as well as in local and national education organizations. He served as Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents President and received the 2003 Massachusetts Superintendent of the Year Award, in addition to national awards for social-emotional learning and character education. He has made nationally

significant contributions by furthering social-emotional learning practice, expanding special education funding, enhancing inclusive instructional strategies, advocating and implementing school integration, contributing guidance on administrative ethics through a decade of *School Administrator* Ethical Educator columns, and launching state-of-the-art virtual learning and instructional innovations. He has authored two books, numerous book chapters, articles, policy reports and op-eds, and has presented nationally and internationally on educational issues and innovations. Throughout his career, he effected educational improvement at the district, state and national levels. He currently serves as the lead superintendent in the AASA SEL Cohort.

Jim Mahoney

A long-time educator and entrepreneur, Mahoney has dedicated his life to bettering educational opportunities for all students, serving as a superintendent, principal and teacher, as well as an adjunct professor at several Ohio universities. In 2001, he joined Battelle for Kids as the first executive director. Under his 15 years of leadership, Battelle for Kids grew into a national not-for-profit that expanded across the globe to advance educational equity and opportunity for all students, which impacted thousands of students and educators. Today, Mahoney serves as the founder of RedBrick Hill, a leadership consulting organization, as well as the Ohio Strengths

Center, creating strengths-based cultures in schools and organizations. He continues to speak, serve, teach and lead in other capacities to support educational advancement. In addition to writing several articles and books, Mahoney is the author of the new book, *To Lead Is to Teach: Stories and Strategies from the Classroom to the Boardroom*. Mahoney has made presentations throughout the U.S., Canada, Ireland and China, and has been recognized on numerous occasions for his leadership in education.

Jule Walker

Walker began her education career in the Long Beach (Calif.) Unified School District in 1985, returning to Montana in 1996 for her first superintendency. She served as a superintendent for 21 years in two rural school districts. During this time, she had the privilege of becoming involved with the Montana Association of School Superintendents (MASS) and AASA (member since 2004). This involvement led to roles as the president of MASS; president of the School Administrators of Montana (SAM), which includes affiliate education organizations, as well as the honor of serving as a Region 1 representative on the AASA Governing Board and then as a member of the AASA Executive Board. Walker was selected as the Montana Superintendent of the Year in 2010, received the Montana G.V. Erickson Award for distinguished service to Montana education in 2013 and the Montana Rural Education Excellence Award in 2018. She has engaged, connected and developed lifelong relationships with great education leaders throughout Montana and the country, sharing her passion and dedication to serving public education students.

Kristi Wilson

Wilson recently completed her term as president of AASA and now assumes the role of past president in the organization. Wilson has dedicated the last 27 years of her life to education, while serving the past nine years as the superintendent of the Buckeye (Ariz.) Elementary School District, one of the fastest-growing school districts in the country, with nearly 6,000 students. It is also projected for continued explosive growth in the coming years. Over the years, Wilson has also been elected to serve in various leadership roles in regional, state and national organizations. She is known for designing schools for the future, where educators and students are encouraged to think critically and engage collaboratively. Academic growth, proficiency and attendance rates, and overall parental satisfaction have shown continued improvement under Wilson's leadership.

Regarded as the most comprehensive professional learning and networking event for school superintendents and administrators, AASA's National Conference on Education addresses the

most critical issues affecting public education today, including leading through the COVID-19 pandemic, equity in education, social and emotional learning, personalizing education, technology and school safety.

[For more information about the conference, access AASA's *Conference Daily Online*.](#)

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About AASA

[AASA, The School Superintendents Association](#), founded in 1865, is the professional organization for more than 13,000 educational leaders in the United States and throughout the world. AASA's mission is to support and develop effective school system leaders who are dedicated to equitable access for all students to the highest quality public education. For more information, visit www.aasa.org.