



250 East 500 South
P.O. Box 144200
Salt Lake City, UT 84114-4200
801.538.7500

UTAH STATE OFFICE OF EDUCATION

January 8, 2014

For Immediate Release

Contact: Carl Boyington, executive director, UASSP
801-538-7885 · carl.boyington@schools.utah.gov

[Jordan, Alpine, Canyons District Educators Named Utah Principals of the Year](#)

SALT LAKE CITY – The principals of Herriman High School and Orem Junior High School, along with the assistant principal of Union Middle School, were named 2014 Utah Secondary Principals of the Year by the Utah Association of Secondary School Principals in a ceremony in Salt Lake City.

Herriman High Principal James O. Birch, Orem Junior High Principal Joseph Jensen, and Union Middle Assistant Principal Douglas C. Hallenbeck will represent Utah in the MetLife Principal of the Year competition.

Birch was named Herriman’s first principal when the school opened its doors in 2010 and created there the Herriman Institute for Teachers (H.I.T.) as a program to help mentor new teachers as the school quickly grew from 1,400 to 2,500 students. “Jim’s willingness to do what is best for students has resulted in his hiring for the culture he envisions for our school,” said Herriman Lead Mentor Teacher Jess C. Gomez. “He realizes that we are not a school that employs adults; rather, we teach students.”

Jensen has been principal at Orem Junior High since 2009 where he has focused on creating professional learning communities and the use of data to inform instruction. “He has changed the culture of Orem Junior High by using compelling data, holding everyone at the school to high expectations and tirelessly working to improve student achievement,” said Alpine School District Superintendent Vernon Henshaw.

Hallenbeck is very interested in expanding technology into the classrooms of Sandy’s Union Middle School. “He works with students on a daily basis on issues pertinent to their success in school and life,” said Union Principal Joanne Ackerman. “He works with teachers to help provide them with what they need to be successful – everything from materials, instruction and management strategies.”

All three Utah nominees will compete in the National Principal of the Year competition sponsored by VIRCO and the National Association of Secondary School Principals.

www.schools.utah.gov