

NEWS RELEASE

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PEARSON SCHOOL SYSTEMS LAUNCHES PEARSON BENCHMARK

Web-based Benchmark Testing System and Assessment Tool Promotes Targeted Instruction and Shorter Assessment Cycles for Maximum Student Achievement

Mesa, Ariz. – June 22, 2005 A major shift is underway in K-12 education, in how school districts approach, administer, and utilize assessment information to drive informed decision making. The most innovative districts -- the real change agents of this movement -- realize that only the most sophisticated technology system, one designed specifically for K-12 education, can provide the backbone of this new paradigm. To answer this call, Pearson School Systems today introduces Pearson Benchmark, a comprehensive, customizable, web-based district benchmark testing system and reporting tool that enables educators to measure, manage, and maximize student achievement through optimal testing, reporting and analytics.

As the leading provider of innovative education technologies to K-12 school districts nationwide, Pearson School Systems developed Pearson Benchmark to help educators quickly and accurately pinpoint student strengths and weaknesses against predetermined standards -- at any time over the course of the academic year. With the ability to gather student performance results collected over time, teachers and administrators can readily monitor student progress, address deficiencies and recheck mastery -- by class, course, grade level, school or even various demographics.

With Pearson Benchmark in place, educators can deliver a wide array of reporting and analytic capabilities, fulfilling the federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) requirements for adequate yearly progress (AYP), while providing a comprehensive view of progress from

student to classroom to school to district. The result is more targeted instruction, shorter assessment cycles, and enhanced student performance.

Alan Cunningham, director of assessment and curriculum development of Dodge City Public Schools, an early adopter of Pearson Benchmark, said, "Originally we selected a competitor's product, but that relationship was cut short when we realized the vast potential afforded us with Pearson Benchmark. This system will clearly help us meet and exceed our instructional objectives and move our assessment strategy to the next level."

Additional features of Pearson Benchmark are its test creation and test administration processes, automated with powerful new tools for test-item authoring and user-friendly wizards to guide educators through test creation and assignment to groups within and across the student population. Pearson Benchmark's open system allows educators to formulate, deliver, and score assessments efficiently, quickly and accurately -- on paper or online -- while aligning the local district requirements with state standards and continuously adjust as needed.

"Pearson Benchmark is the key to unlocking the information needed for districts to facilitate data-driven decisions," said Mike Evans, president of Pearson School Systems. "It generates immediate results to track individual and group progress against standards across schools, classes and even entire districts – all without ever interfering with teachers' or students' daily activities. It is simply the best solution available to K-12 education."

An ASP solution, Pearson Benchmark delivers seamless integration with current student information systems (SIS), minimal maintenance and no interference with teacher or student daily activities. Easy SIS integration allows districts to offer parental access to select assessment results, including test scores and mastery of standards, enabling them to help children at home. Pearson Benchmark also provides links to prescriptive resources that address specific needs and increases parent involvement in efforts to improve student achievement.

"To date Dodge City Public Schools is on target with its plan to complete assessment-on-demand by teachers after each unit of instruction -- assessments that are aligned to state and district standards," said Cunningham. "We're seeing an incredible change in our assessment strategy and student achievement results."

About Pearson School Systems

Pearson School Systems (PSS) is changing the face of K-12 student performance and information management through its offering of tightly-integrated, mission critical district enterprise solutions.

Through its innovative, digital solutions, PSS is dedicated to helping schools perform and students succeed. It's all-encompassing product lineup includes [SASI](#) the widely acclaimed, comprehensive student information system; [Pearson Centerpoint](#); the multi-platform, Web-based student information and performance management system; [CIMS®](#) the comprehensive finance, human resources, and student information system; [Pearson Inform](#), the achievement data analysis and decision support tool; [Pearson Benchmark](#), the customizable, Web-based district benchmark testing solution.

PSS is a business unit of Pearson Education, the world's leading integrated education company, which in turn is part of Pearson (NYSE: PSO), the international media company. For more information please visit: www.pearsonschoolsystems.com

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