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**JOHN OLSON JOINS HARCOURT ASSESSMENT
AS VICE PRESIDENT OF PSYCHOMETRICS AND RESEARCH SERVICES**

SAN ANTONIO – Harcourt Assessment announced today that John Olson will join the company as vice president of psychometrics and research services on Sept. 3.

In this role, Olson will oversee test design and psychometric analysis for Harcourt's educational assessment programs, and will direct research relating to new theories and practices in psychometrics -- the science of measuring mental functions such as learning.

"There are few people who know more about large-scale assessments than John Olson," said Jeff Galt, Harcourt Assessment's president and chief executive officer. "His expertise in psychometrics and his experience in cutting-edge research will be tremendous assets to our company that will solidify Harcourt Assessment's position as the testing industry leader."

Prior to joining Harcourt, Olson was director of assessment for the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO), based in Washington, D.C., where he worked with state leaders on a wide variety of educational assessment projects, including the development of assessment and accountability systems to ensure compliance with the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). Since 1998, he has directed the State Collaboratives on Assessment and Students Standards (SCASS) and the Annual Survey of State Student Assessment Programs, which is the largest and most comprehensive study of state assessment systems.

Prior to that, Olson held a number of positions at the American Institutes for Research. As deputy director of the Center for Education Assessment, he managed the Voluntary National Tests program. He also directed a project to

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review content standards and develop assessment frameworks and test specifications for Minnesota, and he directed a project that developed an item bank in Italy.

In addition, as senior research scientist, he directed a project on appropriate approaches for the inclusion and accommodation of English language learners and students with disabilities in large-scale assessments, with a particular focus on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), which is often referred to as the nation's report card.

From 1985 to 1995, Olson held several positions at Educational Testing Service (ETS), including director of operations, director of state services, and director of technical assistance for NAEP, as well as project director for the Puerto Rico Assessment of Educational Progress. Prior to those positions, Olson was a measurement statistician at ETS.

Over the years, Olson has directed a variety of research and development projects and has overseen the creation of a wide range of products and resources for assessment professionals, such as extensive item pools on CD-ROM for science, social studies and health education, as well as portfolio implementation guides, professional development manuals and alignment study methodologies.

Olson has also served as a professional consultant on statistical, measurement and assessment issues for states, school districts and individuals.

He has published numerous articles on assessment programs and is a sought-after conference speaker.

Olson is a member of the American Educational Research Association, the National Council on Measurement in Education, the National Association of Test Directors, and the Association of State Assessment Programs.

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Olson holds a Ph.D. in educational statistics and measurement, and a bachelor's degree in psychology and mathematics, both from the University of Nebraska.

Based in San Antonio, Harcourt Assessment is a leading provider of high-quality assessment instruments and testing programs. Its educational products include the Stanford Achievement Test series and the Otis-Lennon School Ability Test[®]. It also offers a wide variety of clinical products, such as the Wechsler[®] family of tests, which includes the Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children[®].

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