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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Publisher Aids Maryland Minority Students

Harcourt Achieve Book Donation to Benefit AIMMS Program

BALTIMORE – Harcourt Achieve announced today during an assembly at Woodmoor Elementary School in Baltimore County, Md. attended by hundreds of students, parents, and education and elected officials that it has donated close to 8,000 books to the Achievement Initiative for Maryland Minority Students (AIMMS) program “I established the AIMMS Council and Steering Committee to assist the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) and local school systems in eliminating academic barriers and improving achievement among minority and poor students,” said State Superintendent of Schools Nancy S. Grasmick. “AIMMS has conducted extensive research and data analysis on the gap in achievement among minority and socio-economically-disadvantaged students, and has established programs, such as the annual Excellence in Minority Awards to showcase best practices by educators, community groups, and students in bridging the achievement gap.”

Grasmick continued, “Barbara Dezmon, who chairs the AIMMS steering committee, has been instrumental in creating lasting partnerships with organizations and companies, such as Harcourt Achieve, that further the work of AIMMS. Harcourt’s donation will place age-appropriate books directly in the hands of children as we move closer to the summer months when research shows students, but especially minority and poor students, lag behind their counterparts. “

Harcourt Achieve publishes under the Rigby and Steck-Vaughn imprints. The donation includes books from popular Rigby and Steck-Vaughn product lines “spanning from fictional mysteries and science fiction to nonfiction science topics,” says Elfreda Massie, vice president of strategic alliances of Harcourt Achieve.

“Harcourt Achieve uses a slogan ‘Learning that Changes Lives.’ Everyone attending this event – legislators, administrators, and teachers – also change lives every day as they support the education process in at home, in the school and in the legislature. In today’s world of No Child Left Behind, we need to make sure that we improve achievement among all students, especially minority and poor students,” says Tim McEwen, President and CEO of Harcourt Achieve.

“This is an important donation,” Massie says. “As a publisher of learning solutions, resources and services that play a key role in achieving successful educational milestones, we support the groundbreaking work of AIMMS and its goals – that no minority or poor children be left behind when it comes to getting an education.”

Harcourt Achieve has partnered with AIMMS for several years as a sponsor of the Excellence in Minority Achievement Awards, providing professional development opportunities for teachers.

The books will be provided free-of-charge to one school in each of Maryland's 24 local school systems that has significant numbers of low socio-economic and/or minority students as identified by AIMMS. The schools include:

- Flintstone Elementary, Allegany County Public Schools
- Tyler Heights Elementary, Anne Arundel County Public Schools
- Collington Square Elementary, Baltimore City Public Schools
- Woodmoor Elementary, Baltimore County Public Schools
- Mutual Elementary, Calvert County Public Schools
- Federalsburg Elementary, Caroline County Public Schools
- Taneytown Elementary, Carroll County Public Schools
- Thomas Estates Elementary, Cecil County Public Schools
- Dr. Gustavus Brown Elementary, Charles County Public Schools
- Maple Elementary, Dorchester County Public Schools
- South Frederick Elementary, Frederick County Public Schools
- Crellin Elementary, Garrett County Public Schools
- Magnolia Elementary, Harford County Public Schools
- Talbott Springs Elementary, Howard County Public Schools
- Worton Elementary, Kent County Public Schools
- Highland Elementary, Montgomery County Public Schools
- Matthew Henson Elementary, Prince George's County Public Schools
- Sudlersville Elementary, Queen Anne's County Public Schools
- George Washington Carver Elementary, St. Mary's County Public Schools
- Marion Sarah Peyton Elementary, Somerset County Public Schools
- Easton Elementary, Talbot County Public Schools
- Bester Elementary, Washington County Public Schools
- Prince Street School, Wicomico County Public Schools
- Pocomoke Elementary, Worcester County Public Schools

"Studies have shown that owning books has a positive impact on literacy efforts," Grasmick says, "That is why the Harcourt Achieve donation is so important. For many of these students, these books will be the beginning of a personal library, a book that they can share with parents, siblings, or other relatives."

About Achievement Initiative for Maryland Minority Students (AIMMS)

The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) established the Achievement Initiative for Maryland Minority Students (AIMMS) in 1999. A council and steering committee – including leaders from the civic, business and education communities – assist the MSDE and local school systems in taking steps necessary to eliminate achievement gaps and to advance success among minority students. For information about the program, please call AIMMS Steering Committee Chairperson Dr. Barbara Dezmon at 410-887-2446.

About Harcourt Achieve

Harcourt Achieve produces learning solutions and content that fundamentally and positively changes the lives of young and adult learners, and empower those who teach

them. Published under the Rigby and Steck-Vaughn imprints, its products are based on a developmental philosophy that assesses learners' skills, matches them to appropriate content and accelerates them to meet and exceed expectations. The Steck-Vaughn imprint offers easy-to-use, innovative learning solutions that accelerate content-area knowledge and reading skills, allowing learners to meet and exceed expectations. The Rigby imprint offers progressive learning solutions for reading instruction that provide differentiated instruction to match students' instructional levels. For more information, please visit <http://www.HarcourtAchieve.com>.

Harcourt Achieve is part of Harcourt Education, a global education provider serving students and teachers in PreK through grade 12, adult learners and readers of all ages. The Harcourt Education companies are Harcourt School Publishers; Holt, Rinehart and Winston; Harcourt Achieve; Harcourt Assessment; Classroom Connect; Harcourt Canada; Harcourt Religion Publishers, Harcourt Trade Publishers, Greenwood/Heinemann and Heinemann Global Library. For more information, please visit www.harcourt.com.

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