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**HARCOURT BRIDGES THE GAP BETWEEN ASSESSMENT AND
INSTRUCTION WITH WEB-BASED STANFORD LEARNING FIRST**

**Assessments are Custom-Built for Each State,
Guided by State Content Standards**

**Answer Analysis Feature Helps Teachers
Focus Instruction Where Needed Most**

SAN ANTONIO – Leading test publisher Harcourt Assessment, Inc. has introduced Stanford Learning First, a flexible, Web-based classroom assessment system for grades three through eight that helps teachers bridge the gap between assessment and instruction and helps students get ready for success.

Custom-built one state at a time to help states improve student achievement in reading and mathematics, the Stanford Learning First assessment system consists of two components – formative (periodic) assessments called ClassLinks™ that are guided by each state's content standards; and summative (annual) assessments called ClassViews™ that are guided by the blueprints of statewide accountability tests.

The ClassLinks component includes a unique and powerful answer analysis feature that gives teachers immediate, standards-based feedback about student performance to help focus instruction on those content areas where students are struggling.

“With most assessments, we only know that a student answered a question correctly or incorrectly, but we don't know why. The ClassLinks answer analysis tells us why, because each answer choice provides insight about a student's level of understanding,” said Don Barfield, vice president of educational products for Harcourt Assessment. “The answer analysis gives teachers immediate feedback about student performance, which helps teachers develop effective instructional strategies to target those areas where students need help most,” Barfield added.

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There are six to eight ClassLinks assessments per grade and content area that are designed around instructional themes. Because the system is flexible, teachers can administer the assessments in any order depending on where the themes fit into their instructional plans.

Like ClassLinks, the ClassViews component is also custom-built by state. It provides an “accountability snapshot” that identifies a student’s level of proficiency on the state’s standards. There will be two ClassViews test forms per grade level for both reading and mathematics, which teachers can administer at the beginning of the year, during the year or at the end of the year at the teacher’s discretion.

Both ClassLinks and ClassViews are powered by Harcourt Unison™, a technology platform for the Web that enables both online and print delivery with local scanning, scoring and reporting, as well as professional development for teachers and administrators.

All assessments in the Stanford Learning First system can be administered in one class period for maximum instructional efficiency.

Stanford Learning First will be available initially in six states – Arizona, Florida, Illinois, Ohio, Texas and Virginia.

Based in San Antonio, Harcourt Assessment is a leading provider of high-quality assessment instruments and testing programs used by educators, psychologists, speech-language pathologists, occupational therapists, human resource professionals, admissions and credentialing professionals, and businesses. Through the development of custom statewide educational testing programs, Harcourt is helping more than 20 states meet the accountability requirements of the federal No Child Left Behind Act.

The company is affiliated with the Harcourt Education companies, and together they form the global education brand of Reed Elsevier Group plc (NYSE: RUK and ENL) -- a world-leading publisher and information provider operating in the science and medical, legal, education and business-to-business industry sectors.

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