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NEWS and INFORMATION

SUSD Creates a Balanced Assessment System

SCOTTSDALE, Ariz. (June 28, 2010) Over the years, federal, state and district assessment standards have become more stringent. In order to meet these assessment standards, Scottsdale Unified School District's (SUSD) Assessment Committee reviewed and evaluated programs and created a balanced assessment system to unify assessment and instruction.

The first priority of the Assessment Committee was to create a Balanced Assessment Philosophy that would provide the framework for assessments in the SUSD. This philosophy establishes a standards-based teaching, learning and assessment model.

The second priority of the Assessment Committee was to create criteria for future assessment tools. The District completed the request for proposal process with seven potential programs being evaluated. Based on this evaluation, Assessment Technology Incorporated and its Galileo K-12 Online Instructional Improvement System were selected to provide SUSD with a comprehensive solution for implementing a Balanced Assessment System.

The Assessment Committee also created a communication plan that supports the implementation of the Balanced Assessment System. "We look forward to providing opportunities for teachers and administrators to recognize that using a Balanced Assessment System aligns fully with the work of Professional Learning Communities (PLCs). Teachers can meet their responsibility to parents and students through assessment by continually improving student learning. Assessment also influences the nature of instruction. When assessment is integrated with instruction, it informs teachers of which activities and assignments will be most useful and what level of teaching is most appropriate," said Dr. Ildiko Laczko-Kerr, executive director of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment. With the Balanced Assessment System approach, SUSD hopes to build on the success that the District has already been achieving for some time as reflected in its consistently high AIMS scores.

"Additionally, Galileo K-12 Online can serve as a tool for PLCs as they implement common assessments to measure essential learning and use data to inform instructional decisions. Our District Assessment Program aligns to state (AZ LEARNS) and federal (No Child Left Behind) mandates and provides accountability for a comprehensive student achievement reporting system," said Dr. Laczko-Kerr.

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Scottsdale Unified School District is one of Arizona's most Excelling school districts, with 22 schools earning the state's highest rating—Excelling. All Scottsdale schools are rated as Excelling, Highly Performing, Performing Plus or Performing by the Arizona Department of Education. For more information about Scottsdale Unified schools, please visit www.susd.org.

Assessment Technology Incorporated (ATI) through Galileo K-12 Online provides an easy-to-use, fully integrated instructional improvement system that combines the strength of research and the power of innovation to assist educators in promoting student mastery of local and state standards. Galileo's patented technology provides customized benchmark, formative, interim/end-of-course, curriculum-based, and placement assessments. Galileo reporting tools coupled with curriculum and instructional dialog tools make it possible to continuously link information about student learning to instructional planning and teaching to promote standards mastery. For more information about ATI, please visit www.ati-online.com.