



## ***NEWS RELEASE***

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### **HARCOURT ASSESSMENT AND CO-NECT TEAM UP NATIONALLY WITH PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SOLUTION FOR TEACHERS OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS**

#### **ELL PD PLUS™ Will Help Educators Continuously Improve the Quality of Instruction for ELL Students**

SAN ANTONIO, Texas and CAMBRIDGE, Mass. – Leading test developer and publisher Harcourt Assessment Inc., and Co-nect, the leading provider of professional development solutions, have teamed up to create a professional development program for educators of English language learners in grades K – 12.

The program, known as ELL PD Plus™, combines the power of Harcourt's Stanford English Language Proficiency Test (Stanford ELP) with Co-nect's established data-driven approach to improving instruction.

Harcourt and Co-nect have designed ELL PD Plus as an integrated system of research-based diagnostics, management tools and professional development that supports teachers and administrators in their efforts to assess, monitor and continuously improve the quality of instruction for ELL students.

English language learners are expected to represent 25 percent of all students in grades K – 12 nationwide in the next five years, and while the federal No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) requires schools to focus on this rapidly growing population, ten percent of educators responsible for teaching these students have no formal training.

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## **Harcourt Assessment and Co-nect Team Up Nationally With ELL PD Plus™**

Sept. 6, 2005

Page 2

ELL PD Plus will guide educators as they administer the Stanford ELP, analyze data and make differentiated instructional choices that lead to improved student outcomes.

“Harcourt’s Stanford ELP is a proven assessment that educators can use to measure how well their English language learners comprehend and express themselves in English,” said Don Barfield, vice president of educational products for Harcourt Assessment. “And now, with ELL PD Plus, developed in collaboration with Co-nect, we can help ELL teachers acquire the skills they need to administer the test appropriately and help their students succeed.”

“While it’s vital for ELL educators to employ a research-based instrument to assess English language learners, it’s equally important to provide professional development and support so that teachers can use test results to make good decisions, differentiate instruction, and employ best practice strategies for this very important student population,” said Andrew Skoler, president and CEO of Co-nect. “The collaboration between Co-nect and Harcourt will provide school districts with a first-of-its-kind solution that addresses the specific needs of this critical sub-group and its teachers.”

ELL PD Plus starts with Harcourt’s Stanford ELP, already the leading standards-based assessment for students learning English, and marries it with Co-nect’s proven approach to delivering professional development.

To create ELL PD Plus, Co-nect has customized an ELL version of its Instructional Quality Toolkit™ (IQT) for reviewing instructional practice, the DataFlow process for data-driven decision making, and the Co-nect online eXchange™ engine for delivering content and managing the implementation process.

ELL PD Plus features online courses in best practices such as language acquisition theory, multicultural awareness and sensitivity, integrating TESOL and state standards into classroom instruction, qualitative and quantitative ongoing language assessment, as well as ELL and content area instruction. The solution also contains course material for Harcourt’s Stanford ELP and the training of district and school leaders.

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ELL PD Plus also includes guided, interactive applications that allow teachers and coaches to apply ELL concepts through a variety of hands-on activities that build on the concepts and strategies from the online coursework. Participants follow a five-step process that involves research, application, reflection, revision and assessment activities.

### **About Stanford ELP**

Launched in 2003, Stanford ELP enables educators to measure how well English language learners comprehend and express themselves in English, and is used to determine student placement and track student progress. Stanford ELP was the first assessment of its kind to fully meet the requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act by testing all of the necessary language skills – listening, speaking, reading and writing – and comprehension. Stanford ELP also measures proficiency in both academic and social language usage.

### **About Harcourt Assessment, Inc.**

Harcourt Assessment ([www.HarcourtAssessment.com](http://www.HarcourtAssessment.com)) is a leading provider of high-quality assessment instruments and testing programs. Its educational products include the English-language Stanford Achievement Test Series and the new, third edition of its Spanish-language Aprenda® achievement test. The company is a unit of Harcourt Education, which is the global education brand of Reed Elsevier Group plc (NYSE: RUK and ENL). Reed Elsevier is a world-leading publisher and information provider operating in the science and medical, legal, education and business-to-business industry sectors.

### **About Co-nect**

Co-nect ([www.co-nect.net](http://www.co-nect.net)) is a leading provider of data-driven, K–12 professional development solutions focused on improving the quality of classroom instruction district-wide. Co-nect delivers training, tools, and resources to solve critical issues such as whole school improvement, data-informed decision-making, technology integration, and early reading failure. Since 1992, Co-nect has been a leader in improving instructional quality – implementing data-informed solutions in over 33 states. Research-based programs are delivered through a national network of educational consultants who provide face-to-face training supported by an integrated suite of online professional development, assessment tools, and curricular resources.