

Pearson Press Release

Archdiocese of Boston Schools Turns to Pearson for Powerful Assessments to Support Tradition of Academic Excellence

Stanford 10 Achievement Test Will Make Data for Connecting Assessment to Learning Easily Accessible for Educators at Catholic School Systems

Boston, MA, November 16, 2009 - The Catholic Schools Office (CSO) of the Archdiocese of Boston, as part of its commitment to academic excellence, announced an initiative that will use a powerful assessment and data analysis tool from the education and technology company, Pearson. Beginning in March 2010, the 18,000 students in grade 2-8 throughout the Archdiocese will take the Stanford Achievement Tests 10 (Stanford 10), which will measure students' knowledge in reading, language arts, mathematics, science and social studies, giving their teachers access to data for customizing instruction for all students. In addition, the CSO will administer Pearson's Otis-Lennon School Ability Test®, Eighth Edition (OLSAT 8) in conjunction with the Stanford 10 so that educators can compare students' performance across grade levels in their schools, giving them a complete picture of each student's overall academic potential.

The Stanford 10 from Pearson, considered the standard of excellence in achievement testing for more than 80 years, is supported by a powerful data reporting and analysis tool that will allow CSO educators to make timely, targeted instructional decisions. As a result, they will have a clear picture of the unique learning needs of all students so that they can help them achieve at their highest level.

"At Pearson, we believe that the true power of assessment is to inform instruction. When teachers and administrators have easy and immediate access to student test results, they have a window into the best strategies for improving learning for each and every student," said Mike Medernach, Pearson's Vice President for Educational Assessments for New England. "Over the weeks and months to come, we will work closely with educators from the Catholic Schools Office to help them dig deep into the data they receive from our assessments and use it to meet the unique learning needs of all of their students."

Key to the successful implementation of any new assessment program is professional development and Pearson will be the CSO's partner as it introduces the Stanford 10 and OLSAT 8 and their capabilities to teachers. Using the train-the-trainer model, Pearson will work with teachers from across the Archdiocese to prepare them to administer the assessments and, more importantly, to develop strategies for using the resulting data to support classroom instruction.

"Academic excellence has always been a core part of the mission of the Archdiocese of Boston's Catholic schools, and we are excited to be working on a new level with Pearson, whose curriculum programs for reading and math are also used in some of our classrooms," said Secretary for Education/Superintendent Mary Grassa O'Neill. "Pearson will help us build a comprehensive connection between assessment and instruction that will greatly benefit students and teachers."

Students in the Archdiocese of Boston perform above grade level across the curriculum and Catholic school teachers and administrators receive topflight professional development opportunities throughout the year. Bringing student achievement to ever higher levels is the primary reason that the Archdiocese's Catholic Schools Office has engaged Pearson in this latest partnership.

The Catholic Schools Office undertook a year-long study of various testing and assessment options to come to its decision on the Stanford 10 and Pearson. This process involved gathering both local and national input. An assessment committee of 15 elementary school leaders, including principals, regional directors, and curriculum coordinators, developed recommendations and came up with a strategic assessment plan.

More information about the Stanford 10, OLSAT 8 and Pearson's other assessment products is available at <http://www.pearsonassessments.com>.