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**New Hanover County Schools Equips Teachers with 21st Century Tools
to Help All K-2 Students Advance in Reading**

**Teachers Understand and Meet Students' Learning Needs
with Wireless Generation's mCLASS:Reading 3D,
Handheld Computer-Based Early Reading Assessment**

New Hanover, NC (April 2008) – Continuing its commitment to 21st century teaching and learning, New Hanover County Schools has partnered with Wireless Generation, a leading education and technology company, to help all of its K-2 students make progress in reading. This spring, elementary teachers in 25 schools will begin using Wireless Generation's mCLASS:Reading 3D, a handheld computer-based assessment that enables them to easily and efficiently monitor students' learning progress, understand their strengths and challenges, and provide the right instruction at the right time for every child.

In the past, New Hanover teachers have given short assessments during the school year to track student progress – a widely used practice known as “formative assessment.” Traditionally, these assessments are given using paper and pencil, a labor-intensive process that takes significant instructional time away from the classroom. Research shows that doing formative assessment leads to significant learning gains, if it is done frequently during the school year.

With mCLASS:Reading 3D, teachers can easily and efficiently conduct formative assessments, as often as every two weeks for students at risk. Teachers receive step-by-step guidance through the assessment right on the screen of a handheld computer. While students perform various reading tasks with books or other materials, teachers record responses on the handheld. The handheld device automates timing and scores the assessments instantly, providing “real-time” information on student instructional needs. When the handheld is “synced” to a Web-connected computer, the data is uploaded to a secure Website where teachers and administrators access clear, detailed reports on individual students, classes, grades, and schools.

mCLASS:Reading 3D provides New Hanover schools with two assessments that together support the teaching and learning of K-2 students at every level of skill development, from beginning reading to proficiency and beyond. The research-based Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS®) alerts teachers when students are at risk, and enables close, frequent monitoring of their progress toward mastering basic skills. Reading Records enable teachers to probe the reading strategies and comprehension of students at all levels as they read authentic fiction and non-fiction text. Teachers also use Reading Records to monitor progress and promote the ongoing development of skills and comprehension that students need to transition from “learning to read” to “reading to learn.”

In addition to making formative assessment feasible for busy teachers, New Hanover is focused on helping educators use student data to make good decisions about the right instruction for each child. County teachers will use mCLASS Now What? Tools, online tools which assist in interpreting data and grouping students for appropriate follow-up instruction.

mCLASS Item-Level Advisor analyzes each individual student's DIBELS responses and shows his or her teacher the significant error patterns and what they mean. mCLASS Small Group Advisor places students in groups based on what assessment results reveal about their needs, and the teacher can adjust the groups based on her judgment and knowledge. Finally, mCLASS Home Connect helps teachers explain to parents in clear terms what assessment results mean and suggest appropriate reading activities to do at home.

“Our teachers are experienced with both reading records and DIBELS. As a result, we recognized both the power of the assessments and the power of the mCLASS system, which is truly a 21st century teaching tool in its efficiency and the richness of the information it provides,” said Emma H. Jackson, Executive Director of Instruction for the New Hanover County Schools. “mCLASS:Reading 3D is the ideal solution for us, helping us to take our proven practices to the next level and raise the level of achievement for every child, from the struggling learner to the student reading above grade level.”

“We are honored to partner with the New Hanover County Schools, a district with an unwavering commitment to excellent teaching and successful learning in every classroom,” said Debbie Owens, Executive Director of Educational Partnerships at Wireless Generation.

About Wireless Generation

Wireless Generation makes effective differentiated instruction possible for PreK-12 educators with its mCLASS® system, which includes handheld computer-based formative assessments; Web-based reporting, data analysis and instructional planning tools; and in-person professional development. The company's commitment to listening to educators and gaining a deep understanding of their challenges has led to the development of innovative offerings that help improve student achievement in reading and math. Currently, approximately 150,000 teachers nationwide and overseas use mCLASS and the company's professional services to collect, analyze, and act on data in support of 2 million students' reading and math learning. More information is available on the Web at www.wirelessgeneration.com.

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