

**PRESS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Pearson Tackles Challenges of Helping Boost California Students' Reading Scores

*World's Leading Educational Publisher Offers Department of Education
Array of Innovative Programs Addressing the Needs of All Learners*

SACRAMENTO, Calif. (April 11, 2008) – The education publisher Pearson, today announced that it has submitted to California's Department of Education a total of seven comprehensive programs aligned to meet new state standards and designed to boost reading, vocabulary, and language arts performance for all of California's elementary and secondary students.

Pearson vice president for California Vicky Bush said, "The state has been explicit about its expectations, not only with core content, but especially in meeting the needs of struggling students and English learners. In creating our customized California programs, we have been 100% focused on providing the state's educators with comprehensive, innovative educational materials to provide every child the maximum opportunity to be successful in school."

The Pearson programs include an integrated array of instruction, digital media, and assessment aligned to Reading First requirements and revised State standards. Bush said, "This is the first time that Pearson will be offering an elementary reading program for California. Our *Reading Street for California* customized curriculum is based on five years of research and development invested in the *Scott Foresman Reading Street* series." Bush noted that over the past two years, the core curriculum has been adopted by thousands of schools, and in 2007 was the top-selling reading program in the U.S. Now it has been enhanced and customized for California, adding a visually-engaging and entertaining digital path, and including California authors and literature. This and other elementary and secondary programs are also being customized for English learners.

The new California 2008 instructional requirements are based on research indicating greater need to support academic achievement of students and narrow the achievement gap. According to the state, teachers and school leaders requested this current adoption requirements include comprehensive instructional materials that ensure the successful academic achievement of African American students, English learners, and students at risk of academic failure; and provide new components and improved instruction to efficiently and effectively address their instructional needs.

In response to this mandate, Pearson has submitted comprehensive programs developed by three of its educational publishing arms: Scott Foresman (K-6), Prentice Hall (6-12), and Longman (K-12). "These three publishing teams worked seamlessly to incorporate the many critical student needs and state requirements into our programs," said Bush. "What distinguishes Pearson in this adoption is that for the first time, a publisher has succeeded in pulling all of the required elements together in a totally integrated K-12 reading and literacy package."

The seven Pearson programs are:

1. *Pearson Reading Street for California* (grades K-6), a customized curriculum steeped in five years of research and development to create the *Scott Foresman Reading Street* program. The top-selling reading curriculum in the U.S in 2007, the program has been enhanced and customized for California, adding a visually-engaging and entertaining digital path, and including California authors and

literature.

2. *Pearson California Language Central* (grades K-6), a component for intensive English-language development. Instruction is built from Grant Wiggins's *Understanding by Design* concepts.

Instructional support for English learners of various proficiency levels, including: an explicit and efficient path to the *Reading Street* curriculum; frontloading of language and literacy skills; and connections of common unit and weekly concepts of *Pearson Reading Street for California* and *Pearson calle de la lectura*.

3. *Pearson calle de la lectura* (grades K-3), a parallel Spanish version of *Pearson Reading Street for California*. A comprehensive, research-based program developed specifically to support teaching and learning of the California Spanish-Language Arts Content Standards, with differentiated instruction for struggling readers, grade level readers and advanced readers.

4. *Pearson Literature California Reading and Language* (middle/high school) is a comprehensive literature program developed specifically for California and based on the most recent reading research. Organized around Big Questions and the Understanding by Design model of Grant Wiggins, the program also provides differentiated instruction for struggling readers, English learners, and advanced learners, making the program curriculum accessible to all students and ensuring that all students have the opportunity to master the State's English–Language Arts Content Standards.

5. *Pearson California Language Central* (grades 6-8). Customized to meet California's rigorous standards, this program provides students with an additional one hour of instruction each day to help ensure that English learners acquire proficiency in English as quickly, efficiently and effectively as possible. *Pearson California Language Central* is directly aligned with *Pearson Literature California Reading and Language* and focuses on common units and lesson concepts and is consistent with its scope and sequence.

6. *Pearson Longman Cornerstone* is a stand-alone, multi-level intervention program designed for elementary English learners and struggling readers whose academic achievement is two or more years below grade level. *Longman Cornerstone* incorporates the instructional principles of Grant Wiggins's *Understanding by Design*. The program includes focused instruction to accelerate students' language acquisition, reading comprehension, vocabulary, fluency, and oral and written communication skills.

7. *Pearson Longman Keystone*, a stand-alone, multi-level intervention program for struggling readers and English learners whose academic achievement is two or more years below grade level, blends rigorous, research-based reading and language skills instruction together with a balance of content-area readings and age-appropriate, high-interest literature. The program incorporates the instructional principles of *Understanding by Design*, with the goal of equipping students with the key transferable academic skills necessary to transition successfully into mainstream basal programs.

“One of the factors that separates us from other publishers is our aggressive intervention programs for struggling readers and students whose first language is not English,” said Joanne Dresner, president of Pearson Longman. “As the world's leading provider of instructional materials for English learners, our programs are grounded in extensive research and authored by world-class experts who are uniquely qualified in addressing the complex issues around English language acquisition. Our goal in California is to move learners as quickly as possible out of intervention and into the mainstream programs, so that regardless of whether or not their first language is English, all California students will have the opportunity to achieve academic and lifelong success.”

Pearson has worked diligently to establish a prestigious team of authors, researchers and educators to develop programs that meet California's unique needs, said Pearson's Bush. She noted that Pearson has just signed an exclusive agreement with noted curriculum design expert Grant Wiggins, as well as bringing on the award-winning children's writer Jon Scieszka as a Pearson author.

"Across the spectrum, our programs connect with one another, as well as with the needs of California teachers, students, parents and others in the education community," she said. "We look forward to working with the state throughout the process to ensure maximum impact and value to California."

About Pearson in California:

Pearson, the world's leading education publisher, has been providing education materials to California schools as far back as the 1800s. You may know us individually as Scott Foresman, Prentice Hall, Longman, SuccessMaker, NovaNet, AGS, Pearson Assessment and Information, Learning Teams, Achievement Solutions, and so many more – names in the world of education that are recognized and respected across the State and the globe. In fact, most teachers in California have learned their profession by studying with Pearson's Merrill or Allyn & Bacon textbooks, and many have benefited from our professional development programs. Today, nearly a thousand Pearson people are living and working in the State, providing educational materials that cover the gamut from birth through professional learning. Whether in science, math, social studies, music, middle/high school language arts, English as a second language, foreign languages, or AP courses, hundreds of thousands of California's preK-12 students are learning with our Pearson products every day.

In addition to Education, Pearson's other major businesses include The Financial Times Group and The Penguin Group. For more information, go to: www.californiareading.com or www.pearsonschool.com.

Contact:

kate.miller@pearson.com — 1.800.745.8489
stevan@allenstrategic.com — 1.916.448.1336