

Media Contact: Dan Morris, eChalk Press Office: dmorris@echalk.com; 646.723.3406.

eChalk Report Highlights Online Solution to Barriers in Paper-Based Lesson Planning

New York, NY—April 24, 2008—Online lesson planning is an overlooked, but effective way to align instruction with state standards and prepare students for assessment, according to a white paper released today by eChalk, a provider of web-based communication and learning tools to K-12 schools around the country. Within traditional paper-based lesson planning, it is very difficult for principals, administrators, and curriculum leaders to monitor classroom progress and track which standards have been taught.

Requiring teachers to incorporate state standards into lesson plans is most effective when teachers have easy access to instructional guidance and supervisors actually know what is taught in the classroom. But without a record of planning and instruction, or a method of distributing standards, teachers and supervisors alike cannot notice when lessons are misaligned or when instruction veers off task.

Low test scores are often the first sign that something is wrong. By then it is too late. The report, available at <http://www.echalk.com/products-services/lesson-planner>, finds that breakdowns in planning can be traced to breakdowns in communication.

“Online lesson planning, when integrated into a system that provides registered users in the school district 24/7 access to classroom resources, is the best way to correct such deficiencies in advance of standardized tests and ensure that students receive adequate instruction prior to assessment,” said Charlene Noll, eChalk’s Vice President of Product Development, whose team conducted extensive one-on-one interviews with end users to understand the natural practices and motivations of online lesson planners.

Some of the primary benefits of online lesson planning highlighted in the report include:

- » Allowing all stakeholders, including principals, parents, teachers, and curriculum directors, full access to classroom plans and progress reports—ensuring that what is planned is actually taught.
- » Showing which standards each teacher has covered, allowing principals and curriculum leaders to make real-time course corrections throughout the school year.
- » Making it easier for curriculum directors to communicate objectives and best practices so that teachers can easily insert them into their lesson plans and classroom instruction.
- » Enabling teachers to participate in collaborative lesson planning and peer review so they can enjoy greater access to best practices while reducing paperwork.
- » Offering parents a better chance to stay involved and become active partners in the process.

ABOUT eCHALK www.echalk.com

Founded in 1999 and headquartered in New York City, eChalk offers K-12 schools web-based systems that improve learning and communication. All registered users can communicate and collaborate in an online learning environment as safe and secure as the physical classroom. Students can view classroom pages, submit homework, and discuss the curriculum with their peers; parents can communicate with teachers and access their children’s grades, attendance, and other vital information; teachers can collect assignments electronically, set discussion topics, post lesson plans, and share best practices. The online learning environment is supported by extensive on-site project management, training, and professional development so that users of varying skill levels can be equally successful.

###