

**STI RELEASES ‘STATE-WIDE IMPROVEMENT’ WHITE PAPER ON
FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT USE AND RESULTS**

Dr. Dale Mann’s study of Alabama’s use of STIAssessment shows students performed better in reading and math in schools that used the company’s software

MOBILE, ALA. (June 10, 2008) – STIAssessment, a Web-based formative assessment management system from STI, helps teachers “increase the power and precision of their teaching,” according to a new report on the use of the company’s software in Alabama schools. STI, a leading provider of education data management systems, has released the white paper “State-Wide Improvement from STIAssessment: Results for Students, Teachers and Schools,” authored by Dale Mann, Ph.D.

STIAssessment is used in more than number schools throughout Alabama. The system allows users to create, administer, and track formative assessments, and to gather data detailing student performance on state standards. Guided by these findings, teachers can take the necessary steps to tailor instruction in ways that will help their students improve. Administrators are able to compile reports in the STI system to meet local and federal reporting requirements, and use the information to make critical decisions regarding resource allocation, budgeting, and professional development.

Dr. Mann noted: “School administrators recognize that mandates and best practice both point in the direction of more frequent assessment. But, while assessment can improve achievement, teachers lack the time and expertise to build tests for every subject, every week...In well-designed, teacher friendly assessment analysis and reporting systems, teachers can quickly examine data, discuss the implications and adapt their instruction...Services such as those offered by STI also allow teachers and administrators to use real-time data and reporting to modify instruction for individual students as well as for small groups.”

The key findings from the “State-Wide Improvement with STIAssessment” report include:

- More students meet state reading standards when taught with STIAssessment support than those statewide groups not using STI at five of the six grade levels.
- More students exceed state math standards in the schools using STI than similar schools not using STI at every grade level, third through eighth grade.
- In school-wide math achievement, STI-using schools outperformed others by statistically significant margins for all seven student sub-groups (e.g. Hispanic-American, limited English proficient, free and reduced meal eligible).
- With STIAssessment, administrators and teachers embraced assessment in ways that changed faculty culture and increased student achievement through improved data analysis.

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Administrators and teachers agreed that STIAssessment resulted in dramatic improvement in curriculum and instruction, with 81 percent of interviewed teachers reporting that they changed their teaching daily or weekly. One teacher said, "This [interim assessment data] is what teaching should be about. Before this, we were all just flying blind." And one of the principals interviewed explained, "Now there is a road map that teachers can use to teach to the state standards...I can figure out who is mastering which standard. I can go to the teachers and take the data from STI and fine tune the instructional program."

Dr. Mann conducted a third-party quasi-experimental analysis of a representative sample of Alabama schools and local education agencies for his study of STAssessment. The quantitative study was supplemented with qualitative data gathered from interviews and classroom observations.

Dr. Mann is a professor emeritus at Columbia University's Teachers College and managing director of Interactive, Inc., which is listed on the US Department of Education's Institute of Education Science "gold standard" Registry of Outcome Evaluators. Interactive has completed more than 200 research and evaluation projects for states, school districts, schools, foundations, publishers and learning technology companies.

To download the white paper, go to <http://www.sti-k12.com/presswhite.asp>. This is the third study in a series of white papers commissioned by STI. The white papers "Student Learning Under the Microscope: Using Data to Improve Instruction," by Sarah Odom, Ph.D., and "Formative Assessment and Its Uses for Improving Student Achievement," by Carmen Giebelhaus, Ph.D. and Sandra Young, Ph.D. are also available online. For more information about STI, visit www.sti-k12.com or phone 800-844-0884.

About STI

STI is a leading provider of Education Data Management solutions to the K-12 market. STI's fully integrated suite of products addresses attendance, scheduling, special education, assessment, discipline, grade reporting, professional development, fund accounting, health, and parent/teacher communications. More than 6,000 schools in 28 states use STI solutions. The company was founded in 1982 and is headquartered in Mobile, Ala. For more information, phone 800-844-0884 or visit www.sti-k12.com.

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