



Education Data Management Solutions

News Release
For Immediate Release

STI AND MICROSOFT[®] BUSINESS SOLUTIONS TEAM UP TO PROVIDE PURPOSEFUL INFORMATION TO DISTRICTS WITH DATA INTEGRATION

New system merges all district data processes—student information, learning management and HR/financial systems; integration key to raising student achievement

MOBILE, ALA. (Feb. 17, 2005) – Improving schools can be as simple as giving education leaders the data they need to make informed decisions that can ultimately improve student learning. Leading the way, STI, the nation’s leading provider of education data management solutions for K-12 schools, and Microsoft Business Solutions announce today they are collaborating on a fully integrated data management system to empower education leaders with meaningful information.

One of the seven major actions steps recommended by the Department of Education in the 2005 National Educational Technology Plan is to integrate data systems to make more informed decisions and further tailor and individualize instruction based on student needs. Data integration is key to harnessing the power of technology to transform education; however, it’s contingent on ed tech leadership at the local, district and state levels. The No Child Left Behind Act calls for increased accountability, and data collection, analysis and reporting are critical components of this mandate.

The new integrated system combines learning management, student information management, and facility and process management tools from STI with the best-in-class financial software from Microsoft Business Solutions-Great Plains into one package. Now, educators have the ability to track virtually all education data and connect disparate data sets to create useful information. With the integrated approach, education leaders at any level—school, district, or state—can tie financial data to other education information such as assessment or professional development. Districts can better manage their resources, make quicker decisions, measure return on investment, and ultimately, improve student achievement. Educators can have an enterprise-wide view or drill down to the classroom level and can build unique queries to get the data they need to help them make informed decisions.

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Nearly all school processes from grading to staffing are factors in student achievement. The integrated system from STI and Microsoft Business Solutions is the first offering in the K-12 arena to use data from all areas—essentially administrative, financial and instructional systems—to help education leaders better understand the relationships between school resources and student achievement.

Some examples of the kinds of questions school leaders can answer with the integrated system are:

- What is the most efficient use of limited curriculum dollars, given past gains in student achievement?
- How can resources be optimized to address student groups that are falling behind?
- What is the “return on investment” in terms of student achievement of a textbook adoption?

STI’s education data management tools include *STI Student Information Systems*, *STI Assessment*, *STI Special Education Tracking System* and *STI Professional Development Management*. Together these comprehensive, easy-to-use programs track student demographics, attendance, scheduling, discipline reports, health records, textbooks, lunch programs, grades, assessments, lesson plans, professional development, special education and more. They also enable web- or phone-based school-to-home communications.

The Microsoft Business Solutions-Great Plains software easily streamlines administrative functions including financial reporting, fund accounting, human resources and payroll management, accounts payable and receivable, as well as grants management.

For more information on the new offering from STI and Microsoft Business Solutions, go online to www.sti-k12.com/mbs or phone STI at 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. Over 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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About Microsoft® Business Solutions

Microsoft Business Solutions offers integrated business applications and services that allow small and midsize organizations and divisions of large enterprises to connect employees, customers and suppliers for improved efficiency. The financial management, customer relationship management, supply chain management and analytics applications work with Microsoft products such as Office and Windows® to streamline processes across an entire organization, giving businesses insight to respond rapidly, plan strategically and execute quickly. Microsoft Business Solutions applications are delivered through a worldwide network of channel partners that provide specialized services and local support tailored to a company's needs.

Headquartered in Redmond, Wash., Microsoft Business Solutions is a wholly owned subsidiary of Microsoft Corp. (Nasdaq "MSFT"), the worldwide leader in software, services and solutions that help people and businesses realize their full potential.

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