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### **Online Professional Development Courses Now Available through Pinnacle Suite**

*Offerings designed to help stakeholders make the shift to more effective instructional practices*

GREELEY, Colo. (Feb. 23, 2009) – Designed to help educators and administrators make the shift to support learning through effective strategies, guided by research and real-time information, online professional development courses are now available through the Pinnacle Suite from Excelsior Software. By learning in the same platform they use for teaching, educators will become more effective and save valuable time in the process.

The professional development offerings focus on four key areas and explore classroom-centered assessment designed to improve student learning outcomes.

- **Improving Schools Using Effective Assessment for Digital-Age Learning** – For some schools, meeting NCLB AYP targets is a primary challenge. This program is designed to help them apply the research-based techniques of Dr. Robert Marzano and the use of the Pinnacle Suite to support progress monitoring.
- **RtI: Roadmap to Excellence** – For other schools, the over-identification of students for special education services is a critical issue. From a strong research-based foundation, this program is the first of its kind to provide general education teachers with the knowledge, skills and strategies to address the specific needs of all learners.
- **Visible Thinking, Teaching and Learning: A 21st Century Skills Course** – Many schools have identified the need to provide students with 21st century skills, but have been unable to find ways to strengthen and assess these skills. This student course provides fully developed project-based units, which are aligned to both content area and NETS standards, and are integrated with assessments for fluid learning.
- **Information Technology for Learning (IT4L): A Team Strategy for School Improvement** – Schools committed to standards-based, digital-age learning will find this program prepares teams at the building level to implement practical and sustained instructional strategies using technology for greater effectiveness.

“These offerings represent a game-changing approach to helping schools transition to digital-age learning,” said Ferdi Serim, Director of Professional Development Programs for Excelsior Software. “These courses bring student-focused professional learning into the everyday lives of teachers in a way that builds capacity in every participating school. Each of the four

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initiatives has been designed in response to the biggest challenges educators and administrators have reported they face on a daily basis.”

The programs are based on 15 years of best practices from the National Science Foundation, Dr. Robert Marzano, and the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE). Each initiative includes year-long support through coaching, mentoring, and peer collaboration within a Professional Learning Community.

“By integrating these programs with the Pinnacle Suite, professional development is no longer an optional event – it becomes an everyday process,” said William Zaggie, President of Excelsior Software. “Educators and administrators should learn in the same environment in which teaching takes place, while receiving real-time, on-demand support for the immediate challenges they face in improving learning for all students.”

Each course provides clock hours for CEU credits; courses vary in length up to one year. For \$450, each course participant gains access to the Pinnacle Suite (includes gradebook, curriculum and assessment, supplemental resources, and administrative tools) and all course materials. For more information about the professional development courses offered through the Pinnacle Suite, visit [www.pinnaclesuite.com](http://www.pinnaclesuite.com).

#### **About Excelsior Software**

Excelsior Software delivers the technical innovations that meet the needs of today’s evolving data-driven educational system. The company’s end-to-end solution, the Pinnacle Suite, increases teacher productivity, improves communication, and empowers educators to transform practices that improve student learning for the digital age. Ensuring a high return on investment, the Pinnacle Suite provides: a student information system; gradebook; integrated curriculum and assessments; data analytics; tutoring; supplemental education services; and professional development that addresses 21st century learning, Response to Intervention, effective technology implementation, and formative assessment/standards-based learning with Dr. Robert Marzano. Excelsior Software is a wholly owned subsidiary of GlobalScholar, a member of the Knowledge Universe family of companies. For more information, <http://www.pinnaclesuite.com> or phone 800-473-4572.

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