



EXCELSIOR SOFTWARE

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FETC 2007 NEWS AT-A-GLANCE EXCELSIOR SOFTWARE, INC.

Excelsior Software is committed to raising student achievement by providing parents and educators with instant access to student progress information, increasing teacher productivity, and improving home-to-school communication. Here are the latest steps Excelsior and its partners have taken toward attaining these goals:

ROBERT MARZANO IDENTIFIES ASSESSMENT & GRADING PRACTICES THAT WORK IN NEW BOOK

Dr. Robert Marzano draws on more than 35 years of research to formulate expert advice on best practices for creating truly reliable assessments and implementing accurate grading methods. *Classroom Assessment and Grading that Work*, published by ASCD (December 2006), provides guidelines and steps for designing a comprehensive assessment program that ensures assessments and grades lead to timely, accurate feedback on standards-based learning goals. He discusses how improving and enhancing classroom formative assessments can greatly increase student achievement. In addition, Marzano highlights Excelsior's Pinnacle Plus system as his recommended grading and assessment software solution largely due to the system's alignment to the following characteristics:

- The software should allow teachers to establish multiple measurement topics of their own design and easy entry of scores for those topics
- The software should provide the most accurate representation of a student's score on each measurement topic at the end of the grading period, and
- The software should provide graphs and tables of student's scores. (Marzano 2006)

To order a copy, visit <http://shop.ascd.org/productdisplay.cfm?productid=106006>.

THE NEXT GENERATION OF PINNACLE PLUS COMING IN SUMMER 2007

As Excelsior celebrates its 20th birthday, the company is looking ahead to the next generation of its Pinnacle Plus system — Pinnacle Web — due for release this summer. Incorporating innovative, state-of-the-art technologies (AJAX, used to create Google Maps, et al) the new solution will be entirely web-based. This transformation to an online, zero-footprint model allows teachers and administrators the scalability and mobility that previous iterations and competitor options cannot provide, and eases the work of technical staff by providing fully centralized, SQL server functionality. In addition, hosting Pinnacle Web online gives districts a lower-cost alternative — the investment in multiple servers and hardware is reduced, which translates into less maintenance. Pinnacle Web's state-of-the-art technology offers an intuitive, "smart" user interface, calling for minimal training. Look for more information to come this Spring.

EXCELSIOR SOFTWARE PRODUCTS NAMED FINALISTS IN THE SIIA CODIE AWARDS

Following two consecutive years of earning dual honors in the Software and Information Industry Association (SIIA) Codie Awards, Excelsior Software has again been named a finalist in two categories. Pinnacle Plus has been recognized as a finalist in the "Best Course/Classroom Management Solution" category, and Pinnacle Education Solutions is named a finalist in the "Best K-12 Enterprise Solution" category. The newly introduced Pinnacle Education Solutions suite of applications offers educators practical tools designed to save teachers and IT staff time, keep parents and administrators informed, and raise student achievement. Both products were selected from more than 1,000 high-caliber nominees as one of the best in the software and information industry. Established in 1986, the Codie Awards remain the standard-bearer for celebrating outstanding achievement and vision in the software, digital content and education technology industries.

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