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Questar Assessment Experts to Present at Upcoming CCSSO 39th Annual National Conference on Student Assessment

- Attendees to Learn About New Research, New Ideas, and New Technology -

Apple Valley, MN, June 3, 2009 -- Questar Assessment, Inc. (www.QuestarAI.com), a leading educational assessment provider for states, school districts, and higher education institutions, has announced that three of its industry experts will be presenting at the upcoming Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) 39th Annual National Conference on Student Assessment. The conference will focus on student assessment and takes place the week of June 21-24, 2009, at The Westin Bonaventure Hotel in Los Angeles, California.

“CCSSO is an important event for the assessment industry,” said Roy Lipner, President and Chief Executive Officer of Questar Assessment, Inc. “It is an excellent forum for state and district assessment decision-makers to talk to the leaders in the field to learn about new technologies and the latest research in the field to enhance their knowledge.”

Questar presentations include:

- **Psychometric Issues and Challenges: Morphing End-of-Course Assessments into High Stakes Graduation Exams: Policy and Psychometric Issues and Challenges**
Tim Vansickle, Ph.D., Vice President of Psychometrics and Research

In the last few years, legislators and other policy makers have suggested using end-of-course tests for both NCLB purposes and as graduation requirements. Given that most end-of-course tests were not initially designed for these purposes, the transition for using these tests in higher stakes decisions can prove to be challenging. This session will describe and discuss the policy and psychometric challenges associated with transforming end-of-course assessments into high-stakes graduation tests. Some of the topics include accommodations, appeals processes, retesting policies, and test security, as well as issues of test construction, reliability of classification decisions, scaling, and equating.

- **Improving the Quality of Published Classroom Assessments**

Michael Beck, Senior Vice President

Sheila Potter, Vice President of Curriculum Services

Millions of dollars are spent in the research, development, and implementation of national and state tests. Standards of technical quality are carefully followed, and these tests are subject to close public scrutiny. Yet, every day, students in public schools take tests and complete other assessments that are under little or no scrutiny. In fact, these daily assessments—ones that have the most power in the lives of students—are rarely expected to adhere to the *Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing*. Many researchers make the case that teachers must have higher assessment literacy in order to ensure that daily assessments are technically sound and fair to students. This symposium will present the results of textbook assessment evaluations and will offer a model that textbook authors can use to improve the quality and alignment of assessments for their texts. Other areas to be discussed include identifying common challenges faced by publishing companies and tips for overcoming those challenges. This session makes the case for improving the quality of textbook assessments to advance teacher performance and ultimately, student learning.

“CCSSO is the only national conference that addresses student assessment from both a strategic and functional standpoint,” said Gene Wilhoit, Executive Director of CCSSO. “Whether you’re interested in international tests or moment-by-moment measures that teachers use in the classroom every day, you’ll learn from the experts in the industry.”

About Questar Assessment, Inc.

Questar Assessment, Inc., is a leading educational assessment provider for states, schools, and school districts. Headquartered in Minnesota and New York, Questar offers comprehensive custom assessment services—from large-scale statewide assessment programs to smaller-scale alternate, modified, and English language proficiency assessments. Questar provides complete, end-to-end services designed to address all aspects of assessment from test design, development, calibration, and psychometric services to print production, distribution, scanning, scoring, reporting, and data analysis. Questar also offers customized online testing services to schools and educational entities in the K-12 market. For further information, visit www.QuestarAI.com or call 800-800-2598.

About the Council of Chief State School Officers

CCSSO is a nonpartisan, nationwide, nonprofit organization of public officials who head departments of elementary and secondary education in the states, the District of Columbia, the Department of Defense Education Activity, and five U.S. extra-state jurisdictions. CCSSO provides leadership, advocacy, and technical assistance on major educational issues. The Council seeks member consensus on major educational issues and expresses their views to civic and professional organizations, federal agencies, Congress, and the public. For further information, visit www.ccsso.org or call 202-336-7000.

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