



Blackboard

News Release

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New Report Profiles Role of “Visionary Administrators” in Bridging the Digital Disconnect in Schools

WASHINGTON – November 11, 2008 – Blackboard Inc. (NASDAQ: BBBB) a leading provider of educational enterprise technology and Project Tomorrow, a national nonprofit group, today released a report highlighting the emergence of “visionary administrators,” a new breed of school superintendents and principals who are leveraging new technologies to meet the learning goals and preferences of increasingly tech-savvy students.

A 2007 survey by Project Tomorrow found that while 74 percent of sixth through 12th-grade students believe that good technology skills are important to future success, about half say that their school is not adequately preparing them for 21st century jobs.

To better understand administrator attitudes about technology and learning, Project Tomorrow surveyed school leaders in 2007. While responses generally confirmed the digital disconnect, one group seemed to be bridging the gap. Like the students they serve, visionary administrators championed the use of technology, including Web 2.0 tools, blogs and wiki entries, to expand the reach of the classroom and more effectively engage students.

The report, *Leadership in the 21st Century: The New Visionary Administrator*, contains profiles of nine education leaders representing four school districts and three schools to highlight their success in leveraging technology in the classroom.

“Technology has long held the promise of transforming education for all children, in the same way that it has catalyzed innovation in business,” said Julie Evans, CEO of Project Tomorrow. “This report identifies a new breed of education leader who develops and executes a 21st century vision for leveraging a wide range of technology tools to enhance student achievement. We hope that this report will shine a bright light on these new leaders as models of excellence for all.”

The findings of *Leadership in the 21st Century* are based upon data collected as part of the Speak Up 2007, a survey of more than 365,000 students, teachers, parents and administrators representing nearly 3,800 public and private K-12 schools in the United States. Highlights from the Speak Up data and subsequent interviews with visionary administrators include:

- Almost all visionary administrators (93 percent) believe that using technology improves student achievement.

- Over half of all visionary administrators say that they would provide or expand online courses to keep students engaged in school. Seventy-three percent of visionary administrators report that integrating mobile devices will increase student engagement.
- On average, visionary administrators are 40 percent more likely than their peers to select student response systems, Web 2.0 tools, school portals and games/virtual simulations as important features of a 21st century classroom.

“Visionary school leaders, parents and students understand that 21st century skills are required to succeed in today’s knowledge economy, in school, and in life,” said Jessie Woolley-Wilson, President of K-12 at Blackboard. “Administrators, teachers, and parents are working together to increase the use of emerging technologies in the learning environment. The seamless integration of these technologies helps to create a connected and engaged educational experience that inspires students to achieve.”

Leadership in the 21st Century is the latest in a series of in-depth reports based on the Speak Up data findings and supported by Blackboard. Since 2003, more than 1 million students have participated in Speak Up surveys. Currently, students, teachers, parents and school leaders are participating in the Speak Up 2008 survey that will run through December 23.

Leadership in the 21st Century is available for download at <http://www.blackboard.com>.

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About Project Tomorrow

Speak Up is a national initiative of Project Tomorrow (formerly known as NetDay), the nation’s leading education nonprofit organization dedicated to ensuring that today’s students are well prepared to be tomorrow’s innovators, leaders and engaged citizens of the world. Since fall 2003, the annual Speak Up project has collected and reported on the views of over 1.2 million K-12 students, teachers, administrators and parents representing over 14,000 schools in all 50 states. The Speak Up data represents the largest collection of authentic, unfiltered stakeholder input on education, technology, 21st century skills, schools of the future and science instruction. Education, business and policy leaders report use the data regularly to inform federal, state and local education programs. For additional information, visit www.tomorrow.org.

About Blackboard Inc.

Blackboard Inc. (NASDAQ: BBBB) is a global leader in enterprise technology and innovative solutions that improve the experience of millions of students and learners around the world every day. Blackboard’s solutions allow thousands of higher education, K-12, professional, corporate, and government organizations to extend teaching and learning online, facilitate campus commerce and security, and communicate more effectively with their communities. Founded in 1997, Blackboard is headquartered in Washington, D.C., with offices in North America, Europe, Asia and Australia.

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