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Orange County Public Schools Superintendent Joins Northwest Evaluation Association Board
Ronald Blocker to Help Not-for-Profit Achieve Vision for Kid-Centric Education

February 16, 2009 – Portland, Ore. – Northwest Evaluation Association is pleased to welcome Ronald Blocker, superintendent of Orange County Public Schools (OCPS), to its board of directors. Blocker will lend his expertise leading one of the nation’s largest school districts to help NWEA achieve its vision for kid-centric education.

NWEA provides research-driven – and scientifically based –assessment tools that identify how a student can make the greatest academic growth. NWEA’s flagship assessment is its Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) test, which adapts to each student’s unique ability.

"I’m excited to work with NWEA to help educators better understand how to use assessment to inform instruction," said Blocker, superintendent of OCPS since 2000. "The information obtained through adaptive assessments helps illuminate the individual strengths and weaknesses of *every* child, which is crucial in helping students achieve their goals."

"We are extremely proud to welcome Ronald to NWEA’s board of directors. We have great respect for his success leading one of the nation’s largest school districts into one of the most successful," said NWEA president and CEO Matt Chapman. "Ronald’s presence on NWEA’s board will help us expand our efforts working with large urban school districts, in addition to our traditional partnerships with smaller districts."

Blocker joins seven other directors of the Northwest Evaluation Association, including: Board Chair Dr. Mike Flicek of Wyoming, Dr. Jim Angermeyr of Minnesota, Dr. Barbara Smith of California, Dr. Brenda Tanner of Virginia, Lynn Fielding and Dr. Maria Goodloe-Johnson of Washington and Dr. Joseph Wise of New York.



Blocker has worked for Orange County Public Schools (OCPS) since 1977, and before becoming superintendent served as deputy superintendent of operations. After beginning his career as a school psychologist, Blocker then served as principal of a middle school and an exceptional education center school, and has held several district-level administrative positions.

Blocker has set ambitious goals for OCPS, which include pursuing high academic standards, maintaining a high-performing and dedicated work force and involving the community on important issues. Under his leadership, the district has increased Advanced Placement enrollment and participation, aggressively moved to narrow the achievement gap in minority populations, has developed a comprehensive academic plan for the district and has embarked on one of the largest school capital programs in the state.

As of 2008, OCPS includes 126 high-performing schools (A and B grades) and has earned an 'A' grade from the Florida Department of Education. Thirteen OCPS high schools made *Newsweek's* "Top of the Class" list, announced in May 2008. Because of his influence in the community, Blocker was ranked #9 on *Orlando Magazine's* "50 Most Powerful People in Central Florida" list published in July 2008.

Under Blocker's direction, OCPS high school principals created the League of Educational Excellence, a program of best practices to improve the performance of every high school student. To prepare students for the rigorous coursework of high school, he has expanded the League of Educational Excellence to also include middle schools. Blocker works hard to maintain the balance between complying with the legal requirements for class sizes and opening or renovating an average of 10 schools per year.

Blocker holds both a specialist's degree in educational leadership and counselor education from the University of Florida.

About Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA)

The Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) is a national not-for-profit educational services organization that provides research-based educational growth measures, professional training, and



consulting services to improve teaching and learning. Partnering with school districts, states, and other education organizations, NWEA delivers computerized assessment services to more than 3,400 education agencies and approximately 4 million students. Additionally, its Growth Research Database, the most extensive collection of student growth data in the country, provides a rich source for the study of academic achievement. Contact and other information is available at www.nwea.org.

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