



**For Release 9 a.m. CDT
June 30, 2008**

**Microsoft and Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Learning Technology
Unveil Next-Generation Learning Village**
A new standard is set for teaching and learning.

SAN ANTONIO — June 30, 2008 — Today at the 2008 National Educational Computing Conference (NECC 2008), Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Learning Technology (HMHLT) and Microsoft Corp. announced the release of the new Learning Village, built on Microsoft Office SharePoint Server 2007 and the Microsoft .NET Framework 3.0. This teaching and learning portal is a single sign-on solution where educators, students and parents can access and organize their schools' instructional content and learning resources quickly and efficiently.

“This alliance between Microsoft and Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Learning Technology is built from a common goal to create powerful learning communities within and beyond the classroom,” said Anthony Salcito, general manager of Education for Microsoft. “Microsoft’s technology scale and Houghton Mifflin Harcourt’s content expertise will together change the K–12 education market and atmosphere.”

Learning Village delivers curricula, content and resources in a unified, personalized and education-relevant environment for teachers, administrators, parents and students — providing a central point for communication, collaboration, teaching and professional development. It enhances districtwide decision-making and promotes student achievement. Schools across the country are already migrating from previous versions of Learning Village to tap into the incredible curricula and resources available to drive engagement, collaboration and achievement.

“Learning Village showcases how teachers, students and parents all benefit when lesson plans, content and curricula are centralized and accessible,” said Scott Kirkpatrick, president, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Learning Technology. “As a leading K–12 global education company, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt provides rich instructional materials and ease of use for districts large and small. Learning Village combines Microsoft’s technology platform with innovative curriculum management to deliver an incredible level of teaching and learning resources to the educational experience — making teachers more productive, students more engaged and parents more informed.”

Simplifying Teaching and Learning Solutions

Educators typically spend a lot of time and resources gathering information for lesson plans and tailoring lessons to specific student needs. They must tap into a variety of assets, ranging from DVDs and books to magazines, software and MP3s. Using the capabilities of Office SharePoint Server 2007, Learning Village delivers all this curricula and content for teachers, students, administrators and parents across a school district and community to one central location in a unified and personalized Web environment. Most important, Learning Village provides a framework for delivering high-quality educational experiences — incorporating existing education applications and aligning those with the best practices of the district and community. Learning Village extends the school day, creating a forum for continuous learning and continuous professional development.

“We see Learning Village as a centralized solution for our teachers, where they can expand curriculum and real-world solutions, focus on professional development, and collaborate with one another,” said Linda Eller, professional development coordinator, Educational Technology, Memphis City Schools. “We can’t wait to start using and taking advantage of the

new capabilities in the next-generation Learning Village. Now, with the utilization of the single sign-on application built on SharePoint, Learning Village will offer us even more — better navigation and folder organization, an easier way to search content, and the ability to have even more content available.”

With Learning Village, a single point of entry allows for personalized access to numerous resources, including assessments, curriculum, student information, discussion forums, just-in-time communication and more. As an example, with the student audience on the Microsoft Learning Gateway portal, students can access their homework assignments and participate in news updates and forums with their peers. Similarly, teachers can monitor student progress, share best practices, and deliver state-of-the-art instruction, all while participating in professional development communities that help them hone their skills. Parents stay connected by reviewing their child’s activities and performance.

“For teachers, the Internet is an essential tool that can be used for information-sharing, professional growth, classroom management and community support,” said Marvin Jones, Ph.D., assistant superintendent, Bakersfield City School District in California. “As one of the earliest adopters, we are incredibly excited about the new Learning Village, which uses the power of the Internet to organize district materials and resources. The next generation of Learning Village saves our teachers time and provides them with a single logon to district resources. Utilization of the Internet enables teachers to access Learning Village at their convenience. Additionally, teachers may enhance their instructional expertise by accessing professional development articles and video clips. Learning Village provides a vehicle for grade level teams to collaborate in the development of lessons and share best practices with one another. It will help our parents and students make the most of their educational experiences.”

For more information about Learning Village, please visit:

<http://www.microsoft.com/education/solutions/learningvillage.aspx>.

About Houghton Mifflin Harcourt

Boston-based Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company is a global education company with approximately \$2.5 billion in combined revenue. The Company publishes a comprehensive set of best-in-class pre-K-12 educational solutions, ranging from research-based textbook programs to instructional technology to standards-based assessments for students and educators. The Company also publishes an extensive line of reference works and award-winning literature for adults and young readers. With origins dating back to 1832, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt combines its tradition of excellence with a commitment to innovation. To learn more about Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, visit www.hmhpublish.com.

About Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Learning Technology

Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Learning Technology (HMHLT) develops and delivers highly engaging, interactive pre-K–12 solutions that inspire excellence and innovation, and raise student achievement. With a rich portfolio of curriculum-based technology products and services in all subject areas, HMHLT provides a powerful, research-proven approach for integrating core and supplemental instruction, intervention, assessment and reporting, professional development, and school-to-home connections. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Learning Technology’s flagship brands include Destination Math[®], Destination Reading[®], Learning Village[®], the Edmark[®] House Series, as well as well-known titles such as The Print Shop[®], Reader Rabbit[®], and Kid Pix[®]. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Learning Technology also offers the popular SkillsTutor[®], Earobics[®] solutions. For more information, call 888-242-6747 or visit www.hmlt.hmco.com.

About Microsoft

Founded in 1975, Microsoft (Nasdaq “MSFT”) is the worldwide leader in software, services and solutions that help people and businesses realize their full potential.

#####

For more information, press only:

Wendy Colby, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Learning Technology, (630) 467-6122,
wendy_colby@hmco.com

Kari Sherrodd, Waggener Edstrom Worldwide for Microsoft, (425) 638-7000,
ksherrodd@waggeneredstrom.com

Rapid Response Team, Waggener Edstrom Worldwide for Microsoft, (503) 443-7070,
rrt@waggeneredstrom.com

Note to editors: If you are interested in viewing additional information on Microsoft, please visit the Microsoft Web page at <http://www.microsoft.com/presspass> on Microsoft’s corporate information pages. Web links, telephone numbers and titles were correct at time of publication, but may since have changed. For additional assistance, journalists and analysts may contact Microsoft’s Rapid Response Team or other appropriate contacts listed at <http://www.microsoft.com/presspass/contactpr.mspx>.