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Academy of READING Earns Endorsement from Council of Administrators of Special Education

*Education Technology Partners' "Best of Breed" Technology
Meets or Exceeds Criteria for a Reading Intervention
Software Tool for Struggling Readers*

(St. Louis, MO – May 9, 2010) — Today at the Council for Exceptional Children Conference, School Specialty Literacy and Intervention announced that its Academy of READING[®] is now endorsed by the Council of Administrators of Special Education (CASE). This prestigious recognition signifies that the literacy intervention program meets or exceeds all of CASE's criteria for a reading intervention software tool for struggling readers that is designed to complement existing reading curriculum.

The Academy of READING software program assists educators in developing intervention strategies that enable struggling students – particularly special populations such as special-education students and English Language Learners (ELL) – to build fluency in the foundation skills of reading. The software features a mastery learning approach that incorporates automaticity, independent reading, Spanish language support, and motivational elements. The company earned endorsement for the Academy of READING from CASE after participating in a rigorous evaluation that included review by teachers and students, as well as an in-depth examination of its research base.

"Building a firm foundation in literacy skills is critical for student success in school, college and life," said Dr. Luann L. Purcell, Executive Director, CASE. "To ensure special-education students have the opportunity to develop these skills, it is important they have access to personalized, research-based learning tools that will help accelerate their learning. The Academy of READING exemplifies the type of program that ensures all students, particularly those with special needs, receive high-quality intervention and build 21st century literacy skills. CASE is proud to endorse the Academy of READING."

Among the educators who provided support for the Academy of READING's application for CASE endorsement is Sonja Kubinec, reading specialist at Neil Armstrong Middle School in Bethel Park, Pa. Students at her school have been learning with the Academy of READING since the 2007-2008 school year, and the



district has seen gains of up to three grade levels when students use the system for just one school year.

"After an extremely successful implementation, I can professionally confirm that the Academy of READING builds and strengthens the foundation of reading within my students. It has contributed to making a difference in each and every student's life and gives them the confidence to succeed," said Kubinec.

Randy Jennings, Founder and President of Education Technology Partners, witnessed other success stories like Kubinec's over almost a decade working with schools to implement Academy of READING. "The Academy of READING was the very first product we introduced to our school clients when we founded Education Technology Partners in 2003. Since then, we have assisted over 500 schools across the central United States in implementing the Academy of READING as the cornerstone of their reading intervention program for struggling students. We have always felt Academy of READING was the best reading intervention program available to school districts today, and are extremely pleased by CASE's endorsement of the software," commented Jennings.

"It is an honor to have the Academy of READING endorsed by CASE, a national leader in ensuring that students of all abilities receive an equitable, quality education," said George Kane, Vice President of Products and Innovation for School Specialty. "We have been developing products for the special-education community for more than 50 years, and with the Academy of READING and our other technology-based products, we have extended that commitment to developing high-quality ed-tech tools for this important community."

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About The Council of Administrators of Special Education (CASE)

The Council of Administrators of Special Education (CASE) is an international professional educational organization that is affiliated with the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC), whose members are dedicated to the enhancement of the worth, dignity, potential and uniqueness of each individual in society. The mission of the Council of Administrators of Special Education, Inc., is to provide leadership and support to members by shaping policies and practices that impact the quality of education.

About School Specialty

School Specialty is a leading education company that provides innovative and proprietary products, programs and services to help educators engage and inspire students of all ages and abilities to learn. School Specialty Literacy and Intervention, also known as EPS, delivers comprehensive reading, math and Response to Intervention (RTI) solutions to help schools make a measurable difference in the outcomes for 30 million struggling students who fall below proficiency benchmarks.

About Education Technology Partners

Founded by a former educator in 2003, Education Technology Partners was started with one goal in mind – to research, identify and bring to schools the very best, and most effective, education technology solutions available to the K-12 market. Nationally recognized in 2010 by Inc. magazine as one of the fastest-growing private companies in the country, Education Technology Partners develops lasting customer relationships by combining "Best of Breed" technology solutions and professional development services to better enable schools to meet the needs of diverse learners and maximize the full potential of each student, and assist school personnel and district administration to effectively meet the requirements imposed through federal, state, and local mandates.