

**June 1, 2006**

### **State Board Announces New ISAT Vendor**

BOISE - The Idaho State Board of Education announced its intent to award the Idaho Standards Achievement Tests (ISAT) contract to Data Recognition Corporation (DRC), a nationally recognized testing company with contracts in multiple states.

A formal announcement will be made after the Board negotiates with DRC to determine the total cost for the new contract. The contract will then be reviewed at the Board's June meeting.

"DRC is well known throughout the United States as a quality testing company," said State Board of Education President Laird Stone. "School districts can look forward to a high level of service and technical assistance from DRC. In addition, this change will not affect the foundation upon which the ISAT is based or features such as instant feedback and providing valuable student progress information, and it will also help Idaho meet federal requirements."

"DRC is thrilled to partner with Idaho for the continuation of the development and delivery of the ISAT program," said Susan Engeleiter, DRC's President and Chief Operating Officer. "We welcome this opportunity to work with Idaho, who leads the country in the implementation of state-wide computerized assessments."

In 2001, the state legislature directed the State Board of Education to authorize development of a statewide assessment, the ISAT. The ISAT was one of the first state tests in the nation to be computer administered. Students in grades 2 through 10 take the ISAT in mathematics, reading, and language usage, and students in 5, 7, and 10 take an additional assessment in science. Currently, the reading, language usage, and mathematics ISATs are administered at least twice a year. ISATs are not timed, and the results are available immediately. A tool to help students, parents, and teachers better gauge student progress, the ISAT is also used to monitor student achievement, based upon content standards as required by No Child Left Behind (NCLB).

Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) was awarded a multi-year contract, in January 2002, to develop the ISAT and is the current ISAT vendor. NWEA will continue its work through the Fall ISAT testing window, as DRC begins its ISAT work.

In response to state regulations that require expiring contracts to be competitively rebid, the State Board worked with the Idaho Division of Purchasing to issue a Request for Proposal (RFP) for the ISAT in February of this year. In April, the Division of Purchasing reviewed submitted proposals to determine if each was responsive to the RFP criteria. The Division of Purchasing forwarded responsive proposals for evaluation by an expert panel convened to determine the technical merits of the proposals. The proposals were rated based on criteria clearly delineated in the RFP. A letter of intent to award the ISAT contract has been sent to DRC from the State Board Office.

DRC is headquartered in Maple Grove, Minn. and currently holds state contracts in: Alabama, Alaska, Georgia, Louisiana, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, and South Carolina. South Carolina was the first state to receive U.S. Department of Education approval of their NCLB plan.