North Carolina Schools Leverage Smartphones
To Close the Achievement Gap in Math

New report substantiates improved test scores as result of student use of mobile technology

"The Smart Phone is like a teacher in my pocket." – Project K-Nect Student

Irvine, Calif. --- Students using "smartphones" as part of their academic classroom work in Onslow County, N.C., significantly outpaced other students -- in the school district and across the state -- on end-of-course exams in Algebra, Algebra II and Geometry, a new report reveals. The significant gains made by the students in math suggest that mobile devices, engaging content and subsequent changes in teaching strategies lead to substantial improvement in student achievement, the report states.

In a study of Project K-Nect, a pilot program examining the use of smartphones as a learning tool in schools, teachers and high school students in Onslow are utilizing the technology and digital content to supplement selected math courses. Implemented at three high schools located in economically challenged communities, the Project goals are to increase student achievement in math and close the digital divide.

"We're extremely optimistic about the findings and what they mean for the future of smartphones in the classroom," says Julie Evans, Project Tomorrow Chief Executive Officer, whose organization prepared the evaluation report. "Students improved their scores in Math by an average of 20 percent, and this technology and wireless Internet access ensured the equitable delivery of engaging instruction, bridging the persistent digital and achievement divides. Project K-Nect and this report have significant new implications on how, when and where we engage students in a learning process."

Some of the other key findings from this year's evaluation report include:

- Students participating in Project K-Nect have a greater self-perception (61%) that they are succeeding academically than their national peers (39%). And they believe that they are being better prepared for that success (55%) than other students (45%).

- Project K-Nect has provided a "safety net" of additional support for the students through the connections with classmates and teachers, and new approaches to learning math. As a result of participation in the program this year, over 90% of the students said that they are now more comfortable learning math, and 81% said that they have increased confidence talking about math and math problems.

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- Almost two-thirds of the students reported taking additional math courses and over 50% are now thinking about a career in a math field as a result of participation in Project K-Nect.

- The teachers involved in Project K-Nect also report that their students are more responsible for their own learning and have developed more collaborative learning skills as a result. Additionally, the teachers note that their students are more active participants in the class, as either learners themselves or, in many cases, as teachers or peer coaches to their classmates. This was especially significant for students who are normally shy or reluctant class participants due to disabilities or limited English proficiency and can now participate more fully through the IM or blogging features.

Project K-Nect participating students continue to pursue rigorous Mathematics instruction with 90% of the initial student cohort currently enrolled in AP Statistics, a college level statistics course taken by less than 1% of high school students nationwide. Project Tomorrow plans to track these students as they enter post-secondary schooling.

Project K-Nect is funded through Qualcomm's Wireless Reach Initiative.

Copies of the report will be available for download after July 6th from the following two websites: http://www.projectknect.org and http://www.tomorrow.org

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About Project Tomorrow
Project Tomorrow®, the national education nonprofit organization dedicated to empowering student voices in education discussions, prepared this program evaluation for Digital Millennial Consulting. Project Tomorrow has over 15 years experience in the K-12 education sector and regularly provides consulting and research support to school districts, government agencies, business and higher education about key trends in K-12 science, math and technology education.

Each fall, Project Tomorrow facilitates the Speak Up National Research Project to inform federal, state and local policymakers, program developers and funders on the role of emerging technology within K-12 education. Data collected through its Speak Up project is included in this report. Since 2003, over 1.85 million students, teachers, parents and administrators have share their views through annual Speak Up online surveys and the Speak Up dataset represents the largest collection of authentic, unfiltered data from educational stakeholders. For more information please visit http://www.tomorrow.org/

About Project K-Nect
Project K-Nect was designed and implemented by Digital Millennial Consulting. The initiative represents a successful reference design for mobile learning in the United States. The initiative delivers managed instructional activities (a comprehensive Algebra I curriculum and resources) and support services to teachers and students via Smartphones .
Implemented in several North Carolina school systems, Project K-Nect has yielded significant academic gains for student participants and has had a 'transformative' impact on teachers involved in the program. For more information, please visit www.projectknect.org

About Qualcomm Wireless Reach
Qualcomm believes access to advanced wireless voice and data services improves people's lives. Qualcomm's Wireless Reach initiative supports programs and solutions that bring the benefits of connectivity to underserved communities globally. By working with partners, Wireless Reach projects create new ways for people to communicate, learn, access health care, sustain the environment and reach global markets. For more information, please visit www.qualcomm.com/wirelessreach