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## ORANGE COUNTY MATH INITIATIVE SCHOOLS SEE DOUBLE DIGIT INCREASES IN STUDENT MATH ACHIEVEMENT *MIND Research Institute Brings Research-Based Program to 64 Elementary Schools and Over 15,000 students.*

SANTA ANA, California, September 15, 2009 – Leaders from the Orange County Math Initiative gathered today at Romero-Cruz Elementary School to celebrate impressive student achievement in math using unique instructional software based on brain research and developed by the MIND Research Institute, a non-profit organization. Over 15,000 students enrolled in 64 elementary schools are participating in the Orange County Math Initiative, a 5-year community partnership involving Orange County schools, leaders in the business community, UC Irvine, and MIND Research Institute. The percentage of participating students at schools in the program testing into the Proficient or Advanced level increased by over 12 percentage points, compared to the state average of 4.5 points.

“We applaud the achievement of these Orange County students who have become more proficient in mathematics,” said Andrew Coulson, President of the Education Division at MIND Research Institute. “Our research-based approach has reduced the barriers that too often have caused students to struggle to learn math. We are enabling students to use their innate, visual reasoning ability for initial access to math concepts through engaging software games. We have found that all learners, including English Language Learners, become engaged and make solid progress by following this non-language based introduction to math.”

The 2008/09 within-grade average growth for all grades (2-5) at all Orange County Math Initiative schools was 12.82 percentage points. For comparison, the 2008/09 within-grade average growth for the state of California for grades 2-5 was 4.5 points. Most of that 12.82 points of growth came from students making it into the advanced proficiency level.

A second comparison was made with schools within Orange County, which did not use ST Math at all in 2008/09. This set of comparable Orange County schools was chosen from the lowest three deciles in state-wide performance (as were the Orange County schools using ST Math). The 2008/09 within-grade average growth for these comparable, Orange County Decile 1-3 schools was 5.27 percentage points.

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The math program features a prescribed Education Process based on MIND's ST Math instructional software for students, customized professional development and training for teachers, and leadership institutes for administrators. Born out of decades of neuroscience research at the University of California, Irvine, MIND's unique approach accesses the brain's innate "spatial temporal" reasoning ability to visualize and solve math concepts and problems. Students solve math problems presented as visual puzzles, before being introduced to abstract math language and symbols. They are fully engaged, through a carefully engineered sequence of fun-to-play software "games," with instant feedback about why a solution works, or doesn't. Students work at their own pace to solve increasingly difficult problems that eventually require them to think multiple steps ahead in space and time, developing confidence in their ability to learn math and a desire to advance their mathematical knowledge.

"The Orange County Math Initiative is making a major difference in the lives of our students," said William M. Habermehl, Orange County Superintendent of Schools. "In these difficult economic times, school administrators might think they can't afford to participate in MIND Institute programs, but in reality, they can't afford not to. This transformation in the way we teach mathematics in our schools engages students in new and innovative ways and gives them a chance to get on the road to long term educational success."

Participating community funders who launched the Orange County Math Initiative in 2008 include Microsemi Corporation; American Fund Services CEO John Phelan and his wife, Sherry; Emulex Corporation; Pacific Life Foundation; Bank of America Foundation; Abbott Medical Optics; the Segerstrom Foundation; The Boeing Company; The Capital Group Companies; Fluor Corporation; Edwards Lifesciences and SchoolsFirst Federal Credit Union. "We realized that if we are to maintain our competitiveness, we must invest in students who are skilled in mathematics," noted Jim McCluney, CEO of Emulex. "The consistent, measurable results of the MIND Research Institute program attracted our attention and we are proud to be part of this successful effort to bring it to Orange County students and teachers."

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### About the Orange County Math Initiative

The math initiative is a community partnership to help teachers elevate student math achievement. It is specifically designed to impact invited schools throughout Orange County dominantly in the lower three deciles of the Academic Performance Index. For 2009/2010, the Math Initiative is continuing to rollout more grades in continuing partner schools, as well as startup new schools from the County's lowest 3-decile schools bringing the total, including middle schools, to 95. Additional initiatives have been launched through fundraising efforts in Chicago, Houston, Las Vegas, Kentucky and Silicon Valley.

### About the MIND Research Institute

The MIND Research Institute is a neuroscience and education research-based, non-profit corporation. MIND applies its distinctive visual approach to illustrating math concepts and building problem-solving skills as the basis for innovative, research-proven math education programs for elementary and secondary schools. In 2009, MIND's programs currently reach over 125,000 students and 5,000 teachers in over 700 schools in 22 states. For more information, visit <http://www.mindresearch.net>.

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