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June 4, 2010

Douglas Kubach, President
NCS Pearson, Inc.
2510 North Dodge Street
Iowa City, Iowa 52245

Dear Mr. Kubach,

As you know, this has been a frustrating and disappointing year for Florida as we implemented our assessment contract with Pearson. I would like to address two specific Pearson products, PearsonAccess and TestNav7, and make my intentions clear as we work together toward successful testing seasons moving forward.

For the foreseeable future, the use of PearsonAccess for student database purposes in Florida is unacceptable. The issues we have seen this year clearly indicate that this system is not equipped to reliably perform the tasks described in our RFP. The inadequacies and instability of PearsonAccess have caused significant errors, problems, and delays. While the late reporting of results to stakeholders is the most severe outcome, the excessive stress and overtime work for our staff also concerns me greatly. FDOE is firmly dedicated to reporting accurate test scores in a timely manner, and I will not put this responsibility at risk again. Pearson has not met any reporting dates this spring.

Another Pearson system, TestNav7, has created considerable difficulties for district and school personnel, as well as students in our state. In the fall, I attended a meeting with Pearson staff and was assured that this testing platform would not fail. After the March CBT Retake administration and now during the Algebra 1 EOC Field Test administration, it is clear that the software is extremely sensitive and has issues that have been unable to be resolved or diagnosed. Not only is this unacceptable, but it is the expectation of FDOE as stated in the RFP that Pearson "list a minimum of three customers, within the preceding twenty-four months, utilizing the base platform proposed." Pearson's proposal cited "TestNav" with no version number as a "proven, scalable, secure system" with statistics from 2007. This data is misleading as the 2.5 million students tested that year used a different version. It is clear that TestNav7 was not "proven" prior to use in Florida, and the problems experienced by schools

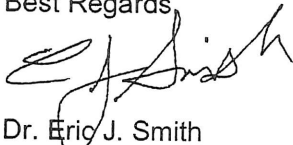
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have created a lack of confidence in Pearson, our program, and computer-based testing in general. The product seems to be so new and untested, that even Pearson staff cannot provide clear and reliable instructions for successful implementation.

Pearson must deliver a reliable student database system and a proven computer-based testing platform for Florida. We will be administering a high stakes graduation test via computer in the fall, and we will not accept the margin of risk seen this year. Please describe what systems Pearson will use and provide detailed evidence that the systems are efficient and stable, as proven in another state of similar size and program complexity prior to their use in Florida.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. I look forward to hearing your recommendations no later than June 23, 2010.

Best Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Eric J. Smith", written over a horizontal line.

Dr. Eric J. Smith
Commissioner of Education

EJS/ke

cc: Darice Keating
Will Etheridge
Marjorie Scardino