

BUCKLE DOWN PUBLISHING

PRESS RELEASE

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BUCKLE DOWN PUBLISHING INTRODUCES NEW EDITIONS OF POPULAR NORTH CAROLINA TEST-PREP MATHEMATICS SERIES FOR GRADES 3–8

Iowa City, IA, September 7, 2005 — Buckle Down Publishing, a leader in state-specific test preparation and a Hights Cross Communications company, recently introduced new editions of its most popular North Carolina test-preparation workbooks and practice tests. The new editions are aligned with the North Carolina Mathematics goals as well as National Council of Teachers of Math (NCTM) standards, and provide students with practice tests in the North Carolina End-of-Grade (EOG) test format.

The complete line of workbooks and practice tests for Grades 3–8 consolidate Buckle Down’s popular *Blast Off* (Grades 3–5), *Sharpen Up* (Grades 6–7), and *Buckle Down* (Grade 8) materials under the company’s flagship *Buckle Down* imprint.

Highlights of the new *Buckle Down North Carolina EOG* series for Grades 3–8 include:

- EOG Practice sections at the end of each lesson provide students with practice items that match the format and the appearance of the EOG.
- Regionalized content features references to North Carolina people, places, and culture.
- Two test forms included free for easy pre-testing and post-testing.
- New practice tests now feature tear-out answer sheets.

“Buckle Down Publishing has a rich history of being North Carolina’s partner in EOG success,” said Dr. Tom Emrick, Buckle Down Publishing’s Vice President of Product Development. “When the state updates its testing program, we have always provided students and educators with updated materials. These new EOG Mathematics materials continue that partnership by providing North Carolina students with the tools they need to achieve on the state assessment program.”

Buckle Down Publishing has been serving the needs of the North Carolina educational community since 1998. In 2003, Buckle Down revised its Reading line to align with the state's updated Reading Comprehension Test. Writing materials were updated to include practice with argumentative writing in late 2004. The new Mathematics editions align the entire Buckle Down program for Grades 2–8 with North Carolina's most recent standards and testing program.

For additional information, visit www.BuckleDown.com. Buckle Down Publishing's North Carolina Educational Consultant, Mindy Romero, is also available to answer questions at 800-776-3454.

About Buckle Down Publishing:

Buckle Down Publishing, a division of Hights Cross Communications' Triumph Learning unit, is one of the nation's leading publishers of state-specific, test-preparation materials. Founded in 1982 and based in Iowa City, IA, Buckle Down creates supplemental student workbooks and practice tests that combine standards-based instruction and test-formatted practice with regionalized content. Together, Buckle Down and Triumph Learning is the largest publisher of standards-focused instructional materials used to prepare for the tests mandated by NCLB legislation. For more information, visit www.buckledown.com.

About Hights Cross Communications:

Founded in 1997 and based in White Plains, NY, Hights Cross is a leading developer and publisher of products for the kindergarten through twelfth grade, or K-12, supplemental education, library, and medical education markets. Hights Cross imprints include: Sundance/Newbridge Educational Publishing (Northborough, MA), Triumph Learning (New York, NY), Buckle Down Publishing (Iowa City, IA), Options Publishing (Merrimack, NH), Recorded Books (Prince Frederick, MD), and Oakstone Publishing (Birmingham, AL). For more information visit www.hightscross.com.

Safe Harbor Statement: This press release contains forward-looking statements. In some cases, you can identify forward-looking statements by terms such as “may,” “will,” “should,” “could,” “would,” “expect,” “plan,” “anticipate,” “believe,” “potential,” and similar expressions intended to identify forward-looking statements. These statements reflect our current views with respect to future events and are based on assumptions and subject to risks and uncertainties. These risks, uncertainties, and other factors may cause our actual results, performances, or achievements to be materially different from those expressed or implied by our forward-looking statements. Factors that may cause our actual results to differ materially from our forward-looking statements include, among others, changes in external market factors, changes in our business or growth strategy, or an inability to execute our strategy due to changes in our industry or the economy generally, the emergence of new or growing competitors and various other competitive factors. In light of these risks and uncertainties, there can be no assurance that the events and circumstances described in forward-looking statements contained in this press release will in fact occur. You should read this press release completely and with the understanding that our actual results may be materially different from what we expect. We will not update these forward-looking statements, even though our situation may change in the future. We qualify all of our forward-looking statements by these cautionary statements.
