

## INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Fall 2011 edition of the *DataDirector* Newsletter! The 2011-2012 academic year is in full swing, and so are things at Riverside.

Without a doubt, the biggest change to *DataDirector* is our upcoming 4.0 release. As this is a milestone release, a large portion of our Fall issue is devoted to critical information about this new version that will help you hit the ground running when 4.0 releases! However, we also have some notes about our upcoming User Conferences, an update on GradeCam integration, and a spotlight on one of our most successful customers, the San Francisco Unified School District.

Don't miss the great information on Distractor Rationales and an opportunity to help us name the newsletter, either! Read on to learn more.



---

**The *DataDirector* newsletter is now optimized for web reading! We hope our new look and layout enhances your reading experience and saves you paper in the process.**

---



## CONTENT CORNER

The *Riverside® Interim Assessments* for the Common Core Standards are now available for administration via *DataDirector*. These research-based assessments provide a new way to demonstrate student progress throughout the school year and to help all students succeed on state assessments. With scaled scores, proficiency scores, and growth scores, these interim assessments offer a year-long method of reporting valid and reliable growth and proficiency information via continued progress monitoring.

Three fixed forms for ELA/Literacy and Math are available per grade to monitor growth and achievement with comprehensive coverage for grades 2–11. Reports facilitate progress monitoring, and can help you to prepare for the transition to the Common Core State Standards. Cognitive level performance reporting gives you insights into students' mastery of standards at each level of rigor. If administered with the *Iowa Assessments, Form E*, results can be linked to those from the *Riverside Interim Assessments* to not only track progress within the year, but across years.

Contact your Account Manager for more details.



## PRODUCT SPOTLIGHT

### GradeCam™

*DataDirector* users will soon have the option to enjoy the ease and convenience of using web cameras, document cameras, or certain mobile devices to capture student answer documents thanks to a strategic partnership with GradeCam.

GradeCam, is one of the industry's fastest-growing technology providers and offers educators a quick and easy method of capturing student assessment results.

Educators will be able to use inexpensive web cameras as well as document cameras to capture student answer choices using GradeCam's proprietary technology and transmit it to *DataDirector* for fast reporting of results. This new option eliminates the need for costly scanners and provides teachers a quick and easy way to complete the testing process. Students can even use GradeCam

themselves as they complete their test, simplifying the post-testing process for teachers.

As part of this strategic partnership, development is also underway for a new mobile application which will be available exclusively to *DataDirector* customers in 2012. This new mobile application will allow educators to use the camera of their Apple iPhone®, iPad® or Google Android™ devices to capture student responses and will offer a new level of convenience for teachers as well as substantial cost savings for districts.

GradeCam, headquartered in Livermore, CA, was created to offer teachers a quick and easy way to identify students' instructional needs. The GradeCam solution was developed in 2003 when its founder, Rob Porter, was trying to find an

Continued on page 6

## FAQs:

### 1. Where can I find the Communication feature in DataDirector 4.0?

In *DataDirector* 4.0, users access communication options by hovering their mouse over the "Admin" option then clicking "Admin Tools." In the Admin Tools menu, the Communication option can be found along the left hand side.

### 2. Where can I find settings for Auto Export in DataDirector 4.0?

The Auto Export feature is enabled by default in *DataDirector* 4.0. Once users enter student data into an Itembank Assessment or an Answer Sheet (formerly an Itembank Exam or Exam Shell), that data will automatically be exported into a Summary Assessment (formerly an Assessment).

### 3. How do I align my Assessment questions to standards in DataDirector 4.0?

For Item Bank Assessments, standards are automatically aligned to the items

Continued on page 4

## DISTRICT HIGHLIGHT

### District Spotlight for DataDirector Newsletter, Fall 2011 San Francisco Unified



In these days of continued belt-tightening, school districts are keenly aware that they need to do more with less. One large and diverse school district, San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD), has achieved just that with *DataDirector*.

SFUSD, which serves more than 56,000 students in 148 schools, first started using *DataDirector* three years ago. Before that time, the district had to maintain and use two separate systems, one for state assessment data and one for local data.

"*DataDirector* is a tool that allows educators to combine multiple data types over time to answer complex questions and provide insight into every student," says John Burke,

*"[DataDirector] has made for much better program decisions."*

—John M. Burke,  
Supervisor for Achievement  
Assessments Office

Supervisor for the Achievement Assessments Office at the district. His office has been charged with maintaining *DataDirector* and training staff in its use. *DataDirector* now holds 11 years of the district's state assessment data, 9 years of student

demographic data, and 5 years of local assessment data.

Replacing the two disparate systems with a single solution has also proven to be economical.

"Before *DataDirector*, we had one system for state data and one for local data. *DataDirector* brought the two systems together and allows us to locally scan assessments," explains Burke. "*DataDirector* has saved us money, but more importantly, it's

Continued on page 6

## FAQs

Continued from page 3

added to your Assessment. For Answer Sheet Assessments, Standards can be aligned on the Edit Assessment page. Clicking on the Add Standards button will bring up a Standards Search window that will be familiar to 3.x users. This window makes it possible to attach additional standards to an Assessment.

### 4. What is the difference between Sections and Clusters in *DataDirector 4.0*?

In *DataDirector 4.0*, sections and reporting clusters are considered different entities, and each has a unique function within the system. Sections have been reimplemented as distinct areas of a single Assessment, while clusters are used to better target reporting efforts. Each cluster can be assigned its own customized set of performance bands which will display in the Assessment Report.



## WHAT'S NEW

### Get Ready for *DataDirector 4.0*!

The *DataDirector* team is focused on finalizing the *DataDirector 4.0* experience. Some of the biggest updates to our platform include:

- A redesigned, user-friendly interface, including the new Application Switcher, which allows quick and easy access to all modules of *DataDirector* from anywhere in the program.
- An updated, intuitive assessment creation process. Now, users can search for and add items to their Assessments without leaving the Assessment screen! Users can also reorder assessment items and sections through a simple drag-and-drop process.
- The ability to create custom true/false, yes/no, short answer and constructed-response items using the item creation tool.
- Improved reporting flexibility with question groups and seamless clustering. Sections and clusters have been separated for the new version of 4.0, making reporting on distinct areas of your Assessments easier than ever.
- Folder-based assessment storage and sharing. Create your own subfolders to keep your Assessments organized, and share with other users, your school or your entire district with the click of a mouse! You can choose to view and organize your Assessments with the new folder view or by switching into our classic list view.

These features and many others are coming your way in the new version of *DataDirector*! A Crosswalk document will be available to help you find other key features from previous versions of *DataDirector* and use them in version 4.0.

Please contact your Account Manager for any questions or concerns you may have about *DataDirector 4.0*.



## TIPS & BEST PRACTICES:

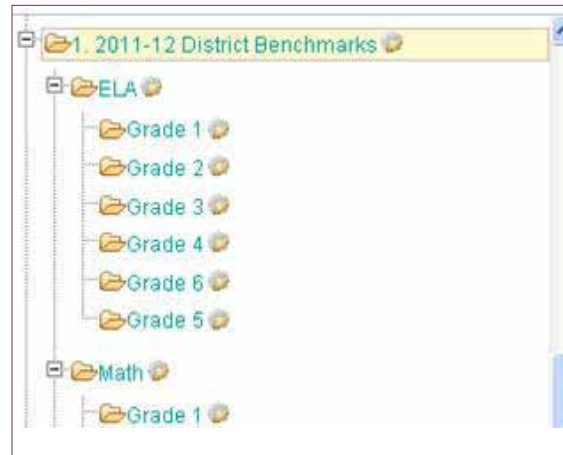
With the release of *DataDirector* 4.0 comes the Folder organizational structure, designed to make organizing, finding, and sharing your Assessments easier than ever. To help you get the most out of this new feature, check out some of our tips and best practices below.

### Best Practice: Keep Your Folder Organization Clear

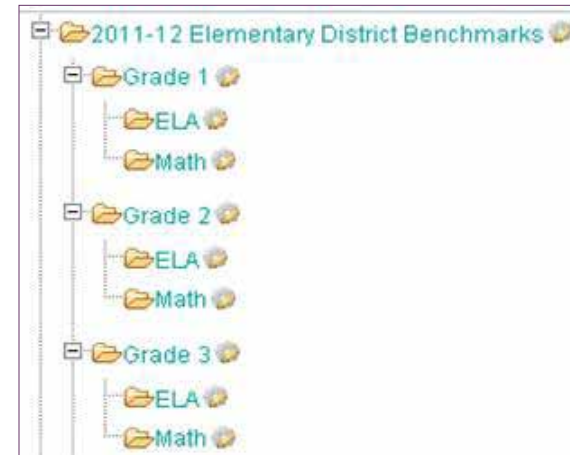
One of the key steps to having a successful folder system is to keep your organizational structure simple and understandable by naming folders with a structured convention. Make sure to include the school year and type of assessments the folder will contain:



*The folder structure below is subject-based and contains grades as subfolders.*



*This folder structure is grade based and contains subjects as subfolders.*



Keeping your folders organized will make it easy for all users in your district to locate the Assessments they need quickly.


### Other Tips for Using Folders

- Currently, the ability to custom sort folders does not exist. Folders will appear chronologically as they are created. It may be useful to plan your folder hierarchy ahead of time to ensure the best organization possible is employed.
- If you do find that your organization requires a change, don't forget that you can edit the titles of folders to rearrange them before moving the desired Assessments into that folder.

Continued on page 6

## LEARN FROM THE LEADERS

### Sharing Best Practices in Education Assessment

Riverside is pleased to present an exciting new series of online meetings devoted to the most pressing issues in educational assessment. Throughout the coming months, we are offering a variety of webinar topics focusing on professional development for district administrators, school principals and teachers. Join us to explore best practices in educational assessment and data use with online presentations from our distinguished authors, research experts and thought leaders in the field. Visit [www.riversidepublishing.com/learnfromleaders](http://www.riversidepublishing.com/learnfromleaders) to see a full list of topics and times, and to register. 

### PRODUCT SPOTLIGHT

Continued from page 2

alternative method his mom (a teacher at Pleasanton Middle School in California) could use to grade tests. Since then the technology has improved exponentially, and word has spread across California and in other states as to the ease of use and cost effectiveness of the solution.

For more information on *DataDirector*, visit [www.riversidepublishing.com](http://www.riversidepublishing.com). To learn more about GradeCam, visit [www.gradecam.com](http://www.gradecam.com). 

### DISTRICT HIGHLIGHT

Continued from page 3

allowed us to look at performance on both local and state assessments and track student progress. It has made for much better program decisions.”


“We’ve been making steady growth,” Burke says. “Even as funding gets cut, *DataDirector* is one of the tools that has helped us maintain growth.” Recognition of *DataDirector*’s strengths across SFUSD is spreading. “We’ve seen usage go up,” explains Burke. “Usage is maturing. It has become an essential tool.”

Staff at the district logged into *DataDirector* almost 100,000 times this past school year. 

### TIPS & BEST PRACTICES

Continued from page 5

- When assigning permissions for Folders, keep in mind that Folder permissions will override Assessment permissions. For example, if an assessment that is shared district wide is placed into a folder only accessible by 3rd grade teachers, then only 3rd grade teachers will be able to see this assessment.
- The List View option is available in place of the Folder system for those who wish to use it. This will allow sorting of Assessments through the Filter options at the top of the page.

By following these tips and best practices, your assessments and assessment data will be easily found and accessed. 

## USER CONFERENCES:

Riverside is pleased to announce its 2011 User Conferences! This year, we will be hosting meetings in three cities to provide *DataDirector* and *Edusoft Assessment Management System* users from across the country an opportunity to collaborate, learn and share best practices:

**Dearborn, Michigan** – Nov. 1 – 2

**Seattle, Washington** – Nov. 29 – 30

**San Mateo, California** – Dec. 8 – 9

For more information, please contact your Account Manager or visit <http://www.riversidepublishing.com/userconference>.



## HELP US:

### Help Us Name Our Newsletter

We need your help naming the *DataDirector* newsletter! Please email [josh.kratovil@hmhpub.com](mailto:josh.kratovil@hmhpub.com) with title ideas.

The winner will have their title featured on the next edition of the *DataDirector* newsletter!



## COMING SOON:

### Distractor Rationales

The latest addition to the *Assess2Know* Benchmark item bank!

In order to have the greatest impact on student achievement, assessment must provide educators with information about what a student knows and what additional instruction or intervention the student needs in order to achieve desired learning outcomes. Riverside has taken the next step in providing Distractor Rationales to support the link between assessment and classroom instruction for our *Assess2Know* customers. At this time, 90% of our *Assess2Know* Benchmark multiple choice items already have distractor rationales available in Excel format. In addition, we are writing rationales to complete the remaining 10% so that every item in the *Assess2Know* Benchmark Item Bank will have a distractor rationale available to support instruction.

For decades, Riverside has followed best practice in the development of multiple-choice items. Continuing this tradition, *Assess2Know* distractors have been designed primarily to draw students away from the correct answer if they do not truly know the right answer. A high-quality item should have distractors that represent common errors that a student might make, as well as rationales that assist with instruction and remediation for those students who do not answer an item correctly. Riverside is pleased to offer *Assess2Know* Benchmark customers this additional information in order to support school and student success.

For information about Excel reports for distractor rationales that are available now, please contact your Account Manager.

