

THE SCHOOL OF THE THIRD MILLENNIUM

PRESS RELEASE
For Immediate Release

ADHERSIS NORTH AMERICA INTRODUCES THE FIRST SCHOOL OF THE THIRD MILLENNIUM IN QUEBEC

Montreal --- In Quebec, the beginning of the school year marks an important milestone in the computer and education sectors, as well as a breakthrough in teaching. The **Collège Sainte-Anne de Lachine** recently became the first francophone educational institution in the world to function as a virtual school by adopting an entirely new portal concept adapted to its teaching needs and administrative requirements. This paves the way to a true technological and pedagogical revolution launched from Quebec. Now, **every Quebec school, and even worldwide, will have access to this important technological breakthrough, which will optimize education and student performance.** Based on a maximized use of Internet resources and Sun Ray™ appliances powered by several Sun Enterprise™ servers, this new concept of the *School of the 3rd Millennium* is an initiative of AdherSIS North America, a specialist of automatic electronic data backup and the “principle contractor” and driving force behind the project. AdherSIS has integrated technologies from Sun Microsystems, a leading provider of hardware, software and services that power the Internet, and iPlanet™ E-Commerce Solutions, a Sun-Netscape Alliance, which provided Directory, Messaging and Calendaring Servers to manage information to a variety of users.

“This innovative concept, implemented by AdherSIS North America, finally allows the true integration of classroom information technology and the use of computers as an instructional tool for all studies,” stressed Roger Gauvin, principal of the Collège Sainte-Anne. “By gathering all relevant information in the school, the setting up of an educational portal is a very powerful and efficient tool that allows the organization to achieve its instructional and administrative goals,” explained Pascal Fournier, President of AdherSIS North America, which is in charge of integrating the Sun Ray appliances into the existing hardware and software infrastructure of the school. AdherSIS also hosts the college’s portal and ensures its technical and upgradeable maintenance 24 hours a day, seven days a week. **“The institution's own portal creates a virtual community among the school, its teachers, students, and their parents. Now, everybody can directly connect to the Internet and have access to all available information. The School of the 3rd Millennium is the integration of the Sun Ray, iPlanet and AnaSave technologies, and a new functional, educational portal that will allow access to knowledge and improve students' performance,”** continued Mr. Fournier. **“Today, it is the only francophone portal that offers this type of approach, and integrates all Web-based technologies.”**

Located in Lachine, in the western part of the island of Montreal, the Collège Sainte-Anne welcomes 1,150 secondary-level students and 100 employees, including 50 teachers in four pavilions. With computing equipment that is typical of Quebec schools’ standards (130 computers for students, 10 workstations for teachers, optical fiber link, T1 Internet access, and a Windows NT 98 operating system), the school faced tough challenges: replacing obsolete computers, updating software and operating system, developing network and computer population, increasing costs for purchasing, upgrading, and maintenance, limited availability and accessibility of computers, etc.

“After more than 15 years spent on all kinds of applications and exponential investments in information and communication technologies, it became vital to find and implement the best solutions,” explained Mr. Gauvin.

A pioneer in the launching of the *School of the 3rd Millennium*, a first ever in Quebec, AdherSIS North America has expertise both in the education sector and in the Sun Microsystems technologies. Thus, AdherSIS North America has integrated the iPlanet software, the Sun Ray appliances, and its remote backup Technology AnaSave, in order to offer students and teachers a concept that allows a better use of Internet, the world's most important source of information. **"The portal is the real cornerstone of this concept, and it becomes an office for the students. They can find their homework, their portfolios, their work directories, their e-mail, and above all, everything related to teaching that is available in their schools,"** explained Mr. Fournier. **"The Sun Ray technology allows, through the use of an access card, students and teachers to find their work environment exactly how they leave it."**

Sun Ray appliances are simple, cost-effective, and compact. They give more desktop space to educators and teachers. Unlike personal computers, which require an operating system and applications running locally on the desktop, the Sun Ray system allows instant access to existing applications and network resources, regardless of the underlying platform. **"It is an affordable solution for school administrators who wish to offer their students easy access to the Internet and office applications, while minimizing configuration and maintenance tasks, since the Sun Ray systems are linked to Sun servers,"** added Yannick Berneron, Vice President of AdherSIS North America and also manager of this project.

"The configuration is done at the server level, not on the Sun Ray appliance themselves. In addition, the Sun Ray system greatly facilitates the network administration and decreases the costs. No more computer maintenance! We work with servers!", emphasized the director of the Collège Sainte-Anne. "The smart card and the Sun Ray system's innovative Hot Desk technology ensures immediate access to all information, similarly to a work session on a personal computer via the Internet. This eliminates the slow startups and multiple crashes associated with Windows. Individual CD-ROMs will be burned so that each student and faculty member can become a teleworker. AdherSIS is also in charge of the automatic, secure data backup, and online service is always available," continued Mr. Gauvin.

By adopting the concept of the **School of the 3rd Millennium**, the Collège Sainte-Anne now has a new computer population that includes 400 Sun Ray appliances. Its ratio of available machines has thus reached one machine for every 2.5 students (instead of one for nine), way beyond the governmental standards that aim at one to five for 2005. Every teacher will have his/her own Sun Ray system. Anywhere in the College, students can easily access their own files.

With Sun Ray appliances installed in each classroom, there are no more computer labs and no more limited, time-constrained computer access. Now, teachers and students can use the computers whenever they need to, just like a basic electronic calculator or a textbook. The implementation of the Sun Ray system does carry significant advantages at both the administrative and financial levels, but the **iPlanet portal software** remains the cornerstone of the *School of the 3rd Millennium*. Indeed, the concept of the educational portal allows the virtual integration of everything related to teaching young people: notes, schedules, assignments and exercises, instructional documents, etc. "The portal is the perfect way to structure, gather, and redirect content toward specific target groups," explained Yannick Berneron.

"The College's portal will not look like any other portal found on the Net. It will be a portal created exclusively by and for our teachers and students," elaborated Mr. Gauvin. All our students will have access to numerous resources, gathered together in one single location, organized according their needs, and planned for their learning. Whether they be in class, at the library, or at home, they can instantly use work tools such as a dictionary or encyclopedia, as well as numerous hyperlinks relevant to their program. As for the parents, they can navigate in the portal and follow the path of their children, read their work, know the deadlines for homework and exams, communicate with the teachers, etc.

For the teacher, the portal becomes a unmatched powerful, didactic tool: it is at the same time a documentation center, a planning and evaluating tool, a source to find enriching or exploratory material, a personal office and desktop, a meeting center for pedagogical exchanges, and much more... **“This virtual place, specific to the Collège Sainte-Anne, offers another choice advantage. It allows teachers to dedicate themselves entirely to what they do best and what inspires them, teaching students. The portal does not require them to be technological wizards. It is their teaching skills that matter,”** concluded Mr. Gauvin.

The *School of the Third Millennium* brings a new computer reality into schools by integrating information and communication technology not only in the classroom, but also in the teaching and instructional processes. It provides a constant communication among everybody involved in the education process. While remaining a unique institution devoted to instruction and education, with a special student-teacher relationship, this *School* integrates much more than just new technologies. It allows the world, with its history, culture, and many resources, to reach out to the student...

- 30 -

For information:

Caroline Sabbagh
CREA COMMUNICATIONS
Telephone : 514-284-0402
caroline.sabbagh@creacommunications.ca
www.creacommunications.ca

Sun, Sun Microsystems, the Sun logo, Sun Ray and iPlanet are trademarks or registered trademarks of Sun Microsystems, Inc. in the United States and other countries.