



Sugar Labs Nonprofit Announces New Version of Sugar Learning Platform for Children, Runs on Netbooks and PCs

Cambridge, MA, March 16, 2009: Sugar Labs™ announces the availability of version 0.84 of the Sugar Learning Platform for the One Laptop Per Child XO-1, classroom PCs, and netbook computers. Designed from the ground up for children, the Sugar computer environment is used by almost one-million students aged 5 to 12 in over 40 countries every school day. This improved version features new collaborative Sugar Activities and, in response to teacher feedback, the ability to easily suspend and resume Activities, saving time in the classroom.

Walter Bender, Executive Director of Sugar Labs, commented: "We're excited about this release, which runs on more PCs than before and has great new Activities for kids to explore together such as a Mindmap Activity, a critical-thinking tool used to create diagrams representing words and ideas around a central keyword, and a Portfolio Activity, an assessment tool that makes it even simpler for teachers and parents to review a child's progress. The Sugar Journal, which provides automatic backup and history of students' work, has new features to make it easier for students to annotate their work and to revisit and revise past projects. The new Infoslicer Activity enables teachers to quickly and easily select web-based content to edit, package, and distribute as teaching materials. And for older students curious about how computers work, the View Source function is now universal to all Activities."

The Sugar Learning Platform is free open-source software; it is available for download at www.sugarlabs.org. The native interface of the One Laptop Per Child project's XO-1 in daily use around the globe, Sugar has been translated into 26 languages with 50 more languages underway. 24/7 community support is available online. Sugar is available on major GNU/Linux distributions, recent Apple Macintosh™ computers with virtualization, and Windows™ PCs via a GNU/Linux liveCD, which doesn't touch the hard disk. Sugar on a Stick, a liveUSB version designed to simplify classroom use of Sugar, is scheduled for release in Q3 2009.

The Sugar Learning Platform is part of the permanent collection of the Museum of Modern Art in New York and was awarded a silver medal in the International Design Excellence Awards '08. Its innovative "learning-centric" approach has earned praise from educators worldwide. Sugar Activities, unique to the platform, allow students to study and create together; students learn both from the teacher and from each other.

Mr. Bender commented, "Sugar 0.84 is an important step as we work toward version 1.0 of Sugar on a Stick, which will greatly simplify evaluation and use of Sugar in the classroom. Sugar on a Stick will start Sugar from a simple USB memory stick on nearly any recent computer from netbooks to desktops, and most older PCs as well, without interfering with pre-existing software installations."

"As we approach the one-millionth child 'learning to learn' with Sugar on the OLPC XO-1, we call for volunteers to join us – a challenge to educate for developers, designers, translators, and deployers," Mr. Bender said. "In particular, we need testers to help us make Sugar on a Stick a robust solution available anywhere there is a computer."

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About Sugar Labs

Sugar Labs, a volunteer-driven, nonprofit organization, is a member project of the Software Freedom Conservancy (conservancy.softwarefreedom.org). Originally part of the One Laptop Per Child project (www.laptop.org), Sugar Labs coordinates volunteers around the world passionate about providing educational opportunities to children through the Sugar Learning Platform. Sugar Labs is supported by donations and is seeking funding to accelerate development. For more information, please visit www.sugarlabs.org.

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The Sugar Home View: the child, his/her Journal, Activities.

