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CONTACT: Susan Patrick
NACOL President & CEO
703-752-6216, spatrick@nacol.org

NACOL Releases First in New Promising Practices in Online Learning Series: *Blended Learning: The Convergence of Online and Face-to-Face Education*

WASHINGTON, DC, May 12, 2008 – The North American Council for Online Learning (NACOL) is pleased to announce the release of the first report in a series of six papers being published in 2008. This series, *Promising Practices in Online Learning*, explores some of the approaches being taken by practitioners and policymakers in response to key issues in online learning.

Susan Patrick, President of NACOL, says, “NACOL is examining significant advances in online learning and highlighting the promising practices. Blended learning is a major trend in K-12 education. Personalization for all students is possible through online learning and will become mainstream in the next ten years.”

Blended learning combines the best elements of online and face-to-face learning and is likely to emerge as a predominant method of teaching and learning. It is being implemented by schools throughout the country and the world, and in some cases it has been underway for several years. Scott Hornblower, Principal of the Cincinnati Public Schools Virtual High School, says “[Cincinnati Public Schools Virtual High School] took a distance learning tool — digital curriculum — and made it the primary delivery system of curricula in the brick-and-mortar institution. It took the risk out of at-risk. Because students work on computers to access all of their content, they are developing better computer skills and a greater comfort level with technology than many traditional students.”

This and other examples throughout the paper demonstrate the ways in which blended learning is being used to increase educational opportunities and outcomes for students.

According to author John Watson, of Evergreen Consulting Associates, “Online learning offers the advantage of personalization, allowing individualized attention and support when students need it most. It provides the very best educational opportunities to all students, regardless of their zip code, with highly qualified teachers delivering instruction using the Internet and a vast array of digital resources and content.”

The NACOL *Promising Practices in Online Learning* Series is supported by K12 Inc., Apex Learning, Florida Virtual School, and Connections Academy.

A Webinar discussing this paper will be held on Wednesday, May 14, 2008 at 2:00 PM (Eastern). For information: www.nacol.org.

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About NACOL

The North American Council for Online Learning (NACOL) is an international K-12 non-profit association advocating online learning to increase access to high quality education and represents the interests of educational stakeholders, providers and students worldwide (www.nacol.org). NACOL is the host of the Virtual School Symposium, October 26-28, 2008 in Phoenix, AZ (www.virtualschoolsposium.org).