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iNACOL Supports President Obama's Stimulus Package

Vienna, VA, February 4, 2009– The International Association for K-12 Online Learning (iNACOL) urges Congress to move forward with a stimulus package that targets strategic investments in education and technology through online learning.

Supporting online learning innovations that expand opportunity for all students is critical to ensure every student has access to a world-class education, regardless of where they live or their parents' income level. States investing in online learning and virtual schools are realizing the benefits of providing top-quality curriculum delivered by highly qualified teachers that address gaps in critical subject areas such as science and math while modernizing learning experiences for today's students through engaging multimedia, customized and personalized instruction, and expanded educational options at any location. Every student should have the right to choose online learning opportunities as part of a rigorous, world-class education that develops essential 21st Century skills.

Online learning requires investments in high-quality digital content, online teacher training, staffing for online learning programs as well as technology infrastructure, and is only effective when coupled with the parallel modernization of relevant policies at the state and local level.

Targeted investments in the proposed stimulus package include:

- \$13 billion for closing the achievement gap for disadvantaged students (through Title I funding for districts and other local education agencies)
- \$14 billion for school modernization and construction
- \$1 billion for enhancing education through technology
- \$300 million for improving teacher quality
- \$250 million for improving state data systems

Ensuring these investments are targeted to fully utilize innovative delivery models available through virtual schools and online learning – including investments in digital content, teacher development, new instructional strategies, and technology infrastructure – is critical to meet overall school reform and improvement goals. Technology alone is not enough, but a systemic approach to innovating the delivery system and instructional models will yield positive results through high-quality online and blended learning environments infused with technology.

Investments in education and online learning can play an important role in turning around the nation's economy and providing new, high-quality educational options for today's students regardless of geography or socio-economic background. No education investment is more critical to America's future global competitiveness.

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About iNACOL

iNACOL is the International Association for K-12 Online Learning. iNACOL is a non-profit association that believes online learning is a powerful innovation that expands education opportunities (www.inacol.org). iNACOL supports access to high-quality online learning for all students. iNACOL hosts the annual Virtual School Symposium (VSS); VSS 2009 will be held Nov. 15 – 17, 2009 in Austin, TX (www.virtualschoolsymposium.org).