



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **iNACOL Announces Launch of Continuity of Learning Website**

WASHINGTON, DC, October 2, 2009 – The International Association for K-12 Online Learning (iNACOL) announces the launch of a new website for Continuity of Learning and pandemic planning providing free resources for schools, districts, and states to assist with learning continuity planning in preparation of the H1N1 flu pandemic or other natural disaster.

The website features a toolkit of online resources for school districts and states that includes: 1) a Readiness Assessment questionnaire; 2) Continuity of Learning planning frameworks; 3) Case studies of state and district plans, 4) archived events, such as webinars and presentations, on continuity of learning and online learning; 5) Steps districts can take to prepare for short-term and long-term closures prompted by the H1N1 virus; 6) a section for providers (companies and organizations) to apply to link to resources they offer for continuity of learning.

“Interest in online learning solutions for continuity of learning is in high demand by school districts,” said Susan Patrick, President and CEO of iNACOL. “The recent outbreaks of swine flu in schools has prompted the need for continuity of learning using online learning. Online learning offers solutions for helping prepare schools for pandemic planning as well as for natural disasters caused by weather, hurricanes, fires and other closures.”

“States and district education leaders are reviewing policies for learning continuity and virtual education to help establish new school models using blended models of online learning every day to help engage students in 21<sup>st</sup> century classrooms – and prepare schools for readiness to use online learning in the event of a school closure,” Patrick concluded.

This website identifies strategies centered on high-tech solutions, such as delivering online learning options, training teachers to use e-learning systems, offering hybrid and online courses, using digital curriculum and open educational resources, implementing a learning management system, and communicating using web-based discussions, tele-conferencing, webinars and virtual meetings, and finally, discovering how virtual schools can support anytime, anywhere education delivery models that work in K-12 education.

The Continuity-of-Learning resources are located on iNACOL’s website: [www.inacol.org/col](http://www.inacol.org/col).

K-12 online learning is growing at 30% annually. Thirty-four states have state-led virtual school programs, eighteen states offer full-time online learning programs, while 70% of school districts offer at least one online course to students. Online learning is expanding access to high quality educational opportunities for students, leveling the playing field for accessing highly-qualified teachers and helping to keep students on track for graduating on-time and college-ready.

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**About iNACOL**

iNACOL is the International Association for K-12 Online Learning, a non-profit 501(c)(3) membership association based in the Washington, DC area with more than 2,500 members. iNACOL is unique in that its members represent a diverse cross-section of K-12 education from school districts, charter schools, state education agencies, non-profit organizations, colleges, universities and research institutions, corporate entities and other content and technology providers ([www.inacol.org](http://www.inacol.org)). iNACOL hosts the annual Virtual School Symposium (VSS). VSS 2009 will be held Nov. 15 – 17, 2009 in Austin, TX ([www.virtualschoolsymposium.org](http://www.virtualschoolsymposium.org)).