



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**CONTACT:** Susan Patrick  
iNACOL President & CEO  
703-752-6216, [spatrick@inacol.org](mailto:spatrick@inacol.org)

### **iNACOL Hosts 2009 Virtual School Symposium in Austin, Texas**

Vienna, VA, November 10, 2009 – The International Association for K-12 Online Learning (iNACOL) will hold its annual conference, the Virtual School Symposium (VSS) on November 15 – 17, 2009 at the Hilton Austin. The theme is *Creating New Solutions through Online Learning*. iNACOL's mission is to ensure all students have access to world-class education and quality online learning opportunities that prepare them for a lifetime of success.

The VSS is the largest event in K-12 online learning – bringing more than 1,500 online learning experts and educators from every state and from around the globe to Texas. K-12 online learning is an important innovation that is growing rapidly across the United States at 30% annually and there were an estimated 1,030,000 enrollments in K-12 online courses in 2007-2008.

Educational innovation experts will provide the VSS keynote addresses. On Monday, November 16<sup>th</sup>, James H. Shelton III, Assistant Deputy Secretary, Office of Innovation and Improvement, U.S. Department of Education will speak about the federal perspective on innovation, online learning and the National Educational Technology Plan. On Tuesday, November 17<sup>th</sup>, the keynote on technology, politics and the future of education is provided by Dr. Terry Moe, Stanford University Professor and author of *Liberating Learning*. There will be a book signing by Dr. Moe on Tuesday morning after his talk.

On Monday, November 16<sup>th</sup>, the conference luncheon will host a Student Panel, providing the students' perspective on virtual schools.

At the VSS, experts in K-12 virtual education have robust networking opportunities; learn about the latest trends, challenges and opportunities in e-learning; interact in session presentations; and gain access to the latest research and best practices reports.

According to Susan Patrick, President & CEO of the iNACOL, “In a time of tightening budgets, schools need to focus on wiser investments for what works for student learning. Studies now show that online learning is *more* effective than traditional courses. New blended models using online learning are more important than ever for providing cost-effective solutions that work for today's students who are naturally online. Online learning provides expanded educational opportunities to students and provides more customized, flexible learning to meet individual student needs any time, any place, any path or any pace.”

VSS registration is open onsite. Press with valid credentials are welcome to attend free of charge.

For the complete agenda and more information, the conference website is located at [www.virtualschoolsymposium.org](http://www.virtualschoolsymposium.org).

# # #

**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 3,400 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)).