

NACOL Launches Needs Assessment Service for Virtual School Programs

VIENNA, VA, Feb. 15, 2007/U.S. Newswire/ -- The North American Council for Online Learning (NACOL) announced the nationwide availability of a new service that assists virtual school administrators make strategic decisions about their programs. Known as SNAP (Schools and Students Needs Assessment Program), NACOL's service helps virtual school programs identify the types of courses and services that their constituents desire.

"Because virtual schools are often established to expand and enhance the academic programs available to students in traditional schools, it is imperative that virtual schools have a clear understanding of the services and courses that their customer base wishes for them to provide," said NACOL president Susan Patrick. She added: "Identifying the key courses and services that customers want will help virtual school leaders make critical strategic decisions about their program's focus and budget allocations."

NACOL will offer this comprehensive needs assessment for any virtual school program, district, or state. Through an online survey of state, district, and school leaders, NACOL researchers will collect and analyze data and produce a report designed to help virtual school leaders make wise decisions about the courses and services offered through their online program. The survey can identify the online course needs of targeted populations, such as rural and underserved populations, or any category of schools. NACOL staff will assist in developing the appropriate needs assessment questions and identifying the target survey groups.

NACOL's SNAP team, headed by vice president Bruce Friend, has experience conducting needs assessments for various virtual school programs. Because of the importance of this type of assessment to educational quality, BellSouth Foundation with its commitment to promoting K-12 online learning recently commissioned NACOL to conduct needs assessments on behalf of programs within its region in the Southeast.

For more information about NACOL's needs assessment service offering, please contact Bruce Friend at 919-802-1030 or at bfriend@nacol.org.

NACOL (www.NACOL.org) is the premier U.S. K-12 nonprofit organization in the field of online learning, providing leadership, advocacy, research, training and networking for the online learning community.