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NACOL RELEASES *Going Virtual! The Status of Professional Development for K-12 Online Teachers* in honor of National Distance Learning Week

Washington, DC, November 16, 2007 – The North American Council for Online Learning (NACOL) released a white paper in partnership with Boise State University, *Going Virtual! The Status of Professional Development for K-12 Online Teachers*, in honor of National Distance Learning Week, November 12–16, 2007.

The report outlines the results from phase one of the *Going Virtual!* study series conducted by Lisa Dawley and Kerry Rice from Boise State University. This report provides a national snapshot and answers two main questions: (1) what practices and models of teacher professional development are being used in K-12 virtual schools and programs across the country and (2) what factors influence the design of professional development (PD)?

Some very distinct trends were identified:

Amount of Training: More than 90% of teachers reported that training had been provided or made available to them.

When PD Occurs: The highest teacher-reported period when professional development (PD) occurred was during the first year (61%). Forty percent (40%) of teachers reported receiving PD each year after the first year.

PD Prior to Teaching Online: 62% of teachers and 26% of administrators report teachers receiving no training prior to teaching online.

Types of PD: 69% of teachers reported participating in ongoing training sessions, and 52% in limited one-time sessions. 34% had attended summer workshops.

Susan Patrick, President and CEO of NACOL, said, “The expansion in online or virtual education opportunities for students in elementary and secondary grades continues at an astounding rate of 30% annually. There are an estimated 1,000,000 enrollments in K-12 online classes. Online learning provides new professional opportunities to teachers and is making flexible working schedules available.”

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About NACOL

The North American Council for Online Learning (NACOL) is *the* leading organization for advocacy, research, professional development and leadership in K-12 online learning. NACOL’s mission is to provide advocacy, expertise, professional development and research for quality K-12 online learning. Visit www.nacol.org for more information.

About Boise State University

Boise State University, a metropolitan research university of distinction, is the largest university in Idaho with an enrollment of more than 19,000 students. The Department of Educational Technology is the largest graduate program on campus, specializing in online teaching, school technology integration, and e-learning design.