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SURVEY OF STUDENTS SHOWS TWEENS MOST INTERESTED IN TAKING ONLINE COURSES

WASHINGTON, DC, November 1, 2007 – According to a recent North American Council for Online Learning (NACOL) survey conducted by Harris Interactive, only 7% of all elementary or secondary students have ever taken an online course. Fewer elementary or middle school students have ever taken one (4%). However, four in ten (40%) tweens are interested in taking an online course before graduating from high school.

Online learning is one of the most important advancements in rethinking the effectiveness of education in the United States. Virtual schools provide access to online, collaborative and self-paced learning environments—settings that can facilitate the 21st century skills that today's students need to succeed in current and future jobs. Twenty-six states run state virtual school programs; 19 states allow virtual charter schools, or e-schools.

“Survey results show that many students are interested in taking online courses,” said Susan Patrick, President and CEO of the North American Council for Online Learning (NACOL). “I believe these results highlight the need to expand more online programs into middle schools and offer high-quality, online learning opportunities for all K-12 students. The number one reason courses are offered online is that they are otherwise unavailable to the students.”

The survey data will be shared with school leaders attending the Virtual School Symposium.

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Methodology

This survey was conducted online by Harris Interactive October 17 - 23, 2007 among 1183 U.S. 8-18 year olds. Estimates of theoretical sampling error cannot be calculated; a full methodology is available upon request.

About VSS

NACOL is hosting the annual Virtual School Symposium (VSS) runs Nov. 4 – 6, 2007 in Louisville, KY. It is *the* leading K-12 online learning event with 750+ attendees. VSS brings together national, state, district, private and virtual school program experts to learn about latest trends, challenges and opportunities in e-learning and gain access to the latest research.

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.