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August 25, 2009

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## **Minnesota Learning Commons offers new online resource for students, teachers, parents and advisors**

**Roseville** – A new online resource was unveiled today that will expand learning options for students, provide more resources for educators and assist parents and advisors in guiding young people on their educational path. The Website, Minnesota Learning Commons ([www.mnlearningcommons.org](http://www.mnlearningcommons.org)), is a collaboration of the Minnesota Department of Education, the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities, and the University of Minnesota.

The Minnesota Learning Commons was created to provide a central source of resources for K-12 through higher education. On the Website, parents, students and advisors can find online high school and college courses and information about financing higher education and planning careers. Educators can create online instructional materials, complete training programs, access library materials and engage in discussions with peers on educational issues and topics. In addition, Minnesota Learning Commons also has a highly advanced online support center to assist users.

“Besides expanding learning options for students and providing resources for teachers, Minnesota Learning Commons aligns with the Governor’s agenda to build a workforce with 21<sup>st</sup> century skills and to improve efficiency in our educational systems,” said Minnesota Department of Education Commissioner Alice Seagren.

“We are excited to offer this new source of information,” said Linda Baer, senior vice chancellor for academic and student affairs at the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities. “Through the Minnesota Learning Commons, teachers and other educators will be able to collaborate on developing online learning materials and then share them with colleagues.”

The site also places a strong emphasis on “quality, best practices, and student success” through advocacy, training and support, said Billie Wahlstrom, vice provost for distributed education and instructional technology at the University of Minnesota.

The Minnesota Learning Commons operates through a joint powers agreement with its three partners: the University of Minnesota, Minnesota State Colleges and Universities, and the Minnesota Department of Education. For more information, go to [www.mnlearningcommons.org](http://www.mnlearningcommons.org).

The Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system comprises 32 state universities and community and technical colleges serving the higher education needs of Minnesota. The system serves about 250,000 students per year in credit-based courses and an additional 140,000 students in non-credit courses.

The University of Minnesota, with campuses in the Twin Cities, Crookston, Duluth, Morris and Rochester serves more than 83,000 students each year with its undergraduate, graduate, professional and non-degree programs. Through its Research and Outreach Centers and regional Extension offices, it reaches each county in the state with credit and non-credit learning opportunities.

The Minnesota Department of Education serves a wide range of customers: approximately 850,000 K-12 students and their families; 118,000 young children participating in a variety of early learning programs including Head Start and ECFE; 82,000 adult learners participating in adult education programs including GED and citizenship programs; Minnesota's 339 school districts and over 52,000 licensed teachers.

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