

## NEWS RELEASE



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### **Free Access to Online Educational Tools and Literacy Curricula from ePals**

#### **Internet Learning Community to Eliminate Subscription Fees for Award-Winning SchoolMail™ and SchoolBlog™ Solutions**

HERNDON, VA. (September 10, 2007) – Encouraging educators and students to utilize technology in the classroom, ePals, Inc., the leading Internet learning community, has made its award-winning, policy-managed SchoolMail™, SchoolBlog™ and online literacy curricula services available free of charge to schools worldwide.

More than 325,000 educators and students in 200 countries and territories participate in the ePals' Internet learning community. With the successful conclusion of several recent agreements with municipalities and school districts, the ePals global learning community is now accessible to more than 8 million students around the world. Agreements have been signed recently in San Antonio and Brownsville, Texas; Aurora, Colo.; Newark and Jersey City, N.J.; Cherokee, Ga.; Kansas City, Kan.; and New Brunswick, Canada.

“ePals fulfills an important need for school systems across the country – most of which, though wired for Internet access, lack the resources to purchase the online tools and curricula necessary to enable effective Internet-based learning for all of their students,” said Ed Fish, President and CEO of ePals. “Our global online learning community provides educators and parents with a safe, proven and cost-effective way to channel students’ enthusiasm for the Internet into authentic educational experiences.”

“By providing ePals’ award-winning connectivity and literacy tools free to schools, more students will have the chance to enhance their 21st Century literacy skills, including critical thinking, global awareness, creativity with media tools and a facility for Internet navigation,” said Tim DiScipio, ePals co-founder and Chief Marketing Officer. “With ePals available at no cost, the money schools have budgeted for email services can now be used for other priorities.”

“From a district perspective, this is a big win-win,” said Stan Salagaj, Director of Instructional Technology at Newark Public Schools in New Jersey. “We get to acquire a leading K-12 designed collaborative tool suite and, in the process, eliminate budget constraints, eRate

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paperwork and the application process to apply for partial government technology subsidies, saving us time and money.”

ePals’ connectivity tools and digital literacy curricula include:

- SchoolMail™, an integrated email service in use in schools around the world. SchoolMail™ uniquely offers teacher-monitored email to ensure secure usage; a built-in, instant translation matrix for 72 language pairs; file sharing and spell checking; virus and spam filters, and easily-accessed manuals and tutorials.
- SchoolBlog™, recipient of the *Technology and Learning* Award of Excellence, is one of the top literacy education tools for teaching students to express their ideas, collaborate with other students and teachers, and involve parents in a secure online environment. SchoolBlog™ builds literacy skills, exposes students to a real audience and encourages cultural idea exchange on a global basis. Message boards are teacher-supervised to ensure that emails and blogs circulate exclusively in the educational environment.
- In2Books®, an evidence-based literacy curricula ([www.In2Books.com](http://www.In2Books.com)), developed by a team of national literacy experts, provides a rich, engaging and authentic online learning experience built around a pen-pal dialogue between a student and an adult mentor. Independent studies have shown that students participating in In2Books significantly outperform other students in standardized reading tests, and increase critical thinking and writing proficiency.

All of ePals’ tools are optimized for policy-managed security standards so that each school district or campus can regulate student interactions with the site based on its own specific Internet policies.

For more information on ePals and company services, please visit [www.epals.com](http://www.epals.com) or corporate site [www.epalscorp.com](http://www.epalscorp.com).

### **About ePals**

Founded in 1996 and merged with In2Books in 2006, ePals offers K-12 students and teachers around the world a safe environment for building and exchanging knowledge based on protected connectivity tools, evidence-based curricula and authentic, collaborative learning experiences. The ePals Global Learning Community™ ([www.ePals.com](http://www.ePals.com)) is the largest online community of K-12 learners, enabling more than 325,000 educators and 126,000 classrooms across 200 countries and territories to safely connect, exchange ideas, and work together. The company’s mission is to support lifelong learning through collaborative experiences that empower and inspire.

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