

NEWS RELEASE



For more information contact
Rebecca Kilduff
ePals, Inc.
(703) 885-3400
rKilduff@corp.epals.com



For immediate release
Sandy Fash
C. Blohm & Associates, Inc.
(608) 839-9804
sandy@cblohm.com

In2Books® Builds Student Literacy Skills through Great Books and Real Dialogue with Caring Adult Pen Pals

ePals Introduces Research-Proven Online Reading, Writing and Thinking Product for Classroom and Home Use

TORONTO, CANADA (May 14, 2007) – ePals, Inc., announces the debut of *In2Books*, a research-proven authentic online literacy program at the International Reading Conference. *In2Books* enhances academic achievement by pairing students with an adult pen pal and introducing them to carefully selected books, all leading to authentic reading, writing and thinking opportunities.

With *In2Books*, students choose and read high-quality books in multiple genres, including realistic fiction, social studies, biography, folktales, and science. Students are matched with caring adult mentors, such as grandparents, aunts and screened adults, and together they engage in ongoing, dynamic conversations about the books and related subjects through the company's safe and protected email system. *In2Books'* professional development tools and resources enhance instruction in reading comprehension, writing and thinking skills correlated to each genre in the curriculum.

“What makes *In2Books* truly unique is the intellectual relationship that unfolds between a student and an adult pen pal as they read and correspond about the same intriguing books,” said Nina Zolt, Founder and Chief Program Architect of *In2Books*. “Through these conversations, students are building higher-level vocabulary, developing a deeper understanding about what they read, experiencing different points of views, and learning about new interests and careers.”

Developed by leading reading researchers and refined over the past ten years, *In2Books* online is available to families and home users as well as classrooms, giving thousands of children the opportunity to engage in real dialogue about books. Research on the program's effectiveness as a supplemental reading and writing curriculum, recently published in *Phi Delta Kappan*, illustrates that students using the tool and materials were more likely to realize gains in standardized test scores.

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In a recent survey, 90 percent of teachers piloting *In2Books* indicated it is one of their most valuable teaching tools. Through the program, teachers also have access to online professional development, practical teacher-tested instructional activities and receive up to a 40 percent discount for all books used in the program. In addition, 3rd-5th grade educators have the opportunity to become an *In2Books* Teacher Leader by applying for the 2007-2008 grant program. The grant, estimated at a value of \$2,000, includes:

- Access to the *In2Books* online learning curriculum units and platform for a year
- Books for students and teachers for units 1-3; including introductory, realistic fiction and social studies
- Toolkit for encouraging adult mentors from the local community to become ePals
- Toolkit for fundraising for the purchase of books and supporting the program
- Read-aloud books to introduce each unit
- Online professional development, access to the global community of *In2Books* teachers
- Email for students and teachers in a safe and secure environment
- 40 percent discount off all books used in the program

Teachers can visit www.In2Books.com to learn more about the grant and to apply online. The submission deadline is June 15, 2007.

To boost summer reading, *In2Books* is also offering a special program for home users. Children choose which books to read from the program's carefully selected summer collection, and parents select a family member or close friend to exchange letters with the child online about meaningful issues presented in the books. As with the classroom version, *In2Books* for the home helps students to hone their reading, writing and thinking skills.

For more information about ePals, visit www.epalscorp.com.

About ePals, Inc.

The ePals Global Community™ (www.ePals.com) is the largest online community of K-12 learners, enabling more than 120,000 classrooms across 191 countries to safely connect, exchange ideas, and work together. Our mission is to support lifelong learning through collaborative experiences that empower and inspire. The company's first curriculum based product, the *In2Books*® literacy program, is research proven and available for school and home use. Over the past decade, ePals products have been widely used and trusted by schools, teachers, students and families. ePals *SchoolM@il*™ and *SchoolBlogs*™ are a pioneering suite of protected communication tools extending the learning community.

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Editor's Note: See the *In2Books* product by visiting ePals at booth #1749 at the International Reading Association (IRA) Annual Convention in Toronto, Canada, May 13-17, 2007.