



SMARTHINKING Forms K-12 Partnership With Florida School District To Facilitate College Readiness

**Osceola School District To Collaborate On College Preparation With
The Osceola Campus of Valencia Community College**

WASHINGTON, D.C., December 14, 2009 – SMARTHINKING, Inc. (www.smarthinking.com), the market leader in products and services to bolster student performance, persistence and retention, has announced the successful launch of its first public K-12 partnership in Florida with the The School District of Osceola County. Students in Osceola's nine high schools will have access to SMARTHINKING online tutoring services as part of an innovative college readiness program developed by the Osceola School District and the Osceola Campus of Valencia Community College in Kissimmee, Fla.

"By implementing the SMARTHINKING online tutoring service for our high school students, we are expanding our toolkit of resources designed to help students achieve at higher levels," said Dr. Michael A. Grego, superintendent of the Osceola School District. "The experienced tutors at SMARTHINKING will provide our students extra assistance in improving basic skills 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, free of charge. I encourage parents and students to utilize this extremely valuable resource."

The SMARTHINKING service will help Osceola's high school students succeed in their current courses, be better prepared for college coursework and become comfortable with online learning. To date, Osceola students have utilized more than 500 hours of tutoring assistance for courses including Algebra, Calculus, Physics and Writing. Independent research proves that SMARTHINKING's proprietary live, online tutoring service increases student achievement and helps improve student retention.

"Valencia Community College's Osceola Campus is very happy to offer the SMARTHINKING program as a tutoring tool to its students," said Dr. Silvia Zapico, provost of the Valencia Community College Osceola Campus. "This online service gives our students the opportunity to receive high-quality assistance with enough flexibility to suit the most demanding or difficult schedule. We are committed to creating pathways for learning; SMARTHINKING will provide one more tool to create a seamless and successful transition between high school and college in our community."

While more than 30 Florida community colleges and four-year universities provide SMARTHINKING's online academic support to their students, The School District of Osceola County is the first public K-12 school district to participate in SMARTHINKING's partnership with the Florida Distance Learning Consortium.

In an effort to create awareness of the SMARTHINKING resource, The School District of Osceola County offered an orientation for faculty, administrators and counselors so that they would be better equipped to educate students and parents. In its first three weeks of use, 693 students utilized the SMARTHINKING service recording more than 1,500 sessions. This indicates most students utilized the service again after their first interaction.

"We are pleased to announce this partnership with the Osceola School District," said Kathy Clark, CEO of SMARTHINKING. "SMARTHINKING is committed to student performance, persistence and retention so we are proud to assist high school students with learning the ways online support can be utilized to promote those goals."

Ninety percent of SMARTHINKING tutors hold a master's degree or higher in their respective fields and more than 1,000 universities, colleges and schools around the world turn to SMARTHINKING for on-demand, online tutoring.

ABOUT SMARTHINKING:

SMARTHINKING is the market leader in providing online tutoring and academic support to students. Its services were honored with the Software & Information Industry Association (SIIA) CODiE award for Best Instruction Solution for Students at Home. Schools, colleges, universities, libraries, government agencies, textbook publishers and other education providers partner with SMARTHINKING to increase student achievement and enhance learning. SMARTHINKING connects students to e-structor®-certified tutors for assistance in math, writing, science and business, up to 24/7, on any Internet connected computer. SMARTHINKING's corporate office is located in Washington, D.C. For more information, visit www.smarthinking.com.

ABOUT THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF OSCEOLA COUNTY, FLORIDA:

The School District of Osceola County, Florida, is located in the heart of Central Florida, and provides kindergarten through adult education for over 52,000 students. The district, home to 43 schools and eight charter schools, has outlined an aggressive set of goals for the 2009/2010 school year in the areas of student achievement, professional development for teachers and employees, safe and caring learning environments, fiscal responsibility, communication and technology. Additional information about the Osceola School District can be found at www.osceola.k12.fl.us.

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