MSD of Decatur Township Partners with CourseNetworking to Introduce a New Paradigm in Education

Indianapolis school district provides online portfolio tool to increase career readiness

INDIANAPOLIS (February 27, 2018) — The Metropolitan School District (MSD) of Decatur Township and CourseNetworking (CN) are excited to announce an educational partnership that will give students the opportunity to showcase their academic work, learning achievements and social network in effort to build a professional image that will help prepare them for future employment opportunities.

The CN ePortfolio is an innovative concept and technology that will serve as a digital collection of each student's academic work and accomplishments accompanied by micro certification badges that provide validation of a student's knowledge, behaviors and skill sets. The concept of the ePortfolio is to provide students with evidence of their learning journey while expanding a meaningful academic social network and building a professional business image all within one comprehensive cloud-native software package.

"We're very excited about our partnership with Decatur Township, a school district that is known for its innovative approaches and forward-thinking solutions to the changing working world," said Ali Jafari, CN founder and CEO. "Together we're implementing a global digital platform that will highly engage students in formal, informal and social learning, and will be a tremendous asset to graduates throughout the entirety of their careers."

Each student has lifelong access and ownership of their CN ePortfolio with the ability to grant access and visibility for each entry within it. In a world that is increasingly influenced by technology, CN's ePortfolio is easily accessible through each student's unique URL. With every student's credentials and characteristics all housed in one virtual location, the innovative technology is expected to not only streamline the interview process, but the job search as a whole. With a simple click and share, any employer can review the candidate's relevant projects, issued certifications, achievement badges, competency and any recommendations the student has received from teachers, as well as colleagues from years past to present day.

Students can also link their ePortfolio with personal social media channels, allowing them to showcase and share their academic achievements and issued badges on various platforms. Similar to social media, the CN ePortfolio has the ability to connect students from all over the world, serving as an academic social network allowing students to interact and collaborate with one another regarding the courses and projects they are working on it real time.

"The ePortfolio introduces a concept of academic networking that has yet to be introduced within the education industry," said Nate Davis, assistant superintendent of Decatur Township

schools. "This innovative tool pinpoints a niche that excites both students and teachers by combining learning incentives and social interaction."

At the end of the 2017-2018 school year, MSD of Decatur Township and CN will monitor and analyze the initial set of created ePortfolios to utilize as a case study for future growth opportunities within higher education departments. The goal of this partnership is to implement the technology and provide the data and validation of the benefits the ePortfolio can provide to students in effort to eventually require the tool in all Hoosier academies. Together, the two partners believe the ePortfolio will prove to be one of the best modern-day learning tools that will go on to change the course of education and employment.

"As virtual learning communities continue to grow, the ePortfolio becomes more and more essential in the 21st century," said Davis. "Starting next year, our hope is that every student enrolled within Decatur Township will graduate with an ePortfolio, with lifelong ownership that they would continue to maintain and update as they move up to college, graduate school, and professional journey."

MSD of Decatur Township is one of five school districts that have begun utilizing the CN ePortfolio this semester. Decatur teachers were trained to learn multiple components of the digital tool, including the ability to assign projects and issue e-badges and micro-certifications. The faculty was also taught how to properly engage students in a way that will encourage their online participation and continuous contribution to their ePortfolio and was given an example of a college-level CN ePortfolio site.

"Education is always there," said Jafari. "There are countless opportunities to learn more and expand your professional and academic social networks. The CN ePortfolio embraces this concept and allows students to continuously collect, develop and showcase their abilities and skills wherever they go."

For more information about the ePortfolio, please visit www.thecn.com/eportfolio, and for more information about MSD of Decatur Township, please visit www.decaturproud.org.

ABOUT THE METROPOLITAN SCHOOL DISTRICT OF DECATUR TOWNSHIP
Student invested and community connected, the Metropolitan School District (MSD) of Decatur Township is a diverse, nationally recognized school district that uses an innovative and personalized, small-learning community approach. The entire district offers multiple learning pathways to its students, encouraging a deeper, more applicable learning environment. For more information, visit www.decaturproud.org.

ABOUT COURSENETWORKING LLC

CourseNetworking (CN) has a unique, next generation technology solution for the education Industry supported by many years of thinking and research invested prior to the commercialization of the product. Built on a global education platform, CN Suite offers a comprehensive Learning Management System (LMS), Social Portfolio, Global Academic Social Network, Badging as well as other social collaboration functionalities to transform teaching and learning. The CN was built to ensure that teaching and learning opportunities are available for everyone, anywhere in the world, at any time, through the web or the mobile app. The CN also provides a full turnkey solution for system implementation in institutions. The CN is the fourth major research and entrepreneurial project of the IUPUI CyberLab. The CourseNetworking LLC was created by capital investment from Indiana University and Jafari in 2011.

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