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CONNECTIONS ACADEMY VIRTUAL PUBLIC SCHOOL COMES TO INDIANA -- APPROVED TO OPEN FOR 2010-2011 SCHOOL YEAR

New Virtual Public School to Serve Grades 1-8 Statewide; High-Quality, Tuition-Free Public Education Option for Indiana Families

Indianapolis (April 6, 2010) – Indiana students will have an exciting new public school option this fall that delivers exceptional public schooling to students online. Indiana Connections Academy Virtual Pilot School (INCA-VPS), a statewide virtual public school operated in partnership with Rural Community Schools, has just been authorized as a Virtual Charter School Pilot by the Indiana Department of Education (IDOE). INCA-VPS can enroll students from anywhere in the state and will offer a high-quality, highly accountable, tuition-free, public education option.

INCA-VPS will begin enrolling students on April 15th for 280 available openings in grades 1-8 during the 2010-2011 school year.

Informational meetings to introduce INCA-VPS and its curriculum to Indiana families will take place throughout the spring and summer in communities across the state. **Additionally, families seeking more information about INCA-VPS can call 1-800-382-6010 or visit <http://www.ConnectionsAcademy.com>.** The school will open its virtual doors on August 23, 2010.

INCA-VPS combines Indiana-certified teachers, a standards-aligned curriculum, unique technology tools, an extensive selection of electives and clubs, and community experiences to create an individualized alternative to the bricks-and-mortar classroom. All INCA-VPS students will participate in the nationally accredited Connections Academy program that combines high quality resources from leading publishers with cutting-edge, yet easy-to-use, technology and hands-on materials. Learning from home, students will work closely with a parent, or another

“Learning Coach” and a licensed Indiana teacher using detailed daily lesson plans that can be personalized to meet individual student needs.

Interaction between teachers and students will be frequent. Accountability is central to the school’s mission and students must meet the same levels of accountability and complete the same state standardized tests as traditional public schools.

“Our new partnership and the establishment of INCA-VPS demonstrates Indiana’s commitment to furthering innovative educational options for students statewide. We have seen parent demand for virtual education in Indiana increase significantly over the past few years and look forward to bringing our world-class program to students this fall. Connections Academy is pleased to partner with Rural Community Schools to deliver highly personalized education that meets the full range of student needs outside of a traditional classroom model,” said Barbara Dreyer, president of Connections Academy.

“As Indiana’s first and only rural public charter school authorized by Ball State University, Rural Community Schools is committed to the charter school movement. This opportunity to work with the Indiana Department of Education and Connections Academy is exciting for the future of education in Indiana,” said Susie Pierce, Director of Rural Community Academy. “Rural Community looks forward to learning, from experts, about innovative, proven technology that we can bring back into the classroom to benefit our students and programs. Being a small school with limited class sizes, with emphasis on individualized instruction, and with a focus on partnerships, we understand the needs of many students who do not fit well into the larger schools for various reasons and how INCA-VPS can provide a new educational choice for those parents.”

Russ Simnick, president of the Indiana Public Charter Schools Association, added, “Virtual charter schools tear down many barriers to accessing education. These schools also are adept at meeting the wide range of student needs and providing true one-on-one teaching and learning. We are delighted that Connections Academy’s presence in our state will extend high-quality education choice to more kids and families.”

INCA-VPS is expected to serve a wide range of Indiana students, including those who are significantly ahead or behind in the classroom; students who would benefit from more individualized instruction; or those who require a flexible school schedule.

Connections Academy opened its first school—serving 400 K-8 students—in 2002. Since then, strong parental demand for this innovative public school alternative has led Connections Academy to grow both its school network and student body by double-digits annually. With its authorization, INCA-VPS joins the national network of 15 Connections Academy schools in 14 states that is serving more than 20,000 students in grades K-12 in 2009-2010 and expects to expand significantly during the 2010-2011 school year.

About Connections Academy

Connections Academy is a leading national provider of high-quality, highly accountable virtual public and private schools in the U.S. for students in grades K-12. Connections Academy schools deliver top quality, personalized education for students that combines certified teachers, a proven curriculum, technology tools, and community experiences to create a supportive and successful environment for children who want an individualized approach to education. In Connections Academy's Personalized Performance Learning[®] approach, students use daily lesson plans and curriculum materials provided by Connections Academy. Teachers develop a learning plan for each student, whose progress is tracked through a proprietary, web-based Learning Management System. During the 2009-2010 school year, Connections Academy served students in Arizona, California (Southern and Central), Colorado, Florida, Idaho, Minnesota, Nevada, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Texas, Wisconsin, and Wyoming. New public school programs will be added in the 2010-11 school year. Connections Academy offers grades K through 12, though some schools do not offer all grades. For more information, call 800-382-6010 or visit www.ConnectionsAcademy.com.

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