



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Connections Academy Public Cyber School Comes to Michigan – Approved to Open for 2010-2011 School Year

*-- New Public Cyber School to Serve Grades K-12 Statewide; High-Quality,
Tuition-Free Public Education Option for Michigan Families --*

LANSING, MI (May 27, 2010)—Michigan students will have an exciting new public school option this fall that delivers exceptional public schooling to students online. [Michigan Connections Academy](#) (MICA), a statewide cyber charter school has just been approved by the Ferris State University Charter Schools Office, a statewide authorizer. MICA can enroll students from anywhere in the state and will offer a high-quality, highly accountable, [tuition-free](#), public education option.

MICA will begin [enrolling](#) students on June 1st for 400 available openings in grades K-12 during the 2010–2011 school year. The school can grow to 1,000 students in the subsequent school year.

Informational meetings to introduce MICA and its curriculum to Michigan families will take place throughout the spring and summer in communities across the state. Additionally, families seeking more information about MICA can call 800-382-6010 or visit <http://www.ConnectionsAcademy.com>.



MICA combines Michigan-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 MICA 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 Michigan 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.

“Michigan has long been a national charter school leader and online learning pioneer, so we are thrilled that the Michigan legislature saw fit to bring full-time cyber charter schools to the state as part of its overall school reform agenda,” said Connections Academy President and CEO Barbara Dreyer. “We have heard from thousands of Michigan parents over the years that they want a complete virtual school option. We thank the Ferris State University Charter Schools Office for allowing us to answer the call, and look forward to working together to provide the best possible service.”

“We believe that the Michigan Connections Academy cyber school fits squarely within the principles guiding Ferris State University in authorizing charter schools,” says Dr. Lawrence Wells, Executive Director of the Charter Schools Office. “Michigan Connections Academy will provide opportunities for innovative teaching and learning in educating K-12 pupils in Michigan, and will do so with an experienced, financially secure education service provider and a proven curriculum that has been successfully implemented across the country.”

MICA is expected to serve a wide range of Michigan students, including those who are significantly ahead or behind in the classroom; students who would benefit from more individualized instruction or who require a flexible school schedule; and returning dropouts.

Connections Academy opened its first schools—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, MICA 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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