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OHIO CONNECTIONS ACADEMY REACHES GOALS FOR STATE AND FEDERAL ACCOUNTABILITY STANDARDS

OHIO – Ohio Connections Academy (OCA), a high-quality, highly accountable virtual public “e-school,” has met No Child Left Behind reading, math and overall Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) measures for the 2006-07 school year. AYP is based on standardized test participation and performance by all the categories of students in a school, from low-income students to children with disabilities. OCA is the only statewide e-school with at least 200 enrolled students to meet the overall AYP measure in 2006-07.

“I am proud of our exceptional, highly qualified teachers and the excellent education we provide for students throughout Ohio,” said Ray Lambert, OCA principal. “Meeting AYP means we are finding effective ways to use innovative learning technology, such as our Learning Management System, to ensure individualized academic success for **all** of our diverse students – regardless of their gender, race/ethnicity, socioeconomic and special education status and no matter how far behind they are when they start with us.”

Along with meeting its AYP goals, OCA continued to show steady progress on other aspects of the state’s accountability system. The Ohio Department of Education’s Performance Index reflects the proficiency on state tests of a school’s students in grades 3-8 and 10; examining the Index Score over time shows the school’s achievement trends. OCA’s Performance Index Score has increased steadily over the last two years to 85.6 this year, a gain of almost 13 points that OCA officials credit to their built-in continuous improvement process. Many other Ohio e-schools serving demographics like OCA’s also have seen increases in their Performance Index scores “I know we have all been working very hard to improve student achievement in our own unique ways,” said Lambert.

“Meeting our goals for growth and improvement demonstrates our dedication to providing our students and families with the highest quality education, but our work is not yet complete,” said Gene Schuster, president of OCA’s board of directors. “We will continue to strive for additional improvements in

testing and other indicators across all grade levels in our mission to help each student reach his or her full potential. Although we are somewhat constrained by the fact that Ohio funds e-schools like ours at just 75% of what other public schools receive, we will not be deterred. ”

OCA launched in 2003. Serving students in kindergarten through 11th grade, with the addition of 12th grade planned for the 2008-09 school year, OCA is designed to meet the needs of students and families who are looking for an alternative to the traditional classroom – those who need a flexible schedule, learn at a different pace from their peers, are looking for a different learning environment or need more individualized attention. The school serves a wide range of students, including those who are significantly ahead or behind in the classroom, previously homeschooled students and students who may be homebound due to a medical situation or other condition. In the 2006-07 school year OCA’s enrollment was just under 900 students.

About Connections Academy

Connections Academy is a leading national provider of high quality, highly accountable virtual public schools operated in partnership with charter schools and school districts. 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 unique 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. In 2007-08 Connections Academy will serve students in grades K-11 in Arizona, California, Idaho, Minnesota, Ohio, Oregon, and Pennsylvania; grades 4-11 in Nevada; grades K-9 in Colorado; grades K-8 in Florida and Wisconsin; and grades K-5 in Missouri. For more information, call 800-382-6010 or visit www.connectionsacademy.com.

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