FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Connections Academy Virtual School Comes to Louisiana – Approved to Open for 2011-2012 School Year

-- New Public Virtual Charter School to Serve Grades K-12 Statewide; High-Quality, Tuition-Free, Public Education Option for Louisiana Families –

BATON ROUGE, LA (December 16, 2010) – Starting in the 2011-2012 school year, Louisiana students in grades K-12 will have an exciting new public school option that delivers exceptional public schooling to students online. Louisiana Connections Academy (LACA), a virtual charter school, has just been approved by the Louisiana State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education and will begin enrollment in spring 2011 for the 2011-12 school year. LACA can enroll students in grades K-12 from anywhere in the state and will offer a high-quality, highly accountable, tuition-free, public education option. LACA’s administrative office and teaching center will be based in the Baton Rouge area.

LACA will combine Louisiana-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 LACA 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 Louisiana teacher using detailed daily lesson plans that can be personalized to meet individual student needs. Students enrolled will receive a loaned computer and a subsidy for Internet connection, in additional to other learning materials such as textbooks, science kits, and more.

VIDEO: A Day-in-the-Life of a Connections Academy Family

LACA is expected to serve a wide range of Louisiana students, including those who are significantly ahead or behind in the classroom, those who need a flexible schedule or learn at a different pace from their peers, and those who need more individualized attention or live in isolated rural settings. Homebound and previously home-schooled students can also thrive in Connections Academy’s program.
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.

“It is evident that Louisiana is committed to serving its students by offering innovative public school options like our virtual school, Louisiana Connections Academy, “ commented Barbara Dreyer, president of Connections Academy. “Technology affords us the opportunity to deliver high quality education to students – no matter where they reside. And because we provide a personalized learning experience, we are meeting students where the ‘live’ both geographically and academically. We are particularly grateful for the more than 6,000 families who expressed interest in our virtual school program and supported its development. We look forward to staffing our soon-to-be Baton Rouge area teaching center with Louisiana teachers and enrolling students in the spring.”

Wade Henderson, Board President for Louisiana Connections Academy said, “In addition to building the timeless skills students have always needed for success in school and in life – such as literacy, mathematics, and critical thinking – Louisiana Connections Academy is uniquely situated to prepare students for their Information Age future. I look forward with excitement to the next school year when students from across our state will be able to benefit from all that Louisiana Connections Academy has to offer.”

Caroline Roemer, Director, Louisiana Association of Public Charter Schools, said, "On behalf of the families of Louisiana, we are happy another public charter school option is available. It is an exciting opportunity for our state."

Families seeking more information about Connections Academy and its innovative approach to personalized public education can visit http://www.ConnectionsAcademy.com or call 800-382-6010. Informational meetings will take place throughout the state starting in early spring 2011.

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, LACA joins the national network of 19 Connections Academy schools in 18 states that is serving more than 30,000 students in grades K–12 in 2010–2011.

About Connections Academy
Connections Academy is a leading, fully accredited provider of high-quality, highly accountable virtual schooling for students in grades K through 12. Through tuition-free public schools, full-time and part-time private school programs, and turnkey online programs for bricks and mortar schools, Connections Academy delivers superior, personalized education for students, with the freedom and flexibility to experience our online learning community from anywhere. The combination of certified teachers, a proven curriculum, technology tools, and community experiences creates a supportive and successful online learning opportunity for families and children who want an individualized approach to education. In the 2010–11 school year, Connections Academy will serve students in Arizona, California (Southern and Central), Colorado, Florida, Idaho, Indiana, Kansas, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Nevada, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Texas, Wisconsin, and Wyoming through its public school programs. It serves students worldwide through the online
private school, National Connections Academy. Connections Academy offers grades K through 12, though some public school programs do not offer all grades. For more information, call 800-382-6010 or visit www.ConnectionsAcademy.com

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