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## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **Back to School Means Logging On for One Local Family**

#### *K – 12 Virtual Schooling Trend Grows Throughout Pittsburgh Area*

Like many other moms this time of year, Michelle Midgley is helping her sons prepare for their first day of the 2012-13 school-year. But when the morning of September 4<sup>th</sup> arrives, she won't be walking them to the bus stop or driving them to school.

As students at Commonwealth Connections Academy (CCA), a Pennsylvania cyber charter school, Midgley's sons will report to a virtual classroom and complete their coursework from the comfort of their home. Across the state last year, there were over 6,000 students enrolled at CCA last year, with about 605 in Allegheny and its surrounding 5 counties.

For Midgley, the choice to have her children enrolled in a cyber charter was the right decision. This will be their seventh year as CCA students. "It's great," she says. "As students at CCA, they're engaged, learning more, and they utilize their time better."

Midgley says that giving her sons an education through CCA allows her to be more helpful to them, which comforts her. She stays with them during the day, sits in on classes, and functions as their learning coach.

Although Midgley likes having her kids at home with her during the day, they're still able to be active CCA students outside the house. Teachers host after-school tutoring sessions at CCA's six teaching centers throughout Pennsylvania. Students also have the opportunity to participate in various extracurricular clubs and field trips.

Midgley's sons all play recreational basketball with other children from the area, and her oldest son runs cross country with the North Allegheny high school team.

"As a mother, it's wonderful to see," says Midgley. "You send your kids to the school that you know is best for them and that will allow them to make the best of their abilities, but it's refreshing to see that CCA still allows them to meet other people like themselves and get involved in other non-academic activities typically associated with traditional schooling."

#### **About Connections Academy**

Connections Academy is a leading provider of high-quality, highly accountable virtual schooling for students in grades K through 12. Through tuition-free public schools, and full-time and part-time private school programs, 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 2012-13 school year, Connections Academy will serve students in 22 states via 24 virtual public schools. 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](http://www.ConnectionsAcademy.com). Connections Academy and its parent company, Connections Education, are part of the global learning company Pearson (NYSE:PSO).