



Included below is a press release regarding Ferris State University's authorization of a cyber charter school with Connections Academy. Further information is available by contacting Leah Nixon, assistant director of News Services.

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Ferris Establishes Cyber Charter School with Connections Academy

BIG RAPIDS – Ferris State University's Charter Schools Office is expanding learning opportunities in the state of Michigan by establishing a K-12 cyber charter school with Connections Academy.

Connections Academy is based in Baltimore, Md., and has successfully implemented 17 cyber charter schools in 15 states. Ferris CSO Director Dr. Lawrence Wells said Connections Academy was chosen from a slate of 18 applicants due to its proven track record of providing quality education and high parent satisfaction rates.

“Cyber opportunities, if done right, provide another avenue for success,” Wells said. “As much as current charter, public and private schools serve the current student populace, we realize not every program is for everybody.

“The cyber charter schools program is designed to offer the best opportunity for students to have their educational needs met,” he added.

Student enrollment for 2009-10 through Connections Academy is more than 25,000, with minority students making up 20 percent of this figure, and 50 percent of students being classified as free and reduced lunch eligible.

The academy offers individualized instruction, including lessons tailored to a student's strengths and weaknesses, as well as group instruction through 500 K-12 course offerings, Wells explained. Such instruction includes live, teacher-led lessons; interactive teacher/student phone consultation; video teachlets; and an in-house learning coach, who is usually a trained parent/guardian or adult family member.

Connections Academy is accredited by AdvanceEd, with all core subject area teachers having state certification.

“A quote from Woodbridge N. Ferris that has always resonated with me is: ‘My plea in

Michigan – and it will be my plea until the last breath I draw, and the last word I speak – is education for all children, all men, and all women of Michigan, all the people in all our states all the time.’

“Ferris State University is addressing the need to have an educated populace in the state of Michigan,” Wells said.

Parents may begin enrolling students in the Ferris-authorized K-12 cyber charter school established with Connections Academy May 30, 2010.

Ferris State University’s Charter Schools Office has 18 authorized charter schools throughout the state of Michigan. For more information on the cyber charter school, visit www.connectionsacademy.com .

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