



For Release: Oct. 2, 2006

Contact: Joe Lyons
Director of School Communications
(610) 275-8500 X122
jlyons@pavcs.org

PENNSYLVANIA VIRTUAL CHARTER SCHOOL MEETS ALL NCLB ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE TARGETS ON PSSA

NORRISTOWN, PA – The Pennsylvania Virtual Charter School today announced that data from the Pennsylvania Department of Education concerning the 2005-2006 Pennsylvania System of School Assessment indicates the school met or exceeded all No Child Left Behind academic performance targets.

“We are excited to see the excellence in education outlined in the high level of academic performance recorded by our students,” said Bonnie Schaefer, President of the Pennsylvania Virtual Charter School Board of Trustees. “At the Pennsylvania Virtual Charter School we believe that every child can succeed and we are proud that our high academic standards are reflected in our PSSA scores.”

The PSSA is Pennsylvania’s achievement test required by the Federal No Child Left Behind law, and must be taken by all students to measure academic standards and determine the level to which schools enable students to become proficient. The PSSA is scored on standards of Advanced, Proficient, Basic and Below Basic. NCLB standards require 54 percent of students scoring proficient or above in Reading and 45 percent scoring proficient or above in Math

PAVCS students scoring Proficient/Advanced on the 2005-2006 PSSA (see figure 1):

- Grade 3: Reading 68 percent; Math 73 percent
- Grade 4: Reading 71 percent; Math 71 percent
- Grade 5: Reading 55 percent; Math 47 percent
- Grade 6: Reading 67 percent; Math 62 percent
- Grade 7: Reading 76 percent; Math 58 percent
- Grade 8: Reading 67 percent; Math 46 percent

“The performance of our children on the state No Child Left Behind standards demonstrates that the Pennsylvania Virtual Charter School serves as a model of achievement for public education,” said Joanne Barnett, CEO of the Pennsylvania Virtual Charter School. “We actualize differentiated education where we design instruction to meet the academic needs of students in a home-based learning environment where technology and one-on-one learning are augmented by a rigorous high-quality curriculum.”

With more than 4,000 students enrolled across the state, coordinating testing attendance is a major issue for the Pennsylvania Virtual Charter School. However, as a school PAVCS achieved the participation threshold of 95 percent, PAVCS’ subgroup participation of special education students (93.6 percent) fell 1.4 percentage points below the required 95 percent participation rate required to gain Adequate Yearly Progress status.

“Improving the participation in all of our subgroups will be a main objective of ours for the present testing cycle, but we will not sacrifice performance for the sake of participation,” said Barnett. “PAVCS not only meet, but exceeded Safe Harbor requirements by significantly decreasing the number of African American and Special Education students who were performing at the basic and below basic levels. Our children can be extremely proud of the high level of performance these students have achieved.”

To meet the Safe Harbor provisions, PAVCS was required to reduce the percentage of students scoring below Proficient by 10 percent in each demographic subgroup. PAVCS exceeded the Safe Harbor targets in the African American and Special Education subgroups. In 2005-2006 at PAVCS:

- The percent of African American students scoring below Proficient in Reading was reduced 9.2 points to 67.5 from 76.7 and exceeded the 10 percent reduction target of 69.1 by 1.6 points.
- The percent of African American students scoring below Proficient in Math was reduced 22.2 points to 71 from 93.2 and exceeded the 10 percent reduction target of 86.6 by 15.6 points.
- The percent of Special Education students scoring below Proficient in Reading was reduced 12.8 points 73.2 from 86 and exceed the 10 percent reduction target of 77.4 by 4.2 points.
- The percent of Special Education students scoring below Proficient in Math was reduced 15.2 points to 74.3 from 89.5 and exceed the 10 percent reduction target of 80.6 by 6.3 points.

About the Pennsylvania Virtual Charter School

The Pennsylvania Virtual Charter School (PAVCS) is a public virtual school of choice chartered and approved by the Pennsylvania Department of Education in 2001. PAVCS serves more than 4,000 students throughout PA from Kindergarten through 10th grade in a home-based setting. In 2006, PDE renewed the PAVCS charter for five more years, allowing it continue to grow through 12th grade. PAVCS provides differentiated instruction through traditional regular education and special education programs. PAVCS’ Diamond Model Partnership is a collaborative partnership integrating parents, teachers, family support coordinators and K12 Inc. curriculum. State-of-the-art technology enhances a rigorous content-rich curriculum that allows for individualized instruction that gives children the opportunity to learn at home at a pace that meets the child’s unique needs.

###

Figure 1

