



**SOUTH CAROLINA  
CONNECTIONS  
ACADEMY**

# MEDIA RELEASE

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## **Charter Institute at Erskine announces South Carolina Connections Academy as 2020-2021 Gold and Platinum School of Excellence**

**COLUMBIA, SC**— South Carolina Connections Academy (SCCA) has been named one of the Charter Institute at Erskine’s 2020-2021 Gold and Platinum Schools of Excellence. The Charter Institute at Erskine staff celebrated the accomplishments of SCCA with a presentation on Thursday, February 17 at the Charter Institute at Erskine’s offices, where they awarded the school with commemorative banners. Representative Jason Elliott (R – Greenville) also attended the event, and the school received a certificate from the South Carolina House of Representatives, introduced by Representative Chris Wooten (R-Lexington).

To be a Platinum School of Excellence, SCCA’s elementary school students had to score in the Top 25% of all South Carolina Department of Education schools in both English and Math with no test score averages below the 25<sup>th</sup> percentile. SCCA’s Elementary school achieved this, scoring in the Top 15% of all SC elementary schools in ELA, the Top 20% in math, and the Top 5% in science, meaning they outperformed the state average in all three subject areas. SCCA is also the highest-performing elementary school in the Institute’s portfolio in science.

To be a Gold School of Excellence, SCCA’s middle school students had to score in the Top 25% of all South Carolina Department of Education Schools in ELA or Math, with no test score averages below the 25<sup>th</sup> percentile. SCCA’s middle school achieved this, scoring in the Top 20% of the state in ELA. They also scored in the Top 15% of all SC middle schools in science and are outperforming the state in ELA, math, and science.

“Today was a great day to celebrate one of our highest-performing schools, South Carolina Connections Academy,” said Cameron Runyan, Superintendent of the Charter Institute at Erskine. “We’re committed to virtual education, we’ve proven that it can be done phenomenally well, and I think we’re going to see tens of thousands of more students in a virtual environment in the coming years.”

South Carolina Connections Academy, a tuition-free public online charter school, serves over 6,300 students in grades K-12 across the state of South Carolina, making them the largest public school in the state. SCCA’s mission is to “provide a personalized education for students to

master the knowledge and problem-solving skills needed to achieve their college and career goals.”

“We’ve been laser-focused in our efforts,” said Josh Kitchens, Executive Director at South Carolina Connections Academy. “It’s no longer about just being one of the best virtual schools in the state. We want to be one of the best *schools* in the state.”

For more information about the Charter Institute at Erskine’s School of Excellence Awards, visit <https://erskinecharters.org/accountabilitymodel>.

### **About The Charter Institute at Erskine**

*The Charter Institute at Erskine is the fastest-growing charter school authorizer in South Carolina. Serving 26 schools and 24,000 students across the state, the Charter Institute at Erskine is committed to innovative, creative, high-quality methods of education. For more information about the Institute, please visit [www.erskinecharters.org](http://www.erskinecharters.org).*

### Photos



*The banner for SCCA’s Elementary School, who achieved the Platinum School of Excellence distinction.*



*The banner for SCCA’s Elementary School, who achieved the Platinum School of Excellence distinction.*



*Director of the Charter Institute at Erskine Vamshi Rudrapati, the Middle School team at SCCA, SCCA Executive Director Josh Kitchens, and Charter Institute at Erskine Superintendent Cameron Runyan pose with the school's banner and certificate.*



*Director of the Charter Institute at Erskine Vamshi Rudrapati, the Middle School team at SCCA, SCCA Executive Director Josh Kitchens, and Charter Institute at Erskine Superintendent Cameron Runyan pose with Representative Jason Elliott.*