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## NEWS RELEASE

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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Atlanta, Georgia - The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) through its Council on Accreditation and School Improvement (CASI) and the Commission on International and Trans-regional Accreditation (CITA) has awarded accreditation to Gateway Charter High School. The announcement was made during the Council's Annual Conference in Atlanta, Georgia, December 9-11, 2006.

SACS provides regional and national accreditation, the purpose of which is continuous school improvement focused on improving student performance. Initial SACS accreditation is based upon the school's assessing itself against quality standards of accreditation, identifying areas needing improvement, creating and implementing an action plan, and monitoring improvement results. The evaluation process includes a review by an outside team of trained professional peers representing SACS.

To maintain accreditation, each accredited school must conduct a continuing program of educational improvement including meeting standards of accreditation, improving student performance, submitting annual reports that certify implementation of the school's improvement plan, and being re-evaluated by external teams of professional educators at five-year intervals.

Through regional and national accreditation, faculty, students, and parents benefit by knowing that teaching conditions in accredited schools meet necessary requirements and that efforts are continuously made for school improvement that focuses on improving student success.

"Citizens are assured of accountability because SACS and CITA member schools meet standards and maintain regular external re-evaluation. Communities with accredited schools can be confident that their institutions compare favorably with other schools not only within the region but throughout the world. Accredited schools are a "plus" for the community and for those who are interested in relocating their families and businesses in Fort Myers and the Gateway Community," said Dr. Mark A. Elgart, Chief Executive Officer of the Council on Accreditation and School Improvement.

Founded in 1895, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools is a voluntary, non-governmental agency composed of more than 13,000 accredited colleges and universities, elementary, middle, and secondary schools. Headquartered in Decatur, Georgia, SACS serves 11 Southern states - Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia, as well as the countries of Mexico, Central and South America, islands of the Caribbean, and other geographic areas.