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**For Immediate Release**

**Contact: Charla Hutchinson**

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Lexington, North Carolina - Charla Hutchinson, M.Ed., Assistant Director, today announced that A Bridge to Learning, Inc. has been awarded the four year CQL Accreditation from The Council on Quality and Leadership (CQL). The announcement completes a six-month process for A Bridge to Learning, Inc. and confirms that the organization shares CQL's vision for person-directed solutions to improve the quality of life for people with disabilities and people with mental illness.

"The CQL accreditation process has helped us identify which areas in the organization need improvement, so that we can continue to provide quality services to children with autism and their families," Hutchinson said. "One of our goals for the next year is to better provide parents with the tools they need to advocate for their child's rights in the school and in the community to help increase their child's quality of life."

James F. Gardner, Ph.D., President and CEO of CQL, stated, "CQL commends A Bridge to Learning, Inc. for its success in increasing the quality of life for the people it supports. CQL Accreditation signifies organizational excellence in promoting a common vision of community participation and quality of life for all people."

The accreditation received by A Bridge to Learning, Inc. meets the new standards announced by CQL in May, 2005 as part of its "*Quality Measures 2005*<sup>®</sup>" initiative. The new measures support strategies that enable service providers to develop a fully integrated quality management system. The *Quality Measures 2005*<sup>®</sup> represent a major break-through in how organizations can evaluate their own effectiveness at providing quality supports for people with disabilities and people with mental illness.

The *Quality Measures 2005*<sup>®</sup> combine many of CQL's existing innovative quality management practices into one core document that provides a blueprint for moving an organization forward. They call for service providers to integrate the assets of the social environment where they are based...an approach CQL has called *Community Life*<sup>®</sup>.

A Bridge to Learning, Inc. provides intensive behavioral intervention programs to children with autism and related disorders across North Carolina and throughout the United States. A Bridge to Learning opened in January of 2001 and has been a CAP MR/DD provider since 2003. For further information about A Bridge to Learning, visit the website: [www.ablearning.com](http://www.ablearning.com) or contact Charla Hutchinson, 336-601-1810.

Headquartered in Towson, Maryland, CQL is an international not-for-profit organization dedicated to the definition, measurement, and improvement of personal and community quality of life for people with disabilities and people with mental illness. Known as the innovators in the human services field, CQL has for almost 40 years challenged "conventional wisdom" while pioneering the concept of "person-directed solutions" for service and support organizations, state and national government agencies, regional systems and networks, and professionals and self-advocates.

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