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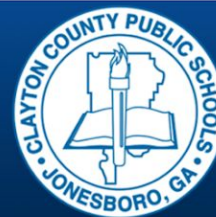
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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **NCMS Creates Clayton County’s First Middle School Drone Course**

**JONESBORO** - A middle school campus in the Clayton County Public Schools (CCPS) district is looking to provide its students with an accelerated pathway to career success through the air.

North Clayton Middle School (NCMS) has created an Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) – drone course. This course of study was designed for scholars to authentically visualize who they can become and what they can do in the Aerospace Industry.

NCMS Principal Shakira Rice believes, “whether a scholar pursues aeronautics, aviation flight, aviation mechanics, or becomes a drone pilot – we are preparing students *before* graduating from middle school with in-demand skills that business and industry desire.”

The drone course is built into the master schedule for all scholars in grades 6-8 in a co-teaching environment with an Engineering teacher and a Certified FAA Part 107 Remote Pilot instructor facilitating real-world applications for scholars. The objective is to prepare participating students to sit for the FAA Part 107 Exam by age 16.

“We are excited over the potential created by the development of the drone course at North Clayton Middle,” said Dr. Morcease J. Beasley, CCPS Superintendent/CEO. “The students that successfully complete this course will have the opportunity to matriculate to North Clayton High School and its Early College Magnet with an Aviation Career Pathway and when its constructed, the students will be able to participate in Clayton’s County’s new College and Career Academy that will offer the Career pathways such as Aviation, Artificial Intelligence, Logistics and Transportation, just to name a few,” he added.

“This forward thinking action of the leadership at NCMS is indicative of our mission to empower our students to achieve academic and personal goals as they seek to live and thrive in a global society,” Dr. Beasley concluded.

Through this course, the scholars at North Clayton Middle are gaining necessary unmanned aerial skills to accelerate learning and enter into the emerging unmanned aerial vehicle (drone) industry. As Dr. Eboni Chillis, CCPS Coordinator of Career, Technical and Agricultural Education (CTAE), commented, “Mrs. Rice has created an ‘ultimate classroom to career experience’ for her scholars, teachers, parents and the aviation community.”

This uniquely designed course is the first and only one of its kind for middle schools throughout CCPS. “Through its creation, North Clayton Middle School is positioning itself to become the first in Georgia as a Pre-Early College Middle School with an aviation theme for the 2020-2021 school year,” said Ms. Rice. “We are excited about the possibilities and exposure to come.”

## **About the UAV Industry**

According to a 2013 report by the Association for Unmanned Vehicle Systems International, (a group representing 7,500 individual members and 600 corporations), the global economic impact is \$100 billion. Today, the U.S. budget for UAV/UAS warfare is more than \$3.9 billion, according to the Congressional Research Service. The global market for commercial drones is projected to reach \$1.8 billion by 2020.

## **About Clayton County Public Schools**

Clayton County Public Schools (CCPS) is fully accredited through AdvancED – Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Council on Accreditation and School Improvement. The district offers a focused world class program based on a challenging curriculum which is taught from pre-kindergarten through 12th grade. Serving over 55,000 students, Clayton County Public Schools is ranked among the 100 largest school districts in the U.S., and is the fifth largest school system in Georgia.

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