



# Franklin County District Schools

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## **PRESS RELEASE: EMBRY-RIDDLE AERONAUTICAL UNIVERSITY UNMANNED SYSTEMS STEM SUMMER CHALLENGE FOR FRANKLIN COUNTY STUDENTS AT GULF COAST STATE COLLEGE**

Traci Moses, Superintendent Franklin District Schools, is pleased to announce a recent partnership with Gulf Coast State College, Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University and the Panhandle Area Educational Consortium, to bring a three-day, Unmanned Systems STEM Summer Challenge to approximately 60 rising 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade students from Gulf and Franklin counties. The STEM Challenge event will occur at Gulf Coast State College on June 5-7, 2018 from 9:00 AM – 3:00 PM each day. Gulf Coast State College and Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University will provide expert faculty for the event. School district supervision and transportation will be provided and there is no cost for students to attend.

This is an important opportunity for our students, because unmanned or autonomous systems are gaining in sophistication, use is expanding and the demand for new systems and operators is growing. Annually, the potential financial impact totals in the billions of dollars across military, commercial, personal, and technology sectors. Increased demand is a result of the benefit of using these systems in places where man cannot reach or is unable to perform in a timely and efficient manner. By using cameras, sensors, and computing capabilities, these systems can sense and navigate challenging terrain and provide information, so that human operators may understand the environment and take action to achieve a variety of missions. Some of the uses include examining agricultural crops, capturing more innovative shots for movies, getting closer to action for accurate news stories, highlighting real estate properties and mapping areas. Unmanned systems are also making their way onto roadways and in use to deliver packages, inspect bridges and oil platforms, for search and rescue missions, to monitor drug trafficking across borders, to conduct weather and environmental research, in disaster relief, firefighting, and by the military. Their use captured an international audience during the 2018 Winter Olympics when 1218 Shooting Star drones took to the skies to present an inspiring light show, as well as set a Guinness World Records title for the most unmanned aerial vehicles airborne simultaneously.

Superintendent Moses encourages students who have STEM aptitude and interest to take advantage of this excellent, fun, summer learning opportunity. Registration forms are available from Ms. Anna Keel at Apalachicola Bay Charter School and Ms. Luci Mathews at Franklin County School.

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