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GROUP TO AUDIT CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS

MARION COUNTY – Marion County Public Schools will audit its own career and technical education programs as part of a larger plan to redesign and update programs. The move has two goals in store -- bring greater relevancy to student learning and develop the community's talent pipeline.

The Whetstone Group, a leading think-tank agency located in Jacksonville, will explain the auditing process in a meeting open to the public on March 8. The meeting begins at 6PM at MTI located at 1614 E. Ft. King St. in Ocala. Doors open for a reception at 5:30PM, sponsored by Engage in Education, part of the Public Education Foundation of Marion County.

The Whetstone Group will train district administrators using its LEAD model (Linking Economic and Academic Development). This model evaluates existing Career Technical and Education (CTE) programs for relevance and effectiveness, identifies needs for new programs, determines outdated programs no longer needed, is data driven providing objective results, and ensures all CTE programs meet Florida legislation, are connected to the area's local economic needs, and provide students with marketable skills.

This audit follows an MCPS announcement last week regarding two new Logistics Career Choice Academies opening in August at Lake Weir and West Port High Schools. This audit will help determine additional academies opening in coming years.

Founded in 2004, The Whetstone Group is a leader in transforming community workforces by establishing career educational offerings connected to local, state and regional economic drivers. Whetstone helps businesses and communities establish a competitive edge through a well-defined and developed workforce.

For more information, contact my office directly or Mark Vianello, executive director of Career and Technical Education, at 352.671.6868 or

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