



## **Whitesburg Elementary Becomes First School in Georgia to Earn National Certificate for STEM Excellence from National Institute for STEM Education**

*Rural, Title I school in Carroll County earns certification integrating the most recent research and best practices in STEM, 21st century learning, and professional development*

HOUSTON — May 11, 2018 — [Whitesburg Elementary School](#), a rural, Title I school in the Carroll County School System, is the first school in Georgia to earn the [National Certificate for STEM Excellence](#) from the [National Institute for STEM Education](#) (NISE). The National Certificate for STEM Excellence recognizes individual school campuses for their commitment to and growth in teachers' implementation of 21st century and STEM strategies.

“Children in our community will have to compete with children who have very different experiences and levels of opportunity. We want to ensure that our students are college and career ready, and provide them with skills to be prepared for jobs that don't even exist yet,” said Marissa Ogando, principal of Whitesburg Elementary. “NISE not only supports our vision, but it integrates perfectly with what we're already doing, so it's not just 'one more thing to do.' It has given us new strategies, tools, and modalities to meet the Common Core standards and deliver our content in a more effective way.”

With the support of an experienced STEM coach, five Whitesburg teachers completed the National Certificate in STEM Teaching (NCST), while the school concurrently completed its requirements for the National Certificate in STEM Excellence-Campus Certificate (NCSE).

“NISE is competency-based. It provides a clear, consistent professional learning path and we absolutely loved the certification process,” said Ogando. “It gave us a new way to look at how we were delivering instruction so we could become better at facilitating students' learning. Now our students own the learning, and we're helping them develop the skills they'll need to succeed in college and careers.”

### **About the National Institute for STEM Education**

NISE is more than a certifying body. It is a research-based support system for campuses and teachers seeking to strengthen STEM instruction and outcomes. Based on 15 STEM Teacher Actions that evolved from STEM professional development originally created at Rice University, NISE's Campus and Teacher Certificates help school leaders and teachers understand and apply research and best practices in STEM, 21st-century learning, and professional development. For information, visit <http://nise.institute>.

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