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# NEWS RELEASE



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**SCHOOL DISTRICT OF PICKENS COUNTY • 1348 GRIFFIN MILL ROAD • EASLEY, SC 29640-6997**

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**Release Date:** November 6, 2013

## **GUIDANCE COUNSELORS, MANUFACTURERS WORK TOGETHER TO PREPARE STUDENTS FOR CAREERS**

Guidance counselors from all Pickens County schools recently collaborated with seven local manufacturing companies to learn about technology and job skill requirements by seven local manufacturing companies.

The guidance counselors gathered at the Pickens County Career and Technology Center on October 28 to hear about job outlooks, Career Center technology training programs, economic development benefits and strategy, and what skills sets local manufacturers look for and hire.

Amanda Blanton, of Tri-County Technical College, presented job outlooks and forecasts for the region and the nation. Ray Farley, Executive Director of Alliance Pickens, discussed how Pickens County markets itself to prospective companies, and how the "Scholar Technician" program's success has played a part in recruiting new industry to the county. Ken Hitchcock, Career and Technology Center director, presented updates on programs the school offers.

Dr. Kelly Pew, Superintendent of Pickens County Schools said, "Our goal is not just for our students to perform well academically, but for our students to be ready for college, career and citizenship opportunities. There are many great careers for our students in our local business community, and we want to ensure that our guidance counselors are aware of the skills students need to be prepared. Having manufacturers, Tri-County Tech, Clemson University, economic development agencies and educators meeting together to discuss opportunities is key for our students and for our businesses."

"The marketplace today rewards skills," Farley said. "In days past, the primary ticket to a financially rewarding career was a four-year college degree. The reality of today is that there is a second avenue to that kind of career, and that is a career founded in developing a technical skill. Those

technical skills alongside STEM (Science, Engineering, Engineering and Math) skills are being taught at the CTC and at Tri-County Tech."

Guidance counselors left the event with a better understanding of career choices students have with local companies.

The event was sponsored by the newly formed Manufacturers Caring for Pickens County (MCPC) Forum. The forum member companies include Cornell Dubilier, MST Concrete, Palmetto Plating, Reliable Sprinkler, Sealevel Systems, St. Jude Medical, and Tri-Tech Inc.

Tom O'Hanlan, MCPC Forum Chairman, said the group was formed to advocate STEM Education, Economic Development and Social benefits, impacting quality of life and growth in Pickens County.

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