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*Onemillforschools*

*@OneMill4Schools*

## NEWS RELEASE

July 19, 2016

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### Local advocacy group launches campaign for renewal of One Mill for Schools

Citizens for Strong Schools, an advocacy group of parents, business leaders, educators and other local residents, will be leading the effort to encourage Alachua County voters to approve the renewal of the One Mill for Schools in the upcoming general election.

The One Mill for Schools, which was approved by about two-thirds of local voters in both 2008 and 2012, supports a wide range of vital programs and services in local schools, including art and music, guidance counselors, media specialists, academic and career-tech magnet programs and classroom technology. It also guarantees a nurse in every school. All the funds raised through the One Mill remain in Alachua County, and a local, independent oversight committee reviews all expenditures to ensure the money is spent the way voters intended.

Under state law, the One Mill must be placed back on the ballot in 2016. The cost of the One Mill for the average local homeowner is about \$7 a month, but because the One Mill has been in effect since 2009, the vast majority of homeowners will not see a difference in their property tax rate as a result of its renewal.

Local businessman Mark McGriff is chair of Citizens for Strong Schools. He says the One Mill is an important investment for all residents, whether or not they have children in schools.

“We all benefit in some way,” he said. “High-quality schools boost property values and help attract new businesses and jobs, and most importantly they prepare our young people to be contributing members of our community.”

The One Mill for Schools has already been endorsed by the Gainesville Area Chamber of Commerce and the League of Women Voters, and McGriff says his group will be seeking the endorsement of other local organizations between now and Election Day.

The Citizens for Strong Schools website at [www.citizensforstrongschools.org](http://www.citizensforstrongschools.org) provides information about the One Mill, including answers to frequently asked questions, the ballot language and a list of ways citizens can become involved in the group’s efforts to raise awareness about and generate support for the One Mill among local voters. Information will also be provided through Facebook (Onemillforschools) and Twitter (@OneMill4Schools).

Although the One Mill passed with strong support during the previous two elections, McGriff says his group is not taking any chances.

“This is obviously a very education-minded community, but we want to ensure that all citizens understand the importance of supporting the One Mill,” he said.

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