

ACCPTA Consideration to Support One Mill for Alachua County Schools

During the recession in 2008, Alachua County Public Schools were in the difficult position of having to cut back on art and music teaching positions and librarians due to funding cuts. Other vital school programs and positions, including school counselors and nurses, career and technical education and magnet programs, and classroom technology were also at risk. The community saw the need and stepped up to help by passing a One Mill property tax to keep these programs and positions in our schools.

The “mill rate” describes the amount of tax payable per dollar of the assessed value of a home or other property. Each mill represents the amount of taxes paid per \$1,000 of property value. The One Mill has been renewed three times since it was originally approved and amounts to an average cost of \$7 per month for the average homeowner.

The One Mill is up for renewal in 2024 and will appear on the ballot on November 5, 2024.

Since it was first approved in 2008, the One Mill has generated nearly \$150 million in revenue for our schools, which has been used to fund art and music teaching positions (including bands and choruses), school counselors, librarians, career and technical programs, and academic magnet program teachers. It also ensures we have nurses in every school. It provides critical classroom technology, including projectors, learning tools, and technicians to support that technology. Overall, around 324 teaching and staff positions are funded each year through the One Mill.

The School Board will vote on the ballot language in April, but the funding will likely be spent in the same way as in the past.

Florida PTA position statements that address the areas impacted by One Mill:

Health and Wellness

- Children’s Mental Health (1992) (2012)
The Florida PTA urges the Legislature to fully fund a statewide comprehensive system of children’s substance abuse and mental health services that must include: Prevention programs which serve children from birth to preschool, in preschool programs and earlier; In-school student assistance programs to provide short-term intervention; Access to individual, family and group counseling in convenient settings and times; Intensive home-based services which address the needs of families in their natural environment; and Residential treatment, including crisis stabilization, inpatient facilities, therapeutic group and foster homes and post- treatment services.
- Mental Health Support in Florida Schools (2017)
The Florida PTA and its constituent associations call upon state and local policymakers and school districts to employ evidenced-based best practice ratios of school counselors, school psychologists, school social workers, and school nurses, who are most qualified to provide

school-based mental health services. Florida PTA also urges the necessary resources and supports be provided to ensure students have access to the proactive continuum of mental health services and they be incorporated with a strong family engagement component.

- Guidance Personnel (Counselors and Occupational Specialists) (1980) (2012)
Recognizing the importance of early detection and treatment of small problems before they become major, and realizing that any learning problem, including an emotional one is a deterrent to a child's educational progress, the Florida PTA strongly supports the continued expansion of the elementary guidance program in Florida schools. The Florida PTA supports the full implementation of a guidance and occupational specialist program utilized to provide prompt, academic, and personal counseling to students in all secondary Florida schools.
- Prevention (2001) (2012)
The Florida PTA urges the Legislature to fully fund an array of coordinated and integrated prevention services to help build strong families that raise their children to be healthy, productive adults.
- Registered Nurses for Schools
The Florida PTA encourages and supports complete funding to supply a registered professional nurse to every one of the 2.8 million Florida public school students, a trained school health aide in every Florida public school, and to include future allocation formulas to increase nursing staff to keep pace with student enrollment.

Cultural Arts

- Arts in Education Essential Curricula (2004) (2014)
The Florida PTA recommends every school district place greater emphasis on arts education and increase opportunities for student participation in the arts incorporating the Florida Sunshine Standard approved by the State Board of Education. The Florida PTA urges that unless a teacher has specialized skills in the arts or is a recognized professional in their arts specialty, the arts be taught by teachers certified in their field specific arts subject area and Be aligned with the National Standards (No Child Left Behind) and the Sunshine State Standards. The Florida PTA urges the State Legislature to include and fully fund Arts instruction without cutting funding from existing programs as part of the PreK-12 curriculum at all schools

Career and Technical Education

- Career and Technical Education (2019)
The Florida PTA provides information to its members and others with respect to the benefits of career and technical education for students at all levels of academic achievement, as well as for the general public. In addition, the Florida PTA urges the Florida Legislature and the United States Congress to increase funding for career and technical education programs, including registered apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship programs, to provide for appropriate market-driven compensation for career and technical education instructors, flexibility in the expansion of career and technical education pathways, and recruitment of a diverse population of program enrollees so that all of Florida's residents will have the opportunity to access, fully participate in, and contribute to the state's economic prosperity.

Public School Funding

- Education Funding Awareness (1996) (2012)
The Florida PTA directs its Board of Directors to provide information and training to its PTAs and County Councils on the history, the current status, and processes surrounding education funding. The Florida PTA urges its PTAs and County Councils to work within their communities to facilitate understanding of education funding issues at the state and local levels.
- Funding (1989) (2012)
The Florida PTA urges the Legislature to place priority on the basic education programs and ensure that the Florida Education Finance Program (FEFP) be adequately funded to guarantee an equal educational opportunity for all children. Funding formulas must assure equalization of funding for all school districts.
- Funding Children's Programs (1991) (2012)
Florida PTA urges the Legislature to take whatever action is necessary to fully fund strategies and programs that ensure the health, safety and education of the children of Florida.

National PTA Position – Remote Learning/Technology

- Distance and Remote Learning for K-12 Students
National PTA believes that by supporting efforts to ensure that funding is specifically dedicated to remote learning it will make it more accessible for all children to receive an equitable education. Adoption of these measures will allow our schools to continue with educating K-12 students regardless of their socioeconomic status and during unprecedented times.