

ACPS One Mill Ballot Renewal could save over 300 jobs

The One Mill, which was first approved by voters back in 2008, currently supports the jobs of more than 300 teachers, protects funding for school nurses and is the district's main source of funds for technology, including the thousands of laptops and hotspots distributed to students since the beginning of the pandemic.

Gainesville, Fla — Alachua County School leaders estimate they could lose millions of dollars in funding this school year due to COVID.

To combat the loss, the Alachua County School District is reminding voters about their One Mill program, which provides job security for teachers, guarantees a nurse in every school, and is the main source of funding for technology.

Alachua County voters approved One Mill in 2008, and have renewed it every time it's appeared on the ballot, but Spokesperson for Alachua County Public School, Jackie Johnson, said this year is even more crucial because of the pandemic.

“The One Mill funded all of those 7000+ laptops and 1000 hotspots that we gave out since the beginning of the pandemic, and these are vital people and programs that we are wanting to maintain even during this crisis situation,” she said.

This year, Johnson said, the district will lose more than 16 million dollars in funding, in addition to the COVID related expenses such as PPE and training, that weren't accounted for. “So add up all that together and we are facing a financial crisis that's significantly more than when the One Mill was first approved,” she said.

Chief Deputy Tax Collector, Jon Costabile with Alachua County Tax Collectors, said One Mill represents \$1 in tax for each 1,000 of assessed property value. "It all depends on the value of the home or business. Everyone has already been paying it, so if they renew it, it's going to be as if they paid it last year, and they're going to pay it next year," he said.

Johnson said for those who don't own property in Alachua County, the One Mill won't cost them anything.

If approved, the One Mill is projected to raise about \$17 million per year for the next four years.