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### **REALTORS contribute seed money to jump start half-cent sales tax for schools**

June 15, 2018 - Gainesville, FL- The Gainesville-Alachua County Association of REALTORS (GACAR) gave seed money to Citizens for Strong Schools, Inc. to help get the half-cent sales tax for schools on the November 2018 ballot. Good schools are vital for a successful and sustainable community but state funding is still \$418 (6%) less per student than ten years ago. Citizens will have the ability to vote on a one-half cent sales tax that will provide funds to improve public school facilities within our local community.

The November ballot will have a lot of big decisions for voters. “Schools are a crucial vertebrae in the backbone of the community,” said GACAR President Susan McQuillan. Alachua County public schools are currently operating with a backlog of more than \$18 million for just roof resurfacing, painting, HVAC replacement and flooring replacement. It is estimated that the backlog will increase another \$6.5 million this year without considering the need for renovations for common areas, upgraded technology, science labs, athletic facilities, and getting students out of portables.

This is still only a stop gap measure, but we must continue to find ways to improve our local public schools.