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## Talking Points

**Now that the City Council vote is over, stop using the word tax!**

Transition to *half-penny*. We will be voting on a **half-penny** for school safety and construction.

**Because of what is happening with the economy, use other words than tax.**

Examples, half-penny, funding, revenue, money.

**Based on student test scores, Duval County Schools are only one half of one percent under an A-rated District.**

**55% of Duval schools have earned an A or B rating.**

**The graduation rate is up to 85%.**

**Title 1 schools are showing significant improvement.**

- St. Clair Evans Academy,
- Academy of the Arts,
- Andrew Jackson HS of Advanced Technology

Are rated A or B schools

**Using a half-penny to fund schools means that everyone pays a share of the cost for new and improved schools, including people who visit or are passing through the county.**

**All the money collected stays in Duval County. No money goes to Tallahassee or Washington.**

**The half-penny will drive economic stimulus by providing hundreds of local companies years of work and creating thousands of new jobs in Duval County.**

**We are trying to teach a 21st-century education in antiquated buildings built for another age.**

- Duval county school buildings are, on average 44-years old, the oldest buildings in the state. We have schools where blackboards and chalk are still used because they lack the infrastructure to provide a modern education.

**The school district is attempting to harden buildings built for the “Leave it to Beaver” Era.**

- The school district is expected to secure school campuses and harden buildings built before today's violent realities. It is extremely costly to provide security for old facilities.
- The school district is required to turn outdated buildings into shelters that will keep thousands of residents safe during severe storms and hurricanes.

**The cost of repairing obsolete buildings is robbing students of educational opportunities.**

- Since 2008, the state has cut funding for facility maintenance by 24%. The district now has a maintenance shortfall of \$243 million. That shortfall is expected to grow to \$1 billion by 2025.
- Maintaining and repairing old buildings uses capital money that should be going to enhance classrooms and keeping up with today's fast-changing technologies. Without new, modern buildings, we will continue to pour money into antiquated facilities.
- Reduce the number of portable classrooms across the county.

**The pandemic does not change the need for new and renovated schools or the need for quality education for our children. We can no longer turn a blind eye to investing in quality education facilities where students can learn and teachers can teach in safety.**

**The School Board will appoint an oversight watchdog committee made up of county residents who have complete access to all the records necessary to report to the community that the money is being spent as promised.**