



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **Raising Money for Computers to Help Close the Digital Divide at Nims**

**TALLAHASSEE, Fla.** — Concerned local business, civic and education leaders gathered at Nims Middle School today to rally community support to ensure the continuation of Digital Harmony – a program that provides at-home computers, Internet access and educational learning software for free to all incoming sixth graders.

For the past two years, the Digital Harmony program has brought together local leaders to help close the “digital divide” between students that have access to educational technology in Tallahassee and those that do not. Through this and other initiatives, Nims has improved its FCAT scores and gone from being an “F” school to a “C” school.

However, officials say budget cuts for education and a struggling economy are creating new challenges and obstacles, including the closing of Belle Vue Middle School. Next year, a significant number of Belle Vue’s students will be rezoned to Nims, increasing the number of incoming sixth graders by 50 percent to 240. To ensure that Digital Harmony is able to provide computers to all incoming sixth graders, supporters and program leaders have launched a campaign to secure support and contributions.

“The upcoming 2009-2010 school year promises to be the biggest and most challenging of the three-year Digital Harmony program at Nims,” said Eileen Self, executive director of the Go Beyond Foundation, a co-sponsor of the Digital Harmony program. “Now, more than ever, we need the support of partners in the community so that we can continue to provide students critical tools to help them succeed.”

Digital Harmony is also sponsored by the City of Tallahassee. It was initiated in 2007 by City Commissioner Andrew Gillum.

In addition to an increased student body, Nims is being advanced to a designated Media Technology Magnet School. The continued success of Digital Harmony is imperative for Nims to succeed as a Technology Magnet School, said Self.

Campaign contributors include Hewlett Packard, which has donated 50 new computers, and Comcast, which has committed to provide free Internet access in the homes of recipients for the third year in a row. However, with a price tag of \$700 per computer, this year’s estimated costs will total approximately \$168,000 – money that will have to be raised from the community.

The purpose of this three-year pilot program is to extend the learning experience beyond the classroom and into students’ homes through computer-based curriculum.

“The youth of today are the leaders of tomorrow and investing in our future begins with them” said Nims Principal Kay Collins. “Nims’ students continue to make great strides. We are committed to excellence and the Digital Harmony program is helping us achieve our goals.”

Speaking at the news conference were Gillum; Collins; Self; and Go Beyond LLC President and CEO Allan Stamm, another significant corporate contributor who urged other area businesses, tech firms, civic groups, parents and concerned citizens to get involved.

Go Beyond Foundation is a Tallahassee-based, not-for-profit corporation committed to promoting leadership and programs that improve access to advanced technology and technical education experiences by providing enhanced educational opportunities. For more information, go to [www.gobeyondfoundation.org](http://www.gobeyondfoundation.org).