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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## SRNS Steps-Up to Grow National Program for Aiken County Public Schools

AIKEN, S.C. – Nov. 19, 2016 – Savannah River Nuclear Solutions (SRNS) is working with Aiken County Public School officials to raise the level of rigor in its schools through support of advanced coursework for all students and the establishment of Advanced Placement (AP) Academies at South Aiken and North Augusta high schools public high school students through a \$324,000 donation.

The donation will help fund the school system's continued implementation and use of the National Math + Science Initiative (NMSI). NMSI is a highly-successful college readiness program that will better prepare local high school students for an increasingly competitive job market involving science, technology, engineering and math.

"We are grateful to Savannah River Nuclear Solutions for their enthusiastic support of this initiative," said Dr. Sean Alford, Aiken County Public School District Superintendent. "Their support, combined with that of others, is a testament to our community's commitment to the future workforce needs of our area. This gift, our largest to date for the NMSI initiative, will allow us to prepare educators to raise the level of rigor in our schools to meet the expectations of 21st century graduates."

Success on AP exams in NMSI-connected schools is cause for celebration. Academic pep rallies and financial rewards, for example, create a shift in culture and generate enthusiasm for all students to participate and excel in AP courses.

"We recognize the need to help students and teachers throughout the region by providing funding for the latest tools and enhanced techniques," said Stuart MacVean, SRNS President & CEO. "We want to partner with Aiken County Schools to inspire and engage students to pursue coursework related to technical fields of study.



*SRNS President & CEO Stuart MacVean presented today a \$324,000 dollar check to Dr. Sean Alford, Aiken County Public School District Superintendent, in support of a nationally acclaimed initiative that will help area students reach new levels of academic excellence.*

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MacVean affirmed SRNS's commitment to assist Dr. Alford and his staff reach one of their most important goals, to significantly increase the number of Aiken County Public School graduates who are meeting and exceeding the standards of college and career readiness.

With assistance from NMSI, the District is transforming math and science education at North Augusta and South Aiken high schools, designating the schools as Advanced Placement Academies. The Aiken County School District is pursuing an academic stretch for all students, which began with three schools in the 2016-17 school year with AP Academies and an Early College at Midland Valley. High School Thematic Programs are being planned for implementation across the District by 2018.

South Aiken High School Assistant Principal Martha Messick noted that students and parents appreciate the increased scholastic challenge. "They realize this is a special opportunity for increased exposure to AP coursework and the potential effect it will have on their children's future at a university or, for that matter, on the job within any career field."

"This partnership with Aiken County will certainly benefit all involved," added MacVean. "In addition to the students and their teachers, it also reaches and impacts our communities, local industry and the future needs of the Savannah River Site."

NMSI, a non-profit organization, was launched in 2007 by top leaders in business, education, and science to transform education in the United States. NMSI has received national recognition for training teachers and improving student performance through the rapid expansion of highly successful programs. Inaugural funding for NMSI was provided by ExxonMobil, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, and the Michael and Susan Dell Foundation. For more information, visit [www.nms.org](http://www.nms.org).

In addition to financial assistance, SRNS and the United States Department of Energy Savannah River Operations Office provide a variety of science and literacy outreach programs to promote academic growth throughout region.

The primary goal of these outreach programs is to enhance interest in science, mathematics, engineering and technology and to support improvements in education by using the unique resources available at SRS. SRNS believes business, industry, government and the education community must work together as partners to improve the educational opportunities for all students in our region.

*Savannah River Nuclear Solutions is a Fluor-led company whose members are Fluor Federal Services, Newport News Nuclear and Honeywell, responsible for the management and operations of the Department of Energy's Savannah River Site, including the Savannah River National Laboratory, located near Aiken, South Carolina.*

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SRNS-2016-514

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