

Sabal Palm Elementary, Children's Home Society agreement to impact poorest 32304 zip code

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The Leon County School Board approved a Memorandum of Understanding Tuesday, June 18, during its biweekly board meeting that will impact the 32304 zip code, rated as the poorest in the state of Florida. (Photo: Getty Images)

The Leon County School Board approved a Memorandum of Understanding Tuesday making Sabal Palm Elementary a Community Partnership School with the Children's Home Society of Florida, Florida A&M University and Florida State University College of Medicine.

It's the 15th partnership CHS has with schools in the state. Each partnership is designed to "address the whole child," CHS executive director Cecka Rose Green said at a Monday School Board agenda review meeting.

It's a sustainable fix for children who are coping with mental and behavioral issues, Green said. The agreement holds for 25 years. LCS and the city of Tallahassee have both pledged \$25,000 to the program, and donors such as Tadlock Roofing and Capital City Bank also have contributed.

Sabal Palm Elementary is in the 32310 zip code, which sits adjacent to 32304, a zip code rated as the poorest in the state, according to LCS board member Georgia "Joy" Bowen. She's the longest-serving school board member and resident of the 32304 area.

Bowen asked Sabal Palm principal Anicia Robinson if the school will keep track of families from 32304 that are accessing medical services at the 2911 Roberts Ave. FSU Primary Health clinic two minutes away.

Forty percent of the students at Sabal Palm live in the 32304 area and will be tracked, Robinson said.

The clinic is now "serving the whole community," she said.

"How about the parents? As we look at the 'whole child,' this might be a healthy opportunity to chronicle some of those issues that will come from 32304," Bowen added.

The agreement also calls for the FSU clinic and FAMU to "assist with the economic development of the surrounding community" and to collaborate with the other partners to figure out a way to expand "services and benefits to the student population and population of the surrounding community."

"Perhaps in the future, 32304 may not continue to be the poorest in the world that we look out and see," Bowen said.

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