

# Sabal Palm school offers wrap-around services

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They say it takes a village to raise a child, and in Tallahassee one of those villages has rallied around 32304.

That's the poorest ZIP code in Florida, and it is here in our community. The Florida Chamber of Commerce reports that the area that runs from central Tallahassee into northwest Leon County has more residents living in poverty than anywhere else in the state.

And now, it is also home to Tallahassee's first community partnership

school: Sabal Palm Elementary. The school is one of nine organizations being recognized for their life-changing work by the Beatitude Foundation and #GiveTLH, a community effort underwritten by philanthropist and businessman Rick Kearney.

"Sabal Palm is a Title 1 school serving 579 students," reports Anna-Kay Hutchison, Community Partnership School Director with the Children's Home Society. "One hundred of our students are homeless." The school provides wrap-around services designed to create the structure and foundation that many of us take for granted.

That includes food, health care, counseling, tutoring, internships and other support programs delivered by the school's four community partners and an array of volunteers.

Four key community partners make the work of Sabal Palm possible: the Leon County School District, the Florida A&M College of Education, Florida State University PrimaryHealth, and the Children's Home Society of Florida. Each has made a 25-year commitment to provide the elements necessary for the students to thrive.

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## About #GiveTLH

#GiveTLH, underwritten by the Beatitude Foundation and Rick Kearney, is a look at nine nonprofits in our community and how you can help them in their life-changing work. At the conclusion of this series, Kearney will award grants to the nonprofit that gets the most votes in an online poll. For more profiles, visit [give.tallahassee.com](http://give.tallahassee.com).

# School

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Immediate needs are hunger and health care, says Hutchison. She tells the story of a third grade student who passed out in class because of pain from a dental issue. “For some of our families, it is access to medical care. For others, it is education about its value,” she says. “Our students receive all of the screenings that they would in any public school, with the addition of a health clinic next door.”

The Sabal Palm model includes a behavioral component, with an emphasis on mental and emotional health.

How can you help?

“We always need mentors and tutors, especially for reading,” Hutchison says. Volunteers in the classroom

are a big need, as well. “We don’t have the same parent volunteer resources that other schools do,” she explains. “It doesn’t have to be your child’s school to be a classroom helper!”

All volunteers receive training and undergo a background check. For more information on how to volunteer, contact Anna-Kay Hutchison at [hutchisona@leonschools.net](mailto:hutchisona@leonschools.net).

The future is brighter for the children of 32304, thanks to the village of support that has formed around Sabal Palm Community Partnership School. The #GiveTLH series will culminate in November with a chance for Tallahassee readers to vote for their favorite profiled nonprofit. In addition to a micro-grant for each featured organization, the top three vote-getting organizations will receive a \$5,000, \$2,500 and \$1,000 grant from Kearney and the Beatitude Foundation. The stories will be compiled on [give.tallahassee.com](http://give.tallahassee.com).