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Pine Forest High School to become a Community Partnership School
Children's Home Society of Florida to expand Community Partnership Schools™ model in
Pensacola

Pensacola, Fla. (November 3, 2022) — Pine Forest High School will adopt the innovative Community Partnership Schools™ model this year with partnerships among Children's Home Society of Florida, Community Health Northwest Florida, Escambia County School District and University of West Florida.

The partnerships are announced as the next step in growing the successful model first implemented in Orlando at Evans High School in 2012 and expanded to more than thirty schools statewide, transforming tens of thousands of lives.

The effective Community Partnership Schools™ model requires at least 4 core partners – including the school district, a healthcare provider, a nonprofit organization and a college or university – to agree to a 25-year commitment to the school and community, impacting generations.

Through the Community Partnership Schools™ model founded by Children's Home Society of Florida and the University of Central Florida, core partners – in collaboration with local nonprofits, businesses, the faith community and other stakeholders – work within the schools to address key barriers to learning including poverty, food insecurity, lack of affordable healthcare, behavioral health services, and elevated rates of violence and crime, in addition to other challenges as identified.

Children's Home Society of Florida will receive \$80,000 in state grant funds after being selected by UCF's Center for Community Schools to launch a community partnership school at Pine Forest High School, in addition to local financial contributions to support this initiative.

"The Community Partnership Schools concept is a powerful model providing key resources and support for students. We are grateful and honored for the selection of Pine Forest High School to become a Community Partnership School," said Dr. Tim Smith, Superintendent Escambia County Schools. "The school would not have been selected without strong community partnerships and we are grateful for our Community Partnership School partners: Children's

Home Society of Florida, Community Health Northwest Florida, and the University of West Florida."

"With the help of our core partners and the voices of our students, families and local community members, we can work together to directly remove barriers to learning," said Lindsey Cannon, Children's Home Society of Florida Regional Executive Director. "At CHS, we have seen disciplinary referrals fall and academic successes soar thanks to the model's impact and the partnership that makes it possible. We are thrilled to have another school community selected for this amazing initiative."

The first step toward implementation is the planning phase, which includes a community needs assessment. Students, teachers, parents and community members identify their primary needs and challenges, the results of which will determine the services and solutions that will be brought into the school.

"One way that the University of West Florida is able to bring its research expertise to bear is in assisting with the needs assessment," said Dr. Diane Scott, Associate Dean of the College of Education and Professional Studies. "In addition to identifying priorities, the needs assessment creates a benchmark for future data, so we are certain that the interventions we employ are evidence-based."

Other critical components of this model include a focus on parental and family engagement, as well as comprehensive health and wellness efforts.

"As a Federally Qualified Health Center, we are driven not only to make healthcare accessible to all, but to truly impact the heart of our community on multiple levels," said Chandra Smiley,

CEO of Community Health Northwest Florida. "We see this partnership as an opportunity to bring real change to Pine Forest and the surrounding neighborhoods."

This collaborative approach leverages schools as central hubs toward improving child well-being by addressing key barriers to learning through counseling, medical and dental services, after-school enrichment, mentoring programs, and more.

Because they center on unique community needs, each Community Partnership School is different, but they all share a similar goal – to empower students to succeed in school and life. Specific successes through the Community Partnership Schools™ model include increased graduation rates, reduced disciplinary actions and increased parental involvement.

With the addition of Pine Forest High School, Children's Home Society of Florida has received planning grants to implement the Community Partnership Schools™ model at Caribbean K-8 Center, Daughtrey Elementary, Lake Worth High School, JFK Middle and Jefferson County K-12.

CHS is a core partner in 27 of 36 Community Partnership Schools in Florida – more than any other entity in the state.

About Children's Home Society of Florida

On the front lines since 1902, Children's Home Society of Florida is the oldest and largest statewide organization devoted to helping children and families. Children's Home Society of Florida serves more than 50,000 children and family members throughout the state each year. More: www.chsfl.org.

Note: The University of Central Florida Center for Community Schools serves as the statewide grant administrator of the Community School Grant Program; provides technical assistance to community schools; and oversees a rigorous, strengths-based certification process for schools to become UCF-Certified Community Partnership Schools.

About University of West Florida

Founded in 1963, the University of West Florida is a vibrant, distinctive institute of higher learning with undergraduate, graduate and targeted research programs. With multiple locations in Northwest Florida, the University serves a student population of more than 13,000. Dedicated to helping students realize their full potential, UWF favors small class sizes with quality teacher-scholars who deliver personalized, innovative, hands-on learning and leadership opportunities.

About CHNWF

Since 1992, Community Health Northwest Florida has served residents of Escambia and Santa Rosa Counties and surrounding areas. Since 2007, it has been the area's only Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) as designated by the Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA). For more information, visit Community Health Northwest Florida's web site at www.healthcarewithinreach.org.

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