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CONTACT:**

MEDIA

Amber Hastings
amber@jarelcommunications.com | 407-748-8714

Heart of Florida United Way and Partners Expand Community School Model to Seminole County with Midway Elementary Launch

ORLANDO, Fla. Aug. 10, 2026 — In collaboration with the Seminole County Public Schools, Heart of Florida United Way as well as True Health and Seminole State College of Florida, are expanding the Community School model to Midway Elementary School of the Arts on August 10, 2026.

This expansion into Seminole County represents a vital step forward in serving local families. As the county's inaugural Community School, Midway Elementary School of the Arts will house an innovative model that unites healthcare providers, nonprofits, school districts, and higher education institutions under a collective 10-year commitment. By introducing this model to Midway Elementary, partners are deepening their long-term investment in student success and community well-being.

"Community Schools are built on a simple but powerful idea: when we surround students with the right people, resources, and support, they can thrive no matter the challenges they face," said Jeff Hayward, Heart of Florida United Way President & CEO. "Here, education will go beyond the classroom. Students will have access to onsite health care, after-school tutoring, and even a hot meal because we know that meeting basic needs is essential for academic success. This one-stop center of care and connection won't just change education; it will change lives."

This new Community School will serve as a collaborative hub, connecting students and families with academic, health, and community-based resources, while expanding access to vital services, enrichment opportunities, and long-term support.

"We are incredibly excited to launch our first Community School in partnership with Heart of Florida United Way, Seminole State College, and True Health," said Serita D. Beamon, superintendent, Seminole County Public Schools. "Together, we are creating a network of support that extends far beyond the classroom, helping students and families access the resources they need to thrive. By removing barriers to attendance and achievement while strengthening our relationships within the Midway community, we are ensuring every child has the opportunity to succeed."

By transforming the school into a “one-stop” center of support, Midway Elementary is strengthening connections between students, families, and the broader community by incorporating the following program model:

Expanded Learning: Students will have access to unique, enriching educational experiences that foster curiosity, build skills, and deepen community engagement to help reinforce classroom learning and support academic achievement. Mentoring and tutoring programs will support students and higher education partner Seminole State College of Florida will bring their expertise for college readiness, access, and student success to expand postsecondary opportunities for family members. Additionally, the partnership will strengthen educator and staff practices through high-quality professional development and collaborative learning.

Wellness Support: Students and families can access on-campus medical, dental, vision and mental health counseling as well as additional support including assistance with food, clothing, and school supplies, ensuring that basic needs do not become barriers to success.

Family and Community Engagement: Parents and families will have the opportunity to participate in programs such as VITA (Volunteer Income Tax Assistance), Health education classes, and job training. Community members also play an active role by volunteering as mentors, supporting the Roadrunner Market, and leading educational workshops.

"True Health brings a proven track record of partnering with community schools to improve access to health care, support student success, and strengthen family well-being through integrated, comprehensive services," said Janelle Dunn, CEO of True Health. "Our partnership with Midway Community School builds on this experience, creating opportunities to address barriers to health and learning while fostering long-term positive outcomes for students and the broader community."

All partners have committed to working collaboratively over the next decade to expand opportunities, enhance support services, and create lasting impact for students, families, and the broader community.

"The Midway Elementary Community School initiative demonstrates what is possible when schools and communities work hand in hand," said Kelly Astro, Heart of Florida United Way Senior Vice President of Community Impact. "When schools, nonprofits, and community partners come together with a shared purpose, we create opportunities that extend far beyond the classroom. This initiative ensures that every student has access to the support, resources, and encouragement they need to reach their full potential."

For more information about or to contribute to the Midway Elementary School of the Arts, please visit www.HFUW.org.

About Heart of Florida United Way

Heart of Florida United Way (HFUW) stands for the education, financial stability, health and basic needs of every person in Central Florida. Since 1939, HFUW has delivered programs, invested dollars, and convened community members around important issues impacting Orange, Seminole and Osceola counties. In 2024-25, HFUW served 1 in 4 people in Central Florida through its direct service and funded programs. HFUW is home to notable community

resources like the 211 Information & Referral Line; 988 Suicide Prevention Lifeline; Mission United program for Veterans; upliftED, a college-access and career-readiness coalition; Digital Horizons, an initiative bridging the digital divide; Digital Horizons, an initiative bridging the digital divide; Destination Graduation at Seminole State College; the Planning Council Support program that facilitates community planning and priority setting for HIV services. United Way partners with individuals, local businesses, government, and other nonprofit agencies to open opportunities and close gaps in Central Florida. Visit www.HFUW.org for more information or call (407) 835-0900. Follow us on Facebook and LinkedIn at Heart of Florida United Way and on Twitter and Instagram @hfuw.

About True Health

True Health is a private, not-for-profit, Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) serving uninsured and underinsured residents of the Central Florida community since 1977. Our mission is to provide high quality, comprehensive healthcare at a reasonable cost to everyone. Please visit mytruehealth.org to learn more about True Health and services provided to the community.

About Seminole State College of Florida

Seminole State College of Florida, established in 1965, serves more than 24,000 students across four campuses in Central Florida and online. Guided by its purpose, Your Learning Partner for Career Success, Seminole State is a full-service education provider that thrives by adapting to and meeting the needs of an ever-changing, growing, vibrant region.

From associate and bachelor's degrees to workforce certifications and adult education, Seminole State offers flexible, affordable, high-quality programs that prepare students for fulfilling and family-sustaining careers. Learn more at seminolestate.edu.

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