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NEWS RELEASE

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School district, health department collaborate on new clinic in northeast Gainesville

Families in northeast Gainesville will have easier access to health care with the opening of a new clinic in the area.

The clinic, which is scheduled to open March 31, will be run by the Alachua County Health Department out of the Fearnside Family Services Center, which is operated by Alachua County Public Schools. Initially it will be open on Thursdays from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., but additional days may be added depending on the demand for services.

Paul Myers, Administrator of the Florida Department of Health in Alachua County, says the clinic will offer local residents acute episodic care, preventive care, school physicals and immunizations, family planning and other services. The Health Department is also looking to add dental care within the next year and a Women, Infants and Children (WIC) program this summer.

“This is great example of what can be accomplished when local agencies work together,” said Myers. “We have the staff and the expertise, the school district has an excellent location close to citizens who need services.”

For many years the Fearnside Center has been home to prekindergarten/Headstart classes and offices. It is now also the hub of the district’s Parent Academy, an initiative launched at the beginning of the school year to provide educational programs and other services to families throughout Alachua County, particularly those in low-income neighborhoods.

“Our goal is to give parents and other caregivers the skills and resources they need to create better lives for themselves and their children,” said Superintendent Dr. Owen Roberts. “Accessible healthcare is an essential part of that equation.”

The School Board of Alachua County will vote on a formal agreement between the district and the health department at its regular business meeting this evening. The Parent Academy will collaborate with the district’s Head Start staff and the health department to market the clinic so that local families will be aware of the services provided.

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