

SUNCOAST CREDIT UNION INVESTS \$50,000 IN POLK EDUCATION FOUNDATION TO BENEFIT POLK COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS STUDENT SUCCESS

May 13, 2026

The Polk Education Foundation received a generous \$50,000 investment from Suncoast Credit Union, strengthening multiple programs and initiatives that directly support students, teachers, and schools across Polk County.

Suncoast Credit Union awarded a major gift of \$25,000 to purchase much-needed school supplies for the Free Teacher Market, helping Erase the Need for students and classrooms. Teachers shop the resource store at no cost and fill an orange Suncoast Credit Union tote with supplies that directly benefit their students. This contribution was also matched dollar-for-dollar through the School District Education Foundation Matching Grant Program.

An additional \$15,000 was donated to support school-based grants addressing specific needs in areas such as literacy, STEM education, Career Technical Education (CTE), resiliency, support for low performers, and teacher quality. A further \$2,500 was awarded to Eagle Lake Elementary and Floral Avenue Elementary to replenish books for their book vending machines, originally funded through Suncoast Credit Union grants. These awards were likewise matched dollar-for-dollar through the School District Education Foundation Matching Grant Program. Suncoast Credit Union continues to be a true champion for learning in Polk County, investing in programs that uplift students, empower teachers, and strengthen schools!

AmeriCorps Polk Reads, a reading tutoring program for kindergarten through third-grade students, received \$5,000 to advance its mission. AmeriCorps members deliver three 30-minute, one-on-one tutoring sessions each week to more than 400 young readers who need additional support. Instruction centers on the five essential components of reading: phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary development, reading fluency, and reading comprehension strategies to help students make meaningful gains. This award was matched dollar-for-dollar through the School District Education Foundation Matching Grant Program, doubling its impact for early literacy.

“Suncoast Credit Union is proud to invest in programs that strengthen Polk County’s students, teachers and schools,” said Bob Hyde, Vice President of Community Impact for Suncoast Credit Union. “Supporting education has been central to our mission for nearly a century, and this donation helps ensure today’s students have what they need to succeed tomorrow.”

Polk Education Foundation Executive Director Tracy Porter shared her gratitude by expressing, “Donations to the Foundation play an important role in transforming lives through the power of education elevated by philanthropy. Suncoast Credit Union’s generous support, matched by the School District Education Foundation Matching Grant Program, is critical to teachers’ abilities to tap into their full potential in the education process through grant funding and supplies, and help almost 500 kindergarten through 3rd graders meet or exceed grade reading level. The appreciation of the Foundation Board and team, and the teachers and students who benefit from Suncoast’s contributions cannot be overstated.”

About Suncoast Credit Union

[Suncoast Credit Union](#) is the largest credit union in the state of Florida, the 7th largest in the United States based on membership, and the 10th largest in the United States based on its \$20.7 billion in assets. Chartered in 1934 as Hillsborough County Teachers Credit Union, Suncoast Credit Union currently operates 80 full-service branches and serves nearly 1.4 million members across Florida. As a community credit union, anyone who lives, works or attends school in Suncoast Credit Union's service area is eligible for membership. In 2021, Suncoast Credit Union's field of membership was expanded to include public K-12 teachers, college educators and educational support staff from all of Florida's 67 counties. Suncoast is passionate about community support. Since its founding in 1990, the Suncoast Credit Union Foundation has raised and donated more than \$61 million to organizations and initiatives that support the health, education and emotional well-being of children in the communities that the credit union serves. For more information, visit suncoast.com or follow us on social media: [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).

About Polk Education Foundation

Through philanthropic support, the Polk Education Foundation is able to fund classroom grants, operate a Free Teacher Market, provide a reading tutoring program for K-3 students through AmeriCorps Polk Reads, offer an at-risk high school student mentoring program through Take Stock in Children, and award over \$1 million in scholarships to graduating seniors. The Foundation also supports programs that increase student success and recognize and retain teachers and employees and enhance educational experiences.

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