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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### Polk State celebrates Legislative Session with funding for Haines City-Davenport Campus

**Monday, June 29, 2026** – Polk State College is celebrating a successful end to the 2026 Legislative Session. Governor Ron DeSantis signed the budget on Monday which includes the remaining funds for construction of the Polk State Haines City-Davenport Campus.

In addition to the approximately \$7.6 million allocated for the new campus, Polk State’s operational budget was also maintained and approximately \$25.3 million was allocated for renovations to the Lakeland Learning Center (LLC) on the Lakeland Campus.

“We are grateful to Governor DeSantis, the Legislature, the Polk County Legislative Delegation and our community partners for their advocacy,” Polk State District Board of Trustees Chair Ann Barnhart said. “Polk State’s eighth location will bring high-demand workforce education programs to the fastest growing area of Polk County, bringing a 20-year vision to fruition thanks to the state’s critical investment in higher education and workforce training.”

#### Haines City-Davenport Campus

The Polk State Haines City-Davenport Campus is on track to open for the Spring 2027 Semester and will house the majority of the College’s Health Sciences programs. The approximately \$51 million project features a 75,000-square-foot facility with Central Florida’s first public higher education interdisciplinary simulation hospital.

Polk State conducted a needs assessment in 2006 which resulted in the purchase of the 7.8-acre property on U.S. 27 in 2009. [Polk State received \\$13.2 million in public education capital outlay \(PECO\) funding in 2022](#) to begin the development of the campus. [In 2024, \\$8.1 million in PECO funding was allocated](#) to the project. Additionally, [Barney Barnett and the Barnett family pledged \\$3 million](#), and the Polk State Foundation raised approximately \$300,000 through *A Night of Legacy*.

While the state has committed significant resources to construct the Haines City-Davenport Campus, private support is still essential for advanced technology infrastructure, specialized equipment and ongoing programmatic support. Philanthropic investment will provide world-class simulation technology, support expert personnel and help ensure long-term sustainability needed to transform the new campus into a lasting institution that serves the community for generations to come. The Polk State College Foundation launched a capital campaign in January 2026 to support these enhancements.

#### Lakeland Learning Center

The renovation of the LLC on the Lakeland Campus will modernize classrooms, labs, offices and student support areas to meet evolving instructional and workforce needs. Upgrades include energy-efficient roofing and HVAC systems, improved air quality and state-of-the-art wireless and instructional technology.

The building, which has served students since 1991, will receive upgrades to its library and tutoring center, as well as improvements to the exterior courtyard, significantly enhancing student study and gathering spaces.



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### **About Polk State College**

Located in Polk County, Florida, and established in 1964, Polk State College is a multi-campus institution serving more than 14,000 students with Bachelor of Applied Science, Bachelor of Science, Associate in Arts, and Associate in Science degrees, as well as 9,000 individuals in a wide range of certificate and workforce training programs. The College also operates three charter high schools.

Polk State's advantages include small class sizes; hands-on learning; dedicated faculty; day and night classes; online options; affordable tuition; excellent financial aid; and a diverse community and vibrant student life, including fine arts opportunities, clubs, and intercollegiate athletics.