



BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Board of Trustees Meeting Agenda

**September 24, 2026
1:15 PM – 4:30 PM**

**Florida Polytechnic University
Barnett Applied Research Center (BARC) Room 2200 and
Virtual via Microsoft Teams**

Dial in: 1-863-225-2351 | Conference ID: 219 253 884

BOARD MEMBERS

Beth Kigel, Chair
Dr. Sidney Theis
Eliot Peace
Rob Kincart
Jeff Beelaert

Jesse Panuccio, Vice Chair
Ilya Shapiro
Sam Neelam
Jack Harrell, III

Patrick Hagen
Colby Manrodt
Dr. Derek Henderson
Dr. Christie Bassett

MEETING AGENDA

- | | | |
|-------|--|--|
| I. | Call to Order | Beth Kigel, Chair |
| II. | Roll Call | Kristen Wharton
Corporate Secretary |
| III. | Public Comment | Beth Kigel |
| IV. | Solar Car Team Recognition | |
| V. | Annual Review and Endorsement of Statement of Free Expression
Action Required | Beth Kigel |
| VI. | 2026-2027 Board of Trustees Work Plan
Action Required | Beth Kigel |
| VII. | Chair Remarks | Beth Kigel |
| VIII. | President's Remarks | Dr. Devin Stephenson
President |
| IX. | Faculty Representative Council (FRC) Chairman Report | Trustee Derek Henderson |

X.	Student Government Association President's Report	Trustee Colby Manrodt
XI.	Consent Agenda <i>*Action Required*</i>	Beth Kigel
XII.	Committee Reports	
	A. Academic Enterprise, Research, and Student Success (AERSS) Committee	Trustee Patrick Hagen
	B. Finance and Facilities Committee	Trustee Jesse Panuccio
	C. Governance, Audit, and Compliance Committee	Trustee Sidney Theis
	D. Ad Hoc Committee: Land Development	Trustee Eliot Peace
XIII.	NASA's Micro-g NExT Challenge <i>Silver Eclipse Team Recognition</i>	
XIV.	Fall 2026 Enrollment Management Report	Bryan Brooks Vice President, SAEMSC
XV.	Florida Poly Athletics Program Multi-Year Operating Budget <i>*Action Required*</i>	Bryan Brooks
XVI.	ITS Presentation: AI Demonstrations and Guardrails	Dr. Cole Allen
XVII.	StAC Design Presentation	David Calhoun and HOK Design Team
XVIII.	Board of Trustees Meeting Calendar	Beth Kigel
XIX.	Board of Governors Meeting Calendar	Beth Kigel
XX.	Closing Remarks & Adjournment	Beth Kigel

**Florida Polytechnic University
Board of Trustees
September 24, 2026**

Subject: Annual Review and Endorsement of Statement of Free Expression

Proposed Board Action

Review and endorse the Board of Governors' Statement of Free Expression.

Background Information

At its January 26, 2022, meeting, the Board of Governors approved the Civil Discourse Final Report. The report includes seven recommendations, including recommendation three: the Board of Trustees' annual review and endorsement of the Board of Governors' Statement of Free Expression.

- III. The Board of Governors recommends that the leadership of each university board of trustees, faculty senate, and student government annually review and endorse the Board's Statement of Free Expression and commit to the principles of civil discourse.

As this recommendation is an annual requirement, it has been added to the Board of Trustees' Work Plan for review and endorsement each September.

Supporting Documentation: Statement of Free Expression

Prepared by: Kristen Wharton, Corporate Secretary and Special Assistant to the President

State University System of Florida Statement on Free Expression

The State University System of Florida and its twelve public postsecondary institutions adopt this Statement on Free Expression to support and encourage full and open discourse and the robust exchange of ideas and perspectives on our respective campuses. The principles of freedom of speech and freedom of expression in the United States and Florida Constitutions, in addition to being legal rights, are an integral part of our three-part university mission to deliver a high-quality academic experience for our students, engage in meaningful and productive research, and provide valuable public service for the benefit of our local communities and the state. The purpose of this Statement is to affirm our dedication to these principles and to seek our campus communities' commitment to maintaining our campuses as places where the open exchange of knowledge and ideas furthers our mission.

A fundamental purpose of an institution of higher education is to provide a learning environment where divergent ideas, opinions and philosophies, new and old, can be rigorously debated and critically evaluated. Through this process, often referred to as the marketplace of ideas, individuals are free to express any ideas and opinions they wish, even if others may disagree with them or find those ideas and opinions to be offensive or otherwise antithetical to their own world view. The very process of debating divergent ideas and challenging others' opinions develops the intellectual skills necessary to respectfully argue through civil discourse. Development of such skills leads to personal and scholarly growth and is an essential component of the academic and research missions of each of our institutions.

It is equally important not to stifle the dissemination of any ideas, even if other members of our community may find those ideas abhorrent. Individuals wishing to express ideas with which others may disagree must be free to do so, without fear of being bullied, threatened or silenced. This does not mean that such ideas should go unchallenged, as that is part of the learning process. And though we believe all members of our campus communities have a role to play in promoting civility and mutual respect in that type of discourse, we must not let concerns over civility or respect be used as a reason to silence expression. We should empower and enable one another to speak and listen, rather than interfere with or silence the open expression of ideas.

Each member of our campus communities must also recognize that institutions may restrict expression that is unlawful, such as true threats or defamation. Because universities and colleges are first and foremost places where people go to engage in scholarly endeavors, it is necessary to the efficient and effective operations of each institution for there to be reasonable limitations on the time, place, and manner in which these rights are exercised. Each institution has adopted regulations that align with Florida's Campus Free Expression Act, section 1004.097, Florida Statutes, and with the United States and Florida Constitutions and the legal opinions interpreting those provisions. These limitations are narrowly drawn and content-neutral and serve to ensure that all members of our campus communities have an equal ability to express their ideas and opinions, while preserving campus order and security.

**Florida Polytechnic University
Board of Trustees
September 24, 2026**

Subject: 2026-2027 Board of Trustees Work Plan

Proposed Action

Approve the 2026-2027 Board of Trustees Work Plan.

Background Information

Chair Kigel will review the Board's 2026-2027 Work Plan. Trustees will have an opportunity to discuss any revisions to the Work Plan before voting.

Supporting Documentation: DRAFT: 2026-2027 Board of Trustees Work Plan

Prepared by: Kristen Wharton, Corporate Secretary and Special Assistant to the President



BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Annual Work Plan | 2026-2027 **DRAFT**

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

The following are strategic priorities which will be discussed throughout the year:

- Strategic Plan 2025-2030
- **Consideration and Approval of the Renewal of the President's Contract**
- Performance Based Funding (PBF) Metrics
- Enrollment Growth
- Student and Faculty Retention
- New Academic Programs (if proposed)
- Campus and Extended Campus Growth

SEPTEMBER

- **Conduct Annual Board of Trustees Retreat**
- Approve trustee evaluation instrument to be used for President's annual review *(for prior FY)*
- Discussion of Strategic Priorities
- Board of Trustees FY2027 Work Plan *(review and approve)*
- Annual Review and Endorsement of Statement of Free Expression *(review and approve)*
- Annual Financial Statements FY2026 (University and Foundation) *(review only)*
- Fixed Capital Outlay Budget FY2027 *(review and approve)*
- Education & General (E&G) Carryforward Spending Plan FY2027 *(review and approve)*
- Regulations and Policies *(review and approve as needed)*

NOVEMBER

- Discussion of Strategic Priorities
- **Approve new trustee evaluation instrument to be used for President's annual review (for FYE2027)**
- **Consideration of the Renewal of the President's Contract**
- Annual Ethics Agreement Reviewed and Signed
- Legislative Advocacy Plan for 2027 Session
- President Stephenson's Annual Evaluation FY2026 *(review and approve)*
- President Stephenson's Compensation Review *(review and approve)*
- Regulations and Policies *(review and approve as needed)*
- *Engagement: event with major donors*

FEBRUARY

- Discussion of Strategic Priorities
- Review and approve recommendation on Board Bylaws *(review every 3 years – due 2027)*
- **Review and consider approval of recommendation to renew the president's employment contract**
- Regulations and Policies *(review and approve as needed)*
- *Engagement: event with students*

APRIL

- University Accountability Plan FY27 *(review and approve)*

JUNE

- Review and approve recommendation on President Stephenson's Annual Administrative Action Plan FY2027 *(review and approve)*
- Discussion of Strategic Priorities
- Legislative Session Report on 2027 Session
- University Operating Budget FY28 *(review and approve)*
- Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) FY29 *(review and approve)*
- Legislative Operating Budget Request (LBR) FY29 *(review and approve)*
- Performance Based Funding (PBF) Metrics FY27 *(review only)*
- Regulations and Policies *(review and approve as needed)*
- *Engagement: event with University Foundation Board of Directors*

**Florida Polytechnic University
Board of Trustees
September 24, 2026**

Subject: Consent Agenda

Proposed Board Action

Approve the consent agenda.

Each of the following items comes before the Board with unanimous approval from the respective Committees, and, as such, there is no need for a second.

- A. Academic Enterprise, Research, and Student Success Committee
 - 1. Approve the 2026-2028 AERSS Committee Charter
 - 2. Approve the Annual Textbook and Instructional Materials Report
- B. Governance, Audit, and Compliance Committee
 - 1. Approve the 2026-2028 Governance, Audit, and Compliance Committee Charter
 - 2. Approve the Audit and Compliance Charters
 - 3. Approve the UAC Risk Assessment and Audit Plan FY27
 - 4. Approve the UAC Compliance and Ethics Program Plan FY27
 - 5. Approve the Performance-Based Funding (PBF) Data Integrity Audit Scope and Objectives
 - 6. Approve the Evaluation Instrument for President's Annual Review FYE26
- C. Finance and Facilities Committee
 - 1. Approve the 2026-2028 Finance and Facilities Committee Charter
 - 2. Approve the FY27 University Carryforward Spending Plan and Fixed Capital Outlay Budget
 - 3. Approve the Campus Master Plan Amendment
 - 4. Approve the Budget Amendment: Pre-Development Work on the Housing/Dining Project (Gilbane)
 - 5. Approve the Budget Amendment: Gary C. Wendt Engineering Center 2nd Floor Construction Project
- D. Ad Hoc Land Development Committee
 - 1. Approve the Ad Hoc Land Development Committee Charter
- E. Board of Trustees
 - 1. Approve the Board of Trustees Meeting minutes from May 22, 2026
 - 2. Approve the Board of Trustees Meeting minutes from June 30, 2026
 - 3. Approve the Board of Trustees Meeting minutes from August 11, 2026

Background Information

For additional information about any of the items listed above, please refer to that committee's meeting materials.

Supporting Documentation:

- 1. Board of Trustees Meeting minutes from May 22, 2026
- 2. Board of Trustees Meeting minutes from June 30, 2026
- 3. Board of Trustees Meeting minutes from August 11, 2026

Prepared by: Kristen Wharton, Corporate Secretary and Special Assistant to the President



BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Board of Trustees **DRAFT** Meeting Minutes

**May 22, 2026
10:45 A – 12:15 P**

Barnett Applied Research Center (BARC) Room 2200 and
Virtual via Microsoft Teams

I. Call to Order

Chair Beth Kigel called the Board of Trustees meeting to order at 10:46 a.m.

II. Roll Call

Kristen Wharton called the roll: Chair Beth Kigel, Vice Chair Jesse Panuccio, Trustee Patrick Hagen, Trustee Eliot Peace, Trustee Sumanth Neelam, Trustee Colby Manrodt, Trustee Derek Henderson, Trustee Colby Manrodt, Trustee Christie Bassett, Trustee Ilya Shapiro, Trustee Rob Kincart, Trustee Jack Harrell, III, and Trustee Sid Theis were present (Quorum).

Trustees not present: N/A

Staff Present: President Devin Stephenson, Provost Brad Thiessen, Bryan Brooks, Dr. Tanner McKnight, Dr. Cole Allen, Kelli Stargel, Katie Daniel, Kristen Wharton, and David Blanton

III. Public Comment

There were two requests received for public comment. Students Wilson Hendershot and Lillian Lambert addressed agenda item XI. Out-of-State Fee Increase.

IV. Chair's Remarks

Chair Beth Kigel began her report by reflecting on the first two years of the current administration, noting that the University has successfully launched its strategic plan and achieved significant growth. She highlighted several key performance indicators, specifically noting the University's remarkable return on investment (ROI) for students at over 500% and a record-breaking Performance-Based Funding (PBF) score of 87. The Chair commended the leadership team for their innovative and accountable approach to institutional challenges, particularly regarding the creative use of existing facilities and the investigation into temporary housing solutions to support the "Rise to 3,000" enrollment initiative. She emphasized that as the University expands its footprint and student body, continued support for infrastructure will be vital to maintaining this momentum and furthering Florida Poly's contribution to the state's economic vitality.

The Chair also emphasized the "palpable energy" on campus, attributing the University's success to the high level of engagement and alignment between the Board of Trustees, administration, faculty, and students. She noted several strategic milestones, including the rise in industry partnerships, advancements in applied research and commercialization, the launch of new initiatives such as "STEM plus M," and high faculty retention rates. Looking ahead, Chair Kigel reaffirmed that the strategic plan remains the University's "North Star" and a living document that will be reviewed and adjusted during upcoming retreats to ensure continued accountability. She concluded by welcoming the new trustees and

expressing her gratitude to the entire Florida Poly community for the collaborative efforts that have led to these extraordinary institution-wide outcomes.

V. President's Remarks

President Devin Stephenson updated the Board on key fiscal and operational milestones, including a \$2.5 million congressional appropriation and the University's receipt of the Ellucian "Student First Experience Award" for its successful implementation of the Banner system. He highlighted the success of major campus events like Research Day and a scholarship dinner honoring high-achieving incoming students. The President also emphasized the University's growing regional influence, bolstered by the new "Different by Design" branding and a record-breaking commencement ceremony for 430 graduates.

Strategic partnerships remain a primary focus, with the President detailing a foundational collaboration with IMSA (NASCAR) for on-campus engineering labs and ongoing engagement with industry leaders in the aerospace and technology sectors. He noted that Florida Poly was recently cited by state and national leaders as a model for institutional efficiency and workforce relevance. President Stephenson concluded by reaffirming the University's commitment to high-wage, high-demand career pathways through its robust applied research and industry-aligned academic programs.

VI. Faculty Senate President's Report

Trustee Derek Henderson reported on the strengthening of shared governance, noting that faculty recently participated in department chair evaluations for the first time. He expressed the faculty's gratitude for the University's positive student culture and the administration's leadership in shaping a collaborative environment. While acknowledging the challenges of rapid growth, specifically regarding parking and classroom space, he noted that the completion of the Gary C. Wendt Engineering Center's second floor and new staff hiring will provide critical support for the upcoming academic year.

Dr. Henderson also highlighted the faculty's enthusiasm for the expansion of graduate programs, emphasizing that graduate students are essential for both research productivity and instructional support. He concluded by affirming the faculty's commitment to the University's evolving strategic vision. The Senate remains eager to partner with the administration in achieving the institution's long-term goals and maintaining the high standards of academic excellence that define Florida Poly.

VII. Student Government Association President's Report

Trustee Colby Manrodt reported that the student body is highly optimistic regarding the University's trajectory, specifically citing increased engagement with President Stephenson and the impact of professional development initiatives. He commended the administration's accessibility and the expansion of campus activities, including the growth of the athletics program and preparation for the upcoming sports season. Manrodt highlighted that student leaders successfully participated in legislative advocacy in Tallahassee and have worked closely with University officials to ensure student concerns are addressed proactively.

The report detailed a productive year focused on operational efficiency and community building. Key achievements included the rebranding of SGA, a significant reduction in organizational waste, and the completion of the student-led SGA Garden project. Looking toward the next academic year, the SGA is planning a large-scale "Engineering Week" to highlight student ingenuity and has earmarked funds to support outdoor recreational spaces for new athletic teams. Manrodt concluded by emphasizing that improved transparency and efficient event planning have led to record-breaking turnout, reinforcing a strong sense of community and pride across the student body.

VIII. Consent Agenda

Chair Kigel brought forward the consent agenda for trustee approval.

A. Academic Enterprise, Research, and Student Success Committee

1. Approve the 2027-28 General Education Course List

B. Governance, Audit, and Compliance Committee

1. Approve the (1) proposed audit and compliance plan changes and (2) external reviewers for both audit and compliance programs
2. Approve the President's Administrative Action Plan for FY27

C. Finance and Facilities Committee

1. Approve advancing with the drafting of ground lease documents between the Florida Polytechnic University Board of Trustees and Strategic Facility Partners, a 501(c)(3) partner of Gilbane Development Company, to construct 2 new student housing buildings (approximately 500 beds each, not to exceed 6 floors each) and a new all-you-care-to-eat dining facility
2. Approve the final ranking of firms for Construction Manager at Risk Services for the Florida Polytechnic University Student Achievement Center (StAC) project. This recommended ranking is as follows:
 1. Skanska USA Building Inc.
 2. Charles Perry Partners, Inc.
 3. Gilbane Building Company
3. Approve authorization for the President to sign instruments, documents, and contracts as necessary to effectuate the design and preconstruction services for the Student Achievement Center project within a budget not to exceed \$34,900,000, the amount of project-specific funding currently on hand
4. Approve advancing the design, construction, and furnishing of the second floor of the Gary C. Wendt Engineering Center, within the total project budget of \$22,587,090, while granting the President authority to sign instruments, documents, and contracts as necessary to effectuate the remodel/buildout
5. Approve the following appointments and reappointments to the Florida Polytechnic University Foundation Board of Directors by the Board of Trustees:

Reappointments

- John Curls, Jr.
- Travis Hills
- Kristen Lowers
- Ryan Perez
- Alen Tomczak

New Appointments

- Larry Arndt – Vice President, South Region – Barton Malow Builders
- Kathy Killingsworth - Consultant
- Curtis Pease – General Manager, Fields BMW - Lakeland
- Kyle Story – Vice President, The Story Companies
- Lea Ann Thomas – Retired, Deputy County Manager (Polk County)

6. Approve the Foundation's planned uses of university personnel and property for the fiscal year 2026-27 for \$483,659

D. Board of Trustees

1. Approve the Board of Trustees Meeting minutes from February 13, 2026
2. Approve the Board of Trustees Meeting minutes from March 4, 2026

As each of the consent agenda items comes before the Board with unanimous approval from the respective Committees, there is no need for a second. A vote was taken, and the motion passed

unanimously.

IX. Committee Reports

A. Academic Enterprise, Research, and Student Success (AERSS) Committee

Committee Chair Sidney Theis reported on several key academic and operational updates, including the exploration of new academic programs and reduced-credit bachelor's degrees. He noted that the Provost briefed the Committee on the upcoming accreditation review timelines for the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) and the Council on Postsecondary Higher Education (CPHE). Additionally, Vice President Bryan Brooks provided an update on strategic priorities for student affairs and enrollment, which included a review of the coaching staff for the University's new NAIA athletic program and positive enrollment projections for the fall 2026 semester.

The Committee also reviewed and recommended approval for the 2027-28 General Education Course List which was approved by the Board as part of the day's consent agenda.

B. Finance and Facilities Committee

Committee Chair Jesse Panuccio reported that the University maintained a strong fiscal position through the third quarter of 2026, ending the period with a \$22.7M dollar net surplus and an 11.3% increase in net position over the previous year. The Committee also reviewed several completed construction projects, including the University Safety and Operations Center and the expansion of Parking Lot 6. Updates were also provided on the planning phases for the Student Achievement Center (StAC) and other minor ongoing campus improvements.

Panuccio noted the Board approved several key recommendations from the committee in today's Consent Agenda, including the selection of Gilbane Development Company as the partner for the housing and dining expansion project. Additionally, the Board authorized the University to begin contract negotiations with Skanska USA Building for the Student Achievement Center and approved a \$35 million budget for its design and pre-construction services. Finally, a budget increase of approximately \$3.6M was approved for the Gary C. Wendt Engineering Center to complete the full build-out of the building's second floor.

C. Strategic Initiatives and External Relations Committee

Chair Kigel reported that the Committee received an update from Vice President Kelli Stargel regarding a high level of engagement with corporate and industry partners. Additionally, Senior Global Affairs Officer Mustapha Achoubane presented a report on the University's international relations strategy, highlighting performance in prestigious international fellowships, global collaborations, and overall engagement initiatives. The Committee had no items requiring action by the full Board.

D. Governance, Audit, and Compliance Committee

Committee Chair Ilya Shapiro reported that the University received a clean financial audit from the Auditor General for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2025, with no internal control deficiencies or non-compliance issues cited. The Committee approved a reprioritization of the five-year compliance and audit reviews and received updates on the Foundation's IRS Form 990, which showed activities consistent with University expectations. Additionally, monitoring reviews confirmed that the University remains in full compliance with statutory requirements for textbook affordability and transparency. A review of the anti-fraud framework resulted in a recommendation for periodic fraud training for all employees to further strengthen institutional oversight.

Shapiro also reported that the Committee voted to recommend retaining the current Chair and Vice Chair for the upcoming two-year term. Furthermore, President Stephenson presented his Administrative Action Plan for the next fiscal year, outlining the University's strategic priorities and

operational goals; this item was approved in today's Consent Agenda.

X. Officer Elections

Trustee Ilya Shapiro reported that the Governance, Audit, and Compliance Committee recommended a proposed slate of officers for the term beginning July 1, 2026, and ending June 30, 2028. With no further nominations or discussion,

Trustee Sidney Theis made a motion to approve for a second term Chair Beth Kigel as the 2026-2028 Board of Trustees Chair and Vice Chair Jesse Panuccio as the 2026-2028 Board of Trustees Vice Chair. Trustee Jack Harrell, III, seconded the motion; a vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.

XI. Out of State Fee Increase

Provost Brad Thiessen presented a detailed follow-up to the previously tabled proposal regarding a 15% increase in out-of-state fees. This measure was necessitated by a June 2025 determination that the University was out of compliance with state statutes requiring out-of-state tuition and fees to cover 100% of instructional costs. Data indicated that the University was undercharging undergraduate out-of-state students by approximately 17% and graduate students by 29% in 2023-24. While rapid enrollment growth has helped lower the per-student cost of instruction for 2026-27, the Provost explained that the current fee structure remains insufficient to meet the legal threshold.

The Board engaged in a robust discussion regarding the balance between statutory compliance and the financial impact on students. Trustees reviewed various options, including the potential for a lower increase (6.8%) for undergraduates, but noted that such a figure might not guarantee future compliance if inflation outpaces enrollment. Concerns were raised regarding the expectations of current students who enrolled under a lower advertised rate. To address this, the administration recommended a "grandfathering" approach where the 15% increase would only apply to students admitted or readmitted after the Fall 2026 semester, ensuring that all currently enrolled and incoming Fall 2026 students maintain their existing fee structure throughout their tenure.

The Board expressed strong support for this revised recommendation, noting it effectively balanced the University's legal obligations with its commitment to the student body. Trustees specifically commended the students for their professional and productive engagement during the process. After clarifying that the measure would allow for individual review in cases of medical emergencies, trustees passed the following:

Trustee Colby Manrodt made a motion to approve and authorize a 15% increase in out-of-state fees to apply to students admitted or readmitted after fall 2026. Trustee Sumanth Neelam seconded the motion; a vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.

XII. 2025-2030 Strategic Plan Progress Report

Bryan Brooks, Vice President, Student Affairs, Enrollment Management, and Strategic Communications presented a comprehensive update on the University's strategic plan through a highlight video featuring several members of the Strategy Circle. The video highlighted significant milestones in the new NAIA athletics program, noting that all coaching positions have been filled and recruitment is nearly complete for the upcoming season, which includes men's and women's basketball, soccer, cross country, baseball, and softball. Enrollment efforts have also yielded historic results, with the University reaching two to three times more prospective students than in previous years, positioning Florida Poly for its largest-ever incoming class.

Technological and academic advancements were central to the update. Vice President Cole Allen detailed the successful implementation of the Ellucian Banner enterprise system, for which Florida Poly received the 2026 Impact Award for its student-centered portal design. Provost Brad Thiessen highlighted the

launch of several new academic programs, including a bachelor's in biomedical sciences in partnership with OCOM and a full major in Aerospace Engineering. Additionally, a new online master's in engineering management and thirty certificates and minors have been introduced as part of a curriculum redesign intended to allow students to earn multiple credentials, increasing their marketability.

The report concluded with a focus on campus innovation and community engagement. Vice President Tanner McKnight highlighted the successful rollout of the Starship robot delivery service, which provides accessible dining options across campus and offers students hands-on experience through robot maintenance and repair roles. The University is also launching its first STEM summer camps for K-12 students, led by faculty and staff to foster local interest in engineering. The Board commended the new reporting format and expressed strong support for the continued alignment of these initiatives with the University's long-term strategic goals.

XIII. Legislative Session Report

Vice President of Strategic Initiatives, Development, and External Relations Kelli Stargel provided a brief update on the ongoing Florida legislative session. She noted that while the state budget was expected to pass later in the day, specific university figures had not yet been released. Stargel emphasized that the administration is closely monitoring the process and will quickly move forward with the University's Legislative Budget Request (LBR) and internal operating budget as soon as the final legislative numbers are confirmed.

XIV. Board of Trustees Meeting Calendar

Chair Beth Kigel announced that the Board of Governors has reinstated the Annual Trustee Summit starting this November, which is highly encouraged for all Trustees. To avoid year-end scheduling conflicts and to begin the next academic year with a Board retreat to review the Strategic Plan at its two-year mark, the Chair proposed moving the annual Board Retreat from November to September. In light of trustee concerns regarding consecutive work-day travel, the Board discussed optimizing the schedule to a single overnight stay.

Trustee Ilya Shapiro made a motion to amend the Board of Trustees' meeting calendar, scheduling the full Board meeting for the afternoon of Thursday, September 24, followed by the annual retreat on Friday, September 25. Trustee Derek Henderson seconded the motion; a vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.

XV. Board of Governors Meeting Calendar

Chair Kigel shared that the next Board of Governors meeting will be held June 24-25, 2026, at Florida Atlantic University.

XVI. Closing Remarks and Adjournment

With no further business to discuss the meeting adjourned at 12:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Kristen Wharton

Corporate Secretary



BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Board of Trustees **DRAFT** Meeting Minutes

June 30, 2026
1:00 P – 2:00 P

Florida Polytechnic University
Virtual via Microsoft Teams

I. Call to Order

Chair Beth Kigel called the Board of Trustees meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

II. Roll Call

Kristen Wharton called the roll: Chair Beth Kigel, Trustee Patrick Hagen, Trustee Eliot Peace, Trustee Sumanth Neelam, Trustee Edwar Romero, Trustee Ilya Shapiro, Trustee Rob Kincart and Trustee Sid Theis were present (Quorum).

Trustees not present: Vice Chair Jesse Panuccio, Trustee Colby Manrodt

Staff Present: President Devin Stephenson, Bryan Brooks, Dr. Tanner McKnight, Dr. Cole Allen, Joshua Millikin, David Blanton, David Calhoun, Katie Daniel, and Kristen Wharton.

III. Public Comment

There was one request received for public comment. Mr. Mike Sanderson addressed agenda item IV. University Operating Budget FY2026-2027.

IV. University Operating Budget FY2026-2027

Dr. Tanner McKnight, Vice President and CFO, stated the proposed budget for the upcoming fiscal year is \$119,526,722, a 6.76% increase driven by strong student enrollment growth that offsets a slight reduction in non-recurring state appropriations (from \$10M to \$7.5M). Out of this total, \$71 million is allocated to the Education and General (E&G) fund. To support its expanding student body, the University is investing approximately \$4 million in Academic Affairs to hire 12 to 15 new faculty members and \$2 million in Student Affairs for support services, balanced by operational streamline efficiencies in IT, administration, and outsourced legal services.

To ensure long-term stability, the University has transitioned the vital Fulbright program into the regular operating budget while maintaining a healthy higher-education spending benchmark of 63% personnel and 37% operating expenses. The remainder of the budget consists of balanced, "dollar-in, dollar-out" funds, including auxiliary services, financial aid, and conservative grant estimates, which scale directly with enrollment and keep the overall \$119.5 million budget balanced.

Chair Kigel inquired if trustees had any questions; hearing none,

Trustee Sumanth Neelam made a motion to approve the University Operating Budget for fiscal year 2026-2027. Trustee Ilya Shapiro seconded the motion; a vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.

V. Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) FY2027-2028

David Calhoun, Assistant Vice President of Facilities and Safety Services, presented the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) for Fiscal Year 2027-2028. He noted that the University's capital priorities remain unchanged from the prior year, with the Student Achievement Center as Priority 1, the Campus Relocation Project as Priority 2, and Academic Building 3 as Priority 3.

Calhoun reported that outside of a minor increase in projected total project costs—resulting from updated BOG space-type unit cost guidelines—all project details remain the same.

Chair Kigel inquired if trustees had any questions; hearing none,

Trustee Derek Henderson made a motion to the Capital Improvement Plan for fiscal year 2027-2028. Trustee Sidney Theis seconded the motion; a vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.

VI. Legislative Budget Request (LBR) FY2027-2028

Bryan Brooks, Vice President of Student Affairs, Enrollment Management, and Strategic Communications, presented the Legislative Budget Request (LBR) for fiscal year 2027-2028, which requests \$20 million in recurring funds. The request is split into two components: \$1.5 million for an AI enablement and operational growth strategy (Element 1) and \$18.5 million to support growth toward the University's enrollment goals (Element 2). Florida Poly remains the fastest-growing university in the State University System (SUS), with fall enrollment projected to reach up to 2,200 students. This represents an approximate 25% growth over the past two recruitment cycles, pacing well ahead of the 2030 enrollment target.

Brooks emphasized the funding imperative, noting that without this recurring support, the state's investment per student would drop from the current \$24,946 to an unsustainable \$8,750 by FY30-31, which is significantly below the projected SUS average of \$20,386. To address Element 1, Cole Allen, Vice President of Information Technology Services and CIO, explained that the AI enablement strategy will leverage artificial intelligence to streamline operations and decouple expense growth from enrollment expansion. Additionally, the initiative will provide students with high-value internships and hands-on experience in enterprise agentic AI.

The remaining \$18.5 million (Element 2) will fund existing and new academic programs, ensuring the University maintains its 18:1 student-to-faculty ratio as it expands. Brooks stated that funding must be secured now to proactively support impending growth. During the discussion, Trustee Rob Kincart commended the 18:1 ratio, and Trustee Sidney Theis recommended incorporating SUS comparative ratios into future legislative talking points to strengthen Florida Poly's advocacy.

Chair Kigel inquired if trustees had any questions; hearing none,

Trustee Sumanth Neelam made a motion to approve fiscal year 2028 Legislative Budget Request for \$20,000,000 in recurring funds. Trustee Rob Kincart seconded the motion; a vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.

VII. Workday ERP System Contract

Katie Daniel, University Counsel, presented a motion to authorize the President to execute agreements for the administration of the Workday Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system and to increase the cumulative Workday budget by up to \$2 million, establishing a new ceiling not to exceed \$7.78 million over the remaining seven and a half years of the ten-year contract. Daniel reminded the Board that while the original \$5.78 million renewal was approved in 2023, the University was not delegated authority to execute subsequent modifications or incorporate new service functionalities. The requested \$2 million delegation provides the administrative flexibility to adopt newly available Workday features and optimize system utility.

Trustee Sumanth Neelam inquired about potential software redundancies, asking how Workday interacts with other University administrative systems. Allen clarified that Florida Poly utilizes Workday for HR and finance, and Banner for student services, explaining that choosing best-in-class systems allows the University to select specific modules and avoid overlapping functionalities. Regarding artificial intelligence, Allen highlighted that the University is orchestrating Agentic AI centrally through its secure Microsoft enterprise environment. He noted that leveraging this unified Microsoft framework allows the University to adopt new Workday automations and API connectors to streamline manual processes without incurring duplicative licensed software costs.

Trustee Sumanth Neelam made a motion to approve authorization for the President to execute all instruments, documents, and contracts necessary to effectuate and administer the Workday ERP System project, including amendments, addenda, exhibits, schedules, statements of work, and other ancillary documents, within a budget not to exceed \$7,788,500. Trustee Eliot Peace seconded the motion; a vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.

VIII. Closing Remarks and Adjournment

With no further business to discuss the meeting adjourned at 1:38 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Kristen Wharton
Corporate Secretary



BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Board of Trustees **DRAFT** Meeting Minutes

**August 11, 2026
9:00 A – 10:00 A**

Florida Polytechnic University
Virtual via Microsoft Teams

I. Call to Order

Chair Beth Kigel called the Board of Trustees meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

II. Roll Call

Kristen Wharton called the roll: Chair Beth Kigel, Vice Chair Jesse Panuccio, Trustee Sumanth Neelam, Trustee Patrick Hagen, Trustee Christie Bassett, Trustee Jeff Beelaert, Trustee Eliot Peace, Trustee Derek Henderson, Trustee Ilya Shapiro, Trustee Rob Kincart, Trustee Jack Harrell, III and Trustee Sid Theis were present (Quorum).

Trustees not present: Trustee Colby Manrodt

Staff Present: President Devin Stephenson, Provost Brad Thiessen, Bryan Brooks, Dr. Tanner McKnight, Dr. Cole Allen, Josh Millikin, Katie Daniel, Kelli Stargel, Kristen Wharton

III. Public Comment

There were no requests received for public comment.

IV. Board of Trustees Resolution 2026-002: Phase 4 Housing and New Dining Facility

Dr. Tanner McKnight presented Resolution 2026-002 to negotiate a public-private partnership (P3) with developer Gilbane and nonprofit ground lessee SFP Solaris LLC. The project includes Phase 4 student housing, a standalone dining facility to replace the current, temporary facility, and a potential structured parking garage, with construction targeted to run from December 2026 to August 2028.

Financed via approximately \$110 million in tax-exempt, off-balance-sheet bonds (40-year maturity, 50-year lease), the project pledges no Florida Polytechnic University credit. It is cash-flow positive in Year 1 (FY 2028–29), with Florida Poly paying roughly \$2 million (leases and utilities) and receiving \$4.8 million (ground rent, concessions, and services) for a net positive of ~\$2.8 million. Over the 50-year term, total payments of \$153 million against \$536 million in returns yield a cumulative net positive cash flow of ~\$383 million (~\$74 million NPV).

Operationally, Florida Poly will retain full control over the student experience—including marketing, applications, assignments, and billing—to ensure consistency across campus. SFP and its property manager will maintain the residence hall structure, while Florida Poly will maintain the dining hall in collaboration with Chartwells. General governance, including setting student rent rates and prioritizing facility upkeep, will be managed by a joint Board of Managers composed of University and SFP representatives.

Chair Kigel opened the floor for discussion and questions from trustees:

In response to questions from Trustee Ilya Shapiro regarding facility naming rights, McKnight confirmed that the University retains full authority to sell these rights for development and fundraising purposes. Addressing Trustee Patrick Hagen's inquiry about the 50-year non-compete covenant and if it limits the University's flexibility, McKnight clarified that it secures Gilbane's first-right-of-refusal for the future Phase 5 expansion, which is already integrated into the ground lease footprint.

Trustee Robert Kincart inquired if Gilbane would also construct the parking garage; McKnight explained that although the garage's financing is integrated into the P3, construction is not restricted to Gilbane, allowing the University to select the lowest-bid contractor. To address Trustee Kincart's concerns regarding developer performance, McKnight committed to incorporating performance-based exit clauses for Phase 5 into the final contracts during the upcoming 90-day revision window.

Addressing Trustee Sidney Theis's questions regarding the sensitivity of the financial projections, McKnight explained that the financial model is conservative. It is based on independent market studies in demand by Brailsford and Dunlavey; the numbers are based on 15 basis points higher than expected actual rates. At Trustee Theis's recommendation, McKnight agreed to run a 0% escalation sensitivity model to test the baseline margins prior to seeking final contract approval.

In response to Trustee Jesse Panuccio's questions regarding downstream protections, project alternatives, and emergency maintenance response, McKnight emphasized that today's vote only authorizes submitting draft documents to the Board of Governors (BOG), with final contracts returning to the Board of Trustees in November. Regarding alternatives, McKnight explained that because Florida Poly is a young institution, its credit profile sits just above subpar investment grade, meaning it cannot meet the debt service coverage covenants required to issue its own bonds. Since off-campus housing is unavailable in the immediate vicinity, a P3 is the only viable path to expand campus capacity. Regarding operational emergencies, SFP is contractually responsible for physical repairs; however, Florida Poly's housing and maintenance teams maintain the right to step in, relocate students, or manage the situation directly if response times are inadequate.

Trustee Sumanth Neelam inquired about the Board's flexibility to amend agreements after BOG review. McKnight assured trustees that he will provide regular updates as the BOG and the Division of Bond Finance suggest refinements to protect the state and the University, ensuring all trustee concerns are fully addressed before the final November vote. Finally, responding to inquiries from Trustees Theis and Kincart regarding structural quality and material contingencies, Dr. McKnight confirmed that the new structures are designed as solid, "100-year buildings." He noted that Phase 3 successfully served as a hurricane shelter due to similar robust construction standards, and David Calhoun represented Florida Poly facilities on the selection committee to ensure all bids specified durable, high-quality materials. The builder's

warranty will cover design and construction flaws. Florida Poly will build interest-generating reserves to cover long-term maintenance issues.

With no further questions from the Board, Chair Kigel called for a motion:

Trustee Sidney Theis motioned to approve Board of Trustees Resolution 2026-002 authorizing the negotiation of a development agreement, a ground lease agreement, an administrative services agreement related to student housing and dining, and other related agreements described herein, to design, build, finance, operate and maintain the Project; and requesting the Florida Board of Governors to approve the project. Following BOG approval, these Agreements will return to the Board of Trustees for final approval. Trustee Sumanth Neelam seconded the motion; a vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.

V. Closing Remarks and Adjournment

With no further business to discuss the meeting adjourned at 9:53 a.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Kristen Wharton

Corporate Secretary

Florida Polytechnic University

Board of Trustees

September 24, 2026

Subject: Enrollment Management Report

Proposed Board Action

Information only – no action required.

Background Information

The main story for Florida Poly enrollment is broad-based growth at every stage of the enrollment funnel, for both first-time-in-college (FTIC) and transfer students, alongside a marketing plan that reached more people at a lower cost.

FTIC & transfer results. Inquiries rose 41.3% to 56,513, applications rose 34.4% to 4,582 and admits rose 34.9% to 3,462. Transfer may be the strongest story in the deck. Net deposits grew 86% to 186, from about 100.

Campus visits. Registered visitors rose 68% (1,292 vs. 769) and total guests rose 63% (3,418 vs. 2,092) for August through June. March alone brought 262 students and 715 guests.

Marketing efficiency. Digital impressions rose from 9.6 million to 16.6 million, about 73%. Website visits from ads more than doubled, from 210,780 to 477,886. Meta cost per click fell from \$0.46 to \$0.34, about 26%, and click-through rates improved on both Meta and Google. Social audiences grew most on Instagram (32%) and LinkedIn (21%).

Potential Questions to Ask VP Brooks:

1. What is our official Fall 2026 enrollment headcount for new FTIC, new transfer, graduate, and total enrollment, and how does it compare to budget and the SEM plan targets?
2. Do we have the housing, course sections, faculty, and advising capacity for a class this size, and what investments does continued growth require?
3. Do campus visitors deposit at higher rates than non-visitors, and can we quantify it?
4. Which marketing channels drove applications and deposits, as opposed to impressions and clicks, and how is attribution measured?
5. Is this growth sustainable as the high school graduate population plateaus, and what is the realistic target for Fall 2027?

Supporting Documentation: N/A

Prepared by: Bryan Brooks, Vice President for Student Affairs, Enrollment Management, and Strategic Communications

Florida Polytechnic University

Board of Trustees

September 24, 2026

Subject: Florida Poly Athletics Program Multi-Year Operating Budget

Proposed Board Action

Approve a multi-year operational budget for Florida Poly Athletics.

Background Information

The Board of Governors (BOG) requires that a multi-year operating budget for Florida Poly Athletics be approved by the Board of Trustees. The University's 25 | 30 Strategic Plan, approved by the Board of Trustees in November 2024 and by the Florida Board of Governors on March 26, 2025, includes the establishment of an intercollegiate athletics program. The Academic Enterprise, Research, and Student Success Committee gave unanimous support to the athletics proposal in September 2025. Competition began in Fall 2026 with eight varsity teams and 127 student-athletes, and the University is pursuing NAIA membership with an anticipated effective date of July 1, 2027.

BOG Regulation 9.013(3) requires that intercollegiate athletics operate as a self-supporting entity. Regulation 9.013(5) permits a university board of trustees to authorize the use of unreserved cash from a non-athletic auxiliary for athletics, as a transfer or a loan, through the fiscal year ending June 30, 2028. Regulation 9.013(6) requires that a board of trustees using such funds develop and approve a multi-year athletic budget to ensure program viability and student-athlete success. This item satisfies that requirement.

Supporting Documentation:

1. BOG Regulation 9.013 Auxiliary Operations
2. Florida Poly Multi-Year Athletic Operations Budget
3. Auxiliary Cash Balance Sheet
4. Florida Poly Athletics FAQs

Prepared by: Bryan Brooks, Vice President for Student Affairs, Enrollment Management, and Strategic Communications

9.013 Auxiliary Operations

(1) Auxiliary services are integral activities of a university that furnish to its faculty, staff and students goods and/or services that are necessary or desirable but not readily available elsewhere in terms of costs, quality, quantity, timeliness, convenience, or other similar considerations. These activities shall support the educational endeavor of the institution and enhance its functioning; therefore, they shall not detract or distract from this basic endeavor in any way, financially or otherwise.

(2) Each auxiliary service is an individual entity and shall be accounted for as such. A service may be operated by the institution or by a private contractor under the institution's supervision. Under either arrangement, all pertinent institutional revenues and costs shall be assigned to each auxiliary and the consequent financial results of operations determined.

(3) There shall be a uniform system of financial reporting within the State University System for auxiliary services. Each institution may determine whether its auxiliary services will be self-supporting on an individual or collective basis, except for athletics, which shall be a self-supporting entity. The use of unreserved cash from a non-athletic auxiliary may be considered for athletics by the university board of trustees and approved by the Board of Governors. The Board of Governors will consider this on a case-by-case basis, taking into consideration the unique facts and circumstances surrounding each situation. The university administration should provide, at a minimum, the following information to the university board of trustees for its consideration, and subsequently to the Board of Governors, so that a transparent and informed decision can be made:

- (a) the specific non-athletic auxiliary the funds are coming from, the amount of the proposed transfer, and the amount of reserves available;
- (b) justification that the use of unreserved cash from the non-athletic auxiliary will benefit the broader student body or campus community;
- (c) if the supporting non-athletic auxiliary has outstanding debt, verification that the funds to be used are unreserved cash balances and that sufficient current revenues exist to cover all expenditures, including, but not limited to, debt service payments and required reserves;
- (d) assurance by the university, with confirmation, not to be unreasonably withheld by the Division of Bond Finance, that such transfer does not violate any bond covenants; and
- (e) in the event the non-athletic auxiliary revenues to be transferred include student fees or payments, documentation that a disclosure has been made to students that non-athletic auxiliary revenues which include student fees or payments will be transferred to athletics.

(4) Proposed expenditures from the various auxiliary funds shall be reflected in annual budgets filed with the Board of Governors.

(5) Notwithstanding Section 3 above, beginning with fiscal year ending June 30, 2025 and going through fiscal year ending June 30, 2028, the use of unreserved cash, not to exceed \$22.5 million annually, from a non-athletic auxiliary, may be utilized for athletics by each university board of trustees, as a transfer or a loan. The university should ensure that funds utilized under this provision do not have a material impact on the university's current credit rating or negatively impact any non-athletic auxiliary enterprise. The university administration should provide, at a minimum, the following information to the university board of trustees for its consideration, and subsequently submit the information to the Chancellor within 14 days of board of trustees approval, so that a transparent and informed decision can be made:

- (a) the specific non-athletic auxiliary being utilized, the amount of the related transfer(s), and the amount of reserves available in each source before and after such transfer;
- (b) if any individual non-athletic auxiliary utilized has outstanding debt, verification, with confirmation, not to be unreasonably withheld by the Division of Bond Finance, that the funds to be used are unreserved cash balances and that sufficient current revenues exist to cover all expenditures, including, but not limited to, debt service payments, required reserves, or any other current debt requirements; and
- (c) in the event a non-athletic auxiliary to be utilized includes student fees or payments, documentation that a disclosure has been made to students that non-athletic revenues, which include student fees or payments, will be utilized by athletics.

(6) If a university utilizes funds from a non-athletic auxiliary, each university board of trustees, pursuant to their powers and duties stated in Regulation 1.001, shall develop and approve a multi-year athletic budget to ensure the viability of university athletic programs and success of their student athletes.

(7) Beginning January 2026, universities shall annually provide the following information to their university board of trustees and the Chancellor:

- (a) an accounting of the funds utilized in section (4), including the amount expended and how the funds were utilized.
- (b) If the university provides a loan to athletics under these provisions, the university shall report on the status of any loan repayment.
- (c) By June 22, 2026, each university shall provide the Chancellor a two-year plan showing how the university intends to address the elimination of the \$22.5

million allowance from non-athletic auxiliary funds in its athletic department by the end of fiscal year 2028.

(8) Revenues for auxiliary services shall not be provided from general revenue supported budget entities except in payment of goods and/or services. Provided, however, auxiliary services may be housed in buildings that are financed by other sources.

Authority: Section 7(d), Art. IX, Fla. Const., Section 1011.47 Florida Statutes; History—Formerly BOG Rule 6C-3.14 and 6C-9.13, 3-4-74, 12-17-74, 8-29-77, 9-8-77, 8-11-85, 1-8-86, 4-10-86, 11-20-08, Amended 6-22-2023, 6-18-25, 11-6-25.

FLORIDA POLYTECHNIC UNIVERSITY
ATHLETIC BUDGET REQUEST

REVENUE				
Foundation Support	\$ -	\$ 50,000	\$ 75,000	\$ 100,000
Under Armour Commissions	7,500	8,250	9,075	9,983
Under Armour Signing Bonus	15,000			
Corporate Sponsorships	75,000	250,000	300,000	300,000
Batting Cage Rental	75,000	82,500	90,750	99,825
Auxiliaries Support	2,450,000	1,750,000	1,775,000	1,725,000
Ticket Sales, Ind. Sponsorships, Promotional Opportunities, Etc.	55,000	80,000	100,000	120,000
Subtotal	\$ 2,677,500	\$ 2,220,750	\$ 2,349,825	\$ 2,354,808
EXPENSE				
Uniforms	\$ 273,325	\$ -	\$ 75,000	\$ -
Legal / Compliance	55,000	56,788	58,633	60,539
Gym equipment	205,722	-	-	-
Supplies	84,137	86,871	89,695	92,610
Insurance	30,000	30,975	31,982	33,021
Contractual Services	84,317	87,057	89,887	92,808
Facility Rentals	75,000	77,438	79,954	82,553
Batting Cages	75,000	-	-	-
Membership / Dues	25,000	25,813	26,651	27,518
Non-travel recruitment costs	60,000	61,950	63,963	66,042
In-State Travel	230,000	237,475	245,193	253,162
Out-of-State Travel	69,000	71,243	73,558	75,949
Full-Time Personnel (Salaries - SP)	815,000	841,488	868,836	897,073
Benefits (Fringe Benefit Expense - SP)	299,450	309,182	319,231	329,606
Part-Time Personnel	292,171	301,667	311,471	321,594
Subtotal	\$ 2,673,122	\$ 2,187,945	\$ 2,334,053	\$ 2,332,472
Net	\$ 4,378	\$ 32,805	\$ 15,772	\$ 22,335
Transfer Back to Auxiliaries	\$ 4,378	\$ 32,805	\$ 15,772	\$ 22,335

Auxiliary 104 Cash Balances

Phase 3 Opened	HEERF Funds	COVID
Phase 2 Purchased	(COVID Relief)	

Florida Poly Athletic Program FAQs

When is the launch date for Florida Poly Athletics?

Florida Poly will begin playing games against opponents in the Fall 2026 semester. Florida Poly will apply for entry into the NAIA in October 2026 to officially enter the NAIA in Fall 2027. Florida Poly will be part of the Sun Conference. Florida Poly is utilizing the NAIA Pathway Program for entry. Information on the NAIA Pathway Program can be found here: [NAIA Pathway Exploration](#).

More information on the development of Florida Poly athletics can be found here:

<https://athletics.floridapoly.edu/press-release/>

Which sports are offered at Florida Poly?

- Men's Soccer
- Women's Soccer
- Men's Cross Country
- Women's Cross Country
- Men's Baseball
- Women's Softball
- Men's Basketball (winter sport)
- Women's Basketball (winter sport)

How did the concept of Florida Poly Athletics begin?

Students approached the administration back in Fall 2024 about pursuing athletics at Florida Poly, after Dr. Stephenson had hinted at the idea in his interview to become the next president of Florida Polytechnic University. This pursuit was supported by the Student Government Association (SGA). Based on student interest conducted by public forums for students on site, Florida Poly added athletics as part of its 25|30 Strategic Plan.

The Florida Poly Board of Trustees reviewed and approved the University's 25/30 Strategic Plan during its annual retreat in 2024. On Nov. 19, 2024, President Devin Stephenson and members of the Strategy Circle (The University's executive leadership team) delivered a detailed, collaborative presentation of the plan to the board. The Board of Trustees unanimously approved the plan on Nov. 20, 2024.

The Florida Board of Governors gave its final approval to the 25|30 Strategic Plan on March 26, 2025. During the University's presentation before the vote, Dr. Stephenson discussed adding an athletics program at Florida Poly.

After the plan's final approval, Florida Poly leadership has provided regular updates during scheduled Board of Trustees meetings, charting its progress toward achieving the plan's goals.

**A full Florida Poly Athletics Timeline is included at the end of this document.*

Subsequently, an Athletic Advisory Council was created which included the following representatives:

- **Bryan Brooks** (Chair) - Vice President for Student Affairs, Enrollment Management, and Strategic Communications
- **Bernadette Mullins** (Faculty Representative) – Professor, Applied Math
- **Michelle Disson**, Title IX
- **Seth Spencer**, Alumni
- **Gina Profeta**, Office of General Counsel
- **Derek Lower**, Athletics and Recreation
- **Samantha Lane**, Director of Marketing
- **Penney Farley**, Controller
- **David Calhoun**, Assistant Vice President for Facilities
- **Andy Oguntola**, Enrollment/Admissions/Financial Aid
- **Jon Pawlecki**, Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs
- **Nolan Nguyen**, VP SGA
- **Kaitlyn Survoy**, Student Rep
- **Reid Johnson**, Student Rep

The committee recommended starting Florida Poly Athletics with 8 sports: men's baseball, women's softball, men's and women's cross country, men's and women's soccer, and men's and women's basketball.

In September 2025, Vice President for Student Affairs, Enrollment Management, and Strategic Communications, Bryan Brooks, presented the case to the Florida Polytechnic University Academic Enterprise, Research, and Student Success Committee for the Board of Trustees with unanimous support.

Are there program goals for Florida Poly Athletics?

Yes, the Florida Poly Athletics program has four goals:

1. **Enhance Student Engagement:** Build school spirit and provide additional opportunities for student involvement.
2. **Promote Student Success:** Use athletics as a tool for recruitment, retention, and student development.
3. **Foster Community Relations:** Engage with local and regional communities through athletic events and partnerships.
4. **Ensure Financial Sustainability:** Develop a business model that includes fundraising, sponsorships, and revenue generation.

What is the total number of athletes?

Florida Poly has 127 total athletes participating across 8 sports:

Baseball	35
Men's Soccer	29
Softball	17
Men's Basketball	15
Women's Soccer	12
Women's Basketball	9
Men's Cross Country	6
Women's Cross Country	4

This includes 40 female student athletes, helping balance the male-female ratio of the Florida Poly student body.

What is the breakdown of the student body who are participating in Florida Poly Athletics?

There are 72 freshmen, 39 sophomores, 9 juniors, 1 senior, and 3 graduate students. The most popular degree for Florida Poly athletes is the BS in Business Analytics degree, with 44 student athletes choosing that major.

Where does Florida Poly play their home games?

Currently, Florida Poly men's and women's soccer, baseball, and softball, all play at the Lake Myrtle Sports Complex in Auburndale, Florida. The Florida Poly cross country teams participate in meets within the regional area and around the state. The men's and women's basketball teams practice and play their home games at Polk State College.

What is the budget for Florida Poly Athletics?

The annual operating budget for Florida Poly Athletics is \$2,324,900. No state funding or tuition dollars can be used to fund Florida Poly Athletics. To support the program, Florida Poly has been granted a 2-year exemption from the Board of Governors to utilize auxiliary funding as additional support in funding athletics. All other financial support must come through athletic program revenue (tickets sales, etc.) and donations.

Florida Poly is finalizing the Florida Polytechnic University Foundation's Case for Support to raise funding to support Florida Poly Athletics, raising between \$3 and \$5 million each year that will support the athletic program.

As of August 31, 2026, an amendment up for vote before the Board of Governors to *Regulation 9.013 Auxiliary Operations* is consequential to helping Florida Poly Athletics financially succeed at the beginning. Upon amendment approval, decision authority on utilizing auxiliary funds to support Florida Poly Athletics would reside with the Florida Poly Board of Trustees, rather than the Board of Governors. The extension of utilizing funds from auxiliary services through the end of fiscal year 2028 provides additional time for Florida Poly to build donor capacity, sponsorship, and operational revenue.

How does this operating budget compare to other universities/program in the US?

Within the NAIA's Sun Conference, member institutions operate athletics programs on annual budgets averaging \$4,169,612, with a median of \$4,566,873 and a floor of \$924,659. Florida Poly's program is efficiently budgeted and appropriately resourced to sustain a competitive, winning culture.

What about a budget breakdown per sport?

Sport	Budget	Coaching (Salaries, PT Staff, Etc.)
Men's Baseball	\$237,425	\$89,905
Women's Softball	\$211,500	\$72,153
Women's Soccer	\$124,500	\$73,852
Men's Soccer	\$123,530	\$89,905
Women's Basketball	\$110,500	\$70,675
Men's Basketball	\$110,000	\$89,905
Men's Cross Country	\$42,950	\$42,452
Women's Cross Country	\$43,350	\$73,409

Do Florida Poly athletes receive scholarship assistance?

Florida Poly athletes receive institutional aid based on merit as any other student would. Only donated dollars specifically designated for athletic scholarships can be used as athletic scholarship assistance. Total institutional aid commitment for the 2026-2027 academic year is \$447,750. The average institutional award per Florida Poly athlete is \$3,860. Twenty athletes are receiving no aid whatsoever.

Florida Poly Athletics Timeline

Nov. 19, 2024: Full board retreat

During the Board of Trustees annual retreat, the board learned about planned student success and campus life enhancements embedded in Florida Poly's 25|30 Strategic Plan, which included the infrastructure, operational support and other elements needed to build a sports program.

Nov. 20, 2024: Full board meeting

The board voted to approve the 25|30 Strategic Plan. This established the framework to introduce varsity sports as an essential way to expand student life, boost enrollment and elevate the University's regional profile.

March 26, 2025: Florida Board of Governors Final Approval

The state Board of Governors unanimously approved Florida Poly's 25|30 Strategic Plan. The approval locked in official campus growth and student life goals, setting the stage for the athletics program's creation.

Sept. 18, 2025: Academic Enterprise, Research and Student Success Committee

The committee received an update about the University's target NAIA membership date projected to be in July 2027. Trustees were also updated on plans to secure off-campus athletic facilities through a community facility partnership with the City of Auburndale at the Lake Myrtle Sports Complex.

October 2025: Trustee orientation

Information about Florida Poly Athletics funding was integrated into the orientation materials for new trustees.

March 10, 2026: Public launch

The University officially announced the launch of Florida Poly Athletics to the public, detailing a rollout of eight inaugural varsity teams and its active pursuit of NAIA and Sun Conference membership.

April 13, 2026: Inaugural athletic director announced

Derek Lower was announced as the first athletic director for Florida Poly Athletics.

May 21, 2026: Academic Enterprise, Research, and Student Success Committee

The committee received an update on the program's newly hired coaching staff and anticipated campus-wide enrollment projections.

June-July 2026: All head coaches hired

Florida Poly publicly announced its inaugural head coaching staff.

July 20, 2026: Lake Myrtle Sports Complex

The Auburndale City Commission approved a facilities use agreement for Lake Myrtle Sports Complex, securing Florida Poly's home fields.

Aug. 11, 2026: First athletics media day

Student-athletes were welcomed to the University during Florida Poly's first media day, showcasing their athletic talent and spirit to the community.

Aug. 18, 2026: Historic first game

Florida Poly's first-ever official intercollegiate game took place, with the Men's Soccer Team capturing a historic 4-0 victory over Webber International University at Lake Myrtle.

**Florida Polytechnic University
Board of Trustees
September 24, 2026**

Subject: ITS Presentation: AI Demonstrations and Guardrails

Proposed Board Action

Information only. No action required.

Background Information

Florida Poly is using AI across a growing number of administrative functions, including a commercially purchased system in Admissions. The systems highlighted in this presentation are developed in-house using a common technical foundation with consistent controls over what the systems may access and what actions they may take.

The demonstrations include systems in use or in testing in Procurement, Student Success, Athletics compliance, and Institutional Grants. Building these capabilities on a shared foundation allows the University to apply the same technical guardrails and governance approach across multiple business processes rather than relying on separate, disconnected solutions.

What the systems may do. These systems can review information, prepare drafts, identify issues, and recommend actions for human review. They do not independently make decisions that commit the University. Actions that change an official record or result in an external University action require human approval, and those limits are enforced within the systems themselves.

Who is accountable. Before a system is placed into use, the office responsible for the underlying business process defines and approves what the system may do independently, what requires human approval, what information it may access, and when it must stop and request human intervention. The functional office remains responsible for the process and its outcomes; the AI system supports that work.

What we review before deployment. Each system undergoes a security and compliance review that considers what information and systems it can access, how sensitive information is handled, and what activity is logged. Any unresolved issues with these review criteria prevent deployment. Subsequent changes are also subject to automated testing before they can be released.

Where University records remain. Banner and Workday remain the University's systems of record. Connections to institutional data are read-only by default, allowing AI systems to retrieve information without modifying source records.

Supporting Documentation: N/A

Prepared by: Dr. Cole Allen, Vice President and Chief Information Officer

**Florida Polytechnic University
Board of Trustees
September 24, 2026**

Subject: StAC Design Presentation

Proposed Committee Action

Information only – no action required.

Background Information

The **Student Achievement Center (StAC)** will play a vital role in Florida Poly’s continued growth by expanding academic support, enhancing student life, and strengthening recruitment and retention initiatives. Designed as a multi-functional hub, tailored to our growing campus, the StAC is dedicated entirely to guiding students through successful degree completion and into high-demand STEM careers.

Unlike existing campus facilities—which primarily focus on research labs, classrooms, and faculty instructional spaces—the StAC places the overall student experience at the forefront. It will provide dedicated study areas, collaborative multimedia environments, student support services, career and internship development spaces, an auditorium, and modern instructional rooms. As enrollment is projected to surpass 3,000 students by 2030, this facility will meet the critical need for vibrant, non-classroom spaces where students can collaborate, study, and access essential services.

In partnership with **HOK (Design Team)**, the University has validated the facility’s programming and established an architectural concept aligned with Florida Poly’s campus design standards. Mirroring the BARC’s impact, the StAC will serve as the anchor for the student side of campus. With the guiding concept established, the project is entering the preconstruction phase for budget validation and construction planning. HOK and **Skanska** will present the conceptual design and construction strategies as an informational update to the Board of Trustees.

Supporting Documentation: N/A

Prepared by: David Calhoun, Assistant Vice President of Facilities and Safety Services, and Dr. Tanner McKnight, Vice President of Administration & Finance and Chief Financial Officer

**Florida Polytechnic University
Board of Trustees
September 24, 2026**

Subject: Board of Trustees Meeting Calendar

Proposed Board Action

N/A.

Background Information

Chair Kigel will review the 2026-2027 Board meeting calendar and make note of upcoming meetings.

Supporting Documentation: Board of Trustees 2026-2027 Meeting Calendar

Prepared by: Kristen Wharton, Corporate Secretary and Special Assistant to the President



BOARD OF TRUSTEES

2026-2027 Board Meeting Schedule

2026

Friday, September 18	Committee Meetings (Virtual)
Thursday, September 24	Full Board Meeting and Annual Board Dinner (In-person)
Friday, September 25	Annual Board Retreat (In-person)
Tuesday, November 10	Committee Meetings (Virtual)
Tuesday and Wednesday November 17-18	17: Thankful Celebration Donor Appreciation Event 18: Full Board Meeting (In-person)

2027

Friday, February 12	Committee Meetings (Virtual)
Friday, February 19	Full Board Meeting (In-person) (<i>student engagement</i>)
Friday, April 30	Academic and Student Affairs Committee and Full Board Meeting (Virtual)
Friday, May 28	Committee Meetings (Virtual)
Friday, June 4	Full Board Meeting (In-person) (<i>BOT/Foundation Board Event</i>)



2026 Meeting Schedule

January 28-29	Florida State University, Tallahassee
February 23	<i>Virtual Meeting via Zoom</i>
March 25-26	University of West Florida, Pensacola
May 26	<i>Virtual Meeting via Zoom</i>
June 24-25	Florida Atlantic University
September 2-3	Florida Gulf Coast University, Fort Myers
September 30	Committee Workshop University of Florida, Gainesville
November 12–13	Florida International University, Miami
<i>*Will include a full day for the annual Trustee Summit on Nov 12</i>	

2027 Meeting Schedule

January 27-28, 2027	University of North Florida, Jacksonville
February 24, 2027	Virtual Meeting via Zoom
March 10-11, 2027	FAMU, Tallahassee
May 6, 2027	Virtual Meeting via Zoom
June 29-30, 2027	University of South Florida, Tampa
Sept 15-16, 2027	New College of Florida, Sarasota
October 13	Committee Workshop TBD
November 3-4, 2027	University of Central Florida, Orlando