



MEDIA RELEASE
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919 N Broad Street • Brooksville, FL 34601

And so it begins!

Brooksville - With hard hats, golden shovels and even a sand sculpture, the Hernando School District held the official groundbreaking of the new technical center at the Brooksville-Tampa Bay Regional Airport on Friday. The event included a gathering of state and local representatives, business and community partners who witnessed the exciting start of the construction of the school district's new technical education center. The center is scheduled to open in August 2023 and will be constructed on land near the airport, and will include a county government center and corporate college.

"This has been a long time coming," said John Stratton, Hernando School Superintendent. The technical training complex is a joint venture between Hernando Schools, Pasco-Hernando State College and Hernando County Government. "Joining forces was the best decision we ever made," Stratton said. "That decision was not only good for Hernando County Schools, but it was a decision that was good for Hernando County residents, future residents, as well as current and future businesses."

Stratton noted several driving forces who made the concept a reality - State Sen. Wilton Simpson, Sophia Watson, Hernando Schools Director of Adult & Technical Education, and School Board Member Jimmy Lodato. He also thanked Hernando County Administrator Jeff Rogers, Congressman Daniel Webster, and numerous community partners who supported the project. "This is what happens when government entities work together for the betterment of the entire county."

"This is an exciting day," Lodato said. "We have come together and made this happen!" He credited Sen. Simpson and Sophia Watson, as well as Dennis Wilfong, a local businessman and community volunteer who passed away last summer, who worked hard at making the facility a reality.

The groundbreaking event was made possible by Skanska Vice President Daniel Abou-Jaouda and his crew. Skanska is the project construction group.

When completed, the technical center will provide expanded workforce training opportunities for both adult learners and high school students. Technical programs currently offered at high schools will remain, but will also expand to the center for the adult learners. Watson said the facility will house many new programs, such as advanced welding, advanced HVAC, diesel service technician, cosmetology lab, and medical programs. "And this is just the beginning," she said. "The opportunities are coming. ... This is the fun part," she said.

*Photos attached