



The Florida Senate

Local Funding Initiative Request

Fiscal Year 2024-2025

LFIR # 2272

1. **Project Title**

2. **Senate Sponsor**

3. **Date of Request**

4. Project/Program Description

The School District of Leon County is seeking funding to establish a fully accessible outdoor play area at the Gretchen Everhart School. Gretchen Everhart, the state's only Center School, serves students ages 3-22 with intellectual disabilities, with an enrollment capacity of approximately 200 students from Gadsden, Wakulla, Jefferson, Taylor, Liberty, Franklin, and Madison counties, along with many from central and south Florida whose needs can't be met in a traditional school setting. Many students with intellectual or developmental disabilities also have co-occurring physical disabilities. While the current outdoor play area at Gretchen Everhart is wheelchair-accessible per ADA requirements, it has no accessible playground equipment and is in a state of disrepair. This project will completely renovate the play area to provide a safer rubberized play surface, cover to reduce heat and sun exposure, wider sidewalks, and specially designed and engineered equipment.

5. **State Agency to receive requested funds**

State Agency contacted? No

6. Amount of the Nonrecurring Request for Fiscal Year 2024-2025

Type of Funding	Amount
Operations	0
Fixed Capital Outlay	1,915,000
Total State Funds Requested	1,915,000

7. Total Project Cost for Fiscal Year 2024-2025 (including matching funds available for this project)

Type of Funding	Amount	Percentage
Total State Funds Requested (from question #6)	1,915,000	100%
Matching Funds		
Federal	0	0%
State (excluding the amount of this request)	0	0%
Local	0	0%
Other	0	0%
Total Project Costs for Fiscal Year 2024-2025	1,915,000	100%

8. **Has this project previously received state funding?** No

Fiscal Year (yyyy-yy)	Amount		Specific Appropriation #	Vetoed
	Recurring	Nonrecurring		

9. **Is future funding likely to be requested?** No

a. **If yes, indicate nonrecurring amount per year.**

b. **Describe the source of funding that can be used in lieu of state funding.**



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10. Has the entity requesting this project received any federal assistance related to the COVID-19 pandemic?

Yes

If yes, indicate the amount of funds received and what the funds were used for.

ESSER funding was used to address learning loss through reading and math interventionist, after-school tutoring, access to digital tools, one-to-one device program for all students (Chromebooks), recruitment and retention of teachers and support staff, enhanced sanitation activities, programs targeting mental health and behavioral concerns, and staff focused on addressing the increased disciplinary issues (guidance workers, case managers, and social workers).

Complete questions 11 and 12 for Fixed Capital Outlay Projects

11. Status of Construction

a. What is the current phase of the project?

- Planning
 Design
 Construction
 N/A

b. Is the project "shovel ready" (i.e permitted)?

c. What is the estimated start date of construction?

d. What is the estimated completion date of construction?

12. List the owners of the facility to receive, directly or indirectly, any fixed capital outlay funding. Include the relationship between the owners of the facility and the entity.

The School District of Leon County is both the owner and the entity requesting funding.

13. Details on how the requested state funds will be expended

Spending Category	Description	Amount
Administrative Costs:		
Executive Director/Project Head Salary and Benefits		0
Other Salary and Benefits		0
Expense/Equipment/Travel/Supplies/Other		0
Consultants/Contracted Services/Study		0
Operational Costs: Other		
Salary and Benefits		0
Expense/Equipment/Travel/Supplies/Other		0
Consultants/Contracted Services/Study		0
Fixed Capital Construction/Major Renovation:		
Construction/Renovation/Land/Planning Engineering	Equipment specifically designed for special needs students and rubberized play surface, along with installation	1,915,000
Total State Funds Requested (must equal total from question #6)		1,915,000

14. Program Performance



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a. What specific purpose or goal will be achieved by the funds requested?

The students at Gretchen Everhart deserve an inclusive and accessible outdoor play area to enrich their education and development. Outdoor play is critical in the early childhood development of all children, including those with special needs. Most experts agree that access to outdoor play is necessary in a child's daily routine. It aids in building key social, creative, and problem-solving skills. Unstructured independent play is particularly beneficial to children who may be overwhelmed or anxious in social settings. Students can improve their gross motor skills, such as jumping, running, and swinging, and experience new sensory stimulation. Ultimately, this enhanced play area will provide these exceptional students with a safe setting to widen their experiences, develop, and learn in a creative and imaginative way.

b. What activities and services will be provided to meet the intended purpose of these funds?

The requested funding will cover the cost of a new rubberized play surface that will enhance the safety of the play area and allow those with mobility aids and wheelchairs to more easily access the equipment. It will also include one or more coverings to provide shade from the sun and reduce heat exposure. Renovated and expanded accessible pathways/sidewalks will allow students and staff to move freely throughout the play area. This may include site work and grading. Landscaping will be added to make the area visually engaging with trees for natural shade. Finally, play equipment specifically designed and engineered for this special population will be added.

c. What direct services will be provided to citizens by the appropriation project?

This play area will be used directly by all students attending the Gretchen Everhart School. This includes a wide range of ages, from three (3) years old up to 22. As a Center School, Gretchen Everhart serves students from Leon, Wakulla, Jefferson, Gadsden, Franklin, Liberty, Taylor, and, most recently, Madison counties. Additionally, students from other areas in central and south Florida will send their students to live in group or residential facilities so they may attend Gretchen Everhart.

d. Who is the target population served by this project? How many individuals are expected to be served?

This play area will directly impact citizens in eight (8) counties who attend or whose children, friends, or family attend the Gretchen Everhart School. Additionally, students from other areas in central and south Florida will send their students to live in group or residential facilities so they may attend Gretchen Everhart. The current enrollment of Gretchen Everhart is approximately 115 students. This play area should serve students for years to come.

e. What is the expected benefit or outcome of this project? What is the methodology by which this outcome will be measured?

Renovation of the outdoor play area at Gretchen Everhart will enrich the lives of its students for years. This includes improvements in students' mental, physical, and emotional development. The impact will be measured through enrollment.

f. What are the suggested penalties that the contracting agency may consider in addition to its standard penalties for failing to meet deliverables or performance measures provided for the contract?

The district would include liquidated damages provisions for delays in delivery or completion of work.

15. Requester Contact Information

a. First Name **Last Name**

b. Organization

c. E-mail Address

d. Phone Number **Ext.**

16. Recipient Contact Information

a. Organization

b. Municipality and County



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c. Organization Type

- For Profit Entity
- Non Profit 501(c)(3)
- Non Profit 501(c)(4)
- Local Entity
- University or College
- Other (please specify)

d. First Name Last Name

e. E-mail Address

f. Phone Number

17. Lobbyist Contact Information

a. Name

b. Firm Name

c. E-mail Address

d. Phone Number