



# The Florida Senate

## Local Funding Initiative Request

### Fiscal Year 2025-2026

LFIR # 1511

1. Project Title

2. Senate Sponsor

3. Date of Request

4. Project/Program Description

More than 8,000 students in Miami-Dade district schools are classified as homeless, including those whose families have lost their homes and lack stable housing, as well as those living on the streets while continuing their education. Without a reliable means of connectivity, these students face significant barriers to completing coursework, accessing educational resources, and staying in touch with teachers and support services. For these students, Bark Phone, Bark Safety Software, and preloaded district-required applications will serve as their primary tools for accessing essential content and submitting assignments, in alignment with Florida's Digital Classroom Plan, helping to bridge the digital divide and provide them with a fair chance at academic success.

5. State Agency to receive requested funds

State Agency contacted?

6. Amount of the Nonrecurring Request for Fiscal Year 2025-2026

Type of Funding	Amount
Operating	660,000
Fixed Capital Outlay	0
<b>Total State Funds Requested</b>	<b>660,000</b>

7. Total Project Cost for Fiscal Year 2025-2026 (including matching funds available for this project)

Type of Funding	Amount	Percentage
Total State Funds Requested (from question #6)	660,000	100%
<b>Matching Funds</b>		
Federal	0	0%
State (excluding the amount of this request)	0	0%
Local	0	0%
Other	0	0%
<b>Total Project Costs for Fiscal Year 2025-2026</b>	<b>660,000</b>	<b>100%</b>

8. Has this project previously received state funding?

If yes, provide the most recent instance:

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

9. Is future-year funding likely to be requested?

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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### Complete questions 10 and 11 for Fixed Capital Outlay Projects

**10. 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?

e. What funding stream will be used for ongoing operations and maintenance of the project?

**11. 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.**

**12. Details on how the requested state funds will be expended**

Spending Category	Description	Amount
<b>Administrative Costs:</b>		
Executive Director/Project Head Salary and Benefits		0
Other Salary and Benefits		0
Expense/Equipment/Travel/Supplies/Other	\$660 per line includes unlimited talk, text, 4GB of High Speed data for 12 month includes Current Bark Phone, Bark Safety Software, Charging Block, Charging Cable, Protective Case, and any preloaded applications that the school district requires.	660,000
Consultants/Contracted Services/Study		0
<b>Operational Costs</b>		
Salary and Benefits		0
Expense/Equipment/Travel/Supplies/Other		0
Consultants/Contracted Services/Study		0
<b>Fixed Capital Construction/Major Renovation:</b>		
Construction/Renovation/Land/Planning Engineering		0
<b>Total State Funds Requested (must equal total from question #6)</b>		<b>660,000</b>

**13. Program Performance**

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

More than 8,000 students in Miami-Dade district schools are classified as homeless, including those whose families have lost their homes and lack stable housing, as well as those living on the streets while continuing their education. For these students, Bark Phone, Bark Safety Software, and preloaded district-required applications will serve as their primary tools for accessing essential content and submitting assignments, in alignment with Florida's Digital Classroom Plan.



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

Funding will provide homeless students with smartphones preloaded with a comprehensive suite of educational tools, high-speed internet access, and integrated communication resources. These devices will enable seamless access to online coursework, virtual classrooms, and direct channels to teachers and support staff. Additionally, they will link students to essential mental health services, emergency assistance hotlines, and local community programs, ensuring timely support in critical moments. This digital connectivity not only fosters academic engagement but also empowers students to build the skills and resilience necessary for long-term stability and success.

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

1) Academic Access: Smartphones preloaded with educational applications and district-required software that allow students to access online coursework, submit assignments, and participate in virtual classrooms, 2) Communication Support: Tools that facilitate direct contact with teachers, tutors, and school counselors, ensuring students remain connected to essential educational support, 3) Mental Health and Crisis Resources: Built-in access to mental health apps, emergency assistance hotlines, and crisis intervention services to support students' well-being, 4) Digital Literacy Training: Technical support and training to empower students with the skills needed to effectively use their devices, 5) Community Engagement: Connectivity to local community programs and support services that help mitigate isolation and promote overall stability.

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

The target population for this project is 1,000 homeless students in Miami-Dade. These students, identified under the McKinney-Vento Act as lacking stable housing—whether living on the streets or in temporary accommodations—face significant barriers to education. By providing them with smartphones preloaded with essential digital tools and applications, the project aims to bridge the digital divide, ensuring these students can access coursework, communicate with teachers, and utilize critical support services. This initiative is designed to foster academic engagement and support long-term stability, empowering these vulnerable students to achieve greater success in their educational journey.

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

Providing 1,000 homeless students with free Bark phones is expected to bridge the digital divide and boost educational engagement. The project aims to improve academic performance, attendance, and access to mental health, safety, and support services by ensuring consistent connectivity. Outcomes will be measured through:

1) Quantitative Metrics:

a) Academic Performance: Comparison of GPA, assignment completion rates, and attendance records before and after phone distribution, b) Digital Engagement: Analytics from the Bark phone platform tracking usage of educational apps and communication with teachers.

2) Qualitative Metrics: Surveys and Focus Groups: Feedback from students, parents, and educators regarding improved access to learning resources and overall well-being.

This mixed-method approach will provide a comprehensive view of the project's impact on students' academic and personal success.

**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 in the contract?**

The contracting agency may impose liquidated damages following a monthly audit, provided that a written warning detailing the unmet deliverables or performance measures outlined in the contract has been issued and discussed. A financial deduction of \$1,000 per month will be applied until the deficiencies are fully remedied.

**14. Is this project related to mitigation, response, or recovery from a natural disaster?**  No

**a. If Yes, what phase best describes the project?**

- Mitigation (reducing or eliminating potential loss of life or property)
- Response (addressing the immediate and short-term effects of a natural disaster)
- Recovery (assisting communities return to normal operations, including rebuilding damaged infrastructure)



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**b. Name of the natural disaster (or Executive Order # for events not under a federal declaration):**

**15. Has the entity applied for or received federal assistance for this project?**

- Yes, Applied
- Yes, Received
- No
- No, but intends to apply

**a. If yes, provide the FEMA project worksheet ID#:**

**b. Provide the total project cost listed on the FEMA project worksheet:**

**16. Has the entity applied for or received state assistance for this project (other than this request)?**

- Yes, Applied
- Yes, Received
- No
- No, but intends to apply

**a. If yes, specify the program and state agency (ex. Local Government Emergency Bridge Loan, Department of Commerce):**

**17. Requester Contact Information**

**a. First Name**  **Last Name**

**b. Organization**

**c. E-mail Address**

**d. Phone Number**  **Ext.**

**18. Recipient Contact Information**

**a. Organization**

**b. Municipality and County**

**c. Organization Type**

- For Profit Entity
- Non Profit 501(c)(3)



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

d. First Name  Last Name

e. E-mail Address

f. Phone Number  Ext.

#### 19. Lobbyist Contact Information

a. Name

b. Firm Name

c. E-mail Address

d. Phone Number

*The information provided will be posted to the Florida Senate website for public viewing if sponsored by a Senator.*