



The Florida Senate

Local Funding Initiative Request

Fiscal Year 2025-2026

LFIR # 2380

1. Project Title
2. Senate Sponsor
3. Date of Request

4. Project/Program Description

As Pinellas County Schools, ARK Educate and the Pinellas Education Foundation develops an Innovation Center for emerging/disruptive technology, these funds would support incentives to outfit spaces in the center with state of the art technology learning environments. The Project will recruit and partner with leading Florida technology companies in areas such as autonomous technology, 3D manufacturing, DNA sequencing, battery cell technology, etc. The Project supports economic development and will serve as a model for the state.

5. State Agency to receive requested funds

State Agency contacted? No

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

Type of Funding	Amount
Operating	860,000
Fixed Capital Outlay	1,140,000
Total State Funds Requested	2,000,000

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)	2,000,000	93%
Matching Funds		
Federal	0	0%
State (excluding the amount of this request)	0	0%
Local	0	0%
Other	150,000	7%
Total Project Costs for Fiscal Year 2025-2026	2,150,000	100%

8. Has this project previously received state funding? Yes

If yes, provide the most recent instance:

Fiscal Year (YYYY-YY)	Amount		Specific Appropriation #	Vetoed
	Recurring	Nonrecurring		
2024-25	0	1,000,000	111	No

9. Is future-year 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.

Complete questions 10 and 11 for Fixed Capital Outlay Projects



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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)? No

c. What is the estimated start date of construction? 07/01/2025

d. What is the estimated completion date of construction? 07/01/2026

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

District capital/operating funds.

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.

Pinellas County Schools owns the land/site where the Center will be developed. It will be on the site of the Stavros Institute located at 12100 Starkey Rd, Largo, FL 33773-2729.

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

Spending Category	Description	Amount
Administrative Costs:		
Executive Director/Project Head Salary and Benefits	Project coordinator at the Pinellas Education Foundation	140,000
Other Salary and Benefits		0
Expense/Equipment/Travel/Supplies/Other		0
Consultants/Contracted Services/Study	ARK Educate business partnership development, research, support and project management	350,000
Operational Costs		
Salary and Benefits		0
Expense/Equipment/Travel/Supplies/Other	Pinellas County Schools district curriculum development, materials/resource development for sharing with others for replication statewide	370,000
Consultants/Contracted Services/Study		0
Fixed Capital Construction/Major Renovation:		
Construction/Renovation/Land/Planning Engineering	Incentive funds for up to 12 companies to outfit spaces within the STEM Innovation Center (\$95,000 x12). Based on technology areas, the anticipated cost to outfit spaces will be above the incentive amount (e.g. autonomous vehicle bay).	1,140,000
Total State Funds Requested (must equal total from question #6)		2,000,000

13. Program Performance

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



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Design and build-out technology corporate fronts with leading corporations in the State. These corporate fronts provide state of the art hands-on experiences to middle school students. This project will demonstrate the ability to successfully bring together public and private entities for the benefit of students, education and Florida’s future job market. Economic development through incentives to bring new and/or highlight companies in the emerging/disruptive technology industry for students and the community. Development of a nation and statewide model for learning. Deep, experiential center development for student learning.

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

High-tech corporations will develop learning modules in partnership with PCS and in consultation with ARK Invest analysts to recreate actual operations taking place within their corporations. Students will engage and learn about various disruptive technologies that are shaping the present and future world and workforce. Students will benefit by learning about these technologies as well as understanding what it takes to study and participate in these select industries.

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

The Center will support Florida State Standards in a variety of subject areas such as engineering, physics, biology, finance, economics, environmental sciences, computer programming, medical sciences and technology education, etc. Students will be studying and preparing for their visit to the Center and complete follow-up lessons when completed.

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

Over 5,000 students annually. Neighboring school districts that utilize the Center for student experiences/field trips. Entire state, as the Center will serve as a statewide model for visits and information as other districts learn to replicate the model.

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

Center development with high-demand and emerging/disruptive technology companies (# companies that sign agreements to be part of the Center). Development of statewide model and opportunities for other counties to tour and learn about model replication. Student scheduled experiences (# of students) once Center is open.

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?

Return of funds

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)

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



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

d. First Name Last Name

e. E-mail Address

f. Phone Number Ext.



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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.