



The Florida Senate

Local Funding Initiative Request

Fiscal Year 2025-2026

LFIR # 3087

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

4. Project/Program Description

Since 2013, Links to Success has provided college and career prep programs students in DeSoto County, where economic hardships and limited resources create significant barriers. With 21% of residents living below the poverty line and only 11.6% holding a bachelor’s degree (compared to 31.5% statewide), many face major challenges in achieving success. To expand our impact, we now support children earlier through the First 1000 Days initiative, ensuring families receive critical support during pregnancy and early childhood when 80% of brain development occurs. A Family Navigator connects families to essential services. Hurricane Ian worsened existing challenges in education, housing, and healthcare, making it even harder for families to access resources. In response, Links to Success is establishing a Family Empowerment Center—a centralized hub program and resources to help families have better outcomes. This request to support the initiation of this center.

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	400,000
Fixed Capital Outlay	150,000
Total State Funds Requested	550,000

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)	550,000	39%
Matching Funds		
Federal	0	0%
State (excluding the amount of this request)	0	0%
Local	50,000	4%
Other	800,000	57%
Total Project Costs for Fiscal Year 2025-2026	1,400,000	100%

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		
2024-25	0	200,000	105	No

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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Sources of funding for Links to Success have been grants and contributions. These funds are often unreliable year to year and can affect the number of students served.

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)?

No

c. What is the estimated start date of construction?

08/01/2025

d. What is the estimated completion date of construction?

01/01/2026

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

Grants and contributions

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.

Links to Success

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

Spending Category	Description	Amount
Administrative Costs:		
Executive Director/Project Head Salary and Benefits	Percentage of salary to oversee financial and program management, board governance, fundraising development, and develop community and stakeholder relations.	150,000
Other Salary and Benefits		0
Expense/Equipment/Travel/Supplies/Other		0
Consultants/Contracted Services/Study	Cost to cover contractor(s) for administrative services	25,000
Operational Costs		
Salary and Benefits	Salary of employee(s) to cover workshop development, setup, and advertisement, student/ family contact and monitoring, college tours, and contracted services with workshop presenters.	125,000
Expense/Equipment/Travel/Supplies/Other	Cost of travel to college campuses and introductory visits to work fields, workshop supplies, facility rentals for workshops, scholarships and software. Materials and furniture for family empower center.	65,000
Consultants/Contracted Services/Study	Cost to cover contracted services to provide programming and oversight	35,000
Fixed Capital Construction/Major Renovation:		
Construction/Renovation/Land/Planning Engineering	Cost to outfit new center with essentials including ADA compliance, internet set up, security, furniture, technology, etc.	150,000
Total State Funds Requested (must equal total from question #6)		550,000

13. Program Performance



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

DeSoto County faces a significant gap, with graduation rates 15% below the state average and a 20% deficit in college graduates. To bridge this disparity, Links to Success is committed to expanding our programs to serve the entire family. Our new family empowerment center will serve as a centralized resource hub, consolidating essential services and providing families access to critical programs in education, early childhood development, and parenting support.

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

Links to Success will utilize the allocated funds to provide a diverse range of workshops and activities for students and parents in the College and Career Prep and Youth Empowerment Program, as well as the Parent Leadership Academy. These activities include case management, college tours, career exploration workshops, financial aid assistance, leadership training, and summer camps.

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

Our workshops are offered to residents entirely free of charge, ensuring accessibility to all, regardless of their economic circumstances. What makes the Links to Success program particularly impactful is its inclusion of families in various workshops and events.

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

Links to Success is designed to serve a specific target population of students and families who meet specific criteria. Our programs primarily caters to people from economically disadvantaged backgrounds, as indicated by their poverty level. Additionally, the program targets first-generation college students who are breaking new ground in their families by pursuing post-secondary education.

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

To measure the outcomes of the Links to Success programs effectively, the following methodologies, combining both quantitative and qualitative data collection methods will be implemented.

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?

•Reduced funding if measures are not met for this appropriation.

14. Is this project related to mitigation, response, or recovery from a natural disaster?

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



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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)

Non Profit 501(c)(4)

Local Entity

University or College

Other (please specify)

d. First Name Last Name



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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.