



# The Florida Senate

## Local Funding Initiative Request

### Fiscal Year 2025-2026

LFIR # 3305

1. **Project Title**

2. **Senate Sponsor**

3. **Date of Request**

4. **Project/Program Description**

LENA Grow is a professional learning program for teachers that enhances the language environment in SR and VPK classrooms statewide, improving school readiness. LENA Grow focuses on increasing teacher-child interactions, which peer-reviewed research has proven to have a positive impact on brain structure and function, executive functioning, literacy skills, language development, and middle school IQ scores. LENA will partner with ELCs statewide to support low-performing classrooms, minimizing staff resource impact. The five-week program uses classroom- and child-level data from LENA's technology, strengths-based coaching sessions, and research-based strategies to support teachers. Program participation has been shown to improve CLASS scores, reduce challenging behaviors, increase teacher job satisfaction and retention, increase language and literacy assessment scores, and improve kindergarten readiness.

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

**State Agency contacted?**  Yes

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

Type of Funding	Amount
Operating	975,000
Fixed Capital Outlay	0
<b>Total State Funds Requested</b>	<b>975,000</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)	975,000	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>975,000</b>	<b>100%</b>

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

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?**  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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### 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		0
Consultants/Contracted Services/Study		0
<b>Operational Costs</b>		
Salary and Benefits		0
Expense/Equipment/Travel/Supplies/Other	LENA Grow Professional Learning Program for 300-400 School Readiness (SR) and Voluntary Pre-K (VPK) classrooms statewide. Fee includes LENA technology, LENA Online software, training and technical support, Coach Guide, Teacher Guide, family engagement materials, early talk strategies, classroom posters, and teacher-interaction evaluation. All program materials available in English and Spanish.	550,000
Consultants/Contracted Services/Study	Contract Services: Coordination, program recruitment, and coaching to provide direct support to SR and VPK teachers and providers. Study: Program evaluation including LENA and child outcomes through available assessment data.	425,000
<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>975,000</b>

**13. Program Performance**

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



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LENA Grow is a professional learning program for teachers that enhances the language environment in SR and VPK classrooms statewide. Based on research evaluations, implementing LENA Grow will achieve increased CLASS scores, accelerated literacy and language assessment scores, increased kindergarten readiness, and improved teacher job satisfaction and self-efficacy in SR and VPK classrooms. Independent evaluations of LENA Grow have shown statistically significant increases in teacher-child interactions, especially with children below the national average, accelerated gains in Teaching Strategies GOLD's® language and literacy scores, and improved social skills.

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

The funds will support ELCs statewide to implement LENA Grow, including contract recruitment and coaching support SR and VPK classrooms. LENA Grow is a 5-week, evidenced-base program that uses data from LENA technology, classroom- and child-level reports, weekly strengths-based coaching sessions, and research-based strategies to help teachers increase quality teacher-child interactions in daily classroom activities. Funding will empower ELCs to deliver critical support to low-performing SR and VPK providers and those with new teaching staff, all while minimizing the burden on ELC staff. To date, 15 ELCs have expressed support by implementing LENA Grow in in over 1000 classrooms, with 97% of teachers saying they would recommend and 93% saw changes in language development. Evaluations from ELC Sarasota and Escambia showed improved CLASS scores, with Sarasota also reporting accelerated GOLD® and VPK STAR scores.

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

The LENA Grow professional learning program will be implemented in SR and VPK classrooms statewide, as will program evaluation measures. Teachers in these classrooms will receive access to LENA technology and the data it provides, as well as strength-based coaching and printed and digital resources. Children in these classrooms will benefit from their teachers' participation, with increased language and literacy scores. Parents and caregivers will benefit from printed and digital resources, as well as increased communication with their children's teachers.

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

The target population for this project includes more than 500 SR and VPK teachers participating in the LENA Grow program. At least 3,000 infants, toddlers, and preschool children in SR and VPK classrooms, along with their parents and caregivers, will benefit from the teachers' participation. Dual language learners and children with unique abilities, language delays, and challenging behaviors are expected to significantly benefit from the program.

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

Classrooms will increase the quantity of teacher-child interactions by an average of 40% among children experiencing interaction rates below the national average and by 25% for the children in the bottom third of their classroom. Prior evaluation has shown this change to result in higher quality, responsive interactions and accelerated assessment scores. Additionally, 80% of participating teachers will experience increased job satisfaction, efficacy, and confidence. LENA Online captures participant data and provides classroom, site, and agency-level reports. Teachers receive an anonymous end-of-program survey, and the results are integrated into the program's profile on LENA Online. As available, an evaluation of pre/post CLASS scores and child assessments will be conducted on a portion of the participating classrooms

**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?**

Agencies will receive ongoing support during the contract period including recruitment, seasonal plans, program training, and technical support. Not meeting deliverables will have financial consequences.

**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)

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.*