



The Florida Senate

Local Funding Initiative Request

Fiscal Year 2024-2025

LFIR # 1578

1. **Project Title**

2. **Senate Sponsor**

3. **Date of Request**

4. **Project/Program Description**

Tree of Knowledge has 15+ years of experience educating 50,000+ students with autism and special needs and is an approved Title 1 provider of academic support services in FL, NJ, and OH. This appropriation, if funded, will support the creation and implementation of ESE enrichment support classrooms dedicated specifically to students with autism and special needs at the Landow/Chabad Educational Center network of schools in South Florida. Each support classroom will consist of certified education professionals (trained, provided, and supervised by Tree of Knowledge) who collaboratively co-plan, co-instruct and co-assess students who are eligible for special education services outside of the usual course of instruction. The core curriculum will consist of reading, math, language arts, and ESOL (when appropriate). Numerous studies have documented improved educational, developmental, and social outcomes when students with autism and special needs are provided with specialized support.

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

State Agency contacted? Yes No

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

Type of Funding	Amount
Operations	500,000
Fixed Capital Outlay	0
Total State Funds Requested	500,000

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)	500,000	50%
Matching Funds		
Federal	0	0%
State (excluding the amount of this request)	0	0%
Local	0	0%
Other	500,000	50%
Total Project Costs for Fiscal Year 2024-2025	1,000,000	100%

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

Fiscal Year (YYYY-YY)	Amount		Specific Appropriation #	Vetoed
	Recurring	Nonrecurring		

9. **Is future funding likely to be requested?** Yes 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?

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

2 rounds of PPP loans to cover payroll expenses in the amounts of \$702,712 and \$831,540; and EIDL loan in the amount of \$150,000.

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.

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	Professional development costs.	10,000
Consultants/Contracted Services/Study		0
Operational Costs: Other		
Salary and Benefits	Tree of Knowledge will provide a supervisor who shall oversee the in class professional staff for a minimum of three hours per week. Supervision will include, but is not limited to classroom observations, classroom support, modifications, profess monitoring, and guiding instructional staff. Supervisor has a Masters in Special Ed and is FDOE certified as a teacher of students with disabilities.	30,000
Expense/Equipment/Travel/Supplies/Other	Program materials and supplies, including specialized instructional/curriculum materials and online per student learning software subscription costs.	40,000
Consultants/Contracted Services/Study	Cost to employ learning center professionals. This includes special education teachers, teacher aides (paraprofessionals), Board Certified Behavior Analysts (BCBA), and speech therapists. Learning center professionals will provide additive support and instruction to the program's ESE students multiple days each week, dependent on school schedule and hours, with data collection to monitor student progress.	420,000



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Fixed Capital Construction/Major Renovation:		
Construction/Renovation/Land/ Planning Engineering		0
Total State Funds Requested (must equal total from question #6)		500,000

14. Program Performance

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

The creation and implementation of ESE support classrooms dedicated specifically to students with autism and special needs at the Landow/Chabad Educational Center network of schools in South Florida. Each classroom will consist of certified education professionals (trained, provided, and supervised by Tree of Knowledge) who collaboratively co-plan, co-instruct and co-assess students who are eligible for special education services. The core curriculum will consist of reading, math, language arts, and ESOL (when appropriate).

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

Assist the general education teacher in understanding the strengths and weaknesses of classified students; Co-plan with the general education teacher to assure that objectives, materials, and instructional processes are appropriate for all students Develop alternative forms of assignments and tests; Deliver instruction using alternate instructional strategies to meet individual student needs, etc.

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

Deliver instruction using alternate instructional strategies to meet individual needs of students; Develop and implement classroom and individual behavior management strategies with the general education teacher; Facilitate inclusion of classified students in general classroom; Monitor student's progress toward service plan goals and objectives through data collection, etc.

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

Tree of Knowledge has 15+ years of experience educating 50,000+ students with autism and special needs, and is an approved Title 1 provider of academic support services in FL, NJ, and OH. This appropriation, if funded, will support the creation and implementation of ESE enrichment support classrooms dedicated specifically to students with autism and special needs at the Landow/Chabad Educational Center network of schools in South Florida. Approximately 101-200 students.

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

This program is in line and supporting the stated mission of FDOE, which has engaged in efforts throughout the state designed to strengthen the quality and variety of services for ESE students. Numerous studies have documented improved educational, developmental, and social outcomes when students with autism and special needs are provided with additional, and specialized, ESE support, especially in the primary (K-8) grade levels.

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?

Failure to meet deliverables, without notification of good reasoning, will result in financial penalties as described in contract.

15. Requester Contact Information

a. First Name **Last Name**

b. Organization

c. E-mail Address

d. Phone Number **Ext.**



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16. Recipient Contact Information

a. Organization (216) 233-0064

b. Municipality and County Miami-Dade

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 Nicky Last Name Salfer

e. E-mail Address nsalfer@learningtreemiami.com

f. Phone Number (216)233-0064

17. Lobbyist Contact Information

a. Name Matt Spritz

b. Firm Name The Spritz Group

c. E-mail Address spritz@thespritzgroup.com

d. Phone Number (954)612-2185