



The Florida Senate

Local Funding Initiative Request

Fiscal Year 2026-2027

LFIR # 1138

1. Project Title Center for Creative Education (CCE): Ending the Cycle of Elementary Illiteracy

2. Senate Sponsor Alexis Calatayud

3. Date of Request 11/7/2025

4. Project/Program Description

The Center for Creative Education's goal is to eliminate elementary illiteracy through creativity and the arts. Several years ago, CCE opened The Foundations School, an innovative, independent elementary school, which serves many of the poorest areas in Palm Beach County, at little to no cost to the families which attend. 100% of third grade students at The Foundations School that have attended since kindergarten are reading at grade level. This compared to a statewide average of 57%, and in the high poverty communities served by The Foundations School, only 34% of third grade students can read. Illiteracy is a pipeline to prison, homelessness, unemployment, and multi-generational poverty -- CCE is breaking that barrier through transformative approaches. Critically, literacy is the foundational pillar for all future learning. The need to admit more students to this unique, school choice experience is staggering, and requires more space, necessitating a new 35,000 sq/ft. building.

5. State Agency to receive requested funds Department of Education

State Agency contacted? Yes

6. Amount of the Nonrecurring Request for Fiscal Year 2026-2027

Type of Funding	Amount
Operating	0
Fixed Capital Outlay	1,500,000
Total State Funds Requested	1,500,000

7. Total Project Cost for Fiscal Year 2026-2027 (including matching funds available for this project)

Type of Funding	Amount	Percentage
Total State Funds Requested (from question #6)	1,500,000	33%
Matching Funds		
Federal	0	0%
State (excluding the amount of this request)	0	0%
Local	0	0%
Other	3,000,000	67%
Total Project Costs for Fiscal Year 2026-2027	4,500,000	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		
2025-26	0	1,000,000	114	Yes

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

a. If yes, indicate nonrecurring amount per year. 2,000,000

b. Describe the source of funding that can be used in lieu of state funding.



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CCE will continue to seek and receive private foundation and individual donor support.

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?

11/01/2027

d. What is the estimated completion date of construction?

11/01/2030

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

CCE will continue to seek and receive private foundation and individual donor support.

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.

Center for Creative Education

12. 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		0
Consultants/Contracted Services/Study		0
Operational Costs		
Salary and Benefits		0
Expense/Equipment/Travel/Supplies/Other		0
Consultants/Contracted Services/Study		0
Fixed Capital Construction/Major Renovation:		
Construction/Renovation/Land/Planning Engineering	Construction of a two story 35,000 square foot facility that will allow for additional classroom space to support The Foundations School and admit more students. This funding will directly support costs associated with the planning and design phase, which is ongoing.	1,500,000
Total State Funds Requested (must equal total from question #6)		1,500,000

13. Program Performance

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



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The requested funds will enable the Center for Creative Education (CCE) and The Foundations School to expand space needed to add more students who are struggling academically and living in poverty. With a transformative education through creativity and the arts, our students are thriving; 100% of our third grade students that have been with us since kindergarten are reading on or above grade level. The need is overwhelming for this unique, independent school choice experience.

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

The goal of The Foundations School is enroll the maximum number of students to increase the positive impact on the community. CCE's current classroom space is fully committed. The new building will allow The Foundations School to double its capacity and expand its offerings to students on its four acre campus in West Palm Beach.

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

Students and families currently enrolled in The Foundations School will utilize the new space for art, STEM education (science, technology, engineering and math), and media arts education, as well as gallery space for student exhibits and performances. In addition, the facility will be available for the Center for Creative Education's many Palm Beach County-wide after school programs. The completion of the new space will enable The Foundations School to double its enrollment by providing much needed (and highly demanded) additional classrooms.

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

CCE and The Foundations School serve students who are behind academically, living in poverty, and are zoned to attend public schools in northern Palm Beach County which are chronically poor performers on state standardized tests. Once this building project is complete, The Foundations School will double in size to serve 180 students and 360 family members. CCE currently serves an additional 200 students enrolled in after school programs, and 400 family members, as well as 2,000 donors and community members supporting our programs and events. Finally, CCE has collaborations with The School District of Palm Beach County, Florida Atlantic University, Palm Beach Atlantic University and Palm Beach State College.

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

The Center for Creative Education is at the forefront of educational innovation, reform, and school choice. We understand that every child is unique and not all students learn by the same methods of teaching. At the Foundations School, individualized assessments therefore drive instruction. Our goal is that 90% of all students attending our school will continue to perform at grade level or above in reading, math, and science. CCE provides services to after school students, and there are opportunities to engage the wider community with student projects (art galleries, films, shows, etc...).

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?

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

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?



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- ☐ 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)

☐ Non Profit 501(c)(4)

☐ Local Entity



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☐ 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.