



# The Florida Senate

## Local Funding Initiative Request

### Fiscal Year 2026-2027

LFIR # 1630

1. Project Title

2. Senate Sponsor

3. Date of Request

4. Project/Program Description

Miami Lighthouse Academy, LLC provides services for students who are Blind/Visually Impaired. The Academy provides services for Miami-Dade County Public School Students from K-3rd grade. To qualify to be in the school, students must be legally blind, have peripheral field loss, or have a neurological visual impairment inhibiting vision. The services provided on sight are standard curriculum instruction, braille instruction, assistive technology instruction, expanded core curriculum instruction, and low vision accommodations (such as large print, screen reader technology). The instruction includes teachers of the visually impaired, O & M Specialist, ESE certified teachers, Occupational Therapist, Physical Therapist, and Speech Therapist.

5. State Agency to receive requested funds

State Agency contacted?

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

Type of Funding	Amount
Operating	200,000
Fixed Capital Outlay	0
<b>Total State Funds Requested</b>	<b>200,000</b>

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)	200,000	15%
<b>Matching Funds</b>		
Federal	0	0%
State (excluding the amount of this request)	87,500	7%
Local	1,016,401	78%
Other	0	0%
<b>Total Project Costs for Fiscal Year 2026-2027</b>	<b>1,303,901</b>	<b>100%</b>

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		
2025-26	0	200,000	112	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.

State funding is leveraged by \$1,016,401 primarily made up of grants and other fundraising activities such as events and requests for private donations.



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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	Prorated portion of Executive salary and benefits	1,600
Other Salary and Benefits	Prorated portion of Administrative staff	16,000
Expense/Equipment/Travel/Supplies/Other	General Insurance, Audit Fees, General Office Supplies, Computers, etc.	3,400
Consultants/Contracted Services/Study	Prorated portion of facilities and public relations	5,500
<b>Operational Costs</b>		
Salary and Benefits	Prorated portion of 10 Full Time Equivalents plus benefits (20%) for teaching staff.	104,000
Expense/Equipment/Travel/Supplies/Other	Program supplies, occupancy costs, and student transportation	46,000
Consultants/Contracted Services/Study	Nursing, Physical Therapy, Speech Therapy, and Security	23,500
<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>200,000</b>

### 13. Program Performance

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

The Miami Lighthouse Academy will utilize the requested funds, to provide additional services and materials for Kinder-3rd grade students who are blind/visually impaired to be given the expansive supports needed to adapt, modify, and be provided access to the general education curriculum and activities of daily living skills.

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



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Providing educational opportunities for students with visual impairments requires an explicit hands-on approach that implements materials and requires key support personnel. Services include: Direct on site services by Teachers of the Visually Impaired which include braille instruction, low vision adaptations, blind specific curriculum (expanded core curriculum) instruction.

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

Miami Lighthouse for the Blind- in collaboration with Miami-Dade County Public Schools - offers a learning environment for kindergarten, first, second and third grade blind and visually impaired students. Miami Lighthouse is the first vision rehabilitation educational institution using the State of Florida Standards and Benchmarks for Excellent Student Thinking (BEST).

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

Grade school students that are blind or visually impaired, persons with poor physical health, developmentally disabled, physically disabled.

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

The Miami Lighthouse Academy provides services for students who are Blind/Visually Impaired who live within Miami-Dade County, Florida. The academy provides services for Miami-Dade County Public School Students who are visually impaired from K-3rd grade.

**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?**

Penalties for failing to meet deliverables or performance measures include a percentage decrease in funding for failing to report:  
A Final Narrative Report of program  
b. Final breakdown and justification of budget categories including direct costs, administrative costs, student costs.  
d. Final Financial Report  
e. Final invoice for incurred expenses.

**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
- ☐ No, but intends to apply

**a. If yes, provide the FEMA project worksheet ID#:**



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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

e. E-mail Address

f. Phone Number  Ext.

#### 19. Lobbyist Contact Information



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a. Name	<input type="text" value="Monica L. Rodriguez"/>
b. Firm Name	<input type="text" value="Ballard Partners"/>
c. E-mail Address	<input type="text" value="monica@ballardpartners.com"/>
d. Phone Number	<input type="text" value="(850)577-0444"/>

*The information provided will be posted to the Florida Senate website for public viewing if sponsored by a Senator.*