Requester Information

Legislator Name: Gricius, Stephanie

Created Date: January 28th 2026 **Submitted Date:** January 28th 2026

Section 1: Requester Details

Description:

The Aspen Center for Learning is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization created to provide continuing educational opportunities for post-high school students with special needs. These services do not exist in the State of Utah for 99% of our citizens with intellectual and developmental delay. Aspen is requesting funding to build a pilot program with Utah Valley University and to help construct a learning center in Heber City on land donated. Millions of dollars have been raised from parents of these individuals and the public to build the center, and we are asking the State of Utah to also participate in helping to fill this social gap for our vulnerable citizens.

Legislative designee contact information:

Name: Casey Hill

Organization: Lincoln Hill Partners

Position: Partner

Section 2: Funding Information

How will the appropriation be used?

Category	One-time		Ongoing
Personnel Services	2026: 2027:	$0.00 $0.00	$0.00
In-State Travel	2026: 2027:	$0.00 $0.00	$0.00
Out-of-State Travel	2026: 2027:	$0.00 $0.00	$0.00

Category	One-time		Ongoing
Supplies and Equipment	2026: 2027:	$0.00 $0.00	$0.00
Technology Purchases	2026: 2027:	$0.00 $0.00	$0.00
Infrastructure/Capital Investments	2026: 2027:	$0.00 $1,500,000.00	$0.00
Other Charges/Pass Thru	2026: 2027:	$0.00 $0.00	$0.00

Expenditure Total

One-time 2026	One-time 2027	Ongoing 2027
$0.00	**$1,500,000.00**	**$0.00**

Funding Sources:

General Fund

Amount Requested:

2026 (One-time)	$0.00
2027 (One-time)	$1,500,000.00
2027 (Ongoing)	$0.00

Revenue Total

One-time 2026	One-time 2027	Ongoing 2027
$0.00	**$1,500,000.00**	**$0.00**

Is this a multi-year project?

No

Is this project scalable if the Legislature does not fund the full requested amount?

No

A short explanation describing how the project might be scaled?

Section 3: Agency Information

Subjects:

Infrastructure and Mobility

Agency:

532 / Utah Education and Telehealth Network

Type of entity to receive pass-through funding:

Government Not For Profit

Grant recipient

No

Requested Direct Award Grant Recipient

Section 4: Performance Outcome Measurement

Who would benefit the most from this request (who is the target audience)?

Individuals with special needs drop off a social, educational, emotional, and mental cliff after high school. Isolation, regression, and even depression can set in due to the lack of opportunities in our state. This doesn't need to be the case. We can change this. These individuals are delayed in their learning, but they have the capacity to continue learning and progress. It is estimated that by 2030, there will be 50,000-60,000 individuals ages 21+ in Salt Lake, Utah, and Wasatch counties who will need our services. We are specifically targeting individuals with special needs who are in the moderate category and make up the majority of the bell curve and have no educational offerings.

What is this project or program intended to accomplish?

Building the Aspen Center for Learning campus in Heber City and building a pilot program with UVU will provide continuing education in basic math, reading, writing, computer science, life and vocational skills, and other subjects, which will help individuals with special needs continue to progress in life and learning. We intend to use the government funds to build programming and educational learning for students at the UVU Orem campus and the Aspen Heber Campus. The Heber campus is currently designed for a capacity of 80+ students. We are still exploring the capacity of students at UVU. Our goal is to help achieve as much independence as is possible for each student. Molly is a great example of a student who has benefited from a similar program in Massachusetts. You can view a video we made about her here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rNpDxnRwEjk

How will the Legislature know whether the project or program achieved its intended purpose?

The legislature will know that our project has been successful if in 1-3 years from now we are educating 80+ students with IDD. Evidence of success will be a constructed learning center in Heber City and successful launch of a pilot program on campus with UVU, leading to further partnerships between Aspen and universities across the state to provide expanded learning opportunities.

Section 5: Other Supporting Documents

Intent Language Documents

Previous Funding Documents

Full Time Employees

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