



# HOUSE of REPRESENTATIVES

## STATE OF MICHIGAN

### Appropriations Requests for Legislatively Directed Spending Items

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1. The sponsoring representative's first name:  
Karen
2. The sponsoring representative's last name:  
Whitsett
3. The cosponsoring representatives' names. All cosponsors must be listed. If none, please type 'n/a.' A signed letter from the sponsor approving the co-sponsorship and a signed letter from the member wishing to co-sponsor are required. Attach letters at question #9 below.  
N/A
4. Name of the entity that the spending item is intended for:  
SAY Detroit
5. Physical address of the entity that the spending item is intended for:  
SAY Detroit Play Center, 19320 Van Dyke Ave., Detroit, MI 48234
6. If there is not a specific recipient, the intended location of the project or activity:  
N/A
7. Name of the representative and the district number where the legislatively directed spending item is located:  
Karen Whitsett, District 4
8. Purpose of the legislatively directed spending item. Please include how it provides a public benefit and why it is an appropriate use of taxpayer funding. Please also demonstrate that the item does not violate Article IV, S 30 of the Michigan Constitution. SAY Detroit provides pathways to success for Detroiters in need with a focus on solving learning, housing and health care challenges. The nonprofit's afterschool academic enrichment program -- the SAY Detroit Play Center -- empowers youth by providing high-quality pathways to learning success in a safe, nurturing and enriching environment. Since opening our doors in 2015, the SAY Detroit Play Center (SDPC) has contributed to rebuilding and empowering one of Detroit's most-challenged neighborhoods. Set on nearly 15 acres in the Osborn community in northeast Detroit, the facility was formerly

an abandoned City of Detroit recreation center (Lipke Park) until it was targeted by SAY Detroit to become a premier learning center for Detroit-area youth with academics as its core.

Establishing consistent, supportive collaborations with local educational institutions is vital the success of the SAY Detroit Play Center. In 2023-24, the center registered students from more than 50 Detroit-area schools. Our K-12 partnerships include: The Detroit Public Schools Community District; Dove Academy; Legacy Academy; Academy of Warren; Centerline Preparatory Academy; Centerline High School; Detroit Edison Preparatory School Academy and High School; Regent Park Scholars Academy; Chandler Park Academy; Cornerstone Academy; Detroit Preparatory Academy; Lincoln Middle School, and Detroit Loyola High School. SAY Detroit Play Center also has existing post-secondary education partnerships with the Wayne State University School of Social Work (social work interns), the Wayne State University School of Medicine (academic tutors), the Wayne State University Center for Research (evaluation services), and the University of Michigan (teambuilding / professional staff development activities). The acquisition of state funding is vital to ensuring the sustainability of the SAY Detroit Play Center. We have seen phenomenal growth in interest from Detroit-area families and enrollment between 2022 and 2024 - as evidenced by a 60% increase in daily student participation during the past two years. The increased demand and student enrollment numbers coincides with additional school pickup sites from our transportation division, increased costs in food, the need to expand staff in all areas of our operation to maintain appropriate staff-to-student ratios, as well as the need to purchase additional supplies and equipment for operational purposes. From an infrastructure perspective, we continue to realize significant increases in costs to ensuring that the SAY Detroit Play Center is a safe, accessible facility that meets the environmental requirements to obtain a Child Caring Institution license through the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services in 2025.

9. Attach documents here if needed:

N/A

10. The amount of state funding requested for the legislatively directed spending item.

2,000,000

11. Has the legislatively directed spending item previously received any of the following types of funding? Check all that apply.

[Local, Private]

12. Please select one of the following groups that describes the entity requesting the legislatively directed spending item:

Non-profit organization

13. For a non-profit organization, has the organization been operating within Michigan for the preceding 36 months?

Yes

14. For a non-profit organization, has the entity had a physical office within Michigan for the preceding 12 months?

Yes

15. For a non-profit organization, does the organization have a board of directors?

Yes

16. For a non-profit organization, list all the active members on the organization's board of directors and any other officers. If this question is not applicable, please type 'n/a.'

- Mitch Albom
- Dennis Archer
- Chad Audi
- Benjamin Carter
- Cynthia Ford
- Carmen Harlan
- Mike Land
- Rob Orley
- Al Papa
- Charlie Rothstein
- Arn Tellem

17. "I certify that neither the sponsoring representative nor the sponsoring representative's staff or immediate family has a direct or indirect pecuniary interest in the legislatively directed spending item."

Yes, this is correct

18. Anticipated start and end dates for the legislatively directed spending item:

October 2025 – September 2026

19. "I hereby certify that all information provided in this request is true and accurate."

Yes