

Agency Name:	Governor's School for Science and Mathematics		
Agency Code:	H650	Section:	10



Fiscal Year FY 2026-2027

Agency Budget Plan

FORM A - BUDGET PLAN SUMMARY

OPERATING REQUESTS <i>(FORM B1)</i>	For FY 2026-2027, my agency is (mark "X"):	
	☒	Requesting General Fund Appropriations.
	☐	Requesting Federal/Other Authorization.
	☐	Not requesting any changes.
NON-RECURRING REQUESTS <i>(FORM B2)</i>	For FY 2026-2027, my agency is (mark "X"):	
	☐	Requesting Non-Recurring Appropriations.
	☐	Requesting Non-Recurring Federal/Other Authorization.
	☒	Not requesting any changes.
CAPITAL REQUESTS <i>(FORM C)</i>	For FY 2026-2027, my agency is (mark "X"):	
	☒	Requesting funding for Capital Projects.
	☐	Not requesting any changes.
PROVISOS <i>(FORM D)</i>	For FY 2026-2027, my agency is (mark "X"):	
	☐	Requesting a new proviso and/or substantive changes to existing provisos.
	☐	Only requesting technical proviso changes (such as date references).
	☒	Not requesting any proviso changes.

Please identify your agency's preferred contacts for this year's budget process.

	<u>Name</u>	<u>Phone</u>	<u>Email</u>
PRIMARY CONTACT: SECONDARY CONTACT:	Elizabeth Oswald-Sease	(843) 383-3906	eoswaldsease@governors.school
	Thomas Kaminer	(803) 737-0526	thomas.kaminer@admin.sc.gov

I have reviewed and approved the enclosed FY 2026-2027 Agency Budget Plan, which is complete and accurate to the extent of my knowledge.

	<u>Agency Director</u>	<u>Board or Commission Chair</u>
SIGN/DATE:		
TYPE/PRINT NAME:	Daniel S. Dorsel	Robert J. Brown

This form must be signed by the agency head – not a delegate.

Agency Name:	Governor's School for Science and Mathematics
Agency Code:	H650
Section:	10

BUDGET REQUESTS			FUNDING					FTES				
Priority	Request Type	Request Title	State	Federal	Earmarked	Restricted	Total	State	Federal	Earmarked	Restricted	Total
1	B1 - Recurring	Step Increase Support for Instructors	192,705	0	0	0	192,705	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
2	B1 - Recurring	Operating Expense Increase	190,081	0	0	0	190,081	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
3	C - Capital	Engineering and Research Building	29,200,500	0	0	0	29,200,500	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
4	B1 - Recurring	Summer Program Partnerships with SC Technical College System	300,000	0	0	0	300,000	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
5	B1 - Recurring	Summer Research Program Partnerships with USC Columbia and Clemson	300,000	0	0	0	300,000	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
6	B1 - Recurring	Robotics	125,000	0	0	0	125,000	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
7	B1 - Recurring	Time Limited to FTE Conversion	0	0	0	0	0	3.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	3.00
TOTALS			30,308,286	0	0	0	30,308,286	3.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	3.00

Agency Name:	Governor's School for Science and Mathematics		
Agency Code:	H650	Section:	10

FORM B1 – RECURRING OPERATING REQUEST

AGENCY PRIORITY	1
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Provide the Agency Priority Ranking from the Executive Summary.

TITLE	Step Increase Support for Instructors
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Provide a brief, descriptive title for this request.

AMOUNT	General: \$192,705 Federal: \$0 Other: \$0 Total: \$192,705
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What is the net change in requested appropriations for FY 2026-2027? This amount should correspond to the total for all funding sources on the Executive Summary.

NEW POSITIONS	0.00
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Please provide the total number of new positions needed for this request.

FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH THE REQUEST	Mark “X” for all that apply:	
	X	Change in cost of providing current services to existing program audience
		Change in case load/enrollment under existing program guidelines
		Non-mandated change in eligibility/enrollment for existing program
		Non-mandated program change in service levels or areas
		Proposed establishment of a new program or initiative
		Loss of federal or other external financial support for existing program
		Exhaustion of fund balances previously used to support program
		IT Technology/Security related
	X	HR/Personnel Related
		Consulted DTO during development
		Related to a Non-Recurring request – If so, Priority #

STATEWIDE ENTERPRISE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	Mark “X” for primary applicable Statewide Enterprise Strategic Objective:	
	X	Education, Training, and Human Development
		Healthy and Safe Families
		Maintaining Safety, Integrity, and Security
		Public Infrastructure and Economic Development
		Government and Citizens

ACCOUNTABILITY OF FUNDS	1.1 Provide the best credentialed and most experienced teachers in all subjects. This request allows the South Carolina Governor’s School for Science and Mathematics to recruit and retain exemplary instructors.
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What specific strategy, as outlined in the most recent Strategic Planning and Performance Measurement template of agency’s accountability report, does this funding request support? How would this request advance that strategy? How would the use of these funds be evaluated?

RECIPIENTS OF	GSSM instructors. Per Provisos 1A.4 and 1A.31, GSSM must provide its instructors with annual step increases. The requested funds will be allocated based on the instructor’s education level and years of experience. The Provisos require that the
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FUNDS	institution utilize the Teacher Salary Schedule authorized by Darlington County School District as a base.
	<i>What individuals or entities would receive these funds (contractors, vendors, grantees, individual beneficiaries, etc.)? How would these funds be allocated – using an existing formula, through a competitive process, based upon predetermined eligibility criteria?</i>
JUSTIFICATION OF REQUEST	ISSUE: The South Carolina Governor's School for Science and Mathematics (GSSM) is dedicated to delivering rigorous, STEM-focused educational opportunities to South Carolina's most motivated and talented students both on campus and virtually through partnerships with school districts statewide. To fulfill this mission, GSSM relies on highly qualified faculty whose expertise and commitment are essential to student success. Per Provisos 1A.4 and 1A.31 of the South Carolina General Appropriations Act, GSSM is obligated to provide annual step increases to its instructors in alignment with the teacher salary scale adopted by the Darlington County School District. These state-mandated adjustments create recurring personnel costs that must be funded to ensure compliance and the retention of top instructional talent. SOLUTION: GSSM requests \$192,705 in recurring personnel funding to fully support FY26 faculty step increases, comprised of: • \$143,810 in recurring salary expenses, and • \$48,895 in recurring employer contribution expenses. This request ensures that GSSM can continue to provide the mandated salary adjustments without diverting operating funds from other mission-critical educational and student support programs. METHODOLOGY: Faculty step increases are calculated annually by comparing each instructor's base salary from the prior year with the current year's salary as set by the Darlington County School District's scale. The percentage increase is determined by an instructor's years of teaching experience and highest level of education, then applied to GSSM faculty salaries. For FY26: The average step increase was 3.48%, or \$3,195.77 per faculty member, across 45 instructors. Employer contributions are projected at 34%, equaling \$48,895. The combined recurring impact totals \$192,705. IMPACT: State law requires GSSM to provide annual step increases to all full-time instructors. Without recurring funding, GSSM would be forced to absorb these mandated costs by reallocating limited operating funds, contrary to state budgeting guidelines and to the detriment of instructional and student support programs. Approving this request ensures compliance with statutory requirements, supports the retention of highly qualified faculty, and sustains GSSM's ability to deliver world-class STEM education to South Carolina's future workforce.
	<i>Please thoroughly explain the request to include the justification for funds, potential offsets, matching funds, and method of calculation. Please include any explanation of impact if funds are not received. If new positions have been requested, explain why existing vacancies are not sufficient.</i>

Agency Name:	Governor's School for Science and Mathematics		
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FORM B1 – RECURRING OPERATING REQUEST

AGENCY PRIORITY	2
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Provide the Agency Priority Ranking from the Executive Summary.

TITLE	Operating Expense Increase
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Provide a brief, descriptive title for this request.

AMOUNT	General: \$190,081 Federal: \$0 Other: \$0 Total: \$190,081
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What is the net change in requested appropriations for FY 2026-2027? This amount should correspond to the total for all funding sources on the Executive Summary.

NEW POSITIONS	0.00
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Please provide the total number of new positions needed for this request.

FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH THE REQUEST	Mark “X” for all that apply:	
	☒	Change in cost of providing current services to existing program audience
	☐	Change in case load/enrollment under existing program guidelines
	☐	Non-mandated change in eligibility/enrollment for existing program
	☐	Non-mandated program change in service levels or areas
	☐	Proposed establishment of a new program or initiative
	☐	Loss of federal or other external financial support for existing program
	☐	Exhaustion of fund balances previously used to support program
	☐	IT Technology/Security related
	☐	HR/Personnel Related
	☐	Consulted DTO during development
☐	Related to a Non-Recurring request – If so, Priority #	

STATEWIDE ENTERPRISE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	Mark “X” for primary applicable Statewide Enterprise Strategic Objective:	
	☒	Education, Training, and Human Development
	☐	Healthy and Safe Families
	☐	Maintaining Safety, Integrity, and Security
	☐	Public Infrastructure and Economic Development
☐	Government and Citizens	

ACCOUNTABILITY OF FUNDS	1.2: Provide the best advanced education for South Carolina’s most talented and motivated students by continually advancing residential, online, and Statewide Services curriculum offerings. This recurring operating budget increase is necessary to offset inflationary expenses, which impact our ability to maintain current service levels and meet our mission to provide a high-quality, STEM-focused education to our students.
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What specific strategy, as outlined in the most recent Strategic Planning and Performance Measurement template of agency’s accountability report, does this funding request support? How would this request advance that strategy? How would the use of these funds be evaluated?

RECIPIENTS OF	External vendors
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FUNDS

What individuals or entities would receive these funds (contractors, vendors, grantees, individual beneficiaries, etc.)? How would these funds be allocated – using an existing formula, through a competitive process, based upon predetermined eligibility criteria?

JUSTIFICATION OF REQUEST

ISSUE: According to the Consumer Price Index (CPI), prices across all major categories increased by 2.7% between July 2024 and June 2025. This inflationary growth directly impacts the institution's ability to purchase goods and services necessary to sustain its academic, residential, and statewide service programs. Without an adjustment for inflation, the value of the current budget diminishes, challenging GSSM's ability to fulfill its mission effectively.

SOLUTION: The institution requests a 2.7% increase in its operating expense budget to offset the effects of inflation. This adjustment will allow GSSM to continue providing high-quality educational programming, maintain operational standards, and meet student and staff needs without compromising quality or scope.

METHODOLOGY: In FY25, the institution incurred \$7,040,028 in operating expenses.

Applying the CPI-based adjustment of 2.7% results in an additional \$190,081 in required recurring funds. This methodology ensures the request is data-driven and directly tied to federal inflationary benchmarks.

IMPACT: If additional funding is not provided, GSSM will be forced to absorb inflationary costs within its current appropriation, resulting in fewer available resources for student services, academic programming, and campus operations. Over time, this erosion of purchasing power will limit the institution's ability to: maintain a safe and healthy residential environment for students, faculty, and staff; provide necessary supplies, materials, and contracted services at current standards; and, sustain the quality and competitiveness of STEM education offered to South Carolina's most talented students. Recurring inflationary adjustments are essential to protect core operations and ensure that GSSM continues to deliver world-class STEM education in alignment with state priorities.

Please thoroughly explain the request to include the justification for funds, potential offsets, matching funds, and method of calculation. Please include any explanation of impact if funds are not received. If new positions have been requested, explain why existing vacancies are not sufficient.

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FORM B1 – RECURRING OPERATING REQUEST

AGENCY PRIORITY	4
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Provide the Agency Priority Ranking from the Executive Summary.

TITLE	Summer Program Partnerships with SC Technical College System
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Provide a brief, descriptive title for this request.

AMOUNT	General: \$300,000 Federal: \$0 Other: \$0 Total: \$300,000
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What is the net change in requested appropriations for FY 2026-2027? This amount should correspond to the total for all funding sources on the Executive Summary.

NEW POSITIONS	0.00
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Please provide the total number of new positions needed for this request.

FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH THE REQUEST	Mark “X” for all that apply:	
	X	Change in cost of providing current services to existing program audience
		Change in case load/enrollment under existing program guidelines
		Non-mandated change in eligibility/enrollment for existing program
		Non-mandated program change in service levels or areas
		Proposed establishment of a new program or initiative
		Loss of federal or other external financial support for existing program
		Exhaustion of fund balances previously used to support program
		IT Technology/Security related
		HR/Personnel Related
		Consulted DTO during development
	Related to a Non-Recurring request – If so, Priority #	

STATEWIDE ENTERPRISE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	Mark “X” for primary applicable Statewide Enterprise Strategic Objective:	
	X	Education, Training, and Human Development
		Healthy and Safe Families
		Maintaining Safety, Integrity, and Security
		Public Infrastructure and Economic Development
		Government and Citizens

ACCOUNTABILITY OF FUNDS	3.2 Enhance and expand high-quality statewide academic programs developed and delivered. GSSM seeks to serve as a statewide resource to support STEM education. This request is focused on providing recurring support for our summer programs for elementary and middle public-school students, which are offered to students across the state in partnership with the SC Technical College System on all 16 technical college campuses.
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What specific strategy, as outlined in the most recent Strategic Planning and Performance Measurement template of agency’s accountability report, does this funding request support? How would this request advance that strategy? How would the use of these funds be evaluated?

RECIPIENTS OF	South Carolina public school students
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FUNDS

What individuals or entities would receive these funds (contractors, vendors, grantees, individual beneficiaries, etc.)? How would these funds be allocated – using an existing formula, through a competitive process, based upon predetermined eligibility criteria?

JUSTIFICATION OF REQUEST

ISSUE: For more than 26 years, the South Carolina Governor's School for Science and Mathematics (GSSM) has delivered high-quality, affordable summer camp programming statewide in fields such as Engineering, 3D Animation, Game Design, and Biological Sciences. To maximize this impact, GSSM employs public-school teachers from across South Carolina to deliver innovative STEM content through the GoSciTech Day Camp program. This effort supports the broader SC NEXUS for Advanced Resilient Energy initiative, a federally designated Regional Technology and Innovation Hub focused on advanced energy and workforce development. The SC NEXUS consortium, led by the South Carolina Department of Commerce and supported by universities, technical colleges, national labs, and industry partners, has already secured \$45 million in federal funding to boost clean energy innovation, workforce training, especially in underserved communities, and statewide economic competitiveness. While GSSM is recognized as the leading K-12 partner in SC NEXUS, the program currently relies on annual fundraising by the GSSM Foundation rather than recurring state support, limiting its sustainability and growth.

SOLUTION: To ensure equitable access for all South Carolina students regardless of geography, GSSM has launched a collaborative partnership with the South Carolina Technical College System under SC NEXUS. In the summer of 2024, GSSM delivered programming at 10 of the 16 technical college campuses, reaching more than 200 students and employing local educators statewide. Building on this success, GSSM scaled the program to all 16 technical college campuses during the summer of 2025. By establishing recurring support through General Funds, the state will not only sustain this program but also strengthen GSSM's ability to attract future external funding opportunities in alignment with statewide economic development opportunities, just as prior investments helped leverage resources through SC NEXUS.

METHODOLOGY: GSSM's summer camp expenses exceed \$500,000 annually, with nearly half of these funds used to compensate local South Carolina public school teachers for curriculum delivery and instruction, ensuring that both students and educators benefit directly from the program. The remainder of program expenses supports curriculum development, student materials, and operational costs necessary to deliver high-quality STEM programming at scale. The expansion into technical colleges was strategically supported by SC NEXUS, which recognized the program as a cost-effective and scalable model for extending STEM education and teacher engagement statewide. This combination of external investment and state partnership demonstrates a sustainable methodology aligned with South Carolina's long-term workforce development strategy and economic priorities.

IMPACT: Recurring state support will allow GSSM to expand GoSciTech Day Camps across all regions of South Carolina, providing equitable access to advanced STEM learning for students in urban, rural, and underserved communities. This initiative has consistently inspired students toward STEM pathways, offered professional development opportunities to local educators, and strengthened the state's pipeline for technical talent. GSSM's role within SC NEXUS demonstrates how state investment can multiply impact: initial support enabled GSSM to secure federal funding through a high-profile innovation hub, amplifying outcomes. Continued state funding increases the likelihood of attracting additional external support (federal, foundation, or private) that can further grow the program's reach. In essence, every state dollar not only sustains a proven initiative but also acts as a catalyst for expanded resources and return on investment for South Carolina.

Please thoroughly explain the request to include the justification for funds, potential offsets, matching funds, and method of calculation. Please include any explanation of impact if funds are not received. If new positions have been requested, explain why existing vacancies are not sufficient.

Agency Name:	Governor's School for Science and Mathematics		
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FORM B1 – RECURRING OPERATING REQUEST

AGENCY PRIORITY	5
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Provide the Agency Priority Ranking from the Executive Summary.

TITLE	Summer Research Program Partnerships with USC Columbia and Clemson
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Provide a brief, descriptive title for this request.

AMOUNT	General: \$300,000 Federal: \$0 Other: \$0 Total: \$300,000
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What is the net change in requested appropriations for FY 2026-2027? This amount should correspond to the total for all funding sources on the Executive Summary.

NEW POSITIONS	0.00
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Please provide the total number of new positions needed for this request.

FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH THE REQUEST	Mark “X” for all that apply:	
		Change in cost of providing current services to existing program audience
	X	Change in case load/enrollment under existing program guidelines
		Non-mandated change in eligibility/enrollment for existing program
		Non-mandated program change in service levels or areas
		Proposed establishment of a new program or initiative
		Loss of federal or other external financial support for existing program
		Exhaustion of fund balances previously used to support program
		IT Technology/Security related
		HR/Personnel Related
		Consulted DTO during development
	Related to a Non-Recurring request – If so, Priority #	

STATEWIDE ENTERPRISE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	Mark “X” for primary applicable Statewide Enterprise Strategic Objective:	
	X	Education, Training, and Human Development
		Healthy and Safe Families
		Maintaining Safety, Integrity, and Security
		Public Infrastructure and Economic Development
	Government and Citizens	

ACCOUNTABILITY OF FUNDS	3.1 Enhance GSSM's advanced research program opportunities for students. GSSM’s mission is to provide a transformative STEM education that cultivates joy in learning and supports South Carolina’s workforce and economic development efforts. The institution’s innovative summer research program, which is a graduation requirement, exposes students to mentored research opportunities at the state’s R-1 universities, the University of South Carolina Columbia and Clemson University. These partnerships benefit the state by increasing in-state recruitment and retention.
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What specific strategy, as outlined in the most recent Strategic Planning and Performance Measurement template of agency’s accountability report, does this funding request support? How would this request advance that strategy? How would the use of these funds be evaluated?

RECIPIENTS OF	South Carolina’s R-1 universities (the University of South Carolina Columbia and Clemson University). GSSM also partners with the Medical University of South Carolina and other colleges and universities, such as the College of Charleston and Winthrop
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FUNDS

University, for this purpose.

What individuals or entities would receive these funds (contractors, vendors, grantees, individual beneficiaries, etc.)? How would these funds be allocated – using an existing formula, through a competitive process, based upon predetermined eligibility criteria?

JUSTIFICATION OF REQUEST

ISSUE: GSSM's innovative and rigorous STEM-focused curriculum is the primary reason the institution is consistently ranked among the top high schools in the nation. A hallmark of the GSSM experience is the required six-week immersive summer research program, in which students are paired with professional researchers to contribute to active projects. Currently, the institution relies on fundraising efforts by its Foundation to cover the contractual costs associated with ongoing partnerships with the University of South Carolina, Columbia, and Clemson University. Without recurring state support, this critical program remains dependent on unpredictable private fundraising.

SOLUTION: The summer research program provides students with transformative, hands-on experiences while also fostering early connections to South Carolina's R-1 universities. In FY25, more than 80 GSSM students partnered with faculty mentors at USC Columbia and Clemson University, conducting advanced research in areas such as microfluidic devices for breast cancer diagnosis and treatment at the single-cell level, integrating robotics into advanced manufacturing systems, applying artificial intelligence to discover improved materials for energy production and storage, molecular genetic plant breeding to reduce allergy risks, developing materials for quantum computing, designing reduced-cost engineering solutions for remote sensing, and building a ground communication station to support South Carolina's first university-built satellite launch. These opportunities expose students to world-class research while cultivating pathways into South Carolina's higher education institutions. Many students continue their projects after graduating from GSSM, further strengthening ties to in-state universities. Recurring financial support through General Funds will sustain and expand this vital program, ensuring that it remains accessible to every GSSM student.

METHODOLOGY: This request is based on the actual contractual costs of the program, including providing on-campus housing for each participating student. In FY25, program expenses totaled \$303,243, including \$155,027 for 32 students conducting research at USC Columbia and \$148,216 for 51 students conducting research at Clemson University and its extension sites in Greenville, Florence/Darlington, and North Charleston. These costs reflect negotiated agreements with the universities to support faculty mentorship, laboratory access, and student housing during the six-week summer term. Although the institution is only seeking funding support for its contractual expenses with USC Columbia and Clemson, GSSM also partners with other colleges and universities, including the Medical University of South Carolina, to offer research experiences. In FY25, summer research expenses at MUSC totaled approximately \$60k for 19 student participants. GSSM also placed students at Winthrop University and the College of Charleston during the summer of 2025.

IMPACT: Recurring state support will secure a cornerstone of the GSSM educational model, strengthening academic excellence while also deepening ties between South Carolina's brightest high school students and its premier research universities. This investment will directly support in-state recruitment and retention by connecting students early to USC Columbia and Clemson, encouraging them to pursue their undergraduate and graduate education in South Carolina rather than out of state. Sustaining this program also positions GSSM to explore future academic enhancements, including the possibility of introducing a global engagement graduation requirement.

By stabilizing funding for the summer research program, the state ensures that GSSM can continue producing highly motivated STEM graduates, expand collaboration with USC and Clemson faculty, and contribute to the long-term development of South Carolina's knowledge-based workforce.

Please thoroughly explain the request to include the justification for funds, potential offsets, matching funds, and method of calculation. Please include any explanation of impact if funds are not received. If new positions have been requested, explain why existing vacancies are not sufficient.

Agency Name:	Governor's School for Science and Mathematics		
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FORM B1 – RECURRING OPERATING REQUEST

AGENCY PRIORITY	6
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Provide the Agency Priority Ranking from the Executive Summary.

TITLE	Robotics
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Provide a brief, descriptive title for this request.

AMOUNT	General: \$125,000 Federal: \$0 Other: \$0 Total: \$125,000
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What is the net change in requested appropriations for FY 2026-2027? This amount should correspond to the total for all funding sources on the Executive Summary.

NEW POSITIONS	0.00
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Please provide the total number of new positions needed for this request.

FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH THE REQUEST	Mark “X” for all that apply:	
	☒	Change in cost of providing current services to existing program audience
	☐	Change in case load/enrollment under existing program guidelines
	☐	Non-mandated change in eligibility/enrollment for existing program
	☐	Non-mandated program change in service levels or areas
	☐	Proposed establishment of a new program or initiative
	☐	Loss of federal or other external financial support for existing program
	☐	Exhaustion of fund balances previously used to support program
	☐	IT Technology/Security related
	☐	HR/Personnel Related
	☐	Consulted DTO during development
	☐	Related to a Non-Recurring request – If so, Priority #

STATEWIDE ENTERPRISE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	Mark “X” for primary applicable Statewide Enterprise Strategic Objective:	
	☒	Education, Training, and Human Development
	☐	Healthy and Safe Families
	☐	Maintaining Safety, Integrity, and Security
	☐	Public Infrastructure and Economic Development
	☐	Government and Citizens

ACCOUNTABILITY OF FUNDS	1.2.1 Provide advanced education for South Carolina’s most academically motivated students; continually enhance curriculum offerings in the residential, virtual, and outreach programs; maintain or increase high-impact practices at GSSM. Robotics at GSSM is a high-impact practice because it combines hands-on research, collaborative teamwork, and real-world problem-solving. Students apply STEM knowledge in authentic, competitive settings, work in diverse teams, and engage in outreach that connects them to schools and communities across the state. The program serves as a capstone-like experience that integrates classroom learning with applied innovation, while also building global connections and workforce-ready skills.
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What specific strategy, as outlined in the most recent Strategic Planning and Performance Measurement template of agency’s accountability report, does this funding request support? How would this request advance that strategy? How would the use of these funds be evaluated?

	GSSM students; the institution has six robotics teams, with nearly 30% of the GSSM
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RECIPIENTS OF FUNDS	student population participating annually.
	<i>What individuals or entities would receive these funds (contractors, vendors, grantees, individual beneficiaries, etc.)? How would these funds be allocated – using an existing formula, through a competitive process, based upon predetermined eligibility criteria?</i>
JUSTIFICATION OF REQUEST	ISSUE: Robotics is one of the fastest-growing and most in-demand fields in STEM education, offering students immersive, hands-on experiences that embody several of GSSM’s high-impact practices, including applied research, collaborative learning, and experiential problem-solving. GSSM’s robotics program, centered on the FIRST Tech Challenge (FTC), has become one of the school’s most popular and successful initiatives, with approximately 30% (>80) of students participating in FY25. Demand for these experiences continues to exceed the institution’s current space and financial capacity. While GSSM has proposed a new Engineering and Research Building to relieve space pressures, if this request is not funded, the robotics program will face immediate challenges in meeting student demand, supporting competition-level preparation, and launching the new underwater robotics program. SOLUTION: GSSM seeks recurring state support to sustain and expand its robotics program as a cornerstone of its high-impact practices. This investment will provide the funding necessary to cover competition fees, equipment, maintenance, and travel for FTC robotics, while also supporting the expansion of the program into underwater robotics, a field directly tied to South Carolina’s maritime and advanced manufacturing industries. Looking forward, GSSM also anticipates growth into drone robotics, an emerging area of strategic importance for South Carolina with applications in logistics, agriculture, aerospace, and defense. Without new campus space, recurring funds will also be essential to allow GSSM to rent and adapt external facilities so students can continue to design, build, and test their robots in a competitive environment. METHODOLOGY: In FY25, GSSM invested \$98,412 in robotics to support equipment purchases, materials, team logistics, and competition expenses. Beginning in FY26, the GSSM Foundation was asked to fundraise in order to help support program costs; however, relying on private fundraising for core instructional programs is neither predictable nor sustainable. The Foundation’s role is intended as a short-term bridge until recurring state funds are secured, which will allow its resources to be redirected toward program enhancements and statewide engagement rather than baseline operations. Expenditures reflect the essential components of a high-impact learning experience: competition participation, design-based research, collaborative team learning, and faculty mentorship. As robotics expands into underwater and drone applications, costs will rise to accommodate specialized equipment, materials, and potential rental of external workspace, should state support for new facilities not be approved. This request is therefore based on both historical expenditures and projected costs of sustaining and expanding one of GSSM’s signature high-impact practices. IMPACT: Recurring state support is essential to ensuring that GSSM’s robotics program remains accessible, competitive, and aligned with South Carolina’s workforce needs. Robotics integrates multiple high-impact practices by requiring students to apply classroom knowledge to real-world design challenges, collaborate in diverse teams, and engage with schools and communities statewide. These experiences foster teamwork, critical thinking, and innovation while exposing students to technologies used in industries vital to South Carolina’s economic growth, including aerospace, automotive, maritime, agriculture, and advanced manufacturing. GSSM’s Golden Dragons (FTC 772) have already demonstrated excellence at the state, national, and international levels. In 2025, the team made history as the first South Carolina team to reach the division playoffs at the FTC World Championship in Houston, finishing 9th in their division and serving as an alliance captain. The team has competed at Worlds for two consecutive years and was also invited to the elite Chicago Robotics Invitational (CRI) in July 2025, one of the most prestigious international robotics competitions. These accomplishments highlight both the program’s quality and the way GSSM serves as a statewide point of pride for South Carolina. With stable recurring support, the program will not only remain sustainable but also expand into underwater and drone robotics, further preparing students for high-demand career pathways. Without such funding, GSSM may be forced to restrict participation, reduce program scope, or rent external space, thereby undermining

	access to one of the most impactful and transformative STEM learning experiences in the state.
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Please thoroughly explain the request to include the justification for funds, potential offsets, matching funds, and method of calculation. Please include any explanation of impact if funds are not received. If new positions have been requested, explain why existing vacancies are not sufficient.

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FORM B1 – RECURRING OPERATING REQUEST

AGENCY PRIORITY	7
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Provide the Agency Priority Ranking from the Executive Summary.

TITLE	Time Limited to FTE Conversion
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Provide a brief, descriptive title for this request.

AMOUNT	General: \$0 Federal: \$0 Other: \$0 Total: \$0
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What is the net change in requested appropriations for FY 2026-2027? This amount should correspond to the total for all funding sources on the Executive Summary.

NEW POSITIONS	3.00
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Please provide the total number of new positions needed for this request.

FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH THE REQUEST	Mark “X” for all that apply:	
	☐	Change in cost of providing current services to existing program audience
	☐	Change in case load/enrollment under existing program guidelines
	☐	Non-mandated change in eligibility/enrollment for existing program
	☐	Non-mandated program change in service levels or areas
	☐	Proposed establishment of a new program or initiative
	☐	Loss of federal or other external financial support for existing program
	☐	Exhaustion of fund balances previously used to support program
	☐	IT Technology/Security related
	☒	HR/Personnel Related
	☐	Consulted DTO during development
☐	Related to a Non-Recurring request – If so, Priority #	

STATEWIDE ENTERPRISE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	Mark “X” for primary applicable Statewide Enterprise Strategic Objective:	
	☒	Education, Training, and Human Development
	☐	Healthy and Safe Families
	☐	Maintaining Safety, Integrity, and Security
	☐	Public Infrastructure and Economic Development
	☐	Government and Citizens

ACCOUNTABILITY OF FUNDS	3. Serve as a statewide resource for K-12 students and educators; serve talented and motivated students across South Carolina. Stable staffing ensures the consistent delivery of outreach programs, summer camps, teacher training, and specialized academic offerings that directly benefit districts across South Carolina. By securing these positions as FTEs, the state guarantees that GSSM can continue providing equitable, high-quality STEM opportunities to students and teachers in every region, fulfilling its statewide mission and amplifying the return on the state’s investment.
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What specific strategy, as outlined in the most recent Strategic Planning and Performance Measurement template of agency’s accountability report, does this funding request support? How would this request advance that strategy? How would the use of these funds be evaluated?

	Three GSSM Employees (Non-Certified Instructor, Landscape Technician, Mailroom
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RECIPIENTS OF FUNDS	Coordinator).
JUSTIFICATION OF REQUEST	<i>What individuals or entities would receive these funds (contractors, vendors, grantees, individual beneficiaries, etc.)? How would these funds be allocated – using an existing formula, through a competitive process, based upon predetermined eligibility criteria?</i> ISSUE: Three positions, including an instructor position, a maintenance/landscaping position, and an administrative position, at our institution that are essential to ongoing operations and funded through general appropriations, are currently classified as time-limited. While this structure initially provided short-term staffing flexibility, these roles now support long-term, mission-critical needs. As such, reclassifying these positions as full-time equivalent (FTE) is necessary to align position type with the nature of the work and the permanence of the funding source. Although a limited number of FTE positions are currently vacant, those slots are reserved for future hires tied to specific programmatic and operational priorities. They are not available for repurposing without compromising strategic staffing plans. SOLUTION: Convert the identified time-limited positions to full-time equivalent (FTE) status to reflect their ongoing responsibilities, ensure proper classification based on funding source, and strengthen workforce continuity and institutional capacity. METHODOLOGY: The institution has reviewed the responsibilities and funding structures of the affected positions and confirmed they are fully supported by recurring general funds, not grants or other temporary sources, and fulfill sustained operational needs. GSSM is requesting three additional FTE slot allocations to accurately classify these roles without drawing from the school's limited pool of existing FTEs, which are committed to other planned uses. This request does not require increased general fund appropriations; rather, it reflects an administrative adjustment to align position classification with existing budget and operational realities. IMPACT: Reclassifying these roles as FTE positions will improve employee retention and morale by providing job security, benefits, and a clearer path for professional growth. This action ensures compliance with State Human Resources best practices and reflects a responsible, forward-thinking approach to institutional workforce planning. Most importantly, it ensures our staffing structure accurately aligns with both the funding model and the permanent nature of the work, without increasing overall costs to the general fund.
	<i>Please thoroughly explain the request to include the justification for funds, potential offsets, matching funds, and method of calculation. Please include any explanation of impact if funds are not received. If new positions have been requested, explain why existing vacancies are not sufficient.</i>

Agency Name:	Governor's School for Science and Mathematics		
Agency Code:	H650	Section:	10

FORM C – CAPITAL REQUEST

AGENCY PRIORITY

3

Provide the Agency Priority Ranking from the Executive Summary.

TITLE

Engineering and Research Building

Provide a brief, descriptive title for this request.

AMOUNT

\$29,200,500

How much is requested for this project in FY 2026-2027? This amount should correspond to the total for all funding sources on the Executive Summary.

CPIP PRIORITY

This is a planned project and is not included in the agency’s current CPIP. Once funded, it will become the top priority.

Identify the project’s CPIP plan year and priority number, along with the first year in which the project was included in the agency’s CPIP. If not included in the agency’s CPIP, please provide an explanation. If the project involves a request for appropriated state funding, briefly describe the agency’s contingency plan in the event that state funding is not made available in the amount requested.

OTHER APPROVALS

The institution’s Board of Trustees and Foundation Board of Directors have endorsed this plan.

What approvals have already been obtained? Are there additional approvals that must be secured in order for the project to succeed? (Institutional board, JBRC, SFAA, etc.)

LONG-TERM PLANNING AND SUSTAINABILITY

The institution has invested in a fourteen-month process with McMillan, Pazdan, and Smith, an architectural firm. GSSM met with the firm again in September 2025 to review the scope of work for this project and confirm the financial projections.

What other funds have already been invested in this project (source/type, amount, timeframe)? Will other capital and/or operating funds for this project be requested in the future? If so, how much, and in which fiscal years? Has a source for those funds been identified/secured? What is the agency’s expectation with regard to additional annual costs or savings associated with this capital improvement? What source of funds will be impacted by those costs or savings? What is the expected useful life of the capital improvement?

ISSUE:

With the generous support of the State of South Carolina, GSSM moved to its Hartsville campus more than twenty years ago. Since that time, the school has experienced exponential growth and has now reached the limits of its existing facilities. The lack of additional space prevents GSSM from expanding on-campus STEM programs for residential students and restricts its capacity to serve public school students and teachers across the state. At the same time, the South Carolina Department of Education continues to designate STEM fields as critical-needs subject areas, underscoring the urgency of scaling access to advanced STEM education and teacher development. To continue meeting the state’s educational and workforce demands, GSSM again turns to state leaders for support, confident that a new investment will yield significant returns by preparing and inspiring even more students and educators.

SUMMARY

Construction market conditions have further increased this urgency. When GSSM first engaged its architectural and engineering partners, the project was estimated at \$20.8 million. Due to significant inflation in labor and materials, verified in September 2025 with McMillan, Pazdan, and Smith, the projected cost has risen to \$29,200,500. Given current market conditions, advancing the project now helps safeguard state resources and ensures that future cost increases are minimized.

SOLUTION: GSSM is seeking state support to construct a new Engineering and Research Building on its Hartsville campus. This project has been endorsed by the GSSM Board of Trustees, the GSSM Foundation Board of Directors, and numerous corporate and state leaders. The new facility will expand GSSM's ability to serve more than 400 residential and online high school students annually and extend our statewide services to more than 20,000 elementary and middle school students across South Carolina. It will also provide modern laboratory and classroom space designed for instruction and research in fields central to South Carolina's future economy, including artificial intelligence, robotics and advanced manufacturing, electric vehicles, biotechnology and life sciences, and sustainable engineering. By providing these facilities, GSSM will be better positioned to strengthen the state's workforce pipeline and ensure students are prepared to contribute to industries most critical to South Carolina's long-term economic competitiveness.

METHODOLOGY: The revised cost estimate of \$30.5 million was developed in consultation with McMillan, Pazdan, and Smith, a licensed Architectural and Engineering firm, and verified in September 2025. The scope and design were informed by GSSM's strategic plan, statewide programmatic needs, and by input from business and industry partners who continue to identify gaps in South Carolina's future workforce pipeline. The budget request, therefore, reflects both professional assessment of facility requirements and the reality of current construction market conditions, ensuring alignment with the state's long-term educational and economic development priorities.

IMPACT: This investment will ensure that GSSM continues to deliver a strong return on investment for South Carolina by scaling its proven expertise to meet the state's STEM education needs. It will allow the school to address the shortage of teachers and students in critical-need subject areas, expand opportunities for research and experiential learning in emerging technologies, and enhance teacher training and statewide service programs across the state. By providing the resources to equip students with the skills required in biotechnology, engineering, robotics, and other rapidly evolving industries, South Carolina will secure a more competitive workforce prepared to support the state's economic growth. This project will position South Carolina as a national leader in STEM education and workforce readiness, while also ensuring that GSSM remains a vital resource for students, educators, and industry for decades to come.

Provide a summary of the project and explain why it is necessary. Please refer to the budget guidelines for appropriate questions and thoroughly answer all related items.

Agency Name:	Governor's School for Science and Mathematics		
Agency Code:	H650	Section:	10

FORM E – AGENCY COST SAVINGS AND GENERAL FUND REDUCTION

CONTINGENCY PLAN

TITLE	Agency Cost Savings and General Fund Reduction Contingency Plan
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AMOUNT	\$545,144
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What is the General Fund 3% reduction amount? This amount should correspond to the reduction spreadsheet prepared by EBO.

ASSOCIATED FTE REDUCTIONS	The agency is FTE-constrained, and any further reduction would significantly impact its ability to perform; however, if necessary, temporary/part-time employees would be considered for reduction to meet budgetary requirements. The institution would make every effort not to reduce its FTE headcount due to the extreme impact such an action would have on its service abilities.
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How many FTEs would be reduced in association with this General Fund reduction?

PROGRAM / ACTIVITY IMPACT	The institution would first attempt to meet the 3% reduction by reducing its operating expenses. In FY2025-2026, the institution was appropriated an operating expense budget of \$ \$5,845,250 in general funds. Of that operating budget, \$4,237,177 is budgeted towards the institution's service contracts, including those for the dining hall, janitorial, and other contracts necessary to ensure daily institutional operations. These contracts are, by and large, essential to providing a high-quality educational and living environment for the institution’s residential students. As such, the institution would endeavor to meet the 3% reduction by eliminating all non-essential travel for employees (valued at approximately \$100,000) and reducing non-essential supply expenditures by 25% (valued at approximately \$304,971). The institution would then meet the resultant delta of \$140,173 by reducing its personal services budget by strategically eliminating non-essential, part-time staff personnel. The overall goal of any cost savings plan would be to maintain the quality of the institution’s academic environment, which requires, to the fullest extent possible, maintaining FTE staffing of faculty and staff.
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What programs or activities are supported by the General Funds identified?

SUMMARY	The institution’s reduction plan calls for a 3% overall budget reduction. In FY2026, the institution devoted over 70% of its budget to employing the teachers and staff necessary to meet the institution’s mission to deliver high-quality educational experiences to South Carolina public school students. Nearly three-quarters of the remaining 30% of the budget is utilized to meet contractual obligations for critical needs such as dining hall operations, janitorial services, and other facilities-based needs. As a result, any reduction in budget would invariably impact the institution’s service delivery. In order to mitigate such impacts, the institution would prioritize the reduction of non-essential travel by employees and students, non-essential supply purchases, and the strategic elimination of part-time and temporary personnel.
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Please provide a detailed summary of service delivery impact caused by a reduction in General Fund Appropriations and provide the method of calculation for anticipated reductions. Agencies should prioritize reduction in expenditures that have the least significant impact on service delivery.

AGENCY COST SAVINGS PLANS

The institution is committed to maintaining the availability of stabilization funds to protect against economic downturns or unanticipated, one-time expenditures that may be required to ensure the continuity of its operations. As such, the institution will retain a minimum carryforward balance that will support two months of operations (currently \$2.5 million). The availability of such funds would be used, as necessary, to meet the institution's mission to deliver a high-quality, transformative education to the state's most talented and motivated students through its residential program and, to the extent possible, sustain its Outreach Program, which provides programmatic support for over 10,000 students grades 3 through 10 and numerous teachers in public school districts across the state.

The institution endeavors to strategically reduce costs whenever possible in order to realize cost savings to buttress its academic mission. In FY27, the institution plans to continue to transition many of its existing paper-bound processes to digital workflows. This will, over time, result in cost savings and potentially reduce personnel costs. Any savings will be repurposed by increasing financial support for academic programs related to the institution's educational mission.

What measures does the agency plan to implement to reduce its costs and operating expenses by more than \$50,000? Provide a summary of the measures taken and the estimated amount of savings. How does the agency plan to repurpose the savings?

Agency Name:	Governor's School for Science and Mathematics		
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FORM F – REDUCING COST AND BURDEN TO BUSINESSES AND CITIZENS

TITLE	Long-Term Workforce Development and STEM-Readiness
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Provide a brief, descriptive title for this request.

EXPECTED SAVINGS TO BUSINESSES AND CITIZENS	GSSM provides cost savings to South Carolina families by offering high-quality STEM education, research, and enrichment programs at little to no direct cost, compared to expensive private or out-of-state alternatives. These opportunities save families thousands of dollars annually while ensuring equitable access regardless of income or geography. For South Carolina businesses, GSSM reduces long-term workforce development costs by cultivating a pipeline of STEM-ready students. GSSM graduates are better prepared to persist in STEM majors, reducing remediation needs and strengthening the future in-state talent pool.
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What is the expected savings to South Carolina’s businesses and citizens that is generated by this proposal? The savings could be related to time or money.

FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH THE REQUEST	Mark “X” for all that apply:	
	☐	Repeal or revision of regulations.
	☐	Reduction of agency fees or fines to businesses or citizens.
	☐	Greater efficiency in agency services or reduction in compliance burden.
	☒	Other

METHOD OF CALCULATION	Summer enrichment savings: Private STEM camps typically range from \$1,500–\$3,500 per week. GSSM’s GoSciTech summer camps, offered at significantly lower costs and with financial aid, save families an estimated \$1,000–\$2,500 per student per week. Business/long-term savings: Research by the National Science Foundation shows that students with strong pre-college STEM experiences are significantly more likely to persist in STEM majors. By increasing the likelihood of STEM degree completion among South Carolina students who remain in-state, GSSM indirectly reduces higher education remediation costs and strengthens the pipeline of graduates available to South Carolina employers.
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Describe the method of calculation for determining the expected cost or time savings to businesses or citizens.

REDUCTION OF FEES OR FINES	N/A
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Which fees or fines does the agency intend to reduce? What was the fine or fee revenue for the previous fiscal year? What was the associated program expenditure for the previous fiscal year? What is the enabling authority for the issuance of the fee or fine?

REDUCTION OF REGULATION	N/A
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Which regulations does the agency intend to amend or delete? What is the enabling authority for the regulation?

	GSSM reduces financial burdens on South Carolina families by delivering a nationally ranked, high-quality STEM education and enrichment experience at little or no direct cost, saving families tens of thousands of dollars compared to private or out-of-state alternatives. For the state and its businesses, GSSM provides long-term cost savings by building a pipeline of STEM-prepared graduates who are more likely to persist in college-level STEM programs, particularly those who remain in South Carolina for higher education. By leveraging partnerships with USC, Clemson, the South Carolina Technical College System, and initiatives such as SC NEXUS, GSSM reduces duplication, maximizes external investment, and ensures that state resources are used efficiently. Together, these efforts reduce the financial burden on citizens while strengthening South Carolina’s future workforce.
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SUMMARY

Provide an explanation of the proposal and its positive results on businesses or citizens. How will the request affect agency operations?