



**WACO ISD EDUCATION FOUNDATION
COVER SHEET – PART II
Application for Grant:
2025-2026 Funding Cycle**

Assigned Grant Proposal #: _____

Project Title: _____

Grade Level(s): _____ **# of Students DIRECTLY involved:** _____

Subject Area(s): _____

Amount Requested: \$ _____

Grant Focus Area(s): In order to be considered, Waco Education Foundation Innovation Grant proposals must fall under one or more of the E4 focus areas: early childhood development, enhanced programming for advanced students, extended education for staff, and emphasis on student performance. NOTE: In addition to meeting one of the E4 focus areas above, grant readers are especially interested in creative and innovative grant requests that target fine arts, STEM, literacy, or enrichment.

(check all that apply)

Early Childhood Development

Enhanced Programming for Advanced Students

Fine Arts

Literacy

Extended Education for Staff

Emphasis on Student Performance

STEM

Enrichment

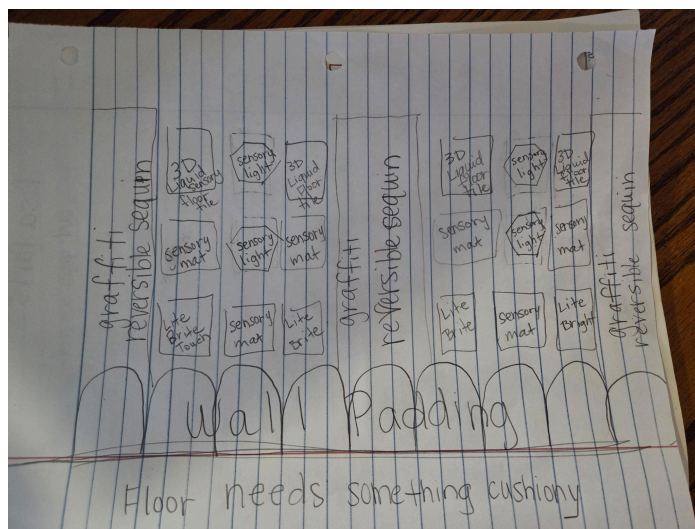
Assigned Proposal # 29

Project Title: *Sensory Pathways to Academic Success*

Project Description:

We would like to create a dedicated sensory wall designed to meet the diverse sensory needs of students with neurodiversity, such as autism. This project aims to provide a safe, interactive, and engaging space within the classroom where students can engage in sensory activities that help them self-regulate, focus, and engage more effectively with their academic tasks.

Sensory processing challenges are common among students with autism, and when these needs are not addressed, it can hinder their ability to focus, learn, and participate in classroom activities. A sensory wall offers a structured and accessible outlet for students to explore different textures, colors, sounds, and movements that help them manage sensory overload and reduce stress. By offering tactile, visual, and auditory stimuli, the sensory wall will support students in self-regulating and transitioning back to academic work more effectively.



1 Rationale

This project aligns with the **Creative Classroom Project** focus area of the Waco Education Foundation by introducing an innovative, sensory-inclusive learning environment. The sensory wall provides a creative, hands-on approach to supporting neurodiverse students, particularly those with autism, in self-regulation and academic engagement.

Additionally, this project supports the **District and Campus Improvement Plans** by promoting inclusive practices, fostering student engagement, and ensuring that all learners have equitable

access to tools that help them succeed academically. The district's emphasis on differentiated instruction and meeting the diverse needs of students is directly reflected in this initiative.

While the grant is not awarded based on need, it is important to highlight that many neurodiverse students face sensory processing challenges that significantly impact their ability to focus, engage, and learn effectively. Currently, our school lacks a structured sensory space that allows students to self-regulate in a way that seamlessly integrates into the classroom environment. This project would fill that gap by providing a purposeful, accessible resource that enhances learning outcomes for students who need sensory input to thrive.

2 Goals

The primary goal of this project is to enhance academic success for neurodiverse students by providing a sensory wall that:

1. **Supports self-regulation** – Helps students manage sensory input and reduce classroom disruptions.
2. **Improves focus and engagement** – Allows students to return to academic tasks more quickly after sensory breaks.
3. **Promotes inclusive learning** – Ensures that students with sensory needs have the same opportunities to succeed as their peers.
4. **Encourages creativity and exploration** – Provides a multi-sensory experience that stimulates curiosity and learning.
5. **Fosters collaboration** – Encourages social interaction and shared learning experiences among students.

3 Plan of Operation

Activities & Strategies

- **Phase 1: Planning & Design (August – September 2025)**
 - Select and purchase sensory-friendly materials (e.g., textured fabrics, light panels, interactive components).
 - Engage educators, occupational therapists, and special education specialists to ensure the design meets student needs.
- **Phase 2: Installation & Training (October 2025)**
 - Construct and install the sensory wall in a designated classroom space.
 - Train teachers and staff on how to integrate the wall into classroom routines.

- **Phase 3: Implementation & Community Involvement (November 2025 – May 2026)**
 - Introduce students to the sensory wall and monitor their engagement.
 - Partner with local businesses or community groups for additional resources and support.
 - Organize a **Family Engagement Night** where parents can learn about the sensory wall and its benefits.

Parental & Community Involvement

- Parents will be invited to **sensory wall demonstrations** and encouraged to provide feedback.
- Local organizations specializing in autism support may contribute resources or expertise.
- Student-created artwork or contributions may be incorporated into the sensory wall to foster ownership and engagement.

4 Communication & Dissemination

- The Waco Education Foundation will be invited to observe the project in action.
- Photos and success stories will be shared via school newsletters, social media, and WISD-TV.
- Teachers will share best practices and insights during **professional development sessions**, ensuring other educators can apply similar strategies.
- The project team will be available to present results at a Foundation meeting.

5 Evaluation

The effectiveness of the project will be measured using:

1. **Student Engagement & Behavior Logs** – Teachers will track how often students use the sensory wall and their ability to transition back to tasks.
2. **Teacher & Parent Feedback** – Surveys will be conducted to gather qualitative data on the sensory wall's impact.
3. **Academic Performance & Focus Assessments** – Teachers will assess improvements in students' ability to stay engaged in lessons.
4. **Observation Data** – Special education staff will monitor how the sensory wall influences classroom dynamics.

6 Long-Term Implications

To sustain this project beyond the **2025-2026 school year**, we will:

- Train additional staff members so more classrooms can benefit from similar sensory supports.
- Seek additional funding or partnerships with local businesses and organizations.
- Integrate sensory-friendly practices into broader district-wide special education initiatives.

7 Key Personnel

Project Director:

- **Responsibilities:** Oversee the implementation of the sensory wall project, coordinate with stakeholders, manage funding allocation, and ensure alignment with district goals.
- **Qualifications:** Experience in special education and sensory-inclusive learning strategies, and familiarity with grant-funded project management.

Special Education Teachers:

- **Responsibilities:** Provide expertise on sensory processing needs, assist in selecting sensory-friendly materials, and train staff on integrating the wall into classroom routines.
- **Qualifications:** Certified special education professional with experience in working with neurodiverse students and implementing individualized support strategies.

Classroom Teachers & Support Staff

- **Responsibilities:** Facilitate student interaction with the sensory wall, track student engagement, and provide feedback on effectiveness.
- **Qualifications:** Trained in inclusive teaching strategies and committed to fostering a supportive classroom environment.

Parent & Community Volunteers

- **Responsibilities:** Assist with installation, participate in Family Engagement Night, and advocate for continued sensory-friendly initiatives within the school community.
- **Qualifications:** Parents of students with sensory needs, community members with experience in autism support or special education advocacy.

8 Budget

Line Item 7, 17, 18, 19 to power project

Work to build has been donated by Michael Holtman.

Line Item 16 - [Lite-Brite Touch](#): Helps develop fine motor skills including finger strength · Teaches cause and effect and color recognition. Games help improve short term memory. Enhances cognitive skills and fine motor development by encouraging children to engage in hands-on creative play.

Line Item 23 - 9 [Labeled Sensory Mats w/Lesson Plans](#): **Perfect for Autism Sensory Needs** – These sensory toys for kids with autism are designed to support sensory exploration, calm, and tactile development for children. **Engaging Tactile Surfaces** - They encourage tactile engagement and sensory integration through a variety of soothing textures. **Teach Colors, Textures, and Vocabulary** with Ease as they come with lesson plans that include special education inclusive sensory games and autism learning materials.

Line Item 24 - [Sensory Wall Sequin Flip Fabric](#): The sequin fabric flip fabric provides visual and tactile fun; It has bright colors of double sided sequins that can be painted with a variety of images, letters, and other creative styles. Ideal for tactile stimulation games and visual tracking exercises.

Line Item 25 - [Sensory Soft Gel Liquid Toys](#): Liquid sports gel toys not only relieve stress and anxiety, they also help improve focus and concentration and promote the development of sensory cognitive abilities. They are also a sensory tool that provides active play, learning and activities for young children.

Line Item 26 - [6 Pack Hexagon Light Panels](#): Sensory lights offer numerous benefits for children with autism and other developmental needs. Providing gentle, ambient lighting creates a peaceful space that encourages emotional regulation, reduces anxiety, and promotes concentration.

Line Item 27 - [6 Pcs 3D Anti Collision Pencil Shape Wall Padding for Kids](#): With its cushioning effect, it reduces the injury from accidental impacts, creating a safe environment for children.

Line Item 28 - [7 Pc Massage Puzzle Pieces](#):

By investing in this project, we are not only enhancing academic success for neurodiverse students today but also fostering an inclusive learning culture that will have lasting benefits for years to come.

Waco Education Foundation

Grant Budget Form

Assigned Proposal #	29
Project Title:	Sensory Pathways to Academic Success
Number of Students Served by Grant:	60

Qty	Budget Item	Verify Vendor (Y or N)	\$ Requested from the WISD Foundation	Other Secured Source	\$ from Other Source (if applicable)	Total Amount
Consumable Supplies						
1	28 Pk Duracell Coppertop	Y	\$ 42.00			\$ 42.00
						\$ -
						\$ -
						\$ -
						\$ -
						\$ -
total Consumable Supplies			\$ 42.00		\$ -	\$ 42.00
Technology						
3	Lite Brite Touch	Y	\$ 90.00			\$ 90.00
3	6 ft. Micro USB Cable	Y	\$ 29.00			\$ 29.00
1	3 Pk USB Charger Block	Y	\$ 12.00			\$ 12.00
1	10ft Surge Protector Power	Y	\$ 16.00			\$ 16.00
total Technology			\$ 119.00		\$ -	\$ 119.00
Long-Term Supplies / Equipment (items that will last beyond the grant year)						
1	9 Labled Sensory Mats	Y	\$ 55.00			\$ 55.00
1	3 Pcs Sensory Wall Flip	Y	\$ 24.00			\$ 24.00
1	6 Pk Hexagon Softgel Liquid	Y	\$ 22.00			\$ 22.00
2	6 Pk HEXlights Sensory	Y	\$ 65.00			\$ 65.00
1	12 Pcs 3D Anti Colision	Y	\$ 55.00			\$ 55.00
4	7 Pcs Massage Game	Y	\$ 169.00			\$ 169.00
1	3.5 ft. x 8.ft. Cedar Fence		\$ 88.00			\$ 88.00
3	5 in. L-Bracket		\$ 35.00			\$ 35.00

1	36 Pk Sound Proof Foam	Y	\$ 44.00			\$ 44.00
1	300 Pk Double Sided	Y	\$ 22.00			\$ 22.00
total Long-Term Supplies			\$ 579.00		\$ -	\$ 579.00
Contracted Services						
1	Michael Holtman -				\$ 250.00	\$ 250.00
						\$ -
total Contracted Services			\$ -		\$ 250.00	\$ 250.00
Personnel						
						\$ -
						\$ -
total Personnel			\$ -		\$ -	\$ -
Travel / Other						
						\$ -
						\$ -
						\$ -
						\$ -
total Other			\$ -		\$ -	\$ -
Totals		Total Requested from the WISD Foundation		Foundation Cost Per Student	Total from Other Sources	Total Cost of Project
		\$ 740.00		12.33333333	\$ 250.00	\$ 990.00