



**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

Grant # 32

Growing Geniuses

Project Description:

Growing Geniuses is a project aiming to enhance student success in math, science, and reading by providing elementary students engaging math and science activities through the online program, Generation Genius. A campus-wide subscription also allowed students to access the program independently at school and home. This program gets students and teachers excited about their learning.

1. Rationale

Growing Geniuses emphasizes improving student performance by hooking them into science and math units by watching, and exploring math and science investigations. The program shows demonstrations and gives instructions for how to replicate these activities at school or home. Getting students excited about learning with real world examples will make lessons more memorable and meaningful. Because of this, knowledge will be retained long term. This will also enhance programming for advanced students. Generation Genius provides questions that guide students to dive deeper into subject matter. This can lead into writing assignments, debates, and even additional research.

This project also provides enrichment opportunities for students. Being able to access the program independently provides multiple opportunities for students to take a deep dive into the subject matter. Our current students have deficits in math and science. These need to be addressed. Reading needs usually take priority, but this won't help students prosper in STEM settings later. Also, having students engaged and invested in their math and science lessons helps build background knowledge that will prove detrimental in raising reading STAAR scores. We have a growing population of students that do not have experiences related to STEM, and that means they lack background knowledge that more privileged peers typically have acquired.

Generation Genius is an exciting and engaging program that sparks excitement about math and science in young learners. It is a comprehensive set of Science (and growing Math) videos and lessons made in partnership with the National Science Teachers Association. This program aligns with 94% of the streamlined science TEKS. The videos and activities are great for hooking students into math and science units/lessons. With schoolwide access to Generation Genius, our students can foster a love for STEM campus wide. Generation Genius provides engaging videos, vocabulary activities, hands on activity ideas, worksheets, Kahoots, discussion prompts, and more. In the past, I have utilized the discussion questions as writing prompts. This allowed for cross-curricular activities. Science videos and activities would be supported by discussion and writing. Incorporating writing wherever possible is critical to student growth. I also used the program for extensions and debates with my gifted students.

Students can access the program at home, as well as school. Over 20,000 schools are using Generation Genius, and 92% of students surveyed said Generation Genius helps them learn.

When I used Generation Genius in the past, it led to some powerful conversations with my students. After watching the videos and activities, students would often request doing further research independently. The discussion questions for before the video helped activate prior knowledge and spark interest in students. There are many opportunities for collaboration throughout the activities. The activities can frame hands-on science activities and guide student exploration. Students enjoyed doing research and engaging in debates and discussions with classmates.

2. Goal

The goal of Growing Geniuses is to provide resources and tools for science and math teachers to empower students to collaborate and engage in problem solving and discussions, investigate concepts through inquiry, and draw conclusions based on the experiences provided. Generation Genius will support reading growth by providing experiences to our students and fostering inquiry. It will also improve science STAAR performance. This growth should be shown through BOY to EOY scores on our screeners and interim assessments in reading, math, and science.

3. Plan of Operation

Generation will be utilized during our math and science blocks. It can also be used as enrichment during intervention for on or above level students. As soon as we are able to receive funding and begin our subscription, we can track student growth in reading, math, and science through BOY, MOY, and EOY screeners, fall and spring interims, and STAAR scores. Ideally we will see growth in these areas due to the provided experiences.

As stated before, students can also access components of the program at home. When parents ask what they can do with their students at home, this would provide another good resource. Students being able to access the program at home also allows parents to be involved and excited about student experiences and growth as well.

4. Communication & Dissemination

We would love for the Foundation to come experience Generation Genius at work in our classrooms. We will also share photos and videos of these experiences with parents and other stakeholders in the district. If we have the expected results, we would love to share our experiences at a meeting or staff development with board members or other educators.

5. Evaluation

As previously stated, beginning, middle, and end of the year screeners will allow us to see the impact of Generation Genius on student growth. This can also be shown in fall and spring interim and STAAR scores.

6. Long Term Implications

Ideally, Generation Genius will become an ongoing part of our campus experience. Our campus administrators have agreed to dedicate funds to the program in the future if teachers and students find

it as beneficial as we hope. If students are engaged in math and science activities and school and home from kindergarten through fifth grade, the benefits will be huge!! Generation Genius is an easily accessible program for educators and families to foster STEM exploration and will spur student growth by providing important foundations that are currently lacking. This should improve not only reading and math STAAR scores (and campus accountability scores) from third grade on, but also science scores for our fifth and eighth graders.

7. Key Personnel

Math and science teachers will implement Generation Genius in lessons weekly. The program is very user friendly, so that should eliminate some teacher stress. The program can also be used for enrichment and intervention activities. In the past, I used it to guide debates, spark interest in research, set the foundation for student writing assignments. It could be used in stations, or as enrichment when work is completed. Students may also access the program at home. Revisiting lessons and activities repeatedly will help strengthen student connections and information retention.

8. Budget and Budget Narrative/Justification

At a cost of approximately \$5.50 per student for the entire school year, this program is extremely affordable. It will give students access to experiences similar to those possible on a field trip for a fraction of the cost. (And they can experience this multiple times!) The campuswide subscription to Generation Genius is currently (as of 3/16/25) \$1,995. If for some reason the price increases before the grant is funded, I have private donors who can cover the difference. When you consider this makes the content accessible to about 360 students and their families for the entire year, it seems silly NOT to fund this grant!

Waco Education Foundation
Grant Budget Form

Assigned Proposal #	32
Project Title:	Growing Geniuses
Number of Students Served by Grant:	360

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						
						\$ -
						\$ -
						\$ -
						\$ -
						\$ -
						\$ -
total Consumable Supplies			\$ -		\$ -	\$ -
Technology						
1	Generation Genius Subscription	Y	\$ 1,995.00			\$ 1,995.00
						\$ -
total Technology			\$ 1,995.00		\$ -	\$ 1,995.00
Long-Term Supplies / Equipment (items that will last beyond the grant year)						
						\$ -
						\$ -
						\$ -
						\$ -
						\$ -
						\$ -
total Long-Term Supplies			\$ -		\$ -	\$ -
Contracted Services						
						\$ -
						\$ -
total Contracted Services			\$ -		\$ -	\$ -
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
		\$ 1,995.00		5.541666667	\$ -	\$ 1,995.00