



**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

Project Description (100 words or less)

"Inner Peace, Outer Impact: A Breathe for Change" empowers educators to lead social-emotional learning (SEL) and well-being initiatives within schools. Through a 200-hour Yoga Teacher Certification and SEL Facilitator training, educators develop inclusive, trauma-informed wellness practices that promote emotional resilience and mindful leadership. This program supports the principles of the school's Leader in Me, enhancing emotional wellness for students, staff, and the broader school community. Flexible training, mentorship, and access to updated resources foster critical thinking, creativity, and collaboration. Grant funds will cover certification costs, resources, and help drive lasting social change and emotional wellness within schools.

Rationale

This project aligns with the Waco Education Foundation's funding focus areas by promoting a creative classroom project that fosters emotional resilience and well-being, both critical components for student success. By equipping educators with SEL and trauma-informed yoga certifications, the initiative supports a district-wide approach to nurturing the mental health and emotional growth of students and staff. This aligns with the District and Campus Improvement Plans by addressing the need for comprehensive social-emotional learning strategies that enhance academic performance and build positive, inclusive school environments. In a time when students face heightened stress and challenges, this project will empower educators with the tools needed to support emotional and academic development, benefiting the entire school community. The program also emphasizes collaboration and innovative teaching methods that directly impact classroom culture and student engagement.

Goals

The goal of this program is to foster a school culture of emotional resilience and mindfulness by equipping at least 4 educators with Social Emotional Learning (SEL) and trauma-informed yoga certifications, enabling them to lead inclusive wellness workshops and SEL initiatives. We expect these certified educators to implement strategies that enhance students' self-awareness, self-management, and relationship skills, resulting in measurable improvements in student well-being and engagement.

Additionally, we aim to establish a sustainable framework for school-wide SEL practices that will positively impact the emotional and academic success of students across the district, with ongoing professional development and mentorship ensuring lasting change. This grant aims to integrate the *Leader in Me* framework with the *Breathe for Change* program, creating a comprehensive approach to leadership, well-being, and social-emotional learning (SEL) at the middle school level. *Leader in Me* equips students with essential leadership and life skills, while *Breathe for Change* provides mindfulness, yoga, and SEL strategies to enhance emotional regulation, focus, and resilience. By merging these programs, students will develop both leadership and self-awareness skills, strengthening their ability to navigate academic and personal challenges.

The integration of these programs ensures that *Leader in Me's 7 Habits of Highly Effective People* are reinforced with mindfulness-based practices. For instance, Habit 1 (*Be Proactive*) aligns with self-regulation techniques taught in *Breathe for Change*, helping students manage stress and respond thoughtfully. Habit 5 (*Seek First to Understand, Then to Be Understood*) connects with mindful listening exercises, fostering empathy and strong communication. These combined strategies will empower students to take ownership of their learning and interactions, building a culture of leadership and well-being.

To implement this initiative, teachers will initially be trained in *Breathe for Change* strategies and *Leader in Me* principles. These trained educators will then serve as mentors, training additional teachers and students to

create a sustainable, school-wide impact. Student-led mindfulness and leadership groups will be established, ensuring peer mentorship and reinforcing key skills throughout the school community.

Plan of Operation:

The plan of operation for the "Inner Peace, Outer Impact: A Breathe for Change" program will be executed in three key phases:

1. Preparation Phase (Months 1-2):

- **Recruitment and Selection:** Identify and recruit a cohort of 2 other educators interested in social-emotional learning (SEL) and wellness initiatives.
- **Enroll:** Enroll the selected teachers in the Breathe for Change program.

2. Training Phase (Months 3-8):

- **Leader in Me Integration:** Incorporate principles from Tennyson's Leader in Me, training educators on integrating SEL into leadership and daily classroom practices.
- **Ongoing Mentorship:** Each educator will receive personalized mentorship throughout the training to ensure application and sustainability of learned practices.
- **Attend Classes:** Attend evening online classes from Breathe For Change.
- **Present:** Present to staff what has been taught so far to the cohort of educators.

3. Implementation & Sustainability Phase (Months 9-12):

- **School-Wide Wellness Initiatives:** Educators will implement wellness initiatives and SEL programs within their classrooms and school communities, ensuring a holistic approach to emotional resilience.
- **Reflection & Assessment:** Regular assessments will measure program success, educator growth, and student impact. Feedback loops will help refine the program and make adjustments for long-term success.
- **Ongoing Support:** After certification, educators will have access to an online platform for continuous professional development, resource sharing, and community-building. Continued mentorship will ensure sustainability, which is part of the Breathe FOr Change program.

Resources Needed:

- Funding for educator certifications, training materials, and resources.
- Administrative support to coordinate presentation schedules and all other communications.

This plan is designed to drive sustainable change by empowering educators with the tools to enhance social-emotional learning, ensuring lasting emotional wellness for students and staff alike.

Activities:

1. **Certification Training:** Educators will participate in training and certification through Breathe for Change's 200-hour Yoga Teacher Certification and SEL Facilitator program.
2. **Implementation of SEL Initiatives:** Upon certification, educators will:
 - Lead mindfulness and yoga sessions for students and staff.
 - Conduct workshops on SEL for students, teachers, and staff.

- Integrate SEL practices into daily classroom routines, such as check-ins and reflective activities.
- 3. **School-wide SEL Activities:** Certified educators will collaborate to host school-wide events and professional development sessions that promote emotional well-being, such as:
 - SEL and wellness workshops for educators and parents.
 - Schoolwide mindfulness and wellness events (e.g., meditation mornings, yoga for families).
 - Peer support groups for students and faculty.

Objectives:

- Train 4 educators in SEL and trauma-informed yoga, empowering them to lead initiatives that foster emotional resilience and mindfulness in their classrooms.
- Implement school-wide SEL initiatives that impact at least 80% of the student population and hopefully 100% of the staff population, promoting emotional awareness and improving overall well-being.

Strategies:

1. **Collaboration and Mentorship:** Ongoing mentorship and support for certified educators to encourage the effective implementation of SEL strategies and ensure consistent application of practices.
2. **School-wide Engagement:** Promote the integration of SEL in all areas of school life, including classroom activities, school culture, and communication with families, ensuring that SEL becomes a district-wide priority.
3. **Professional Development:** Continuous professional development through workshops and collaborative planning sessions, focusing on evolving best practices in SEL and trauma-informed care.

Timeline/Calendar:

Month	Activity
October to March	Training completion and certification of educators.
November	Planning and preparation for school-wide SEL initiatives. Begin school-wide SEL initiatives, including wellness workshops for students.
January	Mid-program evaluation and check-in with educators in training.
March-May	Continued implementation of SEL initiatives, ongoing support for educators, and evaluating program.

Communication & Dissemination:

To ensure the Waco Education Foundation is closely involved in the impact of this grant and to acknowledge their support, we plan to:

1. **Photo and Media Opportunities:** Throughout the program, we will ensure there are photo opportunities that highlight the educators and students engaging in mindfulness practices, yoga sessions, and other SEL initiatives. These images can be shared with the Foundation for use in newsletters, reports, and social media to highlight the success of the program and the Foundation's contribution.

2. **Present the Grant at a Meeting:** Once teachers are certified and have the chance to work with some teachers and students, we will be happy to present the results and impact of the program at a Board meeting or other community events. This will provide an opportunity to share the program's success, lessons learned, and future plans, as well as to acknowledge the Foundation's crucial role in its realization.
3. **Sharing Results with the District:**
 - **Staff Development:** After completing the program, certified educators will lead professional development sessions to share their experiences, SEL strategies, and best practices with their peers across the district. This will encourage the expansion of SEL practices and foster a culture of wellness district-wide.
 - **Newsletters & District Communication:** Regular updates will be shared with district leadership and all staff through newsletters and emails, summarizing the progress and outcomes of the program. Additionally, we will create a final report that includes student and teacher testimonials, as well as data on the effectiveness of the SEL initiatives.
 - **Collaborative Meetings and Conferences:** Educators involved in the program will have the opportunity to present their work at site and district meetings, spreading awareness of the benefits of integrating SEL and trauma-informed practices into daily classroom routines.
4. **Dissemination to Faculty:**
 - **Extended Education for Staff Focus:** As part of the dissemination plan, trained educators will lead site-wide workshops to train other faculty members in SEL techniques, mindfulness practices, and trauma-informed strategies. This will ensure the program's reach extends beyond the initial group of certified educators, supporting a school-wide commitment to emotional well-being and SEL integration in every classroom.

By including the Foundation and the district in the program's journey and creating multiple opportunities to disseminate the results, we aim to promote the sustainability of this initiative while also celebrating the Foundation's invaluable support in bringing the program to life.

Evaluation Plan

To determine the success and effectiveness of the "Inner Peace, Outer Impact" program, we will use a combination of qualitative and quantitative measures to assess both immediate and long-term outcomes. The evaluation will focus on the impact on educators, students, and the broader school community, using the following methods:

1. **Pre- and Post-Training Surveys for Educators:**
 - **Objective:** Measure changes in educators' knowledge, confidence, and skills related to SEL and trauma-informed yoga.
 - **Method:** Administer surveys before and after the certification training to gauge educators' understanding of SEL principles, yoga techniques, and mindfulness practices. This will help assess whether the training effectively increases their competency in delivering these practices.
2. **Implementation and Reflection Journals:**
 - **Objective:** Track how educators implement SEL strategies and yoga practices in their classrooms and reflect on their experiences.
 - **Method:** Educators will maintain a reflective journal throughout the program, documenting their experiences, challenges, and successes. These journals will be reviewed periodically to evaluate the extent to which educators are applying the skills learned in training and adapting them to their unique classroom environments.
3. **Student Surveys and Feedback:**

- **Objective:** Measure the impact of SEL and wellness initiatives on students' emotional well-being and engagement.
 - **Method:** Conduct surveys with students before and after SEL interventions (e.g., yoga sessions, mindfulness exercises) to assess changes in their emotional resilience, self-awareness, and overall school experience. Questions will focus on areas like stress reduction, emotional regulation, and connection with peers.
4. **Classroom Walkthroughs (spring):**
- **Objective:** Assess how well SEL and mindfulness practices are integrated into classroom routines.
 - **Method:** Trained educators will conduct classroom walkthroughs to evaluate the implementation of SEL practices, mindfulness activities, and the overall classroom environment.
 - **Objective:** Gauge the overall effectiveness of the program on school culture and community well-being.
 - **Method:** At the end of the program, a survey will be distributed to staff, students, and parents to assess their perceptions of the program's impact on school culture, emotional climate, and community involvement. This feedback will help evaluate the extent to which the program has fostered a positive and supportive school environment.
5. **Academic Performance and Behavioral Data:**
- **Objective:** Analyze whether the program correlates with improvements in student academic performance and behavior.
 - **Method:** Track academic performance data (e.g., grades, attendance) and behavioral data (e.g., disciplinary referrals, classroom disruptions) before and after the implementation of SEL practices. A reduction in behavioral issues and an increase in academic performance would suggest positive outcomes of the program.

Success Indicators:

- **Educators:** At least 90% of educators report increased confidence in implementing SEL and mindfulness strategies. Educators will successfully lead at least 2 school-wide wellness events or workshops.
- **Students:** 70% of students report a noticeable improvement in their emotional well-being, such as better stress management and stronger relationships with peers and teachers.
- **Academic and Behavioral Outcomes:** A measurable improvement in academic performance and a reduction in disciplinary incidents, as reflected in school records.

By using a multi-faceted evaluation approach, we will ensure that the program's impact is thoroughly measured, enabling us to make data-driven decisions about future improvements and sustainability. This will allow us to refine the program for continued success and share the outcomes with the broader educational community.

Long-Term Implications

To ensure the sustainability of the "Inner Peace, Outer Impact" program beyond the 2025-2026 school year, we have developed a strategy that includes ongoing educator development, continued integration of SEL practices, and strong community engagement. The goal is to create a lasting culture of emotional resilience and mindfulness that supports both educators and students for years to come.

1. Ongoing Professional Development:

- **Certification Renewal and Continued Learning:** Certified educators will be encouraged to renew their certifications and participate in advanced training to stay current with best practices

in SEL and trauma-informed teaching. We will establish a network of trained educators who can share resources, collaborate, and support one another through regular professional development sessions.

- **Mentorship and Leadership Development:** As more educators become certified, we will establish a mentorship program where experienced facilitators mentor new educators. This will create a sustainable pipeline of SEL leaders within the district and help expand the program's reach to more classrooms.

2. **Integration of SEL Practices into School Culture:**

- **Tennyson SEL Policy:** We plan to advocate for the inclusion of SEL practices as a core component of the site's strategic goals and improvement plans. This will ensure that social-emotional learning is prioritized in future curriculum development, school policies, and staff training.
- **Curriculum Integration:** SEL principles will be woven into existing curriculum frameworks and integrated into daily school routines, ensuring that students benefit from ongoing social-emotional support. By embedding SEL into academic content and school culture, the program will continue to impact students well beyond the initial intervention period.

By creating a sustainable framework that includes professional development and site-wide integration, the "Inner Peace, Outer Impact" program will have a lasting impact on the emotional well-being and academic success of students and educators for many years to come. This comprehensive, multi-tiered approach ensures that the benefits of SEL extend well beyond the initial grant period, creating a long-term foundation for emotional resilience, mindful leadership, and positive school culture.

Key personnel

1. **Person A**

Background: Person A is a highly experienced educator with over 30 years of teaching across various educational settings, from preschool to college, in both general and special education. Their diverse background spans multiple disciplines, allowing them to provide tailored interventions that address the academic and behavioral needs of students. They hold multiple state credentials in Texas and California, including certifications in English Language Arts and Reading (ELAR), Special Education, Structured Literacy (STR), and English as a Second Language (ESL) in Texas. In California, they possess a Multiple Subject Teaching Credential, a Specialist Instruction Credential in Special Education, a Resource Specialist Added Authorization, an Administrative Services Clear Credential, and an Autism Spectrum Disorders Added Authorization. Their academic qualifications also include two master's degrees—one in Human Development and another in Education with an emphasis on Administration. Beyond their teaching credentials, Person A has extensive experience in program management, having served as an administrator for a credit recovery and discipline program. In this role, they developed strong leadership skills and a deep understanding of student behavioral and academic challenges, enabling them to implement effective interventions that support both student achievement and well-being. In the field of literacy, they have also successfully written and secured multiple education grants, demonstrating their ability to obtain funding for critical educational initiatives. In addition to their work in education, Person A has been practicing meditation and yoga for over 13 years and is a Reiki practitioner and teacher. They integrate mindfulness and healing practices into their work, fostering emotional resilience and well-being among students. As a SAIL teacher, their primary focus is on teaching coping strategies to students who struggle with emotional regulation,

helping them develop self-awareness, self-control, and healthy emotional responses. With a strong commitment to student success, social-emotional learning, and holistic education, Person A continues to make a significant impact in the field, blending academic expertise with mindfulness and wellness practices to support the whole child.

Responsibilities:

- Oversee the overall implementation of the "Inner Peace, Outer Impact" program, ensuring all activities align with project goals.
- Coordinate logistics for educator training, workshops, and community events.
- Communicate with the Waco Education Foundation, school leadership, and other stakeholders regarding project progress.
- Monitor evaluation processes and compile reports on the program's outcomes.
- Ensure continuous communication and support for educators throughout the certification process and beyond.

2. Person B

Background: Person B is an experienced educator with 18 years in general and special education, specializing in literacy development, inclusive education, and student support. They hold multiple teaching credentials in California (Multiple Subject, Education Specialist, and Administrative Services) and Texas (EC-6 Core Subjects, 4-8 Core Subjects, and Science of Teaching Reading). With an Ed.D. in Educational Leadership specializing in Special Education, Person B focuses on promoting inclusive education and enhancing literacy instruction. They also have experience teaching SEL programs (Character Strong, Zones of Regulation) and integrating yoga and mindfulness into education. As a program advisor and faculty member, they will support SEL integration to foster student success.

Responsibilities:

- Provide guidance and ongoing support to certified educators throughout the program, offering advice on classroom implementation and SEL strategies.
- Assist in troubleshooting challenges that may arise during the program's implementation.
- Support the evaluation process by reviewing educator journals and providing feedback.
- Facilitate additional professional development opportunities to ensure continual growth.

3. Certified SEL Facilitators (Trained Educators this includes the 2 grant writers)

○ **Responsibilities:**

- Complete the Breathe for Change certification program and gain expertise in teaching yoga, mindfulness, and SEL strategies.
- Implement SEL practices and wellness activities in their classrooms and lead school-wide wellness initiatives.
- Lead professional development workshops for colleagues to share SEL strategies and practices.
- Collect feedback from students and staff, and maintain reflective journals to track progress and challenges.
- Engage with parents and the community to promote SEL and emotional well-being initiatives.

Each of these key personnel will work collaboratively to ensure the success of the "Inner Peace, Outer Impact" program, leveraging their individual expertise and responsibilities to create a sustainable, impactful initiative

that supports both educators and students. Their combined efforts will create a lasting culture of wellness, mindfulness, and emotional resilience within the school community.

Budget Rationale and Narrative/Justification

This grant will provide funding for professional development and essential resources to integrate mindfulness, social-emotional learning (SEL), and leadership development into daily classroom activities. Four teachers will receive specialized training through Breathe for Change, equipping them with research-based strategies to foster student well-being and academic success plus self care practices for teachers.

Grant funds will support the purchase of materials such as yoga mats to create an engaging, and structured approach to mindfulness practices. These tools will be incorporated into leadership lessons, enhancing student focus, emotional regulation, and resilience.

This initiative directly aligns with district and campus improvement goals by promoting student engagement, emotional intelligence, and academic achievement. By implementing a train-the-trainer model, initially trained teachers will mentor colleagues and students, ensuring long-term sustainability.

Beyond the grant period, the program will continue to impact school culture by fostering a self-sustaining environment of mindfulness and leadership. Students will develop lifelong skills in self-awareness, emotional regulation, and effective communication, preparing them for success inside and outside the classroom.

						\$ -
total Contracted Services		\$ 4,796.00		\$ -		\$ 4,796.00
Personnel						
						\$ -
						\$ -
total Personnel		\$ -		\$ -		\$ -
Travel / Other						
						\$ -
						\$ -
						\$ -
						\$ -
total Other		\$ -		\$ -		\$ -
Totals	Total Requested from the WISD Foundation	\$ 7,176.00	Foundation Cost Per Student	Total from Other Sources		Total Cost of Project
			#DIV/0!	\$ -		\$ 7,176.00