



**WACO ISD EDUCATION FOUNDATION  
COVER SHEET – PART II  
Application for Grant:  
2026-2027 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                | Extended Education for Staff    |
| Enhanced Programming for Advanced Students | Emphasis on Student Performance |
| Fine Arts                                  | STEM                            |
| Literacy                                   | Enrichment                      |

### **Project Description:**

This project establishes a Permanent Inventory of performance attire—polos, slacks, and shoes—to eliminate the "hidden costs" of music education. By shifting from student-purchased models to school-owned resources, we remove unintentional financial barriers for our economically disadvantaged musicians. This initiative directly addresses clothing insecurity, ensuring talent—not financial status—defines success. Students can access high-quality garments at no cost, fostering a professional image and a unified culture of pride. This sustainable investment creates an equitable Permanent Inventory that serves current and future members, allowing every student to focus solely on artistic growth without the stress of sourcing attire.

### **Rationale:**

Providing a school-owned Permanent Inventory - including a band polo, black slacks, black socks, and black shoes - to every student will promote absolute equality and a professional image regardless of economic background. By shifting from a student purchased model to a school-owned inventory, we directly eliminate clothing insecurity and the "hidden costs" of music education. This allows every musician to focus solely on their artistic growth without the stress of sourcing specific black attire that many families cannot afford.

The band program serves a high percentage of economically disadvantaged students for whom the requirement of formal black slacks and dress shoes is often an insurmountable financial barrier to participation. This disparity can create an unintentional sense of exclusion. By investing in a Permanent Inventory, we establish a sustainable resource that serves students for years to come. This project ensures that every member of the band can have access to high-quality, durable garments at no cost, fostering a unified culture of pride and discipline where talent, not financial status, defines a student's success.

### **Goals:**

In 2026, music education is increasingly recognized as a primary vehicle for developing 21st-century skills. Providing uniforms for the band directly enables these outcomes by removing the psychological and financial barriers that hinder student engagement in higher-order thinking.

- Critical Thinking: The uniform is a tool for professional focus. When students are not preoccupied with the stress of inadequate attire or social comparison, they can dedicate their full cognitive resources to the complex task of performance.
- Creativity and Innovation: Providing a uniform set serves as a platform for artistic expression. Access to proper attire creates a "safe space" where students feel they belong, which is essential for the vulnerability required in creative exploration and improvisation.
- Collaboration: A uniformed ensemble is the ultimate symbol of collective identity and teamwork. Unity Over Division: In a program with economically disadvantaged students,

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uniforms level the playing field, ensuring that the “children of doctors and lawyers” and children from families facing financial hardship are viewed as equal members of the same team.

- Sustainable Resource: A school-owned inventory of performance attire will create a long-term, reusable inventory that will serve future generations of musicians.

### **Plan of Operations:**

1. The Starting Point (Acquisition): Procure a comprehensive inventory of durable, professional-grade uniforms (band polos, slacks, socks, and shoes) to replace the current student-purchase requirement.
  - a. Band polos will be purchased locally (Hole in the Roof)
  - b. Slacks will be purchased from a reputable company (Tuxedo Connect)
  - c. Shoes and socks will be purchased from a reputable company (Amazon)
2. The Core Action (Accessibility): Implement a Permanent Inventory system where 100% of students—regardless of socioeconomic status—can be fitted from the school-owned collection at no cost.
3. The Ongoing Management (Sustainability): Maintain the Permanent Inventory through standardized cleaning protocols and a checkout/checkin system to ensure garment longevity. All inventory will be entered and maintained through Cuttime - a district provided program.
4. The Long-Term Outcome (Continuity): Continue to ensure the Permanent Inventory serves as a permanent foundation for years to come.

### Project Timeline:

Phase	Month	Key Activity
Planning	Month 1-2	Survey student sizes and select uniform vendors
Procurement	Month 3-4	Place bulk orders for polos, slacks, and footwear
Launch	Month 5 (Aug)	Fitting and initial assigning of uniform (Cuttime)
Operations/ Maintenance	Month 6-11	Performance Season! Each performance, students will check out the uniform. Once the performance is over, the student will check the uniform back in before going home. This ensures all uniform parts are returned and stored/cleaned properly.
Evaluation	Month 12	Audit inventory; analyze student participation data for the grant report

### **Communication and Dissemination:**

We will actively involve the Waco ISD Education Foundation throughout the project lifecycle to highlight the impact of their investment:

- Invitation to Observe: Foundation members will receive VIP invitations to witness the immediate impact on student confidence.
- Photo & Media Opportunities: We will capture high-resolution photos of the ensemble and professional-quality video testimonials from students. These will be provided to the Foundation for use in their annual reports and social media. These photos and videos will also be shared with Waco ISD Communications to be spread by social media and more.
- Willingness to Present: The Project Director is available to present a progress report or "Success Story" at a Foundation Board meeting, featuring a small student ensemble in full attire.
- Branding & Credit: All concert programs will prominently feature the Foundation's logo with the text: "Proudly supported by a grant from the Waco ISD Education Foundation."
- Professional Development/Staff Meetings: During district-wide Fine Arts staff development, we will present our Digital Inventory & Sustainability Guide to other directors, sharing data on how removing the uniform barrier affected student retention.

### **Evaluation:**

To evaluate the success and effectiveness of the Uniform Equity Initiative, we will use a mixed-methods approach that combines quantitative data (hard numbers) with qualitative feedback (student experiences).

1. Quantitative Success Metrics (The "What")
  - a. We will measure the project's performance by tracking specific key performance indicators throughout the school year:
    - i. Participation & Enrollment: We will compare current enrollment numbers of economically disadvantaged students (90% of our district per the 2024-2025 TAPR) to previous years. Success is defined by a measurable increase in participation from this demographic.
    - ii. Operational Readiness: Using a digital inventory tracker, we will measure the percentage of students fitted. The goal is 100% of students sized and assigned Permanent Inventory before the first fall performance.
2. Qualitative Effectiveness Metrics (The "Why")
  - a. To determine if the uniforms are truly fostering inclusion and pride, we will use:
    - i. Student "Sense of Belonging" Surveys: Students will complete anonymous pre- and post-project surveys using a validated Sense of Belonging Scale. We will look for improved ratings on statements such as "I feel like a professional member of this ensemble" and "Financial status does not limit my participation."
3. Long-Term Sustainability Evaluation
  - a. At the end of the 12-month calendar, we will conduct a post-project evaluation to report to the Waco ISD Education Foundation:

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- i. Condition Audit: Assess the durability of the selected garments after a full season of use.
- ii. Retention Data: Analyze if the removal of the uniform barrier correlates with higher retention rates of students moving from middle school band to high school programs.

### Summary of Success

The project will be deemed successful if 100% of students in need are outfitted with high-quality attire, zero out-of-pocket costs are incurred by families for required performance wear, and student surveys show a statistically significant increase in professional confidence.

### **Long Term Implications:**

To ensure this initiative isn't a one-time fix but a permanent institutional shift, the long-term implications focus on a sustainable, school-owned asset.

1. Project Sustainability (Financial & Operational)
  - a. The 2026-2027 school year will serve as the "Capital Investment" phase. After this initial purchase, we will sustain the project through:
    - i. The Uniform Maintenance Sponsorship: We will seek a partnership or sponsorship for professional cleaning and minor repairs.
    - ii. Phased Replacement Cycle: To avoid future bulk costs, we will implement a 20% annual replacement strategy paid through school funds or activity funds. This ensures that every five years, the inventory is naturally refreshed without requiring another large grant.
    - iii. Inventory Stewardship: By utilizing our Cuttime digital tracking, we will maintain a loss-prevention rate of 95% or higher, ensuring garments remain in circulation for multiple students.
2. Long-Term Impact for Constituents
  - a. The ripple effect of this project extends far beyond the stage:
    - i. Economic Stability for Families: By institutionalizing school owned uniforms, we provide families with the long-term assurance that their child can remain in the Fine Arts throughout their musical journey without a mounting financial burden. This creates a predictable financial path for low-income households.
    - ii. Educational Pipeline Continuity: Financial barriers are a primary reason students drop out of music programs during the transition from middle to high school. Providing these uniforms creates a seamless bridge, ensuring that talent—not a bank account—determines who stays in the program.
    - iii. Career-Readiness & Professionalism: Students will graduate with two to three years of experience in high-stakes, professional environments. The habit of dressing for success and maintaining "company-owned" equipment builds soft skills that translate directly into the workforce.
    - iv. Institutional Pride: This project transforms the band's identity from a "pay-to-play" activity into a community-supported elite ensemble, fostering

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a lasting culture of excellence that will attract more students for years to come.

### 3. Future Expansion

- a. Once the Permanent Inventory model is proven successful in 2027, we plan to utilize our data to advocate for District-wide adoption of similar equity models in other Fine Arts and extracurricular departments, effectively using this grant as a proof-of-concept for the entire Waco ISD.

### **Key Personnel:**

Role	Primary Responsibility	Key Success Metric
Head Band Director	Strategy and Foundation Liaison	Grant Compliance and District Visibility
Assistant Band Director	Logistical Uniform Management	100% Fit Rate and Inventory Accuracy

#### Head Director: Strategic Oversight & Accountability

- The Head Director serves as the Project Lead, focusing on high-level management and community relations.
  - Grant Compliance & Reporting: Act as the primary point of contact for the Waco ISD Education Foundation, ensuring all funds are spent according to district policy and submitting the final evaluation report.
  - Vendor Relations: Finalize the selection of high-quality, durable garments and negotiate bulk pricing with performance attire vendors.
  - Community & Dissemination: Lead the outreach to WISD-TV and local media, and present project success stories to the School Board and Foundation meetings.
  - Budget Management: Oversee the total project budget, ensuring the transition from student-purchased to school-owned models remains financially solvent for future years.

#### Assistant Director: Logistical Execution & Operations

- The Assistant Director serves as the Operations Manager, focusing on the day-to-day School-owned Uniform experience.
  - Inventory Management: Lead the implementation of the digital inventory system, overseeing the barcoding and tracking of every polo, pair of slacks, and shoes.
  - Student Fittings & Distribution: Manage the dissemination of the Permanent Inventory, coordinating size audits and ensuring every student receives a professional fit regardless of their arrival date in the program.
  - Sustainability Maintenance: Oversee the end-of-year collection process and coordinate with local dry-cleaning partners for seasonal cleaning and repairs.

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### **Budget Narrative:**

The requested \$8,500 budget is specifically allocated to the initial capital investment required to establish a self-sustaining, school-owned "Permanent Inventory" (The Ensemble Wardrobe) of performance attire for approximately 150 students. This transition directly fulfills our primary objective of eliminating financial barriers to participation for economically disadvantaged students in the band program.

Item	Est. Unit Cost	Quantity	Subtotal	Justification
Custom Band Polo	~\$17.00	150	~\$2,550	Funds the procurement of 150 high-quality, logo-embroidered band polos. These are customized to build program unity and cannot be sourced by families independently.
Black Dress Slacks (bulk)	~\$24.00	150	~\$3,600	Covers 150 pairs of durable, machine-washable black slacks. Purchasing these in bulk ensures consistent professional appearance and fabric quality across the entire ensemble.
Black Performance Shoes (bulk)	~\$30.00	75	~\$2,250	Secures 75 pairs of specialized, supportive performance shoes. This guarantees every student has appropriate, safe footwear for band events, addressing a common financial barrier.
Black Dress Socks	~100.00	72	~\$100	Funds one case (72 pairs) of black socks. This ensures a consistent accessory standard and acts as a minor supply buffer for lost items, maintaining a professional image.
		Total	~\$8,500	This total represents the one-time, upfront cost to create a multi-year, sustainable asset for the school district.

