



**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 |

Applicants: Angelica Rodriguez & Shelby Bergman

Assigned Proposal #: 51

Project Title: Once Upon a Lab

Project Description:

Once Upon a Lab is an interactive literacy program designed to engage **up to 200 K–2 students** in creative storytelling while strengthening foundational reading and writing skills. Students will collaborate in hands-on activities to plan, write, and illustrate their own stories, fostering critical thinking, literacy development, and a love for reading. By empowering students to become authors of their own narratives, the project cultivates self-expression, confidence, and literacy proficiency in alignment with district academic goals.

1. Rationale

Once Upon a Lab aligns with the Waco Education Foundation’s focus on **creative classroom projects** by combining literacy skill-building with hands-on, interactive experiences. The project supports district and campus improvement plans that prioritize reading proficiency and student engagement in authentic literacy experiences. Integrating creative writing with interactive learning enhances reading comprehension, vocabulary acquisition, and student motivation. This project addresses the need for innovative literacy interventions that allow students to apply skills in meaningful contexts while fostering ownership of their learning.

2. Goals

- Engage **up to 200 K–2 students** in reading and writing through creative, hands-on storytelling activities.
 - Enable students to author, illustrate, and publish their own original stories.
 - Strengthen literacy skills including vocabulary, comprehension, sentence structure, and narrative organization.
 - Encourage collaboration, critical thinking, and self-expression.
 - Provide teachers with resources and strategies to integrate creative literacy experiences into classroom instruction.
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3. Plan of Operation

Project Description & Activities:

- Weekly literacy labs for brainstorming, drafting, revising, and illustrating stories.
- Mini-lessons on narrative structure, character development, and vocabulary enrichment.
- Use of specialty writing and illustration materials, hardcover book kits, and digital publishing stations to create polished student stories.
- Student-led story showcase including families, school staff, and community members.

Timeline:

- **September – October:** Introduction, distribute materials, initial brainstorming.
- **November – December:** Drafting and peer review, literacy workshops.
- **January – February:** Illustration and story refinement, teacher feedback.
- **March:** Final compilation and preparation for showcase.
- **April:** Author celebration events and evaluation.

Parental & Community Involvement:

- Parents invited to story showcases to celebrate student work.
 - Community partners (libraries, local authors, illustrators) may participate in workshops or virtual sessions to inspire students.
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4. Communication & Dissemination

- The Waco Education Foundation will be invited to attend showcases and other key project events.
 - Photos, videos, and student testimonials will be shared with the Foundation and district communication platforms (WISD-TV, newsletters).
 - Project strategies, lesson plans, and materials will be shared with other teachers via professional development sessions to support replication district-wide.
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5. Evaluation

- Literacy growth measured through pre- and post-project writing assessments.
 - Rubrics will assess narrative structure, vocabulary, sentence fluency, and creativity.
 - Student engagement tracked through participation, attendance, and completion of story projects.
 - Teacher feedback and parent input will provide qualitative evidence of project impact.
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6. Long-Term Implications

- The program is sustainable, with materials and equipment (binding machine and laminator) usable in future years.
 - Students gain lasting skills in reading, writing, creativity, and self-expression.
 - Teachers retain resources and strategies to continue creative literacy labs beyond the 2026–2027 school year.
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7. Key Personnel

- **Project Coordinator/Lead Teacher:** Oversee implementation, facilitate labs, provide instruction, and monitor progress.
 - **Participating Teachers:** Support labs, provide feedback, collaborate on lesson plans.
 - **Community Partners:** Provide guidance, inspiration, and workshops.
 - **Parental Volunteers:** Assist with showcases and provide feedback.
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8. Budget and Budget Narrative/Justification

The requested funds for Once Upon a Lab directly support **student literacy development** and provide the materials, technology, and long-term equipment necessary to implement an engaging, hands-on creative writing program for **up to 200 K–2 students**.

Consumables (\$4,900):

- **Specialty writing and illustration paper sets (200) and classroom sets of markers, colored pencils, and watercolors (10 sets)** give students high-quality materials to brainstorm, draft, and illustrate their stories, fostering creativity and ownership of their learning.
- **Hardcover blank book kits (200) and bookbinding materials (tape, rings, covers, laminating sheets)** provide students the tools to create polished, publishable stories, giving them a tangible product that celebrates literacy and achievement.
- **Printing costs** for final student books ensure that each student can take home a professional-quality copy of their story.
- **Author celebration materials (programs, display boards, certificates)** allow the school to host three recognition events that honor student accomplishments, engage families, and showcase literacy success to the broader school community.

Technology (\$900):

- Three classroom tablets function as **digital publishing stations**, allowing students to create, edit, and format their stories in a collaborative, technology-integrated environment. This supports 21st-century literacy skills, including digital literacy and multimedia communication.

Long-Term Supplies / Equipment (\$750):

- A **comb binding machine** and **heavy-duty laminator** ensure that books can be professionally assembled and preserved for future years, providing **sustainability** and allowing the program to continue beyond the 2026–2027 school year. These tools represent an ongoing investment that benefits multiple cohorts of students while supporting the consistent delivery of high-quality literacy experiences.

Impact and Cost Efficiency:

- With **up to 200 students served**, the total cost per student is approximately **\$33.25**, well below \$40, demonstrating a high-impact, cost-efficient allocation of resources.
- All expenditures are designed to maximize **hands-on student engagement**, strengthen literacy skills, encourage **creative expression**, and provide long-term benefits to both students and staff.

This budget ensures that all project components—**consumables, technology, and durable equipment**—work together to create a **sustainable, high-quality literacy program** that inspires students to become authors of their own stories while reinforcing critical reading and writing skills.

**Waco Education Foundation
Grant Budget Form**

| | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------|
| Assigned Proposal # | |
| Project Title: | ONCE UPON A LAB |
| Number of Students Served by Grant: | 200 (K-2nd grade) |

| Qty | Budget Item | Verify Vendor (Y or N) | \$ Requested from the WISD Foundation | Other Secured Source | \$ from Other Source (if applicable) | |
|--|--|------------------------|---------------------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------|
| Specialty writing & illustration paper sets | | | | | | |
| 200 | Specialty writing & illustration paper sets | y | \$ 600.00 | | | \$ 600.00 |
| 10 (class sets) | markers, colored pencils, watercolors | y | \$ 750.00 | | | \$ 750.00 |
| 200 | Hardcover blank book kits (print binding) | y | \$ 1,200.00 | | | \$ 1,200.00 |
| 200 | Bookbinding materials (tape , rings, covers, laminating sheets) | y | \$ 850.00 | | | \$ 850.00 |
| 200 | Printing costs for final students books | y | \$ 900.00 | | | \$ 900.00 |
| 3 events | Author celebration materials (programs, display boards, certificates) | | \$ 600.00 | | | \$ 600.00 |
| total Consumable Supplies | | | \$ 4,900.00 | | \$ - | \$ 4,900.00 |
| Technology | | | | | | |
| 3 | classroom tablets (for digital publishing stations) | y | \$ 900.00 | | | \$ 900.00 |
| | | | | | | \$ - |
| total Technology | | | \$ 900.00 | | \$ - | \$ 900.00 |
| Long-Term Supplies / Equipment (items that will last beyond the grant year) | | | | | | |
| 1 | comb binding machine (classroom use) | y | \$ 450.00 | | | \$ 450.00 |
| 1 | Heavy duty laminator | y | \$ 300.00 | | | \$ 300.00 |
| | | | | | | \$ - |
| | | | | | | \$ - |
| | | | | | | \$ - |
| | | | | | | \$ - |
| total Long-Term Supplies | | | \$ 750.00 | | \$ - | \$ 750.00 |
| 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 |
|--------|--|-----------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| | \$ 6,550.00 | 33.25 | \$ - | \$ 6,550.00 |

- * directly tied to student products (published Books)
- * Clear breakdown between consumables and equipment
- *includes sustainability (binding machine & laminator used beyond grant year)
- * strong cost -per- student impact under \$40