



**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 |

Assigned Proposal: #49

Project Title: Foundational Skill Building

Project Description:

Every child deserves to feel capable, calm, and excited to learn. This grant funds the creation of over two dozen sensory stations and activity boxes designed for our preschool through 5th-grade special education students. By integrating tactile tools like finger mazes and sensory tiles, we provide the essential grounding needed for emotional regulation. Beyond academics, these resources teach vital life skills and use joyful games to rebuild confidence in students who have previously struggled. Together, we can transform frustration into a sense of belonging and success, ensuring our most vulnerable learners rediscover the pure magic of education.

1. Rationale:

Building on our sensory foundation, this proposal fosters innovation through hands-on learning tailored for preschool through 5th grade. By transforming daily life skills—like hygiene and household tasks—into interactive "play school" models, we empower students to use their natural creativity to bridge the gap to social success.

Engaging science experiments and pattern-building challenges spark critical thinking, turning curiosity into academic breakthroughs. These activities facilitate deep collaboration between teachers and students, replacing frustration with a shared spirit of discovery. Together, we are creating a dynamic environment where every unique learner can think critically, create boldly, and succeed.

This grant proposal directly assists the school in fulfilling the moral responsibility to provide every student with disabilities a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) in the following ways:

1. Facilitating "Appropriate" Education Through Individualization

By funding over two dozen diverse sensory stations and activity boxes, this proposal provides the specific, varied tools required to meet the unique neurological and emotional profiles of each student. It allows teachers to implement the accommodations and specialized instruction mandated in a child's IEP more effectively.

2. Supporting Emotional Regulation and Readiness to Learn

The inclusion of tactile books, sensory floor tiles, and grounding tools helps students reach a state of regulation. Research shows that when students can effectively process sensory input, they experience reduced anxiety and improved academic engagement.

3. Promoting Inclusion and Social Participation

The proposal focuses on collaboration and social skills through household task models and group games like bingo. These activities bridge the gap between isolated life skills and active social participation, fostering the "prosocial behavior" and "positive relationships" necessary for a truly inclusive environment.

4. Addressing Funding Shortfalls for Innovation

This grant provides supplemental resources that go beyond the basic budget, allowing for innovation and creativity. It funds the "fun" side of academics—science experiments and pattern building—that are critical for rebuilding the mindsets of older students (ages 7-10) who have previously struggled.

2. Goals:

In our resource room, we often see tears and heavy sighs as our students realize they learn differently than their peers. That weight of inadequacy is a heavy burden for a child to carry, but we believe every student deserves to feel the spark of a "win." This project is about more than just supplies; it is about replacing that

stress with a genuine love for learning. By meeting frustration with joy, we can relight the flame within our students, helping them grow through play until they realize they were capable all along. To build this environment of confidence and calm, this grant will provide:

- **Foundation-Building Games.** A diverse collection of interactive games that sneakily reinforce the core math and literacy skills needed for academic success.
- **Tactile Learning Tools.** Hands-on resources that transform abstract concepts into something students can physically touch, move, and understand.
- **Regulation & Grounding Kits.** Sensory floor tiles, finger mazes, and tactile books that give students the physical "anchor" they need to navigate big emotions.
- **Strategy-Focused Literature.** Books designed to teach students the "how-to" of learning, focusing on problem-solving and emotional resilience.
- **Collaborative Play Stations.** Group activities that turn social interaction into a safe, fun space for students to practice communication and build teamwork.

3. Plan of Operation:

To ensure these resources translate into tangible growth, the items from this proposal will be integrated daily into our resource groups. Whether serving as a creative supplement or the primary instructional tool, every resource is intentionally chosen to bridge the gap between a student's current ability and the ambitious goals outlined in their IEP.

Targeted Implementation Examples:

- **Math Mastery:** Groups focusing on number operations will use Bambino Bingo during "Weekly Win" game days, transforming repetitive drill work into an engaging, high-success activity.
- **Literacy & Phonics:** ELAR groups will utilize CVC wooden puzzles, providing a vital tactile anchor for students to physically "build" sounds and letters as they develop decoding skills.
- **Behavioral Regulation:** Students with adaptive behavior goals will move from teacher-led regulation to independent use of sensory grounding tools, mastering mental strategies to stay calm and focused.
- **Life Skill Fluency:** To foster independence, students will use specialized play sets—covering dental hygiene, cooking, and school routines—to practice the "rhythm of life" in a safe, supportive environment.

Strategic Growth Timeline:

The implementation follows a "Scaffolded Independence" model, ensuring students don't just use the tools, but eventually own their learning process.

Phase	Focus	Student Outcome
Aug – Oct	Exploration & Literacy	Students are introduced to the tools, learning the rules of the games and the "why" behind sensory grounding.
Nov – Jan	Collaborative Practice	Students begin to choose their own regulation tools and participate in teacher-guided group play with a focus on social skills.
Feb – May	Student Leadership	Students lead games and mentor peers, demonstrating independence and the ability to teach others the expectations of a collaborative setting.

4. Communication & Dissemination:

To share the success of this grant and foster a culture of collaboration across the district, I propose a professional development workshop titled "The Joy of Regulation: Transforming the Resource Room into a Hub of Innovation." This plan ensures that the resources funded by the grant benefit not only our specific students

but serve as a model for inclusive excellence district-wide. By providing a hands-on live "Station Rotation" experience staff will participate in a hands-on "gallery walk." Teachers will rotate through the actual grant-funded stations—testing the finger mazes, sensory tiles, and academic games—to experience firsthand how creativity and tactile tools lower student anxiety.

5. Evaluation:

To ensure this project translates into meaningful life changes for our students, we will measure success through a data-driven approach that links daily engagement to long-term Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) transitions.

1. IEP Goal Tracking & Quantitative Progress

The primary metric for success will be the rate of mastery for individualized goals.

Skill Acquisition: We will utilize progress monitoring to track how tactile tools (like CVC puzzles and math games) impact accuracy. Success is defined as 80% of students meeting or exceeding their IEP goals prior to annual ARD in foundational literacy and numeracy.

Behavioral Frequency Data: For students with adaptive goals, success is measured by a 30% increase in students independently accessing sensory grounding stations to de-escalate, reducing the need for intensive behavioral intervention.

2. Formative Assessment & Qualitative Growth

Beyond the numbers, we will document the shift in student "willpower" and mindset.

Confidence Rubrics: Teachers will use report card feedback to measure task initiation and persistence. We expect to see a marked decrease in "avoidance behaviors".

Social Competency: Observations during collaborative play sets (cooking, camping, school) will track successful peer-to-peer interactions, measuring the student's ability to communicate needs and follow social cues.

3. Fostering the Transition to LRE

The ultimate goal of this grant is to provide students with the "toolkit" they need to spend more time in the general education setting.

Generalization of Skills: We will measure success by the successful generalization of regulation strategies. When a student can take a "mental strategy" learned in the resource room and apply it in a 3rd-grade science lab to stay focused, the project has achieved its highest purpose.

Increased Inclusion Minutes: By building foundational academic stamina and emotional regulation through these stations, we aim for a measurable increase in inclusion time and decrease in resource time needed for our 3rd-5th graders, moving them closer to full participation with their non-disabled peers in the Least Restrictive Environment.

6. Long Term Implications:

To ensure the 2026-2027 school year is only the beginning, this project is designed with long-term sustainability at its core. By shifting the focus from consumable materials to durable, reusable systems, we ensure that this investment continues to serve students for years to come.

1. Built-In Sustainability: Durable Systems

The grant strategically prioritizes durable, non-consumable hardware—such as sensory floor tiles, wooden puzzles, and permanent activity bins.

Low-Prep Access: Once these systems are cataloged and organized, they become "grab-and-go" resources. This eliminates the need for future funding for prep time or replacement parts, allowing teachers to focus entirely on instruction rather than assembly.

Rotational Longevity: Because the kits are designed as stations, they can be rotated between classrooms or grade levels each semester, keeping the content fresh and engaging for students as they progress from preschool through 5th grade.

2. Institutional Knowledge & Staff Capacity

The greatest long-term impact lies in the professional growth of our educators.

Standardized Procedures: The systems established in the first year will create a "blueprint" for our resource rooms. New staff entering the district in future years will inherit a turn-key environment with proven regulation strategies already in place.

Staff Development Legacy: The presentation and training materials developed during the 2026-2027 school year will be archived as a permanent district resource, ensuring that the philosophy of "regulation before education" remains a staple of our campus culture.

3. Long-Term Impact for Constituents

The ripple effects of this grant extend far beyond the individual student:

For Students: By intervening in the foundational years (PK–5th), we are preventing the "compounding failure" that leads to secondary-school dropout rates. We are giving them a portable "toolkit" of coping skills they will carry into middle school and beyond.

For Families: Parents will see a shift in their child's attitude toward school. By replacing academic anxiety with a sense of mastery, we strengthen the home-school connection and reduce the emotional strain on families.

For the District: This project serves as a pilot for cost-effective inclusion. By proving that low-prep sensory and tactile stations can keep students in the Least Restrictive Environment, the district can reduce the need for more restrictive (and more costly) out-of-district placements.

7. Key Personnel:

Special Education:

- The special education resource/inclusion teachers are responsible for ensuring teachers know bins exist and can be checked out for students who need them. This may require a sign out/in system and may require the special education teacher to suggest certain bins that would be beneficial for certain students.
- The special education teacher may need to provide training to teachers on the expectations and content of bins prior to allowing them to be checked out.
- The special education resource/inclusion teachers and paraprofessionals are responsible for maintaining the organization of the station's bins and teaching students expectations.

Administration:

- The campus administration will be responsible for supporting implementation and integration of the project and ensuring the special education teachers are supported.

8. Budget and Budget Narrative/Justification:

A detailed itemized budget is attached, covering:

- Item purchase costs from an approved vendor, Amazon.
- No shipping costs are expected to occur according to current Amazon expectations.

Optional Additional Information:

Ultimately, this grant is an investment in the unseen potential of our most vulnerable learners. While data tracks their progress, it cannot fully capture the profound shift in a child's spirit when they move from saying "I can't" to "Let me try." Many of our students have spent their early years feeling defined by their deficits; this project allows us to redefine them by their capabilities and creativity. By providing these low-prep, high-impact systems now, we are not just buying supplies—we are building a permanent infrastructure of dignity, joy, and success that will support the preschool through 5th-grade community for years to come.

**Waco Education Foundation
Grant Budget Form**

Assigned Proposal #	49
Project Title:	Foundational Skill Building
Number of Students Served by Grant:	105

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						
						\$ -
	total Technology		\$ -		\$ -	\$ -
(year)						
1	Bin with Comfortable Carry Through Handles 6-pack	Y	\$ 29.99			\$ 29.99
1	Acrylic Organizer Square Containers	Y	\$ 36.09			\$ 36.09
1	Rug Bordered Area Rug for Preschool	Y	\$ 256.00			\$ 256.00
1	BPA-Free, See-Through Organizing Solution	Y	\$ 34.99			\$ 34.99
1	Refrigerator Magnets for Early Education Color Sort	Y	\$ 9.99			\$ 9.99
1	Read Vocabulary for 1st 2nd 3rd Grade	Y	\$ 19.99			\$ 19.99
1	2nd & 3rd Grade Educational Math Learning	Y	\$ 19.99			\$ 19.99
1	4th & 5th Grade Educational Math	Y	\$ 19.99			\$ 19.99
1	Educational Games for Kids - Learn to Read Vocabulary	Y	\$ 19.99			\$ 19.99
1	Size, Zipper Bags for Puzzles & Board	Y	\$ 9.99			\$ 9.99
3	Colors Waterproof Zipper Pouches	Y	\$ 44.97			\$ 44.97
1	KidSquare Color Sorting Sensory Toys for Kids with Autism, Autistic 5-7	Y	\$ 8.99			\$ 8.99
1	for Autism - Fidget Toys	Y	\$ 14.95			\$ 14.95
1	Learning Activities Classroom Set	Y	\$ 26.99			\$ 26.99
1	Realistic Pretend Play Toys	Y	\$ 19.98			\$ 19.98
1	Oversized Teeth	Y	\$ 21.51			\$ 21.51
1	Game	Y	\$ 24.99			\$ 24.99
1	Aveboovi Toss and Catch Ball Game Outdoor	Y	\$ 28.98			\$ 28.98
1	Camping Cooking Playset	Y	\$ 24.99			\$ 24.99
1	with 3-in-1 Kids Vacuum	Y	\$ 34.99			\$ 34.99
1	Skills, Emotional Intelligence	Y	\$ 16.99			\$ 16.99
1	Help Children Calm Down, Cope,	Y	\$ 6.69			\$ 6.69
1	Wooden CVC Word Spelling Games, Montessori Educational Learning	Y	\$ 18.98			\$ 18.98
1	Puzzles Blocks	Y	\$ 7.98			\$ 7.98
1	Players, Learning Games	Y	\$ 17.76			\$ 17.76
1	Educational	Y	\$ 7.00			\$ 7.00
1	Never Touch a Shark!	Y	\$ 6.01			\$ 6.01
1	Ocean Friends - Touch and Feel Board Book - Sensory Board Book	Y	\$ 9.58			\$ 9.58
1	Baby Animals (Bright Baby Touch and Feel): A first sensory tactile book	Y	\$ 5.58			\$ 5.58
1	Durum Wheat Semolina	Y	\$ 1.24			\$ 1.24
1	Semolina - Kosher Certified	Y	\$ 1.84			\$ 1.84
1	Semolina - Kosher Certified	Y	\$ 1.84			\$ 1.84
1	BARILLA Limited Edition Snowfall Pasta, 12 oz. Box	Y	\$ 1.84			\$ 1.84
1	Hand Sander Sand Paper	Y	\$ 11.99			\$ 11.99
1	Doctor Jupiter My First Science Kit for Kids Ages 4-5-6-7-8	Y	\$ 22.49			\$ 22.49
1	Montessori Sensory Early Educational	Y	\$ 9.99			\$ 9.99
1	Games Montessori Educational	Y	\$ 9.99			\$ 9.99
1	for Kids	Y	\$ 9.99			\$ 9.99
1	Games, Brainteaser, Building Logic	Y	\$ 12.59			\$ 12.59
1	Developing Problem Solving Skills,	Y	\$ 6.99			\$ 6.99
1	Never Touch a Porcupine!	Y	\$ 6.04			\$ 6.04
1	Developing Problem Solving Skills	Y	\$ 6.99			\$ 6.99
1	Developing Problem Solving Skills	Y	\$ 6.99			\$ 6.99
3	Toxic 2 oz. Cans, Back to School Gifts,	Y	\$ 23.97			\$ 23.97
1	Basic Life Skills Dress Learning Boards	Y	\$ 19.55			\$ 19.55
1	Toys with Color Flow Effect & Non-Slip	Y	\$ 97.99			\$ 97.99
	total Long-Term Supplies		\$ 1,057.24		\$ -	\$ 1,057.24
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
			\$ 1,057.24	10.06895238	\$ -	\$ 1,057.24