



**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 |

Waco Educational Foundation

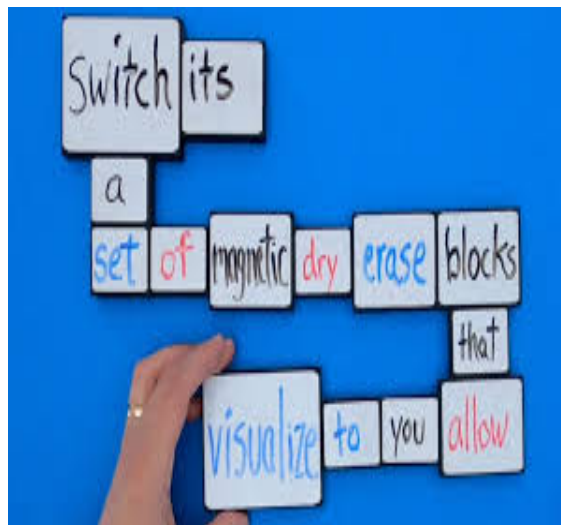
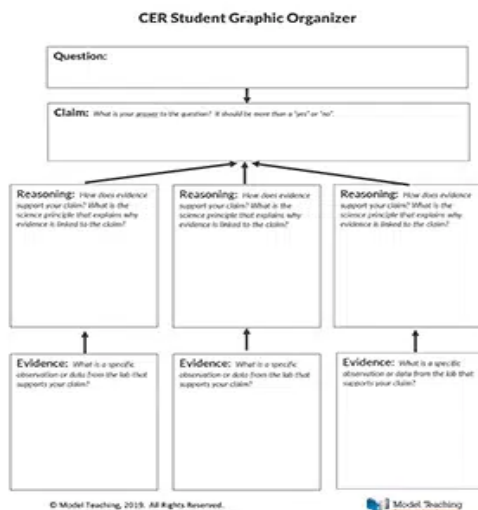
Assigned Proposal: #72

Project Title: *Think It, Build It, Switch It: Magnetic Dry-Erase Blocks for Hands-On Learning*

Project Description

Think It, Build It, Switch It is a tactile initiative using [Switch-It's Magnetic Dry-erase Blocks](#) (video link) to bridge the gap between abstract theory and hands-on mastery. By transforming the classroom into a laboratory of "visible thinking," students move beyond passive desk work to an interactive, collaborative experience. Using these versatile tools, students will construct physical Claim, Evidence, and Reasoning (CER) frameworks, building "argument towers" that demonstrate the structural integrity of their logic. This project shifts instruction from rote memorization to a "revise and refine" mindset, where students can easily modify their physical models to reflect new learning.

Examples:



VS.

1. Rationale

This project aligns with the Creative Classroom Project focus area by moving beyond traditional paper-and-pencil methods and introducing an interactive, reusable learning tool. It supports Campus Improvement Plan goals related to STEAM engagement, literacy development, and scientific proficiency through differentiated, hands-on instruction.

The "3-D" Learning Shift: This project moves classrooms away from rote memorization toward Phenomenon-Based Learning by utilizing the Three Dimensions (3-D) of Science Learning:

- **Science and Engineering Practices (SEP):** Students act as scientists by using Switch-Its to physically construct, test, and revise models of complex systems.
- **Recurring Themes and Concepts (RTC):** Students identify patterns, cause-and-effect, and systems by physically connecting blocks to show how different parts of an ecosystem or organism interact.
- **Core Content:** Abstract scientific facts become "concrete" as students build 3D representations of cellular structures, energy pyramids, and molecular bonds.

Cross-Curricular Impact: While rooted in Science, Switch-Its are universally applicable. They address the critical need for high-engagement tools for all learners—particularly those with processing delays—by providing a low-anxiety, editable workspace. This allows for mapping sentence structures in ELA, visualizing proportional relationships in Math, and creating tactile timelines in Social Studies.

2. Goals

- **Mastery of the 3-D's of Learning:** Students will demonstrate Science and Engineering Practices by building and refining physical models to explain natural phenomena.
- **Physical CER Frameworks:** Students will increase proficiency in Scientific Argumentation by "linking" evidence blocks to claim bases, visualizing the logical flow required for a sound argument.
- **Identification of Recurring Themes:** Students will use color-coded blocks to map concepts like *Energy and Matter* or *Structure and Function*, connecting these themes across units like Genetics and Ecosystems.
- **Collaborative Problem-Solving:** Through "Switch-It" peer reviews, students will swap models to provide feedback and "revise" work, fostering a collaborative growth mindset.
- **Enhanced Spatial & Math Reasoning:** Students will show measurable growth in data analysis (e.g., the 10% Energy Rule) by shifting from 2D drawings to 3D proportional models.
- **Foster Collaborative Literacy:** Students will improve understanding of sentence structure by physically rearranging "word blocks" during peer discussions, bridging the gap between tactile building and written literacy.
- **Increase Student Engagement:** Students will report increased interest and confidence in STEAM activities via quarterly surveys.

3. Plan of Operation

This project provides Switch-Its magnetic dry-erase blocks to support hands-on, visual learning and collaborative reasoning. Switch-Its are a flexible tool for visualizing and sharing ideas, allowing students to build, revise, and clearly communicate their thinking.

Activities & Strategies

- **CER Scaffolding:** Students record claims, organize evidence from investigations, and construct reasoning. Blocks allow for immediate revision as understanding deepens.
- **Math & Science Modeling:** Students use blocks to model formulas, count atoms, and represent concepts such as speed, force, and energy transfer.
- **Collaborative Brainstorming:** Small groups map ecosystem energy pyramids and Earth system cycles while engaging in academic discussion.
- **Versatile Applications of Switch-Its:** To maximize the impact of this grant, Switch-Its will be used across various disciplines to:
 - **Solve** mathematical problems and balance chemical equations.
 - **Diagram** sentence structures and teach phonics lessons.
 - **Model** complex systems, flowcharts, and schematics.
 - **Plan** storylines and organize tasks/deadlines.
 - **Coach** teamwork and strategy using X's and O's for collaborative challenges.
- **Community Involvement:** Local Adopt-a-School partners and community members will be invited to observe student demonstrations during a campus event, where students explain their CER models and learning process.

Timeline (2026–2027)

- August/September: Purchase materials from approved vendors and organize classroom sets.
- October: Introduce students to Switch-Its through CER-focused lessons.
- November–March: Integrate into core units, including energy transfer, Earth systems, and geometry.
- April: Collect data through formative assessments and student reflections.
- May: Share results with the Science PLC and Instructional Specialists.

4. Communication & Dissemination

The Waco Education Foundation will be recognized through project signage and campus media. Foundation members will be invited to observe a live classroom demonstration. Project results, student models, and instructional strategies will be shared through campus professional development and district media outlets.

5. Evaluation

Success will be measured through:

- **CER Rubrics:** Comparison of pre-project and post-project student arguments for clarity and reasoning.
- **Formative Assessment Data:** Teacher observation of student revisions, collaboration, and metacognitive discussions.
- **Student Surveys:** Feedback regarding confidence in scientific reasoning and collaborative problem-solving.

6. Long-Term Implications

Switch-Its are durable, reusable materials that will remain on campus for years and be used across multiple units and content areas. The long-term impact is a sustained shift toward student-centered, inquiry-based learning and a shared set of tactile strategies that future staff can implement.

7. Key Personnel

- Lead Science Teacher: Oversees implementation, CER integration, and community involvement coordination.
- Instructional Specialist: Supports TEKS alignment and data analysis.
- Campus Principal: Oversees budget and ensures alignment with district goals.

8. Budget Narrative/Justification

Please refer to the separate Excel Budget Form for totals.

- Switch-Its Classroom Sets (Long-Term Supplies): Core materials for modeling and collaboration.
- Small Classroom Set of Whiteboard Erasers (Long-Term Supplies): Durable erasers to facilitate the "Switch It" revision cycle, allowing students to instantly modify and refine their claims, evidence, and reasoning on the blocks.
- Storage Totes/Carts (Long-Term Supplies): Organization and material longevity.

- Shipping: Standard vendor shipping costs.

Note on Innovation:

This project moves beyond worksheets by making student thinking visible through a “Think It, Build It, Switch It” approach. Students gain multiple pathways to demonstrate understanding while strengthening their ability to think, communicate, and collaborate through the Claim, Evidence, and Reasoning process.

**Waco Education Foundation
Grant Budget Form**

Assigned Proposal #	72
Project Title:	Think It, Build It, Switch It: Magnetic Dry-Erase Blocks for Hand on Learning
Number of Students Served by Grant:	900

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		\$ -		\$ -	\$ -
Long-Term Supplies / Equipment (items that will last beyond the grant year)						
40	Switch-Its: Magnetic Dry-Erase Blocks	Y	\$ 2,540.00			\$ 2,540.00
20	Clear Storage Bins with Lids Large Stackable Plastic (6	Y	\$ 100.00			\$ 100.00
5 sets	Small Magnetic White Board Erasers	Y	\$ 60.00			\$ 60.00
						\$ -
						\$ -
	total Long-Term Supplies		\$ 2,700.00		\$ -	\$ 2,700.00
Contracted Services						
						\$ -
						\$ -
	total Contracted Services		\$ -		\$ -	\$ -
Personnel						
						\$ -
						\$ -
	total Personnel		\$ -		\$ -	\$ -
Travel / Other						
						\$ -
						\$ -
	total Other		\$ -		\$ -	\$ -
Totals			Total Requested from the WISD Foundation \$ 2,700.00	Foundation Cost Per Student 3	Total from Other Sources \$ -	Total Cost of Project \$ 2,700.00