



**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

Enhanced Programming for Advanced Students

Fine Arts

Literacy

Extended Education for Staff

Emphasis on Student Performance

STEM

Enrichment

Assigned Proposal #89

When in doubt, Orff it out!

Project Description:

The funds from this grant would cover registration fees, housing, and food costs for a 2-week intensive curriculum training on the Orff-Schulwerk teaching methodology. Funds would extend to cover the training costs for 6 Waco ISD elementary music teachers. The Orff-Schulwerk method is a pedagogical framework for teachers to use to teach music to early childhood and elementary-aged students. The teachers who attend this training will be able to implement this new knowledge immediately into their practice for the following school year. Additionally, these newly trained teachers will provide in-house PD for the remaining Waco ISD elementary music teachers for the 26-27 school year and in the following years.

Rationale:

The training offered by the American Orff-Schulwerk Association (AOSA) provides music teachers with explicit instruction on how to better their teaching practice, with implementation being possible in the immediate school year. The Orff Schulwerk approach (henceforth referred to as 'Orff') is not a curriculum, but is a pedagogical framework that informs teachers on how to present musical concepts to students across all elementary ages and grades. The Orff approach is centered on empowering students to make their own creative musical decisions in a hands-on way by moving to, creating, and performing music. Barred instruments (xylophones, metallophones, etc.) and other hands-on percussion instruments are a large component of the Orff teaching process. Over the years, Waco ISD and the Education Foundation (through former grants) have done a tremendous job supplying each campus with ample access to barred instruments. However, many of our teachers lack the training and knowledge needed to implement those resources appropriately. Currently, 3 out of our 16 elementary music teachers have completed Level 1 certification. Attending this training will bring our numbers to reflect over 50% of our elementary music teacher cohort, which will better align our instruction across all campuses. The information gained from this training will be applicable for PK-5th and accessible for students of all abilities and backgrounds. Each music teacher in attendance will return to their home campus, equipped with relevant and meaningful training that will be impactful for their students and their campus's specific improvement plans.

Outlined in Waco ISD's 2025-2026 strategic plan, professional development is listed as a top priority for our teachers: "2.2 Train and develop all staff, in service to Waco ISD stakeholders." However, Waco ISD music teachers are provided with significantly fewer opportunities for professional development when compared to the "general" classroom teachers. To supplement this, we typically provide our own "in-house" PD sessions through our monthly PLC meetings and in our minimal time together throughout the school year. Attending this Summer 2026 training will fill multiple gaps in our professional development by creating a new

cohort of expert teachers in this pedagogical method. Additionally, it will provide more horizontal alignment across our elementary campuses, which will create a more equitable footing as our students eventually merge together in middle school and beyond.

Goals:

The first goal of this grant would be to grow the teachers currently in Waco ISD in a way that would provide relevant and meaningful improvements to their teaching practice, thus creating an impact on their daily music instruction with students. All teachers attending this training under the grant would be seeking Level 1 certification training. This is the introductory level of this teaching methodology, with the option to pursue Level 2 and Level 3 certification at a later time (at personal cost).

The secondary goal is to establish a cohort of expert teachers that will further our in-house professional development opportunities for the 26-27 school year, and beyond. This includes participation in the planning and implementation of the annual Waco ISD Children's Music Festival, in which all schools are represented in a district-wide concert.

Plan of Operation:

Implementation of this grant begins promptly at the start of Summer 2026. Teachers who attend this training will reside on campus at Trinity University from May 31st through June 12th, and attend classes Monday-Friday, 9:00 am to 5:00 pm.

Upon completion of training, those of us who attend the training will work together to prepare professional development for the 26-27 back-to-school work days in August for the teachers who did not attend training. This PD will include a summary of the knowledge gained on the Orff approach to teaching music, sample lesson plans and activities, and a modeling of implementation. This early dissemination of information will allow all Waco ISD elementary music teachers to make informed decisions within their lesson planning processes for the school year. The 2026-2027 PD schedule will be set at a later date.

Throughout the school year, the cohort of elementary music teachers meets monthly for PLC. During these monthly meetings, one of the newly trained teachers will model an Orff-based lesson that all teachers will be able to incorporate into their classrooms. The 2026-2027 PLC dates will be set at a later date.

The Waco ISD Children's Music Festival rotates each year between choir and Orff-centered performances. Though the 2027-2028 school year is slated to be the next Orff-centered performance year, preparation will begin in the 2026-2027 school year. During the preparation period, the Children's Music Festival committee will include at least one of the newly

trained teachers to provide relevant and meaningful insight to the planning and implementation process.

As a result of the training and ongoing in-house PDs from our new cohort of expert teachers, our teachers will be empowered and encouraged to incorporate this new method into their daily instruction and concert preparations. Thus, parent and community involvement will happen through the music performances, at the campus and district level, in the immediate school year and beyond.

Communication & Dissemination:

As the Summer Orff Training is taking place, pictures will be shared with the Education Foundation, Waco ISD Fine Arts administrators, and with respective campuses, to document our learning. Further communication and dissemination will happen at the beginning of the year inservice in August, and throughout the year at our monthly PLC meetings, as previously stated. Teachers from each campus will provide information directly to their campus community through performances, other fine arts events, or in ways that are most relevant for their campus.

Evaluation:

Success criteria will be measured first by the completion of the training and the awarding of the respective levels certification to each teacher in attendance. Future evaluations of success and effectiveness will be measured and assessed when the teachers in attendance provide training related to their Orff certifications, to the remaining Waco ISD music teachers throughout the 2026-2027 school year, and beyond.

Teachers at each campus will self-report, either in leading PLC or in discussions, how they are incorporating Orff pedagogy into their daily instruction, in ways that are meaningful and relevant for their campus.

Further evaluation of success will involve student engagement within the classroom. Because the Orff approach is largely “hands-on” and centered on active music making, we can assume that when students are engaged in active music making, we will see a reduction in off-task behaviors.

Long Term Implications:

Each teacher in attendance at this training will be provided with pedagogical training that will inform their teaching practice as a whole. The respective campuses of each teacher will experience long-term benefits of a cohesive approach to teaching music that will build with each consecutive year that students spend with their music teacher. Additionally, the teachers who do attend and receive this certification training will be able to provide practical and meaningful in-house professional development for the remaining Waco ISD music teachers and for any new teachers who enter our district.

At the district level, having multiple music teachers who are certified in the Orff teaching approach means that our students, district-wide, are getting a more aligned approach to their music education. This ensures that more of the students entering the various middle school music programs have a similar foundation of skills and experiences in active music making. Due to increased student engagement through active music making, we would hope to see an increase in student enrollment in middle school music ensembles.

Key Personnel:

Personnel will include 6 elementary music teachers from various campuses in Waco ISD. Teacher participation was decided based on the availability and willingness of the teachers from each campus. As the primary teacher on this grant, I would be responsible for overseeing the dissemination of information to the remaining or newly incumbent teachers coming into the district in the 2026-2027 school year. However, all teachers who attend the Orff training in the Summer of 2026 would share responsibility for sharing their learning and plans for implementation over the course of the 26-27 school year, via our monthly PLC meetings and other cohort work days.

The teachers and campuses planning to attend the Summer training are as follows:

Bells Hill Elementary - Diana Hinojoza
Brook Avenue Elementary - Jose Vasquez
Cedar Ridge Elementary - Lily Martin
Lake Air Montessori - Bethany Markwardt
Provident Heights Elementary- Bryan Simmons
West AvenueElementary - Mary Kathryn Clark

Budget and Budget Narrative/Justification:

The total cost for 6 Waco ISD elementary music teachers to attend this Summer Orff training is \$10,476. Included in this cost is registration, housing on campus for two weeks at Trinity University, and campus dining (3 meals a day) for two weeks. Because we are expecting to send such a large group from one district, the directors of the Trinity Orff certification program have extended a group registration discount to Waco ISD, reducing the registration fee from \$850 to \$750 per person. The cost for housing and food per person, for two weeks, is \$996. For 6 teachers, the cost of registration is \$4,500, and the cost of housing and food is \$5,967, totaling \$10, 476. All costs associated with this training are considered to be “consumable” costs.

The funding of this grant for training would cover the largest portion of training costs. However, each teacher in attendance will still be responsible for the remaining costs needed for participation in the training, including purchasing resource books, travel to and from Trinity University, and other physical materials needed (such as instruments).

Payment for all fees (registration, housing, and food) can be directly mailed to:

Orff Schulwerk Course
Trinity University
Conferences & Special Programs
One Trinity Place, Box 79
San Antonio, TX 78212

Waco Education Foundation				Assigned Proposal #	89	
Grant Budget Form				Project Title:	When in doubt, Orff it out!	
				Number of Students Served by Grant:		1000
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						
6	Orff Level 1 Certification - Registration Fee (\$750 each)	Y	\$ 4,500.00			\$ 4,500.00
6	Housing and Food on Campus at Trinity Univeristy (\$996 each)	Y	\$ 5,976.00			\$ 5,976.00
						\$ -
						\$ -
						\$ -
						\$ -
total Consumable Supplies			\$ 10,476.00		\$ -	\$ 10,476.00
Technology						
						\$ -
						\$ -
total Technology			\$ -		\$ -	\$ -
Long-Term Supplies / Equipment (items that will last beyond the grant year)						
						\$ -
						\$ -
						\$ -
						\$ -
						\$ -
						\$ -
total Long-Term Supplies			\$ -		\$ -	\$ -
Contracted Services						
						\$ -
						\$ -
total Contracted Services			\$ -		\$ -	\$ -
Personnel						
						\$ -
						\$ -
total Personnel			\$ -		\$ -	\$ -

Travel / Other				
				\$ -
				\$ -
				\$ -
				\$ -
total Other		\$ -		\$ -
Totals	Total Requested from the WISD Foundation	\$ 10,476.00	Foundation Cost Per Student	\$10.48
			Total from Other Sources	\$ -
				Total Cost of Project
				\$10,476