Brookline Education Foundation

FY2026/School Year 2025-2026 Collaborative Grant Application
Deadline: March 3, 2025

BEFORE YOU BEGIN:
RENAME YOUR COPY OF THIS DOCUMENT WITH YOUR NAME IN THE TITLE.

HOW TO COMPLETE THIS APPLICATION:
Work on this form independently and share it with any collaborators for their input. Once it's ready to submit, you will need to convert it into a PDF - we are unable to access uploaded Google documents.

1. Download the file as a PDF document (file →download→PDF document)
2. Complete a brief application form by following THIS LINK:
   https://airtable.com/appbMpM3KX6w3MucY/shrHSX3jb7Gn6SIdk
3. Upload your PDF document into the form when prompted to do so

ONCE YOUR APPLICATION HAS BEEN SUBMITTED:
You will receive an email confirmation to acknowledge that your application was received. The Collaborative Grant Committee will review the grants in late March and early April. The announcement of successful applications will be made by email in mid-April, 2025.

If you have any questions, or need assistance in uploading your application, please call 617-232-3846 or email jennie@brooklineeducation.org or kbarnum@brooklineeducation.org.

Thank you for applying for a BEF Collaborative Grant!

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Lead Applicant's Name(s): Shelley Mains, BHS Library

Project Title:
BHS Warriors Against Misinformation (WAM): Workshop on Teaching Information Literacy

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1. **Project Summary (1-3 sentences)**

Misinformation is rampant in the media landscape we live in, and our students need education and skills to recognize and navigate it effectively. This project will bring teachers across departments at BHS together to collaboratively develop best practices for teaching students about misinformation.

The Warriors Against Misinformation (WAM) workshop will be held over two days in July 2025, plus one follow-up meeting during the 2025-2026 school year. It will feature:
- Training on proven ways to help students assess diverse media sources
- Collaboration/creative time to map where information/media literacy is currently taught, identify gaps, integrate new strategies into existing curricula, and develop plans for disseminating learning among colleagues.

Personnel

    a. In addition to the project leader, who are the participants in this grant? Please include names, schools, assignments, and email addresses.

- Alexa Bader, BHS English/Special Education (alexa_bader@psbma.org)
- Gabrielle Dean, BHS Social Worker, Peer Leadership Program (gabrielle_dean@psbma.org)
- Jennifer Hanaghan, BHS Social Studies (jennifer_hanaghan@psbma.org)
- Laura Honeywood, BHS Social Studies, ACE Program (laura_honeywood@pssbma.org)
- Bridget Knightly, BHS Librarian (bridget_knightly@psbma.org)
- Jen Martin, Curriculum Coordinator, BHS Social Sudies (jen_martin@psbma.org)
- Betty Strong, BHS Math (betty_strong@psbma.org)
- Danielle Theissen, BHS Math (danielle_thiessen@psbma.org)
- Stacy Williams, BHS Science (stacy_williams@psbma.org)
- Megan Zhang, BHS Social Studies (megan_zhang@psbma.org)
- Alexandra Zembruski, BHS English (alexandra_zembruski@psbma.org)
- Lisa Francescon, BHS Educational Technology (lisa_francescon@psbma.org)

b. What administrator (principal, head of school, curriculum coordinator) is responsible and accountable for project activities?
    Scott Moore, Director of Ed Tech and Libraries (Anthony Meyer, BHS Head of School also supports this project.)

c. Will the project require additional personnel or reassignment of current staff?
No

2. Goal Statement

What explicit goals do you aim to achieve with this proposed project? Describe the ideal outcomes and intended impact for your proposal.

-   Convene and train a cross-departmental team of WAM educators equipped to integrate media literacy instruction into their teaching.
-   Assess where information literacy is currently taught at BHS across departments and identify strategies for addressing gaps (e.g. developing lessons/exercises to integrate within existing course content)
-   Increase numbers of BHS students receiving explicit instruction on identifying and avoiding misinformation in their lives (both inside and outside of school)
-   Disseminate lessons/teaching strategies within departments to multiply this impact.
-   The above outcomes are essential steps toward the longer-term goal of ensuring that all BHS students receive media literacy instruction across multiple grades and courses.

3. Motivation

What motivated you to apply for this grant? Are there experiences, in or outside of the classroom, that inspired you to apply for this grant?
A primary mission of school librarians is to help students and faculty find and evaluate information from diverse sources, enabling them to make decisions and formulate opinions based on factual, accurate and up to date information. This work has become more and more challenging for many reasons, including the rise of digital media, the algorithms that drive social media, the capacity of AI for "deep fakes," and the increasingly polarized politics of our country and the broader world. Moreover, disinformation campaigns and the spread of conspiracy theories are on the increase; these deliberate efforts to confuse, manipulate, and cause social and political chaos, undermine the institutions that support democracy and civic health. A 2024 report by the News Literacy Project - the organization we intend to partner with for training and follow-up - found that:

- Nearly half of teens surveyed think the press does more to harm democracy than protect it.
- Eight in 10 teens surveyed reported seeing posts on social media that spread or promote conspiracy theories, and of those, 81% said they are inclined to believe one or more of them.
- The majority of teens struggle to distinguish between different types of information, such as news, advertisement, opinion, and entertainment.

Although our students engage with information around the clock, there are no formal initiatives within the BHS curriculum dedicated to teaching media/information literacy. BHS educators, including librarians and teachers in various departments, have developed lessons to address misinformation and build information literacy; however these efforts are not coordinated, and there is no mechanism for disseminating best practices within departments. This workshop will enable those of us interested and engaged in this work to share our current practices, develop new teaching strategies, and plot where this instruction can be smoothly integrated into existing curricula, working toward the goal of ensuring all BHS students receive media literacy instruction across multiple grades and courses.

4. **Impact**

Clearly outline the specific impact and benefits the proposed project will have on
- You: As a librarian, I feel responsible for teaching students at BHS about misinformation, yet the other librarians and I are not able to do this work comprehensively ourselves. Creating a cross-disciplinary, collaborative team of WAM educators to do this work within our instructional roles means that the responsibility for teaching information literacy will be shared and made relevant within the context of the departments we all work in.
- Your students: We want our students to become Warriors Against Misinformation! To this end, training more teachers in information literacy and giving us time to plan effective lessons within existing curricula will result in more students receiving effective lessons on misinformation from a wider range of teachers.
- Your colleagues (include plans for **disseminating** insights, findings, and pedagogical materials gained as a result of this project with your school and district community): Our WAM teaching team will continue to meet during the school year to discuss the progress of our work and to troubleshoot difficulties. We will also share our work with our colleagues within our departments informally and at department meetings, which will lead to an organic process of dissemination of knowledge and teaching strategies. To facilitate dissemination, we will also encourage colleagues to take advantage of training opportunities through the NLP, through webinars/conferences provided by other organizations, and through in-house PD offered by BHS librarians and other members of the WAM teaching team.

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Will there be any positive impact of this project in terms of the **diversity, equity, and inclusion** in your classroom, school, and/or broader Brookline community? If so, please describe.

- Misinformation weakens the foundations of diversity, equity, and inclusion in society by spreading falsehoods, rumors and conspiracies; fueling division; and hindering necessary action toward a more inclusive society. This in turn undermines our efforts at BHS to create community across differences. By equipping students with the tools to critically assess information, we help combat biases, stereotypes, and false narratives often perpetuated in the media. This aligns with our school's broader mission to foster an inclusive, informed community. A shared commitment to combating misinformation will enable BHS to better support open dialogue about differences and divisions among us, and to distinguish those that are real from those that are manufactured.

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5. Project Description
a. Describe your proposal in full detail, including but not limited to:
Specific details about the activities proposed (topics to be covered, skills to be acquired, etc)
Please include printed or digital supporting materials (e.g., conference brochure, tour itinerary, link to website, class description, museum flyer, etc).

b. Describe the collaborative aspect of this grant.

Our workshop is broken into five half day sessions that will convene in July, depending on the scheduling needs of participants. One additional session will be held in fall 2025. Each session will be either a training session (with BEF funding covering training costs) or a collaboration/work session (with BEF funding covering teacher stipends).

Summer sessions will be held in July 2025, at BHS. Exact dates are not finalized due to uncertainty about summer schedules and whether or not BHS summer school will be held (at least three participants are summer school teachers).

Our training partner will be the [News Literacy Project](link) (NLP), a national organization whose mission is to advance the development and teaching of news literacy in K-12 education. The News Literacy Project offers several resources and services for educators, including an online learning platform, a free weekly newsletter, professional development opportunities, a variety of classroom materials, etc. so this will be a very beneficial partnership. NLP's website is very comprehensive; PD offerings are listed [here](link). Our workshop will be customized to our needs.

Our proposed agenda for five ½ day modules plus one follow-up meeting is as follows:

Module 1 (3 hours): Introduction to teaching news/media literacy (Training session by NLP)
- What is information/news literacy?
- Best practices and resource exploration/Register for NLP Online Resources
- Grade-band expectations

Module 2 (3 hours): Curriculum Map (Collaboration session)
- What are we already teaching at Brookline High School? What are *you* already teaching, and where does this fit into the grade bands?
- What are the gaps in what we cover, and how can we address them?

Module 3 (3 hours): Strategies for teaching about misinformation (Training session by NLP)
- What is misinformation?
- How does misinformation show up in your world? How does it appear in your specific content area?

- Strategies for teaching misinformation and information literacy skills, including content-area-specific resources

Module 4 (3 hours): Content-specific lesson development (Collaboration session)

- Demonstration of lessons targeted to different disciplines
  - Group teachers by discipline to identify resources and lessons to embed into their respective disciplines. Each group will showcase which lessons they would use, how they would use them and why.
- Teachers create action plans for lesson development

Module 5 (3 hours): Work share, Revisit Curriculum Map, Next Steps (Collaboration session)
- Reconvene and share lesson plans
- Revisit grade band expectations - where are there still gaps? How can we move forward with this education?

Follow - up during school year:
- WAM educator team will meet as needed during weekly Collaboration Time to check in on progress with lessons.
- We will hold a **one-hour follow-up Zoom with NLP,** in November 2025, to be held after school. This will be to discuss/support lesson plan implementation and address concerns/questions. 13

6. **Evaluation**
How will you assess the success of this project?
- In collaboration with the News Literacy Project (NLP), we will assess the effectiveness of the training provided during the workshop through participant feedback..
- At the start of the workshop, our WAM teacher team will create a curriculum map identifying where information literacy skills are currently taught across grades and disciplines. By the end of the workshop, we will develop an updated curriculum map and an action plan for integrating these skills across subjects in the upcoming year. Comparing these two maps will help us measure growth and identify areas for further development.
- We will track and document the lessons taught related to information literacy and misinformation, gathering qualitative feedback from both teachers and students on lesson effectiveness and engagement.
- To assess the broader impact, we will monitor how workshop participants share and implement the knowledge and skills gained with their colleagues, tracking dissemination efforts and faculty collaboration.

7. Multi-year projects

If this application is part of a multi-year project, please share the context.

For applications for a second year of funding:

a. Please evaluate the first year of your grant (see the evaluation form here: https://airtable.com/appbMpM3KX6w3MucY/shrhpEsmeE6Kd5mpo

b. How would the second year build upon what was accomplished during the first year?

8. Budget and Finances

Please be as specific as possible. When estimating costs for travel, be conservative as prices often increase over time. Please remember that Collaborative Grants generally don't cover materials or supplies unless directly tied to a program or conference (e.g., a book required by the course you would be taking). And remember that the BEF cannot pay for food.

Expense	Purpose	Cost
Stipends *$36.87 per hour if completed prior to 9/1/25; $37.88 per hour if completed between 9/1/25 and 6/30/26*	9 hours of collaborative work summer 2025 x13 educators 1 hour collaborative work 11/25 (see proposed work plan) x13 educators	9x13x36.87= **4313.79** 1x13x37.88=**492.44**
Consultant *Include name and location*	News Literacy Project Washington DC Travel/training/materials	Two in person ½ days (3500x2=**7000**) 1 remote follow up **500**
Materials/Supplies *only request if directly tied to a program/conference/etc*		
Travel/Accommodations* *please include applicable taxes*		
Conference Fees		
Other		
Substitutes**		

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$135/day; indicate days/hours needed		
Total		**12,306.23**

*single rooms are acceptable, if preferred by the applicant
**the availability of subs is limited; requests will be considered case-by-case

Will there be additional funding from other sources? No.

Are resources needed to continue the work of the project after BEF funding ends? If yes, please describe how these resources will be obtained. If no, please describe how the work of the project will be funded or continued after completion of funding by the BEF.
- We will work on developing an ongoing partnership with NLP to take advantage of free offerings such as webinars, etc.
- We will advocate for resumed funding of summer work through the Office of Teaching and Learning. This has always been a valuable resource but has not been recently available.
- WAM teaching team will take advantage of PD opportunities to deepen our knowledge/skills in teaching information literacy, and will encourage colleagues to participate.
- We will continue to disseminate information and teaching strategies within departments

Do you foresee any potential challenges/obstacles? What is your strategy for dealing with them should they occur?

- The biggest challenge we face is fitting this essential teaching/learning into already packed curricula, and the assumption that "this isn't part of our traditional content." However, the crisis of misinformation makes the importance of this work impossible to ignore. Moreover, misinformation strikes at the heart of the content and skills taught in every department at BHS, from math to English. Creating a team of trained WAM educators embedded across departments will help us keep this work visible schoolwide, and will demonstrate that the responsibility for teaching about misinformation is shared across departments.

Will you be able to complete the project if only partial funding is available? XYes ☐No
Please explain how you might adjust the scope of the project if you receive partial funding:

- While we strongly feel in-person training with the NLP will be more effective and rewarding, we could resort to remote training.
- We could adjust the timing of the training to have one full day training by the NLP rather than two half days; however, at least two of our team are only available in the afternoons during the summer.
- We can decrease the number of hours of stipended collaboration