

Wayland Baptist University Delivers Day One Access for Every Student, Everywhere

Impact by the Numbers (2025)

\$463,000

in student savings

\$28

cost per credit hour

~2,500

students enrolled in Pioneer Academic Access per semester

95%

digital materials

99%

participation since launch

The Vision: At Wayland Baptist University (WBU), the traditional campus in Plainview, TX, sits at the center of a network of external campuses, teaching sites, and a fast-growing online program. Across the university, student athletes board buses to away games, first-generation students navigate higher education without a roadmap, and online learners (including active-duty military stationed overseas) balance coursework from around the world. The Pioneer Store shares a clear mission: **ensuring every student can access the course materials they need at affordable prices, on every campus and every term.**

Pioneer Academic Access, a Total Access (also known as Equitable Access) program, was born from that mission.

The Journey: WBU ran a successful Course Access (also known as Inclusive Access) program with VitalSource starting in 2019. However, as the university shifted to 8-week terms and online enrollment climbed, the access code process created headaches on both sides of the counter. Billing was manual, opt-out tracking was labor-intensive, and costs varied widely. A student in one program might carry a \$300 access code while a student down the hall paid almost nothing. Brad Henderson, director of the Pioneer Store, knew there had to be an easier way.



**"I wanted to make it an even playing field for every student."
— Brad Henderson, Director of Pioneer Store, WBU**

In February 2023, on a trip to the annual ICBA conference, he discovered Total Access, and the path forward was clear: for \$28 per credit hour, every course and every course material would be covered. Bringing that vision to life required more than a proposal. It needed a trusted voice inside the classroom.

That voice belonged to Dr. Rebekah Crowe, dean of the School of Behavioral and Social Sciences and professor of history. A self-described "guinea pig" for Brad's initiatives, Dr. Crowe was an essential thought partner long before Pioneer Academic Access launched. Together they brought the proposal to the CFO, the VP of Academic Affairs, the deans, the cabinet, and the board. The board approved it by the end of April 2023, and Pioneer Academic Access launched less than six months later.



“Dr. Crowe presented at ICBA [2025] about our symbiotic relationship, and I think she summed it up best. It’s not to help her; it’s not to help me. It’s to help Wayland and the students.”

— Brad Henderson, Director of Pioneer Store, WBU

The Outcome: Since launch, Pioneer Academic Access has achieved a **99% participation rate**, with a clear opt-out available to every student. The program eliminated manual billing and simplified the conversation with prospective students and families: **\$28 per credit hour** includes everything. In 2025 alone, the program generated **\$463,000 in student savings**, which reflects not just a simplified pricing model but a long-standing commitment to putting students first.



“Whether they’re on this campus, at an external campus, in a hybrid class, or fully online, the ebooks are always in the same place in Blackboard. That continuity is really helpful for students and instructors alike.”

— Dr. Rebekah Crowe, Dean of School of Behavioral & Social Sciences and Professor of History, WBU

The Impact: Pioneer Academic Access changed what is possible in and outside the classroom at WBU. With more than **95%** of materials delivered digitally through Blackboard, instructors assign readings and quizzes knowing every student has what they need, wherever they are. For a university made up of student athletes, first-generation students, and online learners, Pioneer Academic Access helps everyone start the semester on equal footing.



“\$463,000 in student savings in 2025 alone. That’s astounding, especially considering how small a school we really are.”

— Brad Henderson, Director of Pioneer Store, WBU

What’s Next: Wayland’s focus is on reaching adjunct instructors and faculty at external campuses who are unaware of the full tools available through VitalSource. Brad is building a recorded presentation for the university’s August faculty development event that every campus can stream. WBU’s goal remains constant: **ensure every student accesses the course materials they need at reasonable prices on every campus, every term.**



VitalSource + Wayland Baptist University

Expanding access. Lowering costs. Supporting student success.

VitalSource®

get.vitalsource.com/dayoneaccess