

TEXAS ACE PROGRAM PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK

2022-2023

Dear Parents,

Welcome to the Education Service Center, Region 2 (ESC-2) ACE Program for the 2022-2023 school year. The ESC-2 was awarded the Nita M. Lowey 21st Century Community Learning Center grant for the first time ever in 2021, and we are thrilled to be serving our students and families across 10 campuses in Beeville ISD, George West ISD, and Three Rivers ISD. The Nita M. Lowey 21st CCLC is a federally funded before school, afterschool, and summer program administered by the Texas Education Agency and referred to as the Texas ACE Program. ACE will provide opportunities for academic enrichment and provide an array of additional services that are designed to reinforce and complement the regular school day.

We are so glad to have your family participate in ACE this school year! Our program is a place where families will feel they are in a safe environment and each family's needs are recognized and addressed. We hold special pride in our professional staff selected for their abilities to help children reach their greatest potential; they are the strength of our program. It is our role to encourage and facilitate the learning of children, parents, and one another, and we are pleased to embrace this responsibility.

If we can ever be of assistance, please email me at melissa.morin@esc2.us.

Sincerely,

Melissa Morin

ACE Project Director

ACE Sites:

Beeville ISD

- A.C. Jones H S
- Moreno J H
- R.A. Hall Elem
- FMC Elem

George West ISD

- George West H S
- George West J H
- George West Elem
- George West Primary

Three Rivers ISD

- Three Rivers H S
- Three Rivers Elem

ACE Program Philosophy: *School ends. Learning Doesn't.*

Texas ACE Mission: Texas ACE aims to improve academic performance/grades, school attendance, positive behavior, and student engagement by providing students with a safe place to go during non-school hours for extended learning and enrichment activities.

Reach: When Texas ACE programs are implemented with fidelity, students attend school more often and have fewer disciplinary incidents. The longer a student stays enrolled in a Texas ACE program, the more they stand to benefit. ACE is a nation-wide program with a proven track record for boosting attendance and academic achievement at no cost to families.

Out-of-School-Time Mission: To increase the success of students by providing rigorous activities, engaging enrichment and recreational opportunities that will allow students to explore their interests and discover their talents.

ACE Goals and Components

Each ACE site will:

- Provide opportunities for academic enrichment, including tutoring services to help students, particularly those with an identified need for support;
- Offer students a broad array of non-academic services designed to reinforce and complement the regular school day; and
- Offer families of students served by community learning centers additional opportunities for engagement in their children's education.

ACE Components:

1. **Academic Assistance-** Texas ACE students participate in academic and interactive lessons designed to support the academic instruction received during the school day.
2. **Academic Enrichment Opportunities-** Students choose from a wide variety of enrichment activities designed to improve academic performance through real life experiences. Activities may include, but are not limited to: cooking, gardening, performing and visual arts, sports, robotics and coding, STEAM, community service and technology based projects.
3. **College and Workforce Readiness-** Students and family members are offered opportunities to learn about continued education and different careers. This activity component is embedded in student enrichment opportunities and family engagement workshops.
4. **Family and Parental Support-** Texas ACE Families are offered workshops on topics including, but not limited to: parenting skills, preparing for college, helping with homework, nutrition and fitness, and English as a Second Language (ESL). Activities in this component are led by the Family Engagement Specialists, teachers, and/or community partners.

Homework Help

Texas ACE Students receive homework assistance; however homework completion is not a primary objective of the program. It is recommended that parents/guardians ask their child each evening if they still have homework to complete at home. Check with your Site Coordinator if you have any questions.

Outcome Goals:

1. Improve academic performance
2. Improve student day attendance
3. Improve behavior
4. Promote college and career and workforce or military readiness
5. Increase family engagement

All ACE activities will be a 1 to 15 or better adult to student ratio.

Recruitment and Enrollment

Students must enroll in the Texas ACE Program to receive services. While the Texas ACE Program is open to all students at participating campuses, students with academic needs will receive priority admission. Students may be placed on an interest list if all program slots are filled. Students on the interested list will be offered spaces on a first-come, first-served basis. Any child whose name is not listed on the attendance sheet will not be permitted to stay at the program site without proof of enrollment.

If a selected student has any siblings at a Texas ACE campus, the siblings will be allowed into the ACE afterschool program as a courtesy to the family. After all of the above referrals have been made and if there are still openings in the ACE program, enrollment will be opened up to the whole school and spots will be filled on a first-come, first-served basis. The primary purpose of the ACE program is to serve students with an academic need. Students who participated in ACE during one term are not guaranteed a spot in the following terms. Referrals/nominations may take place each school year.

Policies and Procedures

Animals

Parents will be notified in writing if an animal(s) will be present at the operation during program hours.

Parent Visits/Volunteers

If you would like to visit the program, please contact your ACE Site Coordinator to schedule a visit in advance.

Emergency Preparedness

For the following emergencies, the ACE program will relocate to a safe area of the school until the emergency is no longer a threat: earthquake, lightning storm, severe weather including tornadoes, or a situation outside with an unsafe person. Once relocated, all children will be accounted for and the appropriate ACE staff will be notified.

For the following emergencies, the ACE program will relocate to an area outside of the school until the emergency is no longer a threat: gas leak, bomb threat, hostage situation when able, fire, or internal flood. Once relocated, all children will be accounted for and the appropriate ACE staff will be notified.

If we are unable to return to the school, ACE will work with school officials, district transportation, and emergency management personnel to determine where programming can be provided. ACE will be responsible to communicate with parents should we need to relocate our program for an extended period of time.

Each afterschool program has an available on-site Emergency Preparedness plan specific to their school and program. This plan is available for review by staff and parents at any time during operating hours. Students will evacuate according to the maps available in each room in the school.

Incident Weather

Your safety, the safety of your child(ren), and the safety of our ACE team members are of the utmost importance. In the event of incident weather/adverse conditions, the following procedures will be implemented during ACE:

- If schools have a delayed opening, ACE will only offer afternoon programming.
- If schools require an early dismissal or cancel after-school activities, ACE will cancel afternoon programming.
- If schools are closed for the day, ACE will not have programming.

Personal Belongings

The Texas ACE Program does not permit students to bring toys or electronic devices to the program. If items of this nature are brought to the program, we will require that they remain in your child's backpack for the duration of the day. ESC-2 ACE programs are not responsible for items lost, broken or stolen during program hours. Articles that are left behind at the end of the day will be placed in the school's lost and found.

Contacting your Child

Please do not call to speak to your child unless it is an emergency. If your child is experiencing problems, we will call you immediately. ***Students are not allowed to utilize cell phones during program hours and will not be able to answer any calls and/or text messages.*** If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the Site Coordinator at any time.

Communication

All communication should be directed to the Site Coordinator so that center staff can engage with the children. To better meet the needs of your child, we may share information with school personnel.

We welcome all feedback, and any comments or concerns related to the program can be directed to either the Site Coordinator or Project Director. We request that any serious concerns be discussed outside of program time so as not to disrupt the flow of activities.

Any changes in policies or procedures will be documented in writing and sent to families at least one week before policy implementation.

Family Engagement

Parents/Guardians of students enrolled in ACE are highly encouraged to attend family engagement nights which will be held once a month. Parent involvement is a large component of the ACE grant, research shows family involvement and activities will enhance positive attitudes towards school, increase parental involvement, and improve parent/child relationships. Your campus Site Coordinator will notify you once those dates are scheduled. For the safety of your child(ren) and ACE staff, only approved individuals listed on students' registration form and/or Skyward may attend family events.

Discipline

Children attending the ACE Program will adhere to the discipline policy for the Texas ACE Program and for the school district.

Children whose behavior endangers others will be supervised away from other children. The child will have the opportunity to discuss the problem with a staff member and any other concerned party. If deemed necessary, the parent will be called to pick the child up for the day.

Guidance will always be positive, productive, and immediate when behavior is inappropriate. No child will be humiliated, shamed, frightened, or subjected to verbal or physical abuse while in attendance in ACE.

While our staff will make every effort to accommodate your child's needs, there may come a time when staff determines that the program will not be able to meet those needs. The ACE Program reserves the right to remove a child without the use of the three steps listed below if the Site Coordinator and the ACE Project Director deems it appropriate.

Serious behavioral problems will be documented and the following actions will be taken:

- 1) First Offense - Student counseled; note and/or phone call to parent; suspended for a day if necessary
- 2) Second Offense – Student's parent(s) will be notified of the offense with a Parent Communication form which will outline appropriate behavior expectations, unacceptable behavior, and possible future consequences
- 3) Third Offense – Student may be removed from the program or extended consequences may be given

Attendance

Students: Each of our academic classes and enrichment programs are curriculum based, it is vital that the children enrolled attend every day unless they are absent because of a school sponsored event. Attending a total of 4 hours per day is a part of the grant requirement; if this requirement cannot be fulfilled, your child could lose his/her spot in the program. If a student is absent from school or has been placed on suspension, he or she may not attend programming. A student may attend programming regardless of any other discipline placement, as long as that placement is on campus.

Once your student has been signed into the ACE program they will not be allowed to leave until an approved parent/guardian has officially signed them out of the program through the campus Site Supervisor. Students will not be allowed to leave the program to attend sporting events, non-academic school related events, or for any other reason. If your child will be attending tutorials, please provide the Site Supervisor with those dates and times in writing.

Family Events: We value the active involvement of family members in the Texas ACE Program. It is essential to the success of our program. There are no costs or fees to participate in the Texas ACE Program; however, the parent or guardian of each student will be asked to donate at least 1 hour of their time and energy to ensure the success of the Texas ACE program. Social and educational events are held throughout the year to promote interaction between staff and families and you are encouraged to attend.

Hours of Operation

The ACE program will operate on the same calendar as the district. The program does not operate on student holidays, staff development days, teacher workdays, or holidays.

Late Pick-up

Children should be picked up promptly by the end of program time. Three late pick-ups may result in removal from the program. If you are going to be late, please do your best to notify the Site Supervisor in advance or arrange an alternate person to pick-up the student. If your child has not been picked up by program end, and the ACE Program staff has had no contact with the parents/guardians, the proper authorities will be notified regarding a child in need of supervision.

Transportation

ACE students will have the following three options for getting to and from program activities:

1. Walk - Students who would traditionally walk home after the school day will be allowed to walk home after ACE program activities with parent consent.
2. Pick-up - Students will be allowed to be picked up from ACE activities by designated individuals only with parent consent. Pick-up designations will be identified by the parent/guardian during enrollment. Students will only be released to individuals designated on the Enrollment Form.
3. Bus - Each site will provide an ACE program designated bus to transport students from ACE program sites to the designated location (established by the respective school district). All school district policies and rules for buses will be enforced for ACE program students.

Health and Safety

ACE follows district health guidelines. Please see Student Handbook(s) for your home district for more information.

It is important to remember that schools are required to exclude students with certain illnesses from school for periods of time, as identified in the Student Handbook. For example, if your child has a fever over 100 degrees, he or she must stay out of school until fever-free for 24 hours without fever-reducing medications. In addition, students with diarrheal illnesses must stay home until they are diarrhea-free without diarrhea-suppressing medications for at least 24 hours.

A complete list of conditions for which the school must exclude children can be obtained from the school nurse. A child may return to the program when they are free from sickness for 24-hours without the assistance of fever reducing aides.

What if my child becomes ill while in ACE? ACE Staff will:

- (1) Contact the parent to pick up the child as soon as possible;
- (2) Care for the child away from other children;
- (3) Give appropriate attention and supervision until the parent picks the child up; and
- (4) Give extra attention to hand washing and sanitation.

For an illness or injury that requires the immediate attention of a health-care professional, ACE Staff will:

- (1) Contact emergency medical services;
- (2) Give the child first-aid treatment or CPR when needed;
- (3) Contact the child's parent/guardian;
- (4) Contact the physician or other health-care professional identified in the child's record.

Accidents/Incidents

If an accident occurs while a child is attending the program, the staff will assess the injury and take appropriate action. As standard practice, there are no nurses on duty during programming. First aid boxes are

kept at the site to deal with minor scrapes, cuts and bruises. If a more serious injury occurs which requires medical attention, 911 may be called and the parent will be notified. An accident/incident report will be prepared, and a copy will be sent to the parent on all accidents/incidents.

Nutrition

A healthy snack will be provided each day by the district Student Nutrition Department. If a child's diet must be modified for health reasons, the parent/guardian must notify the Site Coordinator in writing and it must be included in the child's record. If a child's diet is modified for cultural reasons, the parent must notify the center in writing and may be asked to help provide supplemental foods.

Safety

We ask that parents closely supervise their children in the general areas and in parking lots when arriving and departing. Parents must stay with their children at all times while on campus.

Parents or approved persons on the registration form must follow campus procedure in picking up their child each day. Children **will not** be permitted to leave with any person who is not listed on the authorized pick-up list (with a valid ID).

The person picking up your student must be at least 16 years of age with a valid driver's license, or at least 18 years of age with a valid state ID. Students will not be released to siblings who do not meet the above requirements.

All employees are required by Texas Law to report any suspicion of child abuse or child neglect.

ACE staff will follow all district Counseling Department Guidelines and Procedures when a child expresses an intent to harm themselves or others. The ACE program staff has student safety as their number one priority. Parent(s)/guardians will be immediately notified if such a situation occurs with his/her student.

Medications

Medication will not be given during the ACE Program unless deemed necessary by school a nurse **and** if ACE staff have the capability to administer the medication.

Liability: ACE is not responsible for medical expenses resulting from an illness or accident at the center.

Non-Discrimination Clause

ACE is part of the ESCE-2, and BISD, GWISD, and TRISD (local education agencies) and does not discriminate in employment, enrollment, or nutrition programs on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, disability or handicap, age, or any other status protected by the local, state or federal laws.

Confidentiality

The ACE staff will, at all times, protect the confidentiality of the families participating in our program. Any information received by our staff will be used only as necessary and only by approved ESC-2 and district personnel and according to ESC-2 and district policy. In addition, our staff will protect the confidentiality of our participating families by protecting any other privileged information gained through conversations and/or written documents. No personal information will be released to outside entities without the expressed written consent of a parent and/or guardian.

Dress Code

All ACE students are expected to follow school district dress code policies during program activities. Student attire should allow for full participation in activities and events and should be appropriate for the weather conditions.

Program Evaluations/Observations

The ACE Site Coordinator will conduct weekly class observations and make any changes needed to enhance the quality of the overall program. The ACE Project Director will also conduct site observations and evaluate each site and recommend any changes needed. Evaluations of each site will also be conducted by the state evaluator as well as the TEA Education Specialist assigned to the program.



ACE Student Code of Conduct

The ACE program seeks to increase the success of participating students by providing academic assistance, rigorous activities, engaging enrichment and recreational opportunities that will allow students to explore their interests and discover talents. In order to provide a safe and productive learning environment to students, participants must observe the program's Code of Conduct. The ACE program is not a part of the instructional program of the district; therefore, participation may be denied at the discretion of the ACE Project Director if individuals do not comply with these standards of behavior. By signing below you acknowledge the terms of the Code of Conduct and agree to abide by them.

REQUIREMENTS:

1. Students must observe school and district Codes of Conduct.
2. Students will attend the program regularly.
3. Students will respect all school and program property.
4. Students will follow instructions.
5. Students will demonstrate courtesy.
6. Students will conduct themselves in a responsible manner.
7. Students will create positive relationships.
8. Students will observe safety procedures at all times.
9. Students will leave school premises on time at the end of the program day.
10. The intent to harm (verbal, physical or emotional) self or any child or adult (hitting, scratching, kicking, fighting, teasing, name-calling, bullying) will not be tolerated.

CONSEQUENCES:

- First Offense - Child is counseled, note and/or phone call to parent.
- Second Offense – The student's parent will be notified of the offense with a Parent Communication form which will outline appropriate behavior expectations, unacceptable behavior, and possible future consequences.
- Third Offense – Child may be removed from the program; extended consequences may be given.

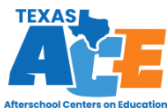
MAJOR OFFENSE CLAUSE:

Any student committing a major offense, including, but not limited to, the threat of physical abuse to self or others, profanity, insubordination, sexual harassment, leaving school grounds without permission, falsification of records, among others, will result in suspension of the program or receive a strike three consequence.

Student Name: _____

Parent/Guardian Name: _____

Date: _____



Parent/Guardian Code of Conduct

The following guidelines have been created to meet the standards, policies and procedures of the ACE. All ACE staff and volunteers are knowledgeable of these standards, policies and procedures. By signing below you acknowledge the terms of the Code of Conduct and agree to abide by them.

1. Communicate with the Site Coordinator or staff on a regular basis.
2. Give detailed information and provide official legal documents to the Site Coordinator if custody situations arise.
3. People whose behavior and/or health status pose an immediate threat or danger to the health and safety of the student must not be present when students are in care.
 - Do not confront any student in a threatening manner.
 - Do not confront students from other families.
 - Using profanity in the presence of a child is prohibited and against the law.
 - Report concerns to the Site Coordinator/Project Director
 - In the event of threatening behavior towards an ACE staff member or child, district police will be called.
4. Consumption and/or possession of alcohol in any form are strictly prohibited by ACE. Controlled substances/medications must be accompanied by a written doctor's prescription when used during program hours. People must not be under the influence of or impaired by alcohol or controlled substances in the presence of students and staff.

Children will not be released to parents, guardians, or other authorized adults if the ACE staff feels as though the individual is consuming, under the influence of or impaired by alcohol or a controlled substance.

5. People must not smoke, use tobacco products, E-Cigs, or Vape Pens at the school, on the premises or on the playground.

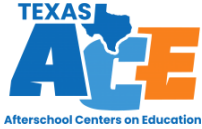
Consequences of Parent Misbehavior

With regard to the "Parent/Guardian Code of Conduct" outlined above, any parent misbehavior will result in the ACE Project Director's decision ranging from a verbal warning to parent's removal from the building or the student's removal from the program.

Student(s) Name(s): _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Parent/Guardian Printed Name: _____ Date: _____



ACE Program Parent Agreement 2022-2023

Student(s): _____

Parent Responsibilities

- Follow drop off/pickup procedures set forth by the ACE Program.
- Sign the child out of the center each day. Students will not be allowed to sign themselves in/out of the program. Failure to comply may result in removal of the program.
- Notify the ACE staff if the child will be absent for the afternoon. School faculty is not responsible for notifying ACE of absences. It is not necessary to report morning absences.
- Notify the ACE Site Coordinator of any change in those individuals authorized to pick up the child
- Pick up a sick or injured child from the center as soon as possible after being notified by ACE staff.

I understand that **the following will result in my child's automatic withdrawal** from the program:

- Consistent late pick-ups.
- Major offense and/or consistent inappropriate behavior.
- ANY use of abusive language, assault, or weapons.
- Student leaving the premises without permission.
- Failure of parent to attend conference (if requested to discuss student behavior.)
- Failure to adhere to the daily 4-hour attendance requirement set in the program guidelines

I, _____, have reviewed a copy of the Texas ACE Program Handbook. I have read, understand and agree to abide by the policies set forth in this document. I understand that while ACE offers an opportunity to begin to work on homework it is not the main focus of our program. ACE has guidelines and requirements that must be adhered to in order to maintain funding. Please know that we will work diligently to ensure the success of your student as well as the program.

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Parent/Guardian Printed Name: _____

Home Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____

Work Phone: _____

Date: _____