



Elgin ISD Texas ACE Program Family Handbook

Funded by the 21st Century Community Learning Centers grant, Elgin ISD provides the Texas ACE Program and/or the Boys and Girls Club at the following schools:

- **Booker T. Washington Elementary School**
- **Elgin Elementary School**
- **Neidig Elementary School**
- **Elgin Middle School**
- **Elgin High School**

Mission Statement:

At Elgin ISD, the Texas ACE Program inspires 21st century thinkers in a safe and supportive expanded learning environment through student led enrichment, school day aligned academic assistance, and family engagement.

The Texas Education Agency has set forth the expectations for all Texas ACE Programs:

- I. Theory of Action:** Students in need, spending additional time in well-structured and aligned afterschool activities, taught by qualified personnel, focused on the 4 activity components will yield improvement in the academic performance, attendance, behavior, as well as promotion and graduation rates of students.
- II. Activity Components:**
 1. Academic Assistance and Support
 2. Enrichment Opportunities

3. College and Career Readiness
4. Family Engagement

III. Outcome Goals:

1. To improve academic performance
2. To improve school day attendance
3. To improve behavior
4. To improve promotion rates
5. To improve graduation rate

Activity Components

Academic Assistance and Support

Texas ACE Students participate in academic tutorials and interactive lessons designed to support the academic instruction students receive during the school day. Activities offered in this component are led by teachers.

Enrichment Opportunities

Texas ACE 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, community service and technology based projects. Activities offered in this component are led by teachers, campus staff, Boys and Girls Club Youth Development Professionals (YDPs) or community partners that may include: Dance Another World, Creative Action, All Rhythm, and more.

College and Career Readiness

Texas ACE 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. Activities offered in this component are led by ACE Enrichment Leaders and community partners.

Family Engagement

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, or community partners that may include Connections, Texas A&M AgriLife, Austin Community College (ACC), and more.

Homework Help

Texas ACE Students receive homework assistance Monday-Thursday; 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 for more information about the homework help opportunities at your Texas ACE center.

Texas ACE Leadership Team

Site Coordinators: oversee day-to-day operations and implement programing for students at each center.

1. Mindy Torres, Elgin Elementary School
(512) 281-3457 Ext. 1322
mindy.torres@elginisd.net
2. Eileen O'Connor, Neidig Elementary School
(512) 281-9702 Ext. 1632
eileen.oconnor@elginisd.net
3. Danielle Hill, Booker T. Washington Elementary School
(512) 281-3411 Ext. 1422
danielle.hill@elginisd.net

Family Engagement Specialist: implements family workshops at all centers.

Myranda Hernandez, (512) 281-3434 Ext. 1282, myranda.hernandez@elginisd.net

Project Director: oversees the programing for parents and students at all centers.

Caroline Johnston, (512) 281-3434 Ext. 1271, caroline.johnston@elginisd.net

Registration Procedure

Students must be nominated and registered for the Texas ACE Program. **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 a waiting list if all program slots are filled. Students on the waiting 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.

Texas ACE Program Qualifying Criteria

Students are selected to participate in the ACE program based on a list of criteria. The qualifying criteria will be kept confidential and will not be shared with non-school personnel. The qualifying criteria are as follows:

- At Risk*
- Academics
- Attendance
- Discipline
- Previous Retention

*Economic status or a latchkey situation alone is not a "qualifier" for the program, but can support another qualifier and move a child up on the waiting list.

If a selected student has any siblings at an Elgin ISD 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.** Nominations may take place each term. Students may be removed from the program if do not have academic need for the program.

Program Operations

Days of Operation:

The Texas ACE Program operates on all school days Monday-Thursday, with some exceptions that will be announced.

Hours of Operation:

After-school Program:

Elgin Elementary School

Monday-Thursday 3:15-6:00PM

Neidig Elementary School:

Monday-Thursday 3:15-6:00PM

Booker T. Washington Elementary School:

Monday-Thursday 3:15-6:00PM

Attendance Requirements

After-school Program - Attendance is mandatory Monday-Thursday until 4:45PM. **There are no ACE afterschool programs on Fridays.**

The expectation is that Texas ACE Students will attend all or most days of the program in order to increase academic achievement and participate in enrichment opportunities. While unforeseen illness or emergency will inevitably occur, **more than 8 unexcused absences will leave the student open to removal.**

Students are counted absent Monday–Thursday if they are picked up before 4:45PM. Students who have 8 or more unexcused absences may be removed from the program. Absences will only be excused with a doctor’s note for illness or medical appointment. You must notify your Site Coordinator if your child is absent from the school day. Day school does not notify Texas ACE of absences. NO EXCEPTIONS!

Family Workshops and Events – Parents/Guardians attending the afterschool program are required to attend at least 4 Texas ACE family workshops, events or volunteer opportunities each school year.

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 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.

Please talk with the Family Engagement Specialist and if you have concerns about fulfilling this obligation.

Pick-Up Guidelines

Dismissal

There will be two dismissal times at Elgin ES, Neidig ES, and Booker T. Washington ES

1. 4:45PM (Parent/Guardian Pick Up **ONLY**)
2. 6:00PM (Parent/Guardian Pick-Up **AND** Bus)

Please let your Site Coordinator know which dismissal time your child will mostly leave at and whether or not they will be riding the bus or picked up by an adult.

Late Pick-Up

CHILDREN MUST BE PICKED UP ON TIME! Three late pick-ups will count as 1 unexcused absence and may result in removal from the program.

1st Time: Warning with documentation.

2nd Time: Warning with documentation.

3rd Time: Counts as 1 unexcused absence. Once student receives 8 unexcused absences, they may be removed from the program.

If you are going to be late, please do your best to notify the Site Coordinator in advance or arrange an alternate person to pick-up the student. If your child has not been picked up by at 6:30PM and the Elgin ISD Texas ACE Program staff has had no contact with the parents/guardians, the proper authorities will be notified regarding a child in need of supervision.

Authorization for Release of a Child

Only persons listed on the enrollment agreement are authorized to pick-up and sign out your child. Authorized persons must be 18 years or older. The Site Coordinator, Project Director, or campus Principal must approve exceptions. Under no circumstances will your child be allowed to leave the program with an unauthorized person. Any change in family status which impacts authorized parties for pick-up will require official documentation from proper authorities.

Parents or other adults authorized to pick up a child must enter the facility and sign the child out each day. We will positively identify any person picking up a child to assure the person is on the authorized list. If appropriate, we will ask for identification, such as a driver's license. Children are not permitted to remain at the program site once they are signed out.

Safety

We ask that parents closely supervise their children in hallways and parking lots when departing. We also ask that parents stay with their children at all times while on campus.

Parents or approved persons on the enrollment paper must come into the building and sign out their child each day. This is extremely important, since this list is used to check attendance during emergency drills or events. Children **will not** be permitted to leave with any person for whom the staff has not received written permission from the parent.

Other Policies and Procedures

Each Texas ACE center follows the policies and procedures set forth by the school district at which it operates. Families participating in the Texas ACE Program may refer to the school district Student/Parent Handbook for more details on district policies and procedures.

Personal Belongings

The Texas ACE Program does not permit children 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. **Elgin ISD, Boys & Girls Club, and the Texas ACE Program 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. Any lost and found items left at the end of each week will be donated to a local charity.

Illness/Accident/Medication

Health

Our program operates for well children and staff only. Children who are mildly ill (e.g., minor cold symptoms) may remain at the campus only with an Administrator's approval. Children should be fully able to participate in all activities, including outdoor play. Parents should provide appropriate changes of clothing so children do not become either chilled or overheated. Light sweaters or jackets should also be made available.

Children with symptoms of communicable disease remain with a staff member until the parent or designated representative arrives for the child. We make every effort to reach the parents when a child is ill, but after 30 minutes we will call the emergency contacts indicated on the student enrollment form.

Illness

We urge you to keep children at home if they are ill, both for their sake and for the sake of other children. We will not serve children if a child is feeling ill during program hours for a duration of 20 minutes or has the following symptoms:

- A fever of 100° F or above
- A fever of 100° F if combined with another sign of illness
- A skin rash that has not been identified by a phone call or in writing from a physician who has seen the rash
- Diarrhea and/or vomiting two or more times in a day
- Evidence of head lice or other parasites
- Severe coughing
- Rapid or difficulty breathing
- Yellowish skin or eyes
- Pink eye
- Sore throat or difficulty swallowing
- Evidence of infection.

Children may be readmitted with:

- With a physician's statement that the child is free from communicable disease and that returning poses no risk to the child or others.
- If visibly free from communicable disease, fever free without benefit from fever reducing medications for 24 hours, and free of vomiting/diarrhea for 24 hours while on normal diet.

Accident: If an accident occurs while a child is attending the program, the staff will assess the injury and take appropriate action. 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 will 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.

Medication: Any medication to be administered to your child by the Texas ACE Program staff must:

- Be brought to the front office of the school by the parent or guardian with instructions to administer during Texas ACE.
- Be in the original container. Labeled with the child's name, date, directions and the physician's name.
- Be accompanied by clear written instructions and the time medication is to be given.

The Site Coordinator will make every attempt to give medicine on time. It is helpful when a child notifies the staff when medication is to be taken. If the medication is to go home with the child at the end of the day or week, it is the parent's responsibility to pick it up from the Site Coordinator or front office of the school.

Behavior Guidelines for Students

As participants, all children will be required to:

1. Respect the property of the school and surroundings.
2. Report to a staff member if they are sick or hurt.
3. Keep all personal belongings in their backpacks during program hours.
4. Behave in a responsible manner, being helpful and cooperative.
5. Demonstrate courtesy and respect for one another.
6. Respect their teachers and counselors and follow directions.
7. Respect the rights of other program participants, the school leaders, teachers and staff.
8. Obey all school rules that are observed during the school year.
9. Be honest, making every attempt to be truthful and fair with others.

Positive Discipline Measures

It is our goal for program staff, children and parents to work together toward cooperative behavior and a cohesive atmosphere. Staff will always notify parents of emerging difficulties and ask for assistance in behavior management. When warranted, behavior contracts and / or specific written goals will be established to reduce or redirect serious misconduct.

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 Texas ACE Program reserves the right to remove or suspend a child without use of the three steps listed below if the Campus Principal deems it appropriate.**

1st Referral: The Site Coordinator or designee will write a referral. Parents/guardians will be contacted and arrangements will be made for immediate child pick-up. The child will be counseled and remain in supervised suspension until the parent arrives.

2nd Referral: The Site Coordinator or designee will make a referral. A 4-day suspension from the program may occur. At this time a discussion between Site Coordinator and authorized member of the family will take place and the child counseled, followed by an agreement that a repeat referral may result in removal from the program.

3rd Referral: The Site Coordinator or designee will make a referral and the child may be removed from the program.

The following behaviors are considered serious in nature and may result in students being removed from the program:

Theft or Attempts to Steal or Property Damage

- *Theft, Attempted theft, or Property Damage* is defined as any property not belonging to the participant.

Verbal Abuse of Counselor or Other Participants

- *Verbal Abuse* is the belittling, humiliation, intimidation or threatening of another.

Physical Aggression

- *Physical Aggression* is the deliberate intent to hurt or jeopardize the safety of oneself or others. This behavior will not be tolerated, even when the child is angered or emotionally upset and requires immediate intervention.

Inappropriate Touching

- *Inappropriate touching* is defined as any physical contact to another individual that causes emotional or physical distress.

Children Leaving the School Premises Without an Authorized Escort

- *Children who attempt to leave* without the assistance of a counselor are seriously endangering their safety and strict measures must be taken to prevent such occurrences. All children are required to stay within clearly designated Texas ACE Program boundaries when indoors as well as during outdoor recreation time. If a child is troubled or hurt, he or she must seek the assistance of a counselor immediately.

Verbal Threats of Severe Harm or Death Threats

- *Severe verbal threats* that potentially endanger the life of a participant will be taken seriously and responded to with great caution. Immediate steps for resolution will take place in all such cases. It is not our intention or within our jurisdiction to determine the intent of the child or to interpret the meaning of statements or actions. However, we cannot minimize the serious nature of such threats and will therefore enforce strict and consistent consequences to prevent future occurrences and/or a dangerous situation.

Because of the serious nature of these behaviors, we will enforce strict and consistent consequences to prevent future occurrences.

In all instances, the Site Coordinator will ensure that fairness and consistency is demonstrated with all disciplinary steps taken. He or she will get to know the child involved and observe, assess and review documentation. Every reasonable measure will be taken to ensure that the child's needs are met. Please note that our primary goal is to provide effective supervision and

positive support for every child and to anticipate, successfully prevent and resolve conflicts. However, the Texas ACE Program reserves the right to remove a child from the program.

Guidelines to Ensure Your Child's Safety

In addition to standard safety guidelines, the following restrictions apply the Texas ACE program:

- All children are to adhere to designated playground boundaries, as established by the Texas ACE Program.
- Rocks and sticks are prohibited from use on the playground. Due to the potential for serious injury, children who do not comply with this guideline will be redirected to another activity.
- Children are never to leave their teacher and group while playing outdoors.
- Children are to use all equipment as it is designed to be used; i.e., children will not walk up slides or slide down headfirst.

Emergency Procedures

The Texas ACE Program is prepared to activate emergency procedures in the event of severe weather, fire and/or other emergency conditions that require building evacuation or other immediate safety measures. When appropriate, parents will be contacted for early pick-up.

Policy Change Procedures

If the ACE Program changes enrollment procedures or any policies, changes will be notified by a posting at your child's school. Questions regarding any changes should be directed to the Site Coordinator.

Rights of Parents and Children

- We recommend that you discuss with your child his/her right to privacy and to communicate any situation or person's action that makes him/her feel uncomfortable.
- Do not hesitate to report to the Site Coordinator or Project Director any action of a Texas ACE Program staff member that you deem to be inappropriate. All concerns will be thoroughly investigated, and Child Protective Services will be contacted, if warranted.
- All parents and guardians are encouraged to visit our program, observe activities and to freely communicate with all site staff and program supervisors.

Please be advised that:

- The schools are mandated by State Law to report any suspected cases of child abuse or neglect to the appropriate authorities.
- Inappropriate language, conduct or sexual harassment will not be tolerated from parents or persons picking up your child.
- Behaviors that indicate the influence of drugs or alcohol may require that the Texas ACE Program staff members contact the authorities to ensure the safety of your child(ren).
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The ACE Program is firmly committed to the protection and safety (physically and emotionally) of all our participants and staff in our program. **Therefore, we reserve the right to exercise removal of participants who do not comply with the guidelines set forth in this handbook.**

Student or Parent Complaints or Concerns:

We value your comments, concerns, or suggestions. Please share your input with your Site Coordinator. If you have a concern or complaint and are not satisfied after discussing it with the Site Coordinator, please discuss your concerns with the Campus Principal or the Project Director. If your concerns can be not resolved through an informal conference with the Campus Principal or Project Director, follow the school district's policy for handling formal complaints or grievances. Texas ACE staff members are employees of the school district that they serve.

Confidentiality: The Texas ACE Program is funded by the 21st CCLC Program and administered by the US Department of Education. The Department of Education requires that site schools provide information on our students for the purpose of assessing our program's effectiveness. The Texas ACE Program 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 School District personnel and according to 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.

RE: Texas ACE Program Family Handbook

I, _____, parent/guardian
of _____, acknowledge that I have read,
understand and agree to the terms outlined in the Texas ACE Program Family Handbook. I
also understand that in order for my child to be eligible to attend the afterschool program I,
another parent/guardian, or both are required to attend a minimum of four Family Engagement
events, workshops or volunteer opportunities. I understand that the school district Technology
Acceptable Use Policy and school district Student/Parent Handbook also applies to the Texas
ACE Program.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Name of ACE Student

****Please return this form to your Texas ACE Site Coordinator****