

**Atlanta Independent School District-Physical Agent
and Daingerfield Independent School District**

**21st Century Community Learning Centers
2020-2021 Evaluation Report**

Cycle 10-Year 3

ACE/BLAST Director, Terre Gaston



A. Executive Summary

The 21st Century Learning Centers program was established to provide opportunities for communities to establish or expand activities for students attending low-performing schools. In Texas, this program is known as the Texas Afterschool Centers on Education (Texas Afterschool Centers on Education (ACE), Cycle 10 program was implemented through the guidance of the Texas Education Agency (TEA), federally-funded 21st Century Community Learning Center (CCLC) grants, authorized under Title IV, Part B of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) of 2015. Atlanta ISD -Physical Agent received a funding Cycle 10 grant from the Texas Education Agency (TEA) to provide 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) programming at four (4) campuses or “program center sites.” at **Atlanta ISD** and two (2) campuses or “program center sites” at **Daingerfield ISD**. This report examines data that documents findings for program operations at the six participating campuses: **(AISD) Atlanta High, Atlanta Middle, Atlanta Elementary, Atlanta Primary, (DISD) Daingerfield Junior High, and South Elementary**. The 2020-2021 academic year was the third year of the Atlanta ISD and Daingerfield ISD, Cycle 10 ACE.

Strong level of Student and Adult Participation: All sites met their student and adult targets by serving or surpassing the required numbers of Regular students and parents. Total enrollment at the six campus sites ranged from 75, 126, 131, 151, 187 to 195 for a total of 865 students. Regular students served ranged from 57, 64, 91, 111, 134, 141 for a total of 598. The number of adults served across all sites was 372.

Key components of the Atlanta Independent School District and Daingerfield Independent School District’s BLAST (Being Lifelong Achievers Starts Today) program included Academic Tutoring, Homework Help, Art, Driver’s Education, Health and Wellness, Welding, Arts and Crafts, Cosmetology, Technology Training, Leadership Skills, STEM, *Mindworks*, Music/Theater Arts, 4H, Sewing, and many more academic and enrichment activities for enrolled students. BLAST offered high quality learning opportunities to students who have been identified by their campus administration, teachers or parents as in need of additional assistance, with academic, behavior or both. Each center opened for 1 hour Monday through Friday prior to school starting to provide student’s academic support with their homework and tutorials. Each program opened again upon school-day dismissal and remained open until 6:00 pm Monday through Thursday. Between August 17th, 2020 and May 25th, 2021, a total of **598 students** were Regular Participants (attended 45 days of more throughout the year. The total state requirement was 553; **total number served was 865**.

Among the most notable process *findings* of the evaluation from Principal Solutions, Inc. were the following-

- The Atlanta and Daingerfield ACE/BLAST program implemented a safe environment for all students and staff. The Project Director reported that ACE/BLAST followed the same policies and procedures as the regular school day in regard to safety. This was a unique school year due to the coronavirus. The transition from At Home and Distance Learning Platform was an unprecedented accomplishment. In terms of the ACE/BLAST Project Director, effective management and administration skills were noted as critical to the success of the program. The Project Director was viewed as critical to building cohesion among the regular day to the afterschool program.
- The support of the campus administration was critical for the success of the ACE/BLAST program and the Site Coordinators maintained and fostered a strong communication system and professional relationship with campus administration.
- There was a close alignment between the activities at each ACE/BLAST center and the curriculum of each associated day school. Particularly noteworthy in this regard was a general emphasis on enrichment at ACE/BLAST centers, an emphasis which supplemented Atlanta and Daingerfield ISD's district-wide emphasis on college preparation and career readiness.
- A striking feature among all ACE/BLAST programs was that all appeared to be successful in creating a positive, engaging afterschool climate. Relationships between staff and students at all of the centers sites were very positive. Afterschool teachers reported having more personal and casual relations with students than was possible in day school classes.
- All centers provided parents with opportunities for meaningful engagement with the ACE/BLAST program. Parent participation was reportedly high at all observed campuses, all programs implemented strategies to keep parents informed of, aware of, and interacting with ACE/BLAST activities. Or the most part, communication with parents occurred daily when parents arrived to pick up their children from the afterschool program.
- The ACE/BLAST program has an amazing team of dedicated educators who are using the informal learning space of afterschool to enhance the lives of youth.

Based upon the above findings and other observations, Principal Solutions, Inc., external evaluator proposes *findings and recommendations* for the 2020-2021 school year.

Atlanta High Findings and Recommendations-Center#1

Finding #1: This school year some of the students were displaced from school due to COVID guidelines or started off as virtual students. Therefore, gaps in academic learning have occurred as shown with fall 2020 to spring 2021 grades.

Recommendation #1: Continue to provide involvement by principals, assistant principals, and teachers to give a high dosage of accelerated learning through the implementation of the intentional planning of activities based on campus needs assessment and campus improvement plans for summer 2021 and the 2021-2022 programming.

Next Steps: The Site Coordinator will work continuously with the Principal, Assistant Principal, classroom teachers, and interventionists to provide a more rigorous tutoring program during the ACE/BLAST program to ensure that gaps in academic learning are reduced and improved. The Site Coordinator will use a variety of different methods to meet this need of the students to include but not limited to targeting students in the gap, enrolling them in the ACE/BLAST program, and pulling out students who are in more need of interventional services. The ACE/BLAST program will continue to monitor the academic needs of their students every six weeks; as well as sporadically throughout the grading period to oversee the students' progress and make adjustments as needed for progression.

Finding #2: The ACE/BLAST program served more than their targeted goal for numbers of parent participants in this third year and provided educational opportunities for parents.

Recommendation #2: The focus is now to empower parents to become their own models for a sustainable future and allow them to be part of the solution and open doors of opportunities for themselves. Continue to provide involvement by the Principal or Assistant Principal in the implementation of intentional planning activities for parents based on campus needs assessments and campus improvement plans. Principal or Assistant Principal should be not only involved in the selection of parent involvement activities but also be doing regular observations of after school parent activities and provide constructive feedback. Presentation nights are a great way for students to showcase their work to their parents. Consider increasing the relevance of parent and family activities, often coupled with the suggestion of soliciting feedback from parents about the kinds of support and activities that would be most useful and relevant for them as well as culturally relevant.

Next Steps: The Site Coordinator will continue to work with the Principal, Assistant Principal, Counselors, and Family Engagement Specialist to work in reviewing the campus needs assessments and campus improvement plans to develop and implement quality intentionally planned parent programs to empower parents with the opportunity to develop a sustainable future for themselves and their families. Parent activities will vary in the type of programs provided; ranging from parent personal development, parent and student engagement, and student showcases. Feedback will be gathered from the aforementioned individuals and parents after the parent activities; reviewed, and will be used for future planning of family events that will support the ever changing needs of our families, keeping the information provided and programs fluidly relevant.

Atlanta Middle Findings and Recommendations-Center#2

Finding #1: This school year some of the students have been displaced from school due to COVID guidelines or started off as virtual students. Therefore, gaps in academic learning have occurred as shown with fall 2020 to spring 2021 grades.

Recommendation#1: Continue to provide involvement by principals, assistant principals, and teachers in to give high dosage of accelerated learning through the implementation of the intentional planning of activities based on campus needs assessment and campus improvement plans for summer 2021 and the 2021-2022 programming.

Next Steps: To ensure academic success in ACE students, the Site Coordinator will continue to work closely with campus administrators, interventionists, and teachers to provide instruction tailored to individual learner needs during ACE programming. The Site Coordinator will continue to frequently monitor a variety of data collections such as grades, attendance, and discipline reports and make adjustments as needed.

Finding #2: The ACE program served more than their targeted goal for numbers of parent participants in this third year and provided educational opportunities for parents.

Recommendation #2: The focus is now to empower parents to become their own models for a sustainable future and allow them to be part of the solution and open doors of opportunities for themselves. Continue to provide involvement by the Principal or Assistant Principal in the implementation of intentional planning activities for parents based on campus needs assessments and campus improvement plans. Principal or Assistant Principal should be not only involved in the selection of parent involvement activities but also be doing regular observations of afterschool parent activities and provide constructive feedback. Presentation nights are a great way for students to showcase their work to their parents. Consider to increase the relevance of parent and family activities, often coupled with the suggestion of soliciting feedback from parents about the kinds of support and activities that would be most useful and relevant for them as well as culturally relevant.

Next Steps: To ensure continuation of meeting and exceeding targeted family involvement goals, the Site Coordinator will work closely with the family engagement specialist and campus administrators in the planning of events based on family needs and campus improvement plans. We will continue to request feedback from parents and stakeholders for future planning of family events and activities that are relevant and useful to our community needs.

Atlanta Elementary Findings and Recommendations-Center#3

Finding #1: Continue to focus efforts on student recruitment to allow the campus to target the maximum number of students at the beginning of the school year continuing to the end of the spring semester.

Recommendation #1: The recommendation is to continue to focus efforts on student recruitment. It is important to closely monitor student recruitment and to follow up with parents and the students during next year. Informally asking students why they are unable to attend the BLAST/ACE program could provide a lot of insight and improve the outcome of this finding.

Next Steps: The site coordinator will focus efforts on student recruitment, working closely with the classroom teachers and administrators to recruit students that failed their STAAR assessments from the 2020-2021 school year. We will provide students with small group tutorials in the areas needed.

Finding #2: The ACE/BLAST program served more than their targeted goal for numbers of parent participants in this third year and provided educational opportunities for parents.

Recommendation #2: The focus is now to empower parents to become their own models for a sustainable future and allow them to be part of the solution and open doors of opportunities for themselves. Continue to provide involvement by the Principal or Assistant Principal in the implementation of intentional planning activities for parents based on campus needs assessments and campus improvement plans. Principal or Assistant Principal should be not only involved in the selection of parent involvement activities but also be doing regular observations of after school parent activities and provide constructive feedback. Presentation nights are a great way for students to showcase their work to their parents. Consider increasing the relevance of parent and family activities, often coupled with the suggestion of soliciting feedback from parents about the kinds of support and activities that would be most useful and relevant for them as well as culturally relevant.

Next Steps: To ensure continuation of meeting and exceeding targeted goal numbers of parent involvement the site coordinator will work collaboratively with the family engagement specialist, principal and assistant principal in intentional planning of parent events based on campus needs assessments and campus improvement plans. The site coordinator and family engagement specialist will ask the principals and parents to give constructive feedback on the after school parent activities and will review feedback for future planning of family events and activities that support families in the most relevant and useful ways.

Finding #3: In the category of College and Workforce Readiness within the 2020-2021 Activity Attendance Report there were (0) activities in the fall and (0) activities in the spring offered to students.

Recommendation #3: Be sure that activities are entered correctly in TX21st. Computer lab and Introduction to Culinary could have been coded College and Workforce Readiness. This is to ensure proper tracking, but to help illustrate to stakeholders that the Center is offering activities aligned to the Logic Model.

Next Steps: When setting up Activities for Elementary, College and Workforce Readiness was not specifically selected because the site coordinator was unaware that it was a focus on the Elementary level this year. In the future, the site coordinator will assure it is chosen.

Atlanta Primary Findings and Recommendations-Center#4

Finding #1: This school year some of the students have been displaced from school due to COVID guidelines or started off as virtual students. Therefore, gaps in academic learning have occurred as shown with fall 2020 to spring 2021 grades.

Recommendation #1: Offer more rigorous tutoring through pull outs and continue to provide involvement by principals, assistant principals, and teachers.

Next Steps: To ensure gaps in academic learning are reduced and grades are improved, the site coordinator will work continuously with principal, assistant principal, interventionists, and classroom

teachers to provide a more rigorous tutoring program during ACE hours through pull out classes for all students who are in need of Response to Intervention Services. The ACE program will continue to monitor students' academic needs every six weeks, and will adjust individualized tutoring based on the needs of each student.

Finding #2: The BLAST/ACE program served more than their targeted goal for numbers of parent participants in this third year and provided educational opportunities for parents.

Recommendation #2: The focus is now to empower parents to become their own models for a sustainable future and allow them to be part of the solution and open doors of opportunities for themselves. Continue to provide involvement by the Principal or Assistant Principal in the implementation of intentional planning activities for parents based on campus needs assessments and campus improvement plans. Principal or Assistant Principal should be not only involved in the selection of parent involvement activities but also be doing regular observations of after school parent activities and provide constructive feedback. Presentation nights are a great way for students to showcase their work to their parents. Consider to increase the relevance of parent and family activities, often coupled with the suggestion of soliciting feedback from parents about the kinds of support and activities that would be most useful and relevant for them as well as culturally relevant.

Next Steps: To ensure continuation of meeting and exceeding targeted goal numbers of parent involvement the site coordinator will work collaboratively with the family engagement specialist, principal and assistant principal in intentional planning of parent events based on campus needs assessments and campus improvement plans. The site coordinator and family engagement specialist will ask the principals and parents to give constructive feedback on the after school parent activities and will review feedback for future planning of family events and activities that support families in the most relevant and useful ways.

Daingerfield Junior High Findings and Recommendations-Center#5

Finding #1: This school year some of the students have been displaced from school due to COVID guidelines or started off as virtual students. Therefore, gaps in academic learning have occurred as shown with fall 2020 to spring 2021 grades.

Recommendation #1: Offer more reading intervention strategies to support students who are reading below grade level.

Finding #2: The ACE program served more than their targeted goal for numbers of parent participants in this third year and provided educational opportunities for parents.

Recommendation #2: The focus is now to empower parents to become their own models for a sustainable future and allow them to be part of the solution and open doors of opportunities for themselves. Continue to provide involvement by the Principal or Assistant Principal in the implementation of intentional planning activities for parents based on campus needs assessments and campus improvement plans. Principal or Assistant Principal should be not only involved in the selection of parent involvement activities but also be doing regular observations of afterschool parent activities and provide constructive feedback. Presentation nights are a great way for students to showcase their work to their parents. Consider to increase the relevance of parent and family activities, often coupled with the

suggestion of soliciting feedback from parents about the kinds of support and activities that would be most useful and relevant for them as well as culturally relevant.

Next Steps: Based on the findings from our External Evaluator about our programming, I plan to involve our parents in some kind of showcase night where students perform or show off their projects for parents. I will also be assisting the principal in planning our intervention for students who did not pass STARR Test.

South Elementary Findings and Recommendations-Center#6

Finding #1: This school year some of the students have been displaced from school due to COVID guidelines or started off as virtual students. Therefore, gaps in academic learning have occurred as shown with Fall 2020 to Spring 2021 grades.

Recommendation #1: Offer more reading intervention strategies to support students who are reading below grade level.

Next Steps: Site Coordinator will ensure students reading below grade level are participating in small group intervention. BLAST Staff will provide structured and targeted teaching. Student progress will be evaluated by grade level teachers, BLAST staff, and classroom performance.

Finding #2: The BLAST/ACE program served more than their targeted goal for numbers of parent participants in this third year and provided educational opportunities for parents.

Recommendation #2: The focus is now to empower parents to become their own models for a sustainable future and allow them to be part of the solution and open doors of opportunities for themselves. Continue to provide involvement by the Principal or Assistant Principal in the implementation of intentional planning activities for parents based on campus needs assessments and campus improvement plans. Principal or Assistant Principal should be not only involved in the selection of parent involvement activities but also be doing regular observations of after school parent activities and provide constructive feedback. Presentation nights are a great way for students to showcase their work to their parents. Consider increasing the relevance of parent and family activities, often coupled with the suggestion of soliciting feedback from parents about the kinds of support and activities that would be most useful and relevant for them as well as culturally relevant.

Next Steps: Site Coordinator will provide volunteer opportunities, ongoing communication about students' progress, and social media to ensure and improve parent involvement. Site Coordinator will also continue to soft survey parents/guardians to best serve their interests.