



Port Aransas ACE

PARENT HANDBOOK

Dear Parents,

The Texas ACE Program is a federally-funded afterschool program administered by the Texas Education Agency. The purpose of the program is to provide free and expanded academic services to students in high need areas. Expanded services will include academic assistance, homework help, enrichment activities, job readiness, and college preparation. In addition, family education and engagement activities will be provided within our program at no charge to families.

Sincerely,

Texas ACE Program

VISION STATEMENT

To ensure that students have the opportunity to participate in a safe, inclusive program with fun, hands on, age appropriate activities which includes increasing academic success, enhancing character development, and building life skills through educational, recreational, enrichment, and community activities.

PROGRAM GOALS

- ★ To provide a safe, enriching environment that builds self-confidence and social development.
- ★ To provide educational, enrichment, and recreational activities that develop each student's educational competence, physical and social development, and community involvement.
- ★ To provide a flexible program that fits the needs of the students and their parents.
- ★ To help students better relate to others and recognize the differences that makes a person unique by working and playing together.
- ★ To increase family engagement in the educational setting.

Activity Components

Academic Assistance and Support

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

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, or community partners.

College and Career Readiness

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

ACE Families are offered workshops on topics including, but not limited to: parenting skills, preparing for college, helping with homework, nutrition and fitness. Activities in this component are led by the Family Engagement Specialists, teachers, or community partners that may include Del Mar College, Texas A&M Corpus Christi, UT Marine Science Institute, and more.

Homework Help

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 ACE center.

Texas ACE Leadership Team

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

- ★ Joy Lea, Olsen Elementary School (361) 749-1212 lea@paisd.net
 - ★ Brian Lewis, Brundrett Middle School (361) 749-1209 lewis@paisd.net
 - ★ Rob Phillips, Port Aransas High School (361) 749-1206 rphillips@paisd.net
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Program Operations

Days of Operation:

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

Hours of Operation:

After-school Program hours are from 7am-8am and 3:30pm until 6:00pm. Students are not required to attend until 6 if their activity ends earlier.

Policies

Accidents/Incidents

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.

Attendance

Attendance is encouraged Monday-Friday until 4:15PM. The expectation is that ACE Students will attend all or most days of the program in order to increase academic achievement and participate in enrichment opportunities.

Behavior Guidelines

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 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 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 ACE Program reserves the right to remove a child from the program.

[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.

Pickup Guidelines

Dismissal

The programs are run in three blocks 3:30-4:15 4:20-5:05 and 5:10-5:55. Parents are asked to pick up children after the block or blocks they signed up for so as to not disturb the other children and programs.

Late Pick Up

CHILDREN MUST BE PICKED UP ON TIME!

Two late pick-ups will count as 1 unexcused absence and may result in removal from the program.

1st Time: Warning with documentation.

2nd 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 6:00PM 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.

Family Workshops and Events

Parents/Guardians attending the afterschool program are required to attend at least 2 ACE family workshops, events or volunteer opportunities each school year.

We value the active involvement of family members in the ACE Program. It is essential to the success of our program. There are no costs or fees to participate in the 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 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.

Medications

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.

Health

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.

Snacks/Food Allergies

A nutritious snack will be provided each day by the ACE Program. If a student does not want to eat the provided snack, he/she may bring a snack from home. The snack from home may not be shared with any other student. If a snack is provided from home, ACE is not responsible for its nutritional value or meeting the student's daily food needs. It is the responsibility of parents/legal guardians to make sure all allergies are properly documented on their child's ACE registration and brought to the attention of the ACE staff.

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. If a child is to walk or ride a bike please after the program please let the staff know.

Emergency Procedures

The 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.

Personal Belongings

The 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. Port Aransas ISD 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 semester will be donated to a local charity.

Other Policies and Procedures

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

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 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 ACE Program staff members contact the authorities to ensure the safety of your child(ren).

Confidentiality

The 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 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: The Texas ACE Program Parent Handbook

I, _____, parent of
_____, acknowledge that I have read,
understand and agree to the terms outlined in the Texas ACE Program Parent Handbook.
I also understand that in order for my child to be eligible to attend I, another parent/
guardian, or both are required to attend a minimum of two parent meetings which will
be announced on each campus at least two weeks in advance.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Name of School/Campus

*Please return this form to your Texas ACE Site Coordinator