

REQUEST FOR APPLICATION

Application Guidelines

Program Guidelines

2013-2014 Texas 21st Century Community Learning Centers, Cycle 8, Year 1

Authorized by PL 107-110, Elementary and Secondary
Education Act of 1965, as amended by the No Child Left
Behind Act of 2001, Title IV, Part B

Application Closing Date—5:00 p.m., Central Time
March 26, 2013

TEXAS EDUCATION AGENCY

**Division of Grants Administration
1701 North Congress Avenue
Austin, Texas 78701**

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Introduction to the Program Guidelines

This part of the request for application (RFA), Program Guidelines, is to be used in conjunction with the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#) and the schedule instructions. The Standard Application System (SAS) consists of all schedules (i.e., forms) to be completed in order for the applicant to be eligible for funding.

While the federal funding source for this grant is known as 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC), the program has been branded in Texas as Afterschool Centers on Education, or Texas ACE. Therefore, when referencing the funding stream, 21st CCLC will be the naming convention, but in all other circumstances, the program will be referred to as Texas ACE.

The PRIME Blueprint for Texas ACE (the PRIME Blueprint) is also provided as a resource to offer guidance about research, best-practices, and requirements. The PRIME Blueprint should be used in conjunction with this Request for Application and is posted online at <http://texasace21.org/index.php/about-ace/ace-model/blueprint>.

For applicants selected for funding, all guidelines and instructions will be incorporated by reference into the Notice of Grant Award (NOGA).

Reference to the General and Fiscal Guidelines

The Program Guidelines provide information specifically relevant to this grant program. The [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#) provide information relevant to all TEA grant programs. Throughout the Program Guidelines, cross-references are given to applicable sections of the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#). **It is critical that you review all referenced sections of the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#) when preparing your application.**

US Department of Education Appropriations

The following is provided in compliance with the US Department of Education Appropriations Act:

Category	Amount
Total funds available for this project	\$34,692,848
Percentage to be financed with federal funds	100%
Amount of federal funds	\$34,692,848
Percentage to be financed from nonfederal sources	0%
Amount of nonfederal funds	\$0

Grant Timeline

All of these dates except the grant ending date may vary slightly as conditions require.

For information on reporting requirements, see the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), Reporting. If a report due date falls on a weekend or holiday, the report will be due the following business day.

Date	Event
February 1, 2013	RFA available; notice of the RFA published in the <i>Texas Register</i>
February 19, 2013	Last date to submit questions to be addressed in the applicant's conference See General and Fiscal Guidelines , Applicants' Conference
February 26, 2013	Applicants' conference (Prerecorded Applicant's Conference webinar available to view at http://burleson.tea.state.tx.us/grantopportunities/forms)
March 12, 2013	Last date to submit FAQs to TEA contact person See General and Fiscal Guidelines , Frequently Asked Questions
March 12, 2013	Due date for the Notice of Intent to Apply in the TEA Document Control Center See General and Fiscal Guidelines , Notice of Intent to Apply.
March 12, 2013	Due date for Reviewer Information Form See General and Fiscal Guidelines , Reviewer Information Form.
March 19, 2013	FAQs posted to TEA Grant Opportunities page
March 26, 2013	Due date for the application in the TEA Document Control Center, 5:00 p.m., Central Time See General and Fiscal Guidelines , Submission Deadline
March 27, 2013-May 17, 2013	Competitive review period See General and Fiscal Guidelines , Application Review.
August 1, 2013	Beginning date of grant See General and Fiscal Guidelines , Grant Period.
May 2, 2014	Final date to submit an amendment
July 31, 2014	Ending date of grant See General and Fiscal Guidelines , Grant Period.

Grant at a Glance

This section provides fundamental information pertinent to the grant program.

Authorizing Legislation

This grant program is authorized by Title IV, Part B, of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), as amended by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB), authorizes funding of the 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) grant program. The full text of the legislation may be found at <http://www.nclb.gov>. The information provided in this section is taken from the federal guidelines published in the U.S. Department of Education (USDE) Office of Elementary and Secondary Education Academic Improvement and Teacher Quality Programs, 21st Century Community Learning Centers, Title IV, Part B, Sec. 4201-4205 and Non-Regulatory Guidance. The Texas model of the 21st CCLC grant program is developed in accordance with the federal guidelines.

Where to Submit the Application

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), Where to Submit the Application.

Number of Copies

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), Number of Copies.

Four copies of the application are required to be submitted, with at least three copies bearing the original signature (preferably in blue ink) of the person authorized to bind the organization in a contract.

Purpose of Program

The 21st CCLC grant serves as a supplementary program that can enhance state or local reform efforts to improve student academic achievement and support overall student development. According to the USDE, the purpose of the program is to create community learning centers that provide academic enrichment opportunities for children, particularly students who attend high-need, high-poverty, low-performing schools, to meet state and local student standards in core academic subjects. A community learning center assists students outside school hours or when school is not in session to complement the student's regular academic program. The 21st CCLC funds will create and expand out-of-school-time (OST) programs that offer extended learning opportunities for children and their families.

Title IV, Part B, specifies that 21st CCLC funds are to be used to provide opportunities for communities to establish or expand activities outside regular school hours in community learning centers that do the following:

- Provide opportunities for academic enrichment, including tutorial services to help students, particularly students who attend low-performing schools, to meet state and local student academic achievement standards in the core academic subjects of mathematics, reading, science, and social studies.
- Offer students a broad array of additional services, programs, and activities, such as youth development activities; drug- and violence-prevention programs; counseling programs; art, music, and recreation programs; technology education programs; and character education programs, all designed to reinforce and complement the regular academic program of participating students.
- Offer families of students served by community learning centers opportunities for literacy and related educational development. These services can be provided during or after school hours.

The authorizing legislation for the 21st CCLC grant program is written in clear recognition that improved student achievement occurs when communities implement programs and strategies that are scientifically proven to be effective. States are responsible for ensuring that grantees develop programs that are of the highest possible quality and that are appropriately tailored to address the needs of students and their families. Grantees must provide programs that will effectively help children to succeed in school, based on evidence from rigorous research and evaluation.

Eligible Applicants

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), Eligibility Requirements.

Eligible applicants include individual eligible organizations and consortia of two or more eligible organizations. The following types of organizations are eligible to apply for a 21st CCLC, Cycle 8, Year 1, grant:

- Local educational agencies (LEAs), including independent school districts (ISDs), open-enrollment charter schools, and regional education service centers (ESCs)
- Community-based organizations (CBOs) and other public or private entities
- Nonprofit organizations
- City or county government agencies
- Faith-based organizations
- Institutions of higher education
- For-profit corporations
- A shared services arrangement (SSA) of two or more agencies, organizations, or entities as identified above.

Reapplying organizations must meet the following eligibility requirements:

- Applicants that received funding in previous 21st CCLC cycles (Cycles 1–5) are eligible to apply for funding to serve new or existing centers per the program guidelines and funding levels as stated in this application.
- Applicants that received funding in Cycles 6-7 are eligible to apply for funding to serve new centers only. Existing centers and/ or feeder schools in these current cycles are not eligible for this funding.
- All applicants whether reapplying organizations or existing grantees must not have had previous issues of noncompliance such as:
 - Unresolved audit findings related to current or previous 21st CCLC cycles (Cycles 1–7), and
 - Consecutively not meeting 100% of student participation requirements during years 2-5 (Cycles 6-7).

Shared Services Arrangement

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), Shared Services Arrangements.

Shared services arrangements (SSAs) are allowed.

A shared services arrangement (SSA) is an agreement between two or more school districts, open-enrollment charter schools, or education service centers (ESCs) that provides services for entities involved. Such entities may desire to enter into an SSA for the performance and administration of a program in order to maximize the use of funds and services to be provided. An eligible entity must serve as fiscal agent for an SSA.

Eligible Schools

Schools must meet at least one of the following eligibility requirements to qualify for grant funding or grant services:

- The school must either be eligible for school-wide programs under Title I, Section 1114, or be a school that serves a high percentage of students from low-income families and families of such students.
- The school must be designated as in need of improvement under Title I, Section 1116.
- The school must serve a high percentage of students from low-income families (40% or more students identified as economically disadvantaged), as indicated on the data submitted to PEIMS for school year 2011–2012.
- A private for-profit or nonprofit school is eligible if the campus has 40% or more economically disadvantaged students. Documentation supporting the percentage of economically disadvantaged students is required.

A school is **not** eligible to apply for grant funding or to be served by the program if it meets either of the following conditions:

- A campus that is Title I school-wide as the result of a waiver (i.e., campus does not have 40% or greater economically disadvantaged as indicated on the data submitted to PEIMS for school year 2011–2012) is *not* eligible to participate in this grant program.
- A new school opening in the current school year (2012-2013) may *not* be included in the application. A school must have been in operation for at least the prior school year (i.e., the 2011–2012) before submitting an application to participate in this grant program.

Eligible Participants

Applicants will target any student in grades kindergarten through 12 who needs assistance meeting state and local standards. Younger children who will become students in the schools being served can participate in program activities designed to get them ready to succeed in school, but applicants are reminded that this program is not intended to be a day care, and students in all grade levels should be served in an equitable fashion. Prekindergarten students (ages 3-5) can be served through this grant, but Prekindergarten-only centers cannot be included in this application.

The Texas 21st Century Community Learning Centers, Cycle 8, Year 1, grant program is designed to serve students of **all** grade levels. **However, the intent of this program is not to serve every student in a school; students who are targeted for recruitment in this program must be students most in need of academic assistance per the federal statute.** The assistance provided will take the form of academic support and enrichment opportunities and/or activities during non-school hours that are designed to complement the student's regular academic program.

Additionally, adult family members of students participating in the Texas 21st Century Community Learning Centers, Cycle 8, Year 1, grant program may also participate in educational services or activities, such as services to support parental involvement and family literacy. Services may also be

provided to families of students to advance the student's academic achievement. **Program activities are open only to immediate family members (parents/ legal guardians, siblings) of participating students.** Activities targeting adult family members may take place before, during, or after regular school hours; however, hours dedicated to program activities for adults do not count toward the weekly minimum 12-hour requirement of OST programming. **Participants (students/ parents) cannot be charged any fees for participating in the ACE program, including late pickup fees, etc.**

Centers, Feeder Schools, and Adjunct Sites

Centers

- **Definition:** A center is the physical host site where ACE program activities will be provided on a daily basis for students and family members. Centers are characterized by defined hours of operation, a routine and consistent schedule of activities, and a dedicated staff with the proper administrative structure.
- Centers must be in a safe environment that is easily accessible to all participants. The center may be located in a facility other than an elementary or secondary school only if the program will be at least as available and accessible to the students to be served as if the program were located in the schools. As ACE programs are normally located on elementary and secondary school campuses, this is not a requirement. **However, applicants proposing to serve participants in facilities other than a school building must demonstrate that the proposed center has sufficient capacity and facilities to meet the needs of all participants and meet any applicable child care licensing requirements.** All centers must complete and abide by the ACE Safety Checklist. The Checklist is described in Task 3 and located in the Appendix of the PRIME Blueprint (<http://texasace21.org/index.php/about-ace/ace-model/blueprint>) and must be conducted annually at each center.
- A center may serve one or more eligible schools in a feeder pattern if the facility has the physical capacity to do so. However, a school cannot be served by more than one center and the feeder pattern must be suitable to the needs of the grade levels served. (Example: it may not be reasonable for students in elementary schools to feed into middle or high schools, and vice versa).
- **Note:** Centers must be within a **reasonable geographic proximity** of the fiscal agent to ensure appropriate oversight and management of the grant program. Reasonable geographic proximity will vary depending on location within the state, but the expectation is that the fiscal agent will be close enough to conduct routine site visits, technical assistance, and oversight of the grant and to be available should an emergency situation arise. **For example, it is unreasonable for a fiscal agent to propose to drive more than an hour or two from the administrative offices in order to serve a center.**

Feeder Schools

- **Definition:** A feeder school is any public or private school that is served by a designated center (e.g., students from one elementary school feed into another elementary school that is a host center).
- **Activities cannot occur separately at feeder schools and must be conducted at the main/ host center; therefore grantees will be responsible for providing transportation to students served from proposed feeder schools to and from the host center.**

- Feeder schools must be within reasonable geographic proximity to the host center to allow for a quick response by program administration in case of emergencies and to avoid extensive travel time between centers. **It is considered unreasonable for students from a feeder school to travel more than 30 minutes by bus to a host site.**
- If a center will serve multiple campuses (**no more than 4 campuses can be included as feeder schools**), the type of feeder pattern should be reasonable to the age and grade level of the students to be served by the center. Centers that serve elementary schools may not be appropriate for middle and high school students, and vice versa. Centers that serve both elementary and secondary schools must ensure the facility has the appropriate space to accommodate the various types of activities of the grade levels that will be served. Please see Task 3 in the PRIME Blueprint (<http://texasace21.org/index.php/about-ace/ace-model/blueprint>) for more guidelines pertaining to feeder schools.

Adjunct Sites

- **Definition:** An adjunct site is considered a facility where **occasional**, supplemental programming/ activities support the activities offered at the main center. For example, adjunct sites are typically those able to house program activities that cannot take place at the designated center, such as a local community college/ university, library, swimming pool, local museum/science center, workforce center, etc.
- Activities that occur at adjunct sites cannot replace or exceed the amount of programming offered at the main center. Instead, adjunct sites should be used to **supplement the activities** at the main center. (Activities may reasonably occur at adjunct sites 1-2 times per week). Please see Task 3 in the PRIME Blueprint (<http://texasace21.org/index.php/about-ace/ace-model/blueprint>) for more guidelines pertaining to adjunct sites.

Application Funding

See the following sections of the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#):

- Grant Funding
- Continuation Funding
- Fund Management
- Use of Funds

It is anticipated that approximately 20 grants will be awarded ranging in amounts from \$50,000 to \$2,200,000. *Each eligible applicant may submit only one application.* **Applicants may apply for funding up to 10 centers.**

The funding of Texas 21st CCLC, Cycle 8, Year 1, grants will be awarded for no less than 3 years, but no greater than 5 years. Project funding in subsequent project periods will be based on satisfactory progress of prior year compliance with objectives and activities, and on general budget approval by the commissioner of education and appropriations by the U.S. Congress.

TEA reserves the right to reduce funding if projections are determined not to have been realistic based on actual participation. Should additional funds become available for distribution, the commissioner will determine how these are to be distributed.

Funding Methodology

It is TEA's intent to fund grantees at a level that allows them to meet all grant requirements and offer high-quality programming, however funding for any one grant application **must not exceed \$2,200,000**. The funding of Texas 21st CCLC, Cycle 8, Year 1, grants will include three components, each of which is described in detail below. **A cost worksheet is provided in Schedule 21 and Grantees will be held accountable for the funding provided in the application with regard to any per student funding reductions due to not serving the targeted number of regular students. The maximum amounts per budget component are provided as a reference, but applicants must request only the amount needed and make variations where necessary to comply with the \$2,200,000 funding limit per grant application.**

1. **Grantee-level fixed costs:** There are fixed costs at the grantee level associated with managing and administering the program. Specifically, these costs include but are not limited to the following:
 - a. Salary inclusive of benefits for one full-time Project Director
 - b. Applicants proposing to serve five or more centers must also include salary inclusive of benefits for one full-time Family Engagement Specialist responsible for coordinating adult and family engagement activities across all centers
 - c. Salaries inclusive of benefits for other staff (i.e. administrative, business office, curriculum and instruction, professional development, etc.) that directly support the grant
 - d. Travel expenses for the Project Director and Family Engagement Specialist to attend all required conferences and trainings
 - e. Costs for technology, supplies, etc. for the Project Director, Family Engagement Specialist (or other Administrative Support staff).

The maximum amount of grantee-level fixed costs cannot exceed **\$170,000**. Applicants must describe and justify in detail each component of their grantee-level fixed cost request in Schedule 21.

2. **Center-level fixed costs:** There are also fixed costs at each center associated with managing and administering the program. For each center, these costs include but are not limited to the following:
 - a. Salary inclusive of benefits for one full-time Site Coordinator per center
 - b. Travel expenses for the Site Coordinator to attend all required conferences and trainings
 - c. Facility costs such as rent, utilities, etc.
 - d. Funding to provide family engagement activities
 - e. Costs for each center to fund an independent evaluation

The maximum amount of center-level fixed costs cannot exceed **\$80,000**. Applicants must describe and justify in detail each component of their center-level fixed cost request in Schedule 21.

3. **Per-student costs:** There are variable costs based on the total number of students served at each center. For each center, these costs include but are not limited to the following:
 - a. Salary or fees paid to instructors and other partners who provide programming and services to students at each center
 - b. Costs for technology, supplies, nutritional snacks, etc. provided at each center
 - c. Transportation costs if needed to transport students to/from each center

The maximum amount of per-student costs cannot exceed **\$1,100**. Applicants must describe and justify in detail each component of their student-level fixed cost request in Schedule 21.

NOTE: The per-student request should be calculated separately for each center, as centers will vary with respect to student needs, transportation needs, technology needs, etc. **The intent of this program is not to serve every student in a school; students who are targeted for this program must be students most in need of academic assistance per the federal statute.** Applicants must be very realistic when setting student number goals as only regular students will be counted each year (reminder: a regular student is one that attends the program **30 days or more** during the school year) and only serve that with which they have the capacity to do so. All grantees will be subject to the agency **funding reduction policy** if regular student numbers are not met each year of the grant.

Goals for Sustainability

Because funding for the ACE program will be awarded for no less than 3 years, but no greater than 5 years, grantees and community stakeholders must develop strategies that ultimately contribute to sustainability based on needs and resources that are viable in their communities. In the initial grant application, grantees must describe their plans to **sustain** their programs once grant funding ends. Grantees will be required to submit a continuation application each year that must describe their progress on this sustainability plan.

Sustainability goals for each grantee may be different, but community support, partnerships, and local buy-in are essential to the success of a self-sustaining program. Grantees can use 21st CCLC funds to build or expand a systemic infrastructure of extended learning opportunities to replicate across their district once funding ends. Therefore, grantees, along with their community stakeholders must develop a sustainability plan that is unique to their needs and resources and demonstrate how and to what degree these programs will sustain. Grantees and community stakeholders must help gather resources to work toward their vision of sustainability throughout the life of the grant so that when funding ends, the grantee is equipped to meet the needs of the community as set forth in their sustainability plan.

Grantees cannot rely on 21st CCLC grant funds alone but must leverage other fund sources to develop a comprehensive infrastructure to ensure they have the resources needed. Applicants must demonstrate their ability to leverage funds throughout the term of the grant period during each year in the continuation application. Applications will be scored (under Quality of Management Plan) based on the strength of their sustainability goals and planning as well as a grantee's ability to leverage other funds, as it is the intent of this program to fully sustain as indicated in the sustainability plan by the end of the grant period (no less than 3 years, but no greater than 5 years).

If awarded for subsequent continuation years, funding will **not** be reduced throughout the life of the grant cycle and **will remain intact assuming compliance with all grant requirements and appropriations of the U.S. Congress**. Grantees are required to budget and plan for the funds needed per year to be based on comprehensive services to meet the program goals. **Awarded funds not used in Year 1 will not be available to the grantee in subsequent funding years.** Funding is contingent upon the grantee's meeting of all federal and state requirements as well as reauthorization of the 21st Century program statute, availability of funding, appropriations by the U.S. Congress for each continuation year, and on general budget approval by the commissioner of education. Actual number of students and adult family members served is subject

to monitoring and verification as are weekly, monthly, and annual operation requirements.

Funding levels may be reduced for not meeting the following requirements:

- Serving less than the number of students and adults proposed
- Failure to fulfill the operations requirements (hours, days, weeks) as proposed in the grant application
- Unsatisfactory progress from prior-year objectives
- Failure to adhere to all requirements, including compliance with Program Implementation Assurance

Cost Share or Matching Requirement

There is no cost share or matching requirement for this grant program.

Limitation of Administrative Funds

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), Administrative Costs.

TEA limits the amount of funds that may be budgeted to administer the program, including direct administrative costs and indirect costs, to no more than 5% of the total grant awarded for any fiscal year.

NOTE: Administrative funds include **both** direct administrative costs **and** allowable indirect costs.

Pre-Award Costs

Pre-award costs are not permitted for this grant.

Applicant Assistance

The following types of assistance are available to applicants for this grant program.

Contact for Clarifying Information

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), TEA Contacts.

The following TEA staff member should be contacted in writing with questions about the RFA, the grant program, or for assistance with the applicants' conference:

Program Contact	Funding Contact
Candace M. Ferguson Program Manager/State Coordinator Division of Federal & State Education Policy Texas Education Agency 1701 North Congress Avenue Austin, TX 78701 candace.ferguson@tea.state.tx.us	Sarah Averill Grant Manager Division of Grants Administration Texas Education Agency 1701 North Congress Avenue Austin, TX 78701 sarah.averill@tea.state.tx.us

Frequently Asked Questions

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), Frequently Asked Questions.

The FAQs for this grant program will be posted to the [TEA Grant Opportunities](#) site no later than the date listed on the Grant Timeline. Applicants may email their questions to the TEA staff member listed in the Contact for Clarifying Information section.

Applicants' Conference

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), Applicants' Conference.

Questions that applicants wish to have addressed during the applicants' conference must be submitted no later than the date given in the grant timeline.

Date of Webinar	Time	Link	Type
February 26, 2013	2:00 pm	http://burlson.tea.state.tx.us/grantopportunities/forms In the Select Search Options box, select the name of the program/RFA from the list. Scroll down to Application and Support Information . Click on Webinar .	Recorded

Errata Notices

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), Errata Notices.

Listserv Messages

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), Listserv Messages.

Program Elements

This section provides detailed information about the grant program.

Program Description

Program Purpose

It is the intent of TEA that any state- or federally funded programs will implement strategies that support TEA's overarching goal that all students will graduate prepared for postsecondary education and/ or the workforce. A key component in addressing state goals is the establishment of out-of-school time (OST) programs that are based on innovative and practical methods of instruction and that are integral in assisting students in meeting academic standards in the core academic subjects of mathematics, reading, science, and social studies.

To implement a high-quality OST program and to meet the program objectives described in the following section, specific program implementation and delivery elements are required statewide.

Goals and Objectives

To accomplish state goals, the Texas 21st Century Community Learning Centers, Cycle 8, Year 1, grant program strives to improve the following:

1. Academic performance
2. Attendance
3. Behavior
4. Promotion rates
5. Graduation rates

The ACE program is getting results, according to the most recent evaluation released in early 2013 of the Texas 21st Century Community Learning Centers / Texas ACE program when comparing participants to non-participants:

- ACE program participation for students in grades 9-10 was associated with higher TAKS scores in Reading/ELA and Mathematics.
- ACE program participants in grades 6-12 had fewer disciplinary incidents than non-participating students.
- Participation of students in grades 4-11 was associated with fewer school day absences.
- ACE participants in grades 7-11 who attended 30-days or more and participants in grades 4-5 and 7-11 attending 60-days or more had an increased likelihood of grade promotion. For high school students, attending 60-days or more, they demonstrated a 97% chance of being promoted to the next grade level.

While most of the effects above were small to moderate, it is important to note that the finding regarding grade promotion was in the moderate to large range.

When comparing high attenders (students who attended 60-days or more) and low attenders (students who attended 30-59 days) in ACE programs, participants in grades 4 to 12 attending 60-days or more of programming had:

- Higher levels of TAKS scores in Reading/ELA and Mathematics.
- Fewer disciplinary incidents.
- Fewer school day absences.
- An enhanced likelihood of grade promotion (enhanced likelihood of 23% - 40%).

All of the program evaluations related to the 21st CCLC/Texas ACE program can be found on TEA's website at http://www.tea.state.tx.us/index4.aspx?id=2908&menu_id=949.

One of the most important factors in achieving these results is aligning program strategies to the intended program objectives. TEA developed the Critical Success Model, described below, to help grantees plan and implement programming with intentionality and grounded in research-based strategies in order to improve in all five of the program's outcome areas.

Critical Success Factors

Critical success factors reflect behavioral changes that must be demonstrated by students and families enrolled in the program or by the adults working on their behalf. Critical success factors are essential for Texas ACE programs to succeed in meeting the five objectives defined for the program and are all indicators of student success. The full Critical Success Factor Model is in Appendix 1 of the PRIME Blueprint (<http://texasace21.org/index.php/about-ace/ace-model/blueprint>).

The Texas Education Agency has identified the following critical success factors for the ACE program:

- Students' and families active participation and engagement in learning
- Students' and families increased sense of involvement in school
- Use of assessment data to revise/evaluate student services
- Implementation of strategies learned through training

Milestones

Milestones are key strategies that establish the foundation on which critical success factors are built. The applicant must develop activities that ensure each of the milestones is met. These milestones correspond to each of the critical success factors above:

- Using innovative instructional techniques for academic and enrichment activities
- Providing adult advocates, based on student need and in accordance with best practices
- Conducting ongoing/continuous student assessment to determine need and improve targeted services
- Providing training opportunities for staff development

Texas ACE programs must be designed within this specific framework as it establishes a foundation for effective implementation and high-quality programs for the attainment of stated goals. Therefore, the physical site of an ACE program where students and families are served will be established through a comprehensive, collaborative, and coordinated approach inclusive of the school, student, family, service providers, and the community. The ultimate goals are to help

students meet state and local academic achievement standards and to help students graduate ready for college and the workforce.¹

Program Description

Branding

As previously mentioned, in Texas, the 21st CCLC program has its own unique, dynamic brand that communicates the characteristics of the program and creates statewide awareness so that all Texas centers can identify themselves as part of a bigger picture. While 21st CCLC is the federal funding source, the programs in Texas are referred to as Afterschool Centers on Education, or Texas ACE, which communicates the importance of education yet is engaging and fun. All applicants awarded through this cycle must use this branding for their local programs. A host of marketing materials are available to grantees and a kit is provided that includes several brochures for community members and families (in both English and Spanish), posters, door hangers, newsletter and press release templates and an outreach checklist to help keep grantees on track with their communication.



Student Participation Expectations

Given that positive academic achievement is not gained through random attendance, the ACE Program is not designed to be a casual or “drop-in” program. Many statewide program evaluations of the ACE program have been conducted and the findings have been consistent; the more students participate the better they perform. Therefore, program activities that are part of ACE must be intentionally designed to connect to student academic needs while providing innovative and interactive opportunities, based on best-practice, hands-on methods of instruction that encourage student participation.

To accomplish the goal to intentionally designing and delivering activities, grantees must develop activities based a review of three important data sets:

- 1) Campus Level Data (TAKS/STAAR scores, Campus Discipline and Attendance Reports)
- 2) Student Level Deficiencies (specific Readiness/Support Standards students are not mastering)

¹ Dynarski, M., Clark, L., Cobb, B., Finn, J., Rumberger, R., and Smink, J. (2008). “Dropout Prevention: A Practice Guide” (NCEE 2008-4025). Washington, DC: National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education. Retrieved from http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/pdf/practiceguides/dp_pg_090308.pdf

3) Student Voice (findings from student interest inventories and/or focus groups) Grantees will design all activities, including enrichment activities, with intentionality based on data. For additional guidance, see Task 3 of the PRIME Blueprint (<http://texasace21.org/index.php/about-ace/ace-model/blueprint>).

Eligible participants should be those who can attend the full, comprehensive program, and ACE programs should design activities and adopt practices that support regular, sustained participation in order to show academic gains. Efforts must be made to effectively coordinate activities with regular school day calendars (e.g., holidays, spring break, statewide testing, summer break) and design programs that align with the regular school day curriculum in order to meet the academic needs of the students served.

Family Participation and Engagement

Not only is offering families activities for literacy and related educational development a federal requirement, but family engagement is a critical element to successful OST programs. “Research shows that family engagement in after school can lead to increased family involvement in children’s education and school, improved relationships between parents and children, and improved after school programs.”² According to previous evaluations of funded programs in Texas (released in 2005 and 2007)³, students with whom at least one adult family member participated in center activities took part in more activities than students with no family members participating. The data show that once they do participate, adult family members return to participate again at a very high rate. The positive finding that students engage in more center activities if they have adult family members participating indicates that encouraging family participation in center activities may positively impact students’ experiences and by extension lead to improved academic performance among the students in at-risk situations targeted by the 21st CCLC program.

Texas 21st Century Community Learning Centers, Cycle 8, Year 1, grantees will be required to fund a position for a Family Engagement Specialist who will focus on supporting each of the funded centers, design outreach and communication plans to engage with families, and deliver programming that will meet their needs. Requirements for the specialist position are outlined under the TEA Program Requirements section.

Ongoing Training and Technical Assistance for Grantees

In order to assist ACE grantees in accomplishing the many goals of this program, TEA will provide high-quality training and technical assistance through the use of a technical assistance provider, Edvance Research, Inc. Services provided include the following:

- **Training:** ACE grantees will have access to MyTexasACE, an online learning platform containing extensive training resources for grantees, including webinars, podcasts, and sample lesson and activity plans. Additionally, ACE grantees will be provided with regional training and other professional development opportunities throughout the year.
- **Technical Assistance:** Each grantee will be assigned a regionally-based technical assistance consultant (TAC). At the beginning of each school year, the TAC will conduct the ACE PRIME Assessment with all new grantees. The assessment instrument and site-visit protocol are

² Build the Out-of-School Time Network (BOSTnet), “Engaging Families in Out-of-School Time Programs Toolkit”

³ See 21st Century Community Learning Centers: Evaluation of Projects Funded for the 2003-04 and 2004-2005 School Year at the link above.

available in Task 8 of the PRIME Blueprint (<http://texasace21.org/index.php/about-ace/ace-model/blueprint>). The goal of the ACE PRIME Assessment (APA) is to ensure grantees are in compliance with all TEA Program Requirements and are on-track to implement high-quality programming. The results of the APA are used to develop the grantee's training and ongoing technical assistance plan for the remainder of the year. Based on the APA results, grantees are determined to have a high, medium or low need for technical assistance. Grantees who are determined to be high need for technical assistance will receive an APA visit annually. Grantees determined to be medium or low need for technical assistance will receive targeted assistance based on specific needs for improvement.

- **Texas ACE Help Desk:** At any time, Texas ACE grantees can also send questions to the Texas ACE Help Desk and receive a prompt response.
- **Program Implementation Assurance:** In accordance with U.S. Department of Education requirements, TEA will review ACE grantees performance and documentation to ensure compliance with federal and state requirements. This will be accomplished through annual self assessments conducted by all grantees and targeted desk reviews by the technical assistance team. Additionally, some grantees will be selected each year to receive onsite Program Implementation Assurance site visits. More information about the program implementation assurance assessment and process can be found in Task 8 of the PRIME Blueprint (<http://texasace21.org/index.php/about-ace/ace-model/blueprint>).
- **Communication Network:** TEA and Edvance facilitate the Texas ACE Communication Network. This group meets three to four times per year and includes all TACs and one grantee from each of the twenty educational regions in Texas. Each regional representative is responsible for facilitating communication between TEA and grantees in the region. Two Family Engagement Specialist representatives also participate on the Network. Communication Network positions are voluntary, application-based, and provide an opportunity for Texas ACE grantees to provide valuable insight and feedback to TEA and be more involved in the program.
- **Program Outreach:** ACE grantees can use the www.texasace21.org website, which contains up-to-date program information and resources. Grantees also receive a comprehensive suite of outreach materials and resources (newsletters, templates, brochures, and posters, etc.) as described above in the branding section.

Supplement, Not Supplant

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), Supplement, Not Supplant.

The supplement, not supplant provision does apply to this grant program.

Indirect Costs

The grantee must use the restricted indirect cost rate. For this federally funded grant, you must use the **lesser** of your current, approved indirect cost rate or 8%.

Refer to the Indirect Cost Instructions, Guidance, and Maximum Indirect Costs Worksheet on the Division of Grants Administration [Grants Management Resources](#) page for more information on indirect costs and the correlation to the supplement, not supplant provision.

Application Requirements and Assurances

This section describes the two types of requirements that applicants must address in the application (such as with a narrative description, an activity timeline, or a checklist) to be eligible to be considered for funding:

- Statutory requirements (requirements defined in the authorizing statute)
- TEA program requirements (requirements defined by TEA program staff)

IMPORTANT NOTE: All requirements must be properly addressed in the application. Failure to address a requirement can result in deduction of points or ineligibility for scoring and review. For details, refer to the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), Completing the Application.

Statutory Requirements

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), Statutory Requirements.

The following requirements are defined in the statute that authorizes this program. The applicant must address each of these requirements in the application to be considered for funding:

1. Describe the before- and after- school and summer recess activities to be funded, including a description of how students participating in the program carried out by the community learning center will travel safely to and from the center and home.
2. Describe how the eligible entity will disseminate information about the community learning center (including its location) to the community in a manner that is understandable and accessible.
3. Describe how the activity is expected to improve student academic achievement.
4. Identify the federal, state, and local programs that will be combined or coordinated with the proposed program to make the most effective use of public resources.
5. Describe how the activities will meet the principles of effectiveness described in NCLB Title IV, Part B, section 4205(b).
6. Describe the partnership between a local educational agency, a community-based organization, and another public entity or private entity, if appropriate.
7. Evaluate the community needs and available resources for the community learning center and describe how the program proposed to be carried out in the center will address those needs (including the needs of working families).
8. Demonstrate that the eligible entity has experience, or promise of success, in providing educational and related activities that will complement and enhance the academic performance, achievement, and positive youth development of the students.
9. Describe a preliminary plan for how the community learning center will continue after funding under NCLB Title IV, Part B, section 4205(b) ends.
10. If the eligible entity plans to use senior volunteers in activities carried out through the community learning center, describe how the eligible entity will encourage and use appropriately qualified seniors to serve as the volunteers.

TEA Program Requirements

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), Program Requirements.

In addition to the statutory requirements, TEA has established the following program requirements. Applicants must address within the application how they will achieve the following:

1. Community Involvement

- a. Since these are community learning centers, each applicant must seek continuous feedback and involvement from its community and coordinate with all stakeholders as to the structure of the program. Community Involvement must be on-going throughout the grant cycle, including during the planning and design stages and continuously throughout the project. Community stakeholders include, but are not limited to local area foundations, businesses, workforce boards, libraries, health services, law-enforcement, non-profit organizations, and faith-based organizations. ACE Grantees are expected to collaborate with some number of organizations and community stakeholders must be representative of their communities.
- b. Community stakeholders will ideally include involvement as part of a community advisory council that is focused on increasing the awareness of and coordinating local resources for students and families enrolled in the ACE program. Many ACE grantees develop their own task force/ advisory councils, but stakeholder involvement must be based on community needs and assets. It is expected that a variety of community members will be involved in meetings and activities related to areas such as creating program awareness, program implementation, evaluating program effectiveness, and sustainability. All meetings must be well documented including agendas, sign-in sheets, and minutes.
- c. Applicants will recruit community members and organizations prior to the notice of grant award and describe their plan for engaging stakeholders (including names and title of individuals and/ or organizations) for community involvement and assistance with designing a sustainability plan to meets the needs of the community to sustain an appropriate level of services provided to students and families after these grant funds end. (See Goals for Sustainability section on pg. 13-14 for further details)

- 2. Grant Management:** The planning and project management of this grant is the most critical element for ensuring success. There are many moving parts to the ACE program, and there must be an effective administrative structure in place with strong management and leadership in order to pull all the components together, adhere to requirements, and provide high-quality programming for all participants.

The following elements are required assurances and need not be specifically addressed in Schedule #17- Responses to TEA Requirements in the Standard Application System, applicants must adhere to the following components:

- **Staffing**
 - One dedicated full-time (FTE = 40 hours per week) Project Director with sufficient experience to manage, coordinate, and oversee day-to-day operations of all grant activities is required. The Project Director is expected to create productive working relationships with staff, partners, vendors and the independent evaluator to accomplish the goals of the grant.
 - One dedicated full-time (FTE = 40 hours per week) Site Coordinator with sufficient experience is required per center unless only one center is submitted for funding in the application. The Site Coordinator must have a

designated work space at each center and be readily available during the school day in order to do the following. (For a complete list of job duties and sample job descriptions see Task 5 of the PRIME Blueprint:

<http://texasace21.org/index.php/about-ace/ace-model/blueprint>):

- Coordinate all activities, provide advocacy for, and meet the needs of the program and all participants, including students and families before, during, and after school hours.
 - Obtain, analyze and use campus level data, student level deficiency data, and student voice to coordinate the development of intentional activities for each center.
 - Oversee the collection, coordination, and entry of data into TX21st, the 21st CCLC Tracking & Reporting System.
- Both the Project Director and Site Coordinator positions are considered program costs and can only be fulfilled by one person per position; sharing of duties by more than one person for these positions is not allowed. Lead teachers or administrators acting in other capacities during the school day cannot satisfy the requirements of these FTE positions. While these two positions are required and must be FTE positions, it is not a requirement that they be 100% funded by Texas 21st CCLC grant funds. Applicants can leverage funds to offset certain portions of these salaries to allow for things that are unallowable per the OMB circulars such as grant-writing/ fundraising, etc.
- Prospective grantees choosing to contract for services with external consultants to oversee program planning, implementation, training, and technical assistance may do so only if the services will differ from, expand, or increase upon the level of services being provided by the state and/or the technical assistance provider.
- **Project Plan:** A project plan operationalizes the project described in the application at both the grantee (administrative) and center level. (One plan must be conducted for each center included in the grant application.) The project plan must address the processes, strategies and timelines for the following:
 - Program management and oversight, to include exact program start/end dates, hours of operation, total number of weeks, organizational chart describing qualifications of key staff, staff development, and training schedule, communication, budgeting, activity planning, and evaluation. Detailed information about the proposed program operations must be provided in Schedule 21 of the grant application.
 - Data collection and management.
 - **For first-year grantees:** Project plans must be submitted to TEA 30 days prior to the program start date. A planning workshop which requires attendance of all key players involved with the grant (Administrative, Project Director, etc.) will be held in Austin, TX on or around September 2013, for newly awarded Cycle 8 ACE grantees; details upon Notice of Grant Award.

➤ Project plans must be updated annually and will be due within 30 days of the program start date of each subsequent funding year. **Any deviation from the program start/ end dates, hours of operation, or number of weeks section of the project plans must be approved by TEA. Reductions from the minimum requirements will not be permitted.**

- **Data Collection and Reporting:** Grantees are required to collect participant (student and adult) and program-level data within the designated TEA terms (fall, spring, summer) and enter into TX21st, the 21st CCLC Tracking and Reporting System for submission to the U.S. Department of Education. Project Directors and Site Coordinators are responsible for establishing data quality processes to protect confidential student information and education records according to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Project Directors and Site Coordinators must also review and approve data on a routine basis (at least monthly), to ensure data is entered on time and accurately.

The *student-level* information includes, but is not limited to the following:

- Student grades and classes passed in core content areas (English, reading/ language arts, writing, mathematics, science, social studies)
- Student attendance during the regular school day
- Student behavior reports and referrals (criminal and non-criminal incidents) during the school day.
- Pre-and post-test assessments for students who participate in tutorials offered as part of the ACE program. (ACE does not require a standard assessment instrument; therefore, grades, benchmark tests, or other standardized instruments approved by the district are acceptable as long as they measure student progress twice).

The *program-level* information includes, but is not limited to the following:

- Types of activities offered and schedule of activities
- Participant enrollment and attendance, which is **required to be entered weekly**, but daily *attendance* data entry into TX21st is highly recommended
- Staffing information, partnerships, and other funding sources

- **Internal Monitoring and Assessment**

- Project Directors and Site Coordinators must conduct and document ongoing, internal monitoring of their programs to ensure compliance with requirements and provide feedback to their programs by conducting site observations, data reviews, surveys of stakeholders, and so on.
- Grantees must also complete self-assessments developed by TEA within the designated timeframes including but not limited to the ACE PRIME Assessment, Program Implementation Assurance. See Task 8 of the PRIME Blueprint (<http://texasace21.org/index.php/about-ace/ace-model/blueprint>) for more information about internal monitoring and assessment.

- **Communication**

- Project Directors and Site Coordinators must have copies of the approved application and subsequent continuation application and amendments in order to be kept informed of the application requirements.
- Grantees must coordinate with the state technical assistance provider, to include their assigned TAC and implement all recommendations as necessary.
- Appropriate staff must also participate in all surveys and needs assessments developed by the state technical assistance provider on behalf of TEA.
- Awarded grantees are required to use the Texas ACE logo, materials provided for outreach and communications with participants and the community. Grantees must also comply with Texas ACE branding guidelines as outlined by TEA. Branding guidelines are available for all funded grantees and a variety of resources are provided including webinars and a user guide to aid in compliance.

- **Training**

- The Project Director and other key grant staff must attend a **mandatory two-day workshop** to be held in Austin on or around September 2013. (Details will be announced post grant award.)
- Funds must be budgeted for the required attendance of the Project Director, Family Engagement Specialist, and designated Site Coordinators at all trainings, conferences, workshops, meetings, and other technical assistance trainings as requested by TEA. (The number of training workshops for the first grant year have not yet been established; however grantees must budget for two to three regional trainings).
- In order to avoid excessive out-of-state travel costs and to ensure funds are spent appropriately, grantees may attend up to two approved out-of-state conferences that would benefit their ACE program and must identify and budget for the appropriate number of staff to attend each conference. Approved conferences include the National Afterschool Association, Foundations, National Summer Learning Conference, and BOOST. Grantees must obtain approval from TEA to attend any other conferences that benefit their student population and ACE program. It is expected that training and conference attendees will turn-key the information to other ACE program staff (train the trainer model) and incorporate relevant best practices into the program.
- Grantees must provide training for all staff members including staff meetings, professional development, and other relevant trainings. Funds, including staff time and relevant travel expenses, must be budgeted for staff to attend training.

3. Center Operation Requirements: Applicants must provide the details of all the centers and feeder schools that will be included in this grant application (no more than 10 centers per fiscal agent), including the number of students and adult family members to be served at each center.

- a. Each center must serve the number of **regular** students and adult family members per year as stated in the grant application (a **regular student** is one that attends the program 30 days or more during the school year; adult family members are not required to be “regular” participants; See Per-Student costs under the Funding Methodology section for important details about student recruitment). Grantees are held to the Cycle 8 Funding Reduction Policy and the funding amount in

continuation years will be contingent upon the number of students and adult family members served in the prior year. The Cycle 8 Funding Reduction policy can be found in Task 7 of the PRIME Blueprint (<http://texasace21.org/index.php/about-ace/ace-model/blueprint>).

- b. Each center must provide a **consistent** and **dependable** schedule of **weekly** activities for program participants (students and adult family members) to be included in the center project plan as stated below:
 - A minimum of 35 weeks per year including summer. (A center must offer the minimum number of hours per week for the week to count towards the minimum number of weeks.) TEA's program hours policy can be found in Task 7 of the PRIME Blueprint (<http://texasace21.org/index.php/about-ace/ace-model/blueprint>).
 - Four to five days per week, Sunday through Saturday, for the fall and spring term.
 - A minimum of 12 hours per week (applicants should not propose to offer more than 20 hours of programming per week). NOTE: Transportation time in excess of 20 minutes per day shall not be counted towards minimum hours per week of programming.
 - For the summer program, a minimum of four hours per day, four days per week, for a minimum of **four consecutive weeks**. See Task 3 of the PRIME Blueprint (<http://texasace21.org/index.php/about-ace/ace-model/blueprint>) for a description of the importance of mitigating summer learning loss for students.
 - In order to remain in compliance, centers will be required to make-up any missed hours, days or weeks.
- c. Each center must have a sign-in and sign-out procedure for all students which must be documented and in place for each center. Each center must also comply with the ACE Safety Checklist annually. The Checklist is described in Task 3 and located in the Appendix of the PRIME Blueprint (<http://texasace21.org/index.php/about-ace/ace-model/blueprint>).
 - Rotation of student participation, such as restricting attendance by grade level on various days or alternative-day schedules, is not allowed.
 - Grantees must obtain necessary parental consent for students to participate in the ACE program and ensure a process is in place to document and address emergency situations, including an emergency readiness plan, emergency contact information, and follow-up documentation.

4. Activity Planning Requirements

- a. To support student skill-building and mastery while maintaining student interest and engagement, activities must expose students to meaningful academic content and provide opportunities for youth to practice skills through engaging and interactive activities. To accomplish this, TEA places special emphasis on Intentional Activity Development. See Task 3 of the PRIME Blueprint for Texas ACE for full description of intentional programming at <http://texasace21.org/index.php/about-ace/ace-model/blueprint>.) All activities must be intentionally developed utilizing the findings from at least these three data sets:

- *Campus Level Data* (STAAR scores, Discipline Reports, Attendance Reports, Promotion Reports)
 - *Student Level Deficiency Data* (why students are not mastering certain skills, why students are getting disciplinary referrals, etc.)
 - *Student Voice & Choice*
- b. All activities provided during an ACE program must be based on identified student needs to bolster the possibility of achieving positive student outcomes. NOTE: While not required, many current grantees have discovered that adding an Academic Liaison or Curriculum Specialist to their team has increased their ability to accomplish this level of intentionality.
- c. Activities must be supervised by qualified individuals at all times and grantees must ensure the appropriate supervising adult to student ratios (22 to 1) are met. While a 22:1 student to teacher ratio is required, adapting instruction to individual and/ or small-group instruction is a best practice and should be considered based on the type of activities offered (academic assistance, enrichment, etc). High quality, research/ evidence based interventions are encouraged for students in the ACE program in order to achieve accelerated learning and improved social skills for students at risk of academic failure.
- d. All activities must occur at the designated and approved center on a daily/ on-going basis as stated in the schedule of activities. Adjunct sites can be used occasionally if approved in the grant application; however activities cannot occur simultaneously at feeder schools.

The following elements are required assurances and must be used when planning activities for each center however will not be specifically addressed in Schedule #17- Responses to TEA Requirements in the Standard Application System:

- In order to allow adequate time to hire and train staff, all activities for students and adults in Cycle 8 must begin no later than **Monday, October 7, 2013**, (activities can begin earlier than October 7th if grantees choose) and grantees must maintain the services within the timelines stated in this application. **Failure to do so may result in reduced funding, and the allocated funds may be reduced in proportion to the reduction of scope in implementation time.**
- Activities **must be a minimum of 45 minutes in length** and be planned for each hour a center is open. Student attendance must be taken for each activity.
- All activities must be balanced and based upon the needs of the campus using the three data sets described above and in conjunction with the **Four-Component Activity Guide** (see *Task 3 of the PRIME Blueprint for a non-exhaustive list of activities* <http://texasace21.org/index.php/about-ace/ace-model/blueprint>); therefore, a minimum of one activity from each category must be offered each term.
- All activities must be intentionally developed using a comprehensive and coordinated planning tool. Grantees are required to use the Texas ACE Activity/Unit and Lesson Plan Worksheets since they encompass all requirements as well as best practices (see *Task 3 of the PRIME Blueprint for a description on how to develop activities with intentionality* <http://texasace21.org/index.php/about-ace/ace-model/blueprint>).

- Activities must align to the school day curriculum and academic-related activities must align with TEKS and where possible align with the specific Readiness/Supporting Standards identified as needing improvement in your Campus Needs Assessment. Enrichment activities should enhance the academic-related activities and/or be aligned with a documented campus/student need (for example, you may offer a sports activity designed to combat a documented student obesity issue).

5. Family Engagement

- a. One full-time (FTE = minimum 40 hours per week) Family Engagement Specialist position is required for grantees with five to ten centers. **NOTE: Grantees requesting funding for less than five centers may propose a half-time position for a minimum of 20 hours per week.**
- b. The Family Engagement Specialist (FES) must work closely with the Project Director and Site Coordinators to encourage families to participate in their child's education and strengthen the skills they need to ensure their children's success in school (see *a guide for FES's and sample job descriptions in the PRIME Blueprint*). The Family Engagement Specialist will work in conjunction with the Project Director and Site Coordinators to coordinate family engagement strategies for all centers included in the grant application.

The following elements are required assurances and must be used for family engagement strategies however need not be specifically addressed in Schedule #17-Responses to TEA Requirements in the Standard Application System:

- Maintaining regular communication with all parents regarding the ACE program.
- Reaching out to individual parents and developing supportive relationships.
- Maintaining a family resource center.
- Conducting needs assessments and surveys to determine types of activities families want and need.
- Planning, coordinating, and implementing ongoing, consistent activities for families that include, but are not limited to:
 - Assistance in how to support their child in school
 - Assistance in developing parenting skills
 - Assistance in making connections and developing relationships in the school community
 - Personal growth and lifetime learning
- Coordinating services with programs within the school and community with groups such as the PTA/PTO, coordinated school health services, local colleges and financial aid offices, local workforce development organizations, etc.

- Coordination and leveraging of funds for positions that share similar requirements is encouraged where possible (i.e., Title I Coordinator, parent liaison).
 - The Family Engagement Specialist should attend at least one conference on family and parental involvement.
- c. Family Engagement Activities will vary per center and consist of coordination of efforts between multiple parties both within the grant and within the community. In addition to determining the types of activities to offer family members of students participating in the ACE program, funds must be budgeted and coordinated for this purpose.

The following elements are required assurances and must be used for family engagement activities, however need not be specifically addressed in Schedule #17- Responses to TEA Requirements in the Standard Application System:

- Funding must be budgeted to support meaningful, high-quality family engagement activities.
- Must be offered for immediate adult/ family members (parents/ legal guardians) of students enrolled in the ACE program only.
- Must be educational and literacy related and based on need and in collaboration with families.
- Must be ongoing and consistent throughout all terms within a year (fall, spring, summer). One-time events throughout the year are encouraged but alone do not suffice.
- The number of family members served should be in proportion with the targeted number of students.

Program-Specific Assurances

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), Provisions and Assurances.

The program-specific assurances for this grant program are also listed in the SAS. Refer to Schedule #2—Required Attachments and Provisions and Assurances, Part 3: Program-Specific Provisions and Assurances.

Failure to comply with one or more of these assurances may result in termination of the grant. By submitting the application, the applicant agrees to the following assurances:

1. The program will take place in a safe and easily accessible facility.
2. The proposed program was developed, and will be carried out in active collaboration with the schools the students attend.
3. The program will primarily target students who attend schools eligible for school-wide programs under section 1114 and the families of such students.
4. Funds under NCLB Title IV, Part B, section 4205(b) will be used to increase the level of state, local, and other non-federal funds that would, in the absence of funds under NCLB

Title IV, Part B, section 4205(b), be made available for programs and activities authorized under NCLB Title IV, Part B, section 4205(b), and in no case supplant federal, state, local, or non-federal funds.

5. The community will be given notice of the intent to submit an application and that the application and any waiver request will be available for public review after submission of the application.
6. Applicant has conducted a comprehensive and systematic needs assessment of the community and identified schools and has selected the schools most in need of out-of-school time services in addition the specific needs of students, families and the community. Once funded, grantees must conduct a campus needs assessment, aligned with the Campus Improvement Plan, annually.
7. Written agreements or memoranda of understanding are required for partnerships involving school districts, community-based organizations, another organization that will help manage the daily operations of the program, or partners that are involved in the development or implementation of the program. For example, a district may act as the fiscal agent but contract out the daily management operations of the program to a community-based organization.

Allowable Use of Funds

See the [TEA Guidelines Related to Specific Costs](#) for general guidance on allowable activities and use of funds.

Allowable activities and use of funds for this grant may include but are not limited to the following:

- Salaries for ACE Project Director, Site Coordinators and Family Engagement Specialist
- Extra-duty pay for staff working beyond their normal contracted hours to provide enrichment activities/services to the ACE program
- Independent evaluation (internal or external) costs that do not exceed 5% of the grant award and no more than \$5,000 per center. Note that this is considered an administrative cost.
- Supplies and materials required for the ACE program
- Computer hardware and software required for the ACE program
- Nutritional snacks to encourage student and parent involvement in the ACE program
- Travel to required ACE training conferences and workshops
- Transporting students home following ACE activities
- Educational field trips (see Appendix 1, TEA Guidelines Related to Specific Costs) for additional information)
- Cell phones or Blackberries: Justification must be provided and must be in accordance with district/organization policies. Texas 21st CCLC funds may not be used to fund personal cell phone contracts, and the phones must not be used for personal use.

Unallowable Activities and Use of Funds

See the [TEA Guidelines Related to Specific Costs](#) for general guidance on unallowable activities and use of funds.

Unallowable activities and use of funds for this grant may include but are not limited to the following:

- Debt service (lease-purchase)
- Audit services for state-funded grants
- Grantees may not charge participants a fee to participate in ACE activities (including late pickup fees)
- The 21st CCLC grant may not be used as a match for any other federal, state, or local grant program
- Expenditures related to students not served by the program
- Fundraising activities of any kind
- Writing grants to obtain other grant funds
- Training on grant writing
- Gifts or anything that can be perceived as a gift
- Payments of stipends to students or family members to participate
- Payment to students for receiving tutoring or mentoring services
- Payment to any student who has not completed high school for providing tutoring, mentoring, or instructing students
- Grant funds may not be used to fund UIL competition events as an extension of any ACE program activity
- College tuition for students except for dual credit courses
- Graduation-related costs and activities, such as printed certificates, banquets, or celebrations
- Religious instruction or provision of sectarian materials
- Construction of new buildings
- Renovation/remodeling of existing structures
- Infrastructure or installation of infrastructure needed for computer access
- Purchase furniture
- Purchase portable buildings
- Purchase vehicles
- PDAs
- Funds to invest in the stock market or savings or bank accounts

Performance Measures

TEA compiles and reports the information marked with an asterisk (*) in the following list based on data the grantee collects and enters into TX21st (the 21st CCLC Student Tracking System) and PEIMS. The applicant will likely have to develop or administer surveys or other information gathering tools and must describe in the grant application how it will collect all information.

The applicant agrees to collect data and report on the following mandatory performance measures:

1. The percentage of all 21st-Century regular program participants whose mathematics and English grades improved from fall to spring.*
2. The percentage of all 21st-Century regular program participants who improve from not proficient to proficient or above in STAAR/ TAKS reading and STAAR/ TAKS mathematics.*
3. The percentage of all 21st-Century regular program participants with teacher-reported improvement in homework completion and class participation.
4. The percentage of all 21st-Century regular program participants with teacher-reported improvements in student behavior. (**Applicants applying for priority points for behavior intervention activities may be required to obtain additional information on student behavior that will be determined upon notice of grant award**).
5. The percentage of all 21st-Century regular program participants showing improvement in school day attendance.
6. The percentage of students in K-11 that promote to the next grade as of the end of the school year.*
7. The percentage of 11th- and/or 12th-grade high school students that graduate at the end of the school year/ summer.*
8. The percentage of all 21st-Century program participants involved in extracurricular school activities.*
9. The percentage of all 21st-Century program participants whose activity selection is based on a needs assessment.
10. The percentage of 21st-Century Site Coordinators who implement strategies learned as a result of trainings attended (based on Project Director assessments).
11. The total number of innovative instructional activities offered.*
12. The total number of students meeting with an assigned adult advocate.*
13. The total number of parent meetings held by the Site Coordinator outside of family engagement activities.
14. The total number of school day staff meetings held by the Site Coordinator.
15. The total number of pre- and post-test assessments conducted.*
16. The total number of afterschool staff members receiving training.

Program Evaluation

By submitting this application, the applicant agrees to comply with any evaluation requirements that may be established by TEA and agrees to submit the required evaluation reports in the format and time requested by TEA. TEA will collect and analyze relevant data from PEIMS if it is available.

Specific critical success factors and milestones will be developed in a manner determined appropriate by TEA.

Independent Evaluation

A periodic **independent** evaluation shall be conducted at the local level by grantees to assess progress towards achieving stated goals and objectives of providing high-quality programs for academic success. The results of the evaluation must be (1) used to refine, improve, and strengthen the program; and (2) made available to the public upon request, with public notice of such availability provided. The following requirements have been established for the Texas ACE program:

Grantees are required to hire an independent evaluator to conduct a basic evaluation of each center included in an application (*See the Independent Evaluator Guide in the PRIME Blueprint*). The evaluation must be based on the factors included in the principles of effectiveness. In order for a program to meet these principles, the program or activity must:

- Be based upon an assessment of objective data regarding the need for before- and after- school programs (including during summer recess periods) and activities in the schools and communities
- Be based upon an established set of performance measures aimed at ensuring the availability of high-quality academic enrichment and other developmental opportunities
- If appropriate, be based upon scientifically based research that provides evidence of the effectiveness of a program activity

Grantees must adhere to the Independent Evaluator Guide (*see the PRIME Blueprint for evaluation components and further guidance*) when selecting an evaluator, either internal or external, and provide him or her with any necessary documents and training needed to fulfill the requirements. *An internal evaluation is allowable if conducted by staff not directly participating in the program.* Grantees should contract with a local evaluator on an annual basis, contingent upon available funding from the federal government and satisfactory performance of specified deliverables.

The cost of the independent evaluation may not exceed **5 percent** of the grant award in the year the evaluation is conducted. This is considered an **administrative cost**. Costs for independent evaluations **cannot exceed \$5,000 per center**.

The independent evaluation must be submitted electronically to TEA no later than **July 31st** of each year.

Statewide Evaluation

TEA is required by the U.S. Department of Education to periodically conduct its own statewide evaluation. For the past decade, TEA has contracted with an external evaluator, most recently American Institutes for Research (AIR) to evaluate statewide programming. **Grantees must comply with the statewide evaluation conducted on behalf of TEA.** Compliance with the statewide evaluation will include, but may not be limited to, collecting student-level data,

responding to surveys, participating in telephone interviews, administering pre-and post-assessments, and hosting site visits while maintaining normal operations.

Limits on Contracted Evaluators

When a grantee chooses, or is required under a grant, to hire a contracted evaluator, TEA believes that the evaluator must have the capability to remain independent and objective in carrying out the evaluation. “Independent and objective” implies that there is no influence or control, real or perceived, exerted on the evaluator by any person who is involved in the provision of program services. Therefore, the only way in which a contracted evaluator can be truly independent and objective is not to be involved in any manner with the provision of program services or activities. Otherwise, the evaluator is, at least in part, evaluating its own services.

In addition, TEA is aware that some grant writers develop and design the grant program, write the entire grant application, and then wish to evaluate the grant program. TEA also believes that this scenario poses a conflict of interest for the evaluator, in that the evaluator is evaluating the grant program that he or she designed, developed, and wrote. Again, it is not possible for the evaluator to function independently and objectively if the evaluator performed in this capacity. It is certainly acceptable for the grant writer to receive some information from a potential evaluator to include in the evaluation section of the grant application with regard to an appropriate evaluation plan or design, but communication between the grant writer and evaluator should be limited to that specific topic.

Applicants should make every effort to ensure that contracted evaluators be independent and objective.

Federal Grant Requirements

Equitable Access and Participation

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), Equitable Access and Participation.

This requirement does apply to this federally funded grant program.

Private Nonprofit School Participation

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), Private Nonprofit School Participation.

This requirement does apply to this federally funded grant program.

Maintenance of Effort

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), Maintenance of Effort.

This requirement does apply to this federally funded grant program.

Application Elements

This section describes the requirements and attachments that must be addressed in and included with the application.

Notice of Intent to Apply

For competitive grants, prospective applicants are requested to submit the Notice of Intent to Apply (NOI) by the date specified in the Grant Timeline. The NOI provides helpful information that allows TEA staff to plan for the management of the application and review processes. Failure to notify TEA of the intent to apply will **not** disqualify the applicant from applying for grant funds.

The NOI is published along with the RFA on the [TEA Grant Opportunities](#) page.

Reviewer Information Form

For every application submitted for a competitive grant, the applicant is required to submit the names of three individuals to serve as reviewers in the competitive review process for the grant program. For LEAs submitting multiple campus grant applications, the LEA must submit a minimum of three reviewers per campus application or a total of 10 reviewers, whichever is less.

Individuals who are hired to prepare grant applications may not serve as reviewers, and their names should not be submitted. Applicants must notify the people whose names they submit that they may be asked by TEA to serve as reviewers.

Once reviewers are selected, they will receive detailed information about the review process. The competitive review for the grant program will take place during the time period given in the Grant Timeline.

The Reviewer Information Form is published along with the RFA on the [TEA Grant Opportunities](#) page. All applicants are required to complete the form and to submit it online on or before the date given in the Grant Timeline.

Required Attachments

See the following sections of the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#):

- Fiscal-Related Documentation Required to Be on File
- Required Fiscal-Related Attachments
- Required Program-Related Attachments

This section describes the two types of attachments that may be required to be submitted with the application: fiscal-related attachments and program-related attachments.

Required Fiscal-Related Attachments

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), Required Fiscal-Related Attachments, for a general description of fiscal-related documents that can be required as attachments to the application.

For a list of the fiscal-related attachments required for this grant application, refer to the SAS, Schedule #2—Required Attachments and Provisions and Assurances.

Required Program-Related Attachments

No program-related attachments are required for this grant program.

Scoring and Review

This section provides information on the scoring and review of applications for competitive grants.

Standard Review Criteria

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), Standard Review Criteria.

Priorities for Funding

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), Priorities for Funding.

In addition to the factors considered in awarding competitive grants as outlined in the previous sections above, TEA will award grants according to the following priorities. Grant applicants must receive a score of at least 70 percent or another minimum percentage of points established by the TEA program division, whichever is greater, before any priority points can be assigned.

Statutory or TEA Priority	Maximum Points
<p>Proposals submitted jointly by eligible entities consisting of not less than one LEA receiving funds under Part A of Title I and a community-based organization or other public or private entity as listed under eligible applicants.</p> <p>Special rule: TEA will provide the same priority to an application submitted by an LEA if the LEA demonstrates that it is unable to partner with a community-based organization in reasonable geographic proximity and of sufficient quality to meet the requirements of this grant.</p>	5
<p>In an effort to combat summer learning loss and provide additional summer programming, applicants proposing to extend summer programming from 4 (the minimum requirement for all applicants) to 6 weeks or more will receive priority points. Note the minimum requirement is for 4 weeks to be offered consecutively. In order to receive priority points, an applicant must propose to offer 6 or more total weeks of summer programming (proposing 5 weeks will not suffice, and additional hours per day/ week will not suffice, though applicants can still propose additional hours or 5 weeks of summer programming, they will not receive priority points). Any additional weeks above and beyond the 4 week minimum requirement must also be consecutive and could occur in July or August 2014, however given that the start date of this grant occurs during a new grant year (i.e. Cycle 8, Year 2 begins August 1, 2014) any programming offered (and subsequent funding for services) in August must come from the following year continuation budget. Applicants could receive priority points for proposing to offer summer transition programs in August (for back to school preparation) but funding for this programming must come from the appropriate grant year, and applicants must continue to offer what is proposed in this application for the duration of the grant.</p>	5
<p>In an effort to target improved behavior, which is a statewide ACE program objective that greatly impacts academic performance, applicants (or partners) who have proposed successful research or evidence based activities/ interventions during the out-of-school time to target students exhibiting</p>	15

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Statutory or TEA Priority	Maximum Points
behaviors that may lead to a referral to District Alternative Education Programs (DAEPs)/ or Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Programs (JJAEPs) and have demonstrated sufficient experience in implementing such initiatives will receive priority points.	
Total maximum number of statutory/priority points	25