



School ends. Learning doesn't.

Texas ACE 2021–22 Messaging Guide

Follow this guide in conjunction with the Texas ACE Brand Guide when producing any print or digital communications about Texas ACE or its affiliates.

Program Overview

When describing the Texas ACE program, use the following statements as-is or adapt them to suit the format/channel or to provide more details specific to local program offerings.

Mission Statement

Texas ACE aims to improve academic performance/grades, school attendance, positive behavior, and student engagement by providing students with a safe place to go during non-school hours for extended learning and enrichment activities. The program serves students in Title I schools who otherwise would not have such opportunities.

Program Features

Texas ACE provides:

- No-cost before school, after school, and summer activities for any student who attends a participating school
- Interactive, hands-on learning disguised as fun and aligned to the school day curriculum
- Enrichment activities, including sports and clubs
- Homework help, tutoring, study strategies, time management, and other targeted, needs-based academic assistance
- Youth development and project-based activities that build character, confidence, and leadership skills
- Support for college and career readiness, such as career planning, SAT/ACT prep, and help with college applications and financial aid
- Snacks (some participating sites may also include meals)

Reach/Results

Through its competitively funded grants, Texas ACE operates more than 700 learning centers in more than 140 school districts and employs thousands of Texas teachers.

When Texas ACE programs are implemented with fidelity, students attend school more often and have fewer disciplinary incidents.

Students attending more than 30 days of a high-quality Texas ACE program experience measurable academic improvements overall, including:

- Increased grade promotion
- Improved grades in English and math for 28% of participating students*
- Higher test scores in English and math for students in grades 9–12
- Fewer absences in grades 4–12
- Fewer disciplinary incidents in grades 6–12

The longer a student stays enrolled in a Texas ACE program, the more they stand to benefit. Programs that retain students for more than one school year have a more positive effect on STAAR math and reading scores.

*Last reported for the 2018-19 school year

Texas ACE Branding Requirements

All outreach, communications, and program materials used to promote Texas ACE should align with and adhere to the official Texas ACE Brand Guide. The Texas ACE Promotional Toolkit includes up-to-date, on-brand logo files, graphics, and other downloadable design assets.

Use of the Texas ACE Logo

The logo must appear on all outreach, communications, and program materials following usage guidelines in the Texas ACE Brand Guide.

Required Funding Statement

This statement must appear at least once on all Texas ACE branded materials (digital and print), including reports, presentations, and most promotional materials:

“Funded by a grant from the US Department of Education’s 21st Century Community Learning Centers program”

Contact the TEA legal department to determine whether the statement may be omitted in specific instances.

TEA Brand Alignment

Texas ACE aligns with Texas Education Agency (TEA) brand and content standards and guidelines. All program materials should be produced in adherence with:

- TEA Brand Book
- TEA Style Guide
- Chicago Manual of Style
- Associated Press style if preferred for media-facing communication

Telling the Texas ACE Story

Tagline

School ends. Learning doesn't.

Supporting Copy

When space or format calls for a secondary line of headline-style copy, pair the tagline with an attention-grabbing phrase appropriate for the target audience.

Examples:

- Elementary students: Step straight into the fun!
- Middle and high school students: Where Learning Gets Real
- Parents: Give your child the gift of more learning—disguised as fun.
- Partners or volunteers: Bring lessons to life for thousands of Texas students.
- Any audience: The Bridge Between Learning and Life

Voice and Tone

Texas ACE is friendly, welcoming, energetic, reassuring, and optimistic. When communicating about Texas ACE, adhere to this established voice while adjusting specific messages and tone appropriately for the target audience, channel, or format.

Key words that express and capture the core values of Texas ACE include:

- Reach
- Extend
- Align
- Achieve
- Expand
- Grow
- Opportunity
- Partnership
- Support
- Engagement
- Community
- Belonging
- Safety
- Relationships
- Fun
- Interactive

“About Us” Statement (a.k.a. Boilerplate)

When the last bell rings, ACE is just getting started. The Afterschool Centers on Education (ACE) program provides no-cost activities before and after school and during summer for K–12 students in Title I schools. Funded through the federal 21st Century Community Learning Centers program and administered by Texas Education Agency (TEA), Texas ACE helps students prepare for college, career, or military service. Texas ACE operates more than 700 learning centers in 142 school districts and has a proven track record for boosting attendance and achievement.

Value Proposition

Texas ACE programs across the state have been shown to improve academic performance, behavior, attendance, grade promotion, and graduation rates. Parents can feel secure knowing their child has a safe, reliable place to receive academic support and enrichment while building relationships with friends and trusted adults. Teachers enjoy seeing students succeed and thrive with ACE support. Kids show up for the fun and hardly notice they’re learning. Teens preparing for college, career, or the military gain leadership opportunities and build essential skills for life.

Elevator Pitch

School only occupies about one-third of a child’s life. Texas ACE provides a safe, reliable place for kids and teens to go the rest of the time—so they can stay on track in school and in life. It’s a place to hang out with friends and get involved in sports, clubs, and other activities. Students get homework help, personalized academic support, and unique opportunities to work in teams and develop leadership skills. Led by educators, Texas ACE includes lots of hands-on and project-based learning to bridge what students are taught in the classroom with what they experience in the real world. Kids and teens enjoy it so much, they recruit friends to join!

Key Messages/Talking Points

All Audiences

- Texas ACE builds the bridge between learning and life.
- When school's out, Texas ACE is ready to embrace every child and fill their hours with a focus on what matters most: academic support, caring relationships, and positive life experiences.
- ACE is a nationwide program with a proven track record for boosting attendance and academic achievement.
- Curriculum connections and relationships from the school day extend into the Texas ACE space, providing continuity and needs-based support.
- Texas ACE centers around learning and encompasses so much more. Meaningful, hands-on activities bring students together to play and learn, become strong leaders, and develop skills that empower them to succeed in school and in life.
- Texas ACE builds and strengthens student relationships with educators, mentors, and peers.
- Texas ACE is a safe, secure environment. All participating sites follow the latest COVID-related guidelines and protocols.

Families/Parents

- When school's out, Texas ACE is in session. We provide a reliable, welcoming, and safe landing space.
- Fill those long after-school and summer hours with something better: academic support, caring relationships, and positive life experience.
- Give your child the gift of more learning time—disguised as fun.
- Feel a sense of community and a stronger connection to your child's learning.
- Discover what your student needs to succeed in school and in life—whether it's homework help, physical activity, or support from a trusted teacher.

Students

- Enter the no boredom zone. Hang out with friends. Get homework help.
- When school's out, lean on Texas ACE. Homework Help – Tutoring – Study Strategies
- This is where learning gets real. Dream big and plan your future with support from Texas ACE.
- Don't miss the afterschool action! [add list/description of local clubs and activities, e.g., animation, gaming, maker club]
- Get in the game at Texas ACE! [add list/description of local clubs and activities, e.g., chess club, lacrosse etc.]

Educators

- Partner with Texas ACE to help your students thrive.
- Texas ACE brings the fun and inspires learning.
- Academically aligned activities build on students' school-day growth and achievement.
- Classroom lessons take on new life after school through hands-on, exploratory activities.
- Learn more about your students so they can learn more in class.
- Texas ACE provides valuable touchpoints for staff and families to connect beyond school hours.

Schools/Districts

- ACE is a nationwide program with a proven track record.
- Research shows that high-quality Texas ACE programs improve academic performance, behavior, attendance, grade promotion, and graduation rates.
- Texas ACE provides grantees with implementation support, including webinars, conferences, site visits, and more.
- Leverage Texas ACE to build local partnerships and strengthen community support for your school.
- When needs are met, students are empowered to succeed. Texas ACE helps schools identify and target the needs of individual students and their families.
- Connect families with other programs that support students beyond the school day with mentoring, enrichment, food, and other needs.

Community Partners

- School only occupies about one-third of a child's life. That leaves a lot of free time—which comes at a cost to families and communities. Help Texas ACE provide academic support and a safe place for kids and teens to go after the last bell rings.
- Texas ACE programs across the state have been shown to improve academic performance, behavior, attendance, grade promotion, and graduation rates.
- Your support/partnership strengthens our local program—which can improve outcomes for local students. Texas ACE programs with active involvement from a local advisory board experience higher rates of student participation in activities, program retention, and larger center-level effects on STAAR reading scores.
- Big community impact starts with supporting our smallest citizens. Partner with Texas ACE and bring lessons to life for thousands of Texas students.
- An investment in Texas ACE yields dividends for your entire community.

Volunteers (tutors, mentors, chaperones, activity coordinators, businesses, nonprofit organizations)

- School only occupies about 1/3 of a child's life. Help kids in your community stay safe, active, and learning after the last bell rings.
- Support and empower local students while earning your volunteer hours and making connections in the community.
- Texas ACE offers volunteers a meaningful, memorable experience with a consistent schedule.

Internal/TEA Employees

- Texas ACE is a valuable tool in the TEA toolbox that aligns with agency strategic priorities.
- Texas ACE complements other agency programs to create a support system for students when school is not in session.
- More than just an extension of the school day, Texas ACE brings learning to life through hands-on, exploratory afterschool activities.

Grantee Welcome Kit Message

Thank you for partnering with Texas ACE!

Together, grantees like you operate more than 700 centers across the state—providing thousands of students with activities to bridge what they learn in the classroom with life outside of school.

Every local ACE program has something special to offer. Use the promotional materials in this welcome kit to start spreading word about yours!

Follow the enclosed Texas ACE Brand Guide to create your own high-quality, on-brand outreach materials and communicate important messages to students, parents, teachers, partners, volunteers, and the media.

Explore more ready-to-print and customizable marketing materials in the ACE Promotional Toolkit, which also includes the Texas ACE logo, illustrations, and other downloadable digital files.

School only occupies about one-third of a child's life. Thank you for filling the remaining hours with meaningful experiences that empower success in school and in life.