

Afterschool Centers on Education (ACE)



The 2010 Landscape of Texas ACE

Dear Texas ACE Colleagues,




Candace M. Ferguson
21st CCLC State Coordinator/
Program Manager

Congratulations on a great start to 2010! We truly believe we have the best ACE team and we are making significant strides in reaching our goal of having all students graduate prepared for college and/or the workforce. We can accomplish this goal through initiatives we currently have in place and through continued support of the 21st CCLC program administered by the U.S. Department of Education.

Afterschool programs are increasingly being assessed to determine the measurable impact our programs have on academic progress and graduation rates. The U.S. Department of Education's FY2010 budget estimates almost \$1.2 billion will be allocated to the 21st CCLC initiative and TEA is anticipating approximately a 4% increase in funding for the ACE program¹. We have also expanded our reach with the addition of 17 new ACE grantees for Cycle 6. Texas ACE now has 120 grantees with 720 centers serving 132,555 students (2008-2009 enrollment) across the state.

With the increased funding and visibility, expectations are high as we remain accountable for making a

difference in the lives of the students and families we serve. To achieve these standards, we continue our focus on  a Blueprint for Afterschool and our continuing commitment is to provide you high quality training and resources to help you build a stellar program. We are expanding our tools and resources with the addition of MyTexasACE.org and continue to offer various high-quality trainings, such as the Technology of Participation (ToP®) Facilitation Methods sessions. This learned knowledge can and should be applied to all aspects of our ACE programs including:

- Developing strategies for addressing Critical Success Factors
- Incorporating the Four-Component Activity Guide into the CSDPs
- Meeting and adhering to the requirements outlined in the program guidelines including needs assessment, outreach and strategic planning
- Enhancing the performance of teams, staff, and more.

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Regional Training

ACE Director Appointed to Prestigious Early Childhood Project

ToP® Facilitation Methods for Improving Leadership and Strategic Planning Skills and Outreach Efforts

Beginning in January through March 2010, TEA sponsored the opportunity for Cycle 5 and Cycle 6 ACE Grant Leaders to attend a series of regional training sessions on facilitation methods. Ten (10) two-day sessions were held across the state and were led by Bourke & Associates, a premier management and organizational development firm. Each **Technology of Participation (ToP®) Facilitation Methods** session offered support for improving:

- Grant Leadership
- Strategic Planning
- Outreach Efforts

ToP Facilitation Methods is a course for leaders who want to be able to facilitate groups more confidently and effectively toward achieving consensus and developing comprehensive, integrated action plans.

Grantee leaders learned about three specific facilitation methods during the training:

- Focused Conversation
- The Consensus Workshop
- The Action Planning Method

Each method was not only described but analyzed and discussed, then practiced in supportive small groups with guided reflection and feedback. Finally, participants planned how they will apply each method to their own situations. Feedback about the session was very positive:

“I came away with practical tools I can use every day.”—ACE Grant Leader

Cynthia Wise Galvan, the Director of the 21st Century Community Learning Centers After School Program (ACE) and Parental Involvement at Mercedes ISD, was nominated by TEA and recently selected by the U.S. Department of Education to participate in The Early Childhood Project Technical Working Group (TWG).



Wise Galvan is a doctoral candidate at University of Texas at Brownsville studying Curriculum and Instruction with an emphasis on Bilingual Education and is a former bilingual teacher. Through these experiences, she will bring insights unique to the Spanish-speaking population and will rely on her previous teaching experiences and her daily involvement with the afterschool program to ensure the national group makes an informed decision regarding services for young children participating in the **21st CCLC program**.

“It is an honor to be selected and I am looking forward to working with The Early Childhood Project Technical Working Group to identify what works to help our children succeed in school.”—Wise Galvan

With approximately 877 Pre-Kindergarten and almost 5,000 21st CCLC sites, the TWG's mission is to identify high-quality programs and practices in early childhood 21st CCLC programs that can be shared across the program and with the larger afterschool community. The group's findings and best practices will be compiled and published in a guide. This guide will also discuss common operational challenges that are critical in the design and implementation of effective and efficient academic enrichment and development programs for **21st CCLC** afterschool centers who have pre-kindergarten and kindergarten participants.

“Top” is a registered trademark of the Institute of Cultural Affairs in the U.S.A.

Sharing Successful Activities with Peers

Activities that focus on increasing parent involvement in the ACE program, assisting students in TAKS preparation, incorporating technology into the classroom, and preparing students for college and/or the workforce are critical to the success of an ACE program. Below is one example of the creativity you and your peers incorporate into your program to make it a success.

Engage Parents as Partners in Their Child's Education

Linda Perez, the Parent Support Specialist at Brown Elementary School in Austin, has developed activities targeting parents of students participating in the ACE program. On average, 19 parents participate in these 90-minute morning activities, which are offered for four to eight weeks depending on the subject matter.

Examples of the activities include:

- **Science Series**—Parents are exposed to the same subject matter as their children through hands-on experiments. This series helps build parents' confidence in being able to assist their children with science homework.
- **KLRU Reading Workshop**—Parents of pre-kindergarten through second grade students learn techniques on how to teach their children how to read.
- **Nutrition Series**—Led by 4-H Capital, these classes help parents plan nutritious meals for their family.

Parents who participate in these classes become more excited about the subject matter. In addition, they learn strategies such as relating the subject matter to everyday activities and asking questions to stimulate conversation, which help engage their children.

Read about other activities at TexasAce21.org/ActivityExample

Do you have an innovative activity you want to share that focuses on parent engagement or college/workforce readiness? If so, please express your interest in an email to TexasACE21@EdvanceResearch.com. A member of the Edvance Research team will contact you for further details.

Save the Dates!

21st CCLC 2010 Summer Institute

Washington, DC
June 21 – 23, 2010

[Read more](#)

ACE 2010 Annual Conference

Austin, TX
August 3 – 4, 2010

Questions?

Send your inquiries to TexasACE21@edvanceresearch.com

TEA Leadership

Lizzette Reynolds—Deputy Commissioner

Barbara Knaggs—Associate Commissioner

Gina Day—Deputy Associate Commissioner

Lilie Elizondo-Limas—Director

Candace M. Ferguson—State Coordinator/Manager

Liza Lorenzi—Program Specialist

James Connolly—Grant Manager

Edvance Research Leadership

Kristin Nafziger—Project Director

Brian Brothers—Project Manager



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Creating a Community of Afterschool Practitioners through MyTexasACE.org



Excitement is in the air with the newly released MyTexasACE.org, an online portal that provides ACE Program Administrators and Center staff the opportunity to connect with one another across Texas ACE programs while accessing on-demand professional development and information needed for implementing high-quality afterschool programs. The site serves as a vehicle for communicating and building knowledge as a community. It is a virtual place where you can join others in a discussion, share successes and resources that impact student and family activities, be guided through different types of learning experiences, and problem-solve challenges faced in day-to-day work. The community is supported by the tools and key features at MyTexasACE.org which include:

Resource Central

Resource Central features a Resource Search and Share where grantees can contribute resources they have used in their ACE program implementation to a database of vetted web sites. The Resource Central page includes the ability to search, submit, and rate resources, as well as comment on how each site has been used to inspire or improve programming. Resource Central can be found under the *Be Resourceful* menu item at MyTexasACE.org.

ACE Community Discussions

Share your successes and lessons learned through the **ACE Community Discussions** at MyTexasACE.org. This peer-to-peer interaction happens through various discussion boards such as Innovative Learning, Strategic Planning, and Intentional Programming. These online discussion boards are easily searchable and grantees can “subscribe” to be notified of any new postings via email.

(The 2010 Landscape of Texas ACE, continued from page 1)

The 2010 ACE Annual Conference, which will be held in early August in Austin, is structured around “**Achieving Critical Success**”. ACE participants will learn, share, and explore ways to achieve critical success for their programs. Additional information regarding the ACE Annual Conference will be forthcoming.

Thank you for a great start to 2010! I know each of you will continue to make and implement strategies that will positively

Templates and Tools for ACE Afterschool

The **Templates and Tools** for Afterschool is a repository of forms and related documents that fellow ACE grantees have created for use in their afterschool programs. These templates and tools can be downloaded and modified for use in your ACE program. Items include tools for collecting data, scheduling and programming, enrolling students into the program, and creating information booklets for parents in both English and Spanish. Grantees can also contribute to this online repository by submitting their Template or Tool of choice. All submissions are reviewed and grantees can provide comments on how they have used or modified each tool or template for their program.

Coming Soon: Activities & Lesson Plan Collection

In Spring 2010 you will be able to access an online collection of **Texas ACE Activities and Lesson Plans** that target each of the four components of the Four-Component Activity Guide. Texas ACE grantees can search, contribute, and post comments about their use of the activities and corresponding lesson plans.

These are a few ways that MyTexasACE.org and TEA are focusing on creating a community of afterschool practitioners. To learn more about MyTexasACE.org or if you are a project director, a site coordinator, or have the responsibility of managing a center's data and have not registered for MyTexasACE.org, contact the Texas ACE Help Desk at TexasACE21@edvanceresearch.com for more information on how to register.

impact your local ACE program's effectiveness and the value it brings to your students, families, and communities.

Sincerely,
Candace M. Ferguson
21st CCLC State Coordinator/Program Manager

¹ U.S. Department of Education. Retrieved on February 17, 2010 from, <http://www2.ed.gov/about/overview/budget/statetables/11stbyprogram.pdf>