

**Afterschool Centers on Education  
Cycle 7  
Boys and Girls Club of Austin**

**Ann Richards School for Young Women Leaders  
Burnet Middle School  
Cook Elementary School  
Lanier High School  
McBee Elementary School  
Webb Middle School  
Wooldridge Elementary School**

**Final Report 2013–2014**



**Austin Independent School District**

**Department of Program Evaluation**

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This report was developed to meet TEA's reporting requirements of the Afterschool Centers on Education (ACE), as specified in the mandated report elements and outline provided by TEA in Appendix 31 of the PRIME Blueprint for Texas ACE.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Afterschool Centers on Education (ACE) is the program administered through the Texas Education Agency (TEA) for the federally funded 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Center (CCLC) grants authorized under Title IV, Part B of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), as amended by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB; Public Law 107-110). This report examines outcomes for Cycle 7, Boys and Girls Club of Austin (BGCA), which served 1,995 students during the 2013–2014 school year from a total of seven AISD campuses- Wooldridge Elementary, Cook Elementary, McBee Elementary, Webb Middle, Burnet Middle, Ann Richards, and Lanier High.

### FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Overall results were mostly mixed on all three outcome goals for the Cycle 7 BGCA campuses. None of the seven Cycle 7 BGCA campuses met all three outcome goals- increased academic achievement, decreased school-day absences, and decreased disciplinary referrals from year to year. Program participants (regular and non-regular) at Webb middle school met both academic (increased GPA and course completion percentages) and discipline goals (decreased mandatory and discretionary referrals over time). Only program participants at Cook elementary school met attendance outcomes (decreased school-day absences over time). At Ann Richards, regular participants met academic achievement and discipline goals while non-regular participants did not.

**Finding 1.** Academic achievement outcomes (improved mean GPA and course completion rates) were mixed.

**Recommendation 1.** Given the mixed results for ACE Austin participants related to GPA and course completion rates, it is recommended that academic-related afterschool programs implement changes to better align with program goals, particularly Lanier middle school where goals were not met on either outcome. In addition, identifying the specific programs and strategies used to address academic issues, specifically, at Webb middle school, where the goal was met for both academic outcomes, would be useful in understanding what may have contributed to this finding in order to influence the adoption of similar approaches at other campuses as well.

**Finding 2.** Attendance outcomes were not met at most of the Cycle 7 BGCA campuses. Program participants (regular and non-regular) experienced an increase in school-day absences from one year to the next at all Cycle 7 BGCA campuses except for Cook elementary school.

**Recommendation 2.** To meet attendance outcome goals at these campuses a closer examination of and modification to program activities and components designed to address attendance issues is warranted. The mean number of school-days absent was reported as required by TEA in the *ACE Final Evaluator Report Guidelines*. It is noted, however, that the number of days absent does not take into account the number of days enrolled. Across AISD, it was found that in 2013–2014, there was a negative correlation

between the number of days students were enrolled and their absenteeism rate ( $r=-.29$ ,  $p<.0001$ ), i.e., students who are enrolled fewer days of the school year are absent for a greater proportion of those days. An absence or attendance rate, which takes into account the days enrolled, would be a better measure of student engagement.

**Finding 3.** Program participation had mixed results regarding discipline outcomes.

**Recommendation 3.** Refinement to components that are effective should be ongoing so that they may continue to meet the needs of students at campuses where the discipline outcome goal was met. Campuses where disciplinary goals were not met could be due to the fact that students who already have a history of high disciplinary issues are specifically targeted and therefore the program would have difficulty in demonstrating a significant reduction in referrals over the course of program participation. In these cases, the specific program goals need to be examined in order to better understand the desired outcomes for these students.

Based on the evaluator recommendations and commentary provided by the site coordinators in the Cycle 7 BGCA center level reports, the following next steps are recommended to help support the Cycle 7 BGCA campuses further improve the ACE program to meet the needs of students and parents.

- **Training:** Sufficient training opportunities should be provided to afterschool program teachers throughout the course of the school year. In addition, opportunities should be provided for school-day teachers and afterschool teachers to train together and work collaboratively in providing effective afterschool services and activities.
- **Identifying needs and aligning program goals to these needs:** Overall program activities at each campus should be aligned with students' needs and interests. To accomplish this, site coordinators along with afterschool teachers at each campus should conduct a needs assessment at the beginning of the school year. In addition, focus groups should be conducted with afterschool teachers, parents, students, site coordinators, and program directors to help determine the appropriate services for students at each campus.
- **Program implementation fidelity:** To successfully meet the needs of students participating in the afterschool program and achieve outcome goals, it is crucial that appropriate curricula, activities, and services of the program are implemented consistently and accurately. Furthermore, program implementation fidelity should be monitored and measured at regular intervals by site coordinators, program directors, and the program evaluators, and requisite modifications should be made if and when issues of fidelity are identified.

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## INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE OF PROGRAM

The Afterschool Centers on Education (ACE) is the program administered through the Texas Education Agency (TEA) for the federally funded 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Center (CCLC) grants authorized under Title IV, Part B of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), as amended by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB; Public Law 107-110). The purpose of ACE programs is to support the creation of community learning centers to provide academic enrichment opportunities during non-school hours for children who attend high-poverty and low-performing schools. ACE Austin provides a comprehensive range of out-of-school-time academic assistance, enrichment, family and parental support, and college and workforce readiness activities. Building on its existing infrastructure of evidence-based out-of-school-time activities and partnerships, ACE Austin collaborates with a range of partners to provide a comprehensive menu of before-school, afterschool, and summer programming. Activities are offered at least 15 hours per week for 30 weeks during the academic year and for 30 hours per week for 4 weeks during the summer. All activities focus on the four 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC core component areas: academic assistance, enrichment, family engagement, and college and workforce readiness/awareness.

**Academic assistance.** ACE Austin offers a range of activities designed to improve students' achievement by providing extra academic assistance and support in the form of tutoring and homework help for students who are struggling in the core subjects, including science, math, reading, and social studies. All extended-day learning opportunities are aligned with the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) standards and with the school-day reading/writing, math, science, technology, and social studies curricula and use hands-on, experiential, and project-based teaching strategies to reinforce learning. Academic support activities incorporate the district-wide Curriculum Roadmap and link the afterschool program with school-day instruction to ensure consistency and continuity.

**Enrichment.** ACE Austin offers a variety of skill-building enrichment activities to which some students would otherwise lack access, including fine arts, technology, games, health and fitness, outdoor and environmental education, and youth leadership and development. Enrichment activities are designed to extend, expand on, or otherwise enrich classroom learning by supporting students' physical, emotional, and social development.

**Family engagement.** ACE Austin staff partner with the AISD Adult Education Department and each school's parent support specialist to provide family engagement activities that help connect families to schools and enable them to better support their children's academic achievement. Services include English language support for limited English proficient (LEP) students; technology classes; parent support classes that focus on college readiness, child development, positive behavior, and ways to support student academic achievement; and family fitness nights, offered in partnership with ACTIVE Life Movement, a national organization dedicated to healthy lifestyles for all.

**College and workforce readiness/awareness.** ACE Austin implemented the Get Ready for College program with 5<sup>th</sup> graders at selected campuses. Students were targeted based on teachers' recommendations. Participating students investigated careers, visited area colleges and universities, practiced public speaking skills, participated in service projects, and played lacrosse. All ACE Austin activities and classes integrate college and workforce readiness whenever feasible, including discussions about careers and educational attainment, presentations from guest speakers, and information about the importance of high school graduation and college attendance.

The main goals of the youth and family afterschool programs offered by ACE Austin are based on narrowing the achievement gap between economically disadvantaged students and students of more affluent families. Across activities and centers, the afterschool program focuses on three primary objectives:

- Decrease school-day absences
- Decrease discipline referrals
- Increase academic achievement through support and enrichment activities

This report examines outcomes for Cycle 7, Boys and Girls Club of Austin (BGCA), which served 1,995 students during the 2013–2014 school year from a total of seven AISD campuses- Wooldridge Elementary, Cook Elementary, McBee Elementary, Webb Middle, Burnet Middle, Ann Richards, and Lanier High.

## EVALUATION STRATEGY

### EXPECTATIONS

The Department of Research and Evaluation (DRE) evaluators and program staff, together, reviewed the grant requirements and developed an evaluation plan and timeline for the program, which were published online (<http://www.austinisd.org/dre/about-us>) as part of the DRE work plan. Throughout the duration of the grant program, evaluators worked closely with program staff to collect and submit identified data in a timely fashion and met regularly to monitor progress and make any needed adjustments.

The evaluation plan was used to ensure continuous improvement for (a) program management (monitoring program operations); (b) staying on track (ensuring that the program stayed focused on the goals, objectives, strategies, and outcomes); (c) efficiency (streamlining service delivery, which helps lower the cost of services); (d) accountability (producing evidence of program effects); and (e) sustainability (providing evidence or effectiveness to all stakeholders).

The ACE Afterschool program used TEA Security Environment (TEASE), the Texas ACE web-based tracking system, to track students' attendance and other program data needed for TEA reports. The DRE evaluator extracted students' records from AISD's data warehouse and assisted program staff with formatting and data entry into TEASE for accurate reporting to TEA.

### MEASUREMENT

Program participation files and AISD student records provided demographic information and results for each of the school-related outcomes. Program participants' outcomes were compared for school years 2012–2013 and 2013–2014. Program participants were categorized based on the total number of days they participated in the afterschool program: regular participants were students who participated in a program for 30 or more days, and non-regular participants were students who participated in a program between 1 and 29 days. Analyses were conducted to compare school outcomes (e.g., school attendance, discipline removals, core subject grade point average [GPA]; reading, mathematics [math], science, and social studies) and course completion percentages.

#### ***School Attendance***<sup>1</sup>

The average number of school days absent was calculated for both the regular participant and non-regular participant groups. Absent days were defined as the total number of days a student did not come to school and included both excused and unexcused absences.

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<sup>1</sup> The mean number of school-days absent was reported, as required by TEA in the *ACE Final Evaluator Report Guidelines*. It is noted, however, that the number of days absent does not take into account the number of days enrolled. Across AISD, in 2013–2014, a negative correlation was found between the number of days students were enrolled and their absenteeism rate ( $r = -.29$ ,  $p < .0001$ ), i.e., students who were enrolled fewer days of the school year were absent for a greater proportion of those days. An absence or attendance rate that takes into account the days enrolled would be a better measure of student engagement.

### ***Discipline Removals***

To examine the program’s impact on discipline referrals, the percentage of students who were disciplined was calculated for both the regular and non-regular participant groups. Student discipline referrals were included for analysis when the resultant action was a suspension (i.e., in-school or out-of-school suspension) or placement in a disciplinary alternative education program (DAEP; e.g., the Alternative Learning Center). These removals from the regular education environment were divided into two categories for the purposes of analyses: those for which a removal was mandatory and those for which a removal was discretionary. All mandatory discipline offenses resulted in a removal from campus, as required by law. Discretionary removals were those offenses that did not require a removal by law, but for which a student was removed anyway. For example, mandatory removals included drug and alcohol violations, as well as assaults on other students or adults on campus; discretionary removals included behaviors such as persistent misbehavior or fights.

### ***Academic Achievement***

Academic achievement was measured using school-year GPA in reading, math, science, and social studies and course completion percentages. The mean GPAs were calculated for coursework completed during the year, and the percentage of students who passed courses was also calculated.

Table 1. Afterschool Program Objectives and Description of How They Were Measured

<b>Program objective</b>	<b>Measurement</b>	<b>Data source</b>
Decrease participants’ school-day absences	Mean school-day absence	Program participation file, AISD student attendance records
Improve behavior	Percentage of mandatory or discretionary discipline removals	Program participation file, AISD student discipline records
Improve academic performance	Core grade point average (reading, math, science, social studies)	Program participation file, AISD student grades records
	Course completion	Program participation file, AISD student grades records

Source. AISD Afterschool Program records

## PROGRAM DESIGN AND SUPPORT STRATEGY

### PROGRAM DESIGN

The BGCA administrators reviewed each school's test results and student data to determine what types of activities to offer. The site directors created campus needs assessments with which they surveyed principals, teachers, other school administration, and parents. They also reviewed the school's campus improvement plan to further guide them to determine what activities those students needed. The project director and site director met or emailed on a monthly basis with principals to check in and see how the program was going and ask for feedback. In addition, site directors had daily or weekly contact with school principals to inform them about what was going on in the program.

Recruitment of the academically case-managed youth and the targeted-intervention youth, who was referred to the program by principals and teachers, was based on each youth's grades and behavior. Other students were recruited through open enrollment at back-to-school nights, lunches, and registration nights.

Youth Program Quality trainings were offered throughout the year to help build staff skills so staff could provide effective, hands-on classes. Education directors and site directors also went through Boys & Girls Club trainings about grant requirements and reporting. Site directors attended the school welcome back trainings at the beginning of the year to understand and align with expectations for the school day. The project director conducted monthly site observations at each site to provide feedback about the program. This feedback helped the site directors know what trainings to attend or what trainings to offer to their staff.

Supplies for programs were ordered or purchased, as needed, throughout the year. The family engagement specialist worked closely with site directors and school-day parent support specialists to help identify parental needs and what the afterschool program could do to help meet those needs. Marketing for the program was through flyers, back-to-school nights, registration nights, lunches, and meetings with school administration.

Cycle 7, BGCA provides afterschool services to students attending Ann Richards School for Young Women Leaders, Burnet Middle School, Lanier Middle School, Webb Middle School, Cook Elementary School, McBee Elementary School, and Wooldridge Elementary School. All these schools have high concentrations of economically disadvantaged students. These schools were chosen because of their high rates of poverty, as well as retention and disciplinary action, and low attendance and graduation rates. Data from TEA's Academic Performance Report (TARP) 2012–2013 indicated that the percentage of students who were low SES (i.e., qualify to receive free or reduced price lunch); considered at risk of dropping out of school; and classified as English language learners were above district and state averages at six of the seven Cycle 7 BGCA campuses, (Table 1).

Table 1. Description of Needs

School	Percentage low socioeconomic	Percentage at risk	Percentage limited English proficient
Ann Richards	57%	22%	3%
Burnet	94%	61%	41%
Cook	97%	78%	58%
Lanier	90%	79%	28%
McBee	99%	85%	76%
Webb	97%	62%	42%
Wooldridge	97%	86%	78%
AISD	63%	53%	27%
State	60%	45%	17%

Source. 2012–2013 Texas Education Agency’s Academic Performance Reports

#### LOGIC MODEL

Site coordinators at all seven Cycle 7 BGCA schools in conjunction with the project directors developed a logic model to guide the implementation of the ACE program at their campus. The model also served as a tool for documenting programmatic changes over time. The logic model of the ACE program at each Cycle 7 BGCA campus included six components: resources, implementation practices, outputs-activities, outputs- participation, intermediate outcomes, and impact.

## PROGRAM PARTICIPATION

### STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

Table 3. Number of Students, by Campus and Afterschool Centers on Education (ACE) Austin Participation Status, 2013–2014

Cycle 7, BGCA campuses	Regular participants		Non-regular participants		Non-participants		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Ann Richards	255	35%	278	38%	192	26%	725	100%
Burnet	149	12%	137	11%	918	76%	1204	100%
Cook	182	18%	32	3%	798	79%	1012	100%
Lanier	125	7%	98	6%	1445	87%	1668	100%
McBee	188	30%	3	0%	437	70%	628	100%
Webb	124	18%	165	24%	413	59%	702	100%
Wooldridge	216	25%	44	5%	617	70%	877	100%
<b>Total Cycle 7 -BGCA</b>	<b>1,239</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>757</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>4,820</b>	<b>71%</b>	<b>6,816</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source. ACE Austin participant records for 2013–2014; AISD student records.

All program participants were regular participants (i.e., attended the afterschool program for 30 or more days) at McBee. There were a greater percentage of regular program participants than non-regular program participants at Burnet, Cook, Lanier, and Wooldridge.

At the following campuses: Burnet, Cook, Lanier, and Wooldridge the overall percentage of program participants were much lower when compared to the total school population. In order to increase program participation and retention, student and parent surveys were conducted to solicit feedback about the programs. After the fall term, program staff examined the survey data and created classes that would address students requests and would maintain, if not increase, participation and retention. The program aimed to broaden students' normal range of choices and give them access to activities out of their normal set of choices. Program staff also used data in order to keep track of the fluctuation of students between classes, if there was low participation, lesson plans were modified using feedback from the students in order to make the activity more entertaining for them.

Additionally, program staff offered incentives and tied enrichment and academic programs together to increase participation. Modifications were made constantly throughout the year. Several strategies were tested to determine what drew students into the academic programs (i.e., times offered, space program was offered in, resources provided that students would take advantage of, etc.). The adult ESL classes were coupled with free childcare. Family nights were incentivized with prizes, gifts, and complimentary refreshments. Collaboration with the school's parent support specialist helped in reaching out to families for combined efforts.

Table 4. Student Gender, by Campus and Afterschool Centers on Education (ACE) Austin Participation Status, 2013–2014

Cycle 7, BGCA campuses and participation level		Gender		
		Regular participants (n = 1,239)	Non-regular participants (n = 757)	Non-participants (n = 4,820)
Ann Richards	Female	100%	100%	100%
	Male	0%	0%	0%
Burnet	Female	40%	36%	49%
	Male	60%	64%	51%
Cook	Female	50%	48%	48%
	Male	50%	52%	52%
Lanier	Female	46%	48%	48%
	Male	54%	52%	52%
McBee	Female	54%	50%	45%
	Male	46%	50%	55%
Webb	Female	54%	57%	47%
	Male	46%	43%	53%
Wooldridge	Female	43%	54%	49%
	Male	57%	46%	51%

Source. ACE Austin participant records for 2013–2014; AISD student records

Table 5. Student Ethnicity, by Campus and Afterschool Centers on Education (ACE) Austin Participation Status, 2013–2014

Cycle 7, BGCA campuses and participation level		Ethnicity						
		American Indian or Alaska Native	Asian	Black or African American	Hispanic	Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	Two or more races	White
Ann Richards	Regular participants	0%	2%	9%	64%	0%	4%	20%
	Non-regular participants	0%	4%	10%	59%	0%	5%	22%
	Non-participants	0%	2%	5%	70%	1%	2%	21%
Burnet	Regular participants	0%	1%	31%	63%	0%	2%	3%
	Non-regular participants	0%	0%	16%	77%	0%	1%	7%
	Non-participants	0%	2%	5%	86%	0%	2%	4%
Cook	Regular participants	0%	1%	18%	79%	0%	1%	1%
	Non-regular participants	0%	0%	6%	91%	0%	0%	3%
	Non-participants	0%	1%	9%	85%	0%	2%	4%
Lanier	Regular participants	1%	2%	48%	43%	0%	2%	5%
	Non-regular participants	0%	10%	20%	61%	0%	2%	6%
	Non-participants	1%	3%	6%	85%	0%	1%	4%
McBee	Regular participants	1%	2%	14%	82%	0%	1%	1%
	Non-regular participants	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%
	Non-participants	0%	0%	7%	88%	0%	2%	3%
Webb	Regular participants	0%	0%	18%	78%	0%	2%	2%
	Non-regular participants	0%	1%	8%	88%	0%	1%	3%
	Non-participants	0%	0%	4%	90%	0%	2%	3%
Wooldridge	Regular participants	0%	2%	15%	76%	0%	1%	5%
	Non-regular participants	0%	2%	2%	93%	0%	0%	2%
	Non-participants	0%	5%	2%	90%	0%	0%	3%

Source. ACE Austin participant records for 2013–2014; AISD student records

Table 6. Student Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Status, by Campus and Afterschool Centers on Education (ACE) Austin Participation Status, 2013–2014

Cycle 7, BGCA campuses and participation level		LEP status
Ann Richards	Regular participants	2%
	Non-regular participants	0%
	Non-participants	2%
Burnet	Regular participants	22%
	Non-regular participants	30%
	Non-participants	43%
Cook	Regular participants	51%
	Non-regular participants	73%
	Non-participants	65%
Lanier	Regular participants	14%
	Non-regular participants	23%
	Non-participants	30%
McBee	Regular participants	60%
	Non-regular participants	75%
	Non-participants	68%
Webb	Regular participants	31%
	Non-regular participants	35%
	Non-participants	43%
Wooldridge	Regular participants	53%
	Non-regular participants	71%
	Non-participants	82%

Source. ACE Austin participant records for 2013–2014; AISD student records

## **PROGRAM INTERMEDIATE OUTCOMES**

### **ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT OUTCOME**

One of the program objectives was to improve students' academic achievement. Mean GPA in the core subject areas of reading, math, science, and social studies, and course completion percentages were compared for students with regular participation and students with non-regular participation in the ACE Austin program for the 2013–2014 and 2012–2013 school years. The goal was for program participants to experience an increase in mean GPA in all core subject areas as well as improved course completion rates in 2013–2014 when compared to 2012–2013.

Program participants (regular and non-regular) at Burnet and Webb, and regular participants at Ann Richards experienced an increase in mean GPA in 2013–2014 when compared to 2012–2013. Program participants at Cook, Lanier, McBee, and Wooldridge experienced a decrease in year to year mean GPA in most of the core subject areas.

Program participants (regular and non-regular) at Cook, McBee, Webb, and Wooldridge had greater course completion percentages in 2013–2014 when compared to 2012–2013. In addition, only regular program participants at Ann Richards had better course completion percentages over time while course completion percentages for non-regular participants declined at this campus. Regular and non-regular program participants had lower course completion percentages at Burnet and Lanier in 2013–2014 when compared to the previous year.

Table 7. Afterschool Center on Education (ACE) Participants' Core Grade Point Average (GPA), by School Year

Campus	Core subject GPA	Participation status					
		Regular participants		GPA change	Non-regular participants		GPA change
		2012–2013	2013–2014		2012–2013	2013–2014	
Ann Richards	Reading	3.40	3.48	0.07	3.58	3.55	-0.03
	Math	3.38	3.30	-0.08	3.43	3.43	0.00
	Science	3.39	3.42	0.02	3.48	3.38	-0.10
	Social studies	3.38	3.32	-0.06	3.44	3.36	-0.09
Burnet	Reading	2.68	3.17	0.50	2.38	2.88	0.51
	Math	2.72	3.03	0.31	2.36	2.76	0.40
	Science	2.91	3.04	0.13	2.50	2.86	0.35
	Social studies	3.13	3.22	0.09	2.81	2.75	-0.06
Cook	Reading	3.36	2.87	-0.49	2.63	2.60	-0.03
	Math	3.51	2.87	-0.64	2.93	2.90	-0.03
	Science	3.64	3.16	-0.47	3.07	2.93	-0.13
	Social studies	3.71	3.23	-0.48	2.93	3.00	0.07
Lanier	Reading	2.72	2.91	0.19	2.91	2.85	-0.06
	Math	2.94	2.70	-0.24	2.88	2.86	-0.02
	Science	2.76	2.54	-0.21	2.84	2.75	-0.08
	Social studies	2.59	2.54	-0.05	2.85	2.76	-0.09
McBee	Reading	2.65	2.37	-0.29	2.67	1.67	-1.00
	Math	2.84	2.65	-0.19	2.33	2.00	-0.33
	Science	3.14	2.76	-0.38	3.00	2.33	-0.67
	Social studies	3.20	3.11	-0.10	3.00	3.33	0.33
Webb	Reading	2.67	3.02	0.35	2.81	3.00	0.19
	Math	2.84	3.34	0.50	2.91	3.29	0.39
	Science	2.64	3.46	0.82	2.82	3.37	0.55
	Social studies	2.88	3.24	0.36	3.15	3.19	0.04
Wooldridge	Reading	3.11	2.73	-0.39	3.11	2.97	-0.13
	Math	3.10	2.75	-0.35	3.08	2.87	-0.21
	Science	3.28	3.18	-0.10	3.45	3.26	-0.19
	Social studies	3.36	3.27	-0.09	3.47	3.44	-0.04

Source. ACE Austin participant records for 2013–2014; AISD student records (TEAMS\_GRDS)

Table 8. Afterschool Center on Education (ACE) Participants' Course Completion, by School Year *Source*.

Campus	Course pass percentage					Course pass percentage point change
	Regular participants		Course pass percentage point change	Non-regular participants		
	2012–2013	2013–2014		2012–2013	2013–2014	
Ann Richards	98.46%	98.88%	0.42%	98.92%	98.54%	-0.38%
Burnet	94.21%	92.83%	-1.38%	94.05%	88.41%	-5.64%
Cook	93.73%	97.32%	3.59%	93.01%	97.28%	4.27%
Lanier	86.82%	83.50%	-3.32%	87.94%	87.80%	-0.14%
McBee	91.89%	95.59%	3.70%	84.87%	90.32%	5.45%
Webb	95.17%	98.49%	3.32%	94.03%	97.04%	3.01%
Wooldridge	96.38%	98.37%	1.99%	95.83%	99.66%	3.83%

ACE Austin participant records for 2013–2014; AISD student records (TEAMS\_GRDS)

#### ATTENDANCE OUTCOME

Average absent days of 2013–2014 ACE program participants at Cycle 7 BGCA campuses were calculated in school year 2012–2013 and 2013–2014. Absent days were defined as the total number of days a student did not come to school and included both excused and unexcused absences.

Program participants (regular and non-regular) experienced an increase in school-day absences from one year to the next at all Cycle 7 BGCA campuses except for Cook.

The mean number of school days absent was reported as required by TEA in the *ACE Final Evaluator Report Guidelines*. It is noted, however, that the number of days absent does not take into account the number of days enrolled. Across AISD, it was found that in 2013–2014, there was a negative correlation between the number of days students were enrolled and their absenteeism rate ( $r=-.29$ ,  $p<.0001$ ), i.e., students who are enrolled fewer days of the school year are absent for a greater proportion of those days. An absence or attendance rate, which takes into account the days enrolled, would be a better measure of student engagement.

Table 9. Average Absent Days of Afterschool Center on Education (ACE) Participants, by School Year

Mean days absent	Participation status					
	Regular participants		Days absent change	Non-regular participants		Days absent change
Attendance	2012–2013	2013–2014		2012–2013	2013–2014	
Ann Richards	3.18	3.73	0.55	4.54	5.16	0.61
Burnet	6.49	7.01	0.52	6.90	9.18	2.29
Cook	5.95	5.30	-0.65	5.33	4.97	-0.36
Lanier	8.82	11.46	2.64	11.19	12.33	1.14
McBee	4.04	5.03	0.99	3.33	3.00	-0.33
Webb	4.81	6.53	1.73	7.17	8.93	1.76
Wooldridge	5.04	6.01	0.97	4.26	4.98	0.71

Source. ACE Austin participant records for 2013–2014; AISD student attendance records.

Note. Attendance was calculated for students who were enrolled at ACE Austin campuses during the 2012–2013 and 2013–2014 school years.

#### DISCIPLINE OUTCOME

The percentage of students' mandatory and discretionary discipline removals were compared between school year 2012–2013 and 2013–2014.

Discipline outcomes were mostly positive for McBee, Webb, and Wooldridge campuses with program participants experiencing a decrease in most discipline referral types. Regular participants at Ann Richards had better discipline outcomes (mandatory and discretionary) compared to non-regular participants. Discipline outcomes for program participants were mostly negative for Burnet and Cook campuses.

Table 10. Mandatory and Discretionary Discipline Removals of Afterschool Center on Education (ACE) Austin Participants, by School Year

Campus	Type of Discipline removal	Regular participants		Discipline removal change	Non-regular participants		Discipline removal change
		2012–2013	2013–2014		2012–2013	2013–2014	
Ann Richards	Mandatory	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.01
	Discretionary	0.02	0.01	-0.01	0.02	0.03	0.01
Burnet	Mandatory	0.16	0.11	-0.05	0.06	0.08	0.02
	Discretionary	1.52	1.70	0.18	1.56	3.03	1.47
Cook	Mandatory	0.00	0.01	0.01	0.03	0.00	-0.03
	Discretionary	0.07	0.19	0.12	0.00	0.13	0.13
Lanier	Mandatory	0.04	0.08	0.04	0.07	0.05	-0.02
	Discretionary	1.96	1.62	-0.34	1.39	0.79	-0.60
McBee	Mandatory	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
	Discretionary	0.02	0.09	0.07	0.00	0.00	0.00
Webb	Mandatory	0.06	0.05	-0.01	0.01	0.05	0.04
	Discretionary	0.82	1.13	0.31	0.99	0.82	-0.17
Wooldridge	Mandatory	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
	Discretionary	0.09	0.01	-0.08	0.02	0.00	-0.02

Source. ACE Austin participant records for 2013–2014; AISD student discipline records (ADIS)

Note. Discipline removals refer to only those discipline offenses for which the resulting disciplinary action was removal from the classroom (e.g., out-of-school suspension, placement in disciplinary alternative education program [DAEP]). All mandatory discipline offenses result in removal from campus. Discretionary removals are those offenses that do not require a removal by law.

## PROGRAM IMPACTS

Overall results were mostly mixed on all three outcome goals for the Cycle 7 BGCA campuses. None of the seven Cycle 7 BGCA campuses met all three outcome goals- increased academic achievement, decreased school-day absences, and decreased disciplinary referrals from year to year. Program participants (regular and non-regular) at Webb middle school met both academic (increased GPA and course completion percentages) and discipline goals (decreased mandatory and discretionary referrals over time). Only program participants at Cook elementary school met attendance outcomes (decreased school-day absences over time). At Ann Richards, regular participants met academic achievement and discipline goals while non-regular participants did not.

Some of the programmatic aspects that may have contributed to better academic and discipline outcomes at Webb middle school were that staff tested out different strategies to identify which ones would be most effective in drawing students to the academic programs (such as, times offered, the physical space a program was offered in, and the resources provided which students could take advantage of). Further, a larger number of enrichment activities (compared to the other three categories) were offered in order to promote student participation in the program. The program served secondary students, and because students at that age range were free to leave the program if they wished to do so, programs offered needed to be fun, engaging, and enticing. Through a large number of enrichment activities the program staff aimed to draw students into the program, give them a safe place to be and belong, and encourage them to build relationships with the staff. The longer students were in the program, the more staff was able to focus on the intermediate outcomes of increased school-day attendance, improved academic performance, improved behavior, grade level promotion and an increased sense of belonging.

At Cook elementary school where program participants met the attendance goal, student surveys were conducted and, after the fall term, program staff examined the survey data and created classes that would address student's requests and would maintain, if not increase, participation and retention. Program staff also used data in order to keep track of the fluctuation of students between classes, if there was low participation, lesson plans were modified using feedback from the students in order to make the activity more entertaining for them.

## EVALUATOR COMMENTARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

**Finding 1.** Program participants (regular and non-regular) at Burnet and Webb, and regular participants at Ann Richards experienced an increase in mean GPA in 2013–2014 when compared to 2012–2013. Program participants at Cook, Lanier, McBee, and Wooldridge experienced a decrease in year to year mean GPA in most of the core subject areas.

Program participants (regular and non-regular) at Cook, McBee, Webb, and Wooldridge had greater course completion percentages in 2013–2014 when compared to 2012–2013. In addition, only regular program participants at Ann Richards had better course completion percentages over time while course completion percentages for non-regular participants declined at this campus. Regular and non-regular program participants had lower course completion percentages at Burnet and Lanier in 2013–2014 when compared to the previous year.

**Recommendation 1.** Given the mixed results for ACE Austin participants related to GPA and course completion rates, it is recommended that academic-related afterschool programs implement changes to better align with program goals, particularly Lanier middle school where goals were not met on either outcome. In addition, identifying the specific programs and strategies used to address academic issues, specifically, at Webb middle school, where the goal was met for both academic outcomes, would be useful in understanding what may have contributed to this finding in order to influence the adoption of similar approaches at other campuses as well.

**Finding 2.** Attendance outcomes were not met at most of the Cycle 7 BGCA campuses. Program participants (regular and non-regular) experienced an increase in school-day absences from one year to the next at all Cycle 7 BGCA campuses except for Cook elementary school.

**Recommendation 2.** To meet attendance outcome goals at these campuses a closer examination of and modification to program activities and components designed to address attendance issues is warranted. The mean number of school days absent was reported as required by TEA in the *ACE Final Evaluator Report Guidelines*. It is noted, however, that the number of days absent does not take into account the number of days enrolled. Across AISD, it was found that in 2013–2014, there was a negative correlation between the number of days students were enrolled and their absenteeism rate ( $r=-.29$ ,  $p<.0001$ ), i.e., students who are enrolled fewer days of the school year are absent for a greater proportion of those days. An absence or attendance rate, which takes into account the days enrolled, would be a better measure of student engagement.

**Finding 3.** Discipline outcomes were mostly positive for McBee, Webb, and Wooldridge campuses with program participants experiencing a decrease in most discipline referral types. Regular participants at Ann Richards had better discipline outcomes (mandatory and discretionary) compared to non-regular

participants. Discipline outcomes for program participants were mostly negative for Burnet and Cook campuses.

**Recommendation 3.** Refinement to components that are effective should be ongoing so that they may continue to meet the needs of students at campuses where the discipline outcome goal was met. Campuses where disciplinary goals were not met could be due to the fact that students who already have a history of high disciplinary issues are specifically targeted and therefore the program would have difficulty in demonstrating a significant reduction in referrals over the course of program participation. In these cases, the specific program goals need to be examined in order to better understand the desired outcomes for these students.

## NEXT STEPS

Based on the evaluators' recommendations and commentary provided by the site coordinators in the Cycle 7 BGCA center-level reports, the following next steps are recommended to help the Cycle 7 BGCA campuses further improve the ACE program to meet the needs of students and parents.

- **Training:** Sufficient training opportunities should be provided to afterschool program teachers throughout the course of the school year. In addition, opportunities should be provided for school-day teachers and afterschool teachers to train together and work collaboratively in providing effective afterschool services and activities.
- **Identifying needs and aligning program goals to these needs:** Overall program activities at each campus should be aligned with students' needs and interests. For example, applying Socio-Emotional Learning (SEL) curriculum to programs aimed at addressing discipline issues. This will help achieve better program specific outcomes and help increase program attendance.

To accomplish this, site coordinators along with afterschool teachers at each campus should conduct a needs assessment at the beginning of the school year. In addition, feedback from parents and students should be solicited, and focus groups should be conducted with afterschool teachers, parents, students, site coordinators, and program directors to help determine the appropriate services for students at each campus.

- **Program implementation fidelity:** To successfully meet the needs of students participating in the afterschool program and achieve outcome goals, it is crucial that appropriate curricula, activities and services of the program are implemented consistently and accurately. Furthermore, program implementation fidelity should be monitored and measured at regular intervals by site coordinators, program directors, and the program evaluators and requisite modifications should be made if and when issues of fidelity are identified.

## EVALUATOR INFORMATION

Evaluation of the ACE Austin program for the Cycle 7 campuses served by BGCA was conducted by a team of evaluators from the Research and Evaluation department at Austin Independent School District. The evaluators' scope of work is detailed below:

- Meet with the project director to review TEA's evaluation requirements and create an evaluation plan. Also, determine what additional data, if any, are going to be collected in addition to data collected through TX21st and state-level evaluation.
- Meet with the project director and site coordinators to develop the center logic models; review the minimum evaluation questions outlined in the *Texas ACE Independent Evaluation Guide 2013-2014*; and add additional evaluation questions as desired.
- Meet with program staff routinely Provide support to program staff for the two required interim reports based on the evaluation questions and other findings from ongoing internal monitoring processes.
- Help project directors and site coordinators use data to plan professional development, hire staff with different skills and interests, link personnel evaluation with internal monitoring results.
- Conduct unstructured or structured observations of program activities to assess fidelity of program implementation and recommend modifications when necessary.
- Assist centers in administering student, parent, and teacher surveys.
- Provide data for the fall, spring, and year end reports due to TEA.
- Collect program participation information, analyze data, and write the final annual evaluation reports (grant and center level). These reports will answer research questions stipulated in the grant proposals and link student outcomes to program objectives.

The total cost of evaluation allocated for the thirteen centers served by BGCA across Cycles 7 & 8 in 2013-2014 was \$39,000.

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- Westmoreland, H. (2009). Family involvement across learning settings. *Family Involvement Network of Educators (FINE) Newsletter*, 1(3). Retrieved from <http://www.hfrp.org/family-involvement/publications-resources/family-involvement-across-learning-settings>

## APPENDICES

### Appendix A. Parent Survey

A parent survey was administered to ACE program participants to obtain parents' feedback on program implementation and impacts on student academic achievement and behaviors. A total of 161 parents of students who participated in Boys & Girls Club Austin cycle 7 programs responded to the survey. Results of the parent survey indicated that family nights/performances (94%) received most parent attendance in the past year, followed by English as a second language (ESL; 21%) and coffee with principal (24%) (Table 11). Respondents recommended the ACE program offer the following classes: family nights/performances (92%) and English as a second language (14%) again next year.

Table 11. Percentage of Parents Indicating That They Participated in Afterschool Centers on Education (ACE) Classes or Events, by Events/Activity Type

	%
Coffee with principal	9%
English as a second language (ESL)	21%
Family nights/performances	94%
Literacy	7%
Love and logic	1%
Social and emotional learning	1%
Strengthening families	2%
Zumba	4%

Source. ACE Austin Parent Survey 2014.

When asked about the qualities of the ACE program that they considered important, parent respondents checked the following areas most often: Homework help (78%), safe environment (74%), and the program was free of charge (63%).

Table 12. Percentage of Parents Indicating That Individual Qualities of the Afterschool Centers on Education (ACE) Program Were Important

	%
My child is in a safe environment afterschool	74%
Classes that encourage creativity	45%
Participation in sports and other physical activity	43%
Opportunity to have fun	40%
It's free of charge	63%
Free summer camp	38%
Fieldtrips	33%
Homework help	88%

Source. ACE Austin Parent Survey 2014.

Almost all (99% and 98%, respectively) of parent respondents indicated that the instructor

cared about their individual progress and that they were more connected to the school community as a result of attending these classes. All parent respondents reported that they knew whom to contact when they had questions about the ACE program. All parent survey respondents also reported that their children were doing better in school because of the after-school program. All of them believed that their children enjoyed the time in the afterschool program.

**Appendix B. Cycle 7 BGCA Center Final Reports**

# AUSTIN INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

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