

Afterschool Centers on Education

Cycle 8 Boys and Girls Club of the Greater Austin Area

Final Report 2015–2016



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Afterschool Centers on Education (ACE) is the program administered through the Texas Education Agency (TEA) for the federally funded 21st 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 the 921 program participants served by Cycle 8, BGCAA, during the 2015–2016 school year from a total of six AISD campuses: Garcia Young Men’s Leadership Academy (YMLA), Jordan elementary school, LBJ high school, Overton elementary school, Sims elementary school, Walnut Creek elementary school.

Findings and Recommendations

Overall, results were mostly mixed on all three outcome goals for the Cycle 8 BGCA campuses. None of the seven Cycle 8 BGCA campuses met all three outcome goals- increased academic achievement, decreased school-day absences, and decreased disciplinary referrals from year to year.

Significant academic achievement outcome results were mixed for all the Cycle 8 BGCAA campuses. Program participants (regular and non-regular) at Garcia YMLA experienced a significant increase in mean GPA in Math and Science in 2015–2106 when compared to the previous year. Regular participants at Overton and Sims experienced a significant decline in mean GPA for all four subject areas from 2014–2105 to 2015–2106. Regular participants at Walnut Creek experienced a significant increase in course completion rates from 2014–2105 to 2015–2106. However, course completion rates for program participants (regular and non-regular) at Garcia YMLA and regular participants at Overton significantly declined over time.

Attendance outcomes were mostly positive for Cycle 8 BGCAA campuses. Regular participants at Jordan experienced a significant decrease in school-day absences from 2014–2105 to 2015–2106 while absences significantly increased from year-to-year for regular participants at LBJ high school

Discipline outcomes were positive for program participants (regular and non-regular) at Sims. Non-regular participants at Overton did not have discipline removals (discretionary or mandatory) in either school year. Discretionary discipline removals significantly increased for regular participants at Garcia YMLA from 2014–2105 to 2015–2106.

Across all Cycle 8 BGCAA campuses, program participants who attended the program more (i.e., 80% or more of the time) experienced better academic, attendance, and discipline outcomes compared to participants who attended less frequently.

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 Overton elementary school where goals were not met on either outcome.

Recommendation 2. In order to meet attendance outcome goals at these campuses a closer examination and modification of program activities and components designed to address attendance issues is warranted. Identifying strategies implemented to address attendance issues at Jordan and Overton elementary schools, where the goal was met, could prove useful in understanding how attendance related challenges could be handled at other campuses.

Recommendation 3. Refinement of 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.

Recommendation 4. This finding underscores the importance for students to attend the afterschool programs on a regular basis in order to reap the benefits of the classes and activities being offered. Program providers should identify and implement appropriate retention strategies such as incentives, point reward systems, better snacks/food, which would increase student engagement and improve attendance.

Next Steps

Based on the evaluators' recommendations and commentary provided by the site coordinators in the Cycle 8 BGCAA center-level reports, the following next steps are recommended to help the Cycle 8 BGCAA 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. Trainings should focus on topics such as program implementation fidelity, developing logic models, and the Youth Program Quality Model (YPQ). 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, 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 curriculum, activities and services of the program are implemented consistently and accurately as they are supposed to be. In particular issues with implementing a program for the first time, as is the case for the Cycle 8 AISD campuses, should be identified so that appropriate modifications and or additions can be made for the upcoming school year. These issues could relate to recruitment, marketing, resource allotment, staff training, and scope and appropriateness of activities being offered.

Furthermore, program implementation fidelity should be monitored and measured at regular intervals by site coordinators, program directors and the program evaluator and requisite modifications should be made if and when issues of fidelity are identified.

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21st CCLC Core Components

Introduction and Purpose of Program

Afterschool Centers on Education (ACE) is the program administered through the Texas Education Agency (TEA) for the federally funded 21st 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 (OST) academic assistance, enrichment, family and parental support, and college and workforce readiness activities. Building on its existing infrastructure of evidence-based OST activities and partnerships, ACE Austin collaborates with a range of partners including Boys & Girls Clubs of the Austin Area (BGCAA), 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 21st CCLC core component areas: academic assistance, enrichment, family engagement, and college and workforce readiness/awareness.

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

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.

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.

21st CCLC Core Components

This report examines outcomes for the 921 program participants served by Cycle 8, BGCAA, during the 2015–2016 school year from a total of six AISD campuses- Garcia Young Men’s Leadership Academy (YMLA), Jordan elementary school, LBJ high school, Overton elementary school, Sims elementary school, Walnut Creek elementary school.

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.

College and workforce

readiness/awareness. ACE Austin implemented the Get Ready for College program with 5th 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.

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 operation; (b) staying on track (ensuring that the program stayed focused on the goals, objectives, strategies, and outcomes; (c) efficiency (streamlining service delivery, which helped lower the cost of services; (d) accountability (producing evidence of program effects; and (e) sustainability (providing evidence or effectiveness to all stakeholders).

The ACE Austin program used TEA Security Environment (TEASE), the Texas ACE web-based tracking system, to track student 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 2014–2015 and 2015–2016. 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

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.

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 (Table 1). The mean GPAs were calculated for coursework completed during the year, and the percentage of students who passed courses was also calculated.

For all three school outcomes, additional analyses were conducted to determine if program participants' outcomes significantly improved over time, and, based on their level of program participation. Program participants' outcomes were compared for school years 2014–2015 and 2015–2016. Participation level was categorized based on the percentage of time students attended the afterschool program (e.g., 10%, 40%, and 70% of the time).

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

Program objective	Measurement	Data source
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) Course completion	Program participation file, AISD student grades records Program participation file, AISD student grades records

Source. AISD Afterschool Program records

Program Design and Support Strategy

PROGRAM DESIGN

The BGCAA administrators reviewed each school's test results and student data to determine what types of afterschool 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.

The family engagement specialist worked closely with site directors and school-day parent support specialists to help identify parental needs and identify steps to meet those needs. Marketing for the program was through flyers, back-to-school nights, registration nights, lunches, and meetings with school administration.

Data from TEA's *Academic Performance Report* (TAPR) 2014–2015 indicated that the percentage of students who were low SES (i.e., qualified to receive free or reduced price lunch), considered at risk of dropping out of school were above district and state averages at all six Cycle 8 BGCAA campuses. The percentage of students classified as English language learners was above district and state averages at four of the six Cycle 8 BGCAA campuses (Table 2).

Table 2. Description of Needs

School	Percentage low socioeconomic	Percentage at risk	Percentage limited English proficient
Garcia	96%	74%	39%
Jordan	97%	80%	62%
LBJ	84%	67%	17%
Overton	96%	77%	56%
Sims	95%	61%	27%
Walnut Creek	92%	84%	68%
AISD	60%	53%	28%
State	59%	51%	18%

Source: 2014–2015 Texas Education Agency's *Academic Performance Report*.

Recruitment of academically case-managed youth and the targeted-intervention youth, who were 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 grant requirement and reporting trainings. Site directors attended 'Welcome back to school' trainings at the beginning of the year to understand and align with expectations for the school day. The project director conducted two monthly observations (one formal, one informal) at each site to provide feedback about the program. This feedback helped the site directors decide what trainings to attend or what trainings to offer staff.

Logic Model

Site coordinators at all six Cycle 8 BGCAA schools in conjunction with the project directors developed a logic model to guide the implementation of the ACE program at their campus. The model served as a tool for documenting programmatic changes over time. The logic model of the ACE program at each Cycle 8 BGCAA 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, 2015-2106

Cycle 8, BGCAA campuses	Regular participants		Non-regular participants		Non-participants		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Garcia YMLA	125	31%	100	25%	172	43%	397	100%
Jordan	132	20%	34	5%	496	75%	662	100%
LBJ	97	11%	20	2%	770	87%	887	100%
Overton	141	20%	14	2%	551	78%	706	100%
Sims	101	36%	8	3%	173	61%	282	100%
Walnut Creek	128	21%	21	3%	456	75%	605	100%
Total Cycle 8 - BGCAA	724	20%	197	6%	2,618	74%	3,539	100%

Source. ACE Austin participant records for 2015–2016; AISD student records.

Regular participants (i.e., attended the afterschool program for 30 or more days) constituted the majority of program participants all Cycle 8 campuses. At all of the Cycle 8 BGCAA campuses the overall percentage of program participants was 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 student's 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.

In addition, 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, 2015–2016

Cycle 8, BGCAA campuses and participation level		Gender		
		Regular participants (n = 724)	Non-regular participants (n = 197)	Non-participants (n = 2,618)
Garcia YMLA	Female	0%	0%	0%
	Male	100%	100%	100%
Jordan	Female	53%	62%	49%
	Male	47%	38%	51%
LBJ	Female	54%	40%	48%
	Male	46%	60%	52%
Overton	Female	48%	57%	48%
	Male	52%	43%	52%
Sims	Female	56%	50%	49%
	Male	44%	50%	51%
Walnut Creek	Female	51%	38%	48%
	Male	49%	62%	52%

Source. ACE Austin participant records for 2015–2016; AISD student records.

Table 5. Student Ethnicity, by Campus and Afterschool Centers on Education (ACE) Austin Participation Status, 2015–2016

Cycle 8, BGCAA 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	
Garcia YMLA	Regular participants	-	1%	46%	48%	-	1%	4%
	Non-regular participants	-	3%	25%	72%	-	-	-
	Non-participants	-	3%	17%	76%	-	2%	2%
Jordan	Regular participants	-	-	17%	80%	-	1%	2%
	Non-regular participants	-	-	23%	76%	-	-	-
	Non-participants	-	-	18%	79%	-	2%	1%
LBJ	Regular participants	-	-	80%	14%	-	5%	-
	Non-regular participants	-	5%	65%	25%	-	5%	-
	Non-participants	-	-	35%	62%	-	1%	2%
Overton	Regular participants	-	-	13%	86%	-	-	-
	Non-regular participants	-	-	36%	64%	-	-	-
	Non-participants	-	-	27%	71%	-	2%	2%
Sims	Regular participants	-	-	32%	62%	-	2%	4%
	Non-regular participants	-	-	-	100%	-	-	-
	Non-participants	-	-	42%	53%	-	-	5%
Walnut Creek	Regular participants	-	1%	19%	76%	-	1%	1%
	Non-regular participants	-	-	9%	67%	-	9%	14%
	Non-participants	-	4%	13%	75%	-	1%	7%

Source. ACE Austin participant records for 2015–2016; AISD student records.

Table 6. Student Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Status, by Campus and Afterschool Centers on Education (ACE) Austin Participation Status, 2015–2016

Cycle 8, BGCAA campuses and participation level		LEP status
Garcia YMLA	Regular participants	26%
	Non-regular participants	40%
	Non-participants	42%
Jordan	Regular participants	63%
	Non-regular participants	59%
	Non-participants	60%
LBJ	Regular participants	5%
	Non-regular participants	0%
	Non-participants	17%
Overton	Regular participants	70%
	Non-regular participants	57%
	Non-participants	58%
Sims	Regular participants	41%
	Non-regular participants	67%
	Non-participants	22%
Walnut Creek	Regular participants	61%
	Non-regular participants	56%
	Non-participants	69%

Source. ACE Austin participant records for 2015–2016; AISD student records.

Program Intermediate Outcomes

ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT OUTCOME

Significant academic achievement outcome results were mixed for all the Cycle 8 BGCAA campuses (Tables 7 and 8). Program participants (regular and non-regular) at Garcia YMLA experienced a significant increase in mean GPA in Math and Science in 2015-2016 when compared to the previous year. Regular participants at Overton and Sims experienced a significant decline in mean GPA for all four subject areas from 2014-2015 to 2015-2016.

Regular participants at Walnut Creek experienced a significant increase in course completion rates from 2014-2015 to 2015-2016. However, course completion rates for program participants (regular and non-regular) at Garcia YMLA and regular participants at Overton significantly declined over time.

Cycle 8 BGCCA participants who participated in the program at least 80% or more of the time, regardless of campus of participation, had significantly higher grade averages in all four subject areas, as well as higher course passing rates (Figures 1 and 2).

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

Campus	Core subject GPA	Participation status					
		Regular participants			Non-regular participants		
		2014-2015	2015-2016	GPA change	2014-2015	2015-2016	GPA change
Garcia YMLA	Reading	2.11	2.20	0.08	2.01	2.17	0.08
	Math	2.08	2.21	0.12↑	1.96	2.20	0.23↑
	Science	2.16	2.49	0.33↑	2.09	2.42	0.33↑
	Social studies	2.49	2.27	-0.21↓	2.40	2.14	-0.26↓
Jordan	Reading	2.47	2.36	-0.11	2.45	2.37	-0.07
	Math	2.35	2.43	0.07	2.83	2.38	0.10
	Science	2.88	2.88	0.00	2.88	2.82	-0.06
	Social studies	3.03	2.87	-0.16↓	3.15	3.01	-0.13
LBJ	Reading	2.08	2.22	0.13	2.24	2.59	0.35
	Math	1.84	1.73	-0.10↓	2.18	2.09	-0.09
	Science	1.74	2.06	0.32↑	2.08	2.41	0.33
	Social studies	1.87	1.96	0.09	2.07	2.89	0.81
Overton	Reading	2.75	2.46	-0.28↓	2.54	2.46	-0.07
	Math	2.60	2.24	-0.36↓	2.62	2.21	-0.41
	Science	2.97	2.55	-0.41↓	3.08	2.67	-0.40
	Social studies	3.02	2.85	-0.17↓	2.95	2.67	-0.27

Campus	Core subject GPA	Participation status					
		Regular participants			Non-regular participants		
		2014–2015	2015–2016	GPA change	2014–2015	2015–2016	GPA change
Sims	Reading	2.62	2.30	-0.32↓	1.96	2.14	0.17
	Math	2.69	2.05	-0.63↓	2.21	1.78	-0.42
	Science	3.17	2.57	-0.59↓	2.42	2.35	-0.07
	Social studies	3.23	2.88	-0.35↓	2.57	2.57	0.00
Walnut Creek	Reading	2.52	2.54	0.01	2.61	2.00	-0.61
	Math	2.64	2.39	-0.24↓	2.76	2.33	-0.42
	Science	3.08	2.96	-0.12	2.97	3.06	0.09
	Social studies	3.23	3.28	0.04	3.13	3.30	0.16

Source. ACE Austin participant records for 2015–2016; AISD student records (TEAMS_GRDS)

Note. Arrows indicate statistically meaningful changes from year to year ($p \leq 0.05$)

Figure 1.

ACE students who participated in the program 80% or more of the time had significantly higher grade averages in all four subject areas than did students who participated for less.

Participants did not demonstrate improved year-to-year grades in any of the four subject areas, regardless of participation level.

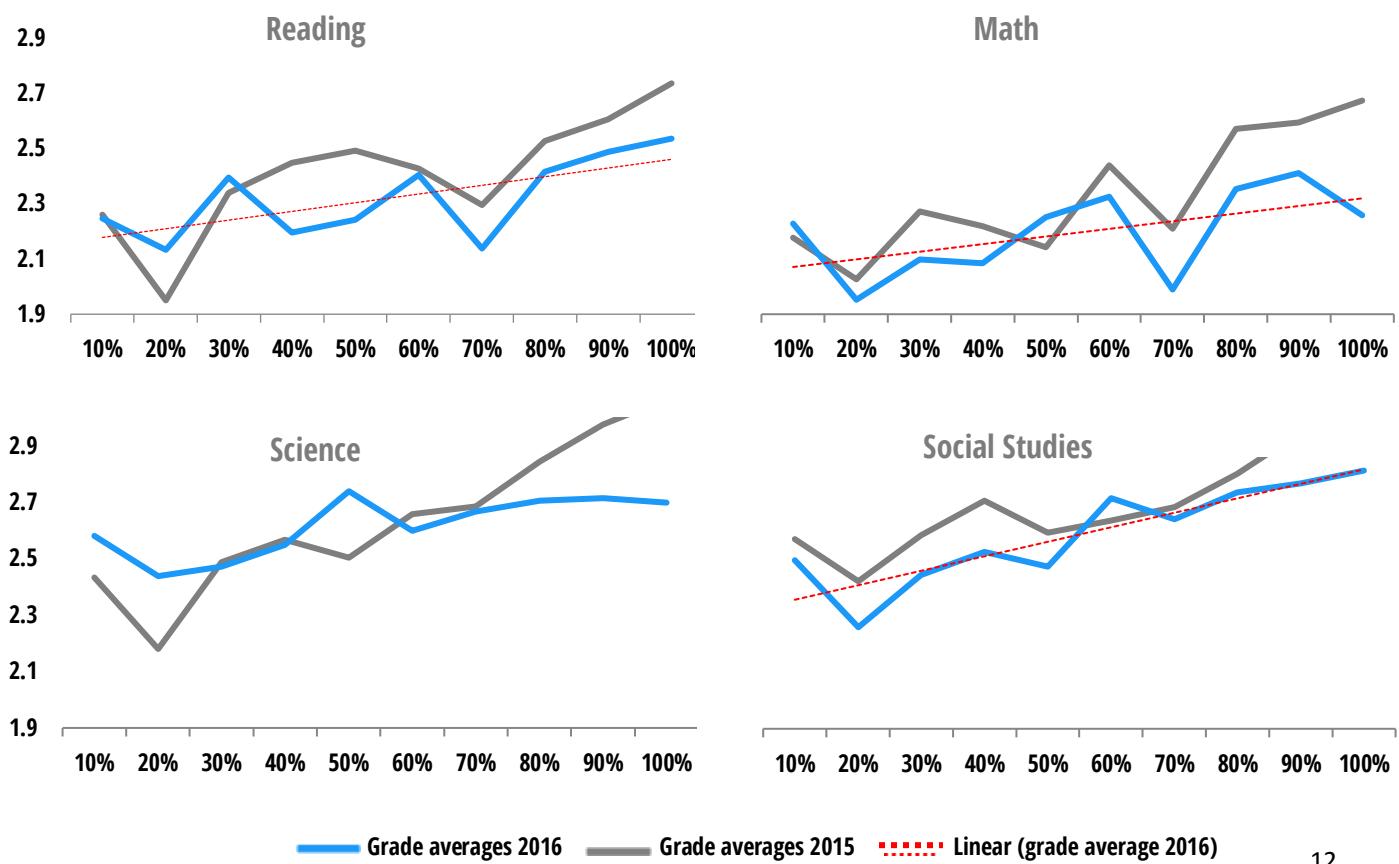


Table 8. Afterschool Center on Education (ACE) Participants' Course Completion, by School Year

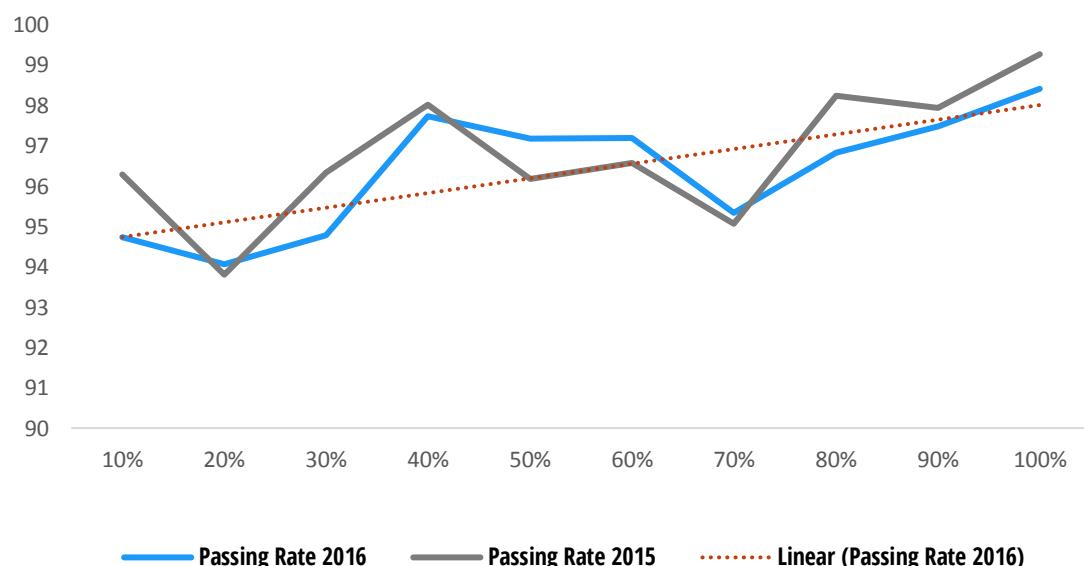
Campus	Course pass percentage					
	Regular participants		Course pass percentage point change	Non-regular participants		
	2014–2015	2015–2016		2014–2015	2015–2016	Course pass percentage point change
Garcia YMLA	97.68	95.92	-1.76↓	97.34	94.55	-2.79↓
Jordan	95.32	96.79	1.47	96.53	95.88	-0.65
LBJ	92.93	92.01	-0.92	93.53	97.06	3.53
Overton	98.52	96.41	-2.11↓	99.18	96.64	-2.54
Sims	98.77	98.70	-0.07	89.43	97.01	7.58
Walnut Creek	97.57	98.48	1.27↑	98.05	92.78	-5.27

Source. ACE Austin participant records for 2015–2016; AISD student records (TEAMS_GRDS).

Note. Arrows indicate statistically meaningful changes from year to year ($p \leq 0.05$).

Figure 2.

ACE students who participated in the program between 80% or more of the time had significantly higher course passing rates than did students who participated for less.



ATTENDANCE OUTCOME

Attendance outcomes were mostly positive for Cycle 8 BGCNA campuses. Regular participants at Jordan experienced a significant decrease in school-day absences from 2014-2015 to 2015-2016 while absences significantly increased from year-to-year for regular participants at LBJ high school (Table 9). Regardless of campus of participation, program participants who attended the program 90% or more of the time had higher school-day attendance rates compared to those who came to the program less frequently (Figure 3).

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

Mean days absent	Participation status					
	Regular participants		Non-regular participants			Days absent change
	2014–2015	2015–2016	Days absent change	2014–2015	2015–2016	
Garcia YMLA	5.97	6.77	0.79	7.39	7.04	-0.35
Jordan	6.06	4.50	-1.56↓	7.94	5.82	-2.11
LBJ	10.60	12.90	2.27↑	11.30	9.63	-1.65
Overton	4.93	4.67	-0.26	10.80	10.40	-0.39
Sims	5.10	5.71	0.60	15.00	14.00	-0.63
Walnut Creek	5.23	4.66	-0.56	5.32	6.24	0.92

Source. ACE Austin participant records for 2015–2016; AISD student attendance records.

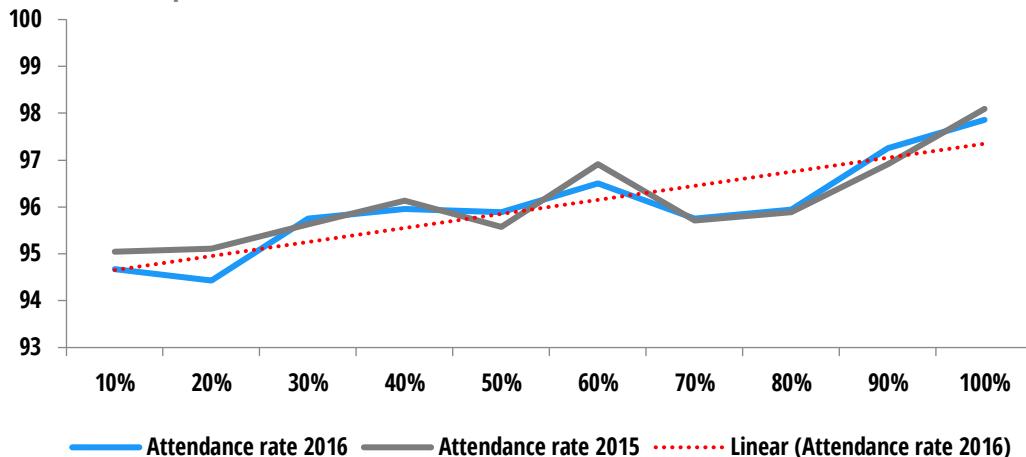
Note. Attendance was calculated for students who were enrolled at ACE Austin campuses during the 2014–2015 & 2015–2016 school years.

Note. Arrows indicate statistically meaningful changes from year to year ($p \leq 0.05$)

Figure 3.

ACE students who participated in the program more number of days had significantly better school-day attendance rates than did students who participated fewer days.

Students who participated in the program 70% or more of the time had better school-day attendance rates in 2015–2016 compared to 2014–2015.



DISCIPLINE OUTCOME

Discipline outcomes were positive for program participants (regular and non-regular) at Sims. Non-regular participants at Overton did not have discipline removals (discretionary or mandatory) in either school year. Discretionary discipline removals significantly increased for regular participants at Garcia YMLA from 2014-2015 to 2015-2016. Discipline outcomes were mixed at the remaining three Cycle 8 BGCAA campuses (Table 10).

Frequency of program participation had a significant impact on discipline removals. Participants who attended the program 80% or more of the time had fewer discipline removals compared to participants who attended the program less (Figure 4).

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			Non-regular participants		
		2014-2015	2015-2016	Discipline removal change	2014-2015	2015-2016	Discipline removal change
Garcia YMLA	Mandatory	0.05	0.03	-0.02	0.01	0.03	0.02
	Discretionary	1.15	1.92	0.77↑	1.10	1.63	0.53
Jordan	Mandatory	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.03	0.03
	Discretionary	0.16	0.14	-0.02	0.15	0.18	0.60
LBJ	Mandatory	0.01	0.04	0.03	0.05	0.05	0.00
	Discretionary	0.89	0.93	0.04	1.25	1.85	0.60
Overton	Mandatory	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
	Discretionary	0.03	0.08	0.05	0.00	0.00	0.00
Sims	Mandatory	0.01	0.00	-0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00
	Discretionary	0.14	0.03	-0.11	0.25	0.25	0.00
Walnut Creek	Mandatory	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
	Discretionary	0.09	0.13	0.04	0.00	0.19	0.19

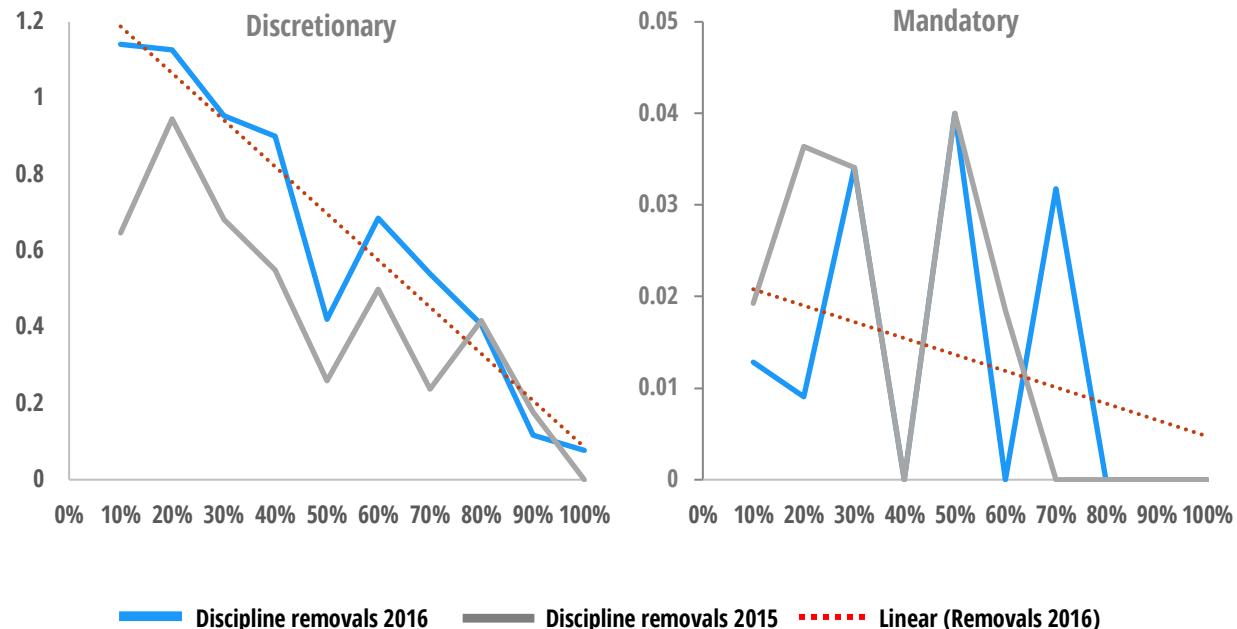
Source. ACE Austin participant records for 2015–2016; AISD student discipline records (ADIS)

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.

Note. Arrows indicate statistically meaningful changes from year to year ($p \leq 0.05$)

Figure 4.

Program participation had a significant impact on decline in discretionary and mandatory referrals.
ACE participants who participated in the program 80% or more of the time had fewer discipline referrals (discretionary & mandatory) than did students who participated fewer days.



Program Impacts

Overall results were mostly mixed on all three outcome goals for the Cycle 8 BGCAs campuses. None of the six Cycle 8 BGCAs campuses met all three outcome goals- increased academic achievement, decreased school-day absences, and decreased disciplinary referrals from year to year. Only regular participants at Garcia YMLA experienced a significant increase in mean GPA in Math and Science in 2015-2016 when compared to the previous year. Attendance outcomes were mostly positive for Cycle 8 BGCAs campuses. Regular participants at Jordan experienced a significant decrease in school-day absences from 2014-2015 to 2015-2016 while absences significantly increased from year-to-year for regular participants at LBJ high school. Discipline outcomes were positive for program participants (regular and non-regular) at Sims. Discretionary discipline removals significantly increased for regular participants at Garcia YMLA from 2014-2015 to 2015-2016.

Regardless of campus of participation, students who attended after school program 80% to 90% or more of the time experienced significantly better results on all three school outcomes: academic achievement, attendance, and discipline.

All afterschool classes & activities offered by BGCAs at Garcia YMLA were aligned with TEA, ACE, and YPQ curricula. Modifications were made for needs of specific students. Participants' academics, and behavior were monitored and teacher input was sought. Student and parent surveys were also conducted to obtain feedback which was then incorporated into program implementation. Additionally, incentives were provided to increase participation and student academic motivation.

Evaluator Commentary and Recommendations

Significant academic achievement outcome results were mixed for all the Cycle 8 BGCAs campuses. Program participants (regular and non-regular) at Garcia YMLA experienced a significant increase in mean GPA in Math and Science in 2015-2016 when compared to the previous year. Regular participants at Overton and Sims experienced a significant decline in mean GPA for all four subject areas from 2014-2015 to 2015-2016. Regular participants at Walnut Creek experienced a significant increase in course completion rates from 2014-2015 to 2015-2016. However, course completion rates for program participants (regular and non-regular) at Garcia YMLA and regular participants at Overton significantly declined over time.

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 Overton elementary school where goals were not met on either outcome.

Attendance outcomes were mostly positive for Cycle 8 BGCAA campuses. Regular participants at Jordan experienced a significant decrease in school-day absences from 2014-2015 to 2015-2016 while absences significantly increased from year-to-year for regular participants at LBJ high school

In order to meet attendance outcome goals at these campuses a closer examination and modification of program activities and components designed to address attendance issues is warranted. Identifying strategies implemented to address attendance issues at Jordan and Overton elementary schools, where the goal was met, could prove useful in understanding how attendance related challenges could be handled at other campuses.

Discipline outcomes were positive for program participants (regular and non-regular) at Sims. Non-regular participants at Overton did not have discipline removals (discretionary or mandatory) in either school year. Discretionary discipline removals significantly increased for regular participants at Garcia YMLA from 2014-2015 to 2015-2016.

Refinement of 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.

Across all Cycle 8 BGCAA campuses, program participants who attended the program more (i.e., 80% or more of the time) experienced better academic, attendance, and discipline outcomes compared to participants who attended less frequently.

This finding underscores the importance for students to attend the afterschool programs on a regular basis in order to reap the benefits of the classes and activities being offered. Program providers should identify and implement appropriate retention strategies such as incentives, point reward systems, better snacks/food, which would increase student engagement and improve attendance.

Next Steps

Based on the evaluators' recommendations and commentary provided by the site coordinators in the Cycle 8 BGCAA center-level reports, the following next steps are recommended to help the Cycle 8 BGCAA 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. Trainings should focus on topics such as program implementation fidelity, developing logic models, and the Youth Program Quality Model (YPQ). In addition, opportunities should be provided for school-day teachers and afterschool teachers to train together and work collaboratively to

provide 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 (e.g., applying Socio-Emotional Learning 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, 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 curriculum, activities and services of the program are implemented consistently and accurately as they are supposed to be. In particular issues with implementing a program for the first time, as is the case for the Cycle 8 AISD campuses, should be identified so that appropriate modifications and or additions can be made for the upcoming school year. These issues could relate to recruitment, marketing, resource allotment, staff training, and scope and appropriateness of activities being offered.

Furthermore, program implementation fidelity should be monitored and measured at regular intervals by site coordinators, program directors and the program evaluator 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 8 campuses served by BGCAA was conducted by a team of evaluators from DRE at AISD. The evaluators' scope of work is detailed as follows:

- Meet with the project director to review TEA's evaluation requirements and create an evaluation plan; determine what additional data, if any, are going to be collected in addition to data collected through 21st CCLC 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 2015–2016*; 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 activities, hire staff with different skills and interests, and link personnel evaluation with internal monitoring results
- Conduct unstructured or structured observations of program activities to assess the fidelity of program implementation and recommend modifications, when necessary
- Assist centers in administering student and parent surveys
- Conduct focus groups with afterschool program participants
- 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), which will answer research questions stipulated in the grant proposals and link student outcomes to program objectives

The total cost of evaluation allocated for the 13 centers served by BGCAA across two Cycles (i.e., 7 and 8 in 2015–2016) was \$52,000.

APPENDIX A

BGCAA Cycle 8 Parent Survey

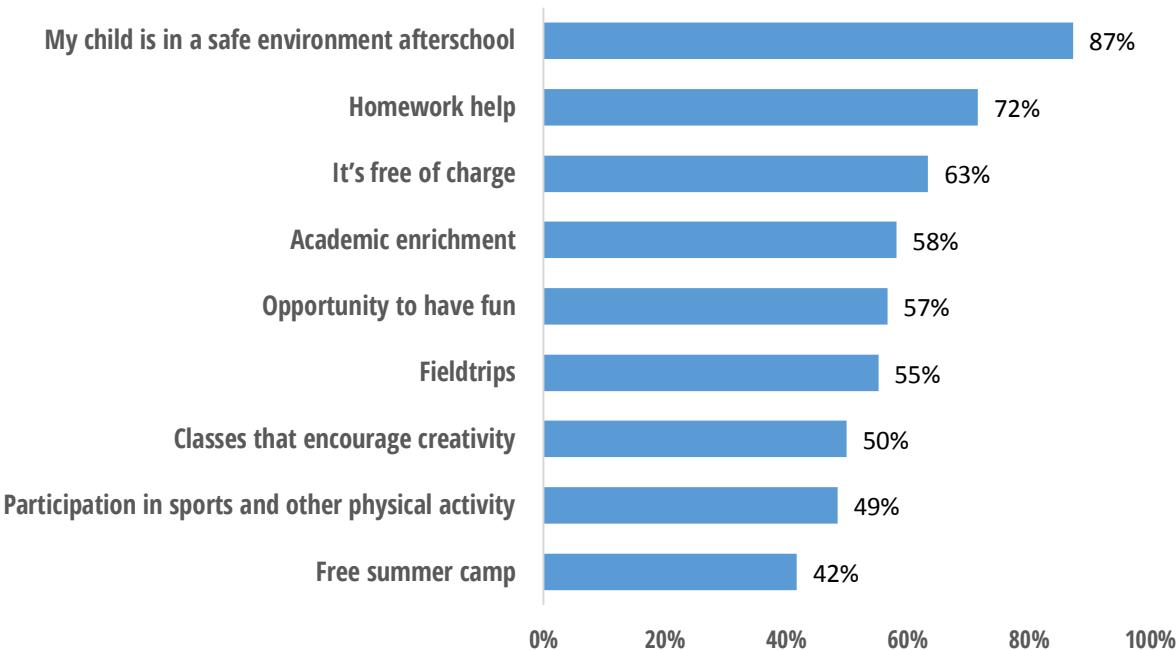
A parent survey was administered to ACE program participants to obtain parents' feedback on program implementation and on the program's impact on student academic achievement and behaviors. A total of 134 parents of students who participated in ACE BGCAA Cycle 7 afterschool programs responded to the survey.

Results of the parent survey indicated that the following characteristics of the ACE afterschool program were considered most important (Figure 5): safe environment (87%), homework help (72%), and free of charge (63%). A large percentage of parent respondents felt their children showed better school attendance (81%), behavior (74%), and grades (78%) because of participation in the afterschool program (Figure 6).

In addition, most respondents who participated in ACE parent classes or events indicated they were happy with their instructors (Table 10). Ninety-four percent of parent respondents reported they knew whom to contact when they had questions about the ACE program. Finally, most respondents (94%) felt they were more connected to the school community as a result of attending these classes.

Figure 5.

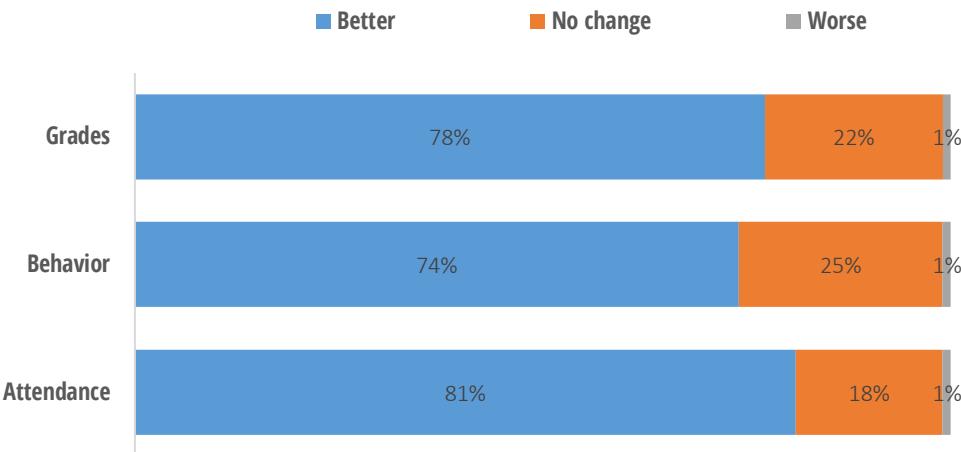
ACE parent reported that the following qualities of the ACE Afterschool Program were most important



Source. ACE Austin Parent Survey 2016

Figure 6.

ACE parent reported that their children did better because of the Afterschool Program



Source. ACE Austin Parent Survey 2016

Table 11.

Percentage of Parents Indicating They Liked the Instructor of ACE Classes or Events, by Events/Activity Type

% liked the instructor

Coffee with principal	96%
English as a second language	84%
Family Nights/Performances	99%
Love & Logic	95%
Social and emotional learning	96%
Strengthening families	97%
Zumba	96%

Source. ACE Austin Parent Survey 2016

APPENDIX B

BGCAA Cycle 8 Student Survey

The AISD ACE Program Student Survey was administered in Spring 2016 to gather information about students' perceptions of the afterschool programs offered at AISD campuses. The survey was administered by the site coordinators or other program staff during the afterschool program time to students in grades 4 and above. A total of 198 students from Cycle 8 BGCAA campuses completed the survey (response rate of 36%). More than one-third of the survey participants were 4th graders. The demographics (e.g., gender, ethnicity, and LEP status) of the survey respondents were similar to those of the population of program participants (Figure 2).

Most of the survey respondents (90%) reported that they participated in enrichment programs. About half of the students were never home alone, and about one-fifth were home alone or with friends after school without an adult present 3 or more days a week before they started coming to the afterschool program (Figure 4). Students who participated in college and workforce activities attended school more than did peers in other programs (Figure 5). Participation in enrichment programs did not have an effect on students' discipline removal rates (Table 14). There is no significant difference in reading or math GPAs between academic program participants and participants in non-academic programs (Table 15). Student survey respondents rated items on the survey using a 4-point scale, ranging from *agree a lot* to *disagree a lot*. The majority of the student survey participants *agreed a lot* or *agreed a little* on most of the items (Table 16).

Table 12.
Survey response rates were low at most campuses

Campus Name	# of program participants*	# of survey respondents	Response rate
Gus Garcia Young Men's Leadership Academy	225	37	16.4%
Jordan Elementary School	58	30	51.7%
LBJ High School	117	35	29.9%
Overton Elementary School	57	29	50.9%
Sims Elementary School	40	33	82.5%
Walnut Creek Elementary School	55	34	61.8%
Cycle Total	552	198	35.9%

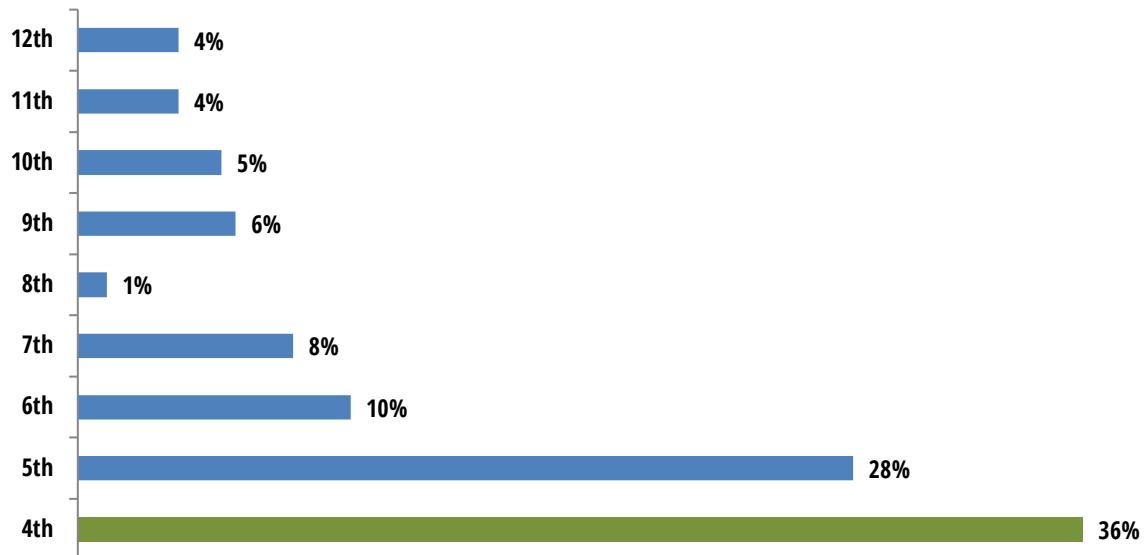
Source. AISD Afterschool Program Student Survey, 2015–2016; ACE Austin participant record for 2015–2016

*Note. The number of program participants listed in the table is the number of students in grades 4 and above, instead of the total number of program participants this year.

*The AISD Afterschool Program Survey was administered to students at grades 4 and above.

Figure 7.

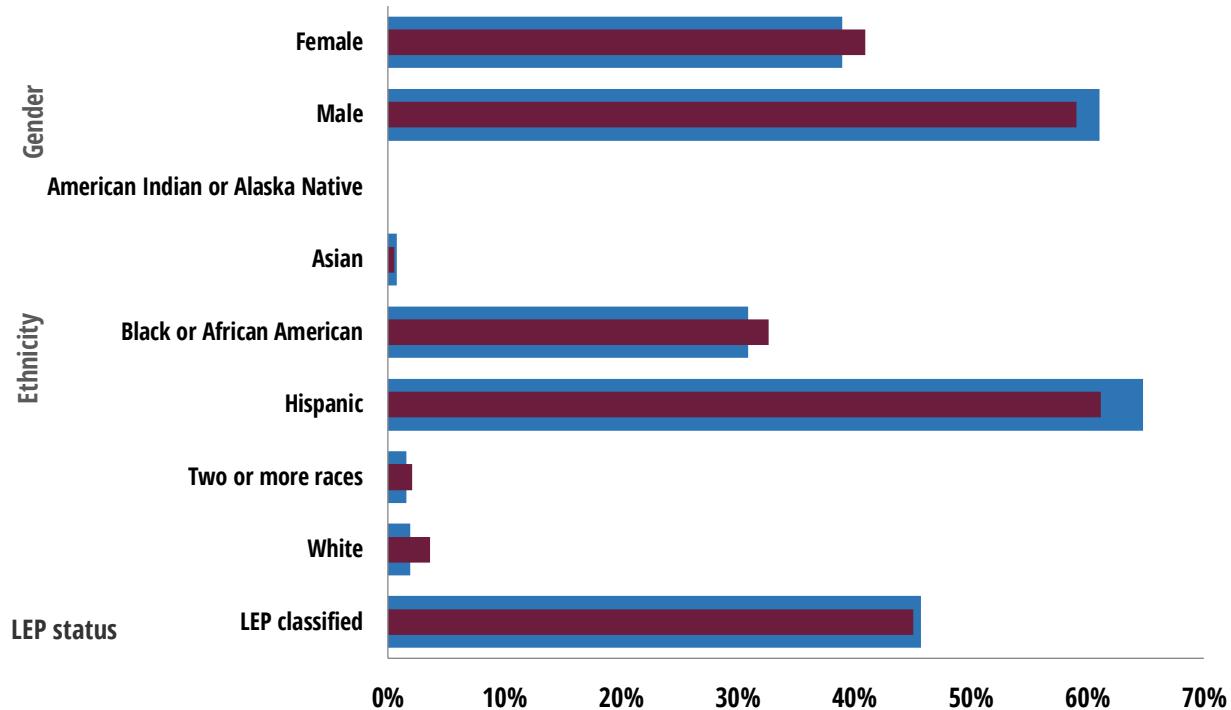
The percentage of student survey participants was higher in 4th grade than any other grade.



Source. AISD Afterschool Program Student Survey, 2015–2016

Figure 8.

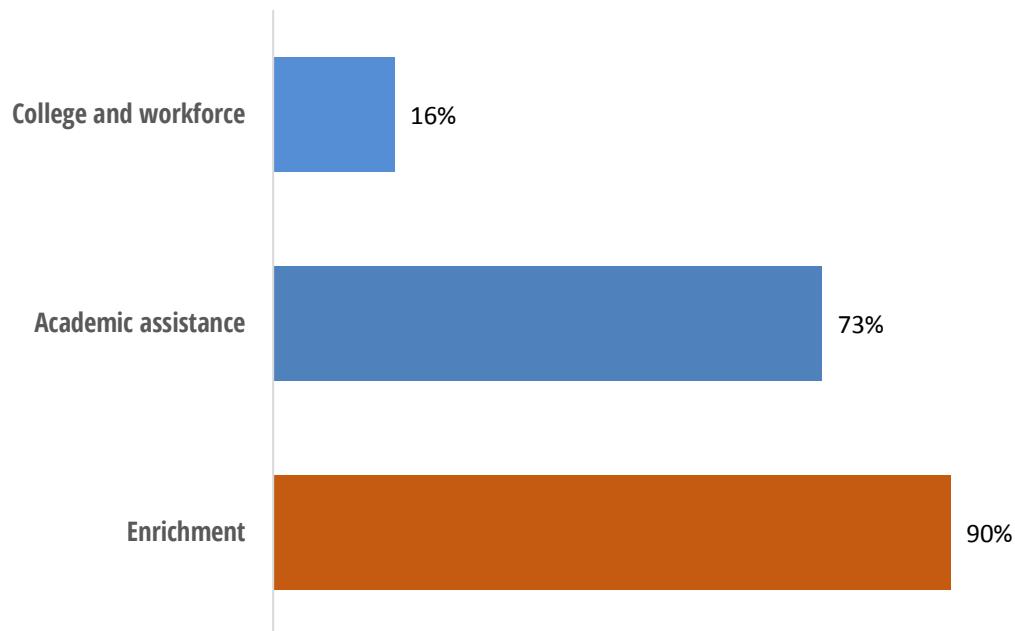
Survey participants' demographics matched program participants' demographics in nearly all cases.



Source. ACE Austin participant record for 2015–2016; AISD Afterschool Program Student Survey, 2015–2016.

Figure 9.

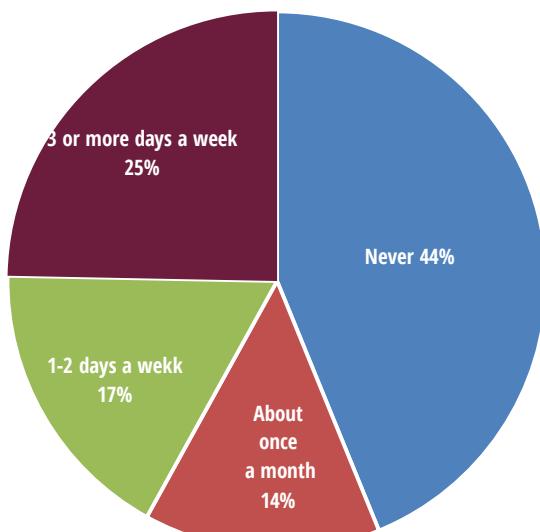
More program participants enrolled in enrichment activities than in other programs.



Source. AISD Afterschool Program Student Survey, 2015–2016

Figure 10.

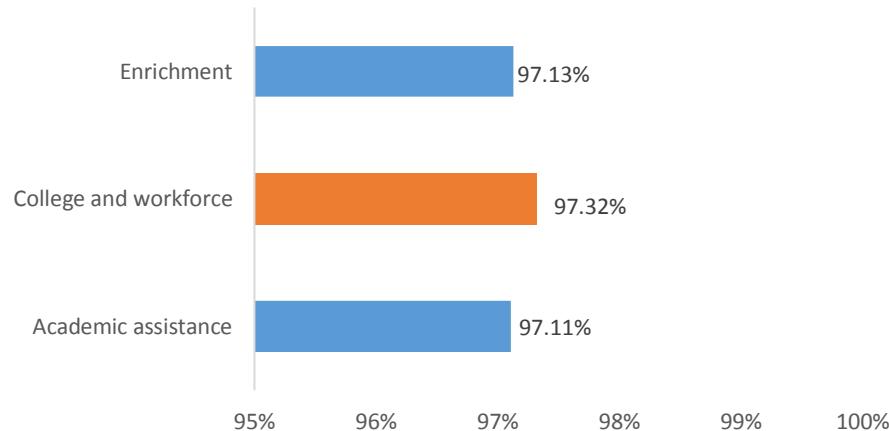
Quarter of the students were home alone or with friends after school without an adult present 3 or more days a week before they started coming to the afterschool program.



Source. AISD Afterschool Program Student Survey, 2015–2016

Figure 11.

Students who participated in college and workforce activities attended school more than did peers in other programs.



Source. ACE Austin participant record for 2015–2016; AISD student attendance records (TEAMS_ATTENDANCE)

Table 13.

The differences between discipline removal rates of survey respondents who participated in enrichment programs and of survey respondents who participated in other program types were not significant.

Discipline removal rates	Enrichment program survey respondents			
	Mandatory removals		Discretionary removals	
	Participants (n = 179)	Non-participants (n = 19)	Participants (n = 179)	Non-participants (n = 19)
	0.01	0.00	0.25	0.16
Significant $p \leq 0.05$	-			

Source. ACE AISD participant record for 2015–2016; AISD student discipline records (ADIS)

Table 14.

The differences between math and reading GPAs of survey respondents who participated in academic programs and of survey respondents who participated in other program types were significant.

	Academic program survey respondents			
	Reading GPA		Math GPA	
	Participants (n = 136)	Non-participants (n = 44)	Participants (n = 136)	Non-participants (n = 44)
	2.17	2.47	1.97	2.10
Significant $p \leq 0.05$	-			

Source. ACE Austin participant record for 2015–2016; AISD student records (TEAMS_GRDS)

Table 15.

The majority of student survey respondents agreed on the survey items

Survey item	%	n
1. I like my afterschool classes.	92.7%	193
2. I feel safe in my afterschool program.	93.7%	189
3. The afterschool program keeps me from getting into trouble.	81.0%	184
4. I come to school more because of the afterschool program.	73.7%	179
5. I get help with my homework in the afterschool program.	91.5%	189
6. The afterschool program helps me learn skills that will help me get a job.	88.5%	182
7. The afterschool program helps me learn about how to get into college.	82.7%	173
8. The afterschool program gives me a chance to help others.	85.9%	184
9. The afterschool program helps me learn skills that will help me be a leader.	91.4%	187
10. In the afterschool program I have the opportunity to do things I like.	87.0%	185
11. My afterschool program makes learning fun.	86.5%	192
12. School is easier because I come to the afterschool program.	80.0%	180
13. My afterschool program teachers make me feel my school work is important.	89.2%	186
14. Someone in my family went to activities or events held in my afterschool	79.2%	159
15. The afterschool program teaches me about my health (e.g. the importance of eating healthy, exercising)	92.1%	189
16. I get to do math and science projects in my afterschool program.	78.0%	177
17. I trust the afterschool program teachers here.	93.7%	189
18. I would sign up again for the afterschool program.	92.7%	179
19. I am sure that I will finish high school.	97.2%	179
20. I am sure that I will go to college.	97.2%	181
21. My life now is the best it could possibly be.	92.0%	176
22. My life in five years will be the best it could possibly be.	94.5%	163

Source. AISD Afterschool Program Student Survey, 2015–2016

APPENDIX C

BGCAA Cycle 7 and 8 Student Focus Group Findings

The AISD evaluation team conducted student focus groups with Afterschool Center on Education (ACE) program participants in the spring of 2016. Student participants ranged from 3rd to 12th grade and attended the program at one of six schools (five elementary schools were represented by 44 students, and one high school by nine students). Participants were asked about their favorite activities in the ACE program, their understanding of the purpose of the afterschool program, and their educational and career aspirations.

Participation in the Program

The majority of students participating in the focus group reported that they participated in the afterschool program four or five days per week. About half of the focus group participants had participated in the afterschool program for one to two years and about 40% participated in the program for three to five years.

Attitude towards the Program

Favorite Activities

When asked what aspects of or activities in the Afterschool Program they liked most, participants' responses varied and the following were the most common answers: Physical activities and sports ($n = 11$); Science and engineering projects ($n = 5$); Homework help ($n = 4$); Arts ($n = 5$). In addition, a few students indicated they liked the computer hours, math class, and tutoring. The high school students reported that they liked all those activities or events in the program, including the service with the city, college and career fest.

Purpose of the program

Participants were asked what they thought was the purpose of the after school program. Their responses ($n = 22$) indicated they felt the program had the following main objectives:

Provide a place that is fun and safe for students to be after the school hours ($n = 17$)

Provide fun activities ($n = 3$)

Help students get their homework done ($n = 3$)

If the ACE program was not available, 16 out of 27 student participants thought they would go home, playing games, watching TV or just sleeping or doing nothing. Three of them said they would wait in the school office, sometimes for a long time until their parents came to pick them up. Some of them also indicated that they would go outside and play ($n = 5$) and others believed that they would go to other afterschool programs ($n = 2$).

Participants were also asked whether being in the after school program changed the way they felt about school. A total of 19 responses were collected, and of these, about half ($n = 11$) indicated that the after school program positively impacted how they felt about school. In such cases, students related that the Afterschool Program helped get their homework done. However, a few of the responses to this question ($n = 8$) indicated that the afterschool program had no impact in how participants felt about school.

College and Career

Student participants were asked what theirs plans were for the current school year and for after finishing high school. Out of 24 responses, many indicated that students planned to advance to the next grade ($n =$

5). At one elementary school, students indicated that they were working to earn more points to get the rewards in the afterschool program. At the high school, the afterschool program participants were striving for a higher level of their community service.

When asked about their goals for after high school, the majority of responses (33 out of 43) indicated that students intended to go to college. Their career choices converged on the following professions: Athletes ($n = 12$), doctor ($n = 7$), veterinary doctor ($n = 3$). In addition, 2 or fewer students also indicated an interest in studying to become an artist, a biologist, a lawyer, an engineer, or a police officer. A few respondents also indicated they were unsure of their goals for after high school.

Almost all student participants (18 of 19) reported that the afterschool program had helped them achieve their goals. The program was reported to be helpful in general ($n = 3$). One student stated: “(The afterschool program) make you believe in yourself that you can do something.” Some students thought that the program had helped them to get better grades, to eat more healthy things, and to become more independent.

Program Environment

When asked if they had made new friends at the Afterschool program, most respondents indicated they had made new friends. Students indicated that they had someone they could go to for help, and in many cases ($n = 12$), that person was their friends, one of their teachers or the program staff.

When asked for ideas on how to improve the program, participants suggested the following changes: Provide better food ($n = 7$); add more outside activities and/or games ($n = 12$); better arrangement of space sharing for younger kids and older kids; some additional classes such as sex education class, anger control class, and dealing with bully class.

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