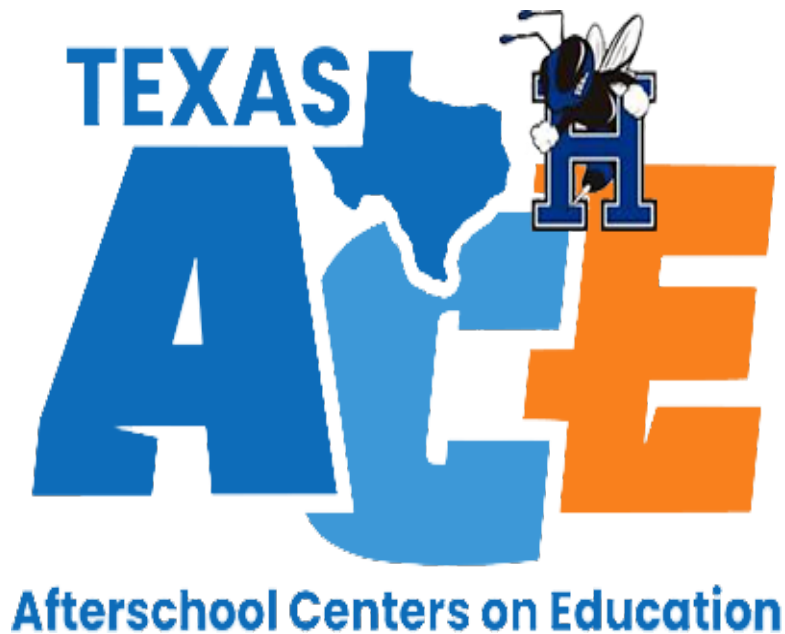


Hooks Independent School District
21st Century Community Learning Centers
2022-2023 Evaluation Report
Cycle 10 Year 5

Final Report 2022-2023

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Executive Summary

The 21st Century Learning Centers program was established to provide opportunities for communities to establish or expand activities for students attending low-performing schools. In Texas, this program is known as the Texas Afterschool Centers on Education (Texas Afterschool Centers on Education (ACE), Cycle 10 program was implemented through the guidance of the Texas Education Agency (TEA), 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 Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) of 2015. The 2022-2023 academic year was the fifth year of the Hooks ISD, Cycle 10 ACE.

This report examines data that documents findings for program operations at the three participating campuses: **Hooks High School, Hooks Junior High, and Hooks Elementary**. In this fifth and final year, there have been continued refinements in programming, program management, and supervision. The program clearly plays a significant role in meeting the needs of ACE students for a safe place to be during the after school hours, opportunities to undertake activities to enhance academic performance, and opportunities to improve social and physical skills.

The Hooks ISD, Cycle 10 ACE program was guided by the Hooks ACE Theory of Change: Students in need, who spend 45 or more days in well-structured and aligned after school activities, taught by qualified personnel, focused on the four activity components will yield improvement in academic performance, attendance, behavior, and promotion and graduation rates of students.

The program's logic model was revised during the 2022-2023 academic year by the ACE Project Director, Site Coordinators, and Family Engagement Specialist with community stakeholders. The logic model continues to be aligned to needs assessment data captured during the current year with students, families, school staff, and community stakeholders. The feedback gathered facilitated a review of community resources to ensure that program goals and objectives continue to be aligned to the needs and interests of the targeted population.

Each of the three centers in Hooks ISD have been established through a comprehensive, collaborative and coordinated approach inclusive of the school, student, family, service providers and the community. The ultimate goals to accomplish are to continue to help students meet state and local academic achievement standards and to help students graduate ready for college or the workforce. The following

objectives guided the development of all activities of the ACE program:

1. Innovative and interactive instructional techniques, based on best practice, hands-on methods of instruction such as iPads in learning STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) activities were implemented in order to maintain active, regular participation of students and family members by keeping levels high.
2. Activities were coordinated with regular school day calendars and high quality afterschool curriculum that is designed to align with the regular school day curriculum.
3. Adult advocates for student participants were assigned to increase student and family sense of involvement and participation.
4. Family members are encouraged to be active participants through a series of regular activities, held both during and after school.
5. Continuous student assessments were conducted to determine need and improve targeted services and revised as appropriate.
6. Training opportunities for staff development is provided so that strategies learned are implemented with fidelity.

To monitor the quality of the implementation, the Evaluator and the Project Director routinely examined TX21st data to monitor implementation, including student and parent enrollment, program participant characteristics, and attendance patterns. The Evaluator also conducted formal observation site visits during the year.

Face to face interviews were conducted by the Evaluator during 2 site visits in the 2022-2023 school year.

These interviews were conducted with campus principals, teachers, parents, ACE staff and students

Key findings showed:

ENJOYMENT of program: 90% of regular attendees enjoy afterschool programming

VALUE: 100% of principals say after school adds value to their school

PARENT/PARTNER ENGAGEMENT: Numerous events occurred district-wide and 100% of the parents fully support ACE

EXTERNAL EVALUATOR: 100% of programs evaluated by an external evaluator

TEACHERS: 95% say that ACE is a valuable program for the district

Each campus administration is supportive of the ACE program. Examples of their support include having biweekly meetings between the administration and the site coordinator to discuss the upcoming events and discuss program needs or areas of support. In addition, the administration allows the ACE Program the use of all facilities on campus including the playgrounds, gym, cafeteria, stage, music room, art room and teacher classrooms. If those areas are in use for time of programming, the campus administration lets the site coordinator know in advance. The campus administration also volunteers as special guests at family engagement events.

Hooks ACE Leadership holds weekly meetings with its afterschool Site Coordinators. During their meetings they cover topics such as upcoming events, important updates, and training. This strategy ensures that the entire team is moving in the right direction. The ACE Director holds regular individual conferences with each Site Coordinator to evaluate individual progress. Site Coordinators are responsible for ongoing communication with Principals to evaluate the program quality, discuss individual student needs, and disseminate upcoming strategies and events. The Project Director, Family Engagement Specialist, Site Coordinators, Campus Administrators along with campus classroom teachers collaborate throughout the program year. Community partners sit on the Community Afterschool Task Force and meet to assess program effectiveness and to ensure all stakeholders have a voice in the goals of the program.

During the evaluator site visits, Site Coordinators discussed factors they perceived as helping to cultivate a strong school-program partnership. Site Coordinators emphasized the importance of frequent communication between campuses and the ACE program, both at the Principal and teacher level. This communication often involved discussions of homework assignments and dealing with individual student issues. During site visits, the Project Director discussed other strategies that attributed to the success of their recruitment and retention efforts. The Project Director noted the importance of collaborating with schools and teachers, and the role that school staff can play in helping to recruit students for the program. The Project Director also more generally discussed the importance of publicity and visibility in recruiting students to the program. For example, program staff often used a multi-faceted approach to disseminate information through a variety of methods to its stakeholders.

Across the ACE program, the external evaluator found common characteristics in terms of program structure and process, academic opportunities, and support systems. These include the following:

Strong leadership with shared decision making:

All three after school sites observed for this evaluation used a decision-making process that was collaborative and shared, involving people who play multiple roles with the program. Site coordinators played a key role in the decision-making structure and generally had a fair amount of autonomy in designing and overseeing center sites to meet local needs. Curricular decisions routinely relied on input from instructional staff. Finally, principals were reportedly included in the decision-making process by all of the campuses. Surveys also indicated high satisfaction among staff regarding leadership.

Strong relationships with school day staff:

All of the observed after school programs maintained very close ties with their day school counterparts. Several factors were especially important across all of the programs in achieving successful bridging between the two. First, day school and afterschool centers frequently shared common staff. Second, strong ties between day and afterschool programs were maintained through an internal alignment of goals and curriculum.

A variety of academic and enrichment instructional practices:

In these programs academic assistance focused primarily on reading and math. The majority of the observed programs offered homework help or tutoring followed by academic instruction and enrichment opportunities. Many programs emphasized a balance of academic, enrichment, and social development instruction within most activities. Common instructional practices observed across all of the grantee centers highlighted the use of engaging students through hands-on learning experiences, purposeful pairings of students, and integrating content learning with other academic disciplines, with “real world” experiences, and with activities designed to engage students in fun and interesting ways.

Positive, engaging afterschool climate with strong staff, student, and parent relationships:

A striking feature among the programs was that all appeared to be successful in creating a positive, engaging after school climate. The context in which after school activities occurred at all 3 centers was consistently described using terms such as “supportive,” “relaxed,” “caring,” “respectful,” “safe,” “positive,” and “nurturing.” Relationships between staff and students at all of the center sites were very positive. After school teachers reported having more personal and casual relations with students than was possible in day school classes. Students were observed interacting very comfortably with staff about both classroom-related and personal issues.

To determine the overall success of the program, we now look at the level of achievement of the ACE goals:

Strong level of Student and Adult Participation:

Total enrollment at the three campus sites ranged from 102, 107 to 110 for a total of 319 students enrolled. Regular attendance in the ACE program (45 days or more) served as follows: Center 1 served 77 students, Center 2 served 75 students and Center 3 served 97 students. Regular students district wide was 249 in comparison to the required 115 shows great interest and satisfaction with the program. In addition the number of regular students increased from school year 2021-2022 by 41 students. This increase shows a continued growth and strengthening of the ACE program.

The External Evaluator includes quality control and improvement processes in the monitoring role that consist of a series of announced site visits. During the 2022-23 school year, Project Director and External Evaluator conducted site visits with the campus after school programs to monitor program implementation. Common themes have emerged:

- ACE provided a staff that was professional, trained, and maintained positive relationships with all of the students.
- ACE intentionally created opportunities for regular school day and after school staff to work together to establish and maintain relationships to maximize children's opportunities to explore new ideas in new ways—through activities that may not always be available during the regular day.
- The findings on instructional quality continue with centers implementing strong classes and activities. During this fourth year the Project Director continued to emphasize the development of intentional activities based on student needs. Again this year, academic needs were stressed along with current research-based best instructional practices. Evidence of research-based instructional practices was noted at every campus. Practices included higher level questioning, student group collaborations, project-based learning, problem solving, and critical thinking.
- The program was perceived quite positively by student participants. An examination of surveys of 160 total students conducted district-wide, revealed quite positive feelings about the program. Among the questions posed on the surveys were, "How are you doing on your school

work?” to which 84% of program participants answered “my school work is getting easier and I am getting better grades” in grades K-12th. Additionally, 80% of ACE participants indicated that they enjoyed the activities offered and liked having a say in choosing which activities they could participate in .

- Similarly, quite positive perceptions were reported by the parents of ACE participants. During the academic year, the ACE program asked parents of all students to complete a survey about their experiences with ACE. Overall, the responses of parents with children participating in ACE were overwhelmingly positive. To begin with, of the 42 parents who responded, 91% of them indicated they worked in the afternoons and were not able to pick their student up from school. In addition 97% of the parents indicated their child was more enthusiastic about school and 97% of the students are getting better grades.

- Parents were asked to share their feelings about the overall ACE program. Here are some excerpts from their comments:

“My child is excited to go and learn new things and having one on one help with difficult homework, I love that my kid enjoys going.”

“He has help with school work that is troubling for him, plus he builds closer stronger friendships that will last a lifetime.”

“It helps children learn different things and be able to have activities after school. It makes the families feel welcome.”

“I never have to worry about my child having someone to watch them while I work late and early.”

“They ALWAYS have their homework done.”

“It allows for students to interact with others in the same grade that they may not get to due to class splitting.”

“It allows students to complete homework with guidance in a timely manner.”

“ACE encourages learning and exploring in areas that a student may not experience at home/during school day (example: cooking, media.”

CRG Consulting, external evaluator, noted the following areas of strength and recommendations for improvement for the Hooks ACE Program:

Hooks Elementary Areas of Strength:

- Has program space that is appropriately equipped suitable for activities being conducted.
- Establishes, maintains and communicates code of conduct to participants, staff and families.
- Applies rewards and consequences consistently for participant behavior.
- Establishes clear attendance and participation expectations.
- Has a system for the collection and monitoring of participant attendance data.
- Has complete and current enrollment / registration documents for all participants.
- Establishes and maintains a centralized database of participant and program information that is regularly updated and usable by staff.
- Has staff who respect and communicate with one another and are role models of positive adult relationships.
- Establishes meaningful community collaborations.
- Recruits, hires and develops staff who reflect the diversity and culture(s) of the community.
- Ensures staff members have competence in core academic areas, where appropriate.
- Maintains staff-to-participant ratio as per staff regulations when applicable.
- Develops and supports staff to plan suitable activities that correspond to the developmental needs of participants.
- Provides activities that reflect the mission of the program.
- Addresses academic, physical, social and emotional needs of all participants.
- Offers high quality academic support, including tutoring and/or homework help.
- Offers enrichment opportunities in core academic areas as well as in the arts, technology, recreation and health.
- Establishes strong links to the school day.
- Incorporates programming that integrates and complements school day activities.
- Collaborates regularly with school-day personnel regarding use of facilities & resources.
- Communicates with school day staff to monitor student academic and behavioral progress.
- Allocates sufficient program time for homework and homework help.
- Engages participants to develop life skills, resilience and self-esteem via activities.
- Promotes consistent and active participation.
- Has measurable program goals and objectives that are aligned with the organizational mission and

identified needs.

Hooks Elementary School-Opportunities for Improvement:

Specific needs for an afterschool program at this site include the fact that the campus is a Title 1 school with many low socioeconomic status families. The goals of the ACE program at this center are to provide students with extended learning opportunities outside the regular school day and to assist students in meeting academic standards in each of the core academic subjects (math, reading, science, social studies). The selection of students for the ACE program starts with campus principal and teacher recommendations. ACE participants are generally identified via the RTI Team identifying potential students from Tiers 2 & 3. Teachers use their judgment in determining which of their students are struggling academically and could benefit from the help that is provided in the ACE program. Besides in class performance, the teachers also review the student's performance on the STAAR state assessments. In addition to teacher recommendations the coordinator receives requests from students themselves to be allowed into the program. Parents also make recommendations for their children to attend ACE.

- Hooks Elementary will continue to utilize discipline practices that ensure the safety and dignity of ACE students and staff, preserve the integrity of the learning environment, and address the causes of a student's misbehavior in order to improve positive behavioral skills and long-term outcomes. Discipline removals will likely decrease when students participate in more activities and are assigned an adult advocate. With the support of an advocate, youth may feel more confident in communicating potential behavior issues resulting in discipline removals.
- Continue to provide involvement by principals, assistant principals, and teachers in to give high dosage of accelerated learning through the implementation of the intentional planning of activities based on campus needs assessment and campus improvement plans for any further programming.
- Continue the focus on Social and Emotional learning approaches to achieve Behavioral/Academic Outcomes: Positive Social Behavior, Fewer Conduct Problems, Less Emotional Distress, and Improved Academic Performance.

Hooks High School Areas of Strength:

- Has program space that is appropriately equipped suitable for activities being conducted.

- Establishes, maintains and communicates code of conduct to participants, staff and families.
- Has a system for the collection and monitoring of participant attendance data.
- Has complete and current enrollment / registration documents for all participants.
- Has staff who respect and communicate with one another and are role models of positive adult relationships.
- Is structured to create close, sustained relationships between individual participants and caring adults.
- Recruits, hires & develops staff who reflect the diversity & culture(s) of the community.
- Maintains staff-to-participant ratio as per staff regulations when applicable.
- Develops and supports staff to plan suitable activities that correspond to the developmental needs of participants.

Hooks High School-Opportunities for Improvement:

- The year has provided a challenge in obtaining adequate staff for ACE. Staff meetings and other training have interfered with ACE time and teachers working late in their classrooms. ACE teachers are valuable to the ACE program at this center because they are developing the tutoring and enrichment lessons based upon their knowledge of what is transpiring in the regular school day.
- Continue to provide involvement by principals, assistant principals, and teachers in to give high dosage of accelerated learning through the implementation of the intentional planning of activities based on campus needs assessment and campus improvement plans for any further programming.
- Continue to offer a broad array of enrichment opportunities along with wide-ranging skill building and mastery. Our focus will also continue to include intentional relationship building with ACE students, which is so necessary in high school programming. Our high school ACE program will continue our mission of keeping high school ACE students engaged in their learning and connected to the higher path of graduation. We will build on individual assets connecting family, school and community providing a venue for credit recovery, academic success and options for their future.
- Encourage good attendance at the high school center, while advancing student academic success

with a myriad of learning opportunities for high school students while helping in the transition to college and career. Continue to foster relationships and community service with project based learning experiences.

Hooks Junior High School Areas of Strength:

- Has program space that is appropriately equipped suitable for activities being conducted.
- Establishes clear attendance and participation expectations.
- Has complete and current enrollment / registration documents for all participants.
- Establishes and maintains a centralized database of participant and program information that is regularly updated and usable by staff.
- Has staff who respect and communicate with one another and are role models of positive adult relationships.
- Is structured to create close, sustained relationships between individual participants and caring adults.
- Ensures staff members have competence in core academic areas, where appropriate.
- Maintains staff-to-participant ratio as per staff regulations when applicable.
- Fosters understanding and appreciation for established program quality standards, evaluation, and program improvement strategies among staff.
- Provides activities that reflect the mission of the program.
- Addresses academic, physical, social and emotional needs of all participants.
- Employs a variety of grouping strategies, for both structured and unstructured activities, including individual, small group, and large group.
- Establishes strong links to the school day.
- 14. Collaborates regularly with school-day personnel regarding use of facilities & resources.

Hooks Junior High School-Opportunities for Improvement:

The ACE program is needed on this campus to provide a fun, safe and academic enriched environment for students during out of school hours. The programs and services offered help the students to succeed in school, and prepare them for high school. They also learn to develop leadership skills and maintain healthy, productive lifestyles. In particular The ACE program offers students help with academics tutoring and homework help. This takes a burden off of families who are not able to assist their child in that area. The

after-school program provides these students with additional academic support not available during the regular school day. The ACE program also offers enrichment activities which are of high interest and help to encourage the students to attend school each day. These enrichment activities create student bonding and give students fun activities to keep them occupied and less likely to get involved in questionable activities.

- For any future programming, we will continue to provide involvement by principals, assistant principals, and teachers to give high dosage of accelerated learning through the implementation of the intentional planning of activities based on campus needs assessment and campus improvement plans for any further programming. This center will continue to offer enrichment, which allows students to use new skills through Project Based Learning while collaborating with school day administrators to design activities and ensure fidelity of implementation. Enrichment activities will be developed for each grade level that focuses on targeted goals for improving skills in math, reading, science and social studies. Students who need additional targeted assistance will be invited to tutorials. The Site Coordinator and Project Director will work together to create SMART goals to monitor academic gains for students.
- For any future programming, the Site Coordinator will make the ACE program more synergistic with cross-trained staff that is able to handle any subject matter, situation or absence of the Site Coordinator or other key staff members. This will allow for multilayer and intertwined programming that produce tangible and intangible products for each other. (i.e., Gardening grows food for Cooking, Graphics designs shirts for eSports, Multimedia does PR for Archery, etc.)