

# Vidor ACE

Afterschool Center on Education

## 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers



## 2010-2011 Program Guidelines for Parents & Guardians

**Vidor Independent School District**  
Department of Community Education  
Funded by a 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC grant

**Statement of Purpose**

The purpose of the Vidor ACE 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC program is to offer opportunities for children to access academic, enrichment, social and recreational experiences in an after-school environment that is safe, drug-free and supervised.

**Statement of Goals**

The Vidor ACE 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC program supports the following goals:

- To offer expanded academic enrichment, including providing tutorial services to help children, particularly students who attend low-performing schools, meet state and local student academic achievement standards in core academic subjects, such as reading, mathematics, and science;
- To offer students a broad array of additional services, programs, and activities, such as youth development activities, drug and violence prevention programs, art, music, physical education/fitness programs, character education, and technology education programs that are designed to reinforce and complement the regular academic program of participating students; and
- To offer families of students served by community learning centers opportunities for literacy and related educational development.

**Welcome to Vidor ACE!**

The Vidor ISD Community Education department recognizes that there is a need to address the problem of the district's school-age children who go home to empty houses after school. We also recognize the need for a quality after school program.

VISD Community Education has a strong history of providing quality programming for children. Community Education is a part of the district and consequently we are conscious and very aware of district policies, goals and objectives.

After researching other after school programs around the state, we have developed the Vidor ACE concept that we feel stands out as a viable solution in meeting the needs of the “latchkey” child as well as staying within the educational realm of the goals and objectives of both Vidor ISD and the Texas Education Agency. This after school program will provide enrichment activities, enhanced self-motivation, social skills, improved study skills, and safety. We also strive to involve parents and families by offering workshops in a variety of topics such as communication, parenting skills, and nutrition.

To ensure your child’s success in Vidor ACE, please review our guidelines and sign the Parental Acknowledgement form at the end of this document.

### **Parental Expectations**

Parents may expect that:

- Their children are in a safe, supportive environment.
- They may visit with the Vidor ACE After School Site Coordinator about concerns related to their child or the program.
- They will be told about negative behavior on the part of their child so that, as a team, we can bring about improvement to the situation.
- They will be informed if their child does not arrive at the program according to his/her enrollment information.
- They will be regularly informed about program activities.
- They will be encouraged to participate in program activities.

### **Child’s Expectations**

Children may expect to:

- Have a safe, supportive and consistent environment.
- Use all the program equipment, materials and facilities on an equal basis.
- Receive respectful treatment.
- Receive fair discipline.
- Receive nurturing care from staff members who are actively involved with them.

### **Program Expectations**

The program expects that parents will:

- Keep the child’s application form up-to-date.
- Follow the attendance and pick-up policies.
- Follow the health policy as explained in the VISD Student-Parent Handbook.
- Contact the Vidor ACE office on the child’s campus by note or by phone before 2:00 p.m. if their child will not be attending on a scheduled day. (Note: children who do not attend school, regardless of the reason, may not attend ACE that day.)

- Pay close attention to any communications from the ACE After School Site Coordinator regarding their child's behavior and cooperate in efforts to improve the situation.

The program expects that the children will:

- Be responsible for their actions.
- Be able to participate in large group activities.
- Respect the school rules that guide them during the day and while at the program.
- Remain with the group and the ACE staff at all times.
- Take care of materials and equipment properly and return them to their place when done, or before taking out new ones.
- Arrive at the program promptly, according to the enrollment information.

### **Program Description**

ACE instructors strive to capitalize on the interests and developmental needs of the child, while utilizing their own talents and skills. Special emphasis is placed on facilitating the child's success in academics, socialization, enrichment and recreation through a variety of experiences. Although activities do contain structure, there is always an allowance for spontaneity. Activities are balanced in terms of teacher directed/child-initiated, group/individual, active/inactive experiences to allow for variety. In planning activities, instructors try to keep in mind the content and style of the activity, characteristics of the school and community and resources available to them. Instructors have a basic plan to promote the consistency of a daily routine. The daily plan requires consistent scheduling for recreation, snack, homework, etc.

### **Administration**

The Vidor ACE program is a function of the Vidor Independent School District and follows the district's policies and procedures. The VISD program's administrative staff consists of the Director of Community Education and the campus After School Site Coordinators. Program policies, staff, curriculum, accountability and finances are all monitored by the Department of Community Education.

Community Education works in cooperation with the principals from each Vidor ACE school site regarding discipline, staff, and the ongoing monitoring of the program. A cooperative arrangement between the Community Education Department and the VISD Food Services Department insures an appropriate food and beverage snack for children enrolled in the program.

### **Absences and Early/Late Pick Ups**

If your child is ill, when you call the school to report the illness or pick up your child from school, please request the school secretary to put a notice of the child's absence in the Vidor ACE mailbox or call the ACE office directly. Absences without prior notification may be mistaken for a missing child and cause unnecessary concern and time searching for the child. If a child does not arrive at the program as intended, the Vidor ACE After School Site Coordinator will contact the parents at work or home. If the parents cannot be reached, the After School Site Coordinator will then call the individuals listed under the emergency contact list. (Note: children who do not attend school, regardless of the reason, may not be dropped off to attend ACE that day.)

**The Vidor ACE program is not a “drop-in” program.** To make best use of our grant funds, to meet grant requirements, and to ensure each child receives the full benefit of the program, students should not be tardy for classes, and should try to stay as much of the afternoon as possible.

When a parent has not arrived by closing time and has not contacted the ACE program, every attempt will be made by the staff to contact the parents, the people listed under emergency contacts and “designated pick-up people.” If we cannot reach you or any of the other persons listed and no one has arrived to pick up your child, we will contact the appropriate police department to determine whether the responsible party has been involved in an emergency situation. If you or the responsible person are involved in an emergency, contact your local police department and request that they notify the Vidor ACE After School Site Coordinator on campus of the emergency or call the Vidor ACE site directly. Additionally, the prearranged “designated person” to pick up the child should be called and you should request them to pick up your child.

**The After School Program Site Coordinator will work in cooperation with parents to solve attendance and pick-up problems, however it is possible for a child to be withdrawn from Vidor ACE for failure to be picked up consistently or for sporadic attendance.**

### **Discipline**

Behavior standards for the children will be the same as in the regular school day. The children will know what behavior is expected, as well as the rewards and consequences of their behavior choices. The Site Coordinator will work in cooperation with parents to solve discipline problems. Constant inability to meet appropriate behavior standards will result in the withdrawal of the student from the program. A disciplinary problem is defined as one in which a child is hampering the smooth flow of the program by requiring constant one-on-one attention. Inflicting physical or emotional harm on other children, physically and/or verbally abusing staff or otherwise unwilling to conform to the rules and guidelines of the program may result in immediate withdrawal.

When imposing discipline, the Vidor ACE program shall adhere to the following general guidelines: discipline will be administered when necessary to protect students, school employees, or property and maintain essential order and discipline; students shall be treated fairly and equitably; discipline shall be based on a careful assessment of the circumstances of each case; factors to consider shall include the seriousness of the offense, the student’s age, the frequency of the misconduct, the student’s attitude, the potential effect of the misconduct on the school environment, other pertinent factors such as self-defense, and requirements of State law and the Code of Student Conduct.

### **Health and Safety**

If your child has a known medical condition (asthma, diabetes, seizure disorder, etc.) please be sure this information is recorded on the application form and the After School Site Coordinator knows what care you suggest if a problem should occur during the

Vidor ACE program hours. In addition, parents will be asked to fill out a Medical/Emergency Information Form which the ACE program will keep on file. Daily Medication will not be administered by ACE staff. We will administer emergency medication (inhalers, epi-pens) if necessary and if medication is made available to us.

*If a child has any one of the following conditions, the parents of the child will be notified to pick up the child immediately: contagious disease, fever over 100 degrees, vomiting or diarrhea, accident requiring medical attention.*

The Vidor ACE instructors will provide care for children who are ill or injured, following the guidelines and policies governing regular school day teachers. Emergency contacts will be made according to the information provided on the application form. Minor injuries (small cuts, bruises, scrapes) will be treated by the ACE staff. In serious cases, the child may be taken to the local hospital by emergency vehicle. This is a decision that will be made by the responding paramedics. The parents will be called as soon as possible.

Texas law requires caregivers to report suspected cases of child abuse. This includes the reporting of parents who appear to be impaired by drugs or alcohol. The ACE personnel are directed to make every effort to keep a child from getting into a car with a parent who they feel might be under the influence of drugs or alcohol. They will call the police to drive the child and parent home.

### **Homework & Tutoring**

Children will receive homework assignments during the school day. A quiet place will be provided each day for students to do homework. Although our after school staff will supervise the children during homework time and will assist as appropriate, they are not cannot take responsibility for the completion of the homework. The District asks parents to help their child by providing the time, place, cooperation and encouragement needed to complete assignments. Children should be reminded to take their books, work and supplies to school each day. To promote responsibility children are generally not allowed to call home for forgotten work or supplies.

Most schools offer tutoring programs administered by VISD certified teachers. ACE fully cooperates with any school requirements regarding student participation at tutoring.

### **Operating Schedule**

The Vidor ACE program operates between the hours of 2:45 p.m. and 5:45 p.m. on elementary campuses and 3:15 and 6:15 on all others. The program coincides with the Vidor Independent School District student attendance calendar at the individual school; therefore, it does not operate during school holidays, school closing due to inclement weather, teacher in-service days, or VISD early release days. In the event of early dismissal of school due to inclement weather or emergency closing, the parent/guardian or other designated person will be expected to pick up the child at the school's scheduled dismissal time as announced on that day by the local media.

## **Parental Involvement**

Vidor Independent School District believes in the power of education and its powerful, positive influence on our community. Research has proven that parental involvement in school is a necessary prerequisite to student success; therefore, a partnership between school and home must exist. You are encouraged to take an active part in your child's life.

The Vidor ACE program offers many ways in which families can become involved, including monthly family nights, literacy evenings, volunteering, and other activities. **To maintain our grant funds, each ACE site must serve a substantial number of parents and family members per school year. While all children are eligible to attend ACE regardless of parent participation, we urge you, your immediate family, and relatives to attend at least one ACE event per semester to help us keep our funding.**

## **Parties**

The Vidor ACE program follows the district policy regarding parties. Birthday parties are not permitted. The delivery of balloons and flowers to students is not permitted.

## **Registration and Enrollment**

The Vidor ACE program encourages children of all backgrounds to attend. The program does not discriminate on the basis of sex, race, color, national origin, ethnic background, religion, or disability.

Children enrolled in the ACE program must be in grades Kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> AND enrolled in school. Children must enroll at the VISD site where they attend school. Once a program site is full, names will be called from the waiting list as space becomes available.

All registrations must take place through the campus ACE office. Children who cannot be immediately enrolled (because of a full program) will be placed on a waiting list. The parent/guardian must complete an application form and return it to the ACE office. Children will be allowed to attend the program only after the application form has been completed and returned. For your child's safety, the program expects the application form to be kept current, including physical and medical limitations. ***The parent/guardian must provide new information to the ACE After School Site Coordinator regarding changes such as: emergency contact people, designated pick-up people, work phone numbers, addresses, etc.*** Texas law precludes us from keeping a child from a natural parent unless there are court documents stating this judgment. If so, the ACE office must have copies of this document.

If there is a custody situation where court documents are on file, you must provide ACE with a copy of the official court orders.

### **Release of Children**

Children are expected to arrive on time and to leave the program according to the information recorded by the parents/guardians on the application form. Each child enrolled in the ACE will remain at the program site until picked up by an authorized individual or has parent/guardian permission to ride the bus. The parent/guardian enrolling the child must stipulate in writing persons that may pick up their child.

All persons who are authorized to pick up a child in the Vidor ACE program must be at least 18 years of age. Any exception requests must be presented in writing and will be approved at the discretion of the Vidor ACE Site Coordinator on the child's campus.

**ALL PERSONS entering to pick up a child will be asked for a picture identification (i.e., Driver's License or State Identification Card.) You must be prepared to present picture identification at all times. This is for the safety of your child.** Only those individuals designated by the enrolling parent/guardian will be permitted to sign the child out of the program. In accordance with Texas law, we cannot legally keep a child from his/her natural parents unless we have a court document on file to that effect. To ensure the safety of your child, please make sure all information and documents are up-to date. All Vidor ACE children must have alternative and emergency pick-up arrangements.

**Even if a one-time exception is to be made to the recorded information, the enrolling parent/guardian must provide the Vidor ACE After School Site Coordinator with this information in writing. Again, that individual will need a picture ID in order to pick up your child.**

If your child attends extracurricular activities, tutorials or any other kind of arrival/departure time change within the time period he/she is enrolled in the program, you must provide the ACE After School Site Coordinator with this information.

### **Snacks**

Elementary schools are now required to follow nutrition rules established by the Texas Department of Agriculture. Nutritious snacks are served daily in the Learning Tree program arranged through VISD Food Services Department. Should your child have an allergy or condition that prevents him/her from partaking of certain foods, that information should be noted on the application form.

If a parent does not want his/her child to eat the VISD snack, the parent may choose to send a different snack for their own child but may not send food or purchase food for other students. The alternative snack must be a nutritional snack such as fruit, cereal bar or applesauce. Please do not send chips, soda or candy as a snack.

### **Staff**

Each Vidor ACE program site is staffed by skilled individuals. The average adult-child ratio in the Vidor ACE program is approximately one to fifteen. However, students may occasionally participate in large group activities where the ratio is increased.

### **Transportation & Parent Responsibility**

Parents must assume the responsibility for their students traveling back and forth from home to the bus stop. The program must be kept informed by parents of transportation arrangements for each child. Any change in these plans must be communicated to us in writing.

#### **We remind all parents and students that:**

All students who ride buses to and from school will be expected to conduct themselves in a courteous/proper manner. Riding the bus is a privilege. Any student who cannot abide by the transportation rules of conduct and the Code of Student Conduct in the Student Handbook will be subject to disciplinary action that could result in loss of bus riding privileges.

**The full policy on transportation can be found in the VISD Student Handbook.**

### **Valuables/Personal Property**

Students are responsible for the care and custody of personal items. The district cannot assume responsibility for lost or stolen items and recommends that valuable items such as cameras, jewelry, money, expensive clothing, etc., be left at home. These items are not necessary during the program time and may be picked up from the child and released to the parent only. Children's personal property, coats, clothing, school bags, etc. must be cleared from the program area after each session. Any personal property which remains will be taken to the school office lost-and-found box.

### **Withdrawal Policy**

Students may be withdrawn from the Vidor ACE program for any of the following reasons:

1. Failure to meet appropriate behavior standards.
2. Refusal to follow program procedures and rules.
3. Verbal abuse, physical abuse or sexual harassment of student or staff member by student OR their parents.
4. Being in the wrong place or unauthorized departure from a bus or activity site.
5. Consistent late pick-up or excessive absences.
6. Child's needs cannot be met by the program.
7. Parent or Guardian's failure to provide required records.

### **In Closing...**

Parents are always welcome to observe the ACE program. If you wish to visit the program, please make arrangements through the After School Site Coordinator's office. For liability and supervision reasons, children who are not enrolled cannot take part in activities.

All procedures and policies of the program are developed with the safety and care of the child as the primary concern.

**These guidelines are the minimum expectations for parents and guardians of students enrolled in the Learning Tree program. VISD policy and procedure is always in effect.**

**PARENT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**  
**PLEASE SIGN AND RETURN TO THE LEARNING TREE OFFICE.**

I hereby acknowledge that I have received a copy of the Vidor ACE Program Guidelines for Parents and Guardians.

\_\_\_\_\_  
PARENT/LEGAL GUARDIAN SIGNATURE

\_\_\_\_\_  
DATE

CHILD OR CHILDREN ENROLLED IN THE PROGRAM:

\_\_\_\_\_  
NAME

\_\_\_\_\_  
GRADE

\_\_\_\_\_  
NAME

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GRADE

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