



Jeffrey L. Huisingsh, PhD, PMP, CMC

Principal

Clovis Point Research

[jlhuisingsh@clovis-point.com](mailto:jlhuisingsh@clovis-point.com)

April 7, 2022

# Academic Year 2021-2022 ACE Program Report



## Harrison School District 2

## Centennial Elementary School

## BACKGROUND

During Academic Year 2021-22 (AY 21-22), Harrison School District 2 (HSD2) introduced the Achieving Competitive Excellence (ACE) Program in two of its schools—Centennial Elementary School and Fox Meadow Middle School (FMMS). This report is exclusive to Centennial Elementary with the findings from FMMS available under separate cover.

The ACE Program was presented by *Believe and Perform Like Champions* featuring Coaches Janice Lee and Charmas Lee. Table 1 shows the composition of program participants during AY21-22.

**Table 1. HSD2 Elementary School ACE Program Cohorts AY 21-22\***

Cohort	Number of Students Surveyed	
	1st Semester	2nd Semester
3rd Grade Boys and Girls	50	48
4th Grade Boys and Girls (Spanish)	5	5
4th Grade Boys and Girls	43	39
5th Grade Boys and Girls	18	14

\*Numbers reflect students surveyed. Actual number of participants for these grades were higher, but specific totals were not reported.

All third and fourth grade students participated in ACE for AY 21-22. In addition, approximately 24 fifth grade students were selected to participate in the program for the first semester. Of those, approximately 25% transitioned into the second semester. An additional group of approximately 18 fifth graders were introduced to ACE during the second semester.

ACE was designed to teach students how to analyze situations in real-time and make the best decision in the moment. Using a proven coaching model, *Think-Say-Do*, students were guided through novel decision-making approaches intended to improve behavior, increase attention, and enhance classroom performance. ACE provided students with adaptive skills to enable social and academic success in and out of the school setting. Previous studies conducted on similar grade school populations highlighted improved learning conditions, attitudes and academic performance following exposure to the ACE program and suggested students experienced improved focus, concentration and were better able to regulate their emotions (Huisingh, 2020).

## PROGRAM DESIRED OUTCOMES

Intended results included improved emotional intelligence, self-regulation, decision-making, and the skills of self-efficacy, focus, and concentration.

## METHODOLOGY

This study utilized a mixed-methods design consisting of both quantitative and qualitative data streams from multiple sources. Collected data included a Likert-based survey instrument developed by Lee and Lee (2019) related to specific ACE Program objectives. This survey was administered to students each semester. The data set also included open-ended comments from students and semi-structured interviews conducted with the school's principal. The survey instruments were compiled and reported in bar charts, while the student comments were coded using an iterative nodal development process focusing on theme discovery. The school administrator interview was transcribed verbatim using Otter.AI software and coded using a similar process as the student comments to discover themes. Conclusions were made based on the corpus of collected quantitative and qualitative data using a process of triangulation as described by Kelle (2001).

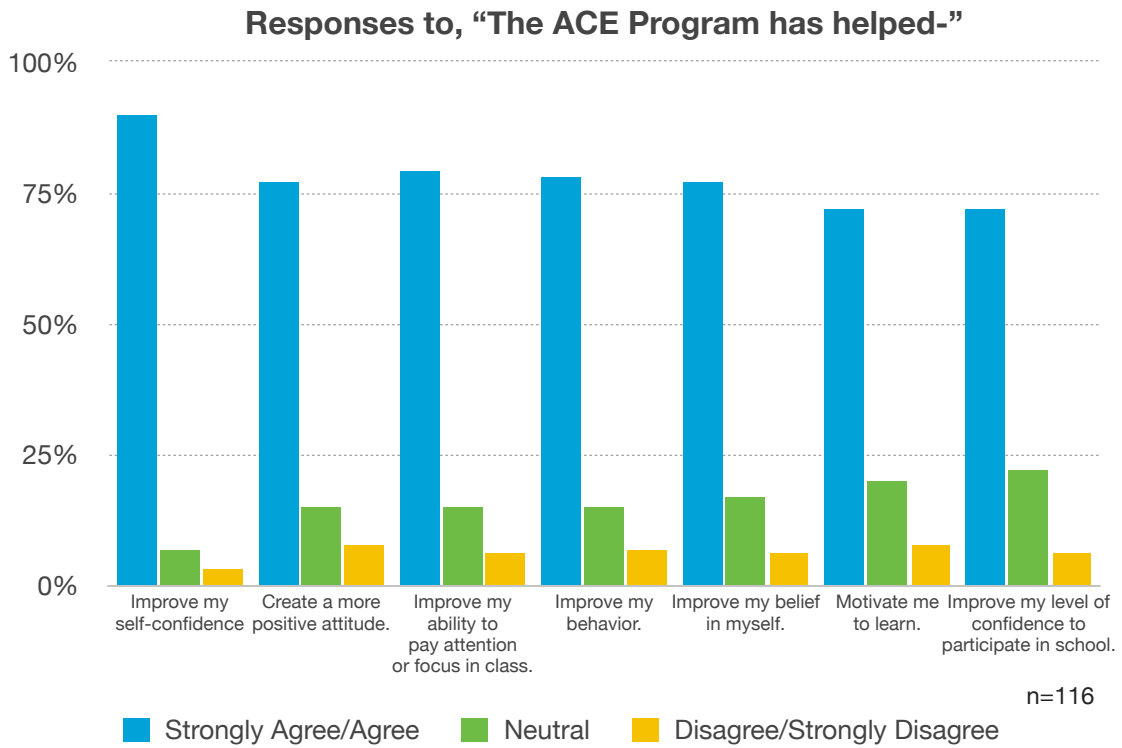
## STUDY LIMITATIONS

This study was conducted under a persistent COVID-19 threat, with precautions ranging from compulsory to voluntary masking. These factors may have impacted both the extent and variability of student participation in the ACE program of instruction. The COVID-19 threat may have also impacted the number of students available to take the *ACE Program Survey*.

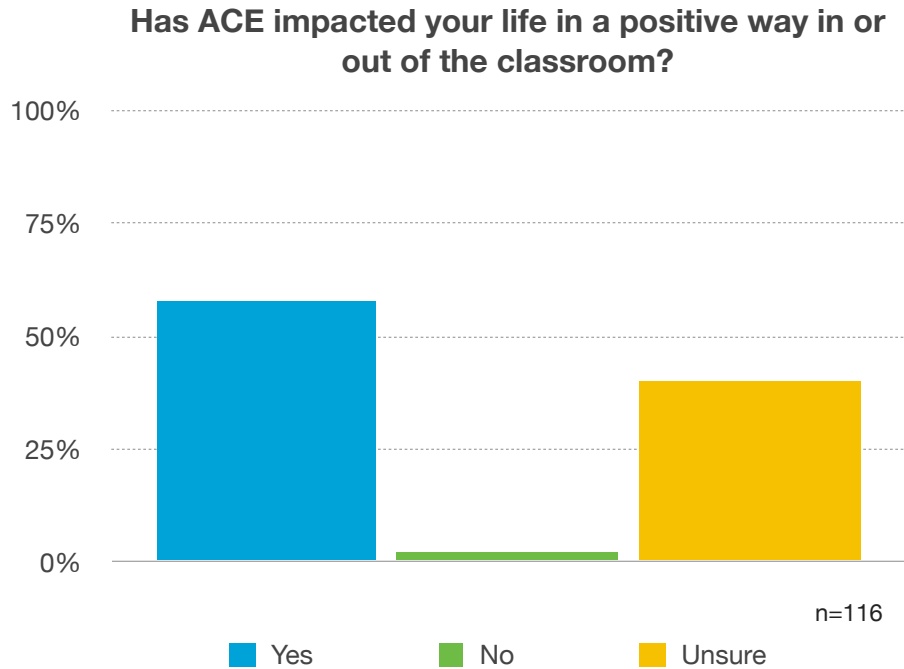
## FINDINGS

### ACE Program Survey

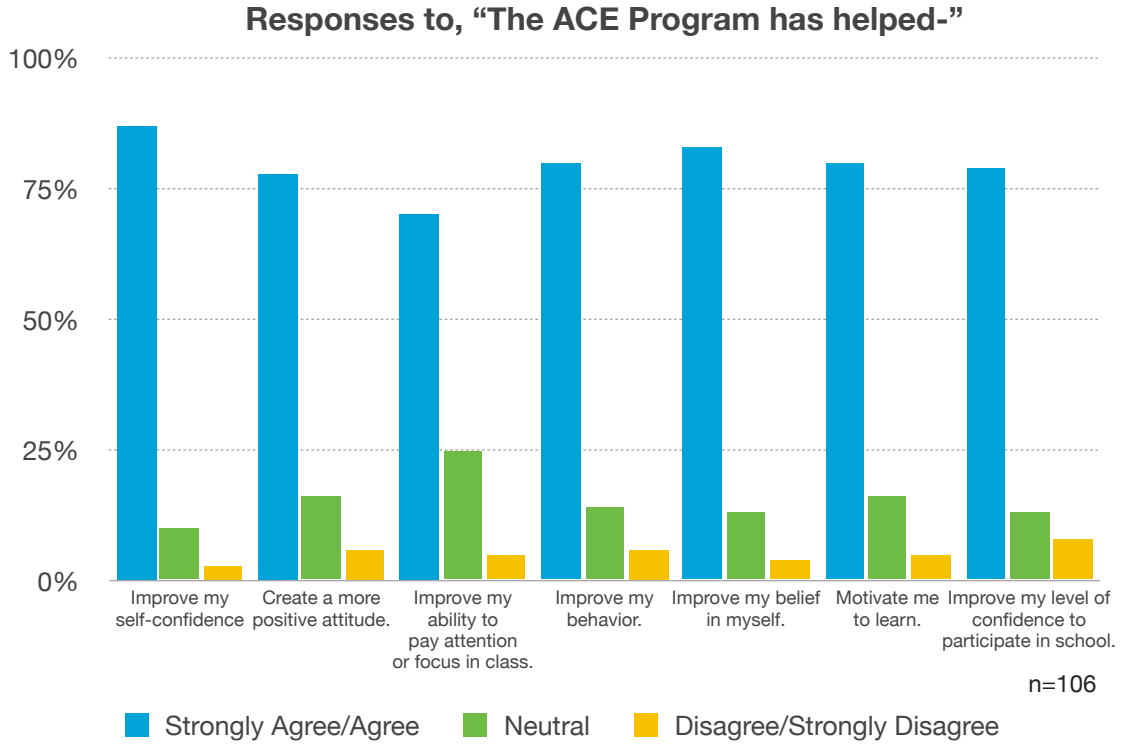
During both semesters, students were surveyed (n=116 and n=106, respectively) regarding their perceptions of the ACE Program using a survey instrument developed by Lee & Lee (2019). This survey binned eight questions into two categories (a) stem-response [self-confidence, attitude, focus, behavior, self-belief, learning, motivation, participation] (Figures 1 and 3) and (b) yes or no as to the ACE Program's impact on their lives both in and out of the classroom. (Figures 2 and 4). First semester results (Figures 1-2) are followed by the results from second semester (Figures 3-4).



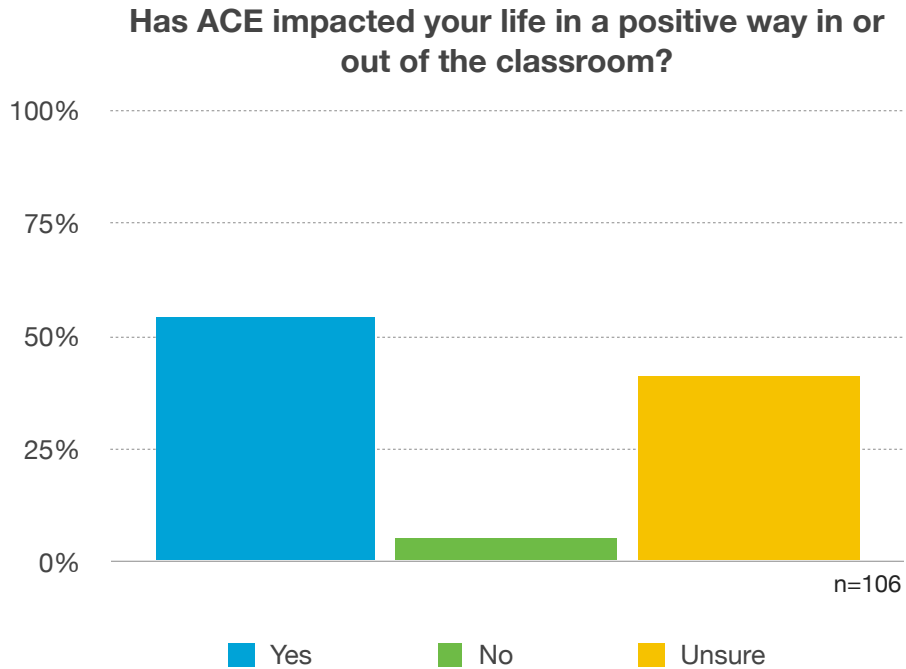
**Figure 1. ACE Program Survey, First Semester AY 2021-22  
Centennial Elementary School—Attributes**



**Figure 2. ACE Program Survey, First Semester AY 2021-22  
Centennial Elementary School—Impact**



**Figure 3. ACE Program Survey, Second Semester AY 2021-22**



**Centennial Elementary School—Attributes**

**Figure 4. ACE Program Survey, Second Semester AY 2021-22  
Centennial Elementary School—Impact**

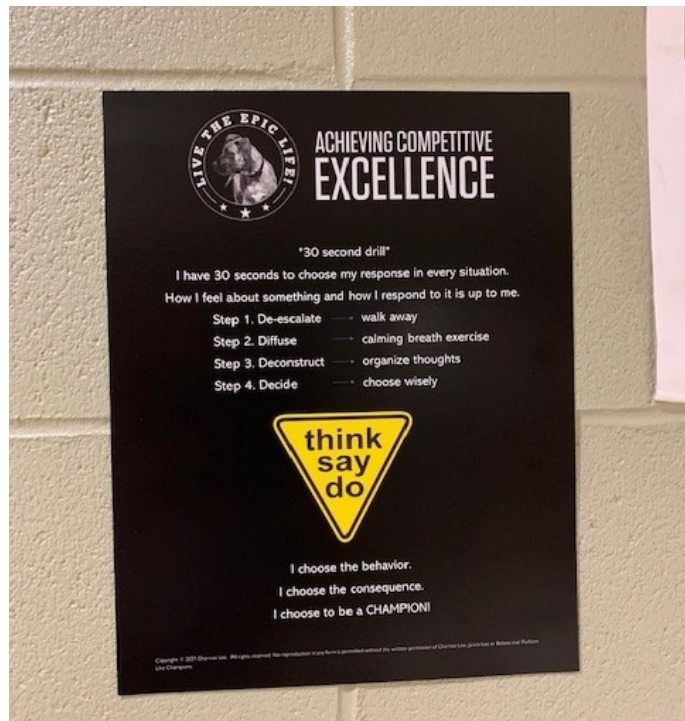
Students participating in the ACE Program self-reported generally positive feedback as to the program's merits with positive sentiments expressed 10 to 21 times more often than negative comments concerning the attributes of self-confidence, attitude, focus, behavior, self-belief, learning, motivation, and participation. Feedback was most positive in terms of individually reported improvements in self-confidence and positive attitude, while the most uncertainty of all questions asked concerned overall life impact of ACE. Based on the positive and definitive results concerning self-confidence and positive attitude, it is possible the students did not make a connection between these attributes and impact on their lives.

## Teacher Comments

A teacher provided written feedback on the ACE Program as shown below.

*The positive energy Charmas and Janice Lee bring to this school is contagious. The students are always excited when they know they get to see them. Their approach is unique. They relate to the students and care for them in a tangible way. I have used some of the Think Say Do streamline strategies in various situations. These strategies are easy to implement, efficient and highly effective. We have incorporated the Respect the Speaker and Mental Mastery Focused Drill into our daily routine, and it is making a difference. Students are learning to regulate their emotions and, in many cases, self-correcting. The Lee's are accessible via email or phone which is helpful when I want their input on certain situations. Ideally it would be great to have more time with the Lee's. We are fortunate to have ACE for our students and I value what the Lee's are doing...*

—Elementary Teacher



ACE Poster at Centennial Elementary School

## Principal Interview Analysis

The Centennial Elementary School principal consented to an interview about the ACE program. She reported her insights based on both personal observations and discussions with teachers with participating ACE students. Her comments converged on the following themes:

- a. *Janice and Charmas Lee are uniquely gifted coaches.* They are compelling role models for the student population. Their personalities, exemplary ethical code, and their ability to connect with students is considered anomalous. The principal expressed that it would be extremely difficult to find others that could replicate the intangible qualities Charmas and Janice bring to the classroom.
- b. *Engagement.* The students were very engaged with Coaches Lee and Lee and faculty members are engaged with students using the power words taught by the Lees.
- c. *Common language.* The ACE program provided a common language and shared understanding for students and faculty to communicate between and among both groups with regard to the fundamental ACE concepts. The principal reported internalization of the program's messaging with students using ACE program language in their conversations with students and teachers.
- d. *Faculty endorsed.* The principal stated the program had her support and the endorsement of teachers and the guidance counselor.

## Conclusions

The quantitative and qualitative data set analyzed suggest that the ACE Program is an effective program contributing to the the self-confidence, attitude, focus, behavior, self-belief, learning, motivation, and classroom participation of students at Centennial Elementary School. Students, teachers, and principals endorsed the program, specifically citing Janice and Charmas Lee, as a positive influence in their school. The principal supported retaining the ACE Program in her school.

## References

Huisingh, J. L. (2020). 2019-2020 ACE program report. Clovis Point Research.

Kelle, U. (2001). Sociological explanations between micro and macro and the integration of qualitative and quantitative methods. *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung/Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, 2, (43 paragraphs). Retrieved from <http://nbn-resolving.de/urn:nbn:de:0114-fqs010159>

Lee, J. & Lee, C. (2019). Achieving competitive excellence: Second quarter student survey. [Survey instrument].