

ALTERNATIVE COOPERATIVE EDUCATION (ACE)

PROGRAM GUIDE

The purpose of this Program Guide is to provide interested parties with additional information about the Alternative Cooperative Education (ACE) Program. This guide serves alongside VUSD School Board Policy 6181.2 and Administrative Regulation 6181.2(a)



About ACE

In 1991, the ACE program was started by parents who wanted to become more involved in the classroom. These parents, along with a core group of VUSD teachers, created a program that was run as a “school within a school” at Markham Elementary. They also formed a non-profit Parent Board that oversaw parent participation within the program and created an annual budget based on a fund that parents donated into. As a district program, ACE was governed by Administrative Rules that required parent participation within the program and emphasized that enrolling in ACE was a family commitment. The ACE Program had always drawn students from all over the district as well as students from other districts and the homeschooling community. Parents were allowed to be involved members of the educational community created within the ACE Program. They provided one on one or small group tutoring in academic areas as well as assisted with administrative tasks. Parents also ran committees and led classroom activities that resulted in an enriched learning environment. As a result, the ACE Program has thrived, often with waiting lists of students whose family desires placement within this program.

In 2009, parents and teachers from the ACE program decided to work together and in collaboration with VUSD to create a charter elementary school. This charter school would embody the core components of the ACE program and converted the Administrative Rules that governed ACE as an Alternative Program under VUSD to the foundation of the Alternative Cooperative Education Charter School. The founding group of the ACE Charter School was

ALTERNATIVE COOPERATIVE EDUCATION (ACE) (Continued)

composed of the teachers of the ACE Program at Markham Elementary, the Parent Governing Board of the ACE Program, the Board of Trustees of the Vacaville Unified School District, the District Administration Team known as the Cabinet, and the Charter Committee, which was composed of parent volunteers in the ACE program. In 2010, ACE became a dependent charter school sponsored by the Vacaville Unified School District. ACE Charter moved to its current location at Hemlock Elementary School.

During the 2016-2017 school year, it was determined that, while ACE had an excellent academic record and reputation, the size of the school made it challenging to exist under current California school funding structures. Options were considered on how to best move ACE forward and it was determined the reverting back to a Program was the most viable of these options.

Mission

The mission of the ACE program is to create a cooperative community dedicated to raising each child up to his or her potential. We encourage and incorporate parent involvement to support the idea that education is a shared responsibility. Together, we will support our students to be successful as they proceed through the educational system. Our goal is to educate children for a changing world and challenge young thinkers to be tomorrow's problem solvers. We will nurture globally responsible citizens who are empowered to think beyond the confines of a classroom and who recognize their impact on the world around them.

The ACE philosophy of education honors and supports each child's unique development. Our goal is to empower children to reach their potential in a supportive atmosphere where they experience joy, creativity, and self-confidence while learning about themselves and the world around them.

The ACE program is in accordance with California Education Code Sections 58500 through 58512 which provides that school districts may establish and maintain alternative schools and programs of choice.

Curriculum

The ACE curriculum and instruction design is based on integrated thematic curriculum, multi-age classrooms, differentiated instruction, cooperative learning, extended learning experiences, authentic assessment, teacher team collaboration, and family participation. All instruction is based on California State Standards and taught through educational themes.

ACE students will have access to the core curriculum through the use of Themes. Subject matter is integrated, using content from several academic subjects to make connections. The teaching of English Language Art standards is based on the theme being taught. Resources and materials are used from many sources to teach core curriculum. Some examples include, but are not limited to,

ALTERNATIVE COOPERATIVE EDUCATION (ACE) (Continued)

thematic fiction and non-fiction books, simulations, and Project GLAD (Guided Language Acquisition instruction) units. The District's currently adopted English Language Arts program may be used when appropriate in the thematic curriculum. To teach reading in the primary grades, leveled books will be used.

ACE currently uses a curriculum that follows a historical timeline. Themes pulled from social studies and science form the umbrella of a four-year cycle. An advantage of integrated curriculum is that additional concepts are embedded throughout the themes. As the students move from kindergarten to sixth grade, the curriculum is repeated on a four year cycle. Similar concepts are introduced but are covered in more depth and sophistication in the upper grades. Participation in the program from K-6th gives students the opportunity to experience the curriculum as a primary student and as an upper grader.

- Year 1: Ancient Civilizations, Earth's Past
 - The timeline starts with an investigation into what forms the layers of our Earth. The fossil record is explored. Students learn that the earth's crust also holds clues about our world's ancient people and civilizations.
- Year 2: Our Land and First People
 - The timeline continues as our focus turns to ancient people of our own continent, Native Americans. Students learn about habitats and understand the life style adaptations that each Native American group needed to make according to their particular habitat and climate.
- Year 3: Early Explorers & Settlers, Colonists, Creating a Nation
 - Moving forward in history, we learn that early explorers and settlers from other countries joined the Native Americans. The students study the trials and successes of the Pilgrims and our early forefathers. They learn about our original colonies and the formation of our nation.
- Year 4: Westward Movement, California History
 - During this year, the students study the early Americans' quest for new land and a new life. They learn of the difficulties and joys the early pioneers experienced as they pressed westward. They see the California Gold Rush as an event that sped up this process, enticed people from all over the world, and helped to form the state and city in which they live.

Although math is taught separately during the day, it is also integrated across the curriculum. The emphasis of instruction will be on helping them learn to think and reason mathematically. Because all students do not learn in the same way, ACE teachers will use an eclectic approach to

ALTERNATIVE COOPERATIVE EDUCATION (ACE) (Continued)

teaching math with proven strategies and a wide variety of enjoyable and stimulating materials. In addition to the Singapore Math Curriculum, resources may include, but are not limited to, district adopted materials, Marcy Cook materials, Accelerated Math, Investigations, Marilyn Burns activities, Math Excursions, Math Their Way, Project AIMS, Family Math, UC Davis Math Project activities, and technology. Math pacing guides and math strands will be aligned to the Common Core standards.

Multi-age Classrooms and Groupings

Throughout their lives, students will need to work alone and with others. Learners need experiences in all types of group situations to become effective working citizens in tomorrow's world. It is in this light that ACE supports multi-age grouping. Multi-age groupings are most effective when they are purposeful and well planned. They are not combination classrooms with separate curriculum. A multi-age classroom is organized with a mindful concern for heterogeneity in gender, ability, and age levels. Each year, classroom formations must be flexible in order to accommodate the incoming population. Ideally, multi-age classrooms allow students and parents to work with the same teacher for two years. This structure allows for rapport to develop between the teacher and family. It also allows the teacher more time to gather information about each child's learning style. Extended time with the teacher provides a continuous and coherent picture of a student's development throughout their elementary education.

Within and between each classroom, (K-6) multi-age groups are formed so that students may learn from each other and work together. Multi-age classrooms lend themselves to students working alone, one-on-one with an adult, in pairs, in small groups, and in large group situations. Students are expected to take responsibility for their own learning as well as encourage their classmates to participate in the learning process.

Teachers choose the type of group based upon what is appropriate for the task, the needs of the students, and the targeted standards. Student groups of different age levels can work together with a common goal. This establishes a potential mentoring situation and brings unique perspectives from the varied age levels that interact with each other. Each student brings his or her own background, knowledge, and experience to the task. Multi-age grouping can also be used to enhance project work and investigation. Acquisition of language occurs, and creative ideas are often shared in these mixed groups.

Differentiated Instruction

ACE teachers and parents agree that in learning, "one size does not fit all". It is for this reason that the teachers use differentiated instruction in the classroom. Differentiation is a proactive approach to instruction that incorporates a variety of strategies, based on the assessed needs of the students. This includes students who are English Learners and students with special needs.

ALTERNATIVE COOPERATIVE EDUCATION (ACE) (Continued)

Multiple ways of learning are provided for students of different abilities, learning styles, and needs. This approach adjusts the curriculum to the learner, rather than expect the learner to modify him or herself to the curriculum. It allows all students access to the same curriculum by providing learning tasks that are tailored to the students' needs. Teachers differentiate content using a variety of leveled, instructional materials that are adjusted for complexity. Each student is appropriately challenged, and targeted standards are successfully reached.

Effective teachers must know the standards and their students. The standards and the needs of the students should determine instructional decisions. Programs, materials, and resources should not guide curriculum and instruction. Materials and resources should be selected to teach to the needs of the particular group of students and the standards being taught. Elements that can be differentiated are content, process, and products. (Tomlinson, 2001)

ACE staff and parents supports this philosophy of differentiation and we believe:

- Everyone is a student.
- All students have areas of strength and areas that need improvements.
- Each student's brain is unique.
- Learning goes on for our entire lives.
- Each person brings his or her own prior knowledge and experiences to the classroom.
- Emotions and attitudes affect learning.
- Everyone can learn.
- Students learn in different ways and at different times.

Cooperative Learning

Cooperative Learning is a small group, interactive instructional strategy that allows students to work collaboratively on meaningful tasks. Students work to help themselves and others in a group. There is academic engagement through social interaction and activities are structured so that students need each other to accomplish tasks. Cooperative learning fosters personal growth, motivates students, and helps them construct their own knowledge. It promotes positive interaction and students learn through active involvement rather than sitting, listening, and watching.

Extended Learning Experiences

It is essential to expose children to rich learning experiences beyond the classroom setting so they can make connections between what they learn in school and the world in which they live. ACE expresses this belief by instituting programs including home learning, field trips, guest speakers, Tech Club, Service Learning, Multicultural enrichment, and parent led Friday events (Mini-clubs, Science Friday and Tech Club). Parent led activities rely solely on parent volunteers to continue and may be subject to change.

- **Field trips** help connect the thematic curriculum to the real world. They help students solidify their understanding of key concepts covered in class. In addition, an appreciation

ALTERNATIVE COOPERATIVE EDUCATION (ACE) (Continued)

of Fine Arts is instilled by attending dance, drama, musical performances, and museum exhibitions. Students learn to conduct themselves appropriately in a public setting at an early age. Field trips are a part of the ACE curriculum, and students are expected to attend and participate.

- **Guest speakers** bring the real world into the classroom. They are the inverse experience of field trips, bringing community specialists into the classroom to share their knowledge and expertise to support and enhance the curriculum.
- **Service Learning** empowers students by helping them identify areas of need in our community, state, country, or world, and take positive action to improve the situation. Students demonstrate citizenship by planning and implementing the project or service and in the process, discover their compassion and the rewards of making the world a better place to live. Service Club is parent-run and supervised; all activities take place on campus.
- **Multicultural Enrichment** is a monthly parent-run event during which students “travel” to a different country to learn about their traditions, geography, history, stories, people, cuisine, and art. Through exploring other cultures, students develop an appreciation of our common humanity and the sanctity of all living beings. Through greater understanding, students learn tolerance and respect for other people and cultures across the globe.
- **Tech Club** is a weekly activity in which parents plan and teach activities that will help students acquire the skills and understanding they need to be successful in a complex, highly technological world.
- **Mini clubs** are parent run and supervised. Parents share their own hobbies and skills with small groups of students. Students rotate through the sessions throughout the year in order to participate and interact with a variety of different parents and topics. Some examples of past Mini-clubs include, but are not limited to, sports, robotics, cake decorating, gardening, dance, foreign language, etc.
- **Science Friday** occurs once per month. Parents plan lessons and opportunities for students to explore the different branches of science. Science curriculum focus alternates between Scientific Method and Engineering Method.

Assessment

ACE will utilize clearly measurable student outcomes as a means to demonstrate that students are attaining requisite skills and knowledge. An important focus of the ACE program is assessment of student progress, both social and academic. We believe that a student should be assessed by looking at a range of their work and development through the course of a school year. This is accomplished through the use of portfolio assessment as well as federal, state, and district testing. ACE assessments will be calendared separately from the traditional VUSD elementary assessments.

- Portfolios are an authentic, accurate and valid tool that matches the student’s learning to the assessment. Portfolios are a purposeful collection of student work

ALTERNATIVE COOPERATIVE EDUCATION (ACE) (Continued)

based on criteria that support and provide evidence of the application and understanding of state standards. This assessment form reflects both the student's strengths and weaknesses. Portfolios exhibit the process of the student's cognitive, affective, and social accomplishments. They serve as a dynamic body of work that is constantly growing and changing along with the child's development. Both the teacher and student select samples included in the portfolio. It may contain:

- Self-portrait
- Student self-evaluations
- Writing proficiencies based on state standards
- Donald Bear spelling assessment
- Accelerated reading and mathematics testing
- ELA and math district benchmarks aligned yearly in a timeframe that supports a multi-age ACE classroom
- Teacher-developed formative assessments
- Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA) and Basic Reading Inventory (BRI) reading assessments
- Running records
- Student projects
- Students participate in district benchmark assessments three times per year. ELA benchmarks consistent with the rigor of the Common Core standards. Math benchmarks will identify essential standards within the core curriculum and will be consistent with the rigor of the Common Core standards.
- Students will be required to participate in applicable mandated federal and state assessments.
- Conferences will be held at the beginning and end of each school year in order to review the student's non graded report card and portfolio. Parent, teacher and student conference together. The report card will reflect the student's academic and social growth.
 - The ACE report card represents student progress as it relates to academic skills and standards using terms such as proficient, practicing and needs improvement; traditional letter grades are not used on the ACE report card.
 - Please refer to the section of this guide titled, **Calendar**, for more information about conferences and reporting.

Family Participation

The ACE program was founded on the principle that parent/guardian participation is critical for student success. In order to assist all families with meeting this recommendation, ACE has a committee (Parent Component Committee) whose function is to help families find ways to volunteer. PCC ensures that all families are provided with opportunities to volunteer and become

ALTERNATIVE COOPERATIVE EDUCATION (ACE) (Continued)

an integral part of the school. We suggest families volunteer: 1 child = 8 hours per month, 2 children = 10 hours per month, 3 children = 12 hours per month (maximum). ACE will not exclude any student whose family is unable to volunteer or participate.

We welcome all volunteers. Below is a partial list of ways to volunteer at ACE:

Help in the classrooms
Help out in the Food Room on Multicultural Day
Help in the Arts & Crafts Room on Multicultural Day
Help in the Sightseeing Room on Multicultural Day
Help in the Games Room on Multicultural Day
Be an extra hand on Multicultural Day
Help assemble Kinder Club activities
Lead a Service Club project *
Assist the Service Club project leader *
Help out on a Service Club Friday
Write a quarterly newsletter of the Service Club projects completed so far and thanking the volunteers
Put together folders for K-2 classrooms
Attend a Parent Board Meeting
Write an article for the News Note *
Work in a classroom
Help with the Book Fair
Work in the Library
Make copies for teachers
Clean the classrooms
Help with the PJ Breakfast *
Help with the Harvest Party
Make a booth for the Harvest Party *
Produce the News Note *
Tally ACE hours each month*
Organize a phone tree*
Buy the groceries for Multicultural Day
Arrange speakers for Multicultural Day *
Contact nonprofits for ideas for Service Club *
Chaperone a fieldtrip
Help teachers with take-home projects
Help with the website *
Help teachers check homework *
Lead an activity for thematic-based parties
Fill a Parent Board position

ALTERNATIVE COOPERATIVE EDUCATION (ACE) (Continued)

Fill a PTO Board position
Help with the school wide activities
Help with Winter Fest
Help with Back to School Night
Volunteer for Family Nights
Help organize 6th grade camp
Help organize 6th grade graduation
Do research for the Sightseeing Room *
Come up with recipes for the Food Room *
Organize past recipes for Multicultural Day into a makeshift cookbook and sell it to raise money for the ACE Charter School*
Research and apply for grants *
Volunteer for Yard Duty
Run errands/buy supplies for teachers
Serve as a classroom coordinator for parties and volunteers
Wash paint smocks *
Make playdough for teachers *
Help with classroom parties
Lead classroom music
Organize pizza night or other restaurant fundraising *
Help the nurse with vision and hearing screening
Serve on school site council
Level classroom books for Accelerated Reading program
Help with school garden

*These are projects that can be completed either mostly or entirely from home.

Calendar

ACE will meet state required minutes for the school year. Total minutes for the year will be in alignment with the district average. We will make the following adjustments to the school calendar:

- For the first full week of school (Monday to Friday) and the week before the end of the year conferences, ACE will have minimum days. This gives time for each child to meet individually with his/her teacher to complete beginning or end of the year assessments. The assessment process in a multi-age classroom takes a longer amount of time to complete. Having assessments done after the school day will allow the teachers to spend quality time with their students while class is in session. Class time will not be interrupted by having the teacher pulled from the students in order to assess one student

ALTERNATIVE COOPERATIVE EDUCATION (ACE) (Continued)

at a time. In order to provide the time for these minimum days, minutes will be increased for each regular school day to meet the total minute requirement.

- ACE teacher/parent/child conferences will be held at the beginning and end of the school year. Beginning of the year conferences will be held 6 to 8 weeks into a school year in order to review assessments, class work, and observations made by the teacher. At this time goals will be set for each student. The final conference will be held at the end of the school year. At this time the teacher, parents, and child will look at the student's portfolio and projects. A year's worth of progress will be shown for each student, further goals will be set, and a plan of action suggested.
- Mid-year progress reports will be completed for all students. Given that this is a parent participation program, teachers will be in regular contact with the parents of "at-risk" students throughout the school year.

Enrollment, Re-enrollment and Admissions

Participation in ACE is voluntary and is open to all VUSD families. To be successful at ACE, a student should:

- Be able to work independently and collaboratively in cooperative groups;
- Be able to transition between activities;
- Demonstrate a willingness to learn;
- Share responsibility for their own learning, both at home and at school;
- Be self-motivated and committed to following through on one's own decisions.

Beginning early in the calendar year, ACE will begin the process of establishing the following year's classroom configurations and its student body. ACE will hold an Informational Meeting in order for interested families to learn more about the program. Attendance at this meeting is strongly recommended so that incoming interested families can get a clear picture of what ACE is and how it successfully functions. In addition, observation days will be held for interested families to see the classrooms and parent led activities.

- ACE families of currently enrolled students will receive an *Intent to Return Form* early in the calendar year. This is to establish whether or not they wish to re-enroll their child (ren) or enroll a sibling into ACE for the following year. Families that have siblings currently on the Waiting List will receive priority placement based on that family's seniority on the Waiting List. If there is more than one family with equal seniority and children on the Waiting List, a lottery will be held. Currently enrolled families will have two weeks to complete and return the *Intent to Return Form* or risk losing their class

ALTERNATIVE COOPERATIVE EDUCATION (ACE) (Continued)

placement for the following year. This is the only action required for currently enrolled students and their families.

- New families who are interested in enrolling their child(ren) at ACE are strongly encouraged to attend:
 - Informational Meeting: ACE Charter School will hold Informational Meetings in order for interested families to learn more about the charter school. The ACE teachers will facilitate these meetings. Members of the ACE Parent Board and members of the District are welcome to come as well. Attendance at this meeting is strongly recommended so that incoming interested families can get a clear picture of what a Parent Co-op Program is and how it successfully functions. Main topics of discussion will be curriculum, parental involvement, student expectations and observation days.
 - Parent-Led Friday Activity: Observation days for parent-led multi-age activities will be scheduled. Each interested family shall sign in at the front office as proof of attendance. This is an opportunity for interested families to see a variety of activities solely run by ACE families and to have questions answered by both volunteers and students.
 - Classroom observation: The ACE teachers will designate certain days for Classroom Observation. This is a voluntary opportunity for interested families to see ACE Charter School classrooms in action and to ask questions of teachers, parent volunteers, and students. Each interested family shall sign in at the front office as proof of attendance.

All information, including dates and times, for the Parent-led Friday Activities Observation, Classroom Observation, and Lottery will be discussed at the Informational Meeting and posted on the program website. Information will be made available to any family unable to attend the Informational Meeting. ACE will not exclude any family from the lottery process who is unable to attend pre-lottery meetings and/or observations. We do strongly encourage families to attend these events so they can develop a strong understanding of what the program entails and make an informed decision.

Lottery and Wait List

Admission preference will be given in the following manner, in accordance with EC 47605:

- Currently enrolled students (exempt from the lottery process);
- Children and grandchildren of ACE certificated staff (exempt from the lottery process);
- Siblings of students currently enrolled;
- All other interested students, with preference given to students who reside within VUSD.

ALTERNATIVE COOPERATIVE EDUCATION (ACE) (Continued)

If the number of students interested in enrolling exceeds the capacity of ACE, then students will be enrolled in order of their enrollment priority grouping. When the process reaches a group that cannot be fully accommodated, a random public drawing (Lottery) will be held for members of that group. A higher weighting in the lottery will be given for students residing within VUSD. Families that live in district will be given 2 lottery tickets as compared to 1 lottery ticket for families living outside of the district. Tickets are per family, regardless of how many children they wish to enroll. ACE may accept students from outside of VUSD by the procedure outlined in the District's guidelines for inter-district transfers after all district students are considered.

After conferring with teachers regarding classroom configurations, the lottery will be drawn by the Teacher-in-Charge and/or Site Administrator and/or the Chief Academic Officer. At least one Executive Parent Board member should also be present. Family names will be drawn and all children in that family will be placed in available spots. If there are not enough spots to accommodate all the children in a family, children will be placed on Waiting Lists for the grade level into which they are seeking entry and in the order that their name was drawn. All families in the lottery will be notified of their status. When it has been decided that another student should be added to a specific grade, the pupil next on the Waiting List will be notified and offered the vacant spot.

The Waiting List will be maintained throughout the entire school year for which the lottery was drawn. Any family whose student remains on the Waiting List at the conclusion of the school year is responsible for contacting ACE in order to be considered for the following year's enrollment. The family must fill out a new Lottery Form for the next grade that their child will be attending

When families have a sibling on the Waiting List and a child (or children) enrolled in ACE, the sibling on the Waiting List will receive Sibling Priority Enrollment after the end of the academic year for which the Lottery was drawn. Siblings remain on the Sibling Priority Waiting List until a spot opens in their grade level. *(Note: It is possible for siblings to never receive a spot in ACE.)*

If a family is interested in a particular grade level that is full, the family should fill out an Interest Form in the office. When a position becomes available and there are no students left on the Waiting List, ACE will contact all families who have filled out Interest Forms and expressed interest for the grade level for which there is an opening. ACE does not enroll new students beyond the second trimester.

If there are openings for certain grade levels and no Interest Forms from families, ACE will advertise seats on the website until those seats are filled.

For families interested in ACE outside of our Enrollment window, we invite them to complete an Interest Form. Should a seat be open, a member of the Parent Board or School Staff will contact the parent to discuss the program. If the number of interested families is greater than open seats,

ALTERNATIVE COOPERATIVE EDUCATION (ACE) (Continued)

a Lottery will be held. *A note about Enrollment after the second trimester:* ACE classrooms are structured and run differently than traditional classrooms. Students receive guidance from the first day of school onward on how to work collaboratively in multi-age groups, interact with parents, and work in a self-directed manner. Portfolios are established using beginning of the year work samples, which form the baseline for student growth. This information is used to assess student progress at the end of the year conference. Students who enter mid-year or later will lack samples for comparison. Additionally, the thematic curriculum builds upon itself over the course of the year. A student entering late in the year will have missed many concepts and standards because they are taught in a sequence specific to the thematic curriculum. ACE Charter School parents attend many after school meetings and training sessions. This ensures the school runs smoothly and students are supported appropriately both at home and at school. The meetings are difficult to repeat during the school year due to time constraints on both teachers and ACE parents. Because of these reasons, ACE does not enroll new students beyond the second trimester.

Home Learning

Home Learning is a term used to describe homework. It is a key component of the program because it embraces the ACE philosophy that learning does not just happen in the classroom nor is it something that teachers alone dispense. Instead, family and people in the larger community are all teachers and learners. Students use this time to explore their own interests and teach their peers what they have learned.

In order to provide students the opportunity to do this, traditional homework packets are not given out. Students grade 1-6 are on a four-week cycle which includes a math week, a writing week, a reading week, and a project week. Changes to home learning may be made at the discretion of the teacher.

Parents are instrumental in helping guide their child through the Home Learning process. They must help their children set realistic goals and assist them with whatever they may need to make each week meaningful and successful. Parents are expected to review, edit, and help correct all of their child's completed work. Parents will communicate with the teacher about what they are observing during their child's Home Learning time. Both the parent and the student are required to sign the child's Home Learning log to indicate that the student successfully completed their work for the week.

Home Learning for the 1st through 6th graders is also divided into four main areas and repeated on a spiraled basis. They are also expected to practice spelling and math skills nightly. Upper grade students have two options to approach Home Learning. One possibility is to approach the month thematically, using each week to investigate a topic of personal interest, which culminates

ALTERNATIVE COOPERATIVE EDUCATION (ACE) (Continued)

in a project that is presented to the class. The other option available to students is to approach each subject week independently from the others.

- **Reading Week:** Students select high-interest books at their level to read.
- Their reading may relate to the project they will present at the end of the month. They are encouraged to explore a wide range of genres. Students keep a daily log of the books they've read and are required to write a summary of their reading for the week.
- **Writing Week:** Students work on composing one or more pieces of writing in which they employ the whole writing process from prewriting, rough draft, to final copy. They may select the writing genre of their choice or it may be assigned based on state standards. Their finished composition may be used as part of their culminating project or shared separately during the writing week.
- **Math Week:** Student work is based on the concepts being covered in class as well as individual needs. Students may practice these skills using student workbooks, teacher handouts, technology, board games, and other resources. Math can also be incorporated into the student's Home Learning Project presentation.
- **Project Week:** Students research and create a presentation about something they've learned and teach it to the class. They are expected to have a visual to use that demonstrates what they have learned (a video, picture, diorama, art project, digital slide presentation, poster or other form of technology, etc.). Students are evaluated on how well they are prepared, the quality of their work and how effectively they present. By the time students' graduate from ACE, they are confident and competent public speakers.

ACE Parent Board and ACE Foundation

The ACE Parent Board is an elected group of parents that oversees the parent involvement component of the ACE Charter School. The Parent Board, consists of Executive Board Members and the Chairs of Permanent Committees, utilizes a set of by-laws voted upon by the parent body of the program. Parent Board does not get involved in academic matters that are the responsibility of the teachers, principal and VUSD.

The ACE Foundation is a non-profit 501 (c) (3) organization. The Foundation's sole purpose is to provide funds for activities and supplies at the ACE Charter School, which is located on the Hemlock Elementary School campus. The ACE Parent Board requests money from the Foundation to cover the costs of Multicultural Day, Parent-Led Projects, Fieldtrips, and Classroom Supplies requested by ACE Teachers on behalf of all the children enrolled.