

# ACES Youth Chinese Program Teacher Handbook

**For paid instructional employees assigned to Youth Chinese**

School year 2026-2027

Effective September 24, 2026

DG Zenith Academy Inc. dba ACES Learning Center dba Austin ESL School

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| Document       | ACES Youth Chinese Program Teacher Handbook                                                    |
| Owner          | DG Zenith Academy Inc. dba ACES Learning Center dba Austin ESL School                          |
| Applies to     | Youth Chinese Program only                                                                     |
| Effective date | September 24, 2026                                                                             |
| Supersedes     | All earlier Youth Chinese handbook editions and any conflicting website or enrollment language |

This handbook defines the required instructional, custody, safety, recordkeeping, and professional practices for the Youth Chinese Program. Every teacher is responsible for maintaining the instruction-only operating model from arrival through dismissal and for reporting any conflict between actual practice and this handbook immediately.

## Program status and instructional scope

The ACES Youth Chinese Program is not licensed or regulated by Texas Health and Human Services Commission Child Care Regulation. It is not a licensed child-care facility, day-care center, or licensed before-school or after-school program, and it does not offer child-care services.

Austin ESL School, formerly ACES Learning Center, holds institutional accreditation from the Commission on English Language Program Accreditation. The institutional accreditation record includes the Chinese Program as a Youth Program. CEA accreditation is educational accreditation; Texas HHSC independently determines exemption from child-care regulation.

The sole subject is Mandarin Chinese language and literacy. Teachers may not add or permit services that are unrelated to direct Mandarin instruction. The program serves ages 5 through 13 in public-school grades kindergarten through grade five and places students by actual Mandarin proficiency.

## Teacher qualifications and assignment

Youth Chinese teachers are paid employees. Before assignment, administration verifies that the teacher meets the program's qualification standard:

- a college degree from an institution in China;
- first-language Mandarin fluency;
- training in Mandarin instruction;
- at least three years of teaching experience;
- required institutional and compliance training under the CEA-accredited program; and
- completion of required criminal-history background checks using Texas Department of Public Safety information and any additional screening required by law or institutional policy.

Administration maintains the qualification and instructional-assignment roster. A teacher may work with children only after administrative approval and may teach only the assigned class, level, or approved substitute assignment.

## Required work period and responsibility

- Arrive by 3:15 p.m., review the current attendance and authorized-pickup roster, prepare materials, and be ready to accept custody at 3:20 p.m.
- Remain responsible for the assigned students throughout arrival, instruction, and dismissal unless another authorized employee completes a documented transfer.
- Do not leave students unattended. For an urgent need, contact the program office and wait until an authorized employee arrives before leaving the group.
- Remain through the completion of custody transfer. No student may be left alone or released to an unauthorized person.
- Notify administration as early as possible if absent or late. Provide the approved lesson plan and instructional materials for a substitute.

## Daily instructional and custody schedule

| Time           | Classification                             | What occurs                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|----------------|--------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 3:20-3:40 p.m. | Arrival and custody transfer               | A parent or authorized independent provider hands the student directly to an assigned ACES teacher in the lobby. The teacher records attendance. Students sit quietly in the lobby or Room 115. No organized activity or unrelated service is offered. |
| 3:40-3:45 p.m. | Direct Mandarin instruction                | Mandarin attendance exchange, oral warm-up, and retrieval of prior language targets.                                                                                                                                                                   |
| 3:45-4:00 p.m. | Direct Mandarin instruction                | Listening and pronunciation practice, including tones, Pinyin, sound discrimination, teacher modeling, and guided repetition.                                                                                                                          |
| 4:00-4:20 p.m. | Direct Mandarin instruction                | Textbook vocabulary, meaning in context, character recognition, and guided language production.                                                                                                                                                        |
| 4:20-4:40 p.m. | Direct Mandarin instruction                | Chinese reading, comprehension questions, oral fluency, and recitation.                                                                                                                                                                                |
| 4:40-5:00 p.m. | Direct Mandarin instruction                | Character writing, stroke order, dictation, grammar, and sentence formation.                                                                                                                                                                           |
| 5:00-5:15 p.m. | Direct Mandarin instruction                | Structured speaking through dialogue, descriptions, and lesson-based language role-play.                                                                                                                                                               |
| 5:15-5:25 p.m. | Direct Mandarin assessment and instruction | Individualized proficiency practice and formative oral, reading, and written assessment with corrective teaching.                                                                                                                                      |
| 5:25-5:30 p.m. | Direct Mandarin assessment and instruction | Mandarin recap, exit assessment, and immediate corrective feedback.                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| 5:30-5:50 p.m. | Dismissal and custody transfer             | Students sit quietly in the lobby or Room 115 with the assigned teacher. The teacher verifies the parent or authorized pickup person, records departure, and releases the student directly. No organized activity or unrelated service is offered.     |

There is no scheduled break during 3:40-5:30 p.m. A student may request restroom access or water. The teacher must manage the request safely while instruction continues for the class and must never withhold necessary restroom or water access as discipline.

## Arrival procedure

1. Accept the student only through direct handoff from a parent or authorized independent provider inside the lobby.

2. Immediately mark the student's arrival on the attendance roster. Do not rely on an unattended sign-in sheet or assume custody from a curbside drop-off.
3. Keep arriving students seated quietly in the lobby or Room 115 under the assigned teacher's supervision.
4. Do not provide games, toys, snacks, homework help, recreation, free play, movies, cartoons, or screen entertainment during arrival.
5. At 3:40 p.m., escort the group to the assigned classroom and begin Mandarin instruction promptly.

## Instructional requirements

- Prepare and follow a written lesson plan aligned to the assigned curriculum, textbook, learning objectives, and student proficiency level.
- Teach listening, speaking, pronunciation and Pinyin, vocabulary, reading, character writing, grammar, sentence formation, oral expression, composition, recitation, and Mandarin proficiency assessment.
- Conduct instruction primarily in Mandarin and use English only when necessary to clarify language instruction or protect safety.
- Use Chinese cultural stories, poems, and context only as Mandarin language and literacy content, not as a separate activity, history, art, craft, dance, cooking, or recreation class.
- Provide active instruction throughout 3:40-5:30 p.m. Do not create a snack period, free period, general study hall, school-homework period, recreation period, or entertainment period.
- Do not teach or assist with mathematics, English reading, science, CogAT, OLSAT, chess, talent subjects, crafts, robotics, music, dance, athletics, or other unrelated skills during the program.
- Teachers may assign limited Mandarin-only home practice, primarily oral-expression, reading, or character work. Do not assign or assist with public-school homework under the Youth Chinese Program.
- Do not use movies, cartoons, video games, or screen entertainment. A device may be used only for a brief, teacher-controlled Mandarin instructional purpose approved in the lesson plan.

## Assessment and academic records

- Use formative oral, reading, writing, and comprehension checks during instruction.
- Administer the approved formal oral and written assessment at the end of each semester.
- Prepare a formal progress report for every assigned student each semester.
- Keep lesson plans, attendance, assessments, grade records, and progress reports accurate, timely, and confidential.
- Do not announce individual grades publicly or discuss a student's records with unauthorized persons.
- Submit required curriculum, assessment, and quality-assurance records to the program director for CEA institutional review and continuous improvement.

## Dismissal procedure

1. At 5:30 p.m., end instruction, account for every student, gather belongings, and escort the class to the lobby or Room 115.
2. Keep students seated quietly. Do not provide an activity or unrelated service during the 5:30-5:50 p.m. pickup window.
3. Verify the parent or adult against the authorized-pickup record, record departure, and release the student directly.
4. Do not release a student based only on recognition, a message from another child, an unverified telephone request, or curbside observation.

5. If a student remains at 5:50 p.m., contact the parent and emergency contacts and notify the responsible administrator. Apply the late-pickup policy. Parents must ensure no child remains after 6:00 p.m.

## Transportation boundaries

ACES does not operate transportation as part of Youth Chinese. Teachers and office staff may not promise, schedule, change, dispatch, collect payment for, or troubleshoot transportation. Direct all transportation scheduling, route, absence, delay, cancellation, or payment matters to the parent and independent provider. At the facility, apply the same direct handoff, attendance, authorization, and release rules to an independent provider as to a parent.

## Food water medication and health

- ACES provides no meals, snacks, food, or beverages and schedules no snack period. Do not distribute food or use food as a reward.
- A student may request water. Do not withhold water or restroom access as discipline.
- Review relevant allergy, medical, disability, accommodation, and emergency-contact information for assigned students while protecting confidentiality.
- Do not administer routine medication unless administration has approved a written plan and the teacher is specifically authorized and trained.
- If a student appears seriously ill or injured, protect the group, notify the program office, contact emergency services when warranted, and contact the parent or emergency contact.
- Complete an incident report promptly for any injury, illness, safety event, missing-child concern, unauthorized pickup attempt, or other significant incident.

## Supervision and classroom safety

- Know the location of every assigned student and maintain active visual and auditory supervision appropriate to the classroom and custody-transfer setting.
- Keep exits, walkways, and classroom floors clear. Enforce no running, fighting, climbing on furniture, throwing objects, or carrying dangerous items.
- Keep personal phones silent and put away except for an emergency or authorized program communication. Do not use personal devices for entertainment while responsible for students.
- Never photograph, record, or post a student without the program's documented authorization and approved purpose.
- Follow evacuation, severe-weather, fire, lockdown, medical-emergency, and reunification procedures and participate in required training and drills.
- Comply with Texas mandatory reporting requirements for suspected child abuse or neglect. The duty to report cannot be delegated to another employee.

## Behavior management

Use developmentally appropriate, respectful, instruction-centered behavior support. Permitted responses include clear expectations, proximity, redirection, choice within instructional boundaries, an instructional seating change, a private reminder, parent communication, and administrative assistance.

The following are prohibited: corporal punishment; pushing, pulling, grabbing, shaking, or striking; threats; humiliation; ridicule; abusive language; collective punishment; forced exercise; punitive cleaning; standing a student in a corner; food, water, or restroom restriction; unsafe isolation; or requiring another student to discipline a peer.

Report serious or repeated behavior to administration and document facts objectively. Administration determines suspension or dismissal after reviewing the incident and communicating with the parent.

## Professional communication and complaints

- Send an introductory message to parents before or at the beginning of the assigned term and provide approved contact information.
- Respond to routine parent communication within two business days when practicable. Do not conduct extended parent conferences while supervising arrival or dismissal.
- Use factual, respectful language and protect student confidentiality. Do not discuss another student, family, or employee.
- Report academic, placement, safety, custody, discrimination, harassment, or policy complaints to the program director and cooperate with review.
- Do not retaliate against a student, parent, or employee for raising a good-faith concern.

## Representation and advertising

Teachers must describe Youth Chinese consistently as a single-skill Mandarin language and literacy instructional program. Do not describe it as child care, day care, a licensed after-school program, general supervision, homework care, camp, or enrichment. Do not advertise snacks, unrelated subjects, recreation, transportation, or any service prohibited by this handbook. Send any public statement, flyer, social-media post, or website change about the program to administration for approval before publication.

## Training observation and compliance

- Complete required orientation, safety, custody-transfer, background-check, curriculum, assessment, and CEA institutional-compliance training.
- Participate in classroom observation, coaching, and record review as assigned by the director.
- Immediately report any actual practice, instruction, form, handbook, advertisement, or website statement that conflicts with this handbook.
- Administration may revise assignments or procedures to preserve student safety, instructional quality, CEA standards, and the single-skill operating model.

## Employee acknowledgment

I have read and understand the ACES Youth Chinese Program Teacher Handbook. I agree to follow the instruction-only schedule, direct custody-transfer procedures, prohibited-services rules, safety requirements, recordkeeping obligations, and professional standards described above.

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Employee name  
and signature

Administrator signature

Date