

2021 National ACE School Awardee:

Creekside Elementary

Livingston, TX Principal, Elisha Bell

ACE School Coordinator and P.E. Teacher, Melanie Justice

Specialist ACE Team: Candice Cozart, Music Teacher

Crystal Valderez, Physical Education Paraprofessional

Vernell Wright, Computer Lab Paraprofessional

Rachel Bily, Utility Paraprofessional

Creekside Elementary School certainly soared during the ACE program this year. Under the leadership of a very enthusiastic specialist, the P.E. teacher, *Ms Melanie Justice*, the school had a stellar year! The principal, *Ms Elisha Bell*, empowered Ms Justice and her team of ACE specialists to conduct above and beyond STEM lessons that allowed the students to learn history, art, and a whole lot more this year!

The dynamic “ACE flight crew” that worked with Ms Justice was: music teacher, *Ms Candice Cozart*; P.E. paraprofessional, *Ms Crystal Valderez*; computer lab paraprofessional, *Ms Vernell Wright*; and utility paraprofessional, *Ms Rachel Bily*.

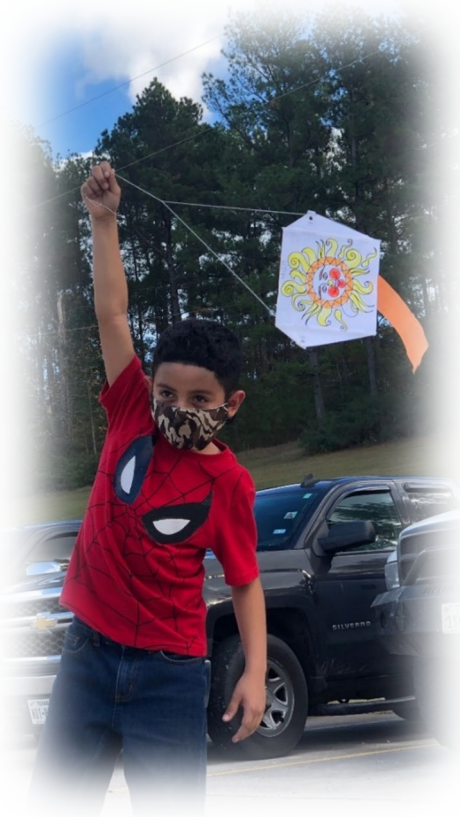
Working at a Title I school with over 50% minority students in grades one through five, each of the team members was assigned five classes to which they all taught the same lessons to all the students on each *Thrilling Thursday*! The team taught a total of 25 lessons to almost 500 students, making lesson modifications based on grade levels.

The students each made an ACE logbook, much like a pilot logbook, wherein they recorded each lesson type, date, duration, and totals. At completion of each lesson, students received a stamp/sticker on the badge page for each lesson. The team leaders wore purple ACE shirts for every lesson.

Ensuring the ACE lessons related to classroom and seasonal topics was important to the team and their lesson presentations showed it. Although guest speakers were not allowed in the school due to COVID restrictions, the school brought in special guests outdoors and via technology. They also shared their activities via social media and the local newspaper.

From the end of August through the end of April, the students were involved in CAP aerospace/STEM lessons.

During P.E., the students would sit in their own hangar (their seats) while they learned the basics of airplane anatomy, the four forces of flight, and the three rotational dimensions of flight. They experienced Bernoulli’s principle in several wind-related lessons with different



aircraft, and learned about the clouds and weather, as well. The students also used stomp rockets angled toward the basketball goal and made angular adjustments in hopes of scoring.

During December, the students participated in lessons about *The Great Uncle Wiggly Wings*, Col Gail Halvorsen, the famed WWII *Candy Bomber*. The students learned about the history of the Berlin Airlift and made parachutes attached to Hershey bars. The local fire department launched the students' parachutes from a 60' ladder truck, which was amazing to the students. *Batman* even helped drop the parachutes from the top of the school! The students read the book, [Christmas from Heaven](#), and watched the video about the 100-yr-old Col Halverson narrated by Tom Brokaw, which impressed the students and their caring hearts.

In January, Mars Hall was named-- the school's 100' hallway that connects the main entrance to the gymnasium and cafeteria. Each grade level had their own section of the hall, and after the lesson about designing their own mission patch, almost 500 Mars mission patches were posted on the walls. Each end of the hallway had an inflatable solar system hanging from the ceiling and students would call out the planet names as they walked under them. The middle section focused on Mars and the Perseverance Rover landing, with a countdown to the landing on the Red Planet each day until the successful landing in February. Then, the focus on the Ingenuity helicopter started and continued until the end of the year.

Throughout the rest of the year, the students studied space topics, learned the phonetic alphabet, and created the Mars helicopter, Ingenuity, from marshmallows and toothpicks.

The culminating event was conducted at the end of April where each student was presented their ACE certificate and entered their final logbook entry to take home. The "Top Gun" students in the 5th grade "graduating" classes earned a wing pin.

As for statistical success, the students had phenomenal growth as their post-test averages increased 120% from their pre-test averages. The teachers are anticipating higher state standardized test scores and notice that Thursday, ACE Day, had higher attendance rates.

CAP sincerely applauds this soaring school and appreciates their work with CAP's aerospace/STEM programs! [Creekside Elementary School](#) will host the 2021-2022 National ACE Lift-off in October! Stay Tuned!

CONGRATULATIONS, CREEKSIDE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL!

See associated school photos, below!

Find their Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/lisdcs>



2021 National ACE School Coordinator Awardee:
ACE School Coordinator and P.E. Teacher, Melanie Justice
Creekside Elementary Livingston, TX

Creekside Elementary School's P.E. teacher, Ms Melanie Justice, impressed CAP with all she did to implement STEM with the entire school via her P.E. classroom and her ACE "flight crew" leadership team! It is quite unusual for the P.E. teacher to also be the shining STEM star in a school, but Ms Justice is just that, quite unusual! Her work is described in the outstanding activities depicted in the National ACE School award write-up, above, and the photos to follow certainly reveal the happy student results of a passionate and enthusiastic teacher.

"Thrilling Thursdays are always so much fun at Creekside! We can't wait to see what adventures Coach Justice and her aviation crew have in store for us!!"- Creekside Facebook post

CONGRATULATIONS, COACH MELANIE JUSTICE!
"Thrilling Thursdays" with your Aviation Crew were AMAZING!

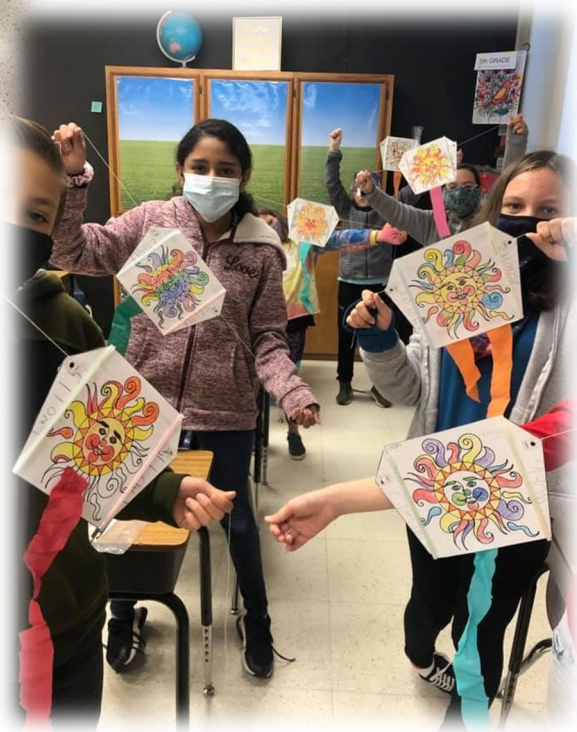














*Congratulations to Creekside Elementary,
and to Coach Justice and her Aviation Team,
for an AWESOME ACE YEAR!*