



## PeaceKeepers I

PEIMS Code: N1290024

Abbreviation: PEACE1

Grade Level(s): 9-12

Award of Credit: 1.0

### Approved Innovative Course

- Districts must have local board approval to implement innovative courses.
- In accordance with Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §74.27, school districts must provide instruction in all essential knowledge and skills identified in this innovative course.
- Innovative courses may only satisfy elective credit toward graduation requirements.
- Please refer to [TAC §74.13](#) for guidance on endorsements.

### Course Description:

PeaceKeepers® is a peer mediation program which trains high school students in all aspects of the mediation process. These students then mediate peer conflicts resolving them in a peaceful manner. PeaceKeepers® is designed to provide skill development and knowledge acquisition in mediation plus substantial field experience to young people who are interested in careers in education and/or related helping professions. Participants will receive intensive classroom training in skill-building mediation activities and implement a campus-wide mediation program as their field practicum. Positive peer influence through nonviolence will be a central strategy for addressing such issues as conflict resolution, anger management, low academic achievement, dropout prevention, behavior problems, and negative attitudes toward school, in addition to other issues of concern in the school/district.

### Essential Knowledge and Skills:

- (a) General Requirements. The course is recommended for students in grades 9-12. Students shall be awarded one credit for successful completion of this course. (Note: Students will benefit from Level I even if they do not take Level II, however, in Level II the skills learned in Level I will be further enhanced and developed.)
- (b) Introduction.
  - (1) Many of the difficulties students and teachers encounter during the school day center around interpersonal conflict. Conflicts can begin with minor issues and, if unresolved, may spiral into more serious issues such as violence. By providing a safe, neutral, and respectful place for students to work toward resolutions in an educational setting, PeaceKeepers® students improve the school experience for everyone.
  - (2) Students learn and apply knowledge and skills which may be used to improve the quality of their academic and personal lives. The course standards require strong participant commitment to use skills such as positive communication, cooperation, and problem solving to resolve conflicts nonviolently.

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- (c) Knowledge and skills.
- (1) Communication skill development. The student learns and uses active listening skills as a method for validating others. The student is expected to:
    - (A) identify examples of good and poor listening;
    - (B) list and exhibit effective listening skills such as being able to restate what has been said, able to summarize what they have heard, and to ask clarifying questions;
    - (C) explain the effects of good and poor listening;
    - (D) explain and demonstrate restating, reframing, encouraging, summarizing, and questioning techniques;
    - (E) apply higher-level listening skills such as listening for underlying motives in mediation; and
    - (F) recognize a disputant's body language to determine if the body mirrors what the speaker is saying.
  - (2) Communication skill development. The student demonstrates effective listening techniques to identify feelings. The student is expected to:
    - (A) explain the difference between thoughts and feelings;
    - (B) acknowledge the disputants' perceived feelings and emotions in a conflict; and
    - (C) demonstrate techniques to help disputants who have difficulty talking about their feelings express how they feel.
  - (3) Mediation strategies. The student explains the role of the peer mediator program. The student is expected to:
    - (A) define the role of a mediator;
    - (B) explain and practice the seven stages of the mediation process; and
    - (C) explain when to refer certain situations to the mediation coordinator, counselor, or principal.
  - (4) Mediation strategies. The student learns basic principles of human behavior. The student is expected to:
    - (A) list expected positive behavioral norms such as openness and respect, no name calling, and a willingness to work to solve the problem;
    - (B) list expectations that will facilitate the mediation process such as having the disputants agree to listen and not interrupt; and
    - (C) identify and discuss how human emotions affect behavior and the ability to handle conflict.
  - (5) Mediation strategies. The student gains an understanding of the importance of confidentiality. The student is expected to:
    - (A) explain what confidentiality means; and
    - (B) discuss the consequences of a breach in confidentiality in the mediation setting.

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- (6) Mediation strategies. The student investigates conflict dynamics and individual responses to conflict. The student is expected to:
- (A) examine the student's own ideas about the types and causes of conflicts that are common on the campus;
  - (B) summarize the student's own reactions to conflicts common on the campus;
  - (C) identify and explain different strategies for dealing with common conflicts and give examples of these strategies;
  - (D) compare different outcomes to conflict resolution such as win/win, win/lose, and lose/lose; and
  - (E) explain how conflict can provide an opportunity for growth and change.
- (7) Mediation strategies. The student uses strategies that facilitate agreements between disputants. The student is expected to:
- (A) name and explain the components of a good agreement;
  - (B) respond in writing to all the issues and concerns identified by both parties in a simulated setting; and
  - (C) explain the impact that multiple viewpoints have on the mediation process.
- (8) Mediation strategies. The student learns techniques for anger management. The student is expected to:
- (A) describe the emotion of anger and give examples of how anger may be exhibited;
  - (B) discuss and apply common methods for coping with anger effectively; and
  - (C) identify and implement strategies for dealing with a peer who is angry.
- (9) Mediation skill development. The student demonstrates how to elicit needs from others. The student is expected to:
- (A) analyze the difference between needs and solutions in mediation;
  - (B) model for the disputants how to see the problem in terms of needs rather than solutions; and
  - (C) demonstrate support for each disputant to help them understand what the other person needs or wants to resolve the conflict.
- (10) Mediation skill development. The student learns how to maintain neutrality. The student is expected to:
- (A) discuss the concept of neutrality and explain the importance of maintaining neutrality during mediation;
  - (B) identify techniques for asking questions and reframing statements in a neutral way;
  - (C) demonstrate effective strategies to help disputants stay focused on reaching a solution; and
  - (D) investigate methods of empowering both disputants to solve their own problems.

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- (11) Improved school environment and peer interaction. The student acquires an understanding of racial, ethnic, and socio-economic culture. The student is expected to:
- (A) state elements of culture by giving examples of values and customs from one’s own culture;
  - (B) discuss ways to demonstrate respect for different cultures by being open to and respectful of various cultural traditions such as, language, dress, religion, and family;
  - (C) analyze how a disputant’s or mediator’s culture can affect the mediation process; and
  - (D) express seen and unseen elements of culture such as how respect is shown both to elders and people in authority and the concept of what constitutes “family.”
- (12) Improved school environment and peer interaction. The student demonstrates an understanding of other school-related social issues and topics. The student is expected to:
- (A) identify forms of sexual harassment, bullying, dating violence, and stereotyping;
  - (B) summarize elements of peer pressure; and
  - (C) devise and discuss pro-social strategies for impacting the student’s peers and school.

### Recommended Resources and Materials:

- PeaceKeepers© Curriculum and PeaceKeepers© Student Workbook
- Peers Making Peace (PMP) Orientation video

### Recommended Course Activities:

Besides the knowledge and skills development experiences, The PeaceKeepers® curriculum provides extensive practicum activities. Recommended activities include:

- presenting mediation strategies to students and faculty;
- creating team activities to establish rapport;
- creating team activities to establish the mediation team dynamics;
- creating team activities to set norms; and
- establishing team expectations

### Suggested methods for evaluating student outcomes:

Each PeaceKeepers teacher, campus, and/or district can collect and utilize the following information to evaluate how well the students learned and used the mediation skills: The

- number of mediations held and types of issues mediated;
- number of successful mediations;
- retention rates of mediators; and
- mediators’ fidelity to the mediation process.

### Teacher qualifications:

An assignment for PeaceKeepers is allowed with a valid Texas secondary classroom teaching certificate. Additionally, it is recommended that the teacher of assignment hold any one of the following

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certificates: Counselor (Grades PK-12), School Counselor (Early Childhood-Grade 12). The program coordinator should also have successfully completed the PeaceKeepers Coordinator program and be certified in the PeaceKeeper Facilitator training.

### Additional information:

The curriculum details a systematic and rigorous selection process that should be utilized, with the goal of selecting a diverse group of students who are representative of the student body as a whole. The potential peer mediators are ones who have demonstrated the ability to be good listeners, who are trustworthy, empathetic, caring, with a high degree of personal responsibility and initiative.

Students selected for the program must be recommended by a combination of teachers, counselors, administrators, and/or students, and then interviewed by the teacher and program planning team using the questions provided in the curriculum as a reference. It is recommended that the student take both levels of PeaceKeepers®.