

ACTNOW!

Afterschool for Children and Teens

Policy Update

ESSA Round Three of Statewide Listening Tour

Congress passed the [Every Student Succeeds Act](#) (ESSA) in December 2015, reauthorizing the nation's largest education law with many much needed updates and revisions. ISBE is working on its plan to implement this new law, which provides Illinois with many opportunities to tailor implementation to our needs. You can find ISBE's draft plan [here](#).

There is a lot of language in ESSA that is very favorable to afterschool programs—even programs outside of 21st Century. It is important that afterschool providers point this out to ISBE so that it is included in Illinois' plan.

We encourage providers who could not attend the listening tour in person to submit comments electronically to essa@isbe.net by **Tuesday, December 27th**. You can find ACT Now's testimony [here](#), sample comments for providers [here](#), and abbreviated talking points [here](#). Remember it is always more effective to individualize your comments to your programs' specific needs, for example including examples of how your program promotes family engagement, STEM, or College and Career Readiness. Please contact Susan Stanton, ACT Now Network Lead, at sstanton@voices4kids.org, with any questions.

21st CCLC RFP Recommendations

The passing of the Every Student Succeeds ACT (ESSA) provides the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) an opportunity to revise its 21st Century Community Learning Centers (CCLC) process.

We need you to tell your policymakers that the RFP needs to be released in order to time the grant start date as much as possible with the start of the fiscal year. Timing the RFP this way allows for schools and partners to engage in shared planning before the start of school, leading to stronger programs and stronger partnerships. It also means that there will not be a gap in programs or services, and that grantees do not need to lay off staff. Click on this [link](#) to share this message with legislators asking them to tell ISBE to release the RFP. You can also use this [form letter](#) to send a message to ISBE.

Youth Opportunities

Joy Maker Challenge

Join generationOn for the Joy Maker Challenge, which connects kids and teens to meaningful, hands-on service projects during the holiday season. Volunteer from now until December 23rd and Hasbro will donate a toy or game to Toys for Tots, up to 1 million dollars' worth, for each kid or teen who participates. Share your story and you'll be entered to win grants to support further service. To sign-up and for more details click [here](#).

Chicago Regional Bridge Building Contest

The 41st Annual Chicago Regional Bridge Building Contest will be held on **Tuesday, January 24, 2017** on the campus of the Illinois Institute of Technology. The competition is open to high school physics and science students who have placed in the top four of a bridge building contest at their school. For more information, click [here](#).

EngineerGirl Essay Contest

The 2017 EngineerGirl essay contest is open to female and male students in grades three through 12. Participants will create and submit an original essay describing how engineering might improve life of a species on the International Union for the Conservation of Nature's Red List. First place winners in each grade category will receive \$500. All entries must be received by **Wednesday, February 1, 2016**. The contest guidelines and entry form can be viewed [here](#).

World of 7 Billion Video Contest

Population Education, the only national program with a strong emphasis on curriculum and professional development for K-12 educators that focuses on human population issues, is hosting the *World of 7 Billion* video contest. The competition challenges students in grades six through 12 to illustrate, in 60 seconds or less, the connection between world population growth and one of three global challenges: climate change, ocean health, or rapid urbanization. Participating teachers can receive free curriculum resources and student winners will receive cash prizes up to \$1,000. All entries must be submitted by **4:00 p.m. CST on Thursday, February 23, 2017** to be considered. Contest guidelines and resources can be accessed [here](#).

Trainings and Webinars

Youth and Resilience Professional Development Training Series

The Night Ministry and the National Runaway Safeline (NRS) will be hosting its next installment of the Youth & Resilience Professional Development Training Series entitled “Creative Approaches to Engaging Youth” on **Wednesday, December 14, 2016**. The workshop will be held, from 12:30 p.m. through 4:00 p.m. at the NRS office, located at 3141B North Lincoln, Chicago. For more information or to register, click [here](#).

Knowing When STEM Learning Runs Deep

Join Click2Science on **December 14, 2016** at 1:00pm for their upcoming Webinar Wednesday entitled “Knowing When STEM Learning Runs Deep.” Learn useful ways for assessing out-of-school time STEM learning using formative and summative evaluation strategies. Click [here](#) for more information or to register for this event.

Using the New ESSA Regulations to Advance Educational Opportunity

Join the Alliance for Excellent Education and the Learning Policy Institute on **Wednesday, December 14, 2016** at 1:00 p.m. for a webinar on using the Every Student Succeeds Act and its accompanying regulations to advance equity and educational opportunity. The session will focus on how states can effectively design multiple measure accountability systems to assess overall school performance and progress, including gaps in student performance, and drive evidence based interventions and continuous improvement across all schools and for all students. For more information or to register, click [here](#).

Resources

Equity and ESSA

A new report released by the Learning Policy Institute, “Equity and ESSA: Leveraging Educational Opportunity Through the Every Student Succeeds Act,” outlines the equity implications of ESSA. Click [here](#) to access. To register for the December 14th Equity and ESSA webinar, click [here](#).

High School Bound

Chicago Public Schools (CPS) in partnership with the University of Chicago have launched High School Bound. It is an online hub that allows students to search for and learn more

about CPS high schools and the programs they offer. To access the website, click [here](#).

Growing Computer Science Education In Afterschool

In its most recent report, the Afterschool Alliance surveyed afterschool program directors and managers and conducted focus groups with afterschool leaders to understand the field's thoughts on computer science education in the afterschool space. The data indicated that although almost 60 percent of respondents currently or previously offered computer science, a lack of qualified teachers, sufficient funding, and adequate technology are consistent barriers to moving forward. To access the report including a list of recommendations for advancing computing education in afterschool, click [here](#).

Getting Kids Outside to Inspire STEM Thinking

Increasing research shows that outside play and learning can provide many benefits. In the latest edition of Talk Tuesday, the National AfterSchool Association provides afterschool professionals tips on how providing young people access to outdoor time helps them be happier, healthier, and smarter. Suggested outside activities for cultivating STEM learning include, keeping a nature journal, examining rocks, and building a bird feeder. For more tips that inspire STEM thinking, click [here](#).

Chicago STEM Pathways Cooperative Landscape Survey

The Chicago STEM Pathways Cooperative is conducting a STEM out-of-school time (OST) landscape survey on programs offered in Chicago between January 1 and December 31, 2015. The findings will help the Cooperative understand how the Chicago STEM OST community is serving youth and families, identify gaps in service, and inform future work to better meet community needs. The survey must be completed by **Saturday, December 31, 2016**. Participants will receive a \$5 Starbucks gift card as a thank you for filling out the survey. To take the Assessing Chicago OST STEM Opportunities 3.0 survey, click [here](#).

Prioritizing Social Emotional Learning

In this 75 minute webinar, co-hosted by the American Institutes for Research (AIR), American Youth Policy Forum (AYPF), the Collaborative for Academic Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL), and the Washoe County School District, audiences heard from a panel of researchers and practitioners on ways in which districts and school leaders have implemented a coordinated and purposeful SEL effort. To view the recording, click [here](#).

Opportunities for Afterschool Providers

2016 Youth Development Practitioner Award Nominations

The US Play Coalition in partnership with Clemson University's Youth Learning Institute is accepting nominations for the 2016 Youth Development Practitioner Award. The award recognizes outstanding performance in the creation and implementation of youth development programs or services. Nominations will be accepted through **Thursday, December 15, 2016**. For more information, click [here](#).

Dollar General Afterschool Literacy Award

The Afterschool Alliance and the Dollar General Literacy Foundation are accepting nominations for outstanding afterschool programs that have demonstrated excellence providing literacy support to English language learner students. The Dollar General Afterschool Literacy Award winner will be awarded \$10,000 for their program that will be presented at the Afterschool for All Challenge in Washington, D.C. For eligibility requirements or to access the nomination form questions, click [here](#). Nominations will close on **Friday, December 16, 2016**.

Digital Learning Challenge

SCE, a social investment organization that connects talent and innovation with market forces to drive social change, will be accepting applications to identify afterschool program partners for their Digital Learning Challenge starting January 2, 2017. Over the next two years, the Challenge will bring together a community of afterschool programs, researchers and evaluators, HR professionals, and digital product developers/distributors to explore what it means to be a prepared and skilled 21st century citizen. The application deadline is **Friday, January 20, 2017**. For more information, click [here](#).

Funding Opportunities

RFP For The Mayoral Youth Mentoring Initiative

The Chicago Department of Family and Support Services (DFSS) is soliciting interested and qualified respondents to provide mentoring services to boys and young men currently in 8th, 9th, and 10th grades living in Chicago who reside or attend school in one of 22 targeted areas throughout the city. Emphasis will be placed on participants struggling with school attendance, have a high rate of absenteeism or behavioral issues. DFSS is seeking respondents who currently operate in one of the identified community areas and have experience with this population and evidence of an established mentoring program that is

positioned to scale under this initiative.

An hour long [pre-proposal webinar](#) will be held on Tuesday, December 13, 2016 at 10:00 a.m. The Request for Proposal (RFP) which includes the application, instructions, and a program description can be accessed [here](#). Responses must be received no later than **Friday, December 30, 2016** at 12:00 noon CST.

Springboard Foundation Afterschool Funding

The Springboard Foundation funds small nonprofits that provide critical afterschool programs in under-resourced neighborhoods in Chicago. First year grantees receive between \$5,000 to \$10,000 plus funds to help build capacity. The ideal Springboard grantees are youth development organizations located in Chicago who provide afterschool enrichment sometime Monday through Friday between 3:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. during the Chicago Public Schools academic year. Grant proposals are due **Tuesday, January 17, 2017**. All interested prospective grantees should schedule a phone conversation with Springboard Foundation's Executive Director Sejal Shah-Myers via email at sejal@springboardfoundation.org or phone at [312-447-6553](tel:312-447-6553). To learn more about Springboard Foundation, click [here](#).

Read more about the [ACT Now Coalition](#). Please send any information you would like included in the next newsletter to SStanton@voices4kids.org

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The ACT Now Coalition brings together afterschool and youth development stakeholders from across Illinois to work towards ensuring that all young people in Illinois have access to quality, affordable afterschool programs.

Please send this information to others who might be interested by forwarding this e-mail.

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