

ACTNOW! NEWSLETTER

Policy Updates

Federal Updates

21st Century Community Learning Centers Proposed Funding Increase

Last week, Sen. Kamala Harris (D-Calif.) introduced legislation that would authorize doubling the current funding for 21st Century Community Learning Centers, with the additional \$1.3 billion targeted to summer learning programs. The Family Friendly Schools Act also establishes a new Title IV Part G pilot program separate from Community Learning Centers, which would create 500 “Family Friendly Schools” that align the school day with the work day to better support working families, and disseminate the lessons learned from these model schools to communities throughout the nation. For more information, click [here](#).

Rural STEM Education Act

This bipartisan bill was introduced by House Science, Space, and Technology Committee Ranking Member Frank Lucas (R-OK) along with Chairwoman Eddie Bernice Johnson (D-TX), Rep. Jim Baird (R-IN), and Rep. Ben McAdams (D-UT). The legislation enhances STEM education at rural schools. Nearly half of all public schools are considered rural and more than nine million students in the United States—roughly 20 percent of all schoolchildren—attend rural schools. Rural schools face unique barriers to providing STEM education, including a shortage of science and math teachers, high teacher turnover, and difficulty accessing online and computer-based technology. [H.R. 4979, the Rural STEM Education Act](#), gives teachers, students, and rural communities the tools they need to overcome these challenges, including funding NSF to provide rural STEM education grants that include working with afterschool and youth serving organizations to provide informal STEM education.

Higher Education Act

The College Affordability Act passed the House Education Committee. It has strong language in Title II about partnering with afterschool, and including afterschool in grow your own teacher strategies. While progress was made on protecting the community service set aside in Federal Work Study, the bill still

changes the 7% community service set aside to instead support work based learning.

STEM Plan Update

The White House's Office of Science and Technology Policy recently released a progress report on the federal implementation of the five-year STEM education strategic plan published in December 2018. The progress report combines an update on how agencies are implementing the new strategic plan with the inventory of federal investments in STEM education across the federal government. Updates from a number of agencies are included in this section, providing insight into how the federal government is implementing the new plan. Check out the full progress report [here](#).

For a list of previously listed policy updates, click [here](#).

Trainings, Events, and Webinars

Family and Community Partnerships

Rise Up for Equity: A National Summit on Community Schools & Family Engagement

Join the Institute for Educational Leadership (IEL) in **2020 from May 27th through the 29th in Los Angeles** for this high-impact educational equity event that will cultivate collaboration and innovation. When you register for this Summit, you'll be joining up to 4,000 other attendees—ranging from school district leaders to elected officials, researchers, and more—from all across the country, and beyond. For more information or to register, click [here](#).

Youth Development, Programming, & Activities

Webinar: Exemplary Practices using 'Girls STEAM Ahead with NASA'

Join the partnership of National Girls Collaborative Project and NASA's Universe of Learning, 'Girls STEAM Ahead with NASA' project for a webinar that explores the free resources NASA offers, along with accompanying exemplary practices. This will take place on **November 14th from 12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m. Pacific time**. There will be time for a Q&A session with NASA's Universe of Learning team to best support your program efforts with the Girls STEAM Ahead with NASA materials.

Earth Day Network

April 22, 2020 will mark the 50th anniversary of Earth Day, the largest civic-focused day of action in the world. For Earth Day's 50th Anniversary, engage your students in a variety of fun, educational and impactful learning opportunities. For example, hold citizen science data collection events that encourage your students to learn about environmental issues and connect them with lessons from school. Organize environmental-themed craft projects that allow them to channel their creativity or host cooking workshops where they can make sustainable recipes. Explore what species are local to your community and think of ways your students can help protect them. For more information about Earth Day and resources on things you can do, check out the [Earth Day Network website](#). To be part of the movement your organization can [Partner with Us](#) or your school can [Sign Up to be an Earth Day School!](#)

Partnerships with Schools

Webinar: The State We're In: A Report on Public Education in Illinois

Join Advance Illinois for an overview of the key findings in the sixth edition of its publication, [The State We're In: A Report on Public Education in Illinois](#) in a webinar on November 25th at 3:00 p.m. Get an inside scoop on the progress we've made as a state over the past decade as we look ahead to address the deep-rooted inequities that still exist, even as the state continues to serve more students from low-income families and diverse backgrounds. Learn more about where we stand as a state in Early Childhood access, K-12 growth, and postsecondary enrollment and completion. To register, click [here](#).

To view ACT Now's calendar of events, click [here](#).

Youth Opportunities

For an archive of our previously listed Youth Opportunities, click [here](#).

Opportunities for Providers

For an archive of our previously listed Opportunities for Providers, click [here](#).

Funding Opportunities

NSF INCLUDES Planning Grants

The deadline for applications for the NSF Nation of Communities of Learners of Underrepresented Discoverers in Engineering and Science (NSF INCLUDES) is quickly approaching. Proposals for the grant that focuses on creating systems and understanding surrounding participation in STEM are due on **December 3, 2019**.

For an archive of our previously listed Funding Opportunities, click [here](#).

Resources for Providers

Administration

Issue 12 of Connected Science Learning

The most recent issue of the ASTC and NSTA publication focuses on establishing and understanding a “STEM mindset.” The issue includes articles focused on professional development for educators and a deeper dive into STEAM.

Youth Development, Programming, & Activities

New Illinois Report Card

The Illinois Report Card is an annual report released by the Illinois State Board of Education that shows how the state—and each school and district—are progressing on a wide range of educational goals. The Report Card offers a complete picture of student and school performance to inform and empower families and communities as they support their local schools. All versions of the 2019 Report Card can be accessed via www.illinoisreportcard.com. All data can be accessed via [ISBE’s Report Card Data Library](#).

After-School Programs and STEM: The Key to an Inclusive Tech Future

Earlier this month, Dell Technologies published [this article](#) on the role afterschool programs can play in encouraging more underrepresented youth to consider an education and/or career in STEM fields.

Chicago College and Career Advising Credential (CCCAC)

Chicago Jobs Council, in collaboration with Youth Guidance and Chicago Public Schools is offering the CCCAC training program that will help you support youth in exploring progressive postsecondary pathway options. This interactive cohort training will provide tools to help youth explore their passions, interests, goals, and future pathways. You will also practice youth-centered coaching strategies, and examine and address equity issues in coaching and postsecondary planning. For more information or to sign up, click [here](#).

Wings for Kids New SEL Resources

Last month, Wings for Kids launched *Soar with Wings*, a new program with Discovery Education and sponsored by the Allstate Foundation. *Soar with Wings* provides digital lessons and resources for **FREE** to elementary school students, classrooms, and organizations nationwide. For more information, click [here](#). Wings for Kids also has a free [downloadable poster](#) on the emotional alphabet, to help youth build awareness.

Code Your Hero

The CS First team at Google has created a new activity where students can use their imagination to turn a real-life hero into a superhero using code. [Code Your Hero](#) is an activity that honors the everyday heroes in students' lives who use their powers to better their communities. Students will use Scratch, a block-based coding language, to animate and bring a story or game to life with movement and dialogue. Available in both English and Spanish.

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Call for Resources

Do you have valuable resources, stories, or best practices to share with the afterschool field? Please click [here](#) to share your resources with ACT Now and we will disseminate them (via our newsletter and website) to other providers across the state! If you have any questions, please contact Emma Vibber (Quality and Professional Development Specialist) VibberE@actnowillinois.org

NOTE: We are now sorting our trainings and resources by the Core Areas in the Illinois Statewide Afterschool Quality Standards to promote better understanding and implementation of the Standards. Dark blue headings denote a Core Area. To learn more about the Quality Standards, click [here](#).