

ACTNOW! NEWSLETTER



January

- 1/11** Suburbs Community Schools Training (Rescheduled December Training)
- 1/13** Chicago Community Schools Training (Rescheduled December Trainings)
- 1/13** Illinois Quality Program Self-Assessment Tool (IL-QPSA) Webinar for New Users #2
- 1/14** Illinois Quality Program Self-Assessment Tool (IL-QPSA) Webinar for Returning Users #1
- 1/21** ACT Now STEM Webinar #3: Fitting STEM Curricula into OST Programming

Policy Updates

Federal Policy

The U.S. House of Representatives: Continuing Resolution Passed

On **December 8, 2020**, the U.S. House of Representatives passed [H.R. 8900](#), a one-week continuing resolution (CR), to extend current funding for federal agencies and programs through **December 18, 2020**. The bill will prevent a partial funding lapse and allow policymakers to continue to discuss a spending omnibus bill. To read more about the CR, click [here](#).

The U.S. Senate: Rural STEM Education Act Proposed

On **December 8, 2020**, U.S. Senators Roger Wicker (R-Miss.), chairman of the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, and Jacky Rosen, (D-Nev.), proposed the Rural STEM Education Act in the Senate. This bill aims to improve science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) education access and training in rural communities across the United States. The Rural STEM Education Act would:

- Direct the Secretary of Commerce to establish a prize competition to encourage innovative ideas to deploy broadband connectivity to rural communities
- Instruct the National Science Foundation (NSF) Director to establish a working group to address challenges and opportunities for improving broadband access
- Direct the NSF Director and the National Academy of Sciences to evaluate federal programming for rural STEM education and make recommendations for ways in which it can be improved

To read the proposed legislation, click [here](#).

Afterschool Alliance: Take Action to Support Youth and Contact Your Legislators

The U.S. Senate is considering a bill to expand access to afterschool through the rest of the public health crisis. *Now is the time to tell your elected officials to support [S. 4868](#), which was introduced by Senators Murkowski (R-Alaska) and Smith (D-Minn.) in late October. S. 4868 is the bipartisan 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) Coronavirus Relief Act of 2020. **The legislation would provide \$1.2 billion in additional funding and greater flexibility for the 21st CCLC***

program. The House version of the bill passed in September.

As Congress debates an FY21 spending bill and another COVID-19 relief bill, consider reaching out to your members of Congress in support of afterschool programs and let them know how the pandemic is affecting young people, youth-serving programs and organizations, and your community at large. **Please ACT Now and Advocate by clicking [here!](#)**

State Policy

Governor's Office and the Illinois Department of Human Services: New Partnership with ALDI to Provide Online Grocery Access to Over 2 Million Families on SNAP

Yesterday, Governor Pritzker and the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) announced a new partnership with ALDI to provide Illinois residents, who are a part of the Electronic Benefit Transfer and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (EBT SNAP), with a new option for online shopping. Participants will have to access fresh food and pantry staples from ALDI via Instacart's same-day delivery and pick-up services. To begin, eligible SNAP customers can visit IDHS' website, by clicking [here](#). To read the full press release, click [here](#).

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

Trainings, Events, and Webinars

Administration

ACT Now: Community Schools Convenings Rescheduled

ACT Now will continue to host training events for Community Schools (CS) providers throughout the state during FY21.

- **The training for Suburban providers originally scheduled for December 17, 2020, will be hosted on January 11, 2021, from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.** The session is titled Ending the Silence for Staff: Recognizing and Addressing Mental Health Symptoms in Young People. It will help providers recognize the signs and symptoms of mental illness in young people. To register for this event, click [here](#).
- **The trainings originally scheduled for mid-December, and**

developed for Chicago providers, are rescheduled for **January 13, 2021, from 9:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.** This training is focused on the topic of Trauma and Culture. To register for the event, click [here](#).

More information regarding the regional events is located on our Community Schools Corner page. To access it, click [here](#).

ACT Now: Illinois Quality Program Self Assessment Webinars

ACT Now is excited to hear from you, whether you are a *new* or a *returning* IL-QPSA user! The IL-QPSA affords providers the opportunity to assess their performance based on the Illinois Statewide Afterschool Quality Standards. Joining a cohort, depending on your prior QPSA usage, provides you with free one-on-one technical assistance along with free tools such as a data dashboard, automated surveys, and both site and agency-wide reports.

- On **January 13, 2021, from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.**, ACT Now is hosting a webinar for *new* users
- On **January 14, 2021, from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.**, ACT Now is facilitating a webinar for *returning* users

To register for either webinar click [here](#). *Please Note: Once you have registered for the IL-QPSA, you will be placed in either the New Users group or the Returning Users dependent upon your selection. Webinar links and supplemental information will be sent to you via calendar invitation.*

ACT Now: Statewide Quality Standards Trainings (QST) Update

Due to the continuing effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, **ACT Now** has decided to cancel all in-person Quality Standards Trainings (QST) at the 101 and 102 levels. As a result, additional opportunities have been added for afterschool providers interested in participating in virtual webinars. **To review these new opportunities, click [here](#).** To register for both QST 101 and QST 102 trainings, click [here](#). If you have any questions and or concerns regarding these trainings, please contact Emma Vibber at VibberE@actnowillinois.org.

National Conference of State Legislatures: Virtual Youth Education Forum

On **December 16, 2020, from 3:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.**, the [National Conference of State Legislatures \(NCSL\)](#) is hosting a virtual forum to elevate the experiences and voices of young people. Hear directly from

middle school and high school students about their afterschool programs, their well-being, online school, and advice to policymakers. To register for the event, click [here](#) . For questions and inquiries, please email autumn.rivera@ncsl.org.

Youth Development

ACT Now: FY21 STEM Webinar Series

On **January 21, 2021, from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.**, **ACT Now** will help afterschool providers understand the ease in which STEM curricula can be combined with “traditional enrichment” OST programming and will offer best practices for integrating STEM lessons and learning outcomes into your program. Hear from STEM professionals and colleagues already facilitating STEM curricula about their experiences incorporating STEM as a continuous theme into programming and how they are engaging youth in STEM. To register, click [here](#).

National Girls Collaborative Project: Equity & Inclusion in Afterschool - Skill Development in STEM Programming

Today, from 2:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m., the [National Girls Collaborative](#), in conjunction with STEM Next, will be hosting a webinar on its Equity and Inclusion framework. This framework will help afterschool providers identify resources and strategies that foster more participation in STEM. To learn more about the session and to register, click [here](#).

The Chicago Children's Theatre: Trauma-Informed Arts Education for a Trauma-Informed Illinois

The Chicago Children's Theatre is hosting a webinar on **December 16, 2020, from 3:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.**, in order to encourage young people, providers, and families to discuss how theater and the arts can foster resilience. To learn more about the webinar and to register for the webinar, click [here](#).

For an archive of our previously listed Trainings, Events and Webinars, click [here](#).

Resources for Providers

Youth Development

Community Engineering: Free Engineering Challenges for Youth

[Community Engineering](#) hosts a variety of engineering challenges that are community-based and includes learning modules on topics like school gardening, classroom renovation, and designing an accessible playground. To review these engaging activities, click [here](#).

ShareMyLesson: Digital Winter Holiday Lesson Plans and Activities for Students

[ShareMyLesson](#) has compiled a list of pre-K-12 winter holiday lesson plans, worksheets, and other resources for students to use in order to learn about diversity and celebrate community. These materials can be used for virtual, in-person, and hybrid programming, and are based on social-emotional learning competencies. Materials are printable as well. To review the lesson plans and activities, click [here](#).

Governor's Office of Early Childhood Development: Social-Emotional Toolkits for Early Childhood Providers & Leaders

The [Governor's Office of Early Childhood Development \(GOECD\)](#), in partnership with the [Illinois Pyramid Model State Leadership Team](#), developed two Social-Emotional Toolkits for early childhood providers and leaders in the field. These resources will help providers to manage stressors and promote wellness during these challenging times. To access these resources, click the links below:

- [Social-Emotional Toolkit: Resources for Early Childhood Education and Care PROVIDERS](#)
- [Social-Emotional Toolkit: Resources for Birth to Five LEADERS](#)

Family and Community Partnerships

The Latino Policy Forum: Videos to Support Families with Early Learners

[The Latino Policy Forum](#) has developed a short video to support families to promote early learning at home. The video is available in [English](#) and [Spanish](#). The Latino Policy Forum is also offering free virtual workshops to organizations serving English Learners and their families. To review the description of these opportunities, click [here](#). To attend these workshops, please email Rosario Hernandez

at rhernandez@latinopolicyforum.org.

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

Opportunities for Providers

Administration

University of Chicago: Diversity + Inclusion Summit

On **January 27, 2021, from 4:00 p.m. to 6:45 p.m.**, the [University of Chicago](#) is hosting a summit on Diversity + Inclusion. The University of Chicago invites you to join your fellow employers for a session dedicated to networking and sharing best practices for diversity, equity, and inclusion. To learn more about the opportunity, please email ncasperson@uchicago.edu.

American Writers Museum: Online Education Program

The [American Writers Museum \(AWM\)](#) has unveiled an interactive online education program featuring young, diverse, and thought-provoking authors. This initiative is designed to inspire young writers across the United States. The interactive program includes live and virtual sessions with AWM education staff and renowned writers, as well as other digital materials developed for students grades 3 through 12. To review the Museum's online educational programs, click [here](#).

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

Youth Opportunities

Youth Development

CS Energy and National Girls Collaborative Project: Town Hall

[CS Energy](#) and the [National Girls Collaborative Project](#) are inviting young people to an interactive discussion on **December 16, 2020, at 6:00 p.m.** Conversations will surround the topic of exploring exciting

careers in cutting edge fields of environmental sustainability, engineering, and renewable energy. Participants will learn about the importance of fostering STEM competencies in girls in particular. To learn more about the Town Hall and to register for the event, click [here](#).

Girls Who Code: Hiring Summit

[Girls Who Code](#) is hosting a hiring summit for college students, and recent graduates, and young professionals looking for summer internship opportunities. On **January 28, 2021, between 11:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m.**, join Girls Who Code to network with companies looking to connect with talented and diverse students and professionals. To learn more about the summit and to register for the event, click [here](#).

Black Youth Project: Employment Opportunity

[Black Youth Project](#) is searching for a part-time social media manager to support the daily operations and coordination of the social media team. The commitment is 10 hours per week and the individual will be compensated \$20.00 an hour. Applicants should be clear communicators who have experience driving digital engagement across platforms, support with branding, and developing graphics for social circulation. Folks of marginalized genders strongly encouraged to apply. This position is remote. To apply for this position, please send a cover letter and resume to info@blackyouthproject.com.

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

Funding Opportunities

Safety, Health, and Nutrition

No Kid Hungry: Early Childhood Grant Opportunity

[No Kid Hungry](#) is soliciting applications for its Early Childhood Grant Opportunity. These flexible grants will allow community-based organizations, early child care centers, and healthcare providers to respond to the growing needs and emerging opportunities to provide healthy food to young children (0-5 years old) and their families facing food insecurity. Grants will range between \$15,000 - \$25,000. Applications are due **December 18, 2020**. To learn more and to apply,

click [here](#).

Family and Community Partnerships

Clifford Chance Law Firm: Racial Justice Award

[The Clifford Chance Firm](#) is soliciting applications for its Racial Justice Award. This award is open to non-profit organizations that help individuals, groups, and communities use the law to achieve significant social, inclusion, and racial justice impact. The law firm will provide the winning organization with a cash prize and pro bono work. Applications are due **December 31, 2020**. To learn more about this opportunity and to apply, click [here](#).

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

Call for Phenomenal Staff and OST Programming!

To celebrate afterschool and extended learning providers, and to shine a light on the integral role that program staff plays in restoring Illinois, ACT Now will continue to showcase staff members and programs on our social media platforms and in our weekly newsletter. We will also share your stories and experiences with legislators and state agencies to advocate on your behalf!

Please email Emma Spencer (ACT Now - Youth Development Associate) at Spencere@actnowillinois.org. Please attach a photo, the name of the staff member or name of the afterschool program, and a caption for how this individual or program is working to support young people in the community.

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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 Spencer (ACT Now - Youth Development Associate)** at Spencere@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](#).

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