

# ACTNOW! NEWSLETTER



## *December*

**12/10** Virtual Quality Standards Training 101 #2

**12/17** Suburbs Community Schools Convening

## *January*

**12/13** Illinois Quality Program Self-Assessment Tool (IL-QPSA) Webinar for New Users #2

**12/14** Illinois Quality Program Self-Assessment Tool (IL-QPSA) Webinar for Returning Users #1

**12/20** ACT Now STEM Webinar #3: Fitting STEM Curricula into OST Programming

## Policy Updates

### Federal Policy

#### 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: Illinois Commission on Poverty Elimination and Economic Security

**Yesterday**, Governor Pritzker and the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) announced the creation of the Illinois Commission on Poverty Elimination and Economic Security. The Commission aims to develop and adopt a strategic plan that will execute anti-poverty programs that ensure long-term, multigenerational economic mobility regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, age, sexual orientation or identity, ability, or geographic location. The plan will be released in spring 2021. Goals for The Commission include reducing poverty in Illinois by 50% by 2026, eliminating child poverty by 2031, and eliminating all poverty by 2036. To read the full press release, click [here](#).

#### Illinois Department for Health: Preliminary COVID-19 Vaccination Plan Published

On **December 4, 2020**, the Illinois Department for Health (IDPH) released

its preliminary COVID-19 Vaccination Plan, which is a draft document designed to assist Local Health Departments in planning for vaccine distribution. Information is based on limited and preliminary guidance from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) & Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) and will be continuously updated as that guidance evolves. To read the document, click [here](#). **Initial populations prioritized for the COVID-19 vaccination in Phase 1 are the following:**

- Health Care Personnel & Residents from Long Term Care Facilities
- Essential frontline workers including first responders
- Those with high-risk medical conditions and adults over 65 years of age

**Illinois educators, afterschool providers, and children will not be among the first wave to receive a vaccination.** When asked by [Chalkbeat](#), during the press conference, when teachers would receive vaccinations, Governor Pritzker said that essential workers, such as teachers, will be addressed in the next phase (Phase 2). To read the full article, click [here](#).

#### **Illinois State Board of Education: Assessment and Accountability Requirements Update for 2021**

**In October**, the U.S. Department of Education released its process for states to access flexibilities for accountability in 2021. **Currently, assessment and accountability requirements are not waived for 2021. States are allowed to request temporary adjustments** to calculation and scoring rules, timelines for identification, and achievement of measures of interim progress and long-term goals for 2021 **via an expedited addendum process. The addendum is due to the U.S. Department of Education by February 1, 2021.**

On **December 2, 2020**, the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) published a draft of the addendum for review and public comment. To review the addendum, click [here](#). Additionally, ISBE will present two live webinars reviewing the document. Sessions will be held **today and December 21, 2020, from 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.** To register for these events, click [here](#).

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

# Trainings, Events, and Webinars

## Administration

### ACT Now: Community Schools Convenings

**ACT Now** will continue to host training events for Community Schools (CS) providers throughout the state during FY21. **The trainings originally scheduled for today and December 9, 2020, for Chicago providers, are canceled due to a scheduling conflict with the 21st CCLC Virtual Conference. The convenings will be rescheduled to a later date in January.**

The next Community Schools training for Suburban providers will be hosted on **December 17, 2020, from 9:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.** The session will help providers recognize the signs and symptoms of mental illness in young people. To register for this event, click [here](#). More information regarding the regional events is located on our Community Schools Corner page. To access it, click [here](#).

### Afterschool Alliance Webinar: America After 3 PM Report Release

[The Afterschool Alliance](#) is hosting a webinar **today at 12:00 p.m.**, in celebration of its newest report on the demand for afterschool programs nationwide. Participants will learn about parent views on afterschool opportunities across the United States. It also offers a pre-pandemic snapshot of how young people spend their afternoons and includes a separate survey of parents conducted this fall. To register for the event, click [here](#).

### Family Action Network and Chicago Beyond Webinar: The Purpose of Power: How We Come Together When We Fall Apart

[Family Action Network \(FAN\)](#) and [Chicago Beyond](#) are hosting a webinar on **December 14, 2020, at 7:00 p.m.**, to discuss inequity present in our communities and to share guidance on building the type of movements that can address the challenges of our time. Hear from one of the organizers of Black Lives Matter and more. To learn more about this discussion and to register for the event, click [here](#).

### You for Youth Webinar Series: Implementing Project-Based Learning

[You for Youth \(Y4Y\)](#) is hosting a two-part webinar series on how to integrate project-based learning into afterschool programming. This

webinar is geared towards providers looking to build upon young people's 21st Century skills and foster positive relationships between peers and team members. Join Y4Y on **December 15, 2020, and December 17, 2020, at 12:00 p.m.**, to learn about these important strategies. To register for the events, click [here](#).

## Youth Development

### ACT Now Webinar Series: FY21 Social-Emotional Learning (SEL)

On **December 3, 2020**, **ACT Now** hosted its first webinar in the FY21 SEL series on the topic of fostering positive Relationship Skills in youth. To access the webinar recording, click [here](#). In this webinar series, we will review the [CASEL SEL competencies](#) and panelists will share concrete examples of how they are implementing SEL competencies into their virtual afterschool programming. To register for the following sessions, click [here](#).

### National Girls Collaborative Project Webinar: Computer Science Education Week Celebration

In celebration of Computer Science Education Week, the [National Girls Collaborative Project](#) is hosting a webinar with SciGirls on **December 8, 2020, at 1:00 p.m.** Participants will learn about SciGirls' techniques for engaging girls in STEM and how to facilitate thought-provoking computer science activities. Attendees will gain access to high-quality computer science curricula and network with like-minded colleagues to share best practices for virtual facilitation of STEM programming. To register, click [here](#).

### CODE.org Webinar Series: New CodeBytes Lessons for Virtual Facilitation

[CODE.org](#) is unveiling CodeBytes, a new mini-series of interactive lessons related to coding and computer science, throughout Computer Science Education Week (**December 7, 2020, to December 11, 2020**). These lessons are around 20 minutes, will be streamed twice daily, designed to be integrated into remote learning plans, and tailored to different grade levels. To register, click [here](#).

### Million Girls Moonshot Webinar Series: Engineering Design Challenges

Over three hour-long sessions this fall with [Technovation](#), you'll become

an expert in leading engineering design challenges online that help students develop the following engineering mindsets: understanding the engineering design process, working in teams, evaluating, and iterating, learning from failure, and self-identification. Participate in hands-on building activities during each session and become a part of a supportive learning community (*To register, click on the sessions below*).

- [Session 1](#) - *Recording Coming Soon*
- [Session 2](#) - *Recording Coming Soon*
- [Session 3](#) - This will take place on **December 10, 2020, at 2:00 p.m.**

### **Midwest and Plains Equity Assistance Center: Virtual Coffeehouse to Support Parents/Caregivers During Virtual and Hybrid Schooling**

[The Midwest and Plains Equity Assistance Center](#) is hosting an informational webinar **today from 2:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.**, to help educators, school personnel, and afterschool providers support families and caregivers during online and hybrid learning. Participants will learn how to more effectively collaborate with families and caregivers in curricular planning and outline steps that schools can take to support them during the pandemic and beyond. To register, click [here](#). Please contact [dlazzell@iupui.edu](mailto:dlazzell@iupui.edu) if you have questions or trouble registering.

## **Family and Community Partnerships**

### **University of Illinois School of Social Work and Illinois Extension in Cook County Seminars: Bold Conversations - Racial Healing with Social Emotional Learning**

[The University of Illinois School of Social Work and Illinois Extension in Cook County](#) is hosting a seminar for families that are designed to bring them together to have a respectful and honest exchange of ideas. Discussion will focus on how communities can help our children address the challenges they may face. The seminars will take place on **December 13, 2020, December 22, 2020, January 9, 2021, and January 19, 2021**. To learn more about these opportunities and to register for any of the seminars, click [here](#).

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

## Resources for Providers

### Administration

#### **eSchool News Articles: Strategies for Creating a Culturally Responsive and Engaging Virtual Classroom**

[eSchool News](#) has published an article with six strategies that afterschool providers can utilize to create a more culturally responsive virtual classroom for their young people. The article emphasizes the importance of creating opportunities for students to share about their diverse backgrounds and embracing an asset-based mindset. To read the full article, click [here](#). eSchool News has also released an article with seven free tools to foster more-engaging online learning for afterschool providers to use with young people. These tools are compatible with many of the digital platforms used for virtual instruction such as Zoom, Google Classroom, and more. To read the article and access the tools, click [here](#).

### Youth Development

#### **Mizzen Application: 23 Days of Fun, Healthy, and Creative Activities for December**

The Mizzen application hosts a variety of engaging activities for afterschool providers to utilize in their programming. Most recently, Mizzen, along with partner organizations such as the [Afterschool All-Stars](#) and [OregonASK](#), has developed a list of 23 healthy and creative sessions for young people to participate in during the month of December. These activities are geared towards virtual, in-person, and hybrid facilitation, and are based upon social-emotional learning competencies, the arts, and exercise. To review the sessions and to download the application, click [here](#).

#### **Google Resource: CS First Unplugged**

As a part of this year's Hour of Code, [Google](#) recently released a new CS First activity for afterschool providers looking to foster computational thinking in youth in grades 4 through 8. This activity can be facilitated asynchronously and students will not need access to a computer or technology. The materials are also available in Spanish. To learn more about CS First and to access the resource, click [here](#).

#### **American Association of School Administrators: Youth**

## **Apprenticeship Toolkit**

[The American Association of School Administrators \(AASA\)](#) has published a new youth apprenticeship toolkit to provide resources for educators and afterschool providers looking to build apprenticeship programs and develop school and business partnerships. To access the youth apprenticeship toolkit and supplemental materials, such as case studies and videos, click [here](#).

## **You for Youth Course: Supporting English Learners**

[You for Youth \(Y4Y\)](#) has created a new course to help afterschool providers design activities that support English learners and increase proficiency across the four modalities of language—listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Y4Y highlights strategies for developing a safe learning space that embraces cultural diversity and helps engage students and families. To review the resource, click [here](#).

## **National AfterSchool Association Article: Meeting Young People Where They Are via E-Mentoring**

[The National AfterSchool Association \(NAA\)](#) has released an article on e-mentoring young people during the pandemic. The article highlights several recommendations for mentoring youth in a virtual environment and "tags" supplemental resources for doing so. To read the article, click [here](#).

## **Safety, Health, and Nutrition**

### **NAMI Chicago: Youth Mental Health Education Website**

[NAMI Chicago](#) recently released its youth mental health education website, which includes information, activities, and videos for young people in grades 3 and higher, which aim to help foster discussions around mental health. There are also resources for families, caretakers, educators, and afterschool providers. These materials are available in Spanish as well. To access the website, click [here](#).

## **Family and Community Partnerships**

### **Illinois Department of Public Health: Free Mobile COVID-19 Testing Sites Throughout Illinois**

The Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) has released a list of



sites where the Illinois public can access free mobile COVID-19 tests throughout the state. These tests will be provided starting this week and extending into the weekend.

- To review locations in Northern Illinois, including the City of Chicago, click [here](#).
- To review locations in Central Illinois, click [here](#).
- To review locations in Southern Illinois, click [here](#).

Please note that the site locations are subject to change. To review the most updated information regarding free COVID-19 test sites, click [here](#).

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

## Opportunities for Providers

### Administration

#### Council for a Strong America: Employment Opportunity

The [Council for a Strong America](#) is seeking applications for its Policy Associate position at the Illinois Children's Advocacy Organization, based in Chicago, IL. This position would have primary responsibility for recruiting, engaging and mobilizing the Council's retired senior military leader members of Mission: Readiness. The organization focuses on high-quality early care and education, prevention of child abuse and neglect, after-school programs for youth, juvenile justice issues, child nutrition improvements, obesity prevention, and more. Ideal candidates will have experience in advocacy, media relations, public policy, and/or political campaigns. **Applications are due December 7, 2020.** To learn more about this employment opportunity and to apply, click [here](#).

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

## Youth Opportunities

## Youth Development

### Girls 4 Science: Saturday STEM Academy Winter 2021

Girls 4 Science is hosting a free opportunity for girls ages 10 to 18 called Saturday STEM Academy Winter 2021. Between **January 16, 2021, and February 20, 2021**, participants will learn about microbiology. Students will need access to a computer and the internet. There are three offered locations and each academy site will be capped at 25 registrants. To learn more about the opportunity and to register for the STEM academy, click [here](#).

### Future Founders Competition: Startup Sprints

Future Founders is hosting a competition called Startup Sprints that is open to high school students currently enrolled in Chicago Public Schools (CPS), Chicago Charter Schools, and Big Shoulders Schools. During the day-long event, youth will work with peers to develop, prototype, and pitch a startup idea. Participants will be guided by a startup coach with industry experience and compete for a \$125 grand prize and other exciting prizes! The Startup Sprints will be held on **December 21, 2020, and December 22, 2020, between 10:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m.** Applications are due **December 14, 2020**. To apply today, click [here](#).

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

## Funding Opportunities

*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](mailto: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.

## Were you forwarded this email?

[Click Here](#) to Subscribe to the ACT Now Newsletter!

### 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](mailto: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](#).**

[Unsubscribe](#)