

# ACT NOW! NEWSLETTER

New ACT Now Team Member



*Afterschool  
Resources & Support  
Specialist*



"I have worked very closely with ACT Now for several years and have seen firsthand the impactful work this agency is doing in the afterschool field. I could not be more excited to expand my scope of service and experience under the leadership of this amazing team"  
**Chelsea Corbett**

Meet our new Afterschool Resources & Support Specialist, **Chelsea Corbett**! Chelsea is a New York native who moved to Chicago in 2014 to pursue her Masters degree in Social Work, with a concentration in Community Health and Urban Development. Chelsea brings with her over 8 years of youth development and afterschool experience and is ecstatic to join the ACT Now team!

**Chelsea, we are thrilled to have you! WELCOME!**

# Policy Updates

## Federal Updates

### [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's New Quarantine Recommendation for Schools](#)

On **January 6, 2022**, the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#), announced its **recommendation to reduce the number of days for isolation and quarantine for school personnel and students to five days**. Both the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) and the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) have adopted this guidance as it applies to school settings. To read more about this isolation period and what it means for schools, click [here](#).

## State Updates

### [Chicago Public Schools Closed for the Fourth Day due to Concerns over COVID-19 Protocols](#)

**Yesterday evening, January 10, 2022**, [Chicago Public Schools \(CPS\)](#), [Chicago Teachers Union \(CTU\)](#), and the [City of Chicago](#), came to an agreement after days of discussions around COVID-19, safety protocols and personal protection equipment, testing, re-entrance to school buildings, and the facilitation of classes. Yesterday, also marked day four of canceled classes for students across the district. Some schools within CPS worked to provide enrichment opportunities for students throughout the week, while others had to close, causing many families to scramble to find child care opportunities. CPS did not allow for virtual learning during this time. **Late last night, CPS announced that schools will reopen tomorrow. To read more about the agreement, click [here](#).**

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

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## Trainings, Events and Webinars

Core Area	Organization	Name of Event/Training	Date	Registration Link
<a href="#">Administration</a>	<a href="#">Chicago Public Schools</a>	A Conversation on the Equity Mission and Vision for Chicago Public School	<b>TOMORROW</b> , from <b>2:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.</b>	<a href="#">REGISTER</a>
<a href="#">Youth Development</a>	<a href="#">EducationWeek</a>	A Whole Child Approach to Supporting Positive Student Behavior	<b>TODAY</b> , at <b>1:00 p.m.</b>	<a href="#">REGISTER</a>

<b>Professional Development</b>	<a href="#">ACT Now</a>	IL-QPSA Returning User Webinar #1	<b>TOMORROW</b> , from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.	<a href="#">REGISTER</a>
	<a href="#">Forefront</a>	Emerging Education Ideas Poised to Ignite Change	January 13, 2022, from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.	<a href="#">REGISTER</a>
	<a href="#">ACT Now</a>	IL-QPSA New User Webinar #2	January 13, 2022, from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.	<a href="#">REGISTER</a>
	<a href="#">Coalition for Community Schools</a>	2022 National Community Schools and Family Engagement (CSxFE) Conference - Virtual Kickoff Event	January 14, 2022, at 12:00 p.m.	<a href="#">REGISTER</a>
	<a href="#">ACT Now</a>	ACT Now STEM Webinar #3: Supporting OST Staff in STEM Curriculum	January 19, 2022, from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.	<a href="#">REGISTER</a>
<b>Family and Community Partnerships</b>	<a href="#">Truth, Racial Healing, and Transformation (TRHT) Greater Chicago</a>	National Day of Racial Healing 2022: Healing Through Transformation	January 18, 2022, 6:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.	<a href="#">REGISTER</a>
	<a href="#">United Way of Metro Chicago and the Baumhart Center of Loyola University</a>	Doing Good in the Neighborhood: The Rise of Community-Based Incubators	January 26, 2022, from 8:30 a.m. to 9:30 a.m.	<a href="#">REGISTER</a>

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

## Resources for Providers

### Youth Development

#### Million Girls Moonshot STEM Resources for January

January oftentimes marks the start of new goals and initiatives. This month is also a great time to re-engage with the Million Girls Moonshot (MGM) STEM affirm one's commitment to advancing learning opportunities for youth and girls and participating in STEM professional development for program providers!

## Webinars, Recordings, and Quality Trainings

### Engineering Mindsets

- **Recording:** [Computer Science with the IF/THEN Collection](#)
- **Recording:** [Exploration and Awareness of Careers that use an Engineering Mindset: The Possible Futures Curriculum Part I](#)
- **Recording:** [Exploration and Awareness of Careers that use an Engineering Mindset: The Possible Futures Curriculum Part II](#)

### Quality Trainings

- [PEAR – Dimensions of Success \(DoS\) Certification Trainings](#) - *January 26, 2022 to January 27, 2022, from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.*
- [PEAR – Dimensions of Success \(DoS\) ReCertification Training](#) - *February 1, 2022, from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.*
- [Afterschool Coaching for Reflective Educators in STEM \(ACRES\)](#) – January Cohort: Asking Purposeful Questions. *Sessions begin on January 19, 2022 and continue into March 2022. Sessions take place between 5:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.*

### Toolkits and Resources

- **Toolkit:** [Math Equity Toolkit](#) - This toolkit layers professional development into “Strides” that educators can take along a path to equitable education. Topics include Dismantling Racism in Mathematics Instruction and Creating Conditions to Thrive.
- **Article:** [The Importance of Equity in STEM Education](#) - The National Inventors Hall of Fame discusses identifying and delimiting implicit biases, and increasing cultural awareness.
- **Blog:** [Math Lessons Go Better With Engineering](#) - This blog describes how math is an integral part of engineering. An engineering parachute design challenge offers examples of how students practice math as they measure various aspects of their design and calculate their final evaluation scores.
- **Activity Toolkit:** [STEM Educators Academy Activity Toolkit from ExpandedED Schools](#) - This Activity Toolkit offers hybrid learning engineering design challenges, STEM facilitation skill builder videos, and engineering design activities categorized by content areas.
- **Toolkit:** [Brokering Youth Pathways: A Toolkit for Connecting Youth to Future Opportunity](#) - This toolkit shares ways in which various out-of-school educators and professionals have approached the challenge of brokering conversations around STEM pathways and opportunities for youth.

### For Families

- **Toolkit:** [Engaging Families in Mathematics Education](#)
- **Toolkit:** [Community Math Night Facilitators’ Toolkit](#)

### Youth Activities

- **Student Design Activity:** [Design a Watercraft](#) - Youth engineering a small boat out of straws and plastic wrap that can hold weight.
- **Student Design Activity:** [Get it Write!](#) - Youth engineering a writing device (pen) using everyday materials. They think about both the (water soluble) "ink" and the delivery mechanism.

## National Mentoring Month - STEM Opportunities for Youth

**January** marks **National Mentoring Month** and calls attention to the need for educational programs to support youth mentoring opportunities. Research shows girls in particular benefit from relationships with role models and mentors who can provide valuable information about STEM careers. The National Girls Collaborative Project (NGCP) has compiled several mentoring resources:

- [FabFems](#): A collection of resources for role models, educators, and families to inspire and educate girls about STEM courses and careers.
- [National Mentoring Resource Center](#): A collection of mentoring resources including handbooks, curricula, manuals, and other resources that practitioners can use to implement and further develop program practices.
- [SciGirls Role Model Strategies](#): These resources help to encourage girls to consider STEM careers and offer basic training for role models, introducing them to best practices for their volunteer efforts.
- [Techbridge](#): Role Model Training and Resources are available to help develop skills to engage girls and underrepresented youth in STEM through guides, videos, and questions.
- [GirlsTechBoss](#): This organization strives to empower girls and non-binary individuals to pursue careers in STEM and entrepreneurship through access to resources and role models.

## Supporting Older Students' Learning

[eSchool News](#) has an article that hosts information on strategies for supporting older youths' learning with respect to reading and writing competencies.

## Data Suggests Students Skills in Coding Lead to Future Success

[eSchool News](#) released an article suggesting that more opportunities to build upon students' coding skills will lead to future success academically.

# Professional Development

## Resources for Creating Supportive Learning Environments

[eSchool News](#) has written three different articles highlighting resources for developing responsive and supportive learning environments for students. The resources include [strategies for facilitating programs in a](#)

[hybrid environment](#), [optimizing social-emotional learning \(SEL\) curricula](#), and [developing activities to increase student participation and engagement](#).

## Safety, Health, and Nutrition

### [Self-Care Guide for Afterschool Professionals](#)

[The National AfterSchool Association \(NAA\)](#) recently published the Afterschool Professional's Guide to Self-Care for program providers. The free guide hosts information on the basics of self-care, in addition to practical self-care actions and strategies for managing one's mindset to cope with stress.

### [Protecting Youth's Mental Health Report](#)

[The U.S. Surgeon General](#) released a new report on the supporting youth's mental health. There are sections that focus on services and strategies that educators and afterschool providers may use to protect youth as we continue to navigate the pandemic. There are also advisories and recommendations for mental well-being for youth themselves.

### [Illinois Unidos COVID-19 Resources for Latinx Families](#)

[IllinoisUnidos.com](#) serves as the portal for the Illinois Unidos – a consortium of more than 150 Latino elected and appointed officials, health professionals, and representatives of community-based organizations. The website hosts resources collected and developed to engage families and community members regarding their most frequently asked questions about vaccinations and mitigation measures, and accessing health, economic, and mental health community services.

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

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## Opportunities for Providers

### Administration

#### [Volunteer Grant Reviewer Opportunity](#)

[The Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority \(ICJIA\)](#) is seeking community members to read and review grant applications submitted by organizations across Illinois for its equity-based grant programs, such as the Restore. Reinvest. Renew. (R3) opportunity. Reviewers are trained and sit on a team of three to review a number of proposals based on a clearly outlined criteria. This collaborative approach will enhance ICJIA's application review process with the assistance of individuals with diverse backgrounds, viewpoints, and experiences.

## [Pro-Bono Consulting Services for Nonprofits](#)

[The University of Illinois' Students Consulting for Nonprofit Organizations \(SCNO\)](#) is accepting applications from organizations interested in receiving pro-bono consulting services to help develop innovative, practical, and sustainable solutions to various challenges. **Applications are due Monday, January 17, 2022.**

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

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# Youth Opportunities

## Youth Development

### [Applications for STEM Signing Day for Chicago Public Schools Seniors OPEN!](#)

STEM Signing Day is an annual event that celebrates the accomplishments of Chicago Public School (CPS) students and Gary Community School and Chartered School students who are currently under-represented in STEM fields. These students will have a chance to secure scholarships and mentoring opportunities to pursue their STEM education. **Applications for STEM Signing Day are open until February 4, 2022, for graduating CPS seniors.**

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

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# Funding Opportunities

## Family and Community Partnerships

### [Chicago Recovery Grant for Community Development](#)

[The City of Chicago](#) is soliciting applications from community members looking to invest in their communities and develop community centers, commercial corridors, housing, and more. There are two levels of grants, dependent upon the size of the organization applying for this opportunity. **The first application deadline is January 31, 2022. The second application deadline is March 10, 2022.**

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

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## ***Were you forwarded this email?***

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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 (Youth Development Associate) at [Spencere@actnowillinois.org](mailto:Spencere@actnowillinois.org)

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

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