

ACTNOW!

NEWSLETTER



November

- 11/5** STEM Webinar #2: How to Make STEM At-Home Kits
- 11/10** Million Girls Moonshot STEM Webinar: Engineering Practice Support Equity Part III
- 11/11** Cultural Competency Webinar Series Part I
- 11/12** Downstate Community Schools Convening
- 11/18** Cultural Competency Webinar Series Part II
- 11/25** Cultural Competency Webinar Series Part III

Call for Phenomenal Staff and OST Programming!

To celebrate afterschool and extended learning providers, and to shine light on the integral role that program staff play 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!

If you are interested in participating, have photos to share out, or would like to nominate someone you know, 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.

Phenomenal Afterschool Staff Highlight!



Sadie Hofer

Title: Site Coordinator
Location: Judith Giacoma Elementary (21st Century)
Organization: Project Success of Vermillion County

Sadie makes every one of her students feel special with her kind and compassionate heart. When it comes to her program and students, there is no challenge too great for Sadie!



PROJECT Success **ACTNOW!**
Afterschool for Children and Teens

ACT Now Blog

ACT Now Blog: Elections

Afterschool programs are excellent resources to support youth and families, including during a stressful election season. Our Network Lead, Susan Stanton, has written a blog post outlining some suggestions for afterschool providers to keep in mind with regard to the upcoming elections in order to support the youth and communities they serve, as well as staff. To read the blog post, click [here](#).

Policy Updates

State Policy

Restore, Reinvest, and Renew (R3) Program: October Board Meeting Recap

On **October 22, 2020**, the Restore, Reinvest, and Renew (R3) Program Board met for its monthly meeting. Members reviewed the Illinois General Assembly Black Caucus' agenda in regard to the grant program. Board Members shared that by November, there will be between \$2 to \$3 million in R3 funding. However, the Board wants to ensure that there is continuous funding, rather than potential funding gaps for FY22. As a result, they are continuing to explore these options and discussing the maximum funding that will be given to approved applicants. The Board then spoke to the timeline of the R3 grants being awarded to selected grantees. **As of the meeting, the Grant Application Review Committee has reviewed all applications and aims to begin providing grants to organizations at the end of November.**

Mayor Lori Lightfoot's Office: City of Chicago's FY21 Budget Recommendations Released

On **October 21, 2020**, Mayor Lori Lightfoot released the FY21 Budget Recommendations to the City Council, which called for \$12.8 billion to be used to help recover from the impacts of COVID-19 and support "the long-term financial goals and policy priorities" of the City. The proposal recommended that the City commit:

- an additional \$5.25 million in funding for community-based violence prevention and reduction initiatives, which includes programming for high-risk youth
- an additional \$1.7 million for youth programming
- \$2.0 million in new funding for affordable housing
- \$7.0 million in new funding for economic recovery efforts to support workforce training, help small businesses build capacity and assist with job creation and recruitment

To read the full announcement, click [here](#).

Illinois State Board of Education: October Board Meeting Recap

On **October 21, 2020**, the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) met for its monthly board meeting. To review the board materials from this convening, click [here](#). The Board heard public comment on CTE, possible federal state testing waivers, gifted education, competency-based education, and the short-term approval process for teachers. ISBE's Board Members also conducted a discussion on whether the state should pursue a waiver for state assessments if it is made available. This discussion will continue next month. The Board also named Teacher of Year Awardees and named new students to the Student Advisory Council. Board Members also heard a presentation from the Early Childhood Funding Commission, which recommended that the state increase investments in Early Childhood Education and consider creating a centralized agency to run these programs. ISBE will be hosting its next board meeting on **November 19, 2020**. During this next meeting, ISBE will discuss the agency's FY21 budget.

Illinois Department of Children and Family Services: Child Care Guidance Updated

On **October 19, 2020**, Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) issued updated guidance for licensed and license-exempt child care providers. In regard to the number of children and youth allowed to be served, DCFS stated that:

- **Day care homes:** no change in the staff to child ratios and maximum capacity have been made
- **Group day care homes:** there will be an increase of two children in maximum group size for mixed groups
- **Day care centers:** toddler, twos, threes, fours, and fives classrooms' maximum capacity will all increase by two children. School age classrooms will increase by five children, with a maximum of 20 students served.

To read the full guidance, click [here](#).

On **October 14, 2020**, the Governor's Office for Early Childhood Development (GOECD), the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH), the Illinois Department for Children and Family Services (DCFS), and the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) hosted a Child Care Provider Town Hall Meeting for child care programs currently providing care for children. To view the recording, click [here](#).

Illinois State Board of Education: 21st Century Waiver Public Comment Period Open Until October 29, 2020

On **September 18, 2020**, State Education Agencies (SEAs), including the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE), received the template to apply for the U.S. Department of Education's 21st Century waiver. **This waiver provides 21st Century Community Learning Center (21st CCLC) grantees with the ability to facilitate programming and provide support services during the school day.** The U.S. Department of Education has mandated a public comment period for the waiver. **ISBE continues to accept Public Comment on the waiver via the [21st CCLC Waiver Form](#). Comments are due no later than 4:00 p.m. on Thursday, October 29, 2020.** For more information on the waiver, click [here](#). To urge ISBE to apply for the waiver, ACT Now has written a letter. To access the document with our public comment, click [here](#). *Please note: You may submit your own comments in regard to the 21st Century waiver or use ACT Now's comments in your submission to ISBE.*

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 next community schools training will take place on **November 12, 2020**, for Downstate providers. The training will surround the topic of Advisory Boards. To register for this event, click [here](#). More information regarding the regional convenings is located on our Community Schools Corner page [here](#).

ACT Now STEM Webinar: How to Make STEM At-Home Kits

On **November 5, 2020, from 1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.**, **ACT Now** will be hosting its second STEM webinar on the importance of engaging youth in STEM programming while at home, or in a virtual environment, via STEM at-home kits. Participants will learn how to develop their own STEM kits with low-cost and household items for young people in your program to utilize. Featured trailblazing STEM organizations include Project

Exploration, Homewood Science Center, and the Museum of Science and Industry (MSI). Hear from these diverse entities as they describe the various stages of the STEM kit process and give tips on distributing them too! To register, click [here](#).

ACT Now Webinar Series: Acceptance in Afterschool: When Cultural Understanding Informs Quality Programming

Based on data collected from our online strengths-based quality self-assessment tool, the IL-QPSA, **ACT Now** developed a virtual three-hour series on Cultural Competency. **Last spring, we launched this training and it was so successful that we are bringing it back this November!**

- On **November 11, 2020, from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.**, participate in Part 1: What is Cultural Competency and Why Does it Matter in Afterschool?
- On **November 18, 2020, from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.**, join us for Part 2: Practice and Analyze the Understanding of Self-identities and How they Translate into Afterschool Programming
- On **November 25, 2020, from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.**, attend in Part 3: Programmatic Ways and Tangible Resources to Implement and Sustain Cultural Competency.

Each webinar is \$10. To register for individual webinars or for the entire series, click [here](#).

Please Note: Each webinar will be limited to 30 individuals to encourage a robust and in-depth conversation on Cultural Competency between attendees over Zoom. Please contact Emma Vibber at VibberE@actnowillinois.org to inquire about group pricing.



Illinois Student Assistance Commission: Free Online Financial Aid Application Completion Workshops

The Illinois Student Assistance Commission (ISAC) is offering free online Financial Aid Application Completion workshops this week and into mid-November in order to help students complete their financial aid applications in the fall. During these workshops, ISAC staff will assist students in filling out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) or the Alternative Application for Illinois Financial Aid. Bilingual staff will be available. The next workshop is taking place on **October 29, 2020, from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.** For more information and to register, click [here](#).

Million Girls Moonshot Webinar: Engineering Practice Support Equity Part III

On **November 10, 2020, at 2:00 p.m.** Million Girls Moonshot is hosting part three of its webinar series on engineering practices to support equity. Participants will dive deep into the importance of fostering an engineering mindset in youth and highlight how to evaluate and iterate, navigate failure, and promote teamwork and STEM identity. Attendees will also learn how to create inclusive learning experiences for young people. To register, click [here](#).

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

Resources for Providers

Administration

ACT Now Report: Community Schools in Illinois - An Effective Strategy to Address Equity, Health, and Academics in Our Schools

Over the past several months, **ACT Now** collaborated with community schools to develop a report on their impact in Illinois. On **October 6, 2020**, in celebration of the report release, **ACT Now** shared our findings on these effective partners and holistic support systems through a virtual event. We heard from community schools providers as they described the diverse actions they took to respond to their youths' and communities' needs relating to COVID-19 and racial injustice. State Representative Theresa Mah [D-2nd] also made remarks in support of community schools. To read the report, review the event broadcast, and access the supporting materials, click [here](#).

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

Opportunities for Providers

Administration

National Summer Learning Association: 2021 Summer Learning Awards Applications Open

The National Summer Learning Association (NSLA) is soliciting applications for its annual Summer Learning Awards, which recognize outstanding summer programs, virtual or hybrid, that demonstrate excellence in accelerating academic achievement and promoting healthy development for young people. There are two awards (the [New York Life Foundation Excellence in Summer Learning Award](#) and the [NSLA Founder's Award](#)) and recipients will be eligible for a \$10,000 donation, an opportunity to be featured at the NSLA's Summer Changes Everything annual conference and more. For more information and to review the application requirements, click [here](#).

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

Youth Opportunities

Administration

ACT Now: Policy and Communications Internship for Spring 2021

ACT Now is seeking applicants for its Policy and Communications Internship for the Spring 2021 semester. As our intern, you will have the opportunity to assist in ACT Now's federal and state policy initiatives and communications work. Applicants should have excellent communications skills, a strong work ethic, and a background in government relations, public policy, or social work. Applicants must have also completed at least their sophomore year in their undergraduate institution and be able to dedicate at minimum 12 hours a week to working at ACT Now. To review the full posting, click [here](#).

Youth Development

DuPage Children's Museum: Virtual STEM Programs for Youth

The DuPage Children's Museum (DCM) is offering two virtual hands-on learning STEM opportunities for children and youth to participate in. STEM Labs are 45 - 90-minute sessions that encourage children in grades 1 to 4 to problem-solve and explore. Arts & Maker After School provides youth ages 4 to 12 with materials to tinker and create along with peers. To learn more about DCM's online STEM offerings, click [here](#).

Illinois State Board of Education: United States Senate Youth Program Applications for 2021 Now Open

The United States Senate Youth Program (USSYP) is soliciting applications from juniors or seniors in high school for its virtual and intensive weeklong program, which studies the federal government and its leaders. Each student will also receive a \$10,000 undergraduate college scholarship, with encouragement to continue coursework in history, government, and public affairs. Applicants must be elected or appointed student officers for the 2019-20 or the 2020-21 academic year (some flexibility applies due to COVID-19). For more information on the program and to apply, click [here](#). **All applications are due by 4:00 p.m. on November 13, 2020.**

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

Funding Opportunities

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

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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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