

# ACTNOW!

## NEWSLETTER

**ACTNOW!**  
Afterschool for Children and Teens

*Upcoming  
events &  
trainings*

### *February*

**2/22** Suburbs Community Schools Training

**2/23** Chicago Community Schools Training

### *March*

**3/2** Afterschool Town Hall: COVID, Summer Programming, and Planning for Vaccinations

**3/4** ACT Now SEL Webinar #3: Self-Management

**3/8** ACT Now Family Engagement Training #1

**3/9** Planning on Applying for the 21st Century RFP Webinar

**3/24** ACT Now STEM Webinar #4: Connecting STEM to Everyday Life & Career Exploraation

# Policy Updates

## Federal Policy

### House Education and Labor Committee: FY21 Budget Reconciliation Bill Supports Afterschool and Summer Learning

**Last week**, the House Education and Labor Committee released its portion of the [FY21 Budget Reconciliation Bill](#), which enacts President Joseph Biden's [American Rescue Plan](#). This bill emphasizes the important role that afterschool and summer learning programs, child care providers, and nutrition programs play in helping young people and families across the United States recover from the COVID-19 crisis.

- **Provides \$128.6 billion in funding to State Education Agencies (SEA) such as the Illinois State Board of Illinois (ISBE). Afterschool and summer learning are allowable uses for these funds.**
- Requires SEAs to reserve at least 5 percent (**estimated to be about \$6.4 billion nationally**) of new ESSER funding for grants and contracts to carry out activities to promote **learning recovery**.
- Requires school districts to reserve at least 20 percent of their newly allocated ESSER funds to promote learning recovery including **afterschool programs and summer learning experiences. Extended school day, extended school year, and other strategies and interventions are also allowable.**
- Allows states and local school districts to use funding for **evidence-based interventions that “respond to students’ academic, social, and emotional needs” and address the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on low-income students.**

The FY21 Budget Reconciliation Bill also attempts to support families with more-affordable child care and stabilize the child care system by investing **\$39 billion in child care providers via the Child Care Development Block Grant Program (CCDBG)**.

To read the full Afterschool Alliance article on the bill, click [here](#).

### Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: New Guidance for K-12 Schools

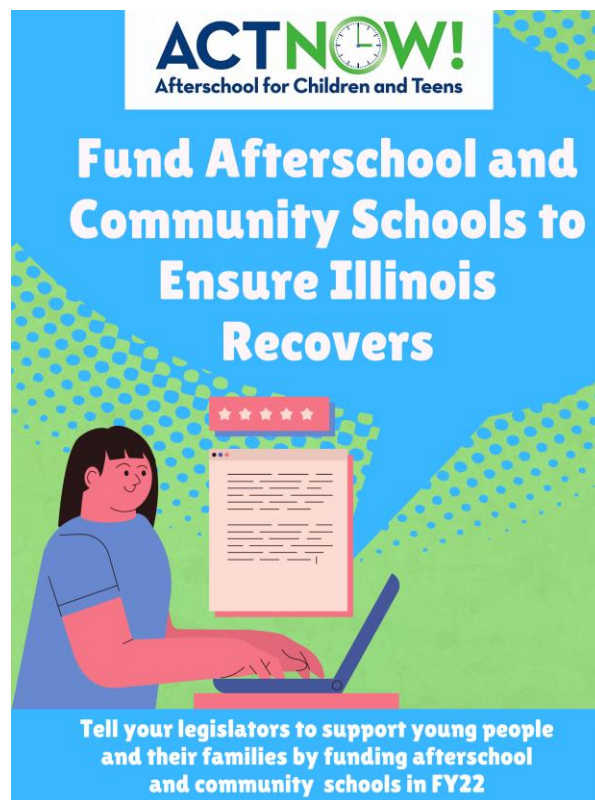
On **February 12, 2021**, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) announced updated guidance for K-12 schools as school districts across the nation begin to make the transition back to in-person instruction. This new guidance is not a mandate for school

districts to reopen but rather a set of recommendations for making a safe shift to hybrid or in-person facilitation. To review these recommendations, click [here](#).

### **U.S. Senate: Letter to Senate Leadership in Support of COVID-19 Funding for Summer Programming for Low-Income Youth**

On **February 10, 2021**, twelve U.S. Senators, including Senator Durbin, wrote a letter to Senate leadership advocating for the dedication of future COVID-19 relief funding for summer enrichment opportunities for low-income youth. To read the full letter, click [here](#).

## **State Policy**



### **ACT Now: FY22 Budget Advocacy Alert to Legislators**

Afterschool programs and community schools are an extremely effective resource in solving many of the problems exacerbated by the outbreak of COVID-19. As the nation continues to respond to the pandemic and the State of Illinois faces projected budget cuts to health and human services, it is imperative that we come together to support our youth and most marginalized communities by funding afterschool programs and community schools in Illinois.

## **ACT Now & ADVOCATE**

Click [HERE](#) to send our advocacy alert

### **Tell your legislators to Fund Afterschool and Community Schools NOW**

#### **[Count Me In](#)**

#### **ACT Now: Letter on COVID Relief for Afterschool Programs and School-Age Child Care**

**ACT Now** has written a letter to Secretary Hou of the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) to advocate for COVID-19 relief for afterschool programs and school-age child care providers. The letter speaks to the need for heightened support for afterschool and child care programs as families and parents return to work.

**ACT Now** asks that IDHS use the flexibility provided by the Federal Office of Child Care, as well as additional flexibilities and funding provided in the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act (CRRSA), to support school-age child care and afterschool providers that are license exempt to help keep them afloat.

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

#### **ACT Now: Sign-On Letter on Education COVID Relief for Afterschool Programs**

**ACT Now** has launched a sign-on letter campaign to the Illinois State Board of Illinois (ISBE) in support of education COVID-19 relief and school-afterschool partnerships.

**This letter emphasizes the need for the state to utilize federal COVID relief for afterschool and summer programs. ACT Now is also calling for ISBE to ensure that school districts coordinate with their afterschool partners as funds are spent.**

To read the full letter, click [here](#). ACT Now and support afterschool providers!

#### **[Sign On by Clicking here!](#)**

#### **Governor Pritzker's Office: Plan to Expand Phase 1B Eligibility of Vaccination Rollout Released**

On **February 10, 2021**, Governor Pritzker announced that the state of Illinois is in the process of expanding Phase 1B eligibility to individuals who have comorbidities and underlying health conditions as defined by the Centers for Disease Prevention and Control (CDC). In addition, Illinois will also prioritize individuals with disabilities. This expansion also applies to people 16 and older that aren't otherwise covered in previous eligibility

categories. To review read the full press release and learn more about the expansion of Phase 1B, click [here](#).

### **Chalkbeat Article: Chicago Teachers Union and Chicago Public Schools Reach Agreement on Reopening**

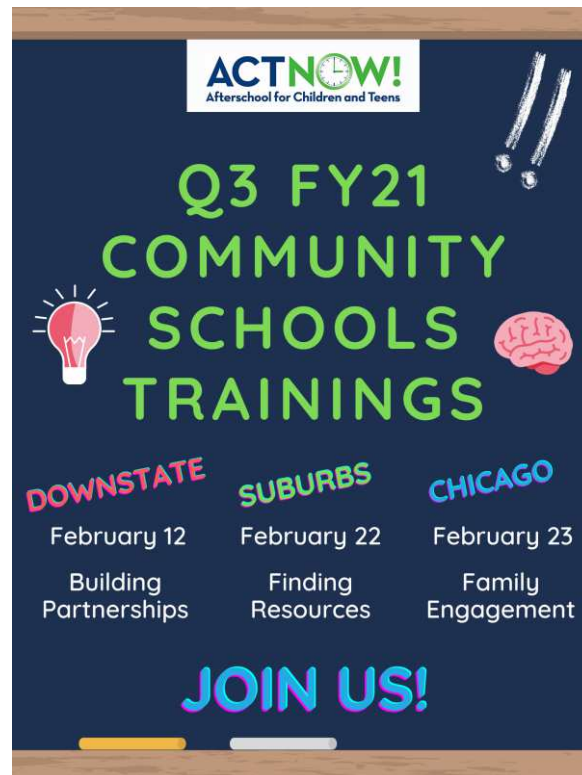
On **February 10, 2021**, Chalkbeat Chicago reported that Chicago Teachers Union (CTU) and Chicago Public Schools (CPS) reached an [agreement](#) on reopening the school district. More than two-thirds of CTU members backed this agreement after days of contentious discussion. This agreement between CTU and CPS may allow for students to begin returning to their classrooms immediately. Students in most elementary grades are still scheduled to return to school buildings on **March 1, 2021**. To read the full article, click [here](#).

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

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# **Trainings, Events and Webinars**

## **Administration**



The poster is for ACTNOW! Afterschool for Children and Teens. It features a dark blue background with a chalkboard texture. At the top, the ACTNOW! logo is in white. Below it, the text 'Q3 FY21 COMMUNITY SCHOOLS TRAININGS' is written in large, green, block letters. To the left of 'SCHOOLS' is a lightbulb icon, and to the right is a brain icon. Below the main title, there are three columns of text, each with a date and a topic. The first column is for 'DOWNSTATE' on February 12, 'Building Partnerships'. The second is for 'SUBURBS' on February 22, 'Finding Resources'. The third is for 'CHICAGO' on February 23, 'Family Engagement'. At the bottom, 'JOIN US!' is written in large, colorful letters. There are also some white chalk marks at the top right and bottom of the board.

Location	Date	Topic
DOWNSTATE	February 12	Building Partnerships
SUBURBS	February 22	Finding Resources
CHICAGO	February 23	Family Engagement

## **ACT Now: Q3 FY21 Community Schools Trainings**

Community schools are a robust framework of support for our young people and families in Illinois. We know that community schools providers are assessing the needs of their communities and providing integral services amidst the ongoing pandemic. To support the well-being and professional development needs of our community schools programs, **ACT Now** will continue to host training events during 2021. We will be facilitating these trainings virtually and encourage all community schools programs to join our engaging sessions on the following dates:

### **Suburbs Providers**

**Theme:** Finding Resources

**Date:** February 22, 2021, from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

To register, click [here](#)

### **Chicago Providers**

**Theme:** Family Engagement

**Date:** February 23, 2021, from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

To register, click [here](#)

To access more information and resources relating to community schools, please check out our Community Schools Corner page, [here](#).

## **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, two additional QST 101 opportunities have been added for afterschool providers interested in participating in virtual webinars.

### **WHEN?**

**February 23, 2021, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.**

**May 4, 2021, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.**

**REGISTER [HERE!](#)**

**\*NOTE:** The registration link is the same for each of the dates and you will have the ability to choose in the registration form. Credit for the provider trainings will be available through the Gateways to Opportunity system. Also, participants can earn CEUs!

Please check our QST page for more information and in order to register for the upcoming QST 102 training by clicking [here](#). If you have any questions and or concerns regarding these trainings, please contact Emma Vibber at [VibberE@actnowillinois.org](mailto:VibberE@actnowillinois.org).



### **ACT Now: Afterschool Town Hall - COVID, Summer Programming, and Planning for Vaccinations**

**ACT Now** wants to continue to meet the needs of the Out-of-School Time (OST) space during the pandemic! On **March 2, 2021, from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.**, we are hosting a Town Hall to address your questions about COVID-19 and discuss plans for summer programming and vaccinations. Join us for an engaging conversation on the needs of the afterschool field. To register, please fill out this form [here](#), and share information about your program's current plans. Once you fill out the form, you will receive a GoToWebinar link within 1 business day.



## **ACT Now: 21st Century Community Learning Center Request for Proposals Webinar for Prospective Grantees**

Are you interested in expanding your afterschool offerings to become a 21st Century grantee? **ACT Now** recognizes that this is a grant that can take programming to the next level, but that it is also a large grant to write for new grantees. On **March 9, 2021, at 10:00 a.m.**, we will be offering a webinar to share information about the Request for Proposals (RFP), answer questions, and highlight successful grantees. After the webinar, we will also provide the opportunity to sign up for one-on-one coaching from successful 21st Century grantees. To register for this event, click [here](#).

## **Kauffman Foundation and UpMetrics Webinar: Leveling Up Philanthropy - Why 2021 is the Year to Shift From a Reporting Mindset to a Learning Mentality for Greater Progress and Impact**

On **February 24, 2021, from 12:00 p.m. to 12:45 p.m.**, the [Kauffman Foundation](#) and [UpMetrics](#) are hosting a webinar for community-based organizations and afterschool providers interested in learning how to begin tracking and applying data in ways that drive learning, collaboration, and change, rather than for reporting requirements. To register for the webinar, click [here](#).

# Youth Development

## ACT Now FY21 STEM Webinar Series: STEM Webinar #4

**ACT Now** will be hosting its final STEM Webinar on **March 24, 2021, from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.** on the topic of Connecting STEM To Everyday Life and Career Exploration. To learn more and to register for this event, click [here](#).

## ACT Now FY21 SEL Webinar Series: Self-Management

On **March 4, 2021, from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.**, **ACT Now** will review [CASEL's SEL Competencies](#) and provide an opportunity for afterschool providers to share how they are facilitating SEL curricula, with a focus on Self-Management. To register, click [here](#).

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

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# Resources for Providers

## Administration

### City of Chicago: COVID-19 Resources and Educational Events

The City of Chicago has compiled resources on the COVID-19 vaccination program:

- [Protect Chicago Website](#) with information on the vaccination and rollout plan
- [Social Media Messaging Resources](#) in a variety of languages

The City of Chicago is also hosting a variety of ongoing educational events on the COVID-19 vaccination. On **Tuesdays and Thursdays at 11:00 a.m.**, Dr. Arwady, Commissioner of the Chicago Department of Public Health, will be facilitating **Facebook Live** conversations to address questions and concerns surrounding the COVID-19 vaccine and rollout plan for the City of Chicago. On **Wednesdays at 10:00 p.m.**, Dr. Luna will be discussing the vaccination on **Univision**.

### UNICEF Report: Towards an equal future - Reimagining girls' education through STEM

[UNICEF](#), along with [EQUALS Global Partnership](#) and the [International Telecommunications Union \(ITU\)](#), has published a new report showcasing how STEM education can transform

gender norms in education, improve quality learning opportunities for girls, and encourage more girls to pursue higher education and technical expert jobs in STEM industries. To read the report, click [here](#).

## Youth Development

### eSchool News: 10 teaching Resources for Black History Month

[eSchool News](#) has curated a list of 10 resources for educators and afterschool providers looking to host difficult conversations on the experiences of black people within the United States and around the world. Resources include lesson plans, virtual museum tours, digital materials, and text. To review these resources, click [here](#).

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

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# Opportunities for Providers

## Administration



### ACT Now: Call for 21st Century Community Learning Center Request for Proposals Mentors - Stipend Provided

**ACT Now** is seeking mentors to assist programs applying for the next 21st Century Community Learning Center (21st Century) Request for Proposals (RFP). ACT Now will provide mentors with a \$250 stipend for their time. Mentors do not need to be currently associated with a 21st Century programs, but need to have former experience writing this grant in Illinois. **Applications are due February 28, 2021, by 5:00 p.m.** To apply, click [here](#). Please email Susan Stanton with any additional questions at [stantons@actnowillinois.org](mailto:stantons@actnowillinois.org).



## **ACT Now: Call for New ACT Now Committee Members!**

**ACT Now** is seeking **ACT Now** members from our diverse membership to sit on a variety of committees. This is a great opportunity for professionals who are looking to take a statewide leadership role in policy and advocacy campaigns, professional development, quality initiatives, or sustainability and are excited about professionalizing, expanding, and improving the afterschool field. Benefits to being a member of our standing committees include:

- Opportunities to attend national conferences with expenses paid
- Time to network with other leaders in the field
- Access to a platform for sharing the work your organization is doing and learn about the work of similar youth-serving organizations
- The chance to shape how afterschool operates in Illinois

If you are interested, please complete this brief application to the best of your ability. The ACT Now team will reach out with further instructions. In the interim, if you have any questions please reach out to Emma Vibber at [VibberE@actnowillinois.org](mailto:VibberE@actnowillinois.org).

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

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# Youth Opportunities

## Administration

### **ACT Now: Policy and Communications Internship for Summer 2021**

**ACT Now** is seeking applicants for our paid Policy and Communications Internship for Summer 2021. 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 a minimum 12 hours a week to working at ACT Now. Intern(s) will receive a stipend that reflects their experience. **Applications are due to Emma Spencer at [SpencerE@actnowillinois.org](mailto:SpencerE@actnowillinois.org) on April 2, 2021, by 5:00 p.m.** To review the full posting, click [here](#).

## Youth Development

### **Gray Matter Experience: Hustle Hacks Program Application Live**

[The Gray Matter Experience \(TGME\)](#) is a non-profit and entrepreneurial experience program for high school students. The free eight-week program aims to expose entrepreneurship opportunities to young people and provide them access to the tools and resources necessary to build businesses that impact their communities. **Applications are due March 12, 2021.** To learn more and to apply, click [here](#).

### **MHA Labs and The (Un)Learning Space: Black History Month Toolkit and Resources**

[MHA Labs](#) and the [\(Un\)Learning Space](#) have developed a toolkit with resources to help young people explore their own leadership role in the movement for racial justice during Black History Month. These resources can be utilized digitally and offline. To access the toolkit and to review the free materials, click [here](#).

## Safety, Health, and Nutrition

### **BASTA! Webinar: Virtual Discussion on Healthy Relationships and Domestic Violence**

On **February 18, 2021, at 4:00 p.m.**, the [BASTA! Domestic Violence Program](#) is hosting a virtual discussion for young adults on the topic of healthy relationships and domestic violence. For more information and to register, click [here](#).

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

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## Funding Opportunities

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

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## 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.

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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](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](#).

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One North Dearborn, Suite 1000, Chicago, IL 60602 | Tel: [312.877.0725](tel:312.877.0725)

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