

ACTNOW! NEWSLETTER

ACT Now & Sign On!

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!](#)



*Upcoming
events &
trainings*

February

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

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](#)

Governor Pritzker's Office: FY22 Budget Proposal Released

On **February 17, 2021**, Governor JB Pritzker released his FY22 Budget Proposal and gave his State of the State and Budget Address. To find a full copy of the proposed budget, click [here](#). The following are updates on several afterschool related state funding lines:

- **Teen REACH is proposed to be funded at the same level of funding as last year at \$14.5 million**
- **The Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) received a \$20 million proposed decrease in state funding but a proposed additional \$400 million in federal appropriation authority for a total of \$169 billion**
- **The Illinois State Board of Education's (ISBE) After School Programs line is proposed to be funded at \$20 million**
- **After School Matters is proposed to be funded at the same level of funding as last year at \$3.4 million**

Now, the General Assembly will work on state budget, to be completed by the **end of May**. To take action to support these funding lines, click [here](#).

Illinois State Board of Education: February Board Meeting Recap

On **February 18, 2021**, the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) met for its monthly meeting. To access the materials from the meeting and upcoming meeting information, click [here](#). The Board heard public comment from a panel of superintendents that spoke in support of waiving state testing requirements for this spring and a panel of high school students that spoke in support of Career and Technical Education. The ISBE Board also voted in two new members of the Board, Roger Eddy and Jaime Guzman. The Board also heard presentations on the teacher shortage and on enrollment numbers for this school year. The next Board meeting is **March 17, 2021**.

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

Trainings, Events and Webinars

Administration



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? 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](#).

The Chicago Council on Global Affairs Webinar: Amplifying Black History for Structural Change and Unity

On **February 25, 2021, at 4:00 p.m.**, the [Chicago Council on Global Affairs](#) is hosting a webinar for educators, afterschool providers, and nonprofit administrators on how to amplify Black History for structural change and unity. To register for this event, click [here](#).

ShareMyLesson Conference: 2021 Virtual Conference

[ShareMyLesson](#) is hosting its annual conference virtually between **March 23, 2021, and March 25, 2021, from 12:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.** The virtual conference will provide educators and afterschool providers with resources and strategies for reopening schools safely, supporting the social and emotional recovery and learning recovery of young people, strengthening a foundation of anti-bias education, increasing civic engagement, and incorporating trauma-sensitive practices into programming. To learn more about the conference and to register for the webinars, click [here](#).

Family and Community Partnerships

ACT Now: FY21 Family Engagement Webinar Series Kicks Off Soon

Does your program struggle to maintain ongoing, supportive, and consistent family engagement? Do you wish you had strategies to increase interaction with families and show them all the high-quality work you do? Back by popular demand, **ACT Now** will be hosting its Family Engagement webinar series on the following dates:

- **Part I: March 8, 2021, from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.**
- **Part II: March 15, 2021, from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.**
- **Part III: March 22, 2021, from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.**

This virtual family engagement training series will help you improve family engagement in Out-of-School Time (OST) environments. Dive into the layers family engagement, develop a model of evaluation, and craft a systematic strategy to high-quality and evidence-based family engagement!

Each webinar is \$10. To register for individual sessions or the entire webinar series, click [here](#). *If you are interested in group pricing for 5 or more participants within the same organization, please contact Emma Vibber (Quality and Professional Development Specialist) at vibbere@actnowillinois.org.*

Illinois AfterSchool Network: Parent Cafe

On **March 13, 2021, from 11:00 a.m. to 12:15 p.m.**, the [Illinois AfterSchool Network](#) is hosting another Parent Cafe workshop for families on the topic of Healthy Relationships. To register for the session, 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](#).

Illinois AfterSchool Network Webinar: Introduction to Coding with Texas Instruments - Nspire CX II and Python

On **March 2, 2021, from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.**, the [Illinois AfterSchool Network \(IAN\)](#) is hosting a webinar in collaboration with [Texas Instruments](#) for providers interested in learning about coding and the Python programming language. To register for the event, click [here](#).

National Council for Behavioral Health Webinar: Addressing the Adverse Impacts of COVID-19 on Children with Serious Emotional Disorders

On **March 3, 2021, at 12:00 p.m.**, the [National Council for Behavioral Health](#) is hosting a webinar on the impact of COVID-19 and distance learning on young people with emotional disorders. Attendees will also learn about the social-emotional impacts of remote learning and learn about two trauma-informed, resilience-oriented strategies for addressing these effects. Please Note: the webinar will be presented via the Adobe Connect platform. To learn more about the webinar and to register, click [here](#).

National Geographic Events: Explorer Classroom and BioBlitz

[National Geographic](#) is hosting a variety of STEM-oriented events and trainings for young people and afterschool providers:

- The first opportunity is called Explorer Classroom, which engages students in a live discussion and Q&A session with cutting-edge scientists, researchers and storytellers from across the globe. **The first Explorer Classroom event kicks off on February 24, 2021, at 3:00 p.m., and occurs biweekly.** To register for the live session and learn more about the upcoming events, click [here](#).
- The second opportunity is known as BioBlitz, which is geared towards afterschool providers. Learn how to lead students in safe, fun and free BioBlitz activities in which students must find as many species as possible over a short period of time. **The first training will take place on March 10, 2021, at 12:00 p.m.** To register for the session and other upcoming trainings, click [here](#). Don't forget to check out the new [Guide to BioBlitz for Afterschool Programs](#).

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

Resources for Providers

Administration

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: Essential Workers COVID-19 Vaccine Toolkit

[The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#) has developed a COVID-19 vaccine toolkit for essential workers, including afterschool and child care providers. This communications toolkit provides resources on vaccine education, information on vaccine availability, and FAQs for employers and employees. The toolkit is regularly updated. To access the toolkit, click [here](#).

Youth Development

North Chicago Community Partners Article: 10 Things We Learned Serving Students During the Pandemic

Our friends at [North Chicago Community Partners \(NCCP\)](#) have written an article highlighting ten important lessons the organization has learned while supporting students and their families throughout the pandemic. The article offers tips and strategies for program providers that are continuing to facilitate programming in the virtual and hybrid settings, and meeting the basic needs of their communities. To read the article, click [here](#).

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

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.



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](#). **Survey responses are due February 28, 2021.** 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.

ACT Now: Diversity, Racial Equity, and Inclusion Consultant Request for Proposals Released

ACT Now is seeking a consultant to conduct a review of ACT Now's diversity, racial equity, and inclusion (DREI) practices, assist in developing activities to improve in our DREI practices, develop a DREI needs assessment for our members, and assist in creating resources to meet the needs of our members. For more information regarding this

opportunity and the RFP, click [here](#). Submissions are due by **March 30, 2021**, to stantons@actnowillinois.org. We ask that all submissions are in a PDF format.

Youth Development

National Summer Learning Association: Summer Bootcamp - Get Ready for Summer Series

[The National Summer Learning Association](#) is hosting a summer bootcamp to prepare afterschool providers and summer learning programs for Summer 2021 **between March 1, 2021, and March 5, 2021**. To learn more about this free professional development and planning opportunity, click [here](#).

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

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. **Applications are due to Emma Spencer at SpencerE@actnowillinois.org on April 2, 2021, by 5:00 p.m.** To review the full posting, click [here](#).

Youth Development

Entertainment Software Association Foundation: Scholarship Opportunities for Young People

To inspire future creators in the video game industry and encourage diversity in Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Mathematics (STEAM), the [Entertainment Software Association Foundation \(ESA\)](#) established a scholarship fund providing support for women and minority students. Applicants must be a current high school senior, college freshman, sophomore or junior and be pursuing a degree leading to a career in computer and video

game arts and sciences. To access the application, click [here](#). **Applications are due March 12, 2021.**

For students pursuing video game arts degrees, collegiate esports, or content creation while actively supporting their LGBTQ+ communities ESA has developed a scholarship program in conjunction with [Gay Gaming Professionals](#) that recognizes students who show a commitment to service in their local, regional and/or national LGBTQ+ communities. The 2021 application for this scholarship is now live. To learn more about eligibility and to apply, click [here](#). **Applications are also due March 12, 2021.**

The Chicago Architecture Biennial: Student Ideas Competition

[The Chicago Architecture Biennial](#) is asking students in grades 7-12 to participate in its Student Ideas Competition. This competition is free and challenges students to reimagine urban spaces so that they better reflect the needs and dreams of their communities. Winners of the competition will be awarded cash and technology prizes. To learn more about this opportunity, click [here](#). **Submissions are due May 7, 2021.**

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

Funding Opportunities

Safety, Health, and Nutrition

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois: New Funding Opportunity Closes Soon

Last week, [Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois](#) opened a round of quick-release funding to support community-based organizations (CBOs) that are providing young people and communities access to care, hunger, shelter, behavioral health, and COVID-19 health literacy and vaccine outreach. This grant cycle will offer 75 grants of \$20,000 (per grant). **Applications must be completed and submitted by February 26, 2021.** To learn more about this funding opportunity and to apply, click [here](#).

Youth Development

Youth Service America: Youth Service Zones Grant Program

[Youth Service America](#) is soliciting applications for its Youth Service Zone grant program, which offers organizations and schools an opportunity to work collaboratively to increase the youth volunteer rates in their community. Each zone will receive a grant of \$15,000 (\$5,000 to each of the three collaborative leaders) to support program activities that build partnerships and capacity in order to increase youth volunteer participation rates. Applicants may work locally (city, county, school district), regionally, or statewide. There is language that calls out youth development organizations and community schools! To learn more about this grant opportunity and eligibility for the program, click [here](#). **Applications are due March 31, 2021.**

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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