

ACTNOW!

NEWSLETTER

ACTNOW!

Afterschool for Children and Teens

*Upcoming
events &
trainings*

February

2/12 Downstate Community Schools Training

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

Policy Updates

Federal Policy

President Joseph Biden: Executive Order Issued to Remove Immigration Barriers

On **February 2, 2021**, President Joseph Biden issued a Public Charge Executive Order, which removes barriers to the legal immigration system and calls for the review of the public charge regulations imposed by the Trump Administration. This Executive Order also requires the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), the Department of State (DOS), and the Department of Justice (DOJ) to evaluate the current effects of the rules, and to address the policies' affect on the U.S. immigration system and public health within 60 days. The Executive Order does not directly rescind or replace the DHS or DOS public charge rules, but rather holds DHS, DOS, and DOJ accountable to review the policy and take appropriate actions within 60 days. To learn more about this Executive Order, click [here](#).

ACT Now: Sign-on Letter to Congress in Support of the Full-Service Community Schools Expansion Act of 2020

ACT Now encourages its members to advocate for the passage of the Full-Service Community Schools Expansion Act of 2020 by signing onto a letter to Congress. The letter also pushes for the inclusion of full-service community schools as an allowable use of funding for public schools and school districts in future COVID-19 relief packages. To read the full letter, click [here](#). To sign on in support of community schools providers, click [here](#).

U.S. House of Representatives: Learning Recovery Act of 2021 Introduced

On **January 28, 2021**, the U.S. House of Representatives introduced [the Learning Recovery Act of 2021](#), which aims to provide \$75 billion in federal aid to school districts, over two years, via the Title I Part A formula. This funding may be utilized to support programs like afterschool, summer school or extended school days, as well as other school programming. The Act also directs the Institute of Education Sciences to conduct research on learning loss. The legislation emphasizes equity and addressing communities that have the most need, and also has language to allow funding to be used for trauma screenings, mental health supports, and other efforts designed to "locate and reengage within the school community missing students." The Learning Recovery Act of 2021 is part of a [three-bill package](#) from the House Education and Labor Committee, led by Chairman Bobby Scott (D-Virginia). The other two bills address school infrastructure needs and protecting jobs in the education sector. Each legislation provides the funding for afterschool in the following ways:

- The Reopen and Rebuild America's Schools Act of 2021 would provide \$130 billion in federal aid, with emphasis on targeting high-poverty schools, to help reopen public schools and provide students and educators a safe place to learn and work. The funds can also be utilized to develop community learning facilities and early learning centers.
- The Save Education Jobs Act of 2021 would establish an Education Jobs Fund to stabilize the education workforce across the country. Over the course of 10 years, states and school districts would receive up to \$261 billion in funding.

To read more about the Learning Recovery Act of 2021, 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 is asking that the Illinois General Assembly approve the following line items proposed in Governor Pritzker's Fiscal Year 2022 Budget:

- Restore the Teen REACH line item to the funding appropriated in FY18, at \$19.6 million
- Allocate a minimum of \$270 million from U.S. Congress' Child Care Stabilization Fund for CCAP via Child Care Restoration Grants. We ask that there be flexibility in the use of dollars and eligibility for license-exempt providers.
- Develop a new \$15 million line item to support Community Schools in the state
- Include \$3.44 million for After School Matters
- Include \$20 million in direct funding for ISBE's After School Programs line
- Allocate funding for afterschool and Community Schools from the federal COVID-19 relief package

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: COVID-19 Follow-Up Survey for Afterschool Providers

In order to assess the current needs of the afterschool, summer learning, and community schools providers in Illinois, **ACT Now** has developed a brief COVID-19 Follow-Up survey. The survey should take a maximum of 15 minutes and will allow us to understand how we may best support your organization and staff amidst the ongoing pandemic. **ACT Now** appreciates your thoughts, concerns, questions, and any other feedback you may provide through this COVID-19 inquiry survey. We aim to review the responses with the field in our upcoming Afterschool Town Hall on **March 2, 2021**, and to develop support materials for the provider community. To complete the survey, click [here](#).

Chalkbeat Article: Chicago Teachers Union and Chicago Public Schools Create Tentative Agreement on Reopening

On **February 7, 2021**, Chicago Teachers Union (CTU) representatives announced that CTU was weighing a tentative agreement with Chicago Public Schools (CPS) that would end the impasse on reopening the school district. There will be two days of meetings to further discuss the agreement and to make a final decision. Under this tentative agreement, Pre-Kindergarten and some special education teachers and students will return to in-person instruction on **Thursday, February 11, 2021**. Kindergarten through fifth grade educators will be transitioning back into schools on **February 22, 2021**, to prepare for students in these grades to return on **March 1, 2021**. Finally, sixth through eighth grade teachers are scheduled to enter school premises on **March 1, 2021**, with students following on **March 8, 2021**. To keep updated on the situation, click [here](#).

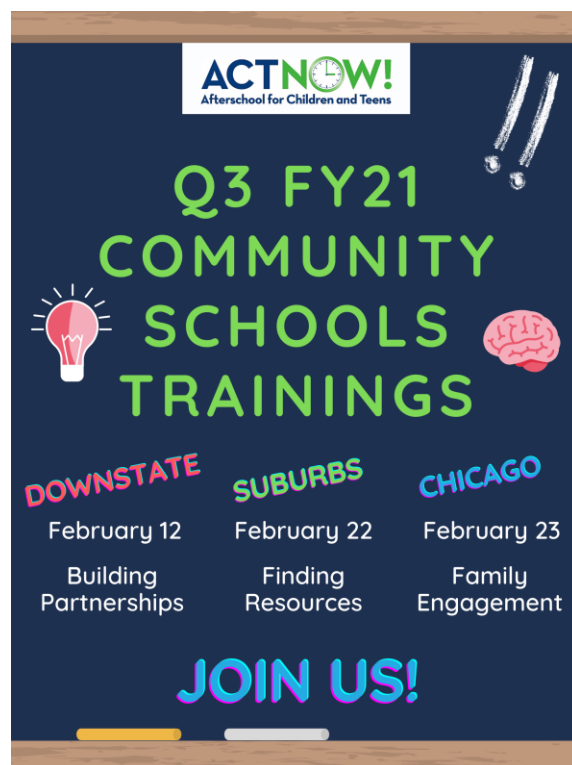
Illinois State Board of Education: 21st Century Community Learning Center Request for Proposals - Opportunity for Providers

[The Illinois State Board of Education \(ISBE\)](#) will be releasing a 21st Century Community Learning Center (21st Century) Request for Proposals (RFP) in **Spring 2021**. 21st Century is a federally-funded grant administered through ISBE. This program supports the creation of community learning centers that provide academic enrichment opportunities during non-school hours for children, particularly students who attend high-poverty and low-performing schools. The funding is normally up to \$150,000 per site for up to five years. **ACT Now** is working to build a network of support for programs that are new to applying for the 21st Century RFP. Please review the upcoming webinar event as well as our 21st Century RFP mentor opportunity in the subsequent sections.

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

Trainings, Events and Webinars

Administration



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:

Downstate Providers

Theme: Building Partnerships

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

To register, click [here](#)

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.

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](#).

Illinois AfterSchool Network: 35th Annual Spring Conference

[The Illinois AfterSchool Network](#) is hosting its annual spring conference **between April 7, 2021, and April 9, 2021**, online. This year marks 35 years of the event and will provide the afterschool field with the opportunity to participate in engaging professional development trainings, hear from colleagues in the field speak to a variety of pertinent topics, and elevate youth voices via presentations. There is also time to network! As the event draws closer, keep an eye out for more information. To register for the conference, click [here](#).

Million Girls Moonshot Initiative: PEAR Institute Dimension of Success Webinar Series

As an implementation partner for the [Million Girls Moonshot Initiative](#), the [PEAR Institute](#) is thrilled to offer a three-part training series to Out-of-School Time (OST) program providers for free. Program staff and coordinators will learn how to leverage the free Dimensions of Success (DoS) Program Planning Tool (PPT) during these guided, interactive sessions focused on creating authentic plans to support quality programming and maximize positive outcomes for youth and educators.

- **Part I:** Understanding Quality STEM Learning: Empowering Networks and Program will take place on **February 23, 2021, from 2:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.**
- **Part II:** Imagining & Planning for Quality: Exploring Goals to Guide Our Work will be hosted on **March 11, 2021, from 2:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.**
- **Part III:** Creating Change: Leveraging DoS Towards Continuous Growth will be facilitated on **March 30, 2021, from 2:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.**

To learn more about the webinar series and register for the webinar sessions, 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 **February 4, 2021**, **ACT Now** hosted our second Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) webinar on Responsible Decision-Making. To access the recording, click [here](#). 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](#).

National Girls Collaboration Project Webinars: STEM, Saving Lives, and Mental Health

[The National Girls Collaboration Project](#) is hosting two STEM-based webinar opportunities for young people interested in learning how STEM relates to one's physical and mental health.

- **Today, at 2:00 p.m.**, hear from panelists from the [Alliance for a Healthier Generation](#) and [Gateway to the Great Outdoors](#) as they share ways to connect physical and mental health to STEM learning. To register for the webinar, click [here](#).

- On **February 24, 2021, at 6:00 p.m.**, join the National Girls Collaboration Project's interactive Town Hall focused on hearing the voices of women and girls as they explore careers in biology, chemistry, and other scientific disciplines to create medical treatments and vaccines to serve humanity. To learn more about the event and to register, click [here](#).

Afterschool Alliance: Youth Voice Week and We <3 Afterschool

Between **February 4, 2021 and February 12, 2021**, the [Afterschool Alliance](#) is hosting its first Youth Voice Week in celebration of its seven Youth Afterschool Ambassadors! Each day, a Youth Afterschool Ambassador will be sharing their story via the Afterschool Snack blog and be interacting with young people and programs via social media. On the final day, **February 12, 2021**, the Afterschool Alliance invites you to participate in [We <3 Afterschool Day](#) to honor and elevate the ways in which programs have risen to the moment to keep kids safe, inspire them to learn, and help working families during difficult times. To access materials, including a printable activity sheet, graphic, and social media copy, click [here](#)! Don't forget to use the hashtag [#IHeartAfterschool](#) on Twitter and Instagram.

Wings for Kids: Share the Love SEL Webinar Series

[Wings for Kids](#) is hosting a webinar series on Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) that surrounds the topics of connecting to self, connecting to students, and connecting to adults through SEL.

- **Part I:** Connecting to Self Through SEL will take place on **February 17, 2021, at 11:30 a.m.**
- **Part II:** Connecting to Students Through SEL will be facilitated on **February 19, 2021, at 11:30 a.m.**
- **Part III:** Connecting to Adults Through SEL will be hosted on **February 22, 2021, at 11:30 a.m.**

To learn more and to register for the entire series or individual sessions, click [here](#).

Million Girls Moonshot Initiative: Incorporating STEM Role Models into Afterschool Webinar Series

This webinar series will be presented by [the National Girls Collaborative](#) and focus on providing exposure to diverse STEM role models for girls and young people. The webinar series aims to dispel stereotypes about who does STEM and provide participants with an overview of STEM role models, benefits of incorporating role models into STEM programs for girls, and resources and strategies for identifying and engaging role models.

- **Part I:** Incorporating STEM Role Models Into Afterschool will be hosted on **March 2, 2021, from 3:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.** To register, click [here](#).
- **Part II** will take place on **March 23, 2021, from 3:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.** To register, click [here](#).
- **Part III** will be facilitated on **April 27, 2021, from 3:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.** To register, click [here](#).

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

Resources for Providers

Administration

Afterschool Alliance: America After 3PM Report Data on Middle School Students

Last week, the [Afterschool Alliance](#) released new America After 3PM Report data specifically on middle school students. This information shows that parents and families recognize the critical supports and experiences afterschool programs provide, both for middle school students' academic learning and social and emotional growth. To read the new brief, click [here](#). To access the full America After 3PM Report, click [here](#).

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: Suggestions for Youth Programs and Camps - Readiness and Planning Tool

[The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#) has developed a tool for afterschool and summer learning providers to utilize in order to plan for in-person instruction, outdoor youth development activities, and camp. This guidance may help to prepare for summer 2021. To review and access this tool, click [here](#).

Youth Development

National Girls Collaborative Project: Black History Month Resources

In recognition of Black History Month, [the National Girls Collaborative Project](#) has compiled several resources that serve to promote Black students in STEM learning and the STEM sectors.

- **Black Girls Code** is designed to [increase the numbers of young women of color](#) in the field of digital technology and computer science by providing skills, exposing them to technology role models, and increasing self-confidence to become tech creators and entrepreneurs.
- **Blacks in Technology** is a [community-based website](#) that works towards building and establishing a community that focuses on bringing blacks together within technology-related sectors.
- **The Black Inventor Online Museum** focuses on the ingenuity and accomplishment of the top black inventors over the last 300 years. There is a notable section dedicated to [female inventors](#).
- **The National Society of Black Engineers (NSBE)** is a [non-profit association](#) that is dedicated to the academic and professional success of African-American engineering students and professionals.
- **Science NetLinks** has developed a [number of resources](#) that honor the achievements and scientific work of African Americans.

CASEL: Refocus on the SEL Roadmap Brief

[CASEL](#) has written a brief for school district administrators, educators, and afterschool providers interested in learning how to best support the Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) needs of young people during the second half of the school year. Many students will be transitioning from distance learning back to in-person learning, or vice versa, and SEL remains as important as ever. This resource contains three strategies to help prepare for a successful second semester based on insights into how school districts nationwide have prioritized SEL this year. To read the brief, click [here](#).

Family and Community Partnerships

Global Family Research Project: Family Engagement Game

[The Global Family Research Project](#) has created a powerful and fun game that allows people to share and reflect on the dilemmas and issues they face and discuss how they could address them. The tool allows teams to co-create new approaches, partnerships, and collaborations. The game has been developed for educators, community-based organizations, families, and more. Afterschool providers may utilize this game in programming and events in order to engage families and other relevant stakeholders and

further develop a sense of community. To learn more about the game and to access it, click [here](#).

Safety, Health, and Nutrition

Illinois Governor's Office of Early Childhood Development: COVID-19 Vaccination Information and Resources for Providers

On **January 25, 2021**, Illinois transitioned into Phase 1B to administer COVID-19 vaccines to those eligible in Priority Group 1B. Illinois has included the following providers under the "educator" category eligible for vaccines in Priority Group 1B as outlined in the [Illinois Department of Public Health COVID-19 Vaccination Plan](#):

- Early Intervention personnel
- Home- and center-based child care providers
- Home Visiting & Maternal, Infant & Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) providers
- Head Start/Early Head Start providers
- Preschool for All providers
- Support staff, including custodial, transportation, kitchen, and other staff

Please note that Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) staff and family members of the provider are not included in this priority group. **It is expected to take at least several months before all those who are eligible in Priority Group 1B to receive their first dose of the vaccine. All eligible people must make an appointment with their local health departments, medical centers, and pharmacies in order to receive a vaccine.** As a result, the Illinois Governor's Office of Early Childhood Development (GOECD) has compiled a variety of resources on Illinois' COVID-19 vaccination rollout:

- [Searchable Map](#) of Vaccine Locations Across the State
- [Vaccination Appointment Website](#) for Cook County

Chicago Department of Public Health: COVID-19 Resources

[The Chicago Department of Public Health](#) has a curated resources and educational materials on the COVID-19 vaccination and rollout of the vaccination plan.

- [Talking Points](#) on the COVID-19 Vaccination
- [City of Chicago Vaccine Updates](#)
- [Top 5 Facts Downloadable Document](#) (English and Spanish PDF)

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). These mentors would present for 10 minutes on an ACT Now webinar on **March 9, 2021, at 10:00 a.m.**, and share their best practices in writing a proposal. Then mentors would answer questions for programs as they go through the proposal process. These conversations may happen via email or over the phone. We are asking each mentor to provide up to a ten-hour time commitment to answering questions for prospective grantees during the 45-day window the RFP is live. We also request that you share with ACT Now any issues programs are running into. 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.

Illinois State Board of Education Special Education Department: Vendor Opportunity

The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) is seeking a vendor to provide recruitment and training services for the Educational Surrogate Parent Program. Educational Surrogate Parent (ESP) volunteers assist students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) who are without parental representation in special education procedures, such as youth in care. Educational Surrogate Parent volunteers must participate in training in order to best advocate for students under evaluation for or who are receiving special education services. Illinois is also seeking assistance in recruiting additional ESP volunteers for areas of greatest need throughout the state. The vendor will collaborate with the ISBE grant administrator. Interested applicants will find more information in the Request for Quote: Educational Surrogate Parent Program by clicking [here](#). Please search for Bid # 21-586SBE-FINAN-B-20146. **The bid is due February 11, 2021, at 12:00 p.m.** Please direct any questions to surrogate@isbe.net.

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

Youth Opportunities

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. 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.

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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