

ACT NOW! NEWSLETTER

ACT Now Statement to our Membership

In the past year, **ACT Now** has written to its members to address issues of racism, discrimination, violence, and police brutality. As an organization that acts as a voice for afterschool in Illinois, we feel it is our responsibility to continue to make our stance on these issues known, to hold space for those members and communities most affected, and to encourage action.

The verdict in the trial of Derek Chauvin is a step towards accountability for the police brutality that has affected communities throughout the country for hundreds of years. However, we are also still processing and mourning the death of Daunte Wright, the death of Adam Toledo (aged 13), the death of Jaslyn Adams (aged 7), the death of Ma'Khia Bryant (aged 16), mass shootings in numerous cities across the country and the fact that we have endemic issues of racial equity and violence in our society, which stop our children from realizing their potential. Black Lives Matter. We need police reform. Our policymakers must take swift action to address gun violence in our country.

ACT Now is proud of the programs with whom we work and the programming they run that serves diverse populations throughout the state. We must continue to serve our youth with a focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion and examine these competencies in our own organizations and in ourselves as individuals. We encourage you to use your voice and speak the names of the people who have lost their lives due to racism, gun violence, and police brutality.

We are actively working on strategies to assist programs in their antiracism work and look forward to sharing that work with you in the future. In the meantime, please reach out to us with any thoughts, resources, or perspectives you would like to share with us.

In Solidarity,
ACT Now Coalition

Policy Updates

Federal Policy

U.S. Senate: Bipartisan Summer Meals Act Introduced in Senate

This month, Senators Kirsten Gillibrand (D- New York) and Lisa Murkowski (R- Alaska) introduced the bipartisan Summer Meals Act ([S. 1170](#)), which is similar to the U.S. House of Representative's version ([H.R. 783](#)) that was proposed this year by Representatives Rick Larson (D - Washington) and Don Young (R- Alaska). The Summer Meals Act aims to:

- **Lower the threshold to allow areas with 40 percent or more of students receiving free or reduced lunch to be eligible for the program, rather than the current threshold of 50 percent.** This would make the meals programs consistent with the eligibility for summer learning programs provided through the 21st Century Community Learning Centers program.
- **Reduce the paperwork burden for meal program sponsors and streamline the application process for programs operating year round.**
- **Improve nutrition in rural, underserved, and hard to reach areas by providing transportation grants** for underserved areas to get children to summer meal sites and by promoting innovative ways to increase children's access to summer meals, such as through mobile meal trucks.
- **Offer sites the option of serving two meals and a snack or three meals to children who attend evening enrichment programs during the school year and summer months.**
- **Allow Summer Nutrition Program providers to serve food to children after emergencies or disasters and be reimbursed if the meals are taken offsite.**

Tell your legislators that this Act must pass in order to provide healthy meals to youth throughout the summer and support families! To take action and send the Afterschool Alliance's alert, click [here](#).

State Policy

Illinois State Board of Education: April Board Meeting Recap

On **April 21, 2021**, the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) met for its monthly meeting. To find the meeting materials and information about future meetings,

click [here](#). The Student Advisory Council presented to the Board and recommended that the Board invest in tutoring to support learning renewal, does not extend the school day or year, train teachers annually on meeting the mental health needs of students, and create a tax credit and Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) partnership to attract more teachers of color. The Board also discussed ESSER funds. The Board has shared information on its state projects using ESSER II funds several times but has not shared how that funding will be distributed. **With regard to ESSER III funds from the American Rescue Plan, ISBE shared that all districts must submit a return to in-person learning plan and to allow for public comment on it. The twenty percent set aside for districts to address learning loss was also addressed, including that this funding can be used for afterschool and summer learning.** Finally, Superintendent Dr. Ayala emphasized the need for districts to use this funding to build capacity.

Chalkbeat Chicago Article: Chicago Public Schools to Allocate \$225 Million for In-Person Instruction

On **April 21, 2021**, Chalkbeat Chicago shared that Chicago Public Schools (CPS) will allocate an additional \$225 million into its school budget for School Year 2021-2022 for out-of-school enrichment opportunities. To read more about CPS funding for student supports, click [here](#).

Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services: Partnership with Chicago Public Schools for Health Resources

On **April 20, 2021**, the Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services (IHFS) announced that the agency is partnering with Chicago Public Schools (CPS) to promote health resources for medicaid-eligible students and families. The 'Every Superhero Needs a Sidekick' campaign will raise awareness about the full spectrum of healthcare and social services available to the more than 240,000 CPS students and families enrolled in Medicaid, and those who are eligible but not yet enrolled. The services include COVID-19 testing, health risk screenings, vaccinations, wellness check doctor visits, prescriptions, therapy, transportation to and from a doctor, and more. To read the full press release, click [here](#).

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

Trainings, Events and Webinars



presents

Quality Standards Training 102



JOIN US!

NEW!

MAY 5

10AM TO 2PM

Prerequisite:
QST 101 attendance required

Goals:
This training will dive deep into the top 3 Core Areas of need

ACT Now: Quality Standards Training 102

In response to provider feedback on the Quality Standards 101 Training, **ACT Now** has developed our Quality Standards 102 training! Join us on **May 5, 2021, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.**, as we dive deeper into crowdsourced and specific Core Areas! You will indicate the topics YOU want to focus on in this training at registration.

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

*NOTE: Quality Standards 101 Training attendance is required prior to Quality Standards 102 Training registration. Please direct any questions or inquiries to Emma Vibber (Quality and Professional Development Specialist) at: vibbere@actnowillinois.org.



ACT Now: NEW WEBINAR SERIES!

ACT Now is unveiling our newest webinar series called Afterschool as a Safe Space! This virtual training series will help programs identify the importance of a systematic approach to health and safety as well as tailor professional development assessments to meet unique programmatic needs. Join Us!

Part I: May 12 2021, from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. - Register [HERE](#)

Part II: May 19, 2021, from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. - Register [HERE](#)

Part III: May 26, 2021, from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. - Register [HERE](#)

Each webinar is \$10.00. If you would like to register for 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.

Core Area	Organization	Name of Event/Training	Date	Registration Link
Administration	ACT Now	21st Century Town Hall Series	May 3, 2021 May 17, 2021 June 1, 2021 June 14, 2021	Click here

			from 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.	
	ACT Now	Q4 Community Schools Training for Chicago Providers: Advisory Boards		To access the recording, click here
Professional Development	ACT Now	Narrative 4: The Power Of Story Exchange	TODAY, from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.	Click here
	American Youth Policy Forum	Committing to Equitable Outcomes for Students During COVID-19: A Focus on High-Quality Curricula and Instruction	May 1, 2021, from 12:00 a.m. to 1:15 p.m.	Click here
Youth Development	Learning Heroes	Out-of-School Time Programs This Summer - Paving the Way for Children to Find Passion, Purpose & Voice	TODAY, at 2:00 p.m.	Click here
	Chicago Park District	Best Practices for In-Person Summer Programming	April 27, 2021, from 1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.	Click here
	Fermilab Friends for Science Education	Booms on Zoom! - A Science Show for the Whole Family	May 1, 2021, from 3:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.	Click here
Safety, Health, and Nutrition	Illinois Partners for Human Services	COVID-19 Vaccine Access and Hesitancy: A Conversation with Community Leaders	May 6, 2021, from 12:00 pm. to 1:00 p.m.	Click here

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

Resources for Providers

Administration

Afterschool Alliance: STEM Messaging for Learning Recovery Document

[The Afterschool Alliance](#) has developed a two-pager with talking points on the importance of STEM programming. This material may be utilized by providers when

conversing with legislators and school district administrators in order to access funding, including federal COVID relief funding from ESSER III (American Rescue Plan). To access the document, click [here](#).

Afterschool Alliance: Summer Programming Guidance

[The Afterschool Alliance](#) has written a brief blog post highlighting guidance from federal agencies and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for providers to utilize while planning for another COVID-19 summer. To read the blog post, click [here](#).

Safety, Health, and Nutrition

National AfterSchool Association: 104 Self-Care Strategies

In celebration of afterschool professionals, across the country, and Afterschool Professionals Appreciation Week, the [National AfterSchool Association](#) has developed a list of self-care strategies and ideas for providers! To download the guide, click [here](#).

Learning Policy Institute: Resources for Reopening Schools

[The Learning Policy Institute](#) has developed and compiled several resources for afterschool and child care providers on reopening schools. Resources surround research and data, guidance, webinars, and more. To review this information, click [here](#).

Youth Development

National AfterSchool Association Article: Activating Activism in Afterschool

[The National AfterSchool Association](#) has created a resource for supporting youth become advocates and activists while in out-of-school time programming. The article highlights opportunities for providers to elevate youth voice. To read the article, click [here](#).

ShareMyLesson: Teaching about Race and Racism - Lesson Plans and Resources

[ShareMyLesson](#) has compiled resources on teaching about race and racism for educators and afterschool providers to use in programming with their young people. These lesson plans and materials are to encourage young people to express themselves, reflect on how we can work to be anti-racist, and provide a safe space to speak about tough topics. To review the resources, click [here](#).

Forbes: Resources on Countering Racial Rhetoric and Violence

[Forbes](#) has collected a variety of materials on countering racial rhetoric and violence for educators, program providers, and youth to help foster conversations and actions. To access these materials, click [here](#).

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Opportunities for Providers Administration



ACT Now & Complete the Survey!

ACT Now is launching its annual spring Resource Survey! **It takes 15 minutes!**

Take the **Survey!**

The information you share with us will be critical in helping ACT Now continue to serve your needs as an afterschool professional and expand upon the services we already offer. We are also, for a limited time, sending resources to interested respondents. **The**

survey closes [May 14, 2021, at 5:00 p.m.](#) By completing the survey, you have entered a chance to win a gift card to either Target, Panera, or Chipotle!

We appreciate your feedback and recommendations and look forward to developing materials and trainings for the field! If you have any questions or concerns, please email Emma Spencer at: spencere@actnowillinois.org.

Council for a Strong America: Employment Opportunity

[The Council for a Strong America](#) is soliciting applications for the position of Deputy Director at the Illinois office. To learn more about this position and to apply, click [here](#).

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

Youth Opportunities

Safety, Health, and Nutrition

Zocdoc: Vaccination Availability for Youth Ages 16 and Older

Youth ages 16 and older in the City of Chicago are eligible to receive the COVID-19 vaccination at the City's pods. Families and parents must accompany their children. Walk-in's are also available at the United Center. To access more information on COVID-19 vaccination, click [here](#). You can also call [312-746-4835](tel:312-746-4835).

NAMI Chicago: Mental Health Website for Youth

[NAMI Chicago](#) has created an engaging and easy-to-digest mental health website for youth in 3rd grade and up. There are different topics, guidance, support resources, and more for different grade levels. To access this information, click [here](#).

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

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