

ACT NOW! NEWSLETTER

COVID-19

State Policy Updates

ACT Now: COVID-19 Afterschool Sign On Letter

ACT Now is encouraging its network partners and afterschool members to sign their names in solidarity in our letter to Governor Pritzker. The letter asks the Governor to:

- Include afterschool programs and providers in to the COVID-19 Education Stabilization Funds
- Provide flexibility for 21st Century Community Learning Centers grantees
- Continue using flexibility by the Federal Office of Child Care to ensure that childcare centers are safe, education, and operational

To read the letter, click [here](#). To add your name to the letter, click [here](#).

Governor Pritzker's Office: Extended Stay At Home Order

On **April 23, 2020**, Governor Pritzker announced that he was extending the Stay At Home Ordinance for Illinois residents **until the end of May**. However, the Governor also issued guidance on allowable actions relating to education, face coverings, outdoor recreational spaces, new essential businesses, etc. To read the full press release, click [here](#).

Illinois State Board of Education: Mandatory Suspension of In-Person Instruction Guidance Update

On **April 24, 2020**, the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) updated its guidance for Illinois school educators, school districts, and afterschool providers. Updates included clarification on summer programming following the conclusion of the academic year, collection of personal belongings by students and educators from school buildings, utilization of CARES Act funding for school districts, flexibility in state grants and general questions regarding grants. In regard to state grants, ISBE announced that it is extending all fiscal year 2020 state grants to **June 30, 2021**. To read the entire updated guidance, click [here](#).

Events and Webinars

ACT Now: Afterschool During COVID-19 Webinar Series

In response to afterschool providers' feedback and requests for more in-depth resources on programming during the COVID-19 public health crisis, ACT Now has developed a robust webinar series. During each webinar, participants will receive resources created by ACT Now to help programs transition their programming online and collect data on their activities going forward.

Part I: Remote Learning Webinar

- **Date:** **May 5, 2020 at 10:00 a.m.**
- **Resources:** Best practices for Remote Learning
- **To register:** Click [here](#)

Part II: Remote Family Engagement Webinar

- **Date:** **May 7, 2020 at 10:00 a.m.**
- **Resources:** Community Assessment Survey (English/Spanish)
- **To register:** Click [here](#)

Part III: Planning for Summer Learning During COVID-19 Webinar

- **Date:** **May 11, 2020 at 11:00 a.m.**
- **Resources:** Staff Survey
- **To register:** Click [here](#)

Part IV: Collecting Data Remotely Webinar

- **Date:** **May 13, 2020 at 11:00 a.m.**
- **Resources:** Sample Family Engagement Tracker, Sample Youth Engagement Tracker
- **To register:** Click [here](#)

ACT Now: 21st CCLC Virtual Town Halls

Join ACT Now for another virtual conversation with 21st Century Community Learning Center Programs in regard to responding to the COVID-19 health crisis **today, April 28, 2020, at 10:00 a.m.** We will cover the latest policy updates, grant updates, resources, and highlight programs' diverse responses to the pandemic. Please [fill out our survey](#) beforehand and [register](#) for the Town Hall! Our next scheduled Town Halls will be taking place on:

- **May 12, 2020 at 10:00 a.m.**
- **May 26, 2020 at 10:00 a.m.**

Click [here](#) to access ACT Now's 21ST Century Town Hall page and find our archived Town Halls and resources relating to the virtual series.

Additional Resources

Internet and Technology Resources

Comp-U-Dopt: Chicago Computer Lottery

Comp-U-Dopt is hosting a computer drive-thru for Chicago community members that do not have access to a computer. Families can register in the lottery system and if chosen, will receive a computer. The computer is FREE, comes with a productivity suite, and two-years of tech support. Lottery registration is now open! Distribution will take place **today April 28, 2020** and **tomorrow, April 29, 2020**. For more information on the project, click [here](#).

Learning At Home Resources

Mott Foundation: Mizzen Application

The FREE Mizzen application offers content from organizations like Jazz at Lincoln Center, After-School All-Stars, and more, to OST educators to use with their students remotely. Mizzen also includes Pro Tips, scheduling, and communications tools to support programming. Afterschool providers will find activity playlists and multi-week modules on topics such as SEL, STEM, art, literacy, entrepreneurship, and youth voice. Click [here](#) for more information.

Zero to Three: Coronavirus Resources for Early Childhood Professionals

For providers that facilitate afterschool programming for infants and toddlers, Zero to Three has created a list of resources that include webinars, activities, online courses and professional development opportunities. To review the materials, click [here](#).

Cox Campus: Free Video-Based Courses and In-Home Learning Resources

In response to the public health crisis, Cox Campus has developed FREE video-based courses and at-home learning resources for OST providers. These resources are geared towards providers that teach students between the ages of birth to 9, and cover a wide variety of topics. Click [here](#) to access the video courses. Click [here](#) to review their online materials.

Resources for Providers

Illinois Collaboration on Youth: Paycheck Protection Program Webinar Recording

On **April 24, 2020**, Illinois Collaboration on Youth (ICOY) hosted a webinar to help Illinois youth service providers better understand the Federal Paycheck Protection Program as outlined in the CARES Act. To view the webinar recording, click [here](#).

Professional Development Opportunities for Providers

Foundations Inc.: Free Professional Development Webinars

Foundations Inc. is providing limited access to their FREE and engaging professional development mini-series for afterschool providers. Participants will receive an e-certificate after completing the sessions. To learn more about the series, click [here](#).

You for Youth: Free Online Courses and Webinars

The U.S. Department of Education, through its You for You program, has 15 FREE courses for 21st Century providers and afterschool program facilitators. Click [here](#) to access these online materials. Upon completion, participants are eligible to receive certificates.

Mental Health Resources

The Kennedy Forum Illinois: Free Webinar to Help Manage Stress During COVID-19

The Kennedy Forum Illinois is offering a FREE 60-minute webinar on managing stress during the COVID-19 pandemic for afterschool providers, interested community members, and youth. This training provides support, resources, and strategies to manage stress. To learn more and register, click [here](#).

Calm Classroom: Free E-Book to Engage Youth and Keep Calm

The Calm Classroom has produced an E-book on mindfulness-based techniques to be used to support the mental and emotional well-being of youth during the COVID-19 health crisis. Techniques are broken down by grade level from Preschool to 6th grade. To access the book, click [here](#).

Breathe For Change: Student & Family Well-Being Resources

Breathe For Change has a variety of FREE wellness resources for providers and families to use in order to help students and children navigate difficult life experiences associated with the pandemic. Click [here](#) to access resources tailored to educator wellbeing.

Coalition to Support Grieving Students: Resources for Providers and Families

The Coalition to Support Grieving Students has FREE modules and materials for afterschool providers and families to use when talking to youth who are grieving during the COVID-19 health crisis. To review practical considerations, learn language to support young people, and access professional care, click [here](#).

For our full list of Mental Health Resources, click [here](#).

Policy Updates

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

Trainings, Events and Webinars

Administration

ACT Now's April 2020 Advocacy Campaign: ACT Now and Advocate!

This year, ACT Now is encouraging its coalition members to interact with state and federal legislators and advocate for:

- **The reinstatement of 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) funding in the federal budget** after President Trump's FY21 budget proposal eliminated the program.
- **The Illinois General Assembly to put ISBE's lines in the state budget.**
- **Funding for Teen REACH in the state budget in the amount of at least \$19.6 million.**
- **The Illinois General Assembly to approve the Governor's proposed \$100 million increase for CCAP in the state budget.**

What Advocacy Actions Should You Take?

- **If you have 1 minute:** Send your legislators an action alert by clicking the buttons below and reviewing the toolkit!
- **If you have 5 minutes:** Find your legislators' contact info and call them! Encourage them to support your campaign!

- **If you have 10 minutes:** Post on social media about the need for out-of-school and summer programming using our fact sheets and templates and tag your legislators!
- **If you have more time:** Collect success stories from parents and youth in your program and share them with your local and federal elected officials!

Join Us! Our Toolkit provides guidance on our asks, hosts links to action alerts for **state** and **federal** elected officials, as well as highlights letter templates, best practices when communicating with policymakers, and sample social media to use during April. **To advocate alongside ACT Now, use our Toolkit!** Click [here](#) to download it.

Professional Development

ACT Now Webinar Series: Create a System for Ongoing, Meaningful Family Engagement

Based on data collected from our research-based Illinois Statewide Afterschool Quality Standards, ACT Now has developed a virtual three-hour series of family engagement training to improve family engagement in out-of-school time. You can register [here](#) for the final webinar in the series. The training is \$10. *Please contact Emma Vibber, VibberE@actnowillinois.org to inquire about group pricing.*

Part 3: Family Engagement Common Barriers and Tangible Resources

- **Date: May 4, 2020 from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.**

We are also launching a Cultural Competency training series. ACT Now anticipates launching this in early May. If your program would like to start on this series sooner, please contact VibberE@actnowillinois.org now!

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

Opportunities for Providers

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

Upcoming Community School Training and Networking Events

Administration

ACT Now: Community Schools Regional Meetings NOW VIRTUAL!

ACT Now will continue to hold meetings online for community school providers. Participants will hear about policy updates, network with other providers, and receive professional development based on topics selected by community schools providers. **Please fill out our [survey](#) so that we can plan next year's training events and continue to advocate for the amazing work you and your programs are providing.**

Community Schools: Chicago Regional Meeting

- **Date:** **May 1, 2020**
- **Time:** **10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.**
- **Topic:** COVID-19 Response, Planning for Next Year, and Summer Learning
- **To register:** Click [here](#) (Log in directions will appear once registered)

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](#).

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](#).

Note to ACT Now Members

ACT Now would like to acknowledge the challenges many of our youth, families, colleagues, and communities are facing with the outbreak of COVID-19. We would also like to thank all our partners for their hard work in responding to the pandemic as we navigate unprecedented situations.

We will continue to support you all by sharing resources and materials relating to COVID-19 from reputable federal and state agencies, through our newsletter and E-alerts, as well as our [webpage, specifically designated for COVID-19 resources](#), and our social media platforms.

We are available for questions and concerns remotely. Please contact our **Network Lead, Susan Stanton:** at stantons@actnowillinois.org or our **Youth Development Associate, Emma Spencer:** at spencere@actnowillinois.org.

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