

ACT NOW! NEWSLETTER

Policy Updates

Federal Policy Updates

U.S. Senate: The Work Opportunities and Resources to Keep Nonprofit Organizations Well (WORK NOW) Act

On **May 18, 2020**, the U.S. Senate proposed The Work Opportunities and Resources to Keep Nonprofit Organizations Well (WORK NOW) Act, which would authorize a major new grant program to help nonprofits — including OST and summer learning providers — retain their employees, scale their programs, and provide employment opportunities in communities. The legislation allocates \$50 billion to create a program to be administered by the Treasury Department.

- 78% of funds are set aside for state and local governments
- 20% of funds are set aside for national nonprofit organizations to apply directly to the Treasury Department to distribute funds to local chapters and affiliates
- 2% of proposed funding set aside of funds is provided for Indian Tribes

The majority of federal funding must be used for employee compensation. To read the a more in-depth summary of the legislation, click [here](#).

U.S House of Representatives: Health and Economic Recovery Omnibus Emergency Solutions (HEROES) Act

On **May 12, 2020**, the U.S. House of Representatives proposed a new COVID-19 relief bill, a \$3 trillion package, known as the Health and Economic Recovery Omnibus Emergency Solutions (HEROES) Act. It is currently only supported by Democrats. The HEROES Act would include additional funding for the State Fiscal Stabilization Fund, with \$90 billion distributed to Governors, including:

- \$58 billion for K–12 local educational agencies
- \$27 billion for public institutions of higher education
- \$4 billion for governors to support K–12, higher education and related activities
- \$450 million each for the Bureau of Indian Education and outlying areas

The legislation has language calling for the fund to support the continuity of student engagement through social and emotional learning, professional development for staff on trauma-informed care, and the purchasing educational technology. The HEROES Act would also include an additional \$7 billion in payments to states for the Child Care Development Block Grant (CCDBG) to remain available until **September 30, 2021**, to prevent, prepare for, and respond to coronavirus (including for federal administrative expenses). Click [here](#) to read the Afterschool Alliance's blog post.

State Policy Updates

Illinois General Assembly: Fiscal Year 2021 Budget Approved

On **May 23, 2020**, the Illinois General Assembly passed the Fiscal Year 2021 Budget. The following programs were allocated funding at:

- \$14.5 million for Teen REACH
- \$3.4 million for After School Matters
- \$20 million for ISBE's After School Programming
- \$19 million for grants to CBOs and local governments for youth employment programs
- \$428.8 million for expenses associated with Child Care Services
- \$230 million for Grants for Free Distribution of Food Supplies and for Grants for Nutrition Program Food Centers under the USDA Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Nutrition Program

- \$500 thousand for grants and administrative expenses associated with the USDA Farmer's Market Nutrition Program

To review the full FY21 Budget, click [here](#).

Governor Pritzker's Office: New Plan to Expand Childcare in Next Phases of Restore Illinois

On **May 22, 2020**, Governor Pritzker announced his new plan to gradually reopen childcare facilities and services, in Phases 3 and 4 of the Restore Illinois Plan, in order to ensure that Illinois' families can return back to work. Public health officials have developed [guidelines and regulations for the opening of childcare facilities](#) in order to reduce the risk of COVID-19 for children, staff, and their families.

- New group size limits will be roughly 30% lower than their pre-pandemic levels for centers
- Emergency childcare providers can move immediately to new maximum capacities when their Region enters Phase 3. Most licensed childcare homes will also be able to reopen to their licensed capacity
- The state is encouraging closed licensed childcare providers to reopen when their Region moves to Phase 3. These newly reopened providers will have no more than 10 children per classroom, for the first 4 weeks

There will be no restrictions on which families can use child care in Phases 3 and 4. Additional guidance will be issued to support programs planning to reopen or transition back from emergency care to regular childcare licenses. To read the Governor's full announcement, click [here](#).

Illinois State Board of Education: Board Meeting Recap

On **May 20, 2020**, the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) met for their monthly meeting. The Board heard public comments about CTE curricula, career support and workforce skills, the impact of COVID-19 on communities of color, charter schools, and Chicago Public Schools' remote grading policy. The Board took time to discuss the grading policy and reviewed its Strategic Plan, which the agency is revising in order to address the challenges associated with the public health crisis. ISBE is still waiting on the U.S. Department of Education's guidance on what the reporting requirements are for in-school educators and OST providers. Board members shared that the Illinois General Assembly accepted all of ISBE's budget asks for the Fiscal Year 2021 and was requesting documentation at the time of the meeting. The agency also explained, in detail,

the process of getting funding from the federal CARES Act to school districts based upon Title I allocation. The Board's next meeting is **June 16, 2020**.

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

Trainings, Events and Webinars

Administration

ACT Now: 21st CCLC Virtual Town Halls

Join ACT Now on **June 9, 2020, at 10:00 a.m.** for an engaging conversation with 21st Century Community Learning Center Programs in regard to responding to the COVID-19 health crisis. 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!

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.

Youth Development

Start 2 Finish Coalition Webinar: How The Pandemic Has Impacted Youth And Young Adults

The Start 2 Finish (S2F) Coalition is hosting a webinar on **Thursday, May 28, 2020 at 9:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.** regarding how COVID-19 has impacted youth and young adults in a variety of ways. Participants will interact with experts in the mental health, education, racial equity and youth employment and learn how we all can best support young people. Click **here** to register for the webinar.

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

Opportunities for Providers

Youth Development

The Summer Activity Guide: More than 150 Activities and Challenges to do with Youth during the Summer

The Summer Activity Guide has been developed for the [50 State Afterschool Network](#), with leadership from the [Georgia Statewide Afterschool Network](#), to engage and support children and youth nationwide.

ACT Now has heard OST providers' concerns about how to maintain engagement throughout an atypical summer, and we understand the diverse challenges associated with programming during this unprecedented time. The Summer Activity Guide will be released over course of 10 weeks, **beginning this week and running through the week of August 14, 2020.**

- Organized by 4 different age groups (5-9), (10-12), (13-15), and (16-18)
- Adaptable for in-person and virtual instruction, or a hybrid of both, as well as printable options for take-home packets
- Based in skill-building and social-emotional learning competencies
- **Supplemental materials** for professional development and enhancing family engagement
- **Resources for families** on topics such as recognizing signs of stress and trauma in youth and how to implement summer programming at home

Click [here](#) to review the materials and supplies needed to facilitate the activities!

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](#).

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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

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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