ACT NOW! NEWSLETTER

Policy Updates

Federal Updates

U.S. Food and Drug Administration Approves the Pfizer-BioNTech Vaccination

On **August 23, 2021,** the U.S. Food and Drug Administration approved the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine for individuals 16 years and older. For children between 12 and 15 years old and immunocompromised individuals who need a third dose, the vaccine will continue to be available under emergency use authorization.

State Updates

Governor JB Pritzker Announces COVID-19 Vaccine Requirement for Healthcare Workers, Pre-K-12 Teachers and Staff

On **August 26, 2021,** Governor JB Pritzker announced that all healthcare workers, including nursing home employees, all pre-k-12 teachers and staff, as well as higher education personnel and students will now be required to receive the COVID-19 vaccine.

- **Workers and students in applicable settings must receive the first dose of a two-dose vaccination series or a single-dose vaccination by September 5, 2021.** Second doses of the vaccine must be received by 30 days after the first dose. **The announcement supersedes previous deadlines set for Chicago Public Schools (CPS)**
- Employees in all of these settings and higher education students who are unable or unwilling to receive the vaccine will be required to get tested for COVID-19 at least once per week, and the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) and the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) may require increased testing in certain situations.

Governor JB Pritzker also announced a statewide indoor mask mandate for all Illinois residents, regardless of vaccination status, as COVID-19 cases and hospitalization rates continue to increase. The masking requirements are effective Monday, August 30, 2021.

Chicago Public Schools Clarification on Vaccination Mandate for All Vendors

Last week, Chicago Public Schools (CPS) announced that as the district prepares to welcome students back to in-person on **Monday, August 30, 2021,** **it will require that all vendor employees with regular direct contact with Chicago Public Schools students, and all vendor employees who are subject to a Chicago Public Schools background check, to be fully vaccinated unless they receive a medical or religious accommodation from their Employer. It will be the responsibility of each Vendor to certify to CPS that they comply with this vaccination requirement and that they maintain accurate personnel records to verify compliance. Vendor organizations will certify compliance by logging into the CPS Supplier Portal beginning August 30, 2021**.

Chicago Public Schools New Reopening Guide for Families Released

On **August 25, 2021,** Chicago Public Schools (CPS) announced that the district will drop the electronic COVID-19 screener it previously required families to complete daily before students stepped onto campus. Instead, CPS is asking families and caregivers to utilize an online checklist of symptoms and fill out an "attestation" form four times a year confirming that practice. CPS also introduced a new reopening guide for parents to review before the start of the school year on **Monday, August 30, 2021**.

For a list of previously listed policy updates, click here.

Trainings, Events and Webinars

Core Area	Organization	Name of Event/Training	Date	Registration Link
Administration	ACT Now	Membership Engagement Exchange: Creative Creatures: Using Improvisation (Improv) to Increase Student Engagement	**September 8, 2021, from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.**	**REGISTER**
	ACT Now	Illinois Quality Program Self-Assessment (IL-QPSA) Sneak Peek Webinar	**September 16, 2021, from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.**	**REGISTER**
	ACT Now	Q1 Community Schools DOWNSTATE Training: Different Structures for Community Schools	**September 22, 2021, from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.**	**REGISTER**

For an archive of our previously listed Trainings, Events and Webinars, click here.

Resources for Providers

Youth Development

Tips to Better Communicate with Children While Wearing a Face Mask

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) has released a new article discussing concerns about whether continuous use of face masks by child care providers, preschool teachers, and other adults may negatively affect a child's speech and language development. The resource offers tips for adults to better communicate with children while wearing a face mask, and more.

Lights On Afterschool 2021 Poster!

This year, the Afterschool Alliance will celebrate 22 years of Lights On Afterschool with a poster that embodies the spirit of afterschool programs. The Lights On Afterschool 2021 poster focuses on all that afterschool programs do to help youth recover from the pandemic and forge successful futures. Further information and ACT Now's Toolkit showcasing resources on how programs may celebrate is forthcoming. To register your Lights On Afterschool event, visit the Lights On Afterschool dashboard. **Every event registered will receive 10 free Lights On Afterschool posters to help promote your celebration!**

8 Fun Digital Learning Tools for the Start of the School Year

eSchool News has compiled a variety of digital learning platforms for educators and afterschool professionals to utilize in programming. Each resource aims to engage youth in a meaningful way and support them as many youth return to in-person instruction.

Million Girls Moonshot STEM Resources for September

The Million Girls Moonshot (MGM) seeks to re-imagine who can engineer, who can build, who can make in the world. It will inspire and prepare the next generation of innovators by engaging one million more girls in STEM learning opportunities through afterschool and summer programs over the next five years. **This month, MGM resources will focus on tools for programs and partners to utilize when developing a plan to engage mentors, families, and the broader STEM community in the fall.** Some of the webinars are already on our calendar!

Opportunities

Teen Science Cafe - Opportunity open through September 30, 2021: Teen Science Café programs are a free, fun way for teens to engage in lively conversations with STEM experts that explore the advances in science and technology that affect their lives. To learn more about this program, submit an interest form!

Webinars

Engineering Mindset

[Intel Future Skills Educator Academy:](#) October 5, 2021 & October 7, 2021, at 2:00 p.m.
Career Exploration and Awareness

[The Possible Futures Curriculum Part I:](#) October 14, 2021, at 2:00 p.m.
[The Possible Futures Curriculum Part II:](#) November 3, 2021, at 2:00 p.m.

Equity

[Addressing STEM Stereotypes and Biases - Facilitating Challenging Conversations with Youth:](#) September 15, 2021, at 3:00 p.m.
PEAR - Dimension of Success (DoS) Certification Trainings:

September 22, 2021, and September 23, 2021, from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
November 17, 2021, and November 18, 2021, from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

PEAR - Dimension of Success (DoS) Recertification Trainings:

September 29, 2021, from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
November 30, 2021, from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Toolkits and Resources:

For Providers

- [Toolkit: Broadening Perspectives in Broadening Participation in STEM toolkit, developed by CAISE](#)
- [BP-Conversation-Guide.pdf (informalscience.org)](#) - A guide for leading discussions in your organization or program focused on broadening participation.
- [BP-4-Cultural-Norms.pdf (informalscience.org)](#) - A practice brief to help organizations and programs reflect on the cultural norms of STEM they do/do not reinforce.
- [Creating Pathways for Equity in STEM Through Family Engagement](#) - Highlighting the experiences of Hispanic/Latinx youths in STEM

    [Exploring STEM Engagement in Girls in Rural Communities](#)

- [What STEM Mindset Is … and Why Everyone Should Have One](#) - This article describes how 21st century skills, growth mindset, and habits of mind all contribute to a STEM mindset

    [What is Engineering? Video For Kids | Kindergarten, 1st & 2nd Grade](#)

- [Toolkit: Brokering Youth Pathways: A Toolkit for Connecting Youth to Future Opportunity](#)
- [Research to Practice: Designing Learning Pathways: A research-practice partnership focused on parent brokering](#)

For Families

- [STEM Teaching Kit](#) - Great activities from the Boston Children's Museum. Hands-on, minds-on activities are broken into categories: science, technology, engineering, and math.

Youth Activities

- [NASA Space Place – NASA Science for Kids](#) - Activities include an art challenge, Color Your Universe, and How Far Away is the Moon?
- [Education at home | 9op](#)
- [50+ Awesome Engineering Projects for Kids - Left Brain Craft Brain](#)
- [Take Flight](#) - Using everyday materials, youth engineer a glider that can fly straight for 15 feet.
- [Keep Your Cool! Design Your Own Cooler Challenge](#)
- The [Mizzen By Mott app](#) delivers inspiring and engaging activities that spark learning in young people.

Community and Family Partnerships

COVID-19 Immigrant Family Support Project

[The Illinois Department of Human Services](#) and the [Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights (ICIRR)](#) have partnered to develop the Immigrant Family Support Project. **Recently, the agencies announced that the initiative has been extended into December 2022.** The project offers cash assistance to immigrants who:

- Have lived in Illinois for at least six months
- Make below 200% of the federal poverty line
- Are NOT ELIGIBLE for ANY public benefits, including:
  - Federal Economic Impact Payments established to alleviate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic
  - Unemployment insurance
  - Social Security
  - Supplemental Security Income
  - TANF/WIC/SNAP or any other public assistance

PTA Facilitating Listening Sessions Toolkit

[The National PTA](#) has developed a toolkit for educators and afterschool providers to utilize when engaging families in community. The Facilitating Listening Sessions Toolkit outlines the strategies for hosting a listening session in your community, hosts invitation scripts, and even an agenda for the facilitator of the conversation. The Facilitating Listening Sessions Toolkit is also available in six other languages.

Safety, Health, and Nutrition

COVID-19 Vaccination Information

- To find an existing vaccine location, go to [Vaccines.gov](#).
- To host a vaccination event for your staff, **please review this information sheet** from the [Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE)](#) and the [Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH)](#).
- To learn more about strategies to boost vaccine confidence, check out these fact sheets:
  - [Strategies to Build Vaccine Confidence](#)
  - [How to Talk About the COVID-19 Vaccine](#)

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Opportunities for Providers

Youth Development

Elevate STEM Learning in Historically Excluded Communities

100Kin10 seeks to address the nation's shortage of science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) teachers by getting 100,000 excellent and diverse STEM teachers into classrooms nationwide within the next 10 years. The community-based organization is soliciting applications from individuals interested in joining its unCommission. This opportunity will offer several benefits and opportunities, including:

- Elevating your communities' voices to positions of power in local and national contexts, including potentially contacting President Joseph Biden
- Receiving a stipend for storytelling of up to $500
- Co-creating an equitable future for STEM by joining a national effort to identify the next set of STEM goals for the country

Need more information? Sign Up for 100Kin10 office hours, offered from **2:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. each Thursday.**

Engineer for the Week

Engineer for the Week (EFTW) provides a high-quality, cost-free curriculum that helps students ages 11-18 develop computer science skills and explore engineering as they design a prototype to achieve positive social impact. **To run a one-week EFTW project with your students, register by October 3, 2021. Facebook provides technical assistance for you to run the project anytime from October 4 to December 3, 2021. The Afterschool Alliance's partnership with EFTW, provides afterschool programs that omplete an EFTW project a stipend of $1,000.**

For an archive of our previously listed Opportunities for Providers, click here.

Youth Opportunities

Administration

ACT Now UPDATE: Policy and Communications Internship for Fall 2021

We are continuing to accept applications for our remote Policy and Communications Internship for Fall 2021. As our intern, you will have the opportunity to assist in ACT Now's federal and state policy initiatives and communications work. Applicants should have excellent communications skills, a strong work ethic, and a background in government relations, public policy, or social work. Applicants must have also completed at least their sophomore year in their

undergraduate institution and be able to work ==*part time*== at ACT Now. **We are providing a stipend to reflect the remote aspect of the internship.** Applications are due to Emma Spencer at SpencerE@actnowillinois.org by **Monday, September 6, 2021, at 5:00 p.m. CDT.**

Youth Development

Apply for Ci3's Youth Advisory Council!

Ci3, a research center at the University of Chicago, is establishing a Youth Council for 14 to 18 year-olds living in the City of Chicago. This council will meet two to three times per month and provide feedback on Ci3's various projects that relate to young people's wellbeing. **Applications are due September 10, 2021.**

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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