

ACT NOW! NEWSLETTER

Policy Updates

Federal Updates

[President Joseph Biden Issues Vaccination Mandate](#)

On **September 8, 2021**, President Joseph Biden announced new COVID-19 vaccination mandates to encourage Americans to receive the vaccines available. Key points of these new mandates include:

- Requiring all employers with more than 100 employees to ensure that their workers are vaccinated or tested weekly
- Requiring vaccinations for all federal workers and contractors that work with the Federal Government
- Requiring vaccinations for all health care workers at Medicare and Medicaid hospitals and other health care settings
- Requiring employers to provide paid time off for vaccinations
- **Requiring all Head Start program staff, Department of Defense schools, and Bureau of Indian Education-Operated Schools to be vaccinated**

[New Learning Loss Recovery Guidance from U.S. Department of Education](#)

On **August 31, 2021**, the U.S. Department of Education released [“Strategies for Using American Rescue Plan Funding to Address the Impact of Lost Instructional Time,”](#) to the public. [The Afterschool Alliance](#) reports that this new guidance highlights successful practices and evidence-based approaches to support students, all of which can be funded by American Rescue Plan (ARP) dollars. This new guidance is a part of the Department’s [Return to School Roadmap](#), a guide for states, schools, educators, and parents to prepare for the return to in-person learning this fall.

State Updates

New COVID-19 Vaccination Guidance for Chicago Public Schools Vendors and Personnel

On **September 10, 2021**, [Chicago Public Schools \(CPS\)](#) released updated guidance for vendors to certify COVID-19 vaccinations. To read the previously shared mandate, click [here](#). As of **September 10, 2021**, CPS also **required suppliers for vendors with youth contact to be vaccinated and to ensure that all employees with a medical or religious exemption will be tested weekly**. Any inquiries should be submitted via a [Procurement Customer Service Ticket](#) so the school district may track all questions.

Illinois State Board of Education COVID-19 Vaccination Mandate Clarification

On **September 8, 2021**, the [Illinois State Board of Education \(ISBE\)](#) announced that the [Governor's Executive Order](#) **does not prohibit any entity from exceeding the minimum requirements for vaccinations**.

Illinois State Board of Education Passes Resolution to Allow Remote Learning for Quarantined Students

On **September 7, 2021**, the [Illinois State Board of Education \(ISBE\)](#) approved a resolution that would require school districts to offer remote learning to all students who are quarantined after being potentially exposed to COVID-19 in school. Further, the new public health guidelines also give school districts the ability to close school buildings under an “adaptive pause” if there is an outbreak at schools.

Kids In Illinois Will Soon Be Able To Take 5 Mental Health Days From School

On **September 3, 2021**, [WBEZ](#) highlighted how under a [bill signed into law by Governor JB Pritzker last month](#), students who decide to take a mental health day will not be required to provide their school with a doctor’s note and will be able to make up any work that was missed on their day off. Students are also now allowed to take up to five mental health days without being penalized.

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	Illinois Children's Mental Health Partnership	Community Engagement Webinar for Mental Health Providers and Advocates	TODAY at 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 11:0 a.m.	REGISTER
	Governor's Office of Early Childhood Education	Staying Updated: GOECD Briefing Call	September 16, 2021, from 12:30 p.m. to 1:00 p.m.	REGISTER

	ACT Now	Connecting School Districts to Community Partners	September 21, 2021, from 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.	REGISTER
	ACT Now	Q1 Community Schools DOWNSTATE Training: Different Structures for Community Schools	September 22, 2021, from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.	REGISTER
	ACT Now	The Return of the Kids: Reconnecting, Re-engaging, and Re-introducing Students to STEM In-Person	September 23, 2021, from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.	REGISTER
	Forefront	Standards of Excellence: Board Leadership	September 29, 2021, from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.	\$15 REGISTER
	ACT Now	Using Data to Design Afterschool Programs	September 30, 2021, from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m.	REGISTER
	ACT Now	Creating Space for Staff: Strengthening Social and Emotional Supports for Staff	October 12, 2021, from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.	REGISTER
Professional Development	Illinois AfterSchool Network	Distance Learning Session: Series on Diversity Equity and Inclusion: Context to Response	September 15, 2021, from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.	\$25 for Series REGISTER
	Illinois AfterSchool Network	Appropriate Setting (Remote Learning), for Family Child Care Professionals Post-COVID	September 15, 2021, from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.	REGISTER
	Illinois State Board of Education Computer Science Education Task Force	Illinois Statewide K-12 Computer Science Education Summit	September 20, 2021 to September 24, 2021	REGISTER
	Illinois AfterSchool Network	Boys and ACEs – How to Assist those with Challenging Behaviors	September 22, 2021, from 10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.	\$10 REGISTER
	University of Illinois - Children and Family Research Center	Continuous Quality Improvement Conference	October 6, 2021 and October 7, 2021	REGISTER

Youth Development	Cobbleston Collective	Statewide Coding event for ALL Illinois 4th - 8th grade educators	September 22, 2021, from 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.	REGISTER
	Illinois Student Assistance Commission (ISAC)	Annual FAFSA Symposium	September 29, 2021, from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.	Registration begins 9/15 REGISTER
Family and Community Partnerships	Illinois Children's Mental Health Partnership	Community Engagement Webinar for Families and Youth	September 15, 2021, from 5:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.	REGISTER

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

Resources for Providers

Youth Development

[Trauma-Informed Care Resources for Providers](#)

[The Crisis Prevention Institute](#) has released a free Trauma-Informed Care for Educators guide to create a deeper awareness of trauma-related concepts in the education and afterschool fields. The resources will also support program providers communicate more effectively and strengthen their relationships with their learners.

[Celebrate National Teach Ag Day 2021](#)

The National Teach Ag Day celebration will take place **September 16, 2021**, and is designed to encourage others to teach school-based agriculture and recognize the important role that agriculture teachers play in our schools and communities. This year the day will include the honoring of an agricultural educator from Illinois! The main Teach Ag Day event in Illinois is known as the Elite Conference and will be hosted **September 17, 2021**, at Heartland Community College in Normal, Illinois.

Safety, Health, and Nutrition

[Self-Care Resources to Utilize During September](#)

September marks National Self-Care Awareness month! [The National AfterSchool Association \(NAA\)](#) has compiled several resources for afterschool providers to utilize throughout the month to encourage the individuals to prioritize checking in with oneself. The NAA also encourages programs to incorporate these practices in the personal and professional environments!

[How to Prioritize Student Wellbeing This Year](#)

[EducationWeek](#) has published an article sharing ways in which educators and afterschool providers may prioritize student wellbeing.

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

Opportunities for Providers

Administration



ACTNOW!
Afterschool for Children and Teens

FY22 SEL WEBINAR SERIES

TOPICS

1. Strengthening Social & Emotional Supports for OST Staff
2. Explicit SEL Instruction in Afterschool & OST Programs
3. Integrating SEL with Classroom Learning

DATES

1. October 12, 2021
2. February 8, 2022
3. May 23, 2022

TIME

10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

REGISTER NOW

The poster features a dark blue background with white and light blue text. It includes icons of books, a heart, a calendar, a laptop, and a head with emotion icons. A green button with a white play icon and a mouse cursor is at the bottom left.

[Creating Space for Staff: Strengthening Social and Emotional Supports for Staff](#)

Returning to full in-person instruction is a relief for many, but will also bring with it a variety of new challenges and concerns. In order to support the social and emotional wellbeing of students in afterschool, program staff need to feel similarly supported. How can OST program providers and administrators create space for staff to

engage with their own social and emotional competencies? **Join ACT Now** for the first webinar in our FY22 SEL Webinar series on **October 12, 2021, from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.** This 1-hour webinar will explore:

- Techniques and activities to integrate SEL practices for staff and adults
- The importance of providing daily space, time, and energy for staff to practice social and emotional skills
- How to foster trust and collaboration among staff who are working together in-person

Along with our partners, Veronica Ortiz (Director of Clinical Services - [Brighton Park Neighborhood Council](#)) and Meg Helder (Senior Director of Trauma-Informed Practices - [YMCA Metropolitan Chicago](#)), we look forward to discussing the strategies in which programs may utilize to support colleagues and youth in Illinois. **Don't forget to review our [Social Emotional Learning Professional Development Page](#) for the upcoming webinar opportunities!**

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

Youth Opportunities

Youth Development

Future Founders Entrepreneurship Programs

[Future Founders](#) is offering two entrepreneurship programs this fall to youth in the City of Chicago. The [Be Your Own Boss internship](#) is a three-week, paid, virtual afterschool program, and its [LaunchLab](#) is a 12-week afterschool entrepreneurship course. **Youth must apply for these opportunities and Future Founders are currently soliciting applications!**

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

Funding Opportunities

Family and Community Partnerships

The Chicago Families FORWARD Fund

[The City of Chicago](#) and [Chicago Public Schools \(CPS\)](#) developed the Chicago Families FORWARD fund to provide students with support for back-to-school supplies and other everyday expenses. Students within the Temporary Living Situations (STLS) may qualify for the fund. Those who are eligible may receive a \$500 check

to relieve students of the barriers of student learning during the COVID-19 recovery. **Families must register by Friday, October 1, 2021.** Families may also pick up a paper registration form at their child(ren)'s school. **Checks will be distributed on a rolling basis prior to December 31, 2021 upon confirmation of eligibility.**

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

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