

ACT NOW!

NEWSLETTER

Policy Updates

Federal Updates

[Build Back Better Act Would Support Afterschool Nationwide](#)

Last week, the U.S. House of Representatives proposed the Build Back Better Act. While the U.S. Senate will most likely make changes to the proposed legislation, funding for expanded learning appears to be strong:

- **Workforce Development:** \$80 billion in total funding. \$9.1 billion for youth workforce investment activities, such as youth apprenticeship, and pre-apprenticeship programs.
- **Child Care and Universal Pre-Kindergarten:** \$450 billion in total. \$90 billion to provide child care for specified low-income and other eligible families through a new “birth through five child care and early learning entitlement program.” This proposed program does not extend to school-age children, but potentially will allow the Child Care Development Block Grant (CCDBG) funding to serve more school-age students. There is also funding for states to create child care information networks and for improving school-age child care infrastructure.
- **Trauma-Informed Care:** \$2.5 billion for reducing community violence and trauma through community-based trauma-informed care services. There is also a \$2.5 billion community violence initiative.
- **Child Nutrition:** Expands the number of schools that would be able to offer free meals to all students (statewide) through the Community Eligibility Provision. The bill extends Summer EBT nationwide for students who receive free or reduced-price school meals. The bill would allow states as well as Indian Tribal Organizations to provide Summer EBT. Finally, it provides \$634 million for a Healthy School Meals Incentives project that would support activities like school and community gardens. Community-based organizations may be able to partner with schools.

Finally, the federal Fiscal Year 2021 ends on **September 30, 2021**, and Congress has not yet passed any final Fiscal Year 2022 appropriations bills. **A continuing resolution (CR) is expected to pass, extending current government funding and preventing a government shutdown at the end of September.**

State Updates

[Illinois State Board of Education Files Emergency Rules for COVID-19 Vaccination Mandate](#)

On **September 17, 2021**, the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) filed emergency rules with the Office of the Illinois Secretary of State to support schools and school districts in implementing [Executive Order 2021-22](#), which requires Illinois school personnel either to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 or to undergo at least weekly testing, **beginning September 19, 2021**.

- **Schools may ensure compliance for school personnel who are not employed directly by the school, such as those supplied by a vendor or contractor, by requiring the vendor to submit an attestation that it will only provide school personnel who are compliant with the requirements and will collect the proof of vaccination or testing results itself.**
- **School personnel who are not fully vaccinated may be permitted to enter or work at the school while they are awaiting the results of their weekly test.** That means school personnel who are not fully vaccinated on Monday do not need to show proof of a negative test result on Monday, but they must take a test within the first week and weekly thereafter.

ISBE and the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) will update its joint public health guidance and frequently asked questions and answers to align with the executive order and emergency rules. ISBE will continue to update the FAQ in response to your questions.

[Illinois State Board of Education Retreat and September Meeting Recap](#)

On **September 14, 2021, and September 15, 2021**, the [Illinois State Board of Education \(ISBE\)](#) met for its annual retreat and its monthly Board meeting. To access the recordings and meeting materials, click [here](#). Both days, ISBE heard public comment on the importance of local control.

During the Board meeting, ISBE approved the 21st Century Community Learning Centers Upward Amendment, which increases the grant funding from \$10 million to \$15 million for fiscal year 2022. The addition of \$5 million allows ISBE to increase the number of grantees. ISBE also approved the request for sealed proposals for nonpublic school high-impact tutoring, which will be formally released to vendors in October. This two-year initiative specifically targeting nonpublic institutions will be funded at over \$22 million with Emergency Assistance to Non-Public Schools (EANS) dollars from the state agency's set-aside.

ISBE's next board meetings will take place on **October 18, 2021, and October 19, 2021**. **The Board also has upcoming budget hearings in early-October (both in-person and virtual)**. To find more details about the budget hearings, click [here](#).

[Governor JB Pritzker Announces Child Care Investments for Providers and Families in Illinois](#)

On **September 13, 2021**, Governor JB Pritzker announced that the state of Illinois will provide every eligible child care provider a one-time \$1,000 bonus and expand the child care subsidy program for families. These actions are in an effort to stop the high turnover rate in the sector and provide incentives during a staffing crisis. The program also allows coverage of three months of child care or after school care costs for children whose parents are unemployed and seeking work. Previously, the program only covered costs for about 93,400 children whose parents are working or attending school.

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	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
	ACT Now	Using Data to Design Afterschool Programs	September 30, 2021, from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m.	REGISTER
	Forefront	Thinking About Collaboration: A Conversation about Fiscal Sponsorships and Back Office Services	September 30, 2021, from 1:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.	REGISTER
	ACT Now	October Membership Exchange: Lights On Afterschool 2021 - Sparking Meaningful Connections	October 5, 2021, from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.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
	ACT Now	Afterschool Advocates Meeting #1	October 14, 2021, from 1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.	Become An Advocate! REGISTER
Professional Development	Afterschool Alliance	Advocacy for ALL!	October 1, 2021, at 12:00 p.m.	REGISTER
Youth Development	The Walking Classroom	The Walking Classroom in Afterschool: An active, fun, academically enriching program that easily supports social distancing	October 5, 2021, at 12:00 p.m.	Chance to win \$100 Gift Card REGISTER

	ACT Now and Learn Fresh	NBA Math Hoops!	October 27, 2021, from 10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.	REGISTER
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For an archive of our previously listed Trainings, Events and Webinars, click [here](#).

Resources for Providers

Administration

[Policy Recommendations for Promoting Youth Employment in Programming](#)

[The Afterschool Alliance](#) has released a short blog post highlighting ways program providers may engage youth and provide employment opportunities within programming. The post emphasizes the policies needed to ensure that young people are supported and compensated for their efforts.

Safety, Health, and Nutrition

[Mental Health Support Resource Created by Students, For Students](#)

[eSchool News](#) released an article highlighting a mental health resource that were created by students and are geared towards supporting fellow young people. The resource is free and widely accessible by internet.

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

Opportunities for Providers

Administration

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

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.** to learn how to create space for staff. **Don't forget to review our [Social Emotional Learning Professional Development Page](#) for the upcoming webinar opportunities!**

[NextWaveSTEM Employment Opportunity](#)

[NextWaveSTEM](#) is a Chicago startup bringing hands-on STEM education courses on emerging technologies to students K-12 and beyond through in-school and after-school programs.

NextWaveSTEM is soliciting applications for passionate instructors who enjoy working with students and have previous experience working with elementary school, middle school, or high school-aged students (No teacher certification required). Please contact Coretta Shane (Program Supervisor) at coretta@nextwavestem.com or 773-742-4779.

Youth Development

[Ciena Solution Challenge](#)

[Digital Promise](#) and [Ciena](#) are running the [Ciena Solutions Challenge](#), a new, global design challenge that invites middle and high school students (aged 11-19) to create solutions that address the Sustainable Development Goals and challenges within their local communities. The Challenge is open now for educators to register. Starting on **September 15, 2021**, educators may submit student projects for exhibition and apply for a \$2,500 award to sustain and scale students' projects.

[NBA Math Hoops](#)

ACT Now and [Learn Fresh](#) are excited to announce a new season of NBA Math Hoops! NBA Math Hoops leverages the game of basketball and the NBA/WNBA to engage students with math and social-emotional learning skills through a board game, curriculum, digital game, mobile app, and community program. **We will be hosting a webinar training on October 27, 2021, from 10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.** Participants will learn best practices for implementing the NBA Math Hoops game and curriculum and receive all materials in-kind!

Professional Development

[Afterschool Advocates Registration is Open!](#)

The Afterschool Advocates is a dedicated group of Out-of-School Time (OST) providers that engages in policy and advocacy work in order to ensure that youth across Illinois have access to high-quality and engaging afterschool and summer learning experiences. Our afterschool community is valuable, powerful, and diverse – and our voices need to be heard! We need you! Our first Afterschool Advocates meeting will take place on **October 14, 2021, from 1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.**

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

Youth Opportunities

Youth Development

[Chicago Public Library Offering Fall Activity Kits for Teens](#)

[The Chicago Public Library \(CPL\)](#) is providing teens six unique back-to-school Mad Skillz Grab and Go Kits available **between September and December**. The kits aim to help teens de-stress, engage and create small hands-on projects.

[Discover Computing Program Registration is Open!](#)

[The Discovery Partners Institute](#), [Wilbur Wright College](#), and [Google Chicago](#) have partnered to offer high school freshmen and sophomores the Discover Computing program. This opportunity is FREE and will take place on Saturdays **(October 16, 2021 to November 13, 2021) from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.** Register by **September 30, 2021**, to participate!

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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