

ACT NOW!

Afterschool for Children and Teens

Policy Updates

ISBE Board Meeting Recap

Last year the Illinois State Board of Education heard testimony from numerous advocates about the importance of afterschool programs and community schools. The Board then included \$15 million for community schools and \$20 million for afterschool programs in its FY20 proposed budget. These programs were not in the Governor's budget.

The Governor has recently appointed a new board. At the new Board's second meeting on March 20, 2019, they provided a new FY20 budget proposal which mirrored the Governor's budget and **no longer included afterschool programs and community schools**. ACT Now presented testimony about the importance of these programs. You can read the letter [here](#). WeGo Together for Kids of West Chicago, the YMCA of Metropolitan Chicago, Metropolitan Family Services, Brighton Park Neighborhood Council, the State Alliance of YMCAs, and Enlace Chicago all sent the Board letters about this issue.

The Board also heard public comments about the ESSA arts indicator and issues around special education in Chicago. The ISBE Student Advisory Council gave an end of the year presentation. The co-director of Legislative Affairs also gave a brief overview of how the Board interacts with the General Assembly and the Board's current legislative priorities. You can find the Board packet, including a list of legislative priorities, [here](#). You can find details about the next Board meeting on **April 17, 2019** [here](#).

We encourage you to send messages to your legislators supporting afterschool programs and community schools by [clicking here](#).

You can also contact the Board in support of afterschool and community schools [here](#).

Chicago Mayoral Forum Recap

On March 19, 2019, mayoral candidates Lori Lightfoot and Toni Preckwinkle committed to answering questions at the Communities Striving for Peace and Prosperity: Mayoral Candidates Forum. Community residents most impacted by violence and those working on violence prevention asked the candidates how they will use the full capabilities of the Mayor's Office to reduce violence and build economic prosperity in the City of Chicago.

ACT Now posed the question: "How do afterschool & out-of-school time programs fit into your plan for creating a more peaceful & prosperous Chicago?" Lightfoot responded by noting that she believes afterschool is a wise investment and that afterschool opportunities should be available in more communities. Lightfoot also noted that afterschool programs are important

because they allow for safe spaces to learn without the added pressure of academic outcomes, like test scores. Preckwinkle suggested that Chicago should be ashamed of how little the city invests in its youth and noted that privileged communities should not be the only ones who have access to quality, out-of-school time, enrichment opportunities. Preckwinkle noted that she would like to see schools open for at least 12 hours a day in response to the high levels of youth behavioral issues between the hours for 4:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m., as well as to provide wraparound services to meet the needs of the whole child. To view a recording of the mayoral forum, [click here](#).

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

Trainings and Events

ACT Now Trivia Night!

Grab your friends and join ACT Now for a brain busting evening of trivia, food, fellowship, and fun. Players have a chance to win a \$100 event giftcard and various awesome raffle items! All money raised from this event will go towards supporting our work of educating legislators about the need for afterschool programs in Illinois and ensuring that quality afterschool programs exist all across the state! This event will be held in **Chicago on May 14th from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.** For more information or to register, [click here](#).

Webinar: April Advocacy

Join ACT Now to learn how to get involved in advocacy activities this April 2019 to raise awareness on the need for afterschool! This webinar will provide you with an overview of ACT Now's advocacy toolkit and ACT Now's 2019 legislative priorities, as well as concrete actions you can take this year to ensure that policymakers are aware of the need for afterschool programs in Illinois. The webinar will be held on **April 2nd from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.** To register, [click here](#).

Quality Standards Trainings

ACT Now is providing free in-person trainings on the Illinois Statewide Quality Standards in order to help afterschool providers and staff continuously improve the quality of their programs. The next training will be held in **Springfield on April 2nd from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.** To register, [click here](#).

Community School Providers Meetings

ACT Now is continuing to hold meetings for community school providers to network with one another and learn more about the work of ACT Now in the Community Schools space. Participants will hear about policy updates, network with other providers, and receive a free professional development opportunity. Light refreshments provided. (See below for a schedule of upcoming meetings.)

Upcoming Community School Providers Meetings:

- **Chicago: May 1st (10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.)** at the ACT Now offices. Topics: Policy Updates and Family Engagement. Speakers: Susan Stanton (ACT Now), Sarah Ogeto (UIC), Eric Werge (YMCA of Metropolitan Chicago). **To register, [click here](#).**
- **Downstate (Telenet): May 6th (10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.)** via web conference. Topics: Policy Updates, Messaging, and Outcomes/Evaluation. Speakers: Susan Stanton (ACT Now) and Joie Frankovich (WeGo Together for Kids). **To register, [click here](#).**
- **Wheaton: May 14th (10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.)** at the Metropolitan Family Services office. Topics: Policy Updates, Messaging, and Needs Assessments. Speakers: Susan Stanton (ACT Now) and TBD. **To register, [click here](#).**

Youth Development, Programming, & Activities

Webinar: Addressing Adolescent Mental Health

This webinar will discuss adolescent mental health and two school-based strategies to promote students' mental well-being: implementation and integration of mental health curriculum and introducing mindfulness activities in the classroom. This webinar will be held on **March 26th from 1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.** To register, [click here](#).

Summer Brain Games

Summer is a great time for kids to have fun with science activities. Join the Museum of Science and Industry (MSI) to learn how you can use their Summer Brain Games (SBG) to make science fun and accessible for kids and educators. Learn about engineering, physics and exciting STEM activities, such as making a kite, starting a band with DIY musical instruments, creating a kaleidoscope, and more! MSI is offering two upcoming SBG workshops (see schedule below).

Upcoming SBG Workshops

- **Chicago: April 30th - 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. ([Register Here](#))**
- **Bloomington: May 2nd - 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. ([Register Here](#))**

To view ACT Now's calendar of events, [click here](#).

Youth Opportunities

Mentor Matching Engine

The [Illinois Science & Technology Institute](#)'s Mentor Matching Engine (MME) is an invitation-based web platform that connects Illinois high school students and their teachers to STEM professionals who serve as online mentors. MME facilitates mentor engagement and collaboration through strategic matching, forum-style chatting, video-conferencing and document sharing. To learn more, [click here](#).

One Summer Chicago

One Summer Chicago brings together government institutions, community-based organizations and companies to offer over 32,000 employment and internship opportunities to youth and young adults ages 14 to 24. Applications close on **May 20th**. To learn more, [click here](#).

Chicago Wolves STEM Night

Join the Chicago Wolves hockey team for their very first STEM experience! Visit STEM activity stations, collect Wolves Trading Cards with accompanying STEM facts, and see STEM concepts at work during a fun-filled professional hockey game! This event will be held on **April 6th at 6:00 p.m.** To learn more, [click here](#).

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

Opportunities for Providers

ICOY Needs Assessment

As the [Illinois Collaboration On Youth](#) (ICOY) begins FY20 planning, they want to hear from you. How did you feel they provided value to your organization in FY19 through training and technical assistance, and where do you think they can improve? Let them know by taking 10-15 minutes to complete their Annual ICOY Needs Assessment Survey – your input will help them better serve you in the next fiscal year. All who complete the survey will have the chance to win a **\$50 amazon gift card**, so don't miss out! The survey closes **April 1st**. To access the survey, [click here](#).

Community Engagement Day

[World Vision](#) (serving Chicago and Chicagoland) invites participants to connect with other nonprofit organizations, churches, and schools to build collaborative relationships. Learn about successful programs and ministries to enhance your programs. Participants will also share resources and get to know resource partners. This event will be held in **Chicago on March 29th from 8:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.** To learn more or to register, [click here](#).

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

Funding Opportunities

Chicago Fund for Safe & Peaceful Communities

The 2019 Chicago Fund for Safe and Peaceful Communities will award grants ranging from \$1,000 to \$10,000 to support activities designed to promote peace, build trust, and strengthen relationships that are led by Chicago residents in 21 prioritized communities (full list in the RFP). These could include educational events, group or youth activities, recreational activities, festivals, performances, activities that improve community-police relationships, and more. Applications are due **April 10th**. To learn more, [click here](#).

Summer Meals Program

The federally funded Summer Food Service Program enables eligible organizations to serve free meals to children and teens. If you are interested in learning more about the requirements to participate in the program, please reach out to the Programs Team at **773-247-3663 x 4050** or email <http://programs@gcfd.org> for more information. To access the application, [click here](#).

Colgate Oral Health Kit

The Colgate Bright Smiles, Bright Futures® classroom kit is full of easy-to-use classroom materials, plus Colgate® toothpaste and toothbrush samples for 25 kindergartners or first-grade students. This kit makes it easy to help kids learn healthy oral care habits that will last a lifetime. To apply to receive your free kit, [click here](#).

Free Laminar Flow Hood

The Reagent Project redistributes lab equipment and reagents to organizations all over the world. Currently, they have an opportunity in Chicago to place an Esco Laminar Flow Hood that would allow youth to grow and culture bacteria and cells. The equipment is free but requires a fee for transportation. For more information, contact Marcella Flores at marcella@thereagentproject.org.

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

Resources for Providers

Youth Development, Programming, & Activities

College & Career Readiness for Students With Disabilities

Despite advances in improving college and career readiness for students with disabilities, there is still a great deal of work needed to help more students achieve their full potential. This brief examines how two federal laws, the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), can promote meaningful pathways to post-secondary opportunities by ensuring all students are college and career ready. To read more, [click here](#).

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 Faith Knocke (ACT Now - Youth Development Associate) KnockeF@metrofamily.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](#).

Do you find the ACT Now newsletter to be a quality resource for your program? If so, please consider making a contribution to ACT Now so that we may continue to provide free resources to afterschool program providers, and, in turn, create a brighter future for the state of afterschool programs in Illinois!

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