Policy

ISBE March Board Meeting

The Illinois State Board of Education met on March 14, 2018 in Springfield. For access to the meeting materials, click here. Public commenting at the meeting focused on Foundational Services, with many districts stressing the importance of these services. The Student Advisory Council presented their research project on Career Pathways and announced the launch of the Student Voices webpage, which provides resources for planning for college and career. In regards to the ESSA School Quality Indicators, the Board postponed discussion until April due to many superintendents wanting to be with their students during school walkouts. However, the Superintendent's recommendations do include some changes to the indicators, such as adding math and middle school success to the 3 to 8 indicator and changes to some of the minimum test scores on the College and Career Readiness Indicators. The next Board meeting is **April 18th**.

Final Grant Program Priorities and Definitions

The U.S. Department of Education's complete list of supplemental priorities for discretionary grant programs includes: school choice; promoting innovation; skills development; meeting the needs of students in special education or who have unique talents; promoting STEM; promoting literacy; promoting effective instruction; promoting economic opportunity; school climate; and ensuring that service members have access to high-quality school choice. Applicants whose grant proposals align with one or more of the 11 priorities identified increase their chance of being successful in the competitive-grant process. For more information, click here.

Building Blocks of STEM Act

The federal Building Blocks of STEM Act, H.R. 3397, that directs the National Science Foundation to support STEM education research focused on children under the age of 11 passed unanimously out of the House of Representatives on February 13th. The bill has the potential to support informal STEM opportunities in out-of-school time programs. To read more, click here.

ACT Now policy updates affecting the afterschool/youth development field, including information about Teen REACH and 21st Century, can be found [here](#).

Quality Standards in Action

The Illinois Statewide Afterschool Quality Standards encompass seven Core Areas, which capture practices that research demonstrates lead to quality programs and positive outcomes for children and youth.

The Site Coordinators for the 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) that serve the Regional Office of Education for Bureau, Henry, and Stark Counties (ROE #28) in Atkinson, IL utilize the Quality Standards booklet in their monthly reporting. As a result of attending a Quality Standards provider training, ROE #28 is more intentional about Core Area 5: Family and Community Partnerships. To read more on how the ROE for Bureau, Henry, and Stark Counties is implementing the ACT Now Afterschool Quality Standards, click [here](#).

Youth Opportunities

2018-2019 Chicago Urban League Scholarship

The Chicago Urban League scholarships award up to $5,000 to students pursuing undergraduate degrees at institutions of higher learning. Applications are due by **Friday, March 23, 2018**. For more information, click [here](#).

Lights On Afterschool Poster Contest

The Afterschool Alliance invites afterschool or summer learning program participants to enter its 2018 *Lights On Afterschool* poster contest. Qualified entries must be vertical and made on an 11" x 14" piece of paper. Drawings must be submitted by **Tuesday, May 8, 2018**. For additional details or to enter, click [here](#).

For archived youth opportunities, click [here](#).

Trainings and Webinars

Afterschool and Summer Learning Virtual Summit

The National Association of Elementary School Principals is hosting a series of webinars

that will introduce school leaders to the latest research on how afterschool and summer learning resources can impact student achievement. The session dates are as follows:

- April 10th: Back to the Basics: How to Effectively Lead an Afterschool and Summer Learning Program
- April 17th: Ready, Set, Go! Resources to Support Afterschool and Summer Learning Programs
- April 24: Leading the Charge! Combating Afterschool and Summer Learning Myths and Realities

To view ACT Now's calendar of events, click here.

Resources

Summer Learning Recruitment Guide

The Wallace Foundation's recruitment guide provides proven strategies for marketing voluntary summer learning programs to parents and students. To access the resource, click here.

Social Media Made Easy

The Afterschool STEM Hub's social media quick-start guide offers best practices for creating an effective social media presence. To access the guide, click here.

Want to Start a Coding Program?

In a recent eSchool News article, one Texas school district's technology team shares how they turned an Hour of Code into a three-week summer course for 300 third through fifth grade students. For tips on how to start an out-of-school time coding program, click here.

For a list of afterschool and youth development related resources collected by ACT Now, click here.

Opportunities for Providers

For archived opportunities for providers, click here.

Funding Opportunities

For a list of previously listed afterschool and youth development related grants, click [here](#)*.*

Read more about the [ACT Now Coalition.](#) Please send any information you would like included in the next newsletter to StantonS@metrofamily.org

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The ACT Now Coalition brings together afterschool and youth development stakeholders from across Illinois to work towards ensuring that all young people in Illinois have access to quality, affordable afterschool programs.

Please send this information to others who might be interested by forwarding this e-mail.

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