Fwd: Spotlight on the Network team, addressing learning loss, mental health awareness, and more

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Network Newsletter | May 19, 2021
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Spotlight: Network for Youth Success Team
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New Resource:
Afterschool and Addressing Learning Loss

On March 11, President Biden signed the American Rescue Plan (ARP) into law, infusing almost $2 trillion into the American economy. The law made available $122.8 billion nationally for public education in a third round of Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ARP-ESSER) funds, of which New York received a whopping $8.99 billion. ARP provides critical investments with these funds to support afterschool, summer, and other expanded learning opportunities through $2.2 billion in funds to address learning loss. In New York, these funds are going to local school districts.

These funds present an enormous opportunity to:

- **Reach every child in New York** through afterschool, summer, and expanded learning opportunities, and critical wraparound services that support the whole child.
• **Leverage high-quality school-community partnerships** to foster strong collaborative and collective efforts and ensure that students and families have the support they need to catch up and re-engage effectively in school and community life.

• **Reimagine students’ learning experience** by strengthening the infrastructure for afterschool, summer, and expanded learning programs and other integrated supports, including the incorporation of high-quality informal instructional programming and project-based learning, as well as social emotional learning.

The Network has developed **a new webpage** that provides comprehensive resources to ensure that ARP funds are best maximized to accelerate students’ recovery and empower communities, especially those that have been disproportionally impacted by COVID-19. The webpage provides tools to:

- Search for ARP funds by local school districts
- Access a curated list of community partners
- Advocate for partnerships with your organization

**CLICK HERE TO VIEW WEBPAGE**

### Seeking Input in Developing ARP ESSER Plan

The New York State Education Department (NYSED) opened a platform to seek public input in developing New York's ARP ESSER plan. The ARP ESSER State Plan will detail NYSED’s intentions for the use of federal ARP ESSER funds, as required by the U.S. Department of Education (USDE). States are required to submit a plan by June 22, 2021.

Soliciting and incorporating public input into a state’s ARP ESSER plan is required by USDE and NYSED will be required to describe how meaningful consultation was engaged upon and input incorporated from the following stakeholders:

- students;
- families;
- Native American Nations;
- civil rights organizations (including disability rights organizations);
- school and district administrators (including special education administrators);
- superintendents;
- charter school leaders;
- teachers;
- principals, school leaders, other educators, school staff, and their unions; and
- stakeholders representing the interests of children with disabilities, English learners, children experiencing homelessness, children in foster care, migratory students, children who are incarcerated, and other underserved students.

This is a great opportunity to share with NYSED how important school-community partnerships are in addressing learning loss, and how afterschool, summer, and expanded learning programs can help accelerate recovery and success. For guidance on what you can share with NYSED, see our recommendations to local school districts [here](https://mail.google.com/mail/u/1?ik=9eab5ba277&view=pt&search=query&permmsgid=msg-a%3Ar942838809347502257&dsqt=1&simpl=%23msg-a).

**Sharing Feedback.** Stakeholders are asked to visit the [ThoughtExchange platform](https://mail.google.com/mail/u/1?ik=9eab5ba277&view=pt&search=query&permmsgid=msg-a%3Ar942838809347502257&dsqt=1&simpl=%23msg-a) to provide their thoughts on the following question:

*As we prepare for the next school year in New York State, what are the most important academic, social emotional, and/or mental health supports for schools to provide to...*
 Responses received by **May 24, 2021** will be reflected in NYSED's final ARP ESSER plan. Additional information on ARP ESSER, the plan and public engagement can be found on the NYSED website.

### May is Mental Health Awareness Month

**As programs across New York brainstorm ways to incorporate mental health awareness in their afterschool programs, here's some inspiration from Building Brighter Futures.**

Did you know that a diet rich in nutrient-dense foods can help with symptoms of anxiety and depression, decrease mood fluctuations, and improve the ability to focus? **Building Brighter Futures (BBF)** does. Their yogurt parfaits and green smoothies are nutrient dense foods to improve your mood.

**BBF of BestSelf Behavioral Health, Inc.,** is a 21st CCLC Program in Western New York that leads with social-emotional learning (SEL). Their program model aims to enhance students’ academic achievement, economic security, and SEL in order to foster lifelong interests in the arts, recreation, and other areas by providing high-quality afterschool opportunities. BBF programs are school-based and align with the normal school day. These programs keep children safe, help them achieve and stay meaningfully engaged, and provide support to adult family members to help ensure children’s success.

As a mental health agency that has a school-based department, BBF strives to provide their youth with the skill set needed to promote further discussion around mental health.

In honor of Mental Health Awareness month, every Wednesday in May in BBF’s high school afterschool program is Food4Thought! Food4Thought is an SEL enrichment that teaches youth how to make their own healthy meals and snacks and informs students how foods affect their mental and physical health. When teens learn how to be mindful of the foods they put into their bodies, they are well-positioned to independently make better decisions about their eating habits to fuel their bodies for success—in sports, academics, and healthy relationships.

### Together at Home: Engineering Mindset Activities for Youth and Families

The following STEM resources are available to share with your participants and families.

**Think Like an Engineer** - This activity book of engineering challenges provides an introduction to the skills and process used by engineers. Activities are coded to indicate which of four features of engineering they focus on: Logic, creativity, math, or experiment.

**Thinking Like an Engineer** - Completing this short survey is a simple way for students to reflect on their own engineering mindset development.
**Student Activities: TGR Foundation DIY Design Challenges** - This series of five DIY, family-friendly projects in English and Spanish use ordinary household items to keep kids engaged and still learning.

**Student Activities: EngineerGirl Try This! Design Challenge** - Hands-on activities using common household items. Design challenges include a mini catapult, paper airplane, and sorting machine.

**Student Activities: Girlstart STEM at Home** was created by Girlstart to empower families and communities in STEM. Find free Girlstart curriculum, STEM resources, effective messaging tips, collaboration opportunities. Join the Girlstart newsletter and receive updated information on other online resources.

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Interested in advancing in the school-age field? Need the qualifications to become a Site Director?

**EARN YOUR SCHOOL-AGE CREDENTIAL TODAY**

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**Network for Youth Success Events**

**Starting in September: Fall 2021 SAC Credential Course (online-asynchronous), Part 1**

Looking for a way to meet the educational requirements to be a site director at a school-age program? Looking for a way to "build your bench?"

The **New York State School-Age Care Credential** will help you meet these needs! Throughout the course, you'll learn how to meet children’s needs and reduce challenging behaviors, all while gaining confidence in yourself as a professional.

During the course, you'll work with a trained **advisor** who will help to ensure your success in the program and will work with you to advance your skills and expertise as an afterschool practitioner. You'll work with your instructor and advisor to further develop your knowledge in the 14 skill areas: professionalism, child development, safety, health, out-of-school environments, physical, cognitive, communication, creative, self, social, guidance, families, and operational program managements.

Candidates may even be eligible for scholarship funds through **SUNY’s Educational Incentive Program** to cover some or all of the costs associated with the course. This class meets the education requirement to be a Site Director in New York State.

**Course Details and Registration Information**

**When:** Wednesdays, 10am-1pm (with an occasional Tuesday)

**Where:** Healthy Living Center, 900 Central Ave, Albany, NY 12206*

**Instructors:** Alicia Salamone-Powers, Erin Broderick, Timothy Fowler

Only those working in the Capital Region may sign up for this course.

*Note: We are hoping this remains an in-person course. However, depending on the circumstances this fall, we may have to go to virtual or hybrid.
Check the Network for Youth Success [events page] anytime for a current listing of upcoming events.

Other Events

May 19: America After 3PM: A Game-Changing Summer (webinar; 1 pm ET)
Join the Afterschool Alliance for a virtual briefing on new nationwide data on children’s summer experiences, including which children have access to enriching, engaging summer enrichment programs and which children are missing out. The report, "Time for a Game-Changing Summer, With Opportunity and Growth for All of America’s Youth," provides insights into what the summers of 2019 and 2020 looked like for children and youth in the United States. It is based on responses from nearly 30,000 U.S. families to a household survey examining the summer of 2019, as well as surveys of parents and providers that shed light on how the pandemic shaped young people’s summer experiences in 2020. For more information or to register, [click here].

May 21: American Rescue Plan Act: Funding Social and Emotional Learning (webinar; 11 am–12 pm ET)
ARP offers an unparalleled opportunity for state and district leaders to make long-term investments in SEL to: support students’ learning and development, promote educator SEL and well-being, deepen partnerships with families and communities, and create more inclusive and equitable learning environments. Join CASEL’s webinar to learn more about how to leverage ARP to bolster evidence-based implementation of SEL and fully support students, families, and educators. For more information or to register, [click here].

June 1: Introducing the Supervisor’s PYD Toolkit (webinar; 10–11 a.m.)
Promoting a positive youth development (PYD) approach for many years, ACT for Youth has learned that organizational support is required if PYD is to gain traction. Supervisors and program directors play an important role in providing this organizational support, but where should they begin? ACT for Youth has developed a new toolkit to help organizations engage young people in, and surround them with, positive experiences, positive relationships, and positive environments. For the Supervisor’s PYD Toolkit, ACT for Youth has gathered a wide range of tools and resources that will help supervisors establish and promote the three Ps in their organization.
[Register now].

July 12–16: National Summer Learning Week
National Summer Learning Week is a celebration dedicated to elevating the importance of keeping kids learning, safe, and healthy every summer, ensuring they return to school ready to succeed in the year. The National Summer Learning Association (NSLA) developed this webpage to share toolkits and resources to support summer planning and promote National Summer Learning Week. To access more information and resources, [click here].

Summer Bootcamp: Get Ready for Summer Series (recording)
The Summer Bootcamp Series provides program leaders with the tools they need at this moment to keep kids healthy, learning, earning, and thriving through this pandemic and beyond. In this series, the National Summer Learning Association (NSLA) dives into strategies to accelerate learning, build critical partnerships, and plan successful programs with evidence-based practices relevant to any scenario of summer plans emerging this season. To view the recordings and materials, click here.

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Please visit our website at networkforyouthsuccess.org. Donate to our cause at networkforyouthsuccess.org/donate.

Remove my name from all future mass email communications:

Address postal inquiries to:
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The Network for Youth Success is committed to supporting diversity, equity, and inclusion. For resources, please visit our website.

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