

EXPANDED LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES WORK FOR NEBRASKA BUSINESSES

Expanded learning opportunities, or ELOs, are high-quality, school-based, community-powered afterschool and summer learning programs that provide hands-on, engaging activities necessary for all Nebraska youth. At Beyond School Bells, Nebraska's ELO network, we believe that ELOs provide Nebraska businesses with an important platform for partnering with their community's education system.

These partnerships work together in multiple layers, helping to prepare Nebraska youth for their future careers, giving working parents peace of mind while at work knowing their children are safe, and increasing employee engagement through rewarding experiences of volunteering in their communities. Let's take a closer look at these key benefits of business involvement in ELOs.

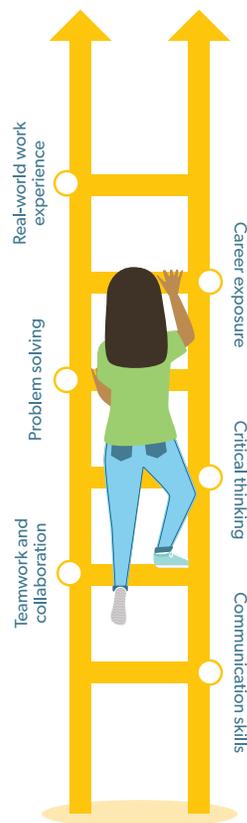


PREPARED FOR FUTURE CAREERS

Today, the private sector spends more than \$164 billion every year on employee education and training to close workforce skill gaps. However, by investing early in their future workforce, businesses can avoid the rising costs of remedial training later on.

Specifically, ELOs work for Nebraska businesses by giving today's youth – tomorrow's workforce – the experiences and skills they need to be successful in the workplace and reach their career aspirations.

From encouraging youth to think creatively and use technology to solve real world problems, to working collaboratively in groups to plan events and presenting their work to parents and community leaders in afterschool assemblies, Nebraska's ELO programs are providing youth with opportunities to develop the real world skills they will need to be successful in the workplace – and to create the new businesses Nebraska communities will need to thrive.



How ELOs Prepare Youth for Career Success

Step 1: Play-based learning that develops foundational social skills of teamwork and communication.

Step 2: Hands-on activities that improve critical thinking, resilience, and work ethic.

Step 3: Community partnerships that connect students with new interests and professions, opening their eyes to potential career pathways.

Step 4: Real-world work opportunities to help students build and refine their career goals.



KEEPING KIDS IN GOOD HANDS

Nebraska has one of the nation’s highest rates of working parents, where every adult in a household is at work from 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. This means these parents have to worry about where their kids can go after the bell rings at 3 until they get home at 6. ELOs work for parents by providing their children with engaging, productive learning opportunities and a safe haven that helps kids avoid risky behaviors online and offline during the hours of 3-6 p.m., when juvenile crime rates typically peak and more than 70,000 Nebraska youth are unsupervised.

ENRICHING EMPLOYEES’ WORK LIVES

Did you know that Nebraska has one of the nation’s lowest unemployment rates at 2.7%? With workforce shortages across the state, it’s important for businesses to reduce employee turnover and increase employee productivity and engagement. ELOs work for Nebraska’s employers by providing opportunities for their employees to volunteer in their community and share their expertise with youth. Research shows that volunteering increases employee productivity, corporate pride, workplace ethics, and employee engagement. This is significant for several reasons:

- Keeping employees engaged is valuable to turnover and retention. Less than one third of U.S. workers were engaged in their jobs in 2014, according to a Gallup poll and approximately 18% are actively disengaged, costing the United States up to \$550 billion in lost productivity each year.
- According to the 2011 Deloitte Volunteer IMPACT Survey of employed adults ages 21-35, millennials who frequently participate in workplace volunteer activities are nearly twice as likely to be very satisfied with the progression of their career.
- In a meta-analysis of 199 employee engagement studies, Gallup found that high employee engagement increases profitability 16%, productivity 18%, customer loyalty 12%, and quality 60%.

AN INVESTMENT IN YOUR FUTURE

Partnering with Beyond School Bells and investing in ELOs can have lasting effects on Nebraska businesses by ensuring that the workforce of the future is educated, engaged, and ready to tackle new challenges.

If you’re interested in learning more about how your business can engage with your community’s ELO program, contact Anna Wishart at awishart@nebraskachildren.org.

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