
Beyond School Bells Newsletter – April 2025

From Beyond School Bells <bsbinfo@nebraskachildren.org>

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Beyond School Bells
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May 2025

News and Events

Nebraska ELO advocates visit Capitol Hill



*Alana Pearson (Beyond School Bells), Congressman Adrian Smith,
and Nicole Everingham (Collective for Youth)*

Last week, our Beyond School Bells team joined Afterschool Alliance and Collective for Youth on Capitol Hill to advocate for the crucial role afterschool programs play in supporting working families across both urban and rural communities.

As part of the visit, the group met with several of Nebraska's federal delegation, including Congressman Adrian Smith, to share how high-quality afterschool opportunities are inspiring the next generation.

The message was clear: Investing in afterschool works!

Young Professionals Leadership Camp



At our Fall Regional Connections, we heard a strong desire for leadership development training tailored to high school and college-age afterschool staff. In response, Beyond School

Bells is excited to host the **Young Professionals Leadership Camp**—a dynamic and immersive experience designed to inspire the next generation of leaders.

August 6-8, 2025

[Camp Comeca](#), near Cozad, Nebraska

This unique event offers a true camp experience, complete with **bunk-style lodging, lake swimming, and marshmallow roasting around the campfire.**

As a **team-building** opportunity, attendees (high school and college-age staff) should be accompanied by an adult in a leadership role, such as a Site Coordinator or Program Director. This ensures that program leaders and their teams grow together through this hands-on, impactful training.

For details on **lodging, cost, transportation, and registration**, check out our website at <https://beyondschoolbells.org/resources/young-professionals-leadership-camp.html>

Questions? **[Contact Alana Pearson for more information!](#)**

Input Needed for Program Cost Calculator



The American Institutes for Research® (AIR®), with support from The Wallace Foundation and in collaboration with the Afterschool Alliance and National Afterschool Association, is conducting a cost study to understand the current landscape of out-of-school time (OST) programs, including their practices, resources, and costs. The goal is to produce an updated cost calculator to help the OST field advocate for, plan, and secure resources for high-quality programs. A \$50 electronic gift card will be sent to the first 500 eligible programs that complete the screener.

[Complete the Survey](#)

Beyond School Bells is proud to introduce the 2025–26 Michelle Arehart ELO Administrator Fellows

Seven outstanding program leaders have been selected to take part in a 14-month fellowship focused on identifying challenges and developing innovative solutions for afterschool programs throughout Nebraska. The fellowship will begin in July, and the fellows will share their insights and outcomes during a presentation at the 2026 Get Connected Conference.

The 2025-2026 Michelle Arehart ELO Administrator Fellows:



- *Carrie Lienemann - North Platte*
- *Karmen Morse - Cozad*
- *Tamma Zulkoski - Kearney*
- *Chelsea Sidel - Crete*
- *Nola Derby-Bennett - Lincoln*
- *Maggie Pilar - Norfolk*
- *Nicole Everingham - Omaha*

Congratulations to all Fellows!

Resources and Opportunities

Young Entrepreneur Pitch Challenge



The 2025 OST Pitch Challenge is Now Open. [Young Entrepreneur Pitch Challenge](#) helps kids learn creativity, problem-solving, critical thinking, and presentation skills. Students can compete for a chance to win prizes and be featured in our winners showcase! They will compete against other students in their grade range: K-4, 5-8, or 9-12 for over \$3,000 in prizes. When your class or program submits 5 or more videos, you win a free pizza, ice cream, or donut party for your class. Plus, students can win up to \$250 with a winning pitch!

Register your classroom or program [here](#) by June 15. Submit your pitch videos by July 31.

[Book a workshop on YIPPEE Exchange](#) to have the YEI team present a workshop to your classroom or staff.

Would you like help thinking through the best way to implement Pitch into your classroom or program? [Sign up for a free consultation with us.](#)

GetConnected Workshop and Walk and Talk Proposals



The 2025 Nebraska GetConnected Afterschool Conference is now accepting proposals for workshops and Walk and Talk tables! This year's conference will be held on Friday, September 26, 2025, at the Younes Conference Center in Kearney, Nebraska, bringing together afterschool professionals, educators, and community partners to share best practices and innovative ideas.

[Submit Your Proposal](#)

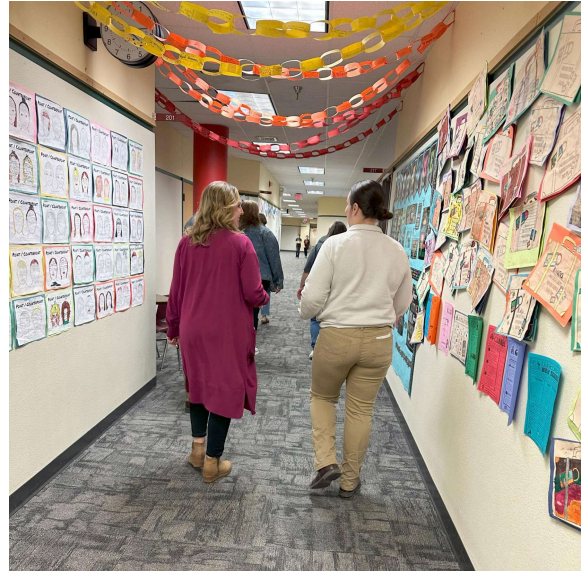
Program Spotlight

Afterschool Program Site Visits

In April, Nebraska's afterschool programs welcomed visitors at five different site locations: Wood River Elementary, Arnold Elementary in Lincoln, Cozad Elementary, Westmoor Elementary in Scottsbluff, and Norfolk Middle School.

Visitors had the opportunity to network with colleagues, share resources, explore best practices, and gain valuable programming ideas. Participants shared that the experience was well worth their time. They indicated they formed meaningful connections with fellow attendees, gained valuable program insights, and left with plenty of new ideas. Beyond School Bells plans to host additional site visits in the upcoming school year.





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