

Tuesday, April 16, 2024 at 09:53:18 Central Daylight Time

Subject: Beyond School Bells Newsletter-January 2023

Date: Tuesday, January 9, 2024 at 7:59:57 AM Central Standard Time

From: Beyond School Bells

To: Lauren Clark



Beyond School Bells

nebraskachildren



January 2024

News & Announcements

Calling All Retired Educators!



WE WANT YOU!

Beyond School Bells, is thrilled to announce a new partnership with Nebraska State Education Association – Retired teachers division, to recruit former educators to join in the growing movement to support afterschool and summer programs across the state.

Retired teachers uniquely understand the pivotal role afterschool and summer programs play in providing youth with additional learning opportunities and crucial support beyond the regular school day and year. From creating safe, nurturing spaces at the end of the school day to facilitating hands-on projects, cooking classes, robotics clubs, memorable field trips, and much, much more, afterschool and summer programs contribute significantly to healthy youth development and community vitality and are indispensable for Nebraska’s working parents and caregivers.

Yet, staffing shortages in programs across the state pose a challenge, limiting the capacity to accommodate all youth and families that want to participate.

This is where our partnership with NSEA – Retired Teachers can make a difference. Because of their decades of classroom experience, retired teachers are ideal candidates to contribute to or assist in running high quality, locally powered afterschool programs. This is nothing new - retired teachers have historically played a vital role in program staffing, but due to the impacts of COVID there’s a need to replenish the ranks of retired teachers working in programs across the state.

Excitingly, there is also an emerging trend in Nebraska — the increased involvement of high school students as staff and club leaders for elementary and middle school programs. Combining the expertise of retired teachers with the enthusiasm of high school students creates a winning formula benefiting both the programs and students. Importantly, this experience just might be the gateway for launching these high school students into a career in education. We all know how important replenishing the ranks of teachers is!

Here's how we recommend getting started:

If you are or know a retired teacher, we suggest you reach out to an elementary or middle school in

your community to inquire about their afterschool program. Once connected, ask to meet with the site director and explore their needs or propose a club idea that sparks your passion and ensures engagement with the youth in the program. Share your availability with the program director and, if you are interested in mentoring a high school staff member, let them know. Trust us - programs will be excited to see a fellow educator interested in being a part of their team!

While Beyond School Bells doesn't operate afterschool or summer programs in communities across the state (these are all locally run programs) we do have a network of contacts we can connect you with if you need a place to start. Contact Katie Christensen at kchristensen@nebraskachildren.org if you would like more information about this opportunity.

Do You Employ High School Students as Staff in Your Program? Share Your Experience!

We are compiling feedback from after school programs aka "The Experts" who are already employing high school students. The results will be compiled and shared at the Innovation invitational in March. We want to highlight the good work happening and the challenges to help others who are thinking of building or growing their high school workforce. If you would like to schedule a zoom call instead of filling out this survey, please email apearson@nebraskachildren.org.

Complete the Survey!

National Spotlight on Beatrice, NE

Featured by the National Environmental Education Foundation (NEEF)



While it is too cold to get outside in Nebraska this week, Afterschool and summer programs are great places to get youth excited about learning in the great outdoors. During the 2022-2023 school

year, elementary students from the Beatrice Learning After School Time (BLAST) program participated in the Greening STEM program with US Park Service staff along with partners at Educational Service Unit #5. They explored the theme of air quality by measuring levels of ozone, carbon dioxide, particulate matter, and light at different locations in the park, and learned how air quality factors impact biodiversity. Funded by the National Environmental Education Foundation, these Beatrice students had a great time learning in the great outdoors.

[See the Highlight Video](#)

Funding Opportunities

Apply for a BSB Leverage Grant Today!

Beyond School Bells is also excited about our new grant program to support afterschool and summer programming across the state, the BSB Leverage Grants.

BSB Leverage Grants are intended to support Greater Nebraska Afterschool and Summer programs during the 2024/25 school year and the summer of 2025. The primary goal of this grant is to help grow and sustain new rural school-based ELO programs. Priority will be given to programs established in the last five years as well as programs serving high need communities, including schools with high concentrations of students residing in low-income households or facing other educational challenges.

The BSB Leverage grant program will be competitive and will provide a select group of ELO programs with one-year grants that begin at \$7,500, with a maximum award of up to \$50,000. While one-year grants, there is the possibility for additional years of funding in future years if funding is available. This grant requires local 1:1 leverage of BSB funds, including district contributions, community partners contributions, and other forms of leverage. Grant funds can support staffing, programming costs, parent/family engagement activities, supplies and sustainability work (outreach, marketing), but should be focused on providing hands on, engaged learning to youth participating in the program. The BSB Leverage grant will give grantees the ability to design the composition of their grant based on their local needs and capacity.

Visit our website for more information <https://beyondschoolbells.org/projects/>

New York Life Foundation Aim High Middle School Grants

Exciting news for Nebraska's middle school afterschool programs! The New York Life Foundation is offering a unique funding opportunity: "Aim High: Supporting Out-of-School Time Programs Serving Middle School Youth". [Request for proposals](#) deadline is February 1st, 2024, at 5pm EST. Grants will begin June of 2024 and end in May of 2025 (one-year) or May of 2026 (two-year). To provide in-depth insights, the Afterschool Alliance will be hosting [an informational webinar on January 11th at 2 p.m. ET](#). Join the webinar to learn more about the eligibility requirements, expectations, and how your program can benefit from this funding opportunity.

Resources and Opportunities

ELO Innovationa Invitational – Going Beyond!

March 5-6, 2024

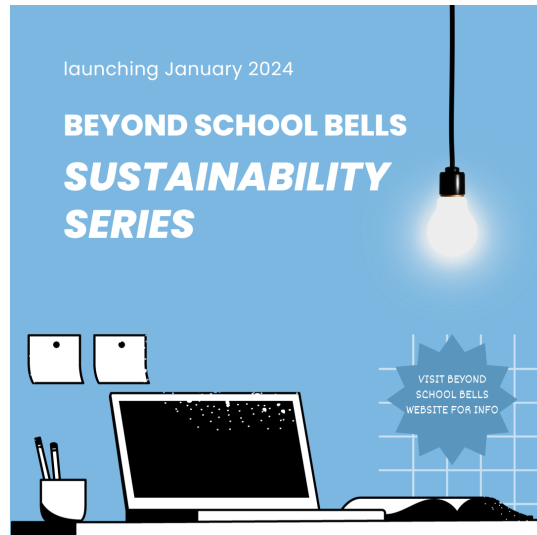


Offered in partnership with the NE Department of Education and Nebraska Extension, the Innovation Invitational in Lincoln, NE on March 5-6 will provide opportunities for ELO Stakeholders across the state to come together, share best practices and challenges as we both plan for the summer programming season and envision the future for ELO programs in Nebraska. This free, two-day event will once again be moderated by Dr. Tony Smith, a national expert in out of school time programming and full-service community schools and will include presentations by Nebraska practitioners working to invigorate afterschool and summer programming in their communities.

More information about this can't miss Networking and skills development opportunity can be found on our website by clicking the button below.

[ELO Innovation Invitational](#)

BSB Sustainability Series Launching January 2024!



Beyond School Bells is excited to launch our newly developed Sustainability Series to help support afterschool and summer programs in their efforts to build long-term sustainability for their programs. Please visit our website to access and view a series of recorded sessions to guide programs in their sustainability and partnership planning and development. The content is divided into brief, individual videos created specifically for afterschool program directors/leadership teams. Additionally, a series of interactive online "Lunch and Learn" sustainability sessions will be held in February—please join us at noon on Feb 8th, 22nd, 29th. Check the website for additional information about these sessions.

[BSB Sustainability Series Page](#)

National Geographic Slingshot Challenge Last Call!



Last call for National Geographic Slingshot Challenge submissions! The National Geographic Slingshot Challenge invites students aged 13-18 to submit a 1-minute video describing their innovative ideas for addressing environmental issues. **Entries are due on February 1st 2024**, so don't wait to sign up, create and submit your videos at National Geographic's Videos for Change.

Winners can earn up to \$10,000 in funding.

Beyond School Bells is committed to helping any students share their solutions with afterschool and summer programs in 2024. BSB has pre-existing support for solutions for food systems, energy, conservation, and many other environmental opportunities. Reach out to Dakota Staggs (dstaggs@nebraskachildren.org) at Beyond School Bells for support.

Register

Join our TMC Monthly Community of Practice Meetings



Have a TMC in your community? Want to share your experiences and learn from how other programs are using their TMC lab in their community?

Join us on the **2nd Monday of each month at 10:30 AM CT/9:30 AM MT** for our TMC Community of Practice meetings.

Zoom link: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88229459077>
Meeting ID: 882 2945 9077

Million Girls Moonshot (MGM) January Resources



January is National Mentoring Month, and we're celebrating the incredible impact of mentorship on the lives of young people and communities. Join us in recognizing the power of guidance, support, and inspiration in STEM. #MentorshipMatters

MGM's Free January Afterschool Activities

Soil Erosion



"Can Plants Stop Soil Erosion?" is an environmental engineering activity that is suitable for intermediate level learners. The activity is expected to last for 2-4 weeks. Soil erosion caused by oil can wash pollutants into streams and rivers, and also lead to the loss of farmland, costing the world billions of dollars every year. But what can we do to address this problem? The answer is simple: we can help save the world (and some money!) by planting a few. plants!" For activity details [click here!](#)

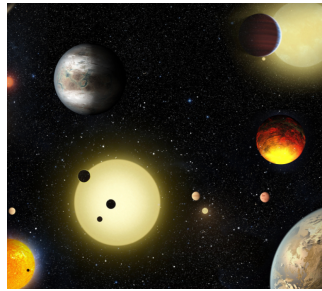
Jumping Robot



Are you searching for a way to engage children in STEM activities? The "Build a Jumping Robot" is an intermediate-level mechanical engineering project that lasts from 2 to 5 days. This project

teaches children how to create a basic robot that uses the energy stored in a stretched rubber band to jump. By utilizing the engineering design process, participants will attempt to increase the height and distance of their robot's jump. A complete activity guide is available [here!](#)

Learning about Gravity



Gravity is a force that plays a significant role in keeping us together on Earth. To help young learners understand how gravity works, here are ten simple activities that use math as an integrated approach. These kid-friendly activities include fun concepts such as 'what would be my weight on Mars?' and are designed to make learning about gravity enjoyable and engaging. Go [here](#) for a complete list of activities.

For the full collection of January MGM resources, [please join our Facebook group](#) and access the January post!



Our Contact Information

Nebraska Children & Families Foundation
215 Centennial Mall South
Suite 200
Lincoln, NE 68508
402-476-9401
<http://www.NebraskaChildren.org>

[Unsubscribe](#) | [Manage email preferences](#)