

**Subject:** Beyond School Bells Newsletter-September 2021

**Date:** Tuesday, August 31, 2021 at 7:54:17 AM Central Daylight Time

**From:** Beyond School Bells

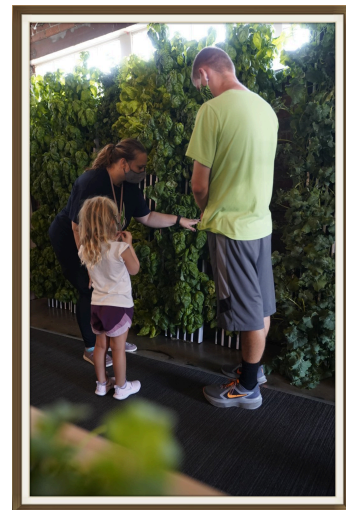
**To:** Lauren Mott



September 2021

## News & Policy

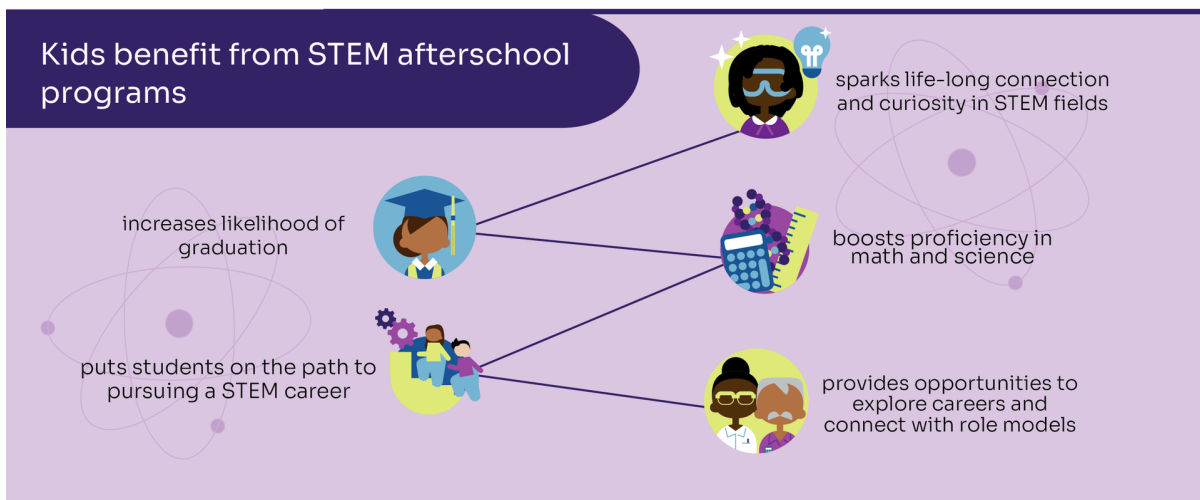
### Freight Farm's First Harvest



On Friday August 27th, BSB and the Bay, a Lincoln-based youth engagement center, initiated what will be a regular series of harvests at our newest innovation – the *Freight Farm Greenery*. Provided through a generous gift from the Hormel Harris Foundation, the *Greenery* is a forty-foot by eight-foot, high-tech container farm able to grow fresh vegetables 365 days a year. UNL students are working with students from the Bay's Independence Academy to harvest vegetables grown on the *Greenery's* state of the art vertical grow walls

and share them with community partners. The *Greenery* is part of a large BSB' project to provide K-12 youth in Nebraska's afterschool programs with opportunities to have experiences and learn skills they need to design and build food systems to feed a growing, hungry planet.

The *Greenery* is part of a larger BSB' project to provide K-12 youth in Nebraska's afterschool programs with STEM rich opportunities to have experiences and learn skills they need to design and build food systems to feed a growing, hungry planet. For more information about this innovative project, contact Jeff Cole at [jcole@nebraskachildren.org](mailto:jcole@nebraskachildren.org)



### America After 3PM Special Report: STEM Learning in Afterschool on the Rise, But Barriers and Inequities Exist

As the *Greenery* indicates, Afterschool and summer programs offer unique hands-on learning opportunities that spark students' interest in STEM subjects and help them gain critical STEM skills. The just-released America After 3PM special report, "[STEM Learning in Afterschool on the Rise, But Barriers and Inequities Exist](#)," finds that afterschool programs are offering more STEM learning opportunities, but inequities exist and too many young people are missing out.

America After 3PM is the nation's most comprehensive look at how children spend their time during the hours after school and during the summer. The 2020 survey findings provide important new insights into STEM learning in afterschool, and a first ever look at trends in afterschool STEM learning since the first special STEM report released in 2014. Please take time read the [Full Report](#), as well as review the [Report Fact Sheet](#) and [additional report-related resources](#).

## Nebraska ELO Programs: A Closer Look

### Successful Summer of Innovation in Nebraska Summer ELO Programs

This summer, BSB offered our first ever Summer of Innovation grants to communities across

Nebraska seeking support to expand or enhance existing summer programs. Now that summer has ended, this is the perfect time to reflect on many of the recently completed innovations in afterschool and summer programming. Over the past three months, 15 summer programs implemented an Environmental and Outdoor project, eight were new or expanded outdoor classrooms, four were school gardens and three were community generated ideas.

Including these environmental and outdoor education projects, BSB is thrilled to have supported 21 Summer of Innovation projects. These projects were each unique and encompassed topics from theatrical arts, engineering on-the-go, and civic journalism. These projects are estimated to have collectively served over 2,300 students across Nebraska. Thank you to all of the dedicated afterschool and community partners involved, this was a tremendous success for Nebraska students and will provide them with memories of engaged, hands on learning that will power their imaginations for years to come!



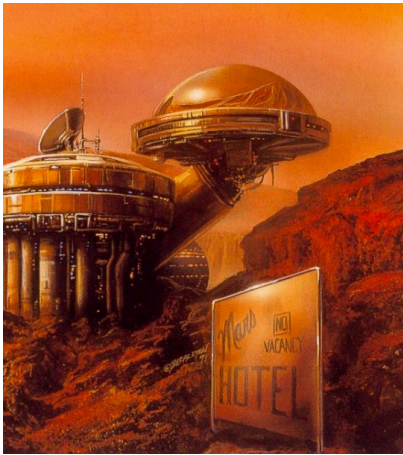
### **Bayard, NE: Summer ELO Program & Outdoor Classrooms**

One goal of our Summer of Innovation program was to support hands-on learning opportunities to engage students, schools and communities in creating active learning experiences. Bayard Elementary School's grant focused on creating multiple outdoor learning spaces around their campus for nature observation including a bird observation station and a pollinator garden. In addition to the natural spaces, this outdoor classroom project applied student and community creativity to build outdoor learning spaces about biking and solar energy.

By engaging multiple community partners to provide expertise and enrichment, Bayard was able to create a wide array spaces of innovation for outdoor and environmental activities in their afterschool program. Each of these projects will be carried into the coming school year and will continually provide opportunities for students to be innovative with their own learning.

## **Resources & Opportunities**

### **To Mars, Marshes, and the Marketplace**



As a part of BSB's **ELO Innovation Network**, a partnership with the Nebraska Department of Education, we are excited to announce that we are supporting afterschool programs interested in piloting clubs focused on the three Es: Engineering, Environmental and Entrepreneurship programming this fall. Using our Mission to Mars platform, for example, we will support STEM rich clubs seeking to engage youth in the challenge of building a sustainable colony on Mars. For programs wanting to give youth an opportunity to bring their ideas to market, we will support clubs using our partner VentureLabs' curriculum to spawn youth entrepreneurship. And finally, for programs wanting to get their students' hands dirty exploring elements of their local environment, we can support local BioBlitz's via resources in our TMC Labs. Contact Sandy Day [sday@nebraskachildren.org](mailto:sday@nebraskachildren.org) for more information about these and other new programming opportunities.



## Afterschool & Summer in the Time of COVID-19

### Resources

#### Afterschool Alliance COVID-19 Resources

BSB's national partner the Afterschool Alliance has dedicated a section of their website to help support afterschool and summer programs with resources, updated policy information and tools related to the COVID 19-pandemic. We encourage you to visit their site and take time to explore these valuable resources for your program.

## Events

A flyer for an event titled "NEBRASKA TALKS". The text on the flyer includes "Full-Service Community Schools", "3 Hours | 3 Conversations", and the date and time "September 10, 2021 8:00 CT - 11:00 CT". The flyer features a logo for "GetConnected" at the bottom right. The design uses a color palette of teal, yellow, and white with geometric shapes.



**Nebraska Talks  
Full-Service Community Schools  
September 10, 2021**

**3 Hours | 3 Conversations  
8:00 CDT – 11:00 CDT**

Join us for a free half-day virtual conversation designed to help school administrators, community partners and afterschool leaders learn about full-service community schools. Recognition that no one entity or system alone can improve all youth outcomes is the first step toward adopting the [Full-Service Community School \(FSCS\) approach](#). A Full-Service Community School is the product of intentional partnerships and shared leadership between the school, the community, students and families, all coming together to address the broad spectrum of needs that impact student success.

Participants will be able to join in a live Zoom conversation with Dr. Tony Smith, former Superintendent of Education in Illinois and a national leader in community schools, Nebraska's Commissioner of Education Dr. Matt Blomstedt, and two panels of Nebraska school administrators and full serve community schools practitioners and advocates as they discuss the nuts and bolts of building and sustaining full-service community schools. ([Agenda](#))

Information and Registration here

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**Lights On Afterschool**

**Take time to celebrate NE afterschool programs and the staff who make them possible!**



And finally, as we move into the fall semester we have the opportunity to take time to recognize all the great work happening all year in afterschool programs across Nebraska and the nation. On October 28th communities and afterschool programs will be commemorating the 22nd Lights On Afterschool Day, a national day of celebration of the impact Afterschool

programs have on America's children and families. Our partner the Afterschool Alliance has a rich array of resources designed to help you organize and lead an event that helps showcase your community's program. Visit their website at <http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/loa.cfm> for more information and as you plan our event, let Lauren Mott [lmott@nebraskachildren.org](mailto:lmott@nebraskachildren.org), BSB's Community Investments Coordinator, know about your program and how we can help you build the support you need to keep the lights on in your Nebraska community's afterschool program.

**Register Now!**

Register for a chance to win free STEM Challenge Kits from 4-H. All who register receive 10 *Lights On* posters and weekly event planning emails.



**Our Contact Information**

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