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From: Beyond School Bells



Beyond School Bells
nebraskachildren



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News & Policy

Spiking Demand, Growing Barriers



Afterschool and summer programs, what we refer to as Expanded Learning Opportunities (ELO), across Nebraska and the country have been challenged by the pandemic like never before. While national press attention has focused on the challenges to ELO programs in urban centers, rural ELO programs across Nebraska have likewise struggled with and continue to be impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. To address this shortcoming, yesterday our partners at the Afterschool Alliance released “*Spiking Demand, Growing Barriers: The Trends Shaping Afterschool and Summer Learning in Rural Communities*” as part of their continuing America After 3 Survey series.

While not focused on Nebraska, this major, new national report identified many issues affecting rural communities across the country that we hear about in Nebraska. Highlights of the report include:

- Parents in rural communities value and are satisfied with their ELO programs, indicating these programs help them keep their jobs and work more hours.
- Rural parents report ELO programs help build their children’s social skills, support their academic growth, engage in STEM learning and develop important life skills.
- A record 83% of rural parents agree all young people deserve access to quality ELO programs
- However, the number of young people enrolled in Afterschool programs has dropped: 1.15 M young people are enrolled in rural programs while 4.5 M lack access
- Demand for rural Summer programs is also high – while 1.8 million rural youth participate, 2.9 million are waiting for opportunities in their communities
- Rural parents are more than twice as likely to say that programs are not available in their community compared to parents outside of rural areas
- Sharp rise in unmet demand for rural AS and Summer at the same time we have seen a decline in participation and availability
- Barriers in accessing rural programs have grown with key items such as cost, staffing, transportation growing by double digits.
- Low-income rural families and rural families of color report the most barriers in finding programs for their children

[Read the Full America After 3PM Report Now!](#)

Nebraska ELO Programs: A Closer Look

Norfolk's Holiday Market



For the second year, Norfolk Public Schools’ Afterschool program hosted an in-person holiday market in November. After transitioning to an on-line market last year, this year, through a partnership with the building’s owner, the 10 person all-girls Entrepreneurship club had the opportunity to sell their goods at a pop up marketplace in the A to Z building in downtown Norfolk. Student businesses that developed as part of the club received \$50 of seed money to make products for the holiday market. Students also accepted online orders for pickup and developed business cards with QR codes for people to order from a google form.

Program staff noted how much growth the student business-owners showed during this period, going from being nervous and "I am not going to sell anything" to confidence and courage once they got a few sales. Because of the positive experience youth are demanding more marketplace days. Community partners noticed this enthusiasm and a local fund recently provided an \$8,000 a year grant to continue offering an entrepreneurship club with a "seed money" model. Their new partner, the A to Z building owners are excited to continue this program next year and new partners await for the 2022-23 year.



Resources & Opportunities

BSB Partner Resources

Million Girls Moonshot



Engaging one million more girls in STEM learning opportunities

Visit www.MillionGirlsMoonshot.org to learn more.



Looking for great resources to boost your STEM programming, train staff on important out-of-school time topics such as equitable learning, and access a library of STEM mentors and role models? The Million Girls Moonshot (MGM) has released an excellent package of resources this month to provide these services and more!

Read this brief on developing equitable STEM learning infrastructures.

[Read the Brief](#)

Gain access to free professional development training groups for program staff on topics that range from virtual programming to developing STEM identities in youth.

[Access Free PD](#)

Register for this webinar that explores resources in the IF/THEN Collection, a free digital library of activities and videos of professional STEM women mentors and role models. Registrants who can't attend live can view recorded/archived session.

Register Now

The 2022 National Summer Learning Association (NSLA) Award application is open!

Each year, NSLA recognizes programs that provide high quality summer learning opportunities to young people in communities across the nation. Program candidates for the Summer Learning Awards demonstrate excellence in accelerating academic achievement and promoting healthy development for low-income children and youth between pre-kindergarten and twelfth grade.

This year there are three summer learning award categories.

- New York Life Foundation Excellence in Summer Learning Award, presented by New York Life.
- Summer STEAM Award, presented by [Big Brain Academy™: Brain vs. Brain](#) for the Nintendo Switch™.
- NSLA Founder's Award, presented by the New York Life Foundation.

See past award winners [here](#).

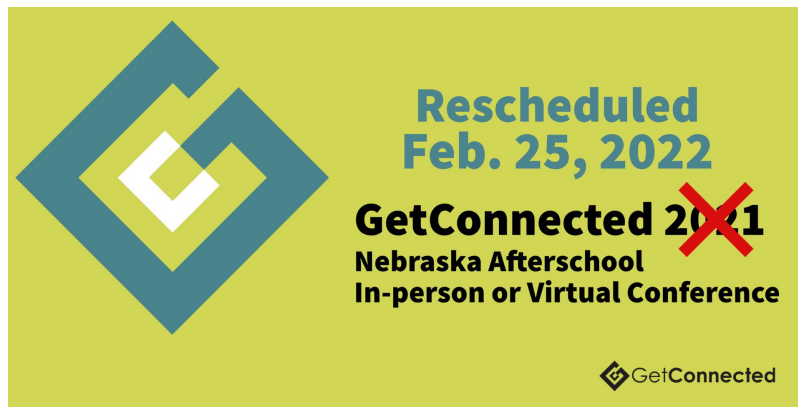
Register [here](#) to attend a webinar on filling out the application – December 16, 2PM EST.

The GREAT summer programs operating in Nebraska need to be recognized in this year's competition!

APPLY TODAY!

Events

Attend the February 2022 *GetConnected* Statewide Afterschool and Summer Learning Conference at the CHI Health Center



February's *GetConnected* conference will be a hybrid event, with a full array of in-person group sessions and workshops as well as opportunities for on-line participation, including six rooms set up for live streaming workshops for both remote and in person attendees and 9 rooms providing opportunities for in person attendees to get hands-on workshops experiences.

Register Your Team Now!



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