

Beyond School Bells Newsletter-July 2024

From Beyond School Bells <bsbinfo@nebraskachildren.org>

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July 2024

Updates and Announcements



#SummerLearningWeek
July 15-19, 2024

Now that we are past our Independence Day celebrations, it's time to celebrate the power of summer learning!

For the past several years, our colleagues at the National Summer Learning Association held a national day of celebration dedicated to elevating the importance of summer learning. This year, their annual national awareness day has been transformed into a week-long celebration of the power of summer learning.

From east to west, north to south, summer learning and enrichment programs are soaring to new heights across Nebraska. Whether it be participating in sports, STEM camps, art clubs,

outdoor education, gardening or a host of other activities, thousands of Nebraska youth are getting hands on experiences learning and growing alongside their friends – and making new friends as they have new experiences.

We hope that you are able celebrate with the out of school time staff and community members leading these important activities in communities across Nebraska.

Conservation Management 2024 Trip Recap



What a summer for conservation in Nebraska!

It was another incredible summer our Conservation Management Internship, introducing youth to conservation careers in Nebraska.

For the first two weeks of June, a group of six high school students and two mentors traveled across the state, learning about conservation efforts in Nebraska. They explored habitat and wildlife management, prairie ecology, and restoration, discovering how conservation varies yet remains interconnected across the Great Plains. The students contributed to habitat restoration and management in each of Nebraska's four ecoregions, explored six of Nebraska's Biologically Unique Landscapes, and were introduced to over 20 conservation careers! While every student know their exact career aspirations, they each saw how they might fit into a future conservation career—whether in scientific research, field biology, recreation, or even marketing and graphic design.



Students took away valuable insights for their future career paths and conservation efforts. One student reflected: “The big thing that I took away from it was just how much work goes into each person’s job. I got to hear incredible stories of where people started and how they ended up at the place they are now”.

Students all came away with a new perspective on conservation and appreciation for the work that goes into it. When asked about what they wish their peers knew about conservation in Nebraska, students reflected on the biological diversity and importance of maintaining it, the hard work that goes into conservation efforts across Nebraska, and the value those efforts provide to us all.

This achievement wouldn't have been possible without the support of Nebraska Wildlife Rehab, Fontenelle Forest, Ponca State Park, Prairie Plains Resource Institute, UNL's Cedar Point Biological Station, North Platte Natural Resource District, Meadowlark Hearth, Agate National Fossil Beds, Ian Nicolson Audubon Center at Rowe Sanctuary, and Crane Trust, Inc. A heartfelt thank you to these organizations and their teams of conservation leaders!



We acknowledge that the Conservation Management Internship takes place on the past, present, and future homelands of the Arapaho, Lakota, Lipan Apache, Omaha, Otoe-Missouria, and Pawnee Peoples. We wish to honor their connections to the land and their leadership in conservation of the Great Plains and, through this program, hope to foster future stewardship of this precious resource.

A Shoutout to Lincoln Community Learning Centers!

... And Celebrate Lincoln Community Learning Centers (CLCs)!

We also have another reason to celebrate this summer – Lincoln CLC program was one of only 13 non-profit organizations from across the country recognized for their ability to utilize Federal funds to expand access to high quality afterschool and summer learning for students by the US Department of Education. As one of the Department's inaugural class of Engage Every Student Recognition Program Champions, Lincoln CLCs is justly recognized for its ongoing commitment to providing high quality afterschool programming in school based sites that serve as neighborhood hubs across Lincoln.



Read more about the Engage Every Student award and Lincoln's CLC recognition here - [U.S. Department of Education Announces the Inaugural Engage Every Student Recognition Program Champions - ED.gov Blog](#)

Events and Resources



GetConnected

Nebraska Afterschool Conference

And once we get through summer, GetConnected 2024 will be just around the corner. **Get Connected** is taking place at the Younes Conference Center South in Kearney on September 27th 2024. Registration is now open – you can register you and your team at the conference website on the Nebraska Department of Education's website [here](#). We encourage you to visit the website to find out more about the conference.

Acclaimed author and speaker Stephanie Malia Krauss will be this year's keynote speaker and her morning keynote and follow up breakout group will focus on how NE's AS and Summer programs can help support the full development of Nebraska's youth. Her presentations are based on insights some of the lessons learned from her book [Whole Child, Whole Life](#) and all registered participants in GetConnected will receive a free copy of Dr. Krauss's book and interact with her throughout the conference. So get registered now!

The GetConnected Conference is a longstanding partnership between the Nebraska Department of Education's 21st Century CLC program, Nebraska 4H Extension and Beyond School Bells, with annual gatherings rotating between Kearney and Omaha. Information on the conference can be found [here](#).

[Register](#)

Bring Your High School Student Staff to GetConnected!

Do you have high school age staff? Do you want them to participate in high quality youth development and leadership training? Beyond School Bells can help support you in bringing young staff members with you to GetConnected in Kearney on September 27. Youth will have the opportunity to participate in trainings created specifically for them as well as regular conference activities.

If interested, reach out to Katie Christiansen kchristiansen@nebraskachildren.org. More details coming SOON!

STEAM = Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math



Would you like to provide your afterschool staff some training on STEAM concepts? Do you have a Think Make Create (TMC) Lab but are unsure how to use it in your program? Whether you have a TMC Lab or not, this hands-on training will guide program staff through best practices in STEAM education like asking purposeful questions and keeping kids engaged. Participants will learn about STEAM concepts, how to plan activities to lead with students, and innovative ways to use a TMC Lab.

[Complete the Interest Form Today!](#)

Free and Fun Summer Curriculum Available from the Edgerton Explorit Center!

Edgerton Explorit Center in Aurora, Nebraska has put together some fun and engaging summer camp and afterschool activities. Many of these activities can be led with your TMC Labs. Most of these lessons are under two pages, which makes these great for new or younger staff members to lead. Does your community have disc golf? If so, find a 5-day disc golf summer camp lesson for 3rd-8th graders. This is just one of many FREE summer camps available.

[Access Now!](#)

Stay Connected!



Here are 3 ways to stay up-to-date on Beyond School Bells and Nebraska Children and Families Foundation happenings:

1. To hear about upcoming events and Nebraska success stories, follow us on social media! ([Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [X](#))
2. Read inspiring stories of impact on our Nebraska Children Blog: <https://blog.nebraskachildren.org/>
3. Catch up on our previous [BSB Newsletters](#) and [TMC Newsletters](#) for anything you may have missed!



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