
Subject: Beyond School Bells Newsletter-August 2023

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From: Beyond School Bells



August 2023

News & Policy

BSB Back to Afterschool Edition



Photo: Future Kids Soccer Program at Scottsbluff

Here we are again – winding down an activity filled summer and poised at the start of another school year, full of all the hope and optimism that comes with new beginnings.

It is an exciting time to be involved in Nebraska’s afterschool and summer learning programs, what we call Expanded Learning Opportunity (ELO) programs. Following years of COVID related disruptions to the school day and year, never before has our collective work growing and supporting out of school time learning opportunities been more appreciated – and needed.

First the good news: ELO programs are flourishing in communities across the state, supported by a combination of public and private resources from local, state and federal sources, including unprecedented recent investments from the Nebraska Departments of Education and Health and Human Services. Due to the efforts of afterschool professionals, educators and community leaders across our state, tens of thousands of youth are engaging in hands-on learning that excites, engages and inspires them to dream big, play hard and work with others to build a brighter future for themselves and Nebraska.

However much more work remains to ensure that all Nebraska youth have access to the array of necessary supports and learning opportunities school and community-powered ELO programs provide. Schools and communities are struggling to find and retain the staff needed to run quality programs. And for every child in a program, many others are waiting for an affordable spot to open up in their community.

That is what motivates us to do our work – a vision of a Nebraska where every child has every opportunity, both during the school day and the hours of opportunity outside of school, they need to thrive. It's a Nebraska where youth are flourishing, parents supported and communities engaged in that most fundamental job of a society – raising the next generation of prepared citizens.

With this vision in mind, we are looking forward to exploring opportunities that await in the new school year to engage more Nebraskans in our collective efforts. Let us know if you are interested in learning more about how you can get involved in your community. Contact us at jcole@nebraskachildren.org.

**July ELO Innovation Summer Conversation:
Of Boys and Men – Exploring the role of ELO programs in addressing
educational inequities**

It's a wrap!

Beyond School Bells Summer Expanded Learning Opportunities (ELO) Summer Conversation Series concluded in July with our third and final topic – the role of ELO programs in helping address a growing problem – boys poor achievement in school and lack of engagement in learning.

This conversation picked up where our ELO Innovation Invitational left off back in March – using Richard Reeves' recent book, *Of Boys and Men*, as a jumping off point for a discussion about challenges facing boys and opportunities for ELO programs to address some of these challenges. We were joined in this conversation by our Antiwan Tate, Executive Director of the South Carolina Chapter of My Brother's Keeper.

To open this conversation, Antiwan discussed efforts in South Carolina to engage boys in a host of activities designed to support positive youth development and leadership. Building on this overview, BSB Network Lead Jeff Cole discussed opportunities ELO programs have to address some of these challenges. Given how closely the needs of boys align with the strengths of ELO programs – a focus on supporting positive youth development, non-cognitive skills and hands on learning with mentors and role models – Jeff stressed the opportunity that Nebraska's ELO programs have to be part of a solution to this challenge. During the discussion that followed, participants discussed opportunities ELO programs have to address some of the unique challenges and inequities facing boys and young men, especially young men of color. For those who were unable to attend, you can view the recording [here](#).

We are grateful to Antiwan Tate and Ron Fairchild for their roles in this important

conversation and for all the participants in last month's discussion.

We are also grateful to Ron for his role moderating and facilitating these conversations. Ron helped us experiment with ways to extend important conversations that flowed from our ELO Innovation Invitational, and in so doing helped us think about important new directions in our work. Thanks Ron!

Get Registered for GetConnected 2023



Now is the time to register for Nebraska's annual, in person (with on-line options) statewide Afterschool and Summer Learning Conference - *GetConnected 2023: Come Play!*

This year's event, hosted jointly by BSB, the NE Department of Education's 21st CCLC program and Nebraska Extension, will be held on **September 22, 2023 at the CHI Health Conference Center in Omaha**. This year's conference is a great opportunity to connect with afterschool program leaders and staff, as well as other community partners engaged in our important afterschool systems building work across Nebraska. We will have exciting keynotes, hands on resource tables and information rich workshops where you can learn new ideas and approaches to making your community's afterschool programs the very best they can be. Our goal is to have 500 in-person and virtual attendees at this year's event, which as the title suggests, will focus on the power of play to excite, engage and inspire youth in afterschool and summer programs across our great state.

Click the button below to register now for this important (and fun!) professional development experience.

Register

Resources & Opportunities

Round Two: Fall 2023 Youth Brainstorming Sessions

Interest Form is Now Open!



Beyond School Bells is committed to cultivating and harnessing the valuable insights of youth across the state of Nebraska to help communities build ELO programs that meet the needs and excite the passions of youth participants. Our Youth Brainstorming Sessions offer a unique opportunity for youth to identify interests that can shape afterschool and summer programs in their own communities as well as statewide.

Beyond School Bells wants to hear from more youth in more communities. If you are interested in participating in the next round of Youth Brainstorming Sessions Fall of 2023, please fill out the [interest form](#) today!

For more information, check out the [Youth Brainstorming Sheet page](#) on our website or contact: Stephanie Vadnais at svadnais@nebraskachildren.org and Alison O'Toole at aotoole@nebraskachildren.org.

Interest Form



This past spring, Beyond School Bells launched a College and Career Readiness toolkit that is a comprehensive guide to help afterschool programs get laser focused on building 21st century skills and supporting young people as they navigate through the complex world of planning for their advanced education and careers. The toolkit provides practical resources, information, and activities for afterschool programs to move through this continuum, starting with foundational skills, career and college readiness culture building, and awareness to opportunities in Nebraska. It also provides guidance on how to implement College and Career Readiness skills and conversations into your current and new programming.

Million Girls Moonshot (MGM) August Resources

The Million Girls Moonshot has a ton of great opportunities available to afterschool program staff for free as we wind down the summer and rev up for the school year. For a full list of this month's professional development opportunities and free curricula and activities for afterschool programs please request to join the Beyond School Bells Face Group [here](#).

Exciting news ahead for PD in the state: **Beyond School Bells' Katie Christiansen was selected to become an ACRES training coach in Nebraska.** This means you'll have a chance to attend online PD & coaching sessions later this fall with a familiar face around useful topics such as Elevating Youth Voice, Facilitating Science Practices, and Nurturing STEM Identity and Making Career Connections. Contact your BSB point person for more details. Don't want to wait? See these fall offerings by out of state coaches in the full asset package list at the BSB Facebook group page.

ACRES: [Nurturing STEM Identity and Making Career Connections](#)

Wednesdays: 9/20/2023, 10/4/2023, 10/18/2023 10:00am-12:00pm CT*



How do you help youth recognize their role in STEM? How do you help youth learn about STEM careers? Participants experience several easy-to-implement strategies, including a photo-elicitation activity that can help youth form STEM identities, and then learn how to conduct related activities with youth.

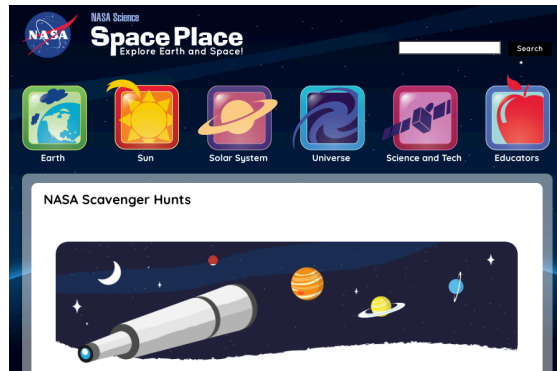
*The expectation is that you will be live at all three sessions and an active member of this coaching cohort. Recordings are not available if you are unable to attend. Completion of the

Asking Purposeful Questions module is a prerequisite for this module.

[REGISTER HERE](#) Code: AC360ID

Free, Quality Afterschool and Summer STEM and Space Activities

View the full list [here](#)



Looking for activities you can implement in your afterschool program today? Say goodbye to googling or searching on Pinterest. Use the following activities in sequence to support youth in building an engineering mindset.

- [First Woman Camp Experience](#): Hands-on activities that accompany NASA's "First Woman" graphic novel series
- [James Webb Space Telescope STEM Toolkit](#): Virtual and classroom resources related to the James Webb Space Telescope.
- [Sun STEM Toolkit](#): Virtual and classroom resources related to the sun.
- [Sustainable Aviation STEM Toolkit](#): Virtual and classroom resources related to aviation.
- [NASA Coloring Pages](#): Color and learn about some faraway worlds with these coloring pages.
- [NASA for Students Grades K-4](#): Fun activities centered around all things NASA. Games, puzzles, color, and more.
- [Space Place Art Challenge](#): Space Place monthly art missions. Draw, color or paint the subject of the month.

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



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