Dear Afterschool Lab Report Subscriber,

From the ongoing rise of COVID-19 across the country to a presidential election, a lot has happened in the past few months that impacts afterschool programs and STEM learning. Here's what you need to know:

**Senate Funding Bill**

The government is currently being funded under a continuing resolution (CR) that expires on Dec. 11. On Tuesday, Nov. 10, the Senate Appropriations Committee released their twelve Fiscal Year 2021 (FY 2021) spending bills. Leadership agrees that completing the FY 2021 appropriations process is a priority before the December deadline. While negotiations continue, budget caps set by the 2020-2021 budget deal passed in the summer of 2019 limit the possibility of much-needed funding increases in afterschool and education as a whole.

The House and Senate have both set their priorities for the next COVID-19 relief package and are working to settle differences before heading out of town for recess starting Aug. 10. The two houses, along with the administration are navigating how to provide additional funding for K-12 and higher education institutions to resume school this fall, whether in person or virtually. Learn more about what the newly released Senate HEALS Act would provide to education, including afterschool programs.

Read more [here](#).

**Congress**
While the results on who will control the Senate in 2021 remain unknown, House Democrats will retain their majority and enter the 117th Congress with Nancy Pelosi as Speaker. As a result, the Education and Labor Committee which has jurisdiction over many of the federal programs that support afterschool and summer learning programs will continue to be chaired by Congressman Bobby Scott (D-Va.). Another key committee for afterschool policy is the Appropriations Committee and the Labor, HHS, Education (LHHS). In positive news for afterschool programs both the leading candidate for the Appropriations Committee Chair, Rep. Rosa DeLauro (D-Conn.), and the LHHS Republican Subcommittee Ranking Member, Tom Cole (R-Okla.) have both supported increased funding for afterschool programs in the past.

Read more [here](#).

### The White House

After four years of proposed funding cuts to education initiatives, or the zeroing out of funding streams like 21st CCLC, the education field has high hopes for the Biden-Harris administration and their potential impact and support for afterschool and summer STEM learning. At this point, President-elect Biden has appointed his education transition team, led by Linda Darling-Hammond, and has will set the stage for a number of new policy priorities. These priorities could include tripling support for Title I programs under ESEA, increased support for community schools, improved access to afterschool, weekend and summer care for school-aged children, and increased Child Care Tax Credits, all of which were included in the campaigns education proposals.

Along with additional supports for early childhood, universal pre-kindergarten, military family care, child care staff compensation, and more, advocates for afterschool and summer are encouraged to see Biden and Harris explicitly recognizing the importance of increased funding to 21st CCLCs.

Read more [here](#).

### Afterschool STEM Hub Memo to the Biden Transition Team

As part of the transition to the new administration, the Afterschool STEM Hub has put out a transition memo to the Biden-Harris transition team calling for increased support for afterschool and summer STEM learning programs. As leaders and thought partners in the out-of-school time STEM field, the Afterschool STEM Hub calls upon President-elect Biden to use the resources of the federal government to invest in afterschool programs and suggest the following actions:

1. Support emergency supplemental funding for 21st Century Community Learning Centers in the next corona virus relief package
2. Provide funding in the Biden administration’s first budget proposal to increase the availability of high-quality afterschool STEM programs for those who need it most
3. Seek out and include informal STEM education stakeholder input as you establish federal agency priorities
4. Invest in an afterschool STEM research and practice agenda
5. Leverage the expertise and resources of federal agencies to support education initiatives in afterschool STEM programs
6. Use the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act to support professional development for both in-school and out-of-school educators

Read the full memo [here](#).
We wish you a happy Thanksgiving, winter holiday, and New Year!

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