January 2022

The Afterschool Lab Report

INTRODUCTION: POLICY UPDATES

Appropriations
The next budget deadline for FY2022 is now Feb. 18, 2022. The environment at the Federal level is changing quickly and there could be another continuing resolution or an

Omnibus. If FY 2022 appropriations are resolved via a full-year continuing resolution, increases in education programs approved by the House in the LHHS Education bill would be voided, and all programs would be funded at FY 2021 levels. As no top-line number has been agreed upon for spending by Democrats and Republicans, $30B is at stake for education investments including increases in Title I, Title II, CCLS, CTE, Title IV Part A, and 21CCLC.

Additional details related to federal funding:

- President Biden delivers his State of the Union speech on March 1st, with a budget request to presumably follow.
- The vast majority of all education relief funds have now been committed for previous rounds of funding, but this doesn't mean they are fully dispensed at the local level.
- With the Supreme Court nomination now on the table, this may affect the Build Back Better bill, and it may come back in a different form(s).
- 29+ Democratic House members are retiring. This signals that a Midterm election power shift is potentially ahead.
- The America Competes Act is back. The single bill was introduced the week of January 24th. Competitiveness legislation passed by the House and Senate include various provisions important to STEM stakeholders.

Key Present and Future Focus Issues for the STEM Community
(from James Brown, STEM Education Coalition)

- USICA/America COMPETES Act have numerous STEM education provisions, will need support to make the final bill.
- Now is the time to formulate a more effective strategy on accountability policies for STEM subjects, especially around science.
- Keep capitalizing on federal relief and infrastructure funding to advance STEM goals.
- Need to focus aggressively on Republican-side outreach in 2022.
- "Economic Development" is the new "Competitiveness"

MATERIALS: NEW TOOLS AND RESOURCES

Resources from Million Girls Moonshot
Check out the latest compilation of resources from the Million Girls Moonshot, featuring trainings, transformative practices, activities, professional development and more HERE.

STEM Educators Academy Resource Hub from ExpandED Schools
Visit this NEW online home to lesson plans and facilitation videos developed by the STEM Educators Academy for their OST middle school STEM program. All lessons are anchored in design-based practices that encourage youth to create open-ended solutions to real-world problems.

STEM Next Resources and Trainings In Support of Family and Community Engagement
STEM Next Opportunity Fund works toward dismantling the opportunity gap in STEM so that all youth can thrive and reach their potential. Central to this mission is elevating the role of families in supporting children's interest and persistence in STEM.
In coordination with The Family Engagement Project, STEM Next develops resources to build the capacity of organizations, challenging them to be more inclusive and expansive. With case studies, research-to-practice blogs, and white papers like Changing the Game in STEM with Family Engagement, STEM Next highlights promising practices and research. STEM Next is building a community-of-practice model to support family engagement in STEM for professionals working with families in the out-of-school space. This capacity-building model provides for reflection, sharing strategies and resources, and planning with partners over an extended period for greater collective impact. STEM Next encourages funders to support this work with The Essential Funders' Guide to STEM-Focused Family Engagement.

STEM Family Engagement Planning Tool
This new tool introduces a framework for family engagement in STEM, entitled CARE: Connect, Act, Reflect, and Empower. The CARE framework provides a simple method

for any STEM program that would like to engage more deeply with families. It includes relevant research and practice and guides readers to create their own shared and equitable vision for family engagement in STEM. This free tool and workbook encourage strategic reflection, visioning, and working in partnership with families to ensure collaborative culture and practices. The tool was designed for beginners as well as practitioners who are experienced in STEM family engagement. It was created by the Institute for the Study of Resilience in Youth (ISRY) at McLean Hospital and Harvard Medical School in partnership with STEM Next.

The Planning Tool is one of three case studies presented in the NSF INCLUDES National Network's November brief, entitled *Centering Inclusivity and Equity Within Family Engagement in STEM*.

METHODS: UPCOMING OPPORTUNITIES

Request for Information: Tell IES About Your Science and Math Interventions
To identify and encourage the use of evidence-based practices in education, the Institute of Education Sciences (IES) is presenting two new prize competitions: one to incentivize innovation in middle school science instruction and another to leverage technology to improve mathematics achievement for elementary students with disabilities using digital instruction, specifically around fractions. To share your intervention, respond to the Request for Information by February 14, 2022.

STEM Education Summit: Attracting & Retaining a Diverse STEM Teaching Workforce
The Smithsonian Science Education Center is hosting a virtual STEM Education Summit on March 19-26, 2022 to engage leadership teams from districts throughout the US who have identified problems in attracting and retaining a diverse STEM teaching workforce. This highly interactive Summit will give districts the tools to develop "action plans" for attracting and retaining minority STEM teachers.

EPA Seeks Applicants for Youth and Educator Presidential Awards
The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is seeking applications for the 2021-22 President's Environmental Youth Award (PEYA) program and the Presidential Innovation Award for Environmental Educators (PIAEE). The PEYA program recognizes outstanding environmental stewardship projects by K-12 youth that promote awareness of our nation's natural resources and encourage positive community involvement. The PIAEE recognizes outstanding K-12 teachers who employ innovative approaches to environmental education and use the environment as a context for student learning. Applications for both programs are due February 18, 2022.

The Million Girls Moonshot is launching its inaugural Flight Crew!
The Flight Crew is a cohort of youth advocates, ages 13-18, who are committed to creating equity for girls in STEM through elevating youth voices and inspiring future STEM leaders. We are looking for young scientists, engineers, inventors, builders, and leaders who have been inspired by their experience outside of the school classroom. Flight Crew members will participate in six months of virtual programming where they will hone their leadership and advocacy skills using their own experiences from afterschool STEM learning. Those selected will be eligible for a $1000 stipend, an all-expense paid trip to the annual Million Girls Moonshot summer 2022 event, and thanks to our partners, an all-expense paid opportunity to go to Space Camp for summer 2023.

The Flight Crew application is open to youth ages 13 to 18 who identify as female, gender-expansive, or outside of the identity of cis-gender male. Applicants will share their views in a written, video, or art piece. Applications are **due February 25, 2022**. Apply here! https://milliongirlsmoonshot.org/moonshot-flight-crew!

RESULTS: IMPACTS OF COORDINATED

ADVOCACY

The America After 3PM Rural Communities Report
In December 2021, the Afterschool Alliance released "Spiking Demand, Growing Barriers: The Trends Shaping Afterschool and Summer Learning in Rural Communities". Rural communities are seeing a sharp rise in unmet demand for afterschool and summer programs. There are now 4.5 million children in rural communities who are not in an afterschool program, but would enroll if a program were available—a 43% increase from 2014.
Rural parents see the benefits, and support afterschool and summer learning access for all youth. More than 9 in 10 rural parents report satisfaction with their child's afterschool or summer program, and cite specific benefits for children and families. Additionally, 86% of rural parents support public funding for afterschool and summer learning opportunities.
Barriers to program participation are growing. Increasingly, rural families are encountering roadblocks to participating in programs, and those roadblocks are greater among communities of color and families with low incomes.
Read the full report HERE and find the report fact sheet HERE.

Comment on Community Schools
The Department of Education released the Notice of Proposed Priorities, definitions, and requirements for the Full-Service Community Schools competitive grant program and launched a 30-day public comment period. Community schools can meet student social, emotional, and academic needs through after school and summer learning that could include STEM enrichment opportunities, as well as mental and physical health services. To submit comments about these priorities, the definitions, and requirements, please follow this link to the Federal Register by February 11, 2022.

FURTHER READING

Commitments for Connected STEM "Spanning Disciplines, Generations, and Anchor Institutions for Humane Science" By Katie Headrick Taylor
This article proposes three major design principles—or commitments—in creating educational environments for connected STEM learning that scale across diverse student populations and bridge formal and informal learning contexts. In summary, Katie outlines how connected STEM in our designed learning environments should span: STEM and humanities disciplines, generations of learners, and anchor institutions. Enacting these commitments foregrounds and supports the ethical and moral obligations learners have to each other, to their communities, and toward larger social issues, ensuring that connected STEM works on problems that matter for people's lives. Read the full article HERE.

STEM Strategic Plan Progress Report
The Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) recently issued its third annual progress report to Congress on the implementation of the five-year Federal STEM Education Strategic Plan. This progress report describes ongoing efforts and implementation practices across the Federal government as it works to accomplish the goals and objectives of the Strategic Plan. This report also compiles budget information from all Federal agencies that have investments in STEM education during Fiscal Year (FY) 2021.

Read more!

AFTERSCHOOL STEM HUB

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