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April 2019



The Afterschool Lab Report



INTRODUCTION: POLICY UPDATES

How did STEM fare in the President's FY2020 Budget? This year's budget proposal from President Trump didn't deviate much from the last few years. We are again faced with a proposed elimination of the 21st Century Community Learning Centers program, a \$1.2 billion program serving nearly 1.7 million students after school and during the summer. A proposed increase of \$170 million for Education Innovation and Research grants, a program that has had a growing emphasis on STEM education, was offset by proposed cuts to NASA and NOAA's education and engagement departments and NSF's AISL program. These cuts aren't different from the last two budgets proposed by the President, which Congress ultimately rejected due to sustained advocacy from the field. To learn more about what is included in the president's proposed budget, check out the Afterschool Alliance's blog on the [topic](#).

STEM Education Bills reintroduced in Congress: March saw the reintroduction of two STEM education bills in Congress. [The Building Blocks of STEM Act](#) (S737, HR1665), a bipartisan bill to support research in STEM education focused on early childhood was reintroduced by Reps. Stevens (D-Mich.) and Baird (R-Ind.), and Sens. Rosen (D-Nevada) and Moore-Capito (R-W.V.). Additionally, the [21st Century STEM for Girls and Underrepresented Minorities Act](#) (HR3119) was reintroduced in the House by Rep. Joyce (D-Ohio) to provide grants to LEAs for programs and curricula for girls and underrepresented minorities in STEM. A companion bill may be released for HR 3119 in the Senate shortly. We'll be tracking both pieces of legislation as they work their way through committee.

MATERIALS: NEW TOOLS & RESOURCES

The Afterschool Alliance recently released a toolkit aimed at helping state afterschool networks reach engage CTE directors and local school districts in response to the Perkins CTE legislation that was reauthorized in July 2018. The toolkit also includes guidance for local youth development programs, particularly those already working in the CTE and STEM education space, to potentially partner with local school districts around CTE efforts.

[Explore the toolkit](#)

Parents play a vital role in building youth's awareness and interest in STEM. A new white paper from the STEM Next Opportunity Fund highlights the promising practices of family engagement for STEM. **Changing the Game in STEM with Family Engagement** provides a guide to practitioners and field leaders looking to incorporate family engagement into their STEM programs and the benefits students and families take part in when participating in STEM activities together.

[Read the white paper](#)

METHODS: UPCOMING ADVOCACY AND ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES



The Afterschool for All Challenge is an opportunity for advocates to meet with nearly 200 members of congress and their staff as well as with STEM-focused federal agencies. On June 11 and 12 advocates from around the country will come to Washington DC to tell our nation's leaders why afterschool and summer learning programs are critical for parents, families, and communities as part of the Afterschool Alliance's Afterschool for All Challenge. Learn more about the Afterschool For All Challenge and ways that you can advocate from home! Learn more about the Challenge [here](#) .

Summer is a critical opportunity to engage youth in STEM. However, the president's proposed budget eliminates many programs that support summer opportunities – including the 21st Century Community Learning Centers program that supports afterschool programs across the country. Join NSLA on Wednesday, May 8, for Summer Learning Advocates Hill Day in Washington, DC, to show congress why summer programs are important.

The call for commitments for the 2019 CSforALL Summit is now open for submissions. Last year's summit celebrated 294 commitments yielding 47 million new opportunities for educators and students across the US. The submission deadline for this year's summit is July 15, 2019, and will be celebrated during the CSforAll Summit from October 21 to 23 in Salt Lake City, Utah.

[Learn more](#)

[Submit your commitment today](#)

Ways to engage in the next quarter:

- Teacher Appreciation Week – *May 6-10*
- World Environment Day – *June 5*
- Apollo Moon Landing 50th Anniversary – *July 20*
- National Park and Recreation Month – *July 2019*

RESULTS: IMPACTS OF COORDINATED ADVOCACY

This April the STEM Learning Ecosystems convened in New Orleans for their Community of Practice Convening to discuss the power of engaging families in supporting a community's STEM learning. Located across the country, the STEM Funders Network's STEM Learning Ecosystems work to support, engage, and align community resources for STEM Education. Currently there are 80 STEM Learning Ecosystems across the U.S. supporting more than 33 million preK-12 students. Twice a year these Ecosystems convene to promote positive practices to the field and build connections that help support a global ecosystem of STEM Learning.

[Learn more about the STEM Learning Ecosystems](#)

FURTHER READING

Researchers at The PEAR institute and Harvard Medical School conducted an in-depth case study of Tulsa, Oklahoma, one of America's first STEM learning ecosystems, as a first step toward understanding how ecosystems form, develop, and thrive. The report, made possible thanks to the Overdeck Family Foundation and the STEM Next Opportunity Fund, explores six themes (landscape, origin, evolution, theory in action, impact, and sustainability) and serves as an example for other communities to guide their programming, strategies, and approaches within their ecosystems.

[Learn more](#)



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