



## The Afterschool Lab Report

Welcome to the Afterschool Lab Report, the Afterschool STEM Hub's e-newsletter. Each quarter, we'll send you the latest policy news ([Introduction](#)), new resources ([Materials](#)), upcoming opportunities for advocacy ([Methods](#)), and new research ([Further Reading](#)).



### INTRODUCTION: POLICY UPDATES

**Federal Policy:** Over the last months, the focus has been on tax reform and passing a budget. While the tax reform conversation was largely brought to a close with the passage of the tax bill on December 22, 2017, the ongoing fight for government funding continues. See updates on the [progress of budget negotiations](#), and the potential [impact of the federal budget on afterschool programs](#) in the Afterschool Snack.

**The Higher Education Act:** In early December, the House Education Committee passed [reauthorization language](#) advancing it to the House floor. The language included in this Act repeals Title II, which provides supports and accountability structures for teacher preparation and building educator capacity in high-needs fields. While the Act makes popular changes to streamline the student financial aid system, many education advocates are sounding the alarm, saying that repealing the federal support in Title II would be devastating to the STEM teacher career pipeline. Democratic House leaders are in the process of drafting their own reauthorization language, and the larger STEM community is encouraging Congress to support incentives for both STEM career professionals and recent graduates to pursue teaching.

**New White House STEM Advisor:** After nearly a year of vacancy, the White House named Dr. Jeff Weld to the post of Senior Policy Advisor and Assistant Director, STEM Education in the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP). OSTP advises the president on federal scientific and technological policies, plans, and programs. Dr. Weld has a long career of STEM education leadership, and joins OSTP from his recent role as

**State updates:** Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) implementation is in full swing, and several states within the 50 State Afterschool Network are pursuing innovative strategies to ensure afterschool and summer STEM programs are on the map. For example, Vermont Afterschool is activating principals across the state in support of afterschool STEM. OregonASK is renewing their efforts to engage local education associations on how to leverage the ESSA plan for afterschool STEM learning. Check out this blog from the Afterschool Alliance for a summary of recent state level STEM policy initiatives.

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## MATERIALS: NEW TOOLS & RESOURCES

### Summer learning policy

**highlights:** The 2017 State Policy Snapshot from the National Summer Learning Association shows legislation from across the country that was passed throughout 2017 to support summer learning opportunities for students, including a spotlight on summer STEM.

Explore it!

### 2018 Science and Engineering

**Indicators:** Released by the National Science Board, the 2018 Indicators shows the state of science and engineering in the United States—including K-12 and Higher Education, the labor force, and public attitudes toward science and technology. Cite this research in your advocacy materials.

Read it!

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## METHODS: UPCOMING ADVOCACY OPPORTUNITIES

**Make the case for science centers and museums!** On February 26 and 27, advocates from around the country are coming to Washington, D.C., for [Museum Advocacy Day](#) to show Congress why science centers and museums are essential in their communities. Registration for Museum Advocacy Day is over, but check out these [5 ways you can participate](#) from anywhere across the country!

**Tell your representatives that afterschool STEM is your priority!** The government still has huge funding decisions to make for FY18 and FY19. Last year, the president's budget proposed a complete elimination of 21st Century Community Learning Center funding, and the Afterschool Alliance is anticipating the proposal of similar cuts to the FY19 budget. Without this funding, afterschool programs around the country are at risk of elimination—and along with them valuable STEM learning opportunities for students!

Take action now!

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## RESULTS: IMPACTS OF COORDINATED ADVOCACY



**Computer Science Education Week 2017:** From December 4 to the 11 advocates from around the world helped spread the word computer science is important for today's youth, with more than 150,000 CSEdWeek events held worldwide. As key partners in computer science education, afterschool and summer programs made their voices heard. The Afterschool Alliance hosted [a webinar](#) on creative computing in afterschool, and the National Girls Collaborative Project hosted [a tweet chat](#) on equity and computer science with many voices calling out support for afterschool and informal computer science opportunities. For more on afterschool and CSEdWeek, check out [the Afterschool Snack](#).

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## FURTHER READING

**Investment in Staff Yields Summer Success for Students** from the National Summer Learning Association highlights the positive impact of providing staff with professional development, coaching, and curricula. The study, conducted by the research group Public Profit, examines the Summer Science Project led by the Partnership for Children and Youth and the afterschool STEM program Techbridge Girls, in collaboration with 10 California elementary schools.

Read it!

**Afterschool and Workforce: Opportunities for System-Level Alignment**, a White Paper from the American Youth Policy Forum, discusses the ways in which the afterschool programs and the workforce sectors can work together on a systems level to help prepare students for success in their future careers.

Check it out!

**Leveraging the Power of Partnerships to Impact Environmental Education at Scale**, a new article in *Connected Science Learning* — a journal from the National Science Teachers Association and the Association of Science-Technology Centers — explores the Science Action Club's successful partnership, professional development, and train-the-trainer model in engaging middle school youth in afterschool citizen science projects.

Learn more!

**Science Education's** January 2018 Issue includes two articles discussing STEM for high school students. [Boosting the numbers of STEM majors? The role of high schools with a STEM program](#) examines whether high schools with a STEM focus increase the number of students that study STEM in college. [Community organizations' programming and the development of community science teachers](#) explores using an environmental justice approach with teacher candidates for high school science positions.

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## UP NEXT

- Look out for the Afterschool STEM Hub exhibit table at [Beyond School Hours XXI](#) (February 21-24 in Orlando, FL).
- *Connected Science Learning* is looking for submissions for the fall issue highlighting afterschool partnerships. Submissions are due April 15. Learn more in the [Afterschool Snack](#).
- On April 18-19, advocates from across the country will join together on Capitol Hill to make the case for afterschool programs during the Afterschool for All Challenge. [Save the date](#) and stay tuned for ways to participate!