The Afterschool Lab Report

October 2017

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**). Thank you for your interest and support.

Introduction: Policy updates

White House computer science memorandum: On September 25, the White House released a Presidential Memorandum acknowledging that too many of our kids lack access to high-quality STEM and computer science (CS) education opportunities. The memo directs the Department of Education to prioritize STEM education efforts in federal grant making, with particular emphasis on CS. While it is not yet clear how the newly proposed STEM and CS priorities will impact federal afterschool and informal STEM funding, this will continue to be monitored.

Tech sector commitment to STEM: On September 26, the private sector gathered in Detroit, MI and together pledged an additional $300 million over five years in money, technology, and volunteers to support K-12 CS learning. This commitment, championed by Ivanka Trump, is fueled by several tech giants including Facebook, Microsoft, Google, and Salesforce to name a few.

Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA): As of the September 18th deadline all 50 states, DC, and Puerto Rico have submitted their ESSA plans. Next, Department of Education staff review the plans for compliance with federal law. More than 30 states have included chronic absenteeism and/or college and career readiness as indicators for success in their plans. Given the large evidence base that suggests afterschool programs are an effective strategy for both reducing absenteeism and preparing students for post-secondary success, the inclusion of these indicators represents potential opportunities for expansion of afterschool and afterschool STEM programs as local education authorities' move toward implementation of ESSA.

Career and Technical Education: Since the House of Representatives passed the *Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century (*H.R. 2353) in June 2017, there has been increased pressure on the Senate to pass their own reauthorization of the 2006 *Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act*. On October 11, 2017, 59 senators sent Senators Alexander and Murray a letter urging them to take action on the reauthorization process in the Committee on Health Education Labor and Pensions. If the Senate is able to act on the legislation, reauthorizing of Perkins CTE represents an opportunity for potential funding of school and

community collaborations that promote student exposure to employability skills during and outside of the school day.

Materials: New tools & resources

Messaging tools: Part of the original messaging tools from the Afterschool STEM Hub, the [STEM Swamp](#) outlines the common pitfalls in the public's thinking about STEM learning and afterschool. Our new guide explains the terms highlighted in the Swamp to help readers take a deeper dive into the language to use when making the case for out-of-school time STEM.

Position statement on afterschool and computer science: The Afterschool STEM Hub's leadership group penned a [position statement](#) in conjunction with the 2017 CSforAll Summit. It provides recommendations for policymakers and education stakeholders to leverage out-of-school time programs to bring computer science learning to all kids. Use it to help shape your local and state advocacy efforts in computer science!

Methods: Upcoming advocacy opportunities

Start planning for CS Education Week. How will you spread the word that afterschool programs are key partners in computer science? Share stories and photos online using the hashtag #afterschoolcs, and advocate locally during this year's CS Ed Week, December 4-10.

Get to know your state's ESSA plan. With all 52 ESSA plans submitted, now is the time for advocates to review their states' plans for the future of STEM. With all 52 ESSA plans submitted, now is the time for advocates to review their states' plans for the future of STEM. The non-profit organization, Achieve, just put out the [ESSA State Accountability Tracker](#) to identify accountability systems designated in state plans. Click on your state and "School Quality or Student Success Indicator" to see what your state will be using.

Results: Impacts of coordinated advocacy

Lights on Afterschool: On October 26th, afterschool programs across the country held events to show the world how they are working to keep the lights on afterschool. This year approximately **7,160** participated in Lights On Afterschool events, and **2,400** STEM programs and events were held across the country.

CSforAll Summit: Afterschool got its time in the spotlight at this year's [CSforALL Summit](#) in St. Louis on October 16-17. The Afterschool Alliance moderated a panel on the value of afterschool in computer science education, with speakers from the Boys & Girls Clubs of America, 4-H, and the Girl Scouts of the USA. Read the [Afterschool Snack](#) blog for more highlights!

Further Reading: New research

[**The Growing Out-of-School Time Field**](#) is the first book in a new series from Information Age Publishing highlighting research and promising practices for the OST field. This volume of the Current Issues in Out-of-School Time series features a chapter on how data-driven practices have influenced STEM OST programs.

[**Career and College Exploration in Afterschool Programs in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics**](#) highlights three afterschool and summer learning programs and their best practices providing youth with STEM career exploration opportunities. [Read the full report](#), or check out the Afterschool Alliance's [blog post](#) summarizing the report.

Up Next

- Look for the Afterschool STEM Hub's updated STEM Talking Points in the January edition of the *Afterschool Lab Report.*