

North Dakota AFTERSCHOOL Update

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Selecting STEM Activities: 15 Questions to Ask

STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) affects every aspect of our lives. High-quality STEM experiences develop critical thinking skills, increase science literacy, and enable the next generation to be innovators. By helping youth develop science attitude, identity, and engagement, we can have a positive and lasting impact on youth.

Selecting appropriate activities is a cornerstone for creating an engaging STEM afterschool program. Skilled and trained frontline staff and volunteers are key to raising the quality of STEM experiences in out-of-school time. It is essential they feel confident and comfortable choosing and facilitating STEM activities.

One of the most effective ways to build a successful STEM program is to select activities that meet youth interests, experiences, and needs.

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Continued Selecting STEM Activities: 15 Questions to Ask

1. Is the activity safe?
2. Is the activity appropriate for the age group I am working with?
3. Are the youth I work with interested in this topic?
4. Does the activity have a hands-on component?
5. What STEM skills will youth learn by doing this activity?
6. Is there enough space, adequate time, staff support, et cetera for me to do this activity?
7. Are there any reasons (school rules, program regulations, et cetera) why I shouldn't do this activity at my program?
8. Is this activity suited to the unpredictable environment of out-of-school learning?
9. Does this activity provide opportunities for collaboration?
10. Is there additional background knowledge needed? Is it easy to locate?
11. Are the materials and supplies required by the activity easy to access and affordable? If not, can I find other materials and supplies to use in the activity?
12. Does the activity address STEM standards (National Council of Teachers of Mathematics-NCTM, National Science Education Standards-NSES, National Science Teachers Association-NSTA, or state or local standards)?
13. Can the activity be part of an ongoing STEM theme that builds upon the previous experiences of youth?
14. Can I make a real-world career connection to this activity?
15. Are there relevant modern STEM role models to reference as part of the activity?

These tips were adapted from Click2Science's "20 Skills to Make STEM Click" in collaboration with STEMfinity. The tips are part of a larger professional development package that includes free resources.

Once these questions are addressed and a program identifies appropriate activities, the search begins to find trusted STEM products and services. Luckily, STEMfinity has them all in one place so you can find everything you need to kickstart your afterschool STEM program. For more information <http://naaweb.org/resources/item/363-selecting-stem-activities-15-questions-to-ask#sthash.s1oi0Fq5.dpuf>



North Dakota State Program Administrator Updates

21st CCLC Grant Competition

The 21st CCLC grant competition has closed and the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction (NDDPI) received one application. We are currently reviewing peer reviewer applications to see who will be scoring the application. NDDPI received a number of applicants from outside of the state which is consistent with the grant competition Request for Proposal. NDDPI will notify the applicant in August whether or not they will receive funding.

21st CCLC and Reauthorization

The Every Child Achieves Act went to mark up, the senate bill, is expected to be voted on in the upcoming weeks. There has been some movement in the house as well. The Student Success Act was passed by the house along party lines. This bill still eliminates a number of programs and keeps the block format. One of the programs eliminated is 21st CCLC. President Obama has stated he will not sign a bill that does not have bipartisan support, which the Student Success Act is lacking. You can follow all the reauthorization buzz at www.afterschoolalliance.org/ on the National Afterschool Alliance website.

Mott Partnership Grant

The Mott Afterschool Network Leadership team will be meeting to discuss the next steps for the partnership grant North Dakota received. The meeting will be August 3, 2015 in Fargo. The results of the meeting will be relayed to the field in the next newsletter.

New NDDPI Website

On July 15, 2015 the NDDPI has launched a new website. Each program has selected three to four items to put on the new website immediately. We ask that you be patient as it will take time to get all pertinent information onto the new site. If there is a document you need, please contact Josh Sharp at jesharp@nd.gov and the document will be emailed to you.

Continuing Application

Each year, sub-grantees are required to complete a continuing application to receive their new grant award. The application is posted on the department website. The application is due August 1, 2015 and there are no changes from last year. Please remember all sub-grantees must close out the current year before the continuing application will be approved.

Things to Watch For

- Updated Fast Facts
- Re-Authorization Updates
- Close Out Memo
- State Sponsored Travel Memo

21st Century Community Learning Centers *Summer Conference*



AUGUST 4-5, 2015 | Holiday Inn, Fargo

To register go to www.ndseec.com/21cclc

The 2015 Conference will feature the following speakers:

- **Brad Barton**, Motivational Speaker
- **Connor Snyder**, Kids 4 Broadway
- **Jenny Davis**, Lights On Afterschool
- **Clint Darr**, Missouri AfterSchool Network
- **NASA Education**
- **PBS Education Services**
- **NDSU Extension Service**

The 21st Century Community Learning Centers Summer Conference Registration is open to ALL afterschool staff not only those funded through 21st CCLC grants. Full Conference details including the schedule and session descriptions will be available in mid-May.