



LIGHTS ON AFTERSCHOOL

A PROJECT OF THE AFTERSCHOOL ALLIANCE

ACTIVITY GUIDE FOR 21ST CCLC PROGRAMS



#LightsOnNV26

NEVADA
Afterschool
NETWORK



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2026 Lights On Afterschool (LOA)

21st CCLC Activities Guide for Nevada Programs

Overview

Lights On Afterschool (LOA), an initiative of the Afterschool Alliance, is a nationwide celebration of the importance of afterschool programs. Each year, programs showcase how they support students, families, and communities through academic enrichment, youth development, family engagement, and community partnerships.

The 27th annual Lights On Afterschool will take place on Thursday, October 22, 2026. Programs may celebrate on October 22 or host an event **on or around this date** based on their program schedule and community needs. The Afterschool Alliance recommends celebrating during the **3:00–6:00 p.m.** to highlight the importance of afterschool hours, although programs may select a time that works best for their students, families, and community.

The Nevada Afterschool Network (NAN), in partnership with the Nevada Department of Education (NDE), facilitates Nevada’s Lights On Afterschool campaign and provides technical assistance to 21st CCLC programs.

To get familiar with LOA, you can start by watching the [2025 Lights on Afterschool 101 webinar](#), and other [previous webinars](#), and visiting the Lights On Afterschool page of the [Afterschool Alliance website](#) for additional ideas.

What You Need to Know

- Celebration date:** Thursday, October 22, 2026
- Celebration schedule:** October 22 or another date that works for your program
- Required activities:** Complete both required activities listed in this guide
- Bonus activities:** Complete any bonus activity for an opportunity to be entered into a prize drawing
- Event registration:** Programs hosting an LOA event must register through the Afterschool Alliance.

- [Register your Lights On Afterschool event](#)
- [Explore the Afterschool Alliance activity database](#)
- [Access the Lights On Afterschool Social Media Toolkit](#)

Your celebration does not need to be large. Programs may incorporate LOA into regular programming, invite **families** or **community partners**, **showcase student work**, or **host a simple activity** highlighting the program’s impact.

Make It a Community Celebration

Programs are encouraged to invite students, families, school staff, community partners, local businesses, policymakers, and other community members when appropriate.

Ideas include:

- Student-led demonstrations or presentations
- Family engagement activities
- STEM, arts, literacy, sports, or enrichment activities
- Student artwork or projects
- Guest speakers or community partners
- Youth advocacy activities
- Lightbulb-themed activities or decorations
- Photos or videos highlighting your program's impact

Required Submission

NAN will distribute a submission form in October. Programs must submit the form and required materials by **November 13, 2026**.

Required materials:

- At least **three** scanned copies of completed youth coloring pages.
- At least **one** advocacy video, 30 seconds to one-minute long.

Submitted materials must clearly demonstrate participation in Lights On Afterschool. **Programs that complete a bonus activity will also be entered into a prize drawing.**

Please make sure submitted materials clearly demonstrate your program's participation in Lights On Afterschool. For questions, contact nan@unlv.edu with the subject line "LOA Inquiry."

Document and Share Your Celebration

Programs are encouraged to take photos and videos to document their celebration and showcase their impact. Follow your organization's policies regarding parent/guardian permission, student privacy, and media releases.

Programs may share their celebration on social media using:

- **#LightsOnAfterschool**
- **#AfterschoolWorks**
- **#LightsOnNV26**

When appropriate, tag the Nevada Afterschool Network:

- **@nvafterschool**
- **Nevada Afterschool Network on LinkedIn**



21st CCLC Connection

Lights On Afterschool provides an opportunity to highlight how 21st CCLC programs support:

- Academic enrichment
- Youth development
- Family engagement
- Career and college exploration
- Community partnerships
- Family literacy and educational development

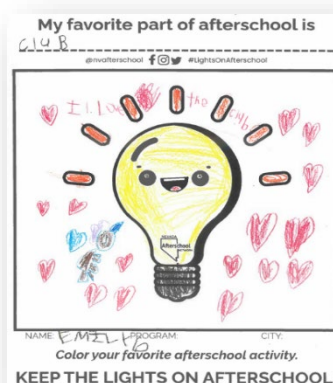
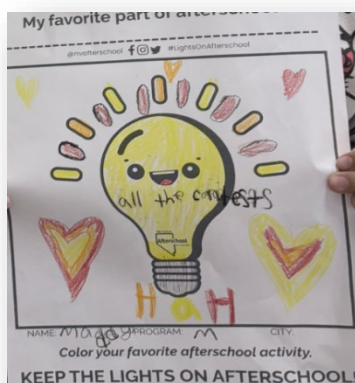
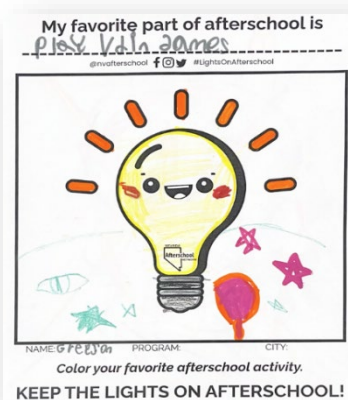
Nevada's 21st CCLC programs should consider using their LOA celebration to showcase the specific ways they support students, families, and the community.

Professional Development Reminder

NDE requires 21st CCLC subgrantees to participate in the Nevada Afterschool Network Annual Showcase in February and at least one additional external professional development opportunity focused on improving 21st CCLC program quality and staff competencies.

Professional development documentation should be uploaded into the Cayen data system.

Please note: LOA participation and professional development requirements are separate unless otherwise communicated by NDE or NAN.



REQUIRED ACTIVITIES

(Programs must complete BOTH activities below):

1. Lightbulb Coloring Page Contest (NEW TEMPLATE!):

Description: Have youth color the [NAN LOA lightbulb mascot - Sparky](#) and add a note describing their favorite part of afterschool. Select one to three outstanding youth creations, or have students vote, and **submit the artwork through the LOA requirements submission form.**

- Hand-drawn artwork must be scanned. Photos of drawings will not be accepted.
- Programs may print their own coloring pages. If printing is not possible, NAN may mail or deliver copies, depending on the program's location. Contact nan@unlv.edu with the subject line "[Your Program] - LOA Coloring Pages" to discuss printing or mailing details.
- The winning artwork will be made into custom Nevada Lights On Afterschool stickers for the following year.

2. Afterschool Advocacy Videos:

Description: Create a 30-second to one-minute video featuring staff, youth, families, or community partners sharing why afterschool is important and how it has made an impact. *See the sample scripts and messaging below.* [See example videos here](#) and [here](#).

Videos may include:

- A personal statement about afterschool
 - Facts about the program or afterschool
 - A day-in-the-life segment
 - Student, family, or staff messages
 - Comments from local businesses or community partners
 - Program accomplishments
- *PLEASE NOTE: For any videos you share with NAN, you must confirm that all youth shown in the video have completed and signed media releases on file. If you need a template, NAN can send you one.*
 - Programs may submit unedited video clips to nan@unlv.edu if the usable content is at least 30 seconds long. NAN may edit and combine clips into a final branded video for the program.
 - Before submitting video to NAN, confirm that all youth shown have signed media releases on file. NAN can provide a media release template upon request.



OPTIONAL BONUS ACTIVITIES:

Programs may complete any of the following bonus activities. Completing at least one bonus activity qualifies the program for the prize drawing.

1. Participate in the Lightbulb Challenge

Pose in the shape of the Lights On Afterschool logo and share the photo on social media. Include a caption **with #LightsOnNV26** and tag **@nvafterschool** or **Nevada Afterschool Network on LinkedIn**. Programs may challenge others to participate.



Example photo

2. Participate in NAN's "Lights On NV" Mini Storytelling Campaign

Share **one story** that highlights the impact of your afterschool program. Choose one:

- Student voice
- Staff spotlight
- Family story
- Program impact or data
- Partner spotlight
- Day-in-the-life video
- STEM or career activity
- Lights On event
- Student artwork
- Policymaker visit

Posts may be shared on Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, or another appropriate platform. Include **#LightsOnNV26** and tag **@nvafterschool** or **Nevada Afterschool Network on LinkedIn**.

3. Complete Afterschool Statements

Invite youth, families, and/or program staff to complete the [We Love Our Afterschool Staff](#) and [Shining a Light](#) statement templates. Programs may print their own copies, or NAN can mail or deliver copies if needed.

Programs are encouraged to send completed statements and lightbulb coloring pages to NAN for use in advocacy use. Contact nan@unlv.edu with the subject line "[Your Program] - LOA Statements" to discuss mailing details.

4. Host a LOA Event AND Invite a Policymaker

Host an event for students and families, such as a literacy night, STEM night, family fitness night, or talent showcase. Invite a local or state policymaker to attend and learn about the program's impact.

Share event highlights using **#LightsOnNV26** and tag **@nvafterschool**. See more planning ideas and details [here](#).

5. Afterschool Superheroes:

Have students write a short story about how they would use a superpower to improve their community. Invite families, school leaders, community members, or policymakers to hear the stories. Share student

quotes or excerpts using **#LightsOnNV26** and tag **@nvafterschool**.

6. Invite an Expert

Invite a local professional – such as a scientist, engineer, artist, athlete, entrepreneur, or coding expert—to speak with and be interviewed by students. Have students reflect on the experience and set a career or professional goal. Share highlights using **#LightsOnNV26** and tag **@nvafterschool**.

7. Conduct a Youth Service Project

Organize a community service project, such as a food drive, neighborhood cleanup, community garden, senior support activity, or care-package project.

Invite families and policymakers to participate. Programs are responsible for arranging transportation.

Share event highlights using **#LightsOnNV26** and tag **@nvafterschool**. To find planning resources and choose a project that is fun and meaningful, visit this [page](#).

8. Involve Media for Your Event or Activities

Contact local news media *at least* one week before your event. Share the event date, time, location, speakers, activities, program information, and the importance of afterschool.

Prepare a [news release](#) for attending reporters and follow up with media outlets that cannot attend. Send thank-you notes to media outlets that provide coverage. See media alert instructions and sample [here](#).

9. Team Up with Corporate or Community Partners

Invite local businesses and community organizations to promote or participate in your LOA event. Partners may sponsor an activity, lead a session, or record a short video about their support for afterschool.

Share event highlights using **#LightsOnNV26** and tag **@nvafterschool**. Send thank-you notes to participating partners.

Appendix A: Bonus Activity Support Details

1. NAN Mini Storytelling Campaign

- **Potential outcomes:** Increased awareness of afterschool, stronger youth and community voice, and more engaging stories that demonstrate program impact.
- **Potential TA from NAN:** NAN can help programs brainstorm content ideas, provide social media guidance, monitor tagged posts, and share selected content.
- **Incentive:** Increased visibility through NAN's website, social media, and advocacy efforts.

2. Lightbulb Challenge

- **Potential outcomes:** Increased visibility for Lights On Afterschool and greater community participation in celebrating afterschool programs.
- **Potential TA from NAN:** NAN can provide ideas for photos and captions, answer questions, monitor tagged posts, and share participating programs' content.
- **Incentive:** Increased promotion through NAN's social media and potential inclusion in Lights On Afterschool advocacy efforts.

3. Afterschool Statements

- **Potential outcomes:** Increased participant voice and personal stories that highlight the value of afterschool.
- **Potential TA from NAN:** NAN can provide templates, assist with printing or mailing, and answer questions about completing or submitting materials.
- **Incentive:** Participant voices may be shared through NAN's advocacy and promotional efforts.

4. Open House or Special Event

- **Potential outcomes:** Increased family and community engagement, greater policymaker awareness, and stronger advocacy for afterschool.
- **Potential TA from NAN:** NAN can assist with activity ideas, event logistics, policymaker invitations, talking points, data flyers, and thank-you letter or proclamation templates.
- **Incentive:** Event highlights may be featured on NAN's website and social media and included in advocacy efforts.

5. Afterschool Superheroes

- **Potential outcomes:** Students strengthen writing, public speaking, leadership, and advocacy skills. Programs may compile the stories into a keepsake storybook.
- **Potential TA from NAN:** NAN can assist with event communications and logistics, including invitations to families, community members, and policymakers.
- **Incentive:** Selected stories may be shared in NAN advocacy and promotional efforts.

6. Invite an Expert

- **Potential outcomes:** Students learn about career pathways, build professional skills, and identify future goals.

- **Potential TA from NAN:** NAN can help identify potential experts and assist with outreach.
- **Incentive:** Student reflections and goals may support NAN advocacy for afterschool as a workforce development resource.

7. Youth Service Project

- **Potential outcomes:** Students develop teamwork, leadership, and civic responsibility while making a positive community impact.
- **Potential TA from NAN:** NAN can assist with project ideas, communications, event logistics, and digital promotion.
- **Incentive:** Event highlights may be included in NAN advocacy and promotional efforts.

8. Media Involvement

- **Potential outcomes:** Increased awareness of afterschool, community support, and opportunities to connect with partners, sponsors, and donors.
- **Potential TA from NAN:** NAN can provide media templates and scripts, help develop an outreach timeline, and promote coverage through its platforms.
- **Incentive:** Increased visibility and engagement with families, community members, and local media.

9. Corporate or Community Partners

- **Potential outcomes:** Increased community awareness, stronger partnerships, and potential access to sponsors, volunteers, donations, and other resources.
- **Potential TA from NAN:** NAN can assist with partner outreach, sponsorship communications, data flyers, event timelines, thank-you letter templates, and promotion.
- **Incentive:** Increased community engagement and visibility, with opportunities to build lasting partnerships and attract additional support.

Appendix B: Advocacy Video Guidance

The following messages are suggestions. Programs are encouraged to create a message that is personal and meaningful to their students, families, and community.

Suggested Video Format

1. **Introduction:** State your name, role, and program.
2. **Key message:** Share why afterschool is important.
3. **Evidence:** Include a fact, program outcome, or personal experience.
4. **Personal connection:** Explain how afterschool has affected you or your community.
5. **Call to action:** Ask viewers or policymakers to support afterschool.

Sample Message

“My name is Jane Smith, and I am a staff member and parent at a Nevada afterschool program. Afterschool is a workforce solution. Without afterschool options, families may have to miss work or arrange costly child care. Our program keeps students safe, helps them learn, and gives families peace of mind. Please support initiatives that protect and expand afterschool opportunities in our communities.”

Additional Message Ideas

- Afterschool programs work and help students build skills through hands-on learning and mentoring.
- Afterschool supports working families by providing safe, supervised care during out-of-school hours.
- Afterschool helps students explore careers, build confidence, and prepare for the future.
- Afterschool is an investment in students, families, schools, and communities.
- Policymakers can support afterschool by protecting and expanding funding and program opportunities.

For help creating an advocacy message or video, contact nan@unlv.edu with the subject line “**LOA Advocacy Video.**”

Appendix C: Program Completion Checklist

Use this checklist to plan and document your Lights On Afterschool participation.

Planning

- ☐ Review the 2026 Lights On Afterschool Activities Guide.
- ☐ Select a celebration date: October 22 or another date that works for your program.
- ☐ Register your event with the Afterschool Alliance if hosting an LOA event.
- ☐ Decide whether to host an event, incorporate LOA into regular programming, or both.
- ☐ Invite families, school staff, community partners, local businesses, and policymakers as appropriate.
- ☐ Review student privacy and media-release requirements.

Required Activities

- ☐ Complete the Lightbulb Coloring Page activity.
- ☐ Select one to three youth creations for the contest.
- ☐ Scan the selected artwork; do not submit photographs of drawings.
- ☐ Create an advocacy video that is 30 seconds to 1-minute long.
- ☐ Confirm that all youth shown in the video have signed media releases.
- ☐ Save copies of submitted artwork and video files.

Bonus Activity

- ☐ Complete at least one bonus activity to qualify for the prize drawing.
- ☐ Follow the activity requirements listed in this guide.
- ☐ Include **#LightsOnNV26** and tag **@nvafterschool** when required.
- ☐ Save screenshots, photos, videos, links, or other proof of completion.

Social Media and Documentation

- ☐ Take photos or videos of your activities, following organizational policies.
- ☐ Share celebration highlights using **#LightsOnNV26** and **#AfterschoolWorks**.
- ☐ Tag the Nevada Afterschool Network: **@nvafterschool**.

Submission

- ☐ Complete the NAN submission form when it is distributed in October.
- ☐ **Submit the form by November 13, 2026.**
- ☐ Submit at least three scanned youth coloring pages.
- ☐ Submit at least one 30-second to 1-minute advocacy video.
- ☐ Include information and documentation for any completed bonus activity.
- ☐ Contact nan@unlv.edu with questions using the subject line **"LOA Inquiry."**