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## **Michigan After-School Partnership Encouraged by Governor's Message On Talent Development**

**Lansing, Mich.** (Dec. 1, 2011) – The Michigan After-School Partnership (MASP) is supportive of Gov. Snyder's message, delivered earlier today, on the need to improve talent in the state. A recent initiative facilitated by MASP directly addresses the issue, noted by the Governor, that Michigan has too few students graduating in the engineering and mathematic fields.

"The current MASP initiative will work to develop talent in the science, technology, engineering and mathematical fields," said Mary Sutton, Executive Director, MASP. "It is our hope that students will have access to the afterschool programs that will help them to build successful futures in these core fields."

MASP was recently awarded a grant from the Noyce Foundation to develop and implement statewide systems for informal Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematical (STEM) education. MASP is hoping to increase awareness of the need for high quality, innovative STEM programs in after-school settings.

Detroit, Grand Rapids and Saginaw have been identified as target communities where MASP will work with local programs to help build staff capacity and increase program quality. MASP has begun to develop partnerships among local, regional, and statewide organizations to work together to support informal STEM education and are cultivating leadership. The group has begun collecting baseline data on the quantity and quality of informal STEM education in the state.

"The Michigan After-School Partnership is working to bridge the gap between the school day curriculum and educational after school programs that include science, technology, engineering and mathematics," said Sutton. "The Governor's message on the need for jobs in these areas stresses the need and timeliness of this initiative."

Afterschool programs are a positive addition to an education system that is seeking more options for delivering science learning experiences. Afterschool programs alone cannot make up all the lost ground. They can and should, however, be part of a more comprehensive approach to giving more young people a chance to discover an interest in STEM, and an aptitude that could lead many -- especially those from underrepresented populations -- to choose degrees and careers in the STEM fields.

MASP envisions that all Michigan children/youth will have access to high quality, innovative after-school STEM activities and programs that develop inquiry and discovery to prepare them for college, work and life.

### **About the Michigan After-School Partnership**

The Michigan After-School Partnership represents a statewide coalition of organizations that supports after-school programs offering structured experiences for youth while preparing them to become successful citizens. MASP includes policy makers, educators, childcare providers, youth development workers, program developers, advocates, parents and others working collaboratively to improve the quantity and quality of after-school programs in Michigan. For more information on MASP, visit [www.miafterschool.org](http://www.miafterschool.org).

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