

Share Your Story. Make a Difference.

Write your legislator or your local newspaper.

STEM is important to you. Tell them why. Writing letters is a great way to communicate the importance of afterschool. The letters to the editor section is one of the most-read sections of any newspaper and an effective way to tell the public about the importance of afterschool. Legislators, state and federal, are always looking to hear from their constituents on issues that matter to them. Writing a letter is an easy way to share your story and let them know what's going on in their district.

Don't know who your legislator is? Find out here: <https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislators/find>

Dear Editor/Legislator,

[Start with an attention grabbing first line. Why are you writing this letter? Are you responding to a previously published article, a proposed bill about afterschool, or a current event?]

[Make your argument. Explain the issue in a concise manner, pick one or two data points that are powerful and really add to your argument. Example: For X amount of dollars, our program can provide X amount of kids with high-quality STEM activities during the school year or summer.]

[Focus on your connection with the issue. What is your personal story? Why does this issue matter to you?]

[Make a call to action. Urge your elected officials to support afterschool or ask readers to reach out to their legislators.]

Sincerely,
[Your name]
[Address]

Best Practices For Writing Letters

- » **Keep it short and to the point.** Limit letters to the editor to 150 – 300 words. A letter to your legislator can be longer.
- » **Use powerful language** – make the most of your limited word count.
- » **Write about your personal experiences with the issue** – your letter will be more relatable to the reader.
- » **Make it timely if possible** – reference a recently published article or current event.
- » **Include a call to action** – something the reader can do to make an impact.
- » **Proof your letter before submitting!**