

STEM Consolidation/Overall Health of the Education Program Messaging Sheet

Bottom Line

- The Administration is proposing a comprehensive reorganization to facilitate a cohesive national strategy of STEM education programs to increase the impact of Federal investments in four areas:
 - Improve K-12 instruction
 - Reform undergraduate education
 - Graduate Fellowships
 - Education activities that typically take place outside the classroom
- 114 programs across 11 agencies will be consolidated or restructured as part of this initiative, a total of nearly \$180 million
- Six NOAA education programs will be terminated as part of this effort and the funds redirected to the Department of Education, the National Science Foundation (NSF), and the Smithsonian Institution to implement initiatives in the four core reform areas.
- The Administration will ensure that all science mission agencies have input into the development and implementation of these initiatives so that they align with agency goals while improving STEM education at all levels in a streamlined way.

Talking Points

- The six programs that will be terminated include:
 - Competitive Education Grants Program – (\$3,069,000)
 - National Sea Grant College Program – (\$4,000,000)
 - Bay Watershed Education and Training (B-WET) - (\$5,500,00)
 - Teacher at Sea Program – (\$600,000)
 - Dr. Nancy Foster Scholarship Program – (\$600,000)
 - Office of Ocean Exploration and Research education programs (\$900,000)
- Although implementation specifics are unknown at this time, Federal science mission agencies will continue their inspiring work in STEM by:
 - Identifying content, assets, and effective STEM programs that can be used in the classroom
 - Playing an active role in developing and implementing STEM initiatives to ensure they align with agency and national goals
 - Coordinating with Department of Education, NSF, the Smithsonian to ensure broad use of agency expertise, assets and effective approaches to STEM education
 - Continuing to build evidence through their STEM education programs

QUESTIONS:

- Does NOAA support this initiative? Does NOAA think this is the right use of STEM Education funds?

Answer: The Administration believes that a significant reorganization, is necessary to greatly improve STEM education. Maintaining a large number of small STEM programs makes it difficult to rigorously evaluate core functions or drive national strategies for targeting resources towards national needs.

- Was NOAA consulted with when the Administration was developing this plan?

Answer: For the past two years NOAA, along with all federal science mission agencies, has been participating in the Committee on Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math Education (CoSTEM). This effort is called for by the [America COMPETES Reauthorization Act of 2010](#). The tasks of the committee were to create an inventory of Federal STEM education activities and develop a 5-year strategic Federal STEM education plan. The Administration proposal builds on the work of the CoSTEM.

- Will these programs be continued at NSF and the Department of Education?

Answer: The NOAA education programs are proposed for termination.

- What will be the impact of the Administration's STEM consolidation proposal on NOAA?

Answer: NOAA will work with NSF, the Department of Education and the Smithsonian to assist in the development and implementation of the 2014 STEM initiatives so that they align with NOAA's goals while improving STEM education at all levels in a streamlined way.

- The National Marine Sanctuaries Act of 2000 established the Dr. Nancy Foster Scholarship Program, and states that the Secretary shall make 1 percent of the amount appropriated each fiscal year to carry out the National Marine Sanctuaries Act available for Dr. Nancy Foster Scholarships. How can NOAA terminate this program when it is signed into law?

Answer: The Administration has advised us that they will work on the legislative changes that are needed to make this termination to NOAA's budget.

- What is the difference between the STEM programs being removed from NOAA's budget, and the education programs that remain in NOAA. Aren't these also STEM programs?

Answer: The two STEM education programs that remain in NOAA in FY14 are the Educational Partnership with Minority Serving Institutions and the Hollings Undergraduate Scholarship Program. The Administration excluded the Educational Partnership Program from the consolidation, along with other programs that directly support Minority Serving Institutions from its reorganization proposal. The Administration felt the best approach to improving STEM education in this area was to engage with MSIs directly to determine the best ways to improve services to these institutions. The Hollings Scholarship provides undergraduates with scholarships and internships. This program did not fit well into the NSF consolidated portfolio for undergraduate education reform.

- What will happen to the funding for projects that are already being funded out of the Competitive Education grant program?

Answer: All currently funded projects through the Competitive Education Grants, are awards that span several years (3 to 5). Grant funding for FY14 will be determined by Congressional appropriation levels.