

Idaho STEM Ecosystem

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American Rescue Plan Act (enacted 3/11/21)

General:

- \$1.9 trillion in total
 - \$20 billion for vaccines, \$50 billion for additional testing
 - \$1400 payments to individuals (phased out above \$75,000/\$150,000 income)
 - Extension of \$400 per week federal unemployment benefits through August, lasting up to 48 weeks.
 - \$350 billion to state and local governments
 - Contains federal minimum wage increase to \$15 per hour
 - Now off to the Senate and then back to the House
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American Rescue Plan Act

Funding for Education

- \$128.55 billion for the [Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief fund](#).
 - \$39.58 billion for the Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund.
 - \$850 million for grants to U.S. territories (Sec. 2004)
 - \$850 million for the Bureau of Indian Education (Sec. 2005)
 - \$100 million for the Institute of Education Sciences to research Covid-19's impact on learning (Sec. 2010)
 - \$7.6 billion for broadband.
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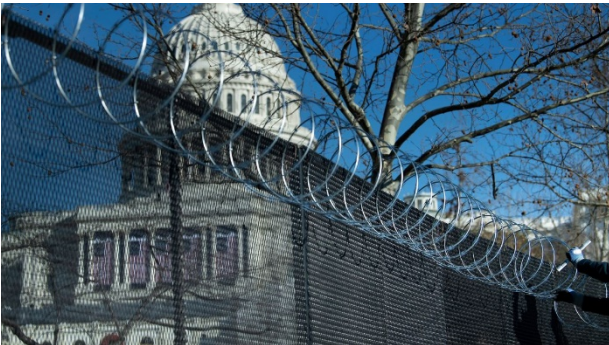
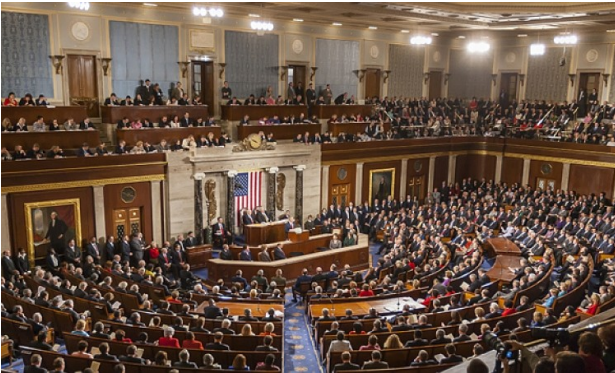
Deeper Dive on ARPA Funding

- Funds can be used to:
 - address the impact of significant interrupted instruction;
 - to prepare schools for physical reopening;
 - to test, repair, and upgrade projects to improve air quality in school buildings;
 - to purchase education technology;
 - to provide mental health supports;
 - as well as other activities authorized by existing law
 - The bill contains minimum set-asides for state educational agencies (SEAs):
 - 5% to address interrupted learning for underserved students,
 - 1% (\$1.25B) for evidence-based summer programs
 - 1% (\$1.25B) for after-school programs
 - 800M for supporting students experiencing homelessness
 - LEAs must also set aside at least 20% of their funds to address interrupted learning for underserved students
 - Within 30 days of receiving funds, districts must release a plan that includes information about returning to in-person learning.
 - All funds must be used by September 30, 2023
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Key “Rescue” and Beyond Issues for the STEM Community

- We need to empower state and local STEM advocates to engage effectively in decision-making about priorities for “rescue” dollars.
 - What kind of accountability system would work best in the post-pandemic environment.
 - Sustainability of funding in the out years of ARPA.
 - How to be truly build it back better versus re-establishing the status quo
 - The tensions between Summer “academic learning” versus other Summer programs
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What's Up Next?



- 'Infrastructure' and further recovery legislation.
- Will Immigration get any attention?
- The full details of the President's FY22 Budget
- Secretary Cardona's competitive grant priorities for ED
- Earmarks are back (maybe)
- Broad workforce policy changes are being contemplated within the Biden Administration
- When does 2022 midterms focus take over?

What a “Very Good” Rest of 2021 Would Look Like for STEM Policy

- Funding for STEM equipment, facilities, and materials included in a bipartisan infrastructure bill
 - A immigration bill that includes a “STEM fund” supported with H1B revenues
 - Full funding of ESSA STEM priorities in FY 2022 appropriations bills
 - A national security workforce STEM initiative in the annual DOD authorization bill
 - A strong STEM coordinator installed at the White House
 - An Office of STEM Education at the Department of Education
 - A revised accountability framework in an ESSA reauthorization blueprint that prioritizes math AND science
 - Competitive grant priorities at ED that emphasize STEM
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Images and Perceptions

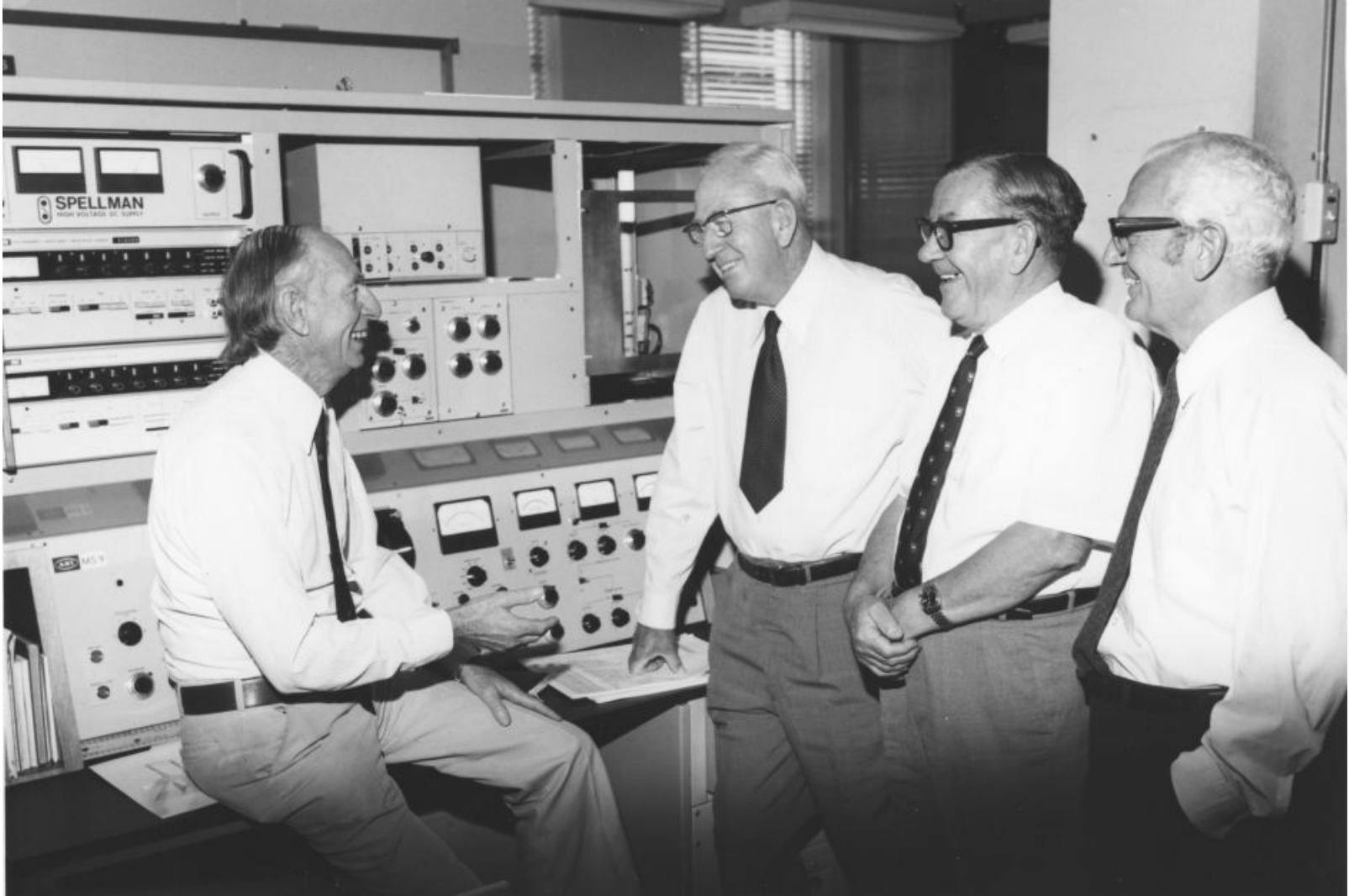
General Public's Image



Hollywood's Historical Image



What (Too Many) Students See in “STEM”



Messaging





—Taxes That Kill Jobs—

JOBS, JOBS, JOBS!

TAX EXPERT URGES

New York Comptroller Says Federal Government
Open Spillways of Employment by Throwing Out
'Work-Blighting' Levies on Business

This is the last of five articles by an eminent and powerful authority on taxation, who served as Comptroller of New York under Governors Al Smith and Franklin D. Roosevelt and still that post. He proposes that the government change its policies to unleash business and restore better times.

Helping Children Learn STEM is Key to Building a Prosperous Economy for All of Us

- The primary driver of the future economy, and especially job creation, will be innovation, largely from advances in science and engineering. By adding to the sector that develops new products and services, we add to the pool of people creating jobs for our economy. In fact, one job in the high-tech sector leads to four new jobs in local goods and service industries (Hathaway, 2012).
- We're experiencing a rapid growth in the need for STEM professionals. Between 2014 and 2024, the number of STEM jobs will grow by 16 percent—which is more than the projected growth for all other jobs (Change the Equation, 2015). Low graduation rates from high school and college mean there's a smaller number of students who can gain advanced STEM skills. And of those students who do graduate, few obtain a post-secondary degree in STEM (WestEd Equation, 2018).



This is About Preparing Our Society for the Challenges of the Future



- Given our complex and changing world, we will need citizens who are critical thinkers and problem-solvers to meet our modern challenges. Learning in science, technology, engineering and math—the subjects called "STEM"—builds the knowledge and skills needed to tackle problems systematically. STEM helps to build the ability to sift through information, draw reasonable conclusions, make decisions based on evidence and come up with creative solutions.
- STEM subjects cultivate experience with experimenting and checking assumptions against evidence, which helps make everyone a better problem-solver. Additionally, STEM learning hones relevant, real-life observation and analysis skills for young people. The kinds of projects that kids tackle in afterschool STEM programs also help them build teamwork and communication skills. These are the kinds of skills that our fast-changing modern society needs. A study of afterschool STEM program evaluations from across the country showed that these kinds of skills are being built in strong afterschool STEM programs (Krishnamurthi, Noam, & Ballard, 2014).



STEM Policy Opportunities for 2021

#1

Only a small portion of the \$150+ billion in Education Funding provided by the American Rescue Plan (and the previous relief funds) has so far been obligated within states and school districts

All of the ARPA funds need to be obligated by 2023 and spent by 2025.

#2

Economist are forecasting that more than 10 million American workers could go back to work by the end of 2021.

STEM workforce needs will be huge
and potentially unmet in many
industries.

#3

State tax revenues are down 7.6% on average and 2021 budgets will be super tight. (But not in Idaho!)

(Nonetheless) STEM-specific program budgets will need to be defended aggressively.

#4

The digital school curriculum has narrowed around math and reading.

STEM advocates need to make the case the STEM education programs are not a luxury, they are a necessity.

QUESTIONS

