



THE PROFESSIONAL LEARNING ORGANIZATION of PENNSYLVANIA

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Learning Forward PA Vision: *“Every educator engages in effective professional learning every day, so every student achieves.”*

Co-Presidents’ Message

Happy New Year! The “Great Blizzard” of 2015 is behind us, the second semester is well underway, and February – the month of groundhog prognostication, Valentine’s Day celebrations, and Presidential birthdays – has finally arrived. Right around the corner is March 8th - the start of Daylight Savings Time - and March 20th – the First Day of Spring! As you are looking ahead to this busy time of year in your classrooms, schools, and districts, Learning Forward PA hopes you will take a few moments to read this newsletter that will update you on various LFPA projects. We encourage you to share the information with colleagues, encourage them to join LFPA in 2015, and recommend to them the [Learning Forward PA website](#) as a wonderful professional resource!

Learning Forward PA Announces Fall 2015 Institute



The LFPA Fall Institute Committee is honored that Dr. Bill Daggett, Founder and Chairman of the [International Center for Leadership in Education](#) will be our key facilitator at this year’s annual Learning Forward PA Fall institute, which will be held on **October 22, 2015** at the **Holiday Inn at Grantville** (Harrisburg-Hershey).

The implementation of the PA Core Standards, and revised state assessments aligned to them, has presented teachers and schools with unprecedented curricular, instructional, and leadership challenges. As the creator of the [Rigor/Relevance Framework](#), a practical planning and instructional tool that is used in schools throughout the United States, Dr. Daggett is recognized worldwide for his proven ability to move educational systems toward more rigorous and relevant skills and knowledge for all students.

Before founding the ICLE in 1991, Dr. Daggett was a teacher and administrator at the secondary and postsecondary levels, and a director with the New York State Education Department. Dr. Daggett has collaborated with education ministries in several countries, the Council of Chief State School Officers, the National Governor’s Association, and many other national and global organizations.

Dr. Daggett has spoken to hundreds of thousands of educators and education stakeholders in all 50 states. His enlightening, entertaining, and motivating messages have helped his listeners to look at education differently by challenging their assumptions about the purposes, benefits, and effectiveness of American schools. Dr. Daggett inspires his audiences both to embrace what is best about our education system and to make the changes necessary to meet the needs of all students in the 21st century.

Although you can certainly attend the institute as an individual, members are encouraged to bring a building or district-level team, as time will be provided during the afternoon session to do some focused problem-solving and action planning, facilitated by Dr. Daggett and members of the Learning Forward PA Board of Directors.

Keep an eye out for a detailed Save-the-Date flyer and registration information from our communications team later this spring. Registration will begin on **July 1st** and space will be limited, so make plans now to attend this exciting professional event on October 22!

Submitted by Dr. Kate Kieres
Co-Chair, Fall Institute Committee

Will Richardson Challenges Audience at LFPA 2014 Fall Institute

At Learning Forward PA's Fall Institute held on October 14 at the Holiday Inn in Grantville (Harrisburg-Hershey), "*Educating Modern Learners: The Opportunities and Challenges of Schooling in the Connected World*" was the focus of Will Richardson's discussion with over 100 educators in attendance from across the Commonwealth. Richardson explained that, whether we like it or not, students now spend an average of four times more hours consuming digital media than they spend in school. This time spent on digital media can be powerful learning time because the internet is – first and foremost – information. There are now over 2 trillion webpages, 5 trillion app downloads, and over 12 billion internet-connected devices. World-class research universities make their knowledge available to everyone through MOOCs, and in this "new" world, almost every piece of knowledge known to humankind is available in our phones!

Richardson asserts that teachers have to help students build skills and networks to foster the effective use of information rather than simply the accrual of information. He encouraged participants to consider six 21st Century skills that the National Council of Teachers of English believes are critical for literacy:

1. Develop proficiency with the tools of technology
2. Build relationships with others to pose and solve problems collaboratively and cross-culturally
3. Design and share information for global communities to meet a variety of purposes
4. Manage, analyze, and synthesize multiple streams of simultaneous information
5. Create, critique, analyze, and evaluate multi-media texts
6. Attend to the ethical responsibilities required by these complex environments

He also encouraged the group to think in terms of developing the “6 Cs”: Creativity, Communication, Collaboration, Critical Thinking, Connections, and Computing. He argued that students need to be not only recipients of knowledge, but *users of knowledge who create new products, materials, objects, processes, and solutions*. Richardson pointed out that traditional jobs and institutions outside of school are rapidly changing. Among workers, a lifetime career is almost unheard of now; workers need to constantly adapt – a reality that he calls “serial mastery”. The modern workforce expects individuals to constantly create and then apply new knowledge, not simply adapt to it; thus, the “6 Cs”.

Participants were challenged by Richardson to be leaders first, teachers second. To use technology to its best advantage, teachers need to be forward thinking. We need to

- read, listen, and think about powerful and deep learning;
- develop our own networks;
- lead conversations about change and dynamism;
- build a vision that clearly articulates learning in a connected world;
- create a deliberate plan to be part of that learning;
- find entry points for change;

And then, we need to do it all again because change in the connected world will involve constant evolution. By engaging in these activities, we stand a much greater chance of fostering *productive learning*, which is learning that makes one want to learn more. Absent wanting to learn more, learning is unproductive.

Richardson then led the group in a discussion based on his prompt: “What if schools were places where students could ... (our greatest hopes with no barriers)?” Attendees posited that schools could be places where “students:

- “follow passions”,
- “enter a room without texts”,
- “explore different apprenticeships”,
- “make ‘crazy’ ideas happen”,
- “explore the world and their place in it”,
- “make a contribution”,
- “experience failure constructively”,
- “enjoy learning”,
- “learn resilience”,
- learn patience”, and
- “work from strengths”.

The group then discussed the kind of teachers, parents, leaders, and students we need to be for our schools to attain our vision.

A framework of three questions developed by Warren Berger in “A More Beautiful Question” was then suggested by Richardson to guide further conversation:

1. **Why** do so few of the conditions for powerful learning currently exist in school? This is a question to define barriers, such as laws and regulations, momentum, tradition, standardized tests, incompetence, faddism, etc.
2. **What if** we could re-conceptualize the barriers and move to solutions?
3. **How** might we actually do it? Develop several potential solutions and then consider:
 - a. Need – Are people feeling a lot of pain that could be solved by this solution?
 - b. Mission – Does the solution make the school a better place to learn?
 - c. Appeal – Would most teachers and students find value in this solution?
 - d. Budget – Is the solution costly?

Richardson ended the afternoon asking participants to consider at least one question to take back to their employer to start the work of moving toward powerful, deep, and connected learning, and to use this question as a stepping stone to 5-day, 5-week, and 5-month planning.

Submitted by Carla Claycomb and Ryan Monaghan
Learning Forward PA Board Members

Panelists Share Expertise and “Best-Practices” at LFPA Fall Institute

A panel discussion of “Best Practices for Technology Integration and Learning for Professionals” was part of the day’s learning opportunities on October 14th. Cathy Groller, Superintendent of the Milton Area School District, served as moderator. The panelists included Jonathan Blow, Technology Integration Coordinator for the Downingtown Area School District; Dr. Chris Harrington, President of eLearn Institute, Inc. (a 501 9c) (3) nonprofit corporation) and Director of Technology and Innovative Learning for the Kutztown Area School District; Lynn Fueni-Hetten, Supervisor of Instructional Practice in the Salisbury Township School District; Jennifer Saksa, Supervisor of Professional Learning for Downingtown School District; and Ken Zimmerman, Coordinator of Instructional Technology & Digital Media at Lancaster-Lebanon Intermediate Unit 13. The panel shared their expertise and specific models for technology integration and learning they have successfully implemented with educators. The entire LFPA Board thanks the panelists for their participation and leadership in this professional conversation!

Successful Raffle Funds Scholarship

A special thank you goes to all the Fall Institute participants who supported the Learning Forward PA Scholarship Raffle held October 14. The proceeds from this basket raffle help fund the Learning Forward PA scholarship awarded to a deserving Milton Hershey School graduating senior 1) who plans to pursue a career in education, 2) who is identified by the MHS as a student with a strong work ethic, and 3) who demonstrates the desire to be a life-long learner. This \$500 scholarship will be awarded to the selected student at graduation ceremonies held this June at MHS. The enthusiastic support of this fundraiser for the scholarship is most appreciated by the entire LFPA Board!

Learning Forward PA Membership Grows

At the December Board meeting of LFPA, Kathy Gibson, Membership Chair, announced that the current membership of Learning Forward PA is 656 – a record high in membership and an increase of 124 members in 2014! The Board welcomes all our new members, and we encourage all members to share with your colleagues LFPA information – especially the Learning Forward PA website as a professional resource.

Mini-Grant and “Best Practices for Professional Learning” Award Recipients Recognized at LFPA Institute

Linda Leib, Principal at Brandywine Elementary School in the Downingtown School District, is the 2014 - 2015 recipient of the \$1,000 Learning Forward PA Mini-Grant. The purpose of the Mini-Grant is “to support innovative professional learning that exemplifies Learning Forward’s *Standards for Professional Learning* in action”. To qualify, the LFPA Awards Committee reviewed several applications, submitted by various individuals, schools, and districts, before selecting Principal Leib’s application for her plan to “empower the (building’s) data team and teachers to analyze data on a regular and sustainable basis”. According to the Committee, Ms. Leib plans to use the \$1000 to help pay for substitutes for a 3 ½ hour kick-off event when her staff will focus on specific pedagogy related to the Common Core and data analysis that will positively influence student achievement. The teachers in this professional learning community will continue to work on this goal by meeting on a monthly basis throughout the year.

Bernadette Boerckel, Director of Curriculum and Instruction in the Warrior Run School District in Turbotville, and Kelly Galbraith, Literacy Consultant and Regional Lead in IU12, 13, & 15 for Teacher Effectiveness, are the two 2014 recipients of the “Best Practices for Professional Learning” Award. As recipients of this Award, both of these educators received free registration to the October 2014 Fall Institute, when they were both recognized for their work which reflects LFPA’s “commitment to supporting and providing exemplary professional learning for educators across the Commonwealth”.

Congratulations to the Mini-Grant and the Best Practices Award recipients! More Mini-Grant and “Best Practices” Award information is available at www.learningforwardpa.org.

Submitted by Angela Ryan
Awards Committee and Board member

Learning Forward PA Schedules Election

An election will be held this spring to fill three openings on the Learning Forward PA Board of Directors. In accordance with the LFPA’s By-Laws, an announcement of these three vacancies was sent in December to the general membership, with a description of LFPA Board member responsibilities, an explanation of the application process, and the application deadline date of January 19. The Nominating Committee will

review all the submitted applications and will present the information to the Board for the determination of a slate of candidates. All LFPA members will then be sent the slate of candidates on which to vote in late March. Voting will be open for one week. The election results will be tabulated, and the results will be communicated to the membership. The newly-elected Board members will be installed at the May 29, 2015 Board meeting.

Share Your Professional Learning Successes with LFPA

Following the lead of Stephanie Hirsh, Executive Director of Learning Forward, our Pennsylvania affiliate is searching for examples from across the Commonwealth of “substantive improvement in the practice and impact of professional learning”. As the U.S. Department of Education and Congress debate the future of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, Hirsh recently pointed out that “many stakeholders lack confidence in professional learning’s impact, and their commitment to invest in it wavers. As a result, we need to offer compelling evidence of professional learning’s importance – and at the same time, expect more from it”. LFPA shares Hirsh’s goal, and we are especially aware of the need to emphasize the importance of effective professional learning and its impact on improving student learning in Pennsylvania as a new governor takes on the challenges of education across the Commonwealth. With that in mind, we are asking all of our LFPA members to consider sending us your example – “stories” - about how effective professional learning has improved educator practice and results for students in your own classroom, building, district, and other education settings. Like Hirsh, we need to share these stories with our colleagues, as well as “local, state, and federal decision makers, educators, and parents”. LFPA plans to highlight these successes in our newsletters, as well as our website, so please share your professional learning success stories – including the *goals, processes, and measures of success* – by sending us your success story. By sharing these example/stories, our hope is to “inspire, motivate, and inform others” of the impact of highly effective professional learning in Pennsylvania, while also elevating effective practice and reporting its impact. For further information or to submit your story, please contact [Claudia Shulman](#). We appreciate your support of this important effort to further our goal of furthering Learning Forward’s Mission “to support, provide, and encourage building the capacity of leaders to establish and sustain highly effective professional learning”.

Your Learning Forward PA Board: 2014-2015

Stefan Biancaniello, Carla Claycomb, Linda Delvernois, Tracy Fasick, Kathy Gibson, Peter Grande, Frances Miller, Ryan Monaghan, Angela Ryan, Donna Spangler

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SAVE THE DATE

October 22, 2015

Learning Forward PA Annual Institute

Key Facilitator: Dr. Bill Daggett

Founder & Chairman

International Center Leadership in Education

***More information about the Institute will be available later this spring. Registration begins July 1.**