SEVEN STANDARDS FOR PROFESSIONAL LEARNING
LEARNING FORWARD PA

LEARNING FORWARD PA
VOLUME 7, ISSUE 2

WINTER 2013-14
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Learning Designs: One of the Seven Standards for Professional Learning

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The national organization *Learning Forward* recently released its third iteration of Standards for Professional Learning with contributions and reviews from representatives of professional associations and education organizations. These standards are based on best practices research with an emphasis on the importance of educators—individually and collectively—taking an active role in the continuous development of their professional learning to ensure student achievement.

These standards make explicit that the purpose of professional learning is for educators and supportive leadership to develop the knowledge, skills, practices, and dispositions they need to improve student achievement.

There are seven Standards for Professional Learning. This fall newsletter will focus on one of these standards: **Learning Designs.**

Learning Forward defines Learning Designs as "professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and results for all students; and integrates theories, research, and models of human learning to achieve its intended outcomes."

Learning Forward goes on to elaborate "integrating theories, research, and models of human learning into the planning and design of professional learning contributes to its effectiveness. Several factors influence decisions about learning designs, including the goals of the learning, characteristics of the learners, their comfort with the learning process and one another, their familiarity with the content, the magnitude of the expected change, educators' work environment, and resources available to support learning. The design of professional learning affects its quality and effectiveness."

There are three core elements to this standard: apply learning theories, research, and models; select learning designs; and, promote active engagement.

For applying learning theories, research, and models, there are many designs that currently exist to plan and to design professional learning. Professional learning can happen face-to-face, online, or in a hybrid context for individuals, for teams, or for entire district-wide learning. The design might be formal or informal: courses, workshops, live, or technology-based. However, what is clear from the research is that the most effective designs involve modeling, inquiry-based learning, active engagement, feedback, ongoing support, metacognition, and both formative and summative assessments to guide and to support change.

When selecting learning designs, it is important to begin with the outcome which has been identified from the analysis of student and educator needs, and then to provide educators with many opportunities to practice new learning with ongoing support, feedback, and coaching.

What is clear is that whatever learning design is used, it must

support change in knowledge, skills, and practice and support transfer to the classroom.

A third core element is active engagement. With this element, educators are respected as professionals and are given opportunities to collaborate with the content and one another. Educators need to construct personal meaning of their learning through demonstration, inquiry, reflection, co-construction of knowledge, practice with feedback and problem-solving.

Reference
Learning Forward. Retrieved from http://learningforward.org/standards/learning-designs

LFPA Fall Institute: Jay McTighe (A.M. Session)

By Dr. Carla Claycomb

Attendees at Learning Forward PA's annual Fall Institute learned from Jay McTighe about the ongoing implementation of the Common Core State Standards, which have been adopted by the District of Columbia and 46 states, including Pennsylvania. According to McTighe, having a national set of standards such as the Common Core helps educators dedicate resources to one set of good learning materials, and it addresses the current problem that textbook content is largely driven by standards in one or two large states with statewide textbook adoption policies.

Because of such widespread adoption, the Common Core State Standards are impacting teaching and learning across the whole nation. As educators try to understand the implications of the new Standards, some conclude that the Standards change absolutely everything about teaching and learning; others think the Standards require nothing to change. The truth is somewhere in between these two positions; many aspects of the Common Core State Standards are familiar to educators, but teaching to the new standards will require new understandings and new instructional approaches. Standards in the past have led to a "cover-the-waterfront" perspective. CCSS argue for more focus and coherency in the curriculum and less curriculum that is "a mile wide and an inch deep."

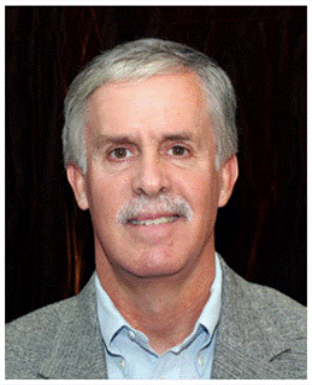
McTighe described for conference attendees the fundamental process of "Backward Design", applied to the Common Core State Standards. He argued that because the Standards reflect new instructional goals and imply new instructional practices, only through careful reading and interpretation can the Standards be translated into comprehensive curriculum that leads to essential learning.

McTighe recommended that educators focus not only on the Standards themselves, but also on the front matter and appendices in the Common Core documents. Implementing the Standards will require more than minor tweaks to current curriculum and instructional practices; information about the intent, structure, and long-term goals of the Standards are included in the Standards documents to help educators understand the larger instructional vision that the Standards imply. Examining these elements of the documents collaboratively within a school or district is an important first step to adopting the Standards.

Educators also should engage in "unpacking" the Standards to translate them into an outcome-focused curriculum. McTighe suggested to conference attendees that they "unpack" the Standards into four broad categories: long-term transfer goals (those knowledge, skills and understandings we want students to have in the long run); overarching understandings (what students need in order to transfer learning to new situations); overarching essential questions (designed to engage students in making meaning and deepening understanding from learning); and recurring cornerstone tasks (curriculum-embedded tasks that recur across grades and progress from simple to complex). Developing an understanding of the Standards in relation to these four categories is an important part of building a blueprint for learning to direct more specific curriculum mapping.

Only after educators have studied the intent, structure, and long-term goals of the Standards and "unpacked" them into broad categories should the practice of curriculum mapping begin. McTighe points out that the best curricula are mapped backwards from a detailed understanding of desired outcomes with the main goal of independent transfer. Consequently, the questions that curriculum writers should grapple with are not what to teach and how to teach it; rather, curriculum writers should focus on what students should be able to do with key content after having learned it.

McTighe also recommended that educators examine appendices in the Standards documents that contain examples of tasks and scored work that students should be able to demonstrate at each grade level, as well as the types of performance tasks that provide evidence of grade-level mastery. Analyzing these documents gives educators key information they need to link curriculum to the content and rigor envisioned by the Common Core.



Dr. Jay McTighe, Keynote Speaker

McTighe not only provided Institute attendees with a primer on backward mapping, but demonstrated how important backward mapping is to effective implementation of the Common Core. Fortunately, the Common Core documents provide important information about the intent and long-term goals of the Standards that can help define this important work.

LFPA Fall Institute: Panel Discussion

by Dr. Ryan Monaghan

The new Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) Teacher Effectiveness Evaluation Tool was the hot topic for discussion at the recent Fall Institute. Panelists who participated in the session were: Angela Kirby-Wehr (PATTAN), Susan Lloyd (pilot principal), Kristen Lewald (PVAAS), Carla Claycomb (PSEA), and Vincent Hall (teacher). Cathy Groller, Superintendent of Milton Area School District moderated the discussion among the diverse group of panelists. While perspectives differed in how the new tool is being implemented, teacher learning for the purpose of increased student achievement was a common priority across participants.

Several points about certification and specialists were clarified for all participants. For example, many districts use the term "specialists" to describe Special Area subjects such as art, music, Physical Education; however, for the purpose of teacher evaluation they do not fall in the specialist category as defined by PDE. LEAs will need to identify teachers who fall into the role of instructional specialists: ESL, special education, gifted, speech, librarian, and early intervention. Modified draft rubrics for specialists are located on the PDE SAS Portal. Districts are encouraged to have conversations about service delivery with staff in order to ensure students are receiving effective instruction.

As we continue with the implementation, the need to focus on professional development at all levels will be a priority if the tool is to be fully utilized. According to PDE representatives, state policy often gets misinterpreted at the local level, so time spent learning the tool and how to better coordinate instruction for students will be essential. According to PSEA representative, Carla Claycomb, there are still many teachers in the state who are unaware of the new evaluation tool that will be utilized this year. At the teacher and principal levels, it is clear that much work needs to be done in learning about the tool, understanding the role of specialists, and how to utilize the process for professional learning.

The Pennsylvania Department of Education has been working since 2010 to develop an educator effectiveness model. The first set of systems for classroom teachers was implemented on July 1, 2013.

To find out more: Educator Effectiveness Project

URL: http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/educator_effectiveness_project/20903

Learning Forward PA Fall Institute: Jay McTighe (P.M. Session)

by Dr. Pete Grande

The goals for the afternoon presentation by Jay McTighe included:

- Providing a blueprint for districts
- Unpacking Common Core Standards to get at overarching understandings
- Using cornerstone tasks

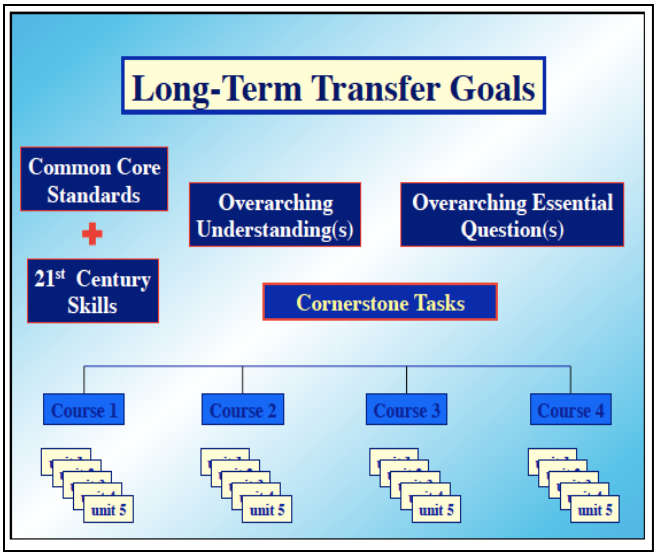
Blueprints for Districts

Jay suggests this blueprint for districts (see graphic on the right) to develop a macro-district view of the curriculum.

- Begin with long-term transfer goals identified by examining CCSS and 21st Century Skills.
- Use these to develop a set of Overarching Understandings and Overarching Essential Questions.
- Anchor these with a set of cornerstone tasks that build across the grades toward the long term transfer goals. These tasks inform the work of individual courses.

The Next Generation Science standards have identified *8 Practices for K-12 Science Classrooms*. These are the types of long-term transfer goals districts should endeavor to discuss and agree on to guide curriculum development.

This framework supports the concept of teaching for greater depth as students spiral through the curriculum.



Graphic 1.1 © Jay McTighe, 2013

LFPA Fall Institute: Jay McTighe (P.M. Session) *[continued]*

by Dr. Pete Grande

Here is an example of a Mathematical Big Idea/ Essential Understanding:
—Mathematicians create models to interpret and predict the behavior of real world phenomena.
—Mathematical models have limits and sometimes they distort or misrepresent.

Jay told a story of a 3rd grade class where students were taught how to measure their physical growth. They were taught how to do it themselves on a monthly basis and keep track of the results. Students learned fractions, tracking numbers and graphing. In May the teachers asked them to create a representation that would explain to second graders how they might grow in third grade. As a second task they were asked to project their heights to 4th, 5th, 6th and 7th grades. Then the students were asked to explain why most 7th graders were not seven feet tall as their projections indicated. Finally, they were asked to write a letter to the principal on why all third grade desks should not be the same size.

To create appropriate tasks like this requires teachers to have in-depth content knowledge and a macro sense of where students are expected to go. A small number of long -term transfer goals enables this process.

After a short break, Jay switched gears to discuss "The Inside Out" method to unpack the standards which invites teachers to identify the *nouns*—concepts from which you can derive understandings, *verbs*—which can be used to create assessments at that level of difficulty, and, finally, the *adjectives* provide insight into what descriptors should be part of the rubric. This method works best with the broader Anchor Standards. In the ELA example below, the green are the verbs, red represents the nouns, and blue, the adjectives.

Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

Jay concluded by detailing his concept of "Cornerstone" tasks. Imagine a student's dropbox with a digital portfolio. These cornerstone tasks are the types of products students would place in their digital dropbox.

Cornerstone tasks:

- Anchor the curriculum around important, recurring tasks.
- Require understanding and transfer of learning.
- Provide evidence of authentic accomplishments ("doing the subject" and "playing the game").

McTighe touted the Learning Design Collaborative as an excellent resource for teachers and districts. LDC provides teachers and curriculum directors with Common Core thinking level task templates. These templates provide a variety of scaffolds that support both the teacher's and students' work.

Jay concluded his presentation by describing a process districts could use to promote change:
1. Share a vision with graphic and examples.
2. Take the long-term view: Think big/Start small.
3. Go for an early win: Ask yourself, "With what teachers and subjects will we start this process to maximize chances of success?"

LFPA Fall Institute: : Joellen Killion (P.M. Session)

By Dr. Fran Miller

At Learning Forward PA's Annual Fall Institute, Joellen Killion presented a half-day session entitled, "Learning Communities and Standards Cubed." This Senior Advisor for Learning Forward began the session by explaining how the chaos in education we are presently feeling is temporary and is due to the passion held by all stakeholders' striving to achieve what is best for students.

In order to define what is best for students, we presently have three sets of standards: student standards, professional educator standards, and professional learning standards.
Joellen explained to the participants that Learning Forward's Standards for Professional Learning explicitly state that the purpose of professional learning is to develop educators' knowledge, skills, practices, and dispositions in order to influence students so they can perform and achieve at high levels, thus the stem of each standard reads…"Professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and results for all students…"

Joellen also explained that the Standards for professional learning guide educators when they are designing, implementing and evaluating their professional learning. When high quality standards-based learning is in place, a cycle of improvement occurs that is linked to student results. The changes in student results are evident when educators' knowledge, skills and dispositions are changed. Their every day practices shift, which causes the changes in student results. As Joellen guided participants through this thought process through interactive questions and discussions, she reminded us to make sure our student standards, professional educator standards and Standards for Professional Learning are in alignment.

[Article continues on page 5.]

Dr. Joellen Killion, Featured Speaker

Learning Forward PA Fall Institute: Joellen Killion (P.M. Session) *[continued]*

By Dr. Fran Miller

She then posed the questions, "What is the core purpose of a professional learning community?" and "What are the critical attributes of a professional learning community?" After the audience discussed the answers and came up with its own list, the group then examined Learning Forward's Standard for Professional Learning Communities:

> *Professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and results for all students occurs within learning communities committed to continuous improvement, collective responsibility, and goal alignment.*

When participants unpacked this standard with Joellen, they learned that the core components of this standard translated to actions where the team members' learning is constant, that all team members are to step in and contribute in order to break down the barriers to do what needs to be done, and all team members are to share in aligning and accomplishing all goals.

The cycle that Joellen shared for a Professional Learning Community to be effective was as follows: analyze data; define professional learning goals; engage in professional learning; provide coaching and other support; assess and evaluate effectiveness of professional learning; inform ongoing improvements; tap external expertise when needed; and, analyze data.

As Joellen shared a video of a professional learning community in action, it was discovered by the participants that the rest of the Standards for Professional Learning could not be ignored when working in a Professional Learning Community. In fact, the Leadership, Resources, Data, Learning Designs, Implementation, and Outcomes standards are designed to support one another. In the most optimal of conditions, each needs the other to be effective.

Participants left this session with much to ponder. The video of teachers from Stults Road Elementary was impressive. (Keep your eyes on Learning Forward PA's website. We hope to download that video on our Learning Communities page soon!)

The Stults teachers and staff were adept at conversing about data and forming a collective vision as to what needed to be done. Joellen helped the audience learn exactly what this standard should look like and sound like when it is alive and well. Learning Forward PA wants to hear from you if you have a Learning Community functioning in this manner. Let us know by contacting us through our website.

You can access the professional development video called Stults Road Elementary: PD in Action at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aM4ExyARNNQ

Learning Forward Article Resources

JSD
Note this article is from this issue (August 2011):

The starting point for professional learning is in schools and classrooms
By Ann Lieberman and Lynne Miller (Available to the public)

Through learning communities, educators build the capacity and collective will to enhance the learning and achievement of all students.

URL—http://learningforward.org/docs/august-2011/lieberman324.pdf?sfvrsn=2

JSD
Note this article is from this issue (October 2011):

How adults learn forms the foundation of the Learning Designs standard

By Eleanor Drago-Severson (Available to the public)

Understanding how adults learn is an essential component for shaping professional learning initiatives.

URL—http://www.learningforward.org/docs/october-2011/drago-severson325.pdf?sfvrsn=2

JSD
Note these articles are from this issue (December 2011):

The elements of effective teaching: Professional learning moves vision, framework, and performance standards into action.
By Joellen Killion and Stephanie Hirsh (Available to the public)

For teachers in classrooms, effective professional learning is the single most powerful pathway to promote continuous improvement in teaching.
URL—http://learningforward.org/docs/jsd-december-2011/killion326.pdf?sfvrsn=2

What makes a good teacher? The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation digs for answers with its Measures of Effective Teaching project.

Vicki Phillips from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation talks with Learning Forward about the foundation's investment in effective teaching and the role of professional learning.

URL—http://learningforward.org/docs/jsd-december-2011/phillipsqa326.pdf?sfvrsn=2

The view from the seats: Student input provides a clearer picture of what works in schools.
By Tracy Crow (Available to the public)

URL—http://learningforward.org/docs/jsd-december-2011/crow326.pdf?sfvrsn=2

Universal Design for Learning: Teaching All Students in the 21st Century

by Matt Bergman

Introduction
Classrooms in the 21st Century are more diverse than ever. Our classrooms contain a variety of learning difficulties, abilities, styles, cultural backgrounds, and interests. In fact, research from the Center for Applied Special Technology (CAST) has found that the way we learn is as different as our DNA. With the challenges of standardized testing and meeting Common Core Standards, how do educators meet the needs of all learners in their classroom? Many states, like Maryland, have made the concept of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) a statewide initiative. With so much "buzz" about this particular educational concept, what is UDL?

Universal Design
The original term, *Universal Design*, was an architectural concept coined by the late architect and North Carolina State University professor, Ron Mace. Universal Design is all about creating architectural solutions that are designed to accommodate everyone from the beginning, not when a potential barrier occurs. Examples of Universally Designed products are all around us. Ramps are designed for individuals using wheelchairs, pushing strollers, or wanting to avoid steps.

Eventually the term progressed into creating Universally Designed products, such as Closed Captioning. This technology was originally designed for individuals who suffer from hearing loss; however, other audiences and users began to see the benefits of the technology as well, such as people who are working out at the gym or spouses who want to watch television and not disturb their spouses.

What is Universal Design for Learning?
The idea of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) was developed by David Rose and CAST to create an instructional model, a curriculum where all students had "access" to learning. UDL's three principles focus on eliminating barriers to learning through providing students with:

- Multiple Means of Representation
- Multiple Means of Action and Expression
- Multiple Means of Engagement

By adapting and structuring our curriculum to accommodate for these learner differences from the beginning, we can design a curriculum that creates access for all students. The term curriculum refers to the goals, methods, materials, and assessments that we use to instruct students.

Some learner differences are variable based on age. For example, when I was a sixth grade teacher, we noticed a big difference in student maturity and performance from the beginning to the end of the year. These items were "predictable." What if we thought about these differences and had supports and strategies already built into the curriculum? This would eliminate the need to constantly adapt the curriculum because supports were already in place from the beginning and not when they happened.

A poor example of this occurred in 2003, when I was a rookie teacher in a rural school district in south-central Pennsylvania. A group of Russian immigrants moved to the area who did not know how to read or write the English language. As a computer teacher, I was asked to have my new seventh and eighth grade students type English words from a picture book into a Microsoft Word document. Sadly, I cannot say that my students learned anything. We never considered this scenario and felt overwhelmed to adapt "on the fly" to our students' needs. If our curriculum had been Universally Designed, we may have had plans in place for ESL students.

Multiple Means of Representation
The principle Multiple Means of Representation accommodates the fact that students differ in how they perceive information and interpret concepts. Learning disabilities or learning styles may prevent students from fully accessing the curriculum. For example, a student with hearing difficulties may perceive a PowerPoint presentation differently compared to a student who is a kinesthetic learner. How do you accommodate for these differences?

Multiple Means of Action and Expression
Multiple Means of Action and Expression can be described as the opportunity for students to "show what they know," through physical action, writing assignments, presentations, projects, or other means to express their knowledge to appropriately meet learning goals.

In the era of standardized testing, we don't always have this option; however, we may have the ability to provide options on how students express their understanding during the school year. This often solidifies understanding and helps students perform better on standardized tests.

For example, a science teacher that I know gives students the option to create a comic strip describing a complex scientific concept. It gives the students a non-traditional way of expressing what they know in a way that they understand. Some students would rather write a paragraph reflecting on the process, while others love the visual option! Many of this teacher's students actually perform better on tests with this option because they gain a better understanding of difficult content.

Multiple Means of Engagement
Multiple Means of Engagement can be one of the most challenging UDL principles because what motivates one student may not motivate another. Engaging students means understanding how the student best learns content and design options to recruit their interests and sustain effort. Many of us think that technology works for all students, but this isn't always true. I recently met a Family Consumer Science teacher who found that her students came to her class wanting a break from technology. In fact, they begged her for "low-tech" options like paper, pencil, and knitting.

Engaging students also means providing students with choices. For instance, a teacher in a school district that I visited in Indiana uses a Tic Tac Toe board for her students to complete major projects. She includes a series of nine components she would like to see included in a project. Students pick any three items of their choice in a row (diagonally, vertically, or horizontally).

Conclusion
In the era of standardized testing and the Common Core Standards, it is important that school districts design a curriculum for all students to access learning. When a curriculum is initially designed to accommodate for all learning styles, more students have access to the curriculum and teachers can spend less time on making modifications and more time on teaching. UDL takes into consideration learner differences and makes learning possible to all students.

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Center for Applied Special Technology (CAST). (2011). Retrieved from www.cast.org

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Designing Learning for Teachers : A Case Study Model

by Dr. Fran Miller

Essential Questions
What would happen if each component of the learning designs standard was deliberately and practically applied within a school setting? What would it look like and feel like? How would teachers respond? Would there really be an impact on student achievement?

A small school improvement team provides a comprehensive framework, created by Steve Olsen, to improve instruction and classroom management in schools. This is a case study of how the learning design has influenced student achievement significantly.

Prior to working in each setting, the team leader meets with the administration to determine the school's needs, discuss mutual expectations, and make recommendations. This essentially, is where the first coaching session begins. This collaborative planning provides effective feedback to the leader. That information facilitates the future of the professional learning sessions.

After establishing a collegial relationship with the administration, the team meets with the faculty for the first professional learning session. All members of the staff, including the administrators, begin by learning the same instructional philosophy and language. This is done in a small group setting during a half-day session. The strategies that are modeled are research-based.

Trainings are active. Both the strategy and the theory behind the strategy are taught. Research on professional learning that impacts student achievement informs the team that teachers need to explore the rationale for the new skills and/or strategies they are learning. They need to know the answer to the question, "Why should I use this strategy?" along with, "How should I use this strategy?" in order to make the decision to adapt their teaching and actually use the new strategy.

Strategies that are taught are modeled throughout the training and teachers are continually asked if they think the strategies are doable, practical and immediately transferrable. Teachers can begin using them in their classrooms the next day! Since research indicates that the "transfer of training is the critical point at which staff development impacts on student achievement" (Joyce and Showers, 2003) the team plans visits to schools in two-day increments. At the end of the first half-day of training, teachers complete a survey indicating their preference regarding that transfer of training. Teachers can choose whether or not they want a consultant to coach them while teaching or they can have a consultant model the strategies in their classrooms. Teachers can opt to have their own administrator visit them to provide feedback. Some teachers ask for the consultant to observe him or her using the strategies and provide feedback after the observation. The team has modeled lessons while the grade level team has observed the consultant. Then, that grade level team meets after the observation to discuss the lesson and participate in further coaching. the lesson and participate in further coaching.

Regardless, after looking at the teachers' preferences, the next morning the team visits each teacher to determine a schedule and the targeted outcomes for each individual. Most importantly, a relationship is formed. Teachers are coached. Team teaching occurs and learning is shared. Observations occur and everyone learns from each other. The improvement team models strategies. The teachers have fun and laugh. Discussions occur. Resources are shared. They do a lot of reflecting. The process, even though it is enjoyable, carries a sense of gravity. After all… the teams *are* working in schools labeled "in need of improvement" by their state department of education. At the end of the day, they meet with the administrator and plan the next visit.

The process of teaching this framework could take one, two, or three years should a system commit to something that becomes sustainable. Since a school system falls into the "needs improvement" range over time it will take more than one year to appoint the proper supports that system needs. The team has watched systems grow and emerge stronger than before in order to sustain the future because they took their time implementing the strategies, using the job-embedded coaching and practicing several forms of professional learning configurations in order to improve instruction.

While the consultants are gone, teachers have the option and the privilege of visiting a professional website that has courses they can visit that review the content learned during the professional learning sessions. They can leave comments on the website where the trainers who visited their schools can answer their questions. Teachers within their school can also leave comments and chat with each other should they choose to do so. Also included on this website are videos of classroom teachers, experts in the field, blogs about the Common Core and teaching strategies, as well as ways to connect with teachers around the nation virtually. This online learning design allows the classroom teachers at each site to add another resource to their professional learning communities.

Approximately two to four weeks later, the team returns to the school. Depending on the strategy implemented in the prior visit, consultants either visit grade level teams to discuss their progress thus far and then teach a new strategy within that configuration, or they use the half-day session format to teach the new content followed by the full day format to coach or collaborate in order to meet the teachers' needs. It is recognized that teachers are creative and bright individuals. Teacher work hard to implement the new strategies and make them work for their students; the consultants make certain to honor teachers' time by bringing something new that they can use immediately.

The results in using this learning design have been extremely successful. Achievement has truly been affected. After one year of work in the following schools this is what has happened: at Newark Vocational High

[Article continues on page 8.]

Designing Learning for Teachers with Benefits for All *[continued]*

by Dr. Fran Miller

School, located in Newark, NJ, students in the Hispanic subgroup who were administered the High School Proficiency Assessment experienced a 10% increase in Language Arts/Literacy, and an 11% increase on the Math Assessment. Schools in the state of Hawaii experienced an 8% gain in reading scores. In Louisiana, at the St. John's Parish School, in Grade 8, an 18% improvement was experienced in Math, while a 27% improvement was experienced in Reading. Watson Elementary School in Fairmont, West Virginia, was labeled a "Focus School." This label meant that there were large achievement gaps between student subgroups on the state assessment. In one year's time, Watson skipped the next label ("Transition School") and proceeded straight to the label of "Success School," meeting all academic goals in math and language arts, and closing the gaps between student groups.

When the learning design standard is followed with integrity, great things can be accomplished. Teachers are energized, cultures within a system can change, and student achievement can be influenced…in a significant manner!

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A Learning Design, Just for You!

by Dr. Fran Miller

Learning Forward PA has a new, improved, "learning design" just for you. Board members Donna Spangler and Fran Miller worked together this past summer to revise the Learning Forward PA website in order to provide those who access the site with resources aligned to Learning Forward's Standards for Professional Learning. The two board members wanted to develop a website that was completely devoted to demonstrating what the Standards could look like in practice or how one could breathe life into the Standards for Professional Learning. Learning Forward PA hopes you find the website to be an electronic learning design for stakeholders to access resources to support one's learning.

The website can be accessed at www.learningforwardpa.org Most of the content is categorized according to the Standards for Professional Learning. The separate tabs or pages for each of the Standards contain links to videos, documents and web resources that breathe life into that standard. It is suggested that professional learning communities use the videos and journal articles as a springboard for discussion. Administrators, instructional coaches, or teachers can click on the links and share the information with colleagues in order for this electronic Learning Design to reach its maximum potential … or click on the Outcomes tab and share your story. Then, a conversation can commence and the vision of this standard can be truly realized!

Aside from the information supporting each Standard, other features include access to all newsletters- past and current, easy enrollment regarding Learning Forward PA membership, and up-to-date information concerning the mini grant award and upcoming professional learning opportunities. Feel free to visit and share Learning Forward PA's website with a colleague. Remind them that membership is free, and now that we have a quick membership enrollment form, there's no excuse not to join! Learning Forward PA hopes you find this new Learning Design a valuable resource that you access often.

A Three-Minute Video on Professional Learning and Teacher Leadership

by AITSL

Go to http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e6ZifjWftc8&feature=BFa&list=PL1AA7CB9102F831A0 to see a three-minute animation to learn about what makes good teachers, school leaders, and education systems. The answer? There must be opportunities and a commitment to learning that occurs in all parts of the system. This includes an intentional learning design with: diverse forms of support, learning communities, practitioner-based research and action, experiential events, reflection, courses, peer feedback, shadowing, coaching, and mentoring.

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learningforward PA

Our Vision

Every educator engages in effective professional learning every day so every student achieves.

Our Mission

Learning Forward PA Advances educator effectiveness and student results through standards-based professional learning.

Learning Forward PA believes:

- Effective professional learning is fundamental to student learning.
- All educators have an obligation to improve their practice.
- Students achieve when educators assume collective responsibility for student learning.
- Sustainable learning cultures require skillful leadership.
- Improving student learning and professional practice requires ongoing systemic and organizational change.

The MetLife Survey of The American Teacher

Have you read the most recent "MetLife Survey of The American Teacher: Challenges for School Leadership?"

This type of survey has been conducted annually since 1984 by Harris Interactive, and it shares the voices of teachers and others close to the classroom with educators, policy makers, and the public.

This 132-page survey examines the views of teachers and principals on the responsibilities and challenges facing school leaders, including the changing roles of principals and teachers, budget and resources, professional satisfaction, and implementation of the Common Core Standards. You can access the most recent MetLife survey at https://www.metlife.com/assets/cao/foundation/MetLife-Teacher-Survey-2012.pdf

Some of the major findings of this survey included:

- Nine out of ten principals take responsibility for leadership of their schools.
- The job of the principal is becoming more complex and stressful.
- Teachers take leadership roles in schools and think principals are doing a good job.
- The biggest challenge teachers face are beyond what schools alone to address.
- Principals and teachers have similar views on academic challenges, but diverge somewhat on the priorities for leadership.
- Teacher satisfaction continues to decline.
- Challenges cited by educators are greater in high-needs schools.
- Educators are confident about implementing the Common Core, less so about its potential for increasing student achievement.

Reference

The MetLife Survey of the American Teacher. (URL listed above.)

"Nine in 10 (89%) principals say that ultimately a principal should be held accountable for everything that happens to the children in a school; 74% of teachers agree in 2012, compared with 60% in 1989" (p. 5).

MetLife Survey of The American Teacher