

KS Direct Connection

LEARNING FORWARD KANSAS

AUGUST 2011

AN AFFILIATE OF



*There is one thing that gives radiance to everything.*

*It is the idea of something around the corner.*

*-- GK Chesterton*

## Learning Forward Updates Standards for Professional Learning

### From the desk at Learning Forward...

Learning Forward recently released the newly revised Standards for Professional Learning, the third iteration of standards outlining the characteristics of professional learning that lead to effective teaching practices, supportive leadership, and improved student results.

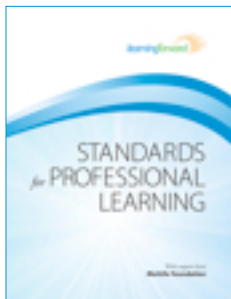
The standards were released at Learning Forward's Summer Conference in Indianapolis, IN.

Last revised in 2001, the new standards will

serve as a guide for teaching practice for the nearly 13,000 members of Learning Forward, formerly known as National Staff Development Council. The existing standards have been adapted or adopted by 35 states to guide policy and practice in professional development. The standards revision initiative was made possible with support from MetLife Foundation.

"These standards call for a new form of educator learning," said Joellen Killion, deputy executive director of Learning Forward and project director of the standards revision. "Naming this version Standards for Professional Learning signals the importance of educators

taking an active role in their continuous improvement. By making learning the focus, those who are responsible for *continued on page 2*



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### A *LEARNING* School In *ACTION*

April 10-11, 2012

Airport Hilton

Wichita, KS



Leadership Conference

Share your knowledge and experience through a breakout session. Submit a call for proposal form by September 30. See the form on page 9 or online at [www.learningforwardkansas.org](http://www.learningforwardkansas.org)

## Revised Standards Call for New Form of Educator Learning

*continued from page 1*

professional learning will concentrate their efforts on ensuring that learning for educators leads to learning for students."

As with earlier versions of the standards, Learning Forward invited representatives from leading education organizations and associations to contribute to the development of the standards. Together, these representatives reviewed the available research and literature to contribute to the standards revision on behalf of their constituencies, which include teachers, principals, superintendents, and local and state school board members.

"We now call on policy-making authorities at all levels of government to adopt the standards. Increasing the effectiveness of professional learning is the leverage point with the greatest potential for strengthening and refining the day-to-day performance of educators," said Stephanie Hirsh, executive director of Learning Forward. "Decision-makers can demonstrate their commitment to ensuring effective professional learning by taking this step and, more importantly, holding education systems accountable for meeting the standards," said Hirsh.

Learn more about the new standards at <http://www.learningforward.org/standards/index.cfm>, which includes video, the seven standards statements with explanations, information about ordering a hard copy of the standards, and much more. **DC**

## Calendar



## Countdown

### KSDC Board Meetings

November 1, 2011

4:00-6:00 p.m.

Hyatt

Wichita, KS

April 10, 2012

4:00-6:00 p.m.

Wichita Airport Hilton

Wichita, KS

### Capture the Magic

Learning Forward

Annual Conference

December 3-7, 2011

Anaheim, CA

Register at

[www.learningforward.org](http://www.learningforward.org)

Registration before

October 15 - \$50.00 discount

### LF KS Awards

Read more about awards on

page 6. Apply by

January 15.

### \*NEW LF KS AWARD\*

LF KS announces the "Cycle of Continuous Improvement" Award. Look for details in the October issue and on the website.

### A LEARNING School In ACTION

Learning Forward Kansas

Annual Conference

April 10-11, 2012

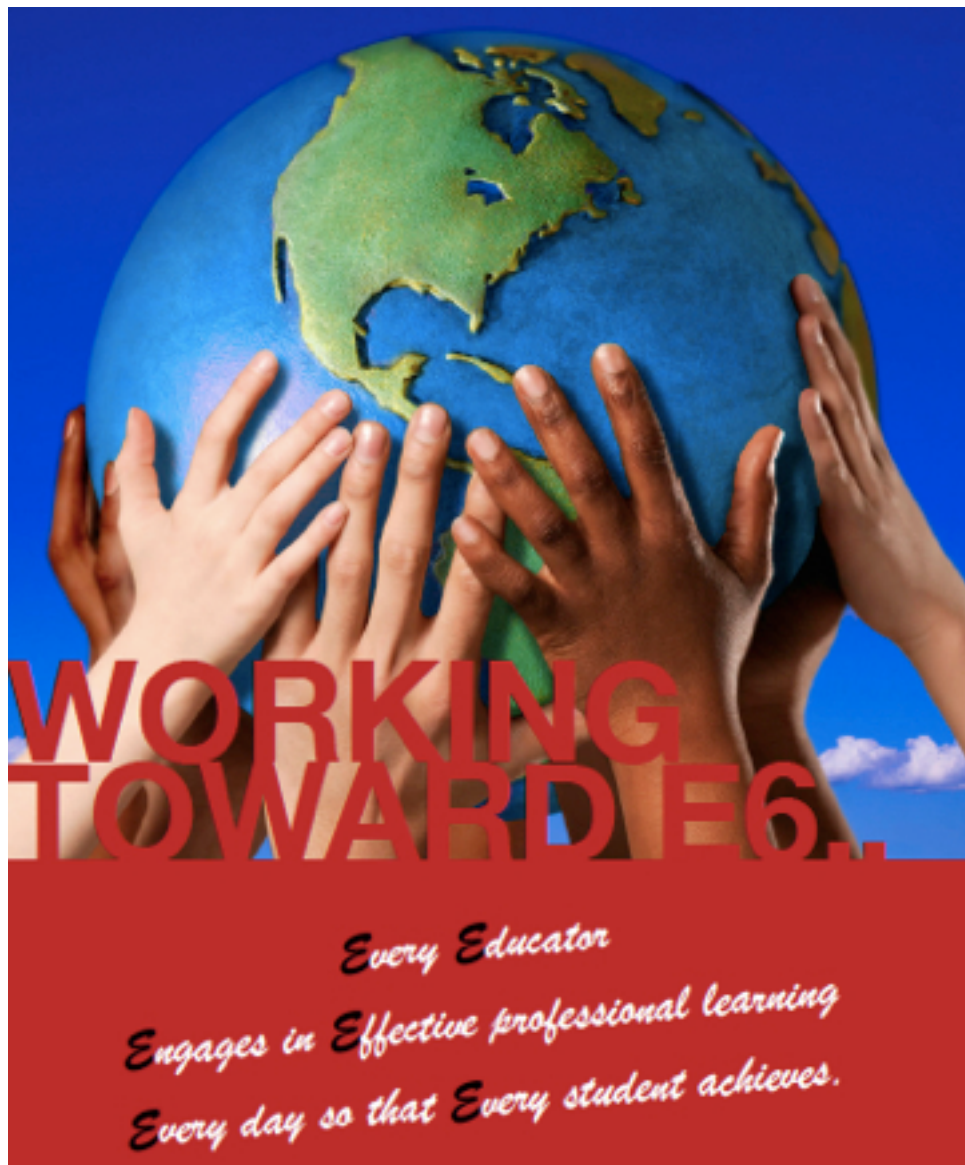
Wichita Airport Hilton

Wichita, KS

### KSDC Board Advance

June 6-7, 2012

Hesston, KS



## President's Column

# LF KS Looks Forward to a Learning Year

By Craig Correll  
LF KS President

I would like to welcome everyone back to a new school year! It is a privilege to serve as President of Learning Forward Kansas (formerly Kansas Staff Development Council) this year. Our mission is to promote high standards in student achievement by advocating, modeling, and providing resources for quality professional learning. The strength of the organization is in the network of our membership.

LF KS membership includes: teachers, instructional coaches, school support staff, administrators, university professors, parent educators, education service center personnel, KSDE staff, KNEA staff and education consultants. Each individual brings a unique perspective and their own personal experience. LF KS collaborates with other associations and is actively involved with Kansas Learning Forward Alliance (KLFA).

The Learning Forward Kansas 2011 Spring Leadership Conference theme is *A Learning School in Action* and takes advantage of the connections with both KLFA and Learning Forward. Members of KLFA will help to kick off the event with 21<sup>st</sup> Century skills and practice. Joellen Killion, formerly with Learning Forward, will return for a follow-up session on her book, *Becoming a Learning School*. As always, a variety of breakout sessions will also be offered. Proposals for breakout sessions are still being sought. Please review the proposal form on page 9, and check the LF KS website at <http://www.learningforwardkansas.org> for more information and online application instructions.

Learning Forward's new purpose statement says the organization exists to ensure that "every educator engages in effective professional learning every-day so every student achieves." This can not be achieved without the collaboration of all stakeholders involved. I would like to encourage each of you to become a part of our dynamic organization. Together, we can provide resources and strategies to help all educators plan, implement, and evaluate the learning process. DC



Santee Crowther, LF KS Executive Director, and Craig Correll, LF KS President, display a LF KS banner presented to the organization by the national affiliate.

## What Are the Benefits of Membership in Learning Forward Kansas?

Seems everywhere you turn these days someone is asking you to join or sign up. Join Facebook. Sign up for our online services. Register your name as a member. Learning Forward Kansas is no different. We are adding in our plea to join us, sign up, register your name, and become a member.

However, a membership in Learning Forward Kansas offers more than just a chance to enroll in an organization. A membership with Learning Forward Kansas yields a chance to connect with:

- "Cutting edge" staff development research through Learning Forward and Learning Forward Kansas.
- Annual Leadership Conference, featuring national and state staff development leaders in providing sessions for all members and for all levels of staff development experience.
- Professional networking 24/7 through organization website and social media.
- Skill development seminars presented at regional and state sites.
- Informative organizational online newsletter, published five times each year.
- Opportunities to apply for organizational awards.

Learning Forward Kansas offers a variety of membership levels tailored to needs of districts, buildings, and individuals. In fact, an individual membership costs only \$1.25 per month!

For more information about membership in Learning Forward Kansas or to download a membership application, check the membership section of the organization website at [www.learningforwardkansas.org](http://www.learningforwardkansas.org) DC

# Sailing Into the 21st Century

By Jan Neufeld  
LF KS Past President

Professional development for 21st Century learning will be helping students and educators to support the sail to cyberspace; however just as with any professional learning opportunity, learning colleagues need to first consider the changing tides in our experiences as we work in schools with more and more digital natives. Learning Forward Kansas leaders worked with teams of educators from across our state this summer. The summer happening, called "Partnership

for 21st Century Skills Training," enabled school and district-based teams to examine best practices in project design, assessment and management for 21st Century learning themes. And what about the pay out? With 21st Century skills there should be four support systems in place to enable 21st Century student outcomes: standards and assessment, curriculum, professional development and learning environments.

## Standards

21st century standards include skills as well as content standards. They are fewer and deeper, focused on content



## Curriculum and Instruction

Instruction that works within the context of 21st Century learning includes:

- students at the center of the learning process,
- learning objectives align to standards,
- students working with peers,
- involvement of experts and community members,
- authentic and real world connections,
- varied instructional strategies that support and engage all learners, and
- demonstration of learning through products or performance.

## Professional Development and Learning Environments

21st Century skills initiatives cannot succeed without building educator capacity. What are these critical elements?

1. Ensures educators understand the importance of 21st Century skills and how to integrate them into content standard achievement.
2. Enables ongoing collaboration among educators (PLC).
3. Provides practical models of instruction that show what 21st Century skills looks like in the classroom.
4. Builds community and taps expertise within a school or district through coaching, mentoring, and teacher leaders.
5. Is scalable and sustainable.

## Characteristics of Professional Development that Support 21st Century Skills

These are the attributes that would make 21st Century professional learning experiences successful, cause change in educator behavior and impact student learning.

- Developing a deeper understanding of subject matter can enhance other 21st Century skills: problem solving, critical thinking, etc.
- Identifying students' learning styles and intelligences
- Providing models of real classroom practice through observations
- Taking advantage of rich media examples, digital repositories
- Weaving into everyday fabric: modeling, coaching, collaboration

## Looking for additional research?

### Role of PLCs in Advancing 21st Century Skills

from Chapter 4 in *21st Century Skills*, Solution Tree, 2010 DC

and skills, and observable and measurable. Being purposeful about content standards in combination with higher order thinking skills adds rigor.

## Assessment

Considering assessments, there should be summative opportunities that:

- allow students to construct responses to open-ended items,
  - measure collaboration,
  - incorporate adaptability to novel situations, and
  - are largely performance based.
- Formative opportunities add value to both teaching and learning and make students' thinking visible.



Searching for a way to stay connected with a network of staff developers 24/7?

**Learning Forward Kansas is now on Facebook.**

Find a link on the KSDC website.

[learningforwardkansas.org](http://learningforwardkansas.org)

# Free Google Tools Assist in Evaluating Implementation of School Improvement

By Dr. Gina Marx  
Higher Education Representative

Two schools I worked with last year through the Kansas Learning Network created implementation rubrics with their teachers for each of their school improvement strategies, which proved to be a very effective strategy in itself! These rubrics were the guiding document to help teachers assess where they currently were at in each strategy, and also to help them see what was needed to achieve a deeper level of implementation. Based on Doug Reeves (2011) research, 90% of teachers must be at a high level of implementation for "critical mass" to occur where a strategy truly makes a difference with student improvement. Reeves is quick to point out that it is usually at least a two-year process to achieve critical mass. *An example of an implementation rubric for a school improvement strategy might be as simple as the one printed in the right column, titled "Cooperative Learning Implementation Rubric."*

Others may go deeper by breaking down each rubric by categories such as Professional Development Instruction, Student Work, etc. Still others might create an innovation configuration matrix. Regardless of the instrument, it is important that teacher are involved in the making of the document, and that there exists an easy way to gather the data from the teaching staff at benchmarked times throughout the year. My schools chose to have teachers self-assess on the rubrics at the beginning of the year, again mid-year before winter break, and again in early May. The data collected was analyzed and shared with staff at subsequent professional development sessions, and teachers were able to celebrate their growth.

Obviously, this is only one piece of data, but a powerful one. The principals also used walk through data and data from their coaches to strengthen validity of the teachers' self-assessment data. Google has a free online survey that can be created easily to provide an online survey for teachers to quickly self-assess.

**Here are the steps to make an online survey in Google documents:**

1. Go to [www.google.com](http://www.google.com)
2. Click on "Documents" top left (if not visible - click "more"...).
3. Click "Create New" at top Left.
4. Choose "Forms."
5. Click "Theme" to choose background.
6. Change title of survey.
7. Edit each question by clicking on the picture of the pencil at the right of each question.
8. Add "help text" or directions, if applicable.
9. Choose the type of question you want (multiple choice, text, paragraph, etc.).
10. Click if you want it to be a required question or not.
11. Click "done" when the question construction is complete.
12. Click "+Add Item" top left if you want to add a question in addition to the two spaces for questions provided.
13. Repeat steps 8-11.
14. Top right "more actions" to edit the confirmation message participants view when they submit.
15. Note: You will need to add the numbers if you want questions to be numbered.
16. Send it to yourself first to double check it! Make edits as needed.
17. You can then forward it to your staff!

Give your staff a deadline of say, one week, and you'll want to be sure you make a question where they need to enter their name so you know who took the survey, and who needs additional professional development; however, when sharing data with the staff you would not use individual teacher names! You can access the data by going back to Google Documents, click on File, and then "download as"...and download as an Excel document. Now you can have fun analyzing the data!

*Dr. Gina Marx serves as Assistant Professor in the graduate education department of Newman University. She is an Implementation Coach for the Kansas Learning Network and a Leadership Coach for Coaching For Results, Inc. DC*

## Cooperative Learning Implementation Rubric

### Knowledge Level 1

I have attended professional development and participated in some structures during the PD. I have occasionally tried the strategies with students; not written in lesson planning. I rely on a few basic structures used when extra time is available. My groups are based on individual student personalities or achievement. I primarily use shoulder or face partners in groups of two. I am unsure of the difference between group work and cooperative groups.



### Implementation Level 2

I identify structures in my lesson plans, and use cooperative structures for class building, team building, and teaching content. My students are grouped based on assessment data. Groups are used in my teaching of content at least twice per week. I collect student products and evaluate them to assess my students' learning. My students are able to explain and describe some strategies. I am able to identify the difference between group work and cooperative groups.

### Application Level 3

I use Class Building one time per week and Team Building two times per week. I am aware of multiple structures and am able to explain in which context structures should be used and why. I identify structures in my lesson plans. Structures are used for reinforcing content in addition to Team and Class building. I use structures to elevate engagement and student attention during 20 minute intervals. Student groups are formed based on formative or state assessment data, as well as gender and ethnicity. Groupings are reassessed with new data every 6-9 weeks. My students know the structures and can facilitate the structures with little guidance. I can model for other teachers.

# Learning Forward Kansas Promotes Excellence in Professional Development

By Sheri Thomas  
Awards Team Co-Chair & President Elect

## Show Your District Pride!

The Learning Forward Kansas (LF KS) Awards Program recognizes excellence in staff development at several levels annually. The program is built on three major elements:

- The program must reflect knowledge, application, and impact.
- Awards will be presented at the individual, building, and district levels, and
- Awards will be decided on verifiable evidence.

Awards for the 2011-2012 year include:

- Systemic Learning Award- District Level
- Professional Learning Community Award- Building Level
- Impact Award- Individual Level
- Staff Developer of the Year- Individual Level
- 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills Professional Learning-building/district level
- Classified Personnel Staff Development Award-building/district level

The following information explains each award in more detail.

### Systemic Learning Award:

The Systemic Learning Award is a school district level award. All Kansas school districts are eligible to apply for the award, which recognizes district level commitment to growth in professional learning and support for change. Specific criteria for growth include the time, money, management, materials, and authority allocated to the adult learning effort in the district to foster improved student learning. Up to two districts will be awarded annually.

### Professional Learning Community Award:

The PLC Award is a building level award. All schools in Kansas are eligible to

apply. The building must provide evidence of excellence in professional development by measuring progress on a Professional Learning Community (Building) Rubric, which is based on the Learning Forward Standards and includes the standards most often aligned to school improvement efforts. The artifacts provided must illustrate the



level of performance on the rubric. Up to two buildings will be awarded annually.

### Impact Award:

The Impact Award recognizes individual educators who take learning beyond knowledge and application and provide verifiable evidence of improved student learning as a result of professional learning for the educator. The number of Impact Awards is not limited and any educator may apply.

### Staff Developer of the Year Award:

LF KS helps districts recognize the staff developer who has had the most direct impact in a school district. Districts will be encouraged to nominate one individual (either an internal or an external source) who has had the most impact

on improving student performance through professional learning in their schools.

### 21st Century Skills

#### Professional Learning Award:

LF KS wants to recognize those who effectively implement 21st Century Skills in their professional learning program. This award could be for a building or district. The application questions are based on the Learning Forward Standards for Professional Learning. Applicants are also asked to submit technology-based evidence (such as a video, podcast, PowerPoint, multimedia

presentation, etc.) that showcases 21st Century Skills professional learning. Up to two building/districts will be recognized for this award.

#### Classified Professional Development Award:

The Classified Personnel Professional Development Award recognizes an individual or

building/district that has made a significant commitment toward the staff development of classified staff members to improve student achievement.

Check the Learning Forward Kansas website, [www.learningforwardkansas.org](http://www.learningforwardkansas.org) for more information about the benefits of each award and application guidelines. Deadline for application is January 15 with winners being announced at the LF KS Leadership Conference.

For more information, contact the LF KS Awards Co-Chair:

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KSDC is an affiliate member of Learning Forward

[www.learningforward.org](http://www.learningforward.org)

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

## Direct from the Learning Forward Affiliate Meeting

### My Adventure -

# Setting the Pace for Affiliate Leadership

By Sheri Thomas  
LF KS President Elect

As a new executive board member of Learning Forward Kansas, I literally was "off to the races" while attending the Affiliate Leaders Meeting July 15-17 in Indianapolis, IN. My first "pit stop" was to attend the Affiliate Basics session to address the "nuts and bolts" questions about leadership, Constitutions, strategic planning as well as ideas for membership and marketing. I was proud to find that Learning Forward Kansas has had a strong commitment to leadership and policy, and send congrats to past board members for maintaining a high level of planning and decision making that we benefit from today. This also emphasized to me, as a new executive board member, how important it is to attend these meetings to keep current so I can support our local affiliate plan.

#### The Next Lap

The next "lap," was to attend the Affiliate Meeting where representatives from several states gathered to listen to Stephanie Hirsh, Executive Director of Learning Forward, discuss the mission and belief statements of the national association. She introduced the members of the Learning Forward staff and their job in providing assistance to affiliates. She also discussed how to assist affiliates with efforts in advancing Learning Forward's purpose with five priorities:

- 1) Affect policy change;
- 2) Examine the Evidence;
- 3) Narrow the Achievement Gap;
- 4) Develop school leaders; and
- 5) Engage thought leaders.

It was during this "lap" that I was able to get the sense of the states' common purpose we all hold in promoting professional learning. This was completed by first "qualification" round or day one. I was able to reinforce my own knowledge, put names and faces together, network with other state representatives and start thinking about how this message impacts Learning Forward Kansas with our own strategic plan.



Sandee Crowther, Executive Director of Learning Forward Kansas, greets members of the Learning Forward Board of Directors during the 2011 affiliate leaders meeting.

#### The Fast Track

Day two: The "fast track!" We received the revised Learning Forward *Standards for Professional Learning*. Joellen Killion, Deputy Executive Director, spent the day with us explaining the rationale for why the new standards were needed. We gained a basic understanding of the standards and how they are structured. This impacted our local conversation about our role in disseminating these revised standards. Our "pit stop" was to consider this in our own action plan.

#### The Finish Line

Day three: Looking ahead to the "Finish Line!" We were able as a local team to have time to discuss possible strategic actions for our affiliate work, spend time in round table discussions and celebrate our progress on Learning Forward priorities. Did you know that *The Journal of the National Staff Development Council* (JSD) has learning guides that support

the content of each issue? It provides support for each issue with sample articles, reflection questions and protocols that may be helpful to school leaders. I also learned that LF newsletters will be sent to members both electronically and a hard copy during the coming year. Also, archived copies of the newsletters are available on the website for future reference.

#### Our Victory Lap

"The Victory Lap!" My first Affiliate Leader Conference, what a great experience to gain information important to the mission of our Kansas affiliate and the support provided by Learning Forward. Don't be surprised when you attend the next Learning Forward Kansas conference to see our new "flag," black with the colorful Learning Forward Kansas logo, on the table and our "golden Affiliate trophy" from a terrific "race" experience! **DC**

## Learning Forward Releases Revised Standards for Professional Learning

By Sandee Crowther  
Executive Director

Learning Forward Kansas President Craig Correll, President-Elect Sheri Thomas, and Executive Director Sandee Crowther represented the state organization at the affiliate meeting, held in Indianapolis, Indiana, in July. The biggest news from the meeting is the "Revised Standards" are ready. The first standards for professional development were developed in 1994. Those were for the middle school grades. Shortly after that, two more editions came out: one for high schools and one for elementary schools. These editions included 27 standards around three areas: context, content, and process. In 2001, the standards were revised to be just 12 standards and all in one book. More support materials were developed and it was easier to use and understand the standards so the standards were often used as a guide. KSDE adopted the use of these standards as a guide for Kansas Educators.

To have the greatest influence on professional development, the National Staff Development Council, now known as Learning Forward, regularly updates the standards to reflect insights from current research. New standards were released at this meeting and are now available.



### What's new about the standards?

There are now seven standards which function together in synergy and work in partnership to enable educators to increase their effectiveness and impact student learning.

- The context, process, content organizer is not as prominent in the new standards but remains a foundation.
- The standards still begin with a common statement but the wording is changed: "professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and results for all students....."

This statement confirms the link between educator practice and results for students.

Four core concepts are embedded in the new stem: educator, effectiveness, results, and all students.

• **Educator** describes the members of the education workforce.

• **Effectiveness** refers to educators' capacity to meet performance expectations to increase student learning

• **Results** refers to all aspects of student growth and development.

• **All students** signifies that educators' professional responsibility and professional learning are driven by the belief that education is for all students, not just some.

The new standards are called *Standards for Professional*

*Learning*. The seven standards include: learning communities, leadership, resources, data, learning design, implementation, and outcomes.

If you want to know more, go to [www.learningforward.org](http://www.learningforward.org). Watch for more information in future issues of *Direct Connection*. DC

## Beliefs of Learning Forward Kansas

The ultimate purpose of staff development is to improve student learning.

A staff developer is anyone who systematically enables others to change their professional behavior.

Effective staff developers use a research base to continually define and refine best practices.

Collaboration strengthens staff development.

Effective organizational development is required if all students are to learn.

Organizational development requires individual change.

Each educator has a moral responsibility to improve professional effectiveness through life-long learning.

Reinforcement and support systems are critical to the transfer of learning into practice.

Ongoing assessment is critical for effective staff development decisions.

Kansas Learning  
First Alliance

"Making Kansas first  
in the nation  
in teaching and learning"

[www.klfa.org](http://www.klfa.org)

KANSAS  
Learning First Alliance





**"A Learning School in Action"**

**April 10 & 11, 2012**

Submit a PROPOSAL  
 for the Learning Forward Kansas Leadership Conference  
 Conference Proposal Strands  
 \* Quality Professional Learning \* Teacher Leadership \*  
 Measuring Impact \* Implementing the Common Core Standards \* 21st Century Skills

**Title of Presentation** (As you wish it to appear in the program.)

Lead Presenter	Position/Title	Affiliation
----------------	----------------	-------------

**Work or Home Contact Address**

Work Phone (area code)	Fax	Email
------------------------	-----	-------

**Proposal Strand** (Check the **one** your presentation best addresses.)

Quality Professional Learning       Teacher Leadership  
 Measuring Impact       21st Century Skills       Implementing the Common Core Standards

**Target Audience** (Check those that apply.)

District Administration       College Instructors       Principals       Teachers       Classified

**Presentation Options** (Check **one** length and **one** type.)

1 hour and 15 minute session       2 hour and 45 minute session  
 Informational       Interactive

**Program Description** (Please attach the following:) Your presentation description of **no more than 40** words, as you wish it to appear in the program. Include participant outcomes - what will participants know and be able to do as a result of participation in the session.

**Audio Visual Needs** (Presenters must provide their own computers and projectors for Power Point and Internet presentations). The hotel has wireless internet capabilities.

Screen       Small AV cart for my equipment that I bring

**List the following information for Additional Presenters:** Presenter, Position/Title, Affiliation, Work or Home Contact Address, Work Phone (area code), and Email

**Verification**

*On behalf of the presenters listed in this proposal, I understand that I (we) must register for the conference and be responsible for all conference registration fees and other expenditures. I understand that it will be my responsibility to notify each of my co-presenter(s) regarding the status of the proposal, the date, time and location of the presentation should it be accepted.*

Submitter Signature	Date
---------------------	------

Please submit Proposal On-Line by Friday, September 30, 2011 at: [www.learningforwardkansas.org](http://www.learningforwardkansas.org) or mail hard copy to: Melissa Green, USD 506, 401 S High School St., Altamont, KS 67337.

All breakout sessions will be held Tuesday and Wednesday afternoon, April 10 & 11, 2012.

**2011-12 LF KS Board****Elected Officers****President**

Dr. Craig Correll  
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**Ex Officio**

**Learning Forward Kansas-  
KASCD Liaison**

Karen Brack  
**Nominating Com. Chair**  
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