

KS Direct Connection

LEARNING FORWARD KANSAS

OCTOBER 2011

AN AFFILIATE OF



The iTech Generation

They are the NetGen kids. Kindergarteners who are adept at using the “Angry Birds” app, but unable to tie their shoes

Valentino-DeVries, 2011

Read about professional learning to support 21st Century skillbuilding on page 4.

Image by Stuart Miles

http://www.freedigitalphotos.net/images/view_photog.php?photogid=2664

Embedding Professional Learning Through Action Research

By Penny Schuckman
 Director of The Learning Center
 USD 261 Haysville

Is there anything you would like to change about your district, your school, your classroom or yourself? If you answered yes, then Action Research is an effective tool you can add to your toolbox to bring about that change you desire!

WHAT? Action Research is studying your own situation to change the quality of processes and results within it. To do Action Research is to empower yourself to study your action so that your future actions will be more effective.

WHY? Do Action Research because it is.....

Practical – Insights that you get from data lead to practical changes in your classroom or in your school during and immediately after the inquiry.

Collaborative – As action researchers, you and your students or you and your colleagues collect data about a real issue in your shared situation.

Empowering – All of you together can influence and contribute equally to the research.

HOW? Collaborative Action Research has five sequential steps:

1) *Problem formulation* – The team identifies the issue that is of the greatest continued on page 2

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Leadership Conference

A LEARNING School In ACTION

April 10-11, 2012

Airport Hilton

Wichita, KS

From the keynote address “Movin’ from Talk to Walk” to breakout sessions on common core, technology, professional learning and more, the annual LF KS conference promises tips and tools on building “A Learning School In Action.” Read more on page 5.

Action Research Provides Avenue From Data To Change

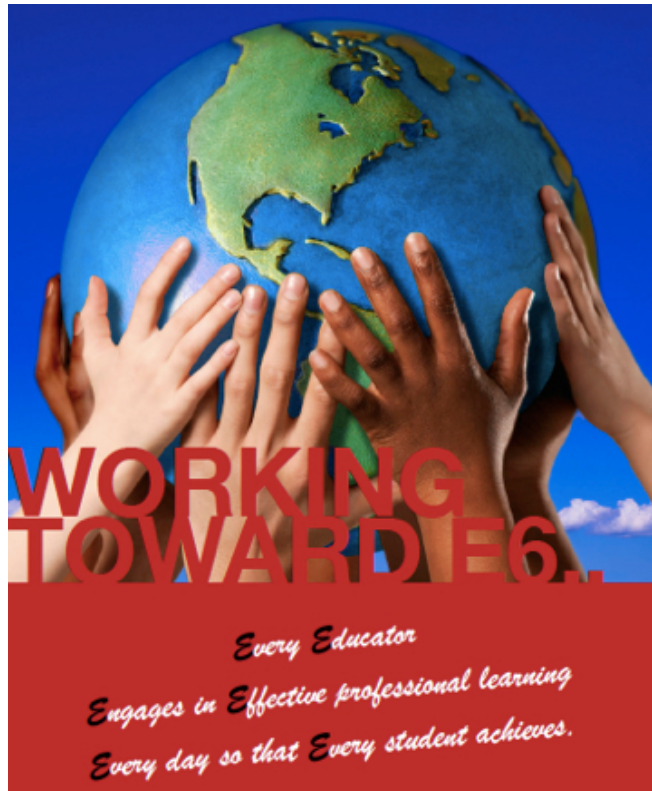
continued from page 1
professional concern. Researchers identify what they already know about the issue, what they still need to know, and their understanding of the variables affecting the issue.

2) *Data Collection* – The credibility of any research effort lives or dies on the quality of the data used to support its conclusions. To ensure adequate data collection, action researchers and their colleagues are expected to assemble three sets of data for each research question.

3) *Data Analysis* – Most action researchers find this step to be the most enjoyable of the entire process. It involves looking systematically at all the data collected to see what trends or patterns emerge and what conclusions can be drawn.

4) *Reporting Results* – Inviting others to peer over our shoulders and learn from our practice is one of the most powerful and rewarding aspects of collaborative action research. It is imperative that teams of action researchers find as many appropriate forums as possible to share what they are learning about teaching and learning.

5) *Action Planning* – Since the purpose of collaborative Action Research is to



improve our professional practice, the process won't be complete until we have put in place plans incorporating what we've learned as a result of our systematic inquiry.

I need to conclude this article with a warning. Action Research is addictive! As you begin to see your district, school, classroom, students and self change for the better, you will be compelled to repeat the process. Enjoy your Action Research journey!

RESOURCES:

- Sagor, R. (1992). *How To Conduct Collaborative Action Research*. Alexandria: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
- Schmuck, R. A. (2006). *Practical Action Research For Change*. Thousand Oaks: Corwin Press, Inc.
- <http://arj.sagepub.com/> An online Action Research Journal
- <http://cadres.pepperdine.edu/ar/c9/burker/ar-blog.html> A blog of one teacher's Action Research journey
- http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qg83f72_6Gw Video of the Action Research Process DC

Calendar



Countdown

LF KS 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
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 on the LF KS website soon.

A LEARNING School In ACTION

[Learning Forward Kansas Annual Conference](#)
April 10-11, 2012
Wichita Airport Hilton
Wichita, KS

LF KS Board Advance

June 6-7, 2012
Hesston, KS

Kansas Learning
First Alliance
"Making Kansas first
in the nation
in teaching and learning"
www.klfa.org

KANSAS
Learning First Alliance

Craig's Corner

Share Your Strategies With LF KS

By Craig Correll
LF KS President

Educators across the state are engaged in incredible professional learning activities. Learning Forward Kansas recognizes the work of those whose efforts have a direct impact on quality professional learning. Award winners are announced each year at the LF KS Leadership Conference, and include teachers and administrators.

The Awards 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.
- Awards should be decided on verifiable evidence

A variety of awards are given each year to address the diverse professional learning happening across Kansas. A new award is being offered this year. *Cycle of Continuous Improvement* is designed to recognize a school team that successfully implements the cycle of continuous learning for professional learning that results in student achievement. This award is unique in that it involves capturing a video that depicts your school team engaged in the cycle of continuous improvement as described in Learning Forward's definition of professional learning. We'll be sharing more about this award in the coming months so keep checking *Direct Connection*, our website, or our Facebook page for details.

In the meantime, for information and instructions on applying for any of the other awards sponsored by Learning Forward Kansas, see the article on page 6, or visit our website at <http://learningforwardkansas.org/awards.html>. The deadline for this year's awards is January 15, 2012.

You can also share your strategies by volunteering to present a breakout session at our annual Leadership Conference.

So don't keep your great professional learning strategies to yourself, share them with others. **DC**



Grant Jones and Kathy Boyer discuss during the 2011 LF KS Advance. LF KS members gather at the annual advance to review organizational goals and plan initiatives for the upcoming year.

KLFA Receives Donation To Assist With Public Engagement Efforts

Kansas Learning First Alliance (KLFA) Chair Dr. Nancy Bolz, Advanced Kansas Director, accepted a \$3,000 donation from United Teachers of Wichita on behalf of the KLFA Educational Foundation at the 2011-12 kick-off meeting. UTW President Larry Landwehr explained his organization was impressed with the KLFA effort to produce Public Service Announcements on behalf of Kansas public schools and wanted to support it. To view the first of three planned PSAs, visit <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D879Af2JGzY>. A second PSA has been started with hopes of a late fall roll out. Almost three dozen people from 19 of the 28-member organizations were in attendance.

This marks the 13th school year education organizations, agencies and institutions have worked together to improve teaching and learning in Kansas under the KLFA banner. It is the second year a Thursday night Webinar preceded the Friday meeting. Kansas State Board of Education President David Dennis, R-Wichita, and Commissioner Diane DeBacker were the program's featured speakers.

Again this year, KLFA is working toward improving student achievement; strengthening the professional learning of educators; and engaging the public in school improvement and student achievement efforts. To focus their work, three general goals offer guidance. They are:

- KLFA will broadly disseminate its work to influence practitioners.
- KLFA will increase its visibility among policy makers.
- KLFA will strengthen and increase its organizational capacity.

Visit the KLFA Website at www.klfa.org for more information, including agendas for upcoming meetings as they are developed. **DC**

Windows, Blackboards & Mice

By Karen Brack
21st Century Skills Workgroup Chair

Not too long ago, if you asked students to identify windows, blackboards, mice or breadcrumbs, they would have pointed to things vastly different from

what they might show you today. Technology has redefined our world, and it continues to do so at an amazing rate. Who would have thought that teaching could involve Plurking, Googling, and Skyping? Who knew they would be able to create a Prezi, a screenshot, or a dotepub to use with students?



What the universe of technology has to offer education is vast and ever-expanding! Keeping abreast of the newest and greatest in technology is overwhelming, but in order to harness its power for our classrooms, learning about emerging technologies is paramount. As with anything new, effective professional learning is the key. At Kansas Learning Forward's summer advance, the 21st Century Committee drafted a presentation protocol that merged Marcia Tate's best practices for adult learners with ideas for sharing new websites or tools. Learning Forward Kansas believes it's important to walk-the-walk and talk-the-talk so this protocol will be expected when we present, and will be shared with anyone submitting a proposal for a conference session.

Marcia Tate shared these eleven characteristics for a brain-compatible workshop several years ago at a KSCD conference:

1. Positive environment
2. Visuals
3. Music
4. Relevant content
5. Rituals taught
6. Talking
7. Movement
8. Positive interactions
9. High challenge/low stress
10. Content taught in chunks/sections
11. Follow-up and support

Tate also shared tips for adult learners:

1. Use a learning plan.
2. Greet attendees at door.
3. State purpose at the start.
4. Provide activities with each section, with movement.
5. Allow interaction/talking.
6. Model concepts taught.
7. Make content relevant.
8. Know your participants.
9. Arrive early.
10. Let participants get to know you.
11. Begin and end big (emotion and movement).
12. Begin on time and dismiss early.

As members of Learning Forward Kansas, we feel that it's important that our professional learning session not only follow Marcia's suggestions, but that we also offer 21st Century teaching and learning techniques and tools. In order to ensure that we offer current and relevant topics delivered with emerging technologies, we will follow these guidelines when developing or accepting session proposals:

- 1) **Use the most current device, application, or site possible at your disposal.** For example, can you use a Prezi rather than a PowerPoint presentation? Can you show how to use a new app like Idea Flight when discussing a concept? Have you found a fantastic site that converts any article into an iBook? What you've been using might be just the thing for which someone else has been searching.
- 2) **Introduce a new piece of technology.** Do you have the newest iPad? Do you have a video of something in use in your district that is new and exciting? Your information may be new to someone.

- 3) **Involve the audience in use of technology** (clickers, MILE guide, text voting, Google forms)

Everyone is at a different place in his/her education when it comes to 21st Century teaching and learning. There is also something new to learn, and limited time with which to discover these things. However, by sharing new skills and knowledge with colleagues, professional learning can stay fresh and innovative. So, please share your technological tools and tips. We're ready to learn!

DC



Image by Clare Bloomfield
http://www.freedigitalphotos.net/images/view_photog.php?photoid=862



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

Movin' from Talk to Walk: Implementing Professional Learning Standards

By Melissa Green
2012 Leadership Conference Chair

"A Learning School in Action" will be the focus when Learning Forward Kansas holds its annual leadership conference April 10-11, 2012 at the Airport Hilton in Wichita, KS. The conference will feature Dayna Richardson, M.Ed, and Dr. Nancy Bolz as keynote speakers.

Richardson and Bolz will kick off the conference with the opening session featuring "Moving from Talk to Walk: Let's Implement the New Professional Learning Standards." Be ready for possibility thinking and solution finding. Explore how to use the new Learning Forward Standards. Identify where your district/school is, and how you boldly move forward to implement these standards immediately. Conference participants will dialog how to create professional learning that is interactive, relevant, sustained, and embedded in everyday practice.

Dayna Richardson, M.Ed, has served as an Assistant Superintendent, Gifted Education Teacher and Coordinator. She is the original director of an educational service center in Kansas, and is also one of eight Kansas coaches for Coaching For Results, Inc. She has done extensive work with Professional Learning Communities, including Adaptive Schools, data-driven dialogue and teacher leadership. Richardson was named Staff Developer of the Year for the group now known as Learning Forward Kansas, and has been awarded Kansas ASCD Outstanding Curriculum Leader. Richardson currently represents Learning Forward Kansas with the Kansas Learning First Alliance.

Dr. Nancy Bolz served in school systems in Kansas for 20 years and with AdvancED Kansas for 11 years. She taught physical education, health, and sex education in Wellington, Dodge City, and Derby; served as the School Improvement and Staff Development Coordinator for Newton; and was the principal of Abilene High School. She is currently the director of AdvancED Kansas and an adjunct professor for Wichita State University for Educational

Leadership. Bolz is currently serving as the chair of the Kansas Learning First Alliance and previously as the co-chair of the Professional Learning Work Group. She is committed to the holistic continuous improvement process focused on student achievement.

Joellen Killion will also be a featured presenter at the Leadership Conference, facilitating two breakout sessions. Killion is a Senior Advisor for Learning Forward, focusing her work on improving professional learning for all educators. Participants at her breakout sessions will explore the attributes of a learning school and use Configuration Maps for school-based roles to assess the status of learning communities.

A variety of additional breakout sessions showcasing best practices by Kansas educators will also be scheduled throughout April 10 and 11.

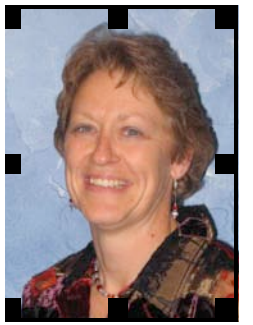
Brad Neuenswander, Deputy Commissioner, Division of Learning Services Kansas State Department of Education, will lead the conference wrap-up session on April 11. Neuenswander will inform Kansas educators about the Common Core Standards and the insight of the future of AYP and QPA.

Submit A Call for Proposals

Learning Forward Kansas continues to accept proposals for conference breakout sessions. All educators are invited to consider sharing best practices. Proposals may be submitted online at <http://learningforwardkansas.org/>. DC



Dayna Richardson, M. Ed.



Dr. Nancy Bolz

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.

Last revised in 2001, the new standards 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.

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.

"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.

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, and much more. DC

Extended Deadline

Apply For Learning Forward Kansas Awards

By Sheri Thomas
Awards Team 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
- 21st 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 LF KS website, 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 Learning Forward Kansas Leadership Conference.

For more information, contact the LF KS Awards Chair:

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LF KS is an affiliate member of Learning Forward

www.learningforward.org

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

LF KS Membership News

The Challenge Is On...

By Jo McFadden
Membership Chair

Fall brings lots of new challenges into our lives: the challenge of beginning a new school year filled with new schedules and new students, the challenge of implementing new curriculum and new initiatives, the challenge of networking with colleagues, new and old. As you step further into the work of this school year, Learning Forward Kansas would like you to consider adding another challenge to your agenda.

The LF KS challenge: Share this newsletter with at least five co-workers and recruit at least one new member this month.

LF KS promotes effective staff development practices, provides assistance with the design and implementation of staff development programs, collaborates with other organizations, and expands training opportunities for staff development leaders.

LF KS has a multitude of benefits for our members: professional networking, dynamic learning and leadership conferences, bi-monthly newsletters,

recognition opportunities, skill development seminars, and a 24/7 connection with educators statewide.

But, LF KS needs your help in sharing news about our mission and about the benefits of joining our organization. So take on the challenge! Share this newsletter – it's as easy as forwarding on the link to our website. Then recruit at least one new member this month. While you are recruiting, don't forget to renew your own LF KS membership for the 2011-2012 year.

Join or Renew LF KS Membership at www.learningforwardkansas.org

\$40 Agency Membership
(with \$15 for each Building Membership in conjunction with the Agency Membership)
\$40 Building Membership
(if joining separately)
\$15 Individual Membership

Download or print the application at www.learningforwardkansas.org. After completing it, mail it with your check or purchase order # to Tom Jerome, Treasurer, Box 616, Eudora, KS 66025. 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.

* Poster above created at www.bighugelabs.com



The 2011-2012 LF KS Board invites you to join in the membership challenge: Share this newsletter with five co-workers and recruit at least one new member for LF KS.

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

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