

KS Direct Connection

LEARNING FORWARD KANSAS

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AN AFFILIATE OF



Don't judge a day by the harvest you reap, but by the seeds that you plant. Robert Louis Stevenson

Developing Systems To Support Implementation Of Common Core State Standards

By Jill Bergerhofer
Education Services Support Team,
USD 229 Blue Valley

Frederick Brown, Director of Strategy and Development for *Learning Forward*, kicked off the LF KS annual Leadership conference, held April 23-24 in Wichita, KS, with a keynote address focused on developing systems to support implementation of Common Core Standards.

Dr. Brown's address could be broken into two related sections. The first section focused on what is needed at the school level to effectively implement Common

Core State Standards (CCSS), while section two highlighted the lessons learned through a collaboration with the Council of Chief State School Officers titled "Transforming Professional Learning to Prepare College-and Career-Ready Students: Implementing the Common Core (TPL I)".

This article focuses on the first section of Dr. Brown's keynote address.

Dr. Brown began his address by challenging attendees to connect with each other by sharing "a statement you've never uttered before regarding

education." He then grounded his presentation in the *Learning Forward Continued on Page 2*

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LF KS Elects New Board Members

The annual election of board members for LF KS was held April 23. Members elected were: President-Elect, Lana Evans; Teacher A Representative, Paige Rathbun; Central Office Representative, Pam Irwin; Higher Education Representative, Dr. Donna Augustine-Shaw; Representative A East of Hwy 281, Ben Smith; Representative A West of Hwy 281, Judy Beedles Miller.

Brown Shares Lessons From Kentucky On Common Core Implementation

Continued from Page 1
beliefs, mission, and standards as shown on the **sidebar on page 4**.

Dr. Brown went on to present four guiding questions to frame his address.

1. What is it we that want our students to know and be able to do? (*Common Core*)
2. What do we want our teachers to know and be able to do to develop and sustain effective learning environments for students? (*Teacher Standards*)
3. What do leaders need to know and be able to do to create optimum conditions for teaching and learning? (*Leader Standards*)
4. In what ways can we ensure teachers and leaders develop the skills they need to be consistently effective? (*Professional Learning Standards*)

When considering question #1, conference attendees were asked to estimate the percentage of teachers in their schools/systems that “have a crystal clear picture of what students are expected to know and be able to do in order to be college and career ready?” The average answer from attendees seemed to fall between 3% and 5%.

Dr. Brown next highlighted lessons learned from Kentucky about implementation of the CCSS. According to Brown, in working with Kentucky educators, *Learning Forward* learned that Common Core, known as a “game changer” on how teaching and learning looks, can be brought down to three shifts each in literacy and mathematics. Brown cited those shifts as the following.

Literacy shifts:

1. *Building knowledge through content-rich nonfiction*
2. Reading, writing, and speaking grounded in **evidence from text**, both literary and informational
3. Regular practice with **complex text** and its **academic language**

Mathematics Shifts:

1. **Focus:** Focus strongly where the standards focus
2. **Coherence:** **Think** across grades, and link to major topics

3. **Rigor:** In major topics, pursue **conceptual understanding**, procedural skill and **fluency**, and **application**

When considering question #2, Dr. Brown stressed two key actions schools/systems should do regarding what “we want teachers to know and be able to do” to create effective learning environments. He shared that research supports starting with a “deep exploration” of the CCSS so teachers really understand them. Dr. Brown reiterated the importance of including a study of the introduction and appendices sections of both the ELA and Mathematics documents in developing a complete understanding of the CCSS. The second essential piece to a deep and complete understanding of the CCSS is for schools/systems to have “a solid plan for teachers’ professional learning and implementation support”. Beginning with these two steps, as Kentucky did, will facilitate ensuring teachers will have what they need to “know and be able to do [begin] to develop and sustain effective learning environments for students”.

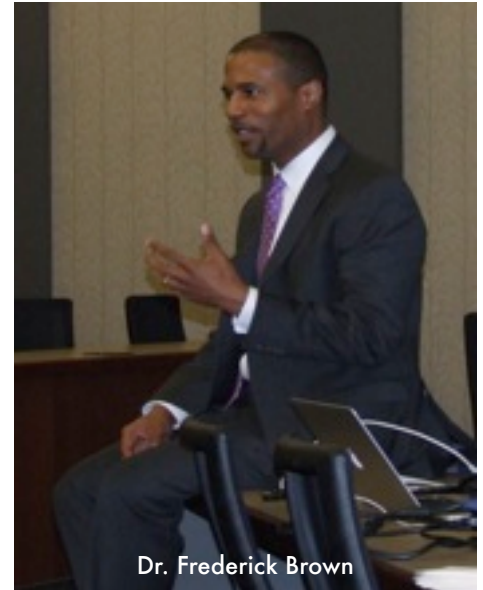
When considering question #4, concerning what leaders need to know and be able to do to create optimal conditions, Dr. Brown shared “The Wallace 5”. These are the key lessons culled from the Wallace Foundation (2012) study, *The School Principal as Leader: Guiding Schools to Better Teaching and Learning*. These five lessons for school principals include:

1. Shaping a vision of academic success for all students.
2. Creating a climate hospitable to education.
3. Cultivating leadership in others.
4. Improving instruction.
5. Managing people, data and processes to foster school improvement.

Dr. Brown added a deeper look at the first of these “Wallace 5”, visioning academic success for all students.

According to Brown, research showed characteristics and actions associated with this lesson were principals who:

- deepen their own understanding of the CCSS;
- reinforce high expectations for



Dr. Frederick Brown

- students and stand and develop/enact plans to achieve the vision;
- challenge beliefs that interfere with achieving the vision;
- establish and communicate non-negotiables related to teaching and learning; and,
- serve as the cheerleader, coach, and standard bearer for the vision.

Finally, Dr. Brown brought conference attendees full circle when sharing what the Kentucky study taught *Learning Forward* about ensuring teachers and leaders develop skills to be consistently effective. The answer to guiding question #4 was found within the *Learning Forward Professional Learning Standards* because

- 1) “they make explicit that the purpose of professional learning is for educators to develop the knowledge, skills, practice, and dispositions to help students perform at high levels, and
- 2) they guide the design, implementation, and evaluation of professional learning.”

To help us operationalize this deep and insightful look at the lessons *Learning Forward* has learned about developing systems to support the implementation of CCSS, Dr. Brown also provided contact information for sites that participants could access or share with other members of their school/system.

[The Wallace Foundation](#)

[America Achieves](#)

[Learning Forward: Implementing CC](#)

A summary of the second section of Dr. Brown’s presentation will be shared in the August issue of *Direct Connection*.
DC

Summer Reflections Support Effective Teaching, Student Learning

By Sheri Thomas
LF KS President

This past year has seen many new opportunities for educators across the state! We are spreading the word about the seven New Standards for Professional Learning that were adopted by the KSBE in April 2012 across the state and into each district. We are also looking for ways to implement the College and Career Ready Standards into each classroom to allow each student to reach new heights in thinking and learning.



improvement teams, district *leadership*, department and grade level *learning communities* as we look ahead to what we want happening with the new academic standards we are putting into place into the classroom. What *learning designs*, *data* discussions and *resources* might be needed to think outside of the ordinary. Use the professional learning standards to bring a new level of discussion to your district.

With summer approaching, this might be the time to reflect on your own learning this past year. What do you want to continue? What new learning would you like to experience? Which of the above actions from Fred Brown spur you to think in a new way? This reflection, whether on your own, or with your colleagues allows you to support effective teaching and student learning in your district.

Fred Brown, the keynote speaker at the LF KS annual Leadership Conference held in Wichita in April, left many educators with some powerful thoughts to take back to their districts. He asked everyone to consider these actions when thinking about implementing the Common Core Standards in their own districts:

*Think things you've never thought.
Write things you've never written.
Say things you've never said.
Plan things you've never planned.*

These words could be the basis for powerful *collaboration* for school

As my term of *Learning Forward Kansas* President comes to a close, I want to thank the many talented and professional educators I have had the experience to meet and work with over the course of the year. I am amazed at the committed individuals who have stepped forward to make professional learning a priority in their district and across the state. It is an exciting and challenging time to be an educator in Kansas. I encourage all of you to join *Learning Forward Kansas* in spreading professional learning! DC

*Think things
you've never thought.
Write things
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Say things
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Plan things
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- Frederick Brown



Dr. Frederick Brown

Calendar Countdown



Board Advance

June 12-13, 2013
Valley Falls, KS

Learning Forward Summer Conference

July 21-24, 2013
Minneapolis Hilton
Minneapolis, MN

Learning Forward Annual Conference

December 7-11, 2013
Gaylord Texan Resort
Grapevine, TX

Surf on over...

to the **LF KS Facebook** page.
"Like" us to stay updated on news 24/7.

Link up at

www.learningforwardkansas.org



Sticky Standards...

Professional Learning That Sticks
A [website](#) that includes podcasts and other great resources on professional learning

Kansas: Where We Are & Where We Are Going

By Jill Bergerhofer
Education Services Support Team,
USD 229 Blue Valley

Dr. Brad Neuenswander, Deputy Commissioner for Learning Services at the Kansas State Department of Education, offered the closing address of the 2013 Leadership Conference. In short, Dr. Neuenswander's message assured that Kansas is headed in the right direction in respect to the changes in standards, accreditation, and evaluation. Understandably, he noted, that



Dr. Brad Neuenswander

change is going to take work, but there's no doubt our students are worth the work. Learnings from Dr. Neuenswander's address included the following key points.

- By 2018, 64% of jobs in Kansas will require postsecondary education; currently 41% of Kansans hold a post-secondary degree or certification.
- By 2020, <25% of middle-class jobs can be acquired with a high-school diploma.
- We must change the mindset that just scoring well on standardized tests guarantees post-secondary success; the Kansas definition of College and

Career Ready includes academic preparation, cognitive preparation, technical skills, and employability skills.

- The new exam will be a college readiness exam *not* a grade level readiness exam; we have to be comfortable and confident about raising the bar, and seeing different results.
- Assessment Performance Index (API) will be calculated for each school; there is a new formula.
- The new system cares about improved student learning at any level; value is added to the index anytime a student moves to any level.
 - State reports for schools will be much more robust, such as:
 - Multiple measures of success (four instead of one)
 - Proficiency, Achievement, Gain/Growth, Gap Reduction.
 - Three levels of analysis - Summary Level, Comparison Level, and Expanded AMO Reports.
 - The new system looks at growth of a building or system over time.
 - Every building has a customized individual AMO based on how Kansas schools do, not just some "fictitious" number.
 - Schools in the top 10% of student growth percentiles won't have AMOs; they just need to stay high achieving.
 - There will be richer student level data including past scores, comparison to other similar students, and more data for teachers to know what they need to do to help each child.
 - Gaps will no longer be computed by subgroups, but by the lowest 30% of students in a building, *regardless*; goal will be to close the gap in six years.
- In the old system there were 42 ways a school could not make AYP; **the new systems has four AMOs.**
- In the old system one "no" meant a school didn't make AYP; **in the new system one "yes" means a school does.**
- Accreditation will be based on multiple factors that are most important to improving a district - Relationships, Relevance, Responsive

Culture, Rigor, and Results.

- Teacher evaluation and licensure will be based on the belief that there are multiple ways to show achievement with demonstration by the teacher over time versus one year.

For more information or to stay up-to-date on the progress of change consider visiting the [Division of Learning Services on Kansas State Department of Education website](#). DC

Learning Forward Beliefs, Mission, and Standards

Learning Forward Beliefs

- Effective professional learning is fundamental to student learning.
- All educators have an obligation to improve their practice.
- More students achieve when educators assume collective responsibility for student learning.
- Successful leaders create and sustain a culture of learning.
- Improving student learning and professional practice requires ongoing systemic and organizational change.

Learning Forward Mission

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

Learning Forward Standards for Professional Learning

Learning Communities
Leadership
Resources
Data
Learning Designs
Implementation
Outcomes

Check [Learning Forward website](#) for further information.

Conference Breakout Session

Promoting Self-Questioning Through Illustrations

By Vicki Bechard
LF KS Secretary

Self-questioning is at the heart of comprehension – and one of the most beneficial strategies we can use to improve comprehension. While most of the research in this area is done with fourth-fifth grade students, Dr. Gayla Lofink, from Wichita State University, has posed the question, “Shouldn’t we be starting this strategy sooner?” She is currently working with second grade students who are struggling readers in a Wichita school, using self-questioning with picture books to improve engagement and comprehension. While the final results aren’t in yet, mid-year assessment shows gains, and she has observed higher interest levels and engagement among the students.

Typically the teacher asks most of the questions, but in order to improve student understanding (and to align instruction with requirements of Common Core) it is important to teach kids how to become the questioner. Pictures help kids get information – especially in this generation because of all the “screens” they have in front of them. Dr. Lofink noted that showing a picture from the book to the students has been a way for us to activate prior knowledge, or get them to think about what they are going to read. But she encouraged teachers to take it a step further by changing the prompt from, “What’s this story going to be about?” to “What questions do you have?” This one small change allows students to clarify before predicting and helps teachers understand what students are thinking.



Common Core (Kansas College and Career Ready) Standards encourage questioning and finding the details. As a result, we have to adjust our instruction to facilitate the shift in teacher-led learning to more independent, student-led learning. Some of the instructional techniques that Dr. Lofink recommended were:

- Teach students how to search for clues - become a CSI. (Fun Fact: She actually gave her students small magnifying glasses to make them feel like investigators!)
- Search “I Spy” or similar look-and-find books which help teach the idea of *close reading* later on when there are fewer pictures.
- Direct attention to the visual elements of the images in illustrations.
 - Focal points
 - What was the illustrator thinking? (Point of view)
 - Activate background knowledge
 - What do you notice about the foreground and background?
 - What does the color mean?
 - Shapes, graphics used, etc.
 - Key details - what is important?
- Determine the association between the text and images by focusing on changes.
- Use perplexing illustrations in selected picture books and focus on what’s not quite right. Anything can be perplexing – it doesn’t have to be weird, but starting with the unusual can be a good hook for students.
- Help students make the connection between their relaxing behavior (video games) and their academic behaviors.
- Focus student thinking: What do I see? What do I think? What do I wonder about?
 - To get kids to specify the evidence instead of leaping to an inference - show the picture in pieces.
 - Look for connections.
- Incorporate expository reading as well.
- Use sticky notes for the questions and then write evidence.
- Partner read.
- Apply to independent reading of self-selected books. (Note: Independent learning is a goal of Common Core.)

Dr. Lofink indicated that when students pose questions, she considers the question and whether it needs to be answered before reading or be discovered during reading. If it does need to be answered before reading, she allows the other students to answer first and then she will answer if they don’t know the answer. This allows students to feel empowered and understand that they can learn from each other. In addition, if the answer must be discovered in the reading, the question provides a natural focal point.

This session was a powerful example of how visual imagery and questioning can sharpen our attention to detail, improve understanding, and deepen learning. The participants also discussed how this strategy could be used in every grade level and content area to spark discussion and focus thinking prior to beginning a lesson or activity. It is very similar to the “What’s the Question” problem-solving strategy posed by Dan Meyer on his [101 Questions website](#).

How will you use questioning to improve learning for your students? **DC**

Conference Breakout Session

iLearning: Using iPads and iPods as Tools, Not Toys

By Jo McFadden
Leadership Conference Chair
LF KS Principal Representative

What does it mean to be technology rich, but integration poor? Having technology and integrating technology are two different things. Giving our students the opportunity to use an iPad, iPod, or computer isn't effective unless our teachers use the technology to enhance content-focused learning opportunities for students and encourage higher order thinking. Students need to be engaged in meaningful learning opportunities supported by 21st Century tools and advancing their development of 21st Century skills.



It is important to provide our teachers with resources, tools and training on strategies to improve student academic achievement through the use of technology in schools.

Paula Schenk and Terra Sanders, from Community Elementary in Coffeyville, shared some strategies they use to integrate the use of the iPad technology into the curriculum as a part of their breakout session at the annual LF KS Leadership Conference. Schenk and Sanders have adopted a strategy called the "Daily 5 Basics". Their research is taken from the work of Gail Boushey and Joan Moser in their book, *The Daily 5 Basics: Fostering Literacy Independence in the Elementary Grades*. The "Daily 5" consists of reading to self, reading to someone, listening to reading, working on writing and completing word work. Schenk and Sanders use these topics to integrate the use of iPads into their small group lessons.

Schenk and Sanders shared several resources they have used to find and download apps. The following is a list of resources they shared with the attendees.

[iLearning](#)
[App Start](#)
[App Store](#)
[Apps Gone Free](#)
[App Wall](#)

Paula Schenk is a first grade teacher at Community Elementary. The apps she shared include: Show Me, Benson Handwriting, Write My Name, Scribble Press, Spelling with Cimo, Gopher Finding, Word Wizard, Glow Note, Farm Animals, Grasshopper Apps, Disney Digital Books, Mathopolis, and Free Fall.

Terra Sanders is a sixth grade teacher at Community Elementary. Some of the apps she shared include: Pic Collage, Postermywall.com, Quick Voice, Visual Poetry, Idea Sketch, Strip Design, Face Time, Songify and iMovie.

Both presenters brought their young sons to show the attendees many of the apps they use in their classrooms. I'm not sure which was more interesting, learning about the different apps or watching the excitement and engagement of their student presenters. It is very evident that the integration of the iPad is very engaging and motivating for students. 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 lifelong learning.

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

Ongoing assessment is critical for effective staff development decisions.



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



Sixth grade students from Graber Elementary provide music as a part of the Thursday luncheon at the annual Leadership Conference.

Conference Breakout Session

Tips For Opening The Door To Coaching Conversations

By Vicki Bechard
LF KS Secretary

Marceta Reilly and Joanne Hearne opened their breakout session at the annual LF KS Leadership Conference with the premise that *Coaching Conversations* are a way to lead change and that we must begin with the coaching conversation. They defined leadership as someone who is a problem solver, but also one who inspires and empowers others (going from good to great).

Reilly and Hearne explained that the **Coaching Role** can be defined as a one where the coach:

- partners with others rather than telling them what to do;
- is nonjudgmental and does not take fears and complaints personally; and
- focuses on what is known and the processes that will move the other person forward.

They also emphasized that a coach shouldn't let a complaint dominate the conversation. It is important to look beyond the complaint and recognize the passion (what they care about) of the other person.

Reilly and Hearne noted a coach must also have specific mindset where he/she focuses on strengths (not deficits);

believes in the ability of others to grow and excel; and communicates trust in their ability to work through an issue. In addition, a coach must set aside learned behaviors that "I have to know all the answers;" ask reflective questions of the person so they can utilize what they know; be patient with complaints and fears that are expressed; and model committed listening by respecting the concern that is expressed and asking more reflective questions rather than giving answers.

Participants were given discussion opportunities to review excerpts from Reilly's new book, *Opening the Door to Coaching Conversations*, which contains an anthology of coaching scenarios as contributed by many coaches from **Coaching for Results Global**. In those discussions, participants were able to identify coach-like actions and the impact that occurred as a result of those coaching behaviors.

The take-away from this session was that schools need great leaders that can inspire and empower staff by having a coach-like mindset and using *Coaching Conversations* as their leadership style which will build relationships and transform those schools! [DC](#)

Conference Breakout Abilene Schools Provide District-Wide Access To iPads

By Dr. Gina Marx
Higher Ed Rep

Ben Smith, Principal at Abilene High School and his team, presented a breakout session at the LF KS annual Leadership Conference sharing a myriad of ideas from their successful District-Wide iPad initiative. Smith explained their district-wide initiative started with giving teachers iPads in December 2011, then piloting student access with third grade students. The initiative then moved district-wide with the help of two teachers who became professional learning coaches to support the implementation.

USD 435 is using Grappling's Technology Spectrum of Learning to gauge their progress. They hope to have 75% of their teachers at the *transforming* level within two years. Using MyBigCampus and Lightspeed filtering, they have taken student learning to a new high. Some of the various apps and programs that have been widely used by teachers to promote higher order thinking of students include:

- Educreations
- Notability
- Keynote
- Evernote
- Idea Sketch
- iMovie
- Strip Design
- Pic Collage
- Scribble Press
- Trading Cards
- Story Kit
- Show Me
- Explain Everything

There is also a teacher in the district who self-taught herself iBook Author and is piloting it with students.

The district welcomes teams to come and see their tech-infused learning! [DC](#)

Whitepapers Reveal Hidden Treasure

By Jill Bergerhofer
Education Services Support Team,
USD 229 Blue Valley

I discovered a hidden treasure trove of professional literature this year in whitepapers. There is no doubt these types of research papers have been around for many years, so I can't explain why I just become aware of them. For those of you who may not have seen this type of resource, it is simply "a certain type of report that is distinctive in terms of purpose, audience, and organization" (Sakamuro, S. and Stolley, K. 2010). A more in-depth explanation is provided on the [Purdue OWL site](#)

"Originally, the term white paper was



PD on a shoestring

used as shorthand to refer to an official government report, indicating that the document is authoritative and informative in nature. Writers typically use this genre when they argue a specific position or propose a solution to a problem, addressing the audience outside of their organization. Today, white papers have become popular marketing tools for corporations especially on the Internet since many potential customers search for information on the Web. Corporations use white papers to sell information or new products as solutions that would serve their customers' needs."

"Typically, the purpose of a white paper is to advocate that a certain position is the best way to go or that a certain solution is best for a particular problem."

What I have learned is while it is true that the source for many education whitepapers are publishing companies and other organization wanting to sell us something, many times the paper has relevant information that can support professional learning and be used when designing professional development.

But, there are also quite a number of organizations, associations, and even companies that are publishing or providing links to whitepapers for educators simply to contribute to the research base and support our continued professional

learning and growth. Some of my favorite sources include Eye on Education; Edutopia; EdWeek; HJNystrom; T.H.E. Journal; dreambox LEARNING; and Committee for Children.

Examples of some such whitepapers in my collection include:

- THE 21st CENTURY CLASSROOM Perspectives on leveraging educational technology
- Adaptive Learning to Personalize Education: A Special White Paper Based upon the Speak Up 2011 National Findings
- An Elementary School Principal's Guide: Supporting the Transition to and Implementation of the Common Core State Standards in Mathematics
- 5 Things Every Teacher Should be Doing to Meet the Common Core State Standards
- Five-Minute Vocabulary Strategies for the Common Core
- From Common Core Standards to Curriculum: Five Big Ideas
- Social-Emotional Learning and Bullying Prevention
- Securing and Enabling the Next-Generation Learning Environment
- Boosting Achievement Through Blended Learning
- Enhancing Productivity Through Transparency and Accountability: Workforce Management in the Public Sector

Any of these papers can be located by searching the internet by title using your favorite search engine.

Note: Some publishers require you to register to their site to receive a downloadable copy of the whitepaper. I have not found this to be a reason to stop me from accessing the desired title. DC

Award Winners

Impact Award



Mary Zey
USD 435, Abilene
Mary developed a set of ebooks for her students that she can upload to their iPads

Staff Developer of the Year



Pam Irwin
USD 305, Salina

Staff Developer of the Year

Adelyn Soellner
USD 308, Hutchinson



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On-Demand Professional Learning

As a PD360 member through Learning Forward Kansas, you have access to resources addressing the following categories:

- Common Core
- Designing and Evaluating Professional Development
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Common Core Ready Or Not: Here They Come!

By Lana Evans
Rep A West of Hwy 281

Common Core State Standards were adopted by the Kansas State Department of Education on October 12, 2010, while full implementation is expected by 2014-2015. Since this adoption, districts have been planning and preparing for



Kansas College and Career Ready Standards
For English Language Arts and Literacy in
History/Social Studies,
Science, and Technical Subjects

the new standards. What does this mean for Professional Learning?

As we look for ideas and suggestions to support our teachers and administrators, we find that everyone has the answer and everyone and every resource is "aligned" with the common core; or so they say. As educational leaders, we have to be very cautious of all the materials that are being thrown at us.

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

KANSAS
Learning First Alliance

With the assessments currently being created, the big question is the accountability. But let's not worry about that now; let's focus on what we know about the standards.

The math standards leave no room for a "mile-wide, inch-deep approach". Instead these standards are deeper and more focused than our previous KS State Standards. The

English Language Arts standards have an emphasis on literacy development across content areas. It is our responsibility as educational leaders to provide information to our educators on what

the standards are, how they will progress through the grade levels, the increase of cognitive ability, the big ideas, text complexity, mathematical practices, and the list goes on and on....

Here are some **free** resources that can provide assistance in your quest for knowledge in these areas:

- [Official Site for CCSS information](#) and appendices that are provided with the CCSS documents
- [Mathematical Practice Standards](#) with video excerpts of mathematics lessons.

Exemplary lessons integrating the standards for mathematical practice. Explore materials and tasks you can use immediately with your students. You can make use of these standards through searching by grade level, as well as by progression

- ASCD is offering a series of [free webinars](#) focusing on the CCSS. *After each webinar has been broadcast, the content is available for free online.*

- [Mathematical Practices and examples](#) aligned to each content standard. *This also includes grade-level versions of the mathematical practices.*

These resources can be purchased; so review closely to assure they meet your district's goals.

- The School Improvement Network's [Common Core 360 PD](#) program.
- A flipchart of [common core standards for each grade level](#). *The resource denotes one grade level standard per page including enduring understandings, essential questions, suggested Learning Targets written as "I Can" statements, and vocabulary that correlates to the specific standard. The math flipbooks also includes a suggested mathematical practice to focus on for each standard and denotes three to four critical areas that should be focused on at each grade level.* DC

KLFA Focuses On KCCRS

The Kansas Learning First Alliance (KLFA) spring meeting was a continuation of Tom Foster's topic of presentation in January, the "Kansas College and Career Ready Standards" (KCCRS) were the focus.

The highlight of the day was the presentation by Dr. Pat Pat Forgione, Executive Director of the K-12 Center at Educational Testing Service (ETS). He shared information about SBAC and PARCC assessments regarding their purpose, background, similarities, differences, and needed professional learning.

These new assessments were created to support the KCCRS. He also provided possible criteria for comparisons for all assessments. This informational session resulted in a deeper understanding of the background and purpose of these assessments. DC

Nutshell

The ELA CCRSS In a Nutshell

By Jill Bergerhofer
Education Services Support Team,
USD 229 Blue Valley

At this point, most educators understand that the Kansas College and Career Readiness State Standards (KCCRSS) are having a major impact on the teaching of English Language Arts (ELA) and the implications these will have as we continue meeting the needs of our 21st Century learners. There are multiple resources to help us navigate the standards and embed the required practices in our instruction. (See some links at end of this article.) In a nutshell, this comes down to six major pedagogical shifts, which many districts and schools have been working hard to redesign curriculum around.

- Balancing informational and literary text
- Building knowledge in disciplines
- Text-based answers
- Academic vocabulary
- Writing from sources
- Staircase of complexity

[\(Pedagogical Shifts demanded by the Common Core State Standards.\)](#)

Or maybe the nutshell of the shifts that should be happening in teaching approaches are as Lauren Davis discusses in her blog post *5 Things Every Teacher Should be Doing to Meet the Common Core State Standards*.

- Lead High-Level, Text-Based Discussions
- Focus on Process, Not Just Content
- Create Assignments for Real Audiences and with Real Purpose
- Teach Argument, Not Persuasion
- Increase Text Complexity

And yet, perhaps the nutshell of key shifts is discussed in Meghan Everett's article [Common Core: Key Shifts in English Language Arts](#). Everett boils down the ELA standards into three shifts and linked "baby steps" for implementation.

- Key Shift #1: Building knowledge through content-rich nonfiction
- Key Shift #2: Reading, writing, and

speaking in evidence from the text, both literary and informational

- Key Shift #3: Regular practice with complex text and its academic language (Everett, M., 2013.)

Each of the above nutshells certainly provide us with an important summary of what the KCCRS expect schools to make sure our students know and are able to do. And, because of the authors' work summarizing and interpreting these shifts each article merits a close read. But, as educators begin to translate the Standards into a curriculum, learning communities should consider the McTighe and Wiggins' (2012) nutshell of five big ideas about our KCCRS.

In their whitepaper *"From Common Core Standards to Curriculum: Five Big Ideas"*, McTighe and Wiggins (2012) "offer recommendations for designing a coherent curriculum and assessment system for realizing" (para. 1) the promise of our KCCRS for truly constructing a change in how we design, deliver, and assess teaching and learning experiences that meet the needs of our students and prepare them for *their* future. While McTighe and Wiggins acknowledge that "a focus on standards is not new" (para. 2), they stress that "it is a misconception to assume that these Standards merely require minor tweaks to our curriculum and instructional practice" (para. 2). They go on to assert that "it is imperative that educators understand the intent and structure of the Standards in order to work with them most effectively" (para. 6) and offer an essential question to guide a learning communities' close reading and discussion of the full Standards document:

What are the new distinctions in these Standards and what do they mean for our practice? (para. 6)

A brief summary of each big idea is presented below. But, don't stop with reading this column; be sure to download and conduct a close read of [McTighe and Wiggins' \(2012\) whitepaper](#).

Big Idea #1 – The Common Core Standards have new emphases and require a careful reading. Begin with a careful examination of the goals and structure of the overall KCCRS document *before* zeroing in on the grade level Standards. Take time to collaboratively and thoroughly read the introductory sections and appendices and discuss "the changing instructional emphases called for... and their implications" (para.7)

Big Idea #2 – Standards are not curriculum. The intents of the Standards are to focus on outcomes, what our students are expected to know and be able to do as a result of our teaching. It is implicit from the design of the KCCRS that the Standards do not dictate our curriculum or teaching methods, therefore "educators must translate the Standards into an engaging and effective curriculum" (para. 8).

Big Idea #3 - Standards need to be "unpacked". After gaining clarity about "the end results and understanding how the pieces [of the Standards] fit together" (para. 14), learning communities should follow McTighe and Wiggins' tried and true steps for unpacking standards into categories. Recommended categories for the KCCRS are:

- 1) Long term Transfer Goals,
- 2) Overarching Understandings,
- 3) Overarching Essential Questions, and
- 4) a set of recurring Cornerstone Tasks (para. 15).

The authors quote KSDE for keeping unpacking at a macro, thus beneficial, level and avoiding moving the process to a micro-level with a caution to not allow this process to "lead educators to concentrate on the trees at the expense of the forest" (para. 23).

Big Idea #4 - A coherent curriculum is mapped backwards from desired performances. McTighe and Wiggins (2012) cited backward designing the curriculum as "the key to avoiding an overly-discrete and fragmented curriculum" starting from "complex performances
Continued on Page 11

Five Big Ideas Help Educators Initiate ‘Close Reading’ Of ELA Common Core

Continued from Page 10

that require content” (para. 24). A Standards-based curriculum should be built on a set of creditable *outputs*. Curriculum designers’ initial guiding question should focus the development on a goal: *Having learned key content, what will students be able to do with it?* (para. 26) To prepare our graduates for post-secondary success, our Standards-based curriculum cannot be designed in a traditional scope-and-sequence format that prescribes our instructional sequence and pacing. Our “curriculum pathway” should be built backward with the goal of students’ demonstrating *independent transfer* through credible authentic performance.

Big Idea #5 - The Standards come to life through the assessments. As educators working to meet the needs of our students and prepare them for their future, we need to recognize that the standards address the expectation for *quality* of student work and the degree of *rigor* at which we must assess and students must achieve. McTighe and Wiggins implore us to study the ELA Appendices B and C because these “are arguably the most important sections” (para. 37). It is in these that the CCSS authors provide the “core set of criteria for building and testing local assessment; insure



Sabrina Gebhardt Photography

these are validly anchored against national standards; and provide “samples of scored work [that] illustrate the qualities of performance that must be attained to meet the Standards” (para. 36-37). Other resources to support study and reflection on the ELA CCSS include:

- [CCSS Initiative](#)

- [EngageNY](#)
- [The K-12 Center at ETS](#)
- [Partnership for 21st Century Skills](#)
- [NJ Clarification Project](#)
- [Achieve the Core](#)
- [ASCD EduCore](#)
- [Achieving the Common Core](#)
- [Southeast Comprehension Center](#) DC

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Transforming Professional Learning for Implementation of the Common Core Standards

By Sandee Crowther
LF KS Executive Director

Learning Forward invited all affiliates to become part of a new initiative which will provide access to the many things concerning implementation of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) developed by Kentucky (KY) and the other states who helped get this started. State Departments and big districts were also encouraged to become involved. The *Learning Forward* Kansas affiliate and the Kansas State Department have already submitted our signed agreement to participate. Leaders of our affiliate have also been in discussion with Wichita Public Schools who are also considering joining.

The Goal of the TPL II Project is:

to improve effectiveness of educator practice and student learning experiences in high-poverty schools and school systems through *Learning Forward* networks (affiliates, SEAs, and BIG 50 districts) by designing Comprehensive Professional Learning Systems that advance implementation of the Common Core or content standards, and are supported through application of TPL findings and resources.

This project is being supported by Learning Forward, the Sandler Foundation, and the Gates Foundation.

Currently there are 20 affiliate network members, 16 SEA network members, and 22 District network members

Our most recent webinar for the project helped us to understand what an Innovation Configuration Map (IC Map) is and the ways in which it is useful. We explored an IC Map developed in Kentucky to implement the CCSS, and heard how it is helping their state. We were asked to consider how some of the maps they developed, or an adapted IC Map, might help our own state networks (SEA, district, and affiliate) to implement the CCSS.

We were polled on this question: *When you think about how your professional learning systems support implementation of the Common Core, which of the*

following seems to be your biggest challenge:

1. *Helping educators develop a deep understanding of the content and content-specific pedagogy the Common Core require.*
2. *Building educator capacity to assess student learning to improve instruction.*

3. *Developing leaders' capacity to guide and support implementation of new standards.*
4. *Supporting educators in employing instructional practices aligned with the Common Core standards.*

The majority of us on the webinar felt that #3 was our biggest challenge.

Innovation Configuration maps were developed by a task force of Kentucky to align with the four pillars of Kentucky's Leadership Networks. They are offered as a model for other states and districts to use to develop their own Innovation configuration maps to support district implementation of Common Core State Standards, educator effectiveness, and student assessment.

About an IC map:

- An IC map looks at specific behaviors.
- It is for a specific role group (the KY example is for central office).
- "Ideal" or highest-quality implementation appears on the left-hand side—Level One.
- The continuum of behaviors describes the degree of implementation from "Ideal" to "Not Yet Begun".
- There is no pre-determined number of levels required for each outcome.

In KY they saw that the purpose of IC Maps was as a tool "designed to support school districts... to understand

what their responsibilities are in each of the four pillar areas, to guide them in strengthening and focusing their support to schools and teachers, and to help them assess their efforts."

These suggestions were made for future uses of IC Maps.

STATE LEVEL

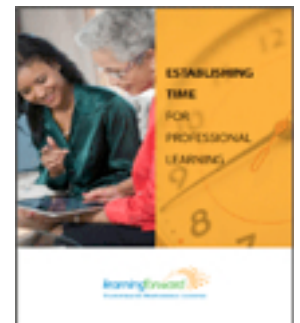
- Advocates for use by Educational Recovery Specialists supporting low-

The Learning Forward Kansas affiliate
and the Kansas State Department
have already submitted our signed agreement
to participate.

- performing districts/schools
- Advances through Instructional Leadership Networks the benefits of IC Maps
- Connects elements from IC Maps to teacher behaviors referenced in the new Educator Effectiveness work in the state

DISTRICT LEVEL

- Recognizes how IC Maps can inform the Comprehensive District/School Improvement Planning Process
- Supports construction of IC maps for specific school level role groups
- Uses maps as formative assessment of progress in KCAS implementation



AFFILIATE

- Generates interest in and use of IC Maps by encouraging sessions at conferences

During the webinar *Learning Forward* gave access to the following New *Learning Forward* Resource, [Establishing Time for Professional Learning](#)

According to Joellen Killion, "This is not hard work—establishing time. It is a matter of will and getting beyond the same ol' mindset." DC

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