

Upcoming Events:

- Oct. 20: KSDE Pre-Conference
- Nov. 14: Regional Learning Lab
- Nov. 21: Daggatt Conf
- Feb. 3-4: LF KS Conf

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President's Message

MEMBERSHIP

By Lana Evans

"Belonging, either individually or collectively, to a [group](#)." Learning Forward is a *group* of individuals who strive to promote professional learning across the state of Kansas.

Our mission: Learning Forward Kansas promotes high standards in student achievement by advocating, modeling, and providing resources for quality professional learning.

The Learning Forward

Kansas membership year begins October 1st and ends September 30. You can apply on-line or by mail with payment options of check, credit card or Paypal. Learning Forward is also a national organization. More information can be found at www.learningforward.org

Membership options range from an individual for \$25, an agency for \$50, and there are several building level options.

Learning Forward Kansas offers FREE membership for first year teachers and pre service student teachers.

Visit our web site for more information on the benefits of membership and become part of a group that promotes professional learning.



THE PROFESSIONAL LEARNING ASSOCIATION

KANSAS



2015 Learning Forward KS Leadership Conference

We are extremely excited for our upcoming conference. Our theme is "Bridge to Change... Closing the Knowing and Doing Gap". We have a variety of strands available for you to choose from, including technology, leadership, content/cross curricular, culture and climate, professional learning and educator evaluation.

The conference will be held at the DoubleTree by Hilton in Wichita, Ks on February 3rd and 4th, 2015. Brad Neuenswander, Interim

Commissioner of Education for the state of Kansas will serve as our opening Keynote on February 3rd, with Jeff Baxter, 2014 Kansas Teacher of the Year closing our conference on February 4th.

If you are interested in sharing the great things happening in your district, please submit a proposal by October 19, 2014. The "call for proposal" form is located on our website at <http://learningforwardkansas.org>.

Submit a Proposal!



Daggatt Conference Rescheduled Friday, November 21, 2014



Registration is open again for the Dr. Bill Daggett Conference

Topic: Rigor & Relevance: Preparing Students to be College & Career Ready!

8:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m., Double Tree by Hilton, Wichita, KS

Co-sponsored by LFKS and SWPRSC

Navigating Complex Change-Organizing for Success the Andover Way

The Andover Public Schools have created a process for navigating complex change associated with the new standards for professional learning and for student curriculum. They have shared the lessons they learned to support systemic change, to design professional learning and to accomplish technology integration within their instructional framework.

In managing change, the district kept in mind the “Managing Complex Change” chart developed in 1996 by the Center for Creative Leadership. The components of *vision*, *skills*, *incentives*, *resources* and *action plan* must all be addressed to implement change effectively. If any component is missing, there is a gap in the amount and quality of change that occurs.

As Andover sought to transform learning they identified five district goals: 1. Student Achievement 2. Educator Effectiveness 3. Culture and Climate 4. Fiscal Responsibility and 5. Communications. To move from the *vision* into *action*, a timeline was constructed for developing an action plan of the district goals leading to a School Improvement Plan identifying those parties responsible for their implementation.

The district goals concentrated on continuous goals with ongoing focus; building upon the work they already started with an intentional focus on Student Achievement and Educator Effectiveness and broadened Safety and Security to include Culture and Climate. The next step was to align the district goals with the action plan and identify the steps to take to achieve the district goals. These district goals and overview of the action plan could be listed on a one page document available for review by the district. The planning continued with an action plan that included month-by-month action steps for each goal and incorporated district BOE alignment, action steps, persons responsible, resources, measures of success and/or evidence and a timeline.

The next focus included the Andover Instructional Framework which is centered around best practices in three areas: Learning Goals, Assessing Student Learning and Learning Activities/Strategies. Educators in the district were expected to learn and share around these three areas. The framework integrated the components of rigor and relevance, KS College and Career Ready Standards, Evaluation (Danielson),

Continued on the following page--

walkthroughs and effective instructional research. This was a year of learning, experimenting, sharing and trying things in the district classrooms by providing choice instead of a rigid process. This framework will continue to be refined based on the experiences and learning of the professionals in the district.

Now with a plan, professional learning was the next focus. Team leaders, administrators and Rigor and Relevance Academy Teachers (January Conference) were identified to help facilitate the professional learning. Their goals included: continue to build capacity of teacher leaders, provide support for teacher leaders so they feel successful, and actively engage administrators as part of the team so there is a partnership and shared leadership model.

Team leaders were identified at each building with grade level and content areas as well as an overall K-12 level. These team leaders had many goals such as to support district collaboration, analyze and apply KS College and Career Ready Standards, develop capacity for leadership and design effective professional learning and align curriculum across the district.

To ensure team time was successful they considered expanding team leaders to build capacity and share responsibility, divide some larger teams into smaller teams (example: Special Education is very large and needed multiple teams), provide additional facilitation support and development to team leaders and create team leader and principal partnerships, involving principals more in the planning and communicating of team learning time.

The Rigor and Relevance Academies for Teachers were created for an instructional academy and for a technology academy. The goal of the academies was to understand and implement the Rigor and Relevance Instructional Framework, apply the Common Core Standards, implement effective instructional strategies to raise rigor and relevance, develop a high rigor/high relevance assessment and seamlessly integrate technology tools to promote 21st Century learning in a student centered classroom to name a few.

With all the action planning in place, the data that needed to be collected and analyzed became the focus. The district analyzed data sources such as student achievement data, STAR Enterprise, Walkthrough Data, Culture and Climate and Professional Learning Data to set achievement goals for fall, winter and spring. A plan for accomplishing the action steps and meeting district goals were aligned with the district professional learning days. The district added two more days to the current year for a total of ten professional learning days allowing the opportunity to accomplish change within the district. All the learning days focused on the Andover Instructional framework. The Andover Public Schools has organized for success by creating a framework to review district goals and actions to lead them into the future.

Presentation by Greg Rasmussen, Superintendent Greg@usd385.org
Jill Lachenmayr, Asst. Superintendent Jill@usd385.org

Helping All Educators and Students Have the Experience of Great Teaching

We do have some great schools in Kansas but some students can attend different schools within the same school district and achieve very different outcomes. We need to ensure that every child experiences great teaching in an excellent school.

We need school districts that are learning systems. Learning Forward Kansas believes this goal is attainable; however, reaching it requires that all school districts focus more intently on learning.

What is inherent in a learning system? ALL educators commit to continuous learning and to

applying that learning to their own and others' performance. Educators at the district and school levels share responsibility for their own learning and for ensuring great teaching for every student every day. Educators, at every level of the organization share responsibility for student and adult learning, dedicate themselves to continuous improvement, use data to drive decisions, and monitor and adjust their practices based on feedback.

For a district or school to progress, a system must use 2 great resources: Learning Forward's Standards for Professional Learning and their

definition of professional learning. For the definition use this link:

http://learningforward.org/who-we-are/professional-learning-definition#.VBr1N_IdXmc

We already know what it takes to make all schools great schools. We already know what it takes to make sure all children have equal opportunities to learn. I invite you to join Learning Forward Kansas in our work to make sure that all school systems are learning systems so that all students experience effective teaching.

This message is adapted from Learning Forward's recent new book: , *Becoming a Learning System*, by Stephanie Hirsh, Kay Psencik, and Frederick Brown.



Article by Sandee Crowther, Executive Director

FREE Webinars that might be of interest to you as a member

Mark your calendars:

October 15 — 1:00 CT, Topic: Creating Communities of Practice — What? Why? How?

November 5 — 3:00-4:30 p.m. CT Topic: Leadership for Change

January 8 — 3:00-4:30 p.m. CT Topic: Implementation Science

March 12 — 3:00-4:30 p.m. CT Topic: Monitoring and Measuring Change

Register with Learning Forward so you will receive additional information with a link to participate closer to the time of the webinar.



Professional Learning That Moves Us From Knowing to Doing

Pre-Conference: Monday, Oct. 20th at the Hyatt in Wichita in conjunction with the KSDE Pre-Conference.

This session will prepare learners to make the move from knowing to doing by applying the Standards of Professional Learning. We will model strategies and provide resources so that participants can leave with a plan to move forward.

[Registration for the Pre-Conference closes Oct. 13th.](#)

\$125 registration fee that includes lunch & the resource, "*Reach the Highest Standards of Professional Learning*" by Shirley Hord et al,

(NOTE: *This requires separate registration from the KSDE Conference - but you do not have to attend the KSDE portion of the conference to attend the LFKS Pre-Conference*)

Go to learningforwardkansas.org to get more information and to register.

**Can't come to
the KSDE Pre-Conference in October?
Consider coming to the Regional Learning Lab on
November 14
at ESSDACK (Hutchinson)**

Same content and cost. [Registration for the Learning Lab closes Nov. 7th](#)

Learning Forward Awards Celebrate the Best in Professional Learning

As we get deeper into a new school year, it is important to keep in mind that January 15th, 2015 is the deadline for nominations for the seven Learning Forward Kansas awards. To nominate individuals or districts, please visit <http://learningforwardkansas.org/awards.html>

Here, you will find a description of the awards with a link to the nomination forms. Please look these nomination documents over in order to provide yourself plenty of time to complete the process.

Completed nominations, with any evidence used as supporting documentation, needs to be sent to

**Ben Smith, Learning Forward Kansas Awards Chair,
1300 N Cedar, Abilene KS, 67410**

The nomination categories are as follows:

- Cycle of Continuous Improvement Award
- Classified Professional Learning Award
- Impact Award
- Professional Learning Community Award
- Systemic Learning Award
- 21st Century Skills Professional Development Award
- District Staff Developer of the Year Award

Recognizing staff for the hard work they do is a great way to promote positive professional relationships and to create a climate where higher levels of student responsibility and learning can occur. Please make sure to have your nominations in by January 15th.

Reflections from the Learning Forward Kansas Leadership Conference



Article by Jill Bergerhofer,
Representative B East of
Hwy 281

“Not everything in life can be fun and games, but more of what we do in schools should be.” This is Curtis Chandler’s tagline, [Educational Specialist and Consultant](#), and it is found on his ESSDACK page. LFKS conference participants attending the session **Helping Students Solve the World’s Woes One Problem at a Time** were treated to a highly motivating and energetic

presentation. Curtis revealed how a highly-active, highly-practical and highly-fun learning environment can be achieved in every classroom regardless of content or grade level. In this session, Curtis shared principles that are necessities for the 21st Century classroom such as real-world relevance, well-ordered problems, and cost of learning, just-in-time learning and

learning by doing. Participants gained an overview of what PBL is, what it’s NOT, how it works, and many practical strategies for creating and managing a fully-engaged classroom. To learn more about what Curtis has to teach us about PBL visit his blog www.betterlearningforschools.com and click on “problem-based learning.”

New Teaching Practices for New Literacies

At the annual Learning Forward Leadership Conference in April, former Kansas Teacher of the Year, Curtis Chandler, presented on ways to engage students in alternate learning practices. His presentation, entitled New Teaching Practices for New Literacies, takes the approach that when students are engaged in problem solving activities, standards can be mastered in an environment that goes well beyond the traditional lecture based class. Chandler said, “If we all taught like problem-based science teachers, we could make huge strides in every area.”

By shifting the work we have students do, and basing their engagement around a lab-style

problem, regardless of curriculum or classroom, students will excel in reading, writing, speaking, and communicating about their own ideas. Too often, students are asked to restate somebody else’s ideas, but by engaging in authentic problem-based learning, students will be required to develop and share their own ideas, and by having a much higher stake in the process, produce higher quality work.

The key to problem based learning lies in “deliberate ambiguity.” Students have to take on their learning by crafting meaningful and creative solutions to a variety of scenarios. Teachers can then truly engage students in higher order thinking, rather than relying on students to simply remember

information. Additionally, this style of problem does not require any additional funds to be spent, so equity is established among different socio-economic indicators across the school.

Student engagement is the key to not only learning, but true understanding of content standards. By redefining the way that we have students approach problems, we can do more to ensure that authentic learning and problem solving is taking place.



Article by Ben Smith,
Representative A East
of Hwy 281

New Teaching Practices for New Literacies

@CurtisChandler6
Dr. Curtis Chandler
BetterLearningForSchools.com
ESSDACK

KLFA Emphasizes the Importance of Professional Learning



Kansas Learning First Alliance (KLFA) met June 10th at the Kansas Association of School Boards (KASB) building. Dayna Richardson, KLFA Chair, provided brief highlights of the LFA Conference.

Stephanie Hirsh, Director of Learning Forward and Chair of Learning First Alliance, our special guest, presented *Why Professional Learning Matters During Times of Complex Change:*

Becoming a Learning System. She engaged the group in a dialogue around professional learning (PL), including the Standards of Professional Learning adopted by KSBE.

- Why does professional learning matter? (Develop leaders for great schools, increase educator effectiveness, ensure collaboration so that no teacher works alone, many changes happening in our schools, the world is changing, others)
- What is the purpose of PL? (Individual, Team/School,

and Program Implementation)

- What is transforming professional learning? (What do we want more of? Less of?)
- Why transform professional learning? (Transformed PL = Transformed Classroom Instruction = Transformed Student Learning)

Dr. Hirsh stressed that all seven Standards of Professional Learning (learning communities, leadership, resources, data, learning designs, implementation, and outcomes) are important and cannot be used in isolation but *learning communities* is the standard that drives the change. She shared protocols that can be used with educators, focusing on professional learning that matters!

- Self assessment of implementation of the PL standards
- The Last Word using the Quick Guide to Professional Learning
- What KLFA

might do to support PL in Kansas

To support professional learning in Kansas, KLFA members brainstormed the following: creating a free web based tool/survey aligned to the standards for educators to evaluate their PL activities as well as gather state wide data, promoting the importance of PL beyond educators, creating some accountability structure to ensure KLFA initiatives are taken back to member organizations, developing a white paper pushing the fulfillment of the promise of the standards to the Board, getting more links on our KLFA website, then getting links on member organizations' websites to KLFA and/or Learning Forward's websites, promoting the free Learning Forward webinars, and collecting Kansas success stories to put on our website.

Dr. Hirsh focused on the creation of a systemic, comprehensive process that results in increased educator effectiveness and learning for ALL students. She challenged us to EXPERIENCE learning!!



Article by Dayna Richardson, Advocacy Chair



2014-15 LF KS Board

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