

Learning Forward blog now available through *Education Week*

Thanks to a valuable new partnership with *Education Week*, Learning Forward's blog is now published through the *Teacher* magazine web site. "We are delighted to have been invited by *Education Week* to pursue this collaboration. We view this as an important opportunity to exchange ideas with important members of our profession," said Executive Director Stephanie Hirsh.

The blog, now titled "Learning Forward's PD Watch" and available at http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/learning_forwards_pd_watch, will also be accessible through www.learningforward.org. Those who wish to comment on entries must do so through the *Teacher* magazine web site.

"Through this opportunity, we can influence and be influenced by others who do not have professional learn-

ing as the singular focus of their work," said Hirsh.

Learning Forward will continue to publish blog postings with the intention that the highlighted topics and issues raise concerns, inspire debate, and motivate action. Hirsh is excited to hear from members and nonmembers alike through the blogosphere. "Tell us what you want to see us address, and let us know when we fail to achieve our goal," she said. "We look forward to hearing from you and want to provide a valuable online forum for interaction and learning."

VISIT

http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/learning_forwards_pd_watch
AND www.learningforward.org

LEARNING FORWARD 2011 CALENDAR

Feb. 28	Deadline to apply for the Learning Forward Academy Class of 2012. www.learningforward.org/opportunities/academy.cfm
March 15	Apply to join the next cohort of Learning School Alliance schools. www.learningforward.org/alliance/index.cfm
April 1	Deadline for Awards nominations. www.learningforward.org/getinvolved/awards.cfm
July 17-20	2011 Summer Conference for Teacher Leaders and the Administrators Who Support Them, Indianapolis, Ind.

book club

LEADING ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

Authors Betty J. Alford and Mary Catherine Niño show how to shape a school culture conducive to high academic achievement for all students. An award-winning former principal and a professional development specialist provide the steps for developing teacher capacity, applying successful instructional practices, and advocating for English language learners. Written in straightforward language with quick reference charts, summaries, resources, and tools, the text provides:

- Strategies for creating a culture of ELL advocacy and achievement;
- Case studies from school leaders who have created positive

change for ELLs;

- Professional development tools that build teachers' knowledge of second-language acquisition; and
- Tips for strengthening home-school-community connections.

This guide is an easy reference for faculty and team meetings to build bridges between research and practical applications.

Through a partnership with Corwin Press, Learning Forward members can add the Book Club to their membership at any time and receive four books a year for \$49. To receive this book, add the Book Club to your membership before March 15. It will be mailed in April. For more information about this or any membership package, call 800-727-7288 or e-mail office@learningforward.org.





Let Learning Forward and its members be your partners in education

Well, howdy, partner! There's my Learning Forward welcome, Texas style. Since this is my first column as president of Learning Forward and I am from Texas, I didn't want to confound stereotypes in this partner-focused issue.

Here's my angle on partners. I consider a partner an ally that works hand in hand with schools and districts as we improve our educational learning so every student achieves. Such an ally brings to the table skills, resources, and a genuine desire to have our best interests in mind. An ally challenges our current thinking, celebrates successes with our campus or district, and is troubled when the successes don't happen as planned.

I know partners are allies in working to achieve Learning Forward's purpose when I hear about external consultants NOT taking jobs or contracts because they are one-time events that they know will not have a deep impact on how we do our jobs. It is also refreshing to hear that more and more leaders no longer call professional development providers asking them to "do a workshop" for two hours on our staff development day.

A few years ago, I had a conversation with a colleague in which

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Mark Diaz is president of Learning Forward's board of trustees.

on board MARK DIAZ

I was lamenting about the lack of time to learn. I was astounded that she spent at least 30 minutes a day in her office reading the latest *JSD* or other professional journal, article, or book. I realized that I made excuses to not learn, and that I chose to be swept up by the daily demands of the job.

Because of that conversation, I came to the very uneasy realization that I was a hypocrite. If I were truly student-oriented — if I really wanted to change the world by working with those students most often neglected — I was doing them and myself a disservice by not taking time to learn to better reach them. I now understand that my job is to learn and apply the learning so my students will succeed. It was with great trepidation that I asked learning facilitator and consultant Karen Anderson to be my coach.

My partner helped me achieve personal insights that all of us with helpful coaches have experienced. Anderson was my ally, in every sense of the word. In my current work, I view my partners in education as allies who intentionally work with our school to create a community of learners. We are a long way from that vision, but are clearly on the right trail we travel together.

As a school leader, I also see the absolute necessity to establish partnerships for the sake of our school. I work at a small pre-K-8 charter school, the Cedars International Academy in Austin, Texas. I'm so proud of our students and faculty, and I've learned that the great work we do together wouldn't be possible without our partners. Whether we're turning to consultants for professional learning, or the Austin planetarium for science enrichment, our partners are true team members.

Learning Forward is one partner that has been with me on my journey in learning. The organization has been my guide in impacting what I know and believe about how we learn so every student achieves. I invite you to partner with me as Learning Forward's president and as a fellow learner. It is my philosophy that strangers become friends, friends develop deeper relationships, together we experience life and offer assistance to one another. As partners in education, we laugh, eat, sweat, argue, decide, fail, succeed, and learn together. I hope Learning Forward and its members can be your team of allies on your learning journey. ■



Killion offers next e-learning program

Learning Forward Deputy Executive Director Joellen Killion facilitates a five-week e-learning program focused on planning and designing professional learning that maximizes results for educators and students. Learn strategies for setting ambitious goals and developing learning plans that produce meaningful outcomes and hold all stakeholders accountable for results.

Participants will develop and share learning plans with colleagues during live interactive sessions and weekly discussions.

“Planning Effective Professional Learning” begins Feb. 21 and is \$199 for members and \$249 for nonmembers. Learn more at www.learningforward.org/elearning/programs.

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THANKS TO OUR FOUNDATION'S SUPPORTERS

The Learning Forward foundation's 2010 campaign to raise money for scholarships and grants raised more than \$40,000. The 2010 Annual Conference included a walk-a-thon, where participants pledged on behalf of their learning heroes, and a fun photo event.

Many thanks to all who contributed to the foundation in 2010. Donor names are listed here. We sincerely regret any omissions. Please e-mail Lenore Cohen (lcohen@jhu.edu) with corrections.

The foundation is dedicated to advancing Learning Forward's purpose by supporting a new generation of leaders in professional learning. Learn more about the foundation's scholarships and grants, and make a donation online at www.learningforward.org/getinvolved/foundation.cfm.



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LEARNING FORWARD'S PURPOSE: Every educator engages in effective professional learning every day so every student achieves.

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