



Articulate a clear vision for beliefs and practices

Recently in Anaheim, Calif., the Academy 2012 class finished its fourth and final learning session. Among the many activities and conversations during session four is a reminder to members to complete three Teachable Points of View (TPOVs), which we define as an articulation of beliefs and principles related to one's practice.

It's not uncommon for Academy members to ask, "Why is it so important for us to put this in print?" "After all," they continue, "we already know what we believe."

It's an excellent question, and of course one we are well prepared to answer. We hold high expectations for our Academy graduates, as many hold key leadership positions in their school systems, state and provincial agencies, and external organizations. We know it will only be a matter of time before one of those moments comes when they, as leaders, will have to stand up for effective professional learning. A superintendent may be questioned by members of her school board about whether or not the district should maintain its professional learning department. A principal may be asked to justify his request to central office for an instructional coach as a resource. A teacher leader may find herself trying to convince a building principal of the need for time built into the schedule for team collaboration. At each of these moments, effective leaders have the responsibility to speak clearly, knowledgeably, and with precision about

ABOUT THE LEARNING FORWARD ACADEMY

The Learning Forward Academy is an extended and profound learning experience that models the organization's vision for professional learning and teamwork in schools. Academy members work collaboratively to learn about and solve significant student learning problems that occur within their school, district, or organization. For more information about the Academy, visit www.learningforward.org/academy.

their belief in the power of effective professional learning to address teaching and learning challenges.

When leaders are able to share their TPOVs within and beyond their schools, they demonstrate alignment with the Leadership standard, which states: **"Professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and results for all students requires skillful leaders who develop capacity, advocate, and create support systems for professional learning."**

As the standard emphasizes, leaders "embed professional learning into the organization's vision by communicating that it is a core function for improvement and by establishing and maintaining a public and persistent focus on educator professional learning." (2011) and TPOVs help to accomplish this function.

Speaking with clarity about professional learning is an important advocacy tool. In the all-too-familiar examples above, leaders are asked to justify the resources and conditions necessary to sustain ongoing learning. Such leaders explain not only the char-

acteristics of and need for professional learning; they also tie that learning explicitly to the changes in educator practice and results it accomplishes for students.

The committed leaders who complete the Learning Forward Academy are crucial to bringing the Standards for Professional Learning to life in schools, school systems, states, and provinces each and every day. We're proud that when they graduate, they will be ready, willing, and able to proclaim their visions to everyone within their spheres of influence. We aspire to empower all school leaders to do the same.

REFERENCE

Learning Forward. (2011). *Standards for professional learning*. Oxford, OH: Author. Available at www.learningforward.org/standards.

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