

## Resources to help introduce the Standards for Professional Learning

### STANDARDS FOR PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

This free online resource offers the standards and additional resources to support their implementation.

[www.learningforward.org/standards-for-professional-learning](http://www.learningforward.org/standards-for-professional-learning)

### STANDARDS FOR PROFESSIONAL LEARNING BOOK

The standards are also available in printed books.

[www.learningforward.org/bookstore/standards-for-professional-learning](http://www.learningforward.org/bookstore/standards-for-professional-learning)

### JSD, AUGUST 2011

This issue of *JSD* introduces the standards with detailed descriptions, articles about how practitioners use each of the standards, and perspectives from numerous professionals throughout the field.

[www.learningforward.org/publications/jsd/jsd-landing/jsd/2012/06/30/august-2011-vol.-32-no.-4](http://www.learningforward.org/publications/jsd/jsd-landing/jsd/2012/06/30/august-2011-vol.-32-no.-4)

### QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE

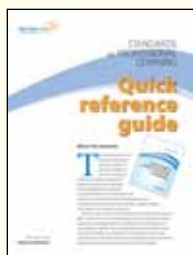
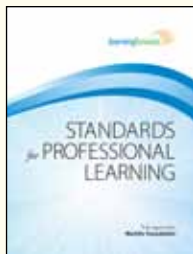
This brief guide introduces the standards and their relationship to effective professional learning and student results. Suggestions for how different roles can use the standards are included.

[www.learningforward.org/docs/pdf/standardsreferenceguide.pdf](http://www.learningforward.org/docs/pdf/standardsreferenceguide.pdf)

### FACILITATOR GUIDE

Designed to assist facilitators in introducing and helping others implement the standards, this free guide includes practical activities, reflection questions, and tools to deepen users' understanding of the standards and how effective professional learning leads to effective teaching practices, supportive leadership, and improved student results.

[www.learningforward.org/standards/facilitator-guide](http://www.learningforward.org/standards/facilitator-guide)



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velopment plan, how courses are developed, leadership roles, the importance of collaboration, how to combine resources for greater impact, etc.

“We are trying to introduce the standards through application, instead of just telling people about them,” said Leal. “When we develop our sessions, the sessions themselves will use collaborative approaches to professional learning. In the past, people would come alone, but now, for some sessions, we will ask attendees to come in pairs or teams. We have conversations with administrators and teams around developing PD plans, and within those conversations we incorporate the standards. We are trying to live the work and have that be the example.”

To help staffs understand the role of the standards and how they apply, Leal’s office worked with Learning Forward to create a custom standards-based tool kit that includes introductions to the standards, implications for each of the different roles within the district, and protocols for implementation. “This tool kit will be the guiding vehicle for realigning and supporting the professional development plan for staff at each level and role within

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Every student learns when every educator engages in effective professional learning.

the district,” said Leal. “It creates a common language and understanding of the work aligned to the standards and our roles to support a change from professional development to professional learning. For instance, one section of the tool kit explores what collaboration is and how we can plan for school wide and team collaboration, including how to structure that time and how to use data to plan collaborative learning.”

Schools participating in the Learning School Alliance use the book *Becoming a Learning School* (NSDC, 2009) in a similar fashion to understand principles of high-quality professional learning and establish common language.

Over the summer, Leal has been talking with building-level leaders, such as principals and school-based planning teams, to help them find entry points for moving toward standards-based professional learning. “I figure out where they are in their process, provide supportive resources, illustrate how the standards apply to their roles and processes, and talk about what resources we have available to help,” said Leal. “When I sit with an administrative team or school-based planning team to discuss their professional development plan or thoughts for planning, we might have a conversation around coordinating available resources at the district level, such as online professional learning texts that can support collegial learning circles, school-wide reads, follow-up to coaching conversations, etc. This equates to a

*Continued on p. 3*

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cost savings to the school and an entry point to strengthen the relationship between the school and the office of professional learning.”

For the coming school year, Leal will continue to support implementing the standards through workshops and courses, site visits, and on-site meetings at each school to walk teacher leaders and administrators through the various resources available to support the school’s job-embedded professional development.

“Our journey of moving toward professional learning and bringing the standards to life is a collaboration between us, the union, our teacher center, and other various groups within the district,” said Leal. “We have used focus groups and an advisory committee to talk through a lot of the things that are happening as we align practices. It has been a wonderful experience, and we have all learned a great deal from one another. The most powerful lesson learned was that we all want and strive for the same thing — high-quality professional learning across the system.”

“People ask me, ‘I’m just a teacher, or coach, or curriculum person, what can I do?’” said Kennedy. “I tell them to start using the standards with their own department or in their own work, which is a great opportunity to share the standards with more people. This kind of organic growth is how it all starts,” said Kennedy.

## REFERENCES

**Easton, L.B. (Ed.). (2008).** *Powerful designs for professional learning* (2nd ed.). Oxford, OH: NSDC.

**Killion, J. & Roy, P. (2009).** *Becoming a learning school*. Oxford, OH: NSDC.

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## 5 steps to help others see the standards in practice

**W**hen the new standards were introduced, Learning Forward, supported by MetLife Foundation, created a free downloadable facilitator’s guide that offers activities and tools to help introduce and deepen understanding of the newly revised Standards for Professional Learning.

Below are some activities taken from Unit 6 of the guide that help others understand what the standards look like in practice. Use the five activities below, and their accompanying tools on pp. 4-7 of this newsletter, to help others make the connections between the standards and their everyday practice.

### 1. Become familiar with how the standards are interconnected.

Each individual standard cannot fulfill its purpose without the other standards. To help others understand these relationships, review the sample questions on the tool on p. 4, Connecting the standards. Discuss how decisions about each standard relate to the other standards.

“The example questions are about learning designs,” said Kennedy. “They consider how learning designs affect each other standard. For example, how learning designs help communities connect to the data they use.”

### 2. Create questions of connectedness.

Use the tool on p. 5, How my standard connects, to have participants create their own questions that demonstrate connectedness among the standards.

“Ask deconstructing questions,” suggests Kennedy. “Such as what exactly do we mean, how do we do it, who is involved, what does this look like, how do we build capacity, etc.”

### 3. Review implications for when elements of a standard are missing.

Use the tool on p. 6, Managing changes in practice, to help learners understand what happens when one of the standards isn’t implemented. Each row contains a missing standard, and the final column of the right

names the implications of not having that standard in place in a system. Explain how the standards are interdependent and an individual standard cannot succeed on its own.

### 4. Have participants identify elements missing in their own work.

Once others understand the implications of neglecting a standard, have participants reflect upon their own work and identify which standards are missing or weak and possible solutions. Reading down the right side of the chart may help participants identify which standards are missing in their school or system.

“The idea is to help participants have dialogue,” explained Kennedy. “If Leadership is missing, the chart indicates that there is a lack of support. So the conversation is ‘yes, we agree, and this is how we might address the missing Leadership elements.’ The group can then explore the core elements of the Leadership standard and what actions or solutions would be most helpful.”

### 5. Identify driving and restraining forces and how to increase or decrease.

Participants then partner with others to use the tool on p. 7, Moving standards into practice, to examine the various driving and restraining forces and how to increase or decrease them.

“This exercise helps participants recognize the two forces at work and to start thinking of how to best navigate those. For example, driving forces might be a new superintendent who is forward thinking, or the new implementation of Common Core,” said Kennedy. “While restraining forces could be budget cuts and layoffs.”

*For more details about these and other guided activities and presentations to help introduce the standards to others, download the Facilitator Guide for the Standards for Professional Learning at [www.learningforward.org/standards/facilitator-guide](http://www.learningforward.org/standards/facilitator-guide).*

**Adapted from: Learning Forward. (2012).** *Facilitator guide: Standards for Professional Learning*. Oxford, OH: Author.