



From left: Principal Rachel Blundell and teachers Casey Kimball, Alana Carlisle, Glenn Sikes, and Keshani Pathirage are members of Santa Fe Junior High's 8th-grade math team.

Texas math team wins Shirley Hord Award

The 8th-grade math team at Santa Fe Junior High School in Santa Fe, Texas, is the winner of the Shirley Hord Learning Team Award. This award is given to a team of teachers that demonstrates Learning Forward's definition of professional learning in action.

Ten teams from schools across the United States submitted nominations. Each school submitted a video and documentation as evidence of its professional learning work.

"All of our learning teams have been using job-embedded professional learning tools to identify specific student challenges and have set goals that will raise our students' achievement levels," said Rachel Blundell, principal of Santa Fe Junior High. "The 8th-grade math team is one great example of that ongoing work."

Through an analysis of data from student achievement tests, walk-throughs, and teacher observations, the team identified their problem of practice and outlined specific goals. The team has developed instructional strategies and uses meeting time to discuss successes and challenges. The learning team includes teachers, Blundell, and an instructional coach and curriculum

To view the video submission of the winning team and learn more about the award, visit

www.learningforward.org/get-involved/awards/2013-hord-award-winner.

specialist.

"The 8th-grade math team at Santa Fe Junior High exemplifies collective commitment to student learning," said Stephanie Hirsh, Learning Forward's executive director. "We know that collaborative learning, when it includes critical elements of our definition and standards, leads to increased student achievement. This award honors the research Shirley Hord has conducted on the attributes and effects of successful professional learning communities."

The award includes funds to support three representatives of the winning team from Santa Fe Junior High to participate in Learning Forward's 2013 Summer Conference. The winning school will also receive \$2,500 to support collaborative professional learning and a gift of Corwin books for the school's professional library.



International influences help us prepare students for a changing world

In *That Used to Be Us*, Thomas Friedman and Michael Mandelbaum (2011) wrote, “In the span of a decade, people in Boston, Bangkok, and Bangalore, Mumbai, Manhattan, and Moscow, all became virtual next-door neighbors.”

This influence of technology and globalization is something we are all experiencing, even though we may not realize it. For example, the iPhone was released in 2007, the iPad in 2010. In less than a decade, the expansion of these and similar technologies has significantly changed how we work and interact with people we can now “see” around the world.

What does this mean for education? Today’s students will be working in the global marketplace. How are we preparing them for this ever-changing future? How are we learning from educators around the world? How are we preparing our educators?

Learning Forward has been purposefully expanding its global influence as an international association of learning educators. We have a growing membership of international educators, and our staff is working to get smarter about how education systems around the world are learning and growing, engaging with educators in Canada, Australia, and Singapore, just to name a few.

•
Jeff Ronneberg is president of Learning Forward’s board of trustees.

on board JEFF RONNEBERG

I experience this influence in many ways. As a participant in Learning Forward’s Academy, a 2½-year extended opportunity to grow as a learning leader, I saw up close the passion of educators from Northern Lights School Division in Alberta, Canada. How they view their work impacted how I view mine. This district is a learning community that aligns the work of educators around improving student learning.

The growing influence of international education is also present in the school district where I work. I recently spoke with a parent who is moving his children to our district in suburban Minneapolis from a school in Singapore. Our staff is planning the transition with the staff in Singapore just as they would if the student was moving from a community nearby.

Like schools across the country, our classrooms have an international influence. Ten years ago, only 2% of our students spoke a home language other than English. Today, that number is 21%.

Last spring, I met five elementary students who had just spoken at a ceremony that recognized the school’s progress with closing the achievement gap. Four of the five students have lived in another country, and they are each

younger than 9. (See photo below.)

This growing diversity is also apparent among our teachers. We have teachers who have taught in Europe, Asia, Canada, and South America. They bring a wealth of experience as well as knowledge of effective professional practice that benefits the whole staff.

In a world that grows smaller by the day due to the convergence of technology and globalization, Learning Forward is growing in influence,



Students who spoke at a recent Woodcrest Elementary School ceremony are, from left, Jeremy Penaloza, John Barban-Iregheta, Levi Kamara, Ashley Wongbi, and Dakota Wallner. Back row, from left: Amy Bjurlin, continuous improvement coach; Brian Grogan, Minnesota Academic Excellence Foundation chairperson; Judi Kahoun, principal; Jeff Ronneberg, superintendent.

connecting educators around the world so the students we work with are prepared to thrive in a future in which Boston and Bangalore are neighbors.

REFERENCE

Friedman, T.L. & Mandelbaum, M. (2011). *That used to be us*. New York, NY: Farrar, Straus and Giroux. ■

Nominations open for board of trustees

The Learning Forward board of trustees is seeking candidates for open positions on the board.

If you are interested in becoming a member of the board of trustees or know a Learning Forward member whom you would like to nominate, review the Board Oath of Office on the Learning Forward website for a description of expectations of board members.

Applications, available on the website, must be submitted by June 28. Applicants will be notified of the slate of candidates by Aug. 16.

Voting begins Sept. 2 and ends at 5 p.m. Eastern time on Oct. 1. All candidates will be notified of election results by Oct. 7, after which results will be posted on the Learning Forward website.

New board members begin their terms Dec. 11 at the end of the Annual Conference in Dallas, Texas.

To qualify as a candidate, an individual must:

- Have been a Learning Forward member for at least two years;
- Have attended at least one Learning Forward Annual Conference;
- Be employed in the field of education (special consideration will be given to candidates employed by K-12 school districts); and
- Have not have served on the board during the past two years.

Board members, among other duties and responsibilities:

- Advocate for and advance the purpose and priorities of Learning Forward;
- Commit to serve for a minimum of three years;
- Are current dues-paying members of Learning Forward;
- Attend and participate in all meetings of the board of trustees;
- Attend and perform board responsibilities at all Learning Forward conferences;
- Serve and support Learning Forward Affiliates and other programs;
- Represent Learning Forward at the request of the president;
- Represent the perspectives of the diverse membership of Learning Forward; and
- Promote Learning Forward membership and services.

For more information, visit <http://learningforward.org/who-we-are/board-of-trustees/2013-elections>.

book club

GROWING INTO EQUITY

Professional Learning and Personalization in High-Achieving Schools

By *Sonia Gleason and Nancy Gerzon*

What makes a Title I school high achieving, and what can we all learn from that experience? Professional learning and leadership that supports personalized instruction make the difference, as captured in the authors' research.

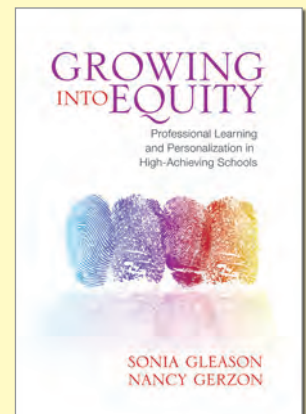
This book shows how four outstanding schools are making individualized learning a reality for every teacher and student. The common thread is the commitment to ensuring every student achieves. Readers will find:

- Guidance on identifying obstacles to equity within your school;
- Background that builds a case for personalized learning;
- Four case studies that show the values, professional learning practices, leadership, and systems that have helped schools transform learning; and

- Templates for creating team-based professional learning that expands individualized instruction in every classroom.

Discover new approaches for individual, team, and whole-school professional learning that support personalized learning, drawn from schools that are leaders in overcoming challenges and creating opportunities.

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 \$69 (for U.S. mailing addresses). To receive this book, add the Book Club to your membership before Sept. 15. For more information about this or any membership package, call 800-727-7288 or email office@learningforward.org.



"We have one tight window of time to ensure that educators have the content knowledge and pedagogical expertise to implement the Common Core."

— Stephanie Hirsh,
Learning Forward's
executive director



REPORT URGES STATE LEADERS TO 'SEIZE THE MOMENT'

State education leaders should take the lead in efforts to create more coherent, comprehensive, and sustained statewide professional learning systems that help educators meet the promise of the Common Core, according to a new policy brief by Learning Forward.

Seizing the Moment: State Lessons for Transforming Professional Learning underscores the importance of a coordinated state professional learning strategy, the adoption of professional learning standards, the value of assessing the quality of professional development, and strategies for leveraging state leadership to drive improvements at the regional and district level.

The brief is a first look at lessons learned through Learning Forward's ongoing initiative, Transforming Professional Learning to Prepare College- and Career-Ready Students: Implementing the Common Core.

"We have one tight window of time to ensure that educators have the content knowledge and pedagogical expertise to implement the Common Core," said Stephanie Hirsh, Learning Forward's executive director. "It's time for states to seize the moment and eliminate policy incoherence, set standards to codify and measure good professional learning practice, and develop the policy framework to provide sustained, intensive, ongoing, job-embedded professional learning in every school."

The brief includes a discussion of six key policy elements necessary to transform traditional approaches into a comprehensive system of professional learning as well as lessons for state education leaders.

Access the brief at www.learningforward.org/docs/default-source/commoncore/seizing-the-moment.pdf.

LEARNING FORWARD CALENDAR

- June 28:** Nominations for board of trustees candidates due.
- June 30:** Last day to save \$75 on registration for 2013 Annual Conference in Dallas, Texas.
- July 21-24:** Learning Forward's 2013 Summer Conference in Minneapolis, Minn.
- Dec. 7-11:** Learning Forward's 2013 Annual Conference in Dallas, Texas.



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

BUSINESS OFFICE

504 S. Locust St.
Oxford, OH 45056
513-523-6029, 800-727-7288
Fax: 513-523-0638
office@learningforward.org
www.learningforward.org

LEARNING FORWARD STAFF

Executive director

Stephanie Hirsh
stephanie.hirsh@learningforward.org

Director of strategy and development

Frederick Brown
frederick.brown@learningforward.org

Director of communications

Tracy Crow
tracy.crow@learningforward.org

Director of learning

Carol François
carol.francois@learningforward.org

Director, Center for Results

M. René Islas
rene.islas@learningforward.org

Director of business services

Leslie Miller
leslie.miller@learningforward.org

Director of marketing

Robert Tess
robert.tess@learningforward.org

Associate director of e-learning

Tom Manning
tom.manning@learningforward.org

Scholar laureate

Shirley Hord
shirley.hord@learningforward.org

Senior advisor

Joellen Killion
joellen.killion@learningforward.org

Distinguished senior fellow

Hayes Mizell
hmizell@gmail.com

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Jeff Ronneberg, president
Julie Blaine, president-elect
Kenneth Salim, past president
Mark Diaz
John Eyolfson
Clara Howitt
Deborah Renee Jackson
Myra Whitney