

## Learning Forward elects new board members

Janet Samuels and Olivia Zepeda have been elected to Learning Forward's board of trustees.

Samuels, superintendent of Norristown School District in Norristown, Pa., is a 10-year member of Learning Forward. She was co-chair of the 2005 Annual Conference in Philadelphia and a member of the Conference Program Planning Committee.

Her vision is to further increase the visibility of Learning Forward by having it recognized by educators as the preeminent organization for educator development. Her goal is to have Learning Forward serve as a vehicle for developing a deeper understanding and implementation of the Standards for Professional Learning and expanding on local, state, and national levels.

Zepeda, assistant superintendent for Gadsden Elementary School District #32 in San Luis, Ariz., is a seven-year member of Learning Forward. She is a



Janet Samuels



Olivia Zepeda

graduate of the Learning Forward Academy and presented at conferences in 2006 and 2007.

Zepeda has worked extensively in Mexico to develop leadership and professional learning communities. She also organized and supported continuous and uninterrupted learning for migrant students who move regularly on the agricultural cycle to Salinas, Calif.

Zepeda's goal is to guide and support decisions and their implementation to increase the effectiveness of teachers, particularly for immigrant students, thus increasing all students' successful learning and achievement.

Members whose terms expire this year are past president Kenneth Salim and Mark Diaz. The new trustees will join the board at the conclusion of Learning Forward's 2013 Annual Conference in Dallas in December.

### book club

#### UNLEASHING THE POSITIVE POWER OF DIFFERENCES

Polarity Thinking in Our Schools

By Jane A.G. Kise

**D**oes your team do more arguing than deciding? Some conflict can be healthy for teams and professional learning communities, but when two sides are unwilling to compromise, that's where polarity management comes in. By identifying mutual goals and common concerns, polarity management helps educators turn vicious cycles of debate into virtuous circles of managing complex issues.

This book provides a three-step process for managing polarities:

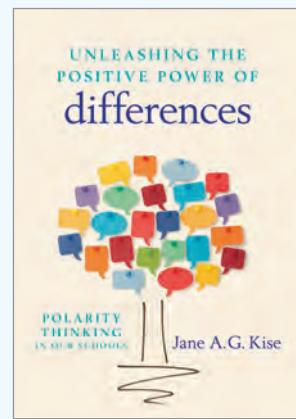
- **See it:** Recognize when you're dealing with two equally valuable perspectives on an issue.
- **Map it:** Identify the upsides and downsides of each position.
- **Tap it:** Apply strategies to leverage the best of both sides.

Kise applies the framework and tools of polarity management to the most contentious education reform debates and guides

readers in applying the framework to their local contexts.

Grounded in interdisciplinary research, the book includes sample polarity maps as well as case studies, professional development activities, and group exercises for mapping and tapping polarities.

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 Dec. 15. For more information about this or any membership package, call 800-727-7288 or email office@learningforward.org.





## Share the wheel for a smoother journey

**W**hen something changes in my life, it isn't always something I embrace with open arms. In fact, if I have not chosen that change for myself, I may struggle with it significantly.

Jeffrey Cufaude, a strategy consultant from Illinois, described this experience in his blog:

"When you're the driver, you've got control of the wheel and know not only where we're going, but each decision you're making along the way.

"In the passenger seat, things feel different. I don't have the same sense of control and comfort with our speed, direction, degree of the turns, etc. I can't prepare for your sudden veer left or rapid acceleration because I don't know they are coming. ... What's true in the car is also true for a change initiative. ... Just because people might be *hesitant* about a change doesn't mean they are ultimately *resistant* to it. Be careful you don't confuse the two" (Cufaude, 2012).

Most of us have times when we are in the driver's seat as well as times when we feel like we are in the passenger seat. For most of us, the driver's seat provides a much smoother, more comfortable ride. However, a willingness to share the wheel, especially when facing a significant trip,

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**Jeff Ronneberg is president of Learning Forward's board of trustees.**

### on board

JEFF RONNEBERG

may result in reaching your destination more easily.

How does this analogy relate to our work in schools? I have yet to find a school or organization that isn't trying to initiate some type of change. I also have yet to find a system that successfully initiates and sustains change without effectively distributing leadership through all levels.

Change happens one person and conversation at a time. The effective leader develops the capacity of formal and informal leaders to provide support, as well as a necessary push at times, so colleagues are able to navigate the highs and lows they will experience through learning and change.

In the Spring Lake Park (Minn.) Schools, we smooth the way through ongoing communication and involving the "passenger" as a partner in planning. Yet, despite our best efforts, we never design the perfect road map for professional learning and change.

Thus, we need to continually see the system from the varying perspectives of leaders from all levels: classroom teachers, informal leaders, new and experienced staff, instructional coaches, learning technology coaches, curriculum leads, and principals. Each provides a unique view, offering real-time guidance so we can adjust our



path as necessary to provide the support and learning staff members need to persist through difficulties.

Ultimately, school and district leadership is about aligning the work of adults around ensuring that each student has a learning experience that results in their feeling valued, inspired, and seeing no limits to their future. This responsibility requires a willingness to not only listen to others' ideas and experiences, but also develop the capacities of leaders at all levels, allowing them to share the driver's seat to navigate change successfully.

### REFERENCE

**Cufaude, J. (2012, December 3).** Things feel different in the passenger seat [Web log post]. Available at [www.ideaarchitects.org/2010/04/things-feel-different-in-passenger-seat.html](http://www.ideaarchitects.org/2010/04/things-feel-different-in-passenger-seat.html). ■

## FOUNDATION AWARDS IMPACT LEARNING LEADERSHIP

The Learning Forward Foundation is dedicated to impacting the future of leadership in schools that act on the belief that continuous learning by educators is essential to improving the achievement of all students.

The foundation awards grants and scholarships to individuals, teams, schools, and affiliates to further Learning Forward's vision, "Every educator engages in effective professional learning every day so every student achieves."

Such support is possible because of donations from Learning Forward members and friends. So far this year, the foundation has raised almost \$13,000; the annual goal for 2013 is \$50,000.

To pledge your support, contribute online at [www.learningforward.org/foundation](http://www.learningforward.org/foundation) or print and mail a contribution card

from the website.

In recognition of donor support, the foundation is holding a donor appreciation drawing. One entry will be included in the drawing for every \$50 donated between Jan. 1 and Dec. 31, 2013.

Prizes include:

- Learning Forward Comprehensive membership renewal;
- Five-day conference registration for you or a colleague;
- Two-night stay at a home in Arizona;
- Weekend in Chicago in a downtown condo; and
- Weekend in San Diego in a condo.

The drawing will be held in January 2014. Winners will be notified by email.

**STATEMENT OF OWNERSHIP,  
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(Required by 39 USC 3685)**

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**Contact person:** Leslie Miller. Telephone: (513) 523-6029
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	Average number of copies of each issue during preceding 12 months	Actual number of copies of single issue published nearest to filing date
a. Total number of copies	6,765	6,000
b. Paid and/or requested circulation		
1. Sales through dealers and carriers, street vendors, and counter sales (not mailed)	None	None
2. Paid or requested mail subscriptions (include advertisers proof copies and exchange copies)	5,499	5,075
c. Total paid and/or requested circulation	5,499	5,075
d. Free distribution by mail	850	550
e. Free distribution outside the mail	None	None
f. Total free distribution	850	550
g. Total distribution	6,349	5,625
Percent paid and/or requested circulation	87%	90%
h. Copies not distributed		
1. Office use, leftovers, spoiled	416	375
2. Returns from news agents	None	None
i. Total	6,765	6,000
Percent paid and/or requested circulation	81%	84%

**16. Publication of statement of ownership** will be printed in the December 2013 issue of this publication.

**17. Signature and title of editor, publisher, business manager, or owner.** I certify that all information furnished on this form is true and complete. I understand that anyone who furnishes false or misleading information on this form or who omits material or information requested on this form may be subject to criminal sanctions (including fines and imprisonment) and/or civil sanctions (including multiple damages and civil penalties)

# INTRODUCING NEW PUBLICATIONS AND LEARNING OPTIONS

To better serve members' needs, Learning Forward is replacing its Summer Conference with a year-round learning plan and introducing a new mix of publications.

The Summer Conference, which focused on teacher leaders and other school-based leaders, will be replaced by a year-round coordinated plan for learning that integrates e-learning programs and webinars and leverages member publications and resources.

Members will be able to connect through multiple channels that will promote 24/7 engagement, networking, and knowledge creation. In addition, many sessions at the Annual Conference will highlight school-based professional learning.

Learning Forward's publications mix will also change. *JSD* and *Tools for Learning Schools* will continue. A new digital action brief, called *Transform Professional Learning*, combines aspects of *The Learning System*, *The Learning Principal*, and *The Leading Teacher* to examine Learning Forward's position on an essential professional learning topic along with tools to advance practitioner knowledge and skills.

This year's *Transform Professional Learning* topics are:

- Leveraging technology for professional learning.
- Working effectively with third-party providers.
- Evaluation of professional learning.
- Creating a supportive culture for learning.
- Achieving equity through the Standards for Professional Learning.

*Transform Professional Learning* will be published six times a year. Members will get a shareable summary of each issue highlighting key points to pass along to peers.

Another new digital publication is a series of knowledge briefs exploring the research and rationale underlying topics in effective professional learning. A summary of this publication will also be available to share with colleagues.

Members will continue to receive *JSD* and *Tools for Learning Schools* as they have been — in print or digitally, according to their membership category.

For more information, visit [www.learningforward.org/publications/new-and-improved-publications](http://www.learningforward.org/publications/new-and-improved-publications).



THE PROFESSIONAL LEARNING ASSOCIATION

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

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