



FILL YOUR SUMMER WITH LEARNING

By Carol François

The research is clear: Failing to fill summer months with meaningful mental stimulation can cause students to suffer stagnation at best and regression at worst. The same is true for adult learners.

If teachers fail to fill their summer months with challenging mental exercise, they, too, will return to school less able to function at their highest levels at the time their students need them at their best.

Professional learning leaders have a charge to advocate for and design high-quality summer learning options for the educators they serve. There are lots of interesting ways educators can continue learning over the summer. See the box at right for a list of ideas.

Educators can challenge themselves and their colleagues to try at least one of these ideas, then see how stimulated they remain over the summer months.

Learning Forward has many free reading options on its website tailored for teacher, school, and system leaders to keep educators current on latest research and trends.

Another option is to attend Learning Forward's Summer

WAYS TO KEEP ON LEARNING

1. Do an action research project.
2. Lead a book study.
3. Write assessments with a colleague.
4. Give presentations at conferences.
5. Do research on the Internet.
6. Maintain a professional portfolio.
7. Write an article about your work.
8. Read education journals, magazines, and books.
9. Attend a conference or summer institute.

Institute July 17-20 in Chicago to learn with like-minded educators who see summer as their chance to learn, grow, and stretch. For more information, visit www.learningforward.org/learning-opportunities/summer-institute.

• **Carol François (carol.francois@learningforward.org) is Learning Forward's director of learning.**

IN THIS ISSUE OF JSD THE LEARNING STARTS HERE ▼

If you're interested in ...	Start with the article on page ...
• EXTERNAL partnerships	16, 22
• COACHING	22, 28, 42
• SYSTEM change	10, 16, 32, 38, 44
• DATA use	44

"You can't change who you are, but you can change what you have in your head, you can refresh what you're thinking about, you can put some fresh air in your brain."

— Ernesto Bertarelli



SUMMER LEARNING PLAN

Summer vacation isn't what it used to be. Many educators find that their so-called free time fills up so quickly that the time to renew and recharge is over almost before it begins. How will you create opportunities to refill your tank before school starts? Answer the questions at right to sketch out a plan of action for your learning time.



REFLECTING ON LAST YEAR

My most significant achievements this year:

How did my learning contribute to these achievements?

What was the role of collaboration with colleagues?

My most significant challenges this year:

What in my sphere of influence contributed to these challenges?

Who in my circle of colleagues was successful in this arena?

LOOKING AHEAD

How will I build on my success for next year?

What do I need to learn to do so?

How will I strengthen my knowledge and skills to address the challenges I faced this year?

Who can help me do so?

What new challenges do I anticipate for next year?

ACTION PLAN

Knowledge and skills I will develop:

Evidence that this is a smart focus for me this summer:

Learning that will support this growth:

Co-learners with whom I can work:

Resources I have/I need to do this:

How I will sustain this learning beyond the summer:

Evidence that will demonstrate growth: