

@ learning forward

LEARNING FORWARD BY THE NUMBERS



As the school year wound down in late May, Learning Forward conducted its first comprehensive membership survey since 2010. The survey was sent to current and former members along with other educators who have never joined. More than 2,400 people responded. Here are some highlights.

90%

HAVE a master's degree or higher.



HAVE worked in education for more than 16 years.

78%

97%

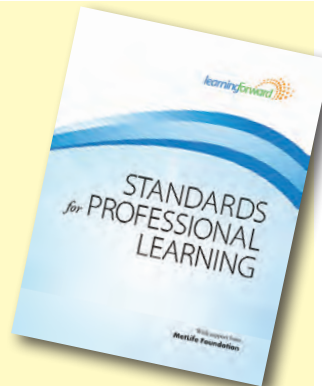
PLAN to remain in education.

ASPIRE to a job change.

65%

70%

OF CURRENT members say that the Standards for Professional Learning are very or quite important in their work.



OF RESPONDENTS who have never been members are very or quite familiar with the standards.

46%

TOP THREE REASONS FOR JOINING LEARNING FORWARD

- 1 Member publications.



- 2 Being part of a community focused on professional learning.
- 3 Advocacy about professional learning's importance.

TOP CHALLENGES FOR ALL RESPONDENTS

- 1 Prioritizing, managing, and implementing new programs and initiatives.



- 2 Justifying the investment in professional learning.



New central office philosophy makes professional learning a team effort

Standing barely 5 feet tall, Janie Pyle, associate superintendent of curriculum and instruction for Raytown (Missouri) Quality Schools, is nothing short of a stick of administrative dynamite.

Affectionately known as Dr. J, she leads her troops with might, passion, and a sense of urgency. I recently met with Pyle to discuss how her role as central office administrator has changed during her six years in Raytown.

“One of the primary responsibilities of central office to is to be well-researched, well-read, and well-trained in the best professional learning,” Pyle said. “Marzano, Reeves, Schmoker, Wiggins, Hattie — our staff deserves the best. You simply have to know the research to effect positive change in your school system. But change theory must also be modeled. And it takes time.

“No matter how much dust it stirred, I knew I had to get out of the office and into schools, modeling and building relationships,” she said. “The community did not immediately understand this untethering. Patrons, parents, secretaries, administrators, and teachers didn’t understand why I was continually away from my desk during office hours.

“When you make this decision to be visible in schools — modeling

•
Julie Blaine is president of Learning Forward’s board of trustees.

on board JULIE BLAINE

your expectations and giving effective feedback — change eventually begins to happen,” she said. “I knew if we wanted Raytown administrators and teachers to meet new challenges of research-based practice, then every administrator must become visible in every classroom, and all teachers must begin working collaboratively with all colleagues to hone their practice.

“In Raytown, we target an unwavering focus on five specific components for improvement,” she said. “We want our administrators and staff to possess a comprehensive understanding of rigorous curriculum design and to recognize and discuss critical issues related to effective instruction. We want them to perform meaningful instructional walk-through observations and evaluations and to analyze various data forms with a focus on instructional trends. At every opportunity, we expect everyone to give and receive powerful, honest feedback.”

Pyle noted that the partnership between the district and University of Central Missouri’s Central Regional Professional Development Center helps anchor the district’s focus. The center’s consultants provide custom professional learning in assessment design and curriculum development aligned to Missouri Learning Standards.

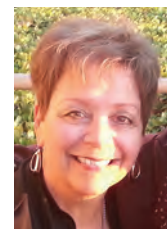
The center also conducts ongoing

curriculum reviews for English language arts and mathematics. Working alongside center consultants, Pyle and Raytown leadership teams orchestrate planning, leading, and debriefing these sessions. Professional learning is a team effort.

When asked to describe the change she is most proud of during her tenure, Pyle said, “I’m most proud that we no longer work in isolation. The realization that the status quo is more painful than change is now our own truth.

“I visit classrooms regularly. Administrators practice walk-throughs, monitoring application of best practice,” she said. “We have developed a team of 160 teacher leaders who are constantly in and out of each other’s classrooms, holding themselves accountable for district teaching standards. Their classrooms are open models for mentoring new skills and sharing knowledge of instructional planning and delivery for all our teachers.”

As I was leaving her office, Pyle handed me a flier entitled “Dr. Pyle’s Assumptions,” which included these: “You are more comfortable with change than most. You are a positive person and solution-oriented. You are collaborative and invite questions and discussion. You are comfortable with your success and failure and can learn equally from both.” That pretty much sums up a new central office philosophy. ■



Janie Pyle



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

Deputy executive director

Frederick Brown
frederick.brown@learningforward.org

Director of communications

Tracy Crow
tracy.crow@learningforward.org

Senior vice president of research, development, and demonstration

M. René Islas
rene.islas@learningforward.org

Director of business services

Leslie Miller
leslie.miller@learningforward.org

Associate director of publications

Anthony Armstrong
anthony.armstrong@learningforward.org

Associate director of learning programs

Suzanne Siegel
suzanne.siegel@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

Learning ambassador

Carol François
carol.francois@learningforward.org

Distinguished senior fellow

Hayes Mizell
hmizell@gmail.com

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Julie Blaine, president
Deborah Renee Jackson, president-elect
Jeff Ronneberg, past president
John Eyolfson Myra Whitney
Clara Howitt Olivia Zepeda
Janet Samuels

book club

DESIGNING SCHOOLS FOR MEANINGFUL PROFESSIONAL LEARNING:
A Guidebook for Educators

By Janice Bradley

Grounded in research, learning theories, and Learning Forward's Standards for Professional Learning, this book outlines the processes for selecting and creating learning designs appropriate for and specific to the context and needs of adult learners at their school site.

Designed to encourage educators to take risks and try new practices, this resource offers tools, processes, and procedures that show how to promote adult active engagement. Learn how to create optimal learning experiences that inspire and how learning designs can promote individual and collective creativity with a diverse school staff.

The book includes vignettes and cases of enactment showing how real people in real settings design learning opportunities connected to classrooms.

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**.

LEARNING FORWARD CALENDAR

- Nov. 6:** Webinar featuring Jane Kise. Topic: Common ground, common goals.
- Nov. 15:** Manuscript deadline for June 2015 *JSD*. Theme: Individualized, personalized, collective learning.
- Nov. 20:** Deadline to order advance tickets for the Learning Forward Foundation Benefit Concert featuring Little River Band.
- Dec. 6-10:** 2014 Annual Conference in Nashville, Tennessee.
- Dec. 8:** Learning Forward Foundation Benefit Concert featuring Little River Band, Nashville, Tennessee.
- Jan. 15, 2015:** Manuscript deadline for August 2015 *JSD*. Theme: Career pathways.

JOIN THE LEADERSHIP SOCIETY

The Learning Forward Foundation has established a Leadership Society as a way to recognize donors at different levels of giving with a range of donor benefits.

Benefits include a certificate of giving, recognition on the website and in the annual report, lunch with the executive director, complimentary memberships, and conference registrations.

Donation levels are:

- Copper: \$20-\$99;
- Bronze: \$100-\$299;
- Silver: \$300-\$499;
- Gold: \$500-\$999; and
- Platinum: \$1,000 or more.

For more information, visit
[www.learningforward.org/
foundation/leadership-society](http://www.learningforward.org/foundation/leadership-society).

The Learning Forward Foundation is committed to developing professional learning to improve educator performance that drives an increase in student achievement. Funds raised by the foundation provide grants and scholarships for individuals, schools or teams, principals, and superintendents to further Learning Forward's purpose.

Join the Leadership Society and pay it forward by investing in educators making an impact through professional learning.