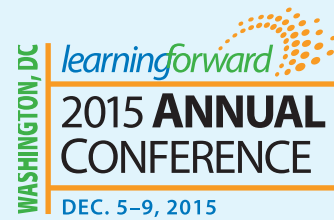


Learn more about opportunities to inspire forward-thinking educators at Learning Forward's Annual Conference Dec. 5-9 in Washington, D.C.



WHY DO I GO *to the* CONFERENCE?

IT'S WHERE CONVERSATION, COLLABORATION, AND CRITICAL THINKING AROUND

By Mark Onuscheck

Over the past three years, Learning Forward's Annual Conferences have provided me with some of the best professional learning experiences in my career. Not only do the conferences bring together leading minds in education, they also open up important dialogue around continuous improvement.

That's why I go — to be a part of conversations that lead positive educational changes, collaborate with other educators working to actualize these changes, and think more critically about how we should all collaborate around the challenges educators face day to day.

Every year, our school brings a group of administrators and teachers to the conference. In this way, we are better able to build a shared understanding and commitment to the work we do together at Stevenson High School in Lincolnshire, Illinois. Developing our decisions with multiple informed viewpoints helps us to better communicate, problem solve, and generate fresh ideas. A collaborative spirit drives our work at Stevenson, and Learning Forward conferences help to sustain our central mission: success for

every student.

Taking the time out of our busy year to think and reflect about how we make a commitment to the growth of every student and to learn from other schools' successes helps us to identify ways we need to improve and how we can become better decision makers. I've been able to network and stay in touch with schools and leaders from around the country — which is key to my own commitment to staying a forward-thinking educator.

During the conferences, our team engages in optimistic conversations on wide-ranging topics such as student growth, the use of technologies, and the power of building equity through common formative assessment. Our work in these three areas continues to thrive. And in all of these areas, we are seeing the smart work take hold.

Likewise, the conference supports the more difficult questions we grapple with regarding using data wisely, the function of teacher evaluation, and the leadership behind change. The variety of topics and the expertise at the conferences are visionary and yet downright practical — both of which help me to think about my work in

constant revision.

The lasting quality of Learning Forward's Annual Conference is the ongoing challenge to be innovative. Anyone who attends a conference like this is going to leave inspired and thinking differently. Whenever I go to a Learning Forward conference, I'm reminded of why we must come together as professionals — to think together, support one another, and help each other lead in our various roles.

I'm also reminded that we are responsible for pushing each other to be come better every day. The rich diversity of our students demands inventive educators who care passionately about the power of learning. Learning Forward's Annual Conference galvanizes education experts and thoughtful teachers and administrators. This powerful combination working side by side shapes and reshapes the best work we all must do for our students.



Mark Onuscheck

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