



HERE WE GO

Eric Celeste

Learning is at the heart in name, mission, and spirit

We know change is hard. Author Mary Shelley called it the most difficult of things: “Nothing is so painful to the human mind as a great and sudden change,” she wrote. We’re fully aware then that the change we have introduced with this issue — not only redesigning Learning Forward’s journal, but also changing the name from *JSD* to *The Learning Professional* — might give readers a case of the fantods. The change is not sudden, however. It was well-considered and purposeful, and we believe it is indicative of where we are as an organization and you are as a professional.

Why make these changes? We believe in systems of continuous improvement. For more than a year, we’ve been asking ourselves and our members how we can take a product we love and make it better. We settled on several goals, four of which readers will notice quickly:

A stronger emphasis on member and practitioner voices. This is most evident in our new Voices section, where we will cast a spotlight on a member doing great work in the field. This month, it’s principal Syeda Woods (p. 8).

More tools and advice that respond to reader questions and specific challenges. We will keep the Tools section of the journal — many of you told us it’s your favorite section — and

we’ve added an advice column called “Ask” to help practitioners with their real-world learning challenges (p. 12).

Greater flexibility to address timely topics. These changes are subtler, but we’re excited about them. One way this is manifest is simply in our topic choices. (See p. 65, where our Tool is centered on changes under the new federal Every Student Succeeds Act.) But we’ve reduced the number of theme articles — now found in the Focus section — so we



can include a wider variety of topics in our nonthematic feature-length articles, now found in our Ideas section.

An updated look and feel. Evidence of this smart, modern design can be found throughout the magazine. Be sure to look over the table of contents called “In this issue” on p. 1 to familiarize yourself with our new magazine.

Why change the name to *The Learning Professional*? While we appreciated that *JSD* (formerly *Journal of Staff Development*) spoke to our heritage, it no longer reflects our mission or the state of our profession. Learning is at the heart of our organization in name,

mission, and spirit. Learning is central to our vision — “excellent teaching and learning every day” — and the word “professional” speaks to the expertise and standard of excellence required of learning leaders.

As well, “professional” speaks to expanded nature of our mission and a recognition of the many roles members serve. We will always work to serve educators in a number of roles. We know that our members are not limited to just one title, whether coach, administrator, or principal. We also know that you will move through many career stages in your current and future roles, and we want to serve and celebrate you in each phase of your career path.

For the staff at *The Learning Professional* and at Learning Forward, please consider these changes a testament to the vital work you do and the children who benefit from it. We hope you see this change as we do: one that represents our great pride in professional learning, the educators who practice it, and the stories we share along the way.

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