



BEING FORWARD Scott Laurence

RECOGNIZE THE HARD WORK OF PROFESSIONALS

I am very honored to serve as the incoming board president of Learning Forward. It is a great honor, and I look forward to serving the organization faithfully over the course of the next year.

It is also an honor to write my first column in our new magazine, *The Learning Professional*. The magazine's new name and design replaces that of *JSD*, formerly known as *The Journal of Staff Development*, that has been one of our main communication tools for many years. (For a timeline of name changes throughout the journal's history, see "The evolution of *The Learning Professional*" on p. 71.)

I have had a long and broad professional history. I taught for more than 10 years at the high school level, was a site administrator for more than a

decade, and worked at the district level for yet another 10 years.

who eventually had the opportunity to play professional baseball. I have always cherished that time. I believe it made me a better teacher and administrator. The traits that make a successful professional athlete also make a successful student. I also believe those traits exemplify quality educators — who are themselves part of a valued, demanding profession. That's why they are professionals in every sense of the word.

From my experience, there is something special about professional athletes: the hard work, the dedication to continuous improvement, the collaboration, the accountability. Too often, educators are addressed in a way that doesn't emphasize the term "professional." In my years as a teacher,



outdated. Staff development represents an outmoded concept of the robust professional learning that we expect educators to experience daily. The new name of the journal, *The Learning Professional*, highlights the large number of people we reach and feature. All our members are involved in learning, no matter their role or function. They lead learning, model learning, and study learning for the benefit of all educators and students.

We looked at many different names and formats. We looked at how best to serve our members and grow our resources to fit the needs of our full community. We looked at how best to bring all our resources in line to best promote our goals and mission.

After many months and multiple discussions, we decided the name *The Learning Professional* aligns the journal with the entire organization. I feel the same sort of pride in helping launch the magazine as I did watching those ballplayers.

Scott Laurence is president of Learning Forward's board of trustees. ■

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But education wasn't my first professional love. Growing up, I wanted to be a professional baseball player. After graduating high school, I was fortunate enough (and, to be fair, worked hard enough) to play baseball at Stanford University. After graduating, I combined teaching and collegiate coaching for the early part of my professional career. In the athletic portion of my work life, I could interact with many young men

principal, and superintendent, I saw the exact same traits in my colleagues as I did when I was playing and coaching future Major League Baseball players.

That is why I am so excited with this reimagining of Learning Forward's journal. The board of trustees and the executive committee have been working on the new design and improvements of the journal for over 18 months. We thought it was important to make the changes for many reasons. The name and connotation of *JSD* has become