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The Arthur Vining Davis Foundations Grant Supports National Staff Development Council's Learning School Alliance

DALLAS—March 11, 2010—The National Staff Development Council has received a \$200,000 grant from The Arthur Vining Davis Foundations to promote effective professional learning and improve student achievement in high schools. The grant will contribute to the Learning School Alliance High School community, specifically to support and connect high schools committed to collaborative leadership and learning consistent with NSDC's standards for staff development.

“Professional development that engages teachers in collaborative learning within their schools using a cycle of continuous improvement fosters collective responsibility for student success,” said Stephanie Hirsh, executive director of NSDC. “The Learning School Alliance provides a venue, encouragement, and recognition for high schools to implement these practices.”

NSDC created the Learning School Alliance (LSA) to improve instruction and student learning as well as to provide exemplars of professional learning communities that advance educator and student performance. The program is based on research validating the contribution of professional learning communities in schools committed to improving the performance of both teachers and students. High school teachers and principals from up to 30 schools will gain knowledge and skills necessary for creating strong collaborative professional learning communities on their campuses by utilizing both virtual and face-to-face resources and coaching tools developed by NSDC. The project will also incorporate and share findings from NSDC's Multi-Year Study of the State of Professional Learning in the U.S. and the perspectives of teachers and principals documented in the MetLife Survey of the American Teacher series.

“Teacher quality is far and away the most important driver of student achievement. Therefore, quality professional development must be at the core of high school improvement efforts. We are pleased to support NSDC's Learning School Alliance, which will facilitate and showcase effective professional development for a wide range of high school settings,” commented William Keator, Vice President for Programs, Arthur Vining Davis Foundations.

Lessons from the Learning School Alliance will be shared broadly in NSDC publications, conferences, and workshops, as well as the NSDC website.

About National Staff Development Council

The National Staff Development Council's purpose is ensuring that every educator engages in effective professional learning every day so every student achieves. With more than 12,000 members, NSDC is the only education association working solely to increase student achievement through more effective professional development. NSDC views high-quality professional development programs as essential to creating schools in which all students and staff members are learners who continually improve their performance. To learn more about NSDC and our activities, visit www.nsd.org.

About The Arthur Vining Davis Foundations

The Arthur Vining Davis Foundations are named for the former president of the Aluminum Company of America. The Foundations make grants in five program areas: higher education, secondary education, religion (graduate theological education), health care (caring attitudes), and public television. Secondary education grants support “innovative professional development programs that strengthen teachers and their teaching in grades 9–12.” For more information about The Arthur Vining Davis Foundations, visit www.avdf.org.