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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Third-Grade Team at Clinton Elementary Receives Learning Forward's Shirley Hord Learning Team Award

DALLAS—July 19, 2011—The third-grade team from Clinton Elementary School in Lancaster County School District, Lancaster, S.C., is the winner of the 2011 Shirley Hord Learning Team Award. This award, presented by Learning Forward and Corwin, is given to a team of teachers who demonstrate Learning Forward's definition of professional development in action.

Learning teams from schools across the United States and Canada submitted nominations for the award, including videos of their teams at work. Submissions were reviewed using Learning Forward's Learning School Innovation Configuration Map. Two schools, Rosemary Middle School from Andrews, S.C. and Clinton Elementary School from Lancaster, S.C., were named finalists. A vote of Learning Forward members determined the winner.

“This team not only impacted their students, but also their colleagues,” said Clinton Elementary School Principal Rachel Ray. “They understand that their actions have a direct impact on student learning.” Schoolwide, 70% of Clinton students were reading independently on grade level in May 2011, compared to 8% in August 2009. Third-grade students have made a 26-point gain in ELA and 28-point gain in mathematics. Through collaboration in professional learning teams, data analysis, analysis of student work, and the support of an instructional facilitator, the percentage of Clinton students performing below basic on the state ELA test dropped 52% between 2009 and 2011.

“Teacher collaborative learning leads to increased student achievement,” said Joellen Killion, deputy executive director of Learning Forward. “When teachers extend their professional expertise to meet the needs of all students, refine their teaching practices, analyze students' classroom work to understand student learning, and make necessary adjustments in their teaching through professional learning, all students benefit. The Shirley Hord Learning Team Award honors the research Shirley has conducted on the attributes and effects of successful professional learning communities. The third-grade team at Clinton Elementary is a strong example of a learning team in action.”

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Learning Forward's annual awards program recognizes individuals for their commitment to improving student achievement through effective professional learning. Learning Forward and Corwin presented the Shirley Hord Learning Team Award at the Learning Forward 2011 Summer Conference Tuesday, July 19 in Indianapolis. Corwin generously sponsored the award, which included funds to support three representatives of the winning third-grade team from Clinton Elementary to participate in Learning Forward's 2011 Summer Conference. Clinton Elementary School will also receive a \$2,500 gift to the school to support collaborative professional learning, and a gift of Corwin books for the school's professional library.

About Learning Forward (formerly National Staff Development Council)

Learning Forward's purpose is ensuring that every educator engages in effective professional learning every day so every student achieves. Learning Forward is a nonprofit, international association of learning educators focused on increasing student achievement through more effective professional development. To learn more about the impact of high-quality professional learning, visit www.learningforward.org.

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