



Contact: Kari Hudnell, 202-955-9450 ext. 318, khudnell@communicationworks.com
Shaina Cook, 202-955-9450 ext. 317, scook@communicationworks.com

Learning Forward Receives \$1 Million Grant to Develop Professional Learning Tools for Common Core State Standards

Grant Will Help to Increase High School Graduation Rates through State and District Staff Professional Learning, Implementing Technology-Enabled Solutions

DALLAS—January 23, 2012— Learning Forward has received a \$999,795.00 grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to further its efforts in providing support to states adopting and implementing Common Core State Standards (CCSS). The grant will also support Learning Forward to create iPD (innovative professional development) technology and to continue its work in creating a statewide, comprehensive professional learning system to support educators as they implement CCSS and new student assessments.

The grant from the Gates Foundation will fund the development of an iPD solution, which will provide educators at the state and district levels, a resource to audit their professional learning and use the results to improve decision making and practices.

“Learning Forward shares the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation’s commitment to increase the number of students who graduate from high school career and college ready,” said Stephanie Hirsh, executive director of Learning Forward. “We look forward to working with the foundation to support the professional learning and its infrastructure necessary for full implementation of CCSS.”

Learning Forward’s initiative, *Transforming Professional Learning to Prepare College- and Career-Ready Students: Implementing the Common Core*, aims to create a multi-tier, multi-year comprehensive plan that stages professional development for the standards and assessments. The initiative looks to use and develop innovative technology solutions for professional learning for teachers and school leaders.

Kentucky, the initiative’s demonstration state, will host a majority of the work as a learning laboratory for Learning Forward. In addition to serving as the development site of the initiative’s professional learning framework, Kentucky will review its current policies, expenditures, and initiatives related to professional learning in order to identify gaps and opportunities to support implementation of Common Core, new assessments, and prepare students for college and careers. Six Critical Friend states—Georgia, Illinois, New Hampshire, New Jersey, Utah, and Washington—will contribute to the development of the Kentucky’s enhanced professional

learning framework, and will have access to all processes, resources, and tools developed in the demonstration state for use in their states.

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About Learning Forward

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.