



NEWS RELEASE
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CONTACT: Joellen Killion, 303-520-6790, joellen.killion@learningforward.org
Sarah Herring, 202-955-9450, ext. 312, sherring@communicationworks.com

Learning Forward Announces Release of *Meet the Promise of Content Standards: The Principal*

DALLAS—Dec. 18, 2012—Learning Forward announces the release of *Meet the Promise of Content Standards: The Principal*, a brief that identifies the principal’s critical leadership role and influence in communicating and nurturing a vision for student academic success that is aligned with the Common Core State Standards (CCSS).

Drawing upon the first-hand experiences of principals in schools across the country and leadership research from The Wallace Foundation, the brief explores the critical role a successful principal plays in achieving the vision of the Common Core by focusing on five essential principal practices associated with increasing student achievement.

It also presents the challenges principals face in their efforts to implement the new standards and provides recommendations for action by state and local stakeholders in order to support principals in their daily role leading change.

Meet the Promise of Content Standards: The Principal was published as part of Learning Forward’s ongoing initiative to develop a comprehensive system of professional learning that spans the distance from the statehouse to the classroom. The initiative, [Transforming Professional Learning to Prepare College- and Career-Ready Students: Implementing the Common Core](#) is supported by Sandler Foundation, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, and MetLife Foundation.

The two-year initiative’s focus is on providing tools and resources to states and school systems as they work to implement CCSS and new assessments. The brief is the latest in a series released by Learning Forward to help share lessons learned through the initiative with district and state leaders.

The new standards demand more involvement of principals than previous reforms, requiring principals to review and refine their current leadership roles and strategies to bring them in sync with the overall vision and goals of the Common Core. With continuous opportunities to engage in collaborative professional learning with their peers and ongoing support from their district and state leaders, principals will have the opportunity to meet the challenge and succeed.

“The leadership of principals will be key to the success of the standards,” said co-author Joellen Killion, Learning Forward’s senior advisor and director of the Transforming Professional Learning initiative. “Implementing the new standards will require school leaders to become strong advocates of change and collaborative professional learning.”

For each practice, the brief presents actions that are core to strengthening principal leadership. These efforts include: shaping a vision of academic success for all students; creating a hospitable climate; cultivating leadership in others; improving instruction, and managing people, data and processes.

The brief also recognizes the significant challenges principals face in implementing the new standards, including a lack of opportunities for school leaders to learn about the standards and the new instructional methodologies they require, balancing multiple priorities, providing support with fewer resources, managing multiple, significant changes simultaneously, and maintaining momentum.

To help principals overcome these challenges, the brief highlights the importance of support and commitment from multiple agencies. With adequate support and shared responsibilities among state boards of education, state departments of education, school districts—and principals, more students will have the opportunity to experience the high-level learning as a result of the new standards.

Among its strategies for success, the brief recommends:

- **State Boards of Education** establish standards for principal certification and performance that include leading professional learning and change within schools and school communities to strengthen teaching and learning.
- **State Boards of Education** direct sufficient resources toward implementation of Common Core standards.
- **State Departments of Education** establish expectations that principal preparation programs and ongoing professional learning for licensed principals prepare and support them to implement Common Core standards.
- **State Departments of Education** support flexibility in regulations that allow principals to create conditions and structures to implement Common Core standards to meet unique needs within their schools.
- **School districts** engage the school district community in understanding the purpose and value of Common Core standards.
- **School districts** design a districtwide plan with clear goals and expectations and adequate resources for implementing Common Core standards.
- **Principals** collaborate with staff, students, and members of the school community to establish a vision of academic success.
- **Principals** access, analyze, and share information and resources about Common Core standards and instructional transformation.

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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.