



NEWS RELEASE
For Immediate Release

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New Officers and Board Members Lead Learning Forward

DALLAS—December 19, 2013—Julie Blaine, executive director of the Central Regional Professional Development Center at the University of Central Missouri, began her term as president of Learning Forward at the conclusion of the association's annual conference in Dallas, Texas, on December 11, 2013.

Blaine succeeds Jeff Ronneberg, superintendent of Spring Lake Park Schools in Minneapolis, Minn., who joined the Learning Forward Board in 2010. Ronneberg now serves as past president.

Blaine also joined Learning Forward's Board of Trustees in 2010. In her current position, Blaine offers support to educators in 73 districts in the central region of Missouri and in several surrounding districts. Blaine has been a member of Learning Forward for 14 years. She served on the host committee for the 2009 Annual Conference in St. Louis and is the recipient of the 2007 Distinguished Staff Developer award and the 2003 New Staff Developer of the Year award. In Missouri, she has led regional and state professional development initiatives, developed the state's outreach teachers' academy, participated in the revision of the state's professional development guidelines, and is a member of the PD School advisory board for the University of Central Missouri. Blaine also served as the president of the Missouri Learning Forward affiliate organization.

Deborah Renee Jackson is Learning Forward's new president-elect. Jackson is special project administrator for Fairfax County Public Schools in Virginia and a former principal.

"I am so impressed and gratified by the expertise our board members offer as we consider how to best serve our members and the field," said Stephanie Hirsh, executive director of Learning Forward. "Their on-the-ground knowledge of the challenges educators face in schools is critical to representing and responding to member needs," said Hirsh.

Leaving the board this year are Kenneth Salim of Weymouth, Mass., and Mark Diaz of Austin, Texas. Both Salim and Diaz led the board as presidents during their

tenure. Newly elected board members Janet Samuels and Olivia Zepeda begin three-year terms to fill the seats created by the departure of Salim and Diaz.

Samuels is the superintendent of Norristown School District in Norristown, Pa. Zepeda is the assistant superintendent for Gadsden Elementary School District #32 in San Luis, Ariz.

About Learning Forward

Learning Forward is the only association focused solely on the most critical lever in improving schools - building the knowledge and skills of educators. Through the Standards for Professional Learning, Learning Forward leads the field in understanding what links professional learning to improved student achievement. We assist classroom, school, and system leaders in solving their toughest problems of practice. To learn more, visit www.learningforward.org.