



The Lincoln Heights Middle School learning leaders team, left to right: Beth Weatherall, Melanie Coffey, Krishanna Langhans, Jaime Greene, Joe Ely, and Derek Voiles.

LINCOLN HEIGHTS MIDDLE SCHOOL WINS 2017 LEARNING TEAM AWARD

The learning leaders team from Lincoln Heights Middle School in Morristown, Tennessee, has won the 2017 Shirley Hord Teacher Learning Team Award. The annual award, named for Learning Forward Scholar Laureate Shirley Hord and sponsored by Corwin, honors a school-based team that successfully implements a teacher-led cycle of continuous improvement.

In 2015-16, Lincoln Heights' learning leaders team began a two-year focus on the development of research-based professional learning community practices. Team members collaborated to develop and model practices that ensured that PLCs were meeting regularly, acting purposefully, and focusing on student work.

This year, the team increased the emphasis on the adult learning aspect of its work. Using the book *Becoming*

a Learning Team (Learning Forward, 2017) as its primary guide, the team has transformed the teaching and learning experience by transforming the teacher learning experience.

"This team models every day what we know about effective professional learning," said Learning Forward Executive Director Stephanie Hirsh. "The team uses student data to identify its teacher and student learning goals, they extend educators' knowledge through their professional learning, they apply their learning in their classrooms, and refine their practice. And they assume collective responsibility for the success of all teachers and students in their school."

Teams from across the United States submitted applications for the award. Applications included documentation of each team's work and its impact on teaching and learning,

as well as a video showcasing the team engaging in the cycle of continuous improvement.

Members of Lincoln Heights' learning leaders team are: science teacher Melanie Coffey; social studies teacher Krishanna Langhans; English language arts teacher Derek Voiles; math teacher Beth Weatherall; principal Joe Ely; and assistant principal Jaime Greene. Located in Hamblin County in northeast Tennessee, Lincoln Heights serves 520 students in grades 6-8.

The Lincoln Heights team was recognized at Learning Forward's 2017 Annual Conference in Orlando in December. The award, sponsored by Corwin, includes funds to support conference attendance for team members, \$2,500 to support collaborative professional learning, and a gift of Corwin books for the school's library.