'THE WORK IS ALWAYS CHANGING AND CHALLENGING FOR ME'

Current role: Supervisor, Professional Learning & Title IIA, Cobb County School District, Georgia

Previous roles: English language arts teacher, literacy/instructional coach, district lead, program manager at Georgia Department of Education

Learning Forward member since: 2016

Why she's passionate about professional learning: Although I enjoyed working with young people [as an English language arts teacher], I discovered my love for professional learning when I became a literacy coach in a middle school. It was rewarding to work with adults who focused on their own learning. I enjoy sharing my own experiences and learning from the teachers' experiences. The work is always changing and challenging for me.

Why she reads _The Learning Professional_: I remember reading the article "Delicate layers of learning" [from the April 2016 issue], which shared ideas of leveraging existing expertise and building cycles of inquiry. The article highlighted many elements that our team was incorporating in a series on building teachers' capacity for writing instruction. The ideas shared in the article reassured me that we were on the right path. As a result, I subscribed to the journal, and I have come to really rely on _The Learning Professional_ for ideas and motivation. Recently, in the August 2020 issue, I really appreciated the tool for planning virtual lesson observations, "Making mentoring work online." The article inspired me to create a new virtual mentoring initiative for our district, which we are planning now to implement for next year's new teachers.

How she uses the Standards for Professional Learning: When I was a program manager at the state level, I began learning about the standards. Our professional learning work was shaped by the Standards for Professional Learning. From there, our team began a journey of being intentional about effective professional learning designs so that we could leverage our resources and support for as many teachers as possible. The standards helped us make sure we were moving in the right direction.

How she uses data: I conducted a survey of teachers after our summer districtwide professional learning, and we had a very high response rate this year. The feedback fell into four buckets: social and emotional learning, digital learning, instructional strategies, and guidance on remote instruction in performing and visual arts. This data will help us meet teachers' needs. I also hope to do more on measuring the impact of our professional learning to ensure it is as effective as possible.

"It was rewarding to work with adults who focused on their own learning."

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What she's working on now:
We've been modifying our professional learning because so much is remote now. We've been working on redesigning our learning walks to be virtual. We're also moving our teacher leader academy online and gamifying the professional learning experience, in partnership with iSchool. We have designed a honeycomb-shaped game board online, and teacher leaders will have to click on each tile to engage in work.

The work includes content-area learning, 10 roles for school-based teacher and leaders based on [Learning Forward's book] *Taking the Lead*, and a culminating legacy project to work on throughout the school year. Our two-day districtwide professional learning is also moving online.

Why she uses social media for professional learning: I wanted to find a way to elevate the professional learning department and share effective practices. I also set a professional goal for myself of becoming more active on social media. Now, twice a week, I take some time to review new resources and tweet them out. It's always a good learning experience for me. ■

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While each provider can play a part in teacher recruitment and development structures and systems, each must work within its own space and means in order to be effective. Applying this knowledge has led to the development of clearly articulated guidance for local education agencies and higher education institutions and to stronger cross-agency collaboration.

Going forward, I hope to continue seeing more grow-your-own partnerships established, filling local pipelines of effective educators being prepared as early as high school to be a future Kentucky teacher. We are continuing to expand state-level educator recruitment and development efforts in a number of innovative and exciting ways, like GoTeachKY (goteachky.com), striving toward equitable access to effective educators for students across the Commonwealth.

The learning, resources, and network of support I gained through the Learning Forward Academy will be instrumental in this work, as well as in my professional and personal growth. Their influence will continue to be felt in grow-your-own programs and beyond.

REFERENCES

Learning Forward. (2014, June). IC maps for external roles. *JSD, 35*(3), 52-56.

Learning Forward. (2011). *Standards for Professional Learning.* Author. ■