



MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Chelyse Stefanik-Miller

A PICTURE OF LEARNING

Current role: Professional learning specialist, Virginia Beach City Public Schools, Virginia

Previous roles: Math specialist and math resource teacher; elementary and middle school teacher; K-12 music teacher

Learning Forward member since: 2014

Work that caught our eye: A frequent participant in Learning Forward conferences and events, she uses sketchnotes, also called visual note-taking, to organize and record her thinking. We enjoy seeing how she represents her learning visually.

How she started sketchnoting: “I saw someone sketchnoting at a Learning Forward Virginia workshop, and I loved how I got to see the learning of the day evolve. A couple years later, I was trying to grow our district’s microcredentialed program — we call them specializations — and I thought it was important for me as a leader to earn a microcredential. I decided to learn how to do sketchnoting. I read about it and watched videos on it. I attended a conference with the idea I was just going to practice. But the process came really naturally, and I loved it. Now I can’t take notes any other way.”

Why she loves sketchnotes: “You have to use a lot of cognition to listen, synthesize, and draw. You really have to follow where the presenter’s thinking is going so you can put it into a visual. As a result, I’m able to remember things much better. Also, as a leader in my division, I can make my learning visible and inspire other people.”

Other areas of expertise: “In 2015, when the district asked each specialist to develop an area of focus, I chose online learning and digital technology. As a young professional and a mom, it was important to me to have opportunities for teachers to learn on their own time, like after their kids went to bed. We’ve now been doing online professional learning for years. It helped this year with moving to virtual school because we already had some really strong examples of online professional learning.”

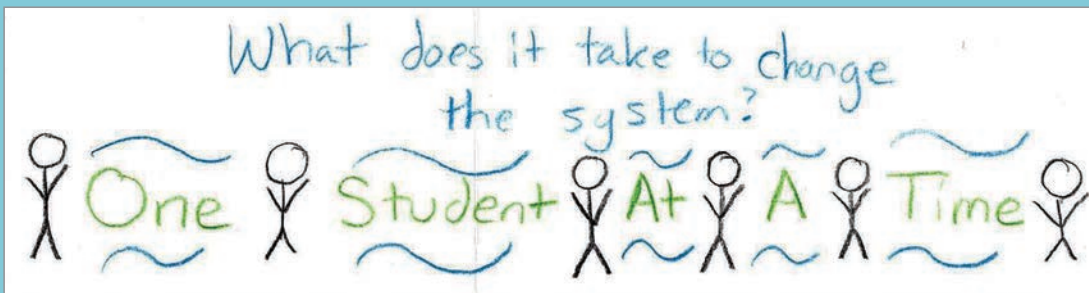
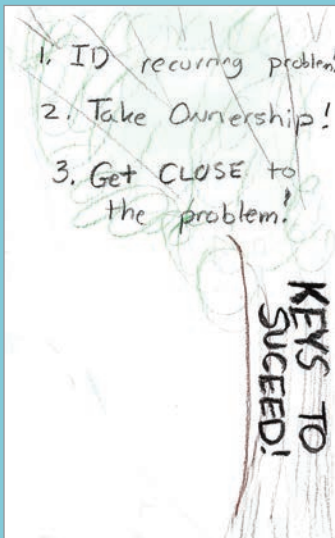
Why she’s a Learning Forward member: “Learning Forward’s resources and events guide a lot of the work we do in our district. For example, we applied the Standards for Professional Learning to create a course called Tuning Your Professional Learning Plan, where participants brought their plan to the session and we went through the standards and whether the plans address them. Then we took the participants through a backward plan to be sure the students benefited. Learning Forward is a valuable membership because of the processes in thinking and connections with others.”

Why she values her Learning Forward local affiliate: “Having connections with other professionals in the state is valuable. When you learn from each other, you can provide even more support to teachers. This last year has shown how necessary that is. We’ve had to lean on and learn from each other when we were catapulted into a situation where no one was the expert. We have to continue to seek others and connect because that’s where our greatest learning happens.” ■

See more
sketchnotes by
Chelyse Stefanik-
Miller in *At a
Glance* on p. 76
or follow her
on Twitter @
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Examples of Stefani-Miller's sketchnotes, created during recent webinars and conferences.



Illustrations by CHELYSE STEFANIK-MILLER