

LEARNING STUDIO: A new online learning experience

Just as you are designing new models of learning to meet your students' needs, we have updated our services to offer high-quality professional learning in a virtual learning environment that is interactive, collaborative, and engaging.

Our first course, Powerful Communication Skills for Coaches, filled up in less than two weeks. Led by coaching experts Joellen Killion and Sharron Helmke, this course engages participants through a combination of synchronous and asynchronous



Joellen Killion



Sharron Helmke

learning, coaching practice, and deep explorations of critical coaching communication skills.

Another cohort is planned for Powerful Communication Skills for

Coaches as are future classes for mentor teachers and learning teams. Ideal for districts who may not have the budget or staff to support customized learning academies, these online courses bring Learning Forward's renowned professional services to educators and districts of all sizes.

For districts with larger staff that want to remain in a distanced setting, we are also offering virtual options for the Coaches Academy and Teacher Mentor Academy, all conducted on the Brightspace learning platform.

Contact Tom Manning, senior vice president professional services, for more information: tom.manning@learningforward.org.



AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN PROVIDES NEW FUNDING FOR SCHOOLS

The American Rescue Plan, the pandemic relief bill enacted in March, includes the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund, an almost \$123 billion fund to support K-12 schools.

The U.S. Department of Education will reserve \$800 million of the funds to identify and provide services to homeless children and youth. The remaining funds will be allocated to states based on the Title I poverty formula.

States must reserve 5% of funds received to address learning loss, not less than 1% for summer enrichment programs, not less than 1% for after-school programs, and no more than 0.5% for administrative costs. States

will then be required to allocate 90% of the funds to school districts, also based on the Title I poverty formula. The funds are available until Sept. 30, 2023.

Once the funds have been allocated to local school districts, the districts must apportion the funds in two ways. The first 20% of funds received must be used "to address learning loss through the implementation of evidence-based interventions, such as summer learning, extended day, comprehensive after-school programs, or extended school year programs, and ensure that such interventions respond to students' academic, social, and emotional needs and address the disproportionate impact

of the coronavirus on" disadvantaged student subgroups, homeless students, and students in foster care.

The remaining 80% is where funds can be used for professional learning. These funds can be used for "any activity authorized in the following current laws: Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Adult Education and Family Literacy Act and Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006." This includes professional learning activities covered by Title IIA.

We encourage Learning Forward members and stakeholders to elevate professional learning as a needed use of these funds by telling superintendents and school board members that professional learning and support for educators has never been more important. To meet today's challenges, educators need instructional coaching, mentoring, online PLCs, virtual supports for engaging students, and any other ongoing, school-embedded professional learning supports.

Learn more at learningforward.org/advocacy.