

New Jersey affiliate features *The Learning Professional* in ‘chat and chew’

Learning Forward New Jersey started an initiative in March to engage educators across the state



in dialogue and new learning. Thirty educators participated in the “New Learning Chat and Chew,” an evening session where they were encouraged to bring a snack and join the conversation.

The dual objective was to engage leaders in a discussion of useful and timely topics while looking closely at a current topic from *The Learning Professional*. Before the event, participants read the interview with Jal Mehta titled “Crisis creates opportunity. Will we seize it?” from the February issue of the magazine. This article was chosen to encourage a conversation on planning to open schools while using the learning of the past year.

To facilitate this Zoom meet, the affiliate created a protocol to promote collaboration and dialogue among

school and district administrators, teacher leaders, higher education, consultants, and educators from additional educational organizations.

The session opened with a networking breakout, where participants answered the question, “What is one teaching tool you hope educators hold onto after COVID-19?” That was followed by a welcome segment, a small-group discussion breakout with a guiding document, and, finally, a full-group discussion and parting resources.

Participant feedback was positive. Many said they had not been this engaged in other Zoom events and were re-energized to plan for the future. Based on this feedback, the affiliate planned another Chat and Chew based on the article “Coaches shape early learning and beyond” from the April issue.

Want to share your affiliate’s initiatives and updates with readers? Email suzanne.bouffard@learningforward.org.



LEARNING FORWARD IMPLEMENTS NEW ADVOCACY TOOLS

Being an advocate just got easier. Learning Forward has invested in an online advocacy tool called Voter Voice. Voter Voice allows education advocates to reach out to members of Congress at the click of a button online or on your phone. No need to look up your legislators — Voter Voice does it for you.

As the fiscal year 2022 appropriations process gets underway, Learning Forward will be calling on every educator to be an advocate in this upcoming appropriations cycle.

While American Rescue Plan Act funds are making an immediate impact, ongoing professional learning needs are increasing. Educators need ongoing and consistent support through Title IIA to budget and implement effective professional learning.

We will ask every educator to call on Congress to increase funding for Title IIA. Watch for advocacy emails from Learning Forward, and try out Voter Voice to see how easy it is to make your voice heard.

FEATURED SOCIAL MEDIA POST

NEW HASHTAG
We’re introducing a new hashtag to make it easier to engage with *The Learning Professional* on Twitter. Follow us at **#The Learning Pro** and share your comments, feedback, and ideas.

Stephanie Hirsh @HirshLF • Apr 21

Compiling SEL resources -- reminded of this great one. [#LearnFwdTLP](#) infographic to understand the [#SEL](#) needs of students. learningforward.org/?p=71853 via @LearningForward

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Infographic shows how much students want and need communication from educators.