



STANDARDS IN PRACTICE

Paul Fleming

LEARNING FORWARD AFFILIATES LEAD THE WAY TO ADOPTING STANDARDS

Learning Forward Affiliates play a particularly important role in this ecosystem of building capacity for high-quality professional learning.

Since the release of the revised Standards for Professional Learning in April, Learning Forward has been providing resources and support for educators to adopt and implement the standards in a variety of contexts and roles.

The 2011 iteration of the standards was formally adopted in 20 U.S. states, and 15 additional states adapted or applied the standards to inform state-level policies. With the 2022 iteration, our goal is adoption through a menu of policy options in 50 states, provinces, and countries. But adoption is not enough. Our focus is on achieving meaningful implementation of the standards so that professional learning is high-quality, research-based, and linked to student success.

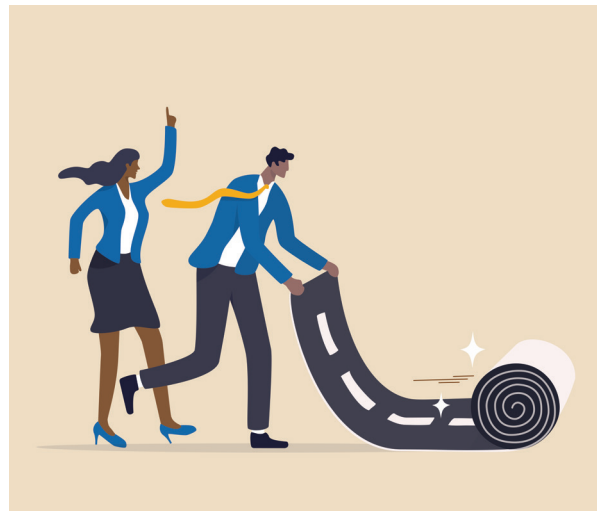
Achieving deep and sustained implementation is a process that takes commitment, time, and resources, including human resources. Learning Forward cannot do this work alone. We rely on the passion and skill of our partners. Learning Forward Affiliates play a particularly important role in this ecosystem of building capacity for high-quality professional learning.

Affiliates are statewide branches of Learning Forward with extensive local expertise and a commitment to equity and excellence in professional learning. There are currently 30 active Learning Forward Affiliates around the world, from Kansas to British Columbia to India. We partner with them to build capacity to design, facilitate, and assess professional learning that aligns closely and meaningfully to Standards for Professional Learning.

Affiliates are uniquely positioned to lead the way to adoption and implementation of the revised standards. Many affiliate chapters and leaders have longstanding relationships with state and local leaders, organizations, and educators. We know that the people closest to the community are always the best messengers. As our affiliate colleagues have pointed out to us, awareness and engagement are the first steps toward change, and many districts and states either aren't aware of Standards for Professional Learning or do not know if the standards have been adopted into policy in their location. Affiliates are eager to raise awareness and build engagement in their contexts.

Many affiliates are also well-positioned to partner with school districts, either in collaboration with Learning Forward's professional services and networks or individually but with the support of Learning Forward tools and resources. They are also skilled at facilitating in-person, virtual, and hybrid events that bring together educators from multiple schools and districts to learn together and find mutual support in building standards-

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To learn more about your local Learning Forward Affiliate, visit learningforward.org/affiliates.

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In the first year, teacher support specialists logged 270 classroom visits. The results were terrific. Between 2017 and 2019, the number of new teachers that had to be hired dropped from 225 to 168 (Norman Public Schools, n.d.).

In 2019, the New Teacher Center, a national nonprofit focused on strengthening the practice of beginning teachers, released findings from a study of a high-intensity mentor support program for new teachers in urban school districts (Schmidt, 2019). The study found that teacher retention

rates after one year were 11% higher in the group that received high-intensity mentoring, compared with a control group of new teachers (78% compared with 67%). The study also found that “although the cost of running the program was high, at \$9,223 per teacher, this was significantly lower than the cost of hiring a new teacher, at an average of \$17,872” (Schmidt, 2019).

Fending off a shortage of teachers needs attention at both ends of the teaching career spectrum. Mentoring is a proven way to support beginning

teachers and increase their tenure in education systems.

REFERENCES

Schmidt, R.A. (2019). *Evaluation of the New Teacher Center (NTC) i3 scale-up grant: Teacher practice impacts.* SRI International.

Norman Public Schools. (n.d.). *Norman’s Title II professional learning investment cuts new teacher attrition.* learningforward.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/NormanDataAltsV2_10-6-19.pdf ■

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aligned professional learning.

To assist affiliates in this important work, Learning Forward provides ongoing information and support about implementing the standards, facilitating professional learning around the standards, and advocating for their adoption in policy. In July, Learning Forward leaders met with affiliate leaders on a deep dive into the revised standards and the new and emerging tools for implementing them.

Recognizing that leaders need

to have deep understanding of the standards to help others, we explored new knowledge, skills, and mindsets that are embedded in and necessary for implementing the revised standards. We also considered policy guidance and examined tools that focus on the awareness, engagement, and implementation strategies necessary for policy adoption. In keeping with the standards and best practices in professional learning, we engaged in structured reflection, small-group discussion, and thoughtful next steps.

We are grateful to the Learning

Forward Affiliates for their leadership in communities around the globe, and we look forward to continuing to support them in their role as experts on how the standards can add value to state, province, or district efforts to build comprehensive professional learning systems. And we encourage all Learning Forward members and professional learning leaders to engage with their state or provincial affiliates as we all support each other in creating excellent professional learning for all educators in the service of excellent learning for all students. ■

About the **Standards Assessment Inventory (SAI)**

Learning Forward’s Standard Assessment Inventory (SAI) is a 50-item survey that measures the alignment of a school’s professional learning to the Standards for Professional Learning. The SAI also measures teachers’ perceptions to provide important data on the quality of professional learning.

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