

# Finding Time for Professional Learning

Webinar  
Sept. 21, 2023

If you can see the  
slide and hear the  
music, you are all set.



## Welcome! We will begin shortly.

All attendees are muted upon entry.  
Please use the chat feature for comments  
and questions during the webinar.



THE PROFESSIONAL LEARNING ASSOCIATION

# Thank you for joining us

**The webinar will be recorded and available.**

All webinar registrants will receive a follow-up email that will include the webinar slide deck, recording, and other resources mentioned during the presentation.

Please introduce yourselves in the chat box

- Your name
- Your location
- Your role in the educational sector



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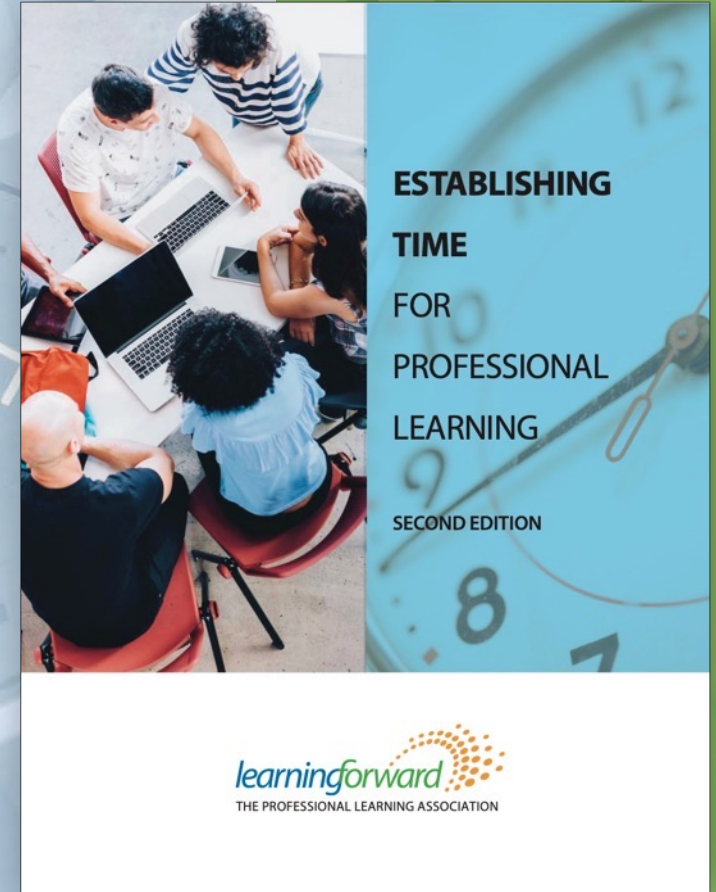
# Let's get started



**Suzanne Bouffard**

Senior Vice President  
Communications and  
Publications

Learning Forward



# Outcomes for this webinar

- Discover strategies for establishing professional learning time during the school day.
- Explore the role of school leaders in prioritizing professional learning for all.
- Learn how to address barriers and challenges to meaningful collaborative professional learning.
- Learn why and how to conduct a time audit.

# Let's check in

**How much time does your school or system currently devote to professional learning?**

- Too little time
- Just about the right amount of time
- Too much time

**How challenging is it to make and prioritize time for professional learning?**

- Very challenging
- Somewhat challenging
- Not challenging

**Type in the chat some of the barriers to prioritizing professional learning time.**



# Panel discussion



**Joellen Killion**

Senior Advisor  
Learning Forward  
Lakeway, Texas



**Christine Langrehr**

Principal  
George D. Lisby  
Elementary at Hillsdale  
Harford County, Maryland



**Rafaela Espinal**

Assistant Superintendent  
and Director of Multilingual/  
English Language Learners  
New York City  
Department of Education



## FOCUS THE TIME DILEMMA



### Time: A timeless topic WE CAN'T MAKE MORE OF IT, BUT WE CAN FIND BETTER WAYS TO USE IT

BY JOELLEN KILLION

**T**en years ago, as a part of Learning Forward's Transforming Professional Learning initiative, I wrote a workbook on finding time for professional learning. A decade later, the topic is still a frequent one among the professional learning leaders

I work with and a pressing challenge for schools everywhere. If there were a simple solution to the troublesome topic of finding enough time, we would have already discovered it. But time cannot be approached as a technical challenge, one for which we already have the answer. Rather, time

is an adaptive challenge, one that we approach with continuous invention, creativity, and experimentation. Time is a nonrenewable resource. Like fossil fuels and earth minerals, it does not regenerate. We can't make more of it, but we can make wise decisions about its use.



### ESTABLISHING TIME FOR PROFESSIONAL LEARNING SECOND EDITION



# The process for establishing time within the school day

**STEP 1: Forming a Time Study team** addresses engaging representatives from various parts of the school or school system community to participate in the time study process and determining who will develop recommendations for the decision makers.

**STEP 2: Examining assumptions about time** describes processes for assessing current perceptions held about time for education. Understanding personal assumptions about time early in the process will provide fundamental information for the Time Study team as they engage in their work.

**STEP 3: Understanding existing time** includes strategies for conducting an analysis of how time is currently used to inform the work of the Time Study team. In some cases, repurposing existing time is the first way to increase time for collaborative professional learning.

**STEP 4: Studying time options** provides resources and guides the Time Study team as members examine models from other schools and school systems to inform their work.



## The process for establishing time within the school day (continued)

**STEP 5: Forming and adopting recommendations** about time launches a public discussion about how to fulfill the need within the given parameters. After developing concrete recommendations, members of the Time Study team should decide how to vet them for consideration and modification before they make final recommendations.

**STEP 6: Establishing a plan to implement and evaluate** accepted recommendations is an essential part of the work. Ongoing monitoring and assessment can generate information about the efficiency and effectiveness of the time investment.

**STEP 7: Reviewing time use and results** provides ongoing data to make adjustments and improvements in the use of time to achieve the maximum benefits for both educators and students.

[learningforward.org/report/establishing-time-professional-learning/](http://learningforward.org/report/establishing-time-professional-learning/)

## Examining Assumptions about Time

### Tools for Examining Assumptions about Time

Tool	Tool Title	Description
2.1	<b>Exploring assumptions about time</b>	This survey presents opposing views about time to engage members of the Time Study team in reflecting on their personal views about time for collaboration.
2.2	<b>Time use flows from school culture</b>	This article accompanied by discussion questions engages members of the Time Study team in exploring perceptions about how time is used within schools.
2.3	<b>Staff perceptions about collaborative time</b>	The brief survey collects staff's perceptions about time.

[learningforward.org/report/establishing-time-professional-learning/](https://learningforward.org/report/establishing-time-professional-learning/)

## TOOLS 4

# Studying Time Options

**TOOL 4.2, cont.**

**George D. Lisby Elementary School at Hillsdale: Deep Dive into Curriculum**

Lisby Elementary School is a Title I school serving approximately 500 students in pre-kindergarten through fifth grade. The staff includes 34 teachers. Staff collaboration and ongoing professional learning are such a high priority that, when school leaders interview prospective staff, they describe it as a key part of the school culture and set an expectation that teachers visit one another's classrooms and work together multiple times a week. The schedule is organized to maximize collaboration time without losing instructional time.

Every week, teachers at each grade level have a structured time for collaborative professional learning on core curriculum areas during the last 45 minutes of the school day. Specials teachers (e.g., art, music) teach an enrichment lesson within their content area so teachers can attend. Professional learning is facilitated by teacher content area specialists in the topic area being covered that week (reading, math, and writing), whose positions are funded by Title I funds. Each content area is covered once per month and on the fourth week of the month, teachers choose from the three areas. In addition to this structured collaborative time, many teachers work with their grade-level peers during their students' daily specials blocks.

Recently, to create additional collaborative professional learning time for a particular grade level that had almost all new teachers, those teachers were not assigned dismissal responsibilities. While specials teachers facilitate dismissal routines, new teachers continue their learning for another 25 minutes. Principal Christine Langrehr describes this as a "minor adjustment that made a big difference."

To prioritize improving literacy, teachers also engage in a 2.5 hour professional learning block with the reading specialist to unpack each unit of the literacy curriculum. This occurs approximately every 6 weeks, depending on the pacing of the units. Substitutes provide rotating coverage, with three grade levels per day engaging in this learning. Substitutes' positions are funded by ESSER funds or as daily subs through the district and paraprofessionals provide coverage as needed.

In addition, teachers engage several times per year in observations of their grade-level peers, along with the content specialist in the area being observed (math, reading, or early childhood). The team identifies a focus, such as one part of a math lesson, and rotate visiting each classroom. While teachers visit others' classrooms, their students continue instruction with either substitutes whose salaries are covered by ESSER funding or in-house staff including paraprofessionals and specialists in content areas not currently being observed (for example, the reading specialist will cover a class while the math specialist is engaged with teachers in the peer observations).

**George D. Lisby Elementary School at Hillsdale, Aberdeen, MD**

### Sample collaborative professional learning schedule at George D. Lisby Elementary School

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
<b>8:30</b>					
<b>9:15-10:00</b>	3rd graders specials	3rd graders specials	3rd graders specials	3rd graders specials	3rd graders specials
<b>10:05-10:55</b>	5th graders specials Pre-K specials	5th graders specials Pre-K specials	5th graders specials Pre-K specials	5th graders specials Pre-K specials	5th graders specials Pre-K specials
<b>10:55-11:40</b>	4th graders specials	4th graders specials	4th graders specials	4th graders specials	4th graders specials
<b>12:15-1:00</b>	Kindergarten specials	Kindergarten specials	Kindergarten specials	Kindergarten specials	Kindergarten specials
<b>1:05-1:50</b>	2nd graders specials	2nd graders specials	2nd graders specials	2nd graders specials	2nd graders specials
<b>1:55-2:40</b>	1st graders specials	1st graders specials	1st graders specials	1st graders specials	1st graders specials
<b>2:45-3:30</b>	2nd graders specials	3rd graders specials 4th graders chorus	1st graders specials	Pre-K specials 5th grade clubs	Kindergartners specials
	2nd grade teachers collaborative time	3rd grade teachers collaborative time	1st grade teachers collaborative time	Pre-K teachers collaborative time 5th grade teachers collaborative time	Kindergarten teachers collaborative time
<b>3:30</b>	Dismissal (grades with many new teachers may have additional collaborative time)	Dismissal (grades with many new teachers may have additional collaborative time)	Dismissal (grades with many new teachers may have additional collaborative time)	Dismissal (grades with many new teachers may have additional collaborative time)	Dismissal (grades with many new teachers may have additional collaborative time)



# **FIVE PRONG APPROACH TO JOB-EMBEDDED PROFESSIONAL LEARNING**

George D. Lisby Elementary  
School at Hillsdale

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- 1. Designate weekly collaborative time built into the master schedule**
- 2. Extend this time for select grade levels or staff**
- 3. Plan for recurring larger periods of time for collaboration**
- 4. Include resources within your county or district**
- 5. Incorporate peer observations**



**IDEAS**

### Superintendents can boost principals' learning

BY RAFAELA ESPINAL

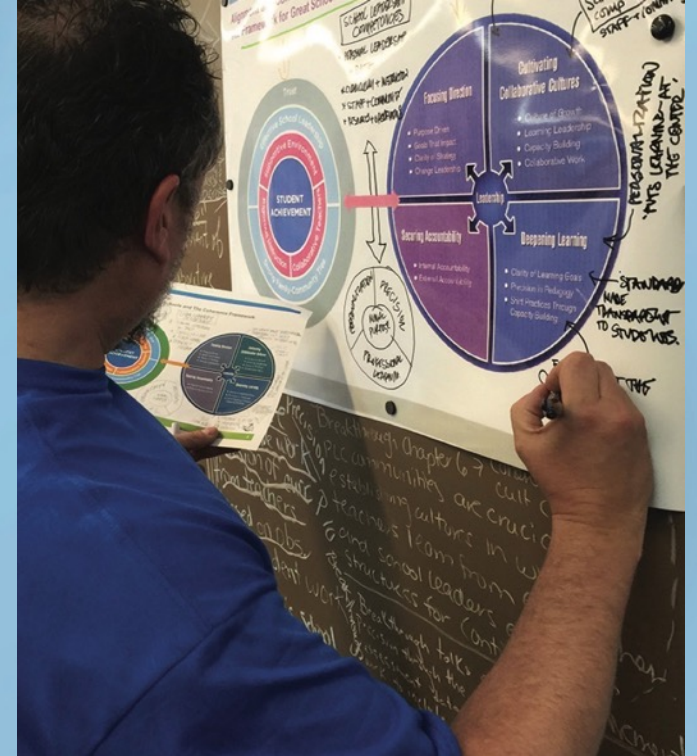
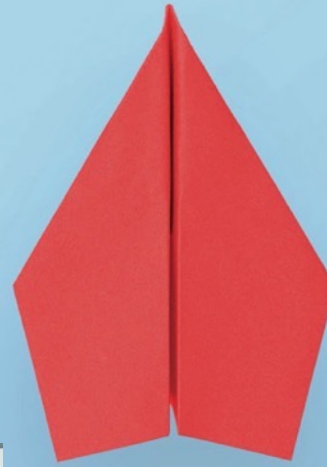
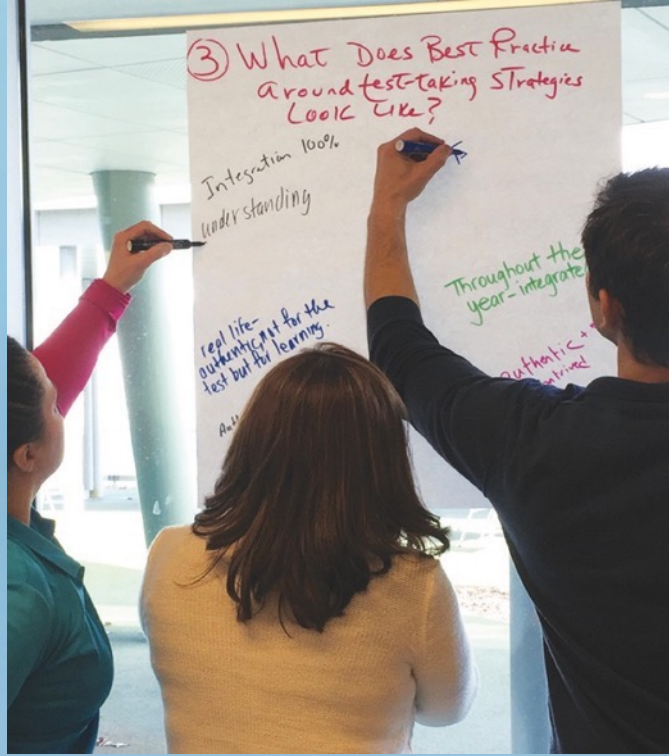
**W**e know the importance of dedicating time for teachers' professional learning, but we often neglect to dedicate adequate time for principals' learning and development. As a district administrator in New York City, I have learned the value of superintendents modeling direct and deliberative learning practices and processes so that principals can do the same for teachers and teachers, in turn, can do the same for students. I recommend that superintendents take the following steps to guide their efforts to support principals' learning:

- Get to know principals as individual learners.
- Ground the work in adult developmental theory.
- Be intentional and strategic about allocating time and resources to principals' professional learning.

These strategies are based on

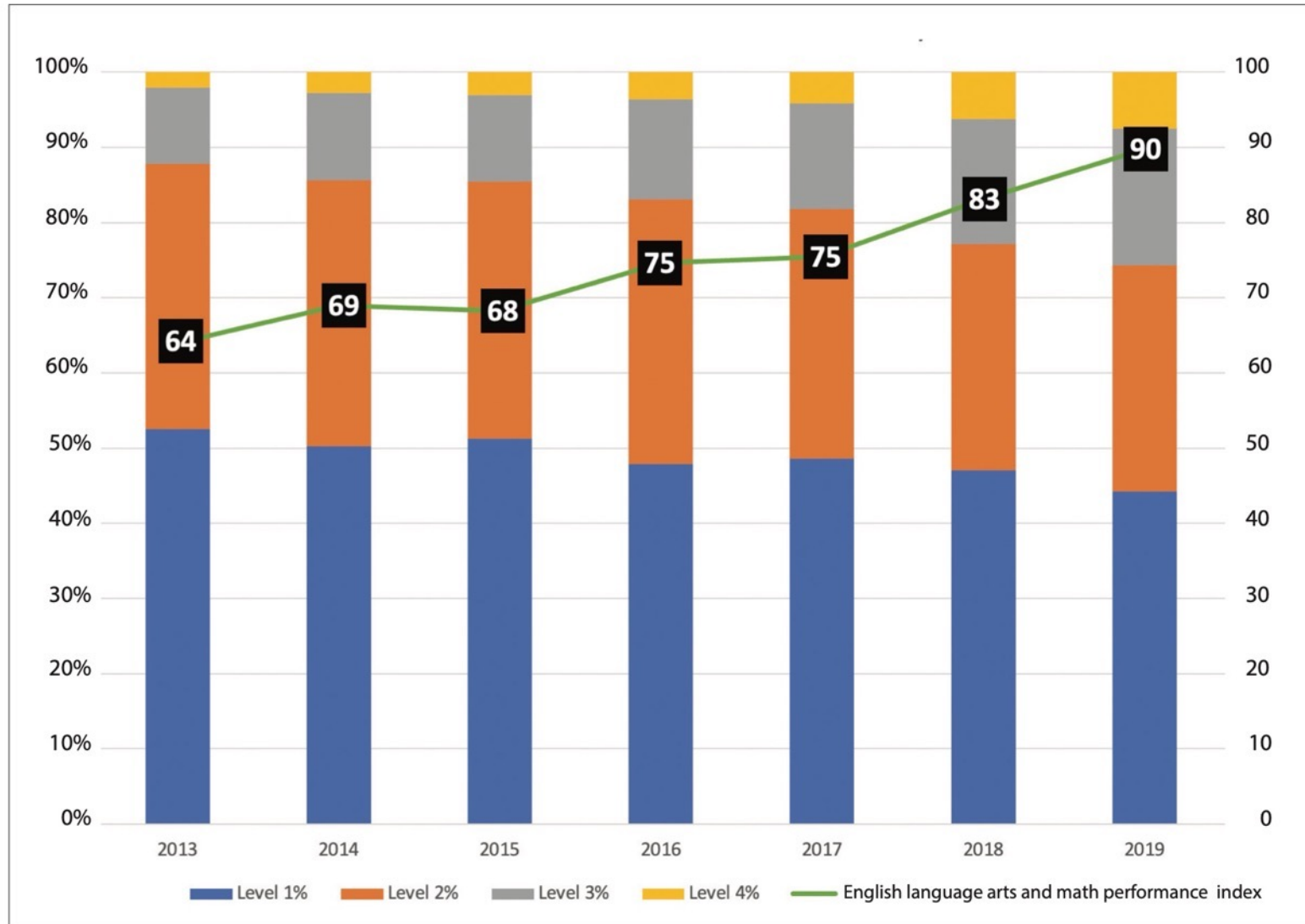
58 The Learning Professional | www.learningforward.org August 2023 | Vol. 44 No. 4







## COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT 12: COMBINED ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS AND MATH PROFICIENCY







## **Tips for superintendents to support schoolwide professional learning**

- Prioritize time to strategically plan.
- Allocate time in principals' schedules for professional learning, including coaching and other forms of job-embedded learning such as instructional rounds.
- Acknowledge and address the guilt school leaders often feel when taking time away from school buildings or administrative duties.
- Provide tools that will help principals make connections between professional learning and the district's overarching mission and goals.
- Connect all levels of professional learning so the time principals, assistant principals, teacher leaders, and teachers spend coheres across all levels.
- Invite principals, teachers, and educators at all levels to lead professional learning to build ownership and empowerment.
- Shift hearts and minds to understand that continuous learning matters for leaders as well as teachers and students.



← Post

 Learning Forward  
@LearningForward

#Principals, on release days, instead of saying "No school - PD day," change your sign to "No school today, educators are learning, so students will learn more."

This is a chance to inform your community and even some teachers that professional learning is valuable. 🗣️



6:35 PM · Aug 16, 2023 · 22.1K Views



# Discussion and Questions





Let us hear from you

**Please fill out our  
post-webinar  
survey**

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/XXPS7DW>





2023

# Learning Forward's Annual Conference

Evidence into Action



December 3 – 6, 2023

Washington, DC

#LearnFwd23



# Mark your calendars

Course:  
**Sept. 25 to Oct. 11**

[Implementing a Coaching Cycle](#)



Webinar:  
**Oct. 19, 3–4 p.m. ET**

[The Power of Coaching](#)

Webinar:  
**Nov. 16, 3–4 p.m. ET**

[Finding Common Ground to Reach All Students](#)



Thank you!

