

August 1, 2017

Dear Colleagues:

We had a productive board meeting in Denver and look forward to sharing our strategic plan priorities after follow up with staff this month. I also was honored to meet new and ongoing Academy members, talk to our committed affiliate leaders, and work with several passionate learners at our summer institutes.

UPDATES

Title II – An Ongoing Campaign

One topic I touched on with almost everyone I met in Denver was the critical need to continue speaking up about the importance of restoring Title II funding in the federal budget.

You've heard about this from us before and we will continue to turn to you as our closest allies. We anticipate that budget battles in Congress may continue until at least the end of the calendar year. And we know you recognize that what happens in DC this year is impossible to predict.

Current Advocacy Priorities

Perhaps you noticed that last week Melinda George sent an email outlining two high-priority actions. She and our advocacy team will be updating our advocacy webpages and creating new educator tools – keep an eye on <https://learningforward.org/get-involved/advocacy/title-ii-advocacy> for the latest news. You'll also continue to get email updates when we have urgent requests.

For now, I'd like to repeat Melinda's requests from last week in case you haven't had a chance to take these steps. **Just as important – would you please share these requests with your networks?** I know that our reach expands exponentially when you enlist your teams, peers, and stakeholders.

Sign letter from educator groups

Show your support for full funding of Title II by joining Learning Forward, Teach Plus, Educators for Excellence, The National Center for Teacher Residences, New Leaders, NNSTOY, TNTP, and Stand for Children in signing a letter that calls on Congress to fully fund Title II, the Supporting Effective Instruction State Grants program.

It's easy! [Review the letter here](#) and add your name. Please also share the letter with your colleagues and encourage them to sign on as well.

Contact your senators

The House Appropriations Committee sent forward an appropriations bill that would completely eliminate Title II, the Supporting Effective Instruction State Grants Program. Now is the time to get in touch with your senators, and in particular members of the [Senate Appropriations Committee](#), to demand they restore full funding of Title II.

When you look at that list of senators, I'd ask you to note if your senators are on the list. If you have connections with any of them, and particularly with the Republican members, please leverage those connections now. Write and call, and please request your educator peers locally to do the same.

This [sample letter](#) offers suggested language to customize.

Helping Educators Share their Stories of Impact

Here's another request I have for today: We've been collecting stories of how Title II funding has an impact on schools, educators, and students, and we need more of those stories. Please ask folks to share at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/RYQNJFW>

We need more stories that get to the impact the funding has – how is student learning improving? How are teacher retention rates improving? What indicators do you see that school improvement efforts are succeeding?

The stories we're hearing (from more than 350 educators so far!) confirm how devastating the loss of these funds will be to schools. Thank you for your help in getting educators to make their cases effectively.

Contact Melinda George (melinda.george@learningforward.org) if you have any questions about our advocacy efforts and to let us know what you're doing.

Advocating with Social Media

If you are on Twitter, please follow me (@hirshlf), Melinda George (@MelindaGeorge2) and Learning Forward (@LearningForward) to not only stay up to date but also for an easy means to share our advocacy messages with your followers. We appreciate it!

UPCOMING OPPORTUNITIES

Annual Conference in Orlando

We're excited to be headed to Florida in just a few short months. Browse the program at <https://conference.learningforward.org/> and be sure to register and reserve your hotel rooms ASAP. *The discount deadline is October 16.* We have a great slate of keynoters – Fernando Reimers, Kaya Henderson, and Hahrie Han – and I encourage you to take a peek at the full list of lecturers and presenters. Thank you for making sure your teams know about the value of this learning experience.

Know an Up and Coming Ed Leader?

Elections for our Board of Trustees are approaching, and we're always on the lookout for educators who would be good candidates. We strive to elect a diverse board in all ways and are eager to broaden our perspectives. Please contact Joel Reynolds (joel.reynolds@learningforward.org) with your suggestions or introductions.

THANK YOU DALE HAIR!

Dale Hair, who has served as the affiliate coach for more than a dozen years, is retiring from that role. We know that affiliate leaders have so appreciated her leadership, accessibility, generosity, and unique insights.

The affiliate leaders celebrated Dale at our recent meeting in Denver. As part of the celebration, Learning Forward Foundation chair Audrey Hobbs-Johnson announced a new foundation scholarship in Dale's name – the Dale Hair Affiliate Development Grant, created to assist affiliates in building capacity to support the work they do each day. I'm proud that our foundation is honoring such a dedicated learning leader in this enduring fashion.

We wish Dale all the best as she moves on from this role. Dale is a forever family member, so we know we aren't saying goodbye. You can contact Dale at dale.hair@learningforward.org. Elizabeth Foster, associate director of standards, research, and strategy, will support the affiliates moving forward.

Thank you and have a wonderful August!

Sincerely,
Stephanie