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Teachers Report Lack of Engagement or Consistency in Professional Development Decisions

***Corwin, Learning Forward and the National Education Association Release Results of New
Nationwide Survey on Successes and Shortcomings of Teacher Professional Learning***

Los Angeles, CA (August 7, 2017) — Today, Corwin, Learning Forward and the National Education Association (NEA) released the results from their first-ever [State of Professional Learning Survey](#). Teachers indicated while school leaders are committed to their professional learning, teachers are rarely part of the decision-making process. Teachers also noted they are not provided with enough opportunities for professional learning across the school day.

In October 2016, [Corwin](#) partnered with [Learning Forward](#) and [NEA](#) to survey online more than 6,300 educators nationwide from diverse backgrounds and experience levels in an effort to learn more about teachers' experiences with professional learning and how they measure up to Learning Forward's [Standards for Professional Learning](#).

"Professional development is a fundamental part of any job, and the education profession is no exception," said Lily Eskelsen Garcia, president of the National Education Association. "Quality and relevant professional learning provides educators with ongoing opportunities to keep up with the rapid pace of classroom advancements and ensure they have the appropriate skills to reach and teach diverse student populations."

"We're happy to see an overarching commitment to professional learning among school leaders and teachers," said Mike Soules, president of Corwin. "But to ensure teachers are receiving professional learning that is useful and meets their professional needs, they must be given more power in selecting their learning path."

[The survey](#) featured research-developed questions and Learning Forward's Standards Assessment Inventory items. Teachers were asked to rate their level of agreement to each of the 50 items reflecting the Standards for Professional Learning on a scale of one ("Never") to five ("Always"). The average scale scores reflect teacher perceptions of the extent to which their professional learning aligns with the standards.

Key findings from the survey included:

- Teachers feel their school leaders and systems are committed to professional learning when asked if school leaders prioritize professional learning for all staff and understand the relationship between student achievement and professional learning (score 3.7 out of 5).
- Nearly 20 percent of teachers indicate that they have no input in their professional development, and 75 percent identify their school and district leaders as the primary professional learning decision-makers. Four percent of teachers say that teachers primarily made decisions regarding professional learning.

- Nearly half of teachers report that a majority of their professional learning experiences occur on in-service days or in the summer despite expressing a strong preference for face-to-face learning during the work day. Nearly 25 percent of teachers report spending less than one hour each week on professional learning.
- Teachers report that their schools tend to use student achievement data to plan professional learning (score 3.4 out of 5), but do not use a variety of data to assess its effectiveness (2.8) or determine how they will assess the effectiveness of professional learning before the plan is implemented (2.4).

“This survey affirms teachers don’t feel invested in their own professional learning. Evidence from all corners tells us that the job-embedded professional learning that educators value is the professional learning that makes a difference for students,” said Stephanie Hirsh, executive director of Learning Forward. “Let’s use this chorus of teacher voices as an opportunity to take action in transforming professional learning systems.”

The report recommends giving teachers more “voice and choice” about their own professional learning, using a variety of data sources to plan and assess professional learning, and providing additional opportunities for continuous, on-the-job professional development.

“This survey,” said Soules, “offers us insights to better understanding what teachers are looking for in terms of professional development resources and programs. We fully intend to use this information to guide our educator offerings and advance the professional development field as a whole.”

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[Corwin Press](#), a SAGE company, was established in 1990, first as a professional book publisher, now as a full-service professional learning company, offering professional development solutions on the topics that matter most and the delivery methods that work best to achieve a school or district’s objectives. Its many resources range from a library of 4,000+ books to on-site consulting to online courses and libraries. At the heart of every professional learning experience is the book content and author expertise that have made Corwin the most trusted name in professional development.

[Learning Forward](#) is a nonprofit, international membership association of learning educators committed to one vision in K-12 education: Excellent teaching and learning every day. Learning Forward pursues its mission to build the capacity of leaders to establish and sustain highly effective professional learning. www.learningforward.org.

[The National Education Association](#) is the nation’s largest professional employee organization, representing more than 3 million elementary and secondary teachers, higher education faculty, education support professionals, school administrators, retired educators, and students preparing to become teachers.