

Constitution
of
Learning Forward New Jersey
Amended as of January 11, 2025

a. Article I. Name and Purpose

b. Section 1: This organization shall be known as Learning Forward New Jersey.

Vision Statement

Our vision is to cultivate thriving and effective educational communities through continuous, collaborative learning, guided by principles of equity and inclusivity.

Mission Statement

Learning Forward NJ builds the capacity of educators to implement and support professional learning to equitably serve all students, fostering a culture of continuous improvement and collaboration.

c. Section 2: The purpose of Learning Forward New Jersey (hereinafter, the Organization) shall be to:

- d. Build board members' capacity to understand, articulate, and support best practices in professional learning for educators.
- e. Build the capacity of leaders of professional learning to support complex, systemic change.
- f. Provide assistance with the design, implementation, and evaluation of systems of professional learning.
- g. Promote learning opportunities for leaders of professional learning that focus on high-leverage practices to support the teaching and learning cycle.
- h. Build strong partnerships with state organizations to further promote the importance of comprehensive systems of professional learning.
- i. Create a network of leaders to strengthen and advocate for high-quality professional learning in the state of NJ through the connection of people and resources.

j. Article II. Affiliation

k. Section 1: The Organization shall be affiliated with Learning Forward International, formerly the National Staff Development Council.

l. Article III. Membership and Dues

m. Section 1: The Membership is open to any person who is interested in the purposes of the organization.

n. Section 2: Dues are payable each year to the organization. Dues may be payable

o. through the Learning Forward International membership or directly to Learning Forward New Jersey.

p. Section 3: Membership shall be for a period of one year.

q. Section 4: Dues shall be set annually by the Board of Directors at the annual meeting.

r. Article IV. Officers

s. Section 1: The Officers of the Organization shall be President, President-Elect, Past President, Recording Secretary, Treasurer, and Membership Secretary. Each officer shall be an active member of the Organization and Learning Forward International.

t. Section 2: The responsibilities of the officers shall be as follows:

a. The President shall preside over all meetings of the Organization and Board of Directors and Advisory Board, appoint all members of standing committees or working groups and any other committees not otherwise provided for in the Constitution, see that all provisions of the Constitution are fulfilled by appropriate officers and chairpersons, and serve as an *ex-officio* member of all committees. The President may serve as a liaison for any business involving an external agency or appoint a liaison to serve in the President's stead. The President will act as the liaison to Learning Forward International.

b. The **Past-President** shall act as an advisor to the President and may serve as a liaison for any business or partnership involving an external agency. The Past-President shall preserve and maintain copies of the Constitution, By-Laws, articles of incorporation, and all other official documents and publications of the Organization.

c. The **President-Elect** shall preside in the absence of the President and support the program chairs within the organization. The President-Elect shall assume the office of the President if it is vacated before the expiration of the President's Term. Upon the expiration of the President's term, the President-Elect will serve their term of President. The President-Elect will support the President in all of the duties of the presidency, as needed, including serving as a liaison for any business involving an external agency,

d. The **Recording Secretary** shall keep records and minutes of all meetings of the Organization and Board of Directors, maintain attendance records, be responsible for all correspondence, issue notices of meetings, and perform other duties as specified by the President. The Secretary, working with the Membership Chair, shall keep a current list of all board members' contact information and affiliations.

e. The **Treasurer** shall receive money for the Organization, pay all bills authorized by the President, keep an accurate account of all receipts and expenditures, provide reports for all meetings, submit state and federal reports, prepare an annual budget, report to the annual business meeting of the board and at other times as requested by the President.

f. The **Membership Secretary** shall keep a record of Learning Forward New Jersey membership, assure timely contact with all members, and work to promote increased membership. The Membership Secretary shall serve as liaison to the Membership Working Groups and/or Standing Committees using membership information.

u. **ARTICLE V. BOARD MEMBERSHIP**

v. **Section 1: The Board of Directors of the Organization shall consist of the elected officers and eight to eleven additional elected members-at-large. A quorum for any meeting shall consist of at least one more than one-half of the membership of the Board of Directors and may include electronic voting for members unable to be present. The Board of Directors shall act as the governing body of the Organization and shall meet as necessary to conduct the business of the Organization.**

- w. **Section 2: Advisory Board members may be nominated from active Learning Forward**
- x. **New Jersey members to serve in support of the vision and mission of the organization and the Board of Directors. The purpose of the Advisory Board is to work alongside the Board of Directors to help them make informed decisions in keeping with the LFNJ purpose and vision. Advisory Board members are non-voting members but will take an active part in all discussions.**

- y. **Section 3: Members of the Board of Directors and Advisory Board will adhere to the**
- z. **following expectations:**
 - a. Each member of the Board of Directors and Advisory Board shall be a member of Learning Forward New Jersey and Learning Forward International.
 - b. Each member of the Board of Directors and Advisory Board shall accept responsibility for one or more of the activities and working groups in the yearly annual plan.
 - c. Each member of the Board of Directors and Advisory Board will commit to completing the work outlined in the annual plan, attend meetings regularly, respond to communications in a timely manner, and provide input on critical issues before the board.
 - d. Each member of the Board of Directors and Advisory Board will make every effort to attend the Annual Retreat and the June Reorganization Meeting.

ARTICLE VI. ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND BOARD MEMBERS

Section 1: The election of officers, Board of Directors and Advisory Board members and the term of the office for each shall be as follows:

- a. The President, President-Elect, Recording Secretary, Treasurer, and Membership Secretary shall be elected to serve a two-year term in those offices. Recording Secretary, Treasurer, and Membership Secretary can be re-elected to their position. Should the president-elect not be able to assume their duties at the beginning of their term, the current president may fulfill those duties for a length of time approved by the Board of Directors.
- b. The Past-President shall serve during the term of the current president and act as a mentor.
- c. Advisory Board members shall be elected to serve with the Board of Directors.
- d. The officers and members-at-large shall be elected during the annual business meeting of the Board of Directors. All newly-elected board members shall assume their duties at the conclusion of the annual business meeting.
- e. In the event that an office other than the presidency is vacated, the elected officers shall appoint a replacement for the unexpired term.

aa. Section 2: Any position on the Board of Directors may be declared vacant by a two-thirds vote of the Board should it become necessary for cause. The Officers must bring the case to a board meeting for a vote. Cause shall be defined as either of the following:

- a. Not performing duties as defined by the Constitution; or
- b. Excessive consecutive absence from board meetings and/or lack of participation in decision-making processes and/or lack of commitment to organization activities.

bb. Article VII. Committees/Working Groups

cc. Section 1: The Board shall establish and be represented on each standing committee and working group of the Organization. Learning Forward New Jersey is a learning organization and, therefore, defines its goals and priorities through collaborative annual planning. Flexible work groups are established as needed and are aligned to efforts and goals outlined in the annual planning process. The President will appoint a Board member as initial team leader and volunteers will be recruited from the board. Each working group will report to the Board to update progress and receive feedback.

dd. Section 2: Standing Committees shall consist of no less than three members. The standing committees may include, but are not limited to:

- a. **Nominating Committee**, which shall be chaired by a Past President. The remaining members of the Nominating Committee shall be appointed from the Board by the President. All nominations for officers shall be presented by the Nominating Committee to Board at least one month prior to the voting.
- b. **Finance Committee**, which shall be chaired by the Finance Director. This committee shall be responsible for complying with IRS and non-profit organizational policies. The treasurer will serve as an ex-officio member of this committee

ee. Article VI. Meetings

ff. Section 1: The Organization shall provide facilitation of high quality professional learning opportunities, inclusive of conferences, institutes, regional presentations, and grant activities.

gg. Section 2: The Organization shall hold an annual business meeting of the Board of Directors which may be held at a regularly scheduled board meeting.

hh. Section 3: Open meetings of the Board of Directors may be held at regional meetings or conferences or a regularly scheduled board meeting.

ii. Section 4: Additional meetings of the Organization may be called by the Board of Directors provided board membership is given at least thirty (30) days prior notice.

Section 5: In an emergency the Board President may call for a meeting either virtually or in person.

jj. Article VII. Amendments

Any member may propose changes to the Constitution by sending the proposed changes to the President at least ninety (90) days prior to the annual business meeting. The proposed changes must be disseminated to all members thirty (30) days prior to the annual business meeting. The proposed changes must be approved by two-thirds of the board members present at the annual business meeting.

kk. Article VIII. Parliamentary Authority

The rules contained in Roberts Rules of Order, Revised shall govern the Organization in all cases to which they apply and in which they are not inconsistent with this Constitution and any special rules of order the Organization may adopt.

II. Article IX. Internal Revenue Service

The purposes for which the Organization is organized are exclusively educational as defined in the Internal Revenue Law and notwithstanding any other provision of this articles, this organization shall not carry on any other activities not permitted to be carried on by an organization exempt from the Federal Income Tax under Section 501C 3 of the Internal Revenue Code for the corresponding provisions of any future United States Internal Revenue Law.

mm. Article X. Dissolution

If at any time the Organization shall cease to carry out the purposes as herein stated, all assets and property held by the Organization, whether in trust or otherwise, shall after the payment of all liabilities, be paid over to an organization which has similar purposes and has established its tax-exempt status under Section 501 C3 of the Internal Revenue Code as enacted or as it may hereafter be amended. The designated organization shall be endorsed by a majority of the Board of Directors.

January 11, 2025