



UNLEASH YOUR POTENTIAL

Frequently Asked Questions About Learning School Designation

What is the Learning School Designation?

The Learning School Designation is an endorsement or mark of distinction in the area of professional learning. The designation provides schools with a set of criteria and research-based practices that indicate a quality professional learning program has been established and sustained at the school level. A school that earns the Learning School (LS) Designation is AdvancED accredited and has met or exceeded additional criteria for its quality professional learning practices and programs. The designation is awarded to an individual institution and not to an entire school system or corporation.

Why is AdvancED partnering with Learning Forward to provide the Learning School Designation?

AdvancED and Learning Forward collaborated to establish this designation based on both organizations' support and application of research that indicates a quality professional learning program increases educator effectiveness and ultimately improves student learning.

When does the Learning School Designation process occur?

The Learning School Designation process is only conducted simultaneously with an institution's scheduled External Review. Therefore, an institution can apply for this designation when it is preparing for the External Review. Individual schools in the AdvancED School System or Corporation Accreditation Protocol can apply for the designation; the Learning Designation review occurs during the scheduled system or corporation on-site review.

Who conducts the Learning School Designation Review?

A trained expert in the area of professional learning, selected by Learning Forward, serves

as the reviewer for the designation process and is considered a member of the External Review Team. The Learning School Reviewer's role is unique in that he/she primarily focuses on the LS Indicators and process; however, the LS Reviewer and External Review Team collaborate throughout the on-site review to share findings, evidence and results.

The LS Reviewer does not rate the AdvancED Standards nor conducts observations using the Effective Learning Environments Observation Tool™ (eleot™) but participates and contributes to the team's deliberations.

Is the Learning School Designation process similar to an External Review?

The process is based on a protocol similar to the one that an institution engages in for its internal review and subsequent on-site review for the purposes of accreditation. Likewise, the LS diagnostics are similar to the accreditation diagnostics a school completes and submits in the AdvancED Adaptive System of School Improvement Support Tools (ASSIST™); the primary difference is the focus on professional learning. Schools interested in pursuing the Learning School Designation should contact their state's Operations Office for more specific information.

What are the criteria for a school to earn the Learning School Designation?

An institution must earn a minimum average rating of "3.0" derived from 15 Indicators: nine Learning School Indicators are rated by the LS Reviewer and six AdvancED Indicators, considered "essential Indicators," are rated by the External Review Team. Also, all essential AdvancED Indicators must receive a minimum average rating of "2.0" and the school's Index of Education Quality™ (IEQ™) must fall within the range of schools that earn accreditation status.

How long is the Learning School Designation valid?

The designation is valid for a period of five years and parallels the school's AdvancED accreditation term. Any school that earns the Learning School Designation pays an annual fee to retain the status and can reapply for the designation at the same time it begins the re-accreditation process.

What are the costs and fees associated with the Learning School Designation?

The Learning School Designation fee in year one is \$600. In the subsequent years after earning the designation, the fee is \$100 annually to retain the designation. The institution also is responsible for all travel and other expenses incurred by the Learning School Reviewer to conduct the on-site review.

In addition to the designation, what are the other benefits of seeking the Learning School Designation?

Each institution that earns the Learning School Designation receives a certificate of recognition similar to the AdvancED Accreditation Certificate. Additionally, Learning Forward provides the following benefits to all schools during their designation terms:



- Organizational membership providing access to publications, resources and learning experiences;
- An invitation to conduct a breakout session at Learning Forward's annual

conference;

- Recognition in an article in Learning Forward's respected Journal of Staff Development (JSD);
- Recognition at Learning Forward and AdvancED conferences;
- Membership in an international network of recognized Learning Schools; and
- The opportunity to serve on an External Review Team for Learning Forward and/or AdvancED.

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