

Annual Report 2010-2011

Mission Statement: The Learning First Alliance/Rhode Island is dedicated to improving student learning in Rhode Island's public schools. We believe that educators and education associations must take responsibility for uniting key stakeholders in the education field, focusing attention on critical education issues, and using sound research to promote the continual and long-term improvement of public education. The Learning First Alliance/Rhode Island believes that public school education is the basic right for every child in a democratic society, the bedrock of the American Dream and the best hope for American success in the 21st Century.

Accomplishments

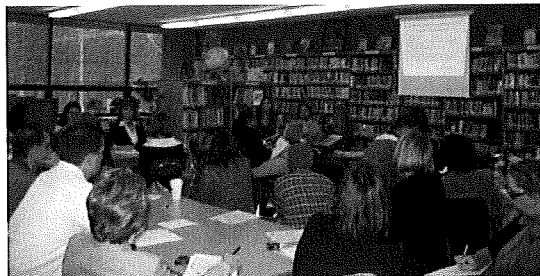
The *What Works: Improving Student Achievement* series continued to be co-sponsored by Learning First Alliance/Rhode Island and our affiliated member organizations. Having completed its third year, this monthly program details some of the best practices in Rhode Island public schools. Recent topics (with co-sponsoring organization in parentheses) included:

- *Accelerating All Schools to Excellence (RIASCD)*
- *K-12 Systemic Leadership/Articulation (Rhode Island School Superintendents Association)*
- *Making Personalization Meaningful at the Middle Level (Rhode Island Middle Level Educators)*
- *No More Apples and Oranges: Creating a SPARCri [Support Personnel Accountability Report Cards] for Your School (Rhode Island School Counselors Association,*
- *PLC's [Professional Learning Communities], RtI [Response to Intervention], and the Use of Data (Rhode Island School Principals Association; repeated by National Education Association Rhode Island),*
- *Proficiency-Based Instruction to Support All Learners (Rhode Island Federation of Teachers and Health Professionals)*
- *RI Standards for Physical Education and Health: Alignment, Instructional Strategies, Classroom Evaluation and more (RIASCD)*
- *What Works with WaytoGoRI (W2G) (Rhode Island School Counselors Association)*



LFA/RI

Learning First Alliance/Rhode Island



Rhode Island educational leaders, including teachers, school counselors, principals, and superintendents, shared their successes in Rhode Island elementary, middle, and high schools with more than 200 colleagues.

Advocacy

- Learning First Alliance/Rhode Island prepared a written statement in support of revisions to the reauthorization of Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), also known as No Child Left Behind (2001), and sent it to the Rhode Island congressional delegation in May 2010.
- A letter to the Board of Regents for Elementary and Secondary Education was prepared regarding proposed changes to the high school diploma system. Members of the Board of Directors read this letter at public hearings and presented it to the Board of Regents in January 2011.

Additional accomplishments are listed in *A Brief History of Learning First Alliance/Rhode Island*.

LFA/RI Supporters

“I did not realize how exercise grows brain cells and improves test scores,” noted one participant at the *RI Standards for Physical Education and Health* session co-hosted by Learning First Alliance/Rhode Island and RIASCD.

Feedback from participants at the Rhode Island Middle Level Educators’ session noted, “It was good to hear from a diverse group of people from their districts;” and “I will bring back ideas to my district.”

The Professional Learning Communities and Response to Intervention session was beneficial for classroom teachers, support staff personnel, building and central office administrators. This session was so successful, it was repeated.

Eighty percent of those in attendance indicated they would attend another session if it were to be offered. This type of feedback encourages the continuation of the *What Works* series, going into its fourth year.



Left to right: John B. Golden, executive director of the Rhode Island Association of School Principals; Virginia Harris, chairperson of the Smithfield School Committee and president elect of the Rhode Island Association of School Committees; Joan Paul Zangari, John E. Piro, executive director of the Rhode Island School Superintendents Association; Raymond J. Wabot, vice president of the National Education Association Rhode Island.



A Brief History of Learning First Alliance/Rhode Island

- 2007-2008** Spring 2007-John Golden (RIASP), Marcia Reback (RIFT), and William Fasano (RIMLE) attend the national LFA conference and make the decision to invite other educational organizations in Rhode Island to consider coming together to form a Rhode Island affiliate.
June 2007- LFA/RI is formed and a mission statement is drafted. Member organizations meet monthly to discuss educational issues affecting public education in RI.
November 2007- The report "*Rhode Island Schools' Performance: Here's the Rest of the Story*" is issued and presented to the Rhode Island Board of Regents for Elementary and Secondary Education.
April 2008 – Representatives from LFA/RI attend national LFA meeting in Washington, DC for LFA state affiliates.
- 2008-2009** Monthly meetings of member organizations continue, and the “What Works” program is born. “What Works” is a series of after-school programs highlighting best practice across the state, and offered free of charge to all. Each month, a different member organization co-sponsors a professional development opportunity for educators.
September 2008 – PBS and local Rhode Island PBS stations air the program, *Where We Stand*. Representatives from LFA/RI participate on air in a panel discussion following the program.
March 2009 – Representatives from LFA/RI attend national LFA meeting in NYC for LFA state affiliates.
- 2009 – 2010** August 2009 – LFA/RI hosts a Board meeting. Commissioner Gist attends to learn about LFA/RI.
October 2009 – LFA/RI approves Bylaws and is incorporated and in February 2010, LFA/RI becomes a 501(c)3 organization, status granted by the IRS. Memorandum of Understanding is agreed to by LFA/RI Board.
“What Works” sessions continue to be presented.
May 2010 – LFA/RI drafts letter to congressional delegation regarding LFA/RI positions on ESEA reauthorization
June 2010 - LFA/RI receives tax-exempt status for State of Rhode Island.
- 2010-2011** “What Works” sessions continue.
January 2011-Letter to Board of Regents for Elementary and Secondary Education is prepared by member organizations regarding proposed changes to high school diploma system. Letter is read at Board of Regents public hearings.
February 2011-Thank you letter to Board of Regents is drafted. The intent of the letter is to thank them for hearing our voices and to encourage them to continue to look at other issues.
March 2011- New England Secondary Schools Consortium is invited to join LFA/RI.
May 2011- Rhode Island Association of Colleges of Teacher Education is invited to join LFA/RI.



Board of Directors

During the 2010-2011 school year, the Board of Directors was comprised of representatives from the following educational organizations:

- Association of Rhode Island Administrators of Special Education – Ann Marie Dubuque
- Center for School Improvement and Educational Policy – Anne M. Seitsinger
- National Education Association Rhode Island - Raymond J. Pouliot
- New England Secondary Schools Consortium – Marcia Cross and Barbara Miller
- Rhode Island Association of Colleges of Teacher Education – David Byrd
- Rhode Island Association of School Committees – Jean Harnois
- Rhode Island Federation of Teachers and Health Professionals – Frank Flynn
- Rhode Island Middle Level Educators - William Fasano
- Rhode Island School Counselor Association - Jean Greco and Patricia Nailor
- Rhode Island School Principals Association – Patricia Hines
- Rhode Island School Superintendents' Association - John Pini
- Rhode Island Skills Commission - Colleen Callahan
- RIASCD –Elizabeth Brito

Each member organization pays an annual fee.

Officers for 2010-2011

Raymond J. Pouliot, Chair

Anne Seitsinger, Secretary

Vice-Chair, vacant

John Pini, Treasurer