

Teachers Teaching Teachers: Creating a Sustainable In-House Professional Development Program

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TheWillows
where great minds grow

Traditional Professional Development (PD)



- Teachers attend conferences
- Teachers attend in-services (summer/during school year)
- Outside speakers/consultants



Limitations of Traditional Models

- high cost
- low quality
- low attendance
- fewer teachers reached
- fewer students reached
- low buy-in
- fragmented
- top-down
- one-size-doesn't-fit-all
- passive



A Balanced Approach

Mandatory
PD

Hands-on, minds-on, time-intensive,
curricular-based

Voluntary
PD

Collegial, intimate, time to
wrestle with new ideas

Learning
Cadres

Interest-driven, consistent,
time for deeper exploration



How we have evolved...

1994 - Present

Curriculum
Design & Building

1998 - Present

Technology
Learning &
Integration

2007 - Present

Teachers Teaching
Teachers

Research, Inquiry,
& Expertise
Extended



Willows Academy

Mandatory PD

- Curriculum enrichment & development
- Skill, technique, and expertise building
- Intense, hands-on learning
- Immediately applicable to classroom practice



Willows Academy

- **100%** of Teachers reached
- **3 or more** times a year
- **29%** of teachers lead



Learning Lunches

Voluntary PD



Learning Lunches

- Facilitate cross discipline, department, and teacher dialogue
- Learn about innovative ideas in education
- Reflect on teaching practices, curriculum, and student learning
- Promote creative application of ideas on classroom practices



Learning Lunches

- **\$12.50** = cost per teacher
- **1/3** of faculty attend
- **60%** increase in Middle School faculty participation



Learning Cadres

Time & Space for Deeper Exploration

- **Teacher Questioning** – improve teacher/student interaction; probe for student understanding
- **Fine Motor** – develop skills with struggling K students
- **Math** – ensure continuity between grade levels
- **Maker/Programming** – empower all to tinker, create, and innovate while learning by doing



Benefits of Our Approach

- Promotes student innovation, inquiry, and independent learning
- Increases faculty retention
- Develops teacher commitment to professional growth



Benefits of Our Approach

- Extends resources = financially sustainable
- Provides time and space for teachers to develop student mindset
- Nourishes the minds and bodies of our teachers
- Demonstrates a shared commitment to the improvement of learning



“Arriving at one goal is the starting point to another.”

-John Dewey



Thank you

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