

# 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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