

APPENDIX A

Kennedy's Process

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Every school change process will be tailored to your unique context. This Appendix describes Kennedy's process as one example that might inform your own.

Kennedy's Process

A FLEXIBLE, CROSS-FUNCTIONAL TEAM

The composition of Kennedy's team changed year to year, but always included teachers, administrators, community school, and after-school staff. It was also helpful to have an external partner who was not completely embedded in the school to help provide perspective, outside ideas, and to help sustain movement toward the vision. For other schools, this external role could be played by a partner school, a thoughtful community partner or skilled coach.

PHASE I: VISIONING

Our process can be described in two phases spanning two academic years 2007-2009. In the first year, we held a series of six meetings with a team of teachers, after-school staff, the Family Engagement Specialist, and the Principal and Community School Coordinator (Table 1). Participants all volunteered to participate and teachers received stipends for the meetings they attended outside of regular school hours. To recruit teachers this first year, the Community School Coordinator presented the opportunity at a staff meeting and followed up with those who expressed interest.

The first-year meetings were focused on increasing understanding of youth development and envisioning an integrated youth development approach across the school day. In addition, we held a separate series of meetings with youth and parents to gain perspective from all school members on envisioning a school that teaches the whole child. During this first year, participants were not expected to implement any strategies and there was no commitment required beyond the first year of meetings. We found that participants were eager to get to action this first year, so other schools might consider moving to implementation earlier.

Table 1 Kennedy meetings held during year 1 (2007-2008)

Participants	Fall (Sep-Nov)	Winter (Dec-Feb)	Spring (Mar-May)
Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2-hour dinner visioning meeting/introduction to youth development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Full day professional development (PD)/visioning on supportive relationships 3.5-hour dinner visioning meeting 4-hour dinner PD on supporting youth autonomy and visioning meeting (with youth and parent reps) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2-hour after-school implementation planning meeting 3.5-hour dinner meeting summarizing youth development lessons and identifying focus areas for year 2 Recruit teachers for year 2
Parents		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2.5-hour dinner focus group with parents Participation in dinner on supporting youth autonomy (with staff and youth) 	
Youth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2-hour after-school visioning meeting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Three 2-hour after-school visioning meetings Participation in dinner on supporting youth autonomy (with staff and parents) 	

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PHASE II: IMPLEMENTING

At the end of this first year, Kennedy Middle School moved into the implementation phase. First year teacher participants recruited 12 teachers to participate and the after-school director recruited two full-time after-school teaching fellows to join the after-school director, all three administrators, the Community School Coordinator, Youth Development Coordinator, and the school counselor in developing an implementation process.

The 21 participants formed five inquiry-driven small groups focused on areas identified during the visioning year: motivation, engagement, respect, relationships, and equity. These groups formed over the summer and met monthly (Table 2). Two groups focused on classroom or after-school strategies to improve motivation. Two focused on whole-school practices and policies to improve school member engagement and respect. One group served as an over-arching body that worked on governance issues, communication structures, and an overall systemic plan for taking a whole-school youth development approach in 2009-2010. These inquiry groups were facilitated by community partners and district personnel during the first half of the year. During the second half of the year, participants volunteered to facilitate with support from the original facilitators. Both years we worked with outside experts to provide supplementary professional development workshops on supportive relationships, motivation, community building, and facilitation of inquiry-driven groups.

Inquiry groups require a significant time commitment and may not be the right solution for every school. While we were only able to meet monthly for an hour, this was often felt to be insufficient, and the time between meetings made it difficult to maintain momentum. While inquiry groups were a core part of the process Kennedy chose, it's important to find a process that fits with your existing structures and constraints.

Table 2 Kennedy meetings held during year 2 (2008-2009)

Summer (Jun-Aug)	Fall (Sep-Nov)	Winter (Dec-Feb)	Spring (Mar-Jun)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2-day PD on inquiry-driven groups (form groups and questions) 1-day small group agreement forming, data planning and PD on supportive relationships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1-hour monthly inquiry group meetings/ facilitator debriefs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1-hour monthly inquiry group meetings/ facilitator debriefs ½-day PD on motivation and first group share-out 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monthly inquiry group meetings/ facilitator debriefs ½-day PD on Community, Diversity and Conflict and year 3 planning meeting 1-hour before school, year 3 planning meeting 1- hour staff meeting: visioning a caring community 1- hour staff meeting group share-outs

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THE WORK CONTINUES

At the time of publication, we are mid-way through the third year of this effort. Kennedy is involving all teachers, all administrators, the Community School Coordinator, three after-school staff and several specialists (Resource Specialists, English Language Development specialists, school counselor, etc.) in inquiry-driven groups focused on a shared vision of creating a supportive and caring community in which all students are motivated to learn. They have formed seven small groups focused on:

- Student voice
- Caring student-teacher relationships
- Mutual respect
- Creating a supportive classroom community (student-student relationships)
- Family engagement
- Motivation in the classroom (growth mindset techniques)
- School-wide sense of care (relationships between staff and all school members)

In addition, the leadership team (composed of all three administrators, the Community School Coordinator and After-School Director) has formed their own small group focused on creating, communicating, measuring and celebrating the school vision. This group also resolves issues that arise through the other small groups, provides support to these groups and connects lessons learned across the school.

Volunteer teachers and after-school staff are facilitating these groups. These facilitators were recruited by leadership team members and receive stipends for their summer facilitation training and monthly debriefs. These small groups are scheduled to meet monthly for one hour and will also meet as a whole staff for two share-outs during the year to share their updates and lessons learned. In addition, facilitators and the leadership team participated in a two-day facilitation training during the summer and in 1-hour monthly debriefs following the small group meetings (Table 3).

Table 3 Kennedy meetings held during year 3 (2009-2010 in progress)

Summer (Jun-Aug)	Fall (Sep-Nov)	Winter (Dec-Feb)	Spring (Mar-Jun)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ½- day small group planning meeting • 1-day Leadership Team Retreat • 2-day small group Facilitation Training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1-day staff retreat: form inquiry groups/ questions • Monthly inquiry group meetings/facilitator debriefs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monthly inquiry group meetings/facilitator debriefs • 1-hour staff meeting group share-out 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monthly inquiry meetings/ facilitator debriefs • 1-hour staff meeting group share-out

In addition, Kennedy continues to work on several other initiatives including on-going equity professional development and a much stronger emphasis on instruction.

Throughout this process, Kennedy staff members have found it helpful to be reminded that challenges and set-backs are normal in school change efforts and thus require patience and persistence. It was also helpful to constantly recognize their efforts and celebrate their small wins toward achieving their vision.