A foundry10 Approach to Professional Development

Introduction

Learning has the power to alter perspective and accelerate personal growth at all ages. We know that young children are excited and passionate about learning, but over time, some of that passion and interest can wane into adulthood. Even as adults we may ask ourselves, "What is it that makes learning exciting for us?" and "How do we re-ignite our passion to learn?" At foundry10, we seek to cultivate patterns of inspiration that fuel learning for both teachers and students. Through a varied and responsive approach to professional development, we work with teachers in a variety of settings, who are interested in pursuing their own intellectual growth and further developing their classroom practices.

We believe that effective professional development can appear in many different formats, and here are some of the avenues we have explored:
- scaffolded co-teaching within residencies
- partnering with other educators to develop specialized programs
- developing unique workshops/trainings
- connecting educators to useful information in their areas
- collaborating with field-specific experts
- observational and reflective work

As learners and researchers, we are always on the lookout for new ways to foster nontraditional ways of learning for both educators and students. This work has shown us that one cannot develop passion in their students if they are not passionately engaged themselves. Finding opportunities to build on the passion of educators is one of many methods that foundry10 utilizes to empower student and teacher voice and expand how we all think about learning.

- Partnering with schools to offer teacher training with our departments during their scheduled training sessions
- Creating in-house training sessions, workshops events, 3-day summer intensives that we host
- Leading workshops at a conference for teacher professional development

Workshops and Training

- Sharing ideas/strategies using media
- Teaching through online tutorials
- Creating podcasts, mints, videos of ways to incorporate the arts or technology in existing programs
- Publishing article using our findings
- We can cast a wide net to the internet pouplace or share specifically with certain teachers as a follow up to a program we ran.

Video/Aricles

- Several week in-school programming where the teaching artists work closely with the teacher to empower them to take over the arts-based/imaginative curriculum with the students.
- This could be a several week program where the teacher begins to take on more responsibility, eventually teaching the last class with our feedback.

Scaffold Teaching

- Working alongside other organizations/companies/schools on the creation of a program.
- Developing curriculum for a teacher and assisting in the implementation.
- Use another program or school's resources to enhance our own programs.

Partnering

- Provide teachers with necessary resources to continue to expand their pre-existing program.
- Consultation with existing programs and connecting them with the resroucesthey need to develope.
- This could be providing curriculum for another teacher, a mentor for a student, or a new sound system, etc.

Expert Resources

- Support opportunities for teachers to watch a class, performance, and have a guided post-discussion.
- Researching a pre-existing program with our interest in specific findings through their program.
- Give feedback on ways a program could expand.

Observations

Workshops and Training

Many people provide workshops for educators, but oftentimes these workshops are designed independently of the specific educators involved and introduce a very specific, formatted curriculum. Our workshops emerge from the interests of the educators involved, build upon their experience, and offer more open-ended challenges for the educators to use as jumping off-points for their own interest areas. For instance, in digital audio, we invited music and technology educators from schools we knew had teachers interested in digital audio, including Sammamish High School, Nova Project, and TAF Academy, to attend a series of small group workshops focused on the areas of interest to the teachers and their students. In addition, we worked one on one with instructors to help them master a new technology that they could bring back to their classrooms. These teachers worked on our campus as well as in their schools, in one-one-one sessions with an expert teacher, or in small groups with like-minded teachers from other schools. These workshops taught the teachers skills they could directly implement in their classrooms during digital music curriculum and allowed them to become creators.

Similarly, we talked to community-drama teaching artists and realized that there was a real desire to come together in a format that promoted professional practice. Using teacher suggestions and feedback, we constructed a recurring workshop for teaching artists in the Seattle area that was focused on developing their teaching tools. In these semi-structured, ongoing workshops, we meet and play each other's theater games and discuss avenues for adapting the exercises for different ages and abilities. This came out of an expressed need for professional development for teaching artists in Seattle to comfortably share and learn from each other. Often, the desire for genuine professional development is there and we believe that capturing that desire and using it as a catalyst to develop valuable interactions and learning opportunities for instructors is paramount to developing outstanding teachers.

Partnering

We are constantly looking for new ways to bridge the gap between teaching-artistry and traditional classroom methods through personalized, varied approaches to professional development. Through our work with interventions in the Shoreline School District, we have had the opportunity to partner teaching artists with classroom teachers to co-create and in some cases, co-implement, curriculum targeting literacy as well as mathematics. We thought using the arts to create an alternative approach to learning would give students a new way to conceptualize the material they were struggling with in class. In order to do this, teaching artists met with teachers for ten hours prior to spring break camp to develop arts inspired traditional classroom curriculum they co-implemented during the week long intervention. In reflecting on the program, one teacher said,

"I learned to view teaching and learning for students as a more whole body experience...it has really opened my eyes to view how I plan to teach and approach reading and math concepts in the future."

The month-long arts-infused reading intervention with Shoreline schools began with teaching artists leading teachers in a dramatic arts workshop where they were introduced to common exercises in dramatic arts. This created the opportunity to discuss their ideas about how to teach literacy using drama with their partner teaching artist. The artists worked collaboratively to tailor the co-teaching model to the comfort level of the classroom teacher. One teacher noted,

"I felt that the lessons presented during this time were ones that I feel like I could use in my future classroom and definitely something that will get students involved in their reading instead of just passages and stories. I feel equipped to use these skills in the classroom."

In dance and theater alike, we have talked to teaching artists who have expressed a desire to challenge themselves to create more process-based or traditional-classroom infused curriculum. As a result, in many of our relationships with teaching artists we heavily encourage them to challenge themselves creatively and educationally in their classroom practice. This summer, in our dance program, teaching artists led a series of workshops created not only to benefit the students but also to provide a safe space for the dance instructors to practice different aspects of their choreographing process. Similarly, in our early childhood programming, we ran a residency with Hilltop Elementary School where the teaching artist had a chance to try teaching curriculum that challenged their usual structure for class. With guided support on the curriculum creation and implementation they tried a new approach and concept for their drama work with younger students. In reflection, the teaching artist said,

"I learned not to be afraid to take a risk and maybe feel like it failed!"

It is our hope that these partnerships and the shared knowledge constructed continue to inform teaching practices for all parties going forward. In fact, this type of partnered learning will be a research area for us in the coming year.

Scaffolded Teaching

Shared knowledge seems to come with a guided practicum model we call a scaffolded teaching experience or the gradual release model. In this experience, interested teachers work closely with teaching artists or other outside experts to learn to confidently lead their own curriculum in arts and technology. For example, this past year foundry10

worked with Hilltop Elementary School staff to co-design a Lego Robotics curriculum. The Hilltop staff had no prior experience with Lego Mindstorms and was initially apprehensive about leading a robotics program but enthusiastic about introducing it to the students. We scaffolded this afterschool class to help the staff member become more comfortable as the leader of the program. Foundry10 worked to transfer leadership of the program in three main steps: firstly, with foundry10 teaching the curriculum with some assistance, then co-teaching the program with Hilltop staff, and finally with foundry10 acting as only an assistant and regular staff member assuming the leadership position.

This model is similarly implemented at Olympic Heights Elementary School where two teaching artists initially co-taught then progressively shifted leadership to the classroom instructors. This year we are continuing that implementation in a third kindergarten and are revisiting the previous teachers to build upon the work they did last year so they can further enhance their curriculum. One teacher said of the co-teaching model,

> *"Since [the teaching artists] have stopped coming, the drama has continued in my room! What I learned from them was really a way to teach and incorporate drama into literacy in a totally sustainable way. The basic structure the teaching artists used was the most helpful to us and its simplicity is why we are still doing it! "*

We also team up with outside experts working to hone specific skills they can use in their work with children. We brought in a local musical theater creator who has a successful career as a young composer for musical theater but felt a lack of confidence in how to teach it. Through several sessions of discussion, reflection and team analysis, they ended up finding their skills were in fact teachable. After leading a successful and highly attended workshop with us at foundry10, they have now gone on to start their own class on songwriting at a local theater company.

Video and Articles

An important piece of our work as educators in the 21st century is the element of sharing what we do on public channels. We often put out videos and written articles on research or other interesting findings during our programs. In our virtual reality programs, we have an entire section focused on Teacher Resources on the website. Most of the content is ours, but it was gleaned from our data and experiences with the teachers and is in a place where they can readily access and utilize it. We see media not only as an important field of learning, but also tool for teaching and a channel to connect students and educators beyond their current networks.

At conferences and other education-related events, we share gathered data from our programs that are directly relevant to teachers. We seek opportunities to engage with other researchers, educators, participants, and interested community members. One of our primary goals is to make the work we do accessible to people who find it interesting and relevant. In addition, we work with the educational community to find ways to use our work as a catalyst for other projects. The summation of a program in the form of videos or articles can be the beginning of new programs, research questions, and larger conversations.

Expert Resources

Foundry10 provides support for educators to explore their interests and uncover passions both new and old. For example, like most of our programs, automotive technology has a large focus on student learning. When we gave students the opportunity to travel to Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca and Canepa motors, we realized the importance of having the instructor present. Their instructor was able to connect ideas from the classroom back to the racetrack, and directly compare the students' habits and skills from their high school automotive shop to the precision and efficiency at a top-tier level of automotive work. The benefit for the instructor of teaching automotive principles in the field was an invaluable experience for everyone and in turn, they were able to take their own experiences back into the classroom to impact other students. This would not have been possible without the immense excitement the instructor had for the automotive field.

Another example is in our Virtual Reality program. We have a subsection on a site called Reddit that is an attempt to bring teachers together, in a format where they can

share their passion about their work. Using our own curated resources, as well as newly developed resources based on our own work, we are linking the teachers involved in our study together so that they can brainstorm and intersect with one another. This is our first attempt to build an online community of learners in this way, and we are curious to see how effective it will be.

We also recognize the importance of sending teachers to conferences to connect with and share with other teachers. Foundry10 has made a push to get teachers out to share their own ideas and content so that others may benefit from their knowledge and experience. Sometimes, this looks like us presenting with them, side-by-side, as we discuss findings from a study or practical work. Other times, it is helping to support teachers as they go out and share what they are doing on their own. Finally, as we gain opportunities to share work publicly, we are making a conscientious effort to really ground that in the teachers and their own work and to bring them into the process.

Conclusion

In our continued exploration of learning, we have found that the avenues with which to approach professional development are endless. Through our flexible structure and relationships with excited educators, we hope to continue to find new approaches to learning and professional development. As we continue to practice, develop and work within the community, we will be sharing additional ideas, models and collaborative ideas.