



Spark Professional Development with the Edcamp Model

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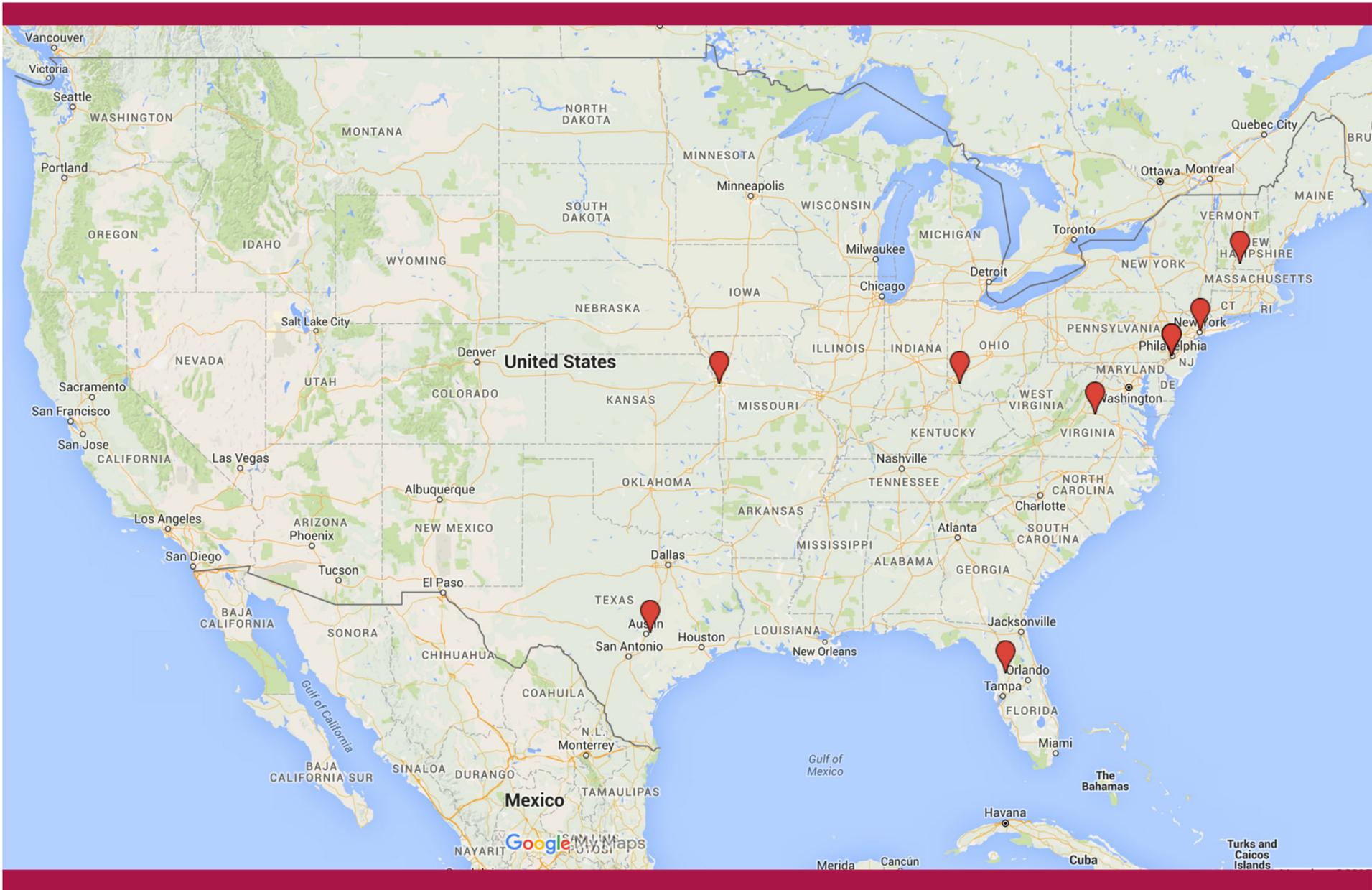
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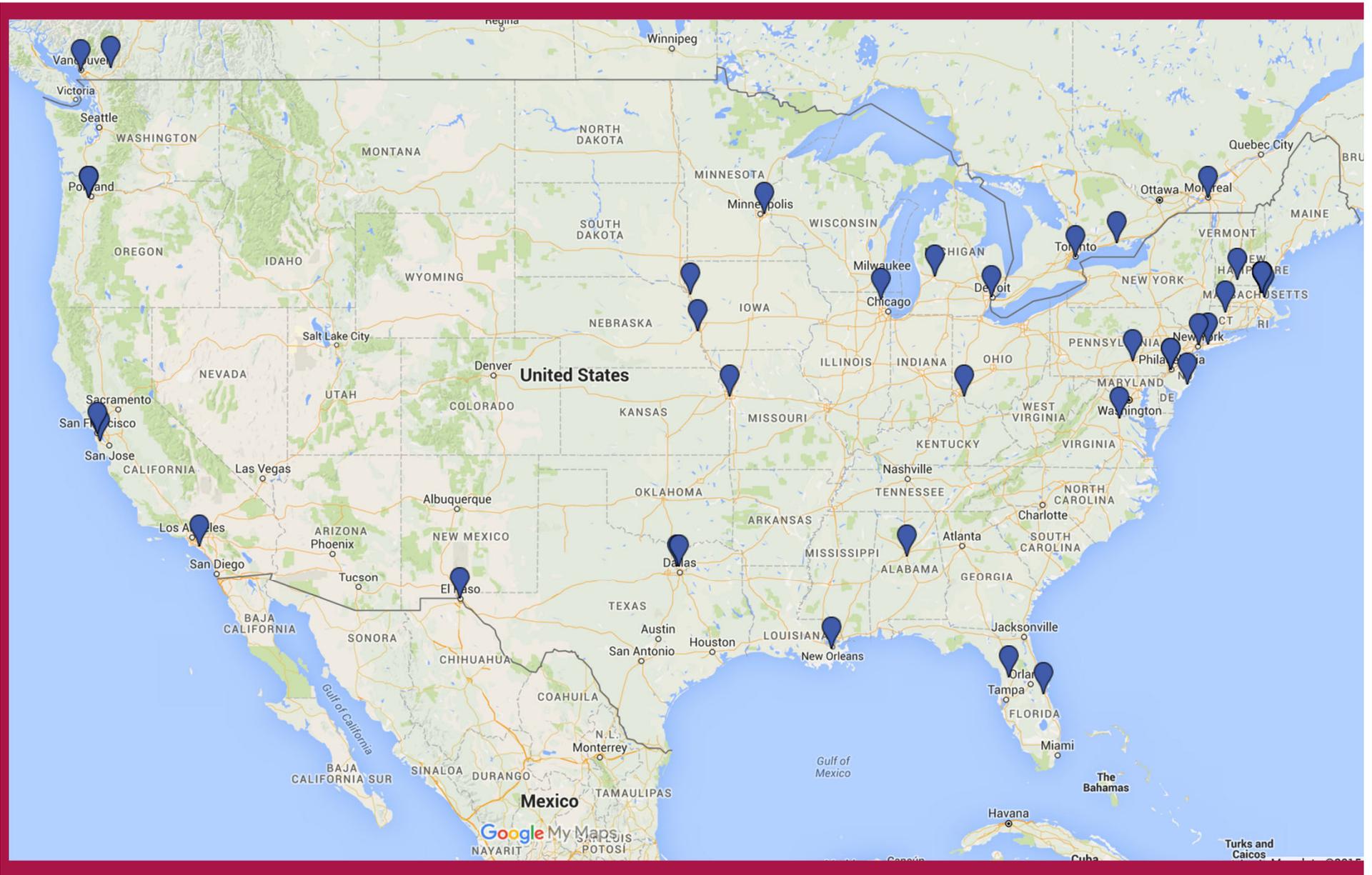
May 2010
Philadelphia





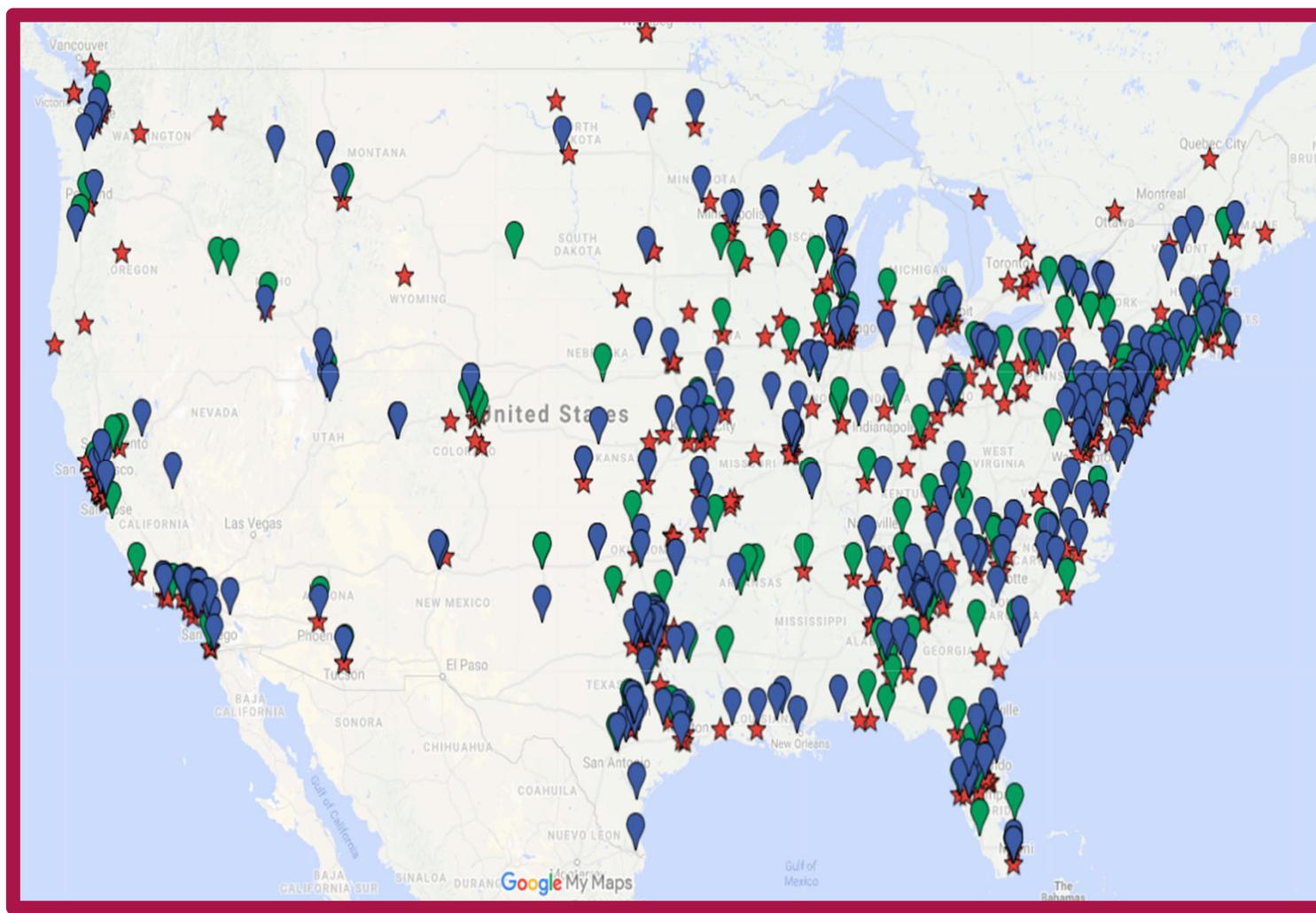
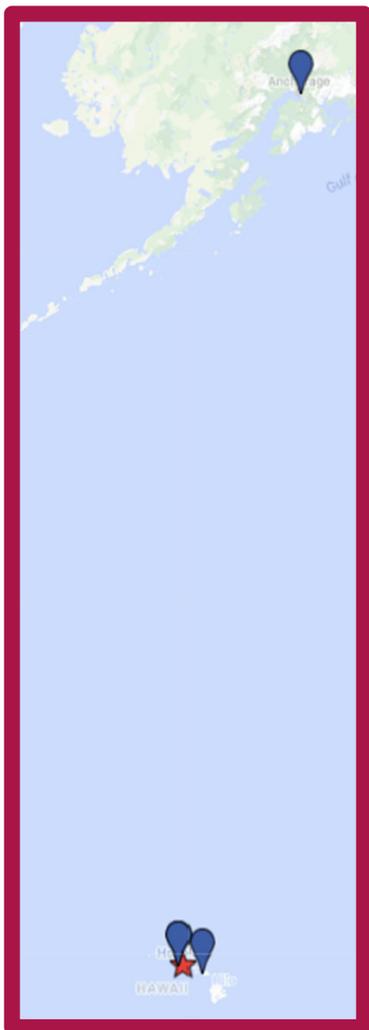


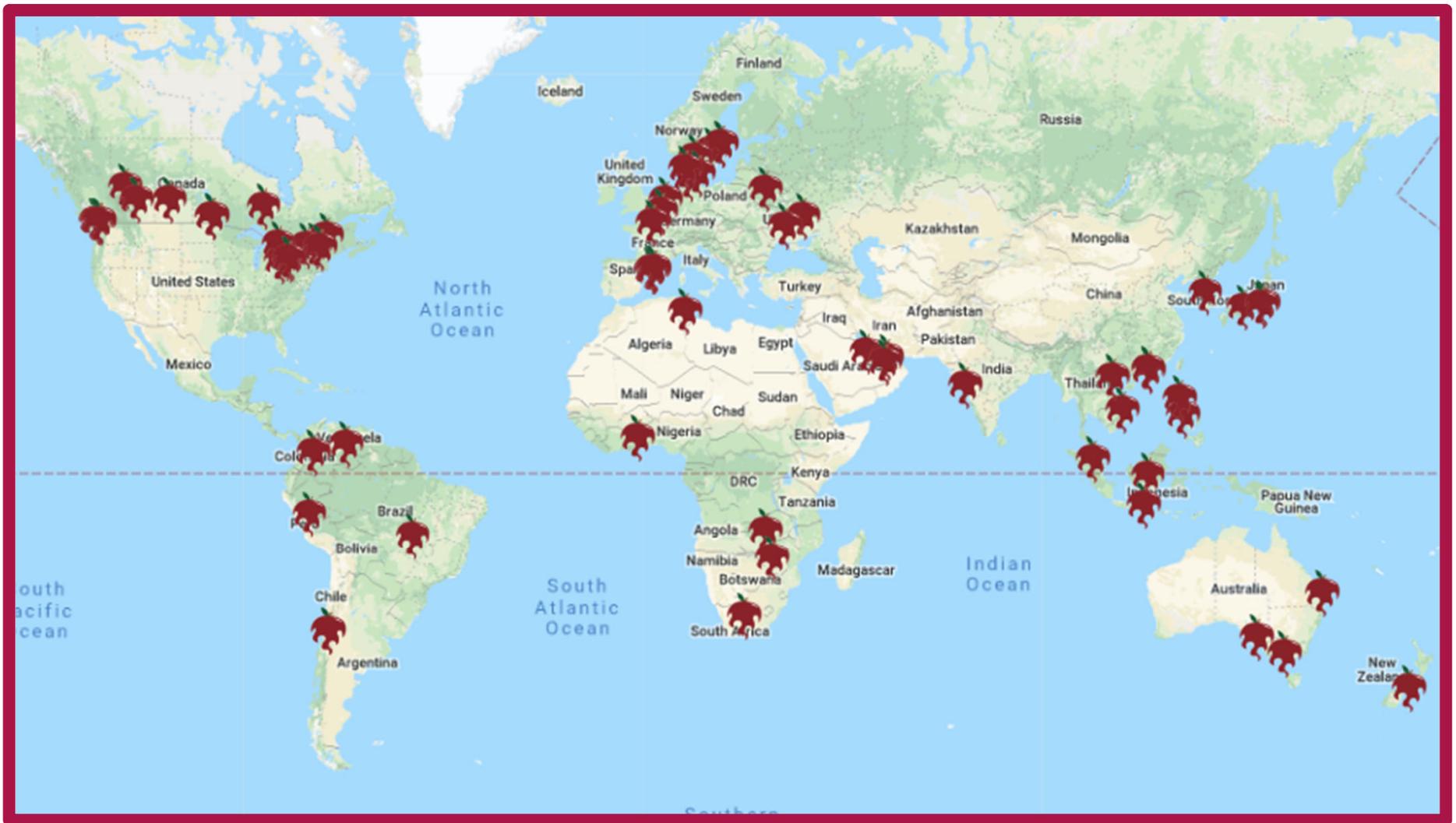
2010



2011

2016 2017 2018



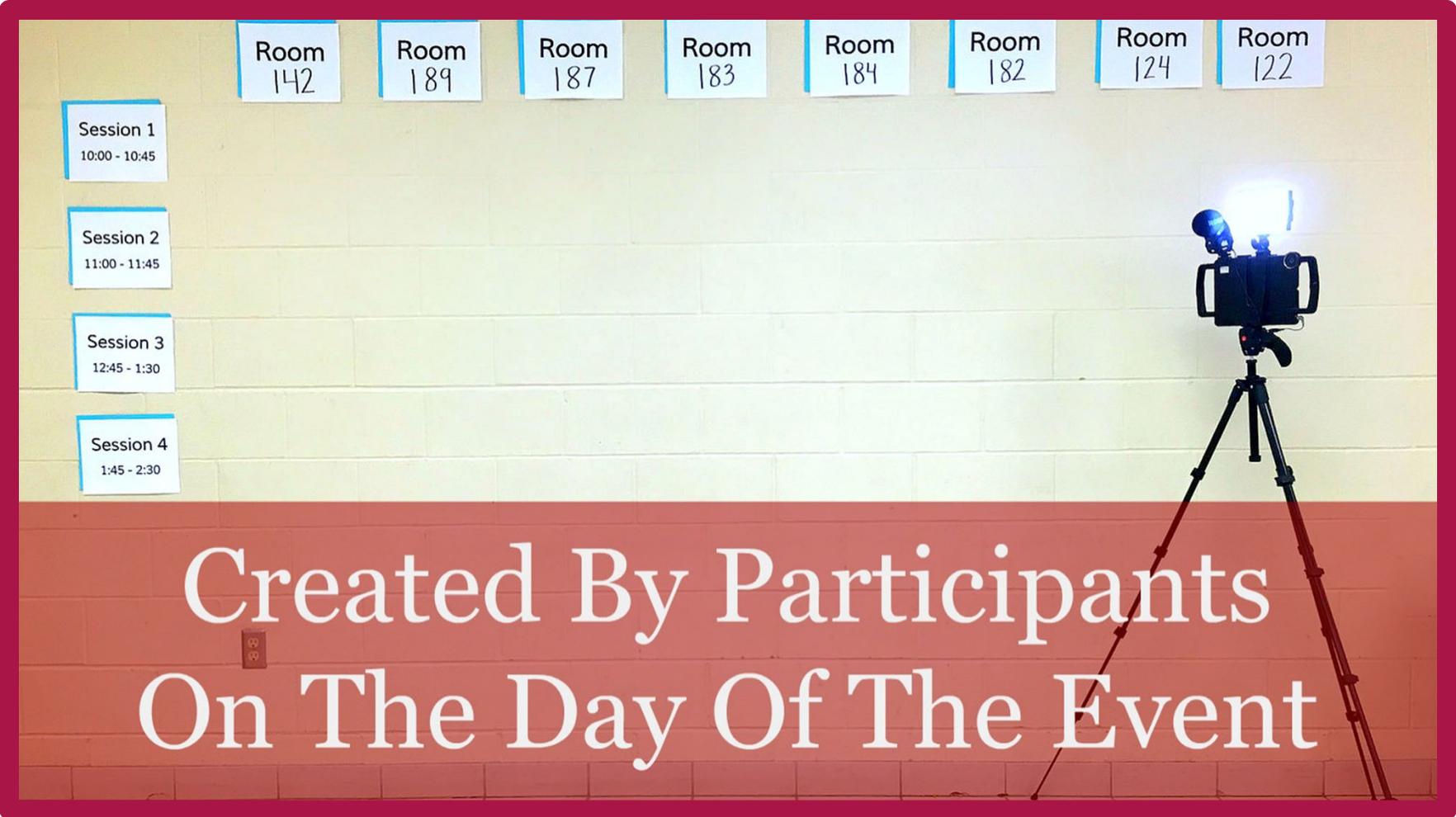


Edcamps outside the United States

Simplicity of the Model



Simplicity of the Model

A photograph of a wall with session and room labels. On the left, four session labels are stacked vertically: Session 1 (10:00 - 10:45), Session 2 (11:00 - 11:45), Session 3 (12:45 - 1:30), and Session 4 (1:45 - 2:30). At the top, eight room labels are arranged horizontally: Room 142, Room 189, Room 187, Room 183, Room 184, Room 182, Room 124, and Room 122. On the right side, a camera on a tripod is positioned, with a bright light source above it. The wall is light-colored with a red horizontal band at the bottom.

Session 1 10:00 - 10:45	Room 142	Room 189	Room 187	Room 183	Room 184	Room 182	Room 124	Room 122
Session 2 11:00 - 11:45								
Session 3 12:45 - 1:30								
Session 4 1:45 - 2:30								

Created By Participants
On The Day Of The Event



Sessions Facilitated By Anyone

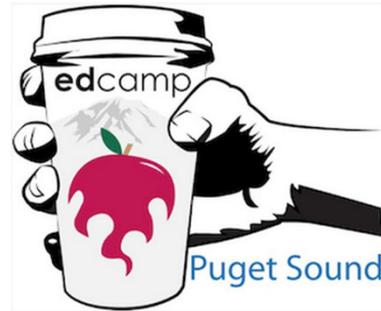


Conversations, not presentations!

Rule of Two Feet



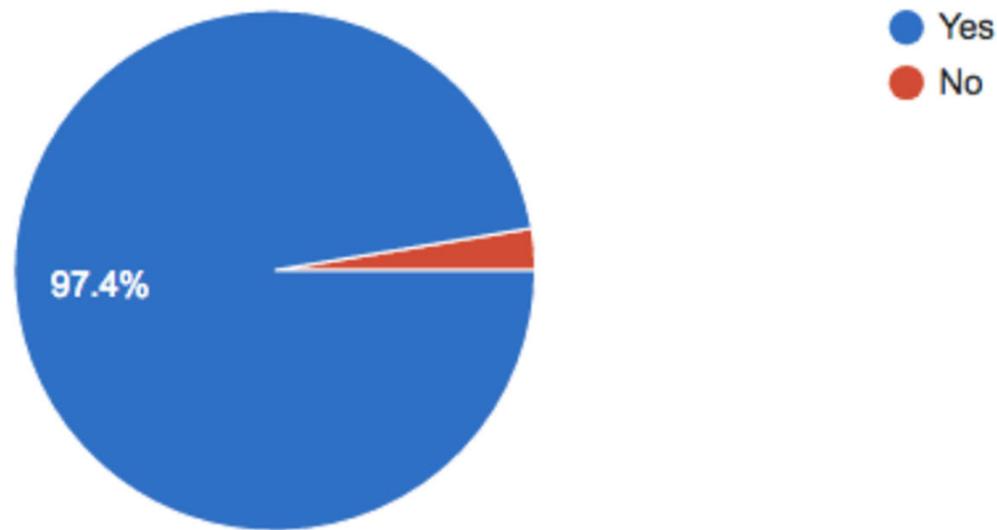
edcamp
LAKE SUPERIOR
2015



Building a Teacher Network

Did you acquire a valuable contact through the Edcamp you organized?

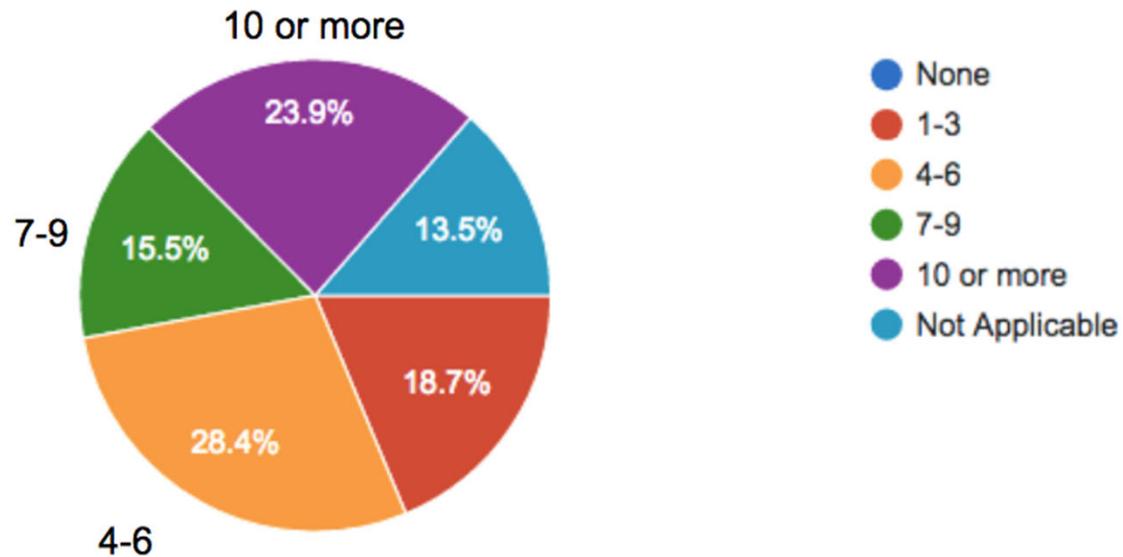
155 responses



New Ideas in the Classroom

How many new ideas, that you learned at your Edcamp, did you implement in your classroom?

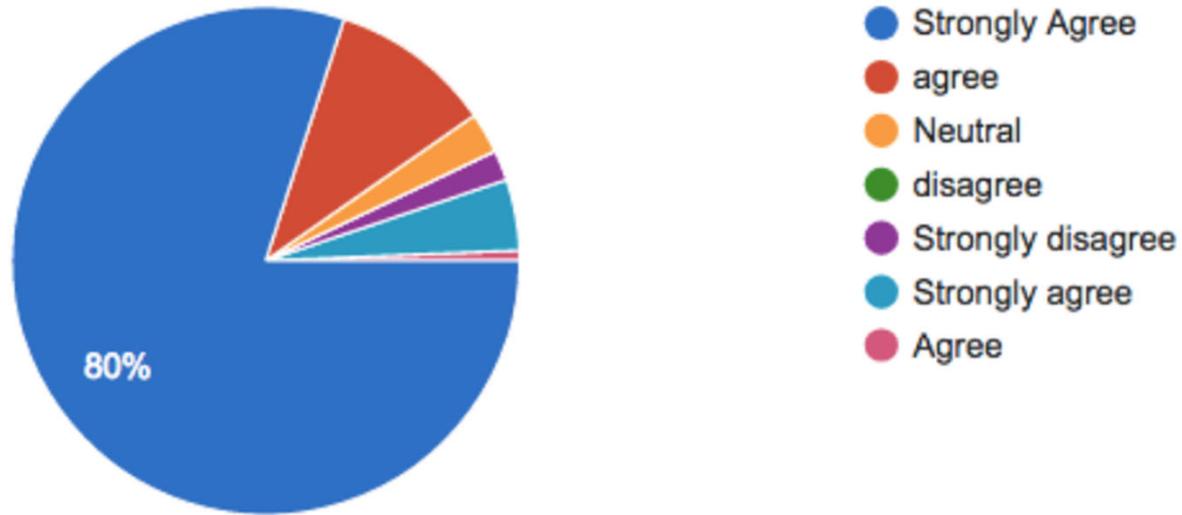
155 responses



Student Impact

Attending an Edcamp had a positive impact on my students' learning:

155 responses



90.3% Strongly Agree or Agree

National Education Technology Plan



EMBRACING THE UNCONFERENCE: GOING TO EDCAMP

An educator attending an [Edcamp](#) event engages in a professional learning experience vastly different from traditional professional development. Sessions are built on the interests and needs of the people who attend and are created on the day by using a cloud-based collaborative application that is open to all (including those unable to participate in person). Each teacher chooses which sessions to attend on the basis of individual interests or needs.

Because using technology in learning effectively is one of the challenges facing teachers, sessions frequently are organized around sharing practices and overcoming common challenges when improving practices around the use of technology. Teachers collaborate to overcome challenges together, often making connections that lead beyond the single session or day, as partnerships are formed to engage their students with each other. The shared documents created at these events become an archive and resource for whoever attended, in person or virtually.

The first Edcamp was organized in Philadelphia by a group of local educators interested in new unconference (self-organizing) approaches to a conference for professional learning. The model took off, and five years later there have been more than 750 Edcamps all organized by local educators. The enormous popularity of the format has led to the formation of the Edcamp Foundation, a nonprofit organization that will formalize much of the ad hoc support that has been provided to Edcamp organizers until now.

<https://tech.ed.gov/netp/>

Learning

GRADES K-12

Where Teachers Teach Themselves

At Edcamps, participants determine the training topics and lead their own professional development.

By KATHERINE SCHULTEN

It was 8:30 a.m. on a beautiful Saturday near the end of the school year, but the 127 teachers in Newark that day came ready to work: Not only were they attending a conference, they were also coming up with the conference topics from scratch, on the spot.

Scrawling ideas on sticky notes, they swarmed a grid showing room numbers and times and claimed their spaces; in a few minutes, the morning's schedule was set. Interested in "Cultivating a Growth Mind-set"? Head to Room 203. "Supporting Youth Activism and Civic Engagement"? 204. "Building a 'Black Panther' Curriculum"? Join the team in 301.

In contrast to the kind of professional development many teachers are used to — one-size-fits-all presentations by an administrator or outside expert — the Newark conference was an Edcamp, an innovative form of training with no predetermined speakers or sessions, led by the participants themselves.

Perhaps the best known of many so-called unconference models, Edcamps arose out of the idea that teachers, just like their students, need "voice and choice" to help them learn. Anyone who shows up to these free events can suggest or lead a session, and participants are invited to "vote with their feet" about which to attend.

Or, as Kisha Slaughter put it in Newark that morning: "Edcamps are more of a conversation than a presentation."

Ms. Slaughter, a 38-year-old math teacher at Marion P. Thomas, the charter school that hosted the Newark event, was at the conference even though she was not being paid to attend or receiving credit. Her school offers regular professional development, or PD, but she said she did not find it very useful.

"We have official PD every Friday and they'll tell us how to do something — like how to 'differentiate' our students — and I'm sitting there as a 13-year veteran and I'm thinking, 'I could teach this,'" she said.

That frustration is at the heart of several new ways teachers are taking training into their own hands. Through social media — educators are one of the largest professional groups on Twitter — as well as in-person meetings, they are reaching beyond their schools to find like-minded teachers who can act as their Personal Learning Networks, or PLN.

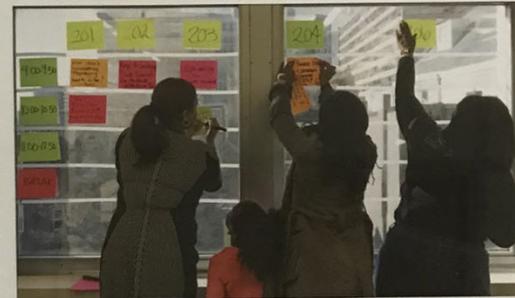
For some, taking charge of their own development might mean being part of a regular conversation on Twitter — like the social studies teachers who, via the hashtag #eschat, share resources, discuss issues and cheer each other on every Monday night. For others, like those in the 10 a.m. "Student Engagement" session in Newark that day, it could mean sharing stories, problems and solutions with 18 other educators who know exactly how they feel when they've tried everything from games to reward systems and nothing is working with that fifth period class.

At a time when thousands of demoralized teachers are walking out of schools, Edcamps offer both community and empowerment. They also fill a gap between the mandatory professional development a school provides and the large traditional conferences that teachers must often pay out of pocket to attend — if, that is, their school district will allow them the time off.

Edcamps are "good-refilling, a booster shot, a way to realize you're not alone," said Robert Dillon, 44, the director of Innovative Learning at the School District of University City in St. Louis and one of the founders of EdcampSTL. This year his camp attracted nearly 600 people from states across the Midwest.

The first Edcamp took place in Philadelphia in 2010, after teachers there attended a local technology industry conference called HarCamp and realized how well a similar event could work for educators. From there it grew, and eight years later more than 2,100 camps have been held in 33 countries, according to Hadley Ferguson, 63, a former middle school history teacher, who was one of the founders of the original camp and is now the executive director of the Edcamp Foundation.

Created in 2013, the foundation has largely been supported since 2015 by grants of nearly \$4 million from the



Participants post the schedule of sessions on cafeteria windows during an Edcamp at a Marion P. Thomas charter school in Newark in April. Anyone there can suggest or lead a session; the camps are "more of a conversation than a presentation."

Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, and its work has begun to creep into traditional education spaces. Large education conferences like ASCD and NCTE have added Edcamp-like sessions to their programs, and in 2014 and 2015, the United States Department of Education experimented with the model, holding Edcamps of its own in Washington.

This year, a partnership between the Edcamp Foundation and PBS LearningMedia has brought the philosophy to a new audience of early childhood educators — and with it, raised new issues to discuss. At a recent camp for those who work with 1- to 3-year-olds, "What do we do about biting?" was a hot topic.

Juli-Anne Benjamin, 46, an instructional coach at Marion P. Thomas Charter School, is an unconference veteran who not only founded EdcampNewark, but also started EdcampBrooklyn. She said she is beginning to see more principals and superintendents at these events — and knows they often take the philosophy back to their schools.

Offering community and empowerment while filling a gap between school-based development and traditional conferences.

Some districts are even beginning to offer their teachers professional development credits to attend.

In fact, Michael Johaneck, who directs a Mid-Career Doctorate program in Educational Leadership at the University of Pennsylvania, said his program is helping to spread the idea by running camps specifically for school leaders so they can experience them firsthand.

He acknowledges that, at first, there can be resistance to the idea. "Right away some raise the question, 'What if the teachers in the room have limited knowledge about the issues they want to discuss?'" But that very hesitation is one reason Edcamps have become so popular. The model "leans against this kind of cultural bias against teachers," he said, adding that administrators willing to experiment with them often discover leaders among their staff they didn't know were there.

For Ms. Benjamin, involving those leaders is important, but her main goal in Newark that Saturday was welcoming another audience often missing from Edcamps — teachers of color.

"We have this amazing tool for professional learning, but black people just like me have sat in so many PD sessions over the years and wondered, 'Is anyone going to talk about cultural responsiveness?' These teachers have to know they're invited in."

TENETS OF EDCAMP

PARTICIPANT-DRIVEN
Sessions are determined the morning of the event. There are no scheduled presentations or keynotes.

COST
Free to all attendees.

EXPERIENCE, NOT EXPERTS
Sessions are led by participants rather than through planned presentations.

'VOTE OF TWO FEET'
Participants are encouraged to find sessions that best meet their needs, and leave ones that don't.

Because Edcamps are designed to address teachers' immediate needs, the topics that bubble up there are often far ahead of where packaged development programs can be. In the early years, Ms. Ferguson said, participants shared cutting-edge tech tools. Now, as the camps reach a wider audience, the conversations have expanded to take on tough political issues like equity and access for all students.

Dr. Dillon has watched the St. Louis camp evolve since it began in 2012. At its February 2015 event, held just three months after the grand jury decision in the shooting of Michael Brown in nearby Ferguson, Mo., much of the conversation focused on creating a "Ferguson syllabus" with strategies for talking about race in the classroom.

"Those conversations have been a beautiful part of what's happened at Edcamp," he said. "We've really grown." Anyone who visits an Edcamp today can "get the pulse of what's on the minds of teachers."

Ms. Ferguson has goals for the foundation. Most camps happen just once a year, and though they generate good feeling and professional connections, she wants to help teachers build more sustained relationships across schools. And there is still a big divide between teachers who are digitally connected and those who are not. "One of our goals is to break out of our digital bubble," she said.

At EdcampNewark, the model seemed to be working as intended. Ms. Slaughter, the math teacher, put her own session, "Brain Breaks," on the afternoon schedule. "I saw other people do it, and somewhere in the day I got inspired," she said.

It was a bit: the room was packed as teachers gathered to suggest tools to help students "rejuvenate" during 90-minute block periods.

"Such a simple idea," Ms. Benjamin said after it was over, "but if you were a new teacher, that session answered prayers."

New York Times Article
June 5, 2018

Next Steps:

Session Topics

Starting a
Conversation

HOW TO BE AWESOME AT EDCAMP!



→ START A CONVERSATION

A session can begin with an idea...



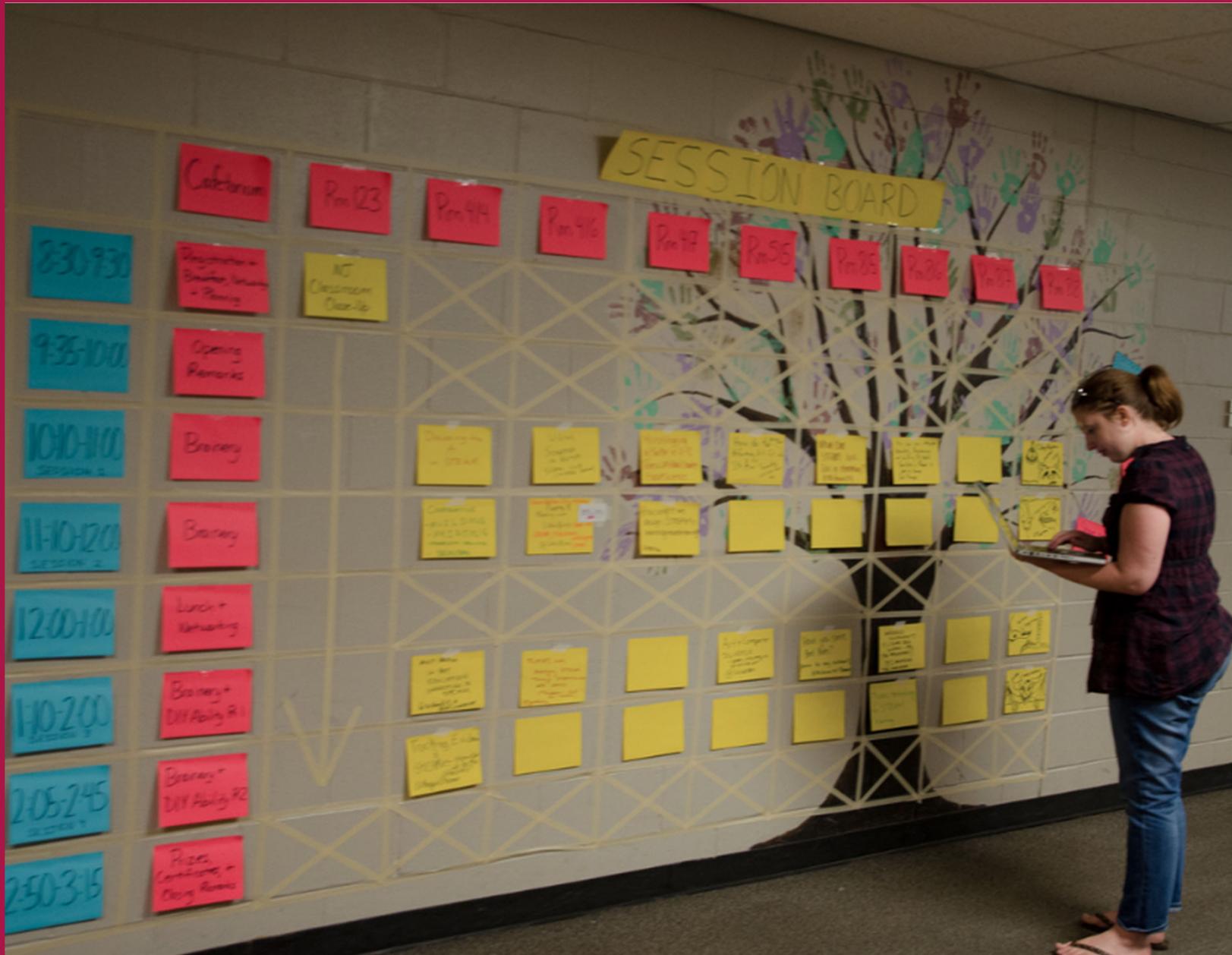
a question...
a problem...
a doubt...
an opinion...
a story.

You do **NOT** need to be "The Expert,"
just someone who wants to learn!

→ LISTEN TO YOUR FEET

If you are in a session that is not
interesting **LEAVE!** EdCamp is about
your learning, not someone's **EGO!**

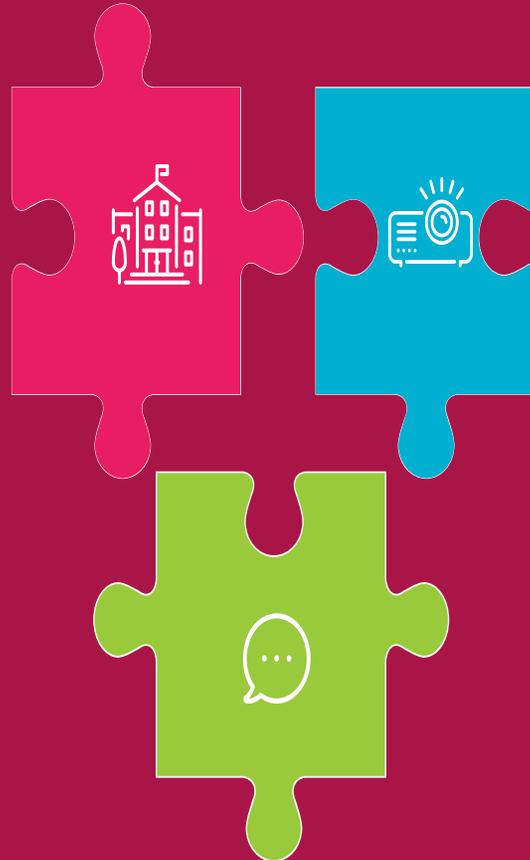




Generating topics



How do you address attendance issues?



What initiatives had the biggest impact on your school?

Ideas for increasing community engagement

Starting the Conversation



[Starting a Conversation](#)



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