

### PD for Building a Curriculum Process

# Gray Academy of Jewish Education, CA

Gray Academy of Jewish Education is a private, Junior Kindergarten through Grade 12, postsecondary preparatory academy in Winnipeg, Manitoba Canada. They came to Rubicon first as an Atlas client but then participated in Professional Development opportunities to build their process.



## What was the problem?

When Rob Dalgliesh began his role as the Director of Teaching and Learning at the Gray Academy of Jewish Education in Manitoba, he recognized a need to have a documented curriculum. In identifying this initiative, he anticipated a healthy dose of skepticism from a faculty deeply devoted to their students, but wary of another initiative to "make more work." Therefore, he sought to create a curriculum mapping process that welcomed teachers and excited them in the work. To initiate this process, Dalgliesh sought professional development about building a sustainable curriculum process.

## How did Professional Development help?

Dalgliesh decided to participate in a Rubicon Leadership Institute, a 3-day, **hands-on Professional Development experience** hosted at Rubicon's headquarters in Portland, Oregon. He came along with a fellow teacher, Sherry Wolfe, to **begin planning their curriculum development process**.

The Leadership Institute focused in part on generating **teacher buy-in for curriculum mapping**. Without buy-in, initiatives often fizzle out, not because they aren't beneficial for students and their learning, but because they are dropped to make room for the next wave of well-intentioned reforms.

By working with consultants at Rubicon and learning from fellow Leadership Institute attendees, Gray Academy of Jewish Education **was able to return to their school with tools to build a curriculum culture, including fostering buy-in among teachers**.

## What were the outcomes?

When they returned to school, Wolfe composed a "testimonial" where she wrote authentically and honestly about her initial thoughts on documenting the curriculum as well as how her understanding evolved as she learned more about the process and the **benefits of mapping**. This includes: how the process will **improve her practice on a personal level**, as well as how it will systemically **improve teaching and learning at their school**. Both cite the **Leadership Institute as an eye-opening experience that shifted their understanding of building a curriculum initiative** and gave them the tools to do so at their school and overcome roadblocks along the way.

## Testimony

I was intrigued. I was impressed. I could see the big picture. We have much to be proud of in this school. We have excellence, a committed staff that goes way beyond for our students every day. But many of us live in silos in this building. Mapping will provide us with the opportunity to break down those walls that isolate us. Sherry Wolfe, Teacher