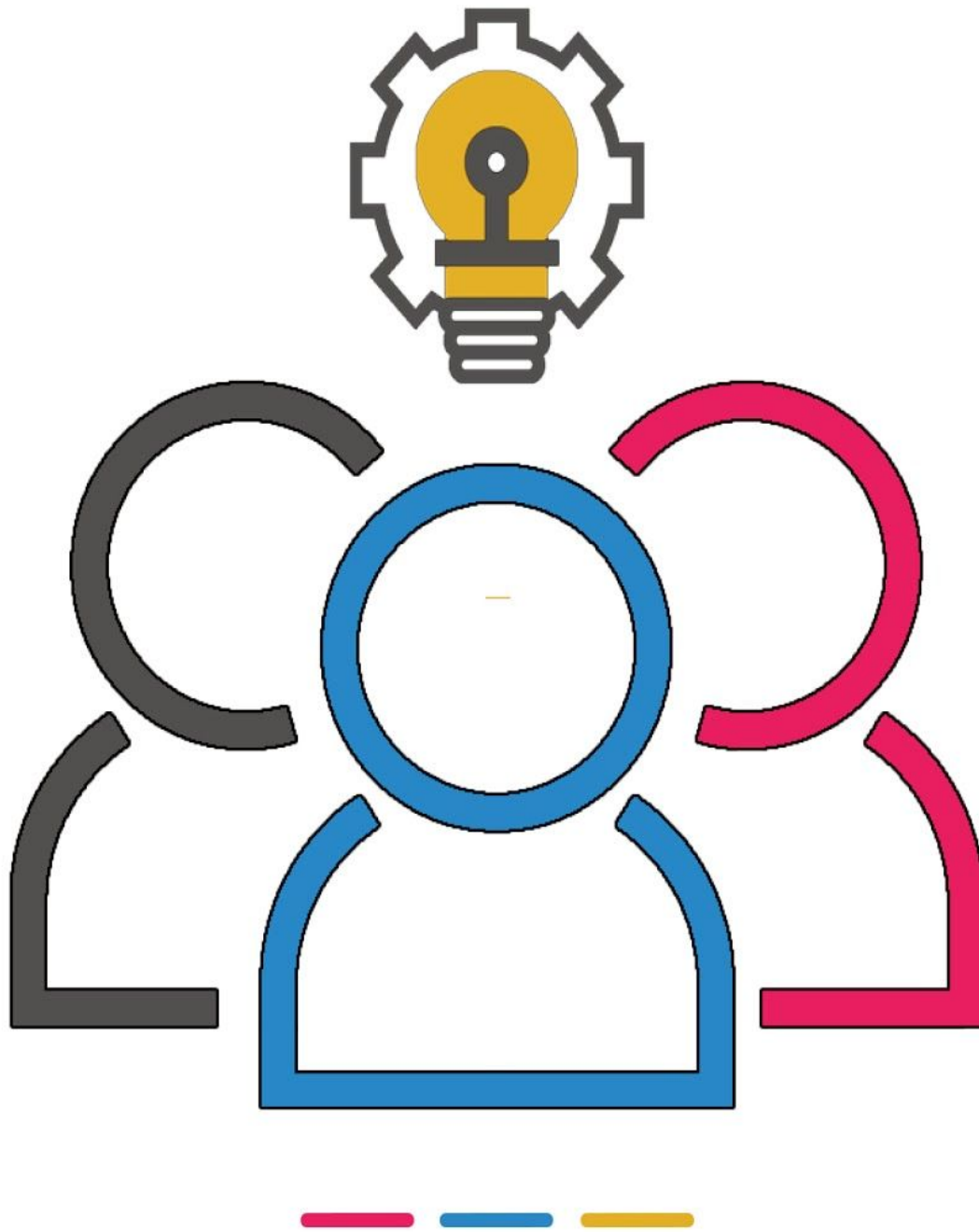


The Maker Educator Meetup Playbook



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Overview

In 2016, Maker Ed and SRI International [conducted research](#) to better understand the needs, interests and motivations of the maker educator community. Time and time again, when asked, “What do you like most about the maker educator community?” survey respondents described the openness, and willingness to share of this community:

“I love that ideas/projects/advice are openly shared, so that we can each adapt it to our own communities. Seeing student work/projects and learning how others work through the logistics has been so helpful.”

– Public School Media Specialist

“The creativity and generosity of the maker educator community is the best thing about it. There is an infectious enthusiasm that keeps me motivated and helps me motivate those I am working with, too.”

– Public School Librarian

“What I enjoy about the maker educator community is the openness and communal sense that you get whenever there is a meetup, connecting online at a forum, at a conference, etc. I feel the need to become friends with everyone associated in the group!”

– Museum Docent

As a leader in the maker education community, it is crucial to create space and time for opportunities that foster these kinds of social connections. One amazing way to do this is by organizing and facilitating Maker Educator Meetups (MEMs).

Maker Educator Meetups are a great way to expand your professional learning network and to dive deeper into maker-based topics, pedagogies, ideas, and insights that can support your community’s needs. Meetups provide a welcoming environment to share successes, get feedback on upcoming projects, troubleshoot ongoing issues, and mingle outside of our respective organizations.

This playbook describes the evolution of the Bay Area Maker Educator Meetups since they started in 2014, and shares the goals, outcomes, inspirations, and nuanced details of organizing, convening, and supporting our local MEMs. We hope that this resource will assist you with organizing your own informal gatherings for local educators interested in making and makerspaces in both informal and formal settings that serve youth.

As with any new venture, the goals and format may change over time as the meetups evolve. ***We invite you to contribute*** to this document by adding your own experiences, insights, and details related to MEMs to help grow our collective body of knowledge of maker education, maker educator needs, and maker-based pedagogies. Use the “comments” feature in the upper-right corner to add your input.

Getting Started

Brainstorming Community Needs:

Defining the needs in your maker community is an instrumental part of attracting maker educators from diverse educational environments and locations. Although individually you might have your own thoughts of what these gatherings should and could be, it is helpful to brainstorm the format of your MEM with a small maker community to develop a coherent vision.

The goals of the Bay Area MEMs are:

- **Equity:** Support all types of schools and environments to integrate making, especially those serving under-resourced communities.
- **Community:** Build a community of maker educators to share stories, activities, and experiences.
- **Support:** Provide and receive ongoing support through our peer community and a space to share opportunities for teachers interested in making.

Ilya Pratt, Design+Make+Engage Director at Park Day School and Agency by Design Maker Leader explains her appreciations for the evolution of Bay Area MEMs:

“I have really appreciated that the MEM's have evolved such that we have members from all different aspects of the larger maker community. Members step up and host the meetups, and consequently we get to experience lots of different spaces--from classrooms to small businesses to museums--and explore making in each of these contexts.”

If you are not able to meet face-to-face to define your community's needs, you might want to consider administering an online survey, reviewing the popular [K-12 Fab Labs and Makerspace Google Group](#), or following maker-centered Twitter chats (e.g., #makered, #making, #tinkering, #makerspace, #3dprinting, #designthinking, etc.) or other social media platforms for insights and ideas.

Questions to Consider:

- What are the needs of your community? What type of gathering will complement these needs?

- What are your goals for the MEM? Why do you think a MEM is needed?
 - Should it be called a MEM? Other educators have used phrases such as “Maker Educator Exchange” or “Maker Educator Network” or “Maker Night”
- How will location, meeting dates, and format affect your MEM?
- How often will your MEMs take place?
- Where will your MEMs be hosted?
- Who is willing to help organize, facilitate, and prepare the MEMs?
- How long will your event be?
- Will there be food? If so, how will the food be funded?
- What activities, discussions, format will take place?
- Will there be unstructured networking options, or [unconference-style](#) time for small break out discussions determined by MEM attendees?
- Will there be making and tinkering opportunities?

When Bay Area MEMs were ready to develop beyond an informal conversation, Aaron Vanderwerff of the [Creativity Lab](#) at Lighthouse Community Public Schools in Oakland and Angi Chau of the [Bourn Idea Lab](#) at Castilleja School reached out to a small group of maker educators from diverse educational settings to gather and discuss their community’s needs.



A slide from the first Bay Area MEM outlining key questions

Want to see more documentation of the first Bay Area MEM in Fall 2014? Here’s the meetup’s [agenda](#), [slideshow](#), [proposal](#), and [planning doc](#).



Bay Area MEM at The Exploratorium. Photo by Aaron Vanderwerf

Over the first year, and based on the needs of the community, our Bay Area MEMs branched off into two separate MEMs (San Francisco and East Bay) due to the large size of the local area, the needs of MEM participants, and the importance of accessibility and public transportation. Since 2014, there have been many changes and improvements to the format of our gatherings, including:

- Building in unstructured, “unconference” time
- Changing the format of each MEM to complement the location
- Providing activities that complement the host locations or the planned discussion topics
- Incorporating [Ignite talks](#) or [PehcaKucha](#)—short, presentation-style talks based upon MEM theme, a specific project share, or pedagogical point of view

Planning a MEM

Reaching out to your maker community often lends itself to identifying leaders or organizers of your MEMs. It is helpful to have thinking partners and collaborators to help with the logistics of the community events. The Bay Area maker meetups started with just two maker lab directors with the passion to connect K-12 makers.

Questions to Consider:

- Who comes to mind when thinking about passionate maker educators?
- One educator shouldn't have to organize on their own. How many core organizers are right for your community?
- Who is the target audience for your MEM community?
- Who isn't at the table but should be? Think about a diversity of experience, different kinds of educational settings and roles, pay attention to race, ethnicity, gender, and age, and ways to reach educators in need.

Take a look at some of the aspects involved in organizing and maintaining a MEM:

Finding a Sponsor:

It is important that MEMs are low-cost or even free. Event spaces and food donations may be possible options. Often time, businesses, museums, libraries, and individuals are excited to help educators. See if there are local businesses or makerspaces that might be able to help out with funding for food or locations. Traditional options like PTAs or Rotary Clubs may also be able to support your MEM, especially if you are holding them at specific schools or community spaces. Don't be afraid to ask local restaurants or companies for discounts or free supplies or food. Again, you may be surprised by how willing businesses are to support educators. Don't forget to give credit to your sponsors during your event: a shoutout for their support, a few minutes to speak to the group, or passing out menus or coupons from their business are great options.

The Bay Area meetups started by collecting money from educators for the cost of food. Eventually, we were able to find local sponsors to help provide support for our meetups costs including food and beverages. Depending on where the food is from, and the number of attendees, our budget ranged from \$100-\$500 for our monthly MEM event. As the Bay Area MEMs have grown, we've actively sought sponsorships with organizations like [The Exploratorium](#), [KQED](#), and local schools and makerspaces who've generously supported MEMs by donating their spaces free of charge.

Karen Wilkinson, Tinkering School Director at the Exploratorium explains why it is important to sponsor MEMs:

“Our goal is to offer maker educators the opportunity to come together and interact with one another at the Exploratorium; to further develop their craft and reflect on the power of learning through making and tinkering.”

Finding a Location:

When planning your MEMs, consider how often and where they will take place. It is helpful to diversify the locations so that all K-12 maker educators feel welcome and are exposed to community resources. It may also be helpful to have an anchor site to host your MEM on a consistent, bi-monthly basis. This can be helpful to both the MEM managers and members who have less bandwidth for getting to various locations.

Don't limit yourself, use the resources and networks available to you, your MEM organizers, and your MEM participants. MEM environments can happen anywhere; public and private schools, makerspaces, community workshops, museums, libraries, a county office of education, or companies that make or design. Think broadly! This could include a job-site, a kitchen, or a even a local cafe. Finding a location with a built-in activity is a plus. Ask your maker community and extended networks for location ideas.

Questions to Consider:

- Is your MEM going to incorporate a making activity, a discussion, or a panel presentation that can be complemented by the environment that hosts your event?
- Depending on your community, it may also be helpful to consider these things when planning out your locations:
 - Proximity to public transportation
 - Parking or carpool options
 - Building access information (entrance/exit, contact information for event day, maps)
 - Potential for childcare

Organize food and drinks:

Figure out a food and drink plan that works best for you and your attendees. For MEMs scheduled during the school week, having a simple dinner available to busy educators is deeply appreciated! Pizza delivery works well for most places. Ice is nice to have to keep

drinks cold. Plates, napkins and utensils are great to have in stock, although your hosts or food delivery may provide these.

Mike Petrich, Director of the Making Collaborative at the Exploratorium, explains the value of their partnership with bi-monthly bay area MEMs:

“Maker Educator Meetups have been invaluable for us as a way to share tentative ideas. The ability to offer a new project or activity idea in the middle of development allows us to share our own questions, and get community input about next steps, solutions to problems, and inspiring new ideas! Maker Educator Meetups allow us to see our work from differing viewpoints, alternative perspectives, and from diverse cultural perspectives. The collective whole of MEM sheds important light on the varied aspects of making and tinkering.”

Materials for all MEMs:

Think about some of the general materials (not considering any maker activities you may be facilitating) to have on hand at the MEMs in order to generate and share information. This might include a welcome message, sign-up sheet, ideas or topics, announcements, instructions, arrows/signs for orienting educators, tools to document your event for future promotion or share outs.

- Post it notes
- Whiteboard/writing surface
- Pens
- Nametags
- Tape
- Ways to document the MEM: have fun with slow-motion or time-lapsed video, use apps to automate image capturing such as [Paper by FiftyThree](#), or think like a creative kindergartener and bring crayons, watercolors, stickers, etc.

Track attendance:

It is helpful to keep track of those that attend the MEMs for contact information, figuring out your audience, and to provide data for your sponsors. Who do you want to attract to your MEM? Participants may attend for various reasons. Perhaps attendees come for the topic or activity that will take place, while others might come for the networking opportunities or a free meal. Many might come for all of these reasons.

The Bay Area maker meetups have included a variety of individuals including science teachers, librarians, fab lab directors, educators from after school programs and summer camps, curriculum directors, school and district admins, students, technology integrators and directors, STEAM coaches, Americorps [VISTA members](#), entrepreneurs, learning specialists, parents, and many, many more.

Promote your MEM:

To help build momentum for a growing and evolving MEM community, it is important to consider your online and offline presence and how resources and information are to be collected and shared. Perhaps reaching out to the science departments or specific curriculum coaches in your educational community will work best for you. Often times, other professional development events may lead to future MEM participants.



Example of a G+ post for the January, 2017 MEM

Questions to Consider:

- Who is your target audience?
- How will you get the word out about your event?
- What are the best channels of communication for public school settings, making sure that equity is at the forefront of these management choices?

The organizers of the Bay Area maker meetups continue to brainstorm ways to better reach maker educators beyond our inner circles. It is important to us that our MEMs support educators from all possible environments.

As technology tools and social media environments evolve,

consider what will work best for your community. Here are some options to consider along with some example of how they've been used by Bay Area MEM organizers:

Uses	Site	Pros	Cons
Promoting your Event	Google+ Community Facebook is also an option.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Announce MEM info ● Provide RSVP link through a service such as Eventbrite ● Share links and resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Cannot RSVP directly ● Not all educators have accounts
Tracking Attendance	* Eventbrite	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Tracks RSVP ● Broad audience ● Share specific links and resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Event specific ● Not all educators have accounts
Sharing Resources & Online Discussions	Google Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Aggregate conversations by topic ● Announce MEM info ● Provide RSVP link 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Not MEM event specific ● Not all educators have accounts
Sharing Resources & Online Discussions	Twitter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Possible chat option for maker educators ● Aggregate conversations by hashtags (#bamem, #ebmem, #makered) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Not all educators have accounts

*Ryan Moreno, an early childhood educator from Florida, explains how Eventbrite helped promote his MEM:

“Our biggest participant (at our MEM) by far was from an all-girls K-12 School. One of their administrators found out about the meetup from Eventbrite itself, the site emailed him the event because the description was similar to events he had shown interest in. They have expressed excitement and are interested in hosting the next one which we are planning for some time in the beginning of 2017. They were also able to point me to another meetup of educators that was happening the following week where we were able to gain other interest from at least two other schools.”

Word of mouth can complement any online tools you may choose to promote and maintain your MEMs. You may also consider having a presence and MEM information available at a local maker faire, a county faire or reaching out to county offices of education.

Expect the Unexpected:

Weather, school events such as Back-to-School Night, and holiday breaks are worth taking into consideration as things that you cannot control, but may affect the MEM turnout. It may be helpful to reference your local school districts' calendar to see when breaks are happening.

We have provided a MEM planning checklist in [Appendix A](#).

Running a MEM

Now that you have planned and promoted your MEM, it's time to think about what will actually happen during the event.

Format:

The format of your event may be best determined by your community needs and your host locations. The current iteration of the Bay Area MEM lasts about 2-hours and includes concurrent time for socializing, discussion, and making, whereby educators can move easily from one activity to another. Some examples:

Perhaps your community would benefit from an event that includes families and other community members rather than an educator-only event? Take a look at the steps taken by [Humboldt County's Office of Education Family Maker night](#).

A Family STEM Maker Night put on by San Diego's [Elementary Institute of Science](#) saw students and families from four schools that the organization's programs partner with, and provided educators with opportunities to connect with student families around making. For many of these families, English was not their first language, and so the meetup provided an exciting, unique way for families to connect with maker education.

Nichole Pinkard, co-founder of the [Digital Youth Network](#) (DYN) in Chicago, explains that in order for youth to participate in the DYN programs, their parents are required to participate in family maker nights in which they create and solve problems. This has proved to be an invaluable way to engage families because parents experience first-hand the very same struggles and joys that their children experience when making—and this allows them to see the value of the DYN program more clearly.

Socializing Activities:

Face-to-face conversations are a highlight for many attendees of MEMs. They are a chance to share and learn about various maker environments and activities and find support in a community outside of your makerspace. Find the opportunities for socializing and discussion activities that best benefit your maker community.

“Everyone who attended (our first MEM) was getting started with the initial planning of their makerspace within their school and was hungry for information, examples, and feedback. We were able to speak to

them and tease out the making that was already going on throughout the school and how they could use the new space to amplify that.”

– Ryan Moreno

To facilitate connections and conversations amongst meetup participants, consider the following ideas:

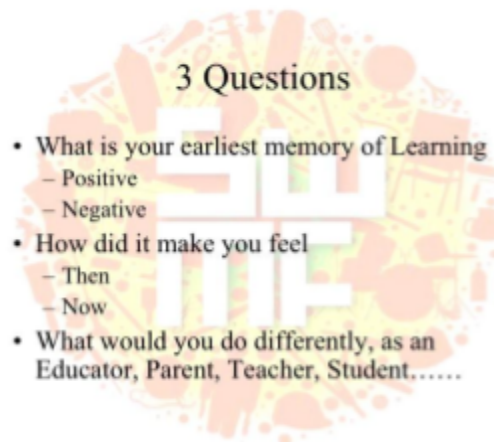
- Have sign-in sheet and name tags available
- Provide unstructured time for networking and snacking while guests arrive
- Provide attendees with discussion prompts to spark conversations and connections. Some examples:
 - Documentation: “What is something about documentation that you want to talk to others?”
 - What is something that you would like to share?
 - What is something you with which you are struggling and would like support?
- Host/Organizer introduction:
 - Provide around 10-20 minutes for a host or organizers to introduce themselves, the space, and the making activity. It is important to be clear about the time allotted for this with your hosts. Knowing the schedule and expectation of sharing time will help keep your evening’s schedule from being compromised.
 - Are there resources you want to share?
 - If the space is conducive to this, can educators get a tour?
- Sharing:
 - Determine social media handles, hashtags, and images you want to use in the invitation and also during the MEM; Encourage participants to document and share artifacts from the meetup online.
 - Using live streaming technology (e.g., Facebook video, YouTube Live, Periscope, etc.) capture a live “interview” during the MEM and share the experience with people who weren’t able to join in-person

Discussion Activities:

Facilitated discussion activities at a Maker Educator Meetup can take on many forms. We’ve outlined a few of the different discussion styles we’ve seen used successfully at past MEM events.

Icebreakers or Short Prompts:

Short prompts or quick icebreakers can be used at the beginning of a meetup, or throughout the event to facilitate conversations and connections amongst attendees.



Prompt from a Maker Educator Meet-up in Phoenix, Arizona.

Panel-Based Discussions:

If your meetup will focus specifically on one theme or topic, consider putting together a panel of local experts in this topic. This might include educators, representatives of connected local businesses or non-profits, out of school program facilitators, or even youth. If your meetup focuses on panel-based discussions, make sure to share the topics and interviewees ahead of time so that attendees can prepare questions and discussion topics.

In January, 2015, educators at a MEM hosted by [The Exploratorium](#) explored the topic of “Quantifying Learning” through a panel discussion. For inspiration, take a look at the [notes](#) that came out of that discussion.

Carl Barone, Create Studio Maker Teacher at Roosevelt Middle School in Oakland shares his experiences of MEMs:

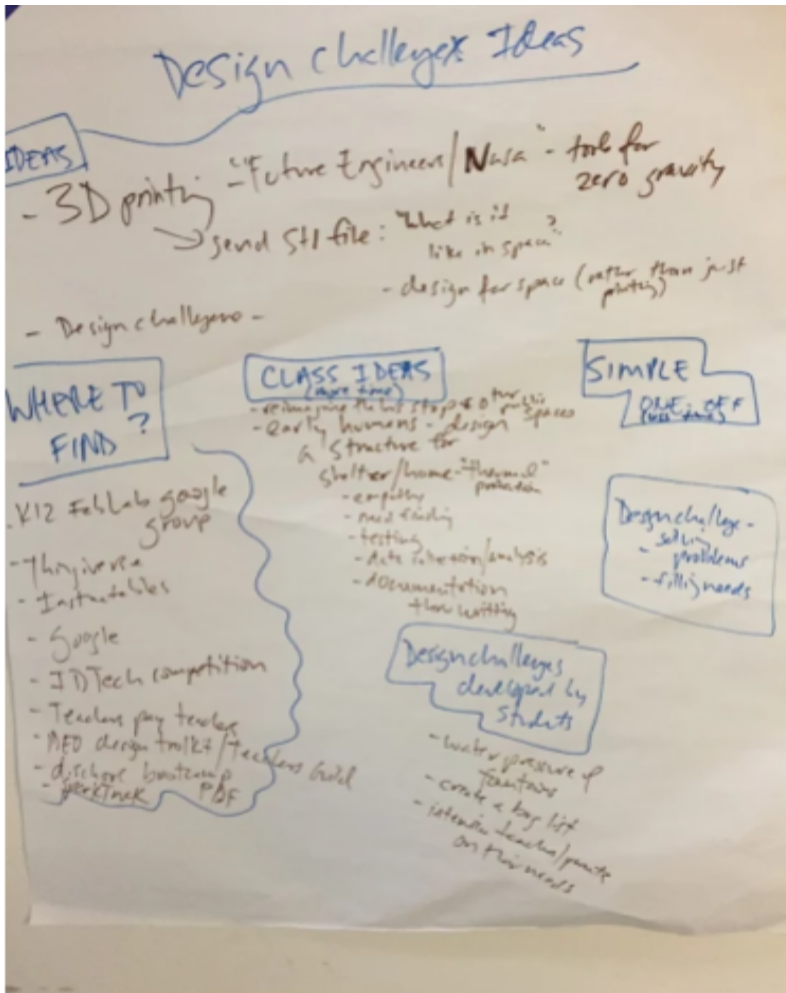
"For me personally there's no better way to get ideas than to bounce ideas off other educators. Now I'm thinking about games and that's the biggest part of these meetings. It's community. For example, asking David about his laser cutter has helped me out. And also just being in other people's spaces and how they have things set up is helpful."

Unconferences:

[Unconferences](#) are participant-driven discussions. It is a time to self-organize and dive deeper into topics that are of interest to you and other participants. The “rule of two feet” allows individuals to move freely amongst conversations that are taking place. No one will take it personally if you exercise this rule and join another conversation or branch off with a new topic. You may choose to have MEM participants write down topics that they are interested in when signing in. These topics might connect with a specific topic around making or can be completely open. Unconference discussions are not

presentations, but a collective sharing of an agreed-upon topic. It is a very beneficial format to collectively deepen meaningful conversations and professional reflections, and also builds a culture in which ideas and topics are pulled directly from participants’ interests rather than pre-planned or pre-defined by one educator.

If the evening involves an option for unconference discussions, determine topics of interest at sign-in or walk around and ask participants if they have a topic of interest to discuss. The table below shares a bit more about the unconference format and potential topics.



Ideas from a group that formed during unconference time at a Fall, 2016 Bay Area MEM.

More on Unconferences	
<i>Unconference Format:</i>	<i>Potential Unconference Topics:</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-organized PD 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making and Equity
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educator-driven and led 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making and School Culture
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “The rule of two feet”: move around freely between making and discussing; no one will take it personally 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design Thinking
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand your professional learning network (PLN) beyond your institution or role 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design Challenges in Middle School
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No one needs to be the "sage on the stage" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specific Maker Skill
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documenting making activities
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making on a budget

Resources for Unconference-style gatherings (e.g., [Edcamp](#), [Foo Camp](#), [EdFoo](#), [ORD Camp](#)):

- [EdCamp SF Bay](#)
- [Kristen Swansen’s Blog](#)
- [Interview with Kristen Swansen](#)
- [EdCamp Wiki](#)
- [EdCamp Foundation](#)
- [Ed Camp video link](#)

Making Activities:

Making activities may have a connection with other pre-planned event themes for your MEM, such as an Ignite talk, a reflection prompt or an activity to complement your host location. Make-and-take activities have the benefit of a tangible item that has the potential to be duplicated with maker students. What maker activities will complement your host sites and MEM participants? Is the activity open to iterations or are the activities kits that can only be used with specific parts? Are the maker experiences diversified by medium (e.g., sewing, woodworking, and programming), topic, technology, cost, individual/collaborative, etc?

Sample making activities from past MEMs:

- [Paper Circuits](#)
- [ScratchX](#) and Circuits
- [Pop-up Engineering](#)
- [Felting](#)
- [Chain Reaction](#)
- [Sound Machines](#)
- [Linkages](#)
- [Paper](#)
- [Toy Take Apart](#)
- [Catapults](#)
- [Microscopes](#)
- [Scribble Machines](#)
- [Chain Reaction](#)
- [Mechanical Boxes](#)
- [Sew a pillow](#)
- [Scratch Play](#)
- [Light Play](#)

Sample MEM Topics, Ignite Talks, and Learning Design Focus:

Preplanned MEM topics will help participants know what they might experience during the meetup. It is helpful to organize your presentation format goals. Will these topics be a theme throughout your event? Will you have short presentation style talks from experts in the field? Might these talks complement a design activity?

- [STEAM](#)
- [Maker PD](#)
- Compare & Contrast - reflecting on [dimensions of learning](#)
- [Agency by Design Framework](#)
- [Maker Faire](#)
- [Design Thinking](#)
- [Meaningful Making](#)
- [Maker Ed Pedagogy](#)
- [Making in the K12 Setting](#)

Documentation:

Documentation is a key aspect of any form of making, so make sure to find ways to capture some of the highlights of the MEM. The artifacts created during MEMs can be incredibly valuable when it comes to reflecting on your meetup, and determining next

steps when it comes to improving and iterating. Some great, easily-accessible methods and tools for documentation can be found in Maker Ed's Open Portfolio Project's ["DIY Documentation Tools for Makers"](#) research brief.

Sample Timeline for Evening Meetup (2 hours):

Time	Activity	Roles	Prep & Clean Up
5:15 - 6:00pm			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Set up: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Food table ○ Drink area ● Organize tables and materials ● Registration area
6:00 - 6:15pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Educators arrive ● Unstructured networking ● Sign in ● Plan Unconference topics? ● Food/Drink ● Making options for those that want to jump right in 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Greeter to navigate space (if needed) ● Facilitator to encourage flow 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● If time for unconference discussions, provide post-its upon check-in for topic suggestions ● Maker activity/supplies should be ready - at least to spark interest
6:15 - 6:30pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Welcome and overview of evening ● Reminder to share on social media #makered (and other predetermined hashtags) ● Short check in introductions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Facilitator intro to evening events and overview of space ● Facilitator to keep time ● Facilitator to determine specific reflection question 	
6:30 - 6:45pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Topic Discussion (predetermined or unconference style) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Notetakers 	

6:45 - 7:45pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Some educators, if interested, may continue breakout/ unconference discussions ● Making activity; pausing for gallery walk or design challenge 		
7:45 - 8:00pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Reflections and Feedback ● Next Meetup info: where, when, and topic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Facilitator to call group back together ● Share takeaways from evening ● Remind folks that an essential aspect of making is cleaning up! 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Clean up ● Empty trash and recycle ● Rearrange furniture (if necessary)

Resources

- [Bay Area Maker Educators Group on Google+](#)

- **Resources from Maker Ed:**

- Online Community:**

- Maker Ed's [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#) feeds showcase and link to great communities and resources for maker educators
 - Maker Ed's [Google+](#) community might also prove helpful

- General Resources**

- Maker Ed's Youth Makerspace Playbook
 - Maker Ed's [Resource Library](#), which includes both Maker Ed and external resources for a wide range of maker education needs
 - Maker Ed's [blog](#), which highlights our work as well as other maker education work we're excited about

- Professional Development**

- General information on Maker Ed's [PD offerings and events](#)
 - Free online, self-paced [PD modules](#)
 - “Getting Started with Making” [Micro-credentials](#): Micro-credentials are research-backed, expert-assessed, representations of learned skills or competencies that can be presented as a [digital badge](#).
 - [Tinkering Fundamentals](#), free online course through the Tinkering Studio

- Open Portfolio Project**

- General information on our [Open Portfolio Project](#)
 - [A Practical Guide to Open Portfolios](#)
 - [Open Portfolio Research Brief Series](#)

- **Resources related to assessing and evaluating maker learning**

- (Collected at past MEMs):**

- [Dimensions or Learning](#) (from The Exploratorium)
 - [Project Zero's, Making Thinking Visible](#)
 - [Alternative Assessments and Feedback in a Maker Ed Classroom](#)
 - [Maker Portfolios; Authentic Assessment that Tells a Story](#)

- [The Role and Rigor of Self-Assessment in MakerEd](#)
- [The Role of Peer Assessment in a Maker Classroom](#)
- [Creating an Authentic Maker Ed Rubric](#)
- [Assessment & Feedback Resources](#)

Comment with any other resources you love, and feel would benefit the wider maker educator community or help support educators looking to start maker educator meetups.

Appendices: Appendix A & B

Key Considerations for Planning a Maker Educator Meetup



Getting Started:

- What are the needs of your community? What type of gathering will complement these needs?
- What are your goals for the MEM? Why do you think a MEM is needed?
- How will location, meeting dates, and format affect your MEM?
- How often will your MEMs take place?
- Where will your MEMs be hosted?
- Who is willing to help organize, facilitate and prepare the MEMs?
- How long will your event be?
- Will there be food? If so, how will the food be funded?
- What activities, discussions, format will take place?
- Will there be unstructured networking options, or unconference style small break-out discussions determined by MEM attendees?
- Will there be making and tinkering opportunities?

Organizing and Maintaining a MEM:

- Who comes to mind when thinking about passionate maker educators?
- One educator shouldn't have to organize on their own: How many core organizers are right for your community?
- Who is your target audience for your MEM community?
- Who isn't at the table but should be? Think about a diversity of experience, different kinds of educational settings and roles, pay attention to race, ethnicity, gender, and age, and ways to reach educators in need.

Promotion:

- Who is your target audience?
- How will you get the word out about your event?
- What are the best channels of communication for public school settings, making sure that equity is at the forefront of these management choices?

Location:

- Is your MEM going to incorporate a making activity, a discussion, or a panel presentation that can be complemented by the environment that hosts your event?
- Depending on your community, it may also be helpful to consider these things when planning out your locations:
 - Proximity to public transportation
 - Parking or carpool options
 - Building access information (entrance/exit, contact information for event day, maps)
 - Potential for childcare



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Maker Educator Meetup Preparation Checklist



One Month Before Your MEM:

- I have set a date and time for my MEM
- I have determined a location and assessed the following:
 - Do you have a designated contact at the space?
 - How will educators get in and out? Is the space accessible?
 - What is the capacity of the space?
 - Are any waivers, clearances or other permission forms that need to be sent out?
- I have considered the following transportation related concerns:
 - Is the location accessible via public transit?
 - Is there parking?
 - Is there any carpool information that may help attendees?
- I have determined the format of my MEM:
 - Will there be a making activity? If so, what will it be and what will I need to facilitate it?
 - Will there be opportunities for discussions and networking? Unconferences? Panel discussions?
- I am prepared to promote the event, and register attendees:
 - I have created and posted an EventBrite page, or some other method for promotion & registration.
 - I have considered the event's potential audience, and am developing a plan for promotion.

Two Weeks Before Your MEM:

- I have considered food and drinks for my MEM:
 - I have placed an order for food.
 - I have, if necessary, coordinated with any partners/sponsors around providing food & drink.
- I have considered materials for my MEM and who will be obtaining them:
 - Post-its
 - Name-tags
 - Tape
 - Maker activity supplies
 - Sharpies
- I have recruited necessary partners to help coordinate and facilitate MEM activities.
- I have continued to promote my MEM through a variety of in person and online channels

Day of Your MEM:

- I have prepared and printed any necessary photo releases or other forms.
- I have printed a registration list, and am prepared with a sign-in sheet for attendees.



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