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## ***Van Andel Institute for Education Empowers K-8 Educators with High-Quality Afterschool and Summer School Programs***

**GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. (March 13, 2023)** — Van Andel Institute for Education (VAI) has always been committed to fostering education both within and outside of the classroom. This means equipping administrators, teachers and staff with effective tools that save them both time and energy, while also creating engaging learning experiences which foster student curiosity, creativity, and critical thinking. To better meet these growing needs, reimagine programming and to close learning gaps, VAI is inviting educators who teach grades K-8 to explore their comprehensive and affordable project-based Afterschool and Summer School professional development programs.

"The projects are going very well and the kids and teachers are really enjoying it, shared Urbana administrator Melanie Anders who put into practice what she learned at a VAI Summer School program in 2022. "I've been visiting the different classrooms during project times and students are excited and talking all at once to tell me about what they're doing!"

"The hands-on experience was the most valuable part of this PD," said a Muskegon Heights teacher who took part in a VAI professional development program last year. "We were engaged the whole day and that is a big deal in PD."

Offerings include:

- **[K-8 Project-Based Afterschool Program](#)**: Whether it's running an afterschool club or providing wraparound services for students, it can be tough to find high-quality resources that any teacher can use to accelerate learning without requiring hours of prep time. VAI's project-based Afterschool Program offers project plans and supplies, as well as coaching for staff, to ensure teachers are comfortable and confident with the lessons.
- **[K-8 Project-Based Summer School](#)**: Summer school is crucial to helping students address learning gaps and prepare for the upcoming school year. Project-Based Learning (PBL) provides an authentic context for learning and motivating students and teachers alike. PBL allows teachers to tackle more content standards in a shorter amount of time. With highly engaging projects and customized professional development support, VAI can help teachers identify instructional gaps and deliver lessons that summer school students will find engaging and meaningful.

Registration is taking place now and space is limited. For more information about VAI's [K-8 Project-Based Afterschool](#) and [Summer School](#) programs and to register please visit [vaei.org](http://vaei.org).

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#### **ABOUT VAN ANDEL INSTITUTE**

Van Andel Institute (VAI) is an agile biomedical research and education organization that unleashes innovation to multiply impact. Established in Grand Rapids, Michigan, by the Van Andel family, VAI collaborates around the world to advance bold ideas in biomedicine and education. With a staff of more than 400 and a growing network of partners, VAI studies the origins of cancer, Parkinson's and other diseases and translates its findings into breakthrough prevention and treatment strategies to improve human health. The Graduate School at VAI offers a Ph.D. in molecular and cellular biology through a research-intensive, interdisciplinary program that prepares students for successful careers as independent investigators. VAI also is dedicated to creating classrooms where curiosity, creativity and critical thinking thrive, offering engaging programs for K-12 students and transformative professional development and instructional tools for teachers. Find out more about Van Andel Institute by visiting [vai.org](http://vai.org).