



# SLPS Teachers Matter Initiative: Retaining Effective St. Louis Teachers

Presentation to the Special Administrative Board

January 15, 2014



# Public Education Leadership Project (PELP) at Harvard University

## ▶ Participating Districts:

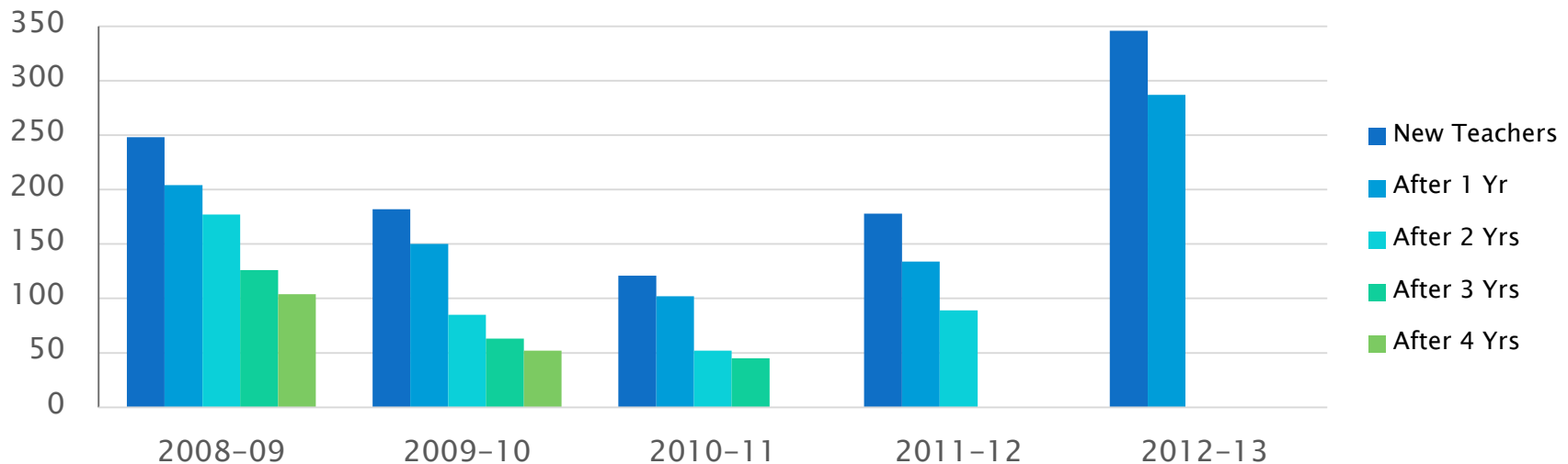
- Austin Independent School District (TX)
- Boston Public Schools (MA)
- DeKalb County (GA)
- Denver Public Schools (CO)
- Gwinnett County (GA)
- Los Angeles (CA)
- Montgomery County (MD)
- San Francisco (CA)
- St. Louis (MO)
- Washington, DC

## ▶ St. Louis Participants:

- ▶ Dr. Kelvin Adams, Superintendent
- ▶ Dr. Elizabeth Bender, Principal
- ▶ Stacy Clay, Deputy Superintendent of Student Support
- ▶ Leon Fisher, Chief Financial Officer
- ▶ Dr. James Henderson, Chief Human Resources Officer
- ▶ Mary Houlihan, Chief Operating Officer
- ▶ Yvette Levy, Local 420 Teacher
- ▶ Square Watson, Office of Accountability
- ▶ Jesse Dixon, Office of Academic Services

# Problem Statement: Retaining Effective Teachers

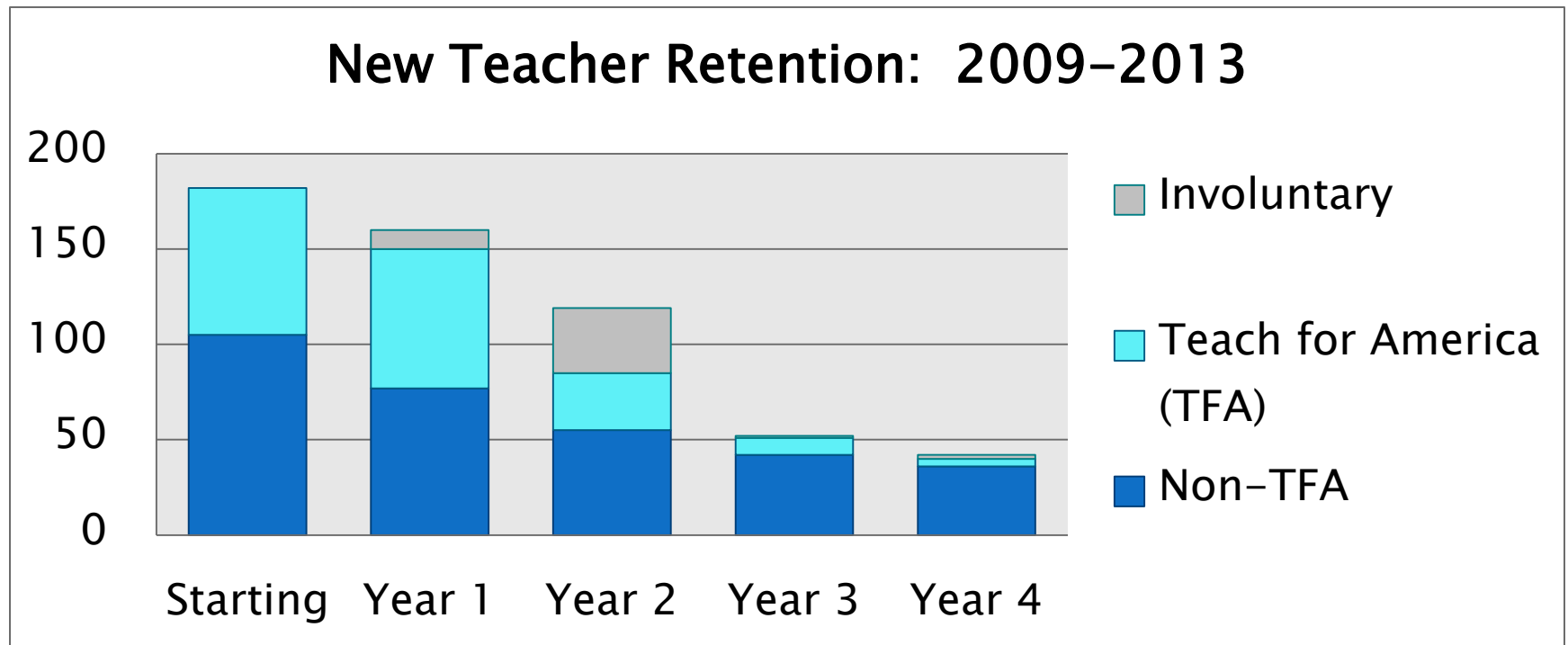
## 4-Year Teacher Retention by Cohort



- ▶ From 2008 – 2012, the % of new teachers remaining SLPS teachers after:
  - 1 Year: **81%**      2 Years: **53%**      3 Years: **41%**      4 Years: **36%**
- ▶ Estimated costs (professional development, central office, etc.):
  - 1 Year (\$10,500) '08 – '13: \$2.1 million
  - 2 Year (\$18,600) '08 – '12: \$3.5 million
  - 3 Year (\$27,500) '08 – '11: \$2.2 million

# Problem Statement:

## Retaining Effective Teachers



- From 2009 – 2013, the % of new non-TFA teachers teaching in SLPS after:  
 1 Year: **73%**      2 Years: **52%**      3 Years: **40%**      4 Years: **34%**

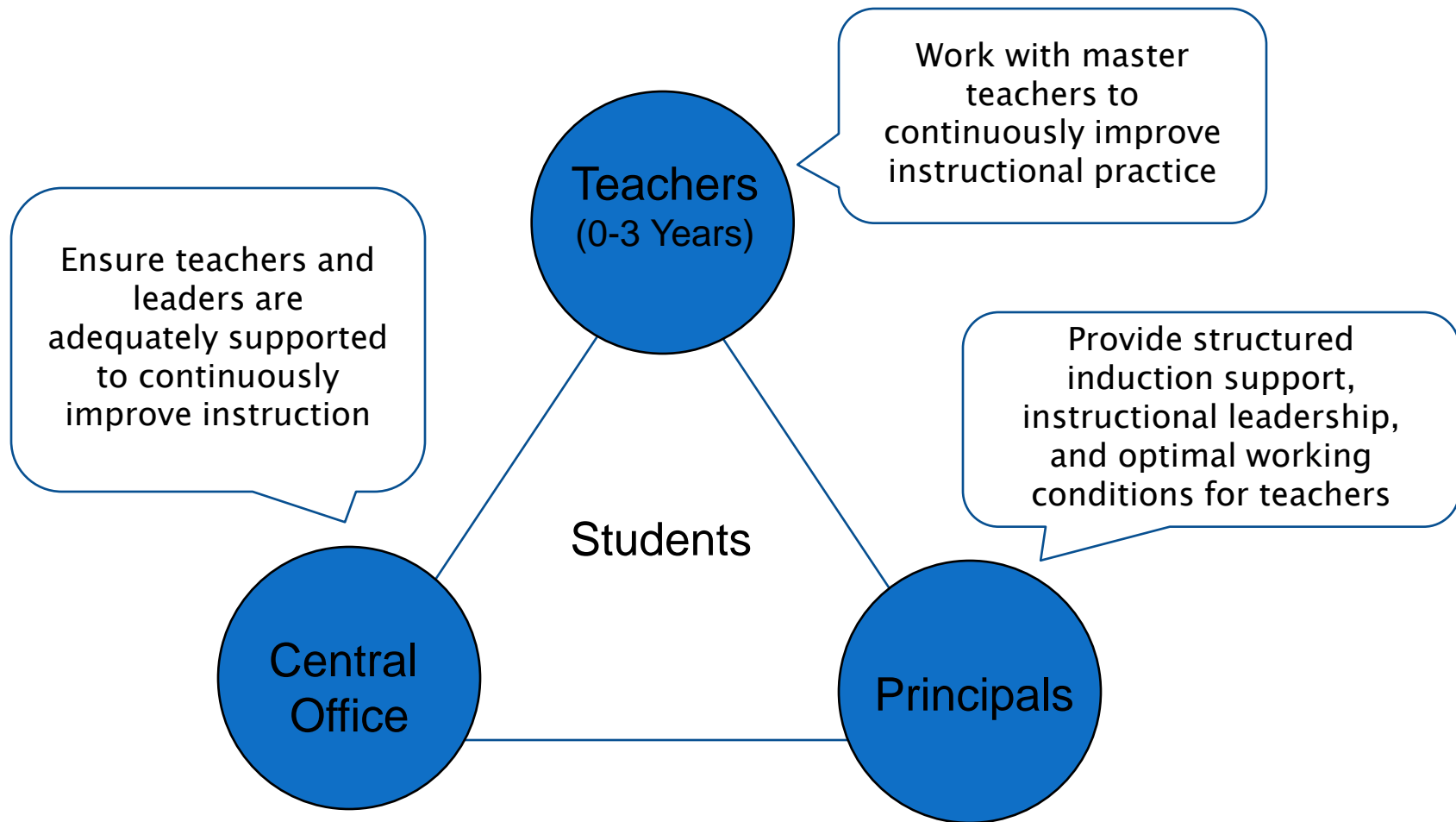


# Developing a Solution:

## Why are they Leaving?

- ▶ National poll of teachers who voluntarily left the profession reported the following reasons\*:
  - Dissatisfaction with Administration – 38%
    - Insufficient support and feedback
    - Lack of influence and respect
  - Workplace Conditions – 32%
    - Discipline issues
    - Insufficient supplies/materials
  - Salary – 20%
- ▶ SLPS Surveys of 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> year Teachers consistent:
  - Lack of support from administration most common concern
  - Requests for support on teacher protocols, discipline, technology, and materials
- ▶ SLPS Exit Surveys show “salary” near the bottom of reasons why SLPS teachers are leaving

# Designing the Strategy





# Teachers Matter Initiative

For every school. . .

## District Systems to Support New Teachers

- HR Induction Processes
- Induction Guidance to Principals
- Ongoing Communication to Teachers (Newsletter)
- Frequent Data Collection and Analysis (surveys, teacher voice sessions, etc.)



## Induction Coordinator

- Serves as point-person in the building for new teachers
- Organizes orientation events and new teacher networks in the building

## New Teacher Mentoring Program

- Redesign the existing mentoring program to adopt key elements of the St. Louis Plan
- Provide structured instructional improvement support

## Principal Support and Supervision

- Ensuring effective teacher working conditions will be emphasized in ongoing principal supervision and support
- Observation and feedback processes



# Defining Success

- ▶ Increased retention of effective teachers in their first three years in the district
  - Set concrete targets based on further data analysis (e.g., 30% increase in 2<sup>nd</sup> year teachers rated as “effective” retained in the district)
  
- ▶ Shift in the culture of how teachers feel valued and supported in St. Louis Public Schools
  - Teachers would say:
    - “I feel supported by my principal and colleagues”
    - “This district really values teachers”
    - “I have everything I need to be an effective teacher in my classroom”
    - “I see there is potential to grow in this district”
    - “I am proud to be a teacher in the St. Louis Public Schools”



# Project Status

- ▶ Induction Coordinators
  - Hired and Trained for every school
- ▶ Mentors
  - Direct connection with Induction Coordinators and jointly trained
  - Overall mentor training and support being re-evaluated
- ▶ Communication
  - Two “New Teacher Voice” sessions conducted with superintendent
  - Weekly New Teacher newsletter from Central office
  - Revised and more frequent teacher surveys under review
- ▶ Culture Shift
  - T-shirts and gift cards for each new teacher starting in August
  - Review of Central Office responsiveness to new teacher concerns

*In process: Principal Training and Support for establishing positive working conditions*