



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:

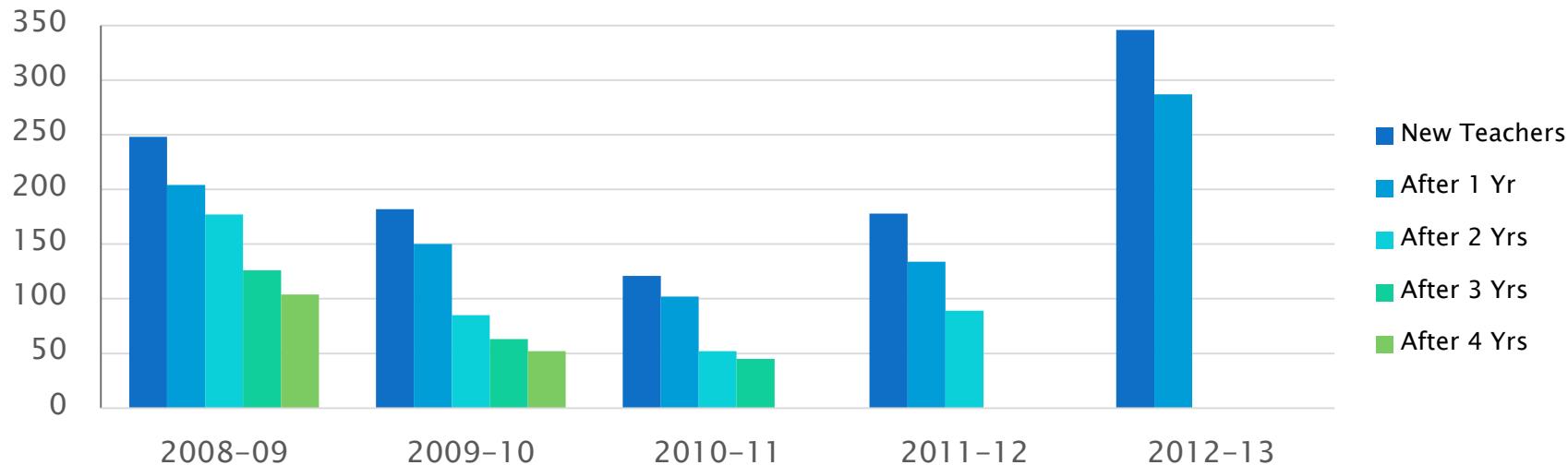
- Austin Independent School District (TX)
- Boston Public Schools (MA)
- DeKalb County (GA)
- Denver Public Schools (CO)
- Gwinnett County (GA)
- Los Angeles (CA)
- Montgomery County (MD)
- San Francisco (CA)
- St. Louis (MO)
- Washington, DC

▶ 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

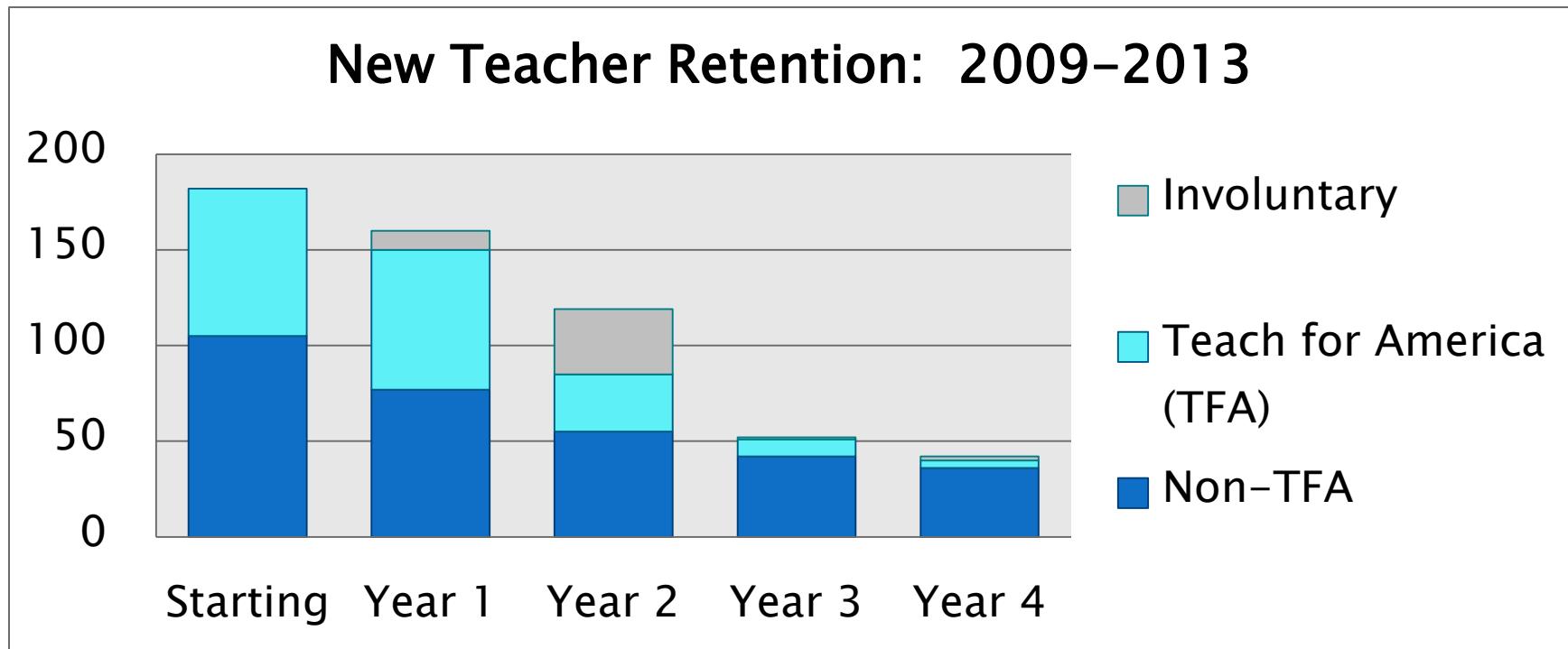
Problem Statement: Retaining Effective Teachers

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

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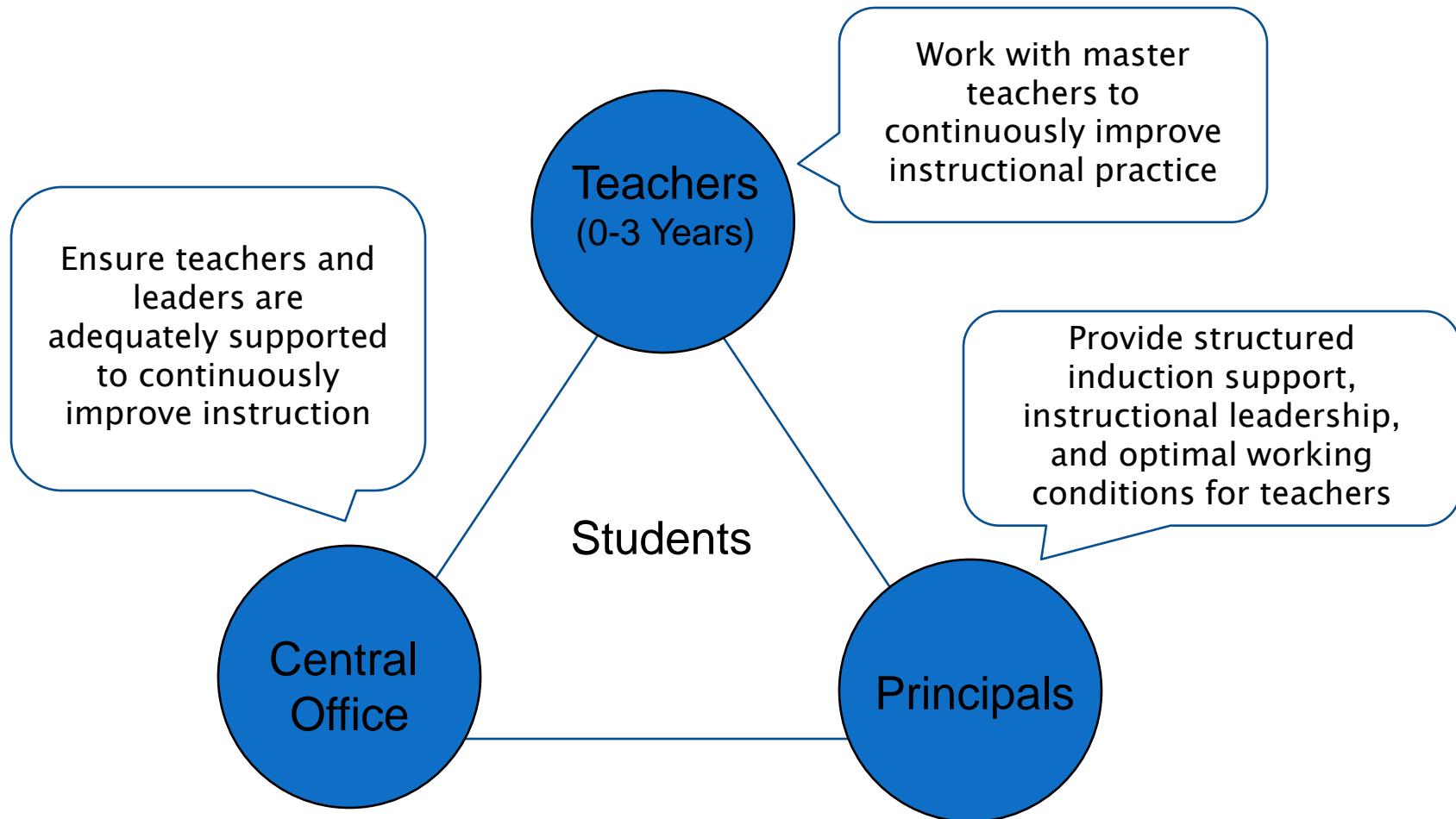


- From 2009 – 2013, the % of new non-TFA teachers teaching in SLPS after:
1 Year: 73% 2 Years: 52% 3 Years: 40% 4 Years: 34%

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 1st and 2nd 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 2nd 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