

Annual Report 2018-2019

Teachers Supporting Teachers



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Letter from our Executive Director



Dear Friends,

Picture this: an education system where the *best teachers* are inspired to stay in the classroom in front of kids. This vision is not a pipe dream but a goal well within our reach.

This journey started five years ago with recognizing the potential in unheard voices: those of teachers. Our two co-founders, Dr. Paul Riskus and Dr. Michael Harries had the audacity to believe that when empowered, excellent teachers can create lasting impacts within their schools. Since those early days, our organization has tried, failed, learned, and now grown to be where we are today thanks to their leadership.

Now, as a city we are on a mission to transform our large school district into one of the best in the nation. TST is excited to be part of this process, supporting the CPS 5-year vision as we create leadership opportunities for the city's best teachers.

This school year has been an exciting time for Teachers Supporting Teachers. We have built a city-wide network of over 900 educators who have connected in order to learn, collaborate and bring best practices to their students. Through our professional development series, we were honored to host Dr. Janice Jackson, Dr. Steve Tozer and many other leaders in our education community. We expanded our programming from 7 schools to 20 schools, empowering over 180 teacher leaders to enact change. But, most importantly- we were able to retain over 90% of our teacher leaders for the following year.

Personally, I feel as if I am standing on the shoulders of giants: our entirely volunteer-based leadership team and our first ED Morgan Russo. I am humbled that they believed in me and am honored to continue their work as the organization's first full-time Executive Director. Thank you for always pushing us to be better, think bigger and keep our amazing teachers at the center of our work.

Of course, none of this would be possible without the support and encouragement of our incredible community of partners who serve as sounding boards, mentors, board members, advisors and associate board members. We are especially grateful to IMC Financial and Lisa Wiersma, without whom, our organization would not exist today.

We are grateful to walk alongside you in this movement.



Pallavi Abraham
Teachers Supporting Teachers
Executive Director



Teachers Supporting Teachers: The Highlights



This was a big year for Teachers Supporting Teachers (TST). In our fifth year, we are excited to share that our EDworking sessions hosted incredible speakers such as **Dr. Janice Jackson, Dr. Steve Tozer and LaTanya McDade**. Our Impact Team program expanded from **7 schools to 20 schools** in which we served over **12,000 students**. Finally we hired our **first full-time Executive Director** to continue to build our organization.



900+
Members



12
Events



390+
Attendees



130+
Schools



10 TST
Coaches



20 Teacher
Liaisons



150 Teacher
Leaders



95% of TMs
Retained

Why: Teachers are a School's Greatest Resource

Why We Exist

Teachers are the primary in-school influence on student achievement. However, 50% of teachers nationwide leave within the first five years, negatively affecting student outcomes.¹ But, we don't want just any teacher serving our students; we want the best teachers. A staggering 92% of these "irreplaceable" teachers are seeking opportunities to lead while staying in the classroom. Despite this widespread desire, less than 50% of teachers feel supported by their administration to lead within their school.² We seek to provide these opportunities to our best teachers.

We believe that at the heart of every school is the same critical resource: effective, committed teachers. We believe that teachers possess the answers to challenges their schools face and hold the keys to creating a school-wide culture of learning. We foresee an education system where the best teachers are inspired to remain in their classrooms.

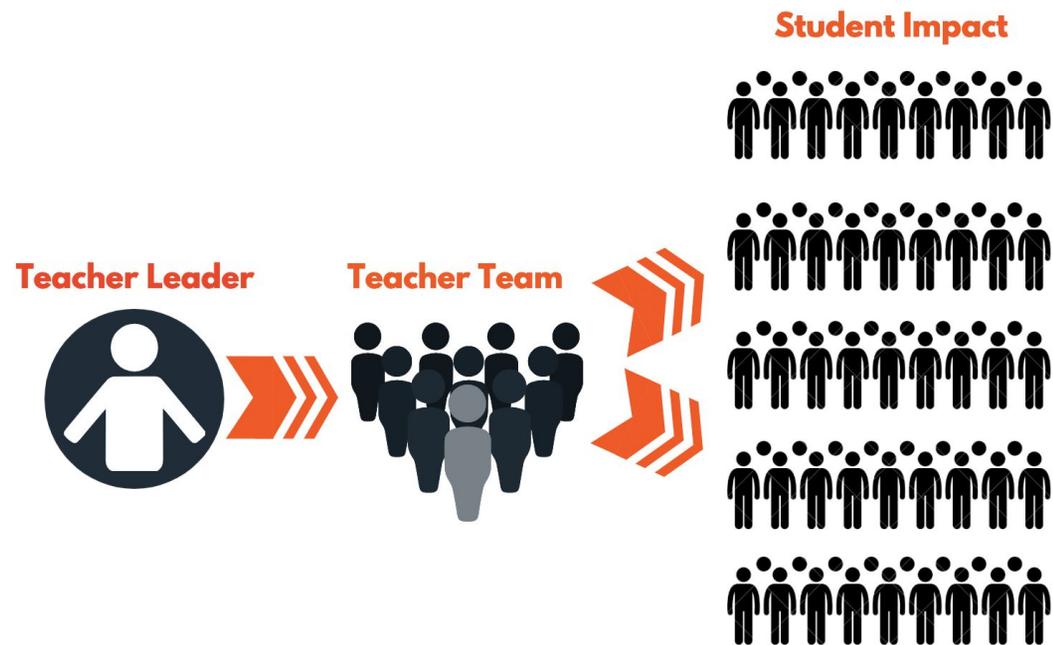


“Teachers with 10 or fewer years of experience now make up 45% of the overall teaching force. **They want to grow as teachers and leaders** and serve in difference capacities as educators over their career, but by and large, these needs aren't met by the education system.”³

The TST Mission

Teachers Supporting Teachers mobilizes and supports teacher leaders to have a lasting impact in their schools.

TST invests in teacher leadership in schools. An empowered teacher not only has a **greater impact**, but is more likely to **remain in the classroom**.



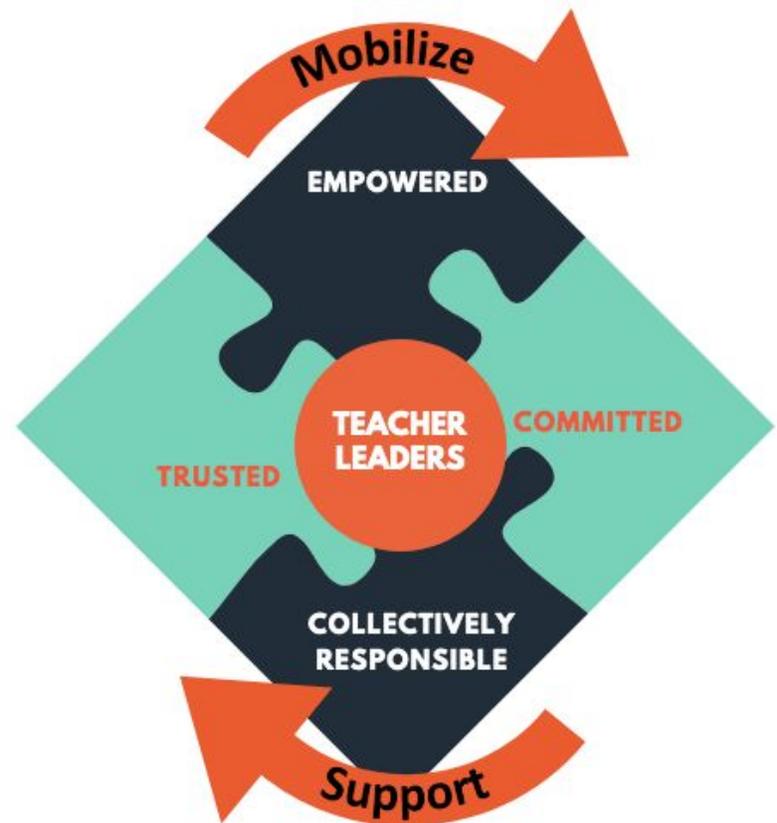
Theory of Change

In order to retain teacher leaders, we identify and build their capacity to have a lasting impact in their schools.

In Chicago, schools saw an increase in anywhere from three to five percentage points in teacher retention rates when **teachers reported feeling collectively responsible, trusted by their colleagues and had both influence and leadership opportunities in their schools.**⁴

Through our “Mobilize and Support” work, we seek to build teacher leaders who are empowered, committed, collectively responsible and trusted. These values come directly from the 5Essentials Survey (University of Chicago Consortium on School Research) and are the same metrics that school administrators to build in their school faculty to drive student learning forward.

By working with administrators to create opportunities to develop teacher leaders in these areas, we believe we can increase teacher retention rates leading to improved school culture. This benefits teachers, communities and, most importantly, students.



Our Core Values

Empowered

We are empowered to identify challenges and seek to enact solutions. Through this we will set ambitious goals and create a positive impact.

Committed

We follow through on our commitments and create accountability in those around us. We possess optimism and a solutions-oriented mindset to overcoming obstacles.

Trusted

We build trust through showing respect and compassion. We are reflective on our own actions and practice and actively seeks to improve. We exhibit humility regarding our strengths and vulnerabilities regarding our areas of growth.

Collectively Responsible

We determine common goals to create collective ownership. We gather diverse perspectives and are inclusive in our execution.

Living Out our Core Values

Empowered

“TST transformed my understanding of how to plan, organize and facilitate meetings. I feel more confident in my ability to be the change agent in my school that I have been waiting for.”

Committed

“These experiences can be shared and spread to more teachers in our school. I know it has had a direct impact on my teaching and my students”

Trusted

“We worked with administration to create goals to move towards a positive, respectful and trustworthy community within our school.”

Collectively Responsible

“This opportunity allows me to collaborate with so many more teachers within and not within my school which inspires me to continue to grow and implement so many new things in the classroom. I can tell this makes a difference to my practice and attitude in the classroom.”

Mobilizing Teacher Leaders

Quarterly EDworking Events

Teacher leaders are constantly seeking to improve their practice. As in any field, one of the best methods to improve practice is to build a committed network of like minded individuals who can learn from each other. Our EDworking sessions provide this space. In addition to building a city-wide network, Teachers Supporting Teachers provides access to educational experts who create first-class professional development on topics ranging from classroom instruction all the way to national social issues. We ask participants to engage in speaker sessions, discussions and networking in order to build a strong community of educators. Finally, as an Illinois State Board of Education certified professional development provider, we issue teachers credit towards certification.

2018-2019 speakers included:

- ◆ **Dr. Janice Jackson**, *CEO of Chicago Public Schools*
- ◆ **Dr. David Stovall**, *Professor of African American and Education Policy Studies, UIC*
- ◆ **Dr. Steve Tozer**, *Founding Coordinator of UIC EdD Urban Education Leadership Program*
- ◆ **Jamyle Cannon**, *Founder of The Bloc*
- ◆ **Dr. LaTanya McDade**, *Chief Education Officer of Chicago Public Schools*
- ◆ **Dr. Decoteau Irby**, *Assistant Professor - UIC*
- ◆ **Paul Zavitkovsky**, *Instructor and Leadership Coach*



Supporting Teacher Leaders



The Impact Team Model

We believe that when teachers are given a voice, and a chance to have impact beyond the four walls of their classrooms, students are more likely to succeed. Our “Impact Team” program is led by the Teacher Liaison (TL), who collaborates with their colleagues to enact lasting change for students and their school. The TL and the school’s administrator will identify a school-specific need, and with the support of a TST Coach, will establish the vision and goals for their Impact Team. Through the tailored support of the TST coach, the TL will work over the course of the year to address the identified need and foster a positive staff culture.

2018-2019 Impact Teams:

- ◆ 20 schools
- ◆ 20 Teacher Liaisons
- ◆ 20 Impact Teams focused on:
 - Instructional leadership
 - Mentorship
 - Culturally responsive instruction
 - Teacher-Led PD
 - Amongst others...



Our Impact: A city-wide network of teacher leaders

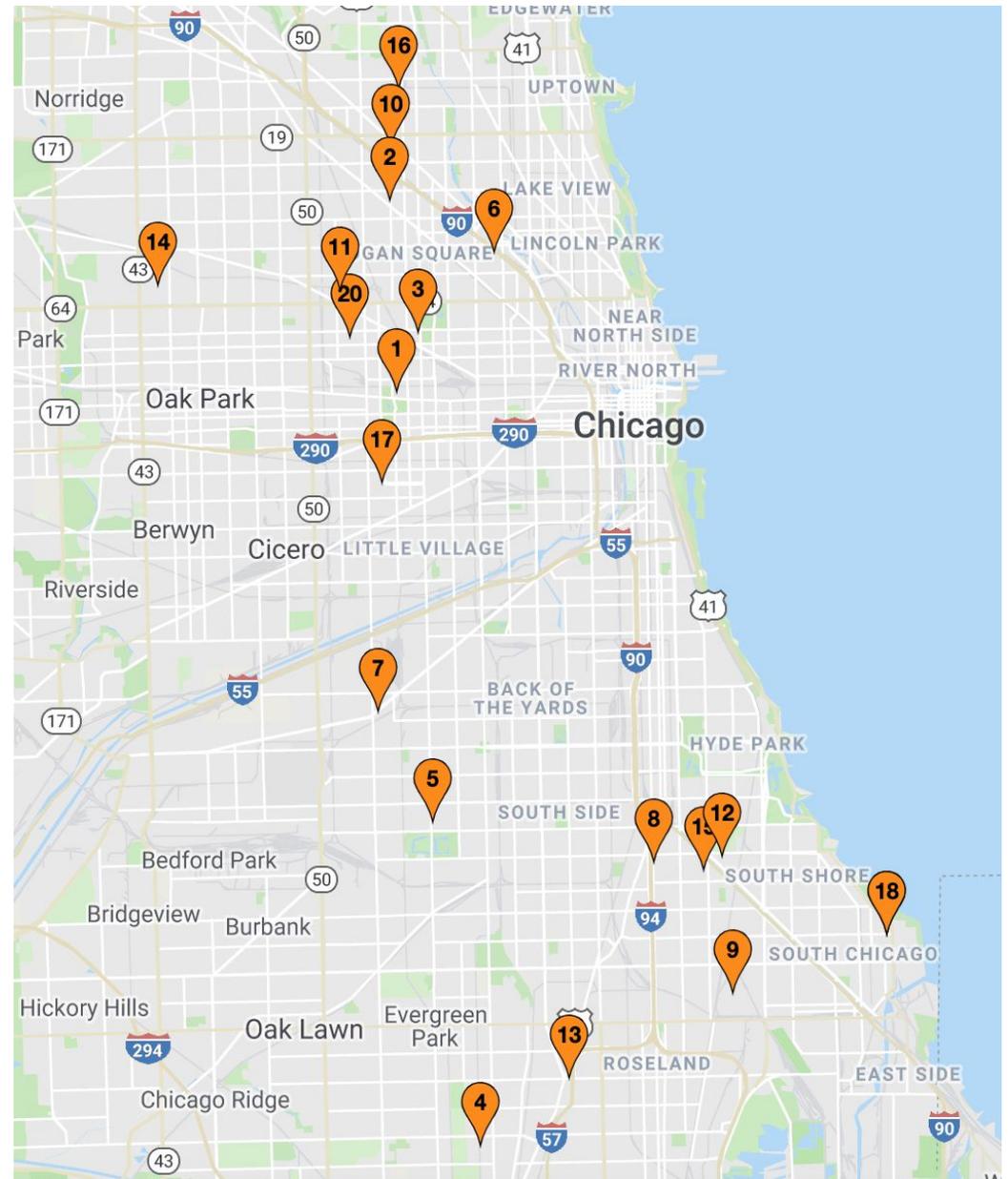
- **900+** educators connected to share ideas and improve outcomes for students
- Over **90%** of attendees leave feeling **enlivened** & agree that the session was **beneficial**
- **91%** of attendees agreed the program was helping them **grow as a teacher leader**



“Attending an EDworking Session was exactly what I needed. I was really struck by the energy and caring compassion all the educators around me had. I left feeling inspired, motivated, and excited to get back into my classroom. I would suggest to all, make the time to attend an event. It is invaluable.”

Our Impact: Schools

- ◆ Acero Cruz
- ◆ Al Raby
- ◆ Aspira Business and Finance
- ◆ Association House
- ◆ Barbara Vick
- ◆ Barbara Vick Village
- ◆ CICS Bucktown
- ◆ Coles
- ◆ Curie Metro
- ◆ Deenan
- ◆ Harold Washington
- ◆ Murphy
- ◆ North-Grand
- ◆ Percy L. Julian
- ◆ Sayre
- ◆ Tanner
- ◆ Theodore Roosevelt
- ◆ Paul Revere



Our Impact: Teachers Retained

The number one priority of Teachers Supporting Teachers is to retain our *best teachers*. Our work is proving the research; when a school's best teachers remain, student outcomes improve. We are extremely proud of the high retention rates of all teachers involved in our programming.



90% of Impact Team members will be returning to their school next year



95% Of our Teacher Liaisons will be returning to their school next year

“This year was an uphill battle. TST was my artillery”

CHICAGO

Our Impact: Students Served



- **12,511** students served
- **91%** live below the poverty line
- **18%** are diverse learners
- **15%** are ESL

“This program has helped me grow tremendously this school year. I feel like I have gained a wealth of knowledge that will continue to push my practice and help my students continue to grow academically.”





“My experience with TST has been phenomenal. Working in a school that has challenges beyond my control as an educator can be overwhelming. My students experience extreme childhood trauma ranging from abuse to extreme poverty. TST has taught me to focus on what is within my control. I can control being solution based, I can control choosing a positive attitude, and I can support struggling colleagues. Each week I meet with my TST Coach to discuss how the things within our control can ultimately create improvement in student achievement academically and social emotionally.”

Our Impact: Teachers Empowered & Committed



100% of Teacher Liaisons and coaches stated they have been **empowered by TST** to be a teacher leader

26% increase in teachers reporting that they wouldn't want to work at any other school

11% increase in teachers reporting that they were provided opportunities to establish school culture standards

100% of surveyed principals believe that the program is helping build a culture of **teacher leadership in their school**

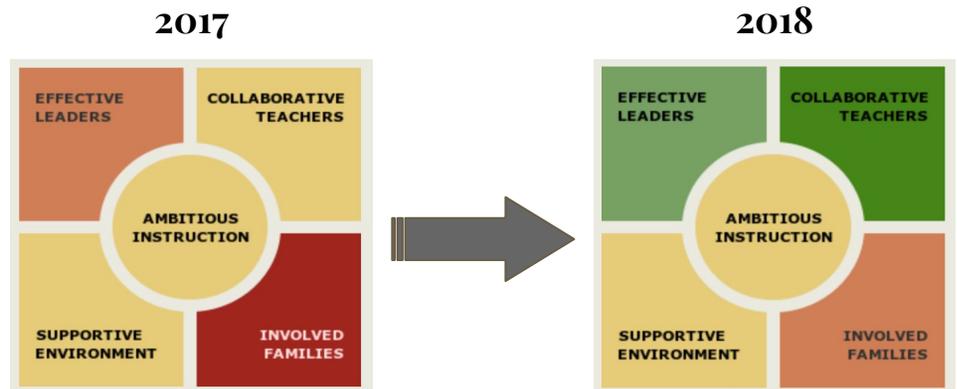


School Spotlight: Association House High School



At Association House, an YCCS alternative high school on Chicago's west side, Teacher Liaison Marcella Vincens was able to change staff culture. She was supported by TST Coach Karissa Shanley who helped her facilitate a year-long series of professional developments. Through their work, they were able to empower teacher voice and build a school culture of collaboration. According to the Principal David Pieper "TST support has helped our growth in the 5essentials survey."

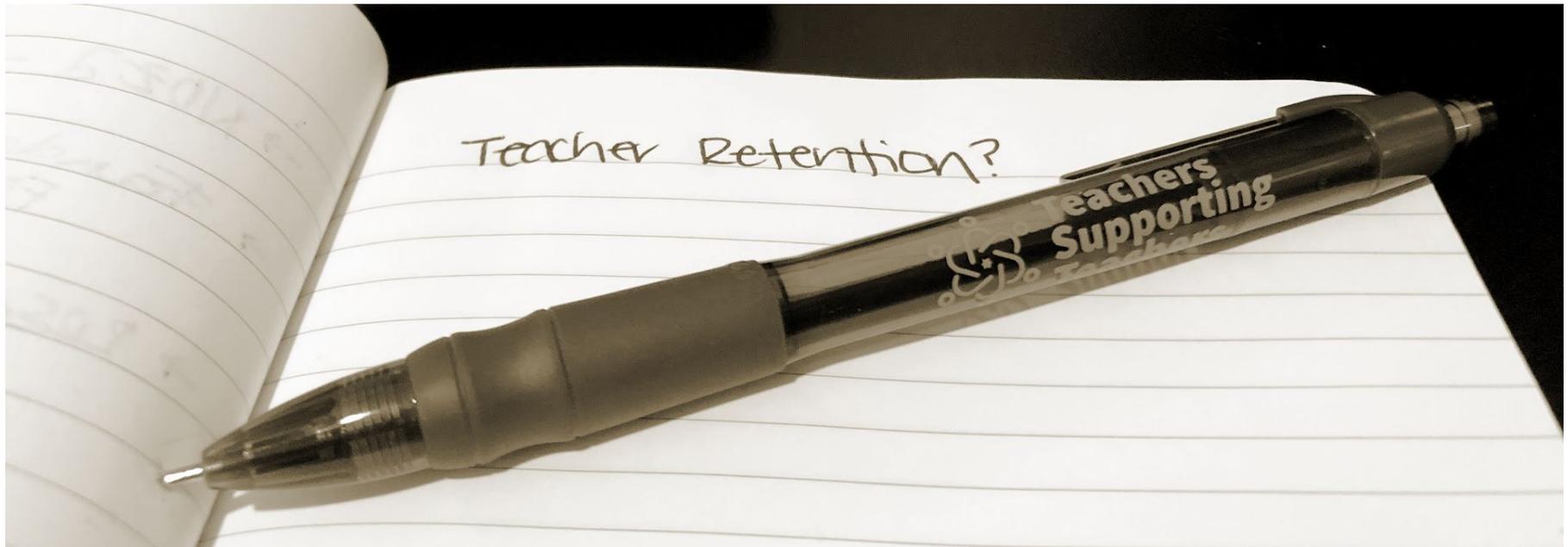
"It is very helpful to have time as a staff to reflect on our personal and professional growth. This is a great program that helps us develop as a teacher team. Ms Vincens did a great job leading this effort! Thank you!"



Board of Directors



Dr. Michael Harries, President & Co-Founder
Dr. Paul Riskus, Vice President, CEO, Co-Founder
Lisa Wiersma, Treasurer, IMC Financial Markets
Dr. Decoteau Irby, Assistant Professor - UIC
Dr. Steve Tozer, UIC EdD Founding Director
Paul Zavitkovsky, Center for Urban Leadership



Stronger Together: Our Partners

\$100,000+

IMC Financial Markets

\$25,000+

Finnegan Family
Foundation

\$10,000+

Osa Foundation
Chicago Public Schools



\$5,000+

St. Louis Community
Foundation

\$1,000+

George Magnuson
Mark Harries

\$10+

Josh Hoen
Nicholas Kolmodin
Paul Zavitkovsky
Courtney Owens
Daniel McKerr

Conclusion

At Teaching Supporting Teachers, we firmly believe that teachers are a school's greatest resource. The TST model of building teacher leaders who are empowered, committed, trusted and collectively responsible is a research proven method in creating teacher leaders. Our approach is organic: we ensure all participants do so voluntarily. Through 1-on-1 leadership coaching, cyclical processes of analysis, data-driven thinking, mentorship, and reflection, we will increase the capacity of high-quality teachers to lead their colleagues. This will lead to increased teacher retention as teachers feel more connected to their school, their colleagues, and their students. At TST, we make a promise that our approach will be specifically tailored to the needs of each school we work with to optimize adult development and student learning outcomes.



References

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