



ANNUAL REPORT

SCHOOL YEAR 2020-2021



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Letter from the Executive Director

Teachers shone through as a critical constant

Technology and Innovation became the center of our universe this year. The city talked about bandwidth, devices and plexiglass. Our schools focused on virtual curriculums, zoom features and google classroom access. At TST, we obsessed over caring for and empowering expert teachers as they worked to deliver a rigorous virtual education.

Over the past year we witnessed teachers shine through as a critical constant, especially as we navigated the ups and downs of the pandemic. The weight of Chicago school was far too much for a principal to bear alone. With excellent teachers virtually leading pandemic efforts, students were able to receive strong instruction no matter where they were sitting.

In 2013, never imagining what this year would become, Paul & Michael had a vision for teachers working across different Chicago neighborhoods and across different backgrounds to drive equitable outcomes for students. Seven years later, the TST community they built held strong from Rogers

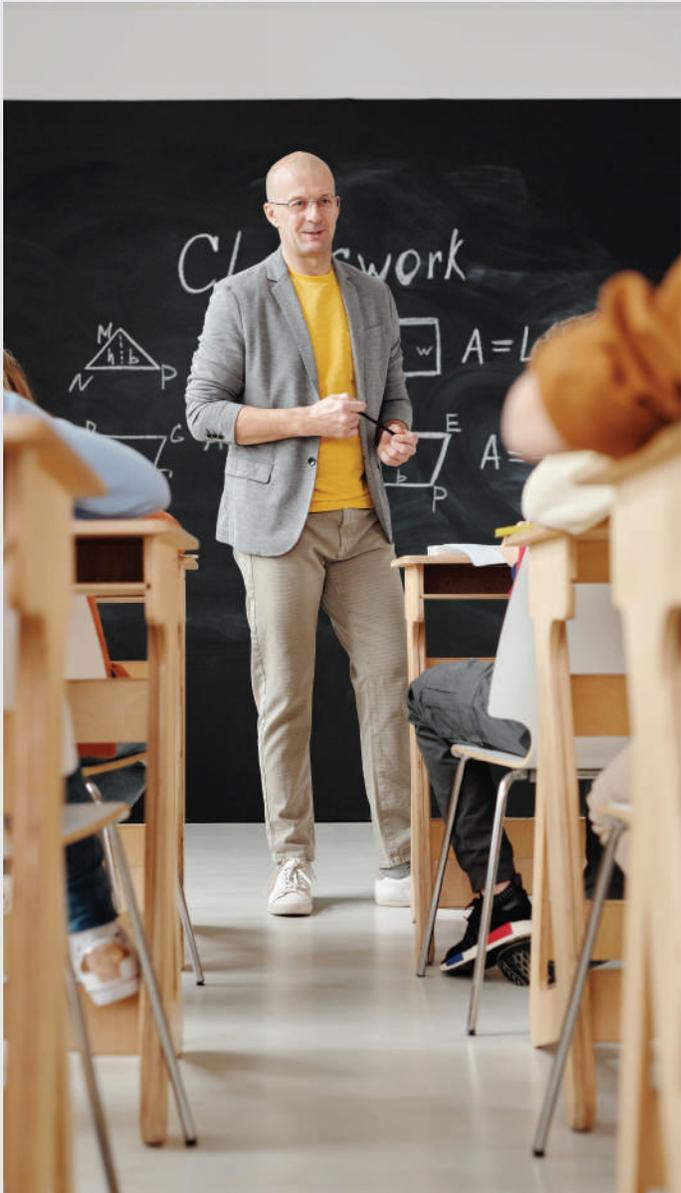
Park to Pullman, as teachers uplifted each other across video screens.

Our TST teachers were tireless, endlessly positive and inspired us every day this year. Though we envision a day when our teachers don't have to be "heroes"—this year they truly were, rising above the pandemic obstacles. They are the reason we exist and the reason we will continue to fight for every student's right to excellent, experienced educators.

Pallavi Abraham

Executive Director





The Need

Every student deserves great teachers

Teachers are the **#1** most important factor in a student's academic achievement¹

We spend **\$7 billion** nationally due to teacher attrition²

50% of teachers leave the field with in 5 years³

Teachers are **50%** more likely to leave urban districts³

Only **18%** of teachers identify as people of color⁴

In a world obsessed with new ideas and innovations, we are investing in an old one: **PEOPLE**



The Solution

Investing in excellent educators

MISSION

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

THEORY OF CHANGE

Knowing that our impact encompasses not just retention, but the larger impact of teachers staying in the classroom, at their schools, and in urban ed, this past year, our leadership team spent time reframing our Theory of Change to better demonstrate this impact. We invest in a diverse cohort of teacher leaders and energize and empower their leadership, the teachers invest in their teams, the teams invest in their students, and students succeed.

THEORY OF CHANGE



Invest in
Excellent
Educators



Energize &
Empower their
Leadership



Build
Lasting Staff
Capacity



Ensure Better
Outcomes for
More Students

The Programs

We create impact through our two arms of programming

MOBILIZE

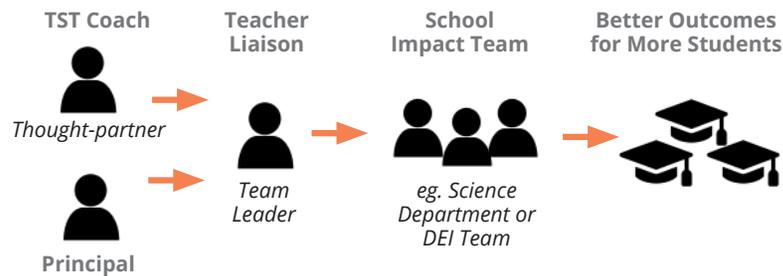
Teacher leaders are constantly seeking to improve their practice. As in any field, one of the best methods to improve practice is to build a committed network of like-minded individuals who can learn from each other. As an ISBE certified PD provider, our **EDworking sessions** create this space. Teachers Supporting Teachers hosts educational experts, including district leaders, non profit partners, and current classroom teachers who lead collaborative sessions ranging from best practices around classroom instruction to ensuring our schools are equitable to all students.



SUPPORT

Our teachers deserve opportunities to grow into the leaders they want to be and to have their voices brought to the decision making table. The TST **“Impact Team”** program is led by the **Teacher Liaison** (TL), who collaborates with their principal and colleagues to enact lasting change for their school. With the tailored support of a **TST Coach**, the TL works over the course of the year to improve student outcomes and foster a positive staff culture. By leading an Impact Team, educators have the opportunity to address a school specific need, develop leadership skills, and expand their impact without leaving the classroom.

IMPACT TEAM PROGRAM MODEL



Impact: The Numbers

We have grown to meet the citywide demand

MOBILIZE PROGRAM

1,400+
TST members

2
EDworking
events

SUPPORT PROGRAM

31
Teacher Liaisons
leading work in
schools

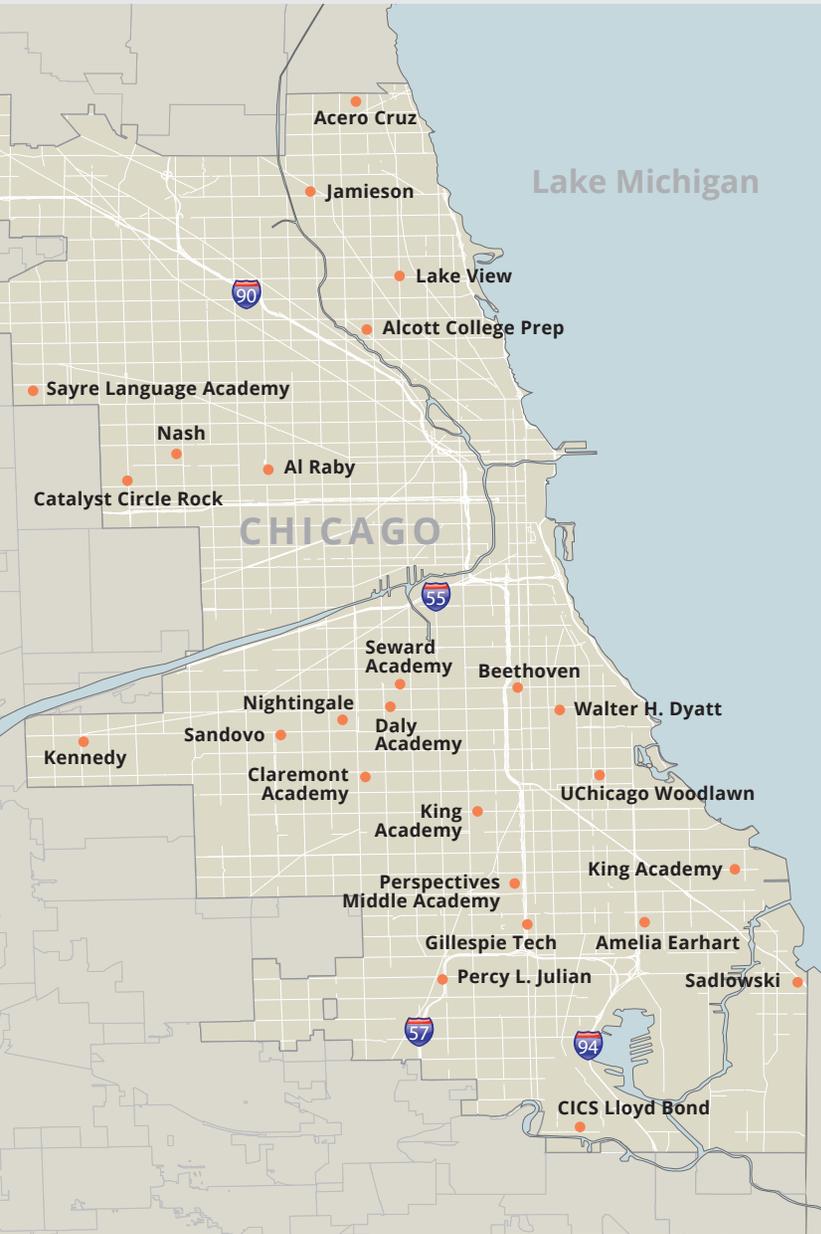
160
Teachers on
Impact Teams

17
TST Coaches
leading support

70+
Projects completed that
focused on improving
outcomes for students

3
Cohorts of teachers
focused on MTSS &
special education

90%
Coaches and Teacher
Liaisons to remain in their
classrooms next year



Impact: The Schools

We serve the communities and students who need us the most

We work with
25
schools across
Chicago.

We serve
14,000+
students.

>85%
students served
qualify to receive
free or reduced
lunch.

17%
of the students
identified as
Diverse Learners.

94%
of TST teachers
agreed that their
work with TST
had a positive
effect on their
students.

94%
of the students
served identify
as BIPOC.

21%
of the students
are ESL.

Impact: Improving Teacher Retention

“It’s about getting the best people, retaining them, nurturing a creative environment to help them innovate.” *Marissa Mayer, CEO of Yahoo*

Feeling at home where you work is a huge factor in workers not just “doing” their job, but loving it. Schools must create environments in which excellent, experienced adults are excited to stay and can see a long-term career filled with autonomy, learning, and opportunity.

“I have finally found my educational ‘home’ after 30 years of teaching. I do not want to go anywhere else!”

*Acero Cruz,
Impact Team Member*

“The work we have been doing has really done wonders for our teams’ overall commitment to our school!”

*Sayre Academy,
Impact Team Member*

As our Illinois and Chicago student body grows increasingly diverse, the educator workforce is failing to keep pace.⁵

- 52% of Illinois students (90% in Chicago) identify as BIPOC.
- Whereas only 17% of Illinois teachers (50% in Chicago) identify as BIPOC.

TST empowers and retains BIPOC teacher leaders at rates significantly higher than city and state averages.

- In SY1920, 50% of our teachers leaders identified as BIPOC.
- This school year, 60% of our teachers leaders identified as BIPOC.
- Our BIPOC teachers leaders are retained at identical rates as their White peers.

TST’s work not only surpasses district and school retention averages by over 10%, but ensures that excellent, engaged teachers are kept from year to year.

- 80% of teachers agree that their work with TST has contributed to their excitement to remain at their school or in urban education.

Impact: Navigating Virtual Schools

As we transitioned into a tumultuous year, it was only through the power of teacher leadership and collaborative teams that schools were able to quickly implement new strategies to make virtual education possible. At TST our role was to provide advice, coffee, and sometimes tissues as we held hands in partnership with the teacher leaders on the front lines.

■ **We built teacher’s virtual leadership skills:**

“I feel well practiced in having deep conversations, building trust, and getting meaningful work done in a virtual space”

Shenel Garner, TL at Curtis Elementary

■ **We transitioned typically school-based teams into an entirely digital space:**

At Sayre Language Academy the 2nd/3rd grade team met regularly to not only create instructional alignment, but they spent the year posting weekly fun videos to engage their students.

■ **We helped teachers navigate the vast number of virtual resources:**

At Julian, the mentor team helped provide 1x1 targeted implementation support to new teachers who had never taught, let alone taught virtually.

CHICAGO FOUNDATION FOR EDUCATION

In partnership with CFE, we were able to fund mini-grants to 11 teacher leaders giving them the autonomy to purchase needed supplies for their teams



Daniela Mladenovic at Acero Cruz used the funds to purchase the virtual Orton-Gillingham curriculum.

Amanda Lonis at Jamieson Elementary used the funds to purchase a new culturally-relevant digital library.

Beatriz Diaz at Sadlowski Elementary used the funds to purchase materials to build “At-home science kits,” allowing students to experience hands-on experiments.



Impact: Empowering Educators to Lead in Chicago

100%
of Coaches and
Teacher Liaisons
agreed that their
work with TST
has empowered
them to be
teacher leaders.

95%
of principals
agreed that the
TST program
has helped grow
their teachers'
leadership skills.

We know that a school filled with strong teacher leaders is better able to address the barriers our students face. When we have multiple leaders, collectively pulling in the same direction and guided by the same vision and values towards a common set of goals, students benefit. Investment in teacher leaders is a key predictor of not only school effectiveness, but also whether teachers stay in their building and the profession.

At TST we are working to grow our early stage teacher leaders as we work to fill our city's education pipeline with high qualified, equity-focused candidates. Our program specifically develops Chicago teachers to lead in Chicago—aligning our content and curriculum to the **LeadwithCPS Framework**⁶.



“I believe that the work that is occurring through TST has helped me to develop into a more mature and developed leader. Being able to hone the skills that I have into actionable steps has really inspired me to perform at an



all-time high. The roundtables provide so much foundational support for me and allow me to see leadership through the perspective of other great leaders throughout the city of Chicago. I am beyond excited to be continuing my growth with TST next year.”

*Patience Scott-Buford,
TL at Perspectives Middle*

Impact: The Power of Mentorship and Coaching

100%

of TST Teacher Leaders agreed that their work with their TST coach has made them better leaders.

Study after study has shown that strong mentorship can be a game-changer for improving instruction and keeping teachers in the classroom.

“I am a new teacher, and Beth has been extremely encouraging and supportive. I really appreciate her guidance. She answers all of my questions and always does her best to quell my fears!”

Al Raby Teacher



SCHOOL SPOTLIGHT: JULIAN IMPACT TEAM

The Mentor team at Julian High School set out to ensure that every new staff member at Julian had a strong support system during their first year. TST Teacher Leader **Michelle Feit** led a team of experienced teachers who served as peer-peer mentors for their less experienced colleagues. This team of mentors met with their mentee's weekly to discuss instructional practice, class culture and school programs. This mentorship program not only served to ensure that new teachers were succeeding in the classroom, but were also supported emotionally as they learned the ropes of a new position. This support included creating social events, scheduled check-ins, surprise coffees, and even a book club! At the end of the year 100% of the first year teachers committed to returning to Julian!

“Our school has become more of a family and having this program for new teachers makes them feel comfortable and at ease.”

Percy L. Julian Teacher

Impact: Cultivating Trust

98%
of principals
agreed that their
teachers have
been energized
by TST to be
leaders

95%
of principals
agreed that
their teachers'
work with TST
contributes to
their excitement
to remain in
urban education.

CREATING COLLABORATIVE RELATIONSHIPS WITH ADMINISTRATORS

Principal support is essential. Because of this, we built out more structured opportunities for our Teacher Liaisons to connect with their principal throughout the year. Through these touchpoints, we are fostering authentic collaboration and increased trust within schools.

“TST has allowed me to find my voice within the school and placed me at the forefront of the collaborative cycle within administration.”

Perspectives Impact Team Member

SPOTLIGHT

Andromeda Bellamy, EPIC Academy Principal

With over 17 years of experience in education, Principal Bellamy has dedicated her career



to teaching in historically underserved communities. She has a laser focus on student achievement and with that comes the understanding that to truly change outcomes for students, it takes a village.



Guided by this belief, Principal Bellamy takes time to deeply invest in empowering her teachers. She spoke with pride about the many projects her TLs took on, which brought “a much needed lift within our school community.” Having partnered with TST for the past year, Principal Bellamy is excited for the continued support in growing the leadership skills of her teachers as they work collectively to drive equitable outcomes for students.

Impact: Building Collective Responsibility

92%
of Impact Team members agree that teachers on their TST team feel responsible to ensure that all students learn.

MOBILIZING CHICAGO TEACHERS

We are working to build a city-wide network of teachers who are engaging with the latest trends in education as they hear from renowned speakers at our events. Though the pandemic forced a shift in our **EDworking Professional Development series**, we were able to host two virtual events this year in which teachers learned from the experiences and expertise of our keynote speakers, Chief Sherly Chavarria of CPS and Dr. Bill Ayers.

SCHOOL SPOTLIGHT: NIGHTINGALE IMPACT TEAM

The teacher-team at Nightingale set out to increase math and reading scores by implementing small group instruction across all classrooms. In many schools, classrooms function as islands—but at TST Teacher Leader **Emily Cozzie** was able to spearhead a collective effort for data tracking and small-group implementation.



As a result of Emily's efforts, teachers across the school were given the space and opportunity to collaborate, sharing materials and targeted lessons



to ensure that each student received instruction that was meaningful and appropriately individualized to their needs. At the end of the year, 100% of teachers at Nightingale were including small-group instruction in their virtual classrooms.

Impact: Fostering Long-term Capacity

At TST we think of schools as **institutions**; ones with strong systems and leaders poised to drive results for students year after year. But institutions are not built overnight. Lasting change does not come in one year of work, but in the work and dedication year-after-year of a school community. Through our program, we support teachers for multiple years as they foster the required staff buy-in and build research-based practices and mindsets.



SCHOOL SPOTLIGHT: AL RABY IMPACT TEAM

The Electives team at Al Raby High School set out to ensure that students achieve B's or better in elective classes. TST Teacher Leader **Ivan Danzy** led the team of elective teachers to ensure that all students were receiving the additional support they needed to be successful, even during a pandemic. This team built a data-tracking system that was utilized by all elective teachers, allowing them to connect as a team to identify struggling students. They worked closely with academic teachers and advisors to address absenteeism and create targeted interventions for students.

“We’re working to implement a system that will help some students this year, but it may take a year or so before we begin to see long-term results in student performance.”

Al Raby Impact Team Member

We support teams to enact school-wide change in three critical areas:

MTSS & SPECIAL EDUCATION

We support school-wide data tracking and collaboration with learning specialists, para-professionals and general education teachers to provide interventions as needed.

INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP

We help our teams ensure curricular alignment and instructional rigor within their grade levels, content areas, and the school as a whole.

CULTURE AND CLIMATE

We work to help our teams create a culture where teachers feel equipped and empowered to help students succeed and where students feel excited about and engaged in their school community.

Teacher Leader of the Year

“Nothing we do is more important than developing people. At the end of the day, you bet on people, not strategies.” *Lawrence Bossidy, former COO of General Electric*

“Brandi has what it takes to be a leader. She is consistent with communication, and she differentiates the level of support based on various needs of stakeholders!”

*Tyson Daniel,
CICS Lloyd Bond Principal*

“Mrs. Pearman worked tirelessly to aid in building relationships and offering support to Bond parents. I believe our school community is better because of her work.”

*Parent Impact
Team Member*

THE SCHOOL:
CICS LLOYD BOND ELEMENTARY
278 Students
89% Low-income
98% Black students

THE WORK
For over 6 years, **Lloyd Bond** had seen a steady decline in parental involvement. As the school has changed leadership throughout the years, parents have come and gone making parent participation inconsistent. This past year the Parent-Engagement team at CICS Lloyd Bond set out to provide more school-wide parent involvement opportunities in order to build a stronger partnership between parents and teachers which will last for years to come.

TST Teacher Leader Brandi Pearman led a team of teachers to ensure that all families were receiving the additional pandemic support they needed in order to help students be successful

during virtual learning. This team created a “Parent Playbook,” which included guidance around digital classrooms, how to help students with homework, and how to balance screen-time amidst a suddenly virtual world. They also hosted a “Parent University” with online tutorials about new school structures and policies. Finally, they even developed a series of monthly parent-child activities targeted toward socio-emotional learning and community-building purposes.

THE TEACHER LEADER: BRANDI PEARMAN

Brandi Pearman is an amazing teacher leader who has served her entire full-time teaching career here in Chicago. With 10+ years of experience, she has worked teaching grades 1-3 and served as a lead teacher and parent liaison for her school. She is a TFA alum, a RISE Fellow and a former teacher coach. Brandi is an exceptional educator, bringing her passion, positivity and leadership to her school and the wider Chicago community.



Partners

We are stronger together

Our partners are the individuals, corporations and institutions who provide the **financial and human capital** that allow us to take on education's toughest challenges. With their support, we are able to provide our students with what they deserve: **excellent teachers.**

Chicago
Public
Schools

IMC
Financial
Markets

McDougal
Family
Foundation

Finnegan
Family
Foundation

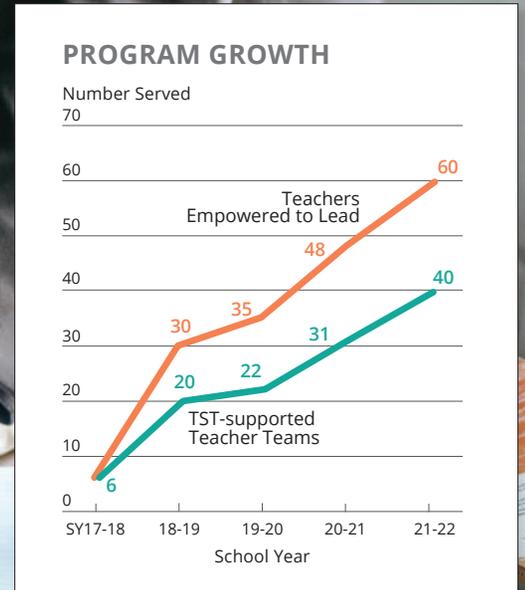
Jack Miller
Family
Foundation

Spencer
Foundation

Osa
Family
Foundation

TST Through the Years

Guided by our core values of trust, empowerment, commitment, and collective responsibility, TST has continued to grow our impact over the years



2014

TST founded

2015

Teacher Advisory Council, Virtual Classroom Observations, Lesson Planning Collaboration

2017

Impact Team Program launched to support teacher leaders

2019

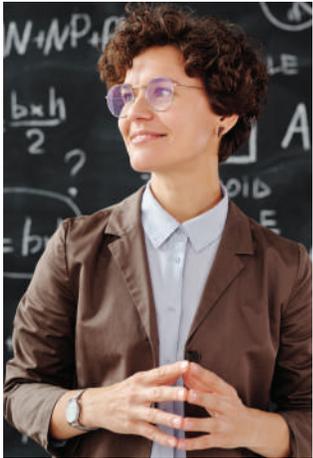
Hired first full-time Executive Director

2021

Expanded Program to include monthly fellowship sessions and multi-year collaborations with schools

Looking Forward

Each year we continue to refine and improve our program



GROWING OUR CURRICULUM

As TST has grown, we have seen an increase in the desire for expanded programming. Many of our TLs, Coaches, and principals have expressed a desire to continue their goals into the next school year and dive further into their leadership development. Because of this, we will develop additional programming over the course of this year for **Y2 TLs** and **Y3 coaches**.

AUTHENTICALLY THREADING EQUITY THROUGHOUT THE PROGRAM

In reviewing our current curriculum, we noticed that though we were providing opportunities for reflection regarding **DEI** at the end of each session, we strongly believe that it cannot be presented as an afterthought and needs to be organically incorporated. If TST is truly committed to building equity in our education system, all our members need to be consistently grappling with their own commitment to equity in every interaction, decision, and initiative. We will be working with our board, staff, teachers, and alumni to bring multiple perspectives to this full audit.

EMBEDDING DISTRIBUTED LEADERSHIP

We continue to deepen our investment in teacher leaders, while also realizing that our investment in them cannot be ultimately sustainable without authentic engagement from their school leaders. Over the years, we have seen ongoing evidence that the more school leaders are invested in their TL's work, the more successful the TL will be. This coming year, we plan to deepen our work with principals, including offering a summer **Distributed Leadership PD** and quarterly opportunities for principals to engage with and continue to learn from each other.

STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

We are excited to strengthen our current partnerships and build new synergies across the city. We are currently working to build a program with **Teach for America (TFA)** and the **Forest Park School district** in which we empower their teachers to lead teams. Furthermore, we are working with the **American College of Education** to potentially provide micro-credential opportunities for the teachers in our program. Finally, we are collaborating closely with the **CPS Talent Office** as part of their "Teacher Leadership Collaborative."

Our Team

LEADERSHIP



Pallavi Abraham
Executive Director



Ann Persson
*Director of Curriculum
and Coaching*



Norma Ferrel
Intern

BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Dr. Michael Harries
President
TST Co-Founder
Pediatric Resident,
University of Chicago

Amy Sauer
Treasurer
Strategic Advisor,
The OSA Foundation

Dr. Decoteau Irby
Assistant Professor,
UIC College of Education

Dr. Greg Jones
Executive Director,
The Academy Group

Shamika Keepers
CPS Framework Specialist,
Bronzeville Classical School



Dr. Paul Riskus
Secretary
TST Co-Founder
Principal, Walt Disney
Magnet Elementary

Dr. Steve Tozer
Director and Professor,
Center for Urban Education
Leadership, UIC

Lisa Wiersma
Executive Director,
IMC Chicago Charitable
Foundation

ADVISORY COUNCIL

The TST Advisory Council is our key group of supporters; a dedicated group of volunteers who helped found and brought TST to where it is today. They work to strategize, advise, and manage many parts of the TST organization.

Michael Cheng
Technical Architecture
Manager, Accenture

Kelly McKimson-Rhodes
English Teacher,
Richards High School

Dr. Paul Riskus
Principal, Walt Disney
Magnet Elementary

Dr. Michael Harries
Pediatric Resident,
U Chicago Hospitals

Andrew Rhodes
Assistant Principal,
South Loop Elementary

Morgan Russo
Children's Digital Media
Consultant



From top, left to right:
Persson, Abraham,
Riskus, Harries, Russo,
McKimson-Rhodes,
Rhodes, Cheng

ASSOCIATE BOARD

The TST Associate Board is our group of dedicated young professionals working outside of the education field to bring awareness to our cause. As brand ambassadors, they host events and fundraise for our program.

George Magnuson
Co-Chair
Software Developer,
IMC Financial Markets

Vicky Lee
Associate Vice President,
Development, Focus

Shreya Singh
Co-Chair
Development Associate,
Related

Dylan Lieteau
Technical Account Manager,
MCE Systems

Susie Choi
Lighthouse Academics
NW Indiana,
Regional Director of
Professional Development

Kelsey McCarty
Math Teacher,
Chicago Public Schools

Arthur Dennis
Humanities Teacher,
CICS Lloyd Bond

Juozas Pranckevicius
Senior Valuation Analyst,
Jackson National Asset
Management

Tori Harrell
Acute Care Occupational
Therapist,
Rush University
Medical Center

Antanas Riskus
Client Consultant,
Euromonitor International

Tejasvi Singh
Analyst,
Evolent Health

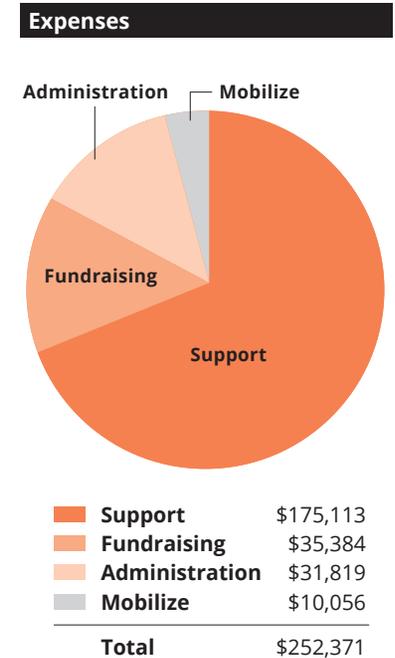
Financials FY21 (SY2020–2021)

Assets	Total
Unrestricted Assets (6/1/2020)	\$203,686

Revenue	5/31/21 Actual
Direct Contributions	\$44,695
Individual Donation	\$44,695
In Kind Contribution	
Revenue from Non Government Grants	\$240,000
Corporate donation	\$100,000
Foundation Grants	\$140,000
Revenue from Program	\$53,000
CPS Directly to Teachers	\$35,000
Charter Schools Directly to Teachers	\$18,000
Special Events	\$0
Fundraising Events	
Associate Board Events	
Total Revenue	\$337,695

Expenses	Admin	Fundraise	Mobilize	Support	Total
Contractors	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$61,000	\$61,000
Program Related Contract					
Teacher Liaison				\$31,000	
TST Coach				\$30,000	
Employee Expenses	\$28,263	\$32,957	\$9,400	\$105,438	\$176,057
Wages	\$22,100	\$25,783	\$7,367	\$82,640	
Payroll Benefits	\$4,099	\$4,782	\$1,366	\$15,321	
Payroll Taxes	\$2,000	\$2,333	\$667	\$7,477	
Staff Development	\$64	\$58			
Professional Service Expenses	\$811	\$90	\$0	\$0	\$901
Accounting Fees	\$785				
Legal & Registration Fees	\$26				
Other Professional Fees		\$90			
Operating Expenses	\$2,246	\$2,332	\$656	\$8,675	\$13,909
Supplies	\$105	\$366		\$7,999	
Event Food and Space	\$85			\$425	
Technology	\$1,401	\$494	\$649	\$184	
Marketing		\$1,450	\$7	\$67	
Bank Charges & Fees		\$22			
Insurance: Non Employee	\$655				
Facility	\$500	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$500
Office Rent	\$500				
Travel & Meeting Expenses		\$5			\$5
Other Expenses		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Program Improvement					
Total Expenses	\$31,819	\$35,384	\$10,056	\$175,113	\$252,371

Net	\$85,324
Year End Bank Balance	\$311,955



“TST has empowered me to lead within my school which has made a tremendous impact on my retention in urban education. They have provided me with a strong support community and truly invested in me as an educator.”

Abby Avendt, TST Coach

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