**Central Falls School District/Rhode Island Department of Education**

**Comprehensive Induction Specialist Program**

**Overview of Selected Strategy:**

Central Falls is a small but densely populated high-need school district of one square mile. In the three years prior to joining T4TLA, the attrition rate of new teachers in Central Falls was over 50%. This problem was most pervasive at the middle school level. Root causes for the high attrition were identified as: 1) teachers and principals not equipped to teach in high needs environment; 2) lack of support system to equip staff with knowledge and skills needed to be successful, and 3) an outdated leadership model focusing on positional leadership rather than collaborative and inclusive leadership.

Through the course of this project, RIDE and Central Falls developed a reciprocally beneficial relationship which both addressed a specific district need and built a model for RIDE of supporting school improvement in a district. Through an intensive planning process, coupled with a combination of national convenings in Washington, Phoenix, and Chicago; dedicated all-day workshops scheduled monthly; SEA and LEA deliverables; tight agendas; webinars; and conference call support, the two year partnership has resulted in RIDE codifying a school improvement framework and processes including conducting needs assessments, root cause analyses, identification of evidence-based interventions, and strategic deployment of resources. For Central Falls, the work of the past two years yielded a revenue-neutral, evidence-based strategy to address persistently high educator attrition in Central Falls through the hiring of four half-time Comprehensive Induction Specialists who work with a cohort of 17 first and second year teachers in the district. The partnership is now transitioning to a focus on implementation fidelity and positive outcomes for teachers and students while also embarking on a new but parallel body of work to develop leadership capacity in the district.

**Success and Challenges in Implementing Strategy:**

The school district implemented the new Induction Specialist initiative in late August 2018. After 18 months of planning and development, specialists were hired and each started working with his/her small cohort of four-six new teachers at the start of the 18/19 school year. At the same time, specialists began their own development via RIDE’s New Teacher Center (NTC) program. We are early in the process, and continue to reflect and refine practices where needed. Central Falls and RIDE have identified the following successes and challenges:

***Our Successes:***

* We developed a well thought out strategy focused on buy-in, role clarity, and strategies to measure effectiveness of the program;
* Induction Specialists and new teachers were onboarded in the summer and moved quickly to building a strong working relationship;
* Ongoing professional development for our Induction Specialists (in house and NTC); finally
* BOY survey to new teachers shows an overwhelming majority believe program is of value.

***Our Challenges:***

* Alignment of schedules (Induction Specialists half time and new teachers free periods);
* Protection of confidentiality;
* Ongoing support for the Induction Specialists and metrics to measure their success;
* The larger teaching community understanding program purpose and outcomes.

**How it has Supported Achievement of Desired Outcomes:**

We are too early in the program to know for sure whether or not we have achieved our desired outcomes. That said, the beginning of year data and feedback is showing positive results. Our desired outcomes are:

* To retain new teachers who have the mindset and skills to work in a high-need district and meet the needs of our students and community;
* To employ a talented workforce of educators who believe in, and can implement, pedagogy and practices aligned with the District’s Equity-Empowerment-Excellence Blueprint for Success;
* To seed a leadership environment where teachers take on future “leadership” roles in the District;
* To have the human capital that sets high expectations for all students ultimately improving academic achievement and proficiency.