

The NWP:

Developing the Teacher Leadership that

Helps Local Teachers

Improve Student Writing

Spring Meeting 2016

Inverness Research

1. THE NATIONAL CHALLENGE

21st century education and workplace require ever more sophisticated literacy skills.

- Writing is integral to thinking, learning, and participating in society.
- To have choices and to thrive, every student needs to become a versatile, skilled writer.
- States are adopting Common Core or similar new standards, calling for more—and more sophisticated—writing

The current amount of writing instruction is not sufficient to meet new literacy demands

- On average, ELA teachers spend **58 minutes a week** teaching writing
- Students spend **37 minutes a week** writing for homework, on average
 - *From NWP College Ready Writers Project 2013 baseline data on ELA middle and high school teacher practices in 10 states*

Local school systems alone cannot offer sufficient professional development

On a national survey, teachers reported that there was a moderate or high need for additional teacher PD in the following areas—

- **Engaging students in writing about complex topics (41%)**
- **Helping students write arguments to support claims in analysis of substantive topics (41%)**
- **Analyzing the structure of texts, including how the sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of text relate to each other and the whole (33%)**

*From RAND's American Teacher Panel survey, representing 1,130 teachers
(as reported in Education Week, February 1, 2016)*

The NWP helps meet the national challenge by building capacity that results in local improvement

- Generating teacher leadership
- Delivering professional development tailored to local needs
- Backed by the shared mission and professional knowledge of the national network

Generating teacher leadership

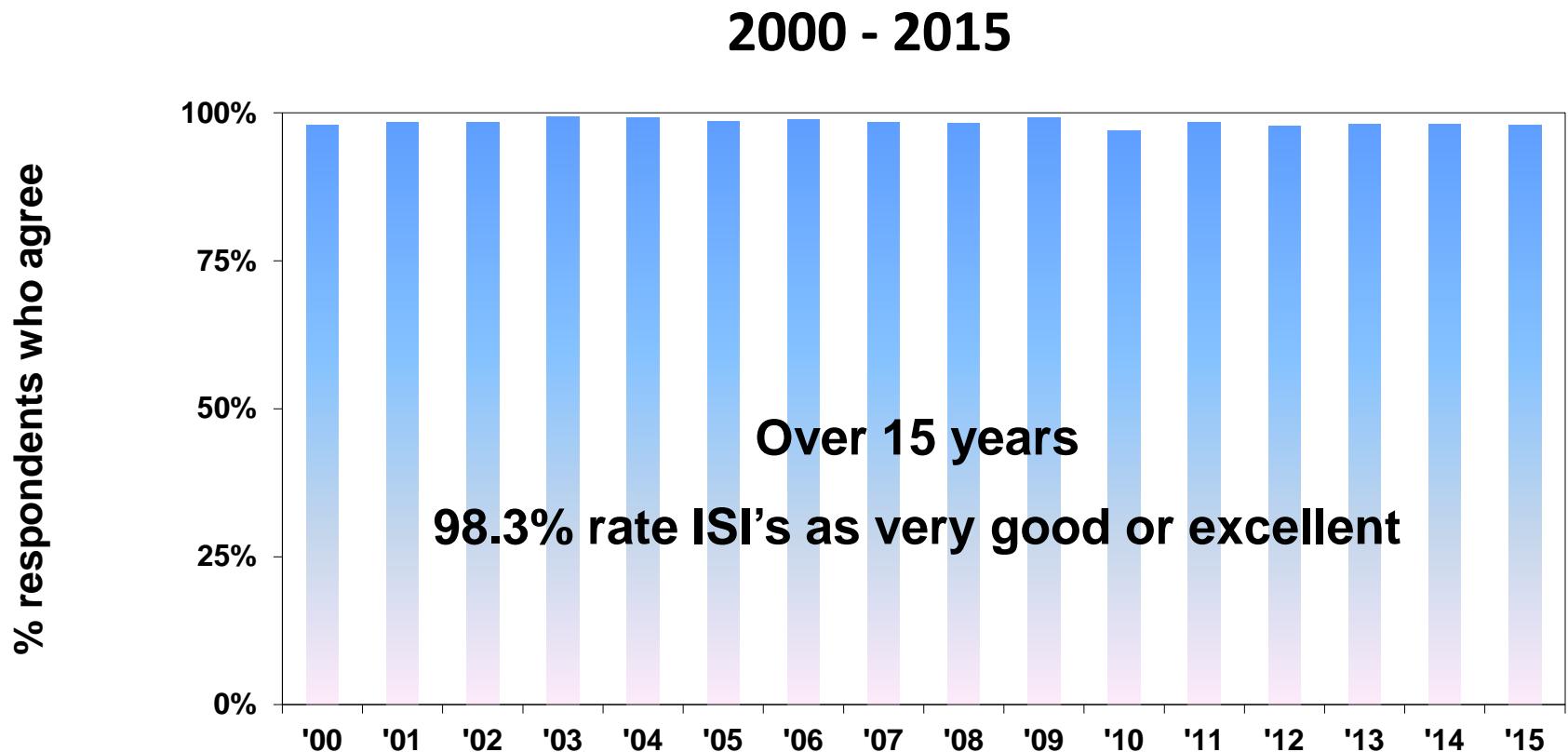
There is widespread and renewed awareness of the need for teacher leadership

Just 2 examples...

- US Department of Education's new *Teach to Lead* initiative
- Gates Foundation's new *Teacher Leadership Networks* initiative

*The NWP has been developing teacher leadership for
40 years!*

NWP institutes offer local teachers *very high quality* support for development of teacher leadership



What it means to be a teacher leader in the NWP

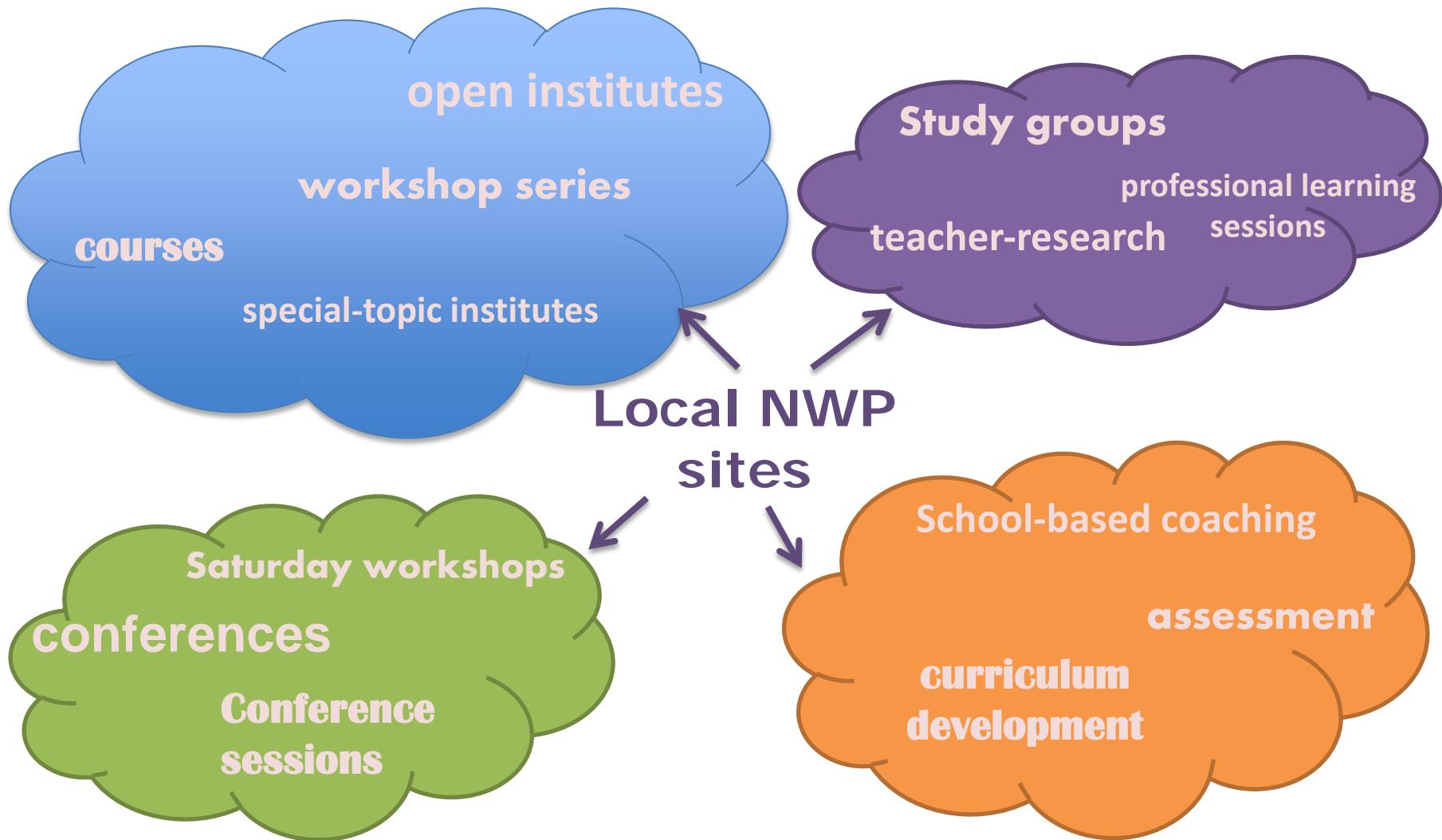
- Advocating for what's right for students
- Staying informed about practice and policy
- Opening the classroom door and going public with teaching
- Working "alongside" teachers and leading collaboratively
- Taking a stand, speaking up, being passionate about teaching
- Learning and reflecting on practice as a teacher and leader
- Sharing classroom practices that work

--From *How Teachers Become Leaders*,
Lieberman and Friedrich, 2010

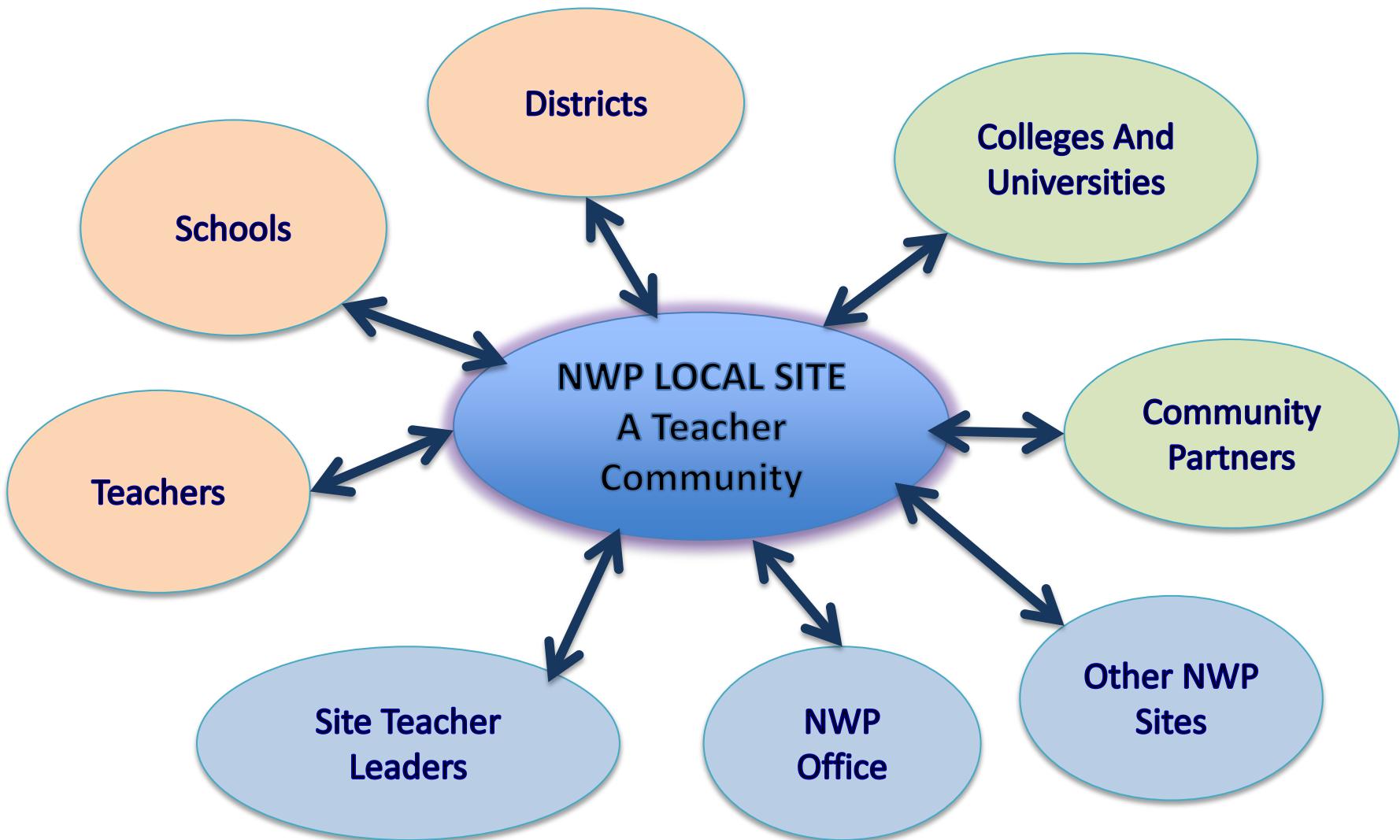
7,500 NWP teacher-leaders were active in 2014-15

**Delivering professional development
that serves local teachers**

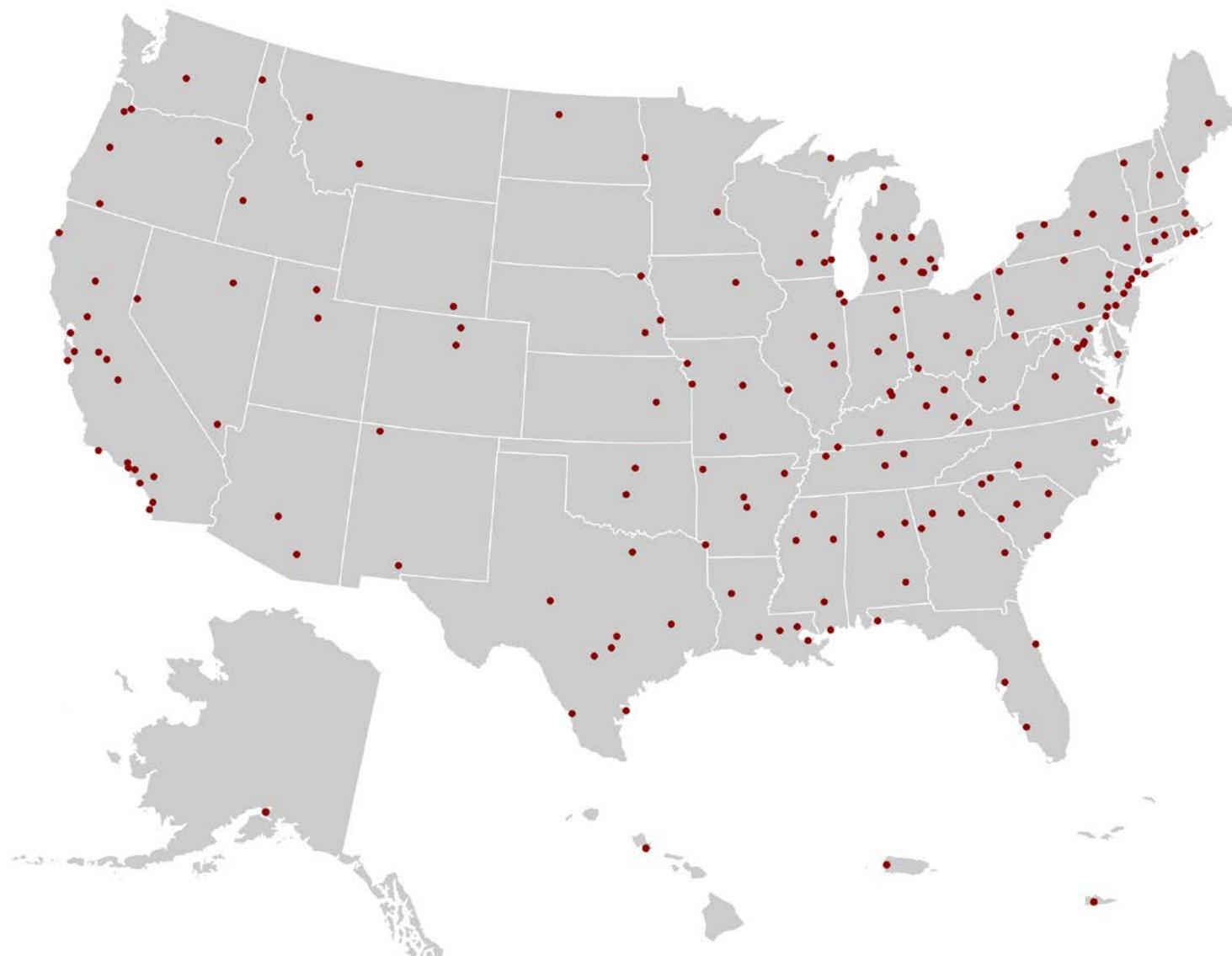
Local sites offer a variety of face-to-face and online programs tailored for local teachers



Local teachers gain access to the many resources that are part of a site's network



Furthermore, each local site is connected to the national network and NWP's digital resources



Thus, local teachers have the backing of the full national network

- **Shared mission and values** about students, writing, teaching, and teacher leadership
- **Exchange of knowledge** from both research and practice
- **Opportunity to develop** as teachers, as leaders, as writers, as learners

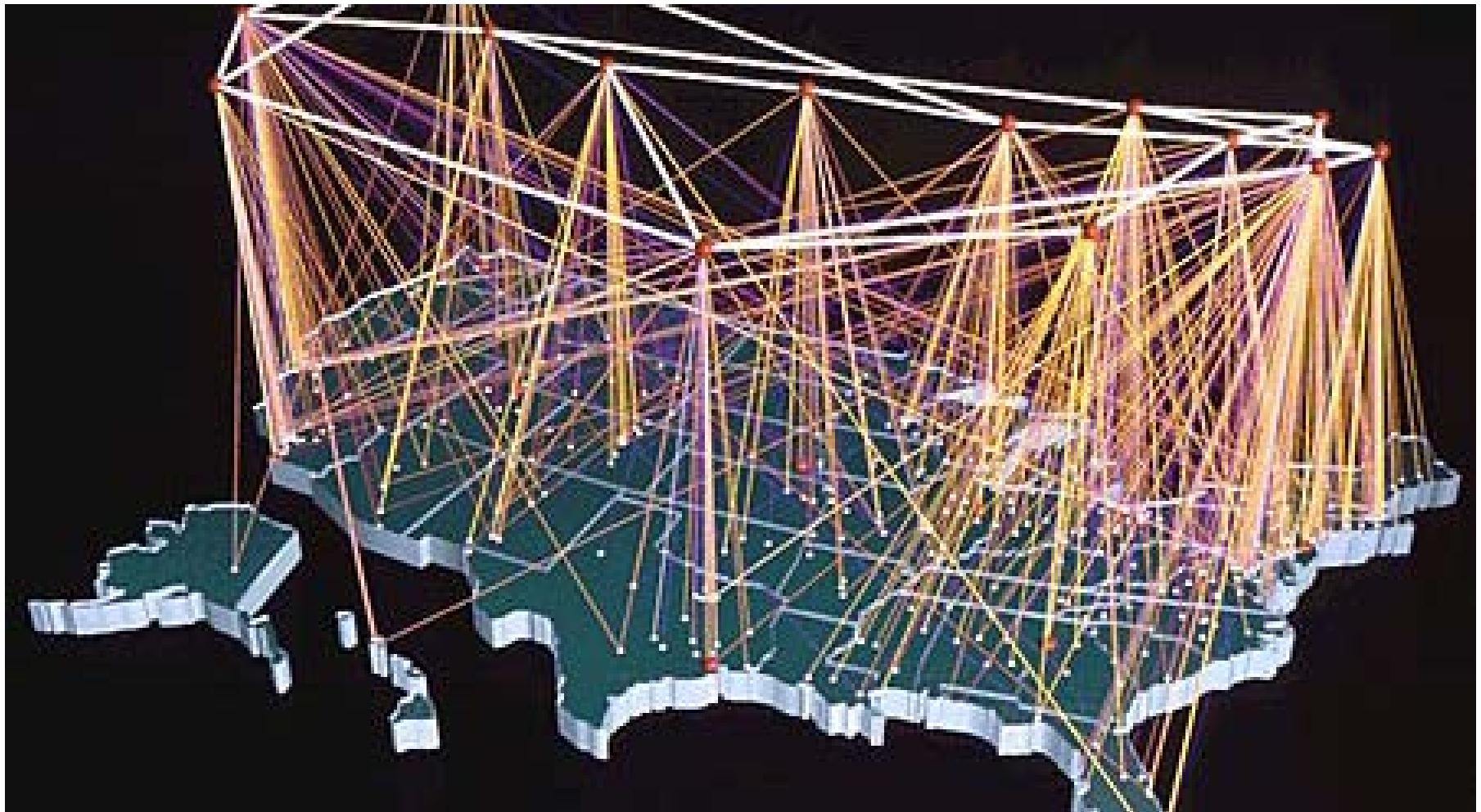
**Why is it important to sustain funding
for writing improvement at the
federal level, as well as locally?**

The NWP network functions as a national infrastructure for the improvement of writing

- We all rely on infrastructures to get work done: highways and bridges, the internet, the aviation system.
- Good infrastructure supports local growth and competitiveness. The infrastructure has to be reliably high quality, consistent, and readily accessible.
- The costs of infrastructure are shared by all levels—federal, state, and locals. It requires steady investment to function.

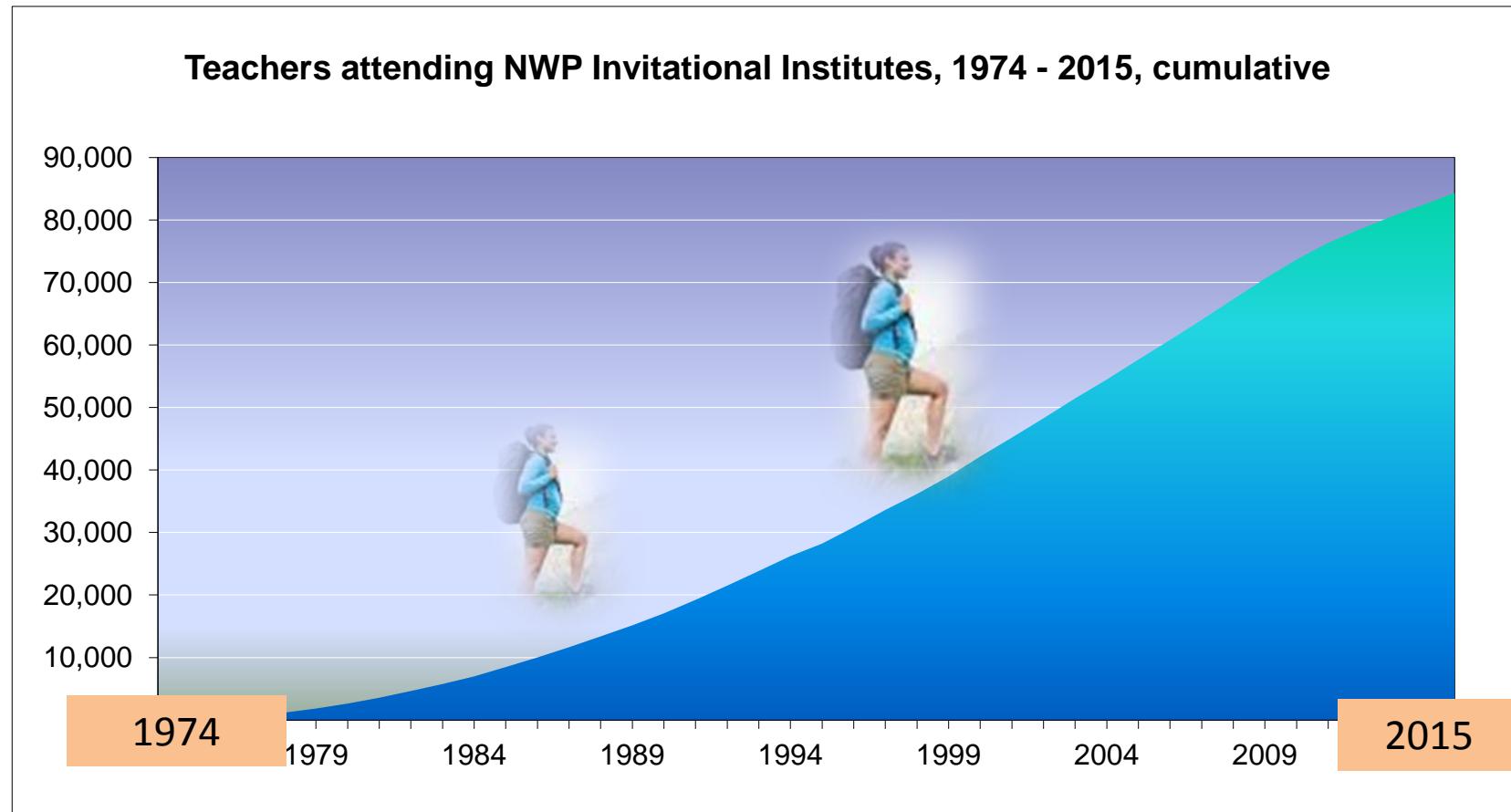
A seeming paradox: High quality local work requires high capacity national infrastructure

Federal investments fuel the NWP's building of teacher leadership for local schools

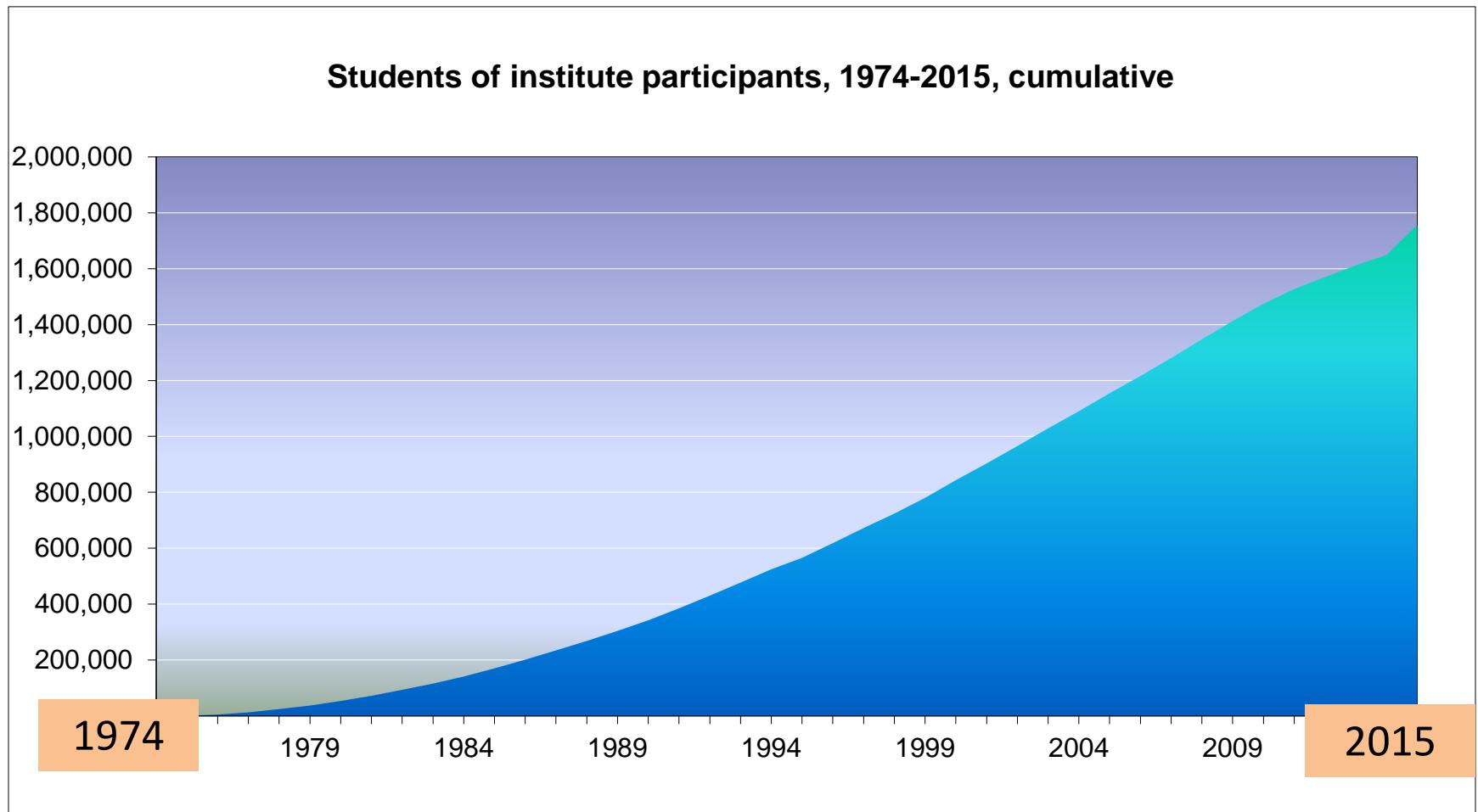


The nation has benefited from the NWP's 40 years of cumulative teacher leadership development

Over **84 thousand teachers** have participated in Summer Invitational Institutes since 1974



NWP institute participants have taught over 1.7 million students since 1974



Federal investments in teacher leadership also allow the NWP to support professional learning in high-poverty schools

Over the past three school years (2012-13 through 2014-15), Writing Project sites have provided 30 or more hours of professional development to:

2,152 schools

1,313 high-poverty schools (>= 50% FRPL)

250 high-poverty schools directly funded through SEED or Investing in Innovation (i3)

TAKE HOME MESSAGE

The NWP has a 40-year track record of developing teacher leadership capacity that helps local teachers improve student writing.

Federal dollars help build the infrastructure that enables the NWP to develop that teacher leadership.

A powerful metaphor...

Investment in the connected NWP infrastructure benefits local teachers across the nation



The largest organism in the world is the Aspen grove. **What appear to be individual trees are actually connected to a shared root system** that nourishes the whole.



END