

**The NWP:  
Developing the Teacher Leadership that  
Helps Local Teachers  
Improve Student Writing**

Spring Meeting 2016

Inverness Research

# 1. THE NATIONAL CHALLENGE

**21<sup>st</sup> 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

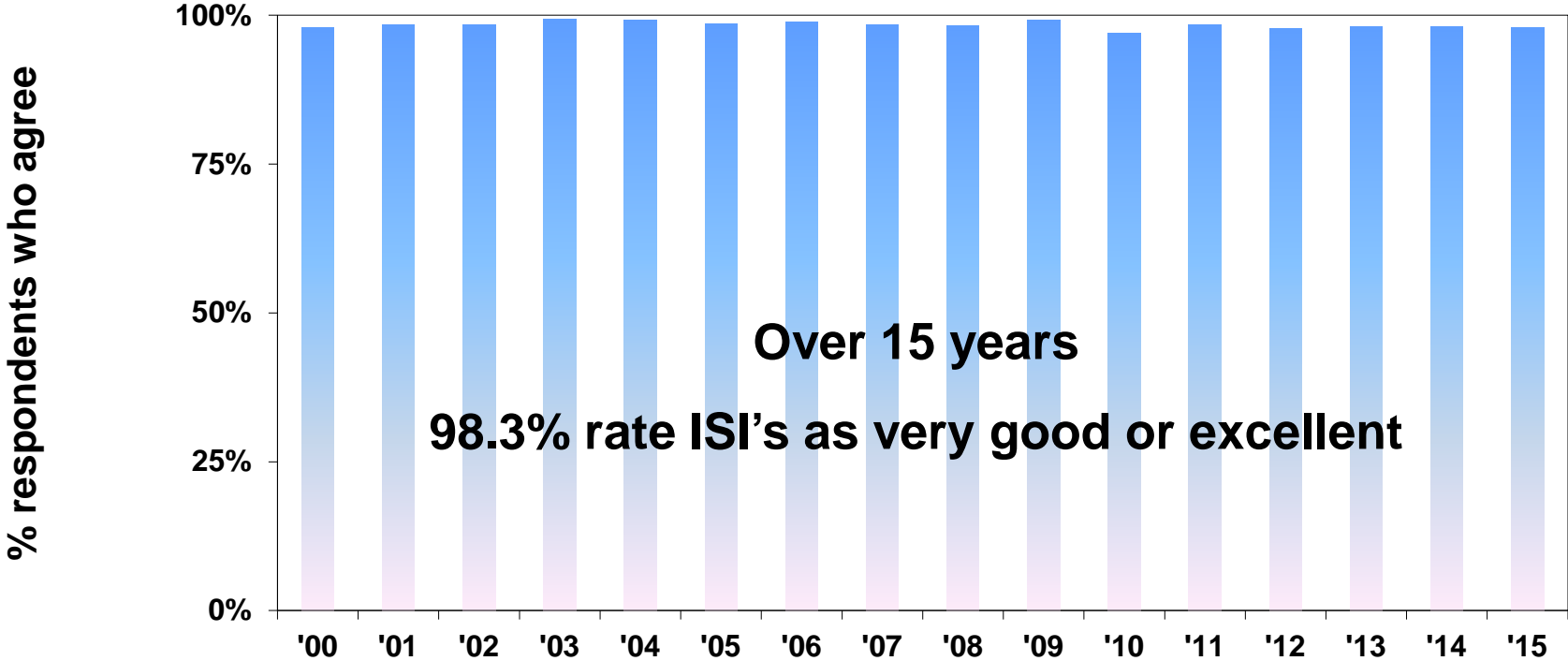
Just 2 examples...

- 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

2000 - 2015





# What it means to be a teacher leader in the NWP

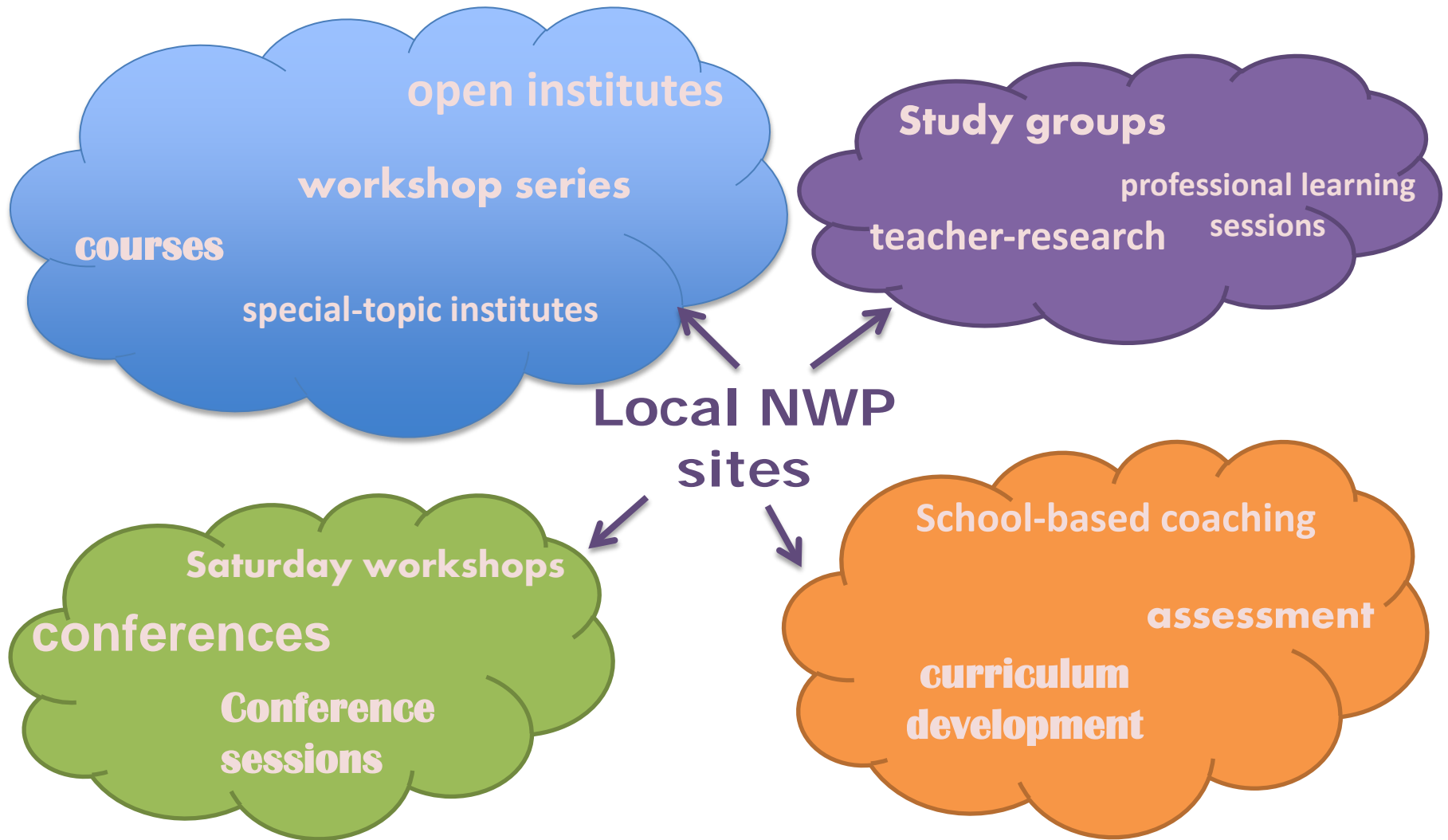
- Advocating for what's right for students
- Staying informed about practice and policy
- Opening the classroom door and going public with teaching
- Working "alongside" teachers and leading collaboratively
- Taking a stand, speaking up, being passionate about teaching
- Learning and reflecting on practice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

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

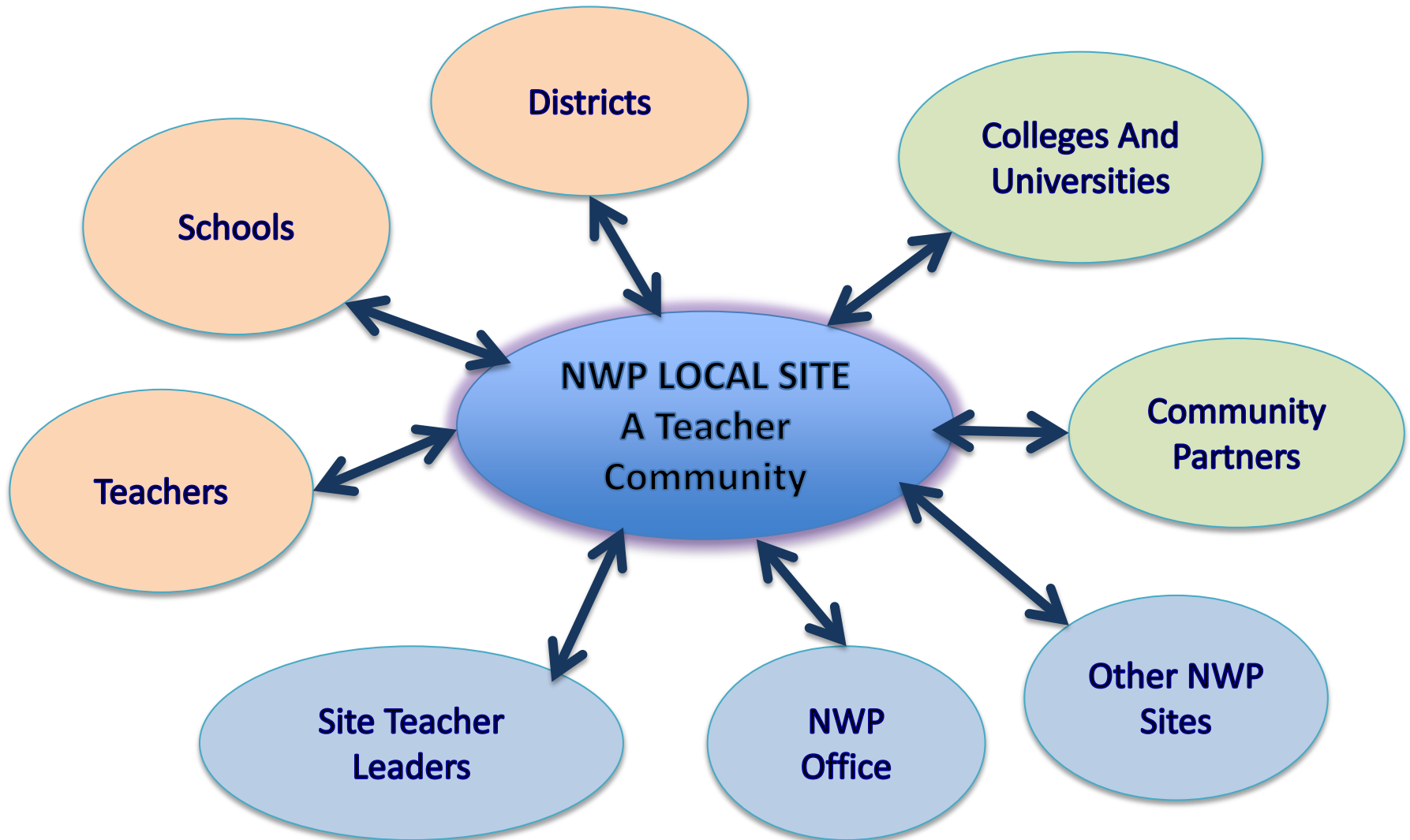
**7,500** NWP teacher-leaders were active in 2014-15

**Delivering professional development  
that serves local teachers**

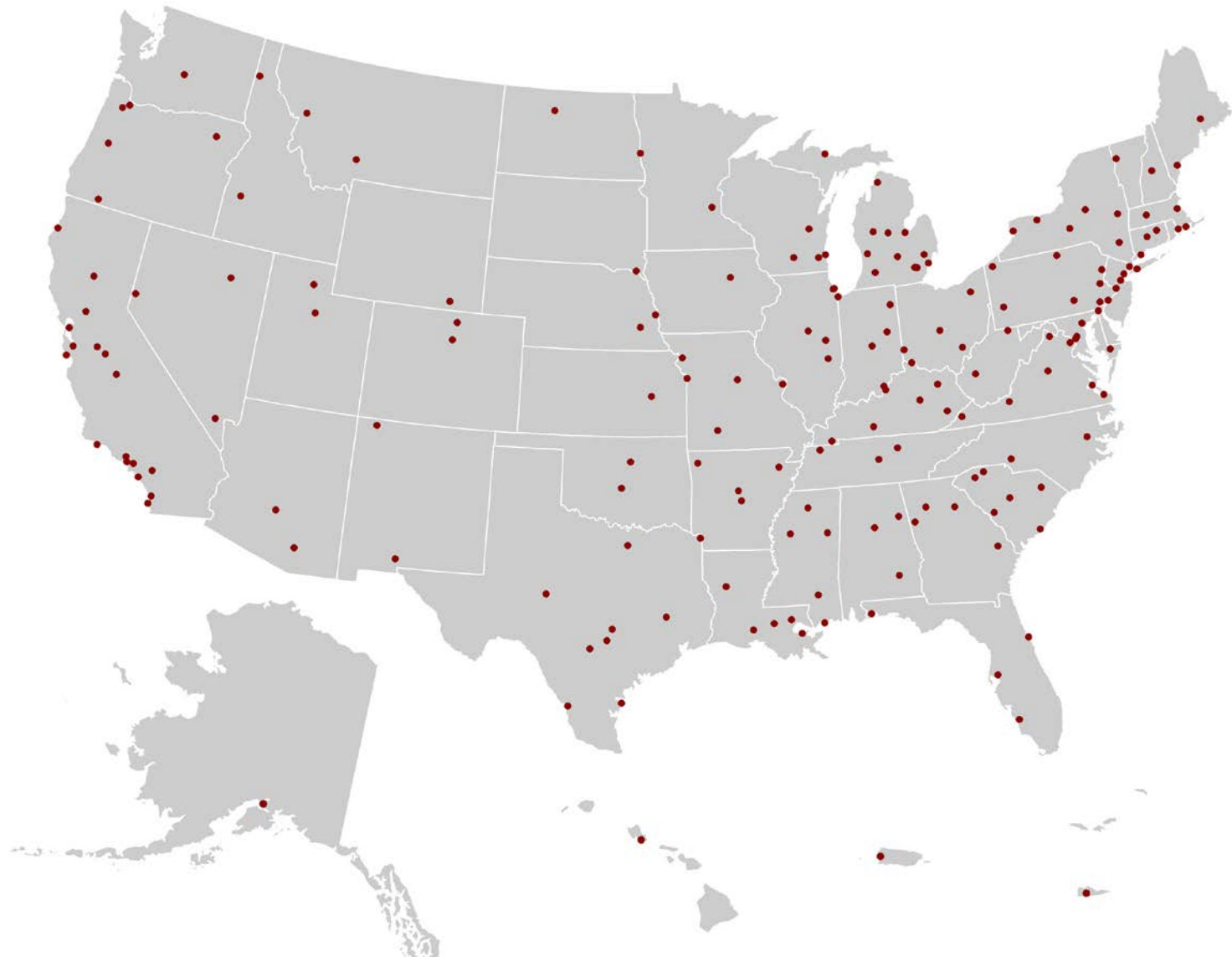
# Local sites offer a variety of face-to-face and online programs tailored for local teachers



# 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?**

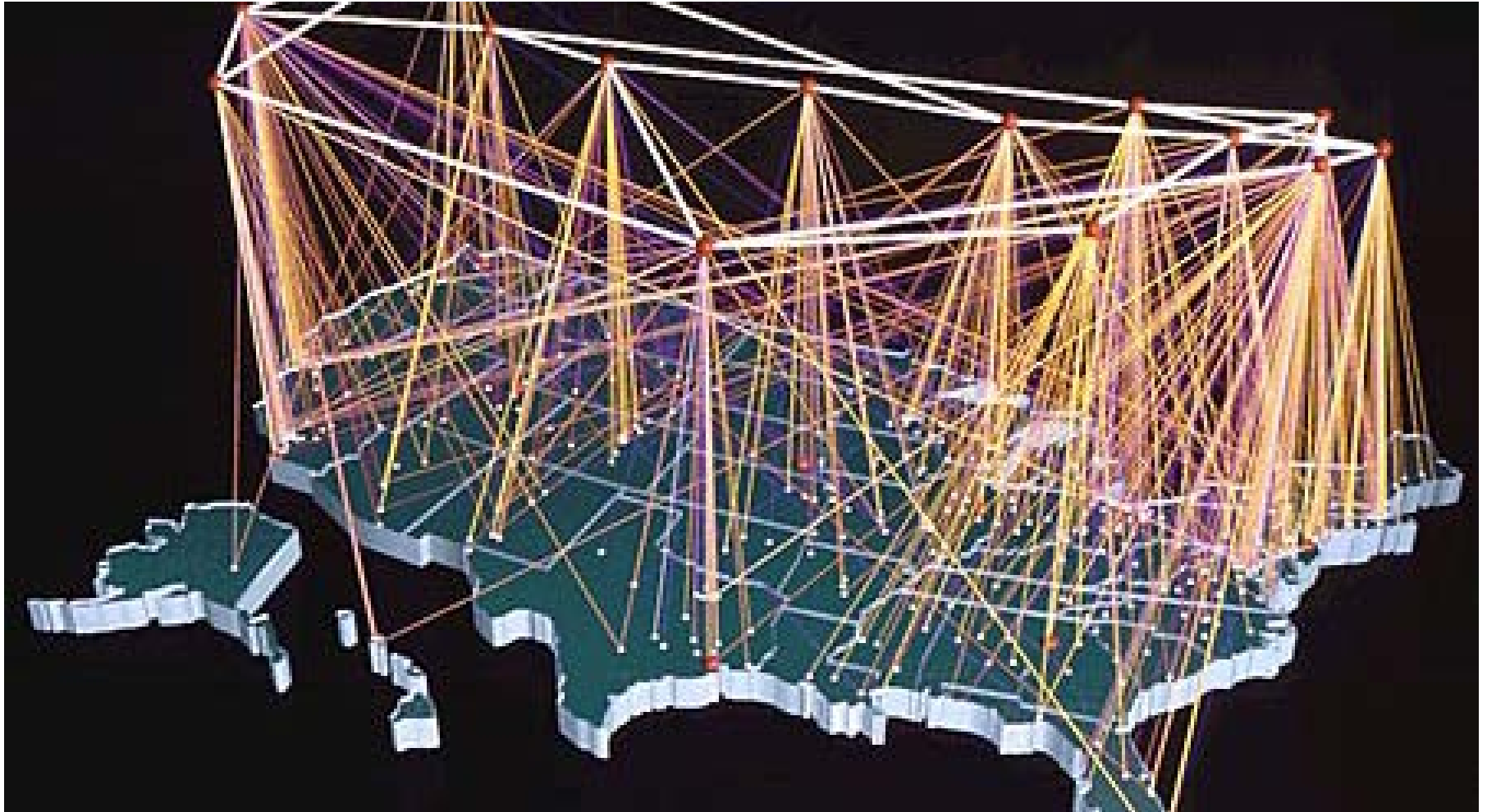
# The NWP network functions as a national infrastructure for the improvement of writing

- 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***

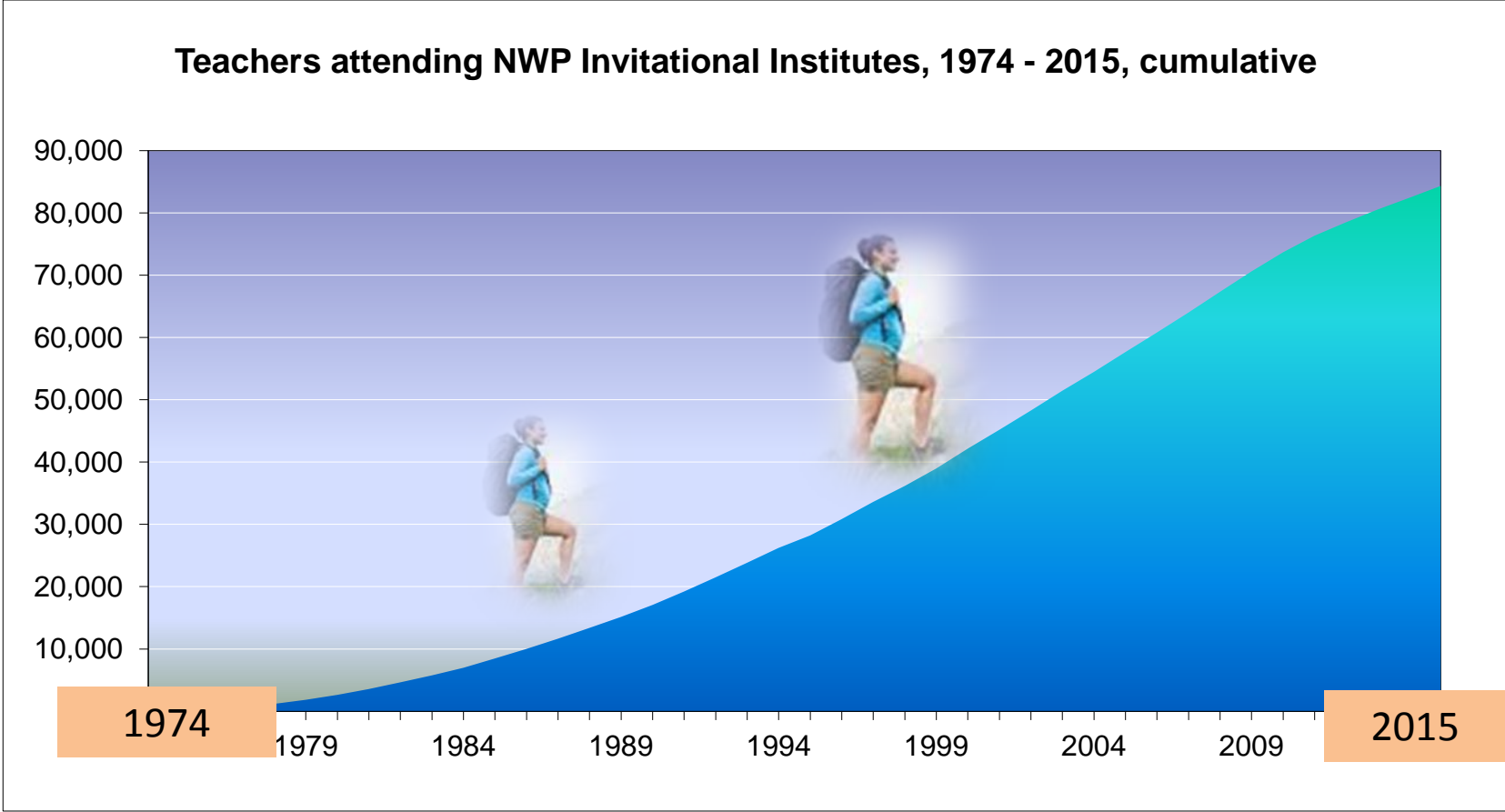


# Federal investments fuel the NWP's building of teacher leadership for local schools

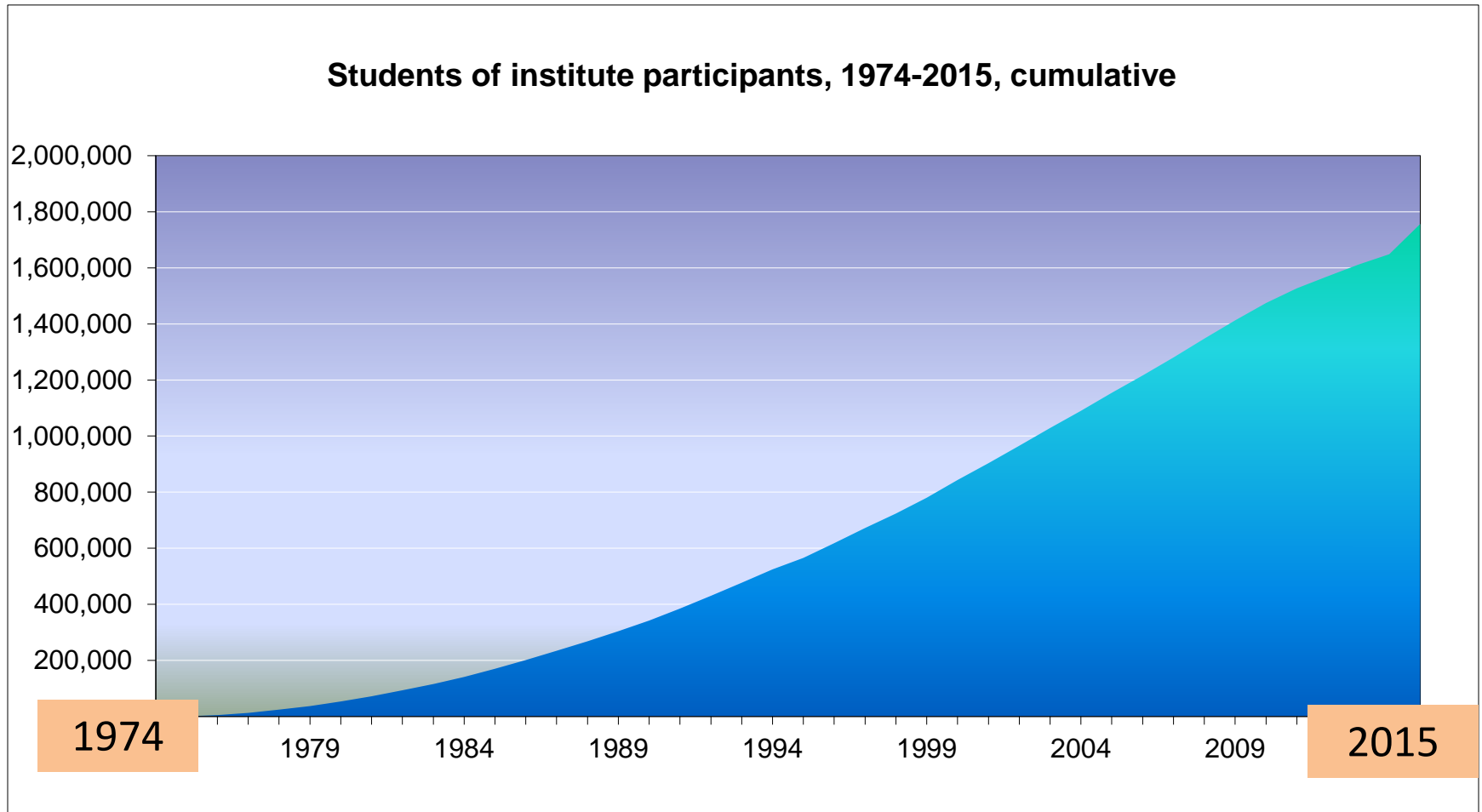


# The nation has benefited from the NWP's 40 years of cumulative teacher leadership development

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 ( $\geq 50\%$  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