



TEACHER WORKFORCE

BUILDING A STRONGER TEACHING FUTURE

Beyond the Vacancy

Why Districts Can't Recruit Their
Way to Workforce Stability



Today's Host

Jessica Solano

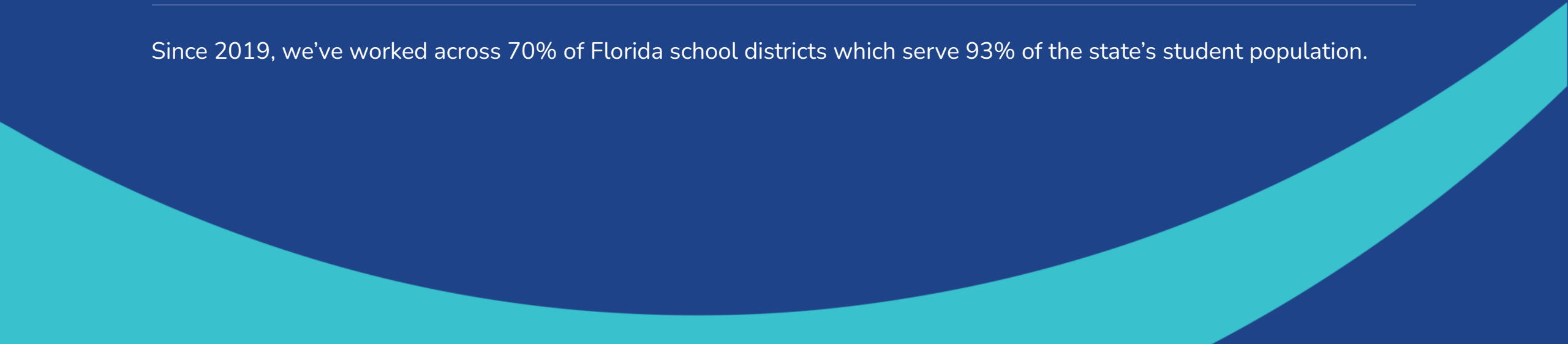
- **2017 Florida Teacher of the Year**
- **Former Director of Recruitment and Engagement, Polk County Public Schools**
- **Former Leader of Impact Florida's Teacher Workforce Cadre**



ABOUT US

Impact Florida helps educators grow their practice, connects leaders to share what works, and shapes systems so that great teaching can reach every Florida student, in every classroom, every day.

Since 2019, we've worked across 70% of Florida school districts which serve 93% of the state's student population.



Our work with Florida districts

Our programs engage students, teachers, leaders, and decision-makers to strengthen:

Instructional systems & structures



Student & teacher voice



Opportunity pathways



Teacher preparation & retention



High-quality instructional materials



AI in Education



Our Teacher Workforce Journey

1

October 2023

Teacher Workforce Project Launches

- Pasco
- St. Lucie
- Polk
- Lake

3

September 2026

Strengthening the Teacher Workforce Webinar Series Launches

2

November 2024

Teacher Workforce Cadre

- Osceola
- Lee
- Polk
- St. Lucie
- Pasco

4

August 2027

Digital Teacher Recruitment & Retention Resource Goes Live



The question every district was asking:

Why are teachers leaving?

The Challenges We're Facing

- Fewer people are entering teaching than those exiting.
- Roughly 2/3 of teachers leave the profession for reasons other than retirement.
- Increasing stress levels contribute to teaching's declining popularity.
- Florida teacher salaries are among the lowest in the nation.
- The cost of living in Florida is high.

Sources: RAND Corporation (2021); Learning Policy Institute (2017, 2024); National Education Association, Rankings & Estimates (2024); National Council on Teacher Quality (2023).





The Solution We've Tried: Recruit More Teachers

But what are the results of recruiting more teachers?

31.4%

of Florida's educators have
less than 4 years of
experience

Source: Florida Department of Education, Know Your Schools: School Report Cards



Recruitment fills the pipeline.
Retention determines how
quickly it drains.



Why do we chase recruitment?

Recruitment is loud.

Recruitment ties to visible classroom vacancies.

- Easy to see and track
- Highly visible to district leadership
- Responds to concrete tactics
- Measurable in the short term:
 - Applicants
 - Job fair attendance
 - Offers
 - Vacancies filled

Retention is quiet.

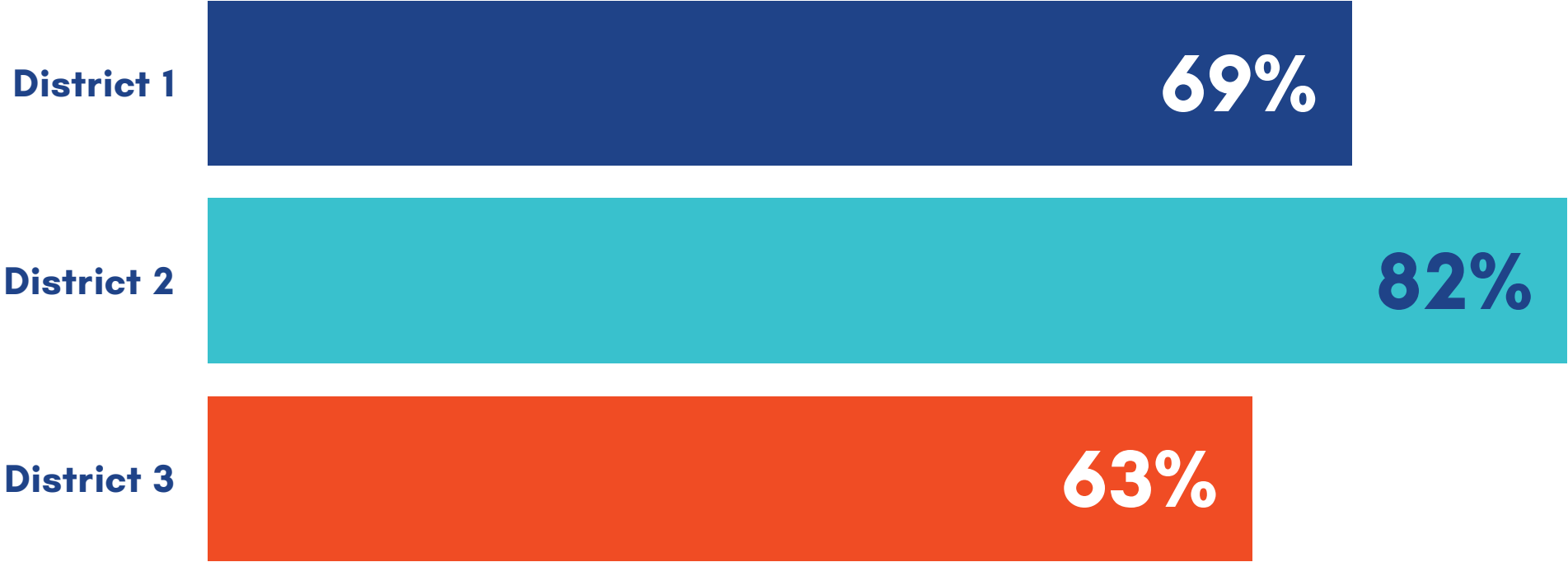
Retention ties to long-term outcomes, not immediate ones.

- Influenced by many departments and systems
- Harder to diagnose
- Slower to show results
- Easily displaced by the next urgent hiring cycle

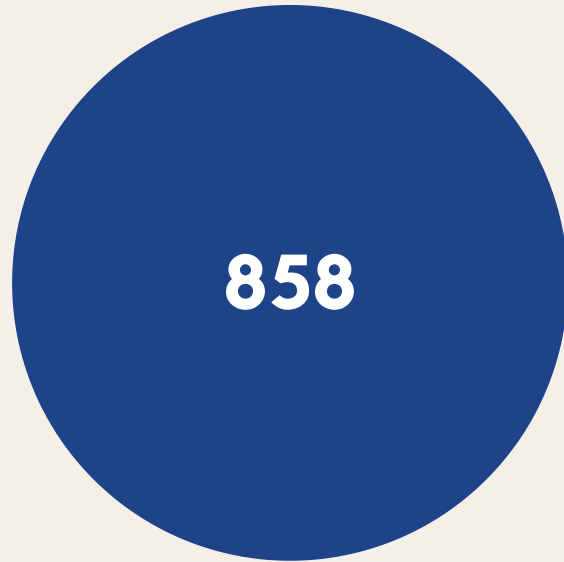
Teacher Retention Rates by District



New Teacher Retention Rates by District

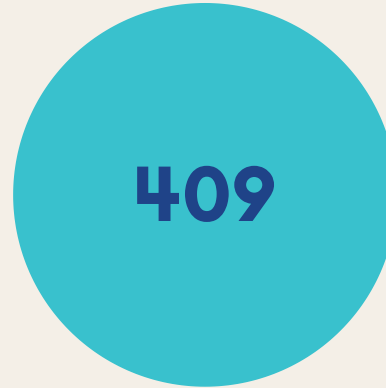


Number of New Hires



District 1

Size:
~7,000 teachers



District 2

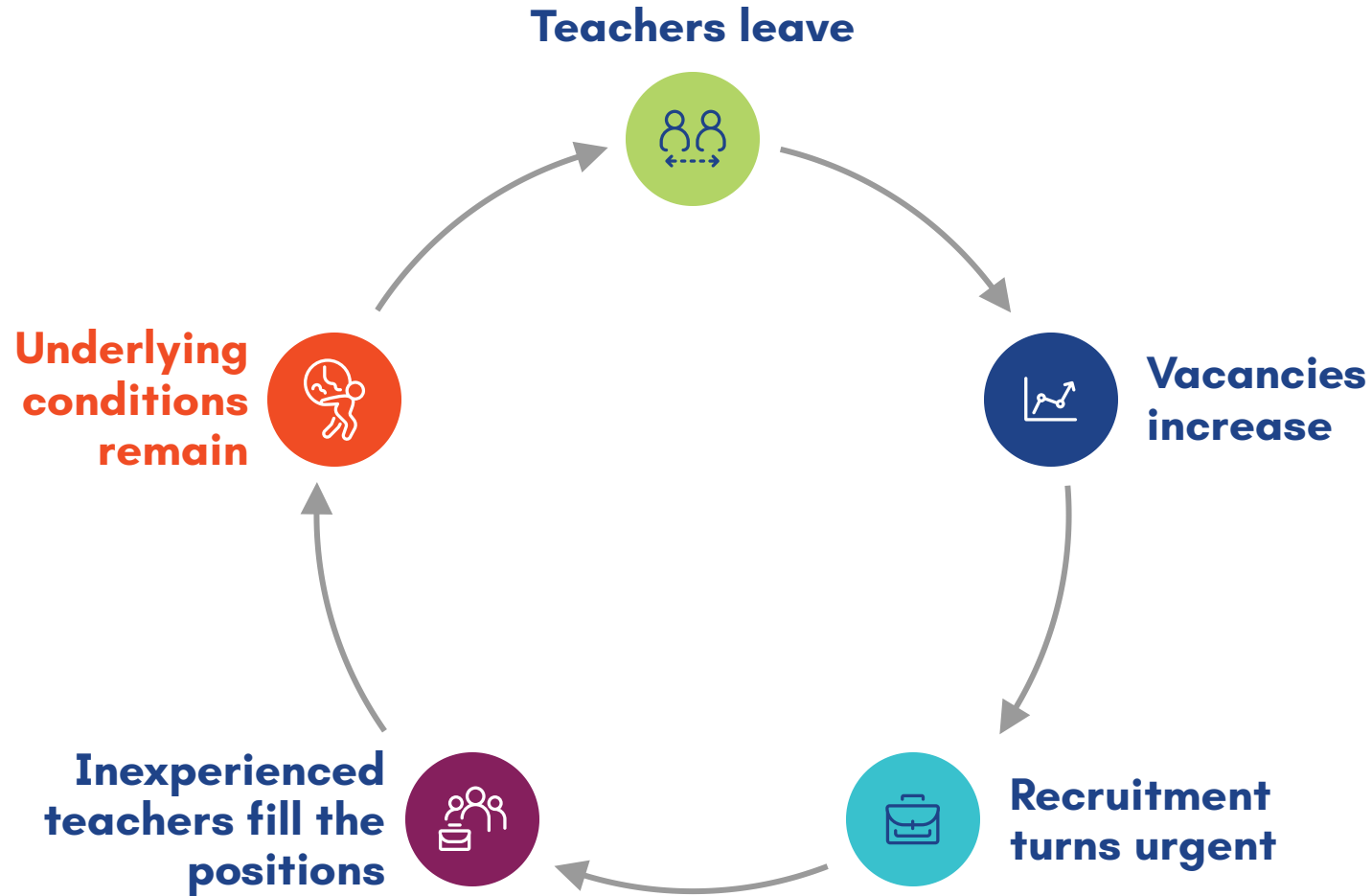
Size:
~5,000 teachers



District 3

Size:
~4,500 teachers

The Cycle Districts Can't Hire Their Way Out Of





Where is your district getting stuck in that cycle?

The Shift We Haven't Made:

From filling vacancies to addressing what keeps creating them

The Shift We Haven't Made



Recruitment Activity



Workforce Stability

The Shift We Haven't Made



Recruitment Activity

- Reactive
- Vacancy-centered
- HR-owned
- Positions filled



Workforce Stability

- Proactive
- Recruitment and retention
- District-wide responsibility
- Teachers supported to stay

The Four Shifts

Workforce stability requires districts to change:

1 Who owns the work

2 How leaders prioritize it

3 How districts understand the problem

4 How solutions are tested



Shift 1: Who Owns the Work

From HR Responsibility to District-Wide Ownership



Typical Condition:

- HR is at the center, holding:
 - Recruitment
 - Certification
 - Workforce data
 - Retention reporting



Shift Needed:

- A shared teacher workforce team:
 - HR and talent
 - School leaders
 - Academics
 - Professional learning
 - Data and strategy
 - District leadership
 - Teacher voice

What a Teacher Workforce Team Could Look Like



HR Director



**Talent Acquisition
Coordinator**



**Regional
Superintendent**



**Director of
Professional
Learning**



School Principal



Data Analyst

HR sees the data. Schools shape the experience.



District Office:

- Hiring data
- Certification
- Vacancies
- Turnover

School Experience:

- Leadership
- Workload
- Belonging
- Instructional support
- Professional growth



Shift 2: How Leaders Prioritize the Work

From a Stated Priority to a Protected Priority



Typical Condition:

- Retention is one of many district priorities

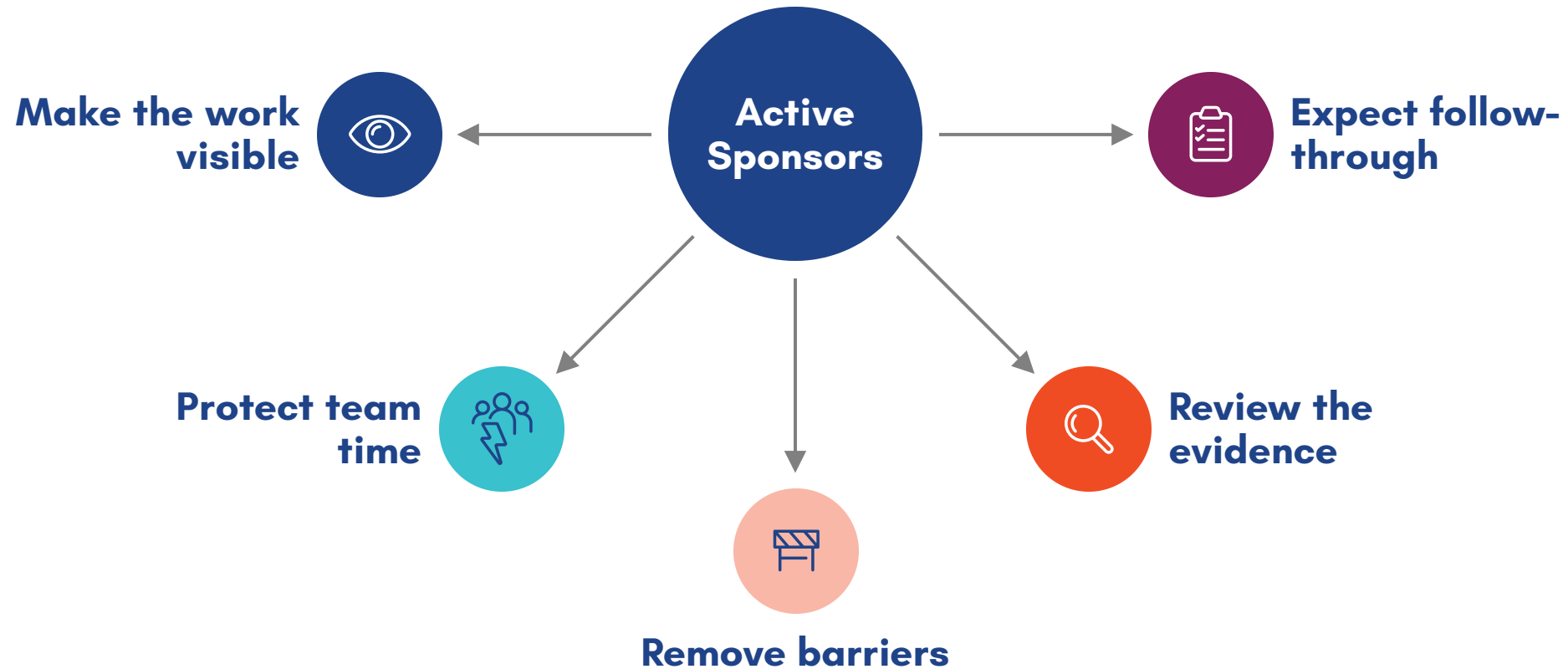


Shift Needed:

- District leaders protect, monitor, and act on it.



What Leaders Pay Attention to Gets Attention





Shift 3: How Districts Understand the Problem

From Assumptions to Teacher-Informed Understanding



Typical Condition:

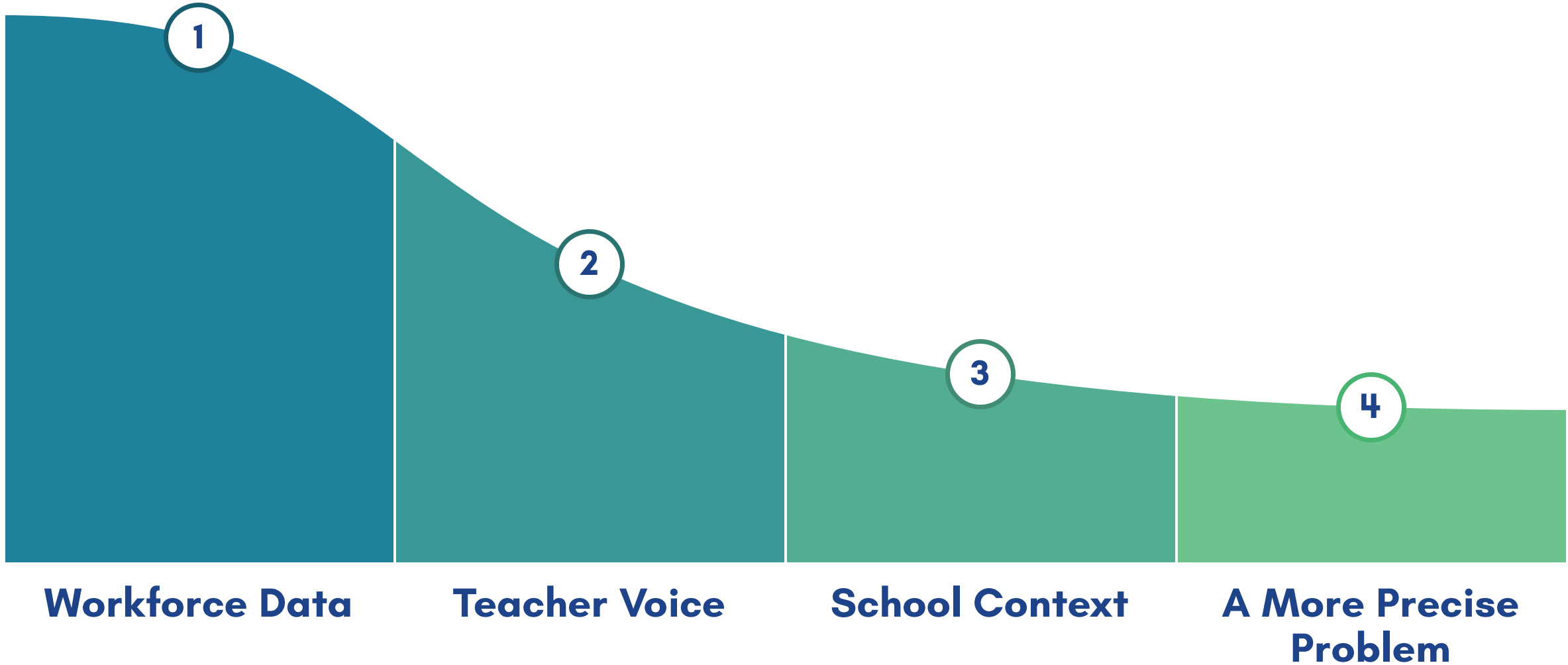
- Leaders select solutions based on what they believe teachers need.



Shift Needed:

- Data and teacher voice identify what teachers are actually experiencing.

From Assumptions to Teacher-Informed Understanding



Move Past Surface-Level Responses

Appreciation matters. It cannot substitute for improvement.

Surface-Level Responses

- **Jeans days**
- **Breakfast**
- **Recognition events**
- **One-time incentives**

Conditions that Shape Retention

- **School leadership**
- **Workload and expectations**
- **Onboarding**
- **Mentorship**
- **Instructional support**
- **Belonging and professional growth**



Shift 4: How Solutions are Tested

From District-Wide Rollout to Focused Testing



Typical Condition:

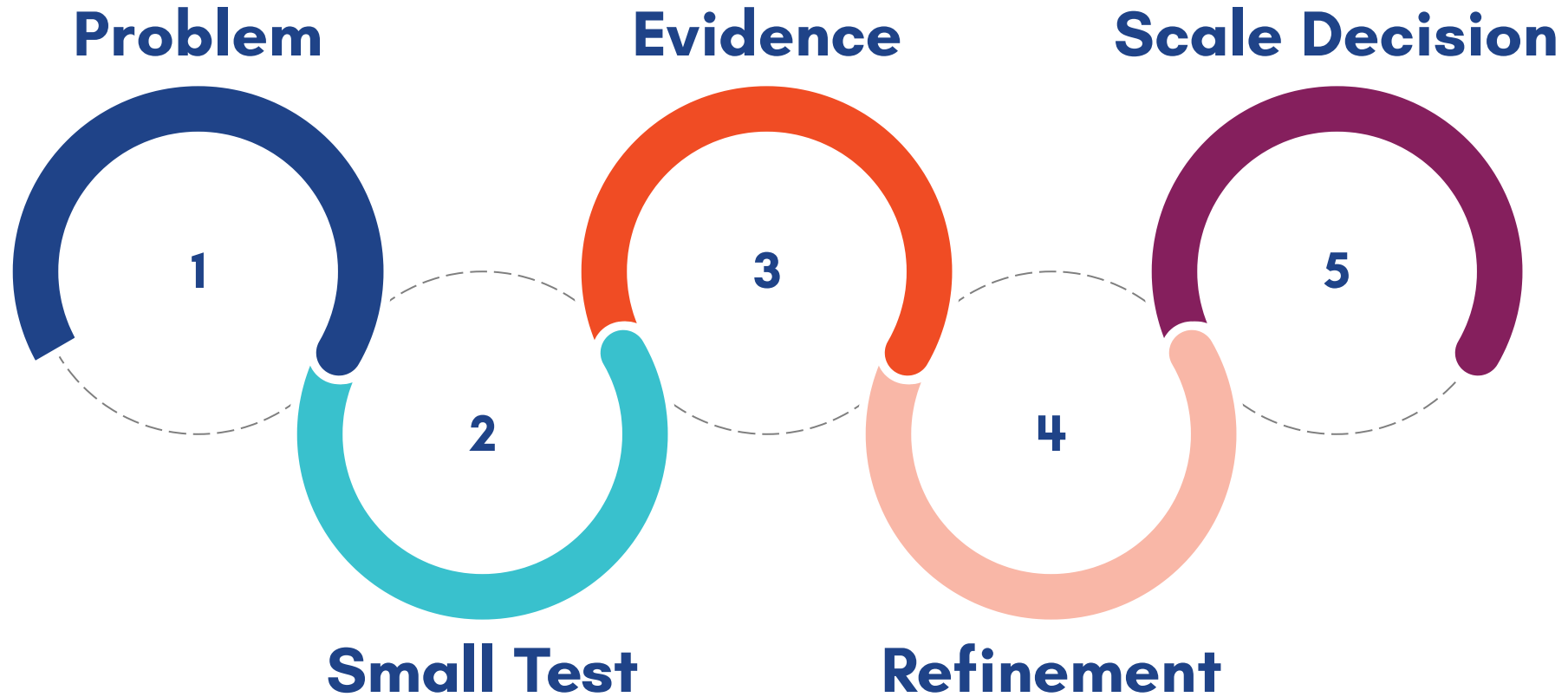
- The district selects a solution and implements it everywhere.



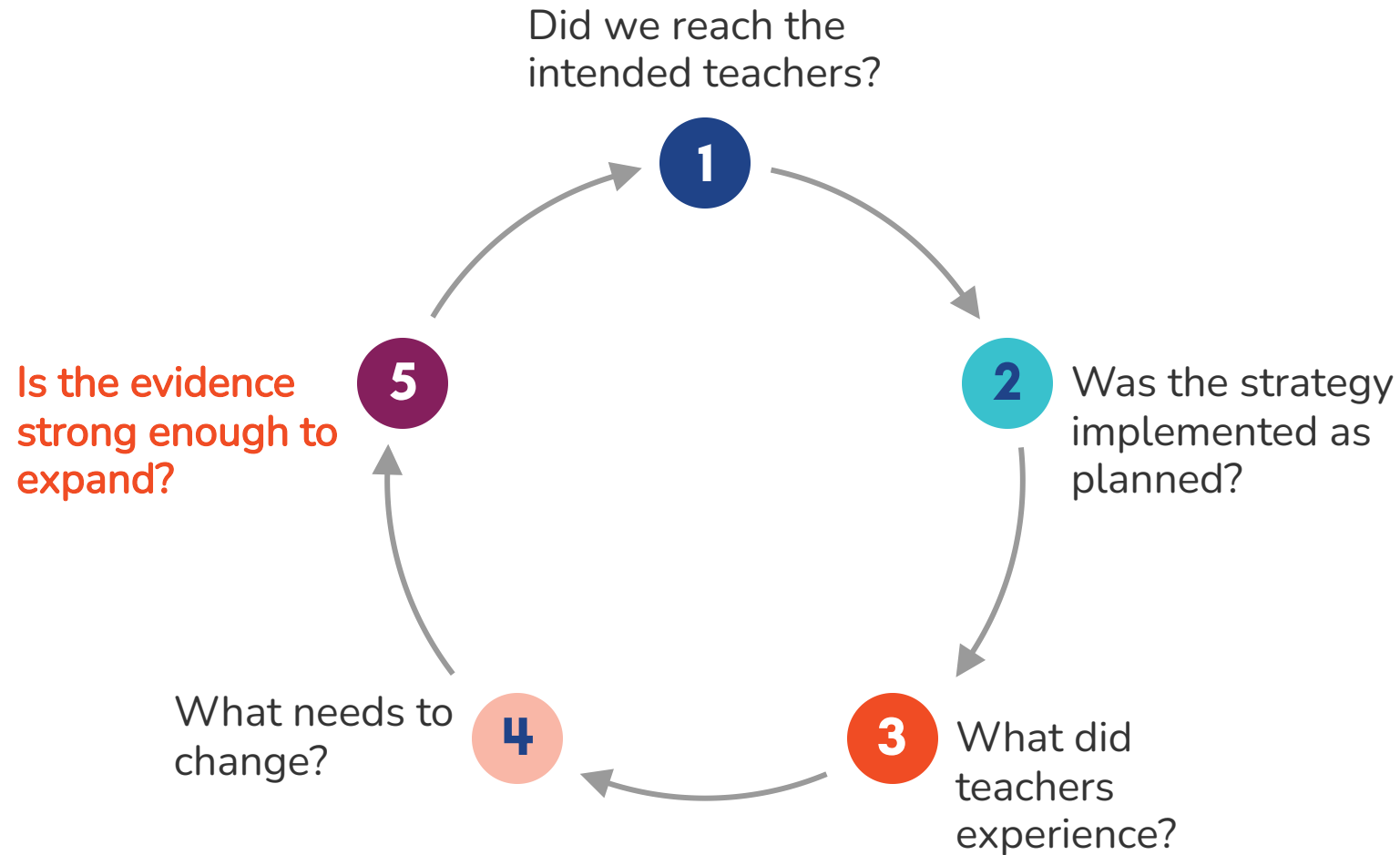
Shift Needed:

- Start small, learn quickly, and refine before scaling.

From District-Wide Rollout to Focused Testing



A Pilot is Designed to Produce Learning



The goal is not to prove the first idea was right. The goal is to learn enough to make the next decision better.

The Four Shifts

Which shift seems most relevant to your district right now?

1 Who owns the work

2 How leaders prioritize it

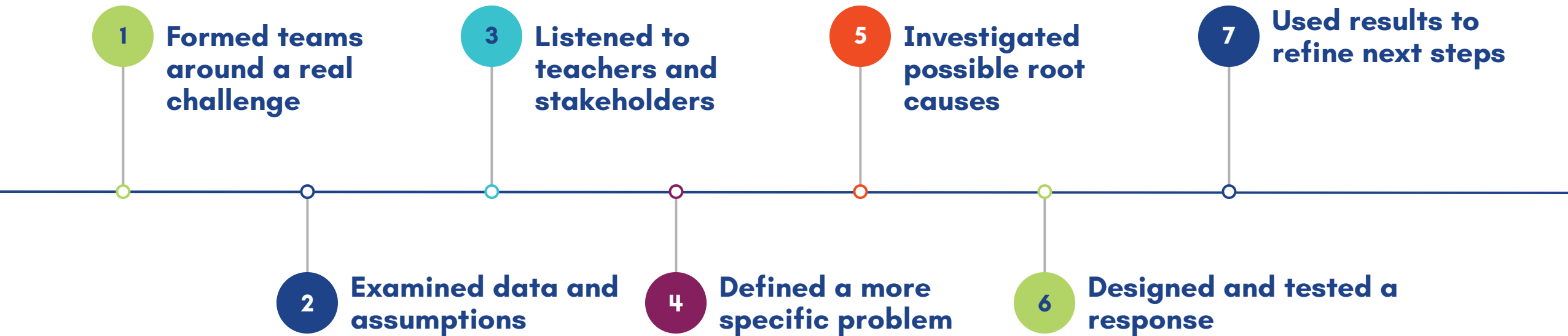
3 How districts understand the problem

4 How solutions are tested



What Makes Workforce Stability Possible

Workforce stability becomes possible when districts...



93.1%

Lee County · Project Thrive —
teacher retention, up from
83%, across a workforce of
roughly 6,000 teachers

91%

Pasco County · Mid-year orientation — of participating teachers returned the next year, compared with 75% districtwide

**“The results are worth
the commitment.”**

Michael Allen · Osceola County Chief of Staff and Strategy

Six more free webinars for district leaders

The "Strengthening the Teacher Workforce" sessions build on each other and include practical tools for HR teams.

November 12

**Building a
Teacher
Workforce Data
Plan**

January 21

**Defining the
Problem**

February 18

**Using
Stakeholder
Voices**

March 11

**Identifying Root
Causes**

April 22

**Designing a
Prototype**

June 17

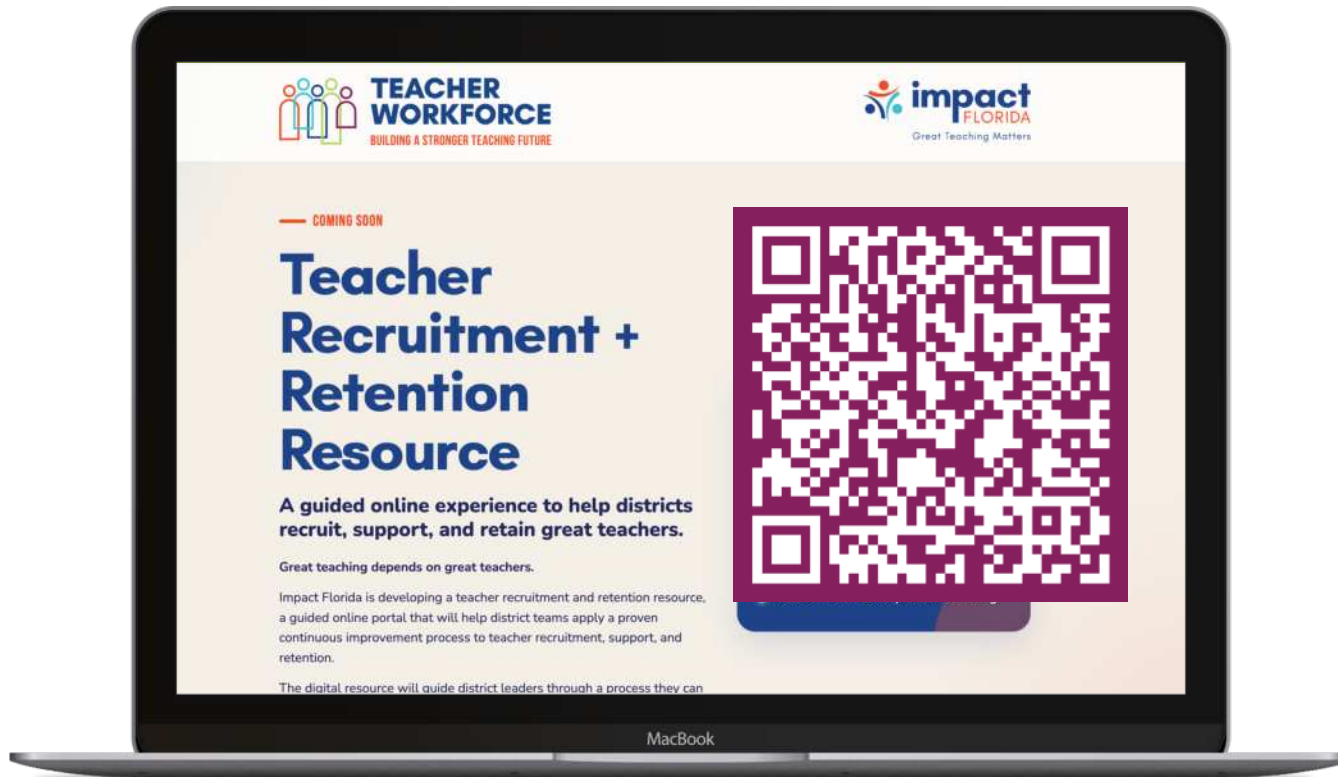
**Planning for
Implementation**

Register:

impactfl.link/tw-series



Coming soon! A digital tool to guide this work



- A step-by-step pathway
- Practical tools + guidance
- Real district examples
- Launching Summer 2027

For more details, scan the QR code or impactfl.link/tw-tool

Where your team begins



- 1 Identify a senior leader who can actively sponsor the work.
- 2 Begin assembling a focused cross-functional team.
- 3 Select one recruitment or retention challenge to understand.
- 4 Register for the remaining webinar sessions.
- 5 Coming Soon: Work through the microsite journey together.

Feedback Survey

impactfl.link/tw1





Contact Us

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