

THE CHALLENGE

In the face of significant budget challenges, Teach Plus teacher leaders in Chicago and Memphis stepped up to advocate for adequate funding for their schools. **THEY MOUNTED CAMPAIGNS TO EDUCATE AND ORGANIZE TEACHERS IN THEIR DISTRICTS AND STATES, AND ENSURE THAT THEIR DISTRICT BUDGETS HELD NO CUTS DETRIMENTAL TO TEACHERS AND STUDENTS.**

MOBILIZING EDUCATORS' VOICE

- + **TEACHERS PROVIDED TESTIMONY ABOUT THEIR CLASSROOMS AT BUDGET HEARINGS.** Throughout spring and early summer, Teach Plus Policy Fellows testified at every budget and regular meeting where public comments were accepted in Memphis.
- + **TEACHERS WROTE LETTERS AND PETITIONS TO POLICYMAKERS.**
 - + A letter written by Teach Plus teachers arguing for the need to fix education funding was signed by teachers from across Chicago Public Schools and delivered to the leaders of the state House and Senate.
 - + In Memphis, Teach Plus teachers authored a petition advocating for full funding of the district's budget and presented it at a County Commission meeting.
- + **TEACHERS ENLISTED THEIR STUDENTS IN THE FIGHT.** In Chicago, Policy Fellows and alums collaborated to hold an event titled "Don't Forget the Kids: CPS Funding from the Student Perspective." Choir students, directed by Policy Fellowship alum **Casey Fuess**, created a song and video focusing on funding which was covered by local television and radio stations.

THE ENDGAME

- + **IN ILLINOIS**, the legislature passed a one-year education budget which included pension parity for Chicago and an equity grant for poorer districts, both ideas for which Policy Fellows advocated. Pension parity requires the state to contribute \$205 million to the Chicago Teachers' Pension Fund just as it does for teachers elsewhere in the state. The poverty grant of \$250 million provides additional funding for districts, including Chicago, based on the number of low-income students they serve.
- + **IN MEMPHIS**, the district brought the deficit down from \$80 million to \$41 million, and the teachers' advocacy helped restore an additional \$22 million to the budget. A critical win for the teachers was the inclusion of a 3% pay increase in the budget.

"I am a Teach Plus Fellow, teacher, parent, and grandparent. I come before you today with 500 signatures from teachers in Shelby County schools requesting that you invest in the future of our children and our community by voting yes to supplement SCS' general fund deficit. The stakes are high for both our students and our economic growth and competitiveness. We must work with a sense of urgency to ensure that adequate funding is available to help our children reach their full potential."

- Soya Moore, 8th grade pre-algebra teacher, Shelby County Schools





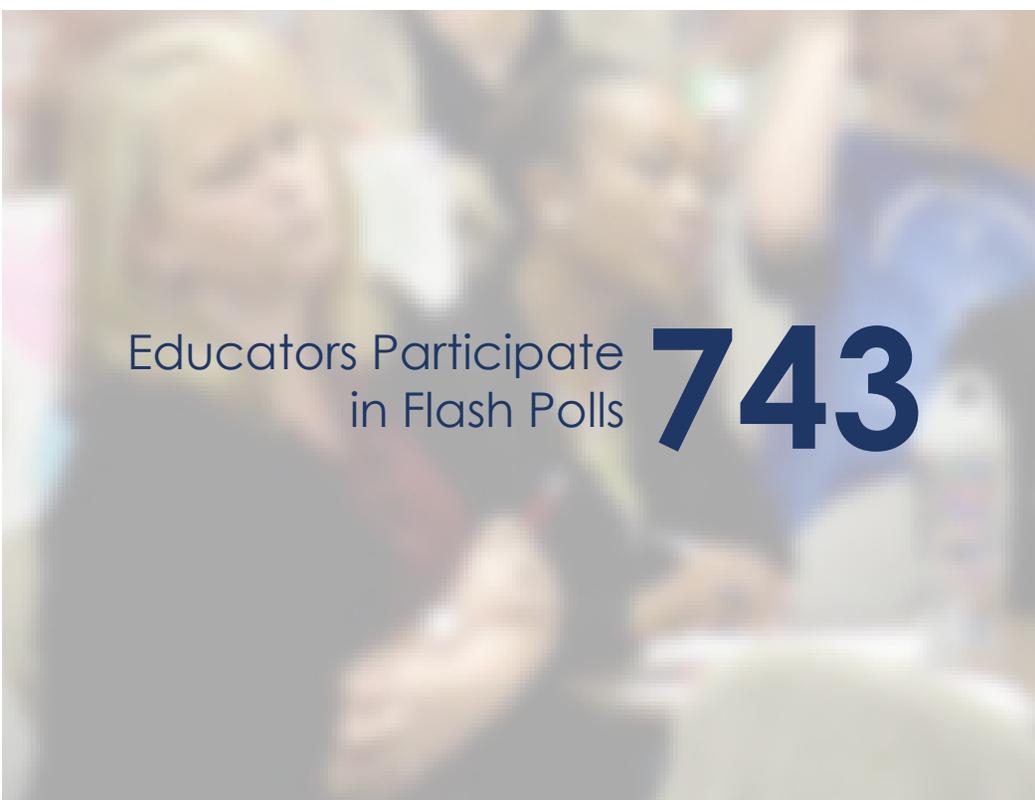
Teachers Sign
Letters & Petitions

938



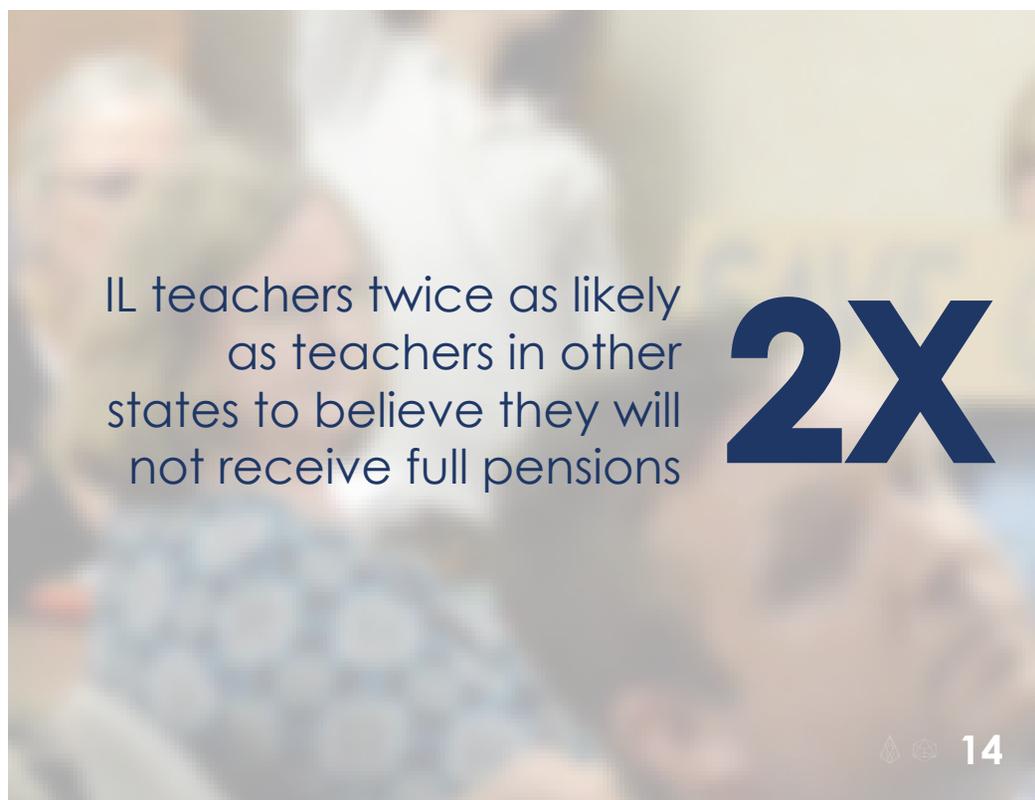
Teachers
at Events

300



Educators Participate
in Flash Polls

743



IL teachers twice as likely
as teachers in other
states to believe they will
not receive full pensions

2X