

# Early Literacy Specialist 2017-2018 Teacher Survey Results

Office of Research and Evaluation

June 2018

# Overview: The Early Literacy Specialist (ELS) Initiative

In an effort to ensure that all students are reading on grade level by age eight (Anchor Goal 2, Action Plan 3.0) and as part of the School District of Philadelphia's (SDP) early literacy initiative, all K-3 elementary schools have a full-time Early Literacy Specialist coach (ELS coach) or Literacy Lead\* as of SY 2017-2018.

ELS coaches and Literacy Leads support K-3 teachers by promoting research-based literacy teaching practices through the implementation of the 120 minute literacy block; improving teacher content knowledge, classroom environments, and classroom structure; and providing content-focused coaching and resources.

\* a fully released SDP teacher who functions in a similar coaching capacity

# Overview: The Early Literacy Specialist (ELS) Initiative (continued)

- Currently, 149 schools serving nearly 43,000 K-3 students have received coaching from an ELS coach.
- Coaching was implemented using a cohort model: in SY 2015-2016 40 schools received an ELS (cohort 1); in SY 2016-2017, 53 schools received an ELS (cohort 2); and in SY 2017-2018, the remaining 56 schools received an ELS (cohort 3). Because of this roll-out implementation approach, the number of years of support received by each school differs by cohort.
- As of SY 2017-2018, when this survey was administered, 108 schools had ELSs and the other 41 had Literacy Leads. This survey was only administered to the 108 schools with ELSs.

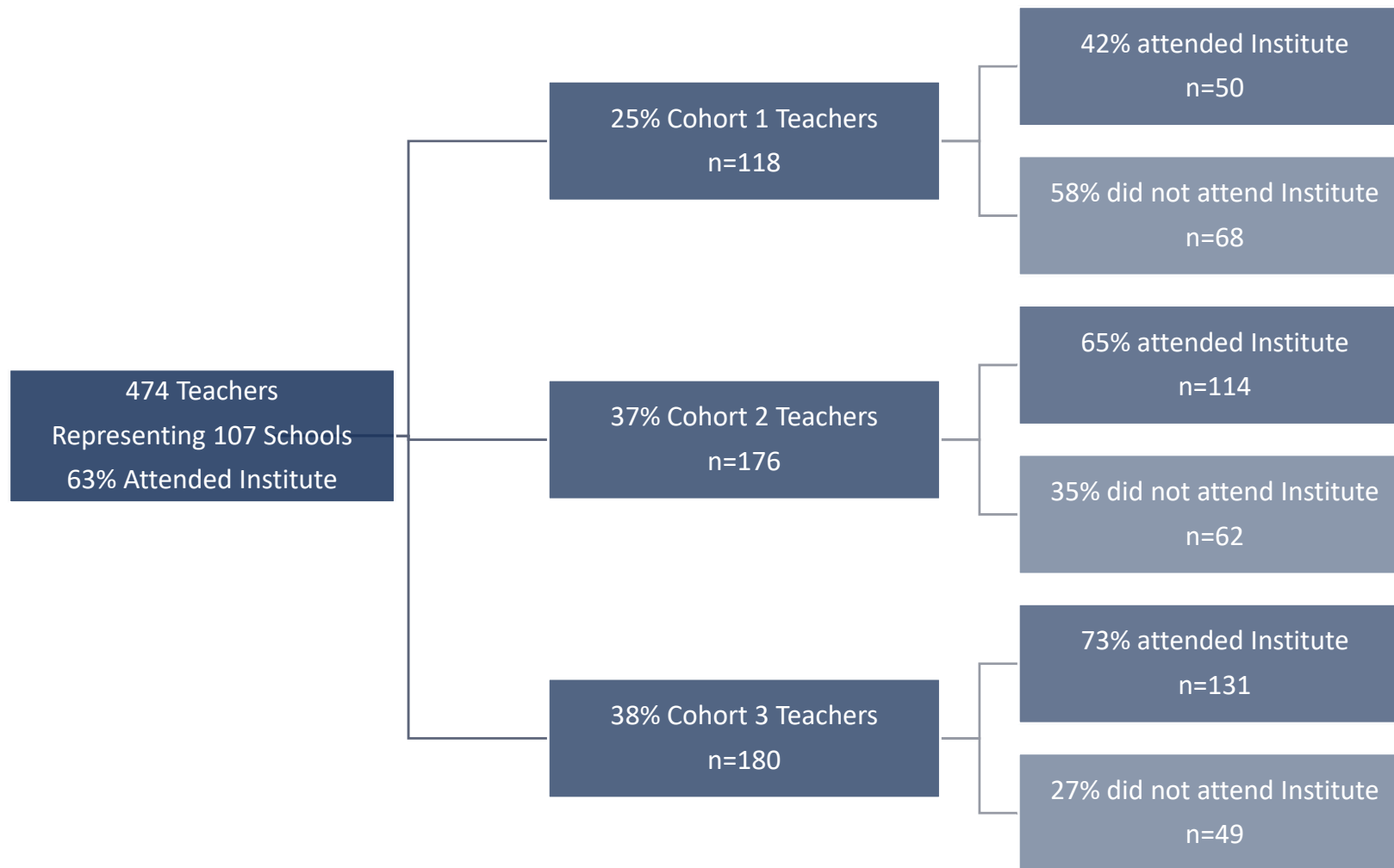
# Overview: survey purpose and responses

The ELS teacher survey is designed to collect information about the implementation of the ELS initiative and to better understand teachers' experience working with an ELS.

- The survey was administered between January 1, 2018 and January 31, 2018.
- It was sent to all K-3 teachers at the 108 ELS Cohort 1, 2, and 3 schools, for a total of 1,141 teachers (who received ELS support but NOT Literacy Lead support).
- In total, 474 surveys were completed for a response rate of 41.5%.
- The responses represent 98% of the 108 schools receiving ELS support (N=107).
- N counts vary by question because not all teachers responded to all questions.

# About the Sample

# Survey Sample: N=474



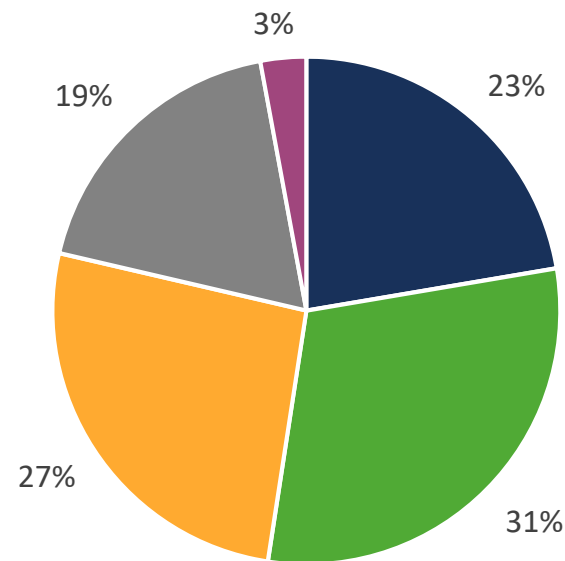
- Teachers from Cohort 1 schools represented the smallest proportion of teachers, with only one-quarter of responses coming from teachers in Cohort 1 schools
- 26% of teachers reported being unsure when they began receiving ELS support.
- More than half (58%) of teachers in Cohort 1 schools said they had NOT attended Institute
- The majority of teachers in Cohort 2 and 3 schools reported attending Institute

\* Teachers were matched to Cohorts using de-identified teacher ID; the Cohort is representative of the school in which they currently teach, not the school in which they taught when the ELS program began.

# Teacher Characteristics

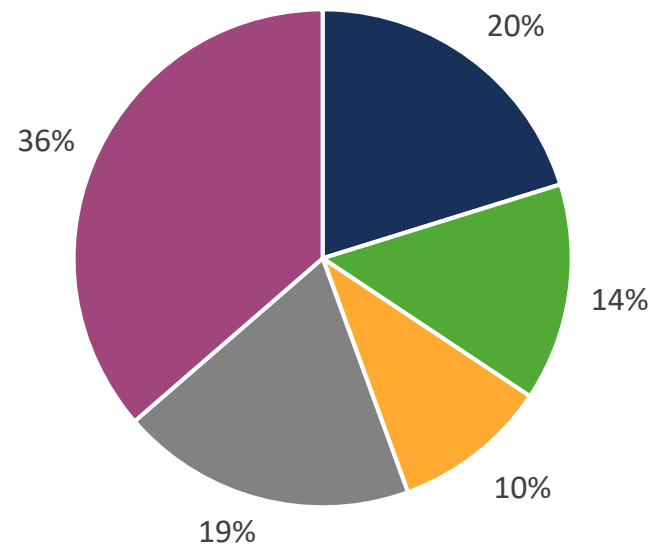
Grade Level (N=332)

■ Kindergarten ■ 1st ■ 2nd ■ 3rd ■ Other



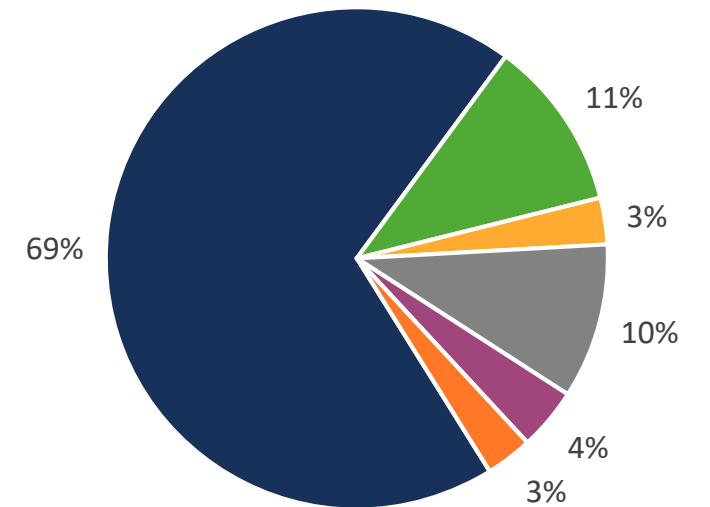
Teaching Experience (N=396)

■ 1-3 Years ■ 4-6 Years ■ 7-9 Years  
■ 10-14 Years ■ 15+ Years



Teaching Placement Compared to SY 16-17 (N=461)

■ Same school, same grade ■ Same school, different grade within K-3  
■ Same school, new to K-3 ■ Different school  
■ First year teacher ■ Other



- There was a relatively even number of responses across grades, with the fewest teachers reporting teaching 3<sup>rd</sup> grade (18%) and the most reporting teaching 1<sup>st</sup> grade (31%)
- Teachers who designated “other” as their grade level (N=10) reported teaching learning support, dual language, or a span of grades.
- Just over half (55%) were veteran teachers with 10 or more years of classroom experience and one-fifth (20%) were new teachers (1-3 years).
- 80% of teachers reported teaching in the K-3 grade range at the same school during the prior school year.

# Differences in K-3 Experience<sup>1</sup> by Cohort

Years Experience	1-3 years	4-6 years	7-9 years	10+ years	Avg Years*
<b>Cohort 1 (n=67)</b>	40%	28%	21%	10%	5.1
<b>Cohort 2 (n=98)</b>	32%	13%	15%	40%	7.0
<b>Cohort 3 (n=86)</b>	26%	28%	12%	35%	6.8

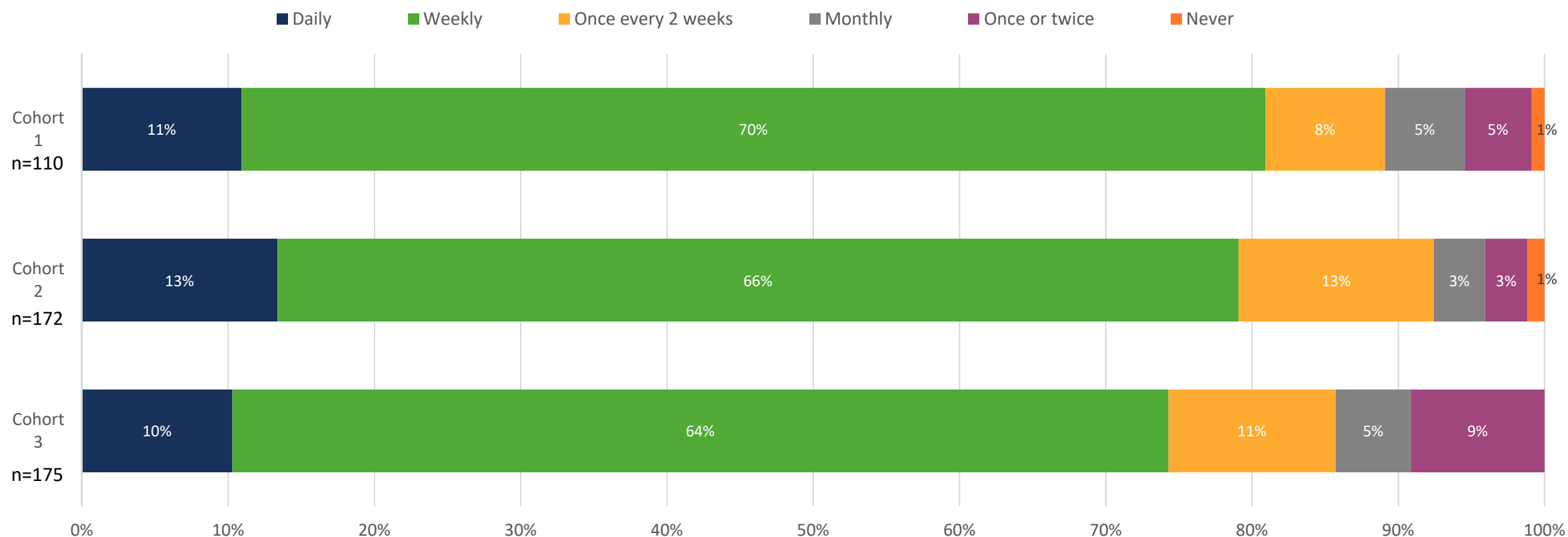
- There was a statistically significant difference between the average number of years teachers in each Cohort have been teaching in the K-3 grade band. Cohort 1 teachers reported having significantly less experience in this grade band than teachers in Cohorts 2 or 3.
- 40% of Cohort 1 teachers reported 1-3 years of experience teaching K-3 and only 10% of Cohort 1 teachers reported 10 or more years experience teaching K-3.
- However, this survey asked specifically about K-3 experience at SDP and would not reflect experience teaching other grades or in other Districts.

\* Statistically significant according One-Way ANOVA,  $p=.009$

<sup>1</sup> Teachers' self-reported experience, n=251



# How often did you work with an ELS this year?



- Although there were differences in the reported amount of time spent working with an ELS by cohort, these differences were not statistically significant.
- Overall, 78% of teachers reported working with an ELS at least weekly during SY 17-18.

# Survey Results: Overview

# Survey Domains

Frequency of Coaching Activities

Perception of the Efficacy of ELS Coaching

Perception of ELS Knowledge

Perception of Teacher Confidence

Perception of Teacher Success as a Result of ELS  
Support

# Survey Results: Frequency of Coaching Activities

# Frequency of Coaching: Overview

**Question:** How often does your Early Literacy Specialist do the following?

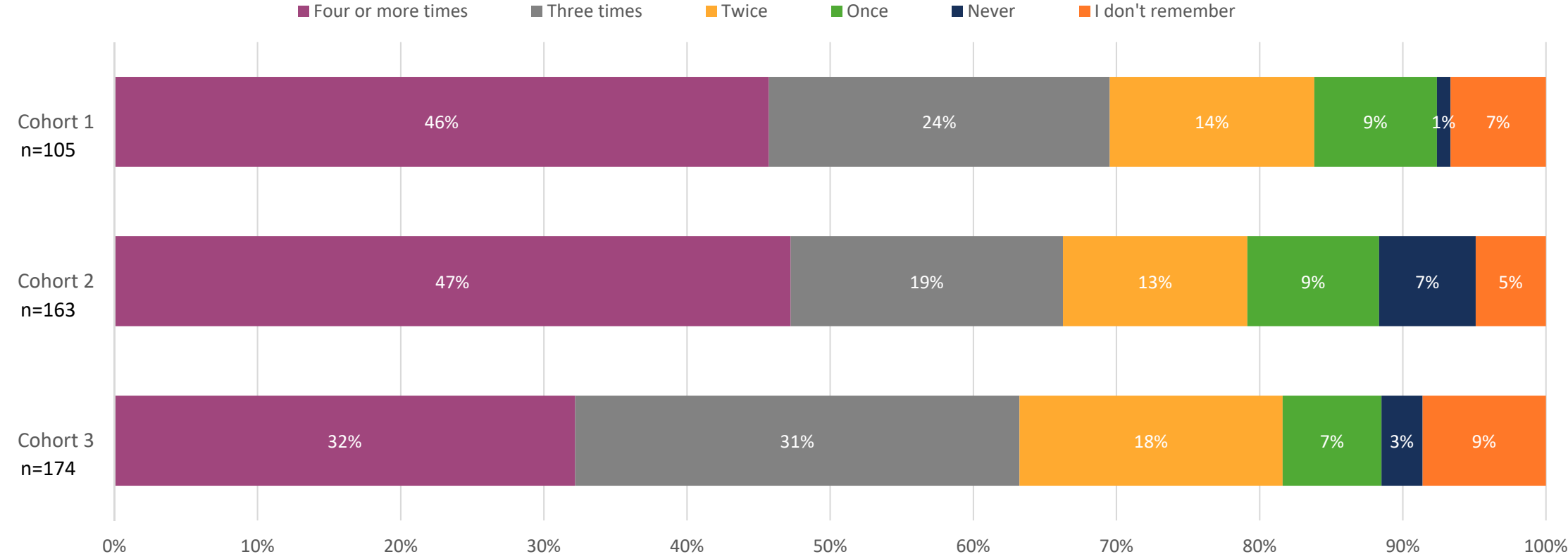
**Number of Items:** 11

## **Purpose:**

- Evaluation- To gain a better understanding of which coaching activities are being implemented and how often.
- Continuous Improvement- To improve the coaching provided to teachers by identifying activities that are not happening as frequently as they should be.

**Additional Question:** How often have you attended an ELS-led professional development at your school?

# Frequency of ELS Coaching Activities: ELS-Led Professional Development



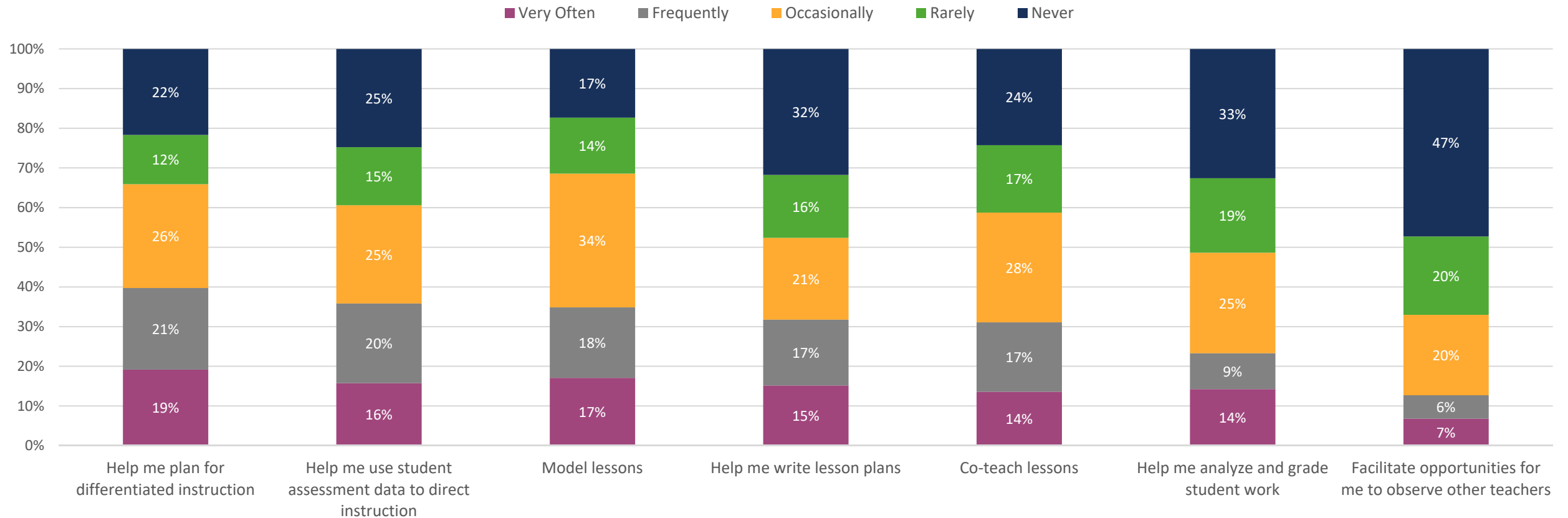
- Although there were differences in the reported amount of time spent working with an ELS by cohort, these differences were not statistically significant.
- In total, 41% of teachers reported having attended an ELS-led professional development (PD) session four or more times during SY 17-18.

# Frequency of ELS Coaching Activities: Most Frequent Activities (n=444)



- 70% of teachers reported that the most frequent coaching activities that occur is identifying resources and materials to support their learning or their students' learning.
- Teachers also reported receiving frequent support (either very often or frequently) from their ELS in creating a literacy-rich classroom environment and receiving feedback from classroom observations.

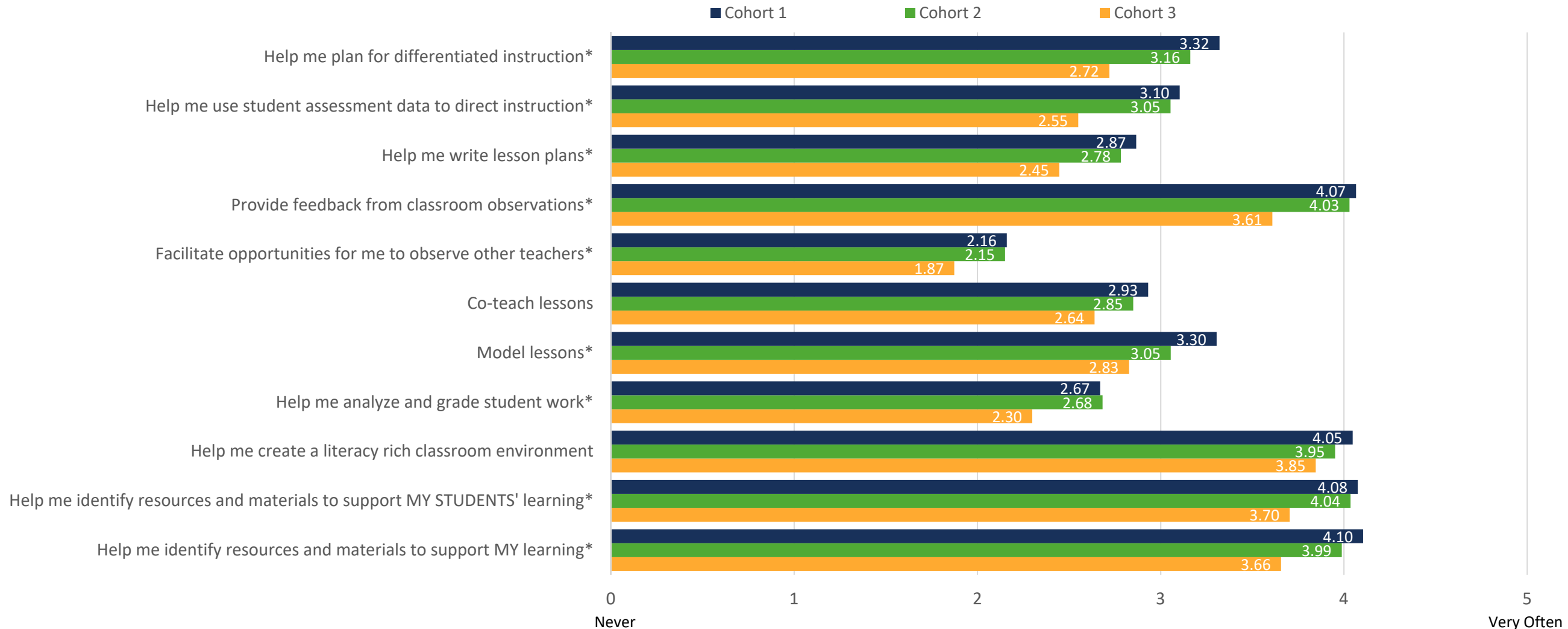
# Frequency of ELS Coaching Activities: Least Frequent Activities (n=444)



- Nearly a quarter of teachers reported that their ELSs never helped them plan for differentiated instruction, helped them use student assessment data to direct instruction, or co-taught lessons. Nearly half of teachers said their ELS never facilitated opportunities to observe other teachers.
- Teachers also reported that ELSs less often (occasionally, rarely, or never) modeled lessons, helped them write lesson plans, or helped them analyze and grade student work.



# Frequency: Differences in Item Averages by Cohort (n=444)



- Cohort 3 teachers reported receiving support from their ELS less frequently than Cohort 1 and Cohort 2 teachers; this difference was statistically significant for many coaching activities.

# Survey Results: ELS Effectiveness

# Effectiveness: Overview

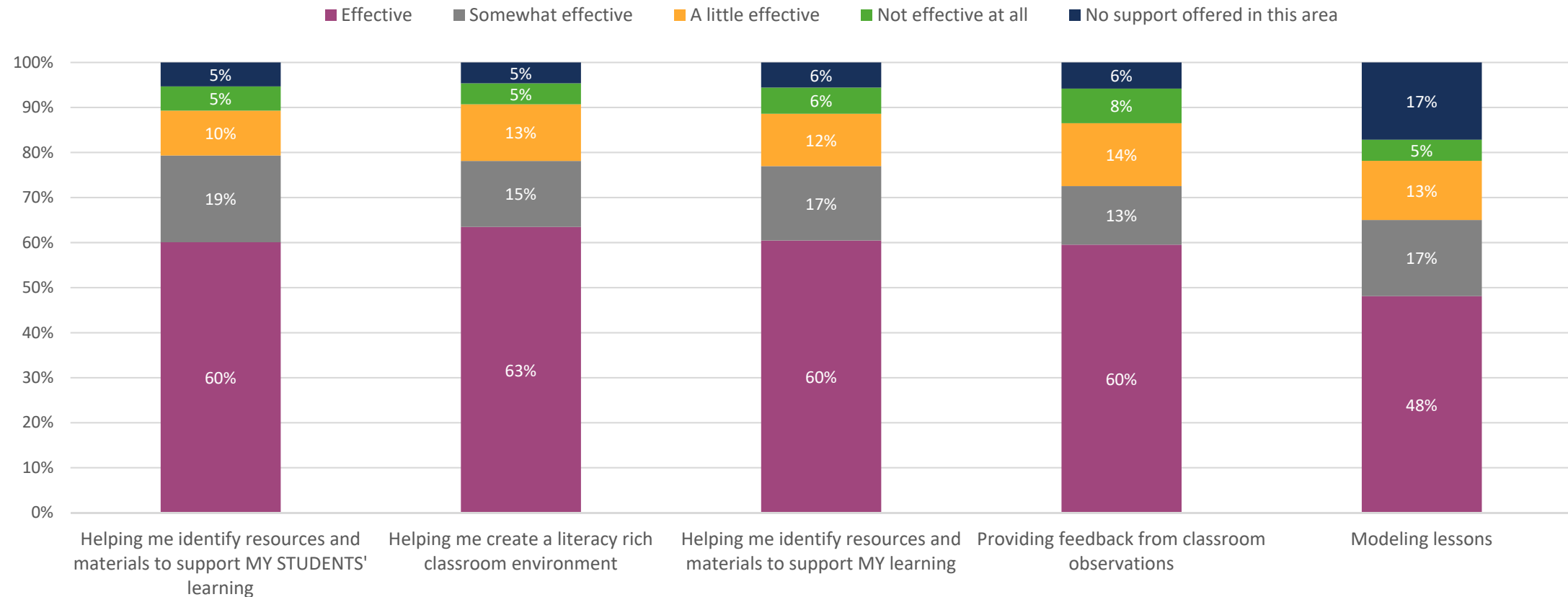
**Primary Question:** How effective is your Early Literacy Specialist in the following areas?

**Total Number of Items:** 10

## **Purpose:**

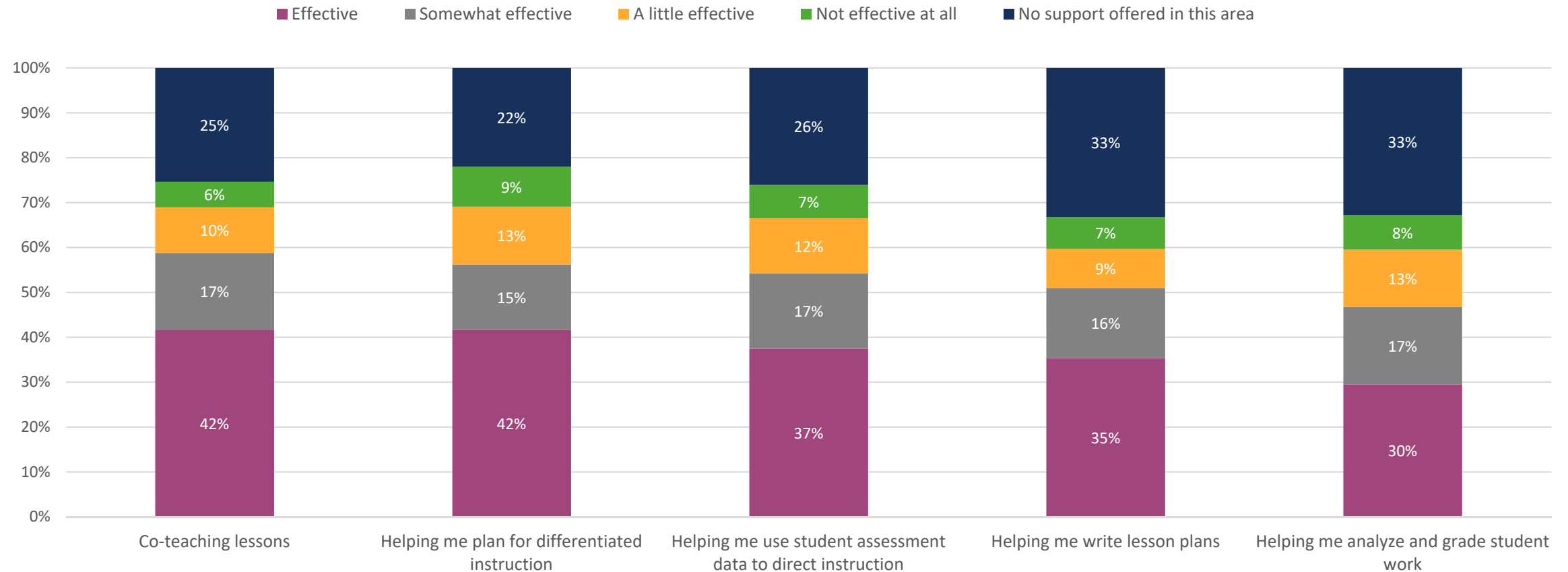
- Evaluation: To understand how teachers perceive the effectiveness of ELS coaching in regards to various activities.
- Continuous Improvement: To improve the coaching provided to teachers by identifying coaching activities that teachers are not rating as effective.

# Efficacy of ELS Coaching Activities: Most Effective Activities (n=432)



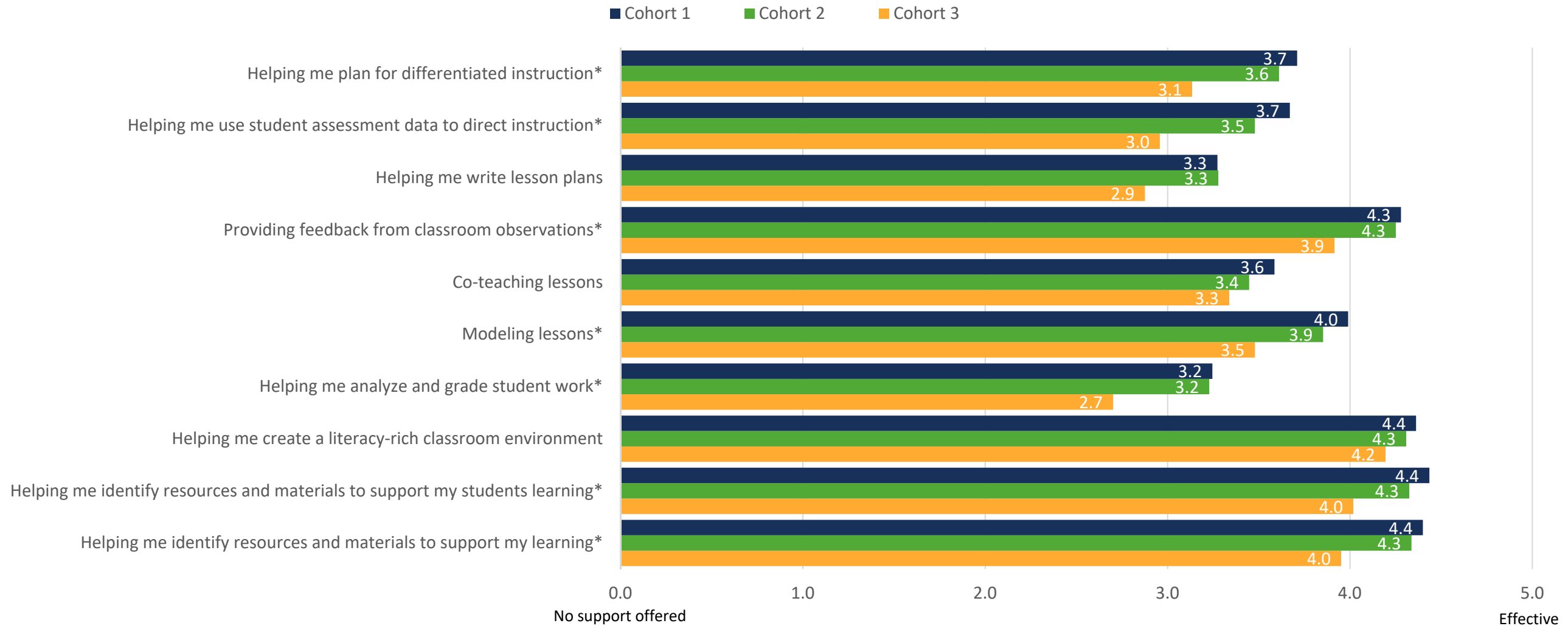
- Four of the five most frequent coaching activities were the same four areas in which teachers rated their ELS coaches as most effective.
- However, while teachers rated modeling lessons as one of the five most effective supports, 17% teachers reported that they did not receive support in this area. Of the teachers who did receive support in this area, 78% reported it to be either somewhat effective or effective.

# Efficacy of ELS Coaching Activities: Least Effective Activities (n=432)



- Between 59% and 47% of teachers reported that these coaching activities were either somewhat effective or effective.
- These supports may have been rated as less effective because fewer teachers reported receiving these types of support from their ELS.

# ELS Efficacy: Differences in Item Averages by Cohort (N=432)



- Similar to frequency of coaching activities, Cohort 3 teachers reported that their ELS was less effective at many coaching activities than Cohort 1 and Cohort 2 teachers; this difference was statistically significant for many coaching activities.

## Survey Results: ELS Knowledge

# ELS Knowledge: Overview

**Primary Question:** How knowledgeable is your Early Literacy Specialist about instructional practices in the following areas?

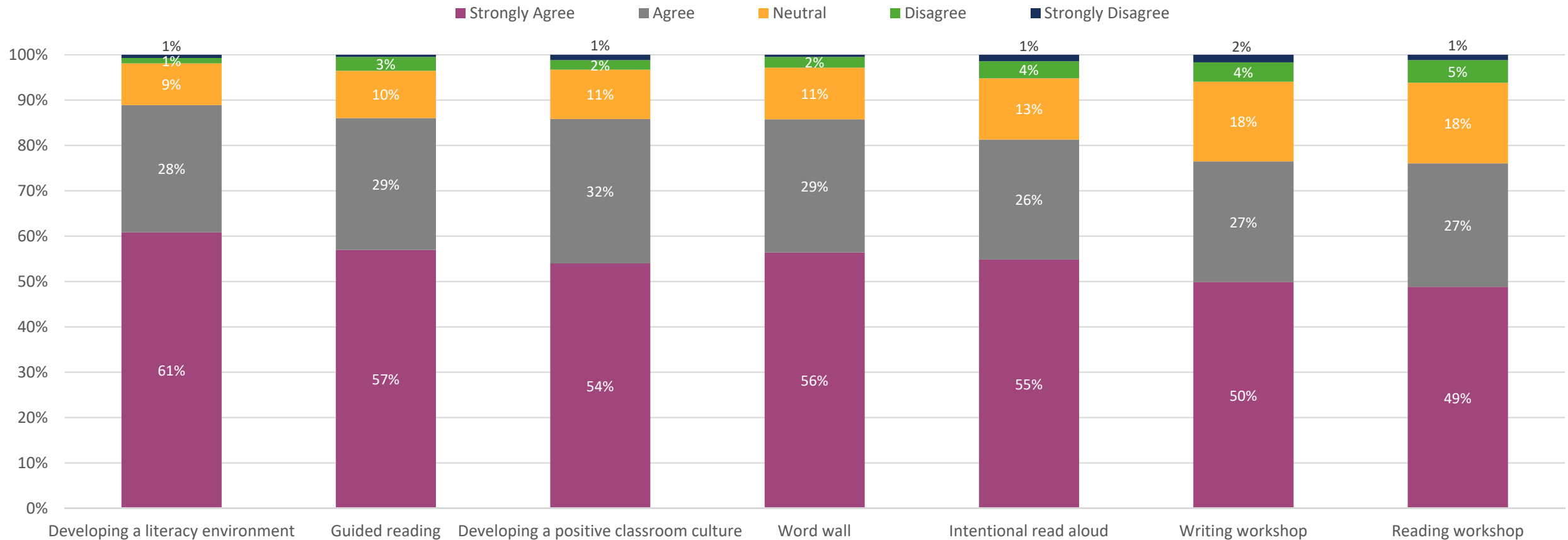
**Total Number of Items:** 14

## **Purpose:**

- Evaluation: To understand how teachers perceive the knowledge of ELS coaching in regards to various instructional practices.
- Continuous Improvement: to improve the coaching provided to teachers by identifying instructional practices in which teachers do not perceive ELSs to be knowledgeable

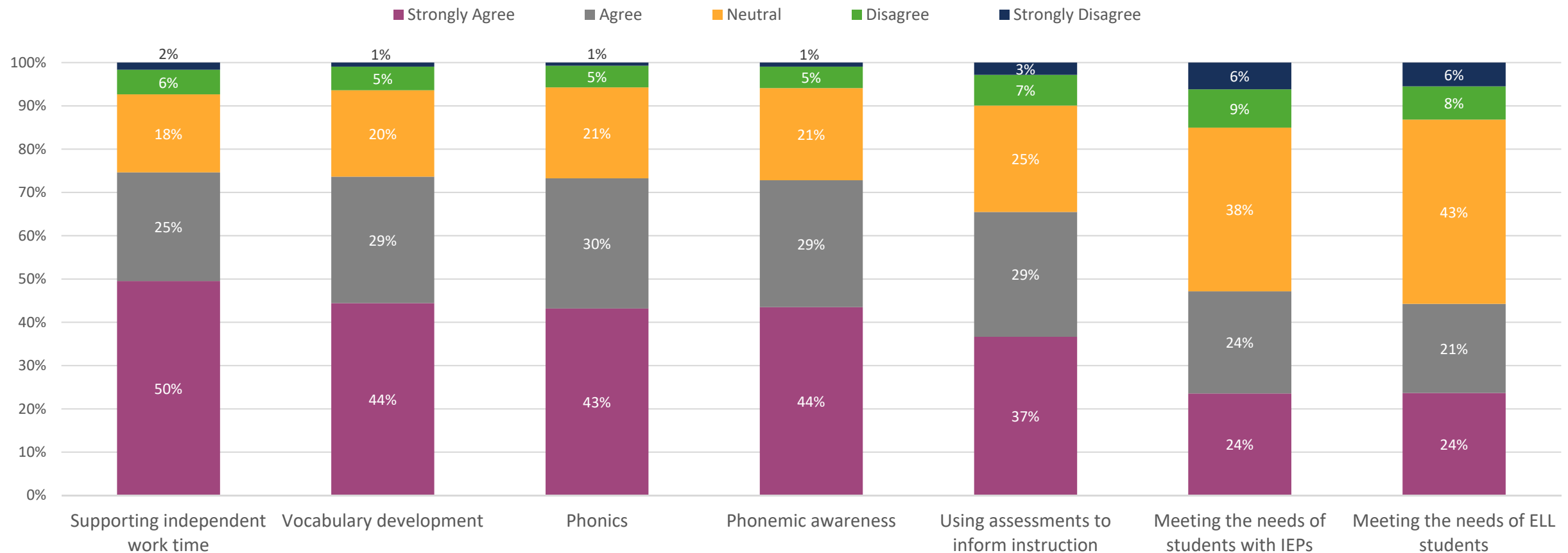


# ELS Knowledge: Highest Rated Items (N=424)



- Over three-quarters of teachers strongly agreed or agreed that their ELS coach was knowledgeable in the instructional practices shown above.
- Teachers rated ELSs as particularly knowledgeable in developing a literacy environment, with 89% of teachers agreeing or strongly agreeing that their coach was knowledgeable in this area.

# ELS Knowledge: Lowest Rated Items (N=424)



- Between 75% and 45% of teachers agreed or strongly agreed that ELS coaches were knowledgeable in the instructional practices above.
- Fewer than half of teachers agreed or strongly agreed that ELS coaches were knowledgeable about meeting the needs of ELL students (44%) and meeting the needs of IEP students (47%).

# Survey Results: Teacher Confidence

# Teacher Confidence: Overview

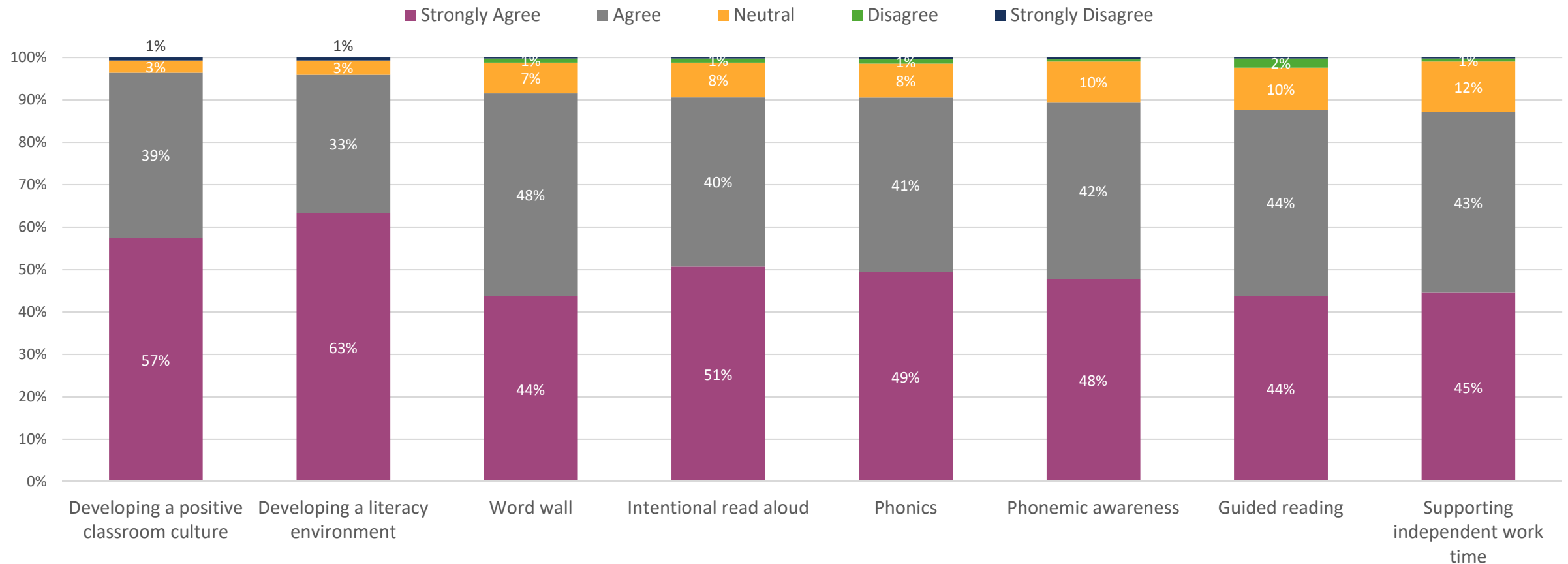
**Primary Question:** How confident are you in your ability to implement the following instructional practices in your classroom?

**Total Number of Items:** 14

## **Purpose:**

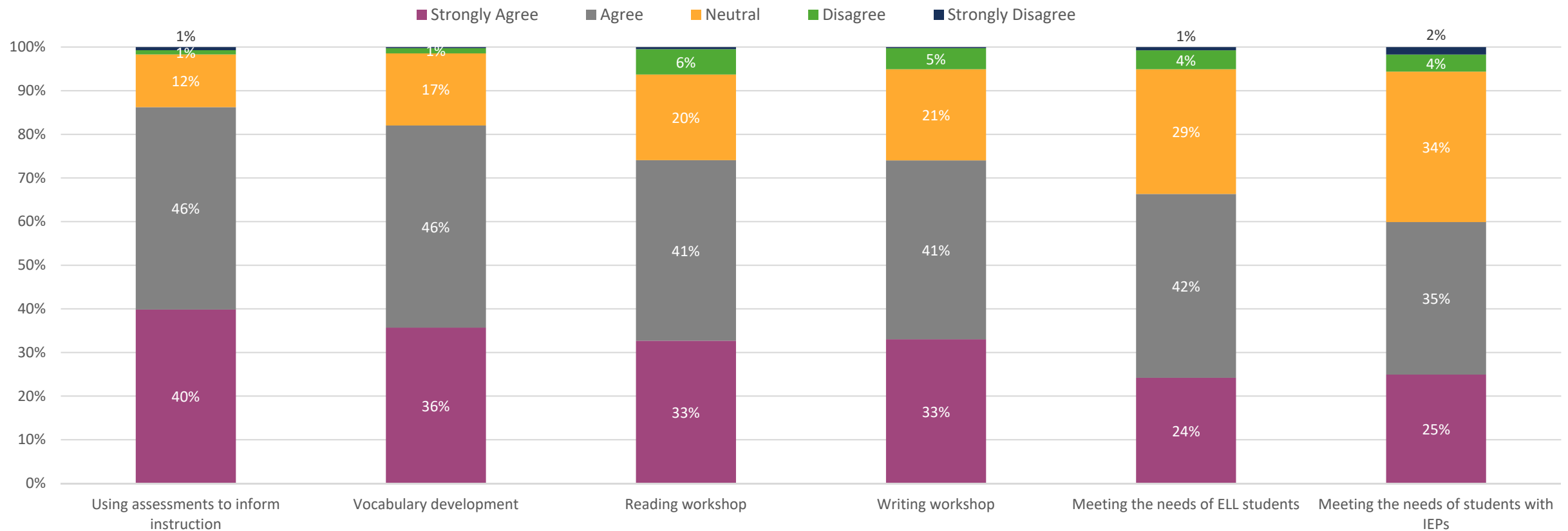
- **Evaluation:** To understand how teachers perceive their level of confidence in regards to various instructional practices.
- **Continuous Improvement:** To improve the coaching provided to teachers by identifying instructional practices in which teachers do not yet feel confident.

# Teacher Confidence: Highest Rated Items (N=414)



- Between 96% and 88% of teachers agreed or strongly agreed that they felt confident implementing the instructional practices shown above.
- Teachers reported the highest level of confidence in their ability to develop a positive classroom culture.

# Teacher Confidence: Lowest Rated Items (N=414)



- Fewer teachers agreed or strongly agreed that they felt confident implementing the instructional practices shown above.
- Teachers reported the least confidence in their abilities to meet the needs of EL students and students with IEPs.
- However, despite being relatively low-rated items, the majority (between 60% and 86%) of teachers still reported feeling confident in implementing these instructional practices.

# Survey Results: Teacher Success as a Result of ELS Support

# Teacher Success as a Result of ELS Support: Overview

**Primary Question:** How successful do you feel across the following content areas as a result of your work with an Early Literacy Specialist?

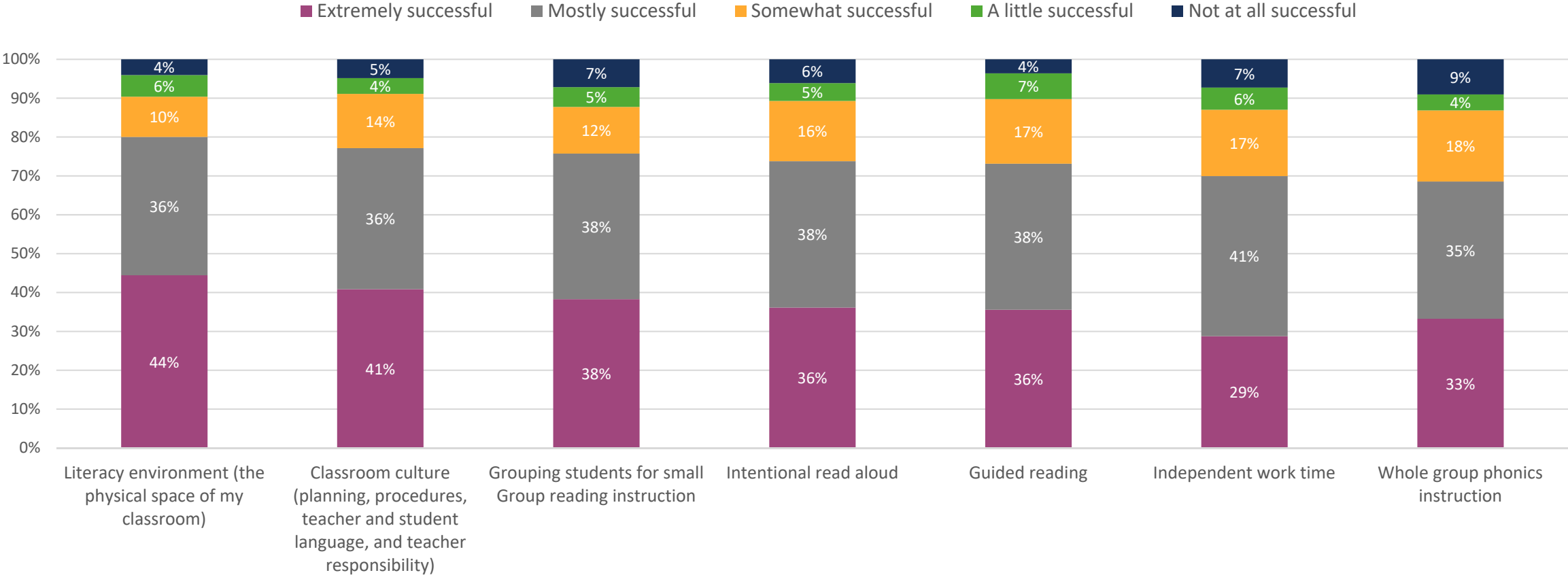
**Total Number of Items:** 12

**Construct** To understand how teachers perceive impact of ELS coaching on their ability to implement best practices in early literacy.

- To identify instructional practices in which teachers do not feel that coaching has increased their success in order to improve the coaching provided to teachers.

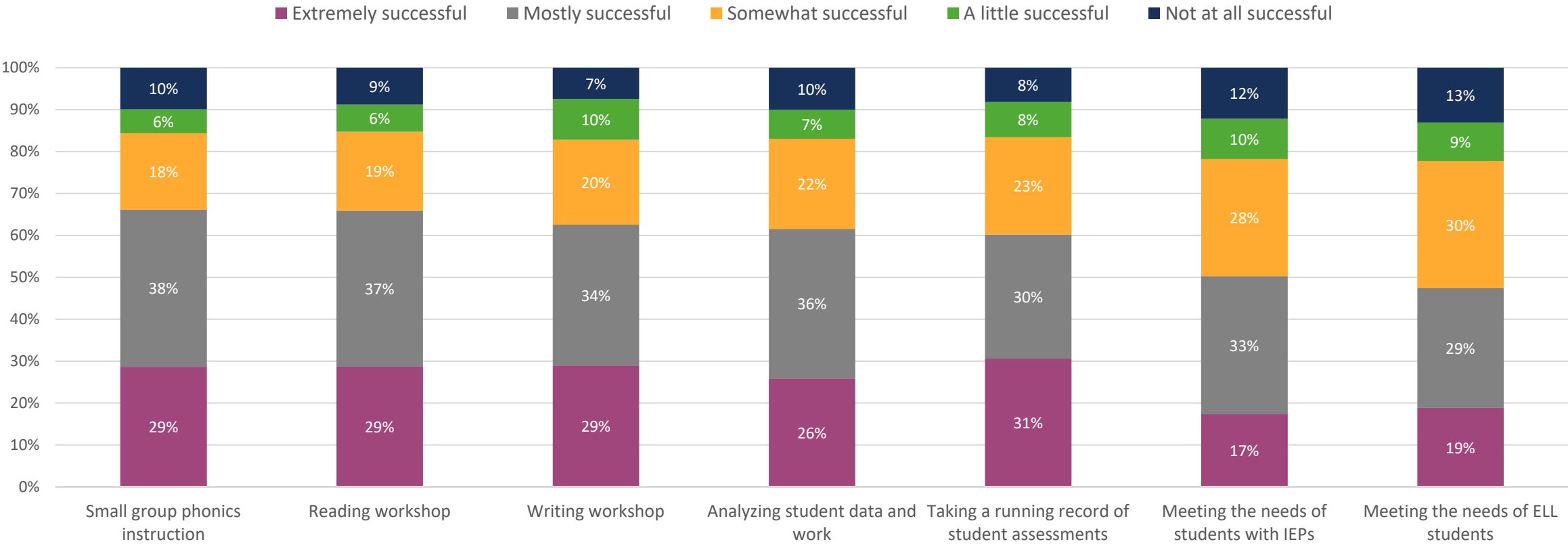


# Teacher Success as a Result of ELS Support: Highest Rated items (n=397)



- Between 68% and 80% of teachers responded that they were either mostly or extremely successful in the instructional practices shown above as a result of ELS coaching.
- Teachers reported feeling most successful in creating a literacy environment and classroom culture as a result of ELS coaching.

# Teacher Success as a Result of ELS Support: Lowest Rated Items (n=397)



- Fewer teachers reported feeling mostly successful or extremely successful in the activities shown above, particularly meeting the needs of students with IEPs or EL students, as a result of ELS coaching.
- However, between 48% and 68% of teachers still reported feeling mostly or extremely successful at implementing these activities as a result of ELS coaching.

# Survey Results: Principal Support & Alignment

# Principal Support for ELS Support: Overview

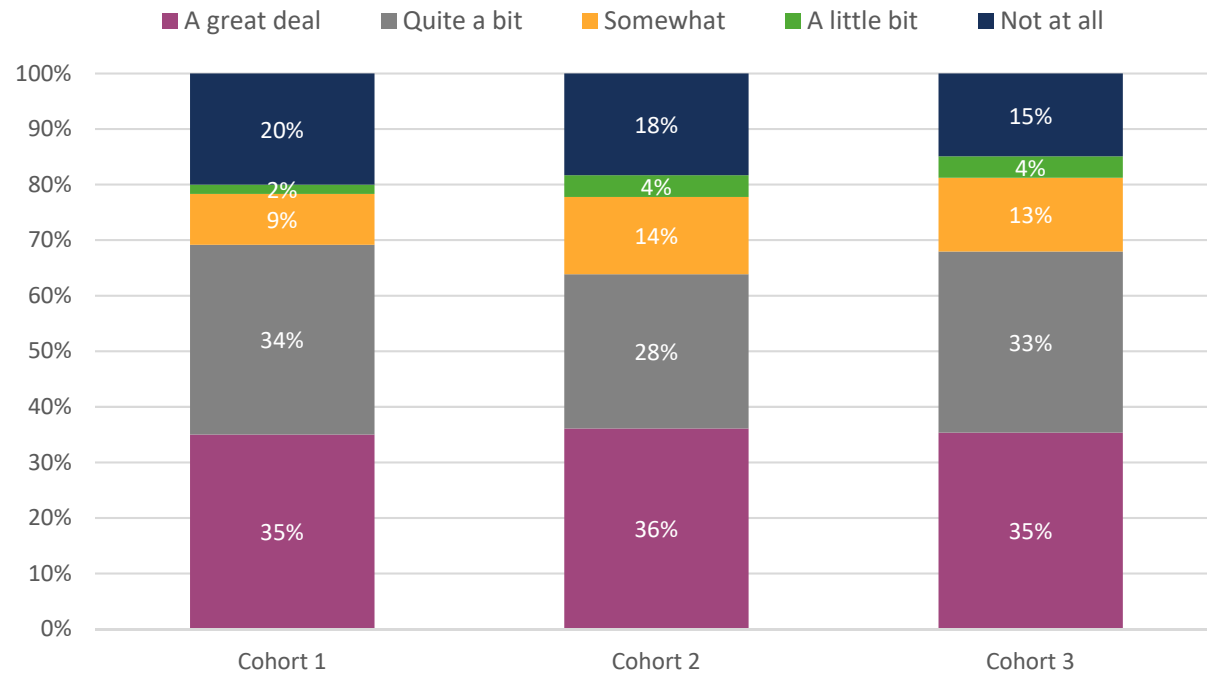
**Primary Question:** How supportive do you feel your principal is of your ELS coach and their coaching practices?

**Total Number of Items:** 2

**Purpose:**

- To understand how teachers perceive principals' support for coaching

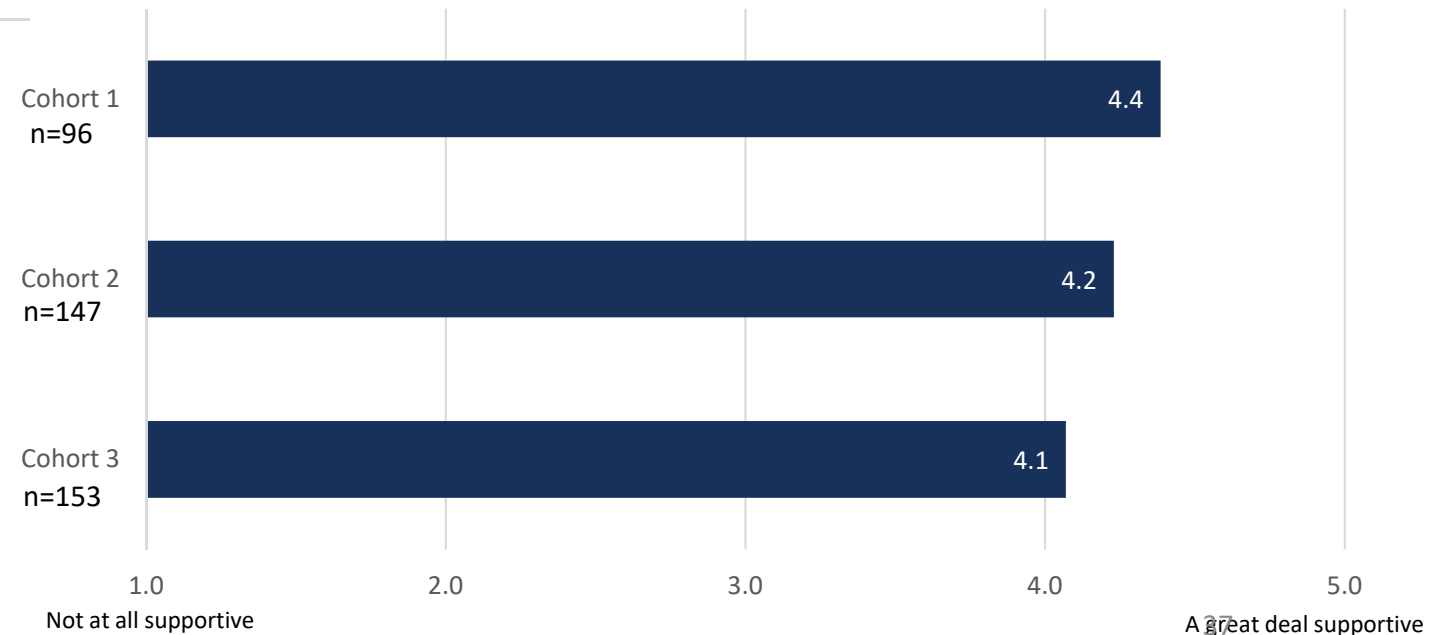
# Principal Support Ratings (n=402)



- There was a statistically significant difference\* between Cohorts 1, 2, and 3 in the average principal support construct rating. Cohort 1 had an average principal support rating of a 4.4, Cohort 2 had an average rating of 4.2, and Cohort 3 had an average rating of 4.1.

\* Kruskal-Wallace,  $p = .029$

- Over two-thirds of teachers in each cohort reported that principals were either quite a bit or a great deal supportive of their ELS coaches and of teachers implementing coaching practices. However, between 15% and 18% of teachers reported that their principals were not at all supportive of these things.



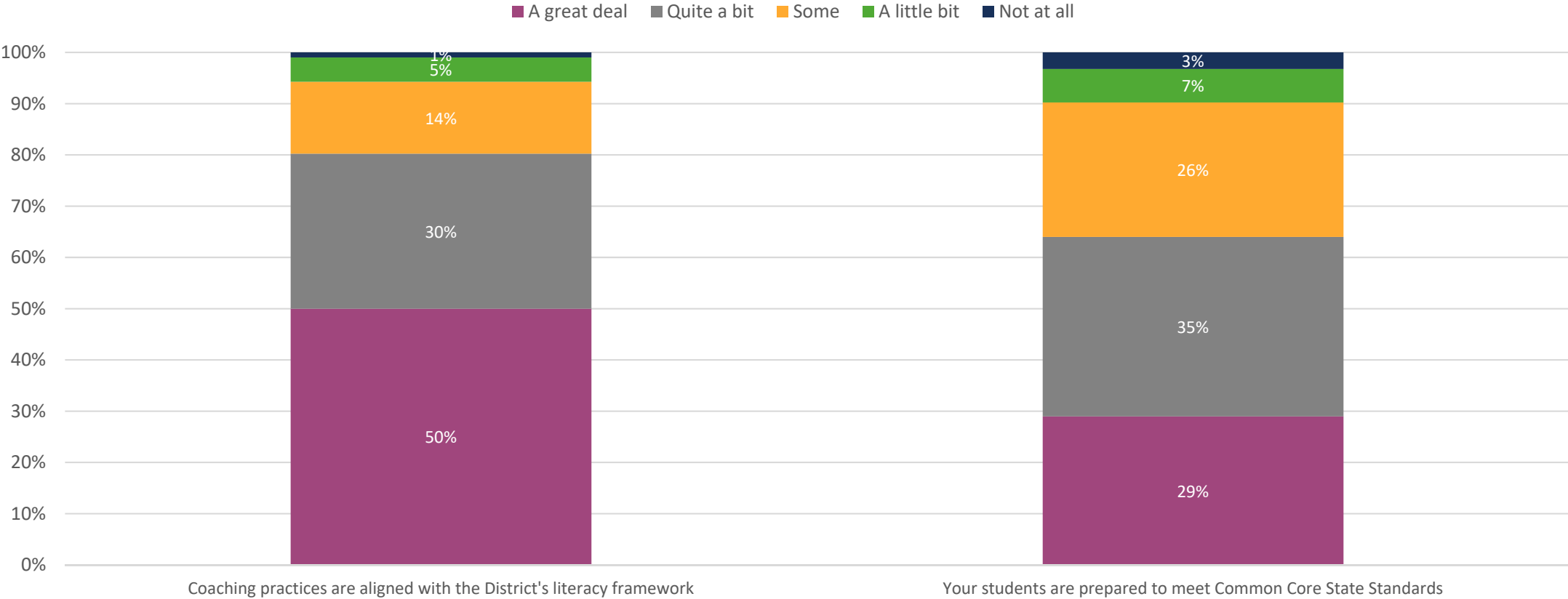
# Additional Findings: Principal Support

Principal Support Rating	N	*Average Frequency of Coaching Construct Rating	*Average ELS Effectiveness Construct Rating	* Average ELS Knowledge Construct Rating	*Average Teacher Confidence Construct Rating	*Average Teacher Success as Result of Coaching Construct Rating
Not at all, a little bit, or some	66	2.88	3.27	3.74	4.11	3.36
Quite a bit or a great deal	330	3.27	3.85	4.23	4.27	3.86

When teachers were grouped by principal support rating - those who found their principal very supportive and those who did not - there were statistically significant differences between their average rating on each construct. **Those who reported that their principal was “quite a bit” or “a great deal” supportive had higher average ratings across all constructs.**

\* $p < .05$  according to independent sample t-test

# Additional Findings: Alignment (n=402)



- 80% of teachers reported that coaching practices were either quite a bit or a great deal aligned with the District’s literacy framework.
- 64% of teachers felt their students were either quite a bit or a great deal prepared to meet Common Core State Standards.

# Additional Findings: Alignment

Alignment Rating	N	*Average Frequency of Coaching Construct Rating	*Average ELS Effectiveness Construct Rating	* Average ELS Knowledge Construct Rating	*Average Teacher Confidence Construct Rating	*Average Teacher Success as Result of Coaching Construct Rating
Not at all, a little bit, or some	79	2.53	2.81	3.43	4.03	3.05
Quite a bit or a great deal	321	3.36	3.98	4.31	4.29	3.94

When teachers were grouped by alignment rating - those who felt that coaching practices were very aligned with the District’s literacy framework and those who didn’t - there were statistically significant differences between their average rating on each construct. **Those who reported that coaching practices were “quite a bit” or “a great deal” aligned with the District framework had higher average ratings across all constructs.**

\* $p < .01$  according to independent sample t-test



# Summary and Recommendations

# Summary & Recommendations

- Cohort 3 teachers reported receiving coaching less frequently than Cohort 1 and 2 teachers; Cohort 3 teachers also rated their ELS coaches as less effective on many of the coaching activities. These differences were statistically significant for many coaching activities. However, there was no statistical difference between Cohorts on how teachers rated their success as a result of ELS support.
- Teachers from all Cohorts reported similar patterns in terms of the most- and least-frequent and most- and least-effective coaching activities. Teachers reported receiving coaching most frequently in: (1) identifying resources and materials to support teachers' learning; (2) identifying resources and materials to support their students' learning; (3) developing a literacy-rich classroom environment; and (4) providing feedback from classroom observations. Teachers from all Cohorts also reported that their coaches are most effective in these areas.
- Teachers reported that planning for differentiated instruction, using student assessment data to direct instruction, and co-teaching lessons were less frequent coaching activities. Program administrators may want to consider how to make these activities more of a coaching priority.
- Teachers also reported that ELSs less often (occasionally, rarely, or never) model lessons, help them write lesson plans, or help them analyze and grade student work.

# Summary & Recommendations continued

- Fewer than half of teachers agreed or strongly agreed that ELS coaches were knowledgeable about meeting the needs of ELL students (44%) and meeting the needs of IEP students (47%).
- When examined at the construct level, Cohort 3 teachers rated their principals as significantly less supportive than Cohort 1 and Cohort 2 teachers; however, Cohort 3 teachers will also least likely to report that their principal was “not at all supportive” of their ELS. Additionally, the majority of teachers from all Cohorts rated their principals as either quite or a great deal supportive of ELS practices and their ELS coaches.
- Teachers who rated their principals as more supportive and who reported high alignment between CLI practices and the District literacy framework had statistically significantly higher ratings across all other constructs.