

Amplify Core Knowledge Language Arts (CKLA): Year 1 Implementation Evaluation

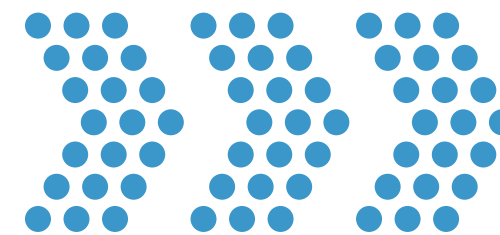
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Shared Accountability
Applied Research and Evaluation





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Evaluation Scope

The 2024–2025 school year marked the first districtwide implementation of Amplify’s Core Knowledge Language Arts (CKLA) curriculum, adopted by Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) for Pre-kindergarten through Grade 5. For Pre-kindergarten through Grade 2, the curriculum is comprised of two 60-minute lessons (a Knowledge Strand lesson and a Skills Strand lesson), while for Grades 3–5, it is comprised of a single lesson (120-minutes for Grade 3 and 90-minutes for Grades 4 and 5). The purpose of this evaluation was to assess the extent to which the curriculum was implemented as intended and to identify areas for strengthening curriculum implementation and professional learning.

Methods

This evaluation used a mixed-methods approach to assess the extent of implementation and stakeholder experiences. Quantitative and qualitative data were collected through classroom observations (40 Kindergarten and 40 Grade 3 classes across 40 schools conducted March 4–April 4, 2025), a review of English Language Arts (ELA) schedules from the same schools, and online staff surveys. Survey participants included Kindergarten through Grade 5 general education and special education classroom teachers (N=1,090; 39% response rate) and school reading specialists (N=91; 70% response rate), with responses collected April 23–May 12, 2025. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze observation data, schedules, and closed-ended survey items, while content analysis was applied to open-ended survey responses to capture deeper insights.

Findings

Instructional Time and Pacing. A review of 40 Kindergarten and 40 Grade 3 schedules showed that most schools (73%–75%) allotted the full 120-minutes for ELA instruction as expected for CKLA implementation. Conversely, about one fourth (25%) of both grade levels had less than 120 minutes scheduled. Some school schedules accounted for transition time. Among the observed classrooms, actual instructional time was often shorter due to late starts, interruptions, transitions, and other subjects. This resulted in 53% of observed Kindergarten and 40% of observed Grade 3 classes delivering the full 120 minutes of instruction. Pacing within a lesson was also inconsistent; for example, 40% of Kindergarten Read-Aloud components exceeded the prescribed time, while Application components fell short. Survey data confirmed pacing difficulty: only 55% of general education teachers reported they could complete all lessons within the pacing window and only 37% could complete all lesson components in a day. This challenge was greater for Grade 3–5 teachers compared to Kindergarten through Grade 2 teachers. Staff consistently reported that the curriculum was unmanageable due to its volume and fast pace.

Usage of CKLA Materials. In general, CKLA materials were widely used across the observed classrooms. Classes consistently featured *Tricky Word Walls* (encouraged for Kindergarten), student use of materials, and teacher use of CKLA-provided slides. In contrast, CKLA-encouraged *Knowledge Boards* and *Vocabulary Walls* appeared in fewer than one half of Kindergarten classes and just over one half of Grade 3 classrooms. In the survey, most general education teachers reported using mostly or all CKLA materials; however, teachers reported modifying materials regularly or occasionally to better engage students, support diverse learners, or embed key content. Notably, staff reported they were short on teacher guides, student workbooks, and the supplies needed to implement lessons.



Findings

Adherence to Curriculum Lessons. Classroom observations showed moderately strong implementation of major lesson components and key lesson elements in both Kindergarten and Grade 3. However, some lesson elements and observer ratings reflected that full adherence to the lesson guides was lower (57%–75%), suggesting opportunities to strengthen implementation in certain areas. Lower adherence may also reflect challenges teachers faced in pacing and fitting lessons within the allotted instructional time.

Additionally, with CKLA, the expectation for Teacher-led Small Groups shifted from rotating all students to pulling only those needing additional lesson support. Observations and survey findings reflected this shift. Notably, some teachers remarked that there was no time during the ELA block for small groups or that they had been directed (source unspecified) not to incorporate them at all during ELA instructional time.

Collaborative Planning. Shared planning structures were provided to school-level teams to support unit preparation and student work analysis. While most teachers reported rich discussions and being able to prepare for instruction during collaborative planning meetings, their reported ability ratings (extremely or very well) were lower for specific collaborative activities such as *Spotlight Lessons*, data review, and student work analysis (58%–67%). Fewer than half of teachers found the planning structures very or extremely useful, though reading specialists viewed several more favorably. Additionally, reading specialists rated some tools as highly useful, but reported they were used infrequently.

Professional Learning and Support. Nearly all general education teachers and reading specialists, and most of the special education teachers who responded to the survey, attended the 2024 district-wide summer CKLA training. Survey findings on professional learning and support showed mixed results, with special education teachers consistently reporting lower levels of support. Ongoing support from school staff (78%) and administrators (77%) were rated the strongest areas by general education teachers. However, only about one half (53%)—and 25% of special education teachers who responded to the survey—felt adequately prepared to implement CKLA. While reading specialists generally reported being supported, only 66% reported they had adequate time for classroom walk-throughs and feedback, and just 55% reported consistently visiting classrooms.

Meeting Student Needs. While most general education teachers reported being able to meet the needs of students on and above grade level (81% and 72%, respectively), far fewer agreed CKLA supported students with IEPs (34%), Emergent Multilingual Learners (30%), students needing extra help (26%), and particularly those performing below grade level (20%). Special education classroom teachers who responded to the survey expressed even greater concern—only 13% agreed they were able to address needs of students with IEPs using CKLA. Additionally, in open-ended responses, teachers expressed great concern that the curriculum did not adequately meet the needs of students (below grade level, with IEPs, or receiving ELD services), primarily citing a lack of foundational skills and background knowledge needed to access the lessons.



Findings

Successes. Over half of teachers and reading specialists identified engaging topics and increased student excitement and participation as major strengths of CKLA. Many also valued the curriculum’s support for building background knowledge and vocabulary. Some staff reported additional benefits, including cross-curricular connections to science and social studies, accessible teacher guides, and student growth in reading, decoding, writing, grammar, and foundational skills lessons.

Challenges. Teachers and reading specialists frequently detailed multiple challenges and concerns implementing CKLA. The most frequently named challenges and concerns were:

- **Pacing and Volume:** Lessons were seen as overly fast-paced and content-heavy, leaving insufficient time for practice or reteaching.
- **Support for Diverse Learners:** Many believed the curriculum lacked differentiation and was inaccessible for students below grade level, with IEPs, or Emergent Multilingual Learners (EMLs). Teachers reported insufficient time to support students in small groups, and special education teachers added that the curriculum was largely inaccessible for their students and lacked guidance for necessary adaptations.
- **Foundational Skills Instruction:** Numerous concerns were raised about the Skills Strand and phonics lessons being disjointed, too fast, and lacking systematic structure. Many expressed a strong preference for returning to the previous phonics program (Really Great Reading).
- **Assessment Concerns:** CKLA assessments were widely described as lengthy, misaligned, and difficult to manage. Grading and data entry, often across multiple platforms, were seen as time-consuming and required hours of personal time. Only 29% of Kindergarten through Grade 2 and 15% of Grades 3–5 teachers agreed data entry was manageable, and the majority of teachers (67%–75%) reported there were too many required assessments.

Overall Satisfaction. Overall, only about half of general education teachers who responded to the survey (52%–53%) reported being satisfied (very or somewhat) with the Amplify CKLA curriculum, while (47%–48%) were somewhat or very dissatisfied. Special Education teachers had the highest level of dissatisfaction. This stands in stark contrast to reading specialists, of whom a large majority (87%) reported satisfaction with the curriculum.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Ongoing discussions and focused attention are needed to strengthen curriculum implementation and support the success of all teachers and students. This was the first school year of districtwide CKLA implementation, a phase often marked by growing pains and a need for refinement. While staff are working diligently to implement the curriculum as intended, and some are beginning to see its benefit, significant challenges remain in meeting the needs of a diverse student population and responding to a wide range of teacher concerns. The following recommendations aim to enhance implementation: 1. Schedule and adhere to 120 minutes of ELA instruction in Kindergarten through Grade 3; 2. Continue and strengthen targeted professional learning, support, and resources to address staff concerns; and 3. Re-evaluate assessment volume, alignment, and processes.



Program Description

Overview

The 2024–2025 school year marked the first year of districtwide implementation of the Amplify Core Knowledge Language Arts (CKLA) curriculum by Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) as the English Language Arts (ELA) and Literacy curriculum for Pre-kindergarten through Grade 5. The goal of the elementary ELA instruction is that all students receive instruction in grade-level content and skills, along with appropriate scaffolds and supports, in order to become skillful readers and communicators empowered to navigate an increasingly complex and information-rich world (MCPS, 2025). Based on the Science of Reading, CKLA sequences deep content knowledge in history, science, literature, and the arts with research-based foundational skills and literacy instruction (MCPS 2025a, Amplify 2025).

In Pre-kindergarten through Grade 2, teachers were expected to implement a one-hour Skills Strand lesson focused on foundational reading skills (e.g., phonological awareness and phonics), along with a one-hour Knowledge Strand lesson designed to build background knowledge on a topic. In Grades 3–5, the expectation was for teachers to deliver a full lesson (120-minutes for Grade 3 and 90-minutes for Grades 4 and 5) as students begin to master reading by building on foundational skills and background knowledge.

Pre-Kindergarten through Grade 2

Daily instruction included a Knowledge Strand lesson and a Skills Strand lesson.

Knowledge Strand Lessons

- 60-minute lessons, within content domains, that focus on complex narrative and informational Read-Aloud texts, teaching oral language development, oral analysis of complex text, knowledge and vocabulary acquisition, as well as shared and written responses to Read-Alouds.
- Lesson components include a Read Aloud; Word Work (depending on the lesson); and Application.

Skills Strand Lessons

- 60-minute lessons, within units, that focus on the fundamentals of print and phonological awareness, phonics and word recognition, fluent reading with comprehension, writing mechanics, structure, and processes.
- Lesson components include Foundational Skills, Reading, and Language (depending on the lesson).

Grades 3–5

- 120-minute (Grade 3) and 90-minute (Grades 4–5) lessons, within content-focused units, where although there are still Read-Alouds, the focus is increasingly on student reading of complex text, and an increasing reliance on independent, partner, and small group work for students.
- Lesson components vary by lesson and may include: Speaking and Learning, Reading, Language, and Writing.

Shared Accountability - November 2025

Materials*



- **Teacher materials:** Teacher Guide, Flip Books, image cards, selected posters and word cards, access to online materials, instructional slides, and authentic text collection.
- **Student materials:** Individual activity books, readers, and writer's journals.

*Materials vary by grade



- **Language Studio** is a CKLA extension program which provides targeted instruction to address the specific needs of English Learners (ELs).
- **Boost Reading** is a student-led CKLA supplemental digital reading curriculum that extends core instruction, addresses remediation needs, and has constantly adapting activities. It is intended to give teachers additional time to support other students and reinforce instruction across all instructional tiers.



- **Shared Planning Protocols** were developed by the Office of Teaching and Learning to be used individually and collaboratively with grade-level teams. Planning protocols were developed for each grade-level and planning structure (e.g. Unit Preparation, Lesson Internalization).



Evaluation Scope

Background

This process evaluation assessed the first-year implementation of the Amplify CKLA Curriculum to examine the extent to which the curriculum was implemented as intended, and to identify areas to strengthen curriculum implementation and professional learning. This evaluation supports the Board of Education’s commitment to continuous improvement. Additionally, the findings can be used to support structures and strategies in place related to student achievement as indicated in the Academic Excellence pillar of the strategic plan.

During 2024–2025, implementation of the CKLA curriculum was in Phase I: Initial Implementation, with the goal of moving from a mechanical use of the curriculum to routine use (MCPS, 2024). During the summer prior to the start of the school year, elementary staff received professional learning on CKLA. Training emphasized adherence to the curriculum as written and lesson components as outlined in the teacher lesson guides. School staff also received planning tools to be used by teachers and grade-level teams. Assessing the extent of implementation helps ensure lessons are delivered with integrity, highlights strengths and areas for improvement, informs professional learning, and avoids misattribution of the curriculum’s effects or non-effects.

Purpose of Evaluation



To assess the extent to which the CKLA Curriculum was implemented as intended and to identify areas for strengthening curriculum implementation and professional learning.



Phase I expectations included the following: use of instructional materials as designed; unit and lesson preparation, as well as student work analysis, to occur during collaborative planning time/PLCs and independently; and data from embedded assessments to be regularly used to identify students’ strengths and gaps as part of the Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) framework.

Evaluation Questions

- 1 To what extent are teachers in Kindergarten and Grade 3 implementing the new CKLA curriculum based on the content of the professional development provided?
- 2 To what extent are school grade-level teams using collaborative planning time and tools to examine student data and prepare unit lessons?
- 3 What are classroom teacher and reading specialist perceptions of the professional learning and support provided by central office and school administrators during the implementation of the CKLA curriculum?
- 4 What are classroom teacher and reading specialist experiences with the implementation of the CKLA curriculum, including materials and lessons?

Methods

The evaluation of the Amplify CKLA curriculum for the 2024–2025 academic year utilized a mixed-methods approach to assess implementation and staff experiences. Quantitative and qualitative data were gathered through classroom observations, document review, and staff surveys.

Data & Measures

Data collection instruments were developed collaboratively by the program evaluation team and the elementary literacy content team.

- **Classroom Implementation Observation Tool** items were derived from essential components for fully implementing CKLA lessons and were tailored to follow the lessons using the CKLA teacher’s guide for Kindergarten and Grade 3.
- **Online Surveys included** questions about experiences and perceptions regarding planning, professional learning and support, and CKLA materials and implementation.
- **Document reviews** of ELA schedules for a sample of schools were examined to assess the amount of time given for ELA instruction in Kindergarten and Grade 3.

Sample

- **Classroom Observations**
 - A total of 80 classroom observations were completed at 40 elementary schools between March 4 and April 4, 2025. The entire CKLA daily lessons for Kindergarten and Grade 3 were observed.

Schools	Kindergarten Observations	Grade 3 Observations	Total Observations
40	40	40	80

- Schools selected for observations were chosen using a stratified random sample to capture a range of school characteristics and geographic locations. Kindergarten and Grade 3 classrooms were then randomly selected from those schools for observations.
- In Kindergarten, observed Knowledge Strand lessons were from Units 9–11, and Skills Strand lessons were from Units 7 and 8. Grade 3 lessons were from Units 7–9.

• Surveys

- All elementary reading specialists and classroom teachers, including special education classroom teachers (i.e., self-contained classrooms), implementing the CKLA curriculum, were invited to complete a survey between April 23 and May 12, 2025.
- A total of 1,090 classroom teachers responded (1,017 Kindergarten through Grade 5 and 73 special education teachers). A more detailed description of teacher respondents is in the survey findings section.

	Invited	Responded	Response Rate
Classroom Teachers	2,760	1,090	39%
General Education	2,508	1,017	41%
Special Education	252	73	29%
Reading Specialists	130	91	70%

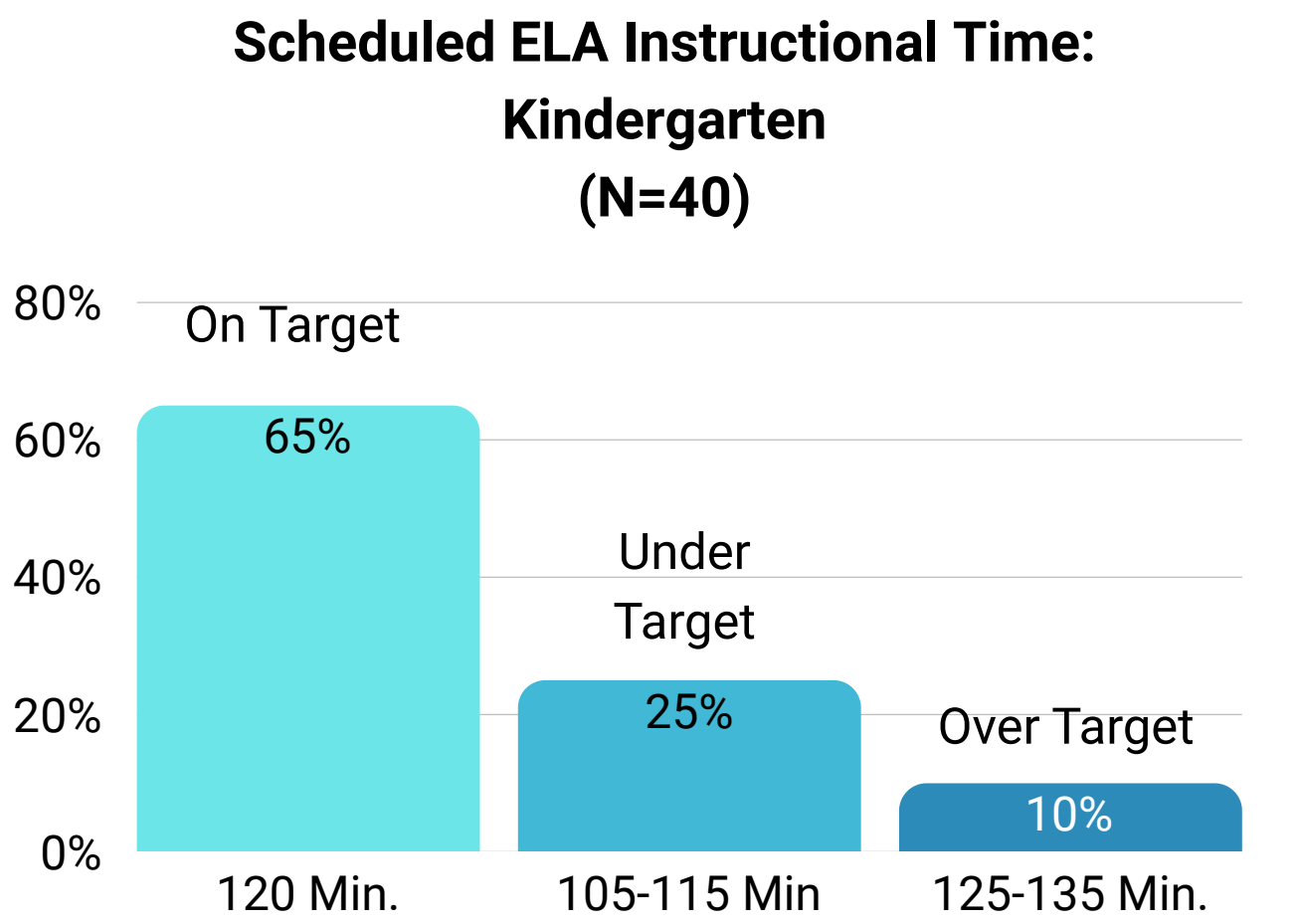
Analysis

- Descriptive statistics were used to examine the extent of implementation from observation data, ELA instructional schedules, and survey responses. Content analysis was used to analyze open-ended survey responses for in-depth experiences and perspectives. Themes were developed from responses, and those representing 10% or more of responses to a given question were reported, along with illustrative quotes.
- Findings from multiple data sources were triangulated when applicable, and included in the report’s summary of findings and conclusion section.

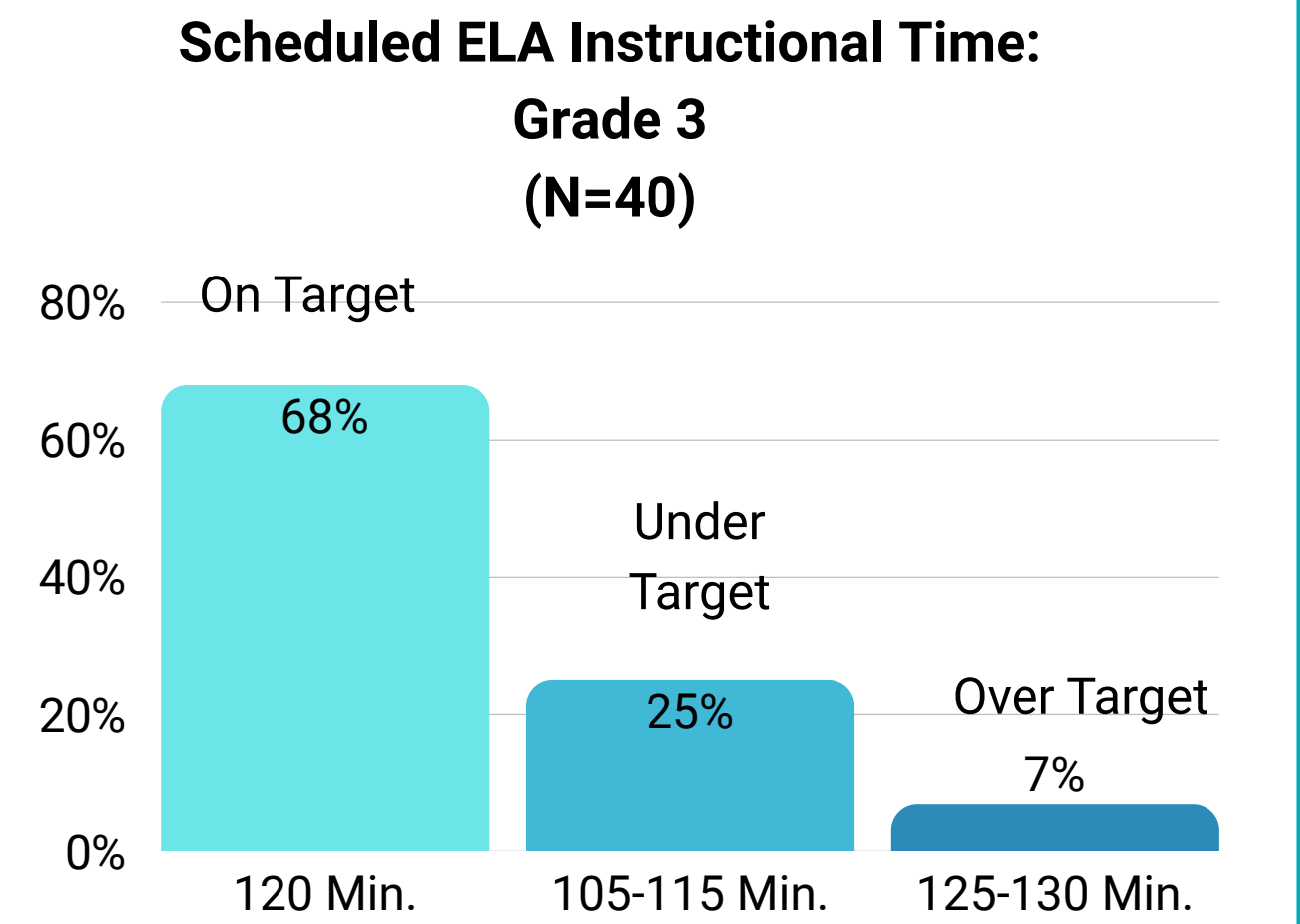
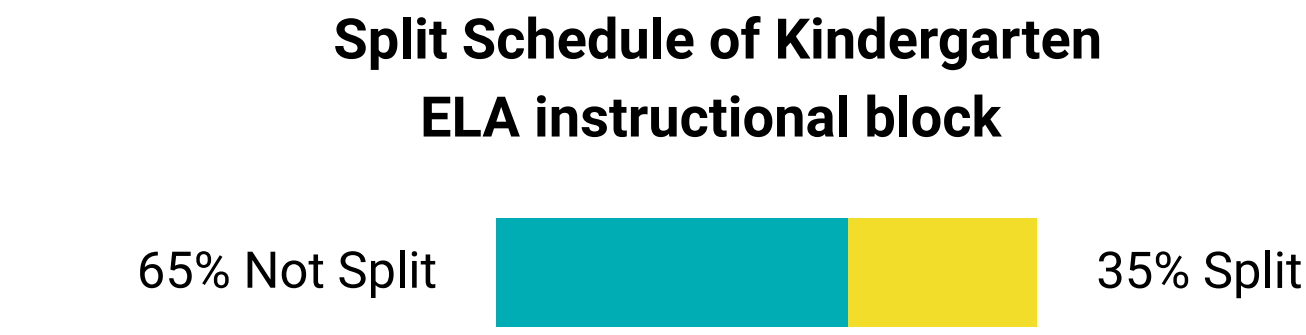
The following costs were presented in a Board of Education memo announcing the adoption of Amplify CKLA. Per the memo, curricular and instructional materials and professional development were based on estimated student counts, and not to exceed the accounts set forth below.

Curricular and Instructional Materials Cost	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Amplify: Core Knowledge Language Arts (CKLA)	\$10,145,807.20	\$10,000,000.00	\$6,740,069.43

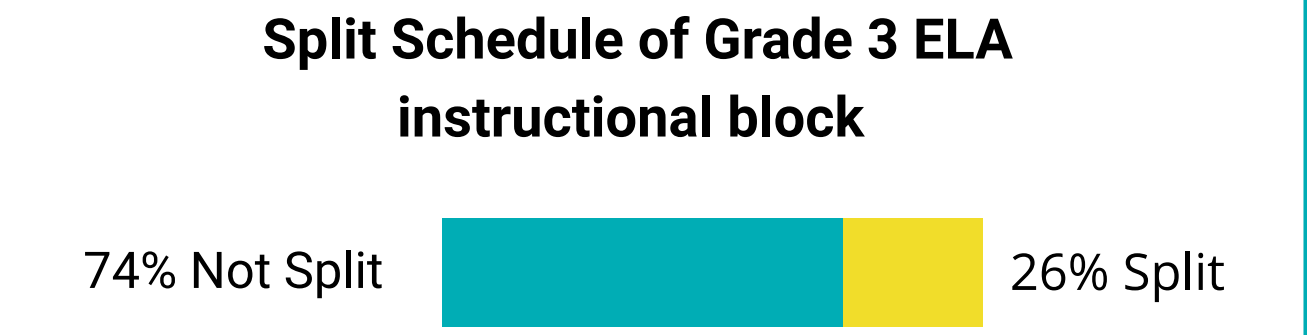
Source: MCPS. Memo to Board of Education: English Language Arts Adoption, Adopted 7.1. March 19, 2024.



Note. The instructional target was a total of 120 minutes.



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Findings

Schools were expected to schedule a total of 120 minutes of daily ELA instruction. Schools in the observation sample submitted their Kindergarten and Grade 3 ELA schedules, which were reviewed against this target.

Analysis showed that 65% of Kindergarten classrooms scheduled the targeted 120 minutes and 10% schedule or more than the target. Classes scheduling more than 120 minutes likely did so to accommodate transitions or non-instructional routines. Similarly, 68% of Grade 3 classrooms scheduled the targeted 120 minutes and another 7% scheduled more than the target. Conversely, 25% of classrooms in both Kindergarten and Grade 3 scheduled less than the 120-minute target (between 105 and 115 minutes).

Schedules were also reviewed to determine whether the scheduled ELA time was delivered in one continuous period or split into multiple blocks. Because Kindergarten implements two separate 60-minute CKLA lessons (Knowledge Strand and Skills Strand), schools were permitted to split the Kindergarten ELA block. In contrast, Grade 3 schools were encouraged to schedule the full 120-minute block as one uninterrupted period.

About 35% of Kindergarten classrooms and 26% of Grade 3 classrooms split their instructional time due to daily activities (e.g., lunch, recess, specials) or other required instruction (e.g., mathematics, science).



Observation Results

Classroom Observation Overview: Kindergarten and Grade 3

Classroom Description

Kindergarten

Average	Minimum	Maximum
16 Students	10 Students	22 Students

- No additional adults in 43% of classes.
- 1–3 additional adults in 57% of classes at least part of the time.

Grade 3

Average	Minimum	Maximum
21 Students	14 Students	28 Students

- No additional adults in 33% of classes.
- One to three additional adults in 67% of classes at least part of the time.

Classroom Displays

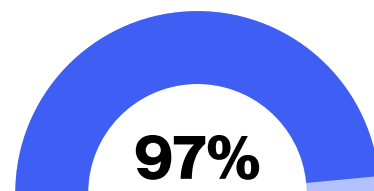
Kindergarten (N=40)

Grade 3 (N=40)

Knowledge Board Observed	35%	58%
Vocabulary Wall Observed	45%	53%
Tricky Word Wall Observed	85%	N/A

Shared Lesson Learning Goals Verbally

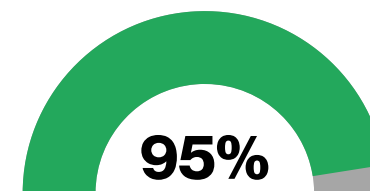
Kindergarten:
Knowledge Strand
Lesson



Kindergarten:
Skills Strand
Lesson



Grade 3
Lesson



Findings

Classroom Description: To provide context to the observed classrooms, an average of 16 students were present in Kindergarten classes and 21 students in Grade 3 classes. An additional 1–3 adults were present for at least part of the instructional time in more than half of Kindergarten classes (57%) and more than two thirds (67%) of Grade 3 classes. Additional adults provide more opportunities for individual or small-group student support.

Classroom Displays: In 85% of observed Kindergarten classrooms, a Tricky Word Wall, as recommended by Amplify, was displayed. However, fewer than one half of the classrooms featured a Knowledge Board (35%), which is recommended by Amplify and highlights the current unit or domain being taught, or Vocabulary Wall (45%). In Grade 3 classrooms, Knowledge Boards were observed in 58% of rooms and Vocabulary Walls in 53%.

Shared Lesson Learning Goals: Lesson learning goals were shared in the majority of observed classrooms: 97% of Kindergarten Knowledge Strand lessons, 90% of Kindergarten Skills Strand lessons, and 95% of Grade 3 lessons.

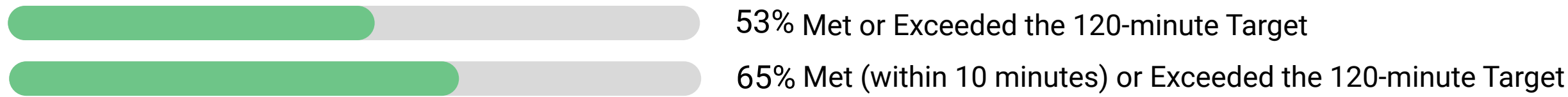
Actual ELA instructional time, along with time spent on specific components, was examined among the 40 Kindergarten observations. As shared previously, one fourth of the classrooms did not have a total of 120 minutes of ELA instruction in the school schedule.

In nearly half (53%) of classrooms (21 of 40), instruction met or exceeded the total 120-minute target, and it is noteworthy that 65% met the target time within 10 minutes or exceeded it. The average total ELA instruction time in observed Kindergarten classrooms was 112 minutes. Observers noted that, in some classes, instruction began later than scheduled or was shortened due to transitions such as arrival, lunch/recess, specials, other instructional time (e.g., mathematics, science), or brief breaks explaining at least some of the missed target times.

Just over half (56%) of the Kindergarten classes met or exceeded the 60-minute target for the Knowledge Strand lesson. Specifically, 41% of classrooms met the target, while 15% exceeded and 44% fell below the target time. For the Read Aloud component within the Knowledge Strand Lesson, 41% of classrooms met the target time for that lesson while 40% exceeded the target (indicating more time was spent than the guide allocated), and 19% fell below. The Application component met the target time in 42% of classrooms which implemented it, but one half fell below.

Half of the classrooms met or exceeded the 60-minute target for the Skills Strand lesson, and half fell below. As part of the Skills Strand, 35% of classrooms met the Foundation component target time and 40% met the Reading component time.

Kindergarten Observed Total ELA Instructional Time (N=40)



Mean	Median	Minimum	Maximum
112 Minutes	115 Minutes	90 Minutes	140 Minutes

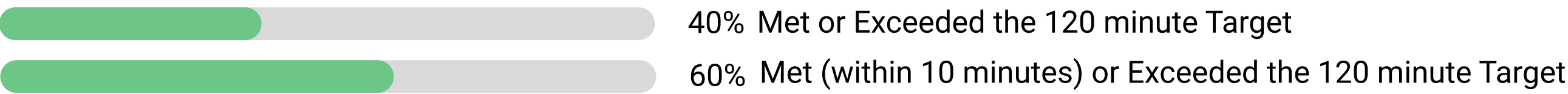
Kindergarten Observed Pacing by Lesson Component

The Knowledge Strand and Skills Strand lessons each had target instructional times of 60 minutes.
The target times for remaining lesson subcomponents (e.g., Read Aloud, Foundation, etc.) varied by individual lessons.

Lesson and Lesson Components	Target Time	% Met or Exceeded Target Time	% Met Target Time	% Exceeded Target Time	Exceeded Target Time Median	% Under Target Time	Under Target Time Median
Knowledge Strand Lessons (N=32)	60 min.	56%	41%	15%	10 min.	44%	20 min.
Read Aloud (N=32)	varies	81%	41%	40%	12 min.	19%	14 min.
Application (N=24)	varies	50%	42%	8%	18 min.	50%	15 min.
Skills Strand Lessons (N=40)	60 min.	50%	25%	25%	14 min.	50%	15 min.
Foundation (N=40)	varies	67%	35%	32%	17 min.	33%	15 min.
Reading (N=40)	varies	65%	40%	15%	12 min.	45%	15 min.

Notes. Eight classroom observations implemented CKLA research lessons as part of the Knowledge Strand. These research lessons varied and did not include the same components as the typical Knowledge Strand Lessons and were therefore not included in the above table. The number of observed lesson components (N =) within the Knowledge Strand lessons vary because not all components were prescribed for every lesson and not all components were implemented.

Grade 3 Observed Total Instructional Time



Mean	Median	Minimum	Maximum
110 Minutes	110 Minutes	87 Minutes	128 Minutes

Grade 3 Observed Pacing by Lesson Component

The target times for lesson subcomponents (e.g., Speaking and Learning, Reading, etc.) varied by individual lessons.

Lesson Components	Target Time	% Met or Exceeded Target Time	% Met Target Time	% Exceeded Target Time	Exceeded Target Time Median	% Under Target Time	Under Target Time Median
Speaking and Learning (N=30)	varies	60%	27%	33%	19 min.	40%	15 min.
Reading (N=32)	varies	84%	34%	50%	18 min.	16%	10 min.
Language (N=23)	varies	78%	48%	30%	15 min.	22%	15 min.
Writing (N=14)	varies	64%	28%	36%	20 min.	36%	10 min.

Notes. The number of observed lesson components (N =) vary because not all components were prescribed for every lesson and not all components were implemented.



Findings

Overall ELA instructional time, along with time spent on specific components, was examined among the Grade 3 observations. As shared previously, one fourth of classrooms did not have a total of 120-minutes of ELA instruction scheduled.

In 40% of classrooms (16 of 40), observed instruction met or exceeded the total 120-minute target, and it is noteworthy that 60% met the target within 10 minutes or exceeded it. The average observed instructional time in Grade 3 classrooms was 110 minutes. Observers noted that, in some cases, instruction began later than scheduled or was shortened due to transitions such as arrival, lunch/recess, specials, other instructional time (e.g., mathematics, science), or brief breaks.

When examining time spent on specific Grade 3 lesson components, 60% met or exceeded the target instructional time for the Speaking and Learning component (27% met the target, 33% exceeded the target), while 40% fell below. For the Reading component, 34% met and 50% exceeded the target time, and 16% fell below. The Language component was on target in 48% of classes, with 30% over and 22% under. For the writing component, 28% met, 36% exceeded, and 36% fell below the targeted time.

For components that exceeded the targeted time, the median time over was 15–20 minutes, while components that fell under were typically 10–15 minutes under.



Observation Results

Usage of CKLA Slides and Student Materials



Findings

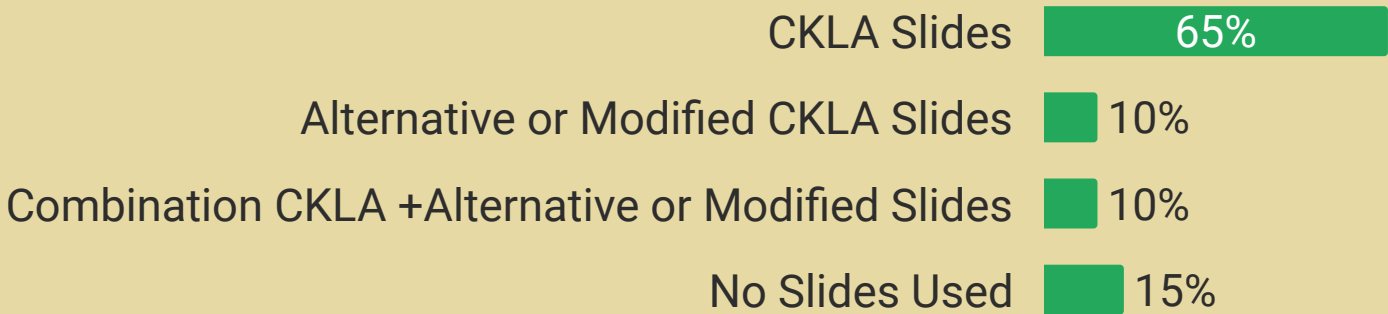
In most observed classrooms, teachers displayed the lesson slides provided by CKLA (65% in Kindergarten, 75% in Grade 3). In 10%–15% of observed classrooms, no slides were displayed.

In 10% of the 40 observed Kindergarten Knowledge Strand lessons, and 13% of the observed Skills Strand lessons, alternative slides or modified CKLA slides were used. Additionally, a combination of CKLA and alternative or modified slides were used in 10% of Knowledge Strand lessons and 13% of Skills Strand lessons. In 15% of the observed Grade 3 lessons, a combination of CKLA and alternative or modified slides were used.

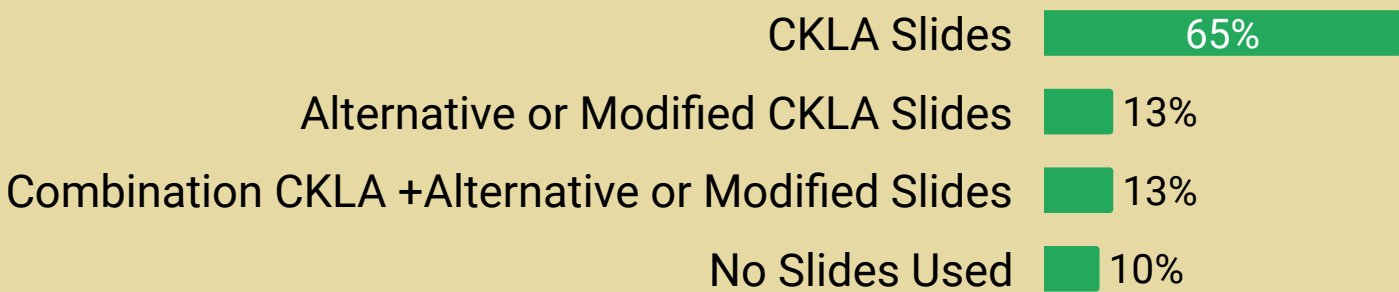
Usage of CKLA materials (e.g., readers, workbooks) among students were observed in most observed Kindergarten (82%–93%) and Grade 3 (86%–100%) classrooms when prescribed by the lesson.

CKLA Slides Displayed During Lesson

Kindergarten: Knowledge Strand (N=40)

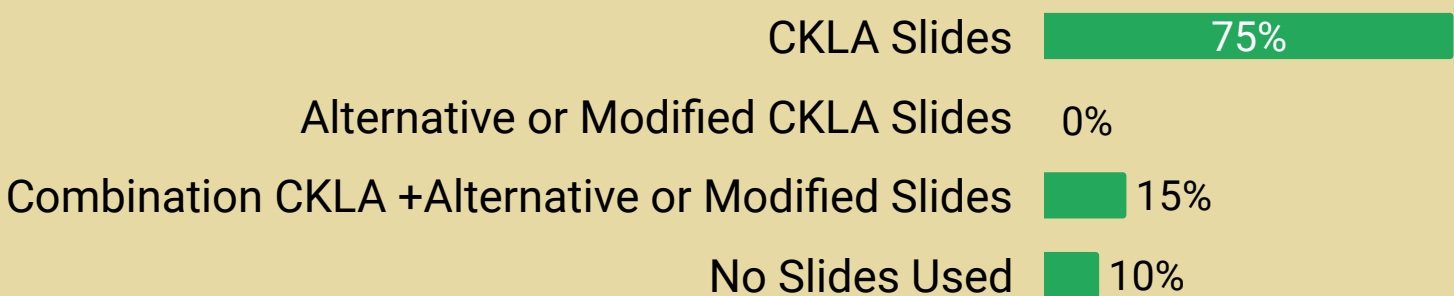


Kindergarten: Skills Strand (N=40)



CKLA Slides Displayed During Lesson

Grade 3 (N=40)



Students Observed Using CKLA Materials

Kindergarten: Knowledge Strand Lesson (N=34)



Kindergarten: Skills Strand Lesson (N=40)



Note. N's reflect the observations where student materials are included in the lesson according to the lesson guide; values vary because materials do not appear in every lesson.

Students Observed Using CKLA Materials

Grade 3

Lesson Component

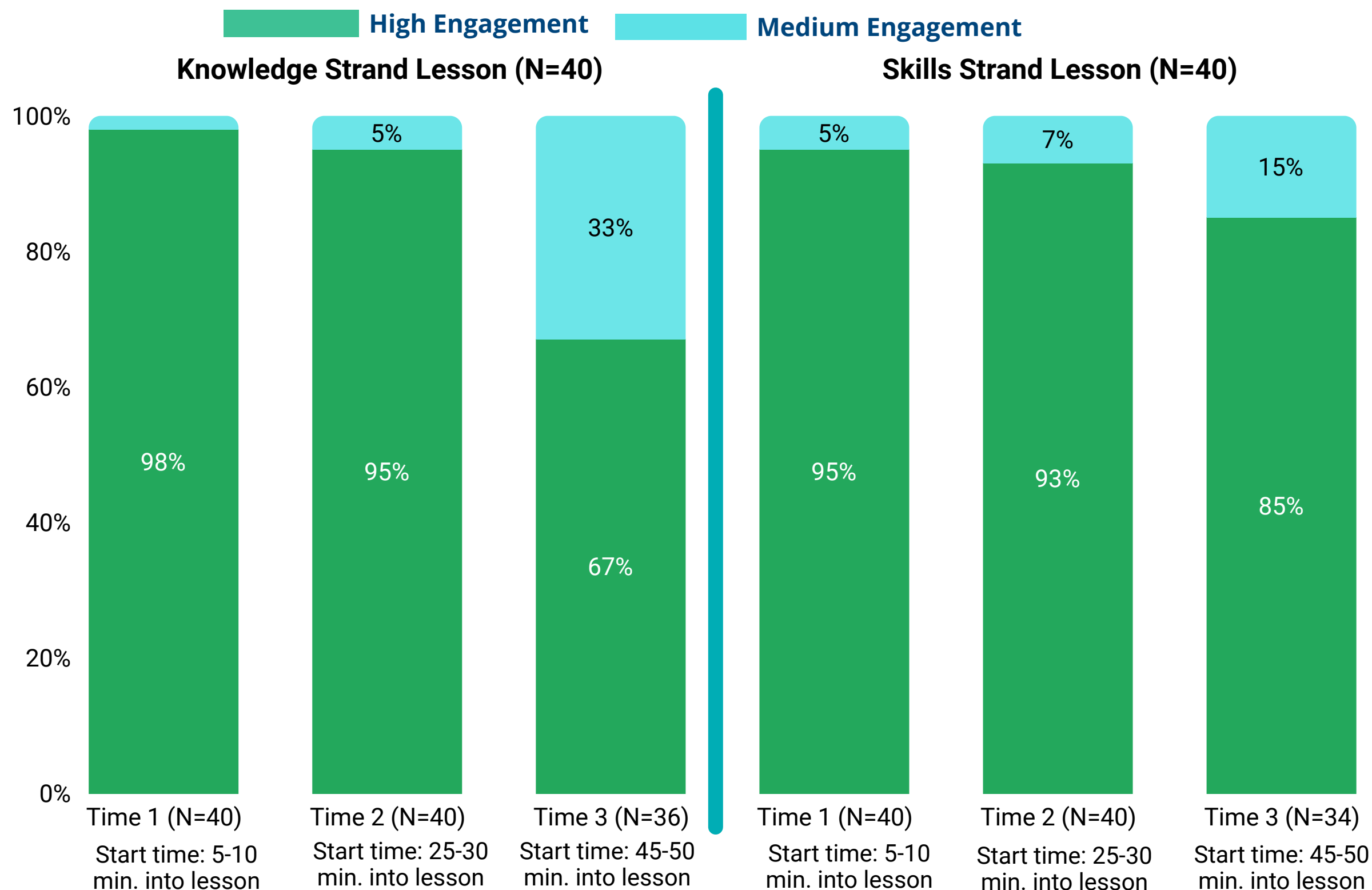




Observation Results: Kindergarten

Level of Engagement During the Knowledge Strand and Skills Strand Lessons

Student Engagement Levels Throughout Observed Kindergarten Lessons (N=40)



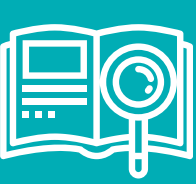
Notes. High Engagement = 80% or more of students engaged; Medium Engagement = 50-80% of students engaged, Low Engagement = Less than 50% of students engaged.



Findings

Student engagement was measured during the 40 observed Kindergarten Knowledge Strand lessons and 40 observed Skills Strand lessons. Levels of engagement were captured as High, Medium, and Low and reflect the percentage of students who were actively listening and participating in the lesson. Engagement levels were recorded at approximately 20-minute intervals throughout the lesson, beginning five to ten minutes after the lesson started. This resulted in three observation points (Time 1, Time 2, and Time 3) for both the Knowledge Strand and Skills Strand lessons.

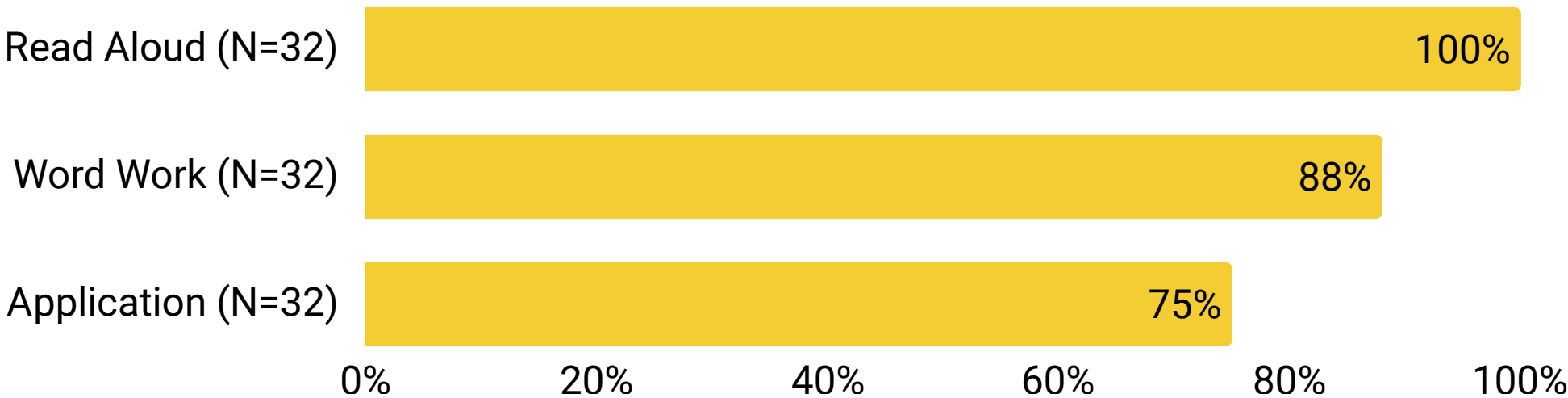
High Engagement levels were observed during the first two observation periods (Time 1 and Time 2) of nearly all Kindergarten lessons (93%–98% across both strands). However, engagement declined toward the end of the lesson. At the final observation point (Time 3), a high level of engagement was sustained in 67% of the Knowledge Strand lessons and 85% of the Skills Strand lessons, with the latter figure still representing a strong majority of classrooms.



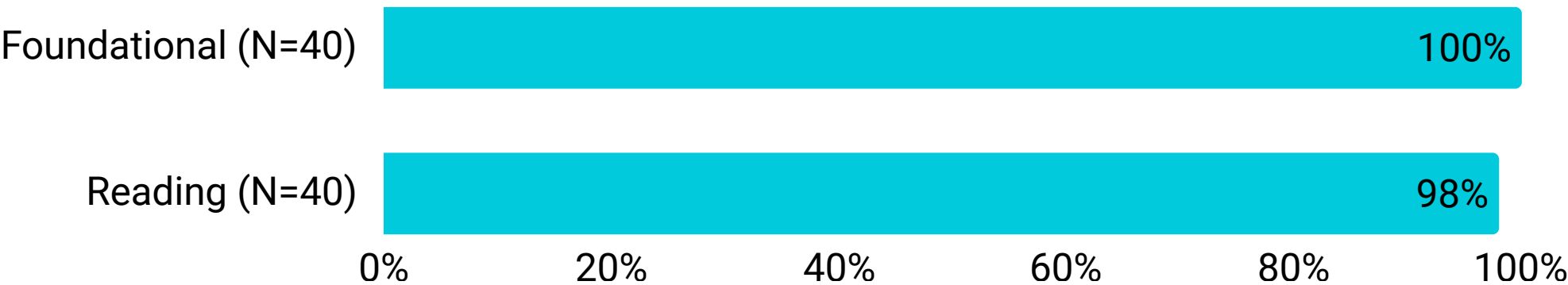
Observation Results: Kindergarten

Implementation of Instructional Components

Implementation of Knowledge Strand Lesson Components When Applicable



Implementation of Skills Strand Lesson Components When Applicable



Notes. The number of observations (N =) reflects only those classrooms where the lesson component was prescribed by the teacher lesson guide. This total varies because not all instructional components are included in every lesson.

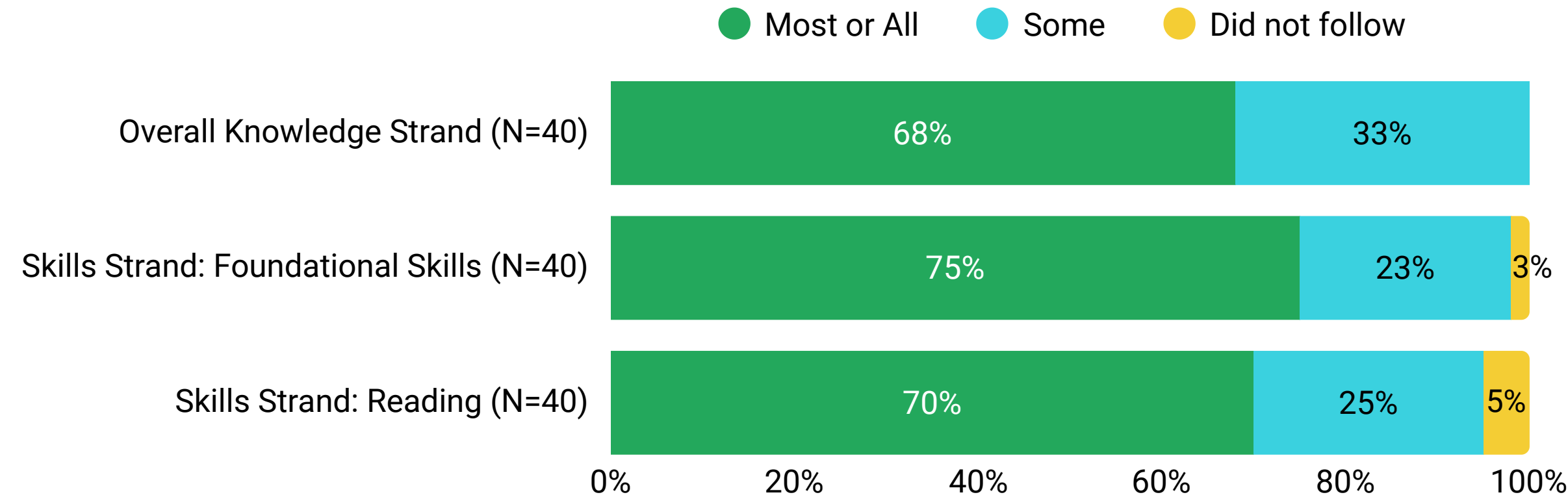


Findings

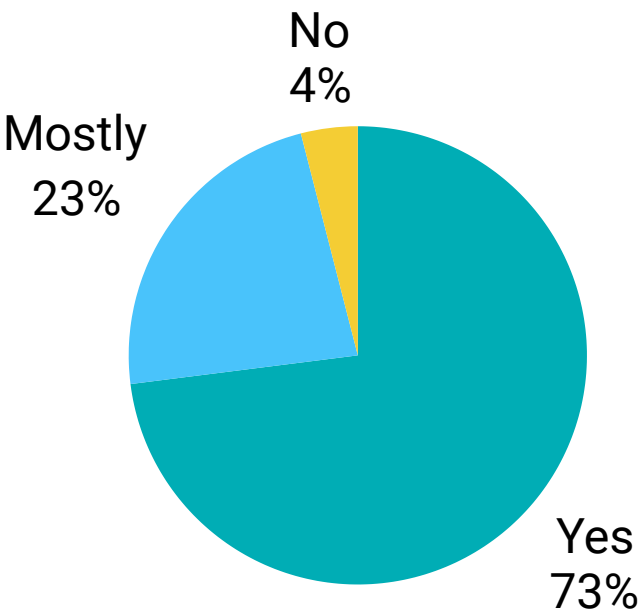
In observed Kindergarten classrooms, both the Read Aloud component in the Knowledge Strand lessons and the Foundational component in the Skills Strand lessons were consistently implemented (100%) when prescribed in the lesson guide.

Most classrooms also implemented the Word Work (88%) and Application (75%) components within the Knowledge Strand lesson, as well as the Reading component (98%) in the Skills Strand lesson when applicable.

Observer Rating of Adherence to the Lesson Component



Teacher Post-Lesson Response to:
Did the lesson go as planned?
(N=22)



Findings

More than two thirds (68%) of observers rated Kindergarten classrooms as having adhered to most or all the Knowledge Strand lessons. While nearly three fourths adhered to most or all the Foundational Skills and Reading components in the Skills Strand (75% and 70% respectively), 23% and 25% followed some of the lesson components. Lessons which were not completely adhered to, were either not implemented as described in the teacher lesson guide or areas of instruction were not implemented. Only a couple of classrooms did not follow the lesson components at all.

In a post-observation question to teachers, 73% of the 22 who responded, said the lesson went as planned. A few teachers noted that they anticipated running out of time, so the lesson unfolded as expected. Others pointed out that pacing, student disruptions, and completing the whole-group instructional time were common challenges.

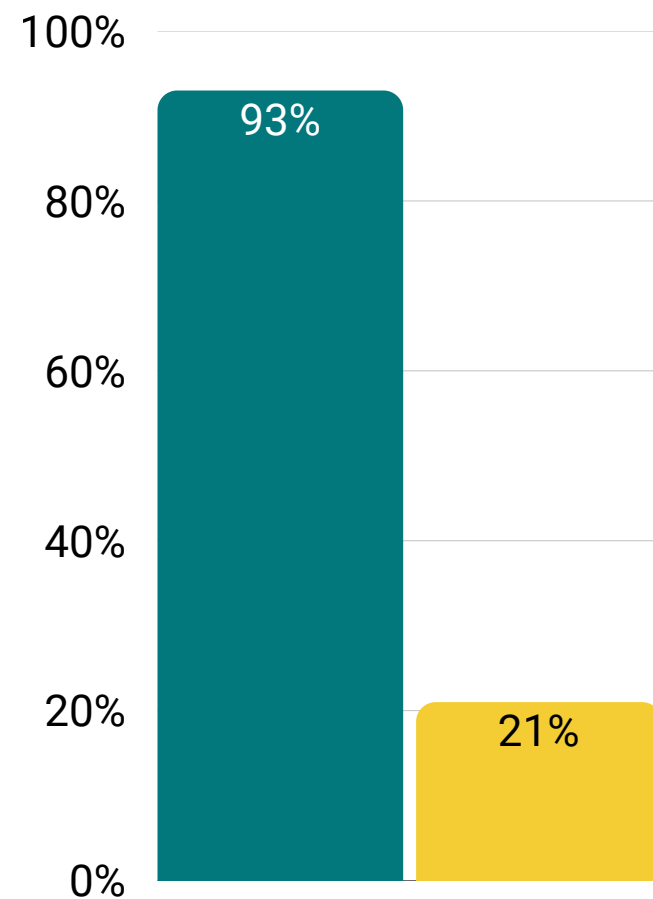


Observation Results: Kindergarten

Observed Student Groupings

● Whole Group ● Teacher-led Small Groups

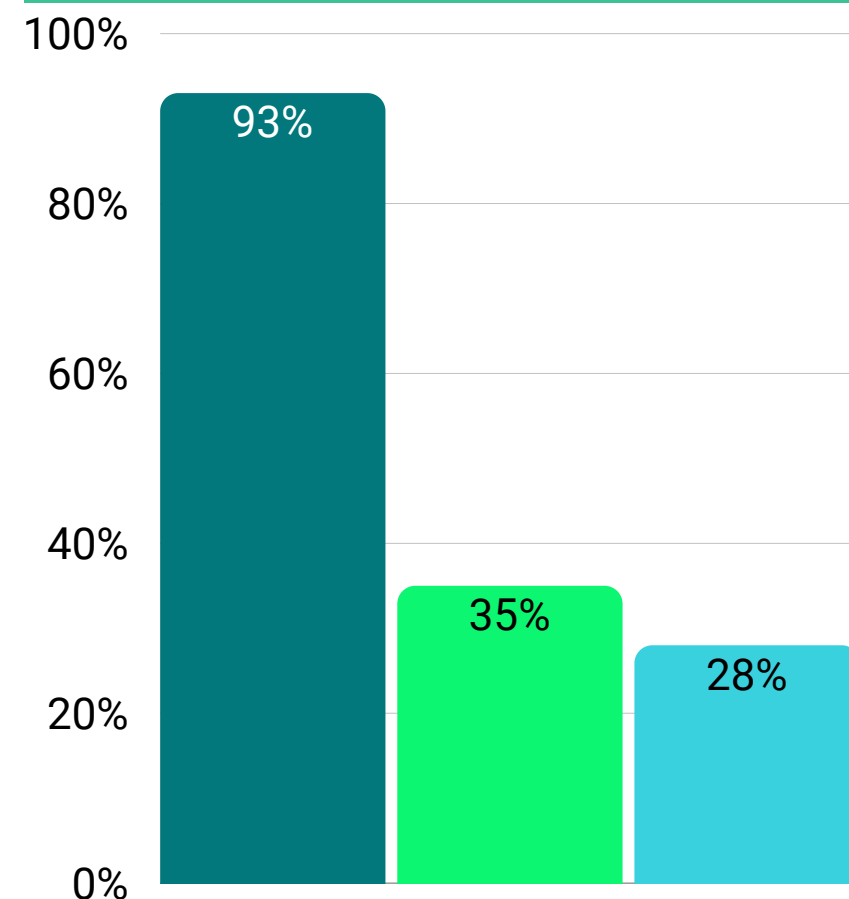
Knowledge Strand Lesson: Application Component (N=24)



Note. More than one grouping format can occur during a lesson. Other groupings were not collected for these components.

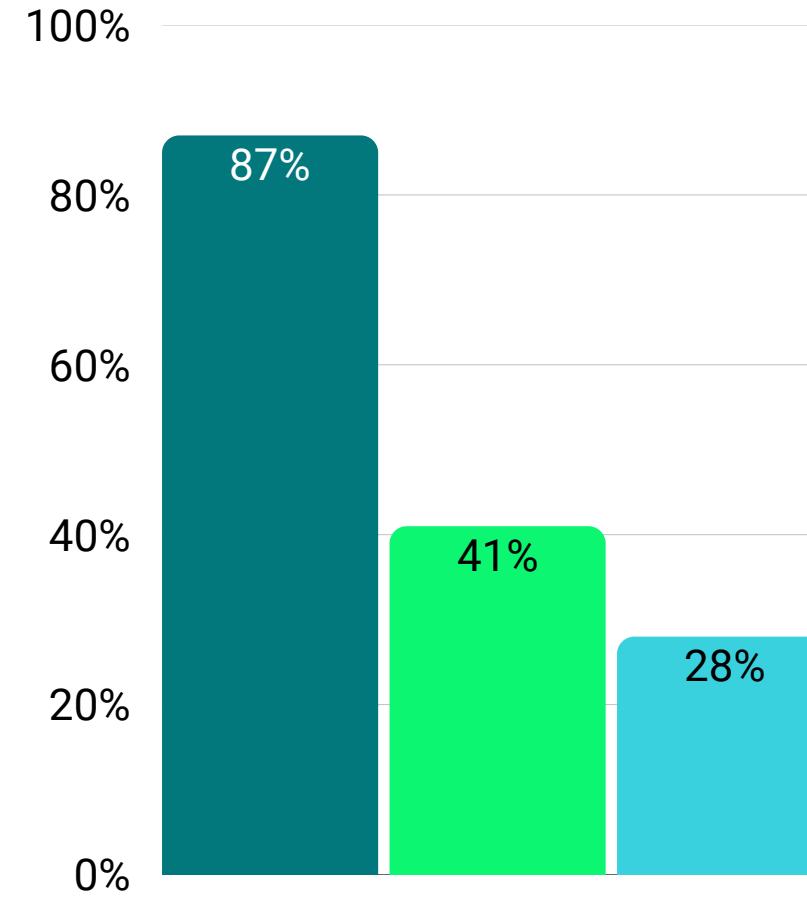
● Whole Group ● Partners/Triads/Small Groups ● Independent

Skills Strand Lesson: Foundational Skills Component (N=40)



Note. More than one grouping format can occur during a lesson. Teacher-led small groups not collected for these components.

Skills Strand Lesson: Reading Component (N=40)



Findings

The Kindergarten Knowledge Strand lessons were primarily designed to be delivered as a Whole Group format. However, it was expected that Teacher-led Small Groups would occur only as needed to support students with the lesson being implemented –a shift away from rotating all students through daily small-group instruction. Observers noted when a Teacher-led Small Group occurred during the application component of the lesson. The Small Groups were observed in about one fifth of observations (21%), with 1–4 students per group, indicating a more targeted approach was used rather than most classrooms meeting with all students.

For the Skills Strand lessons, a variety of groupings were encouraged by the lesson guide. Student groupings were observed to help inform curriculum staff about implementation strategies and potential areas of support, with the understanding that teachers have flexibility in how they structure these groups. In the Foundational Skills Component (N=40), a Whole Group setting was observed in nearly all lessons (93%). Following the Whole Group, Partners/Triads/Small Groups were the next most common grouping (35%), with students also working Independently in over one fourth of the observations (28%). For the Reading Component (N=40), a Whole Group setting was also dominant, observed in 87% of lessons. Partners/Triads/Small Groups were the next most frequently used grouping at 41%, followed by Independent work, which was observed in 28% of the lessons.



Observation Results: Kindergarten

Observed Items During the Knowledge Strand Lesson

Knowledge Strand Lesson: Items Prior to Read Aloud	Yes, as directed in the guide	Yes, but not per the guide	No
Briefly reviewed vocabulary (N=32)	94%	na	6%
Introduced Read Aloud story (N=32)	88%	12%	0%
Connected to previous learning (N=31)	84%	13%	3%
Checked for Understanding (N=31)	84%	na	16%
Shared purpose or question for upcoming reading (N=32)	91%	na	9%

Knowledge Strand: Read Aloud Items (N=35)	
Text read as written <i>*The CKLA recording of the story was played in five classes.</i>	91%
Read text differently then as written	9%
Format of Read Aloud (N=35)	
Used Digital Images or Book	51%
Used Physical Flip Book or Image Cards	23%
Both Digital and Physical images	20%
No images displayed	6%

Read Aloud Materials (N=31)	
Used CKLA objects, videos, or additional images relevant to story	68%
Used Other objects, videos, or additional images relevant to story	19%
Both CKLA and Other images, objects, videos relevant to story	10%
None used	3%

Notes. The number of observations (N =) reflects only those classrooms where the lesson component and component tasks/materials were prescribed by the teacher lesson guide. This total varies because not all lesson components and tasks/materials are included in every lesson.



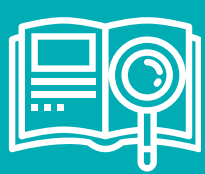
Findings

Reviewing the vocabulary words (94%), introducing the story (88%), connecting to previous learning (84%), implementing the lesson's Checks for Understanding (84%), and sharing the reading's purpose or question (91%) were observed prior to the Read Aloud component in most Knowledge Strand lessons when it was expected.

During a great majority (91%) of applicable lessons, the text was read aloud as written, including five classes that played the recording of the text versus the teacher reading it aloud.

During the Read Aloud, a digital book was used in just over half of the observed classrooms (51%), compared to 23% that used a physical book or image cards, and 20% that used a combination of digital and physical materials.

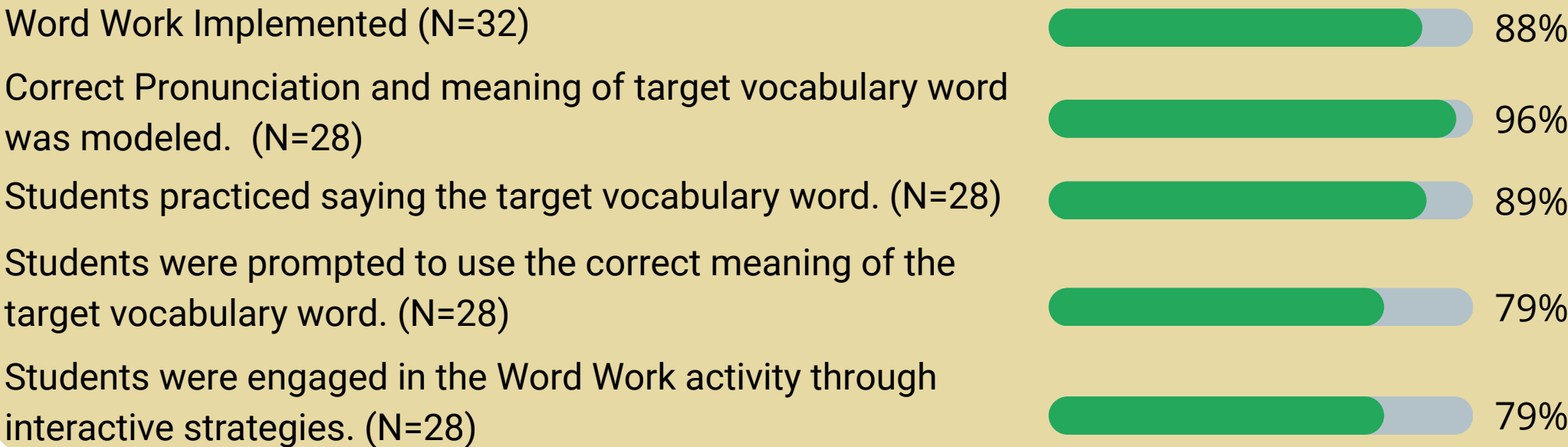
In 68% of applicable classrooms, a CKLA object, video, or image relevant to the story was shared with the class. In 19% of classrooms, a non-CKLA object, video, or image was used, and in 10%, a combination of CKLA and non-CKLA materials was shared.



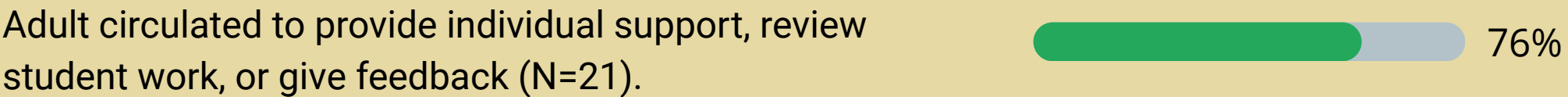
Observation Results: Kindergarten

Observed Items During the Knowledge Strand Lesson

Knowledge Strand Lesson: Word Work Component

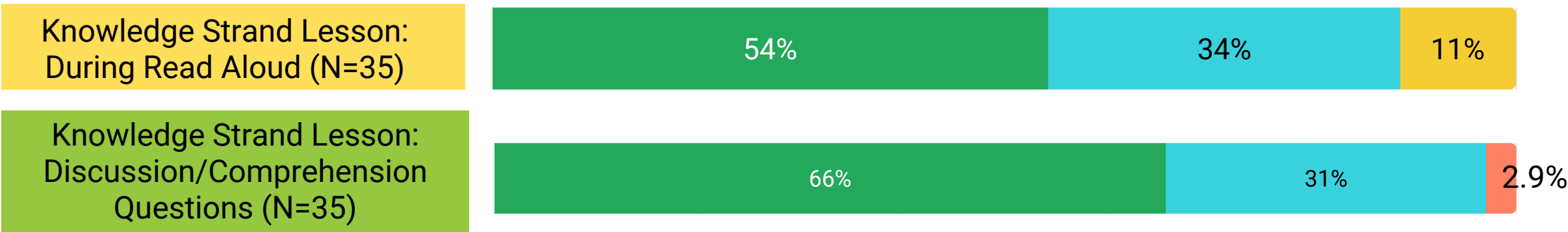


Knowledge Strand Lesson: Application Component



Asked Text-Related Questions from the Lesson Guide

● Asked all of the Questions ● Asked some of the questions ● Asked different questions ● No Questions Asked



Notes. The number of observations (N =) reflects only those classrooms where the lesson component and component tasks were prescribed by the teacher lesson guide. This total varies because not all lesson components and tasks are included in every lesson.



Findings

Where applicable, most observed Kindergarten classrooms implemented the Word Work component (88%) during the Knowledge Strand lesson. Among those that did, nearly all modeled the correct pronunciation and meaning of the target word (96%) and a great majority had students practice saying the word (89%). Additionally, in most classrooms, students were prompted to use the correct meaning of the word (79%) and engaged in an interactive strategy (79%)—primarily call and response (used in all but one of the classes).

During the Application component of the Knowledge Strand lesson, the teacher or other adult circulated among students to provide individual support, review student work, or give feedback in 76% of the applicable classrooms.

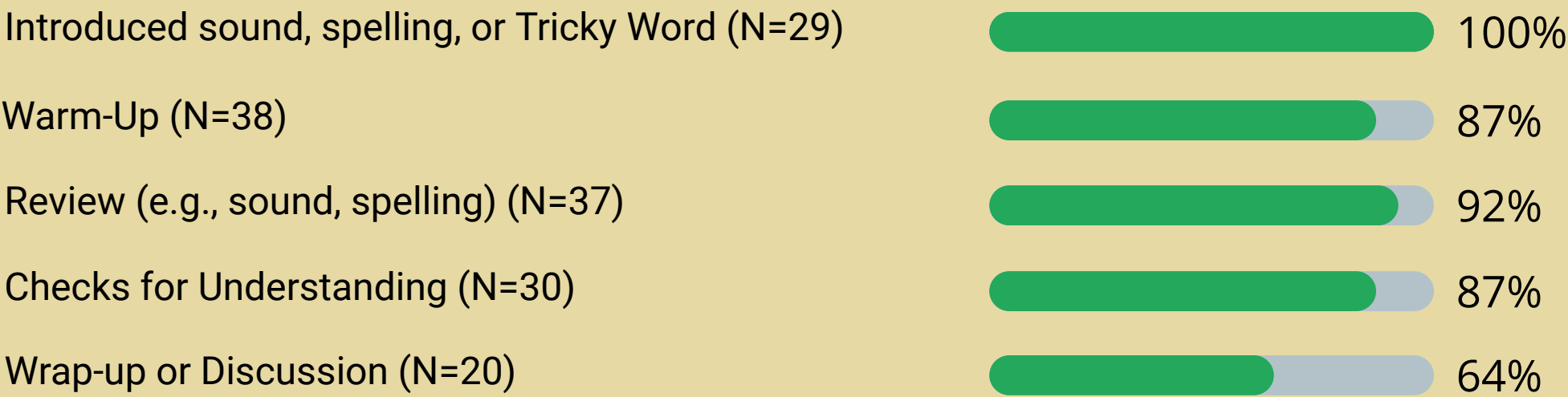
Within the Knowledge Strand lesson, there are text-related questions in the lesson guide for teachers to ask students during the Read Aloud and again at the Discussion/Comprehension component. In 54% of the observed Read Aloud components, teachers asked all of the questions in the lesson guide, 34% asked some of the questions, and 11% asked different questions that were not in the guide. In the Discussion/Comprehension component, 66% were observed asking all the questions while 31% asked some of the prescribed questions.



Observation Results: Kindergarten

Observed Items During the Skills Strand Lesson

Skills Strand Lesson: Foundational Skills Component



Skills Strand Lesson: Reading Component



Notes. The number of observations (N =) reflects only those classrooms where the lesson component and component tasks were prescribed by the teacher lesson guide. This total varies because not all lesson components and tasks are included in every lesson.



Findings

When applicable, all the observed Kindergarten classes introduced the sound, spelling, or Tricky Word prescribed in the Foundational Skills component of the Skills Strand lesson. Furthermore, a great majority provided a warm-up and review when applicable (87% and 92%), as well as the lesson’s Checks for Understanding component (87%). However, less than two thirds (64%) implemented the wrap-up or discussion when applicable to the lesson.

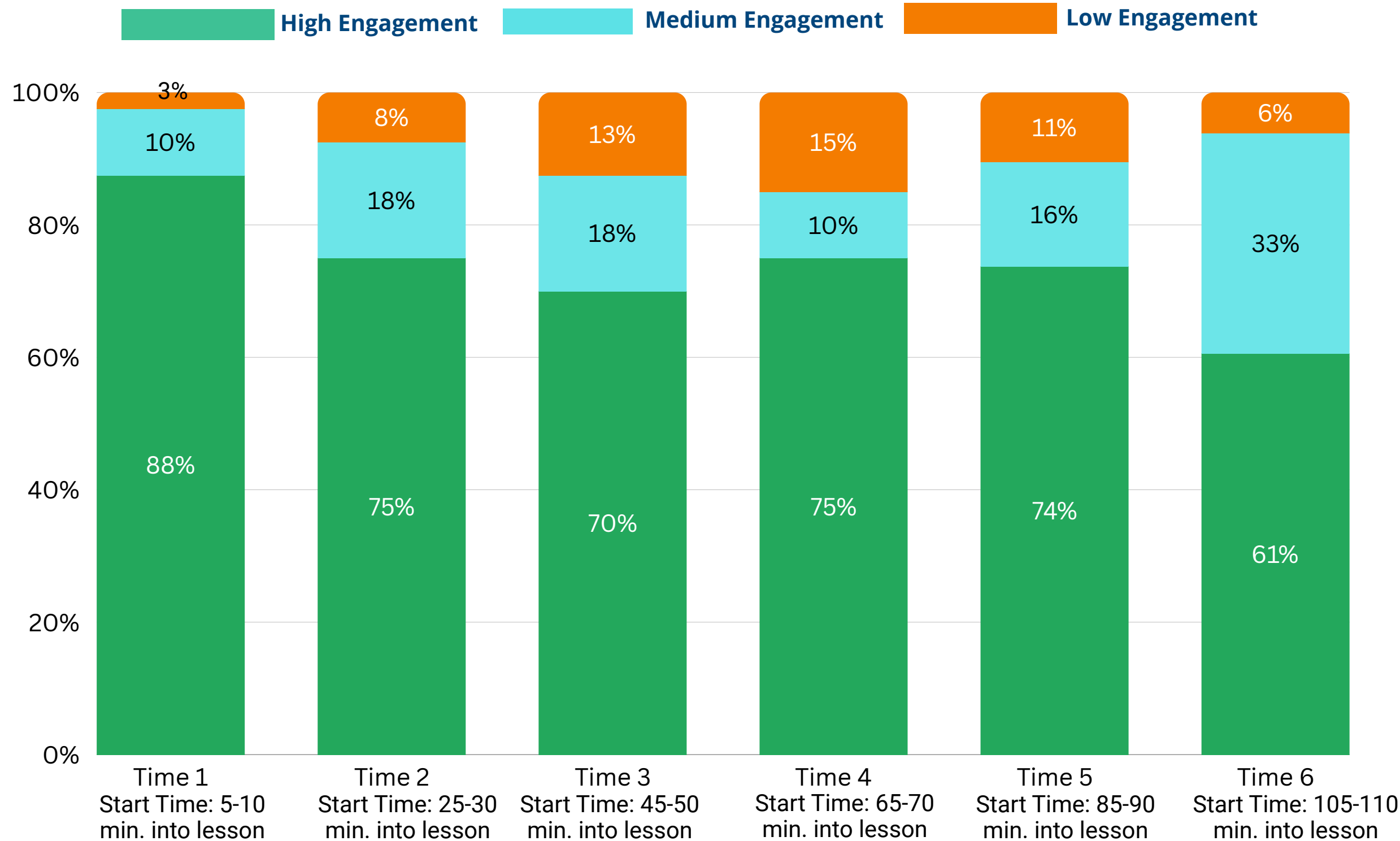
During the Reading component of the Skills Strand lesson, 85% of observed classes implemented the introduction and 89% implemented the wrap-up or discussion when applicable to the lesson.



Observation Results: Grade 3

Level of Engagement During the Grade 3 Lesson

Student Engagement Levels Throughout Observed Grade 3 Lesson (N=40)



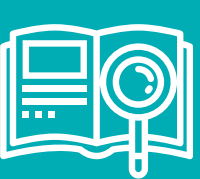
Notes. High Engagement = 80% or more of students engaged; Medium Engagement = 50-80% of students engaged, Low Engagement = Less than 50% of students engaged.



Findings

Student engagement was measured during the 40 observed Grade 3 lessons. Levels of engagement were captured as High, Medium, and Low, and reflect the percentage of students who were actively listening and participating in the lesson. Engagement levels were recorded at approximately 20-minute intervals throughout the lesson, beginning five to ten minutes after the lesson started. This resulted in six observation points (Time 1 through Time 6).

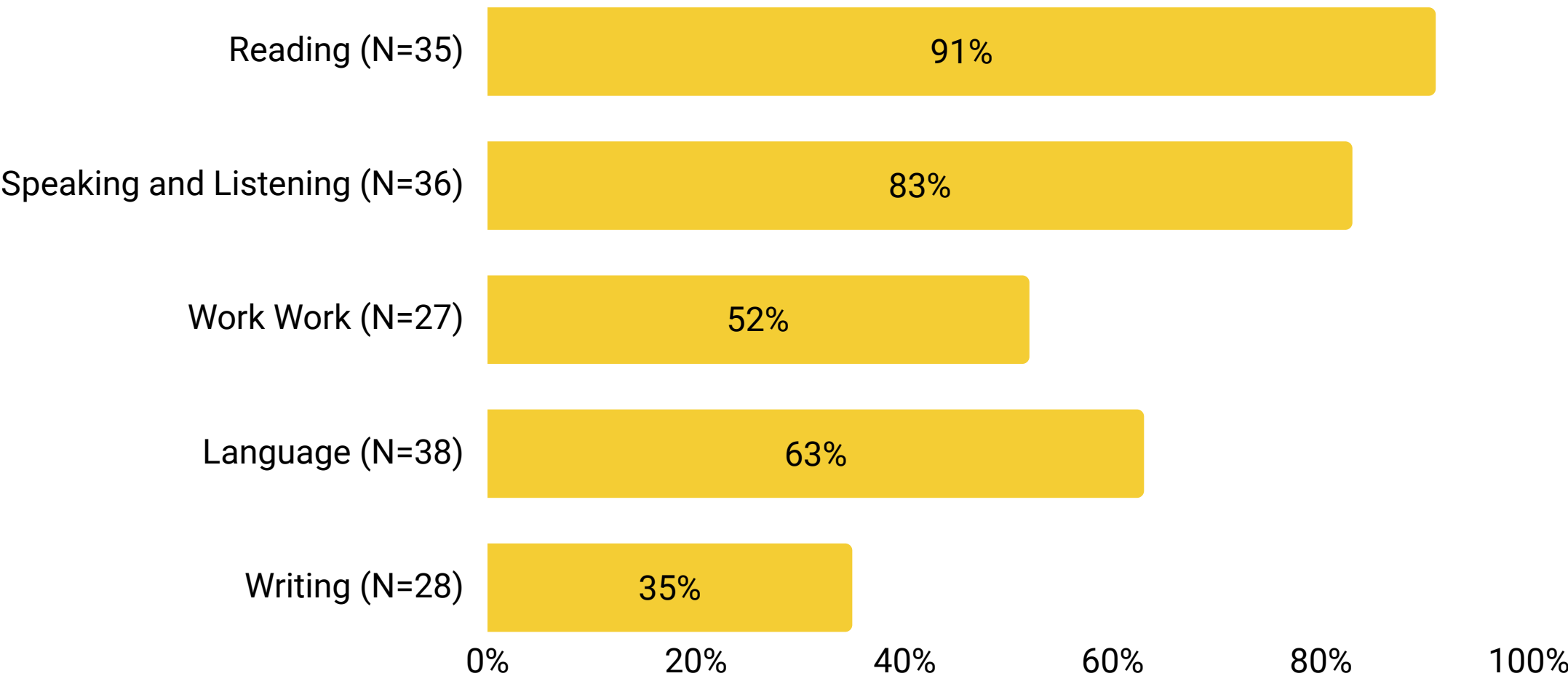
The greatest percentage of High Engagement occurred at the start of the lesson (88% at Time 1). Throughout the middle of the lesson, the percentage of classes with High Engagement remained consistent, ranging from 70% to 75% (Times 2 through 5), though this was notably lower than the levels observed in the previously reported Kindergarten lessons. The percentage of classrooms with High Engagement declined toward the end of the lesson (Time 6), where High Engagement dropped to 61%, with an additional 33% of students observed as having medium levels of engagement.



Observation Results: Grade 3

Implementation of Lesson Components

Implementation of Grade 3 Lesson Components When Applicable



Notes. The number of observations (N =) reflects only those classrooms where the lesson component was prescribed by the teacher lesson guide. This total varies because not all instructional components are included in every lesson.



Findings

In the majority of observed Grade 3 classrooms, 91% implemented the Reading component portion of the lesson, and 83% implemented the Speaking and Listening component when they were included in the lesson. Where applicable, 52% of classes implemented Word Work and 63% implemented the Language component. Only 35% implemented the Writing component when applicable to the lesson.



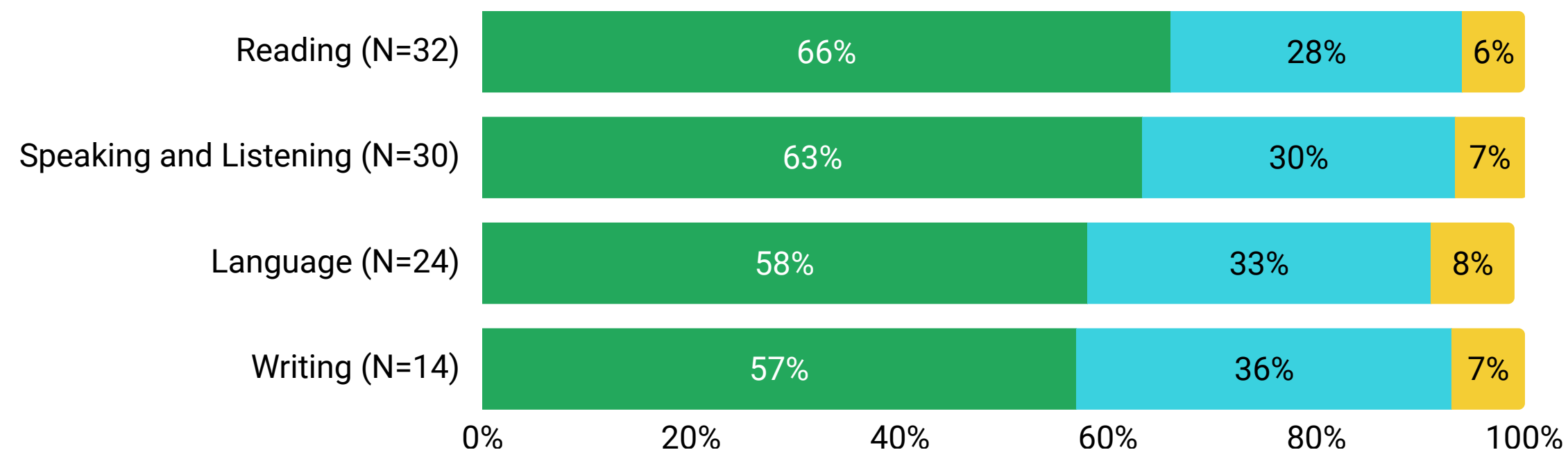
Findings

More than one half of observers rated Grade 3 classrooms as having adhered to most or all the lesson components (57%–66%) when implemented and approximately one third (28%–36%) were deemed as adhering the some of the lesson components. Fewer than 10% (6%–8%) were seen as having not followed the lesson components at all. Lessons not completely adhered to, were either not implemented the same as described in the teacher lesson guide or areas of instruction were not implemented at all.

In a post-observation question to teachers, nearly sixty percent (59%) of the 27 who responded, said the lesson went as planned. Additionally, quite a few teachers remarked in their response, that time and pacing were challenges.

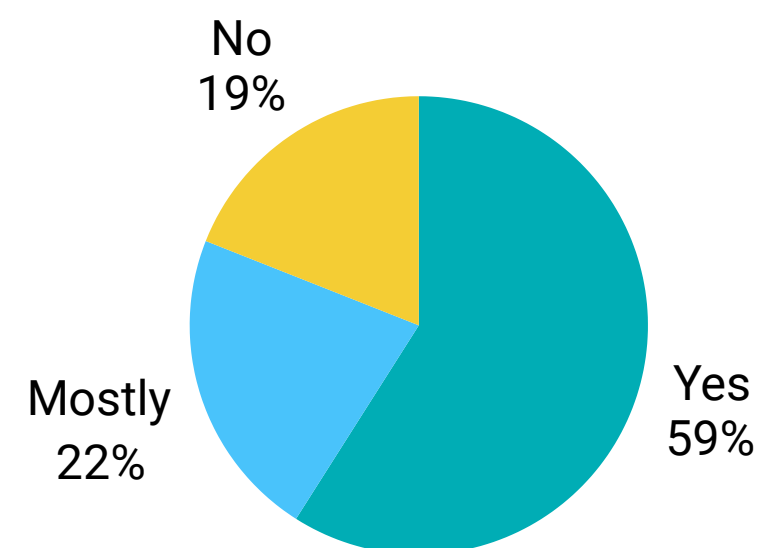
Observer Rating of Adherence to the Lesson Component

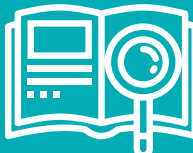
● Most or All ● Some ● Did not follow



Note. The number of observations (N =) reflects only those classrooms where the lesson component was prescribed by the teacher lesson guide and implemented. This total varies because not all instructional components are included in every lesson and were implemented.

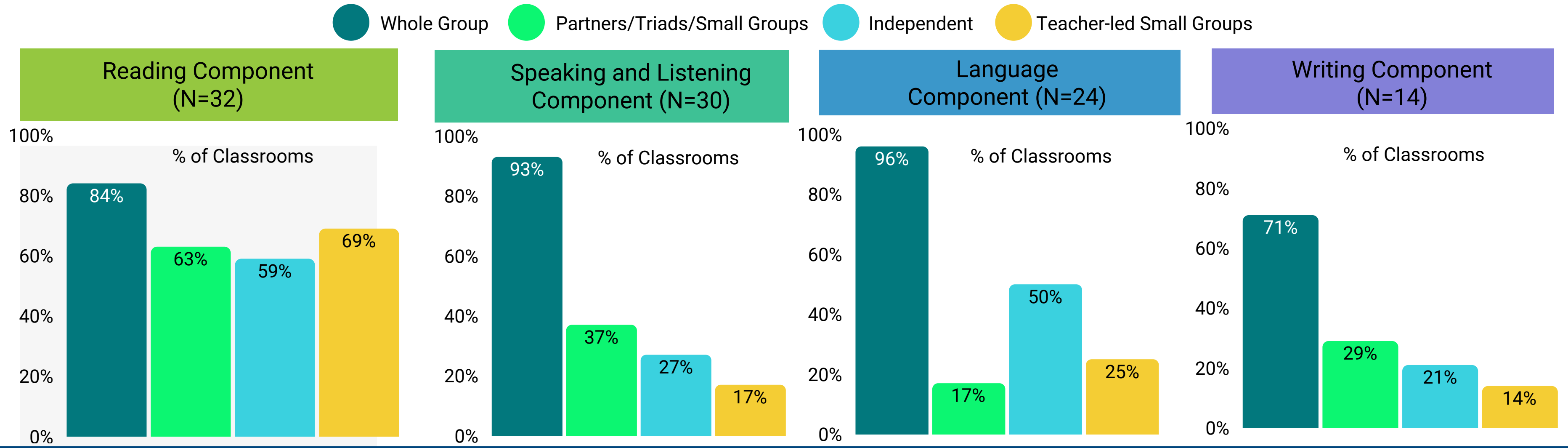
Teacher Post-Lesson Response to: Did the lesson go as planned? (N=27)





Observation Results: Grade 3

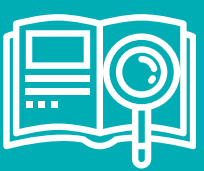
Observed Student Groupings by Instructional Component



Findings

Student groupings were examined to help curriculum staff understand which implementation strategies teachers used and where additional support may be needed. Although teachers have flexibility in how they group students, the lesson guide offers suggested grouping structures. The intent is that a variety of groupings—such as partners, triads, small groups, and independent work—are implemented. Among the Reading components, more than half of observations included Partners/Triads/Small Groups of students (63%) and Independent work (69%). Independent work was also observed in half of the Language components (50%). Partners/Triads/Small groups of students were observed less frequently in Language (17%) and Writing (29%) components. Independent work was implemented in less than one-fourth of Language (27%) and Writing (21%) components.

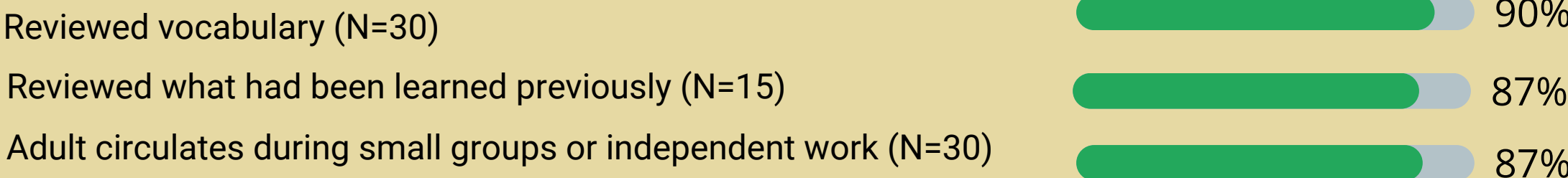
Teacher-led Small Groups were also examined. The expectation was that teachers would pull small groups as needed to support students with the lesson being implemented, a shift away from rotating all students through small-group instruction. The number of classrooms in which a Teacher-led Small Group was observed varied across components; notably, few teachers pulled small groups outside of the Reading component, where Teacher-led Small Groups were observed in 69% of classes. More importantly, fewer than half of the students in a class met in a Teacher-led Small Group; indicating a more targeted approach. Observers noted that in only two classes did most students (19 students in each class) meet in a Teacher-led Small Group—once during the Language component and once during the Writing component.



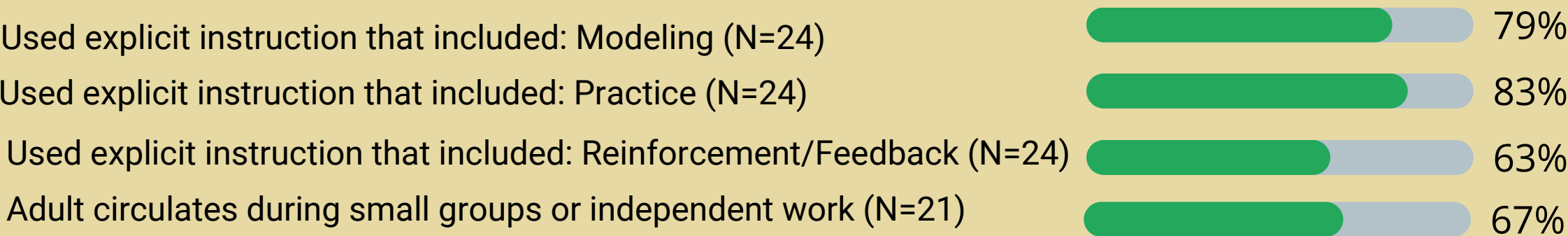
Observation Results: Grade 3

Observed items during Reading, Language, and Writing Components

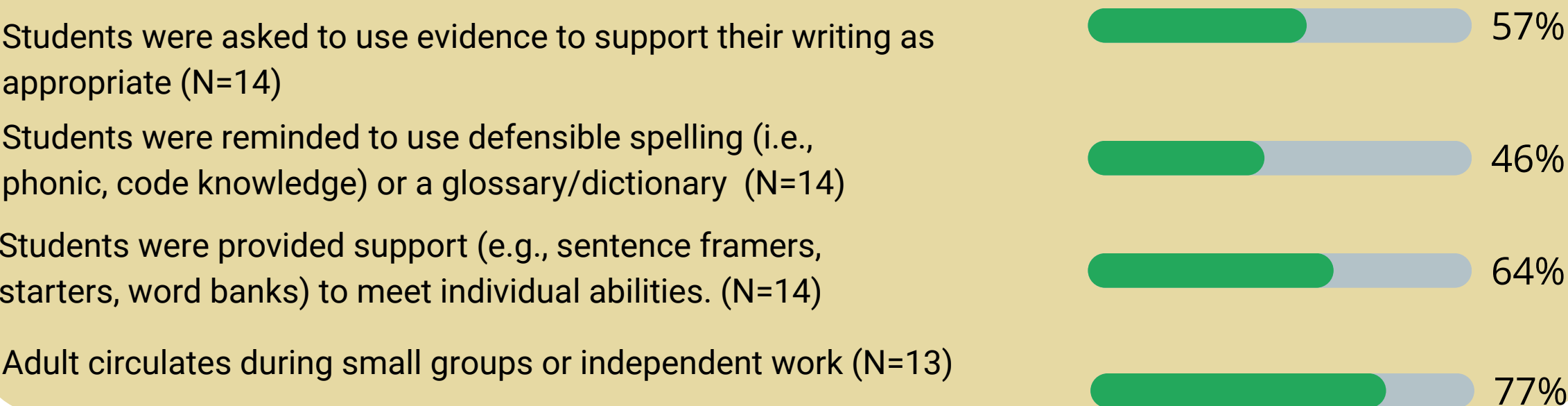
Reading Component



Language Component



Writing Component



Notes. The number of observations (N =) reflects only those classrooms where the lesson component and component tasks were prescribed by the teacher lesson guide. This total varies because not all lesson components and tasks are included in every lesson.



Findings

Among the Grade 3 classes where it was applicable to the lesson, nearly all reviewed vocabulary (90%) and prior content (87%).

Explicit instruction that included modeling was observed in 79% of the Language components and explicit instruction that included practice was observed in 83% of the Language components. Less than two-thirds (63%) provided reinforcement or feedback was observed in 63% of the Language components and an adult circulated during the small groups or independent work in 67%.

Among the classes that implemented the writing component, over half (57%) asked students to use evidence to support their writing and 46% reminded students to use defensible spelling strategies or a glossary/dictionary. Less than two thirds (64%) of observed classes provided students with support such as sentence framers, starters or word banks.

Across all components, it is expected that adults circulate during Partners/Triads/Small groups or Independent work to provide individual support, review student work, or give feedback. This was observed during 87% of Grade 3 Reading components when applicable (i.e., groupings were used), 67% of applicable Language components, and 77% of applicable writing components.



Observation Results: Grade 3

Observed Items During Speaking and Learning Component

Speaking and Learning Component: Introduction (N=29)	Yes, as directed in the guide	Yes, but not per the guide	No
Introduced story	83%	17%	0%
Connected to previous learning	75%	18%	7%
Briefly reviewed vocabulary	93%	7%	0%

Speaking and Learning Component: Read Aloud (N=29)	Yes
Text read as written <i>*In seven classes, the CKLA recording of the story was played</i>	100%
Used Digital Book	86%
Used Physical Book or Image Cards	7%
Used Both Digital and Physical Images	7%

Notes. The number of observations (N =) reflects only those classrooms where the lesson component was prescribed by the teacher lesson guide.



Findings

During the Speaking and Learning component in Grade 3 classes, introducing the story (83%) and reviewing vocabulary words (93%) were observed in most classrooms as outlined in the lesson guide. In over three fourths (75%) of the classes, teachers also made connections to previous learning.

In the Grade 3 classrooms where a story was read aloud (i.e., the Read Aloud) during the Speaking and Learning component, all were observed reading the text as written (seven classes played the recording of the story).

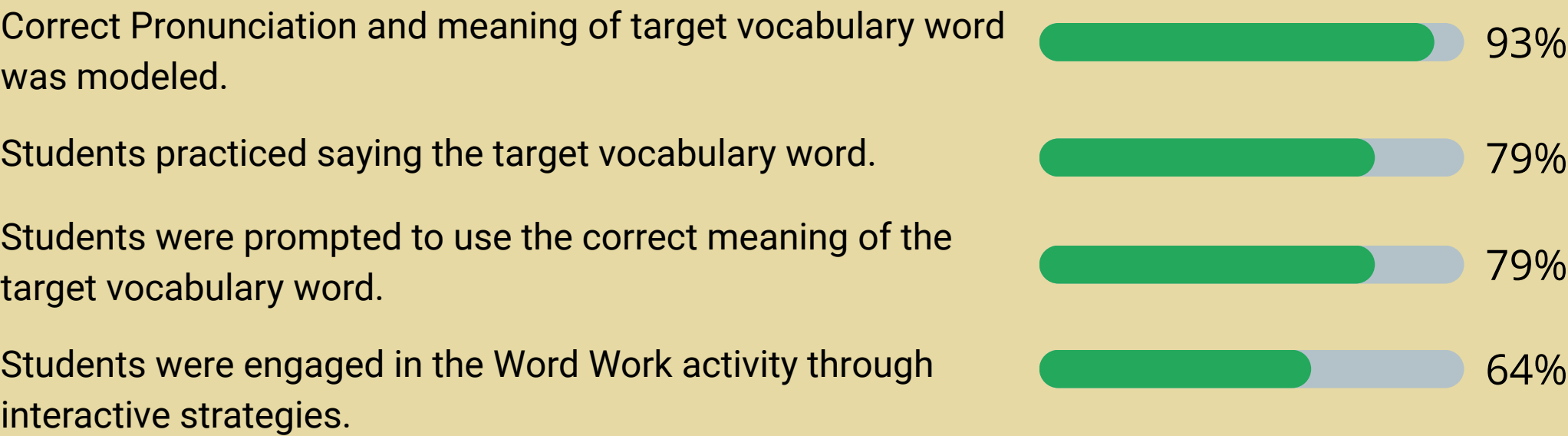
During the Read Aloud, a digital book was used in the majority of observed classrooms (86%), compared to two classrooms that used a physical book or image cards (7%) or a combination of digital and physical images.



Observation Results: Grade 3

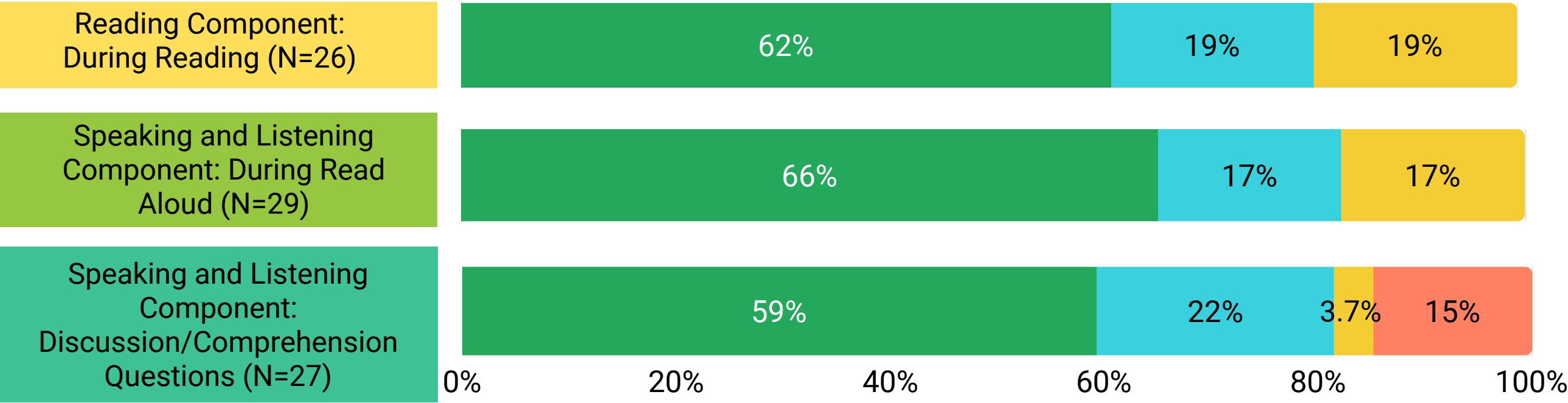
Observed Items During Speaking and Learning Component

Word Work Component (N=14)



Asked Questions about Text from the Guide

● Asked all of the Questions ● Asked some of the questions ● Asked different questions ● No Questions Asked



Notes. The number of observations (N =) reflects only those classrooms where the lesson component was prescribed by the teacher lesson guide. This total varies because not all lesson components are included in every lesson.



Findings

During lessons that implemented the Word Work component, nearly all (93%) modeled the correct pronunciation and meaning of the target word. Most (79%) had students practice saying the word and prompted students to use the correct meaning of the word. Over half (64%) engaged in an interactive strategy—primarily call and response.

In more than half of the observed Grade 3 lesson components (59%–66%), teachers asked students all of the questions in the lesson guide and in approximately two fifths (17%–22%), teachers asked some of the questions. During the Reading and Speaking and Listening Components, two fifths (19% and 17%) of teachers asked different questions that were not in the lesson guide.



Survey Results: Teachers

Characteristics of Teacher Respondents



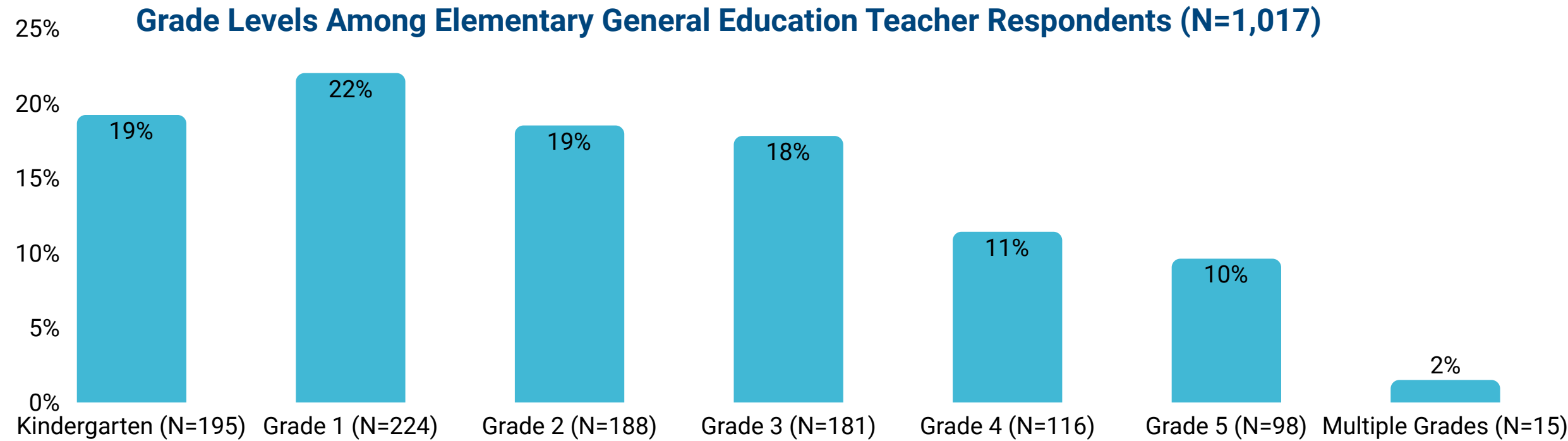
Findings

Of the total 1,090 classroom teachers who responded to the survey, 1,017 were Kindergarten through Grade 5 general education teachers and 73 were special education teachers (classroom teachers vs. home school model special education teachers). Among general education teachers who responded to the survey, each grade from Kindergarten through Grade 3 was represented by approximately 20% of the respondents, while about 10% taught Grade 4 and another 10% taught Grade 5.

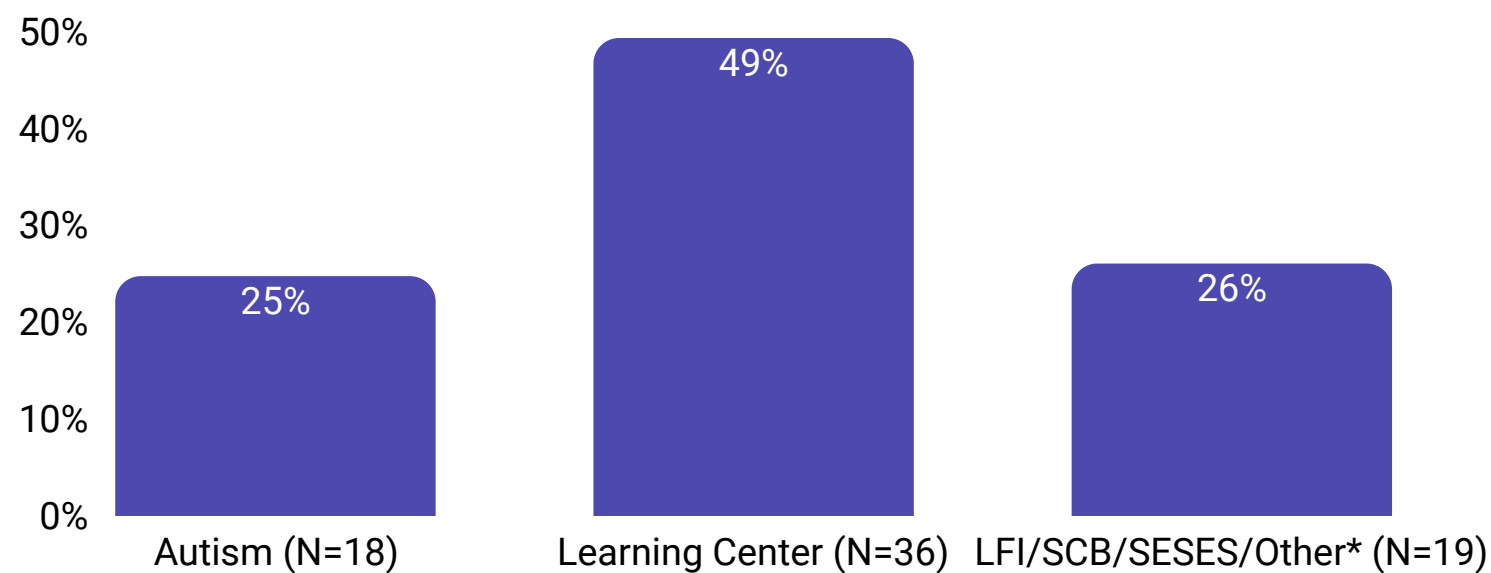
Among the 73 special education classroom teachers, nearly half (49%) taught in a learning center, while 25% taught in Autism-specific classrooms and 26% taught in other special education settings (i.e., Learning for Independence Services (LFI), School Community-based Services (SCB), and Social Emotional Special Education Services (SESES) classrooms).

On average, the teacher survey respondents had 14.5 years of elementary teaching experience.

Survey data were also collected from 91 school reading specialists.



Program Structure Among Special Education Teacher Respondents (N=73)



*LFI=Learning for Independence Services, SCB=School Community-based Services, SESES=Social Emotional Special Education Services

14.5

**Average Years Teaching
Elementary School**



Survey Results: Staff

Professional Learning Participation

Professional Learning Attendance	General Education Teachers (1,017)	Special Education Teachers (N=73)	Reading Specialists (N=91)
The two-day CKLA summer professional learning session.* - REQUIRED	92%	82%	96%
The one-day CKLA summer professional learning for Reading Specialists. - REQUIRED	na	na	86%
School-based professional learning provided by the Reading Specialist or another staff member like the Staff Development Teacher.	51%	38%	na
Job-embedded professional learning provided by Reading Specialist or another school staff member.	32%	22%	na
Job-embedded professional learning provided by central office ELA team members.	na	na	65%
School-based professional learning provided by central office ELA team members.	22%	23%	56%
Other system-wide professional learning provided by central office ELA team members.	11%	11%	66%

*Additionally, 1.4% of general education teachers and 4.1% of special education teachers attended one day of the required training, and 1.6% and 2.7%, respectively, attended a make-up session.

Notes. na = not applicable.



Findings

Nearly all Kindergarten through Grade 5 general education teachers (92%) and school reading specialists (96%) who responded to the survey, attended the required summer training which kicked off the Amplify CKLA curriculum rollout to elementary schools. Most special education teachers who responded to the survey (82%), attended the required two-day training and most reading specialists attended the additional required day of training for that role (86%).

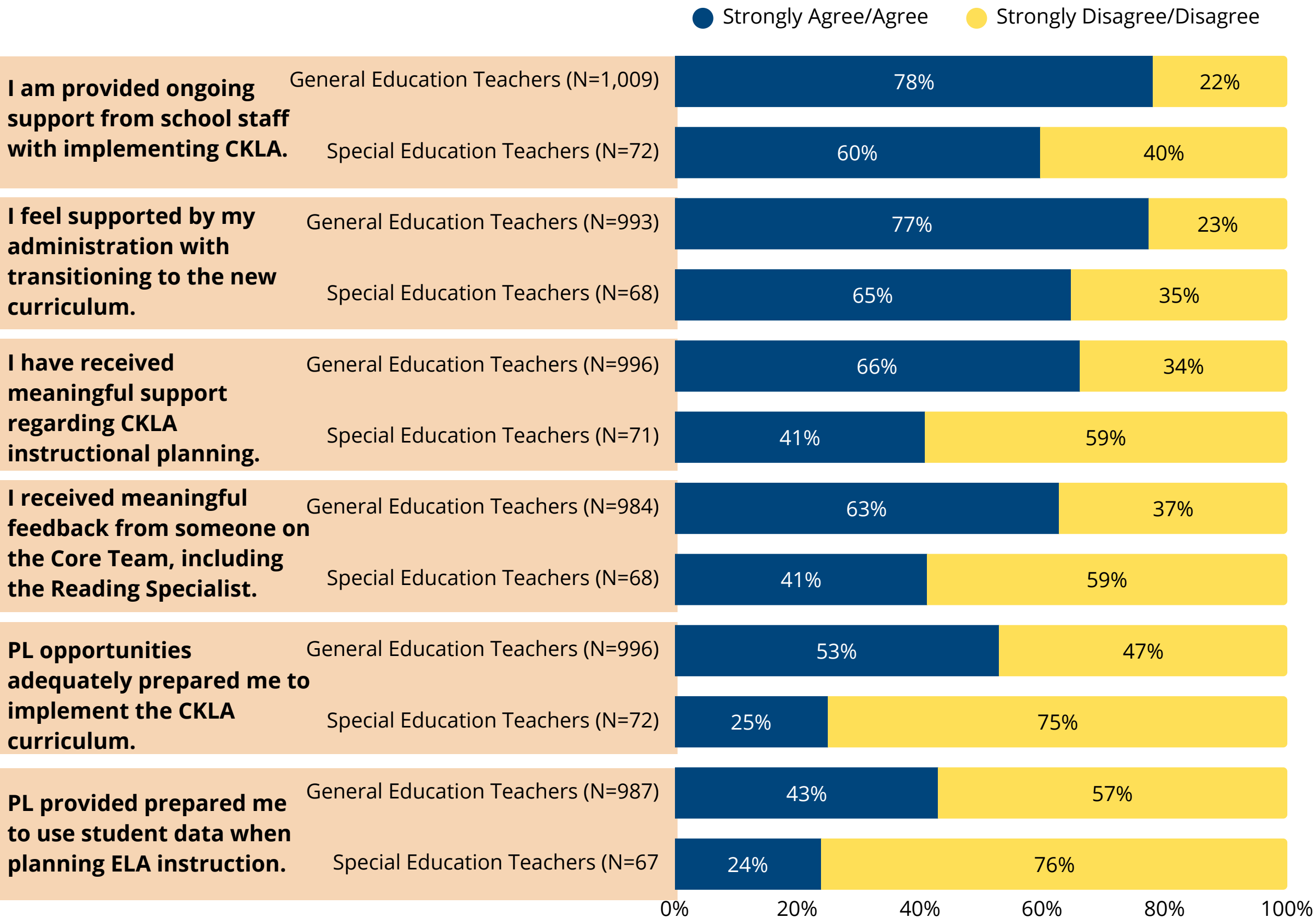
Approximately one half of general education teachers (51%) and 38% of special education teachers reported they attended a school-based Professional Learning (PL). Less than one third of general education teachers (32%) and special education teachers (22%) reported they attended job-embedded PL provided by a Reading Specialist or other school staff member. Less than one fourth attended school-based PL provided by central office ELA team members.

Additionally, 65% of reading specialists reported they attended job-embedded PL (65%), school-based PL (56%), and other system-wide PL (66%) provided by the central office ELA team members.



Survey Results: Teachers

Professional Learning and Support



Findings

Survey results on PL and support for implementing CKLA revealed some areas with higher levels of agreement than others, with special education teachers reporting lower levels of support overall. Not all teachers responded to every item; therefore the N varies by item.

Among general education teachers, the highest ratings were for ongoing support and administrative leadership: 78% agreed (strongly agreed and agreed) they received ongoing support from school staff, and 77% felt supported by their administration.

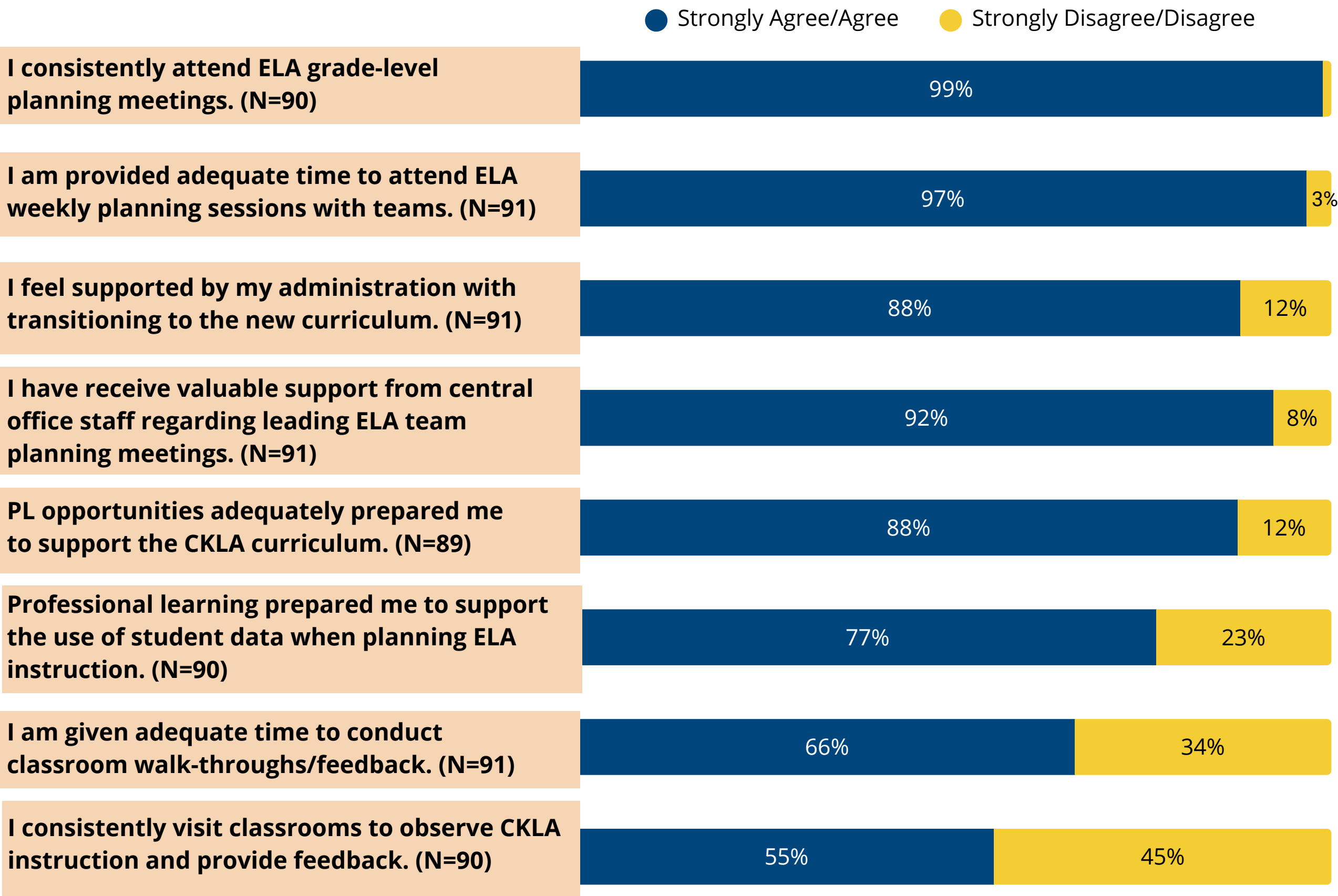
More than two thirds (66%) reported supported with instructional planning, and more than half agreed they received meaningful feedback from their school's Core Team (63%). Just over half agreed to being adequately prepared to implement the curriculum (53%) while fewer (43%) agreed professional learning had prepared them to use student data for ELA.

Special education teachers had the highest amount of agreement with 65% agreeing they were supported by their administration. Sixty percent said they received ongoing support from school staff, 41% agreed they were supported with instructional planning and received meaningful feedback from the Core Team. However, only 25% agreed they were adequately prepared to implement the CKLA curriculum, and 24% agreed PL prepared them to use student data, with three fourths disagreeing (strongly disagreed and disagreed) with both.



Survey Results: Reading Specialists

Professional Learning and Support



Findings

Reading specialists had high levels of agreement about professional learning and support for implementing CKLA, with several areas of strength and a few ongoing challenges. Nearly 100% agreed (strongly agreed and agreed) they consistently attended ELA grade-level planning meetings (99%) and 97% agreed they were provided adequate time to attend weekly planning sessions with teams. Perceptions of administrative support also had strong agreement, with 88% feeling supported by their administration during the transition to the new curriculum. Most agreed they received valuable assistance in leading ELA team meetings (92%), 88% agreed that PL opportunities adequately prepared them to support CKLA implementation, and 77% agreed they were prepared to use student data in ELA planning.

Two-thirds (66%) of the reading specialists agreed they were given adequate time to conduct classroom walk-throughs and feedback, with 34% disagreeing (strongly disagreed and disagreed). Similarly, only 55% agreed they consistently visit classrooms to observe CKLA instruction, while 43% disagreed. Overall, reading specialists reported being well prepared and supported, though limited time for classroom observation and feedback may have impacted their ability to fully support implementation.

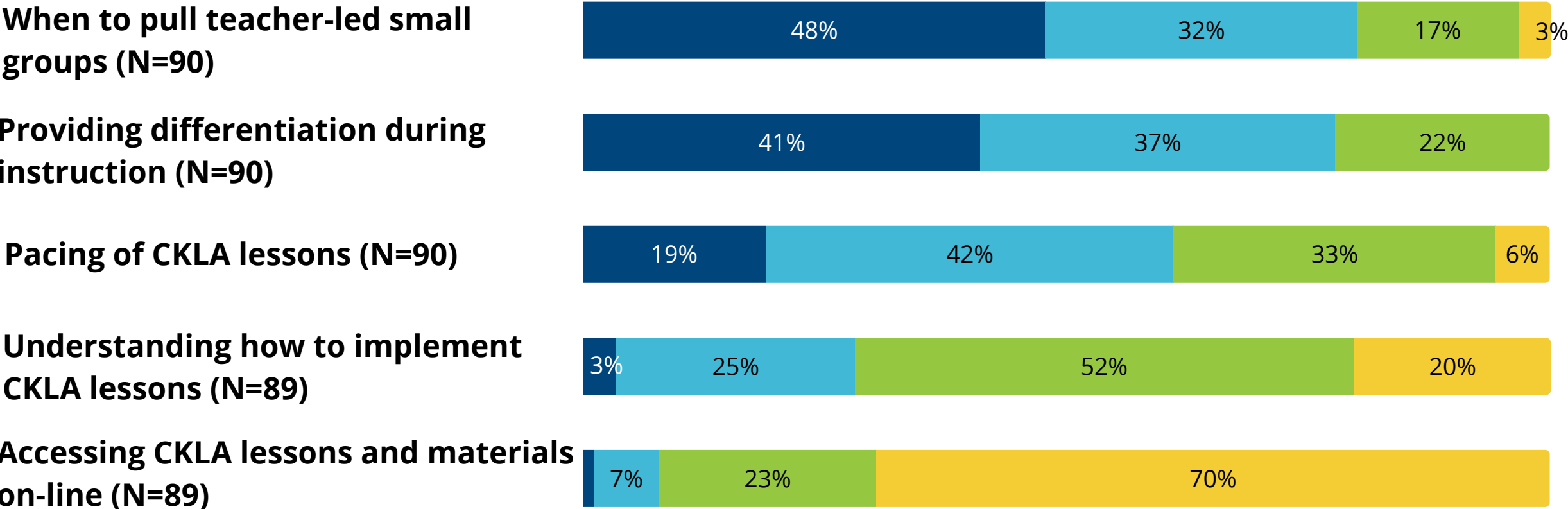


Survey Results: Reading Specialists

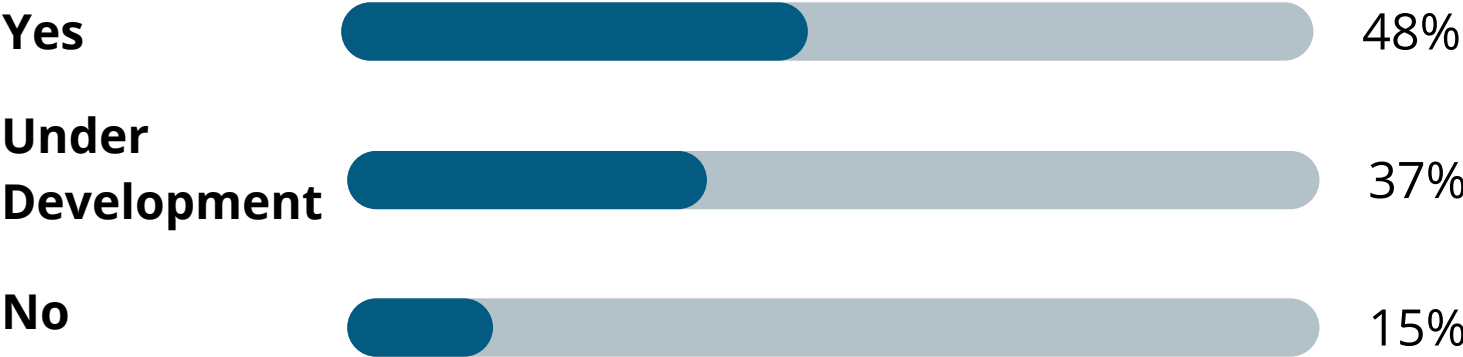
Teacher Support Needed and School Professional Learning Plan

Teacher CKLA Support Needed

● Extensive Support ● Moderate Support ● Some Support ● No Support



Does your school have a professional learning plan to support CKLA implementation? (N=88)



Findings

Most reading specialists reported that teachers need extensive (48%) or moderate (32%) support with knowing when to pull teacher-led small groups. Similarly, 41% indicated that teachers need extensive or moderate (37%) support in determining when to provide differentiation during instruction. Additionally, reading specialists reported that teachers need extensive (19%) or moderate (42%) support with pacing CKLA lessons.

Fewer than one third of reading specialists reported that teachers need extensive (3%) or moderate (25%) support with understanding how to implement CKLA lessons. Only 1% and 7% reported that teachers needed extensive or moderate support, respectively, in accessing online lessons and materials.

Schools were encouraged to develop a professional learning plan to support CKLA implementation. Less than half (48%) of reading specialists reported their school had a professional learning plan to support CKLA implementation, 37% said it was under development, and 15% said there was no plan.

Theme	Description	General Education Teachers (N=390)	Reading Specialists (N=62)	Special Education Teachers (N=40)
Professional Learning and Supports/Guidance	Continued PL, Support/Guidance, and Suggestions for Approaches. General education teachers and reading specialists expressed a desire for ongoing, follow-up professional learning with modeled lessons and practical guidance. Some suggested a district-wide shared folder with adapted materials and best practices. Many emphasized the need for clear implementation guidance and sufficient physical materials during future trainings, which many found missing from the initial summer training. Staff also want stronger curriculum support from administrators, reading specialists, and central office staff, with knowledgeable contacts who can provide timely, effective guidance. Special education teachers expressed that they received limited support and require more overall assistance.	27%	10%	18%
	Differentiation and Scaffolding. Staff want guidance on how to differentiate and support students performing below grade level, students receiving special education services, and Emergent Multilingual Learners. They also desire resources such as response templates and visuals to support scaffolding instruction. Reading specialists also want guidance on how to support teachers with meeting the individual needs of their students and adapting the curriculum, as well as guidance for ELD teachers and coteaching models. Special education teachers also want guidance on how to adapt the curriculum to meet their needs, including resources and materials.	22%	37%	77%
	Pacing. Staff want guidance on how to best to implement the pacing guide, as well as a modified pacing guide, and what lessons to prioritize or skip. Some reading specialists specifically pointed to difficulties with the pacing in Grade 3. Additionally, special education teachers want a modified pacing calendar that is more appropriate to their students.	12%	23%	14%
	Writing. General education teachers and reading specialists expressed a need for support and training on implementing writing instruction, including expectations and grading.	10%	15%	<10%
	Other training topics including: understanding Skills, tips on raising Student Engagement, CKLA Boost, new Reading Specialist training, co-teaching, Enrichment	11%	23%	<10%



Survey Results: Open-Ended Themes

Needed Resources, Professional Learning, or Supports

Theme	Description	General Education Teachers (N=390)	Reading Specialists (N=62)	Special Education Teachers (N=40)
Availability of Instructional Materials	Lesson Materials. Teachers remarked that they spent much of their own money on needed supplies for lessons, were left to obtain their own materials, and were short on student books. Specific needs included: lesson materials (e.g., Light and Sound Unit and Research Unit); additional readers and activity books; visuals; Knowledge Wall/Anchor Chart materials, and Vocabulary Cards). Reading specialists added that they need access to hardcopies of teacher guides for planning and walk-throughs. Special Education teachers want adapted materials, which is captured under differentiation and scaffolding.	18%	13%	-
	Foundational Skills Resources. Teachers stated that they need more explicit instruction for teaching foundational skills and phonics. Some also remarked that they prefer the phonics curriculum Really Great Reading	10%	-	-
Assessments	Staff need clearer guidance on assessment administration and grading, a decrease in the number of assessments, more efficient processes—such as digitized assessments and automated scoring in Performance Matters (PM), and better rubrics and support for managing grading time. Reading specialists also want to additional support with how to use data for planning.	14%	19%	<10%
Time	Planning. Teachers noted a need for more individual and team planning time. Specific suggestions included: reinstating quarterly planning days with substitutes; extending planning time on half-days every marking period; focusing on how to make the lessons accessible rather than reading the teachers guide; and avoiding premature Lesson Spotlight planning. Some reading specialists also pointed to time needed to perform their role and less time on other school tasks.	12%	10%	<10%
	Intervention, Reteach, Practice, Small Groups. Teachers pointed to a need for more time for intervention, practice, and reteaching, including time for small group instruction and additional pausing days.	10%	<10%	<10%

Notes. Individual responses may align to more than one theme.



Survey Results: Illustrative Quotes

Needed Resources, Professional Learning, or Supports

Professional Learning and Support

General Education Teachers

Reading Specialists

Special Education Teachers

“Advise [us] on how to reach all students, particularly EMLs and special education students in a class of 26 that also includes above grade level students with only one teacher.”

“Guidance on how to implement the curriculum in the amount of time provided. Guidance on how to merge lessons or standards as necessary

“ALL elementary teachers should be required to take LETRS. It has given me a solid understanding of the skills I am teaching and WHY this curriculum is designed the way it is. I have spoken with veteran teachers who have NOT taken LETRS that are confused...”

“There has not been enough focus on prioritizing content and instructional decisions based on individual student, class, and school data. I hope that this is the next tier of PD next year.

“How to modify it for special education because it is NOT appropriate for those who are working below grade level at ALL -----
The trainings we attended never felt like they supported special education.

Availability of Instructional Materials

“Making and printing all of the vocabulary cards, anchor charts, and additional required materials took/takes a tremendous amount of time.

“We need enough books so that every child has a book to read. It would have been nice to have enough materials for all students in the classroom.

“CKLA requires a lot of additional materials. Some lessons require that we go out and get them ourselves. It would be very helpful if classroom teacher received a kit for each unit that contained some of the most engaging/versatile materials for that unit.

“Access to paper copies of teacher's guides would allow reading specialists to make notes to support team discussions. Reading seven sets of plans (25-25 pages each) on a screen each week creates a tremendous amount of eye strain

“I would like to see a version that was geared towards Special Education students. I would like to see slides, and student copies of the activity books for the Language studio resources.

Assessments and Planning Time

“I think it would be helpful to have the assessments digitized. It takes so much of my time to grade and input all of the tests multiple times into the spreadsheet and then into PM.

“Please provide assessment rubrics for easy grading.

Streamline the scoring process for CKLA assessments, the current guidance is clunky and hard to understand. There must be a better way to organize that information.

“More time for pausing point days to practice skills

We need training, resources and time in our day to provide these students with reading instruction that actually meets our goal of teaching them how to read.

“PLEASE decrease the number of required CKLA assessments next year. It is taking so much instructional time...Aside from the instructional time lost, we can make better instructional decisions based on what our students need if we aren't giving a long countywide assessment every few weeks.

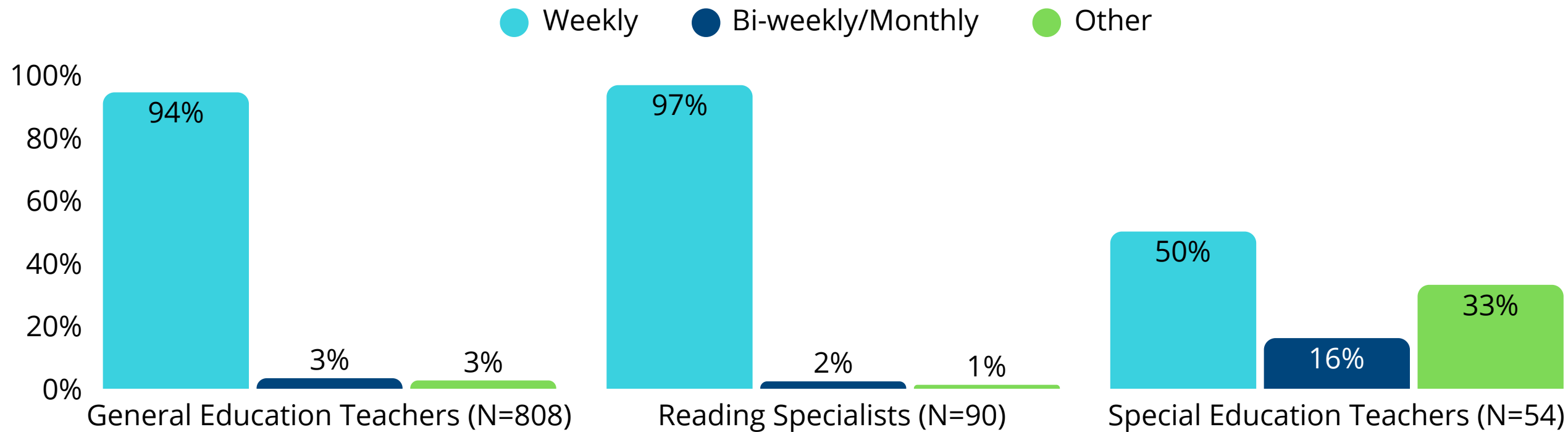
“Assessments modified to include visual answer choices for students who are non-verbal or have limited verbal skills, assessments with reduced answer choices for students whose IEPs include this,....



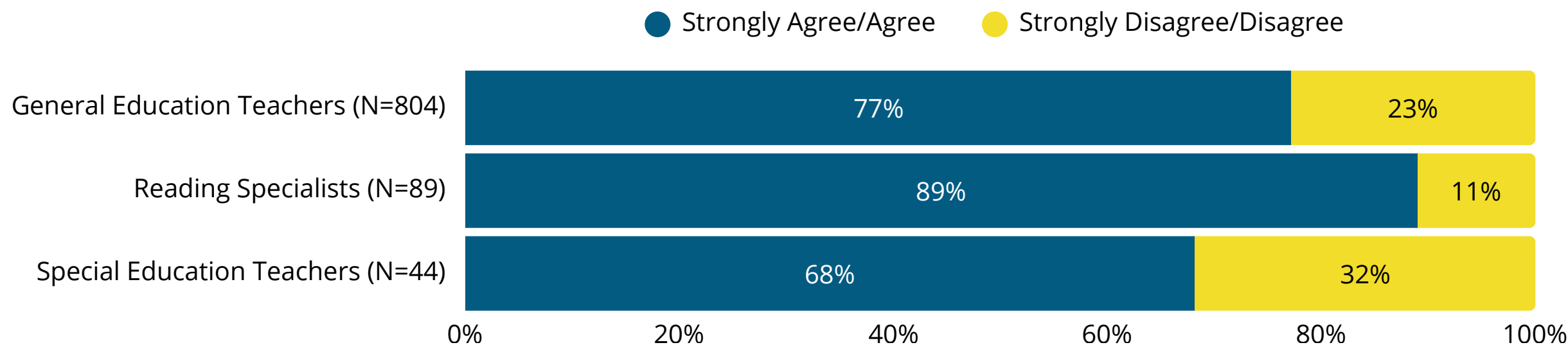
Survey Results: Staff

Collaborative Planning Meetings

Participation in Grade-level Team Collaborative Planning Meetings for ELA



Rich Conversations with Meaningful Planning Occur During Grade-Level Team Planning Meetings



Findings

Classroom teachers (general education and special education) and reading specialists were asked how often they participated in a grade-level collaborative planning meeting for ELA. Nearly all general education teachers (94%) and reading specialists (97%) reported they attended weekly planning meetings. Among the 54 of 73 special education teachers responding to the question, 50% reported attending weekly planning meetings and 33% indicated “other”, with many remarking that their special education classes are not on the same pacing schedule as the grade level classes.

Teachers and reading specialists were also asked their level of agreement to the statement, “Overall, we have rich conversations surrounding meaningful instructional planning during our grade-level team planning meetings.” Most agreed (strongly agreed or agreed) to this statement: 77% of general education teachers, 89% of reading specialists, and 68% of special education teachers.



Survey Results: Teachers

Planning: Preparing for instruction

General Education Teachers

● Extremely/Very Well ● Not Well/Not Well at All

Independently prepare for instruction in the classroom. (N=799)

79%

21%

Independently prepare for collaborative planning meetings. (N=797)

74%

26%

Collaboratively plan for the unit instruction with my grade-level team. (N=793)

79%

21%

Collaborate with my grade-level team on a Spotlight Lesson. (N=744)

67%

33%

Plan for Pausing Point days and knowledge building days. (N=782)

72%

28%

Review data points and discuss student performance with grade-level teams. (N=794)

66%

33%

Examine student work with my grade-level team. (N=788)

58%

42%



Findings

General education teachers were asked how well they could prepare for instruction. A large majority of general education teachers reported they could independently prepare for classroom instruction (79%) and collaboratively plan for unit instruction with their grade-level team (79%) extremely or very well.

Nearly three-quarters (74%) reported they could independently prepare for collaborative planning meetings, and 72% reported they could plan for Pausing Point and knowledge-building days extremely or very well.

Nearly two thirds of general education teachers indicated they collaborated on a Spotlight Lesson (67%) or reviewed data with their grade-level teams (66%) extremely or very well. Fewer general education teachers (58%) reported they could examine student work with their team extremely or very well.

Responses among special education teachers are not shown due to large proportions indicating not applicable or not responding to an item. Some remarked in a prior question that they are not on the same planning schedule.



Survey Results: Teachers

Planning: Usefulness of Collaborative Structures

General Education Teachers

● Extremely/Very Useful ● Not Useful/Not Useful at All

Planning for Pausing Point Days (N=743)

49%

51%

Examining Student Work (N=721)

49%

51%

Unit Prep (N=768)

44%

56%

Data Discussions (N=744)

42%

58%

Planning for Focused Instruction Time (FIT) (N=662)

33%

67%

Lesson Internalization (N=734)

28%

72%



Findings

General education teachers were asked how useful they found each of the collaborative planning structures developed and provided to support school-level teams in their planning.

General education teachers were split on the usefulness of the Pausing Point Days and Examining Student Work planning structures. About half (49%) reported Planning for Pausing Point Days and Examining Student Work extremely or very useful, while 51% reported each not useful or not useful at all.

Fewer than half of the general education teachers reported Unit Prep (44%) and Data Discussions (42%) to be extremely or very useful.

One third of general education teachers reported Planning for Focused Instruction Time (FIT) extremely or very useful, with 67% indicating it was not useful or not useful at all. Similarly, less than one third (28%) reported Lesson Internalization extremely or very useful; 72% rated it as not useful or not useful at all.

Responses among special education teachers are not shown due to large proportions indicating not applicable or not responding to an item. Some remarked in a prior question that they are not on the same planning schedule.



Survey Results: Reading Specialists

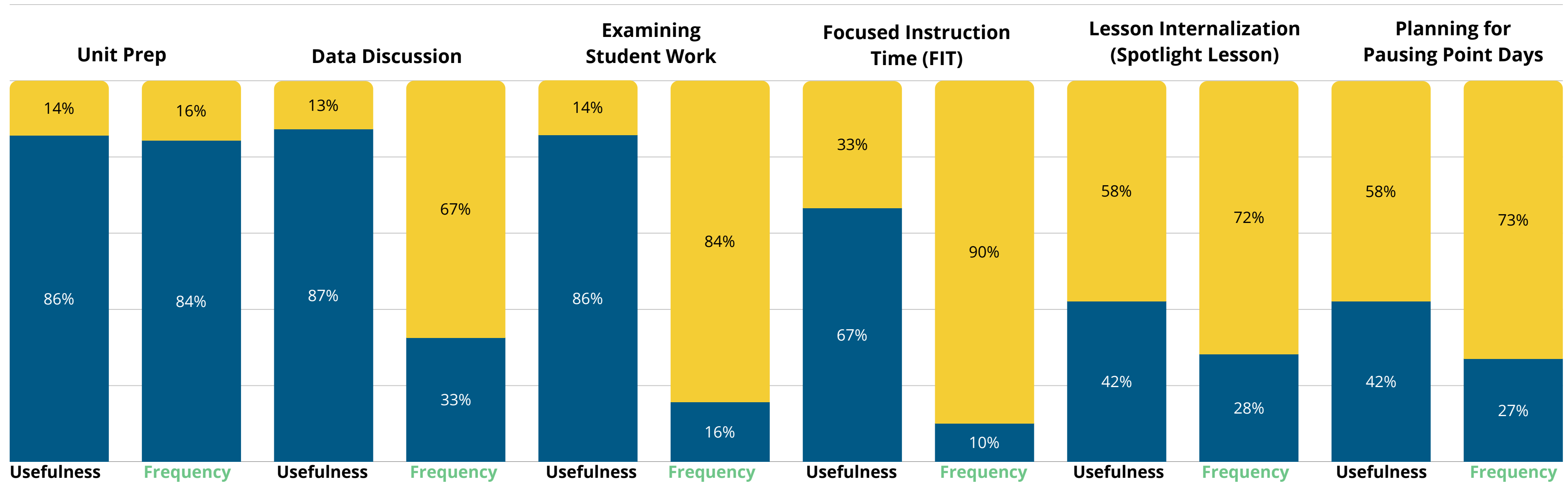
Planning: Frequency and Usefulness of Collaborative Structures

Usefulness

- Somewhat/Not Useful
- Extremely/Very Useful

Frequency

- Sometimes/Never
- Always/Most of the Time



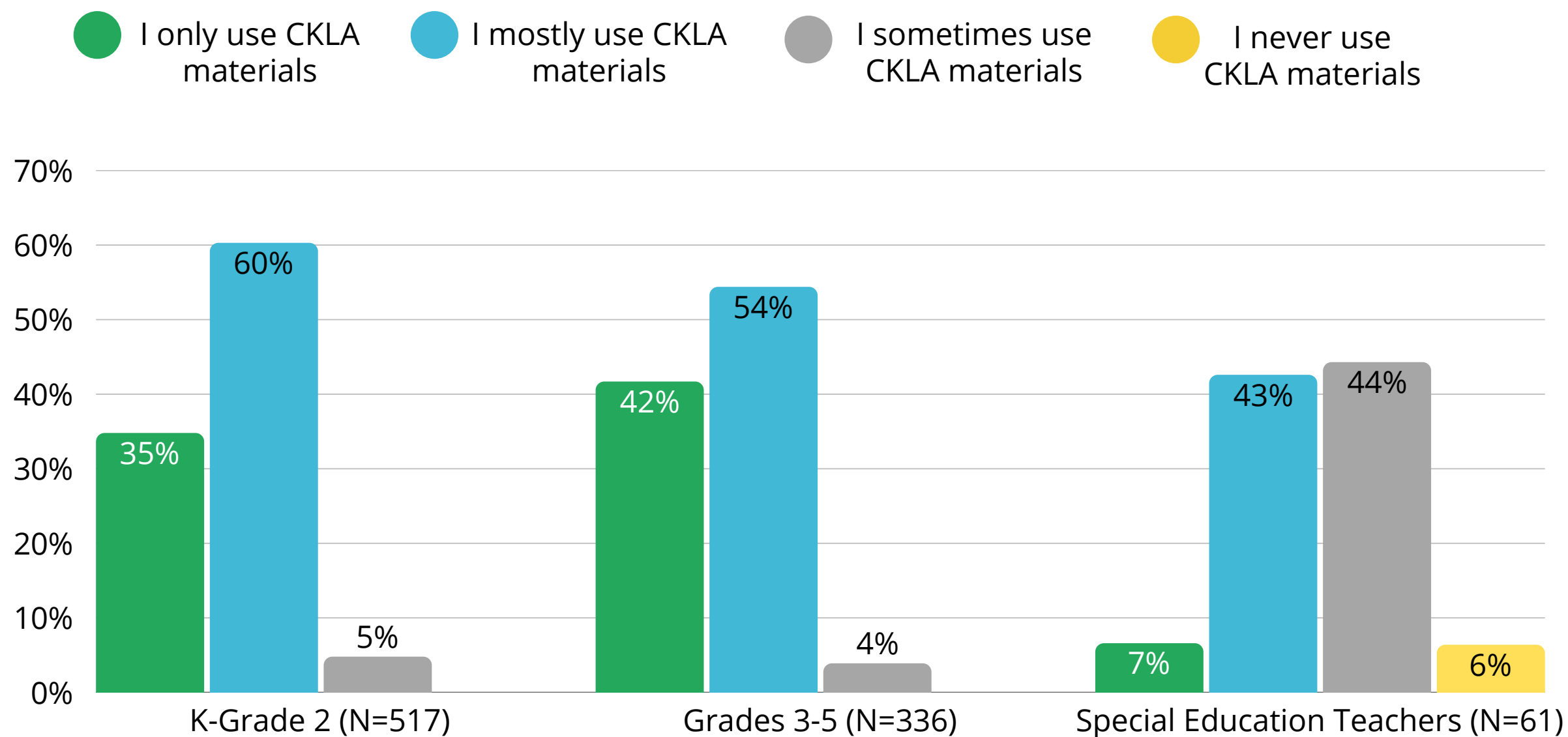
Findings

This graph illustrates reading specialists' perceptions of the usefulness and frequency of the provided collaborative planning structures. Unit Prep was rated the most useful structure, with 86% reporting it extremely or very useful and was the most commonly used structure, with 85% reporting it occurred always or most of the time. For the remaining structures, however, usefulness outpaced actual usage. The largest gap was seen in Examining Student Work, which 86% rated as extremely or very useful, yet only 16% reported using it always or most of the time. Similarly, Data Discussion was rated extremely or very useful by 87% of the specialists, but just 33% said it occurred always or most of the time. Focused Instruction Time (FIT) was reported extremely or very useful by 67%, but only 10% used it always or most of the time. Lesson Internalization and Planning for Pausing Point Days received the lowest usefulness ratings, with just 42% reporting them as extremely or very useful and occurred always or most of the time by only 27%–28% of specialists.



Survey Results: Teachers

Usage of CKLA Materials among Teachers



Findings

Nearly all Kindergarten through Grade 5 teachers reported using CKLA materials exclusively or mostly. Just over one third (35%) of Kindergarten through Grade 2 teachers and 42% of Grades 3–5 teachers reported using only CKLA materials, and another 60% and 54%, respectively, reported mostly using CKLA materials.

Just one half of special education teachers who responded to the survey reported they mostly use (43%) or only use (7%) CKLA materials in their classrooms; 44% reported they sometimes use CKLA materials.

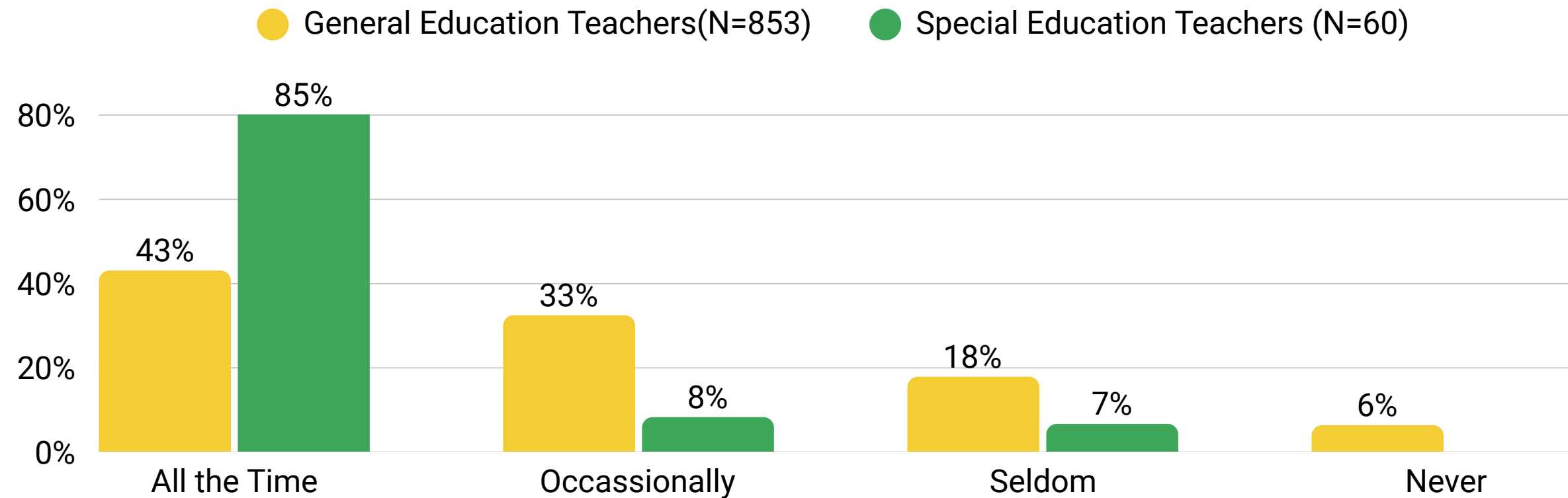
As reported earlier, among the 40 Kindergarten and 40 Grade 3 classroom observations, the majority of teachers displayed the lesson slides provided by CKLA (65% in Kindergarten, 75% in Grade 3). An additional 10%–15% used alternative slides, modified CKLA slides, or a combination.



Survey Results: Teachers

Adjustments to Resources and Teacher-led Small Groups

Frequency of adjustments to CKLA resources



Occasions when teacher-led small group instruction are incorporated.

● General Education Teachers (N=835)

I only incorporate teacher-led small groups **when students demonstrate a need** for extra support during the lesson.

47%

I **rotate pulling small groups** of students so that **everyone** gets teacher-led small group time.

21%

Other

32%



Findings

Almost three fourths of general education teachers who responded to the question, reported making formatting or content adjustments to CKLA resources either all the time (43%) or occasionally (33%). Among special education teachers who responded to the question, nearly all reported doing so, with 85% adjusting materials all the time and an additional 8% doing so occasionally.

With CKLA, an instructional shift was from rotating all students through teacher-led small groups to pulling only students who need additional support with the lesson, which may result in no teacher-led groups or very few. When asked about conducting teacher-led small groups, under half (47%) of general education teachers reported doing so when students demonstrate a need, while 21% rotate pulling small groups. In contrast, 53% of special education teachers who responded to the question, reported rotating through students.

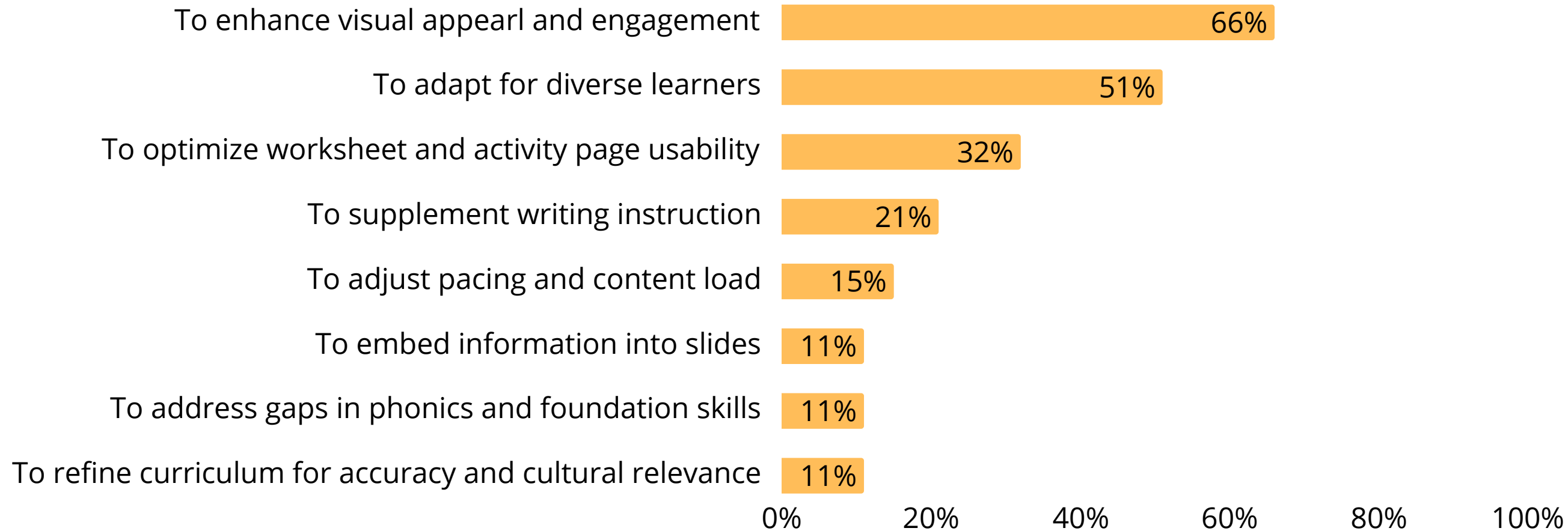
Notably, 32% of general education teachers selected "other". Most of the explanations included: no time during ELA block for the small groups; small groups were only implemented during FIT time or when lesson specifies; and being directed (source unspecified) not to incorporate small groups.



Survey Results: Teachers

Usage of CKLA Materials among Teachers

Reasons Adjustments made to CKLA materials among General Education Teachers (N=533)



Special education teachers shared examples of how they adapted materials for their diverse learners (N=56):

- Adding visual supports
- Simplify language and content
- Create new materials
- Align to IEP goals and accommodations
- Adjust pacing and increase repetition



Findings

Among the general education teachers who made adjustments to CKLA materials, they shared why they made adjustments. Two thirds (66%) reported they did so to enhance the visual appeal and engagement by adding images, videos, etc., and 51% reported doing so to adapt for diverse learners. Nearly one third (32%) reported they wanted to optimize the worksheet and activity page usability due to insufficient writing space, lack of lines, or cluttered appearance.

Special education teachers adjusted material to meet the needs of their learners. Examples included adding visual supports such as graphic organizers and images), simplifying language and content, creating new materials, aligning to IEP goals, and adjusting pacing and increasing repetition.



Survey Results: Teachers

Percentage Reporting CKLA Supplemental Materials Used and Activities During Pause Days

CKLA Supplemental Materials Used	Kindergarten to Grade 2 (N=613)	Grades 3–5 (N=401)	Special Education (N=73)
Pausing Point Suggestions and Activity Pages	62.0%	47.4%	12.3%
Enrichment Suggestions and Activity Pages	28.7%	21.4%	5.5%
Fluency Resources	25.3%	26.4%	11.0%
Handwriting Resources	20.9%	20.7%	16.4%
CKLA Remediation Guides-ARG/DERG	14.4%	7.7%	5.5%
ReadWorks Connections	10.0%	33.4%	5.5%
Intervention Toolkit	9.5%	8.5%	15.1%
Language Studio	6.4%	12.5%	31.5%
Other (e.g., Teachers pay Teachers, Unique Learning System (ULS), Really Great Reading (RGR), Boost, teacher created)	14.4%	12.0%	21.9%
Activities During Pausing Point Days	Kindergarten to Grade 2 (N=636)	Grades 3–5 (N=424)	Special Education (N=73)
Domain Review	69.0%	17.0%	12.0%
Catching Up	59.0%	66.0%	33.0%
Reteaching	48.0%	46.0%	45.0%
Skill Building	39.0%	33.0%	24.7%
Extending/Enrichment	36.0%	22.9%	6.8%
Knowledge Building	32.0%	29.0%	19.2%
Other (e.g., assessments, writing tasks, special events)	8.0%	8.3%	8.2%



Findings

The CKLA curriculum offered supplemental resources for planning, differentiation, enrichment, and intervention. The majority of Kindergarten through Grade 2 teachers (62%) and nearly half of Grades 3–5 teachers (47.4%) reported using Pausing Point Suggestions and Activity Pages. One third of Grades 3–5 teachers reported using ReadWorks Connections, and a similar share of special education teachers (31.5%) reported using the Language Studio.

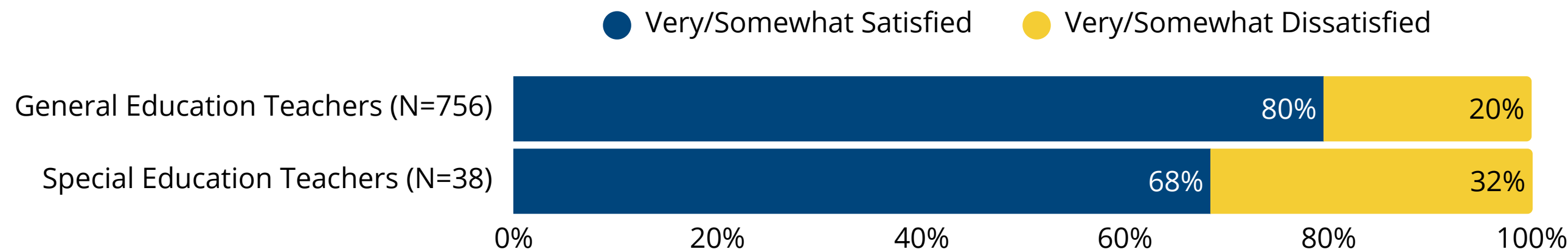
The curriculum pacing guide has built-in Pausing Days in which teachers are given the flexibility to use at their discretion. Teachers described their use of Pausing Point Days primarily for Domain Review (Kindergarten through Grade 2, 69%) and Catching Up (Kindergarten through Grade 2, 59%; Grades 3–5, 66%), with Reteaching emphasized by Grades 3–5 (46%) and special education teachers (45%). Nearly one third or less reported using Pausing Point Days for Extending/Enrichment or Skill Building.



Survey Results: Teachers

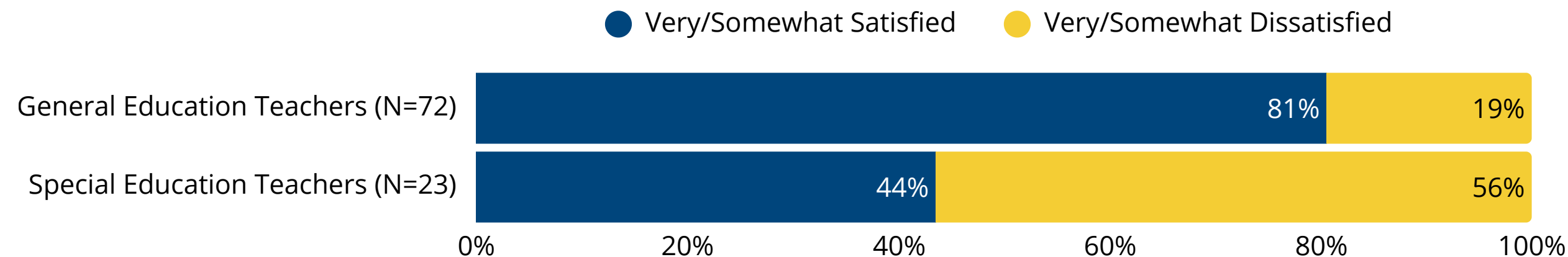
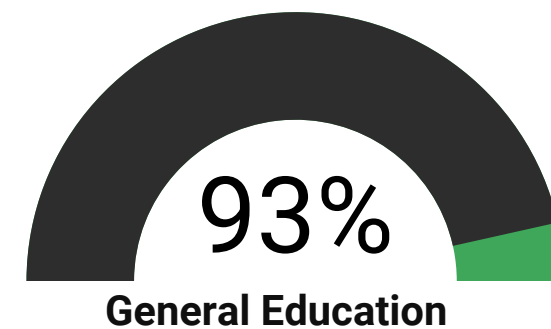
Satisfaction with Caregiver Resources and Language Studio

Satisfaction with the Amount of Embedded Caregiver Resources to Build Strong Home/School Partnerships



Level of Satisfaction with Language Studio

Percentage Don't Know/Skipped Item →



Findings

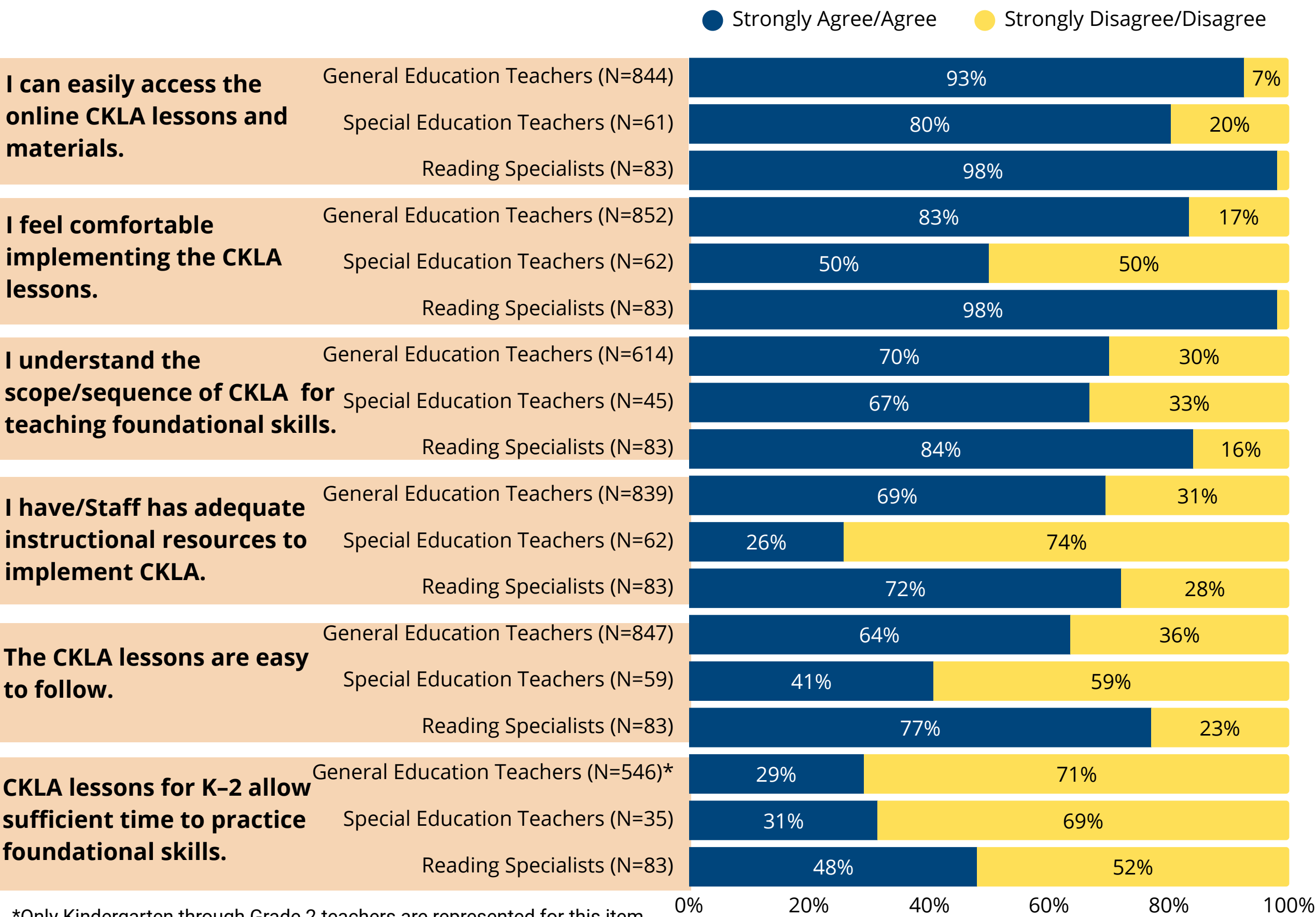
Teachers were asked about their satisfaction with the caregiver resources embedded in the CKLA curriculum and with the Language Studio component. Most general education teachers (80%) and a majority of special education teachers (68%) who responded to the question, reported being very or somewhat satisfied with the caregiver resources designed to strengthen home-school partnerships.

Notably, most teachers either did not respond or selected “I don’t know” to the item asking, “How satisfied are you with the Language Studio?” Only 7% of all respondents (72 of 1,017) and 32% of special education teachers (23 of 73) provided a response (93% and 68% skipped the question), suggesting limited familiarity or use of this resource. Among those who did respond, 81% of general education teachers reported being very or somewhat satisfied with Language Studio. The majority of special education teacher who responded, indicated they were dissatisfied (56%) with Language Studio.



Survey Results: Staff

Implementation of CKLA



*Only Kindergarten through Grade 2 teachers are represented for this item.



Findings

Teachers and reading specialists were asked to rate their level of agreement (strongly agreed or agreed) with various statements based on their experiences implementing CKLA.

There were high levels of agreement among general education teachers (93%) and reading specialists (98%) that they could easily access the online CKLA lessons and materials, and reported feeling comfortable implementing the lessons (83% and 98% respectively). Additionally, 70% of general education teachers and 84% of reading specialists agreed they understood the scope and sequence of the foundational skills lessons; 69% and 72%, respectively, agreed there were adequate instructional resources; and 64% and 77%, respectively, found the lessons easy to follow.

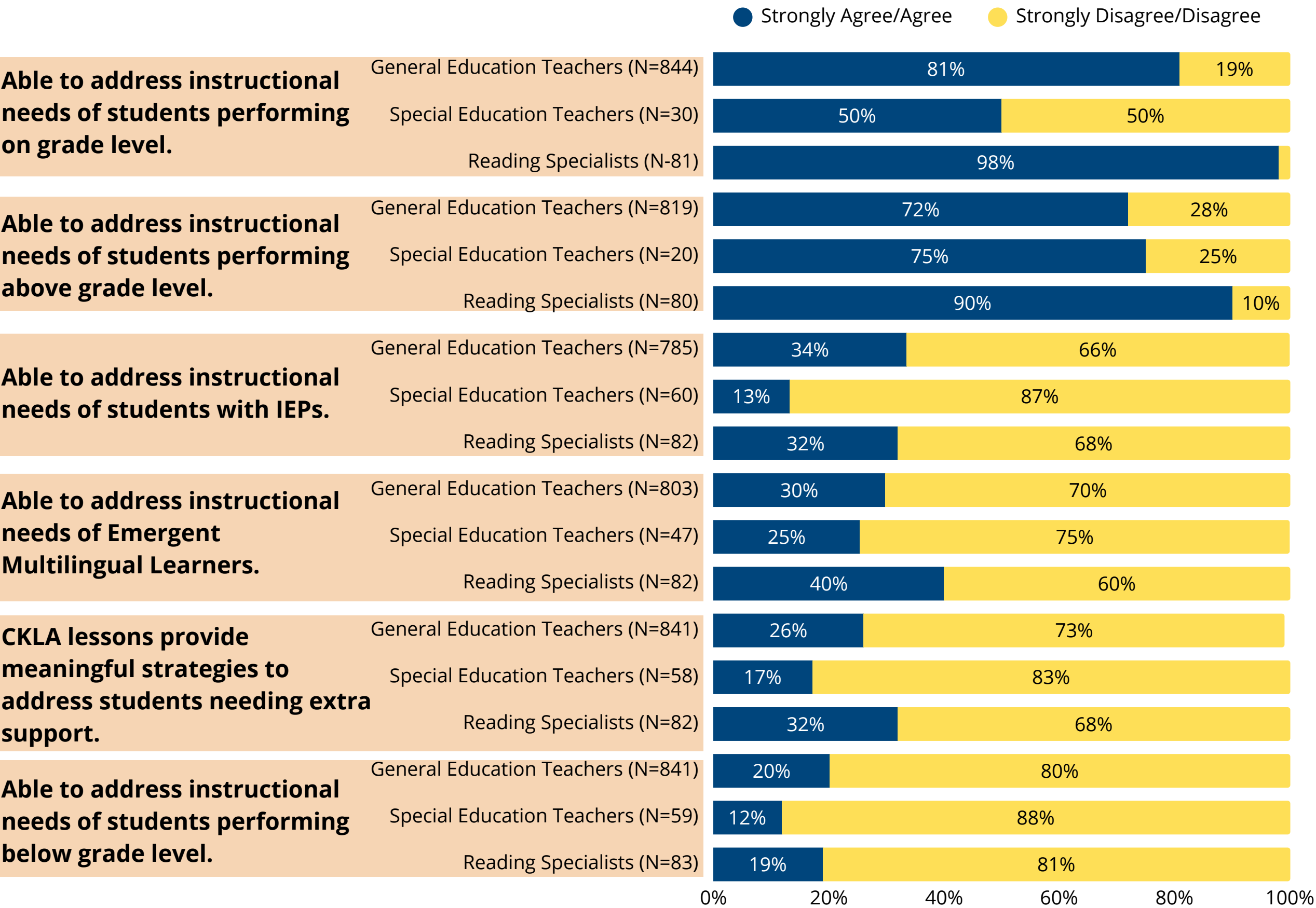
Only 29% of Kindergarten through Grade 2 general education teachers agreed that the lessons allowed sufficient time to practice foundational skills, while 48% of reading specialists agreed.

Most special education teachers (80%) agreed that they could easily access the online materials. However, only half agreed they were comfortable implementing CKLA lessons and 41% agreed the lessons were easy to follow. Notably, only 26% agreed that they had adequate resources and 31% agreed they had time to practice foundational skills.



Survey Results: Staff

Meeting Student Needs with CKLA Instruction



Findings

A large majority of general education teachers (81%) and nearly all reading specialists (98%) agreed (strongly agreed or agreed) that teachers were able to address the instructional needs of students performing on grade level using the CKLA curriculum. Additionally, 72% of general education teachers and 90% of reading specialists reported being able to meet the needs of students performing above grade level.

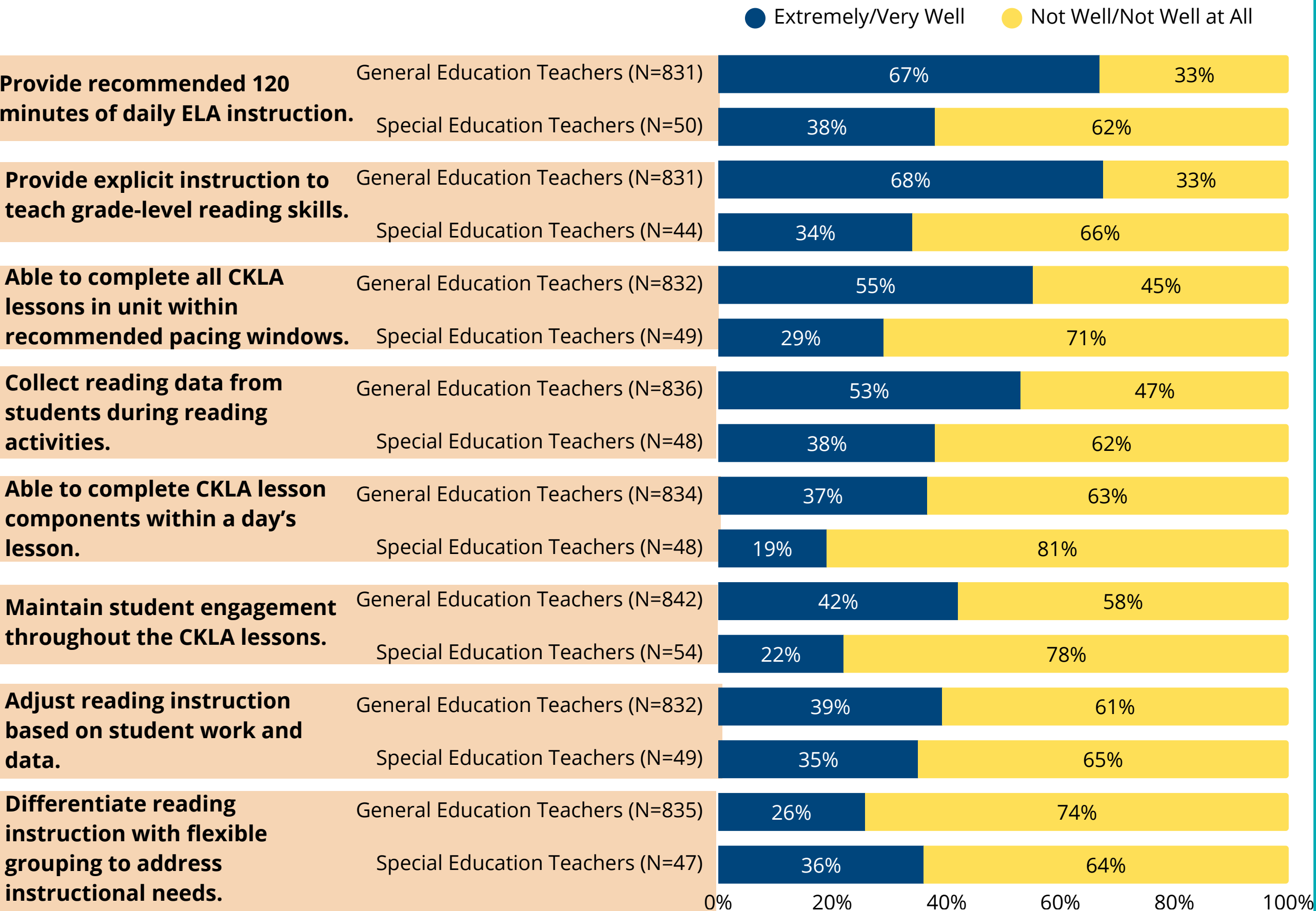
In contrast, only 34% of general education teachers and 32% of reading specialists agreed they were able to address the needs of students with IEPs; 30% and 40%, respectively, reported being able to support Emergent Multilingual Learners. Similarly, only 26% and 32%, respectively, agreed that lessons provided meaningful strategies to support students needing additional help. Even fewer (20% and 19%, respectively) agreed they were able to meet the needs of students performing below grade level.

While 75% of the special education teachers who responded to the question, agreed the lessons addressed the needs of students above grade level, only 50% agreed for students at grade level. Just 25% agreed they were able to address the needs of Emergent Multilingual Learners, and even fewer for students with IEPs (13%), or students below grade level (12%). Additionally, only 17% agreed the lessons provided meaningful strategies for students needing extra support.



Survey Results: Teachers

Ability to Implement CKLA



Findings

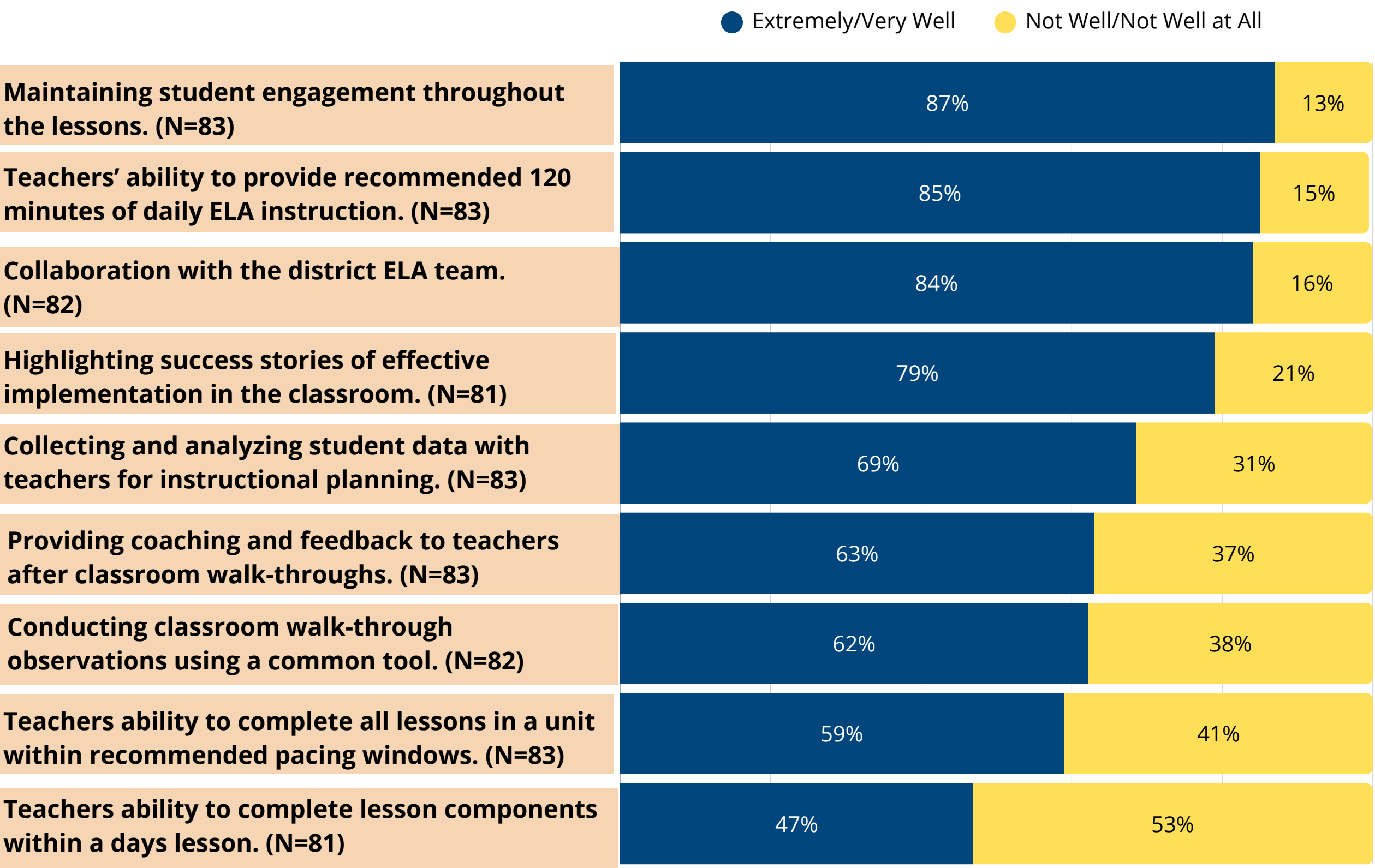
Teachers reported how well (extremely or very well) they were able to implement key curriculum tasks. About two-thirds of general education teachers indicated they were able to provide the recommended 120 minutes of daily ELA instruction (67%) and provide explicit instruction to teach grade-level reading skills (68%). Just over half (55%) reported they could complete all lessons within the pacing windows, and only 37% reported able to complete all the lesson components within a day's lesson. Further analysis revealed significantly fewer Grade 3–5 teachers were able to complete all lessons within the pacing window and all lesson components in a day, compared than K–2 teachers. Just over half (53%) indicated they were able to collect reading data and less than half reported they were able to maintain student engagement throughout the lessons (42%), and adjust reading instruction based on student work and data (39%). Only 26% reported they were able to differentiate reading instruction with flexible grouping.

Fewer special education teachers reported being able to implement these tasks extremely or very well. Just over one third indicated they were able to provide 120 minutes of daily ELA instruction (38%), provide explicit instruction to teach grade-level reading skills (34%), collect reading data (38%), adjust reading instruction based on student work and data (35%), and differentiate reading instruction with flexible grouping (36%). Less than one third reported they were able to complete all lessons within the pacing windows (29%), complete lesson components within a day's lesson (19%), and maintain student engagement throughout the lessons (22%).



Survey Results: Reading Specialists

Ability of Performing Role Tasks and Teacher Pacing



Findings

Reading specialists were asked how well (extremely well or very well) they could perform various tasks related to their roles and their perspective on student engagement and pacing. A large percentage reported teachers were able to maintain student engagement throughout the lessons (87%) and could provide the recommended 120 minutes of daily instruction (85%). Additionally, 84% reported they could collaborate with the district ELA team and 79% reported they could highlight success stories of effective implementation in classrooms.

Fewer specialists, although still the majority, reported being able to collect and analyze student data with teachers for instructional planning (69%), provide coaching and feedback after walk-throughs (63%), and conduct classroom walk-throughs using a common tool (62%) extremely or very well.

Reading specialists were also asked their perceptions regarding teachers pacing with CKLA. Only 59% indicated teachers could complete all lessons in a unit within the recommended pacing, while 41% reported this was not done well (not well or not well at all). Similarly, just 47% reported teachers could complete all lesson components within a day's lesson.



Survey Results: Teachers

Reported Overall Student Engagement



High: Almost all students (80% or more) are actively engaged

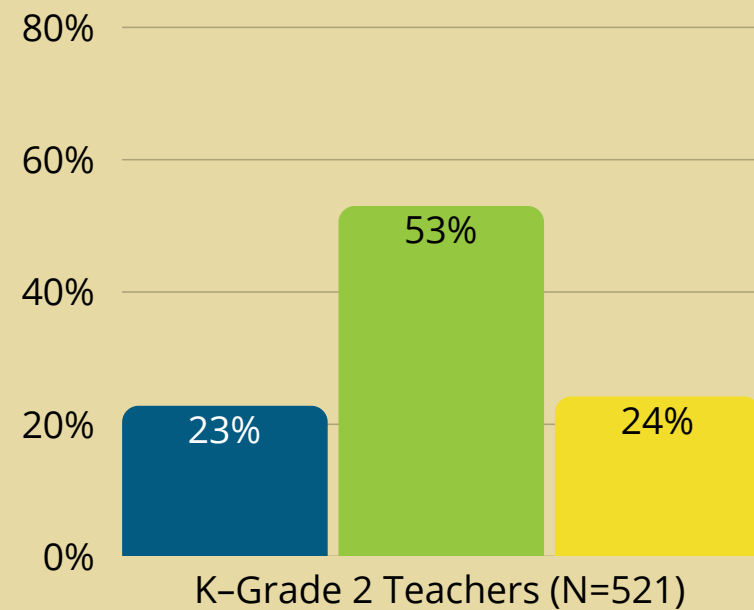


Moderate: Most students (50%–79%) are actively engaged.

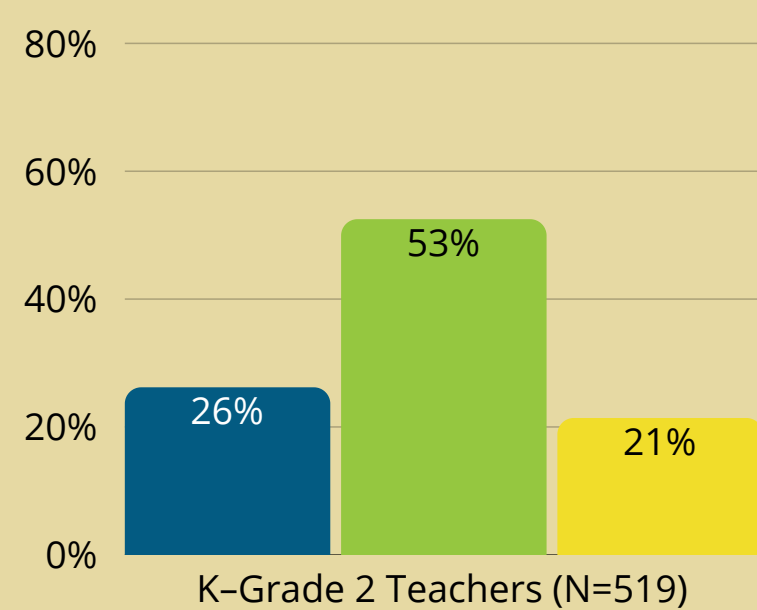


Low: Less than 50% are actively engaged.

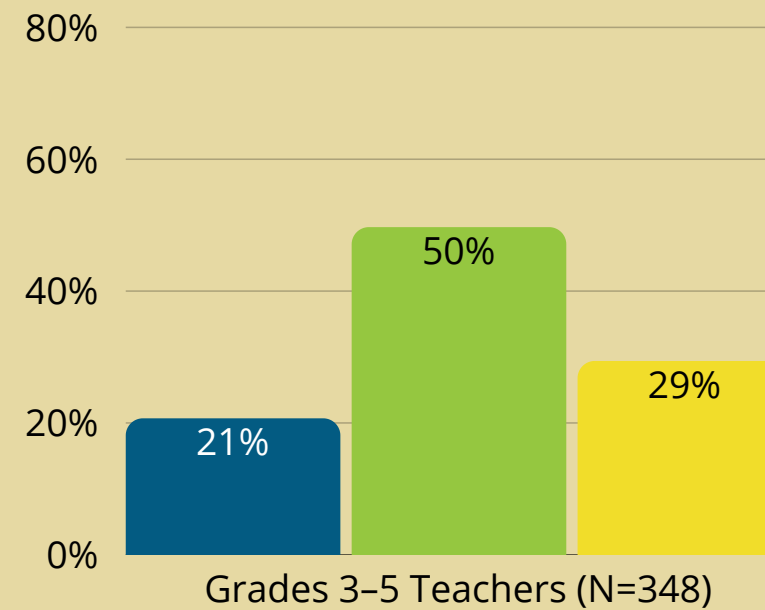
During K–Grade 2 Skills Strand Lesson



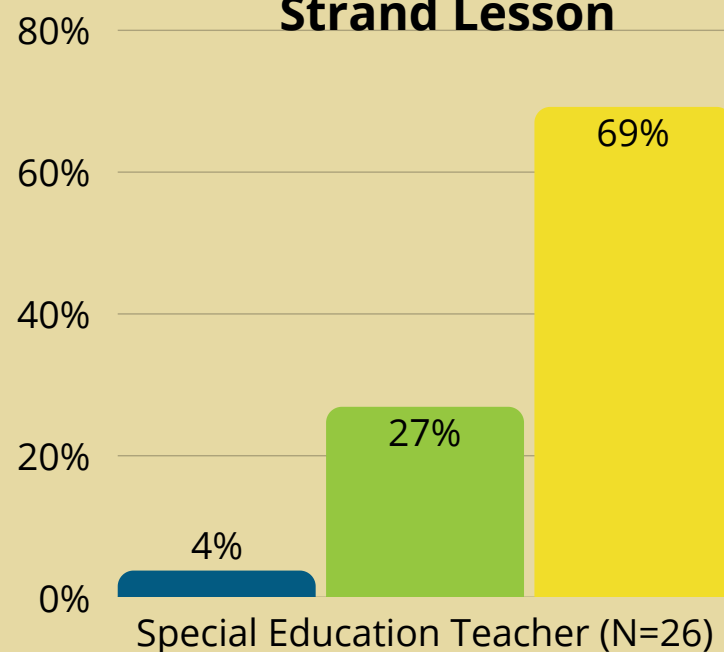
During Grades K–Grade 2 Knowledge Strand Lesson



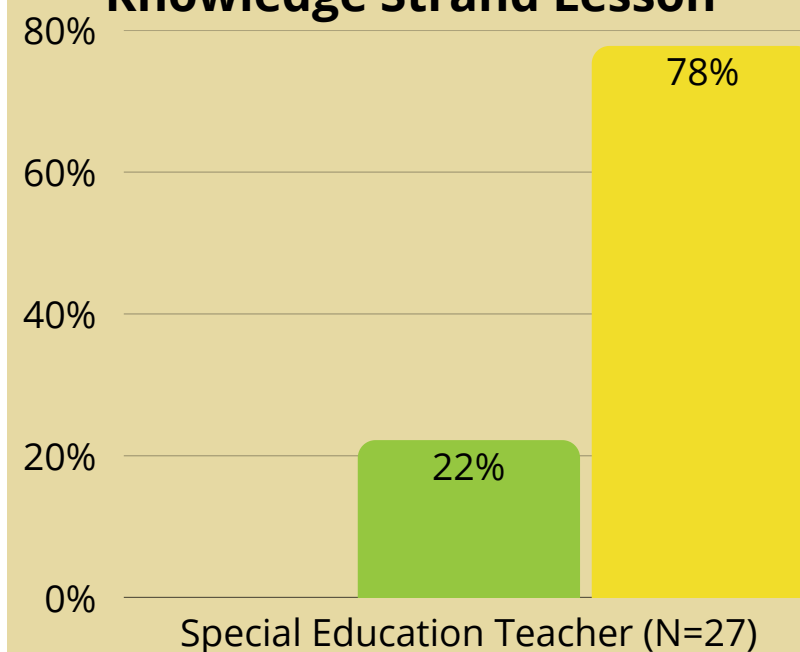
During Grades 3–5 Lesson



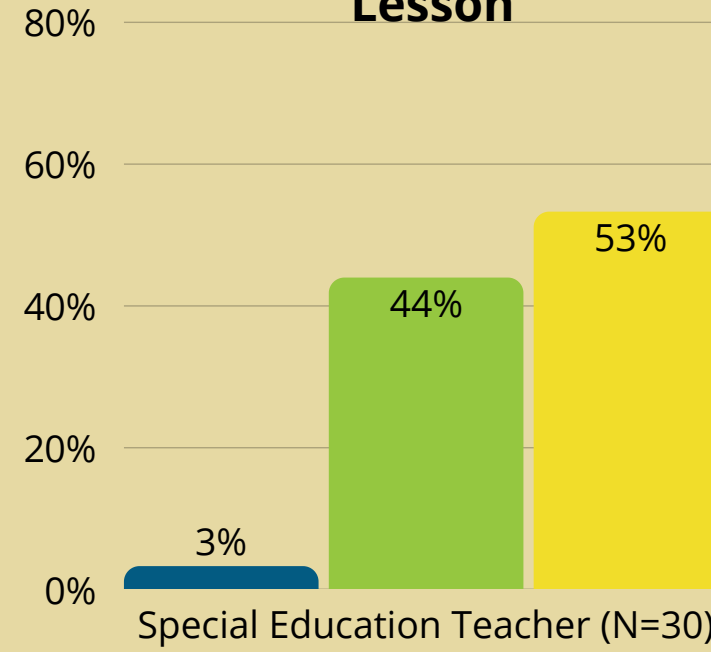
During K–Grade 2 Skills Strand Lesson



During Grades K–Grade 2 Knowledge Strand Lesson



During Grades 3–5 Lesson



Findings

More than three fourths (76%) of Kindergarten through Grade 2 teachers reported high (23%) or moderate (53%) student engagement during the Skills Strand lessons. Similarly, for the Knowledge Strand lessons, 79% of Kindergarten through Grade 2 teachers reported high (26%) or moderate (53%) engagement. For Grades 3–5 lessons, 71% of teachers reported high (21%) or moderate (50%) engagement.

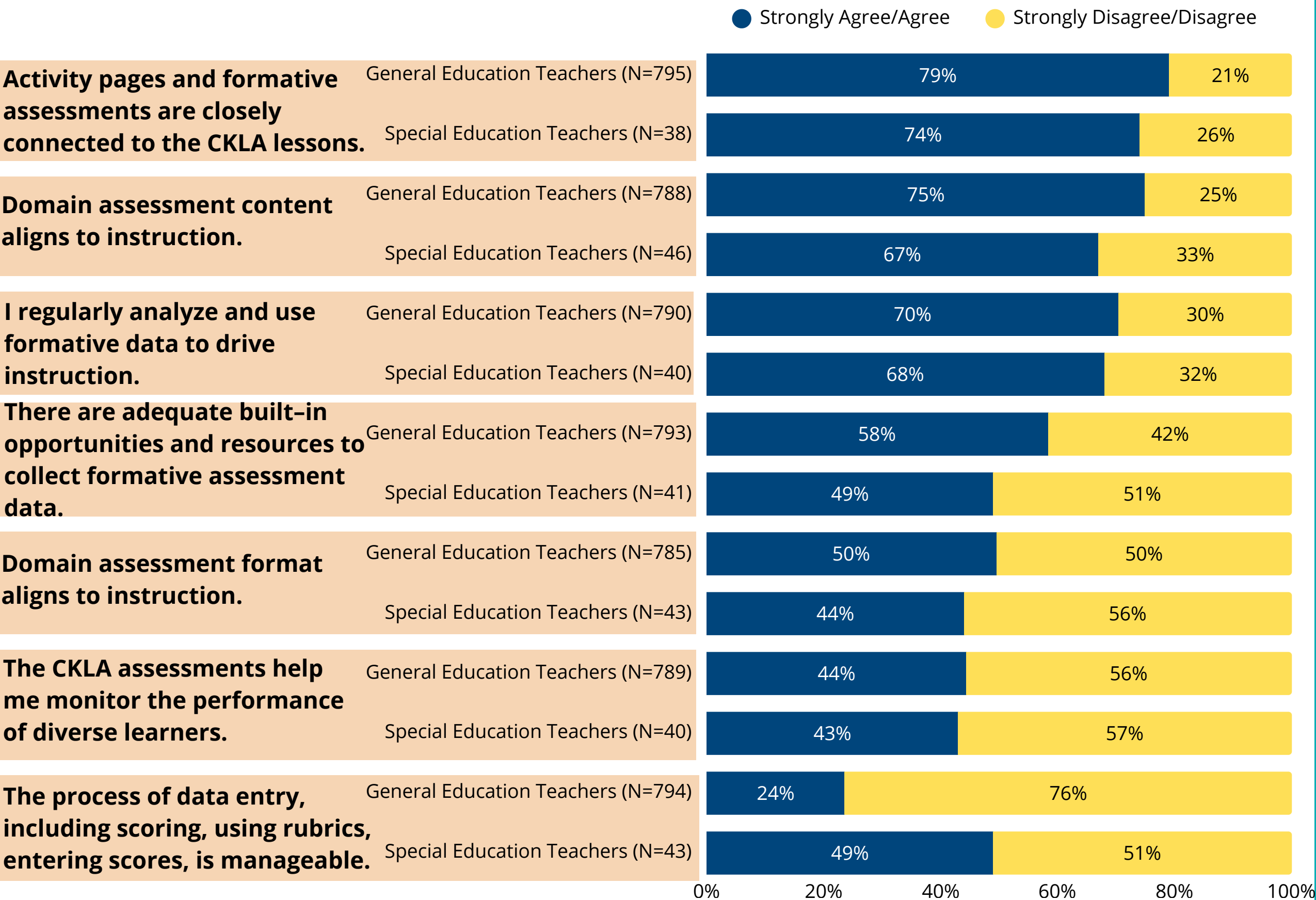
In classroom observations, reported previously, most Kindergarten classes were observed as having high engagement most of the lesson with 98% at the beginning of the Knowledge Strand lesson (declining to 67% at the end) and 95% at the beginning of the Skills Strand lesson (85% at the end). Also, the majority of Grade 3 classes were observed as having high engagement (88% at the beginning of the lesson to 61% at the end).

Much lower levels of student engagement were reported among special education teachers who responded to the question (note only 26–30 responded). For Kindergarten through Grade 2 Skills Strand lessons, only 31% of special education teachers reported high (4%) or moderate engagement (27%), with a majority (69%) reporting low engagement among their students. For the Knowledge Strand lessons, only 22% of special education teachers reported moderate engagement, while 78% reported low engagement. For Grades 3–5 special education teachers, 47% reported moderate engagement with 53% reporting low engagement.



Survey Results: Teachers

Alignment and Usage of CKLA Assessments



Findings

A strong majority of general education teachers agreed (strongly agreed/agreed) that Activity Pages and formative assessments are closely connected to CKLA lessons (79%) and domain assessment content aligns with instruction (75%). Among the special education teachers who responded, 74% and 67% agreed respectively. Additionally, 70% of general education teachers and 68% of special education teachers agreed that they regularly used data to drive instruction.

Fewer agreed there are adequate opportunities and resources to collect formative assessment data (58% general education, 49% special education). However, general education teachers were split on whether the domain assessment format aligns to instruction, with about half agreeing and half disagreeing; 44% of special education teachers who responded agreed.

Teachers expressed lower agreement on whether assessments help monitor the performance of diverse learners. Only 44% of general education teachers and 43% of special education teachers agreed. The process of data entry was rated lowest, with just 24% of general education teachers, but notably 49% of special education teachers agreed the process was manageable.

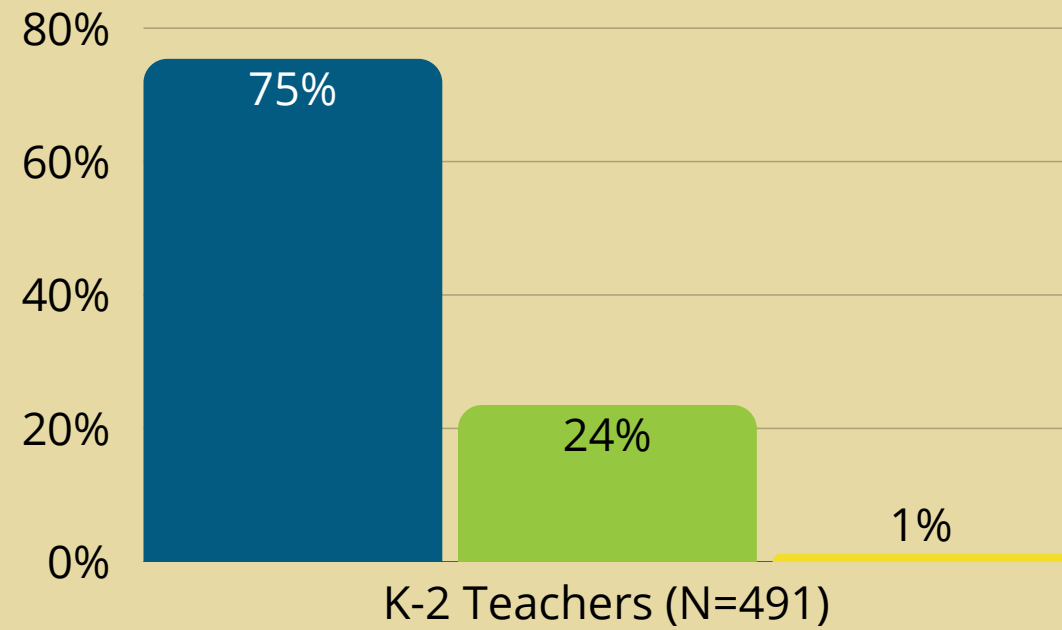


Survey Results: Teachers

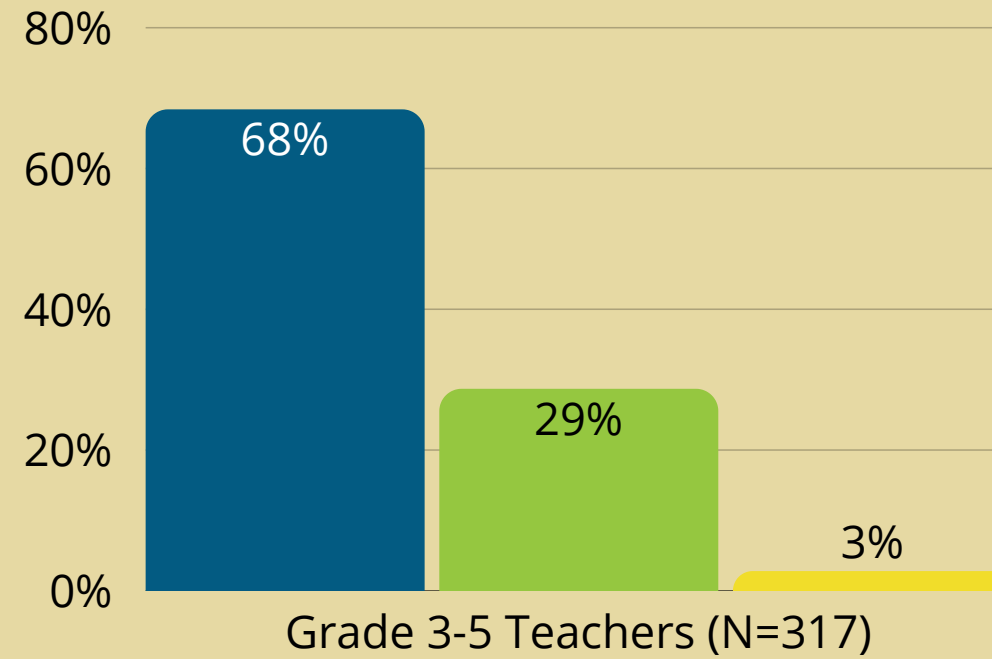
Number of Required CKLA Assessments

● Too Much ● Just Right ● Not Enough

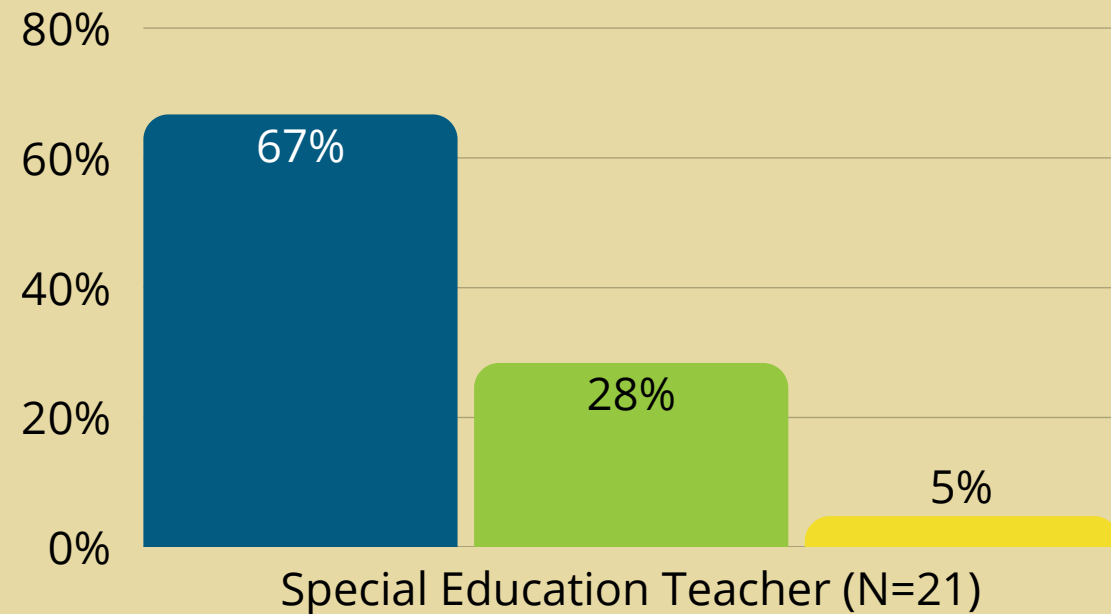
Assessments for K-Grade 2



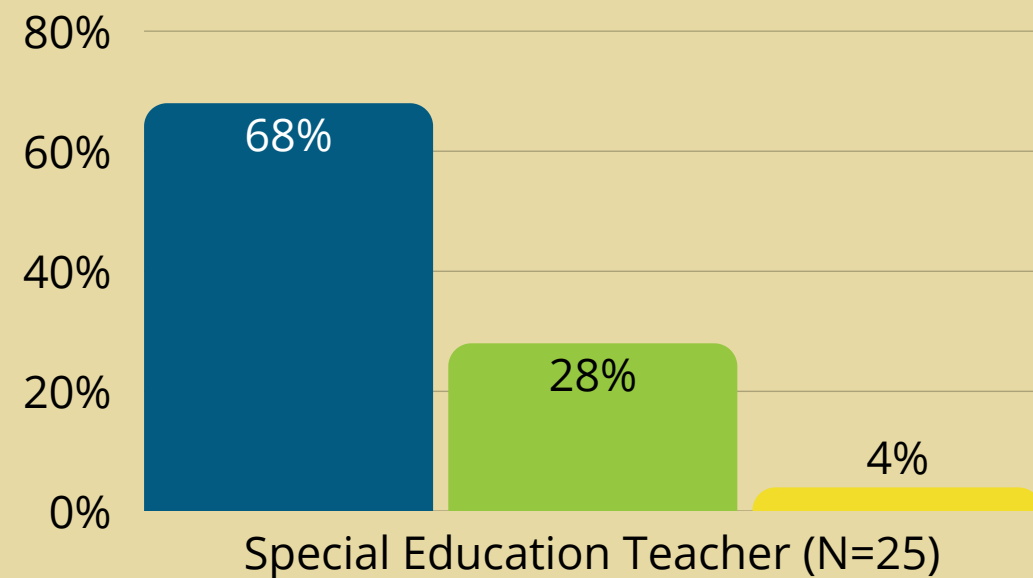
Assessments for Grades 3-5



Assessments for K-Grade 2



Assessments for Grades 3-5



Findings

Most Kindergarten through Grade 5 and special education teachers reported that the volume of required CKLA assessments was too much.

Three fourths of teachers reported the amount of Kindergarten through Grade 2 assessments was too much and 68% reported the amount of Grades 3-5 assessments was too much.

Similarly 67%-68% of special education teachers indicated the number of assessments at both grade level categories was too much. It is noteworthy, that only 21 and 25 special education teachers responded to this question



Survey Results: Open-Ended Themes

Successes and Benefits with Implementing CKLA

The following themes emerged from an open-ended question in which staff described the benefits and successes they experienced with implementing CKLA. Notably, many of these responses were qualified with words like 'however' or 'but,' suggesting mixed or conditional perceptions. The Ns represent those who gave a written response to the question. To describe themes from the staff voice, illustrative quotes follow.

Theme	Description	General Education Teachers (N=589)	Reading Specialists (N=64)	Special Education Teachers (N=18)
Topics are Interesting and Engaging	Staff pointed to the interesting unit and Knowledge Strand topics and that students were engaged and excited. Some teachers remarked that the topics are more interesting than the prior curriculum and pointed to specific engaging topics such as: Fairy Tales, Body, Animals & Habitats, Greek Mythology, Space, and the Five Senses. However, some teachers simultaneously questioned some of the content and focus. Some reading specialists reported also reported they received positive feedback from parents regarding their students' excitement about what they were learning.	54%	62%	29%
Builds Background Knowledge and Vocabulary	Teachers liked that students were building background knowledge and receiving rich vocabulary instruction. Many staff also liked that the topics were cross-curricular with science and social studies.	22%	44%	18%
Grammar, Spelling, Foundational Skills	Staff remarked that they enjoyed that the grammar and spelling components, and others left positive comments regarding the Skills Strand and Foundational Skills portions of the curriculum.	13%	<10%	24%
Materials: Accessibility, Workbooks, Decodables	Teachers liked that they can easily access lesson materials. They also liked the individualized student workbooks, especially not having to create copies of worksheets. Some staff, particularly reading specialists praised the decodables and leveled readers.	12%	12%	29%
Student Achievement	Some teachers and reading specialists remarked that they are seeing progress in student learning. The area most cited was decoding/foundational skills, but reading, writing, and comprehension were also mentioned.	10%	12%	-
Other	Other similar successes and benefits mentioned but totaling less than 10% of respondents included: structure of curriculum, curriculum great for on or above grade level students, writing, focus on listening (special education teachers), and general praise for the curriculum.			



Survey Results: Illustrative Quotes

Successes and Benefits with Implementing CKLA

The following illustrative quotes provide examples that deepen the understanding of themes and how staff responded in their own words.

Topics are Interesting and Engaging

I love the content of Knowledge. My students are very engaged!! They want more time learning about most of the domains!

The Knowledge is AMAZING! The students absolutely love the material and content, the stories, the learning and it is incredible to see their engagement.

The students are very engaged with the knowledge lessons. I originally thought that the topics for 1st grade were too heavy for that age, but they really like them and learned a lot.

Reading Specialists

We have heard nothing but great things..Several of our parents have reported their students share their knowledge ... and are excited about the topics.

Special Education Teachers

The material is much more interesting and student engagement is higher than with Benchmark.

Builds Background Knowledge and Vocabulary

The Knowledge curriculum exposes the students to a variety of social studies and science topics that help build their background knowledge for reading.

Rigor, complex text, rich vocabulary, high expectations for all students. We are building so much background knowledge and students who are engaged are learning so much.

My students' vocabularies have increased tremendously thanks to explicit teaching of the content words.

Students, especially in the primary grades, are using academic vocabulary accurately when speaking of what they are learning. It's exciting to hear!

Content gives opportunity for vocabulary enrichment

Grammar, Spelling, Foundational Skills

The only thing that I find helpful is that we are teaching phonics and grammar. This is very helpful as we have not done this for years in the way that we need to.

The phonics readers have a natural rhythm to the language, unlike many phonics readers which are halted and artificial in the use of language. For MOST students, the skills curriculum is just right.

I am very impressed with Skills. I think this is the quickest I have seen Kindergarten students pick up foundational skills and have embedded letter sounds so early.

The K-2 Skills lessons are explicit and offer appropriate practice for most students working on grade level

My students have really benefitted from an increased focus on daily skills - letter / sound of the day (instead of a week at a time)



Survey Results: Illustrative Quotes

Successes and Benefits with Implementing CKLA - Continued

Materials: Accessibility, Workbooks, Decodables

Having the materials for activities accessible to the kids is such a big deal. Coming from a curriculum that did not really have that, I really appreciate the workbooks and readers.

The activity pages that require students to note the pages where they find the information for answers are beneficial to students and I would like to see more activity pages like them.

General Education Teachers

"The slides provided are very helpful, and everything is online."

Reading Specialists

The CKLA decodables have been invaluable in providing on-grade-level reading and rereading opportunities for students.

Special Education Teachers

The slides being available on the website was a benefit because it gave us a starting point for modification and the images that go with the texts could be displayed large enough for all students to see.

Student Achievement

As a 26 year veteran of Kindergarten, I am **THRILLED** with how well **ALL** my students are reading!

For the first time in 19 years, I feel like I have a curriculum that I know is helping my students learn. **THIS IS GREAT!**

We have seen improvement in their reading scores and in writing. I'm so impressed with how their background knowledge has improved and they are connecting ideas between units.

In the upper-grades, we have seen a significant increase in student writing stamina throughout the year.

Other

Overall, it is an outstanding curriculum in my opinion. It flows great from one topic to another or one skill to another.

I do think for those that are on and above grade level, this is excellent content for them.

CKLA offers structured routines and consistency, which help create a predictable learning environment.

We love the knowledge component!

It has really help me to focus my students on the auditory part of comprehension.



Survey Results: Open-Ended Themes

Challenges with Implementing CKLA

The following themes emerged from an open-ended question in which staff described challenges they experienced with implementing CKLA. The Ns represent those who gave a written response to the question. To describe themes from the staff voice, illustrative quotes follow.

Theme	Description	General Education Teachers (N=734)	Reading Specialists (N=67)	Special Education Teachers (N=39)
Too Much Content/Too Fast Paced/Not Enough Time/Lessons Too Lengthy	Staff consistently reported that the curriculum’s pacing and volume of content were unmanageable. They remarked that the lessons were too long and densely packed, making it difficult to complete all the components within the instructional block. The fast pace left little room for reteaching and additional support and did not account for teacher’s need to adjust calendar or other school events such as assemblies. Some pointed to too much teacher talk and whole group time making it difficult to keep students engaged.	41%	37%	15%
Assessment Challenges (format, content, grading and entering)	Staff described assessments as overly difficult, poorly worded, developmentally inappropriate, and often misaligned with instruction, standards, report cards, and other assessments like DIBELS. Many felt the assessments did not accurately reflect students’ knowledge or skills, including those using a thumbs-up/thumbs-down approach. Teachers expressed overwhelming frustration with the time-consuming process of grading and entering assessment data into multiple platforms. Many reported spending hours of personal time on data entry, often with unclear rubrics and without additional planning time. Notably, the words “ridiculous,” “absurd,” “unsustainable,” or “not manageable” appeared in multiple responses, underscoring the intensity and frequency of concern. Staff also voiced great concern about the number and length of CKLA assessments, describing them as excessive and inappropriate, especially for younger students and students receiving special education services.	33%	48%	26%
Does Not Meet Diverse Student Needs/Lacks Sufficient Differentiation and Scaffolding	General Education teachers and reading specialists reported that the curriculum was not accessible to many of their students, particularly those lacking foundational skills and background knowledge. They noted that lessons did not allow enough differentiation or small groups, which many emphasized as necessary and some remarked that the lessons were developmentally inappropriate for younger students. Additionally, Special Education teachers reported that CKLA was not designed with special education in mind, and the lack of adapted materials or structured guidance has placed a substantial burden on them. They described the curriculum as misaligned with their students’ needs and instructional approaches, broadly inaccessible without significant teacher-created adaptations, and harmful to instructional quality. Many expressed strong frustration, noting that the rollout left them without meaningful support or resources to modify lessons effectively.	30%	24%	92%



Survey Results: Open-Ended Themes

Challenges with Implementing CKLA

The following themes emerged from an open-ended question in which staff described challenges they experienced with implementing CKLA.. To describe themes from the teacher voice, Illustrative quotes follow.

Theme	Description	General Education Teachers (N=734)	Reading Specialists (N=67)	Special Education Teachers (N=40)
Insufficient Skills/Phonics Lacking/Need Explicit Reading Instruction	General education teachers and reading specialists expressed significant dissatisfaction with the Skills Strand Lessons, describing them as lacking clear, explicit and systematic instruction. Many reported the lessons were disjointed, moved too fast, and offered too little practice. Others disagreed it aligned to the Science of Reading. Many teachers (n=70) specifically expressed a desire to return to the previous Really Great Reading (RGR) program which they felt was a stronger phonics program. Concerns were also raised that primary grade students were not receiving direct instruction on how to read, and foundational and decoding skills.	26%	22%	-
Insufficient Writing	Staff repeatedly reported that the curriculum lacks a structured and consistent writing component. Many described the near-total absence of explicit writing instruction, especially in early grades, with students expected to complete writing tasks without having learned how to write complete sentences or understand basic structure. As a result, teachers heavily supplemented and expressed frustration over the mismatch between expectations and what the curriculum provided.	17%	10%	<10%
Problematic Content	Some staff expressed deep concern over lesson content they viewed as inappropriate, culturally insensitive, or historically inaccurate. They cited a Eurocentric bias, outdated gender roles and stereotypes, misinformation, and a lack of diversity. A range of specific lesson examples were shared. Additionally, some staff shared that the lessons and topics were not interesting or engaging for their students.	12%	15%	<10%
Lack of Materials	Books, consumables, teacher guides challenges reported such as having to spend personal funds on lesson supplies (e.g., for science), a lack of student readers or workbooks, readers that cannot be annotated, and workbooks with tear-out pages that are difficult for young students to use independently.	12%	16%	<10%
Other	Spelling, not aligned to science and social studies, overall negative comments regarding the curriculum, too much planning time needed, teachers pivoting to new curriculum and approach. Additionally, special education teachers (28%) emphasized the need for more support and guidance	20%	37%	<10%

Notes. Individual responses may align to more than one theme.



Survey Results: Illustrative Quotes

Challenges with Implementing CKLA

The following illustrative quotes provide examples from the top themes, that deepen understanding of the themes and how staff responded in their own words.

Too Much Content/Too Fast Paced/Lengthy

“The pacing is fast, and there's not much flexibility to slow down or revisit skills or concepts that students haven't mastered. I often find myself having to choose between moving forward or pausing to meet students' actual learning needs.”

“The pacing calendar is unrealistic in addition to the minutes that are suggested in each CKLA lesson for classroom instruction and assessment.”

General Education Teachers

“There is so much content to teach. Teaching one lesson for skills and knowledge daily is too much. We almost never get to all the content in the lesson.”

Reading Specialists

“I am concerned about the pacing of Skills units (in 1st and 2nd grades specifically). Many teachers run over the ELA block into FIT time, leaving less time for small groups/intervention.”

Special Education Teachers

“Pacing also doesn't take into account the reading intervention (lots of K/1 phonics work) and limited writing skills (lots of scribe accommodations) of our students.”

Assessment Challenges

“The standards do not match with what is being assessed...They are often so far from what we have taught throughout the unit that most students do horribly on them.”

“Assessments are a joke. The thumbs up and down is not meaningful. They have a 50/50 chance of getting each answer correct. Most are guessing.”

“There was WAY too much testing and I'd like you to look at Maryland's 2% law for testing because in 2nd grade we administered 15 required CKLA tests. Some tests took one one-hour session, others took 3 or 4 one-hour sessions.”

“The assessments are time consuming, not connected to the units, take additional planning time to enter and often do not represent what students learned in the units.”

“Assessments are incredibly challenging to modify based on students' IEPs and documented accommodations.”

“The tests are long and arduous, and there are too many.”

“The teacher time required for each assessment is ridiculous. Grading all of the parts, entering the grades in my grade book, entering in Synergy, entering on a rubric, and finally entering in Performance Matters takes hours and hours!”

“We need online tests that are graded automatically. Teachers are sacrificing time that they would spend on creating better lessons to enter data.”

“The assessments are frustrating. It would be more helpful to have weekly check for understandings than these beast of unit assessments.”

“The assessments are absolutely ridiculous. Asking a student with a disability who has processing needs to complete a 15 page assessment. How overwhelming, stressful...I am actually embarrassed that more consideration wasn't taken.”



Survey Results: Illustrative Responses

Challenges with Implementing CKLA

The following illustrative quotes provide examples that deepen understanding of how teachers and reading specialists responded in their own words.

Does Not Meet All Needs/Lacks Differentiation and Scaffolding

General Education Teachers

Our biggest challenge is how to support our students who are completely outside the Tier 1 range... we have quite a few...The FIT block has helped with that, but doesn't seem like quite enough for some of our students.

This curriculum is very content heavy with very little support to actually teach students how to access the content. It alienates below grade level students, students with IEPs, and EMLs.

At times I felt as if I was Charlie Brown's teacher because the material was so complex for early childhood... there are so many BETTER fables and fairy tales to read...to keep kids engaged and curious.

Small groups must occur. If we want students to be reading at the end of first grade, small group MUST occur daily. Without small group my scores were the lowest I have ever had.

Reading Specialists

I have many EMLs and early readers who cannot yet read the text independently. This cohort of students is too big for an impactful small group.

We have students that cannot decode well...If the teachers were able to provide some scaffolded texts to support independence, the students would engage in learning more. We have newcomers who sit and cry because they cannot read any of the texts.

Special Education Teachers

I am redoing most parts of all Lessons...Special Education was an oversight. We were told during preservice not to use CKLA then weeks later we were given an adjusted pacing calendar with no other support.

I cannot stress enough how large the disconnect is between the profile of the learners and the curriculum. We need something more to support these students!!!!.

The county needs to spend time having materials and adaptations for below grade level students and programs. When I asked last summer about ways to support my class, she basically said...we would just have to make it all on our own.

CKLA has been a nightmare to implement for students with disabilities. It expects all students to have the same background knowledge, skills and understanding. It does not provide the 'explicit differentiation' it advertises.

Insufficient Skills/Phonics

Skills is a MAJOR set back from RGR. RGR was amazing and every teacher I know loved it. It made sense, was appropriate and I had the best readers of my career.

Skills has been horrible for our students. It does not follow the science of reading despite what it may claim. The scope and sequences are awful, jump around, doesn't teach first graders vowel teams or syllable types which is ABSURD.

SKILLS is a hot mess express! We aren't TEACHING the skills like our previous phonics program did.

[Curriculum] is not written to systematical or explicitly teach phonemic awareness or phonics well enough. We should be able to consistently use something that works well for our students like Countdown, Blast, and HD Word.

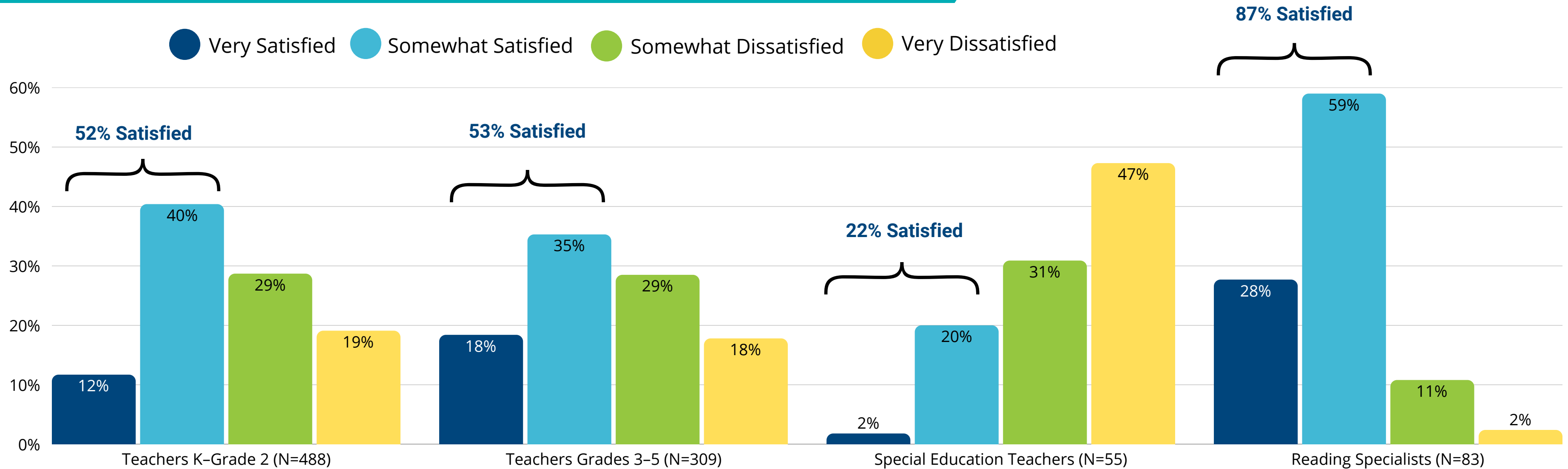
There needs to be paired down language and activities for students who are multi lingual or struggle with receptive language. The language studio and core do not always align.



Survey Results

Overall Satisfaction with the CKLA Curriculum

● Very Satisfied ● Somewhat Satisfied ● Somewhat Dissatisfied ● Very Dissatisfied



Findings

Only about half of surveyed teachers (52%–53%) reported being satisfied (very or somewhat) with the Amplify CKLA curriculum, while approximately one fifth (18%–19%) were very dissatisfied. This stands in stark contrast to reading specialists, of whom a large majority (87%) reported satisfaction with the curriculum. Special education classroom teachers were even less positive, with only 22% saying they were satisfied and nearly half (47%) indicating they were very dissatisfied.



Conclusion

Summary and Conclusions of Key Findings

This summary and conclusion are based on triangulated findings from three primary sources: Kindergarten and Grade 3 ELA instructional schedules, classroom observations (Kindergarten and Grade 3), and surveys of Kindergarten through Grade 5 general and special education teachers, and school reading specialists.

Instructional Time. A review of 40 Kindergarten and 40 Grade 3 schedules showed that most schools (73%–75%) allotted for 120 minutes of ELA instructional time in their schedules, expected for implementation of CKLA lessons. A few scheduled more than 120 minutes, likely to account for transitions or non-instructional routines. Conversely, about one fourth (25%) of both Kindergarten and Grade 3 classes had less than 120 minutes of scheduled ELA instruction time. Even among those classes with a total of 120-minute scheduled ELA time, observed instructional time was often shorter. This means that the number of classes actually delivering a total of 120 minutes of instruction was even lower than scheduling alone would suggest. Observed time was often reduced due to late start times, interruptions, transitions to lunch/recess/specials, or time needed for other subjects like math or science. In Kindergarten, although 75% of classes had 120 minutes scheduled, only 53% of the 40 observed classes delivered a total of 120 minutes of ELA instruction. Similarly, in Grade 3, just 40% of observed classes met this threshold. When allowing for a 10-minute margin, 65% of Kindergarten and 60% of Grade 3 classes were within 10 minutes of the full targeted instructional time.

Pacing. When the observed time spent on specific lesson components was compared to the time prescribed by the vendor, many components exceeded the allotted time, while others fell short. For example, in the Kindergarten Knowledge Strand lessons, 40% of the Read-Aloud components exceeded the allotted time by a median of 12 minutes. In contrast, 50% of the observed Application components were under the target time by a median of 15 minutes. For the Skills Strand lessons, almost half (45%) of the Reading components were under the prescribed time by a median of 15 minutes. Among the Grade 3 observed lessons, 50% of the Reading components exceeded the target time by a median of 18 minutes, whereas 40% of the Speaking and Listening components were below the prescribed time.

In the survey, just 55% of general education teachers reported they could complete all lessons within the pacing window extremely or very well, and only 37% reported being able to complete all the lesson components within a day's lesson extremely or very well. Further analysis revealed significantly fewer Grade 3–5 teachers reported being able to complete all lessons and all lesson components in a day, compared to Kindergarten through Grade 2 teachers. Similarly, just 59% of reading specialists reported teachers could stay within unit pacing guidelines and 47% reported teachers could complete all lesson components in a day. Additionally, just 29% of Kindergarten through Grade 2 teachers agreed there was sufficient time to practice foundational skills. In open-ended responses, teachers consistently described the lesson volume and fast-pace as unmanageable and difficult to complete within the instructional time.

Use of CKLA Instructional Materials. In general, results showed widespread use of CKLA materials. In most observed classrooms, students used CKLA materials as included in the lesson guide (82%–93% in Kindergarten and 86%–100% in Grade 3). Teachers used CKLA-provided slides exclusively in 65% of observed Kindergarten classes and 75% of observed Grade 3 classes, though others incorporated alternative or modified versions. Most general education teachers reported using mostly or all CKLA materials; however, teachers reported making modifications to enhance visual appeal, adapt for diverse learners, and embed key information. Additionally, most staff reported easy access to CKLA online materials (93% general education teachers, 80% special education teachers, and 98% reading specialists). However, staff remarked they were short on teacher guides, student workbooks, and the supplies needed to implement lessons (some pointed to using their own money for lesson supplies).

Extent to which
the CKLA
Curriculum was
Implemented as
Intended



Conclusion

Summary and Conclusions of Key Findings



Extent to Which CKLA Curriculum was Implemented as Intended – Continued

Observers recorded whether classrooms displayed CKLA-recommended themed walls. A *Tricky Word Wall*, expected for Kindergarten, was present in 85% of observed Kindergarten classrooms. However, fewer than half featured a *Knowledge Board* (35%) or a *Vocabulary Wall* (43%). In Grade 3 classrooms, just over half displayed *Knowledge Boards* (58%) and *Vocabulary Walls* (53%). In the survey, some teachers noted that creating Knowledge Boards required significant time and materials.

Adherence to Curriculum Lessons. The expectation to adhere to the curriculum lessons as written was communicated to general education teachers and reading specialists during summer training. The classroom observations showed a moderately strong curriculum adherence in both Kindergarten and Grade 3. Major lesson components in Kindergarten such as the Read Aloud (Knowledge Strand lesson) and Foundational Skills (Skills Strand lesson) were consistently implemented (100%), as well as the Reading (91%) and Speaking and Listening components (83%) in Grade 3. Areas for improvement included the Application component of the Knowledge Strand lesson (75% implementation) and the wrap-up/discussion in the Foundational Skills component (64%) in Kindergarten. Key lesson elements were also widely implemented in most classrooms (84% or more). However, only 54% of teachers asked all the Read Aloud questions from the lesson guide and 66% asked all the comprehension questions, likely due to time constraints. For Grade 3, areas of growth included the implementation of the following components: Word Work (52% implementation), Language (63%), and particularly Writing, which was implemented in only 35% of applicable classes.

Observers rated how closely the implemented lessons followed the lesson guide overall. For Kindergarten Knowledge Strand lessons, 68% were reported as adhering to most or all of the lesson as described in the lesson guide; and 75% for the Foundational Skills component and 70% for the Reading component in the Skills Strand lessons. In Grade 3, adherence was rated lower, ranging from 57% to 66% across Reading, Speaking and Listening, Language, and Writing components. Some of the lower adherence may reflect challenges teachers faced with pacing and fitting lessons within the allotted instructional time.

Teacher-led Small Groups. The CKLA rollout shifted the expectation for Teacher-led Small Groups from rotating all students to pulling only those who needed additional support with the lesson. This shift was reflected in observations: in Kindergarten Knowledge Strand lessons, small groups were noted in only 21% of observations, typically involving 1–4 students. In Grade 3, few teachers pulled small groups outside of the Reading component where they were observed in 69% of classes, but typically met with fewer than half of the students in a class. Observers noted that in only two Grade 3 classes did most students meet in a Teacher-led Small Group, suggesting a consistent targeted approach overall. Supporting this pattern, just under half of general education teachers (47%) confirmed using groups only when students demonstrated a need, though 21% still reported rotating groups. Other teachers remarked that small groups were often used only during Focused Instruction Time (FIT) or when the lesson specified them; or that they had been directed (source unspecified) not to incorporate Teacher-led Small Groups at all during the ELA instructional time.



Conclusion

Summary and Conclusions of Key Findings



Extent to Which CKLA Curriculum was Implemented as Intended – Continued

Student Groupings. Although teachers have flexibility in how they group students, the lesson guide offers suggested grouping structures throughout the lesson. The implementation of CKLA aims to increase instructional variety by promoting a mix of groupings, including collaborative structures (partners, triads, small groups) and individual application (independent work), alongside whole group. Examination of student groupings showed that this variety was observed most frequently in the Reading components, with 63% of observations including Partners/Triads/Small Groups and 69% including Independent work. In contrast, Language and Writing components showed less variation and discourse. Partners/Triads/Small Groups were observed less frequently in Language (17%) and Writing (29%), while Independent work was implemented in less than one fourth of Language (27%) and Writing (21%) components. This indicates that support is needed to integrate both collaborative and individual structures across all literacy components, particularly in Language and Writing.

Collaborative Planning

An expectation of the Phase 1 implementation was that unit and lesson preparation, as well as student work analysis, would occur both independently and during collaborative planning time, supported by shared planning protocols. The majority of staff reported that their collaborative time included rich conversations surrounding meaningful instructional planning (77% of general education teachers, 68% of special education teachers, and 89% of reading specialists agreed). General education teachers reported high ability to prepare for instruction: 79% reported they could independently prepare for instruction and collaboratively plan units (79%) extremely or very well. However, ratings were lower for collaborating on Spotlight Lessons (67%) and reviewing data with teams (66%), and the lowest rating was for examining student work with their grade-level team (58%).

Perceived usefulness of the planning structures was generally low among general education teachers, with no more than half rating any structure as very or extremely useful. Planning for FIT and Spotlight Lessons were viewed as least useful (33% and 28% useful, respectively). Reading Specialists had a much more favorable view of the structures, with a large majority (86%–87%) finding Unit Prep, Data Discussions, and Examining Student Work to be very or extremely useful. While Unit Prep was rated the most useful and used most frequently (“Always” or “Most of the Time”), the perceived usefulness of other critical structures significantly outpaced their actual reported use. The largest gap was seen in Examining Student Work (86% useful vs. only 16% occurring regularly) and Data Discussion (87% useful vs. just 33% occurring “Always” or “Most of the Time”).

Professional Learning, Support, and Resources

Nearly all general education teachers and reading specialists who responded to the survey, reported attending the summer training that launched the CKLA rollout, along with most special education teachers. Survey findings on professional learning and support revealed significant gaps in support, with special education teachers consistently reporting lower levels of support. Although the highest ratings among general education teachers were for ongoing support from school staff (78%) and support from their administrators (77%), just over half agreed they were adequately prepared to implement the curriculum (53%) while fewer (43%) agreed professional learning had prepared them to use student data for ELA instruction. Reading specialists generally reported receiving high levels of support for themselves. However, only 66% said they had adequate time for classroom walk-throughs and feedback, and just 55% consistently visited classrooms—suggesting time constraints may have limited their ability to fully support implementation.



Conclusion

Summary and Conclusions of Key Findings



Professional Learning, Support, and Resources – Continued

In open-ended responses, teachers most often called for additional or ongoing training on implementing CKLA, along with necessary materials for lesson implementation. They highlighted the need for better guidance on differentiation and scaffolding for struggling students, clearer pacing support, and improved foundational skills resources. They also requested increased planning and instructional time, including time for reteaching and interventions. Some teachers expressed a need for more support from key school and central office staff. Reading specialists also requested support to help teachers adapt lessons and manage pacing, guidance on assessments and data use, hard copies of teacher guides, and more training on writing and other curriculum areas. Among special education teachers, the most common need was for resources and support focused on differentiation and scaffolding.

Experiences with CKLA

Meeting Diverse Student Needs. While most general education teachers reported being able to meet the needs of students on (81%) and above (72%) grade level, far fewer agreed CKLA supported students with IEPs (34%), Emergent Multilingual Learners (30%), students needing extra help (26%), and particularly those performing below grade level (20%); special education teachers expressed even greater concern, with only 13% agreeing they were able to address needs of students with IEPs using CKLA. Additionally, in the open-ended responses, teachers expressed great concern that the curriculum did not adequately meet the needs of students who were below grade level, had IEPs, or received ELD services. They explained students often lacked the foundational skills and background knowledge needed to access the lessons. Teachers also reported insufficient time to meet with students in small groups, which many described as essential. Special education teachers added that the curriculum was largely inaccessible for their students and lacked guidance for necessary adaptations.

Student Engagement. Classroom observations indicated that student engagement (defined as active listening and participation) was generally high in most classrooms (93%–98% for Kindergarten, 88% for Grade 3), but declined to medium engagement over the course of the lesson. Teacher survey results reflected slightly less favorable perceptions. For Kindergarten through Grade 2 lessons, 76%–79% of teachers reported overall high or moderate engagement and among Grades 3–5 teachers, 70% reported high or moderate engagement. Special education teachers reported notably lower engagement.

Successes implementing CKLA. When asked about the successes of CKLA, over half of the teachers and reading specialists highlighted the engaging topics, as well as increased student excitement and participation. Secondly, teachers appreciated the curriculum's support for building background knowledge and vocabulary. Others mentioned liking the cross-curricular connections to science and social studies, and lessons in grammar, spelling, and foundational skills. Some remarked they valued the accessible teacher lesson guides, student workbooks, and that they observed growth in student reading, decoding, and writing.



Conclusion

Summary and Conclusions of Key Findings



Experiences with CKLA – Continued

Challenges with CKLA. Many challenges emerged when teachers were asked about implementing CKLA. Teachers often provided detailed responses, frequently citing multiple concerns. The most commonly reported challenges were:

- *Pacing and volume.* (This theme is detailed in the Instructional Time section.) As already mentioned, teachers described the lessons volume as “unmanageable” and difficult to complete within a day’s instructional time. Many reported that the fast-paced curriculum left little time for practice or reteaching. Several noted that FIT was not a sufficient solution, and some schools did not have a scheduled FIT block at all.
- *Support for diverse learners.* (This theme is detailed in the Meeting Student Needs section.) As already mentioned, teachers expressed that the curriculum did not adequately meet the needs of students who were below grade level, had IEPs, or received ELD services, often because they lacked the foundational skills and background knowledge needed to access the lessons.
- *Foundational Skills instruction.* Although some teachers listed the foundational skills and phonics as aspects they appreciated with CKLA, many more raised it as a significant concern. They believed the instruction lacked explicit, systematic structure and was disjointed, moved too quickly, and provided insufficient practice. Around 70 teachers and several reading specialists expressed a strong desire to return to the previous phonics program (Really Great Reading), which they found more effective.
- *Assessment Concerns.* Many teachers described CKLA assessments as too lengthy, overly difficult, poorly worded, and misaligned with instruction, standards, and other assessments. Grading and data entry, often across multiple platforms, were seen as time-consuming and required hours of personal time. Rubrics were described as unclear, and many teachers called the demands “unsustainable” or “not manageable.”. Data entry also received low ratings, with only 29% of Kindergarten through Grade 2 teachers and 15% of Grades 3–5 teachers agreeing it was manageable. A majority of Kindergarten through Grade 5 and special education teachers believed the volume of CKLA assessments was excessive: 75% of Kindergarten through Grade 2 teachers and 67%–68% of Grades 3–5 and special education teachers reported there were too many required assessments.

Additional challenges reported by more than 10% of teachers included limited writing instruction, excessive whole group time and teacher talk, and content that was not developmentally appropriate. While fewer than 10% of teachers raised concerns about problematic content (i.e., culturally insensitive, inaccurate or inappropriate), these issues were communicated by about 15% of reading specialists.

Overall Satisfaction. Overall, only about half of surveyed general education teachers (52%–53%) reported being satisfied (very or somewhat) with the Amplify CKLA curriculum, while (47%–48%) were somewhat or very dissatisfied. This stands in stark contrast to reading specialists, of whom a large majority (87%) reported satisfaction with the curriculum. Special education classroom teachers who responded, were even less positive with only 22% reporting they were very or somewhat satisfied.



Conclusion

Summary and Conclusions of Key Findings

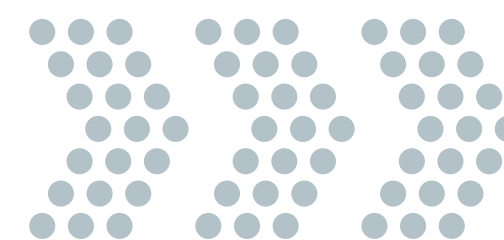


Supplemental Staff Feedback

An additional development worth recognizing, is that that several teachers, including Grades 1–2, ELD, and special education, submitted a joint memo and delivered public testimony to the Board of Education on April 8, 2025, expressing significant concerns about the Amplify CKLA curriculum, which aligned with many of the findings in this evaluation. Their memo included findings from an internal survey of 100 staff members (sampling method unknown) and echoed many of the challenges highlighted in this report, such as inaccessible content for students with disabilities and English learners, lack of scaffolding, issues with Skills lessons, insufficient hands-on instruction, limited access to teacher guides and student materials, and inflexible slide adaptations. They also raised concerns about the curriculum’s assessments. Some issues, such as writing instruction and inappropriate content, were emphasized more strongly in their testimony than the survey data for this evaluation revealed. Their memo also offered proposed solutions, including developing scaffolding materials, allowing slide edits, returning to the Really Great Reading program for phonics, adopting a different writing curriculum, adjusting pacing, and providing more time for small-group instruction.



Recommendations



The following recommendations are based on data collected through schedule examination, classroom observations, and staff surveys. These recommendations aim to optimize the implementation CKLA and highlight areas needing additional support.

1

Schedule and Adhere to 120 minutes of ELA Instruction

CKLA Kindergarten and Grade 3 lessons are designed for 120 minutes of instructional time (i.e. two 60 minute Kindergarten lessons and a 120 minute Grade 3 lesson). Adherence to this scheduled time is crucial to maximize the full benefit of the curriculum components. An examination of Kindergarten and Grade 3 schedules showed that while 75% of classes had a scheduled 120-minute ELA block, one fourth did not. Observations revealed that instructional time, even in scheduled 120-minute blocks, was often reduced due to morning routines, transitions, or interruptions. Additionally, inconsistent pacing—with some components receiving excess time while others were shortened—indicates a need for effective pacing support. To ensure students receive the full benefit, schools must schedule a dedicated 120-minute ELA block that separates instructional time from routines and transitions. Teachers should be provided with guidance and support on pacing each lesson component and expected to adhere to the established schedule. Adherence to the 120-minute block must be supported by clear guidance on pacing and monitored through regular scheduled check-ins and instructional walk-throughs.

2

Continue and Strengthen Targeted Professional Learning, Support, and Resources to Address Staff Concerns

Targeted Professional Learning and Support. Although nearly all teachers attended the summer training, only about half felt adequately prepared to implement the curriculum. Continued, targeted guidance is needed in several key areas: differentiation and scaffolding, small-group instruction, pacing, Skills Strand instruction and foundational skills, and writing instruction. Teachers would benefit from instructional modeling and access to a centralized resource and support hub. Schools also require more materials, including teacher guides for reading specialists, additional student readers and workbooks to support newcomers, and essential lesson materials—particularly for science-related content. To fully support teachers, reading specialists need additional time and clearer guidance for conducting classroom walkthroughs and delivering feedback.

Systemic and Curricular Changes. To systemically address staff concerns revealed in the report, the district should establish workgroups composed of central office ELA staff and diverse school-based educators. These dedicated teams, including separate groups for EML and special education, would focus on streamlining pacing guides, revising content for appropriateness and identifying modifications or alternative elements, and collaborating with science and social studies offices to align and streamline lessons. They would also work to develop scaffolding materials and support student needs through additional opportunities for practice, reteaching, and small-group instruction—particularly in classrooms where the majority of students are performing below grade level. Finally, the workgroups should examine the Skills Strand and foundational skills instruction for clarity and alignment—including consideration of utilizing the Really Great Reading (RGR) program for some or all students. To ensure coherence and alignment, workgroups should regularly collaborate and cross-reference their efforts across focus areas.



Recommendations



Findings revealed a variety of assessment issues that require re-evaluation and action.

Work with the curriculum vendor to address the following assessment-related concerns:

- Consider reducing the volume of required assessments. A strong majority of teachers (75% of Kindergarten through Grade 2 and 67%–68% of Grades 3–5 and special education teachers) reported in the survey that there were too many required CKLA assessments, a concern strongly echoed in open-ended comments. Several teachers suggested making some assessments optional.
- Review assessment wording and alignment with instruction. Although 75% of general education strongly agreed or agreed that the assessments aligned with instruction, fewer Grades 3–5 teachers strongly agreed or agreed (64%). Additionally, in open-ended comments, teachers and reading specialists frequently noted that assessment items were confusing, overly difficult, or misaligned with instruction, standards, or other assessments.
- Evaluate assessment design and the usefulness of the resulting data. For example, teachers reported that the thumbs-up/thumbs-down format is ineffective and does not accurately measure student understanding. They noted that students were often guessing, resulting in a 50% chance of a correct response. Fewer than half of general education teachers (44%) strongly agreed/agreed that the assessments effectively monitored the performance of diverse learners, while over half disagreed (strongly disagreed/disagreed).

Address internal data management issues:

Streamline grading and data entry processes. Staff strongly emphasized that data entry across multiple platforms was time-consuming, unsustainable, and unmanageable, often citing unclear rubrics and using much of their personal time to complete the required tasks. Additionally, a mere 29% of Kindergarten through Grade 2 teachers and 15% of Grades 3–5 agreed the process of data entry, including scoring, was manageable.

3

Re-evaluate
Assessment Volume,
Alignment, and
Processes



PROCEED WITH CAUTION

There is a need for ongoing discussion and attention to key areas in order to strengthen curriculum implementation and support success for all teachers and students. This evaluation reflects the first year of a districtwide rollout of Amplify CKLA, a new ELA curriculum across all elementary grades—a phase often characterized by growing pains and the need for refinement. While CKLA demonstrates strengths in its rigorous topics and vocabulary development, it also faces challenges in adequately serving a diverse student population and addressing teacher concerns to ensure the curriculum meets classroom needs.





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