Second-Year Evidence from an Evaluation of the Partnership Model

EPIC
Education Policy Innovation Collaborative

Presented at:
Fall Partnership District Network Event –
Office of Partnership Districts

September 30, 2020

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

EPIC's Year 2 Evaluation of the Partnership Model Asks Five Main Questions:

1. How has the Partnership model changed over time?

2. How has Partnership changed education in Partnership schools and districts?

3. How are educators and leaders in Partnership schools and districts implementing the reform as it matures?

4. What human capital challenges face Partnership schools and districts and how are educators in these districts addressing them?

5. What conditions, other than human capital, mediate Partnership turnaround efforts?

EPIC

DATA AND METHODS

EPIC's multi-method evaluation relies on several sources of data to address research questions:

Data Type	Data Source	Analysis Method
Administrative	Student administrative records (n=9,014,665 student-years)	Regression-based analyses (event studies)
	Educator administrative records (n=573,875 educator-years)	Regression-based analyses (event studies)
Surveys of Educators in Partnership Districts	Teachers in Partnership districts (fall 2018 n=2,718; RR 38%) (fall 2019 n=3,324; RR 49%)	Descriptive analyses
	Principals in Partnership districts (fall 2018 n=81; RR 29%) (fall 2019 n=88; RR 38%)	Descriptive analyses
Educator COVID Surveys	K-8 teachers across the state (statewide n=8,565; 16% RR) (Partnership district n=909; 19% RR)	Descriptive analyses
	K-8 principals across the state (statewide n=316; 12% RR) (Partnership district n=29; 12% RR)	Descriptive analyses

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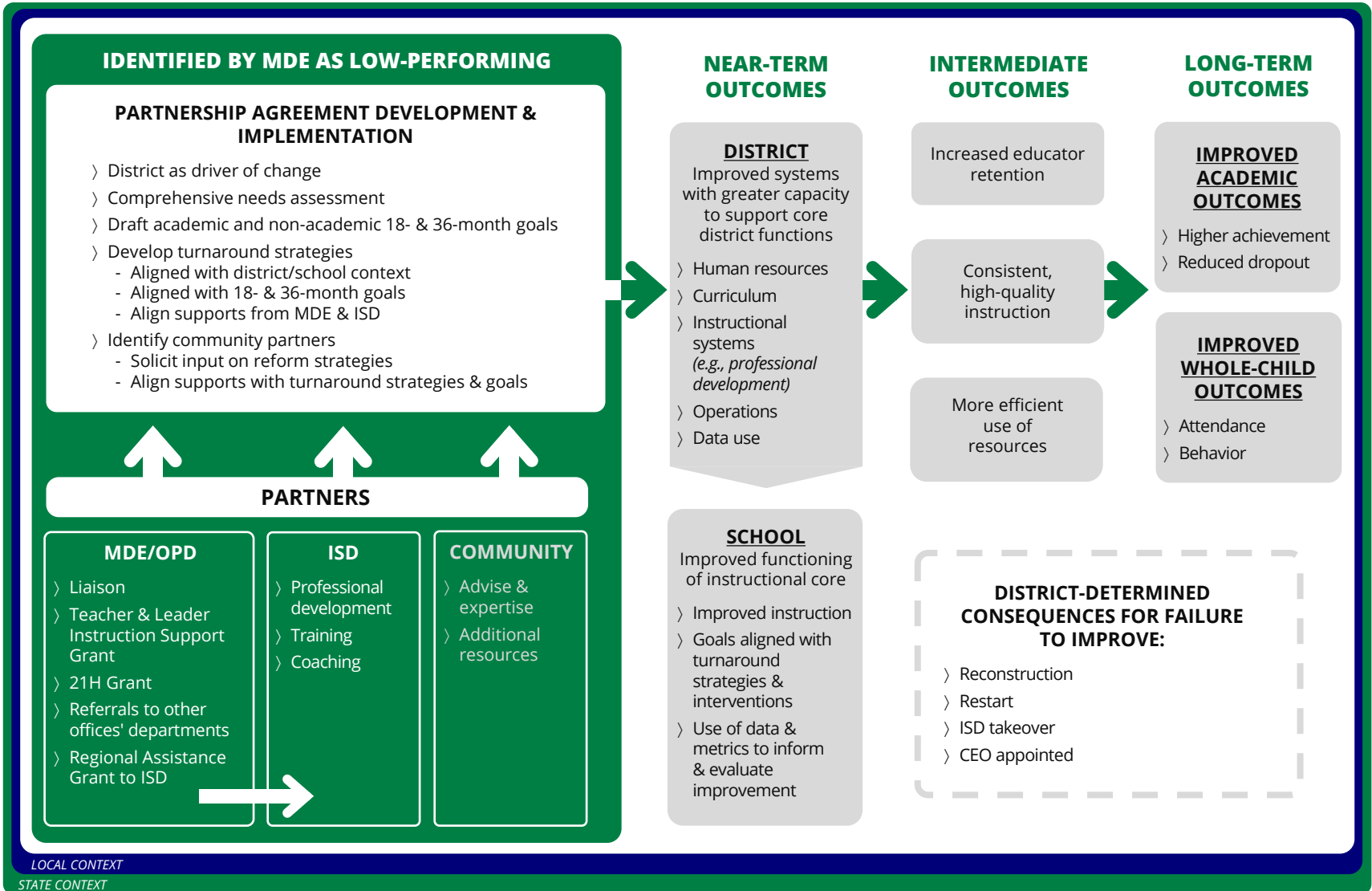| Data Type	Data Source	Analysis Method
Qualitative Interviews	LEA/ PSA Leader Interviews (2018-19 n=22) (2019-20 n=22)	Descriptive & thematic coding
	Case study interviews (2018-19 n=60 across 3 sites) (2019-20 n=28 across 3 sites)	Descriptive & thematic coding, comp. case study
Qualitative Observations and Document Analysis	Review of Goal Attainment (RGA) meetings (n=3)	Observation
	Continuity of Learning (COL) plans (n=813)	Descriptive coding, EPIC-developed rubric

EPIC

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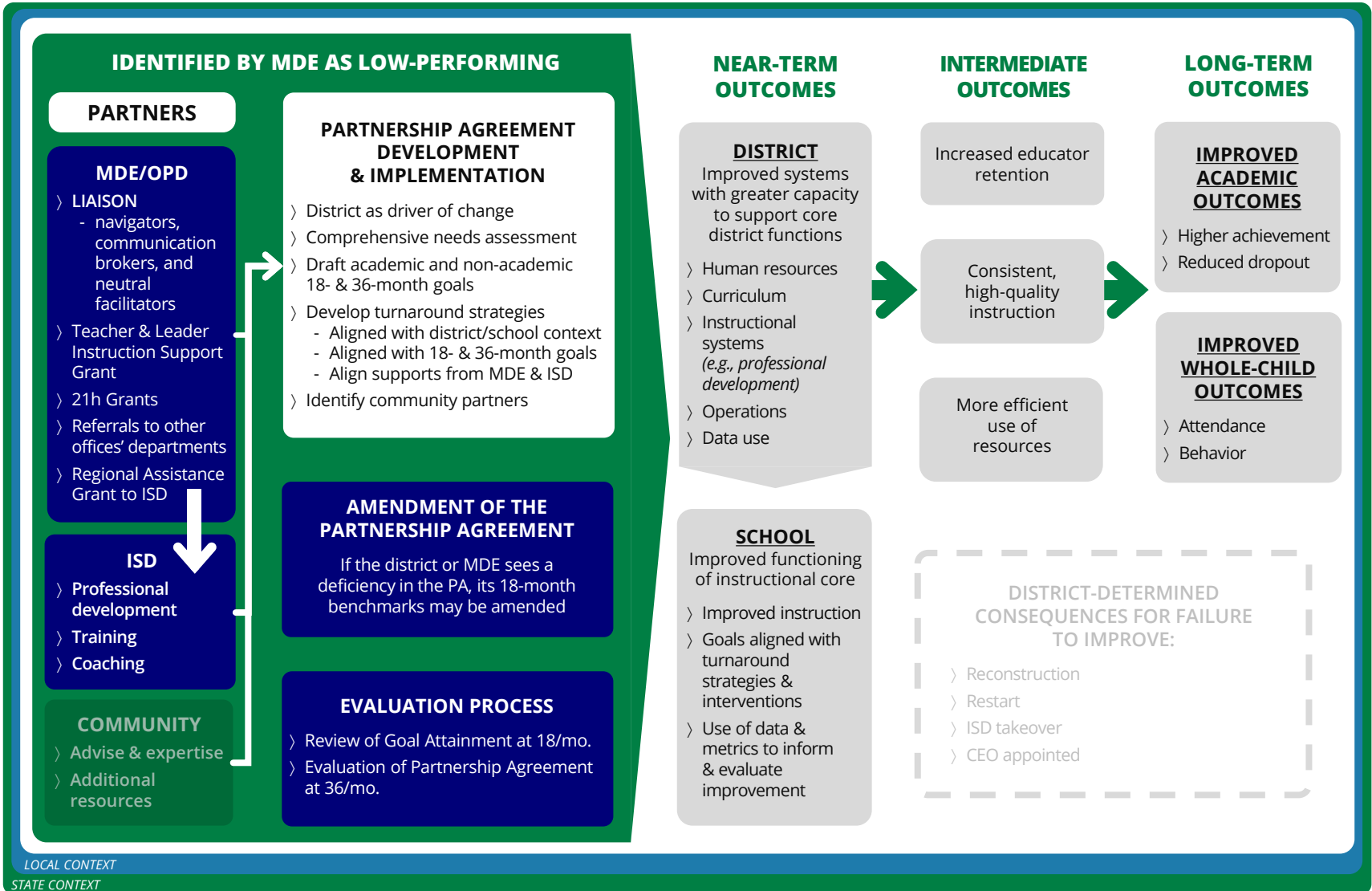
EPIC

MICHIGAN'S PARTNERSHIP MODEL
ORIGINAL THEORY OF CHANGE

EPIC

IDENTIFIED BY MDE AS LOW-PERFORMING

PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT DEVELOPMENT & IMPLEMENTATION

- District as driver of change
- Comprehensive needs assessment
- Draft academic and non-academic 18- & 36-month goals
- Develop turnaround strategies
  - Aligned with district/school context
  - Aligned with 18- & 36-month goals
  - Align supports from MDE & ISD
- Identify community partners
  - Solicit input on reform strategies
  - Align supports with turnaround strategies & goals

PARTNERS

MDE/OPD	ISD	COMMUNITY
› Liaison	› Professional development	› Advise & expertise
› Teacher & Leader Instruction Support Grant	› Training	› Additional resources
› 21H Grant	› Coaching	
› Referrals to other offices' departments		
› Regional Assistance Grant to ISD		

NEAR-TERM OUTCOMES

DISTRICT
Improved systems with greater capacity to support core district functions

- Human resources
- Curriculum
- Instructional systems *(e.g., professional development)*
- Operations
- Data use

SCHOOL
Improved functioning of instructional core

- Improved instruction
- Goals aligned with turnaround strategies & interventions
- Use of data & metrics to inform & evaluate improvement

INTERMEDIATE OUTCOMES

Increased educator retention

Consistent, high-quality instruction

More efficient use of resources

LONG-TERM OUTCOMES

IMPROVED ACADEMIC OUTCOMES

- Higher achievement
- Reduced dropout

IMPROVED WHOLE-CHILD OUTCOMES

- Attendance
- Behavior

DISTRICT-DETERMINED CONSEQUENCES FOR FAILURE TO IMPROVE:

- Reconstruction
- Restart
- ISD takeover
- CEO appointed

LOCAL CONTEXT
STATE CONTEXT

MICHIGAN'S PARTNERSHIP MODEL
UPDATED THEORY OF CHANGE

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AMENDMENT OF THE PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT
If the district or MDE sees a deficiency in the PA, its 18-month benchmarks may be amended

EVALUATION PROCESS
- Review of Goal Attainment at 18/mo.
- Evaluation of Partnership Agreement at 36/mo.

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9

PARTNERSHIP'S IMPACT: COHORT 1 PARTNERSHIP SCHOOLS

Partnership Had a Positive Effect Across Performance Measures in Cohort 1 Partnership Schools
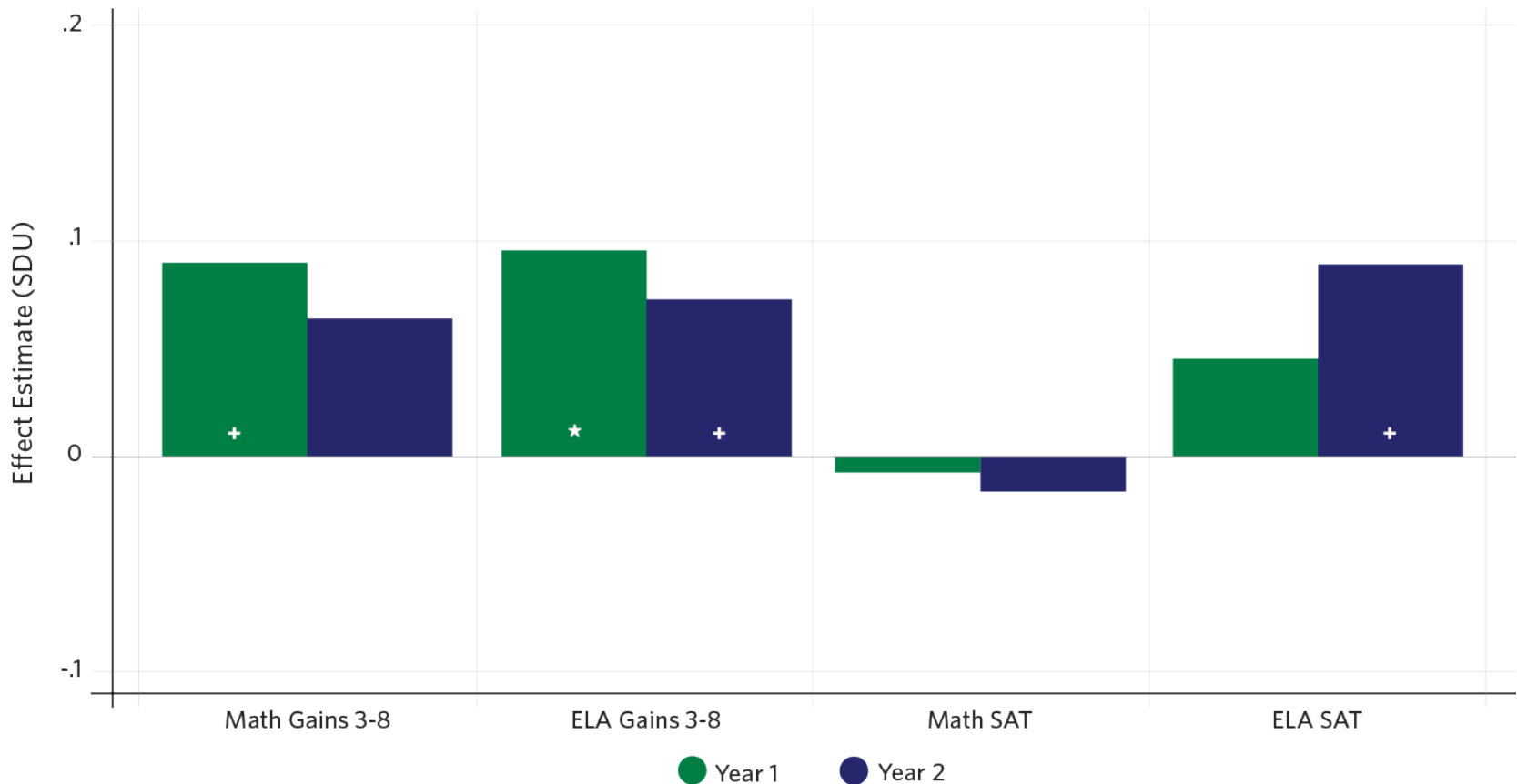
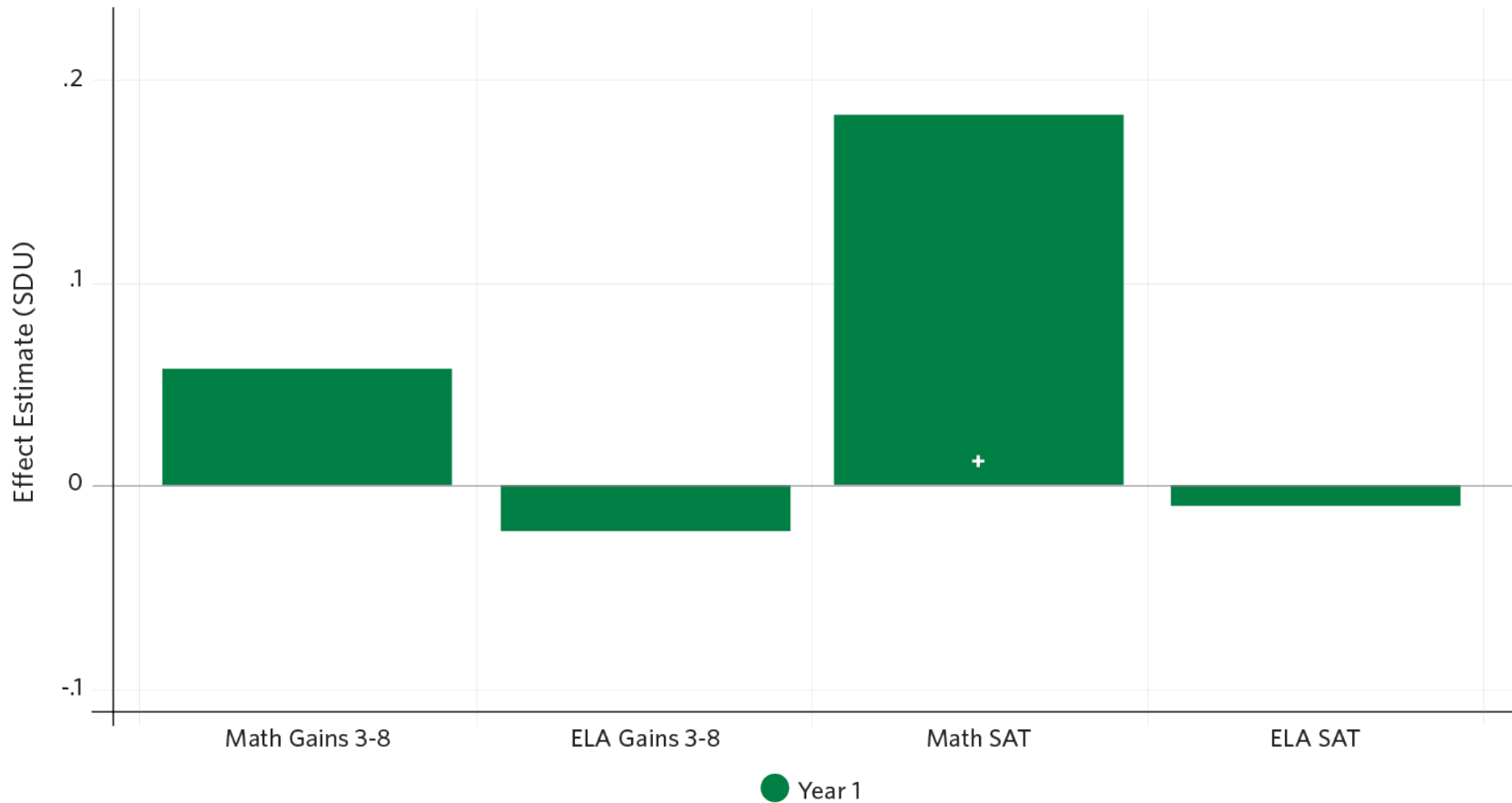*Note: p<.10 +, p<.05 *, p<.01 **, p<.001 ***. Coefficients show effect relative to comparison schools in the identification year.*

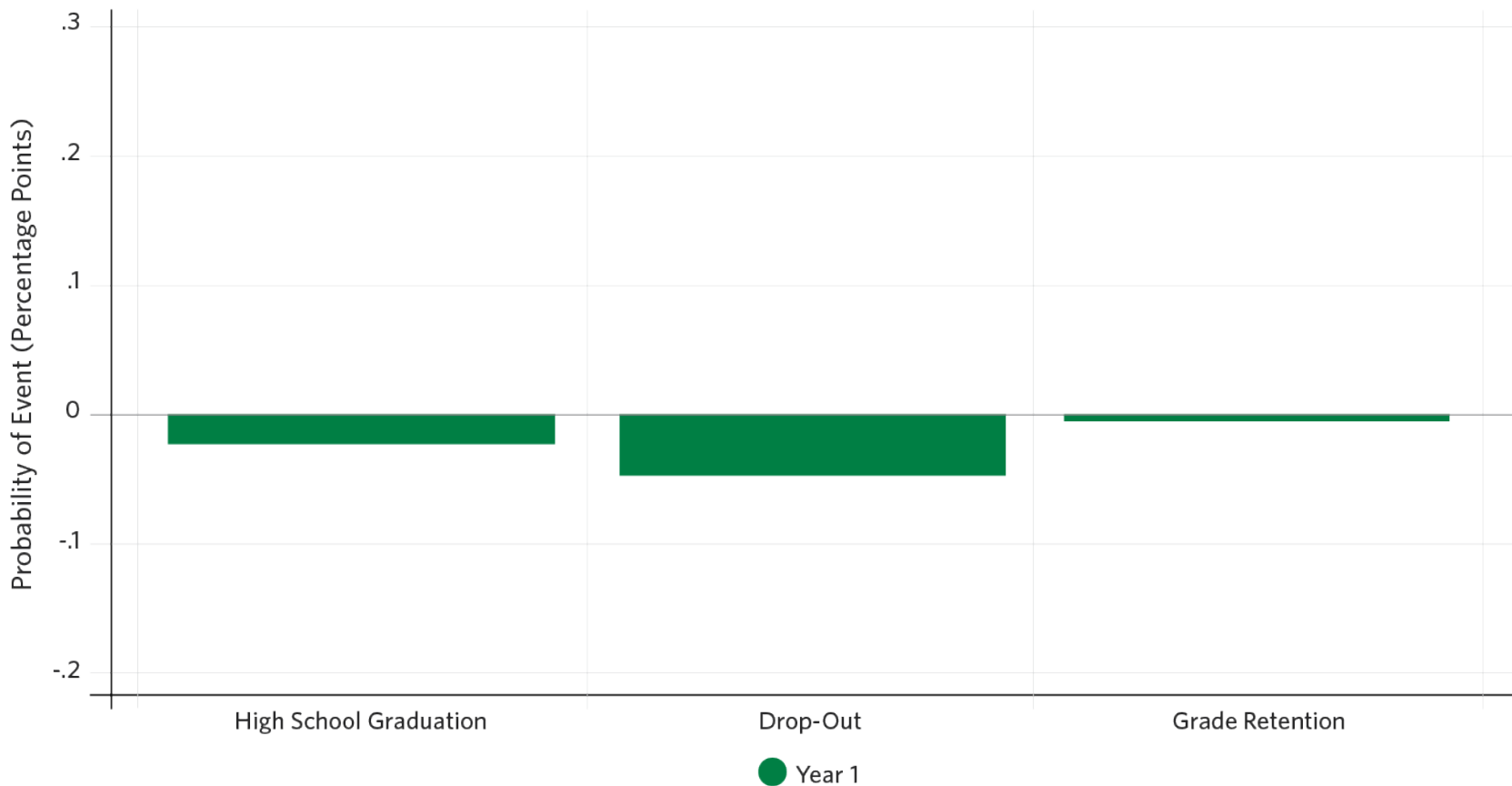# PARTNERSHIP'S IMPACT: COHORT 1 DPSCD PARTNERSHIP SCHOOLS

Cohort 1 DPCSD Partnership Made Achievement Gains in Each of the First Two Years of Partnership
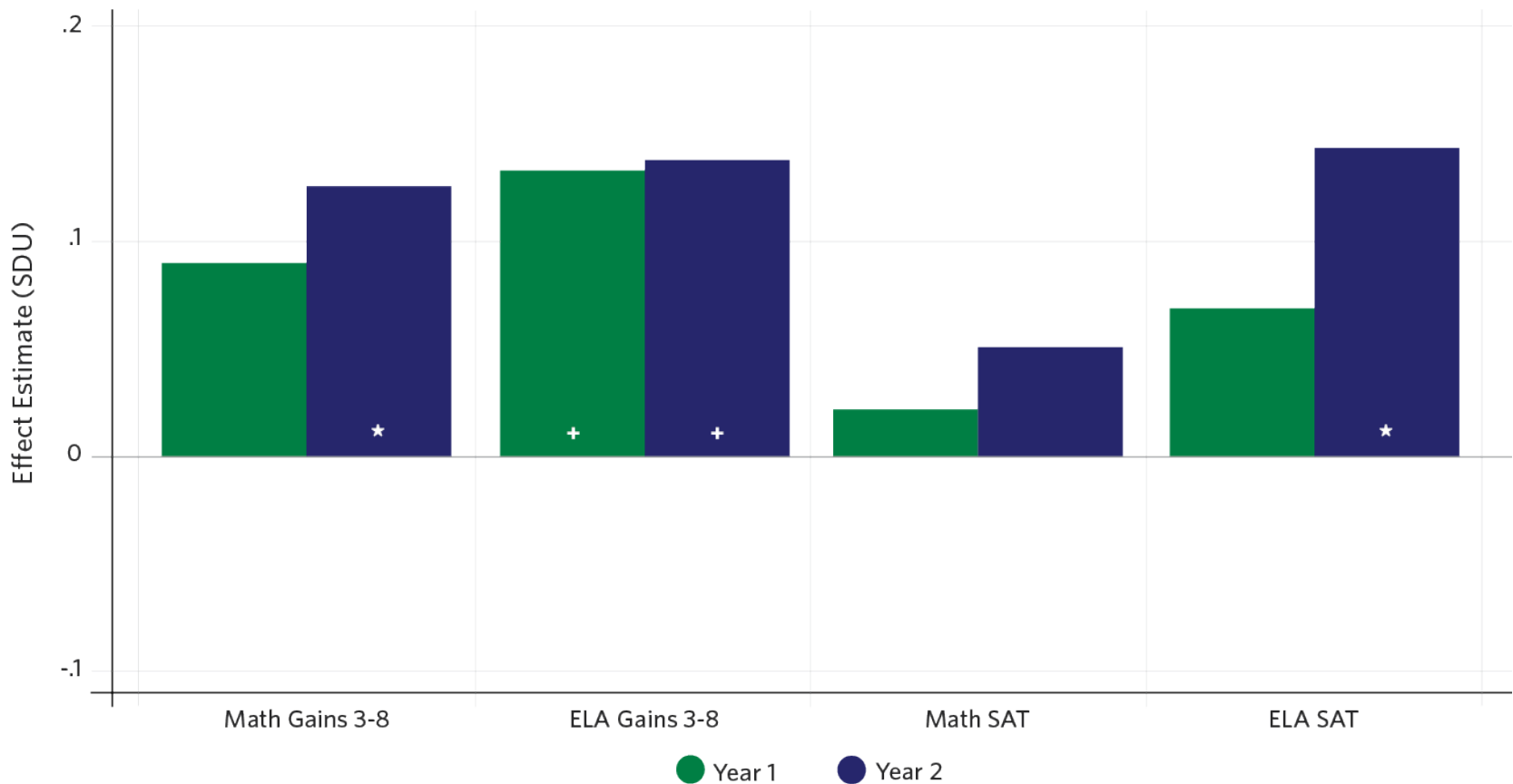
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Partnership Didn't Significantly Impact Other Indicators of Performance
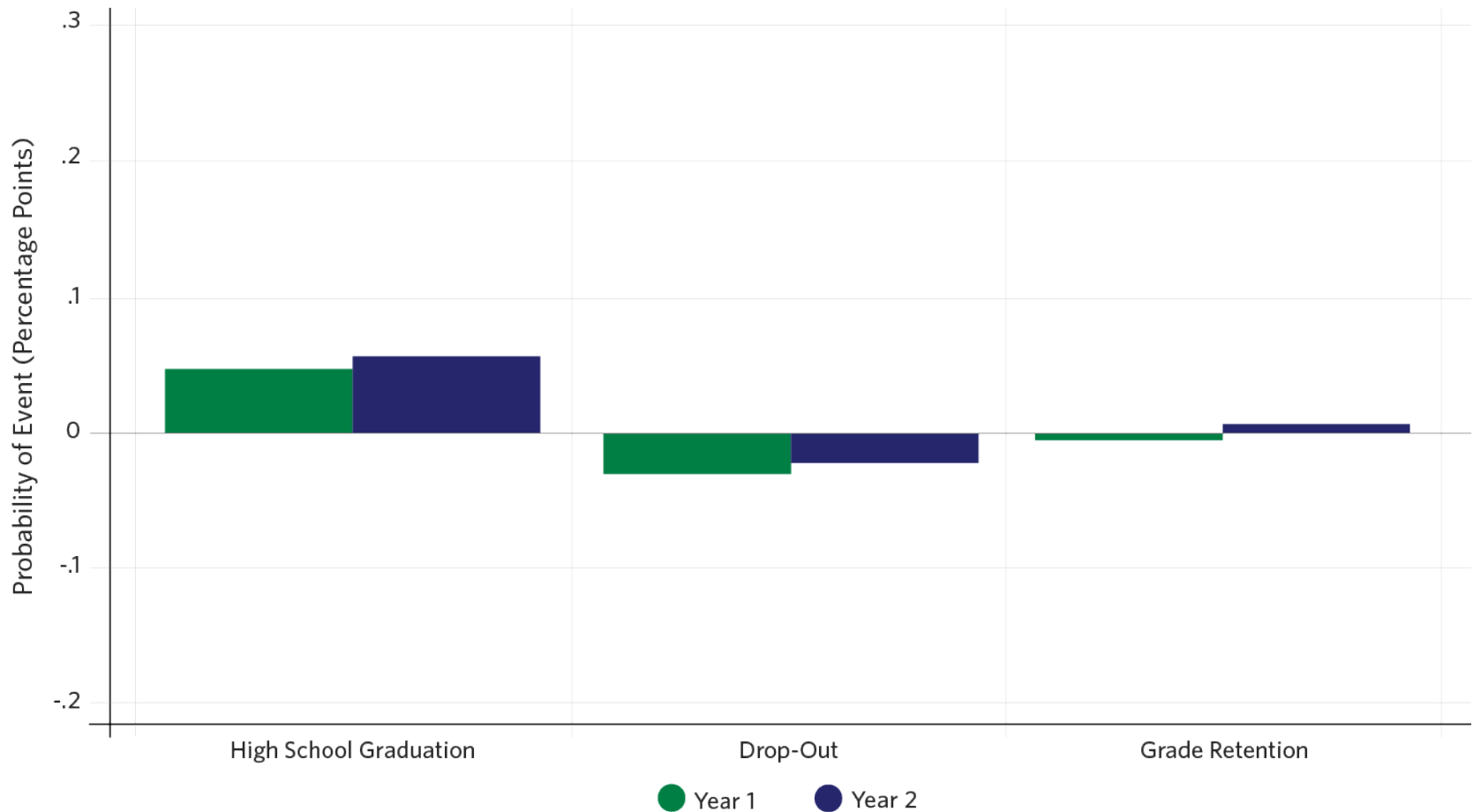
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PARTNERSHIP'S IMPACT: COHORT 1 DPSCD PARTNERSHIP SCHOOLS

Cohort 1 DPCSD Partnership Schools Showed Decreased Drop-out and Increased Graduation Rates
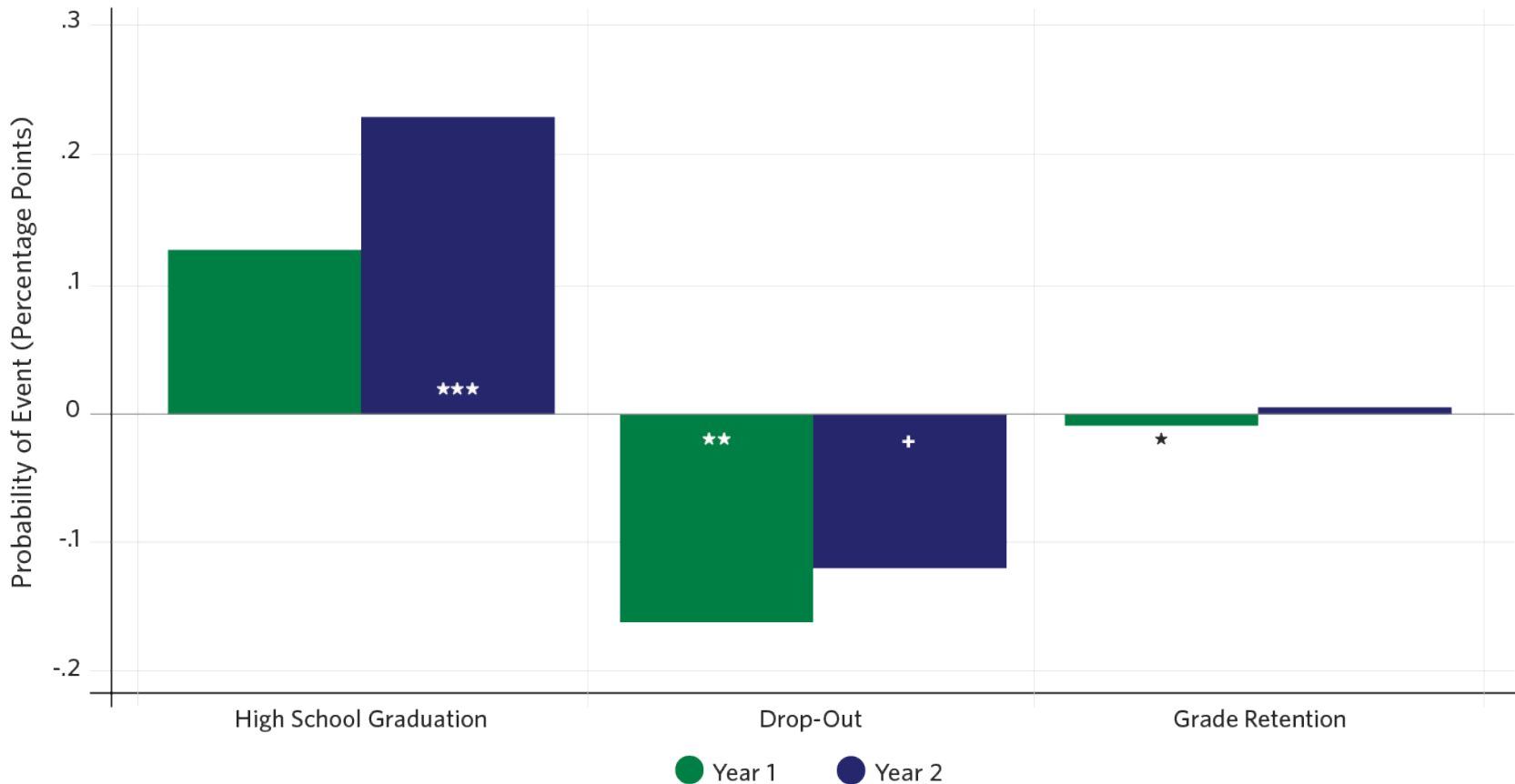
Note: p<.10 +, p<.05 *, p<.01 **, p<.001 ***. Coefficients show effect relative to comparison schools in the identification year.

YEAR 2 PARTNERSHIP OUTCOMES: COHORT 1

Cohort 1 Year 2 Partnership outcomes fare near the middle of the distribution of similar interventions
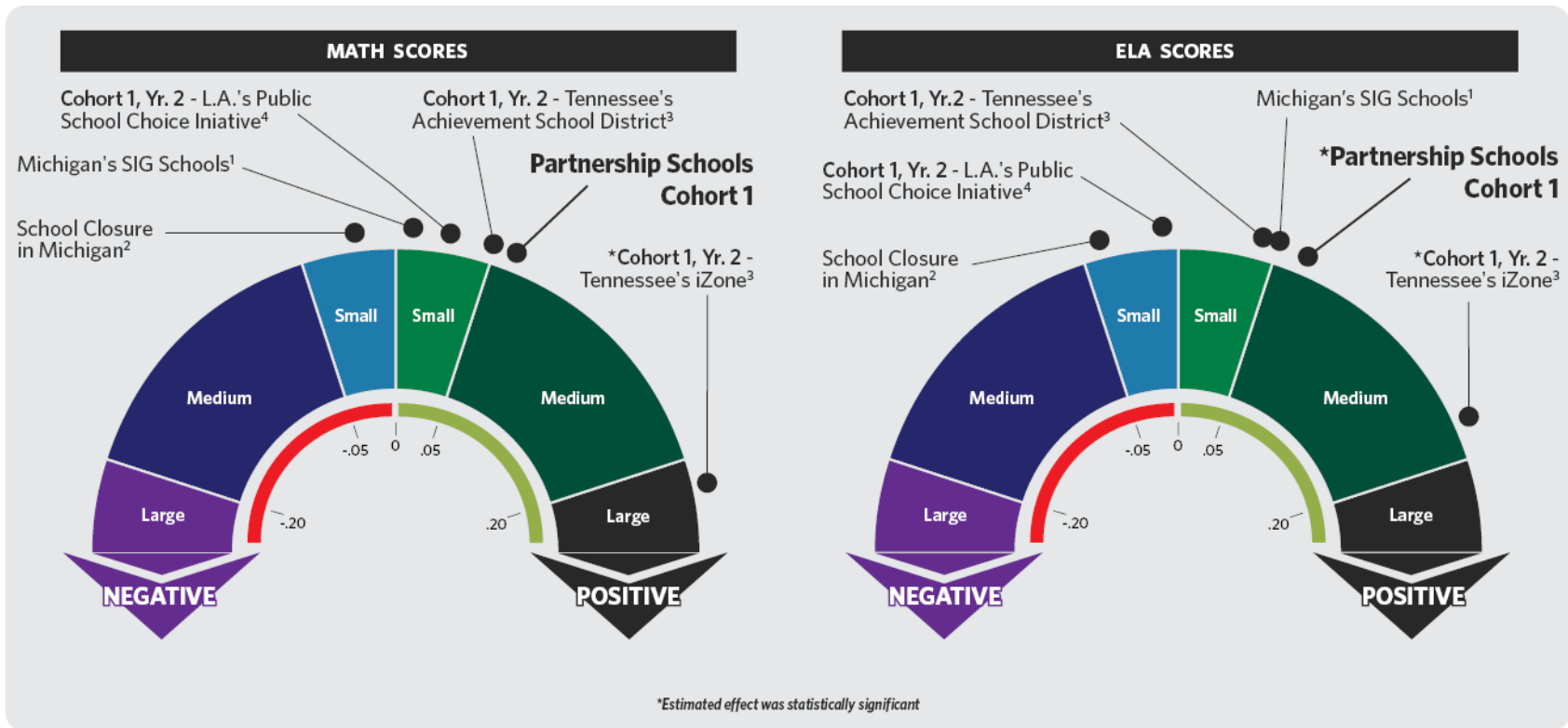
Source: [1]Rice, J., Bojorquez, J. C., Diaz, M., Wendt, S. & Nakamoto, J. (2014); [2]Brummet (2014); [3]Zimmer, Henry & Kho (2017); [4]Strunk, Marsh, Hashim, Bush-Mecenas & Weinstein (2016)

Note: While Partnership schools fared descriptively better than turnaround schools in this subset of interventions, the ELA effect size was qualitatively similar to other interventions with small-to-medium effects, and the math estimate was not significantly different from zero.

PARTNERSHIP'S IMPACT: COHORT 2 PARTNERSHIP SCHOOLS

Cohort 2 Partnership Schools Fared Similarly to Comparison Schools on Most Test Score Outcomes, Though ELA SAT Scores Dipped in the First Year of Partnership
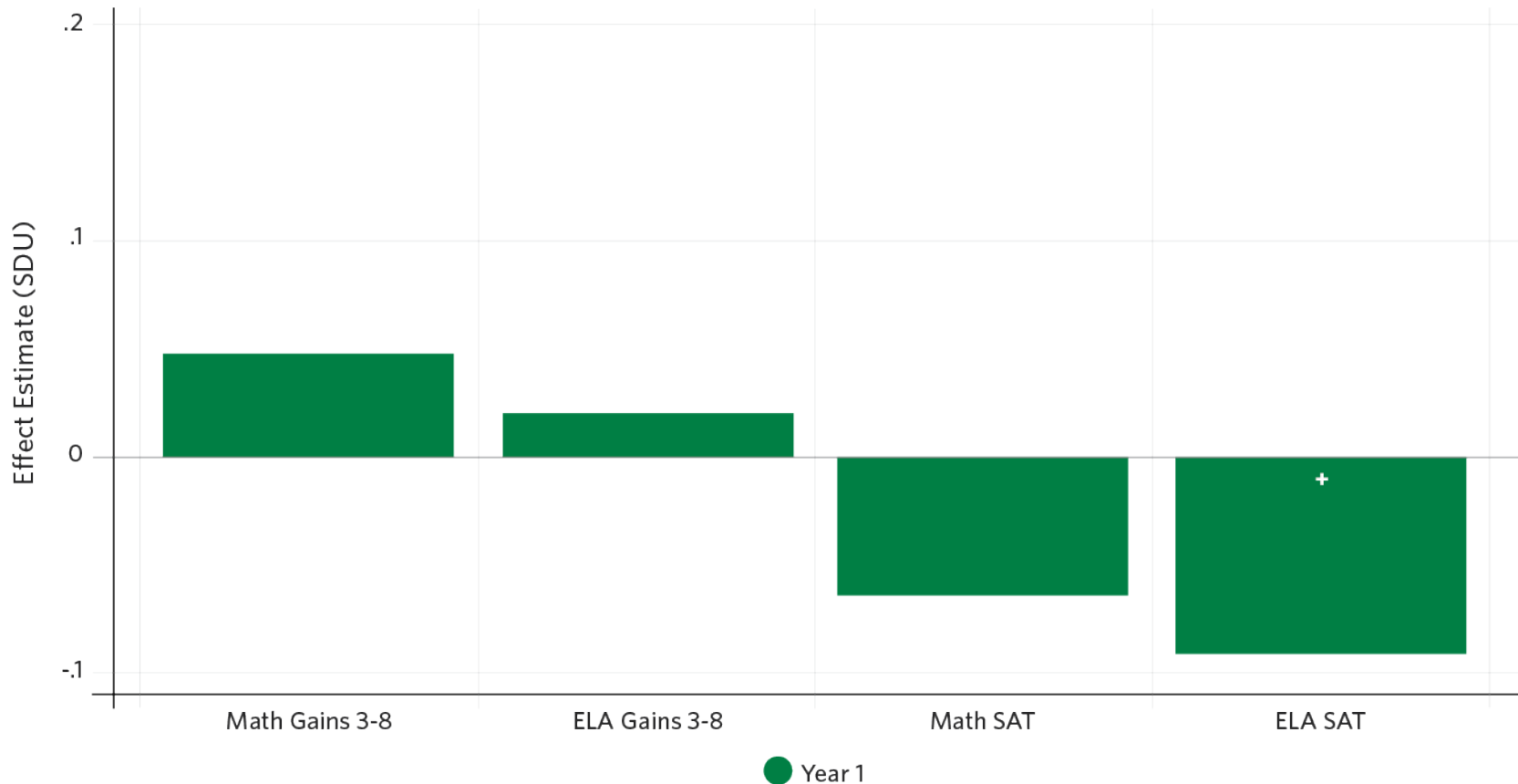
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PARTNERSHIP'S IMPACT: COHORT 2 DPSCD PARTNERSHIP SCHOOLS

DPSCD Students Experienced Improved Math SAT Scores

*Note: p<.10 +, p<.05 *, p<.01 **, p<.001 ***. Coefficients show effect relative to comparison schools in the identification year.*

PARTNERSHIP'S IMPACT: COHORT 2 PARTNERSHIP SCHOOLS

Cohort 2 Partnership Schools Also Fared Similarly to Comparison Schools on Non-Test Score Outcomes

*Note: p<.10 +, p<.05 *, p<.01 **, p<.001 ***. Coefficients show effect relative to comparison schools in the identification year.*

PARTNERSHIP'S IMPACT: COHORT 2 DPSCD PARTNERSHIP SCHOOLS

DPSCD Cohort 2 Partnership Schools Fared Similarly to Comparison Schools on Non-Test Score Outcomes
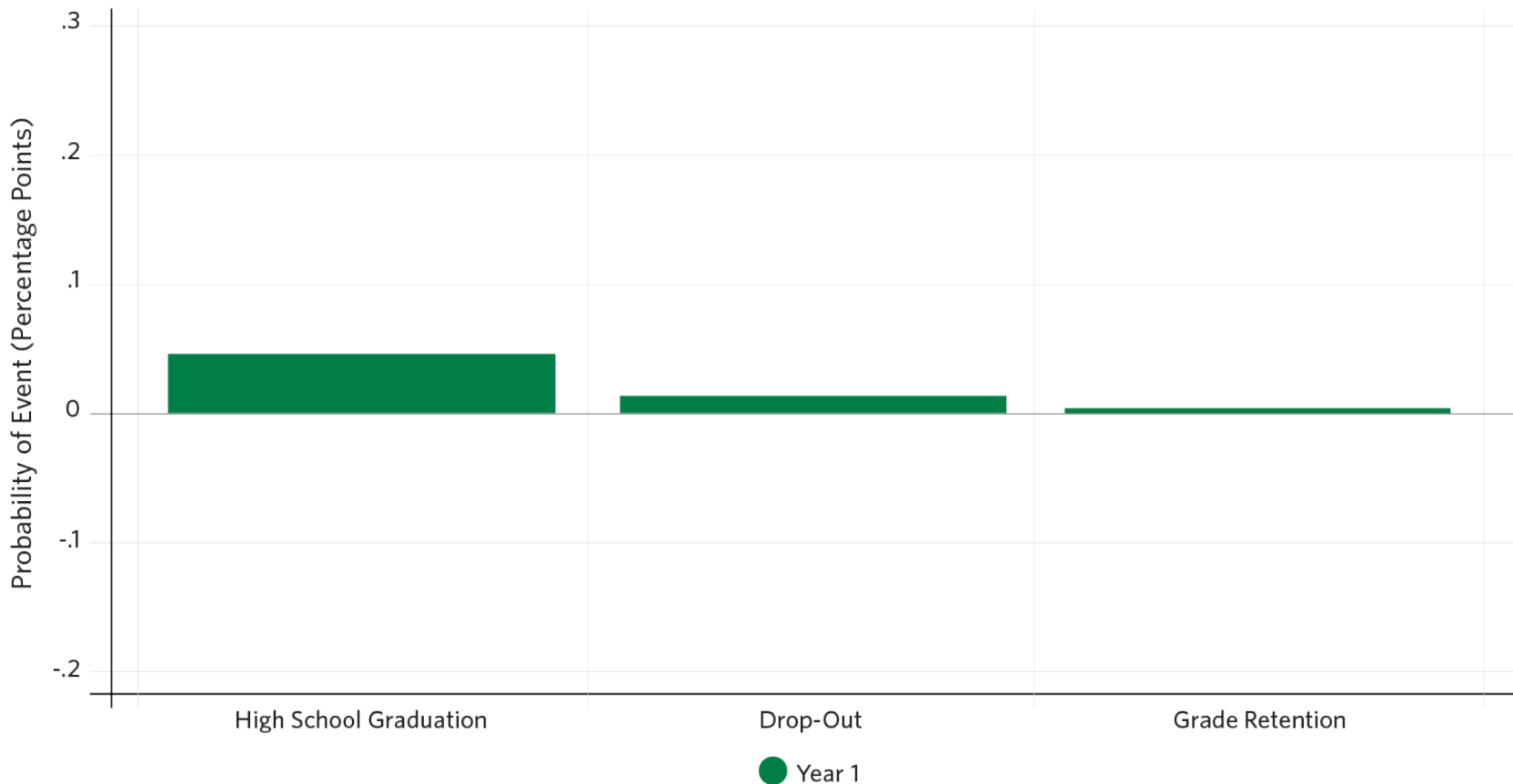
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YEAR 1 PARTNERSHIP OUTCOMES: COHORT 1 AND COHORT 2

Cohort 2 Partnership outcomes are less positive than Cohort 1, but comparable to similar interventions
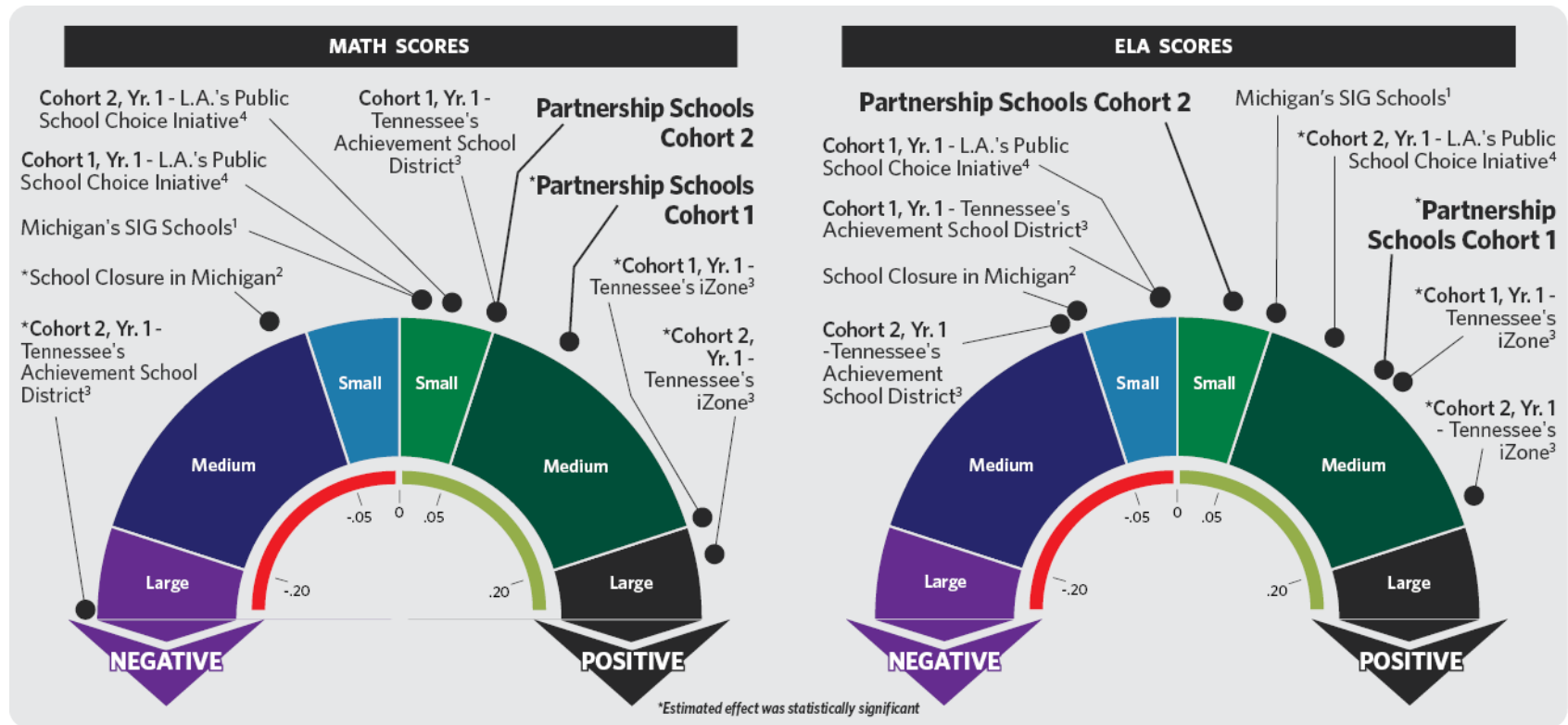
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Note: Michigan SIG Evaluation (2014). This is a different source that was used last year, as this source includes year 2 outcomes.

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EPIC

MICHIGAN'S PARTNERSHIP MODEL
UPDATED THEORY OF CHANGE

IDENTIFIED BY MDE AS LOW...

PARTNERS

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- ❭ LIAISON
  - navigators, communication brokers, and neutral facilitators
- ❭ Teacher & Leader Instruction Support Grant
- ❭ 21H Grants
- ❭ Referrals to other offices' departments
- ❭ Regional Assistance Grant to ISD

ISD
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- ❭ **Coaching**

COMMUNITY
- ❭ Advise & expertise
- ❭ Additional resources

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NEAR-TERM OUTCOMES

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- ❭ Human resources
- ❭ Curriculum
- ❭ Instructional systems *(e.g., professional development)*
- ❭ Operations
- ❭ Data use

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- ❭ Improved instruction
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INTERMEDIATE OUTCOMES

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LONG-TERM OUTCOMES

IMPROVED ACADEMIC OUTCOMES
- ❭ Higher achievement
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- ❭ Attendance
- ❭ Behavior

DISTRICT-DETERMINED CONSEQUENCES FOR FAILURE TO IMPROVE:
- ❭ Reconstruction
- ❭ Restart
- ❭ ISD takeover
- ❭ CEO appointed

LOCAL CONTEXT
STATE CONTEXT

PARTNERSHIP FACILITATES IMPROVEMENT

Partnership Offers a Strategic Planning Framework Which Facilitates Improvement:

1. Identify the most critical goals

2. Use data-driven instruction and a continuous improvement cycle

3. Improve communication both within the internal leadership team and with external partners

ALIGNMENT: PAs AND SIPs

Educators Report Increasing Alignment Between Partnership Agreements and School Improvement Plans
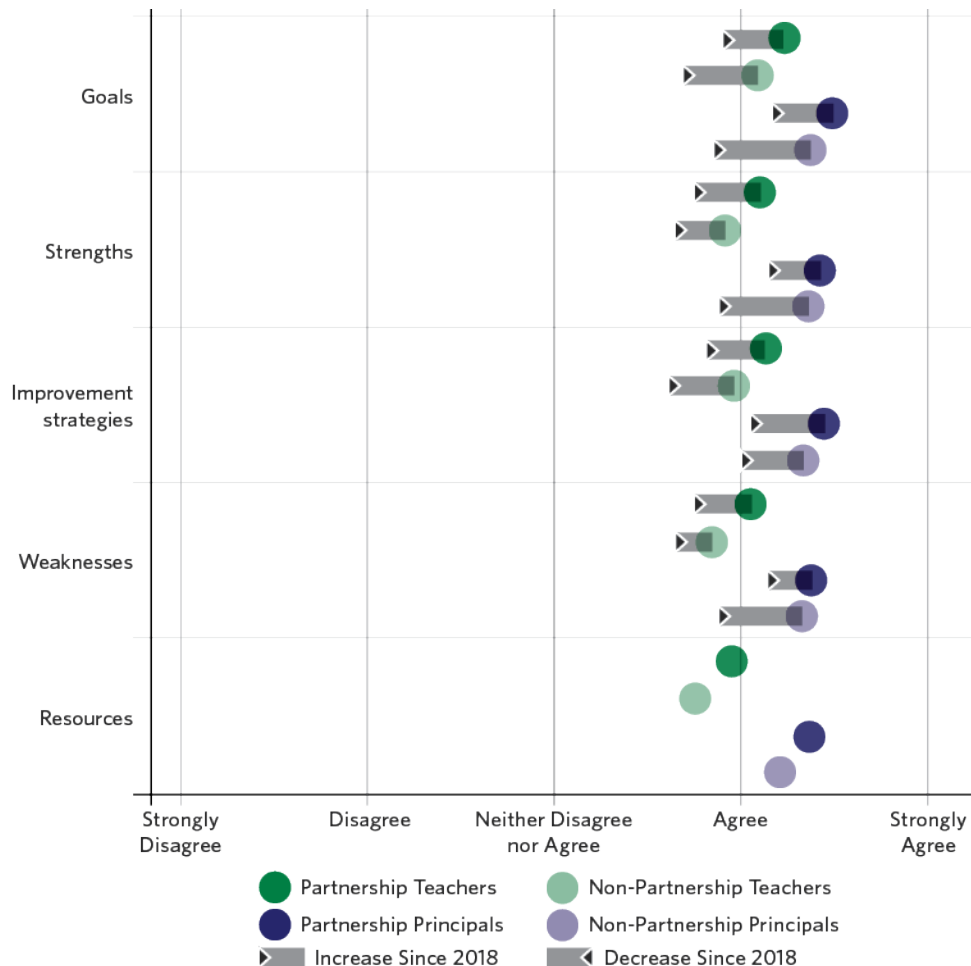
> We first built a strategic plan. Then, from our strategic plan, we built the Partnership Agreement. [...]That Partnership Agreement is still a subset of our strategic plan.
>
> – Blues' Charter Leader

Note: Educators were asked to rate their agreement with statements about the alignment between their school improvement plan and Partnership Agreement. The prompt was "My school improvement plan and Partnership Agreement identify similar…"

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SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT GOALS

Educators Viewed Their School Improvement Goals Favorably
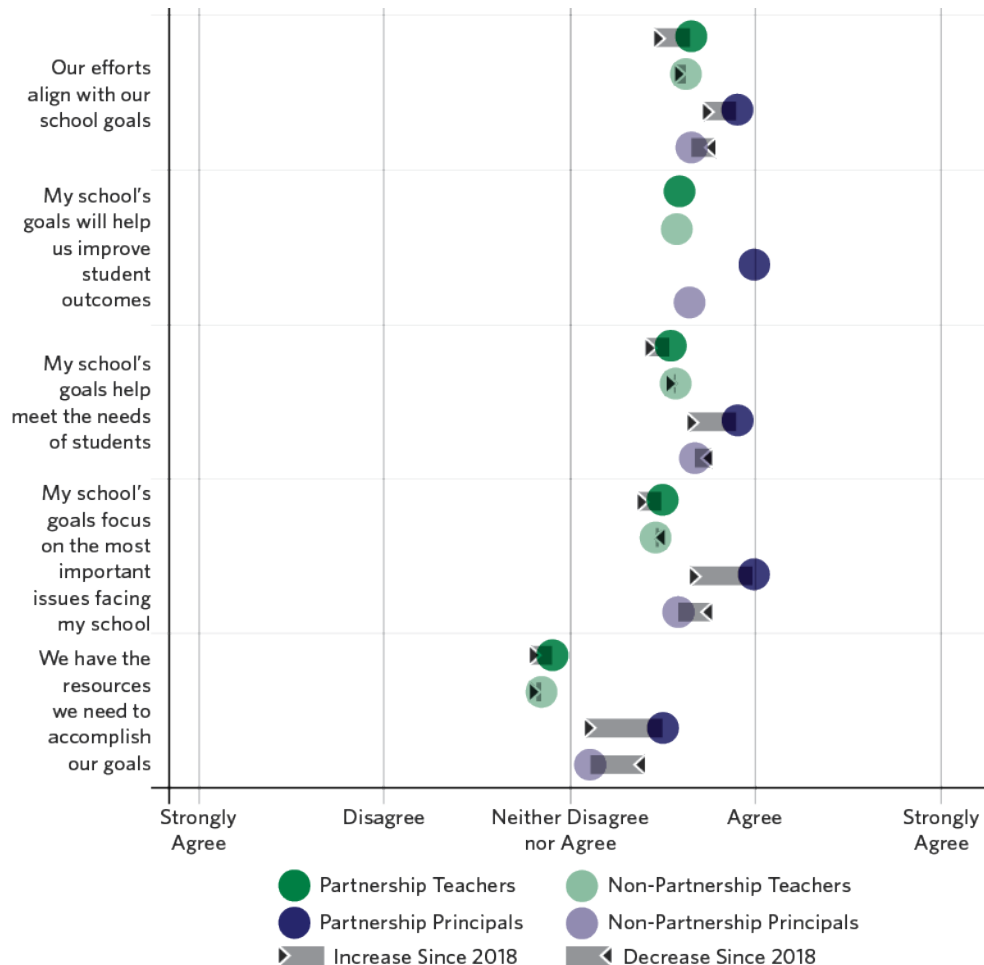
> ❝
>
> *Our goals then are shaped by those [the policy requirements and school needs] mixed together, so that as we accomplish those goals, we're meeting the requirements of the accountability system, but we're also meeting the needs of the school at the same time.*
>
> – *Flyers' Charter Leader*
>
> ❞

Note: Educators were asked "Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements about your Partnership Agreement/School Improvement goals."

DISTRICTS' IMPROVED USE OF DATA

Partnership Improved Districts' Use of Data to Inform Instruction & Practice

1. Partnership goal-setting and evaluation process led to increased data use

*"It really was a benefit, because it did make us really—**we had all the data, we didn't have to aggregate data, we had it. Putting it together in one place I think was a really good part—a really good thing**."*

– Rangers' Charter Leader

*"**I think the sensitivity to the data in [that Partnership] school has increased tenfold.** I think the understanding of the data component of [Partnership school] and their staff, they'll walk away with a really strong understanding of not only just—not panic urgency—but healthy urgency to address things and know that this affects their kids."*

– Stars' District Leader

2. Partnership schools and districts used data conversations to improve communication and align instruction with Partnership goals

*"Well, I think the other piece has been really **forcing us to look at the reading and math scores and then the classroom teachers working with [a coach] to bridge the gap** of where kids might not be understanding algebra or geometry and then giving those additional supports. That has been very helpful."*

– Red Wings' District Leader

# TEACHERS REPORT A FOCUS ON DATA USE FOR IMPROVEMENT

Partnership improved districts' use of data to inform instruction and practice
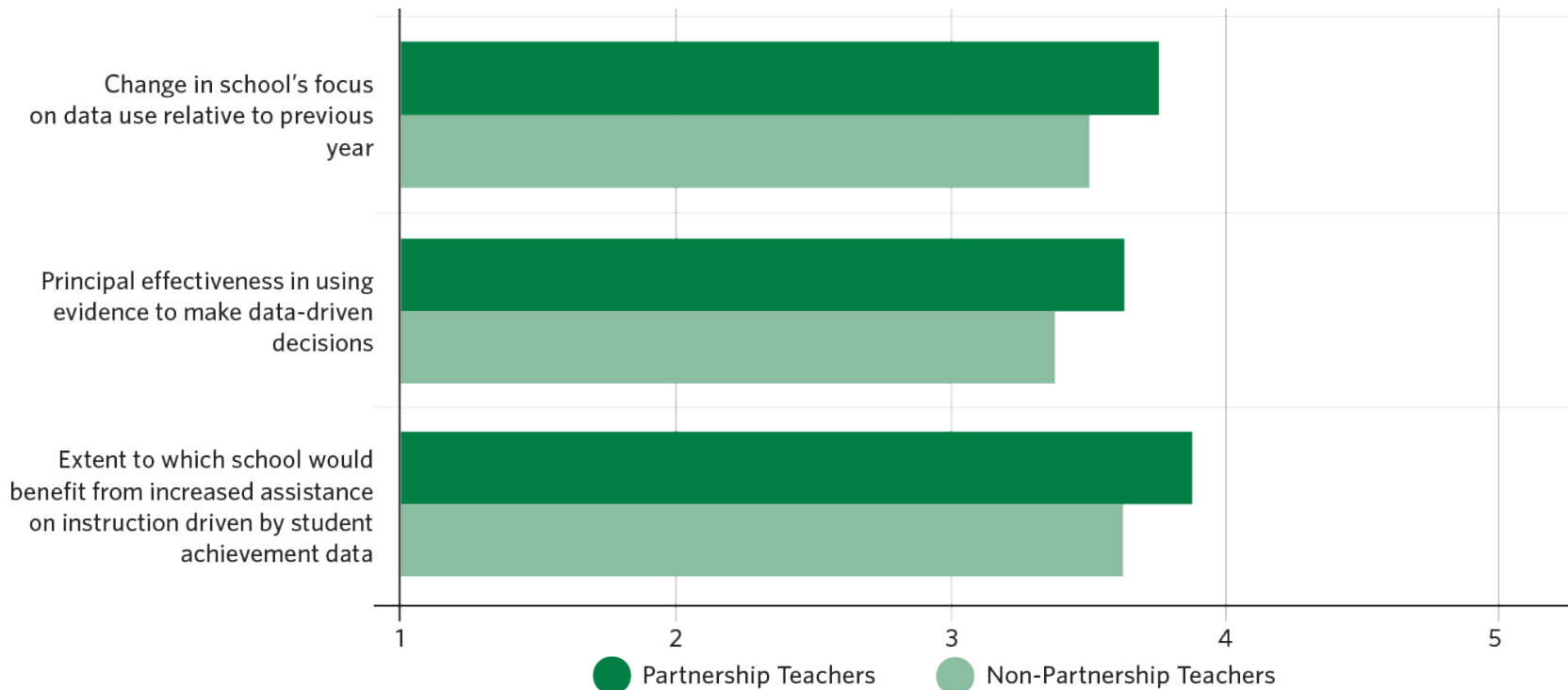
Note: Educators were asked the following three questions about data use: 1) "Comparing this year to the 2018-19 school year, to what extent has your school's focus changed in the following areas: instruction driven by student achievement data (answers ranged from 1= much less than before to 5= much greater than before); 2) Consider your school's 2018-19 principal or leader... Indicate how effectively your principal or school leader performed each of the following: used evidence to make data-driven decisions (answers ranged from 1=not at all effectively to 5 = extremely effectively); and 3) To what extent do you believe that your school would benefit from increased attendance in the following areas: instruction driven by student achievement data? (answers ranged from 1= no benefit to 5 = immense benefit).

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

Educators Report Increasing Focus on Academic Performance
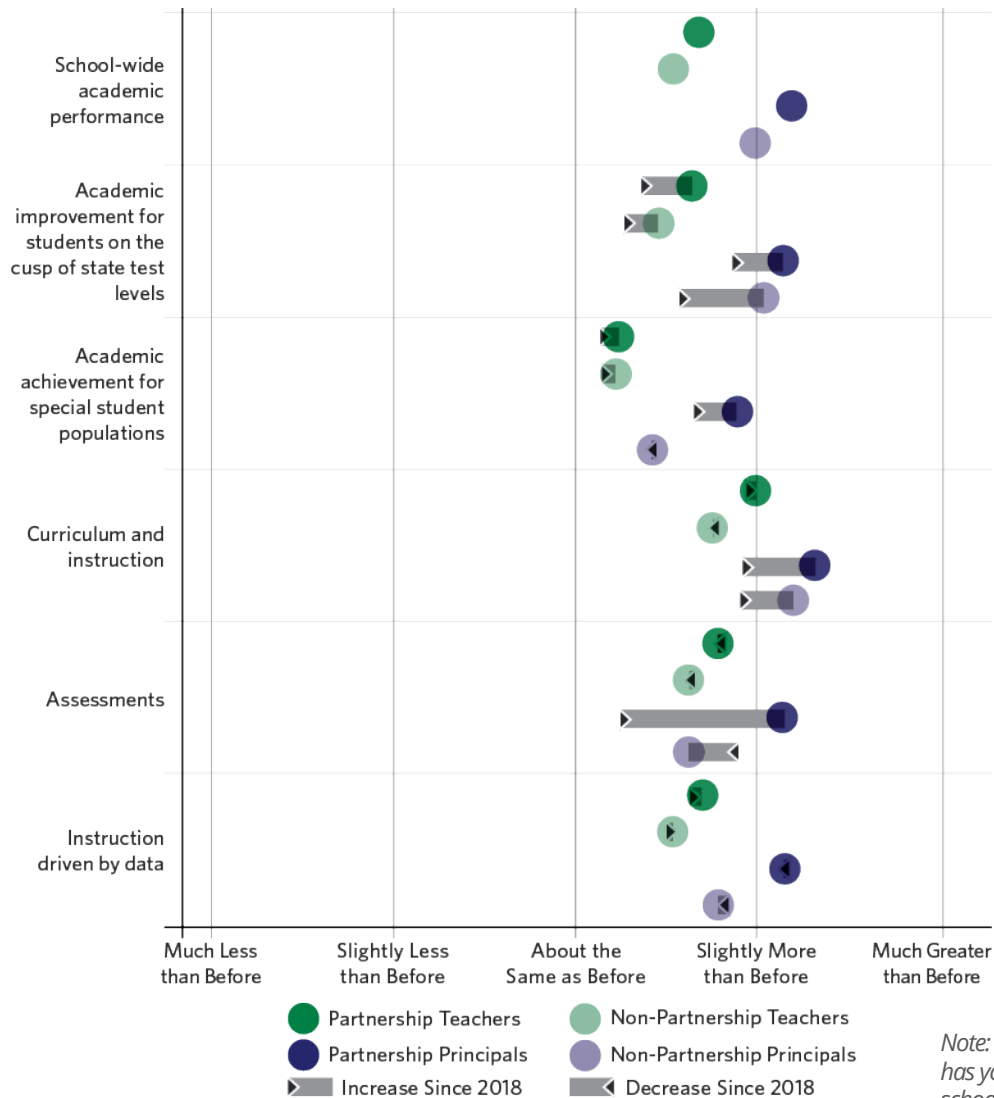
77%

**17 of 22
DISTRICT LEADERS**

Reported increased focus on initiatives targeting the instructional core, including:

- changing curricula,
- working to build teachers' instructional capacities
- enhancing teacher recruitment and retention

Legend:
- Partnership Teachers
- Non-Partnership Teachers
- Partnership Principals
- Non-Partnership Principals
- Increase Since 2018
- Decrease Since 2018

Note: Educators were asked, "Comparing this year to last year, to what extent has your school's focus changed in the following areas?" We asked about schoolwide academic performance for the first time in the 2019-20 survey.

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

Educators Report Increasing Focus on Academic Performance

"

"We did purchase a new reading curriculum. After looking through our needs assessment, the reading curriculum actually stood out: a lack of resources and/or alignment, pacing, scope, sequence and organization, unification. We decide to purchase an all-inclusive reading curriculum, which we purchased with 21h funds."

– Wild's Charter Leader

"A lot of our process goals circled around English Language Arts and math, both new curriculums and counted assessments. [...] Within those process goals, all that was embedded in addition to instructional rounds—which was a new process component that started with our Partnership—which is where teachers and staff travel within their school to observe kind of like a medical doctor would do. They go do rounds to help understand about patients. This would be teachers walk around to different classrooms in a structured format, not to evaluate the teacher but to review processes and then go back and reflect on what they've learned and what things they could take away from it."

– Stars' District Leader

"

EPIC

FAMILY AND STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

Educators Report Increasing Focus on Family and Student Engagement

"

"We're also being pushed far as [building] community... we have to meet all the needs of the students, so making sure we have a social worker in place, making sure we have busses to pick up families when we have parent teacher conferences or Black history or holiday programs. All of the things above."

– Senators' Charter Leader

"We're very supportive to the families that come into the door. We want their kids to make it to school and to be a part of our culture here at Flames, so we make sure we reach out to them and if there's any issues that they're having, we try to resolve it."

– Flames' Teacher

"

11 LEADERS
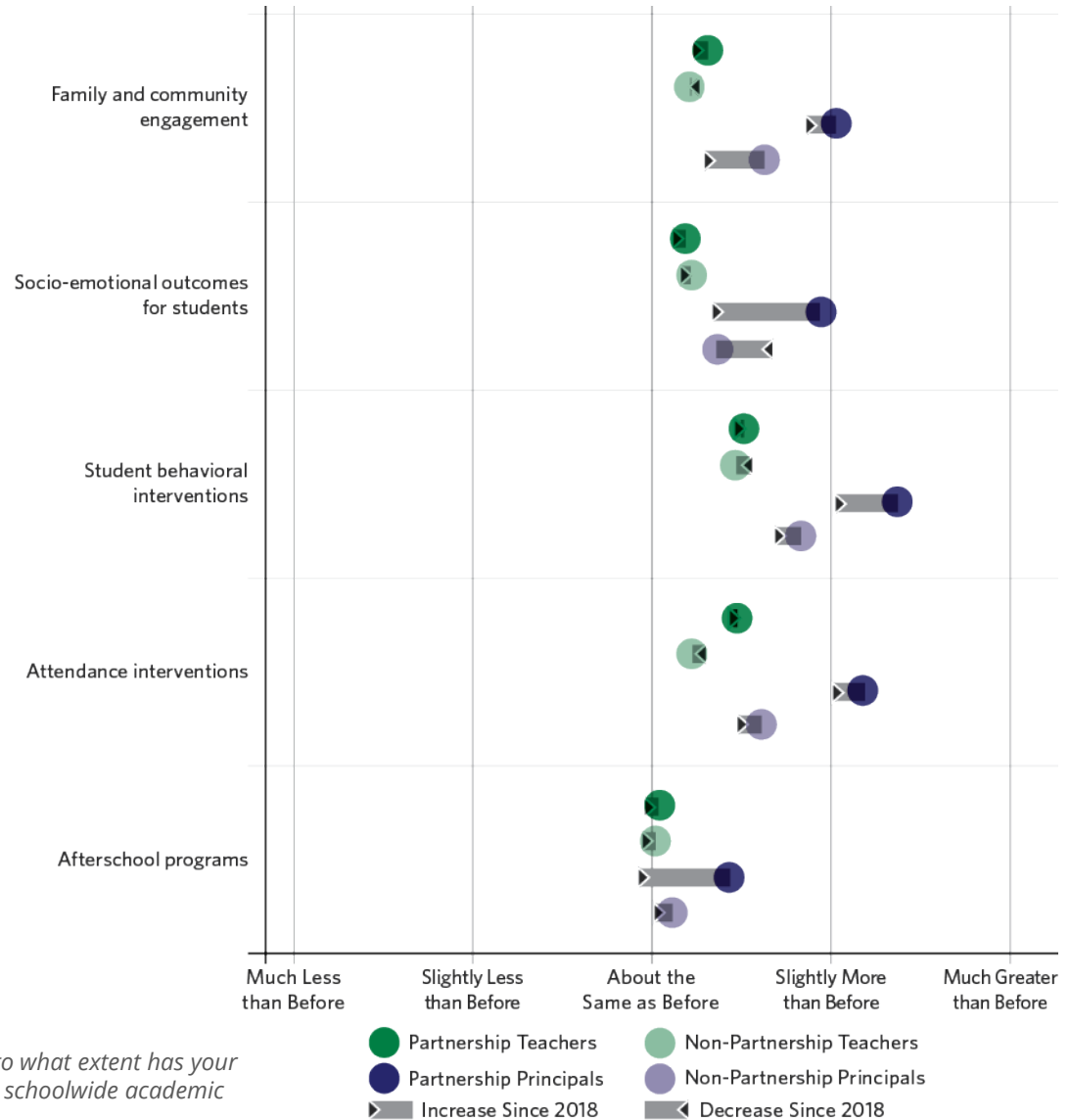discussed efforts to increase parent or community engagement in schools.

EPIC

CULTURE AND CLIMATE

Partnership Educators are Working to Improve Culture and Climate

" *I think there's a lot more focus on [culture and climate] now, and we just have a better understanding of how they fit into the turnaround of the building... we want to reduce our suspension numbers, increase attendance because... if the instruction is excellent and only 75% of our students are in those classrooms, it's not going to make a difference, so we work on culture and climate, we work on attendance, we work on truancy, and that's been our focus.*

— Stars' Principal "

Much Less than Before | Slightly Less than Before | About the Same as Before | Slightly More than Before | Much Greater than Before

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Categories: Family and community engagement; Socio-emotional outcomes for students; Student behavioral interventions; Attendance interventions; Afterschool programs
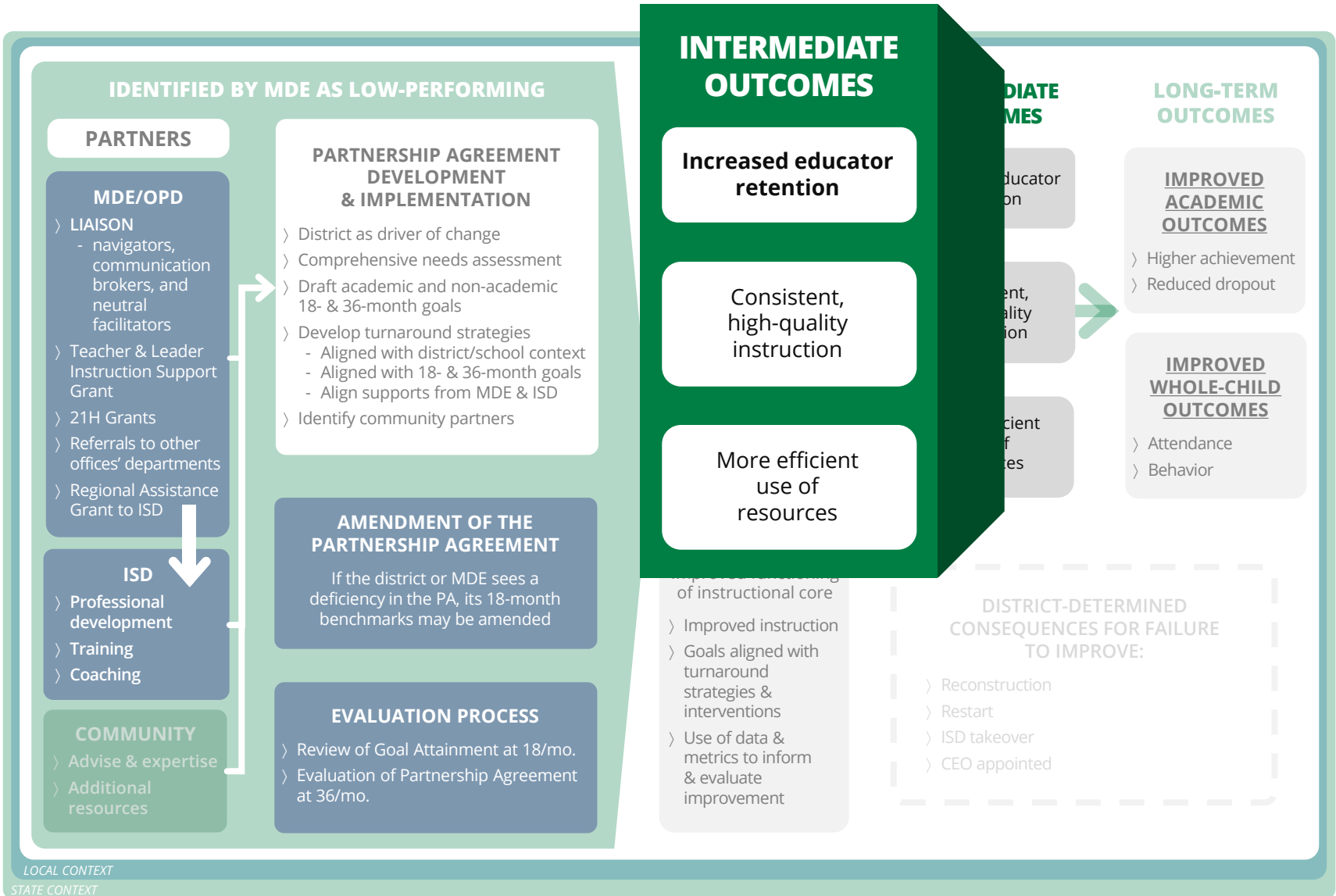
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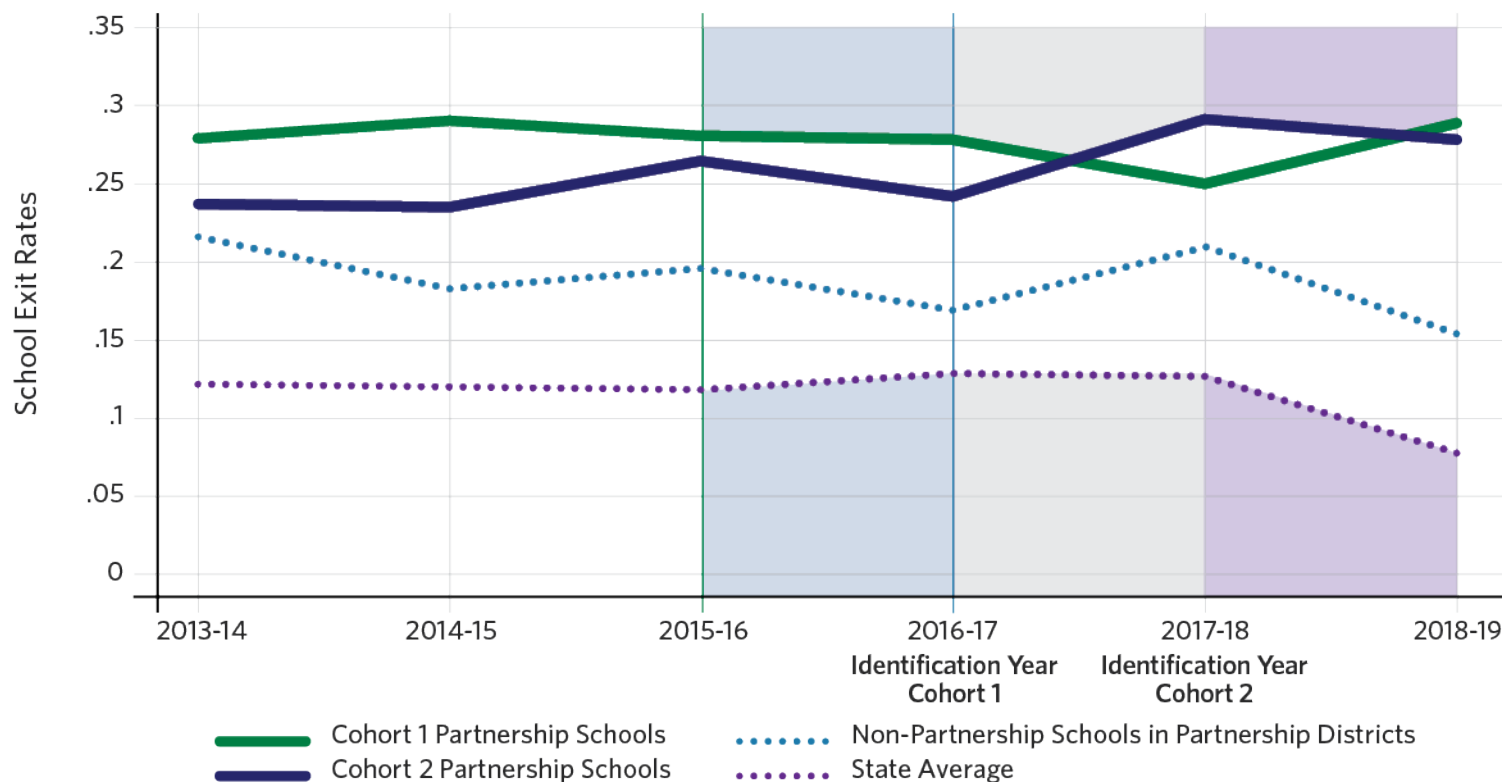**EPIC's Year 2 Evaluation of the Partnership Model Asks Five Main Questions:**

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Increased educator retention

Consistent, high-quality instruction

More efficient use of resources

[INTERME]DIATE [OUTCO]MES

[...e]ducator [...]on

[...]ent, [...q]uality [...]ion

[...]cient [...f ...]es

improved [...]g of instructional core
› Improved instruction
› Goals aligned with turnaround strategies & interventions
› Use of data & metrics to inform & evaluate improvement

LONG-TERM OUTCOMES

IMPROVED ACADEMIC OUTCOMES
› Higher achievement
› Reduced dropout

IMPROVED WHOLE-CHILD OUTCOMES
› Attendance
› Behavior

DISTRICT-DETERMINED CONSEQUENCES FOR FAILURE TO IMPROVE:
› Reconstruction
› Restart
› ISD takeover
› CEO appointed

LOCAL CONTEXT
STATE CONTEXT

RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

Teacher Recruitment and Retention Remains a Challenge in Partnership Schools and Districts

*School Exit Rates* plotted from 2013-14 to 2018-19, with Identification Year Cohort 1 (2016-17) and Identification Year Cohort 2 (2017-18) marked.

Legend:
— Cohort 1 Partnership Schools
— Cohort 2 Partnership Schools
······ Non-Partnership Schools in Partnership Districts
······ State Average

> *For every opening, you used to get 40 applicants, 10 of whom were very hirable, 5 of whom were probably great. I'm talking up till about 5 years ago. Now, you are lucky to get one, extremely lucky to get two or three, and incredibly lucky if one of them is really a hirable candidate.*
>
> *– Devils' District Leader*

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TEACHER COMPENSATION

Several factors impede teacher hiring & recruitment
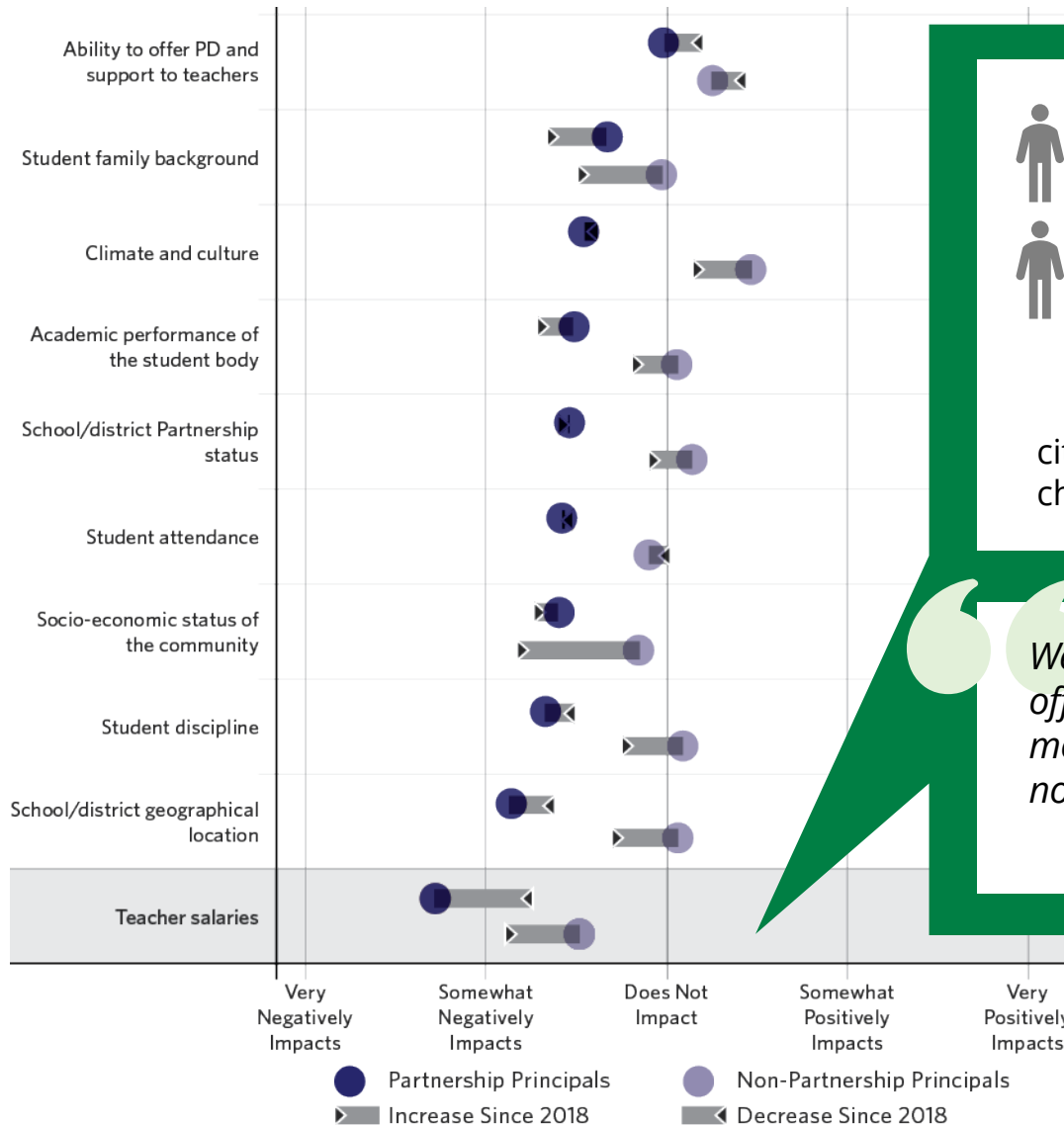
12 of 22
PARTNERSHIP LEADERS
cited compensation as a persistent challenge with teacher recruitment

We still have people who get job offers for 15 or 20 thousand dollars more a year, and they can't afford not to go.

– Avalanche's District Leader

Chart categories (top to bottom):
- Ability to offer PD and support to teachers
- Student family background
- Climate and culture
- Academic performance of the student body
- School/district Partnership status
- Student attendance
- Socio-economic status of the community
- Student discipline
- School/district geographical location
- Teacher salaries

X-axis: Very Negatively Impacts | Somewhat Negatively Impacts | Does Not Impact | Somewhat Positively Impacts | Very Positively Impacts

Legend:
- Partnership Principals
- Non-Partnership Principals
- Increase Since 2018
- Decrease Since 2018

Note: Principals were asked, "To what extent do the following factors affect your ability to recruit and hire teachers in your school?"

HIRING DIFFICULTY

Partnership school principals report less difficulty in hiring over time; more difficulty district-wide
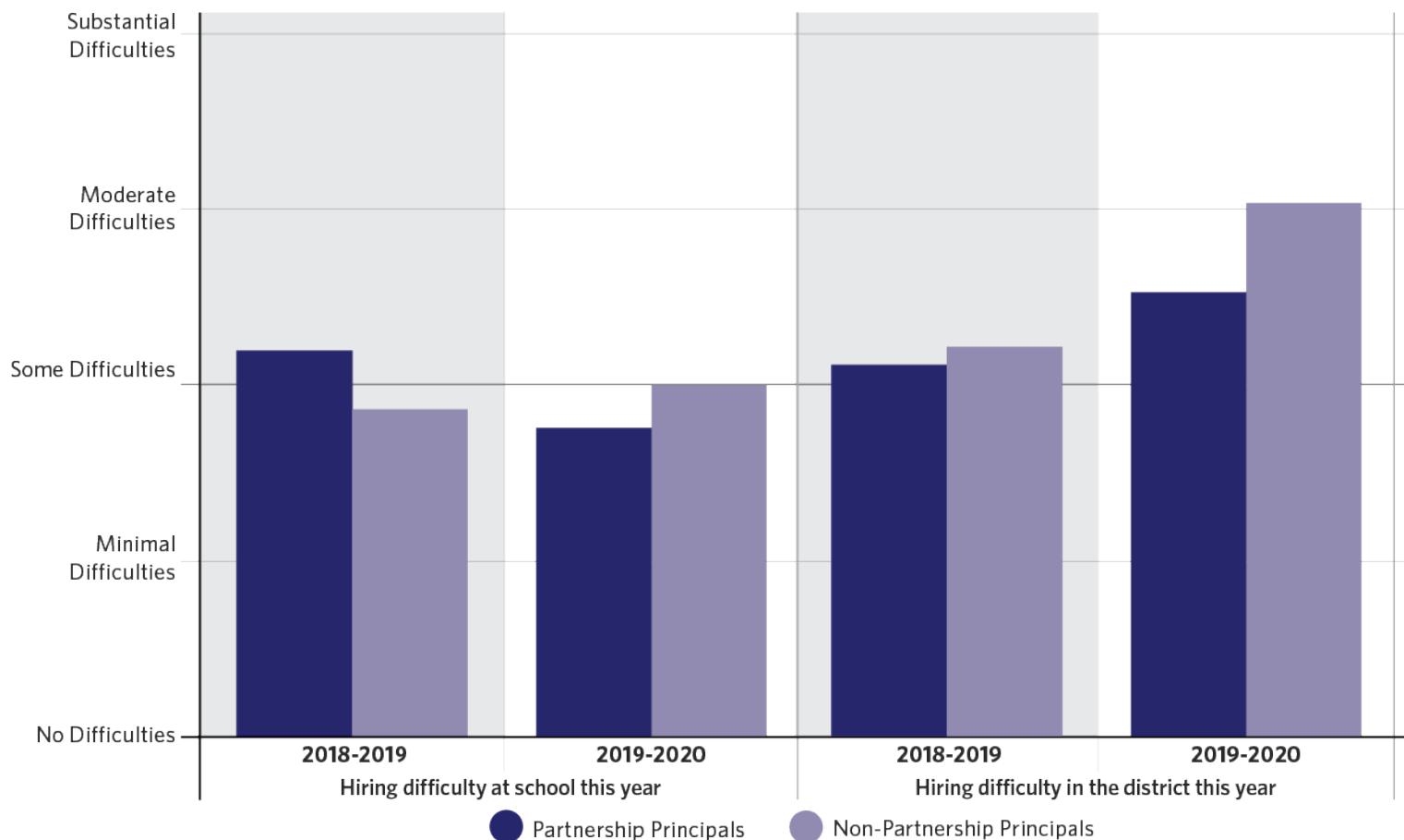
Note: Principals were asked, "To what extent did your school and district experience difficulties in recruiting and hiring teachers this year (2019-2020)?"

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TEACHER RECRUITMENT

Districts Implemented New Strategies to Recruit Teachers

1. Teacher Compensation:

Half of Partnership leaders reported using compensation – e.g., salary increases, signing bonuses, or financial incentives – to help recruit teachers.

2. Grow Your Own Program:

districts implemented programs to help substitute teachers become credentialed, attract new teaching interns, or mentor and develop teachers already in the district. Often in partnership with universities.

50%

OF PARTNERSHIP LEADERS
Reported using forms of compensation to recruit teachers

3. Attracting "Right Fit" Teachers:

districts changed hiring practices to reach teachers who would mesh well with district culture and be less likely to leave.

TEACHER RETENTION: COHORT 1

Difficulties Persist with Teacher Retention in Partnership Schools
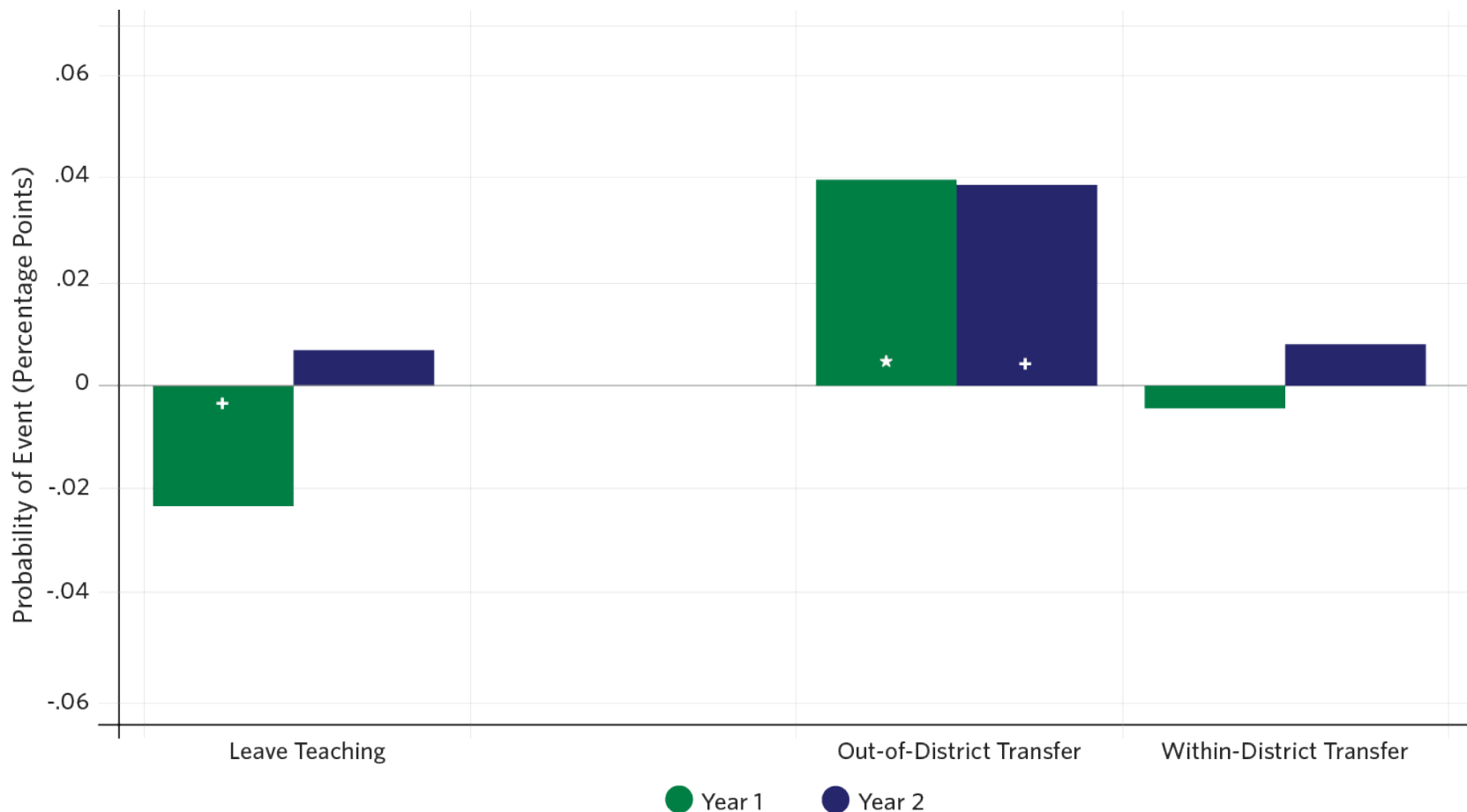
Note: p<.10 +, p<.05 *, p<.01 **, p<.001 ***. Coefficients show effect relative to comparison schools in the identification year.

TEACHER RETENTION: COHORT 1

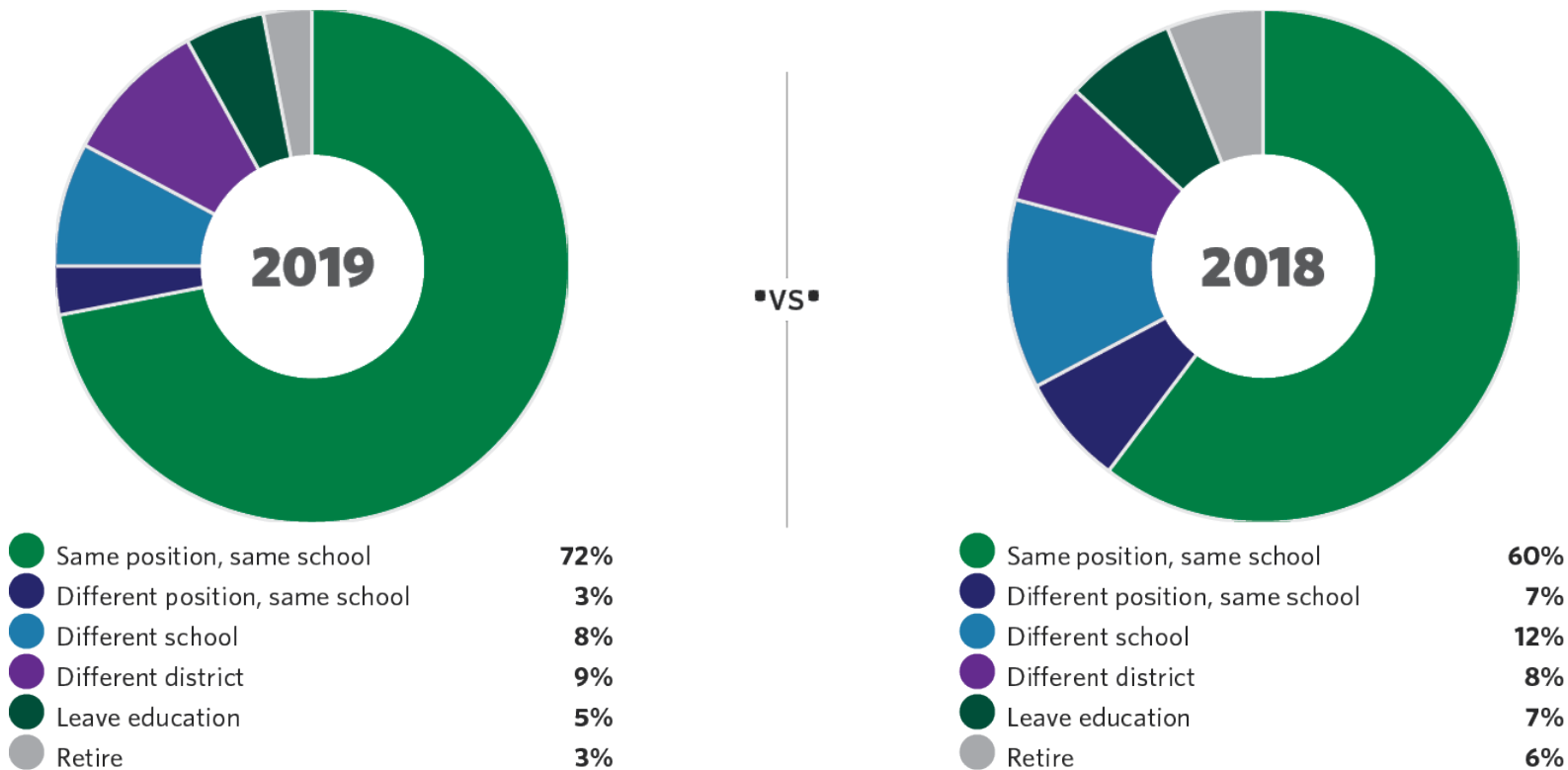## Difficulties Persist with Teacher Retention in Partnership Schools – Early Career Teachers

Note: p<.10 +, p<.05 *, p<.01 **, p<.001 ***. Coefficients show effect relative to comparison schools in the identification year.

TEACHER RETENTION: COHORT 2

Cohort 2 Partnership and Comparison Teachers were Similarly Likely to Exit their Schools
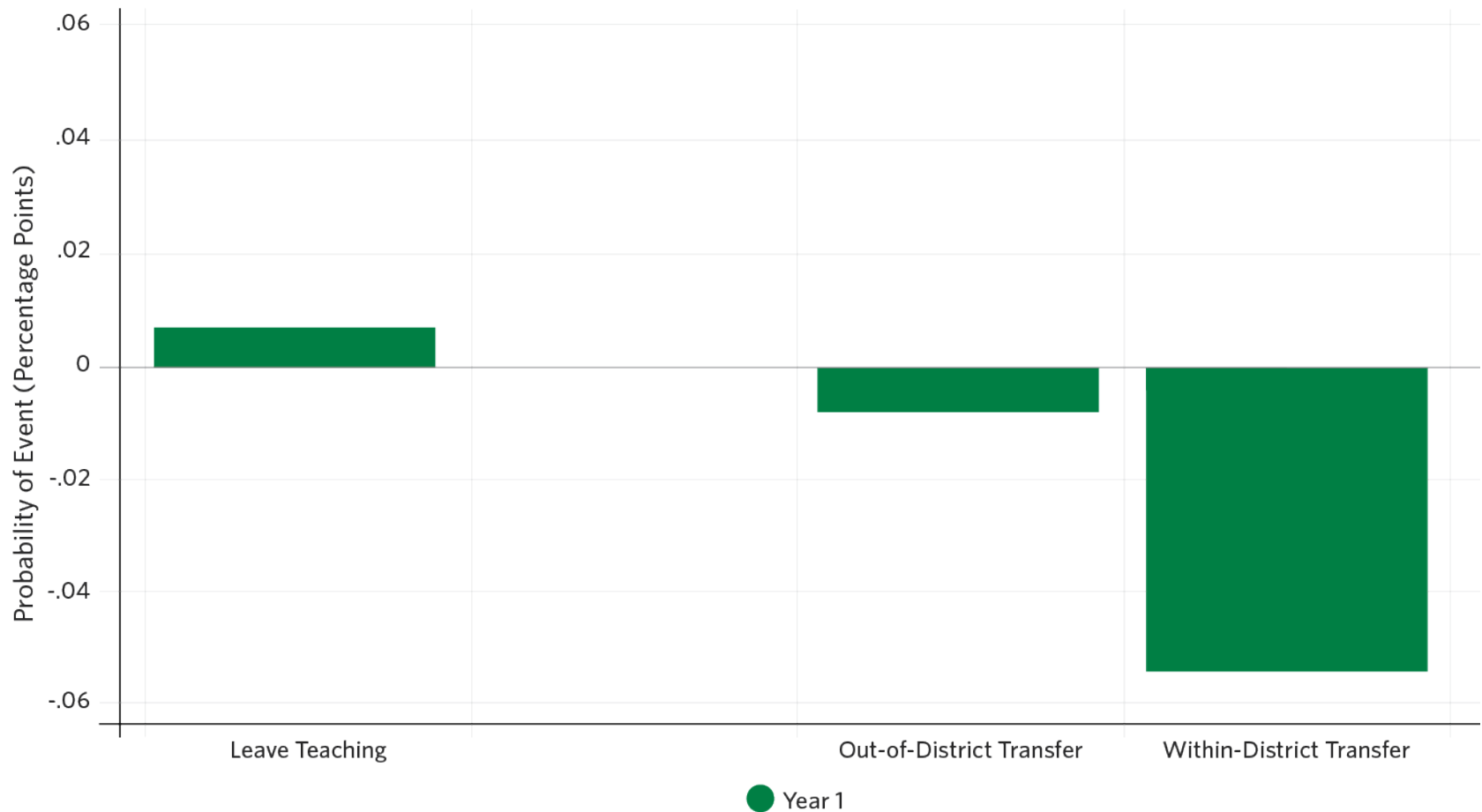
Note: p<.10 +, p<.05 *, p<.01 **, p<.001 ***. Coefficients show effect relative to comparison schools in the identification year.

TEACHER RETENTION: COHORT 2

Cohort 2 Partnership and Comparison Teachers were Similarly Likely to Exit their Schools

*Note: p<.10 +, p<.05 *, p<.01 **, p<.001 ***. Coefficients show effect relative to comparison schools in the identification year.*

PARTNERSHIP TEACHERS: FUTURE PLANS

Across Both Cohorts, Partnership School Teachers Reported They Planned to Stay in Their Positions

2019

🟢	Same position, same school	**72%**
🔵	Different position, same school	**3%**
🔵	Different school	**8%**
🟣	Different district	**9%**
🟢	Leave education	**5%**
⚪	Retire	**3%**

•VS•

2018

🟢	Same position, same school	**60%**
🔵	Different position, same school	**7%**
🔵	Different school	**12%**
🟣	Different district	**8%**
🟢	Leave education	**7%**
⚪	Retire	**6%**

Note: Teachers were asked, "Which of the following best describes your plans for next school year?"

Non-Partnership teachers in Partnership districts show similar patterns; even more likely to plan on staying

TEACHER RETENTION

Factors that influence teacher retention and exit

1. School leadership is a key factor in teachers' decisions to stay in their schools.

"We're seeing what makes a difference, and it's when people can trust and have stable leadership and when they have a support structure and colleagues that they care about with a likemindedness of serving kids."

– Avalanche District Leader

2. Compensation, School Leadership, and Workload are the most important factors driving teachers' decisions to leave.

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TEACHER RETENTION

Districts implemented new strategies to improve working conditions & retain teachers

1. Focus teachers' time on core work

2. Build trust and sense of belonging

3. Recruit strong school leaders

4. Improve teacher compensation

5. Focus on teacher development

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

**EPIC's Year 2 Evaluation of the Partnership Model
Asks Five Main Questions:**

1. How has the Partnership model changed over time?

2. How has Partnership changed education in Partnership schools and districts?

3. How are educators and leaders in Partnership schools and districts implementing the reform as it matures?

4. What human capital challenges face Partnership schools and districts and how are educators in these districts addressing them?

5. What conditions, other than human capital, mediate Partnership turnaround efforts?

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HIGH QUALITY SCHOOL LEADERS

Recruiting and retaining high quality school leaders seen as key to effective school turnaround

"

"We talk about, 'People don't quit the job, they quit their boss.' We believe that relationships with leaders and teachers is ground zero for retention."

– Rangers' Charter Leader

"One of the things we've learned that has been huge is that leadership makes a huge difference in terms of turnover and that stability tends to breed stability, and instability tends to breed instability. … we now have a solid principal who's able to provide strong guidance and is well-liked by the staff. S/he's done some of his/her own hiring that has—basically, s/he's found likeminded people who have come to work there. What's happened then in [that] school is that turnover has stabilized significantly because of that stable leader, and the team, it's not— they're not all just staying for her, but they're staying for each other. They have a support structure that kind of has been developed within the school that has helped them to stabilize the workforce."

– Avalanche's District Leader

"The scores had lowered. The school had a great reputation and had won all these awards, and then we just noticed that the scores were going down. We had a conversation with [the prior leader] and just the passion wasn't there and, in turn, it affected the management of the school and the students as well."

– Flames' District Leader

"

FUNDING

21h funds were viewed as valuable, especially for smaller schools and districts

"We're talking several hundred thousand dollars, that makes a big difference in a small school."

– Maple Leafs Charter Leader

"We also used the money to receive training for our central office and coaches to be trained in some math interventions."

– Bruins' District Leader

"[21h] has definitely been a resource that has allowed us to move forward with some strategies that again, we've had our sights set on, but didn't have necessarily a way to make it come to fruition because there just wasn't funding available behind it in the school's budget. It ... will play a really pivotal role in how we're able to not just make the improvements but sustain the improvements and then grow on them over time."

– Flyers' Charter Leader

"There's 21h funding, which goes along with your Partnership Agreement and in some situations, I've taken advantage of that, but it's also very hard to find additional personnel that want to come on board, knowing that the position is in a way, grant funded. In education people are very apprehensive to take grant funded positions because at any point in time that grant funding can no longer be available."

– Predators' Charter Leader

FUNDING

Financial Constraints Still Inhibited Improvement

1. **Funding available via 21h and RAG funding; lower 21h funding ($6 million) in 2019-20 than previous years**

2. **Leaders emphasized how financially stretched they were, and the inadequacy of available funds**

   "I guess I would say a good way to look at it is as far as budgets go, so far, we've budgeted [around half a million from outside money]. That's a drop in the bucket compared to the amount of resources we need to sustain what we're doing. I'd say no, it's not enough."

   – Stars' District Leader

3. **Miscommunication around the use of 21H funds made it harder for some Partnership leaders to efficiently expend them**

   "With this particular partnership, 21H, yes, there have been issues with that and then the other funds that we use are our Regional Assistance Grants, the RAG money... Last year alone, we had to spend about I think it was [thousands of dollars] out of the general budget because of that communication issue between us, the ISD, and MDE, so it's been pretty frustrating."

   – Red Wings' District Leader

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STREAMLINED SYSTEMS AND PROCESSES

Review of Goal Attainment Process was Useful to Many Partnership Leaders

1. Review of Goal Attainment (RGA) process enabled reflection and continuous improvement

"RGA was a good check and balance to make sure that we were who we said we were. It was a good way to validate all the hard work we're doing. It was a good way to validate that our processes and systems are strong, ... with proof, with evidence we were moving in the right direction. ... I think if we weren't in the Partnership Agreement, we would have continued moving forward and not pausing to look at and reflect on what we did like we did. The review of goal attainment makes you stop and review and reflect in a structured process."

– Stars' District Leader

"[RGA] validated the work through our ratings, and then we also received feedback on things that we were doing well and things that we can improve upon."

– Blues' District Leader

2. Districts used RGA to tell their stories

"It was helpful for MDE to hear our whole story, and for all of our partners to hear that story with MDE here. [Specifically,] the challenges that were faced. The big picture, not just the NWEA scores and those types of things. ... We just were really able to share that data about all the [teacher] turnover and how that affects us."

– Devils' District Leader

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STREAMLINED SYSTEMS AND PROCESSES

There was still a sense of "building the plane while flying it"...

1. RGA process was time-intensive and still somewhat compliance-focused

"What's the point? What's the purpose? All the Partnership districts are schools that serve predominantly vulnerable students. What are they hoping to gain by us uploading a lot of documents? Would it be more purposeful to be on the ground here, really trying to create or help us design a systems response to underachieving kids, or is it better to ask us to do a lot of paperwork?"

– Ducks' District Leader

"That's just going to be more time that we're not going to be able to do the work we were going to be able to do. There's work coming up that I'm going to have to do that's going to take hours to put together. That's [...] just reporting on what's already happened. It's not moving us forward."

– Blues' Charter Leader

2. Instability in liaison assignments contributed to misunderstandings and shifting expectations in some districts

"A Partnership liaison changed. I believe one of the reasons for some of the early on confusion is our liaison. [...] I think s/he told us some things that weren't quite accurate. We had misinformation [...] I think that that was the reason for some of the misunderstandings. We ended up with a new liaison, and I'm not sure why we didn't ask for one."

– Rangers' Charter Leader

CHALLENGES: COVID-19

Partnership Districts are Among the Most Impacted by COVID

1. Remote learning
Teachers in Partnership districts reported greater challenges with transitioning to remote learning

2. Return to school – Fall 2020
More Partnership districts planned to start the 2020-21 school year fully remote; fewer planned to return to school in-person

3. Electronic devices and internet access
Partnership districts were more likely to provide students with electronic devices and internet access

4. Virtual engagement
Partnership teachers were more likely to report offering students opportunities for direct virtual engagement

5. Professional development
Partnership districts were more likely to offer professional development and training on distance learning

KEY TAKEAWAYS

From EPIC's Year 2 Evaluation of the Partnership Model:

- Early partnership effects on student outcomes are mixed but remain positive for Cohort 1

- Partnership educators leveraged the Partnership Model to benefit their schools and districts
    - Strategic planning for improvement
    - Increased focus on academic performance, curriculum and instruction, family/community engagement, school culture/climate, and whole-child initiatives

- Teacher recruitment and retention remain a challenge in Partnership schools and districts

- There are several mediating factors that are critical to successful turnaround in Partnership schools and districts
    - A high quality and stable teaching force
    - High quality school leaders
    - Additional funds to aid in turnaround implementation
    - Continued efforts to streamline and improve Partnership systems & processes

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

From EPIC's Year 2 Evaluation of the Partnership Model:

1. Patience is warranted
School turnaround takes time; patience is warranted

2. Continued Assistance
Partnership districts need continued assistance with teacher recruitment and retention

3. Additional Funding
Additional funding is critical for improvement efforts

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COLLEGE OF EDUCATION | MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

236 Erickson Hall, 620 Farm Lane, East Lansing, MI 48824 | (517) 884-0377 | EPICedpolicy@msu.edu