



# Evidence Regarding the Read by Grade Three Law

**January 31, 2023**

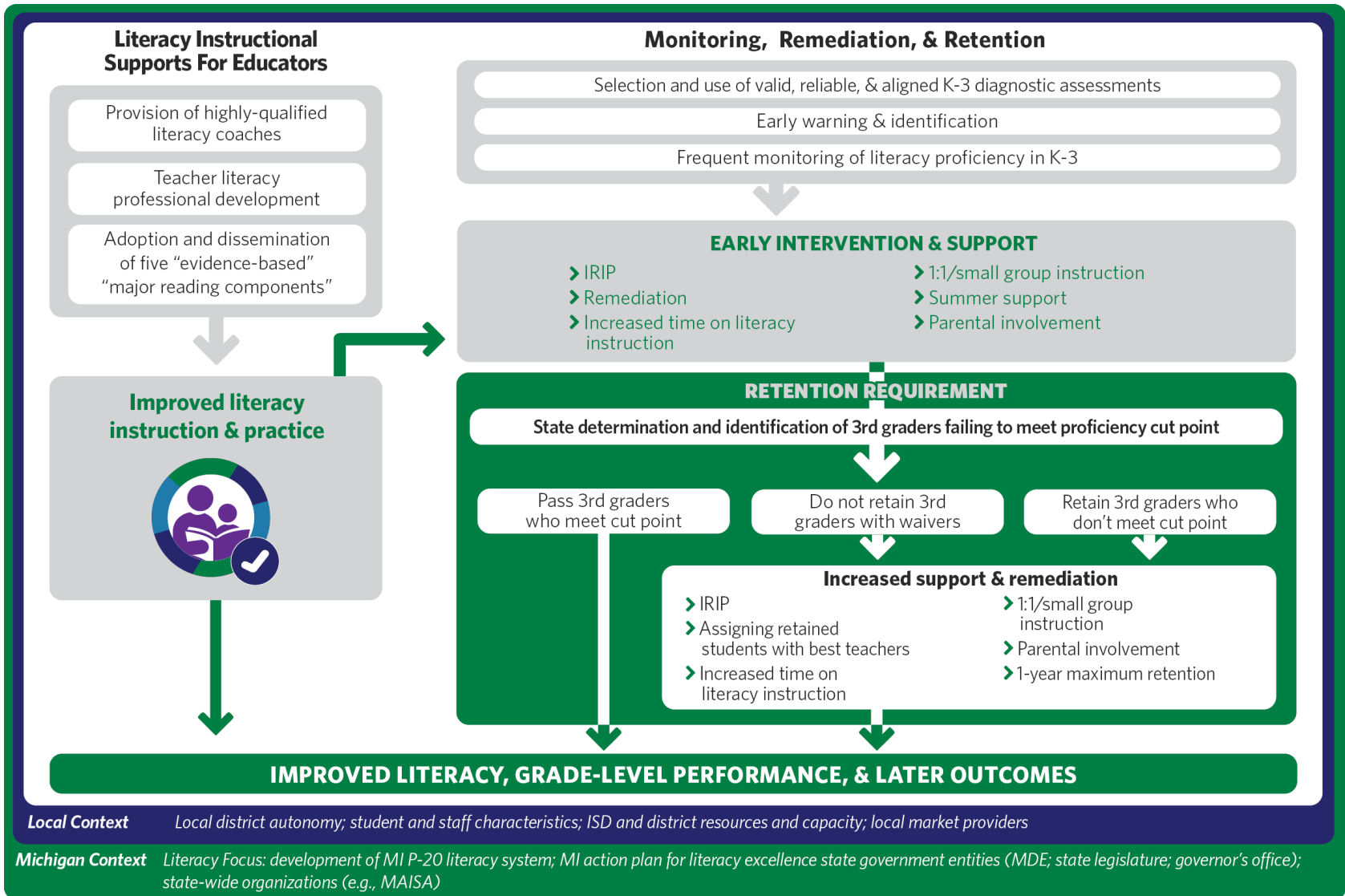
*Presentation to the House Education Standing Committee*

**Katharine O. Strunk, PhD**

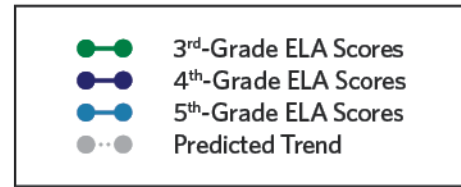
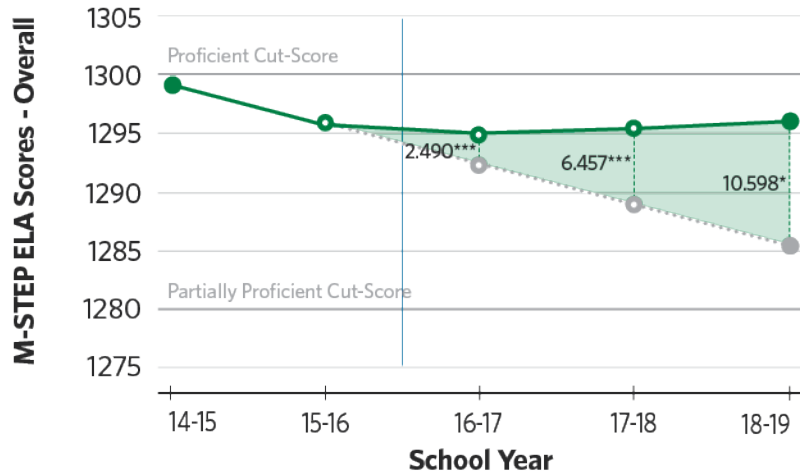
*Clifford E. Erickson Distinguished Professor of Education  
Faculty Director, EPIC*

College of Education | Michigan State University

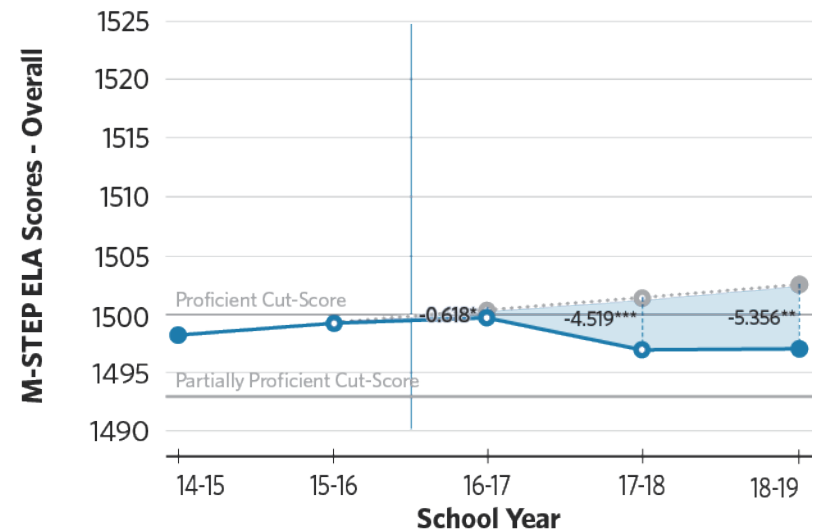
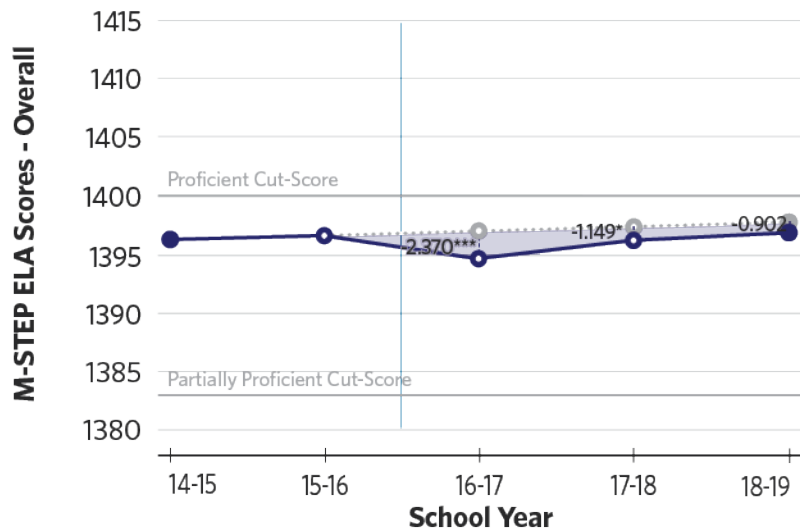
# HOW THE READ BY GRADE THREE LAW IS INTENDED TO WORK



# STUDENT ELA ACHIEVEMENT IMPROVED SINCE THE LAW PASSED- PRIOR TO THE PANDEMIC

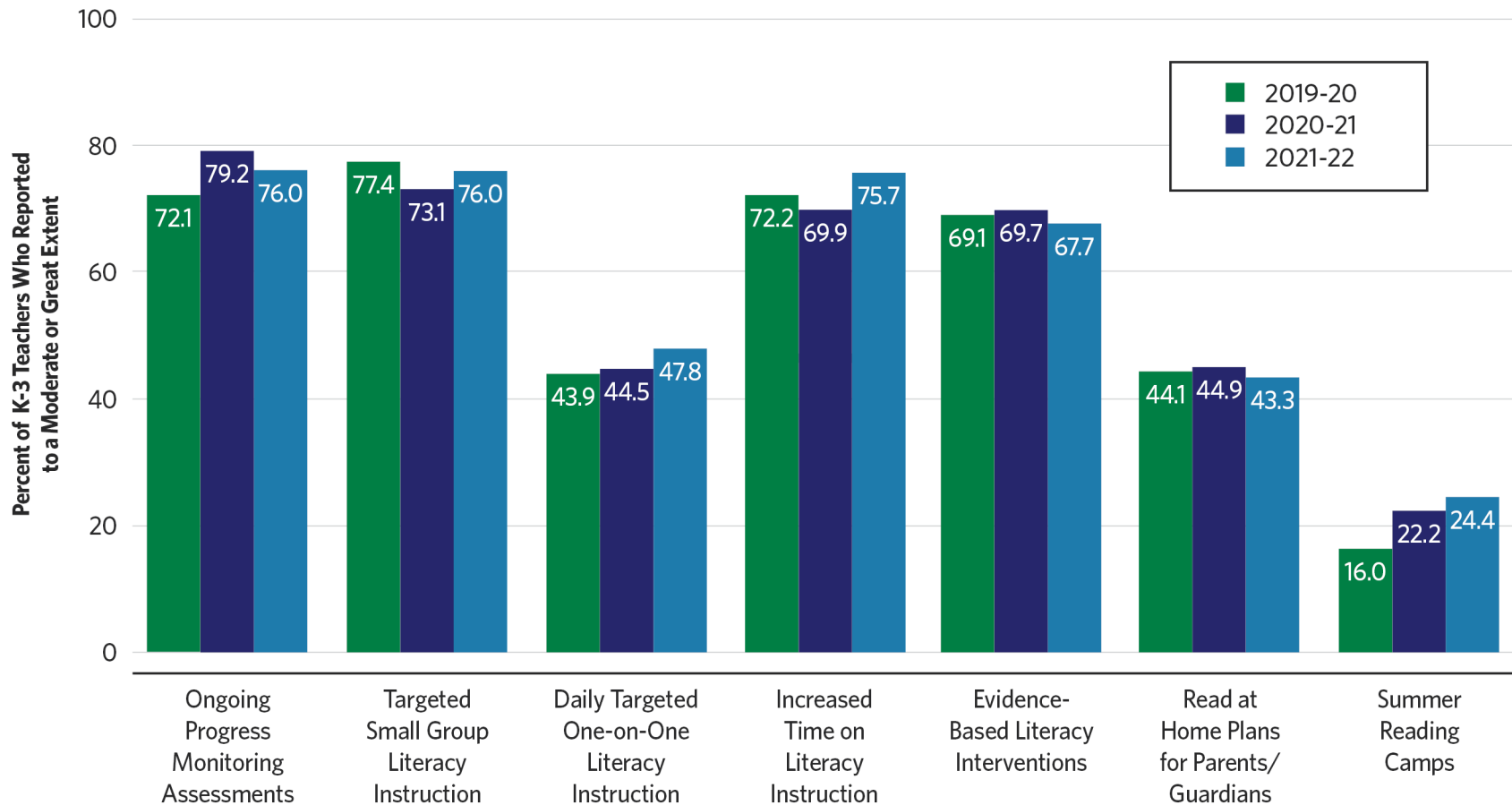


Note: The colored dots are fitted values of M-STEP ELA scores based on coefficient estimates from the ITS model. The light grey dotted line represents the expected trend in absence of the Law. Asterisks represent the statistical significance of deviations of actual M-STEP scores in each of the post-Law years from the expected trend. Robust standard errors clustered at the district level. +  $p < 0.1$ , \*  $p < 0.05$ , \*\*  $p < 0.01$ , \*\*\*  $p < 0.001$ . The model includes a full set of covariates derived from student-level administrative records for Michigan 3rd-grade students.



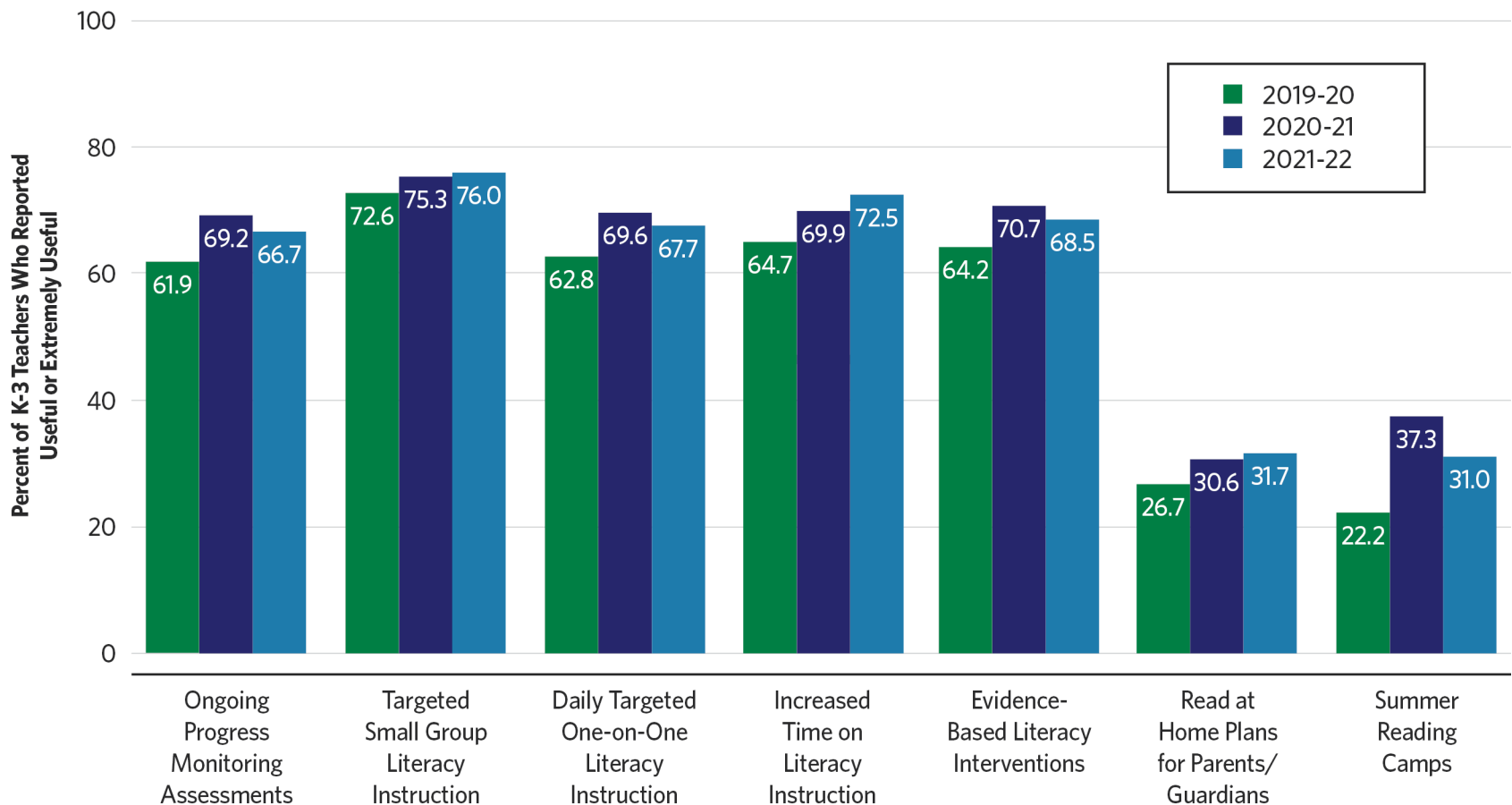
# TEACHERS USE MANY OF THE LAW'S SUPPORTS

I use this intervention when working with students identified as having a reading deficiency...



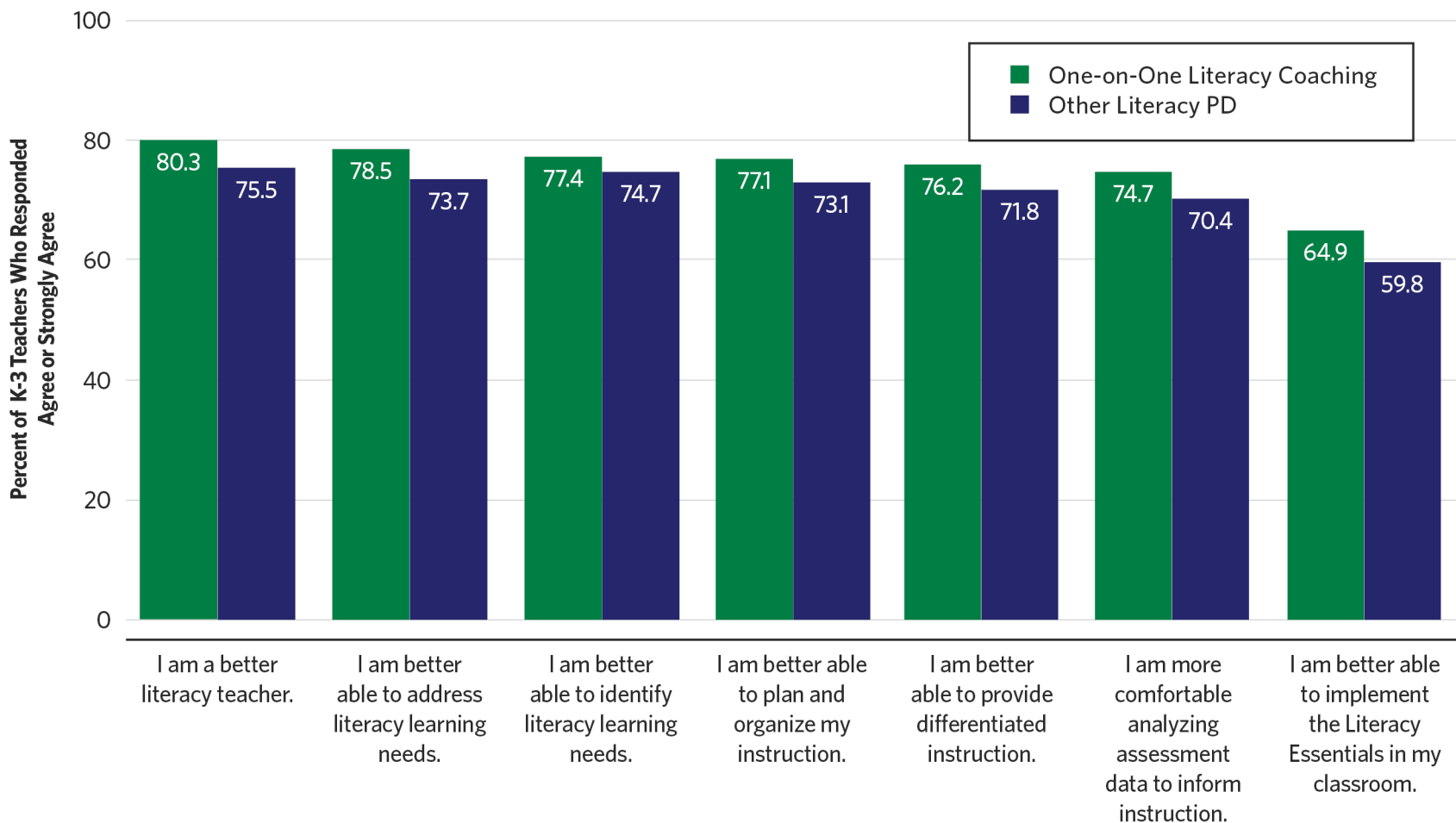
# TEACHERS PERCEIVE MANY OF THE LAW'S SUPPORTS TO BE EFFECTIVE

This intervention is... useful in improving students' literacy.

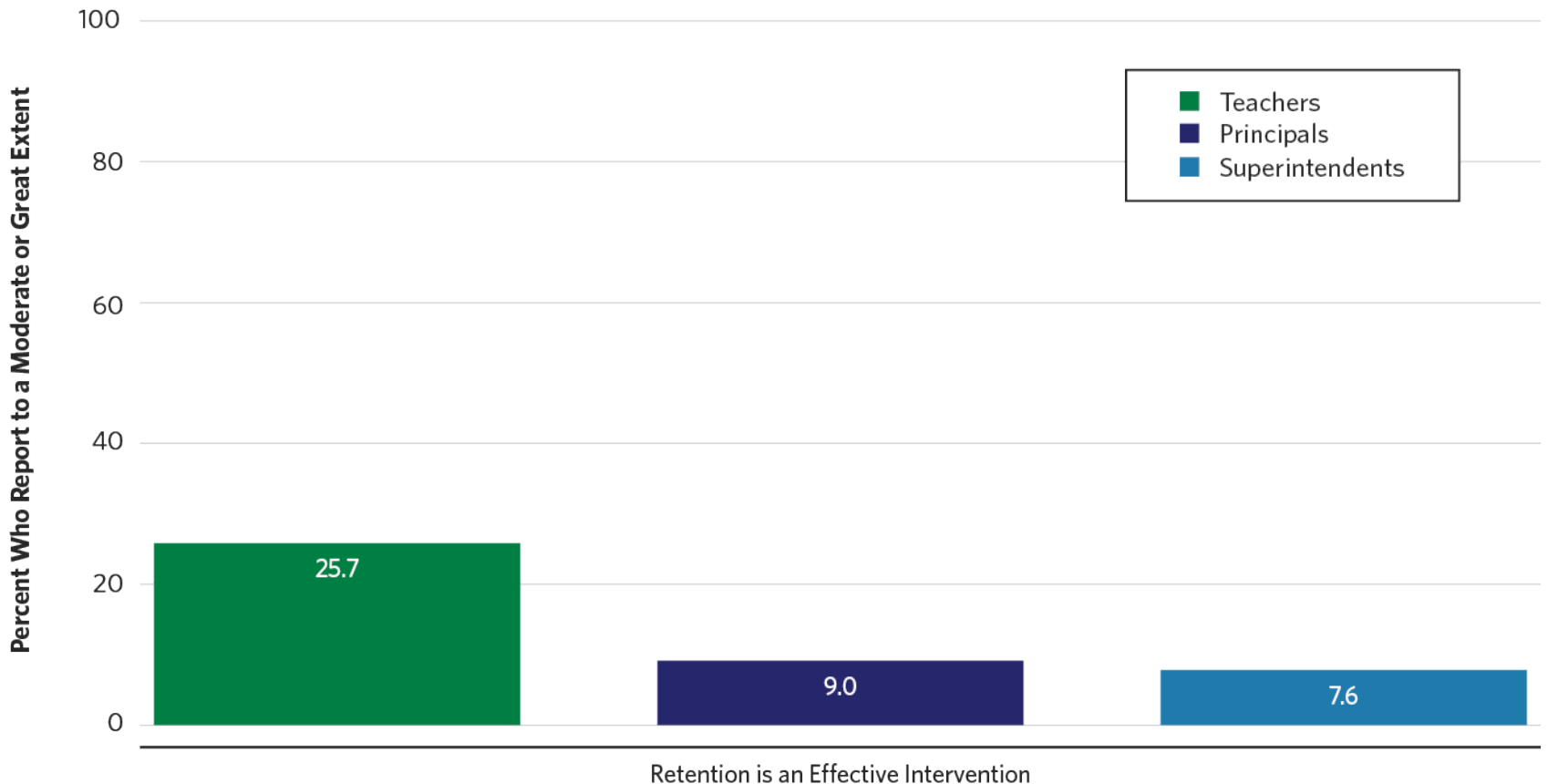


# MOST TEACHERS BELIEVED PD HELPED IMPROVE THEIR PRACTICE

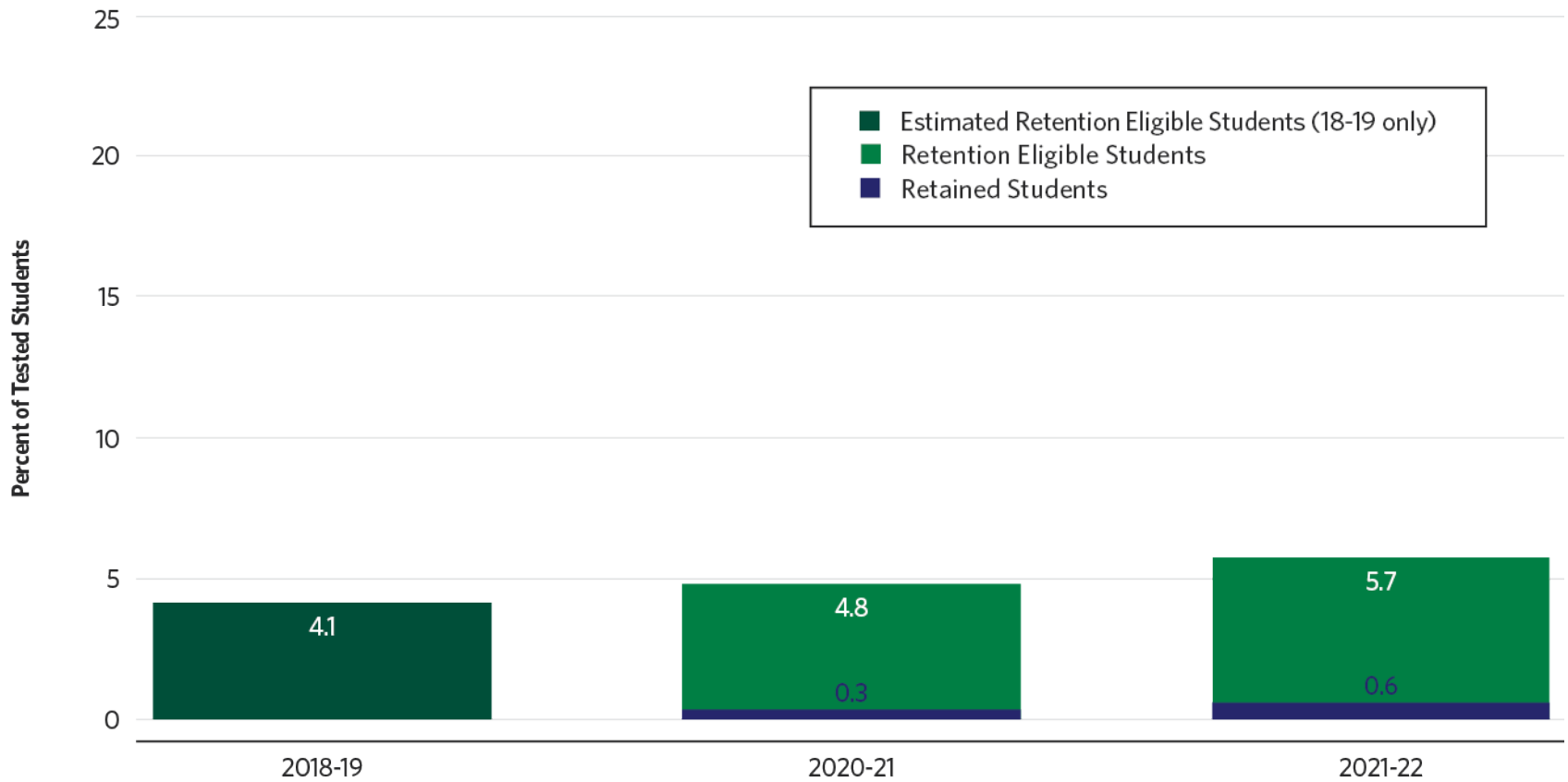
To what extent do you agree that these aspects of 1:1 literacy coaching and/or professional development received this year affected your literacy instruction?



# VERY FEW EDUCATORS BELIEVE RETENTION IS EFFECTIVE

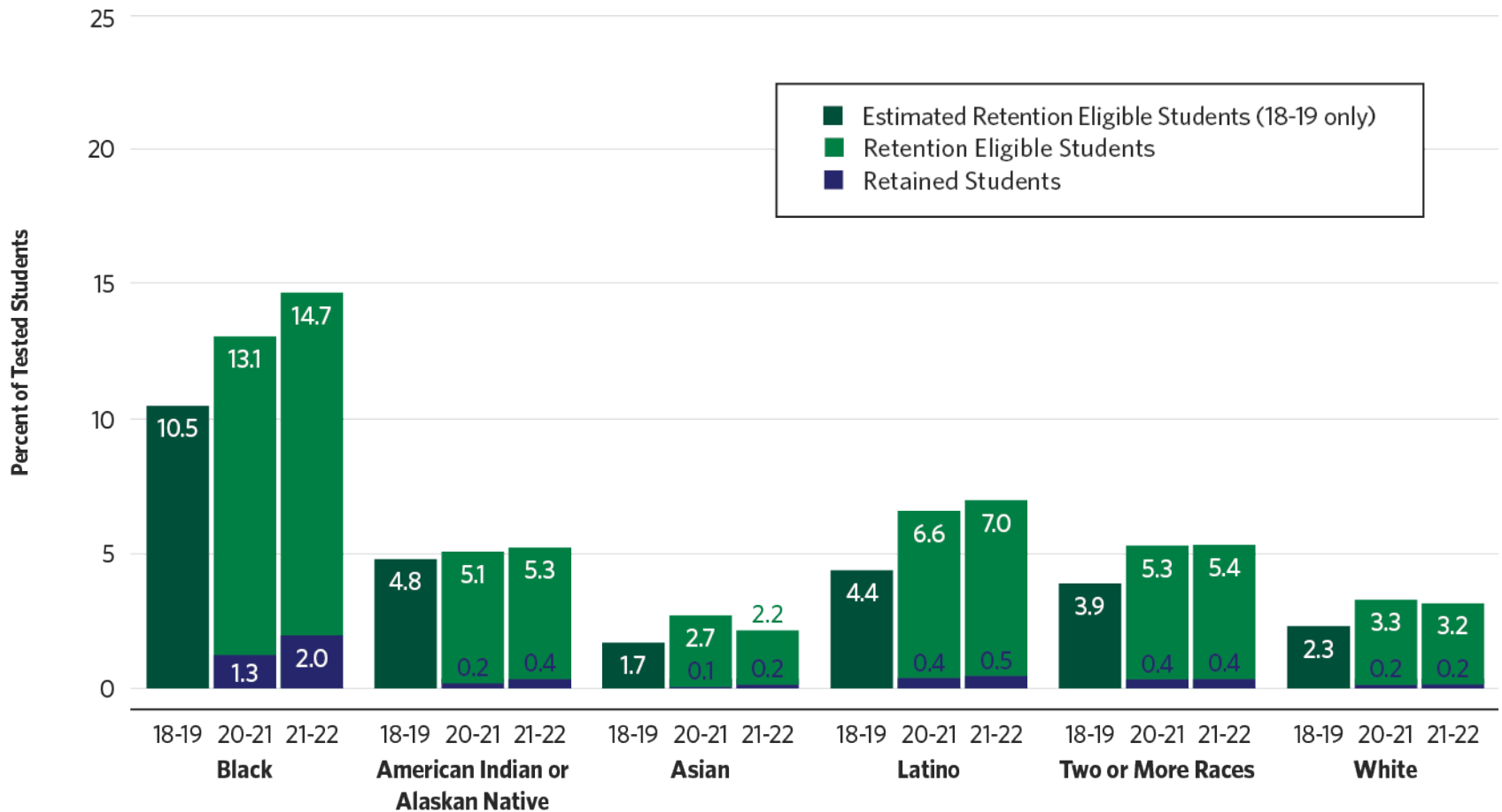


# ROUGHLY 5-6% OF 3<sup>RD</sup> GRADERS ARE RETENTION ELIGIBLE; LESS THAN 1% ARE RETAINED

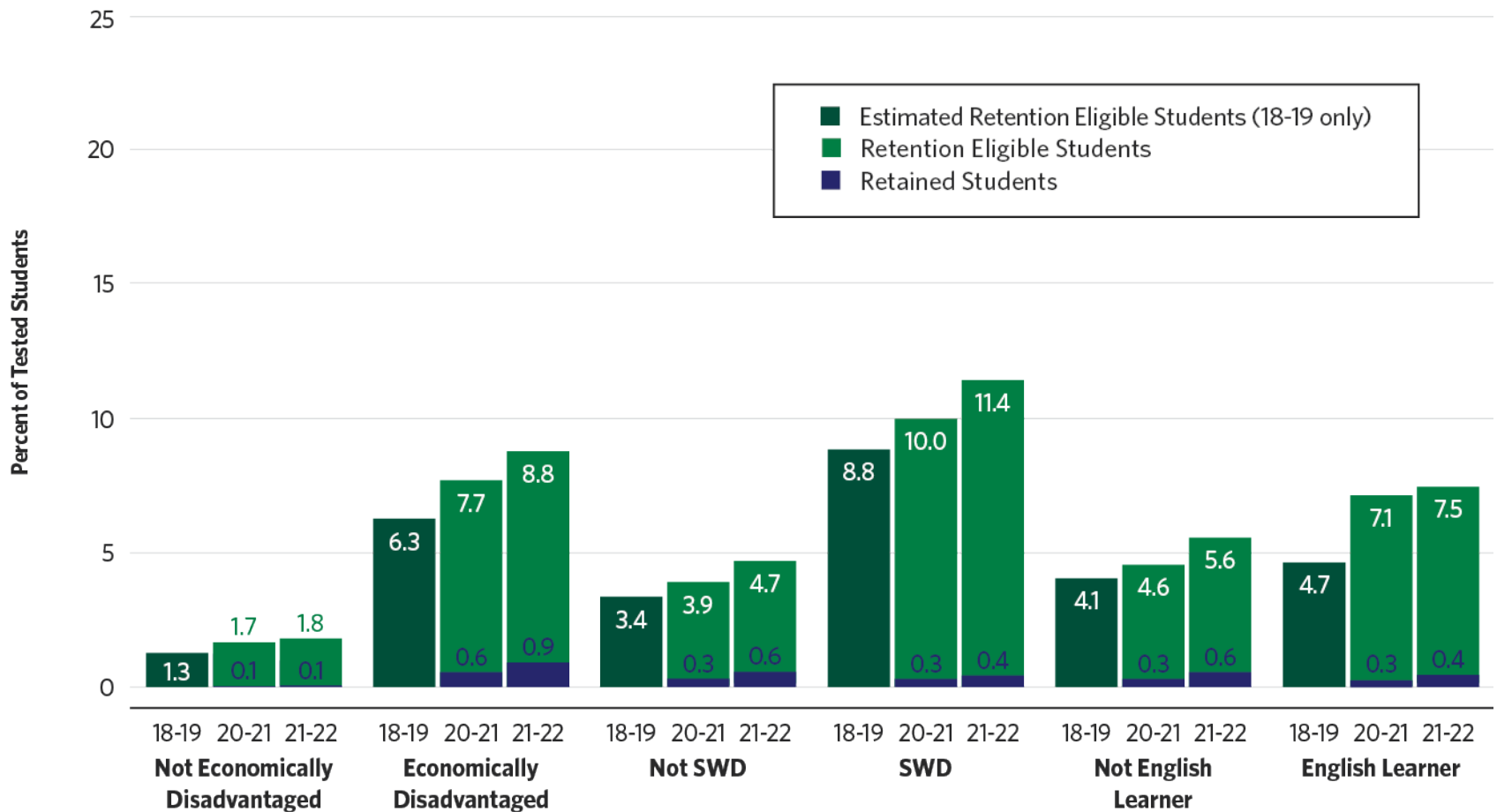




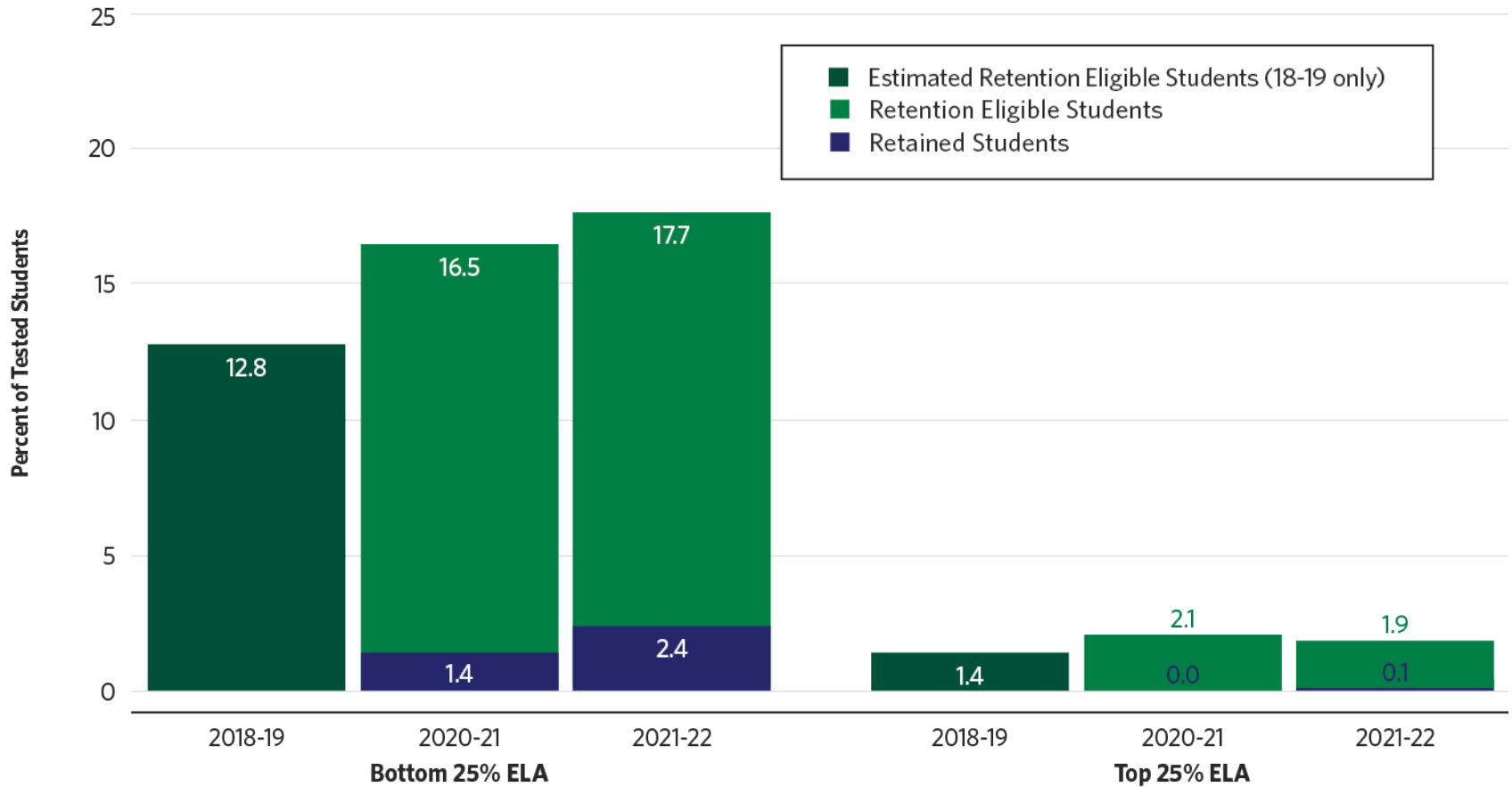
# MORE BLACK AND LATINO STUDENTS QUALIFIED FOR RETENTION AND WERE RETAINED



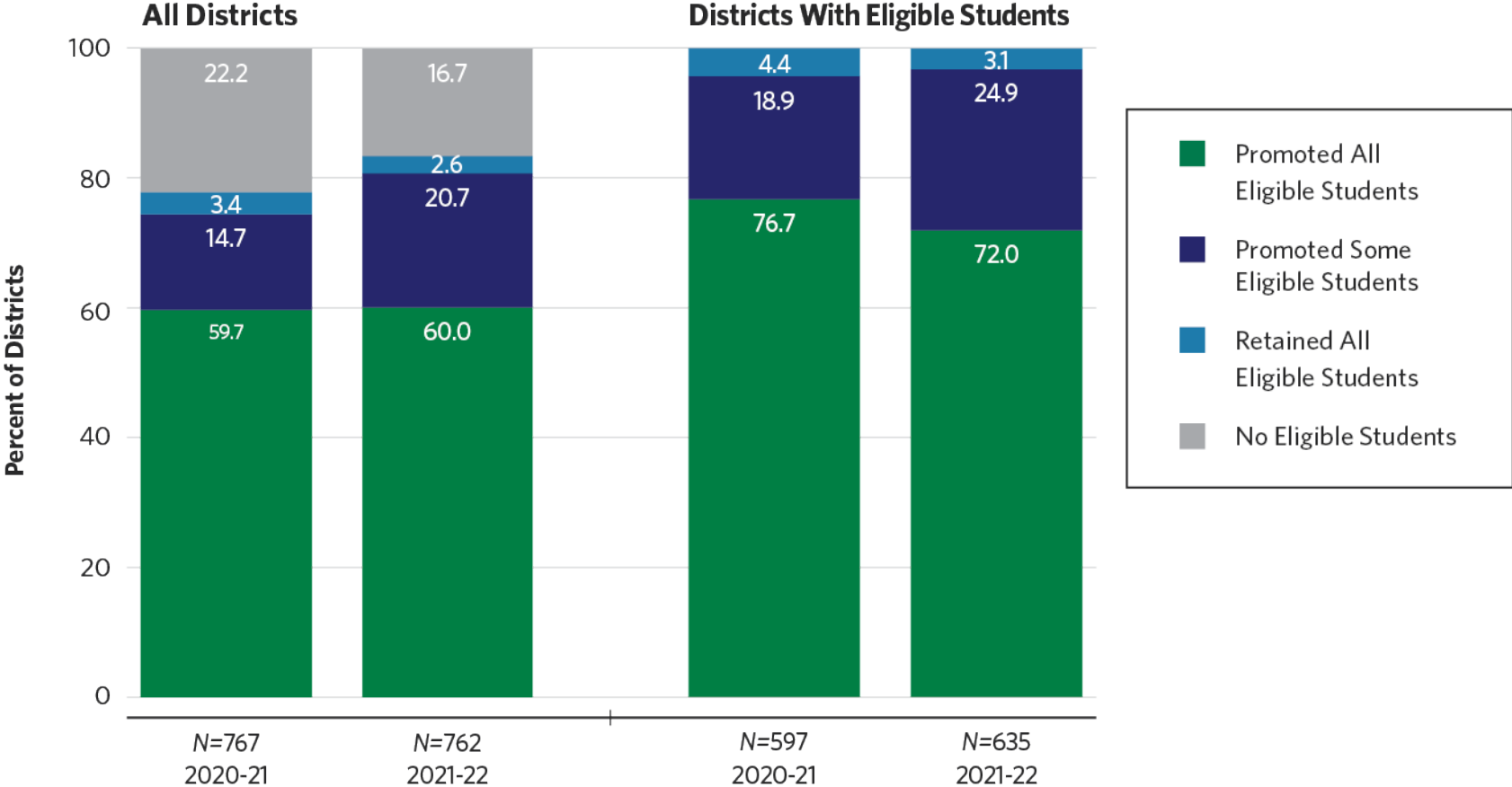
# MORE LOW-INCOME STUDENTS QUALIFIED FOR RETENTION AND WERE RETAINED



# STUDENTS IN LOWER-PERFORMING DISTRICTS ARE MORE LIKELY TO BE RETAINED & RETENTION-ELIGIBLE



# MOST DISTRICTS PROMOTED ALL RETENTION-ELIGIBLE STUDENTS



# IN SUMMARY

01

The Read by Grade Three Law is about more than retention. Coaching, professional development, and required interventions for struggling readers are largely perceived as effective.

02

ELA achievement was improving after the law's implementation and prior to the pandemic, prior to the implementation of 3<sup>rd</sup>-grade retention.

03

Research in other states shows mixed to no effects of retention on student achievement, with most studies showing fade-out effects; good evidence that retention may negatively impact longer-term student outcomes.

04

Very few students are actually retained under the Read by Grade Three Law, and there is evidence it is being implemented inequitably. Student demographic characteristics and district placement should not determine likelihood of retention – but it does.

05

There are high public and private costs to retention. The total cost of retention likely outweighs any potential benefits, especially if borne predominantly by economically disadvantaged students.



## **Education Policy Innovation Collaborative**

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