



Michigan's Literacy Coaching Landscape

A Presentation for Michigan's Early Literacy Task Force

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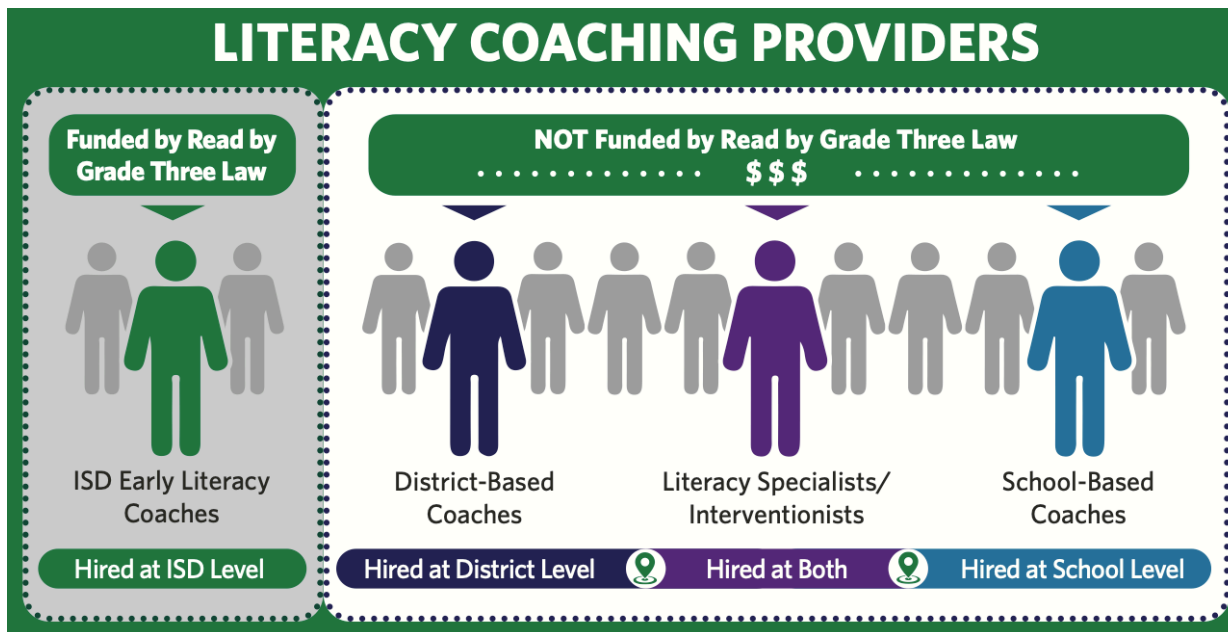
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Literacy Coaching Is a Key Mechanism Through Which the Read by Grade Three Law Aims to Improve K-3 Literacy Instruction

- Under the Law, the state funds **ISD Early Literacy Coaches** to work with K-3 teachers and provide them with literacy coaching and other professional development.
- Currently, the state allocates **\$31.5 million annually** for these coaches and each ISD is eligible to receive up to **\$112,500 per coach**.
- Michigan's literacy coaching landscape consists of other providers beyond ISD Early Literacy Coaches.



Literacy Coaching Is In the Spotlight in Michigan

The Read by Grade Three Law Is In Limbo

- On March 24, 2023, Gov. Whitmer signed Senate Bill 12 into law. While the legislation only eliminates the retention component of the Read by Grade Three Law, it **draws attention to understanding other facets of the Law—including literacy coaching**—to provide evidence about their efficacy and inform future policy decisions.

The State Is Considering Increasing Funding for Literacy Coaches

- On February 8th, 2023, Gov. Whitmer announced her FY 2024 budget recommendation, which **expands funding for ISD Early Literacy Coaches from \$31.5 million to \$42 million a year.**
- Each ISD would be eligible to fund **two ISD Early Literacy Coaches and receive up to \$125,000.**

We Aim to Understand Michigan's Current Literacy Coaching Landscape

Research Questions

1. Who are Michigan's literacy coaches?
2. What do Michigan's literacy coaches do?
3. What challenges do Michigan's literacy coaches face, both independent from and as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic?
4. What are Michigan educators' perceptions of literacy coaches?

A Preview of Our Findings

- Michigan literacy coaches are highly qualified.
- Supports for Michigan literacy coaches vary widely, which may be related to greater challenges for those receiving less assistance.
- Michigan literacy coaches may be spread too thin.
- Teachers who could most benefit from literacy coaching may not be receiving it.
- ISD Early Literacy Coaches allocate their time as designated by the Law and the Coaching Essentials.
- Michigan educators have positive perceptions of literacy coaches.

Data and Methods

- This report relies on data from two sources:
 1. **Surveys:** We primarily rely on **statewide literacy coach surveys** administered in the spring of 2020, 2021, and 2022. We supplement these data with **survey data from K-3 teachers, K-5 principals, and district superintendents** collected in those same years to better understand educators' perceptions of literacy coaches.
 2. **Observational Study of Literacy Coaching:** We complement the survey data with data from **coaching logs and interviews with ISD Early Literacy Coaches** from the 2020-21 and 2021-22 school years. These qualitative data provide further insight into ISD Early Literacy Coaches' implementation of the Law.

Data and Methods

Surveys

- We assess overall patterns in survey responses as well as differences across subgroups (e.g., coach type, sector), using independent sample t-tests to determine whether differences are statistically significant.

Sample Sizes and Response Rates									
	Year 1 (Spring 2020)			Year 2 (Spring 2021)			Year 3 (Spring 2022)		
	Survey Sample	Target Population	Response Rate	Survey Sample	Target Population	Response Rate	Survey Sample	Target Population	Response Rate
Literacy Coaches	Only ISD Early Literacy Coaches were surveyed in Spring 2020.			582	1,152	51%	631	1,168	54%
ISD Early Literacy Coaches	133	151	88%	163	386	42%	164	428	38%
Other Literacy Coaches	N/A	N/A	N/A	419	766	55%	467	740	63%
K-3 Teachers	7,110	16,401	43%	5,811	19,633	30%	5,392	20,070	27%
K-5 Principals	745	1,659	45%	417	1,959	21%	395	1,985	20%
Supts.	192	546	35%	162	545	30%	89	545	16%

Data and Methods

Observational Study of Literacy Coaching

- Five ISD Early Literacy Coaches participated in 2020-21, and seven participated in 2021-22.
- EPIC recruited coaches to participate in the study, then coaches selected 4-6 K-3 teachers in matched pairs by grade level, district, and years of experience. EPIC randomly assigned half of these teachers to receive coaching and the other half formed a comparison group.
- In both years, we collected the following data from ISD Early Literacy Coaches:
 - **Background Surveys:** Demographic information, education level and teaching certifications/endorsements, years of coaching experience, prior teaching and/or instructional coaching roles, professional development experiences
 - **Weekly Surveys:** Total time per week spent coaching, modality (i.e., in-person, remote, hybrid), types of coaching practices in which they engaged
 - **Interviews:** How the COVID-19 pandemic affected their work with teachers



Who Are Michigan's Literacy Coaches?

The Read by Grade Three Law's Requirements for ISD Early Literacy Coaches Are Largely Aligned With the Research-Informed Coaching Essentials

Literacy Coaches' Qualifications		
	Read by Grade Three Law	Coaching Essentials
Education	Bachelor's degree	Beyond initial teacher preparation program
	Advanced coursework in literacy or professional development in evidence-based literacy instruction	Advanced coursework in literacy that results in an endorsement (e.g., reading teacher, reading/literacy specialist)
Prior Experience	Successful classroom teaching experience	Successful classroom teaching experience as evidenced by positive student learning
Knowledge and Skills	Sufficient knowledge of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence-based literacy research Content-area literacy instruction Data management 	In-depth knowledge of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reading and writing processes and acquisition Research-informed instructional practices The purpose, selection, scoring, and use of assessments
	Strong knowledge of working with adults	Specialized knowledge about adult learning principles
	Continually increase knowledge base in best practices in reading instruction and intervention	Continually update knowledge through professional reading; active participation in professional development workshops; and attendance at local, state, and national professional conferences

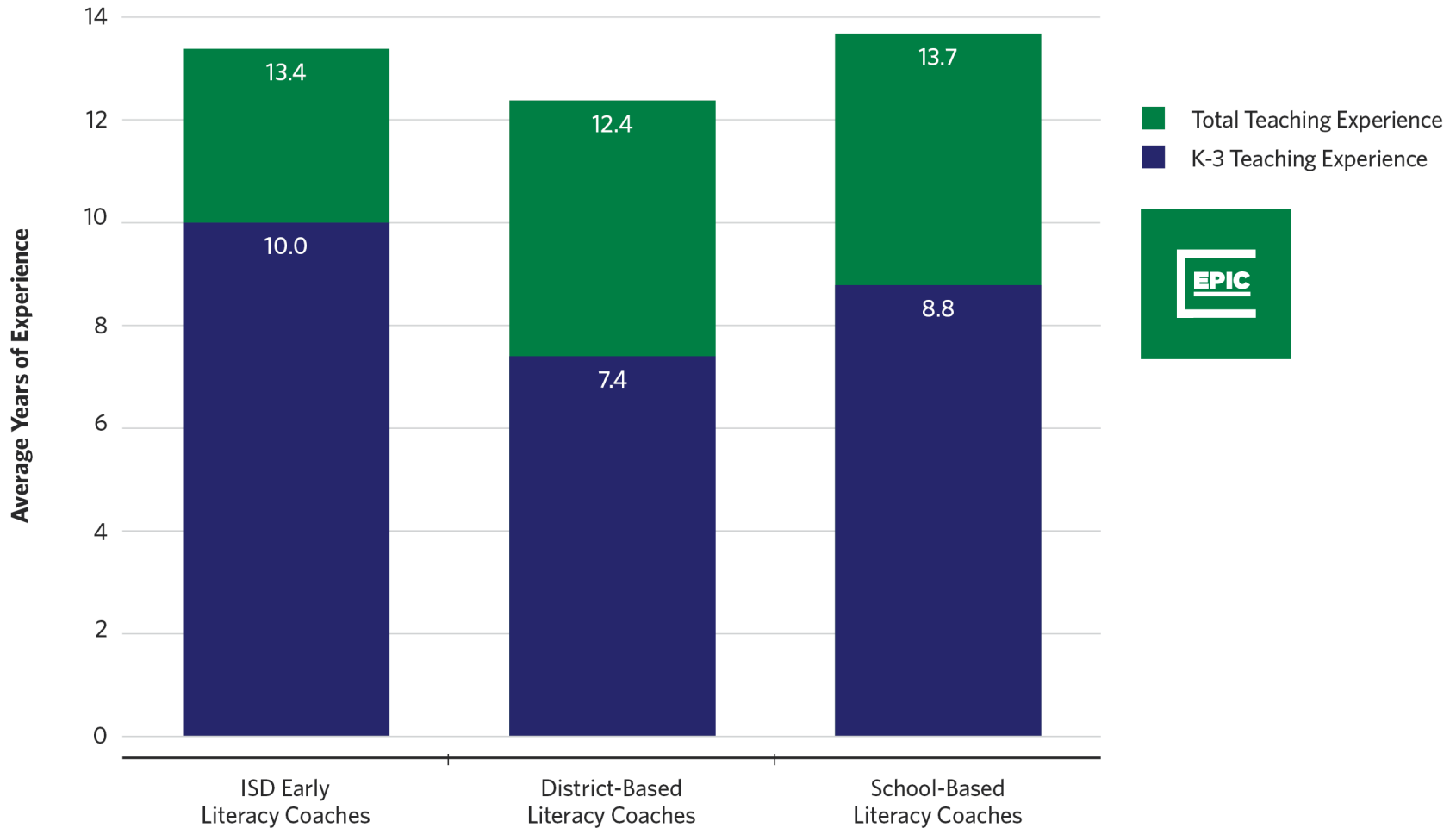
Michigan Literacy Coaches Largely Meet the Qualifications Outlined in the Law and the Essentials

Most Michigan Literacy Coaches Have Advanced Coursework and Teaching Endorsements, but Not Always in Literacy

Literacy Coaches' Advanced Degrees/Coursework and Endorsements		
	ISD Early Literacy Coaches	District- or School-Based Literacy Coaches
Advanced Degree/Coursework		
Percent Who Completed an Advanced Degree/Coursework	94.87%	98.54%
Literacy or Related Field (e.g., Language and Literacy, Literacy/Reading Specialist)	48.65%	40.10%
Non-Literacy Field (e.g., Curriculum and Teaching, Early Childhood)	62.32%	73.33%
Endorsements		
Percent Who Have an Endorsement	80.28%	82.81%
Literacy or Related Field (e.g., English, Language Arts, Reading, Reading Specialist)	59.65%	66.04%
Non-Literacy Field (e.g., Early Childhood, Teacher Leader, Administration)	56.14%	50.31%

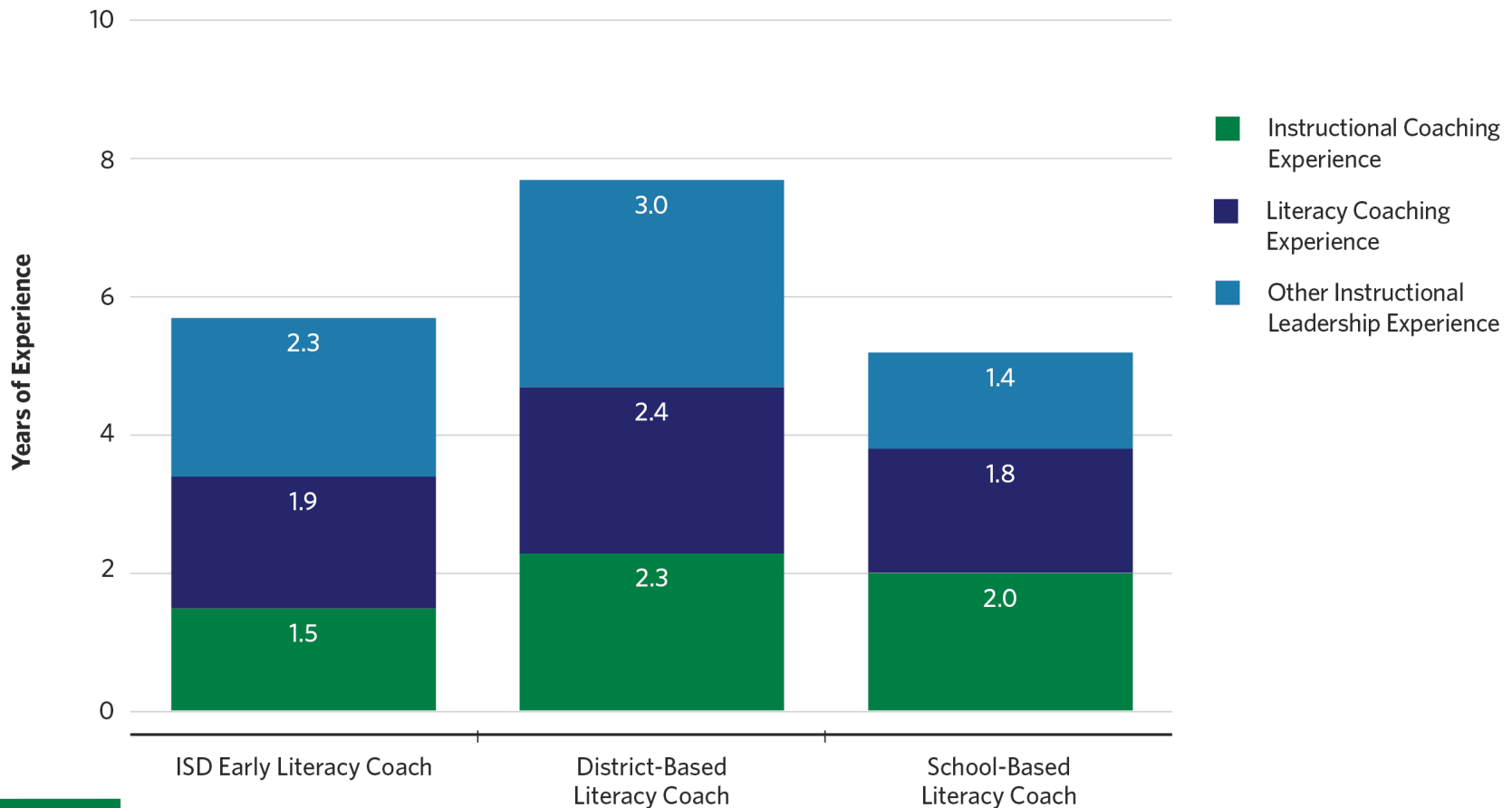
Michigan Literacy Coaches Largely Meet the Qualifications Outlined in the Law and the Essentials

Michigan Literacy Coaches Have Substantial K-3 Teaching Experience



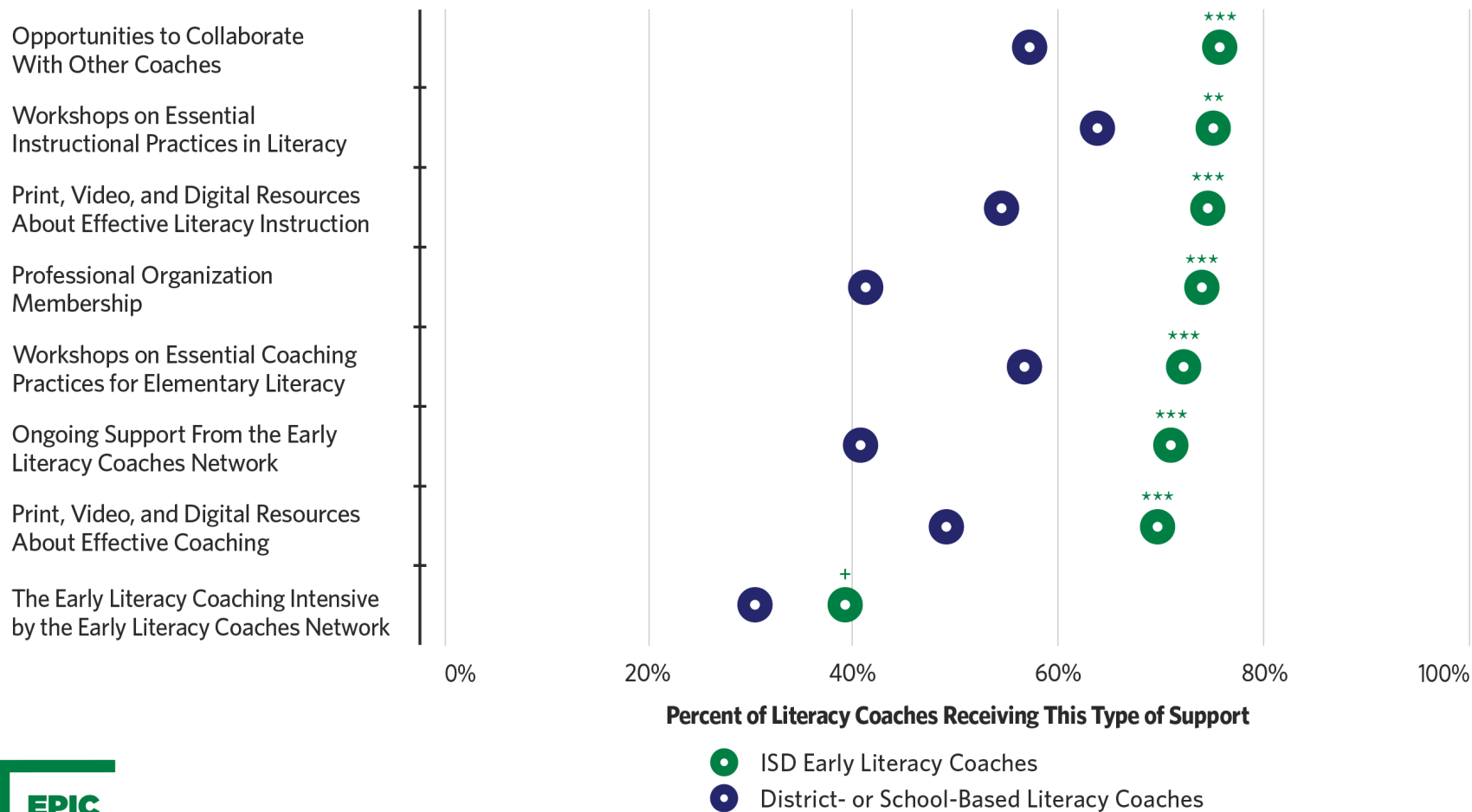
Michigan Literacy Coaches Largely Meet the Qualifications Outlined in the Law and the Essentials

Michigan Literacy Coaches Average at Least Five Years of Instructional Coaching and Leadership Experience



Supports for Literacy Coaches Are Unevenly Distributed

ISD Early Literacy Coaches Receive Significantly More Supports Than Other Literacy Coaching Providers



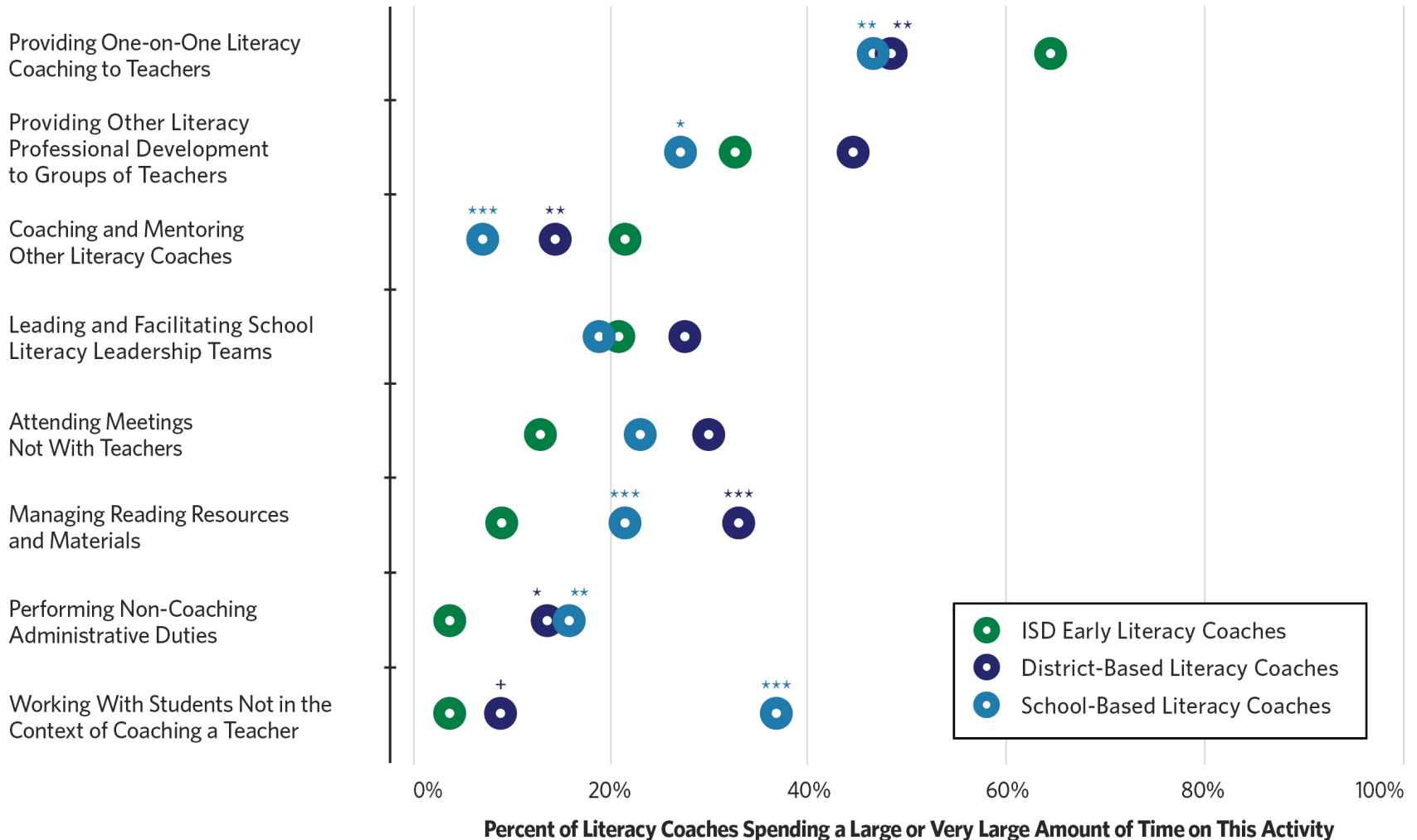
What Do Michigan's Literacy Coaches Do?

The Read by Grade Three Law's Requirements Are Largely Supported by the Coaching Essentials

- **Both the Law and the Coaching Essentials state that literacy coaches should:**
 - provide literacy coaching and other professional development to teachers;
 - spend most of their time working directly with teachers;
 - serve in literacy leadership roles in schools/districts where they work;
 - minimize time spent on administrative or managerial tasks;
 - model effective instructional practices; and
 - emphasize specific areas of literacy instruction in their literacy coaching.
- **The Law and the Coaching Essentials differ in three key respects:**
 1. The Law requires ISD Early Literacy Coaches to coach and mentor other literacy coaches (e.g., “train-the-trainer”).
 2. The Coaching Essentials elaborate further on effective literacy coaching activities. In addition to modeling, they state that coaches should conference, observe, and co-plan with teachers.
 3. The Coaching Essentials recognize more than the “five major reading components” identified in the Law (i.e., phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension).

Michigan Literacy Coaches Spend Most of Their Time Working Directly With Teachers

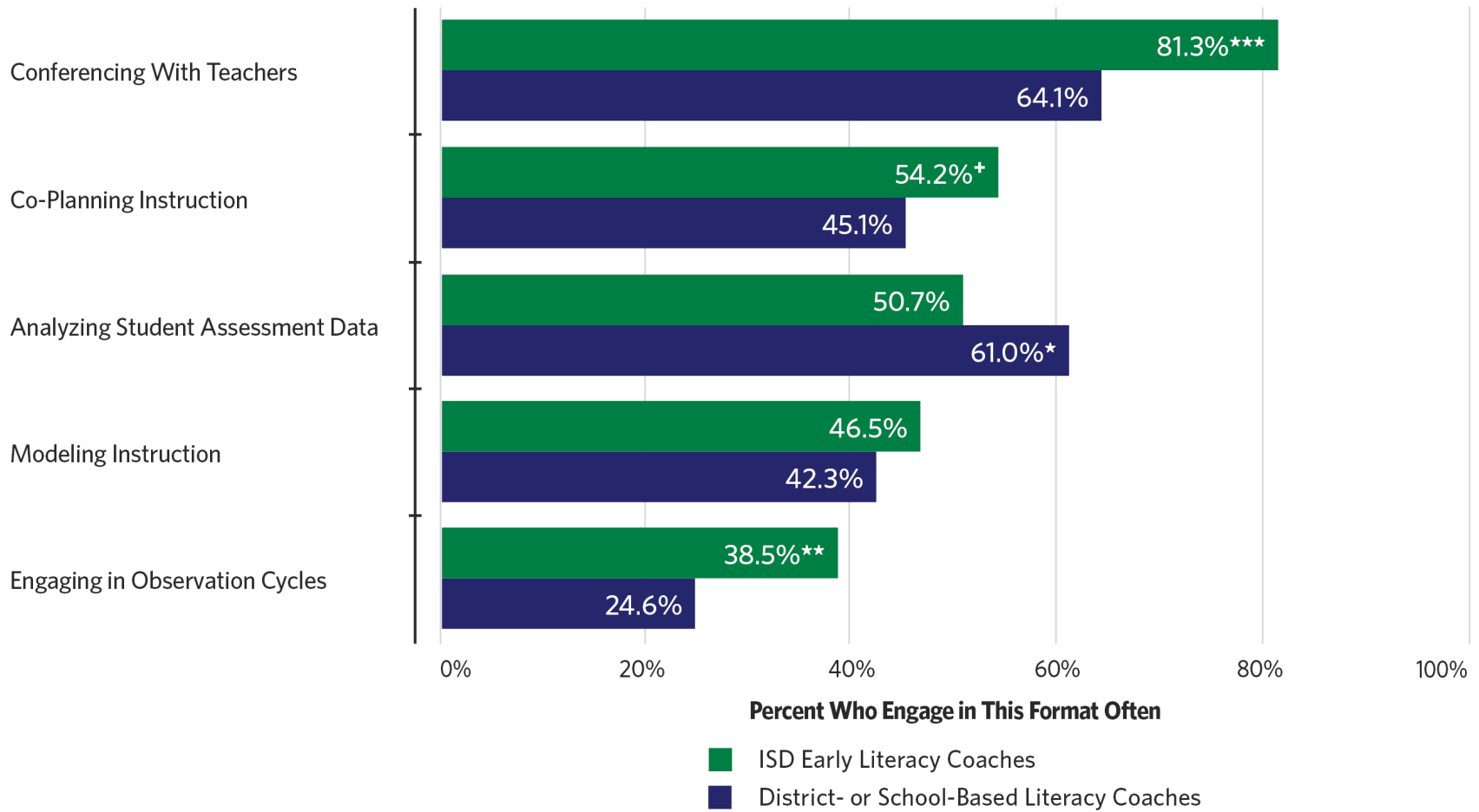
ISD Early Literacy Coaches Are More Likely Than Other Literacy Coaches to Spend Their Time on Activities Specified in the Law and Coaching Essentials



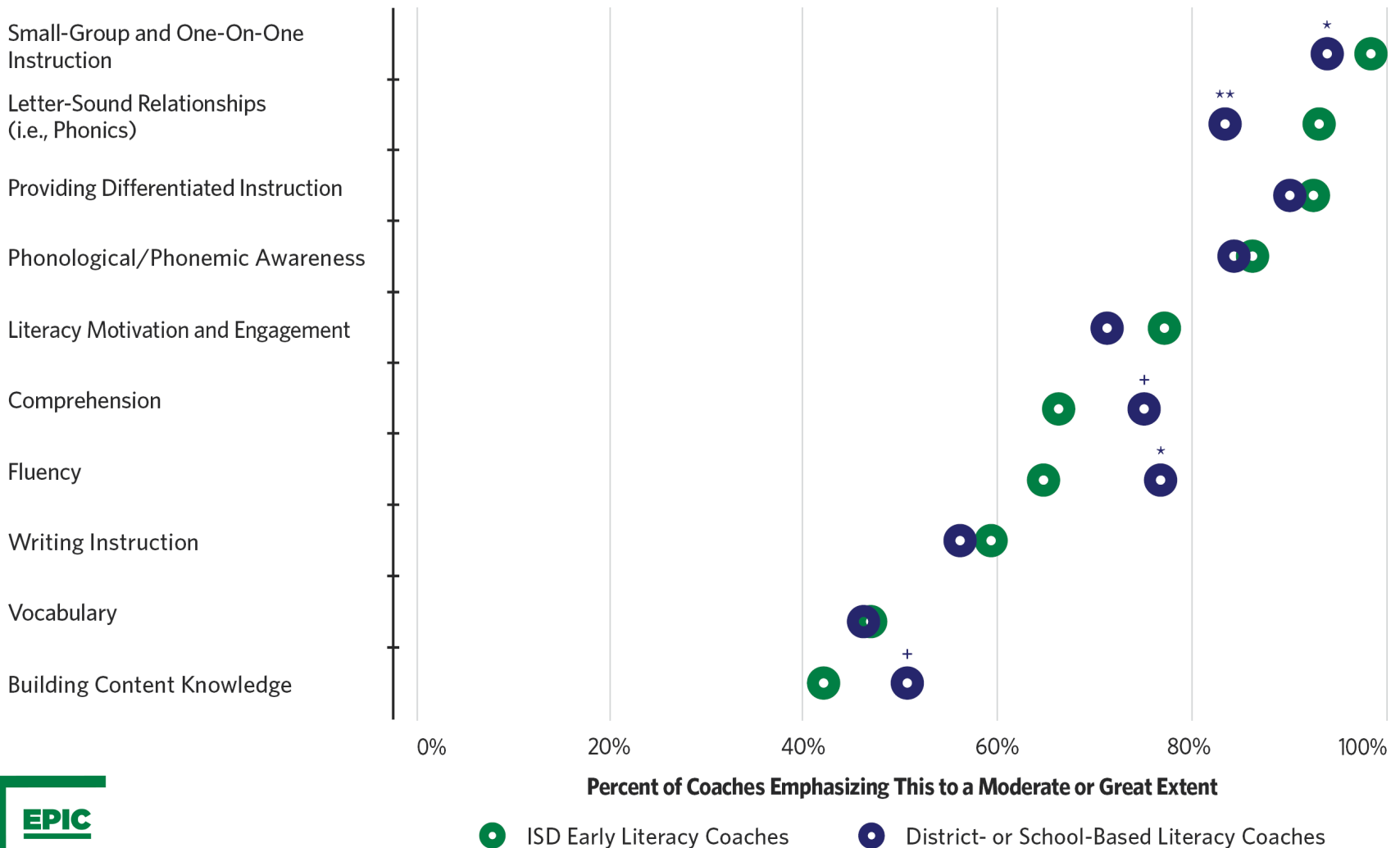
Michigan Literacy Coaches Spend Most of Their Time Working Directly With Teachers

Percentage of Time ISD Early Literacy Coaches Spend Working With Different Populations	
	ISD Early Literacy Coaches
Teachers	59.3%
Other Literacy Coaches	25.7%
Other Populations (e.g., Curriculum Directors, Leadership Teams)	12.9%
Students	2.1%

ISD Early Literacy Coaches Are Significantly More Likely Than Other Coaches to Engage in Evidence-Based Coaching Activities



Michigan Literacy Coaches Emphasize Evidence-Based Areas of Literacy Instruction in the Coaching They Provide to Teachers

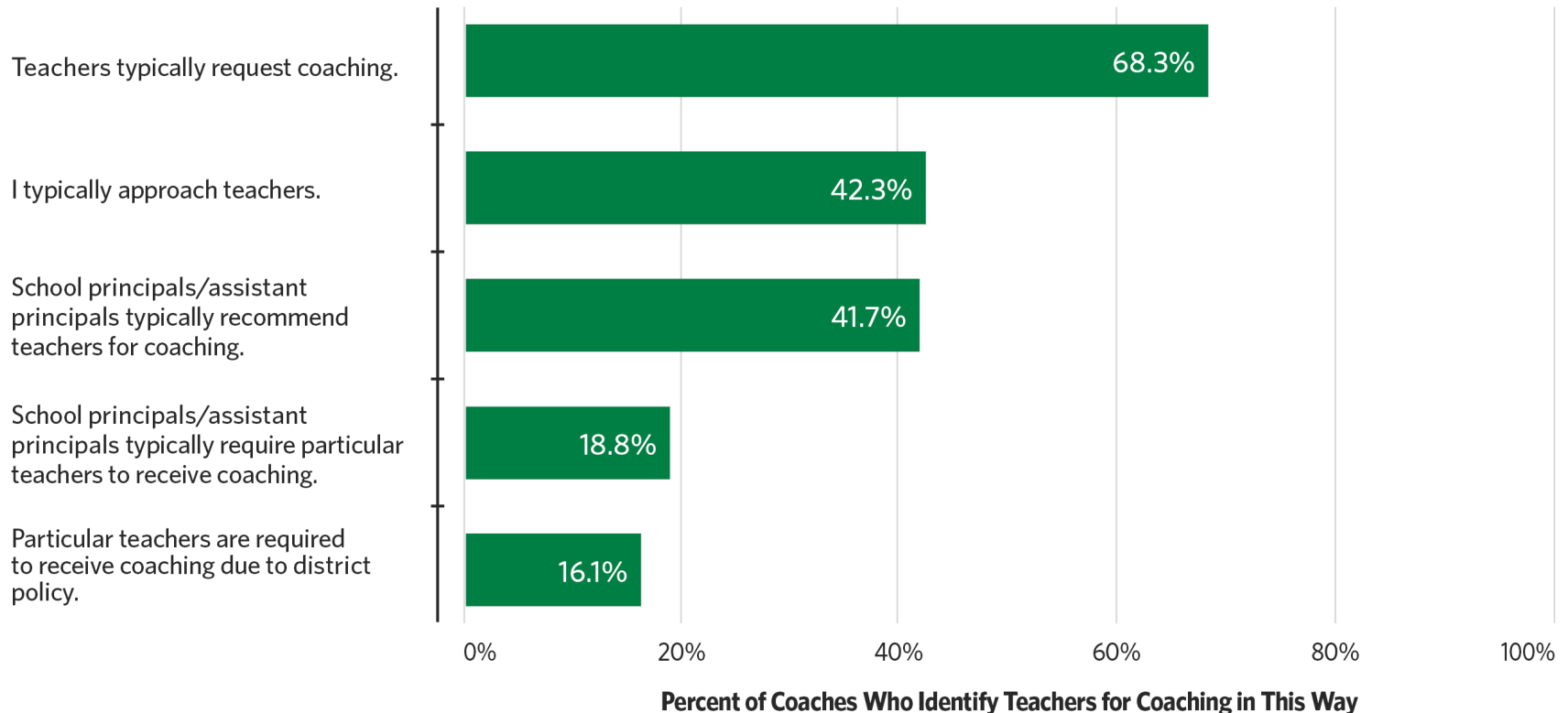


Michigan Literacy Coaches—Especially ISD Early Literacy Coaches—Are Spread Across Many Educators and Buildings

Number of Educators and Buildings Literacy Coaches Work With			
	Type of Literacy Coach		
	ISD Early Literacy Coaches	District-Based Literacy Coaches	School-Based Literacy Coaches
Teachers	15.4 (13.0)	15.5 (13.5)	8.0*** (5.8)
Other Literacy Coaches	3.1 (8.5)	2.2 (6.1)	0.9** (5.8)
Schools	3.7 (3.0)	4.4 (4.0)	1.1*** (0.5)
Districts	2.4 (1.8)	1.0*** (0.7)	0.9*** (0.8)

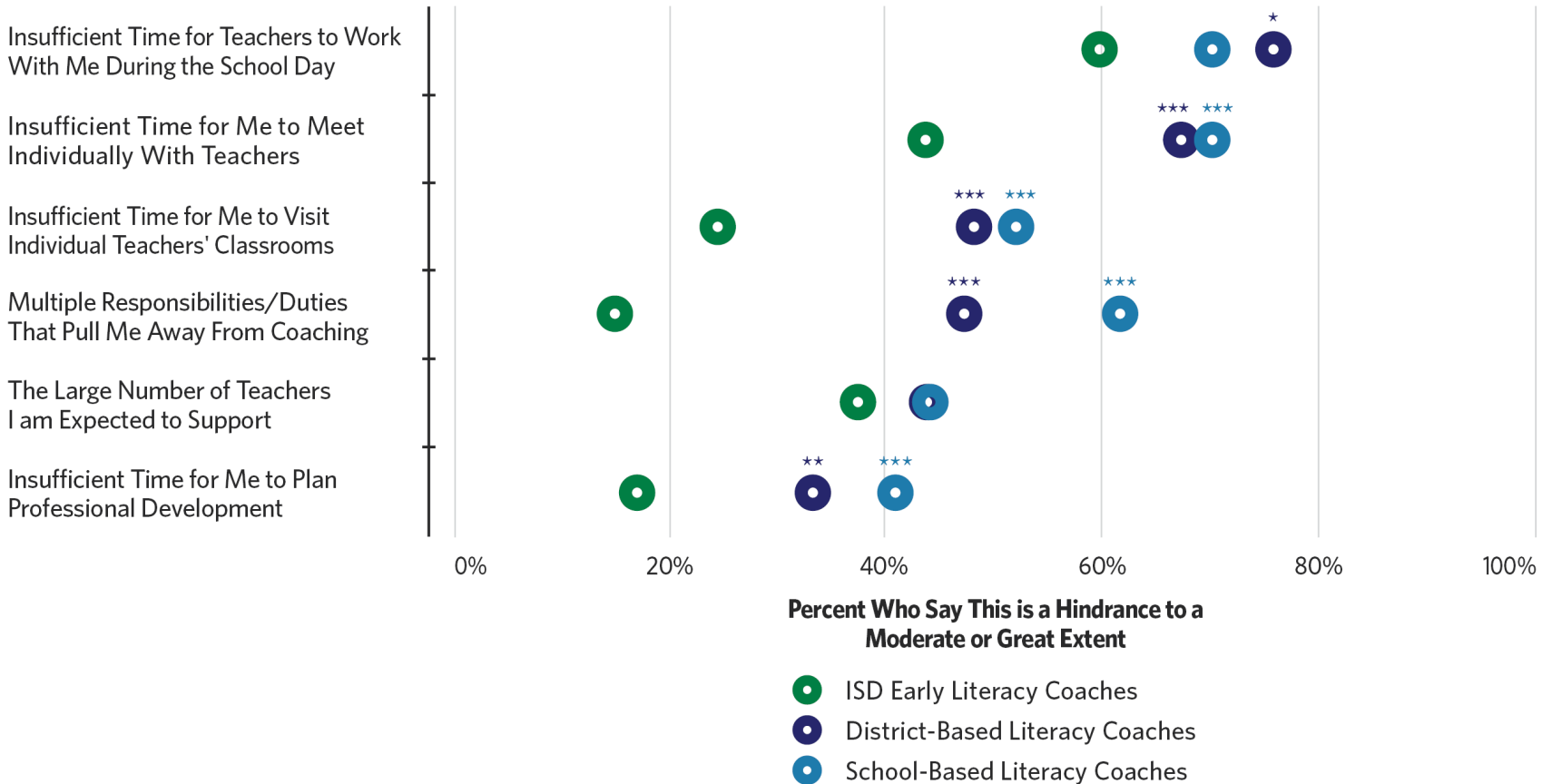
Literacy Coaches May Not Be Reaching the Teachers Who Could Most Benefit

Teachers Are Most Often Identified for Literacy Coaching by Requesting it

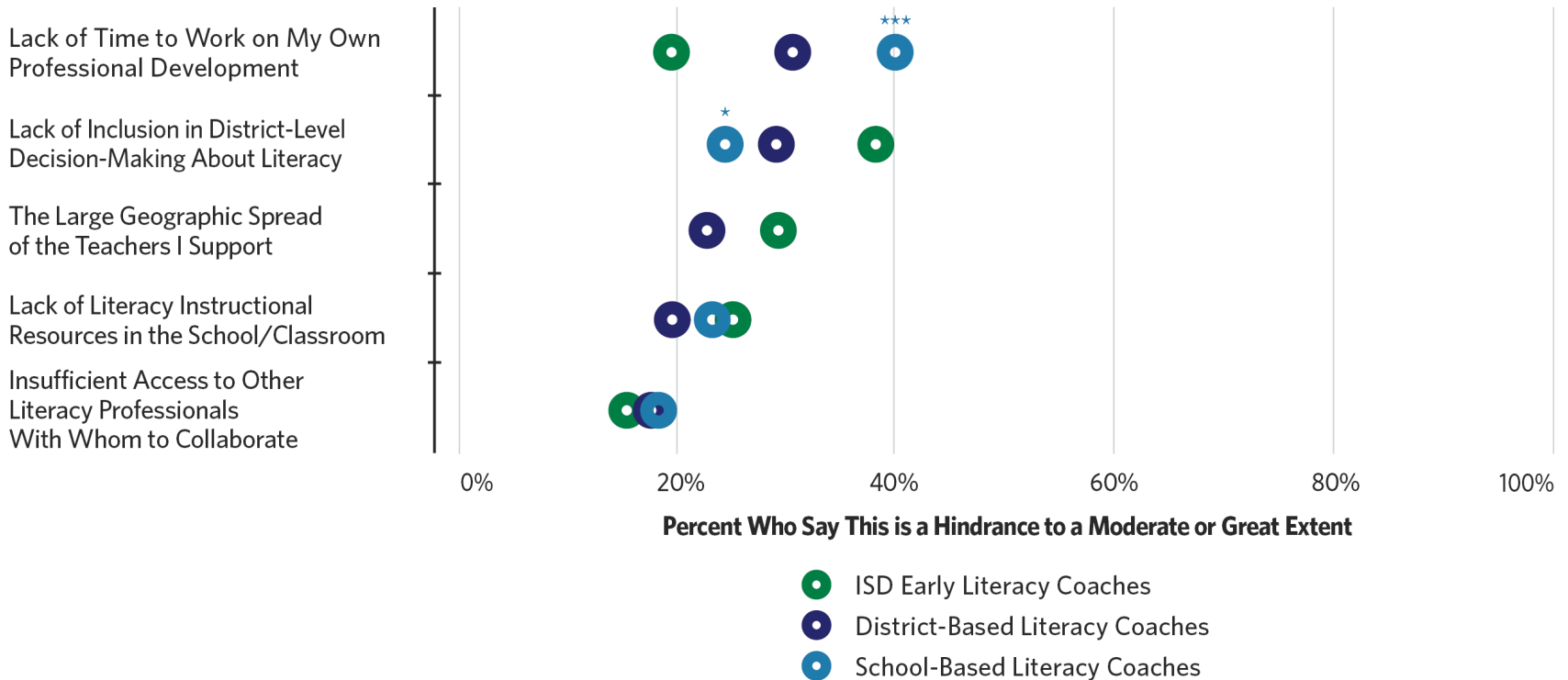


What Challenges Do Michigan Literacy Coaches Face?

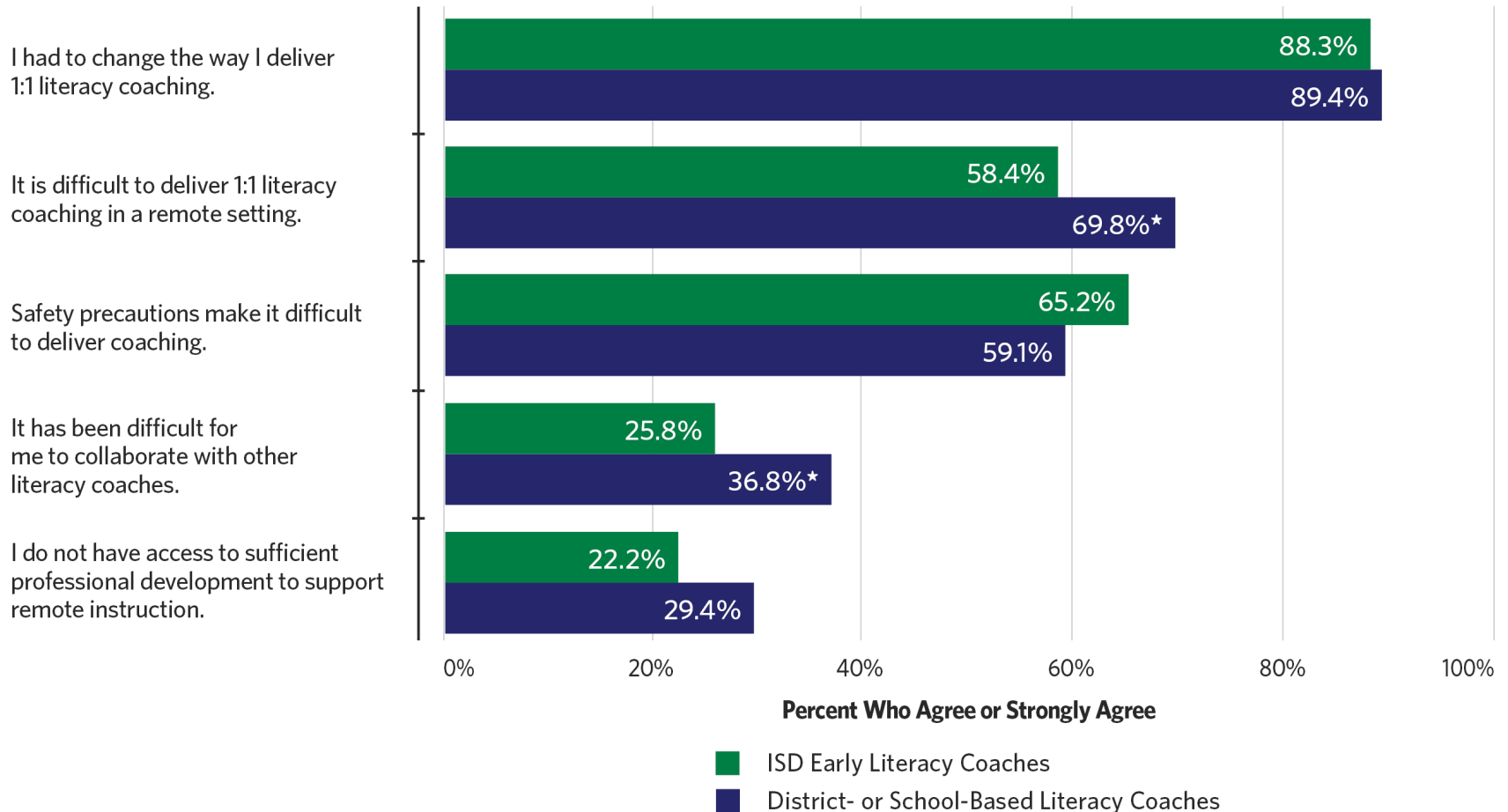
Time Is a Major Challenge for Literacy Coaches



Most Literacy Coaches Feel They Have Sufficient Access to Resources and Networks



Coaches Reported Changing the Way They Provided Coaching During the COVID-19 Pandemic

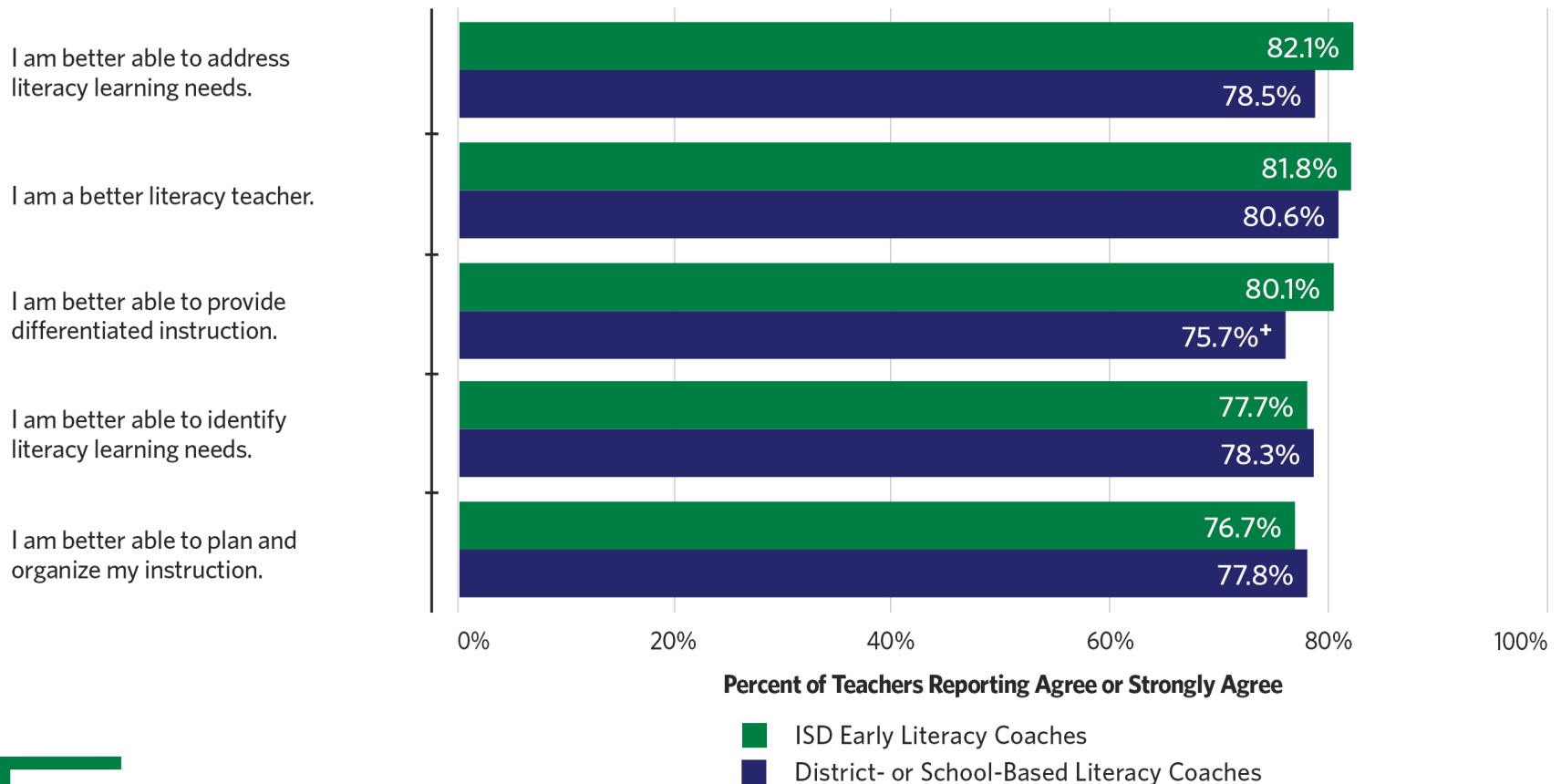


What Are Michigan Educators' Perceptions of Literacy Coaching?

Teachers Believe Literacy Coaching Has a Positive Impact on Their Instruction

Teachers Believe Literacy Coaching Improved Their Practice, Regardless of the Type of Literacy Coach With Whom They Worked

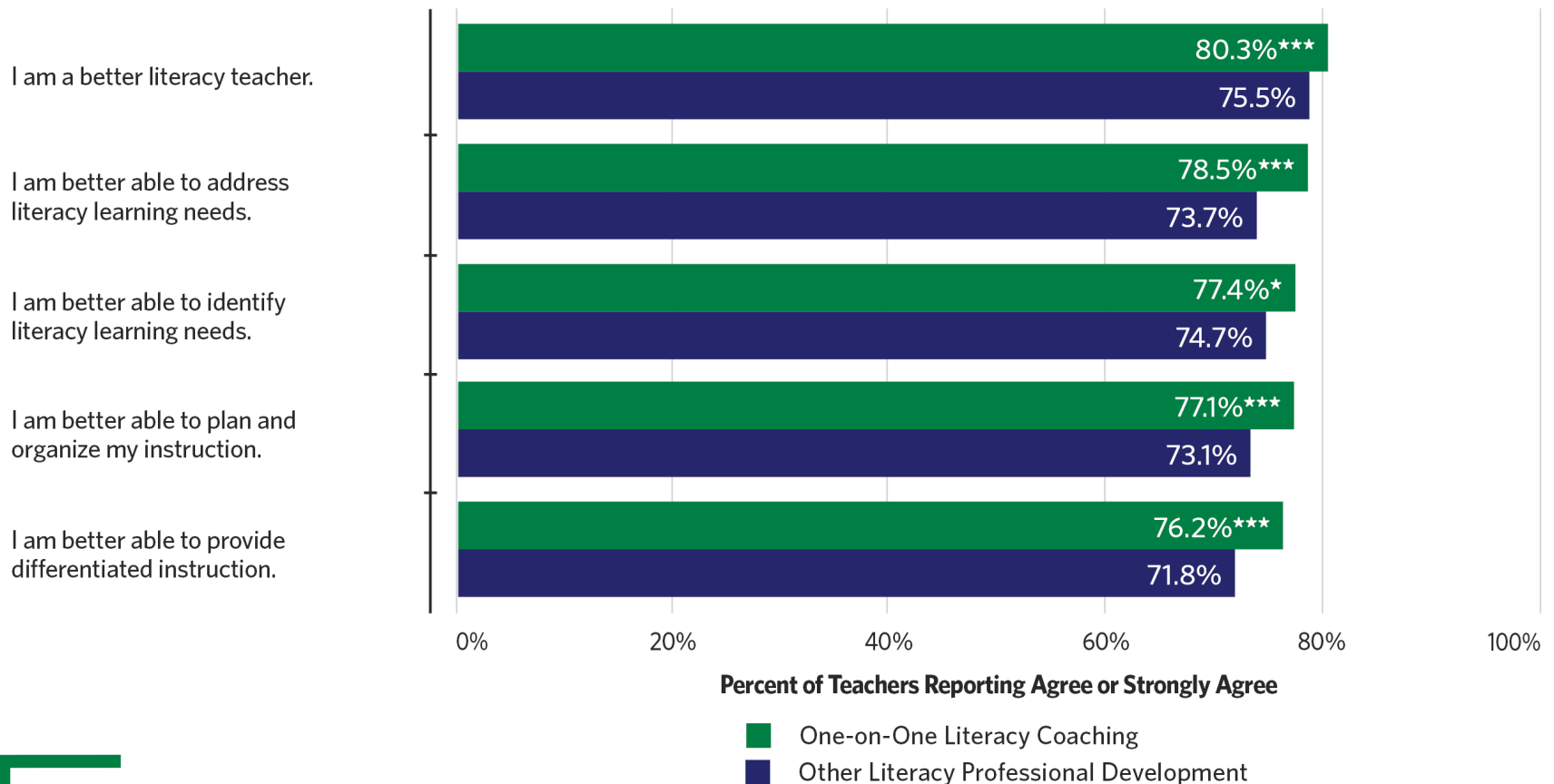
As a Result of the One-on-One Literacy Coaching I Have Received...



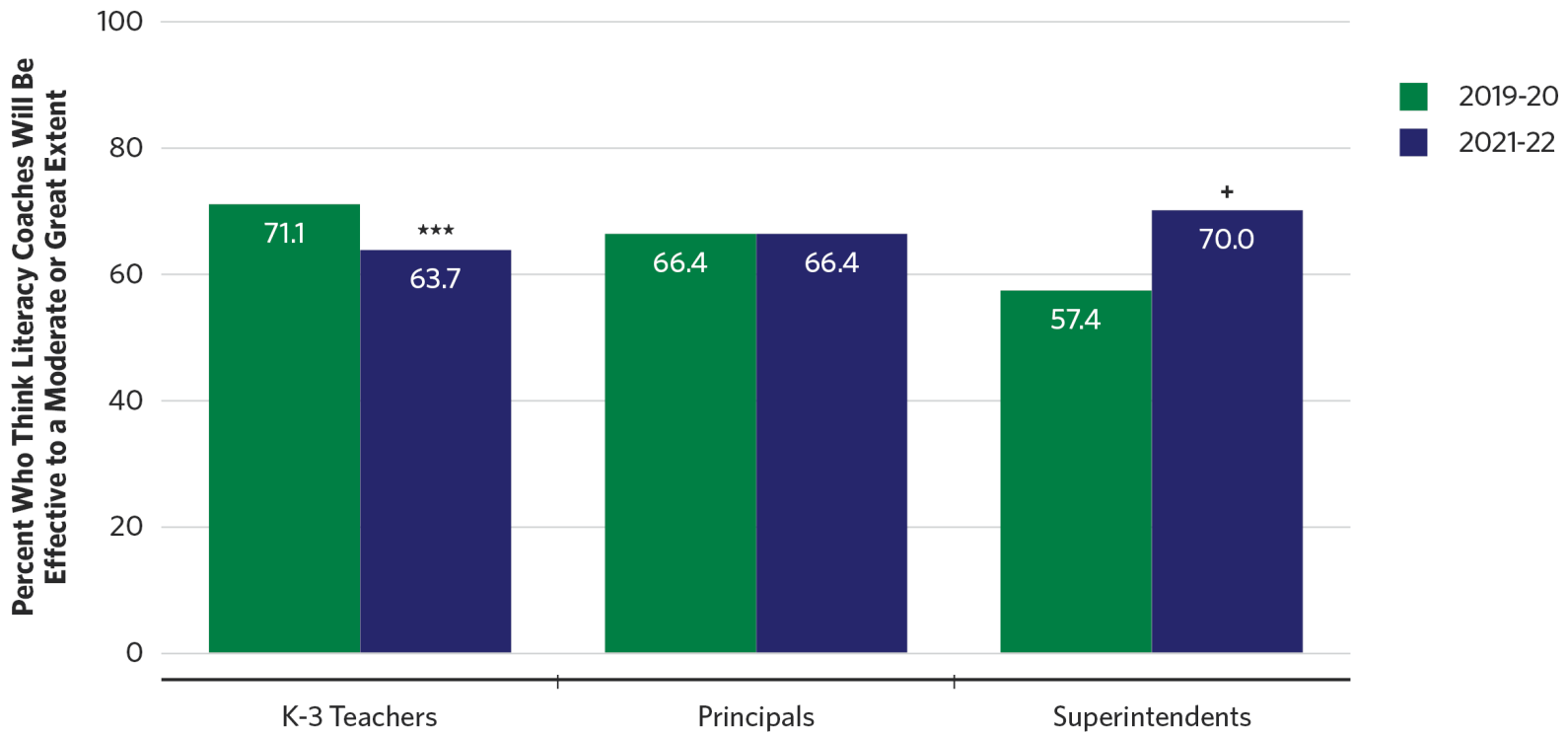
Teachers Believe Literacy Coaching Has a Positive Impact on Their Instruction

Teachers Perceive Literacy Coaching to Be More Beneficial Than Other Literacy Professional Development

As a Result of the One-on-One Literacy Coaching/Other Literacy PD I Have Received...



Most Educators Believe ISD Early Literacy Coaches Will Have a Positive Impact on Student Achievement



Key Takeaways and Recommendations

Key Takeaways

1. Michigan literacy coaches are highly qualified.
2. Supports for Michigan literacy coaches vary widely, which may be related to greater challenges for those receiving less assistance.
3. Michigan literacy coaches may be spread too thin.
4. Teachers who could most benefit from literacy coaching may not be receiving it.
5. ISD Early Literacy Coaches allocate their time as designated by the Read by Grade Three Law and Coaching Essentials.
6. Michigan educators have positive perceptions of literacy coaches.

Recommendations for Policymakers and Practitioners

1. Increase funding for literacy coaching.

- Expand training for more literacy coaching providers (e.g., district- and school-based literacy coaches).
- Hire more literacy coaches.

2. Integrate literacy coaches more purposefully into ISDs, districts, and schools.

- Provide guidance to ISDs, districts, and schools around the allocation of coaching supports.
- Implement a train-the-trainer model in ISDs (many already do this).
- Integrate literacy coaches more intentionally into district and school operations (e.g., ensure role clarity, scheduling).



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