

Appendix E

Stakeholder Feedback

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PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SURVEY ANALYSIS

Prepared for Arlington Public Schools

April 2016

In the following report, Hanover Research analyzes responses to the Professional Development Survey administered to staff in the Arlington Public School District (APS). The purpose of the survey was to evaluate a series of objectives regarding the use and effectiveness of professional development (PD) opportunities at APS.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND KEY FINDINGS

INTRODUCTION

In the following report, Hanover Research analyzes responses to the Professional Development Survey administered to staff in the Arlington Public School District (APS). The purpose of the survey was to evaluate a series of objectives regarding the use and effectiveness of professional development (PD) opportunities at APS.

Survey invitations were sent out to 4537 APS employees and received a total of 1418 partial and complete responses, which results in a response rate of 31 percent and an overall margin of error of + or - 2.2 percent. Due to small sample sizes, responses from C, D, X, and M- Scale respondents are presented aggregately as the “Other Pay Scale”.

Figure 1: Response Rate and Margin of Error (by Pay Scale)

SCALE	TOTAL INVITATIONS	RESPONSES	RESPONSE RATE	MARGIN OF ERROR
A-Scale	623	138	22%	7.4
C-Scale	93	4	4%	48.2
D-Scale	177	1	1%	98.0
X-Scale	234	18	8%	22.1
E-Scale	208	96	46%	7.4
G-Scale	273	100	37%	7.8
M-Scale	317	18	6%	22.5
P-Scale	143	95	66%	5.9
T-Scale	2499	1090	44%	2.2
Total	4537	1418	31%	2.2

This report comprises seven sections:

- **Section I: Participation and Awareness** presents findings regarding respondents’ participation in PD at APS.
- **Section II: Implementation and Barriers** analyzes respondents’ beliefs regarding the implementation of PD at APS and barriers to participation.
- **Section III: Interest and Impact** presents an analysis of survey responses to questions about reasons for participating in PD opportunities and the impact it has on one’s work and abilities.
- **Section IV: Differentiated Compensation Programs** evaluates findings regarding respondents’ reasons for participating in APS’s differentiated compensation programs.
- **Section V: Providers** provides an analysis of the individuals who regularly provide PD to employees at APS.

- **Section VI: Feedback and Evaluation** examines the formal and informal feedback that respondents receive regarding their job performance.
- **Section VII: Respondent Characteristics** presents respondents' background information, which is used to segment results in the preceding sections.

Responses in the report are presented in the aggregate and segmented by pay scale, pay scale and years at APS, grade level, FTE status, formal evaluation ratings, and location (school- or central office-based). Some questions are further segmented by T-Scale type¹. Footnotes on figures indicate the survey question number and corresponding objective. A complete list of the PD objectives can be found in the Appendix of this report.²

KEY FINDINGS

- **Two-thirds of teacher respondents agree or strongly agree that there are enough professional development opportunities offered that are relevant to their position.** Sixty-six percent of non-teacher T-scale staff (e.g. librarians, counselors) and 59 percent of teachers feel this way (Figure 1.2).
- **Respondents who are school-based are more likely than those who are central office-based to believe that there are enough professional development opportunities offered for their position.** Sixty-two percent of school-based respondents feel this way, compared to 45 percent of central office-based respondents (Figure 1.3).
- **Respondents who are school-based and T-Scale, but not teachers (e.g. librarians, counselors, etc.) are more likely than teachers to have learned about PD opportunities through communications from professional associations.** Sixty-nine percent of these non-teachers, versus only 41 percent of teacher respondents, learned about the PD opportunities they attended in the last five years this way (Figures 2.3).
- **Most respondents do not believe that PD programming in a given year builds on programming from the previous year.** Thirty-seven percent of respondents agree or strongly agree that this year-to-year continuity exists, while 40 percent disagree or strongly disagree that it exists (Figures 2.5).
- **Respondents who are central office-based are much more likely to respond “I don’t know” to statements regarding the continuity of PD at APS.** Specifically, G-Scale employees are the most likely to respond “I don’t know” across all central office-based respondents with different pay scales. Seventy-two percent of them indicate not knowing whether school-and division-based professional learning objectives are aligned, while three-quarters of them report not knowing whether PD programming in a given year builds on programming from the previous year (Figure 2.9).

¹ Results are segmented by these groups where requested by APS.

² This list of objectives was provided to Hanover Research by APS.

- **The most common reason cited by respondents for not participating in PD in the last five years is being too busy.** More than half of all respondents, 53 percent, gave this as a reason for not participating in PD in recent years. Among teachers, this percentage increases from 54 percent at the elementary grade level to 70 percent at the middle school grade level and 69 percent at the high school grade level (Figure 2.9, Figure 2.12).
- **A-scale, E-scale, and G-scale staff respondents tend to believe there is no PD available for their position, while P-scale and T-scale staff are too busy to participate in PD.** At least 50 percent of A-scale, E-scale, and G-scale staff cite no job-specific PD being available for their position, the most commonly selected obstacle to participation in PD among these respondents. By contrast, 60 percent P-scale and T-scale staff cite being too busy to participate in PD, the most common obstacle for these respondents (Figure 2.14).
- **The most common reason cited by respondents for participating in PD in the last five years is a desire to broaden their overall professional knowledge.** Seventy-eight percent of respondents who participated in PD in the last five years indicated this being an extremely important or very important factor when selecting PD programs (Figure 3.1).
- **While 84 percent of respondents feel confident about their ability to implement what they have learned during PD, nearly a quarter of T-scale and school-based respondents who have participated in PD programs in the last five years disagree or strongly disagree that their PD experiences have improved student outcomes.** Seventeen percent disagree and seven percent strongly disagree, while another 16 percent indicate that they do not know how PD experiences have influenced student outcomes (Figure 1.1 and Figure 3.6).
- **Elementary school teachers are more likely to agree that their PD experiences in the last five years have improved student outcomes compared to middle and high school teachers.** Whereas 66 percent of elementary school teacher respondents agree or strongly agree that their PD experiences have improved student outcomes, 56 percent of middle school teacher respondents and 51 percent of high school teacher respondents believe the same (Figure 3.7).
- **Nearly all respondents (94%) who participated in the CAP portfolio III felt supported by the PD Office, while 79 percent of them felt supported by their principal/supervisor.** At least 70 percent of respondents who participated in the CAP portfolio I felt supported by the PD Office and their principal/supervisor (Figure 4.9 and Figure 4.10).
- **A large majority of respondents who were successfully moved to the CAP salary schedule indicate that the achievement of the CAP portfolio III influenced their desire to remain with APS.** Fifty-three percent agree and 26 percent strongly agree that it influenced their desire to remain with APS (Figure 4.11).

- **Among respondents who have not participated in one of APS's differentiated compensation programs, only 28 percent are very or extremely interested in participating in one in the future.** Forty-five percent indicate they are slightly or moderately interested, while 27 percent are not interested at all (Figure 4.12).
- **The longer respondents have worked at APS the less interested they are in participating in one of APS's differentiated compensation programs.** Only 11 to 18 percent of respondents who have been at APS 0-10 years are not at all interested in participating in one of these programs. This percentage increases to 42 percent among those who have been at APS 11-25 years and 66 percent among those who have been at APS 26 or more years (Figure 4.14).
- **Two-thirds of respondents who have not participated in one of APS's differentiated compensation programs have not done so because they are unsure of what's involved.** This is more than twice the percentage of those who selected any other category. Another 31 percent cite not participating because they cannot make the time commitment (Figure 4.15).
- **Respondents who are regular providers of PD at APS are more likely to be central office-based than school-based, but school-based providers of PD are more likely to believe they are able to provide adequate levels of PD.** Thirty-five percent of central office-based respondents provide PD at least four times a year, compared to 21 percent of school-based respondents. By contrast, 76 percent of school-based respondents, versus 69 percent of central office-based respondents, agree or strongly agree that they are able to provide the necessary level and amount of professional development (Figure 5.3, Figure 5.4)
- **Direct follow-up with participants is the method most commonly used by providers to measure the effectiveness of the PD they provide.** Sixty-two percent of PD providers indicate they use this method to measure effectiveness. The next most common methods are participant surveys (55 percent) and classroom observation (52 percent) (Figures 5.8).
- **Less than half of all respondents believe that the feedback they receive during formal evaluations can always or often be used to improve their job performance.** Eighteen percent of respondents believe they always receive such useful feedback and 25 percent believe they often receive such useful feedback. Twenty-six percent of respondents indicate they rarely (20 percent) or never (6 percent) receive feedback that they can use to improve their job performance (Figure 6.1).
- **Thirty-three percent of T-scale staff at the high school level never receive feedback from their principal.** This percentage drops to 23 percent among T-scale staff at the middle school level and 18 percent among T-scale staff at the elementary school level (Figure 6.6).

- **The vast majority of respondents are teachers, on the T-scale pay scale, and school-based.** Seventy percent of respondents are on the T-scale, 87 percent are school-based, and 82 percent of those on the T-scale are teachers (Figure 7.1).
- **More than half of all respondents (57 percent) work at the elementary school level.** Twenty-four percent work at the high school level and 18 percent work at the middle school level (Figure 7.1).
- **Most respondents have been in education and at APS for more than 10 years.** Fifty-one percent of respondents have been at APS for 11 or more years and 65 percent have been in education for 11 or more years (Figure 7.1).

SECTION I: PARTICIPATION AND AWARENESS

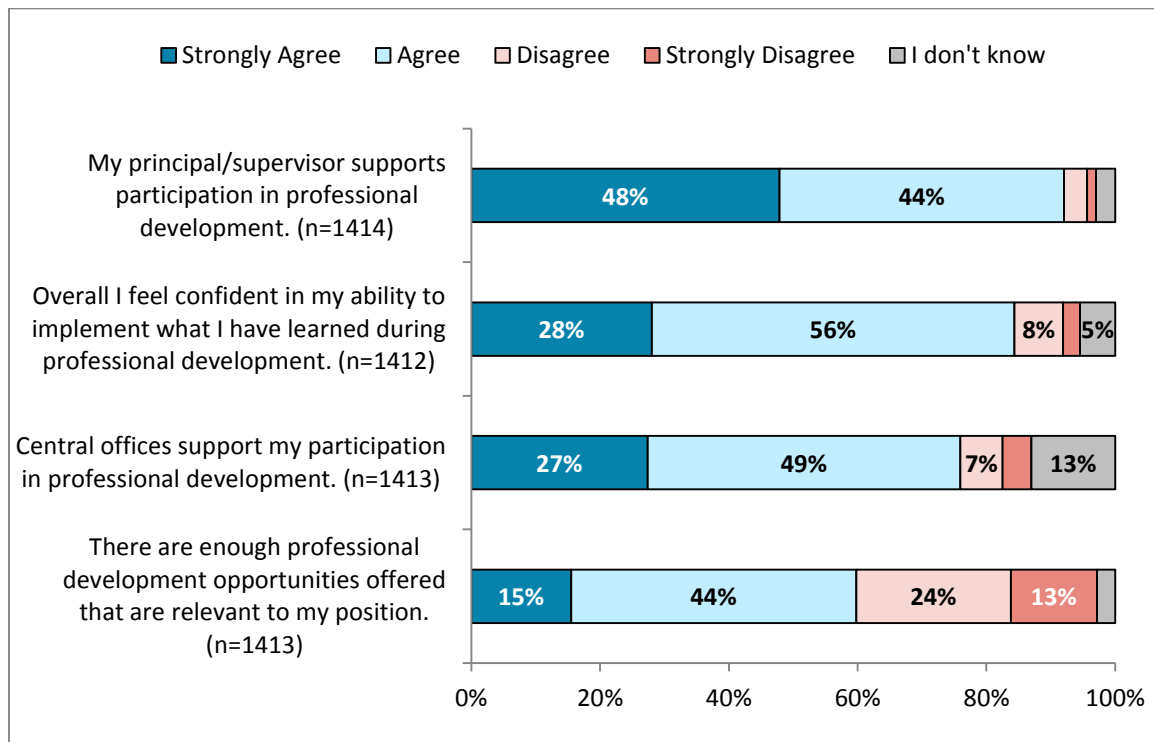
This section presents findings regarding participation in PD at APS. Questions relate to such issues as knowledge of PD opportunities, rates of participation, PD delivery formats, and the usefulness of PD.

FINDINGS

- **Two-thirds of teacher respondents agree or strongly agree that there are enough professional development opportunities offered that are relevant to one's position.** Sixty-six percent of non-teacher T-scale staff (e.g. librarians, counselors) and 59 percent of teachers feel this way (Figure 1.2).
- **Respondents who are school-based are more likely than those who are central office-based to believe that there are enough professional development opportunities offered for their position.** Sixty-two percent of school-based respondents feel this way, compared to 45 percent of central office-based respondents (Figure 1.3).

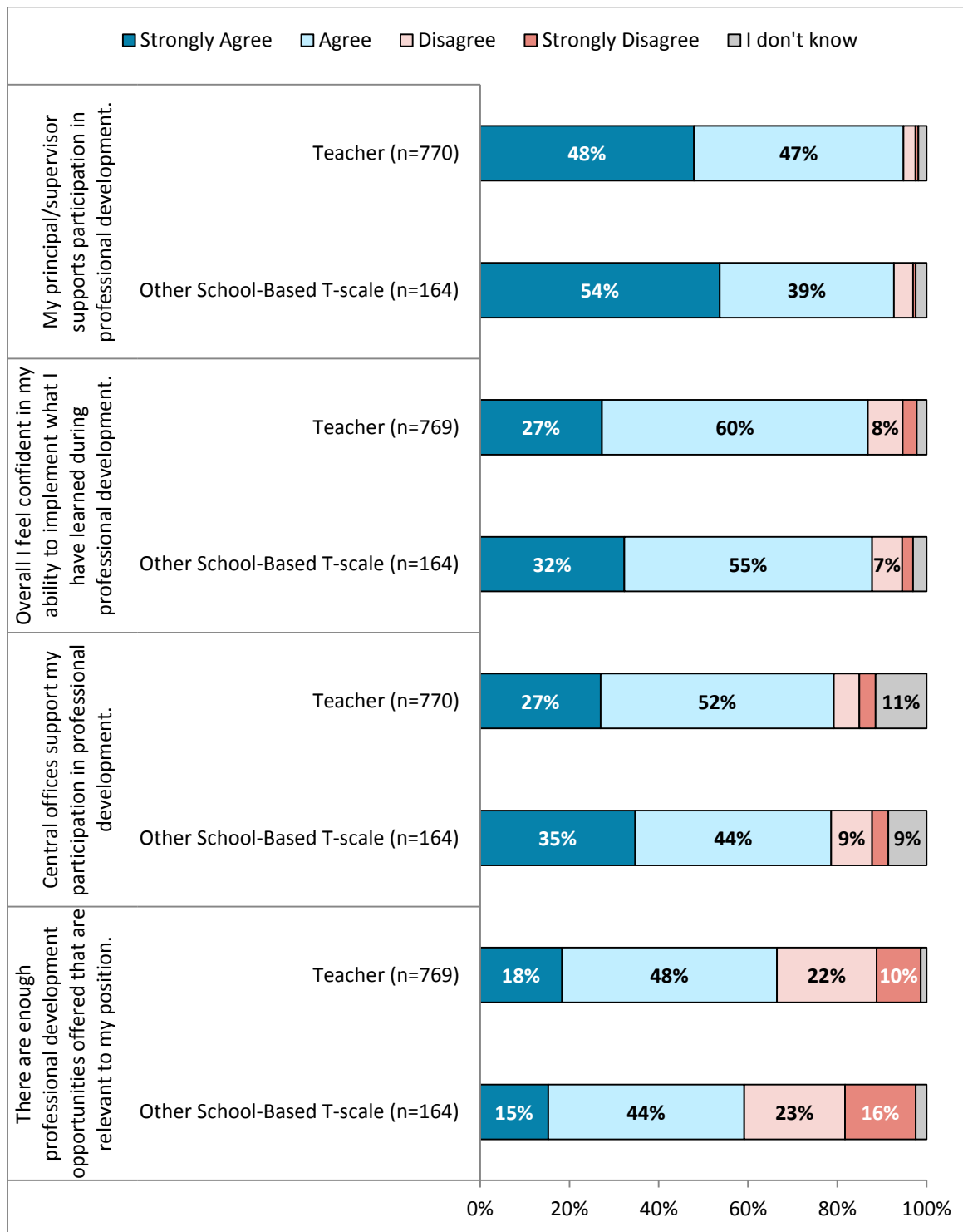
FIGURES

Figure 1.1: Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements regarding your participation in professional development at APS:³



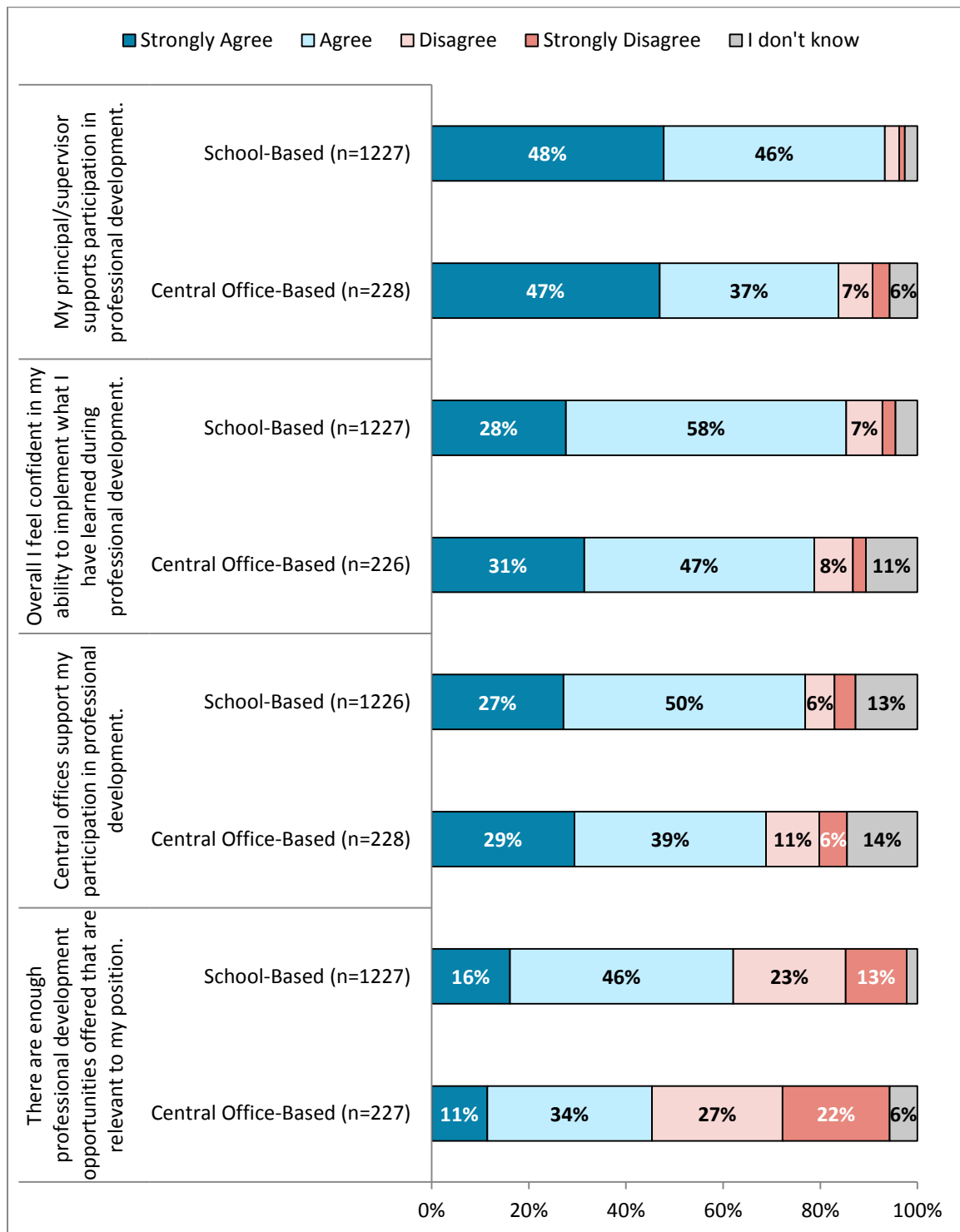
³ Question 10 – Objectives 1c, 1e, 1f, 2b, 2c, 5a, and 5b

Figure 1.2: Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements regarding your participation in professional development at APS (by Teacher Type)⁴



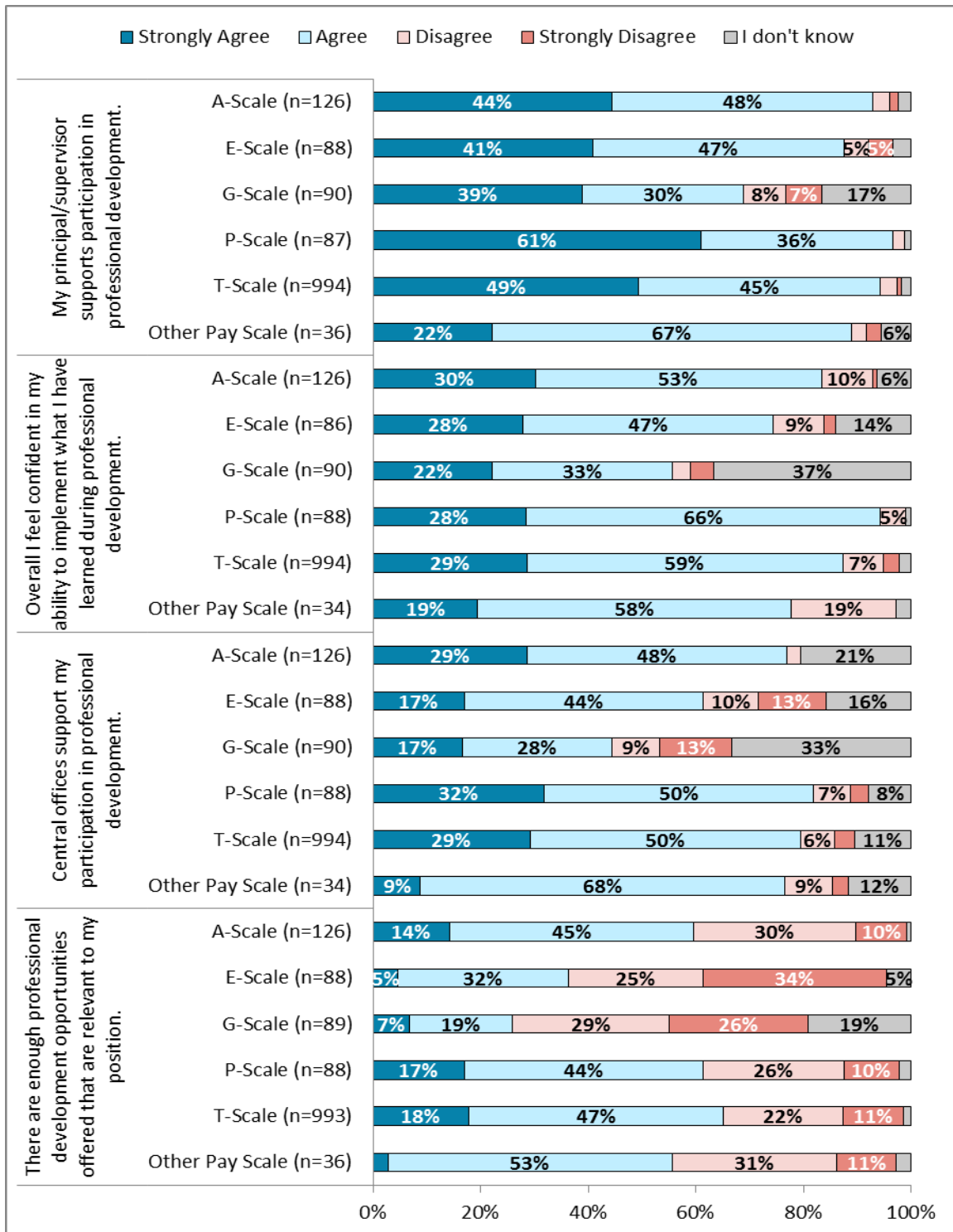
⁴ Question 10 – Objectives 1c, 1e, 1f, 2b, 2c, 5a, and 5b

Figure 1.3: Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements regarding your participation in professional development at APS (by Location)⁵



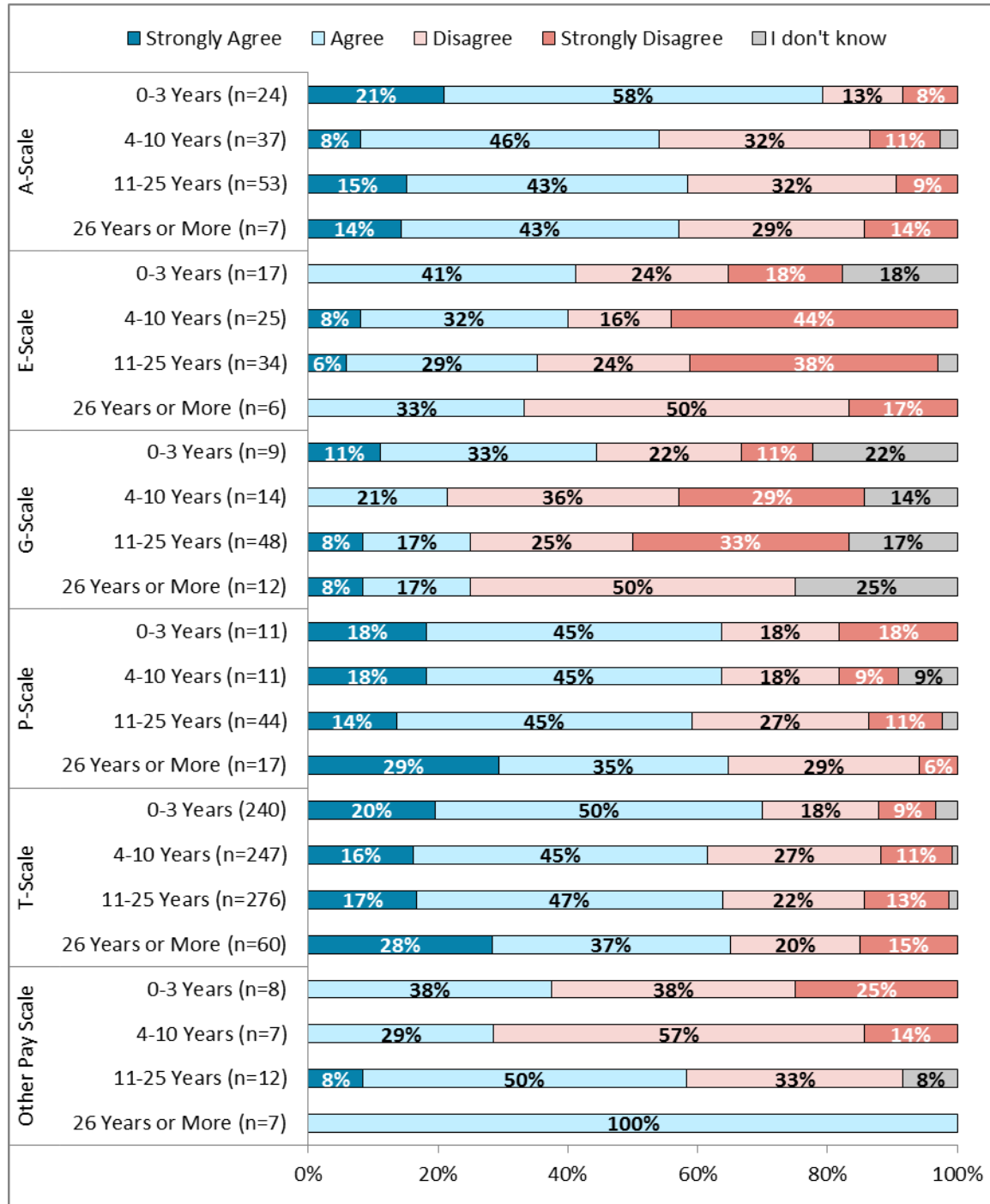
⁵ Question 10 – Objectives 1c, 1e, 1f, 2b, 2c, 5a, and 5b

Figure 1.4: Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements regarding your participation in professional development at APS (by Pay Scale)⁶



⁶ Question 10 – Objectives 1c, 1e, 1f, 2b, 2c, 5a, and 5b

Figure 1.5: Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements regarding your participation in professional development at APS (by Pay Scale and Years at APS) “There are enough professional development opportunities offered that are relevant to my position.”⁷

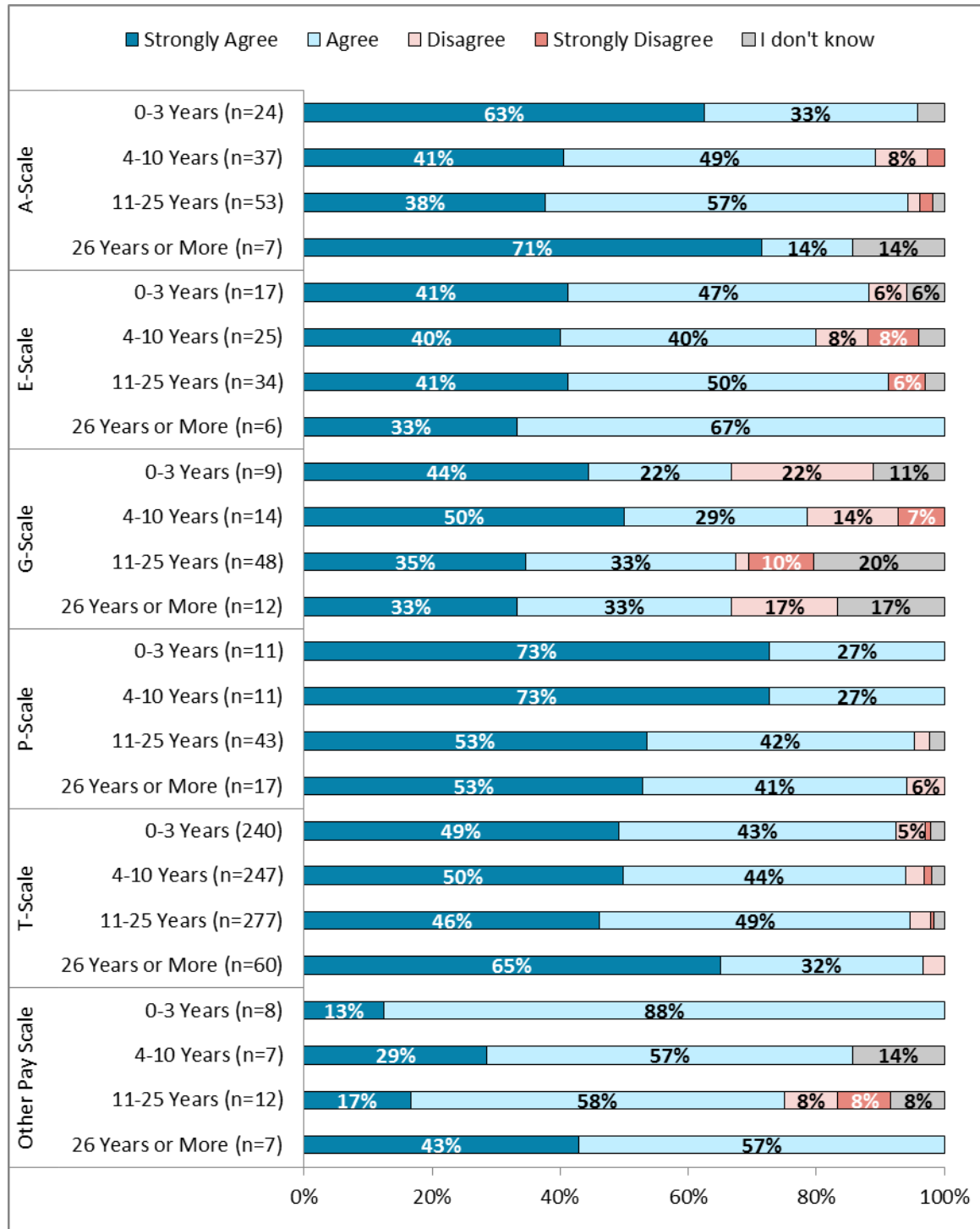


Note: The “Other Pay Scale” presents aggregate responses of C, D, X, and M- Scale respondents.

⁷ Question 10 – Objectives 1c, 1e, 1f, 2b, 2c, 5a, and 5b

Note: The “Other Pay Scale” presents aggregate responses of C, D, X, and M- Scale respondents.

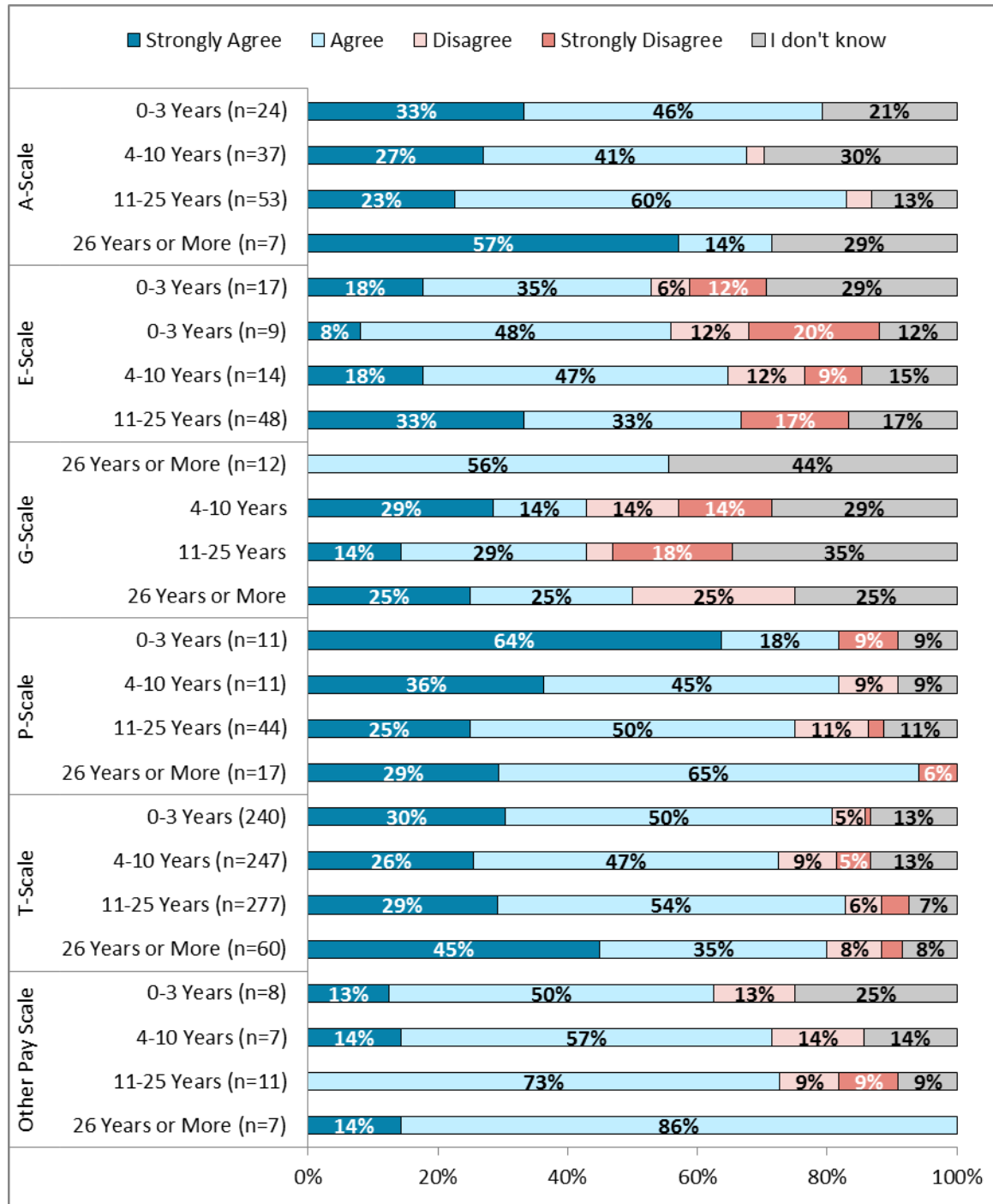
Figure 1.6: Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements regarding your participation in professional development at APS (by Pay Scale and Years at APS) “My principal/supervisor supports participation in professional development.”⁸



⁸ Question 10 – Objectives 1c, 1e, 1f, 2b, 2c, 5a, and 5b

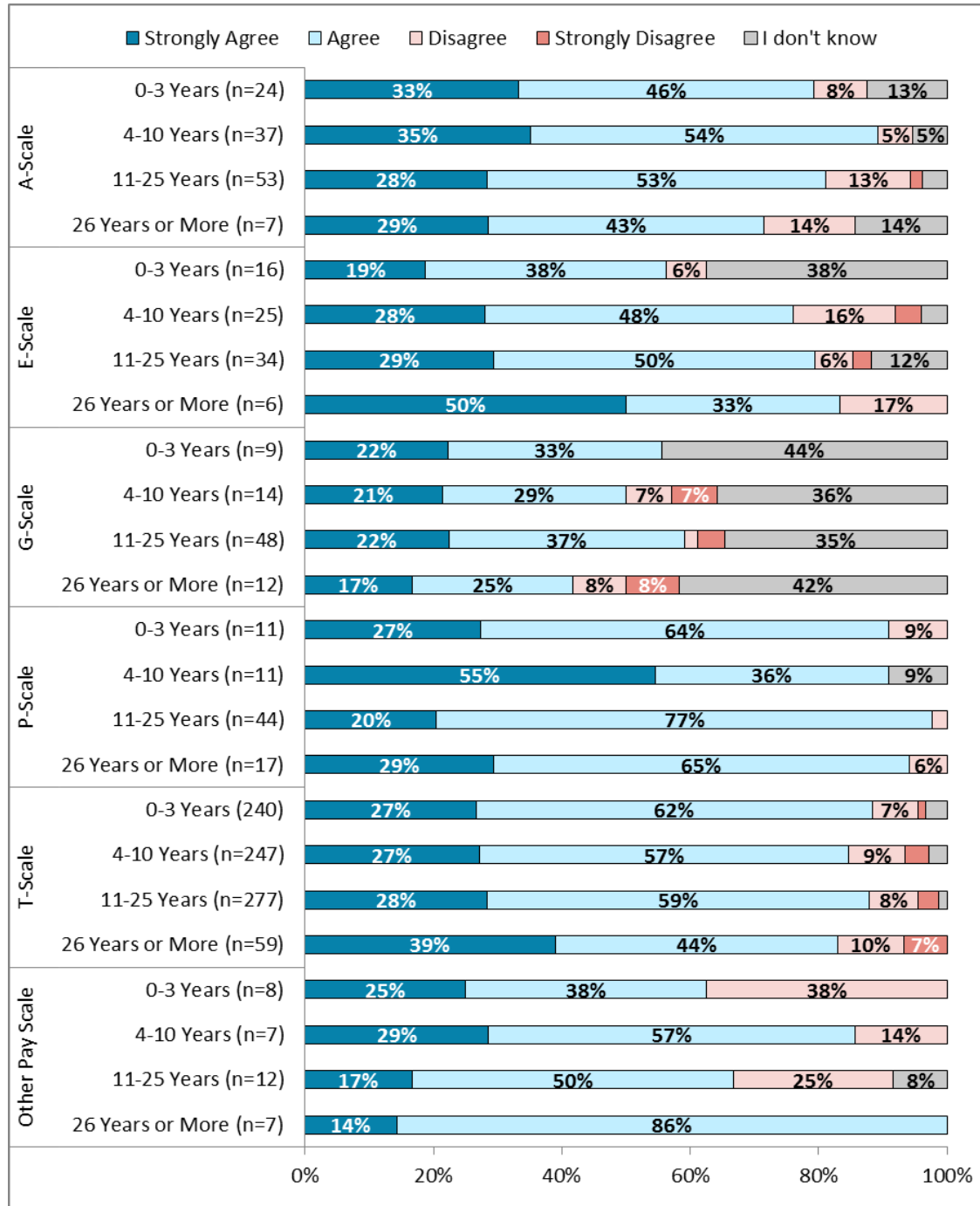
Note: The “Other Pay Scale” presents aggregate responses of C, D, X, and M- Scale respondents.

Figure 1.7: Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements regarding your participation in professional development at APS (by Pay Scale and Years at APS) “Central offices support my participation in professional development.”⁹



⁹ Question 10 – Objectives 1c, 1e, 1f, 2b, 2c, 5a, and 5b

Figure 1.8: Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements regarding your participation in professional development at APS (by Pay Scale and Years at APS) *“Overall I feel confident in my ability to implement what I have learned during professional development.”*¹⁰



Note: The "Other Pay Scale" presents aggregate responses of C, D, X, and M- Scale respondents.

¹⁰ Question 10 – Objectives 1c, 1e, 1f, 2b, 2c, 5a, and 5b

Figure 1.9: Please share your thoughts about PD for your staff type in APS. We are interested in hearing your perspective on availability and quality of PD, or any other comments that you'd like to share.¹¹

THEME	N	% OF TOTAL RESPONSES	SAMPLE RESPONSES
Lack of Relevant PD for Position	111	58%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There should be more professional development for assistants. • Most PD is unrelated to my work. • It would be nice to have more free PD offered through APS, but the skills I need are very specialized so it's probably not feasible. • There is no Professional Development available in-house unless you are T/P scale.
Lack of Protected Time for PD	43	23%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is not enough time in the school year to participate in PD as often as I would like. • My position is the only one of it's kind at APS, so finding PD opportunities are rare and hard to get to since I have trouble getting away.
Lack of Funding for External PD	28	15%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The PD that I have attended that has been most meaningful has been from outside organizations and not from within the APS system. This PD is either paid for out of pocket, on a weekend or in the evening. • There is little to no APS sponsored PD for my scale as it relates to my position.
Satisfaction with PD	26	14%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional Development opportunities are available and have been pretty useful for the most part. • PD quality and availability are good.
Dissatisfaction with PD Quality	14	7%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most PD are repetitive and have little to do with veteran staff members, yet we are forced to attend.
Other	7	4%	--

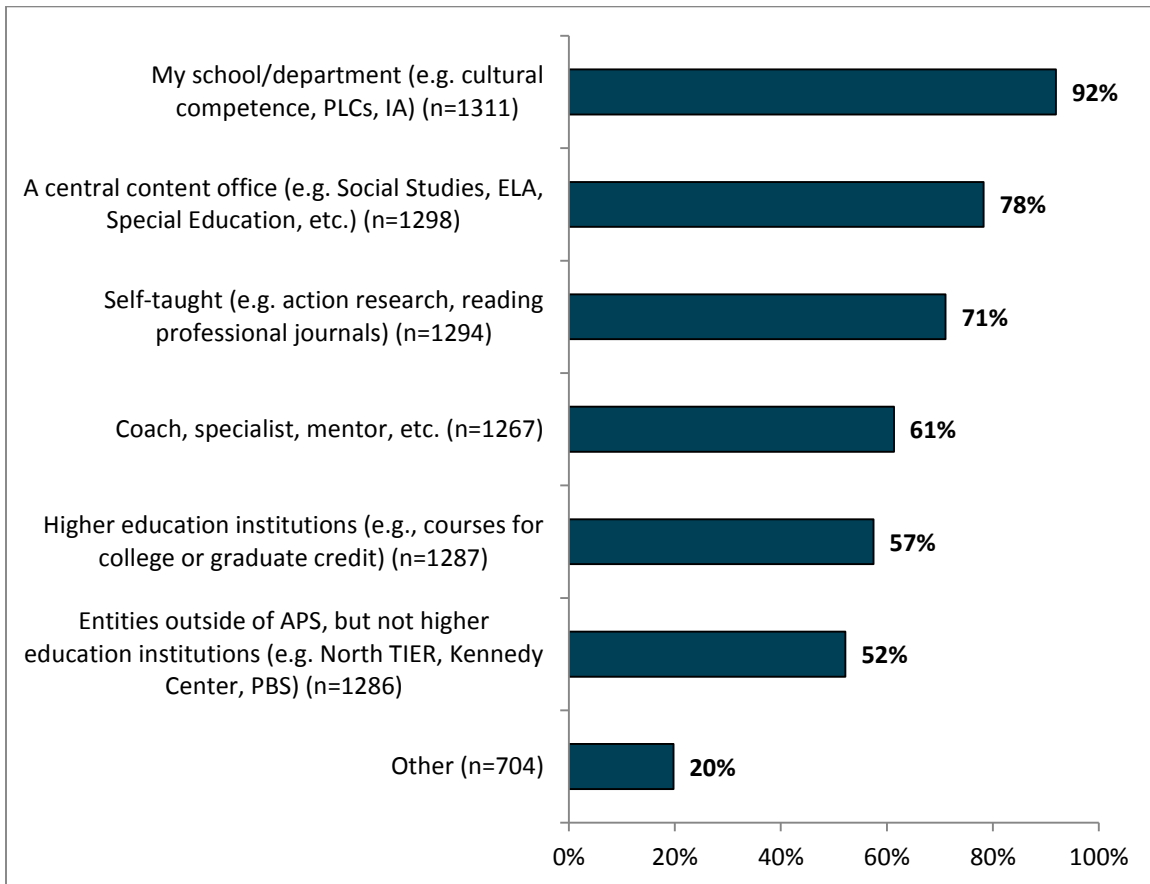
N=190

Note: This question was only asked to respondents who are non-T Scale/P-Scale employees.

Note: The "Other Pay Scale" presents aggregate responses of C, D, X, and M- Scale respondents.

¹¹ Question 11.

Figure 1.10: In the last five years, have you participated in PD offered by the following entities?¹²



Note: This question was only asked to respondents who have participated in PD in the last five years. Percentages represent respondents who selected “yes”.

¹² Question 12 – Objectives 1a and 1b

Figure 1.11: Please specify what other entities have provided PD that you have participated in in the last five years.¹³

THEME	N	% OF TOTAL RESPONSES	SAMPLE RESPONSES
Conferences and Workshops	48	38%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Numerous workshops offered by Center for Arab Studies through Georgetown University Professional conferences VSTE, ISTE, BBWorld2013 and 2014 Workshops from the Department of Education of the Spanish Embassy in DC
Professional Associations and Certifications	34	27%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> American Institute of Architects (AIA) convention and meetings/programs Exxon Mickelson Math and Science Academy
Webinars and MOOCs	17	13%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Online programs with webinars Online Courses through Coursera and EdX
Independent Research/Reading/Activities	15	12%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research and educational books in administration, reading, writing, technology and others Poetry readings
Observation and Collaboration	12	9%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Peer to peer interactions that was not identified specifically as PD Networking with other professionals in my field. This is extremely helpful in my professional development.
University Courses	10	8%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reading and Writing Project at Teacher's College [Columbia University] Northern Virginia Community College-NOVA
Institutes	6	4%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Asia Institute at Georgetown University
Other	15	12%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Content related summer work Twitter, Google+, and other Social Media

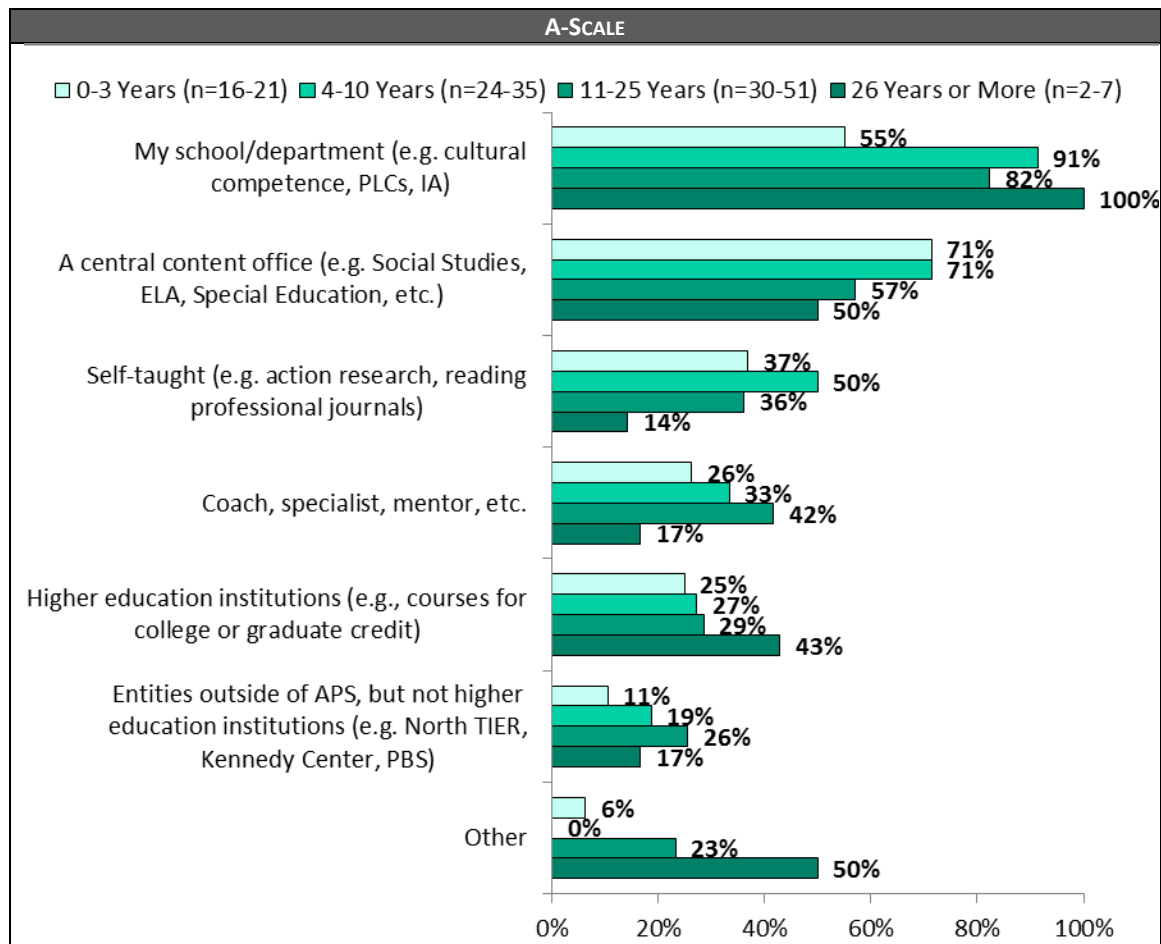
N=128

Note: This question was only asked to respondents who have participated in PD provided by "other" entities in the last five years.

¹³ Question 15- Objectives 1e and 5d.

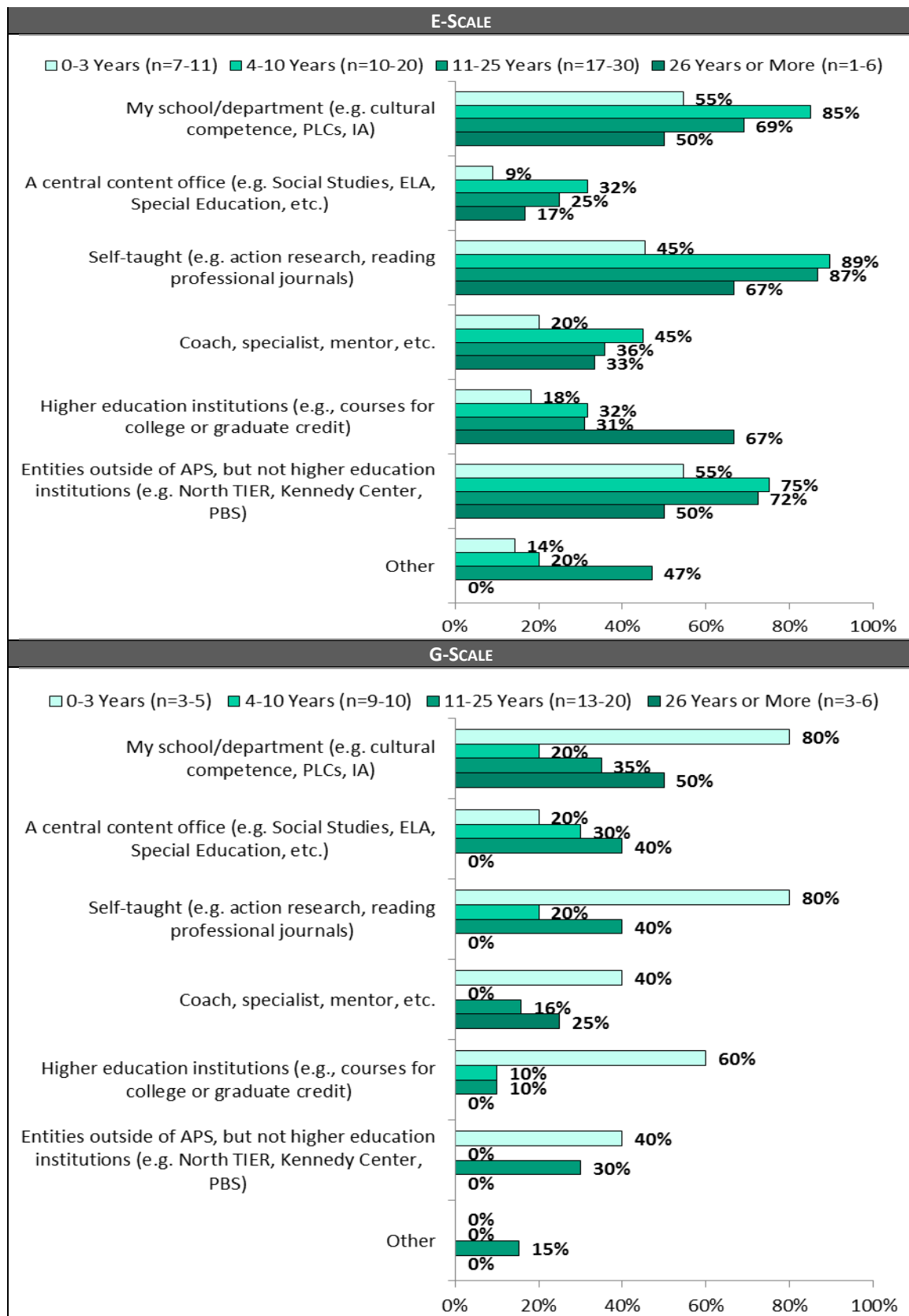
Note: Relative to elementary and middle school, high school respondents are substantially more likely to participate in professional organizations or earn certifications for professional development.

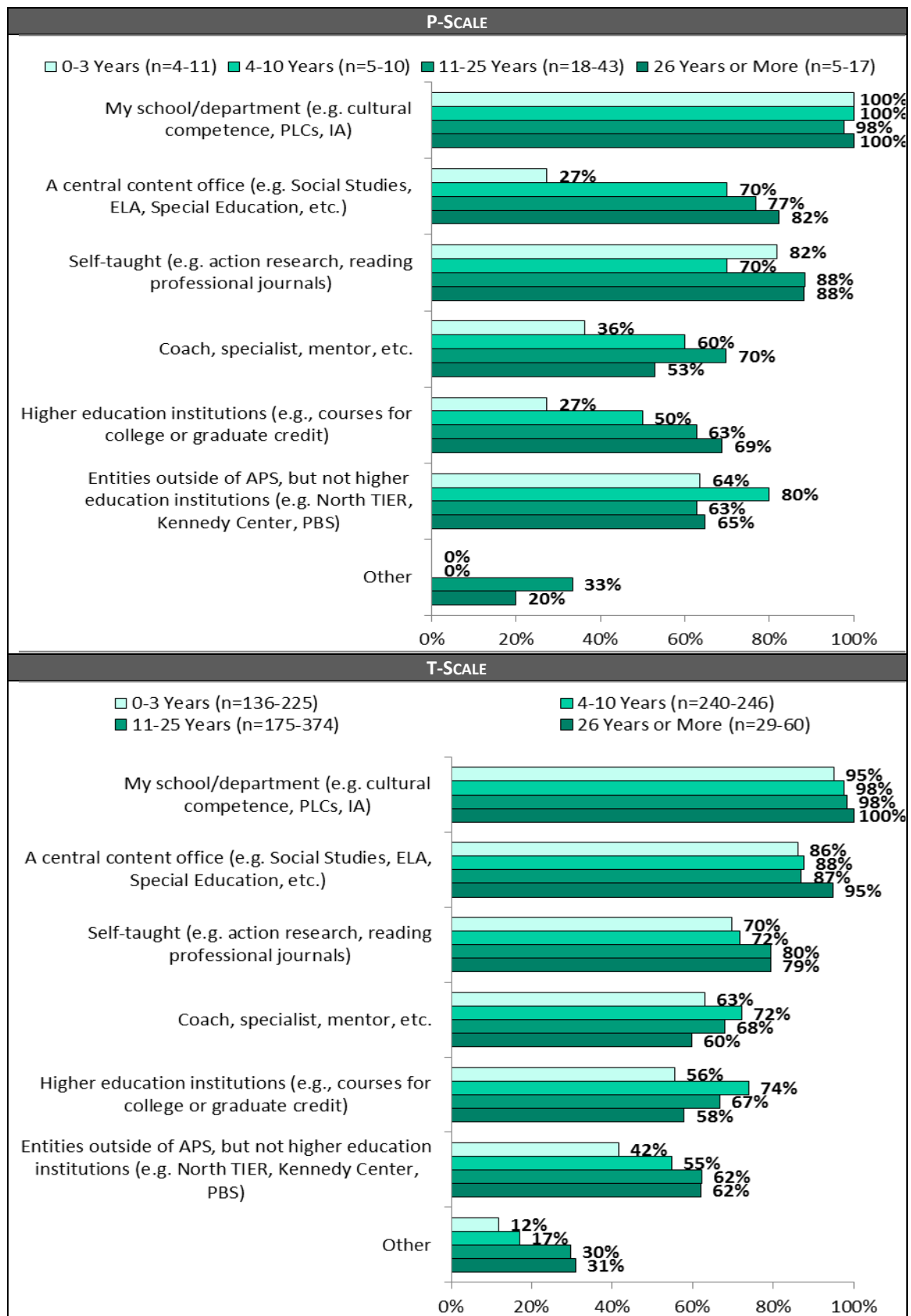
Figure 1.12: In the last five years, have you participated in PD offered by the following entities? (by Pay Scale and Years at APS)¹⁴

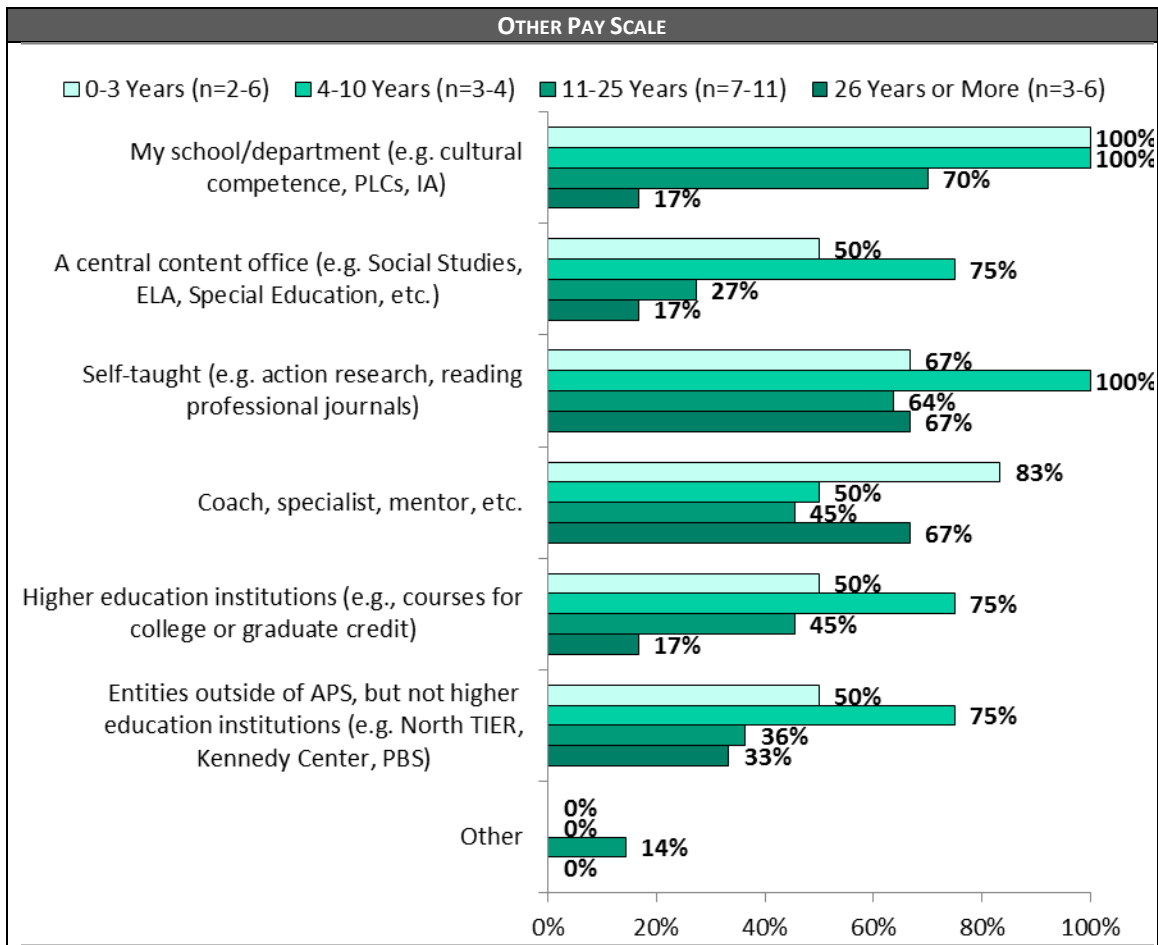


¹⁴ Question 12 – Objectives 1a and 1b

Note: The “Other Pay Scale” presents aggregate responses of C, D, X, and M- Scale respondents.

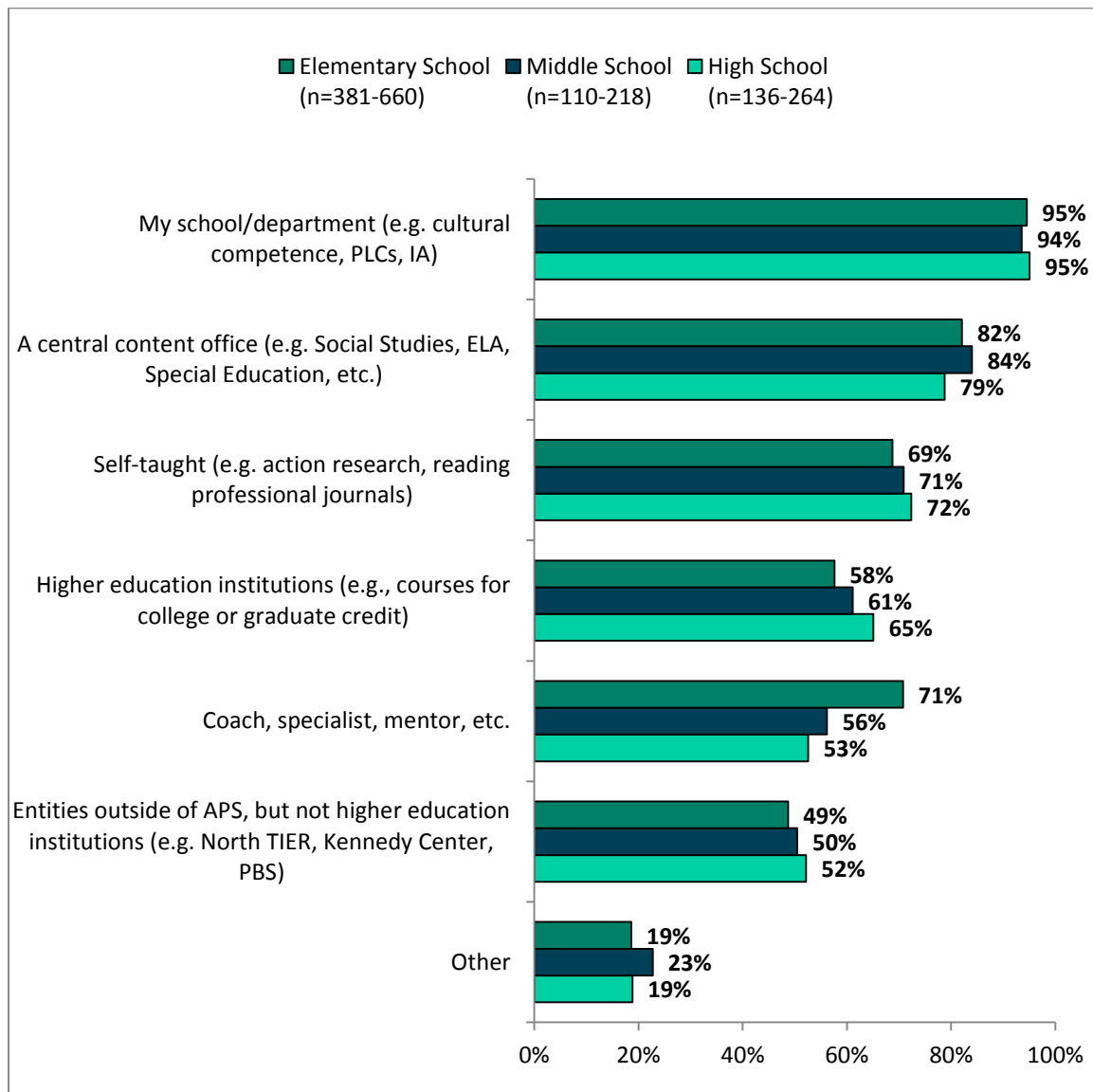






Note: This question was only asked to respondents who have participated in PD in the last five years. Percentages represent respondents who selected "yes".

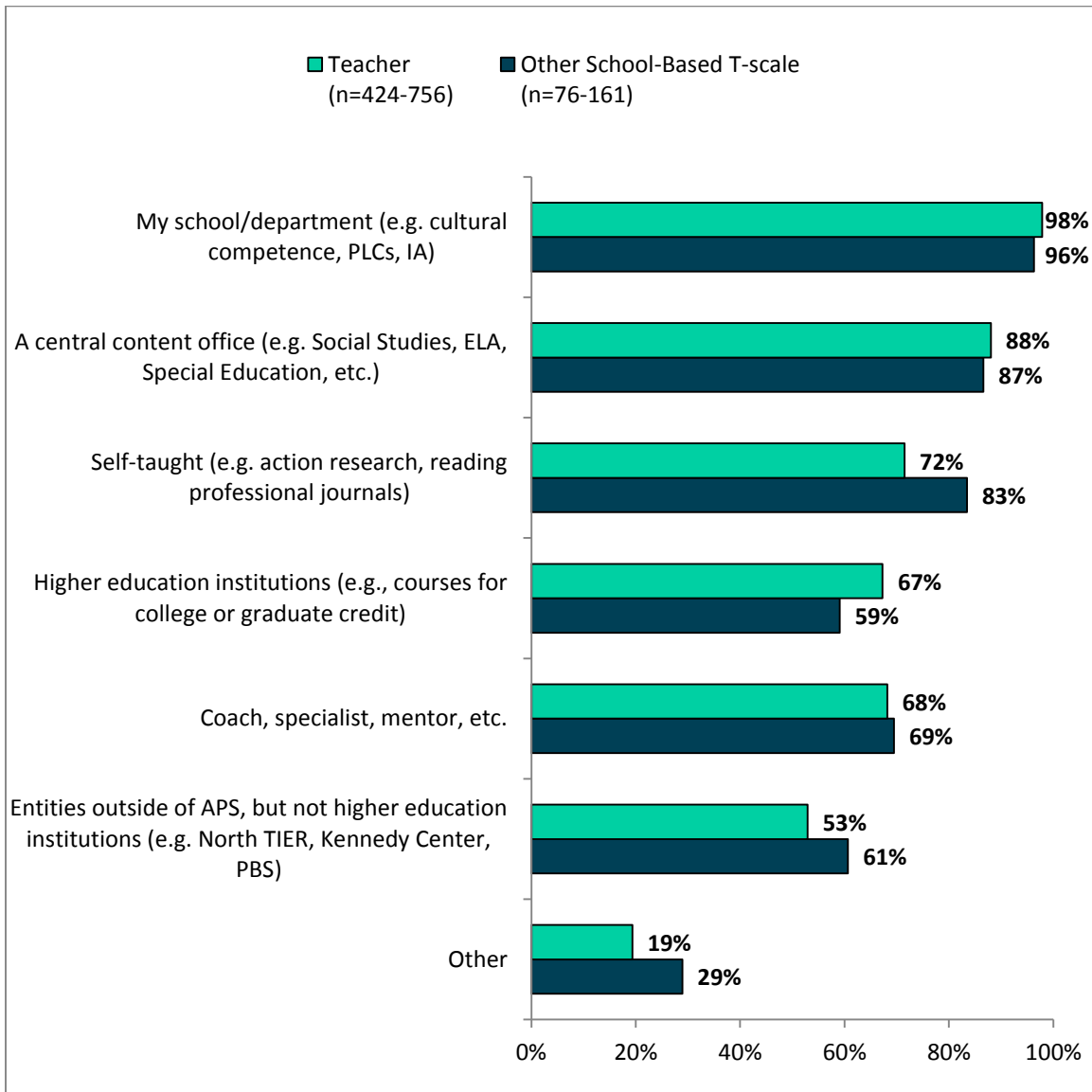
Figure 1.13: In the last five years, have you participated in PD offered by the following entities? (by Grade Level) ¹⁵



Note: This question was only asked to respondents who have participated in PD in the last five years. Percentages represent respondents who selected “yes”.

¹⁵ Question 12 – Objectives 1a and 1b

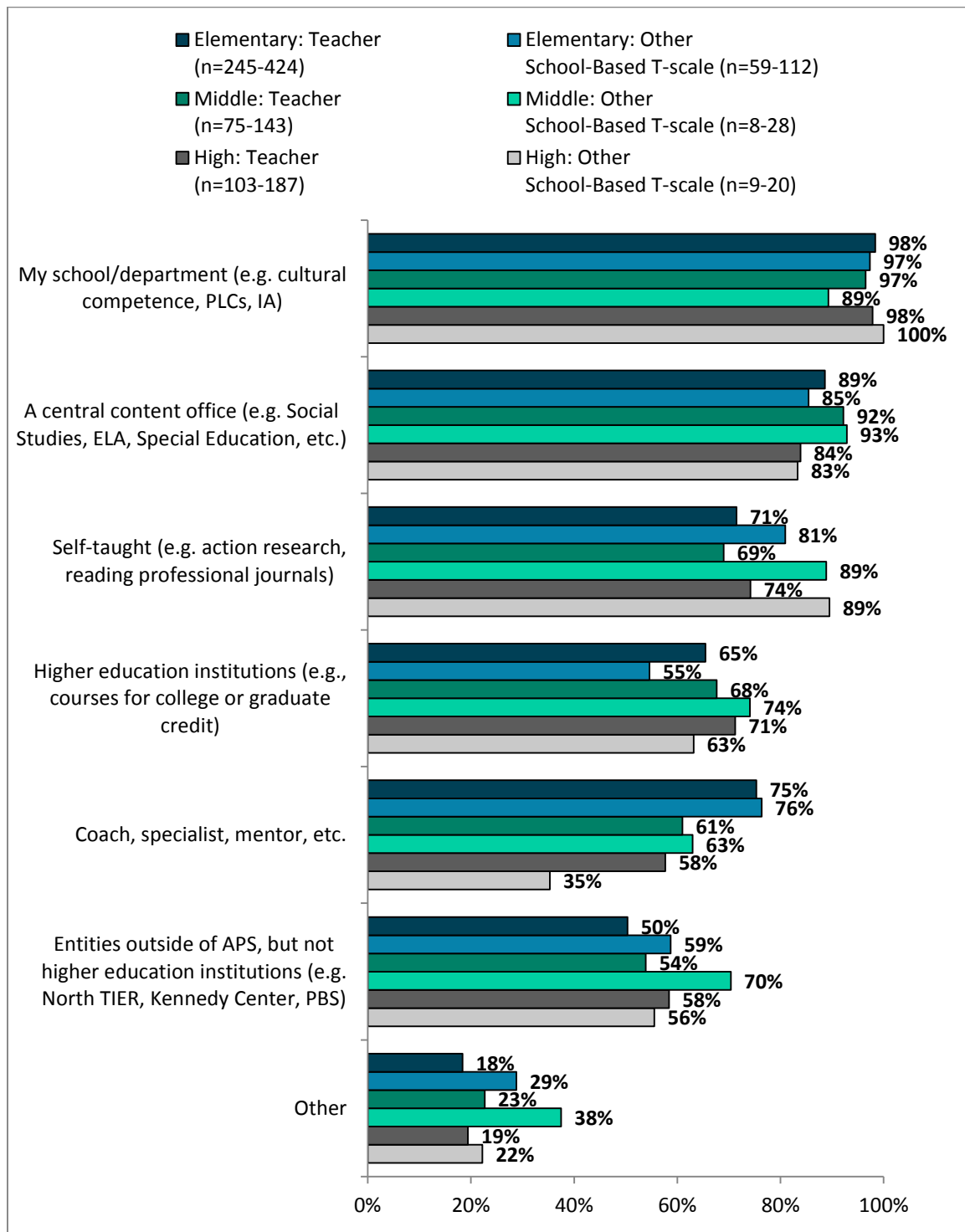
Figure 1.14: In the last five years, have you participated in PD offered by the following entities? (by Teacher Type)¹⁶



Note: This question was only asked to respondents who have participated in PD in the last five years. Percentages represent respondents who selected “yes”.

¹⁶ Question 12 – Objectives 1a and 1b

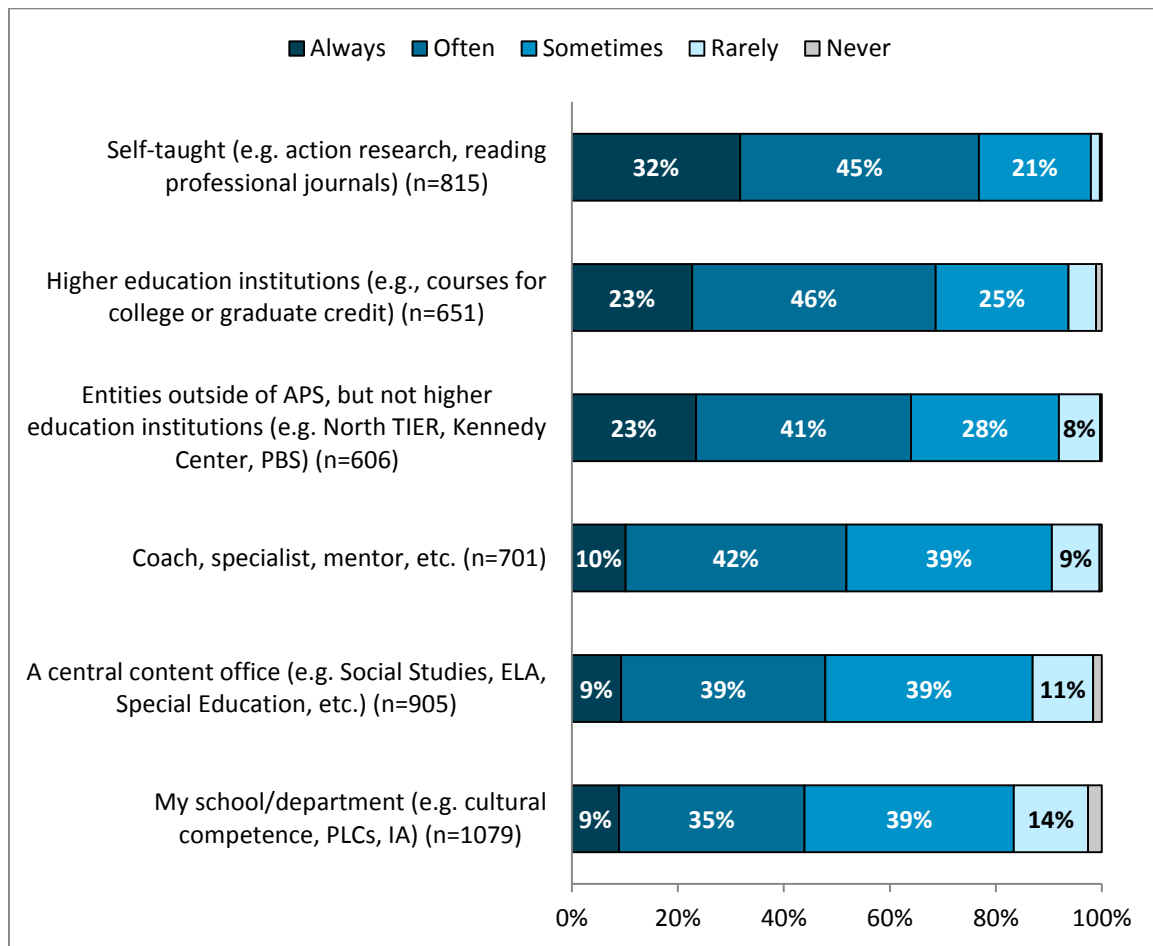
Figure 1.15: In the last five years, have you participated in PD offered by the following entities? (by Grade Level and Teacher Type)¹⁷



Note: This question was only asked to respondents who have participated in PD in the last five years. Percentages represent respondents who selected "yes".

¹⁷ Question 12 – Objectives 1a and 1b

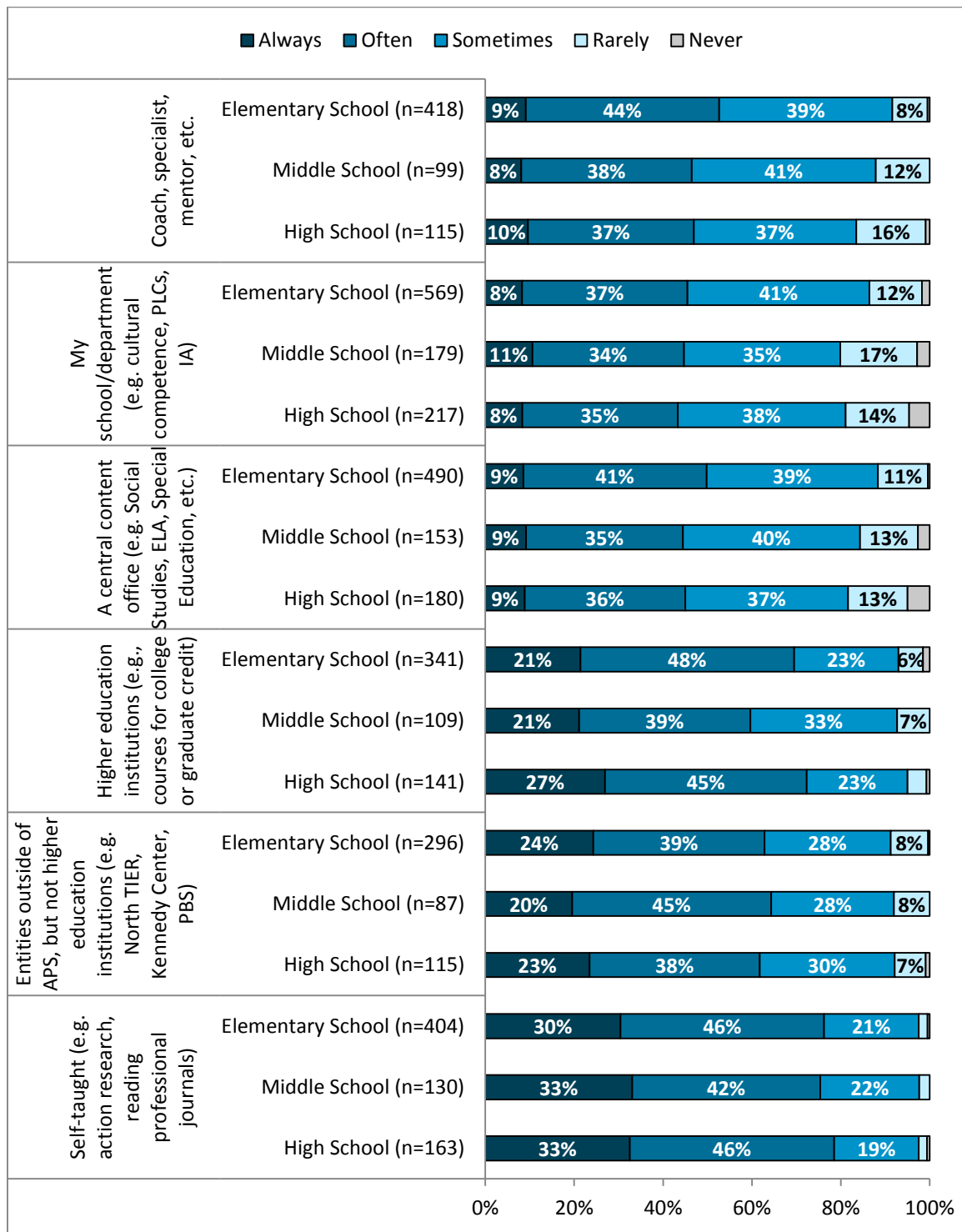
Figure 1.16: Please indicate how often PD offered by the following entities addressed your professional needs:¹⁸



Note: Question asked only if respondents indicated they had participated in PD offered by each entity.

¹⁸ Question 13 – Objectives 1e and 5d

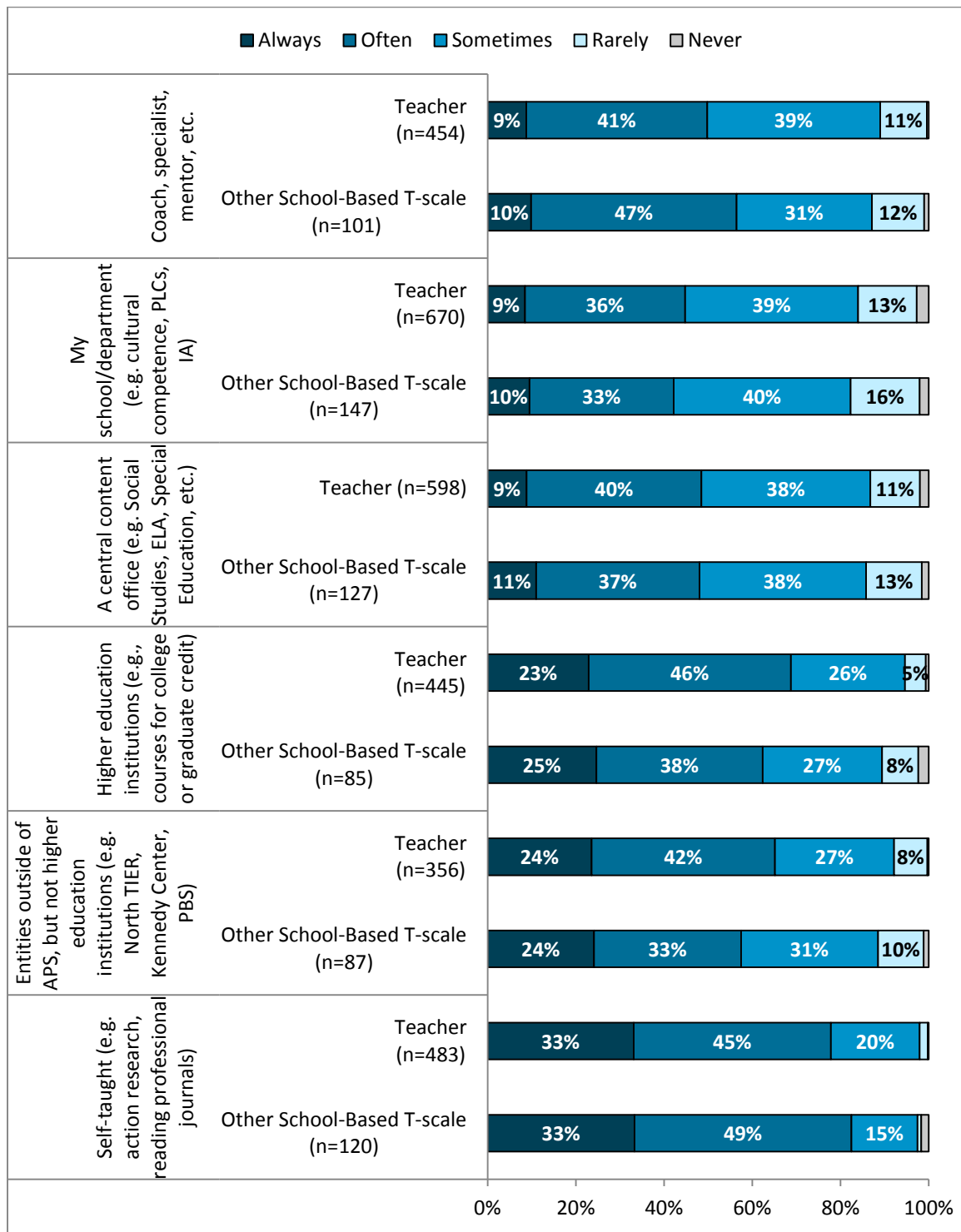
Figure 1.17: Please indicate how often PD offered by the following entities addressed your professional needs (by Grade Level)¹⁹



Note: Options populated from response options selected in Figure 1.5.

¹⁹ Question 13 – Objectives 1e and 5d

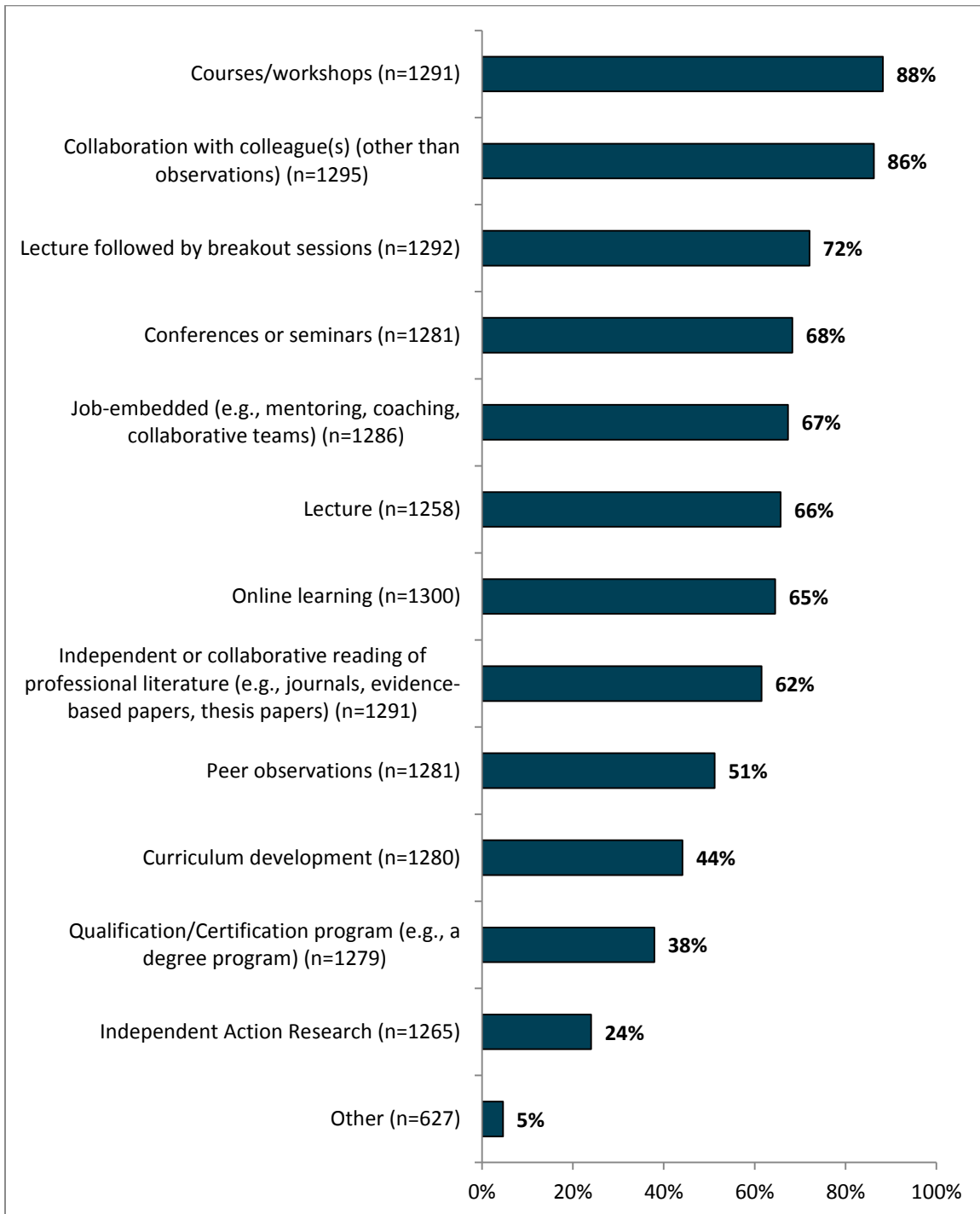
Figure 1.18: Please indicate how often PD offered by the following entities addressed your professional needs (by Teacher Type)²⁰



Note: Options populated from response options selected

²⁰ Question 13 – Objectives 1e and 5d

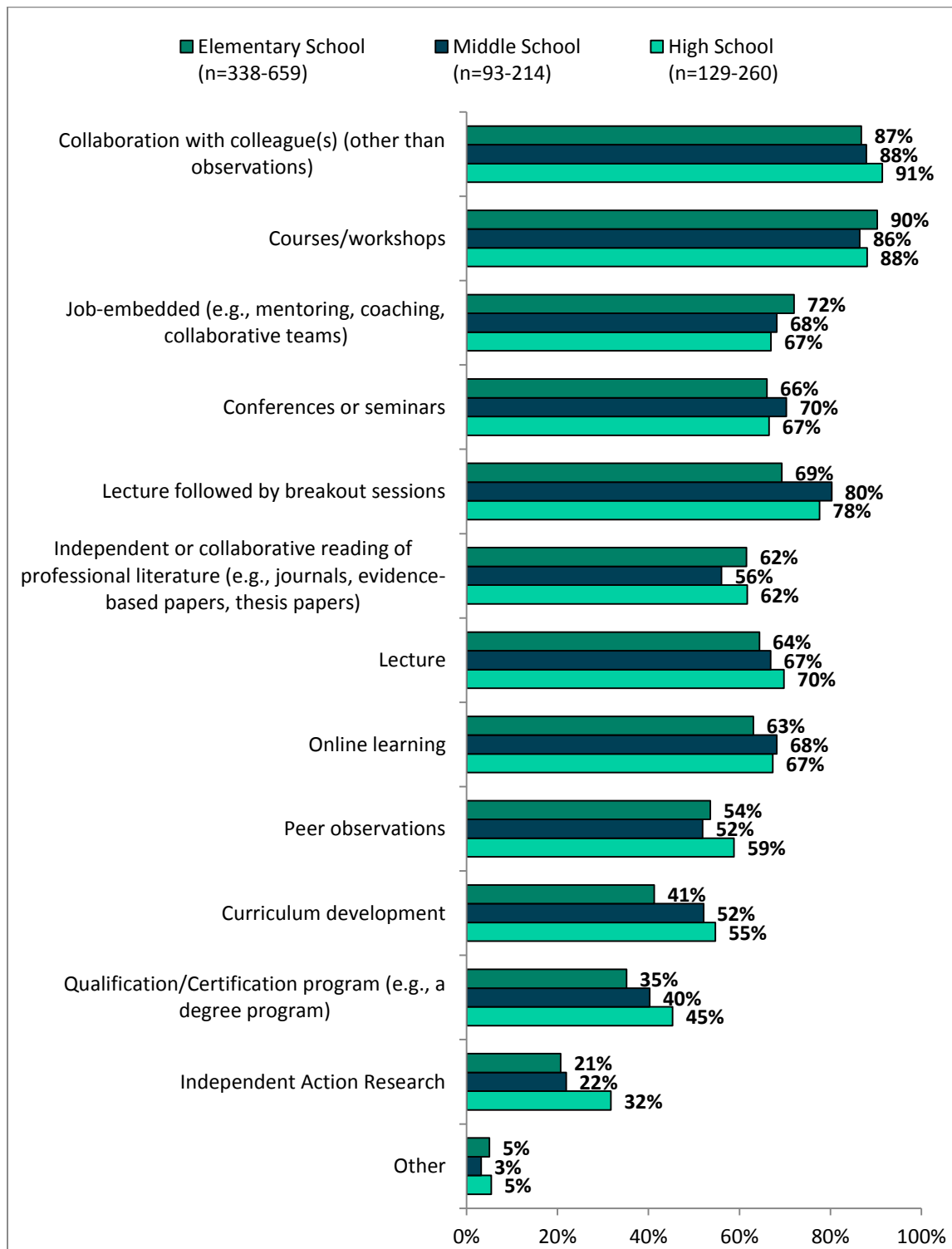
Figure 1.19: In the last five years, did you participate in any of the following PD delivery formats?²¹



Note: This question was only asked to respondents who have participated in PD in the last five years. Percentages represent respondents who selected “yes”.

²¹ Question 14 – Objectives 1a and 1b

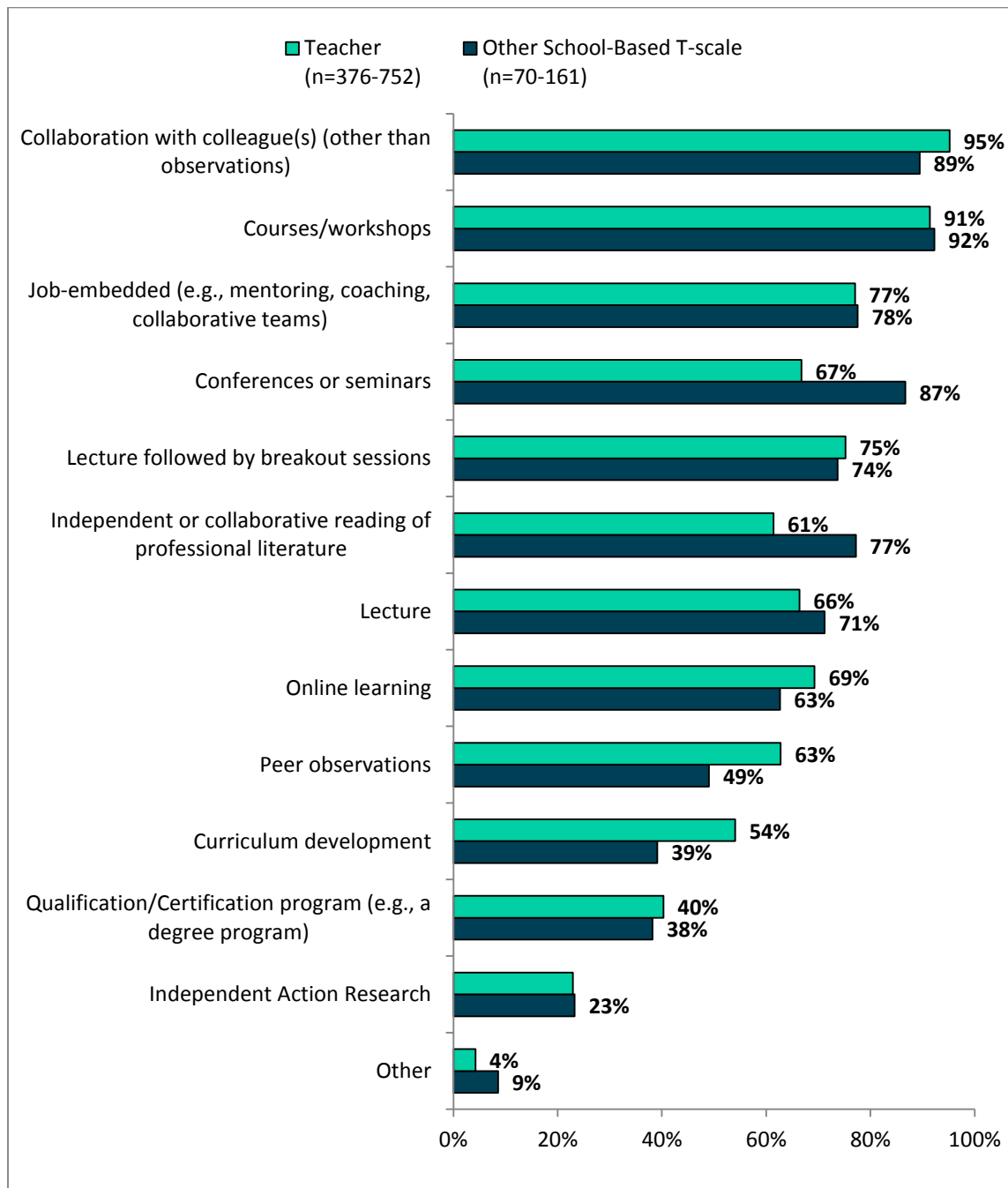
Figure 1.20: In the last five years, did you participate in any of the following PD delivery formats? (by Grade Level) ²²



Note: This question was only asked to respondents who have participated in PD in the last five years.

²² Question 14 – Objectives 1a and 1b

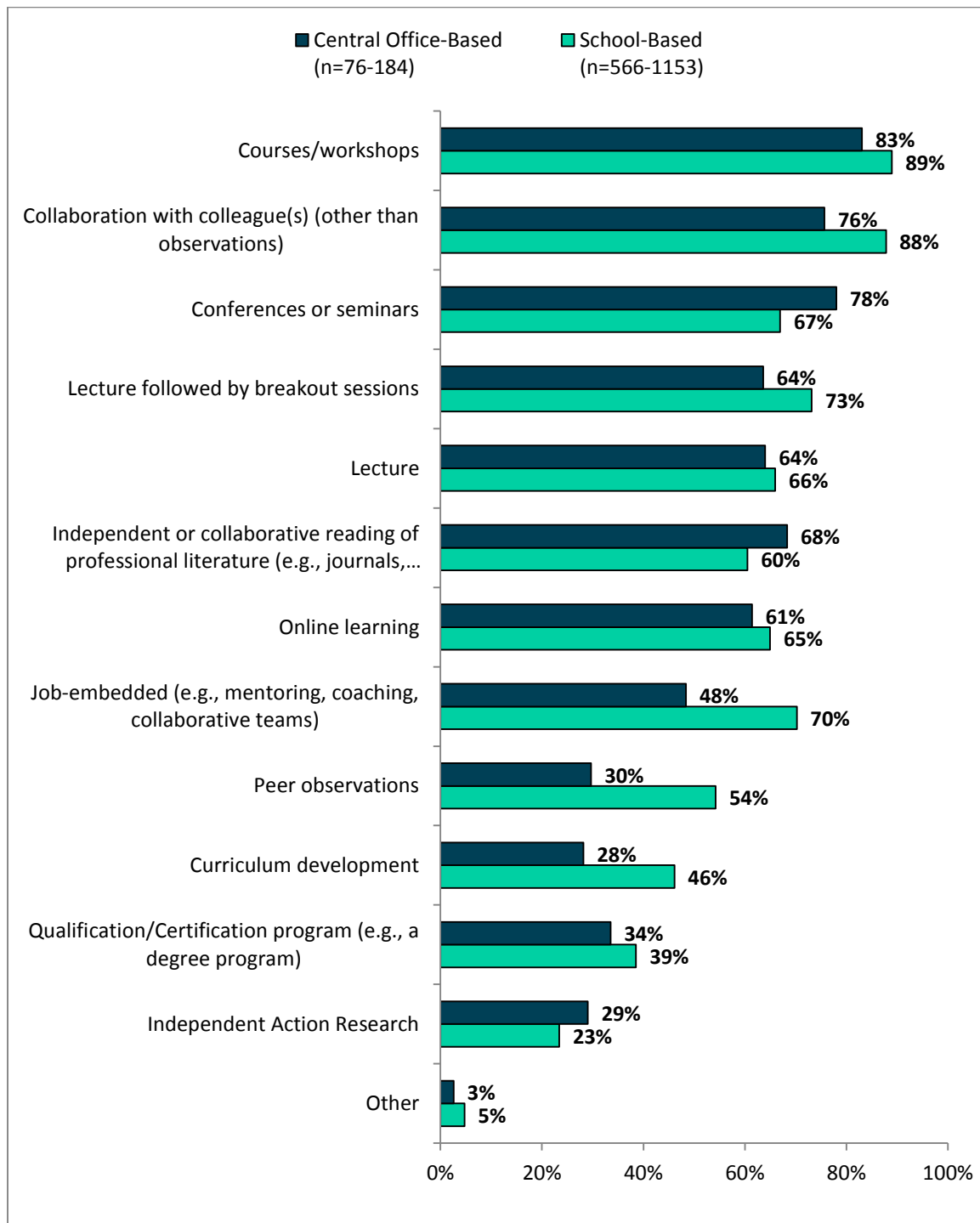
Figure 1.21: In the last five years, did you participate in any of the following PD delivery formats? (by Teacher Type)²³



Note: This question was only asked to respondents who have participated in PD in the last five years.

²³ Question 14 – Objectives 1a and 1b

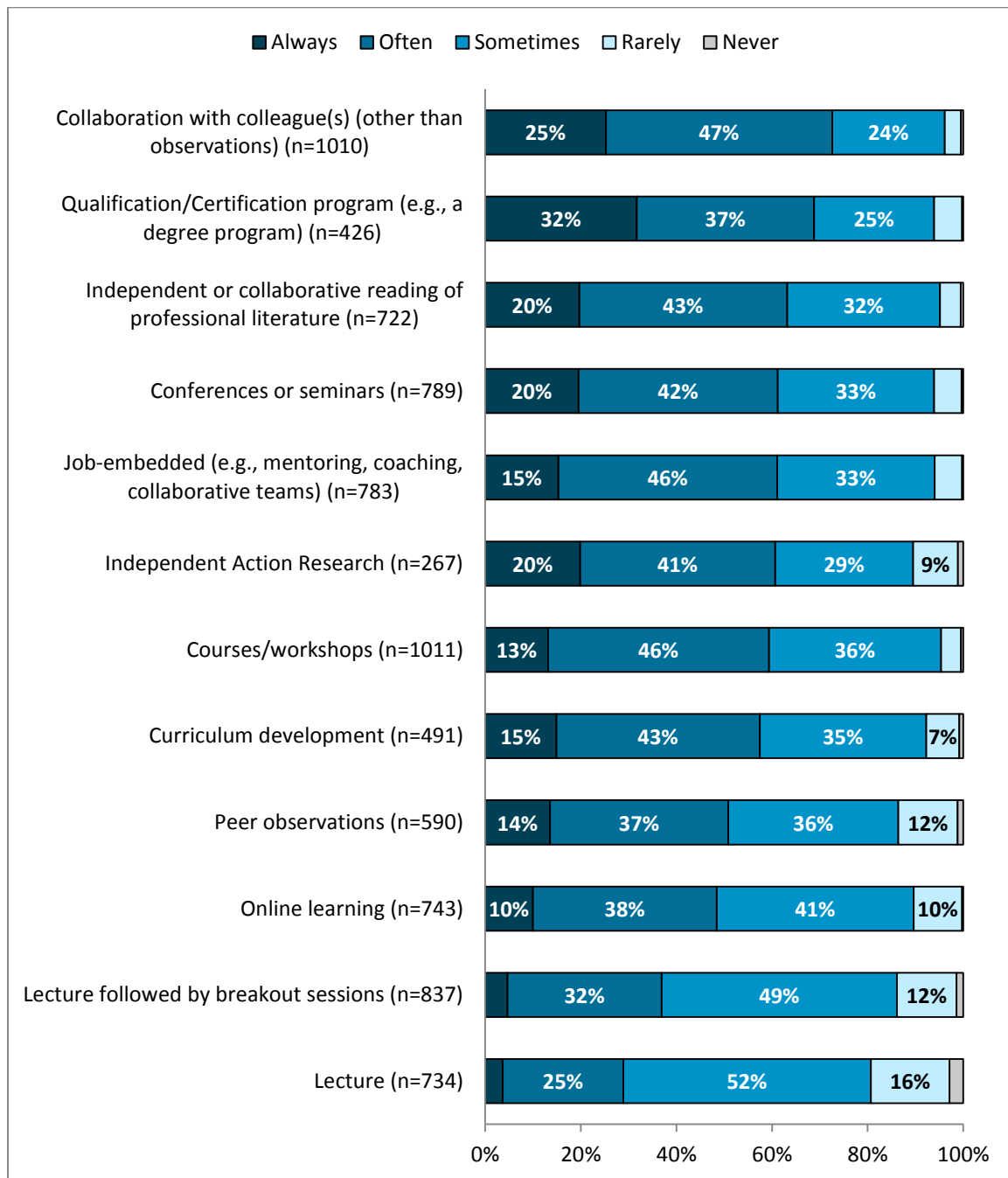
Figure 1.22: In the last five years, did you participate in any of the following PD delivery formats? (by Location)²⁴



Note: This question was only asked to respondents who have participated in PD in the last five years.

²⁴ Question 14 – Objectives 1a and 1b

Figure 1.23: Please indicate how often the following PD delivery formats addressed your professional needs:²⁵



Note: Options populated from response options selected in Figure 1.12.

²⁵ Question 15 – Objectives 1e and 5d

Figure 1.24: Please indicate how often the following PD delivery formats addressed your professional needs (by Teacher Type)²⁶

PD Delivery Format	Group	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
Peer observations	Teacher (n=430)	1%	14%	37%	36%	11%
	Other School-Based T-scale (n=72)	0%	13%	24%	46%	18%
Collaboration with colleague(s) (other than observations)	Teacher (n=654)	0%	4%	22%	49%	26%
	Other School-Based T-scale (n=134)	0%	3%	23%	49%	25%
Online learning	Teacher (n=469)	0%	12%	41%	37%	9%
	Other School-Based T-scale (n=92)	0%	4%	41%	43%	11%
Curriculum development	Teacher (n=359)	1%	6%	35%	44%	14%
	Other School-Based T-scale (n=55)	0%	13%	38%	40%	9%
Lecture followed by breakout sessions	Teacher (n=515)	2%	14%	50%	30%	4%
	Other School-Based T-scale (n=107)	3%	10%	47%	36%	4%
Lecture	Teacher (n=436)	3%	19%	49%	25%	3%
	Other School-Based T-scale (n=101)	3%	13%	53%	29%	2%
Independent Action Research	Teacher (n=151)	1%	11%	28%	43%	17%
	Other School-Based T-scale (n=34)	3%	3%	26%	44%	24%
Job-embedded (e.g., mentoring, coaching, collaborative teams)	Teacher (n=526)	0%	6%	34%	45%	14%
	Other School-Based T-scale (n=114)	2%	4%	33%	47%	14%

²⁶ Question 15 – Objectives 1e and 5d

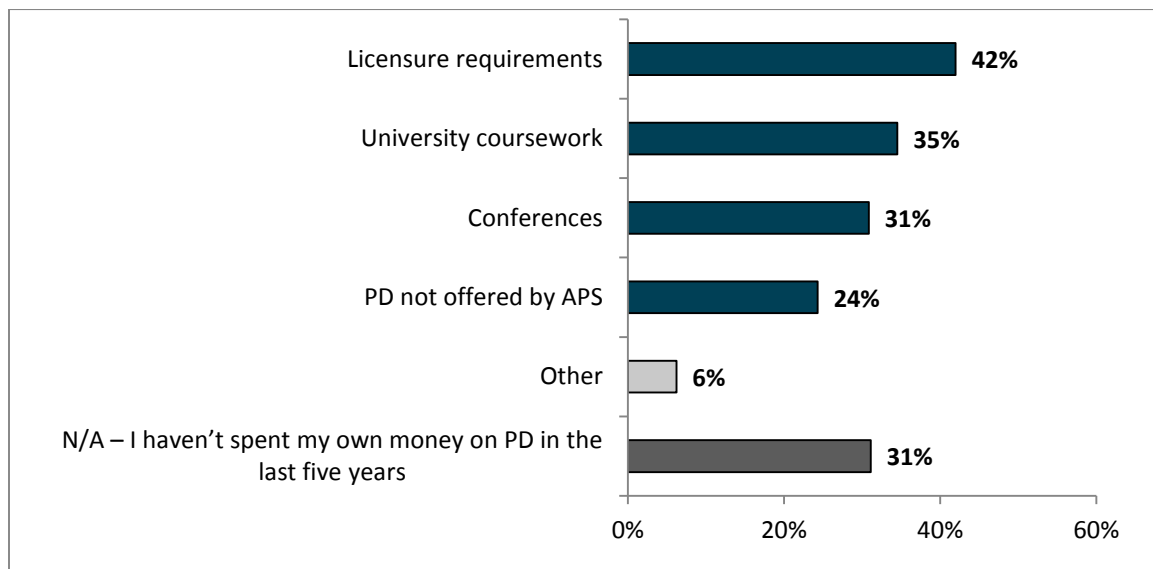
Appendix E1

PD Delivery Format	Group	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
Courses/workshops	Teacher (n=614)	0%	4%	35%	50%	11%
	Other School-Based T-scale (n=133)	1%	3%	28%	53%	16%
Conferences or seminars	Teacher (n=446)	0%	6%	31%	45%	18%
	Other School-Based T-scale (n=128)	1%	5%	28%	42%	24%
Qualification/Certification program (e.g., a degree program)	Teacher (n=270)	0%	4%	28%	38%	30%
	Other School-Based T-scale (n=58)	0%	9%	17%	33%	41%
Independent or collaborative reading of professional literature (e.g., journals, evidence-based papers, thesis papers)	Teacher (n=420)	1%	4%	35%	41%	20%
	Other School-Based T-scale (n=117)	0%	5%	24%	52%	19%

Note: Options populated from response options selected in Figure 1.12.

Note: Darker blue indicates higher value, while lighter blue indicates lower value.

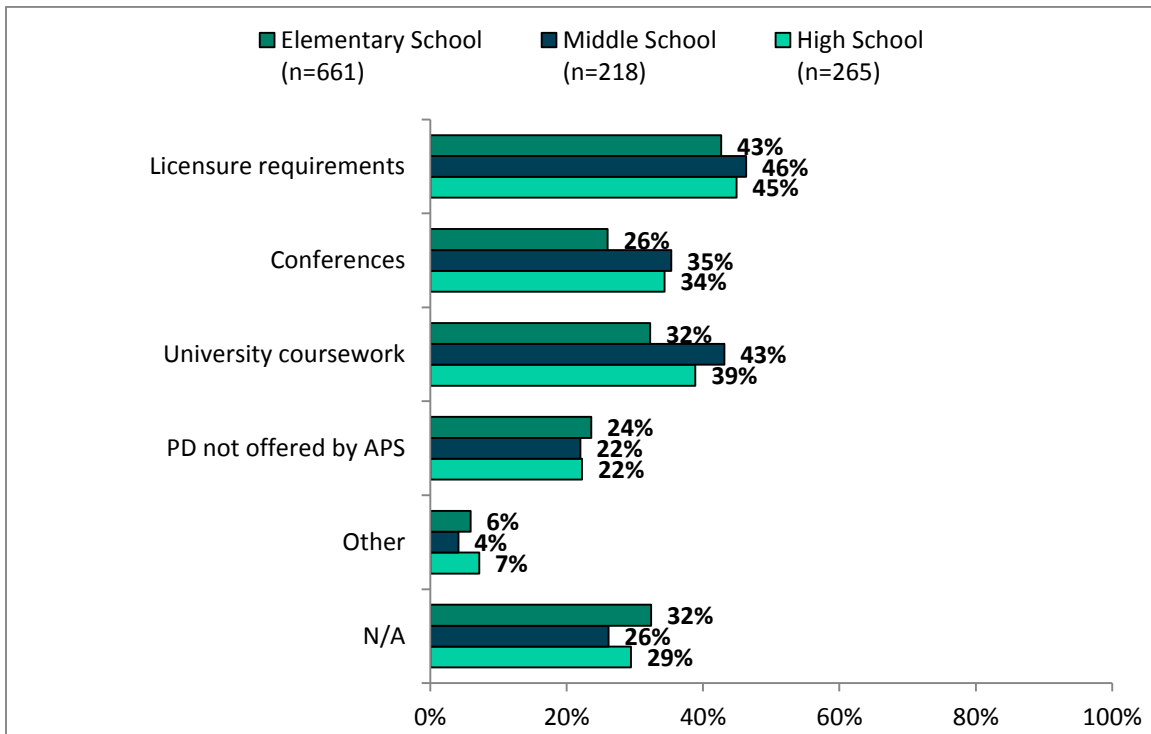
Figure 1.25: Spent own money on PD (last 5 years)



(n=1312)

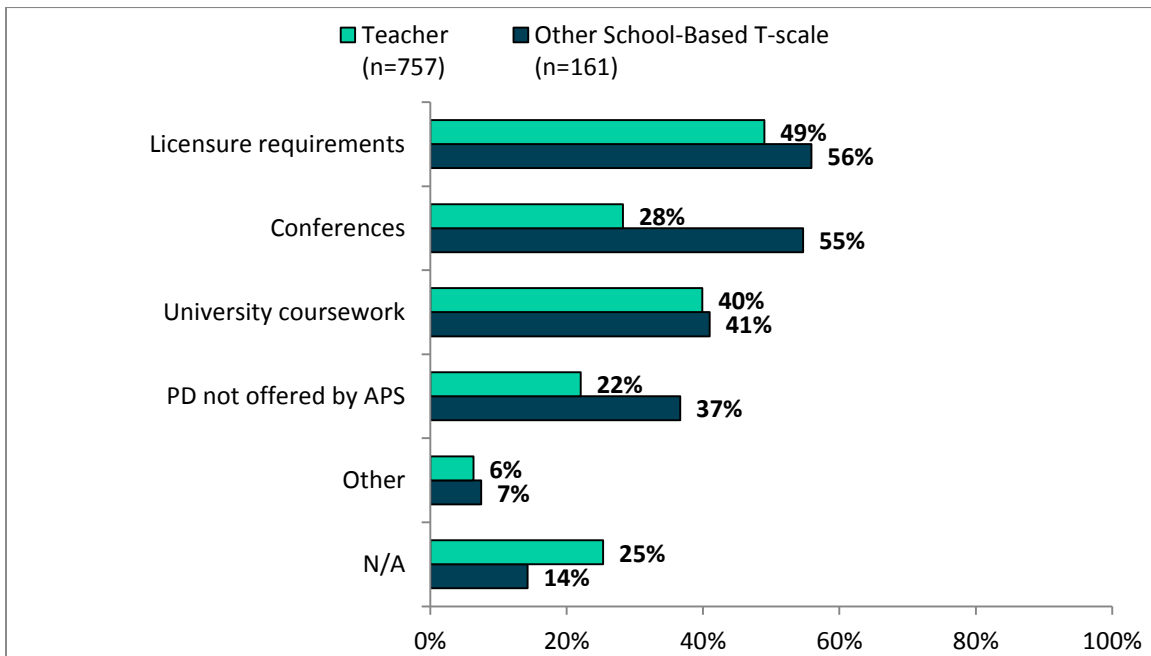
Note: This question was only asked to respondents who have participated in PD in the last five years. Totals sum to greater than 100 percent because respondents could choose multiple responses.

Figure 1.26: Spent own money on PD (by Grade Level)

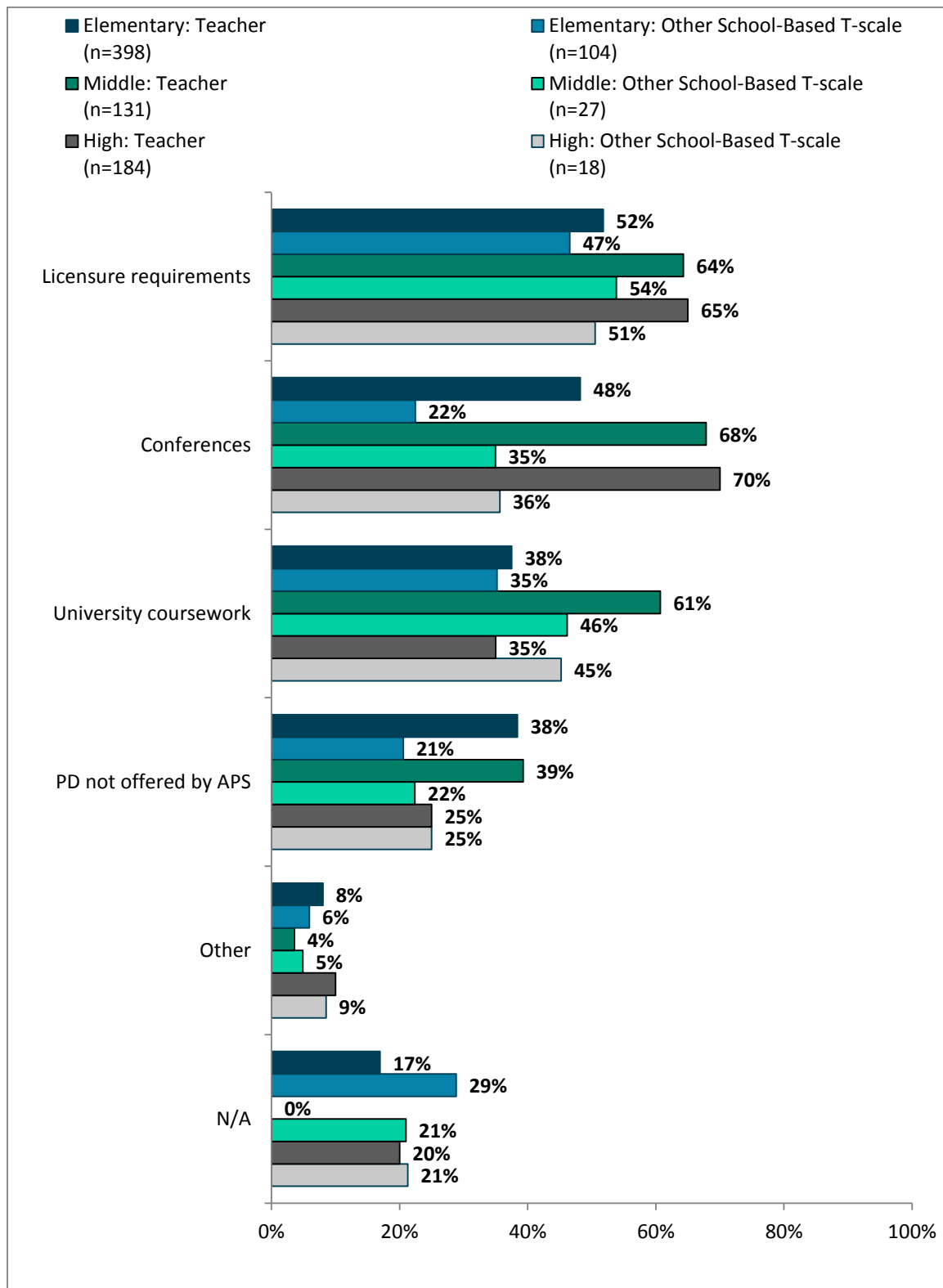


Note: This question was only asked to respondents who have participated in PD in the last five years. Totals sum to greater than 100 percent because respondents could choose multiple responses.

Figure 1.27: Spent own money on PD (by Teacher Type)



Note: This question was only asked to respondents who have participated in PD in the last five years. Totals sum to greater than 100 percent because respondents could choose multiple responses.

Figure 1.28: Spent own money on PD (by Grade Level and Teacher Type)

Note: This question was only asked to respondents who have participated in PD in the last five years. Totals sum to greater than 100 percent because respondents could choose multiple responses.

SECTION II: IMPLEMENTATION AND BARRIERS

This section presents findings regarding the implementation of PD at APS and barriers to participation. Questions relate to such issues as how respondents learned about PD opportunities, the continuity of professional learning at APS, and barriers to participation in PD.

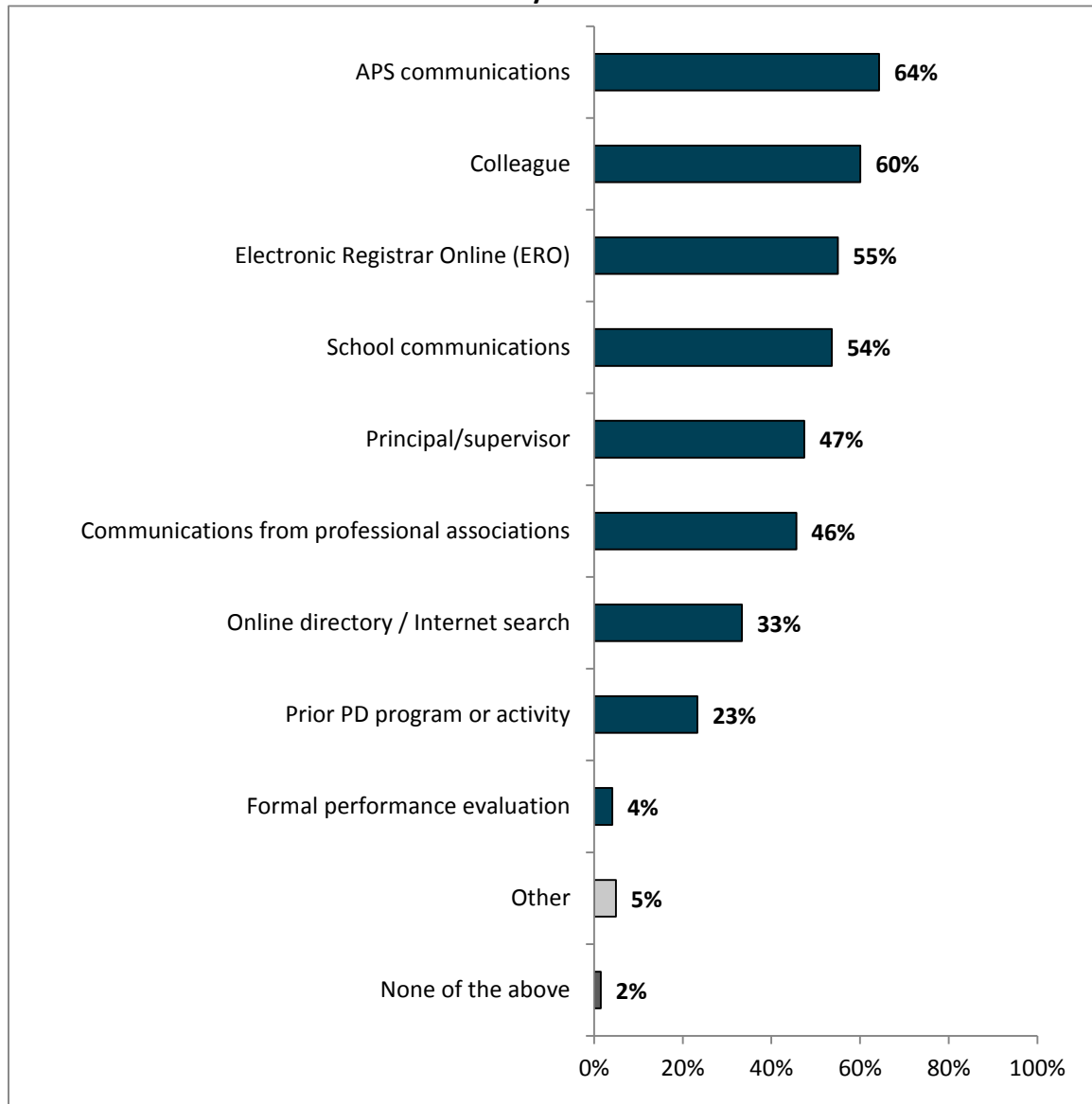
FINDINGS

- Respondents who are school-based and T-Scale, but not teachers (e.g. librarians, counselors, etc.) **are more likely than teachers to have learned about PD opportunities through communications from professional associations.** Sixty-nine percent of these non-teachers, versus only 41 percent of teacher respondents, learned about the PD opportunities they attended in the last five years this way (Figures 2.3).
- **Most respondents do not believe that PD programming in a given year builds on programming from the previous year.** Thirty-seven percent of respondents agree or strongly agree that this year-to-year continuity exists, while 40 percent disagree or strongly disagree that it exists (Figures 2.5).
- **Respondents who are central office-based are much more likely to respond “I don’t know” to statements regarding the continuity of PD at APS.** Specifically, G-Scale employees are the most likely to respond “I don’t know” across all central office-based respondents with different pay scales. Seventy-two percent of them indicate not knowing whether school-and division-based professional learning objectives are aligned, while three-quarters of them report not knowing whether PD programming in a given year builds on programming from the previous year (Figure 2.9).
- **The most common reason cited by respondents for not participating in PD in the last five years is being too busy.** More than half of all respondents, 53 percent, gave this as a reason for not participating in PD in recent years. Among teachers, this percentage increases from 54 percent at the elementary grade level to 70 percent at the middle school grade level and 69 percent at the high school grade level (Figure 2.9, Figure 2.12).
- **A-scale, E-scale, and G-scale staff respondents tend to believe there is no PD available for their position, while P-scale and T-scale staff are too busy to participate in PD.** At least 50 percent of A-scale, E-scale, and G-scale staff cite no job-specific PD being available for their position, the most commonly selected obstacle to participation in PD among these respondents. By contrast, 60 percent P-scale and T-scale staff cite being too busy to participate in PD, the most common obstacle for these respondents (Figure 2.14).

FIGURES

COMMUNICATION

Figure 2.1: How have you learned about the PD opportunities that you attended in the last five years?²⁷

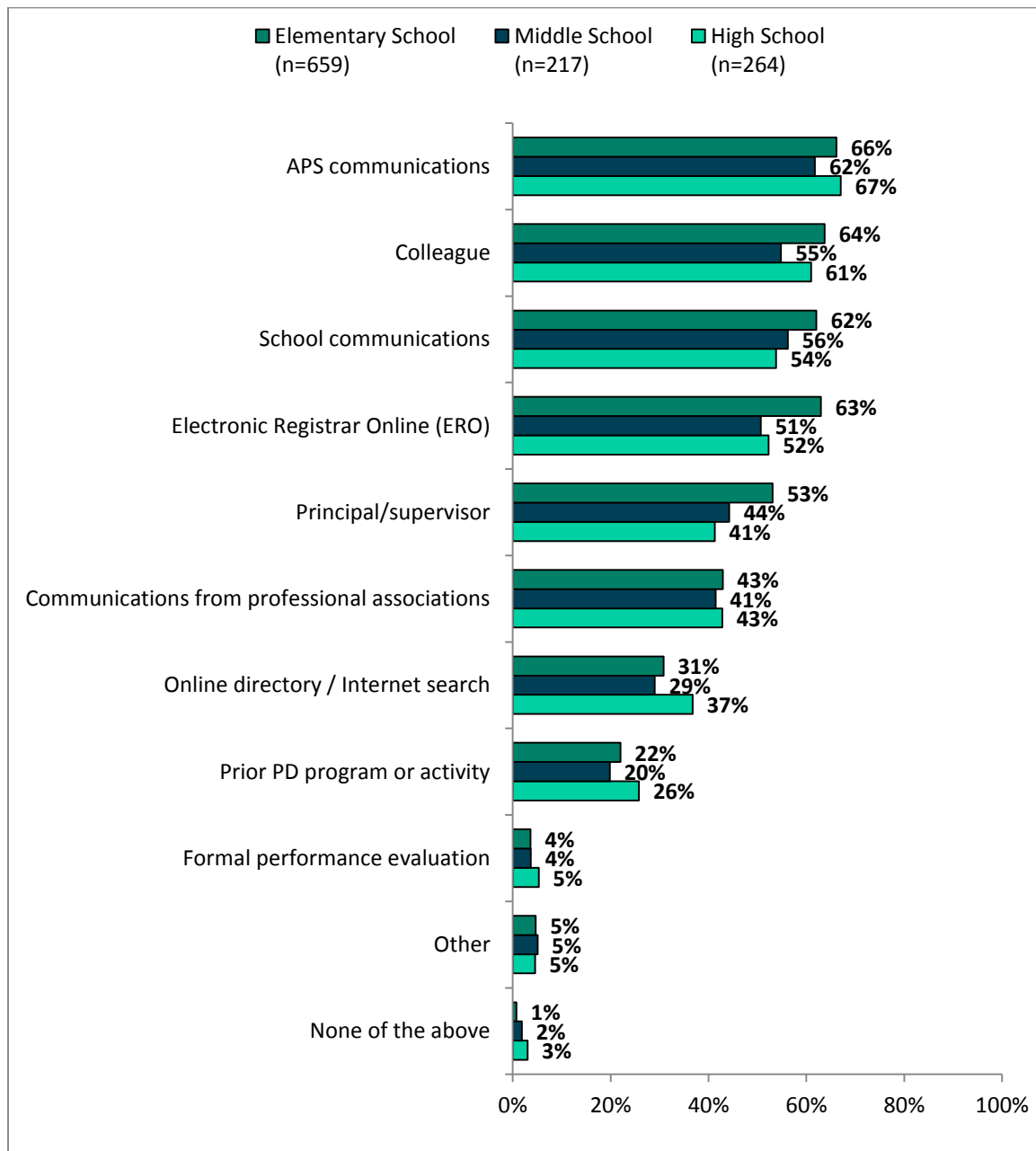


(n=1313)

Note: This question was only asked to respondents who have participated in PD in the last five years. Totals sum to greater than 100 percent because respondents could choose multiple responses.

²⁷ Question 17 – Objective 1a

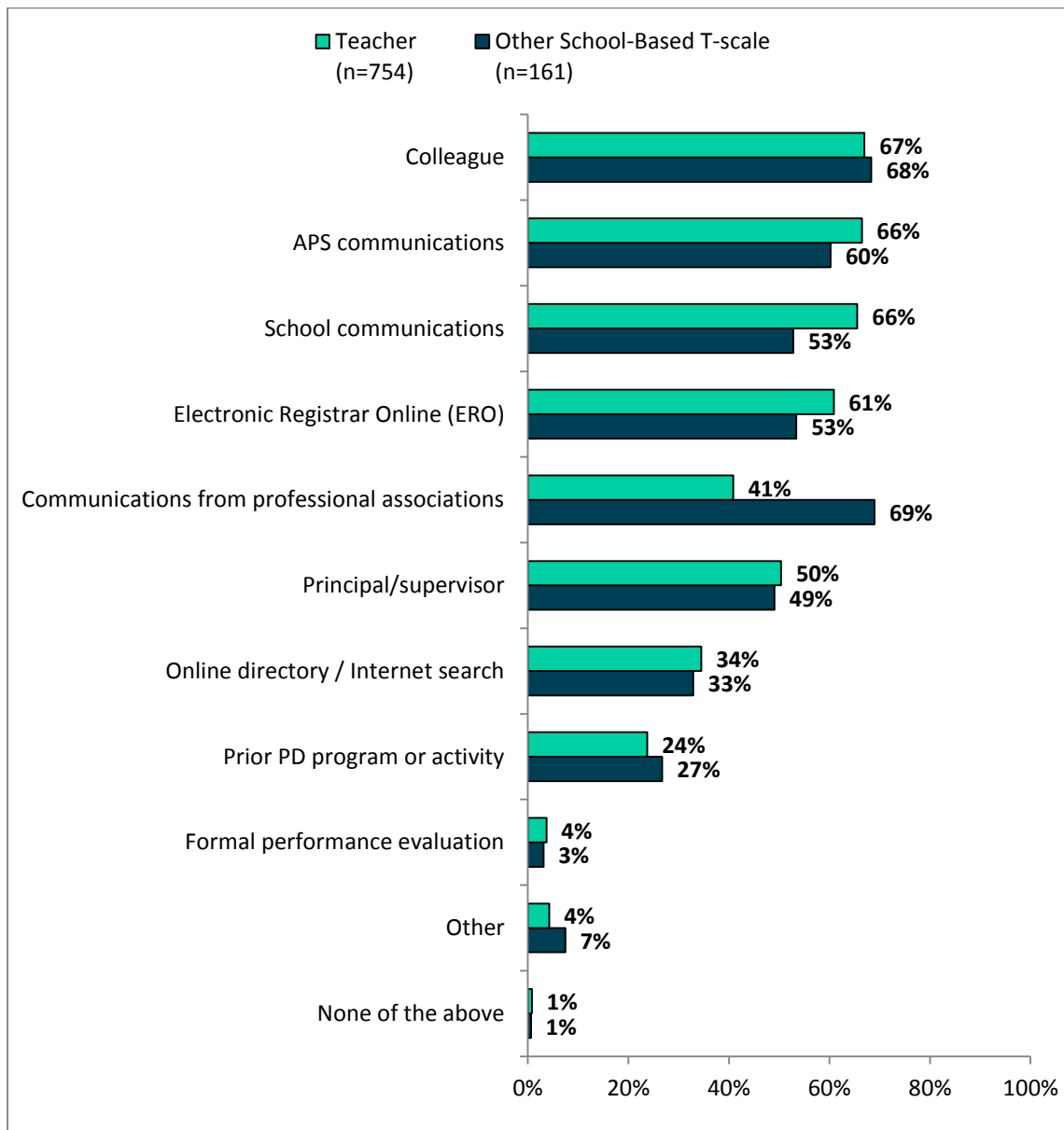
Figure 2.2: How have you learned about the PD opportunities that you attended in the last five years? (by Grade Level)²⁸



Note: This question was only asked to respondents who have participated in PD in the last five years. Totals sum to greater than 100 percent because respondents could choose multiple responses.

²⁸ Question 17 – Objective 1a

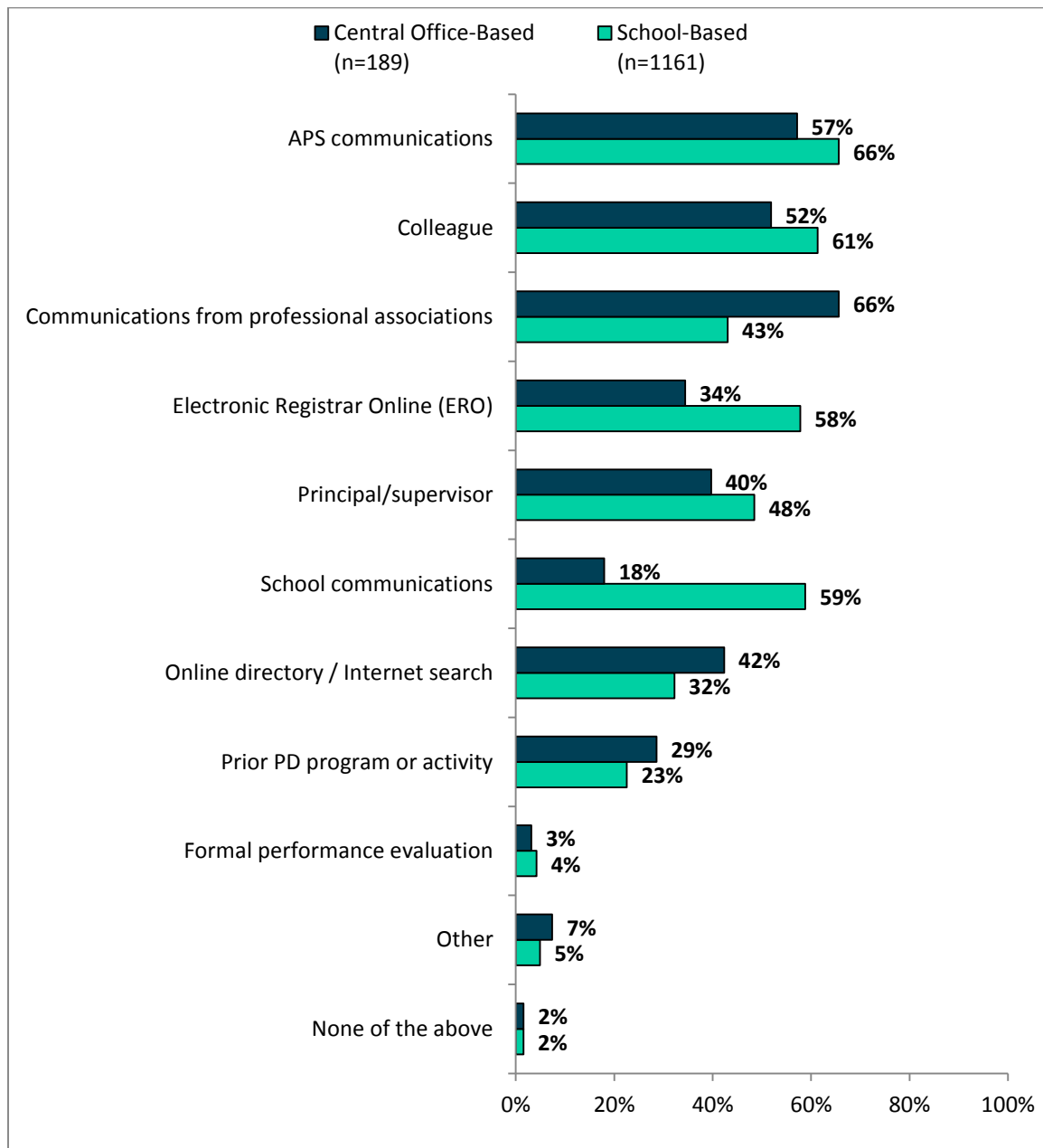
Figure 2.3: How have you learned about the PD opportunities that you attended in the last five years? (by Teacher Type)²⁹



Note: This question was only asked to respondents who have participated in PD in the last five years. Totals sum to greater than 100 percent because respondents could choose multiple responses.

²⁹ Question 17 – Objective 1a

Figure 2.4: How have you learned about the PD opportunities that you attended in the last five years? (by Location)³⁰

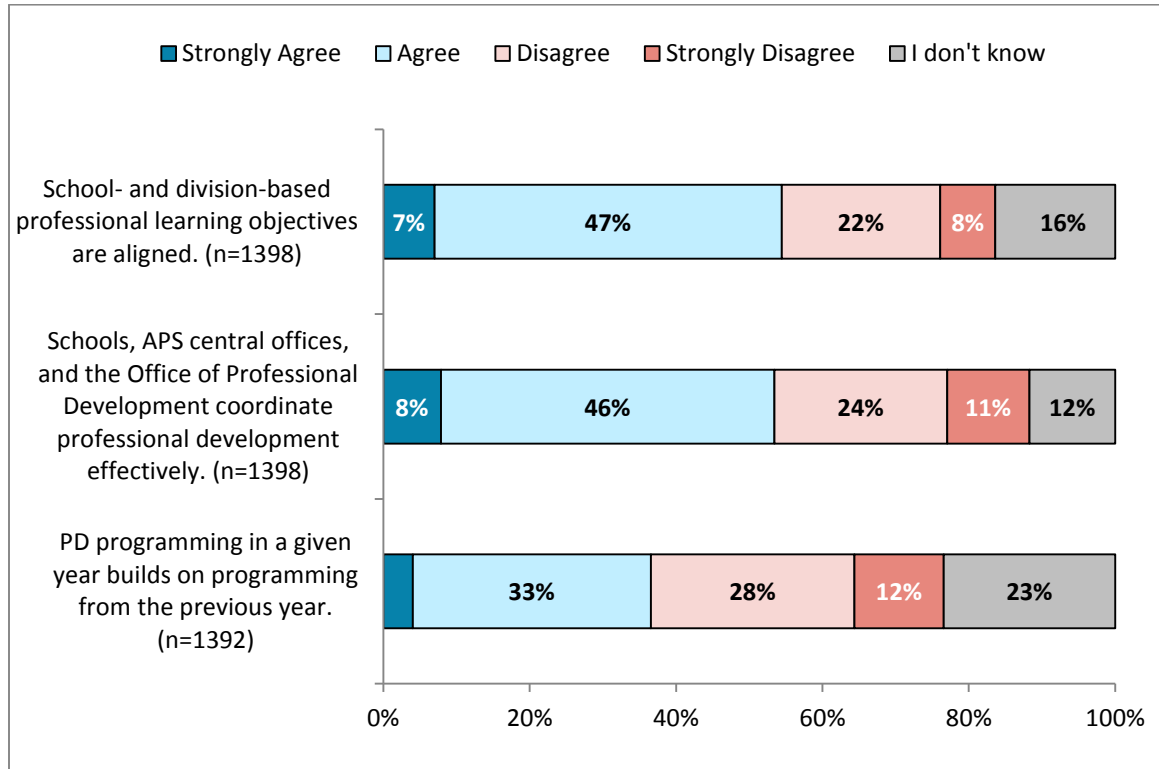


Note: This question was only asked to respondents who have participated in PD in the last five years. Totals sum to greater than 100 percent because respondents could choose multiple responses.

³⁰ Question 17 – Objective 1a

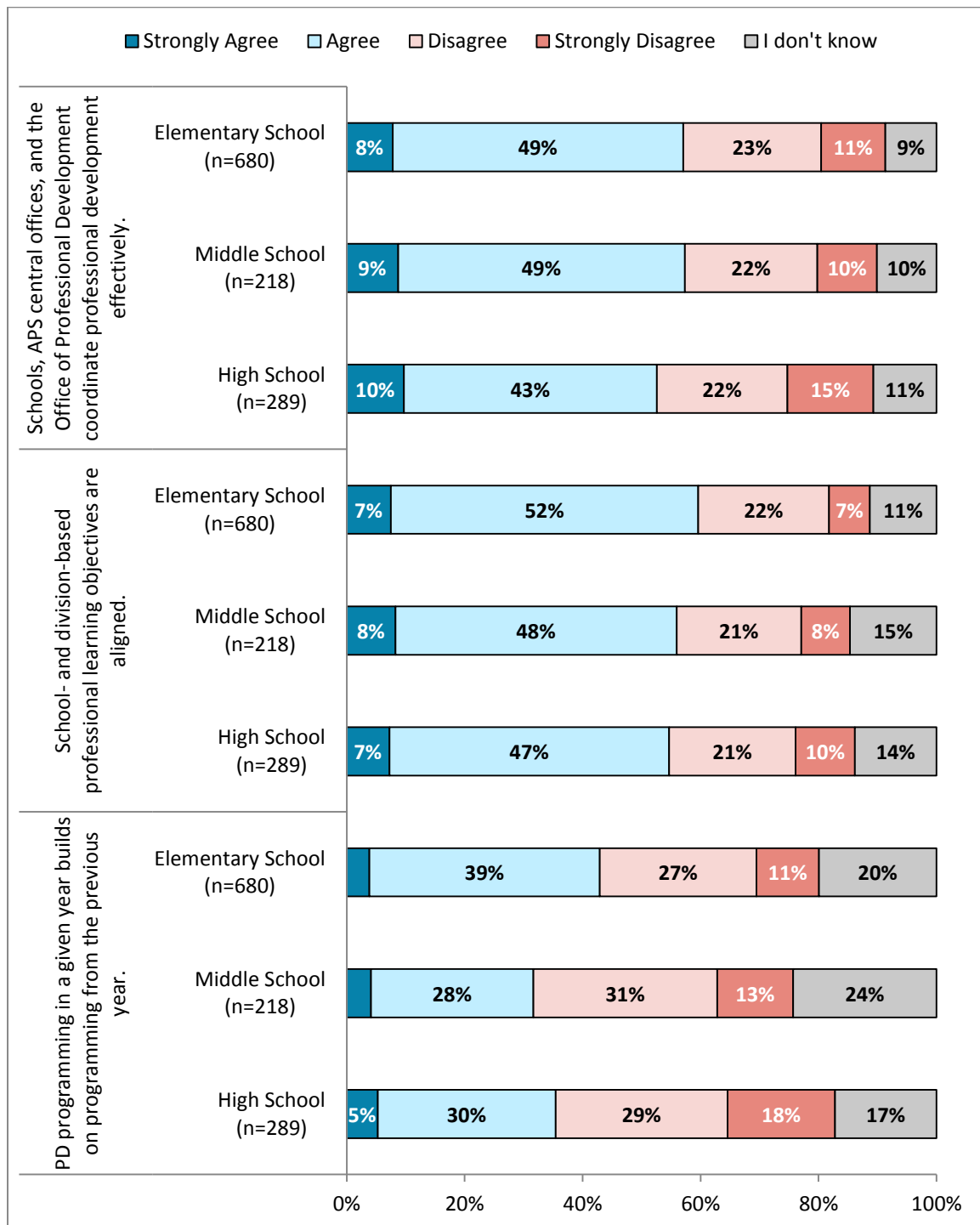
CONTINUITY

Figure 2.5: Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements regarding the continuity of professional learning at APS³¹



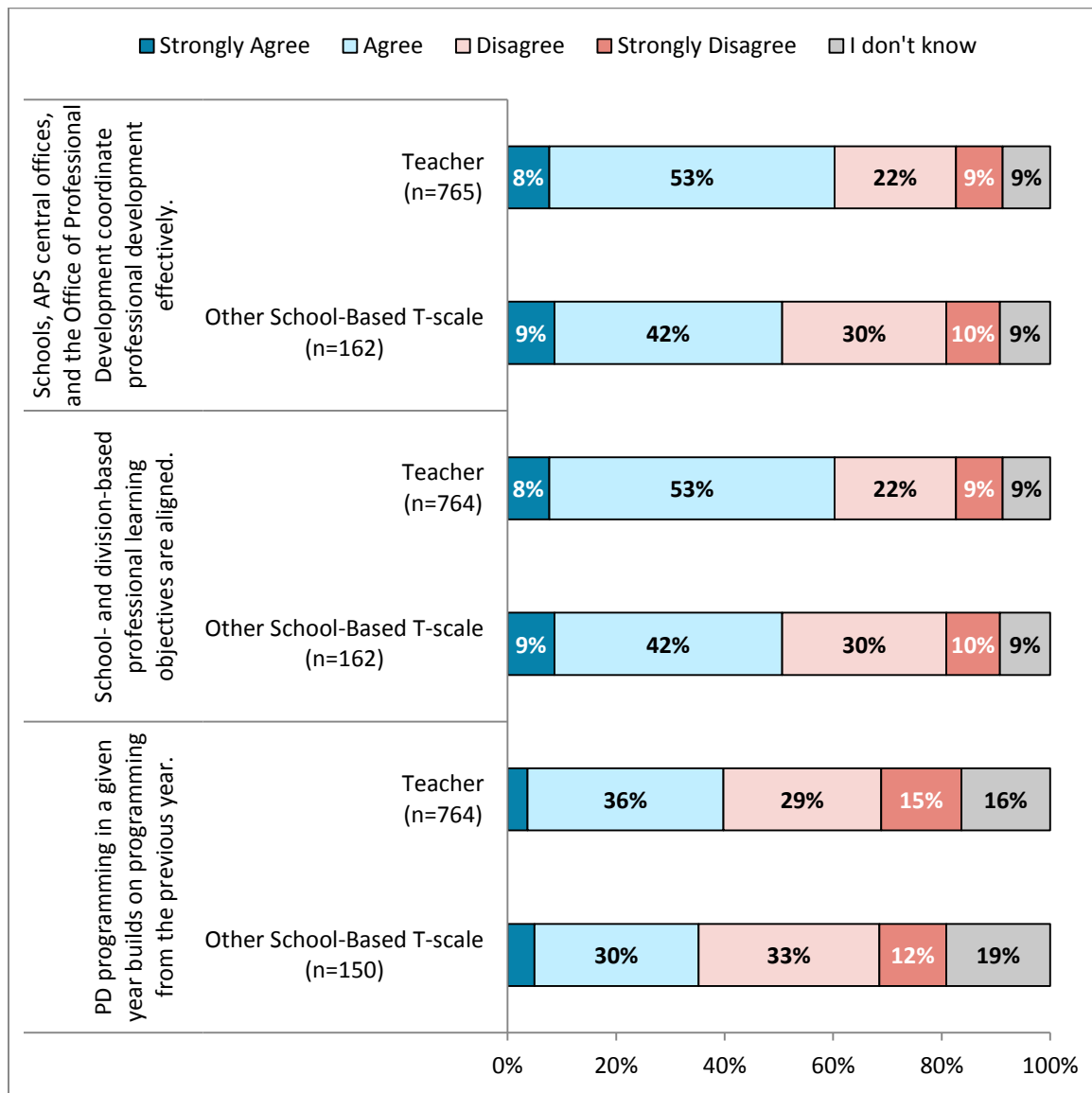
³¹ Question 18 – Objectives 5a, 5b, and 5c

Figure 2.6: Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements regarding the continuity of professional learning at APS (by Grade Level)³²



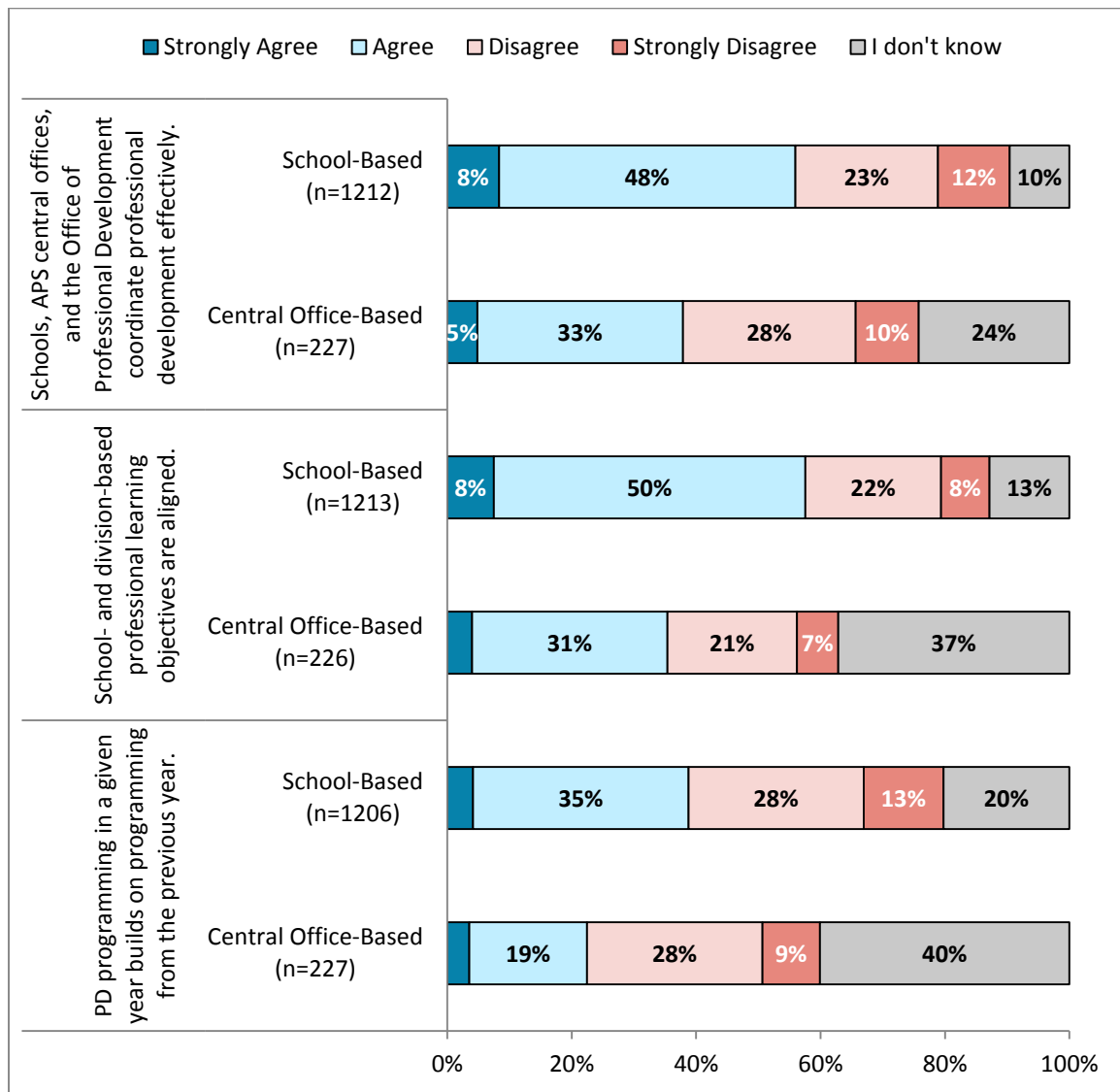
³² Question 18 – Objectives 5a, 5b, and 5c

Figure 2.7: Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements regarding the continuity of professional learning at APS (by Teacher Type)³³



³³ Question 18 – Objectives 5a, 5b, and 5c

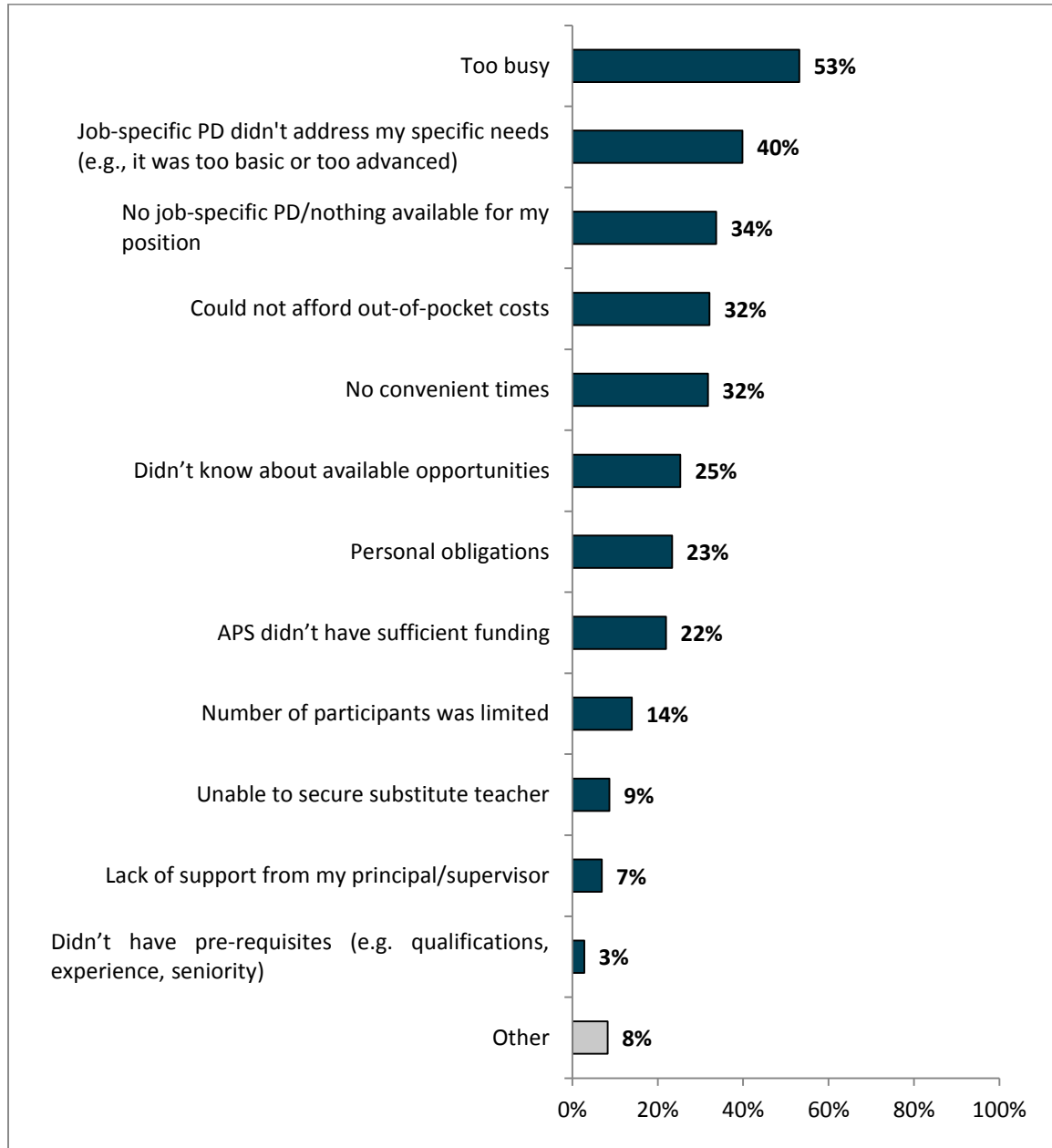
Figure 2.8: Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements regarding the continuity of professional learning at APS (by Location)³⁴



³⁴ Question 18 – Objectives 5a, 5b, and 5c

BARRIERS

Figure 2.9: In the last five years, what obstacles have you encountered to participating in professional development?³⁵

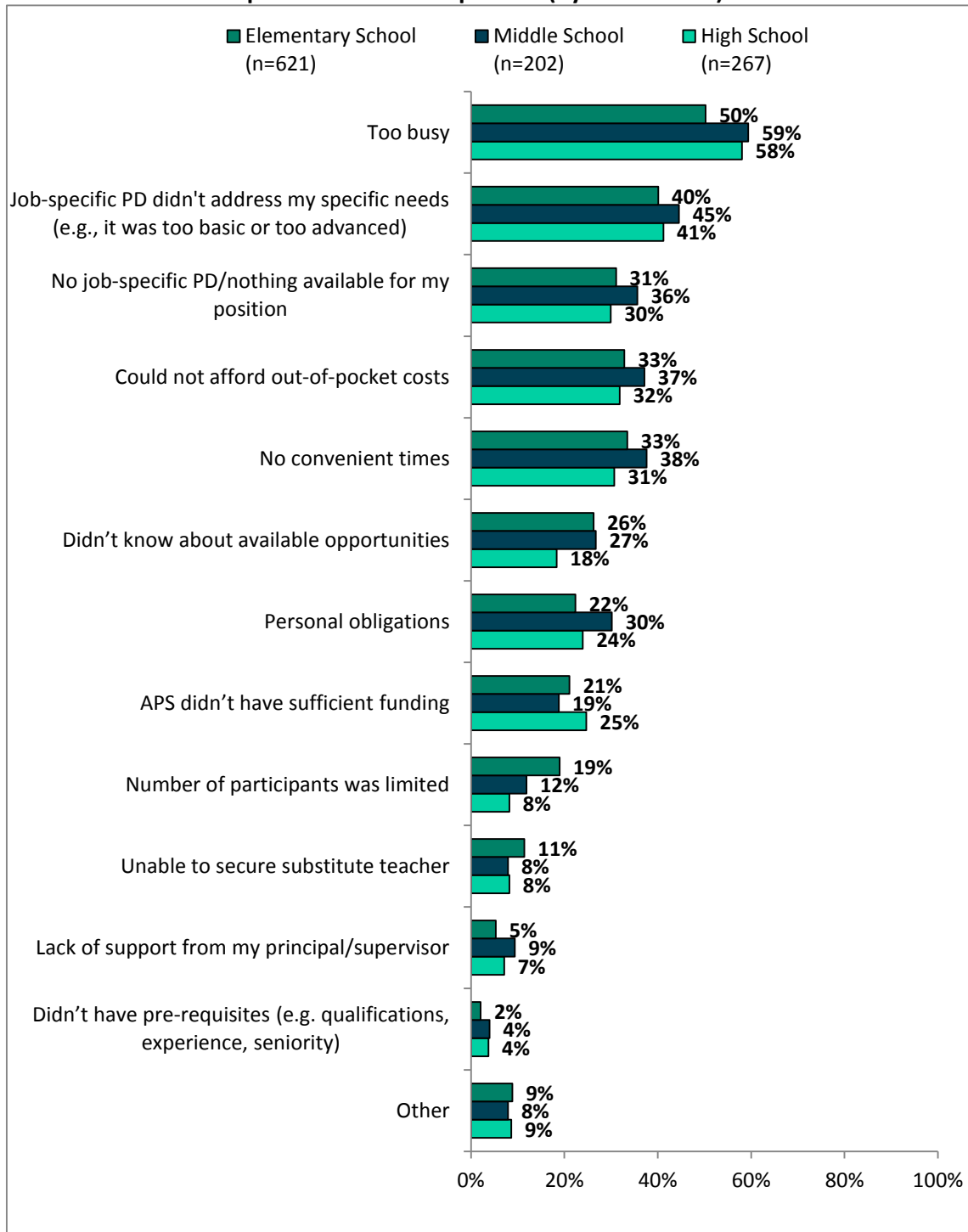


(n=1285)

Note: Totals sum to greater than 100 percent because respondents could choose multiple responses.

³⁵ Question 19 – Objectives 1c, 1d, 1e, 1f, and 6b

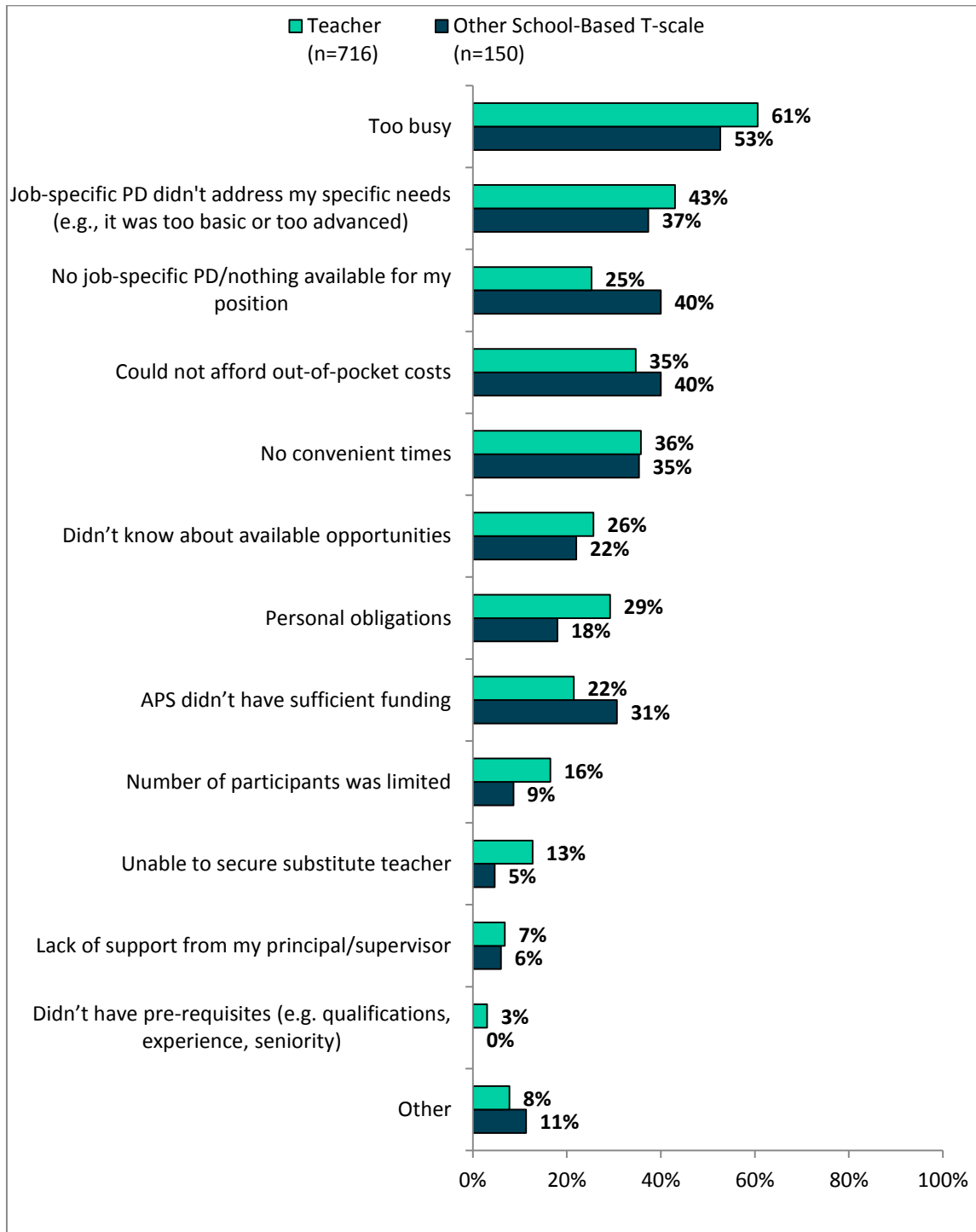
Figure 2.10: In the last five years, what obstacles have you encountered to participating in professional development? (by Grade Level)³⁶



Note: Totals sum to greater than 100 percent because respondents could choose multiple responses.

³⁶ Question 19 – Objectives 1c, 1d, 1e, 1f, and 6b

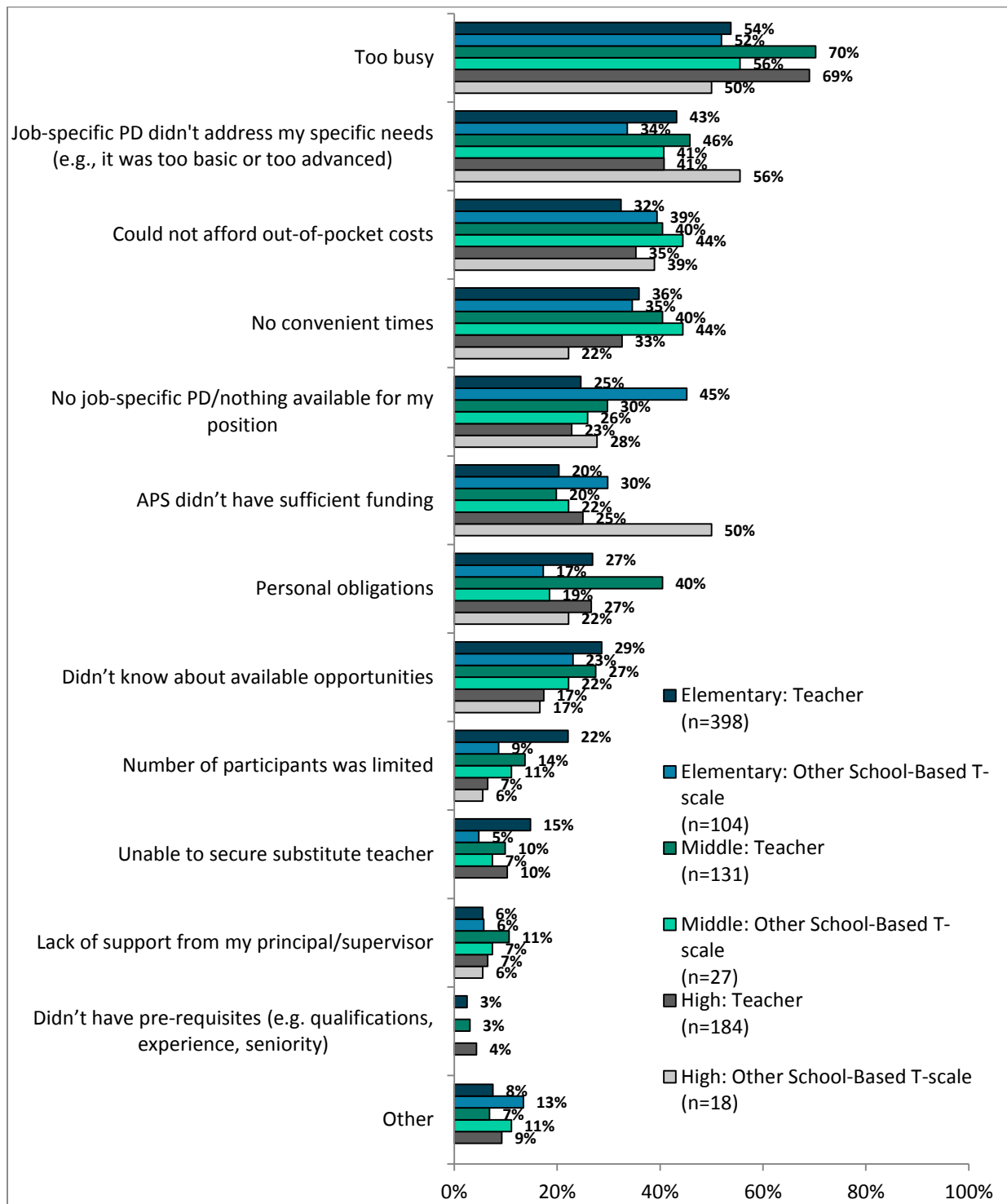
Figure 2.11: In the last five years, what obstacles have you encountered to participating in professional development? (by Teacher Type)³⁷



Note: Totals sum to greater than 100 percent because respondents could choose multiple responses.

³⁷ Question 19 – Objectives 1c, 1d, 1e, 1f, and 6b

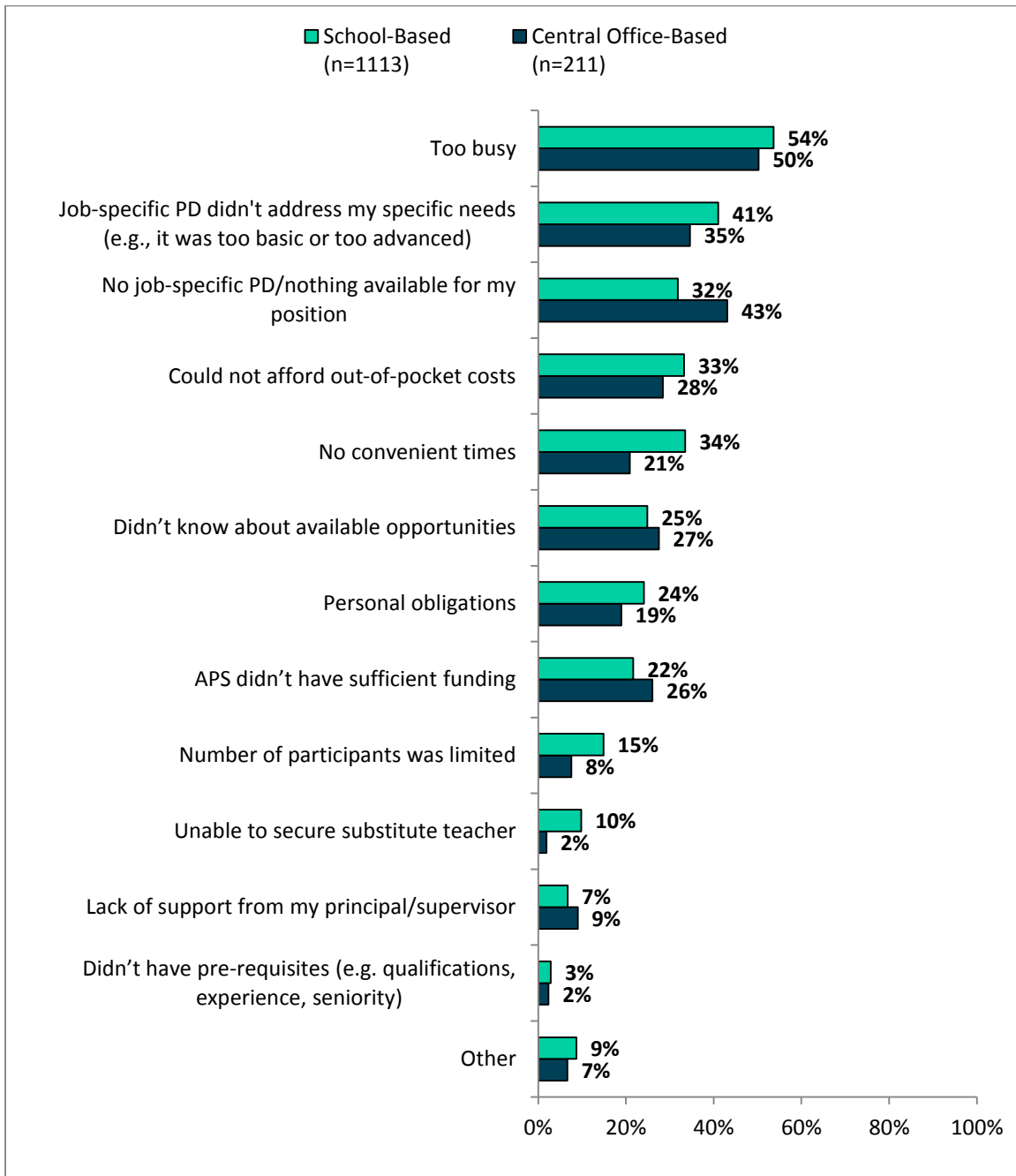
Figure 2.12: In the last five years, what obstacles have you encountered to participating in professional development? (by School Level and Teacher Type)³⁸



Note: Totals sum to greater than 100 percent because respondents could choose multiple responses.

³⁸ Question 19 – Objectives 1c, 1d, 1e, 1f, and 6b

Figure 2.13: In the last five years, what obstacles have you encountered to participating in professional development? (by Location)³⁹



Note: Totals sum to greater than 100 percent because respondents could choose multiple responses.

³⁹ Question 19 – Objectives 1c, 1d, 1e, 1f, and 6b

Figure 2.14: In the last five years, what obstacles have you encountered to participating in professional development? (by Pay Scale)⁴⁰

	A-Scale (n=101)	E-Scale (n=81)	G-Scale (n=78)	P-Scale (n=81)	T-Scale (n=923)	Other Pay Scale (n=27)
Too busy	17%	51%	28%	60%	60%	30%
Job-specific PD didn't address my specific needs (e.g., it was too basic or too advanced)	43%	32%	28%	40%	42%	33%
No job-specific PD/nothing available for my position	50%	56%	60%	27%	28%	26%
Could not afford out-of-pocket costs	18%	27%	14%	27%	36%	33%
No convenient times	16%	30%	10%	33%	35%	37%
Didn't know about available opportunities	24%	32%	37%	15%	25%	33%
Personal obligations	11%	14%	4%	25%	27%	15%
APS didn't have sufficient funding	6%	38%	8%	25%	23%	19%
Number of participants was limited	19%	11%	12%	5%	15%	15%
Unable to secure substitute teacher	2%	5%	0%	2%	11%	7%
Lack of support from my principal/supervisor	3%	15%	9%	2%	7%	11%
Didn't have pre-requisites (e.g. qualifications, experience, seniority)	5%	2%	4%	1%	3%	7%
Other	14%	5%	6%	4%	8%	11%

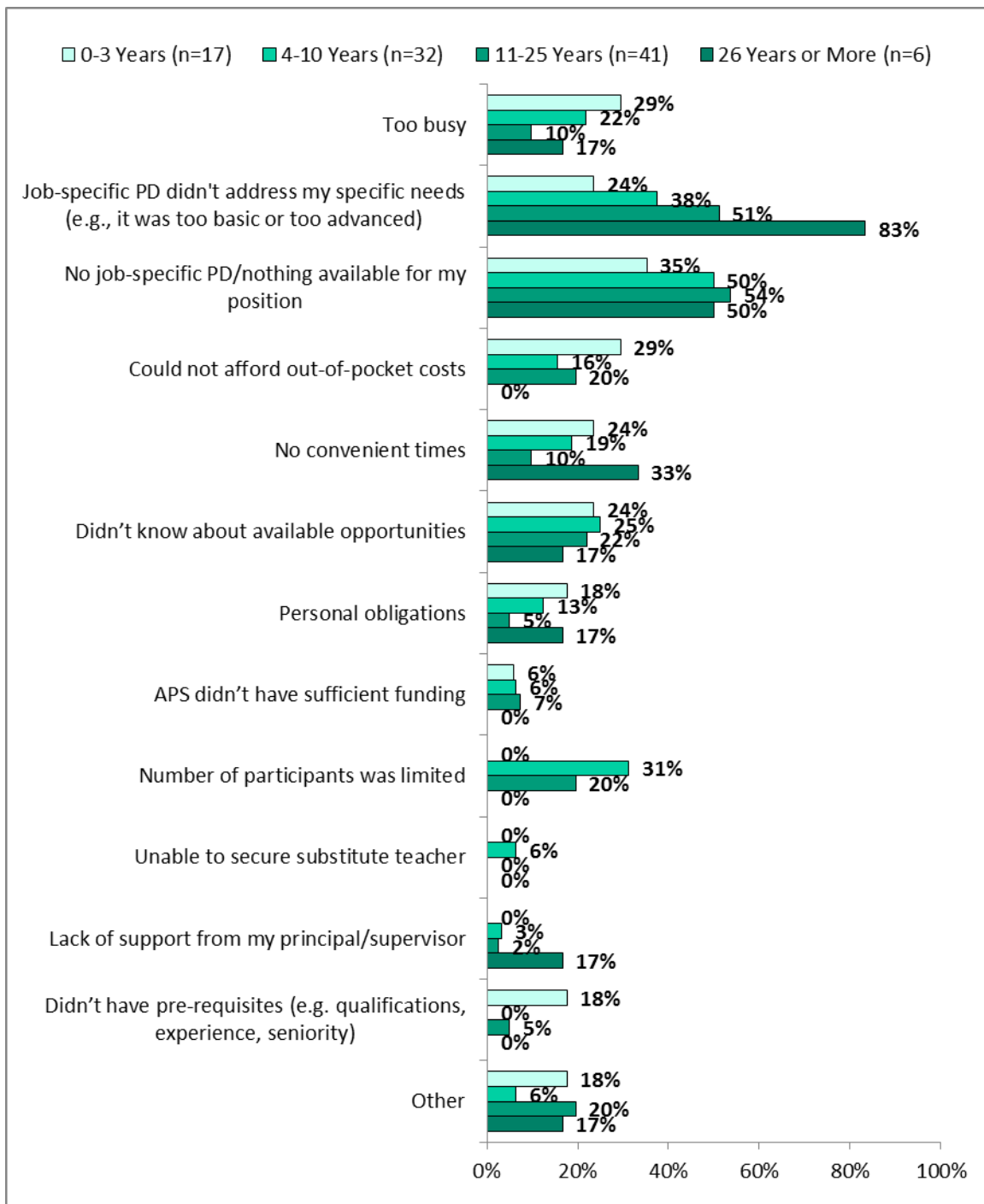
Note: Totals sum to greater than 100 percent because respondents could choose multiple responses.

Note: Darker blue indicates higher value, while lighter blue indicates lower value.

⁴⁰ Question 19 – Objectives 1c, 1d, 1e, 1f, and 6b

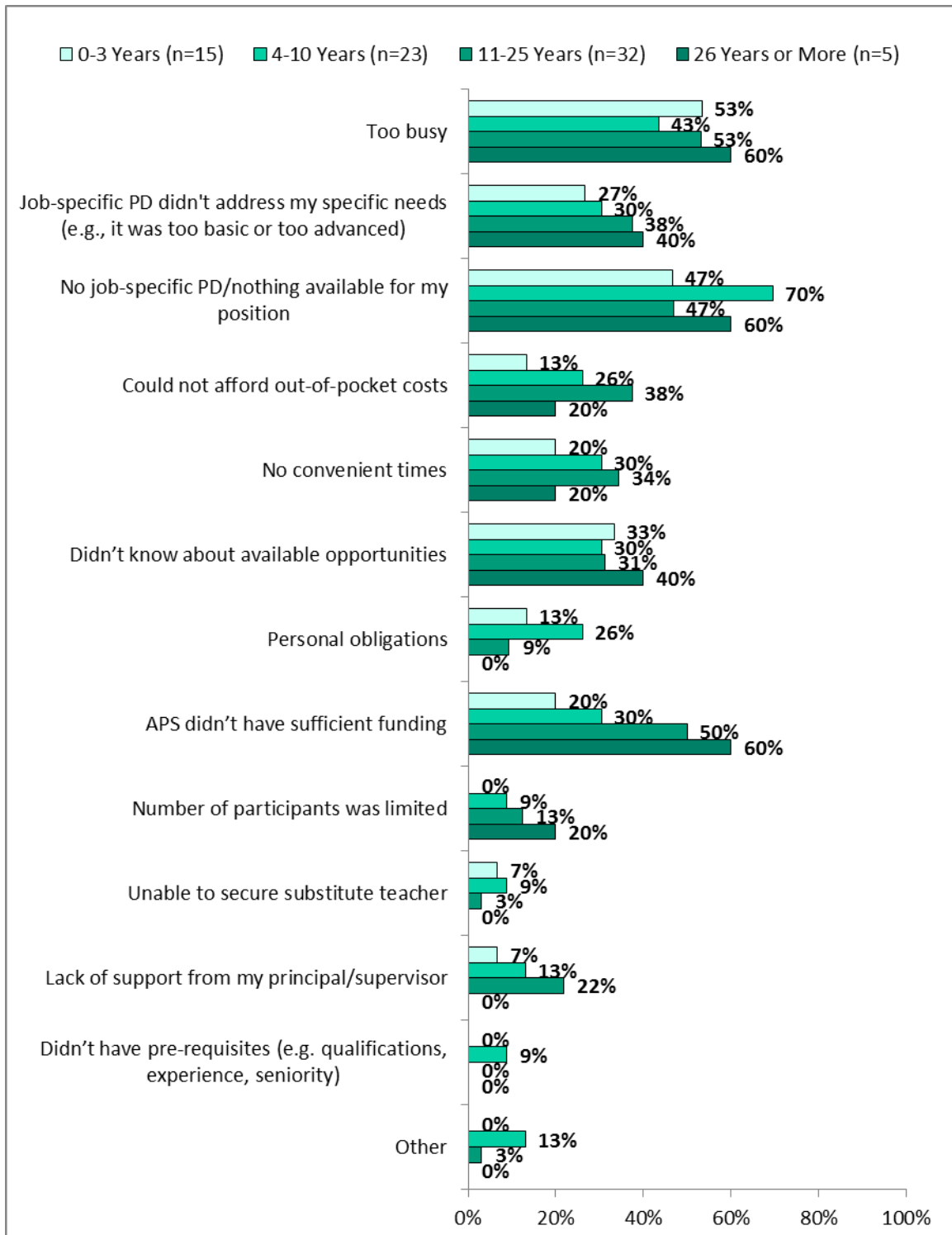
Note: The “Other Pay Scale” presents aggregate responses of C, D, X, and M- Scale respondents.

Figure 2.15: In the last five years, what obstacles have you encountered to participating in professional development? (A-Scale by Pay Scale and Years at APS) ⁴¹



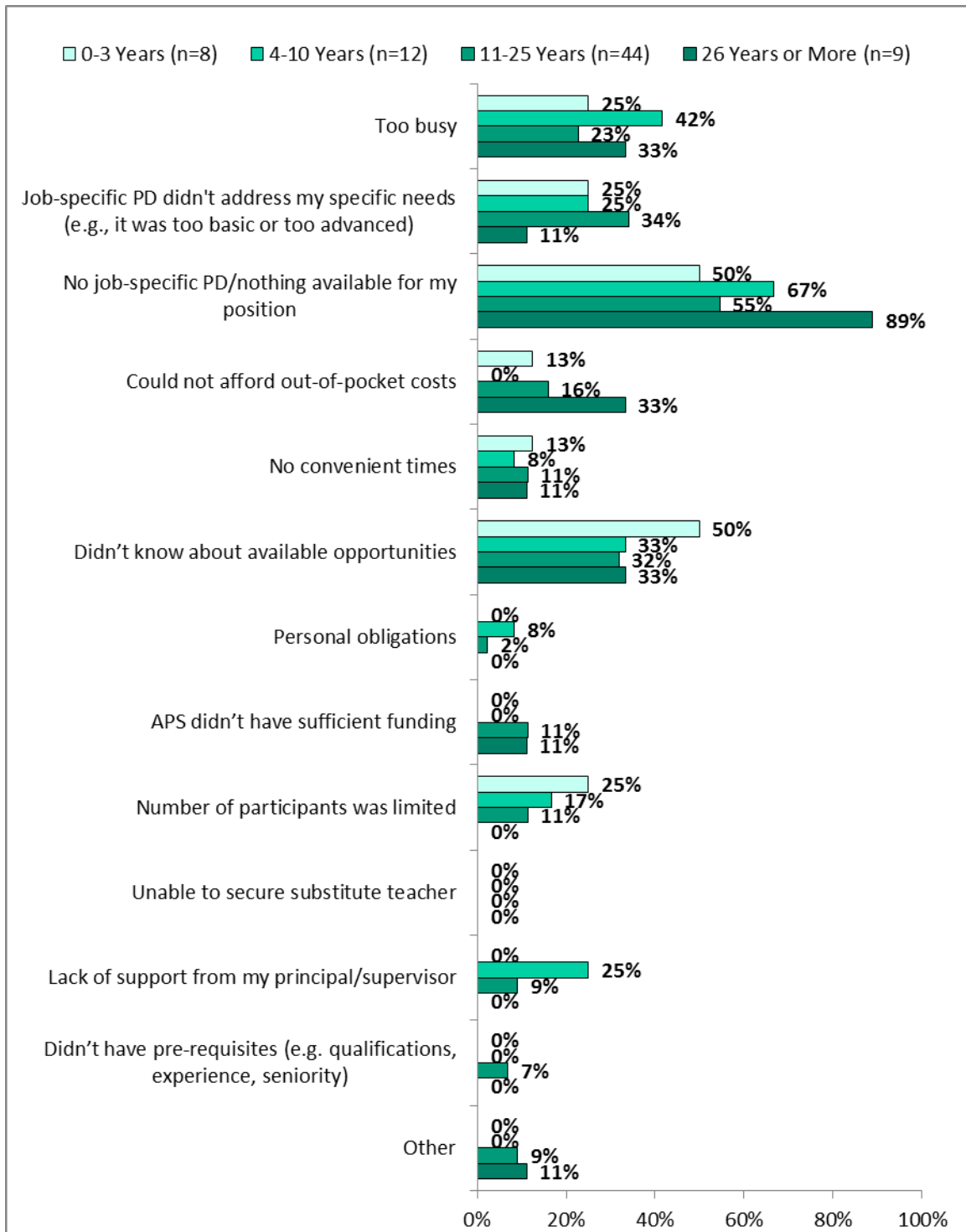
⁴¹ Question 19 – Objectives 1c, 1d, 1e, 1f, and 6b

Figure 2.16: In the last five years, what obstacles have you encountered to participating in professional development? (E-Scale by Pay Scale and Years at APS)⁴²



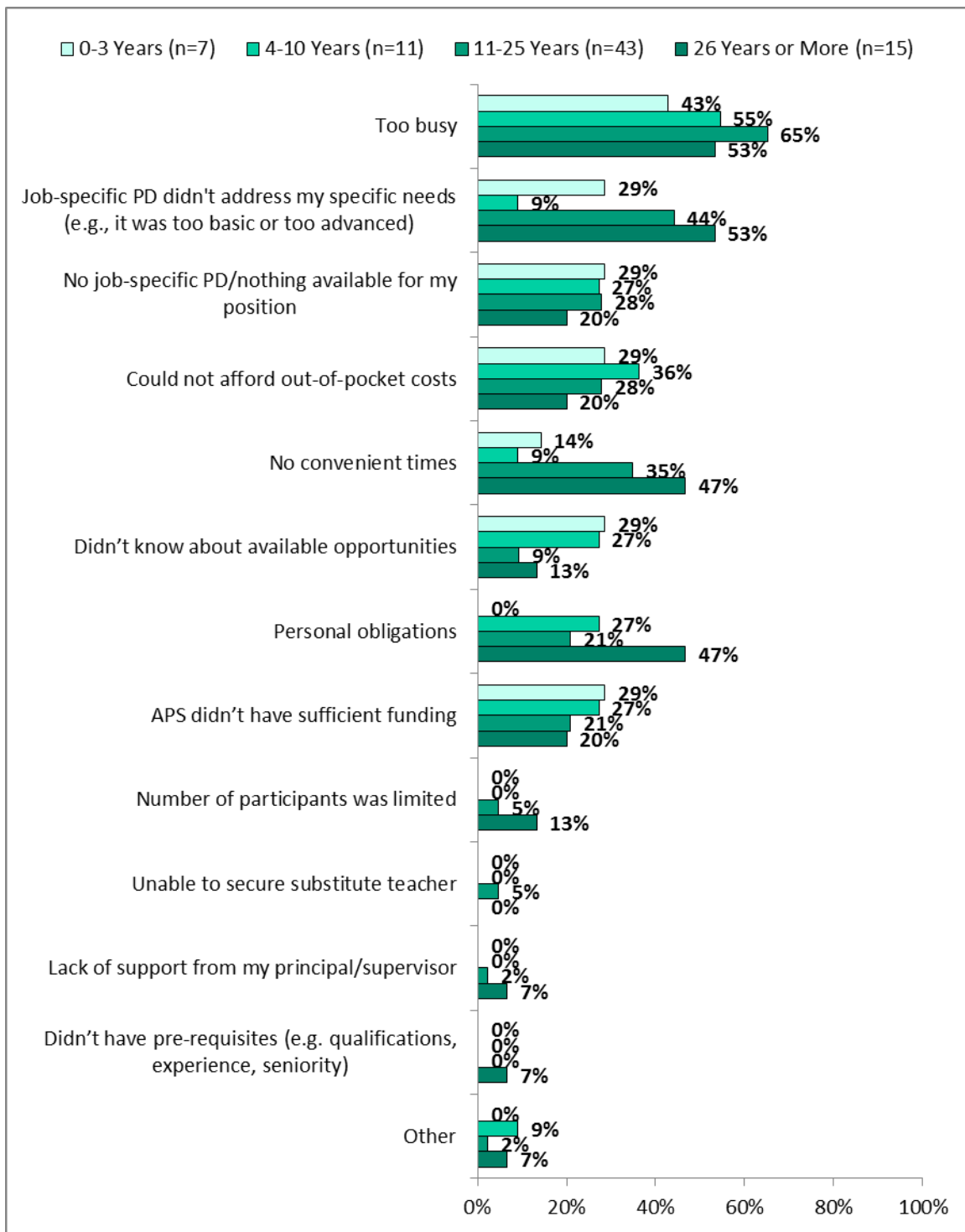
⁴² Question 19 – Objectives 1c, 1d, 1e, 1f, and 6b

Figure 2.17: In the last five years, what obstacles have you encountered to participating in professional development? (G-Scale by Pay Scale and Years at APS)⁴³



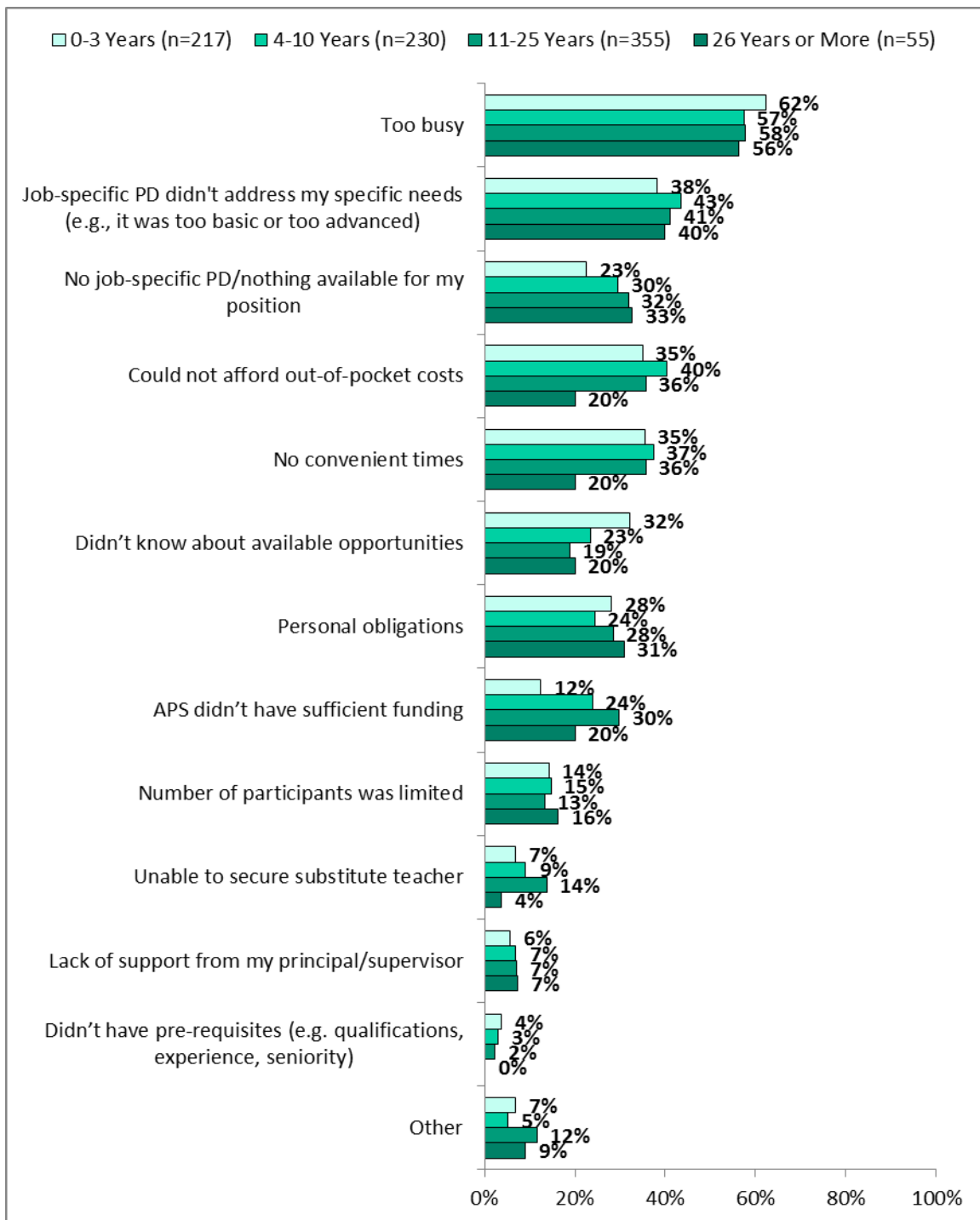
⁴³ Question 19 – Objectives 1c, 1d, 1e, 1f, and 6b

Figure 2.18: In the last five years, what obstacles have you encountered to participating in professional development? (P-Scale by Pay Scale and Years at APS)⁴⁴



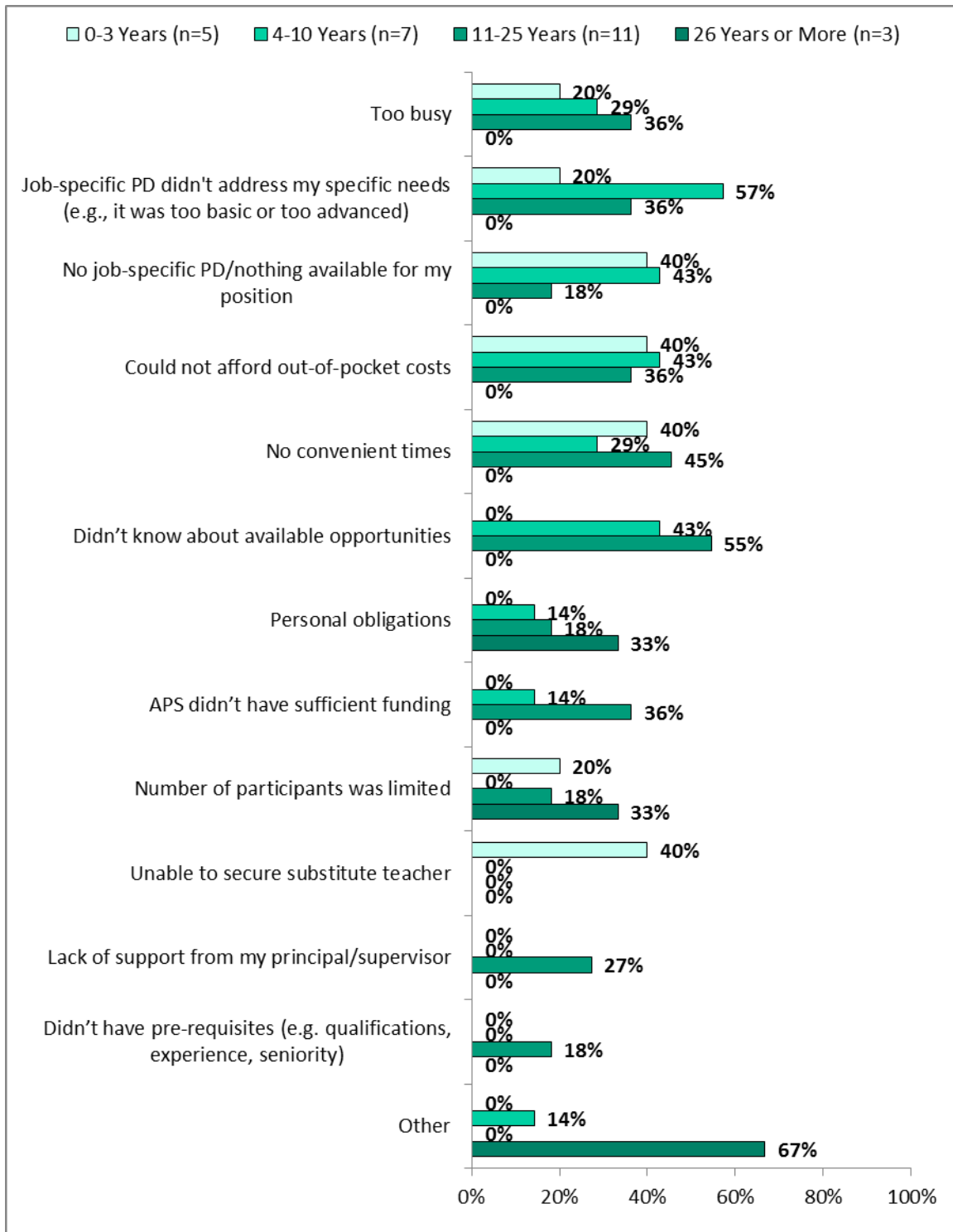
⁴⁴ Question 19 – Objectives 1c, 1d, 1e, 1f, and 6b

Figure 2.19: In the last five years, what obstacles have you encountered to participating in professional development? (T-Scale by Pay Scale and Years at APS)⁴⁵



⁴⁵ Question 19 – Objectives 1c, 1d, 1e, 1f, and 6b

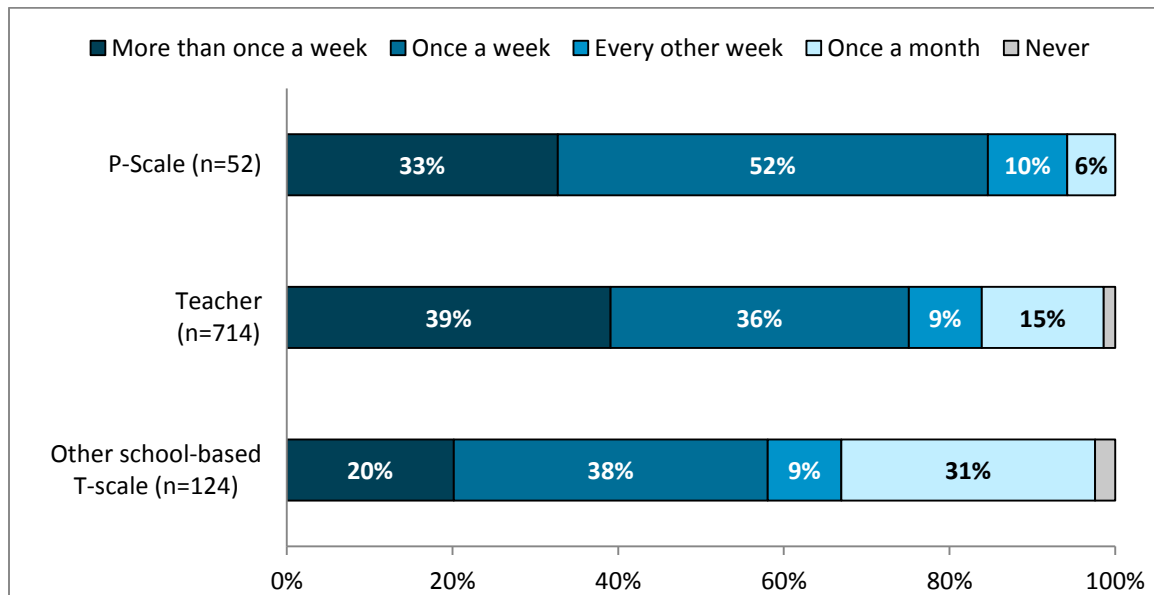
Figure 2.20: In the last five years, what obstacles have you encountered to participating in professional development? (Other Pay Scale by Pay Scale and Years at APS)⁴⁶



⁴⁶ Question 19 – Objectives 1c, 1d, 1e, 1f, and 6b

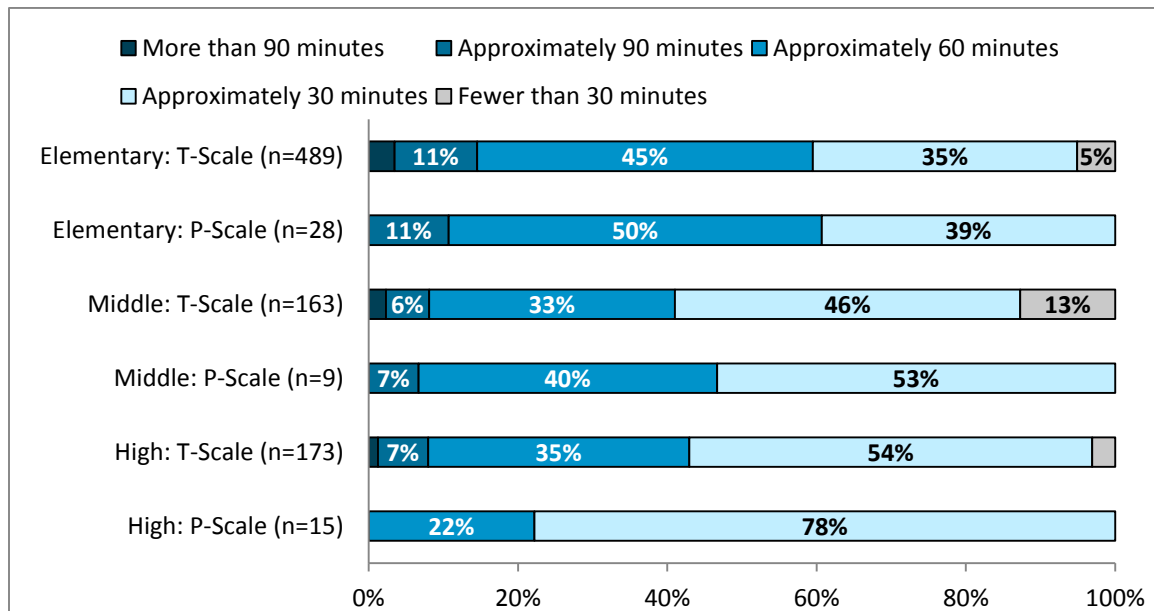
Note: The “Other Pay Scale” presents aggregate responses of C, D, X, and M- Scale respondents.

**Figure 2.21: How frequently does your assigned collaborative teacher team meet? (T-Scale)/How frequently does each collaborative teacher team meeting meet? (P-Scale)
(by P-Scale and Teacher Type)**



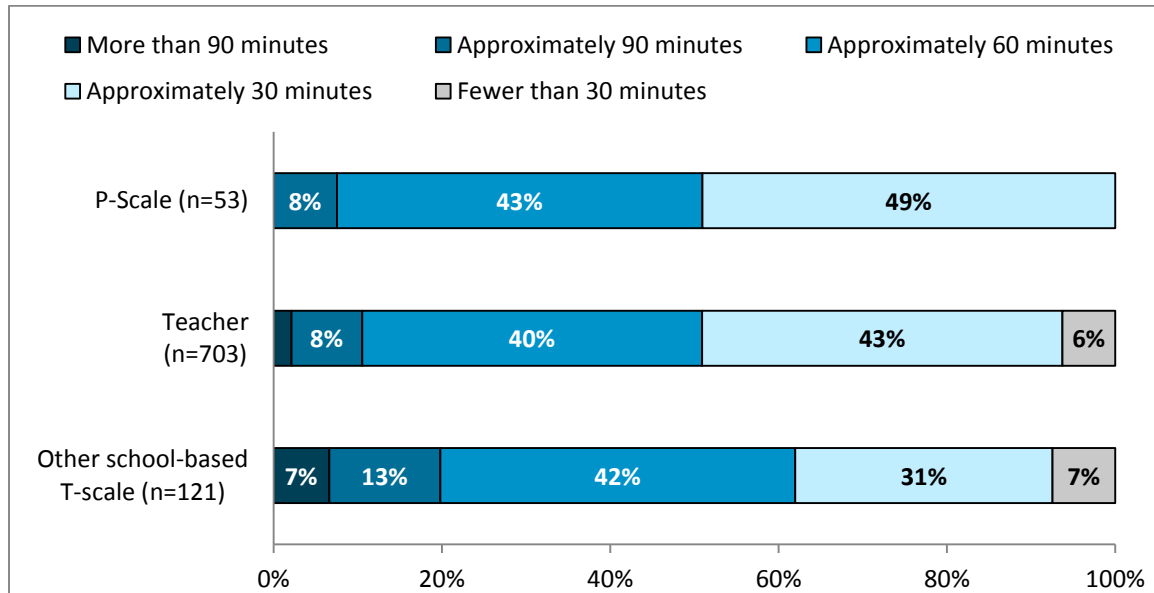
Note: This question was only asked to respondents on the "T-scale" who are school-based.

**Figure 2.22: On average, how long does each meeting with your assigned collaborative teacher team last?/How long does each collaborative teacher team meeting last?
(by Grade Level and Pay Scale)**



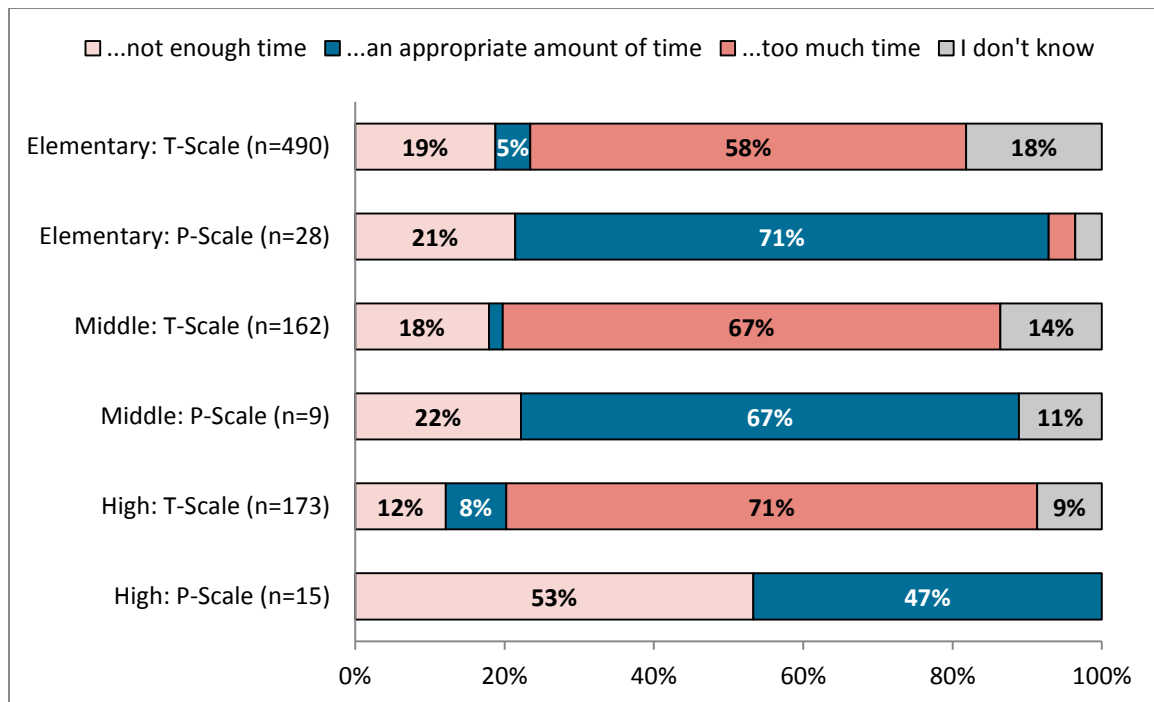
Note: This question was only asked to respondents on the "T-scale" who are school-based.

Figure 2.23: On average, how long does each meeting with your assigned collaborative teacher team last? (T-Scale)/How long does each collaborative teacher team meeting last? (P-Scale) (by P-Scale and Teacher Type)



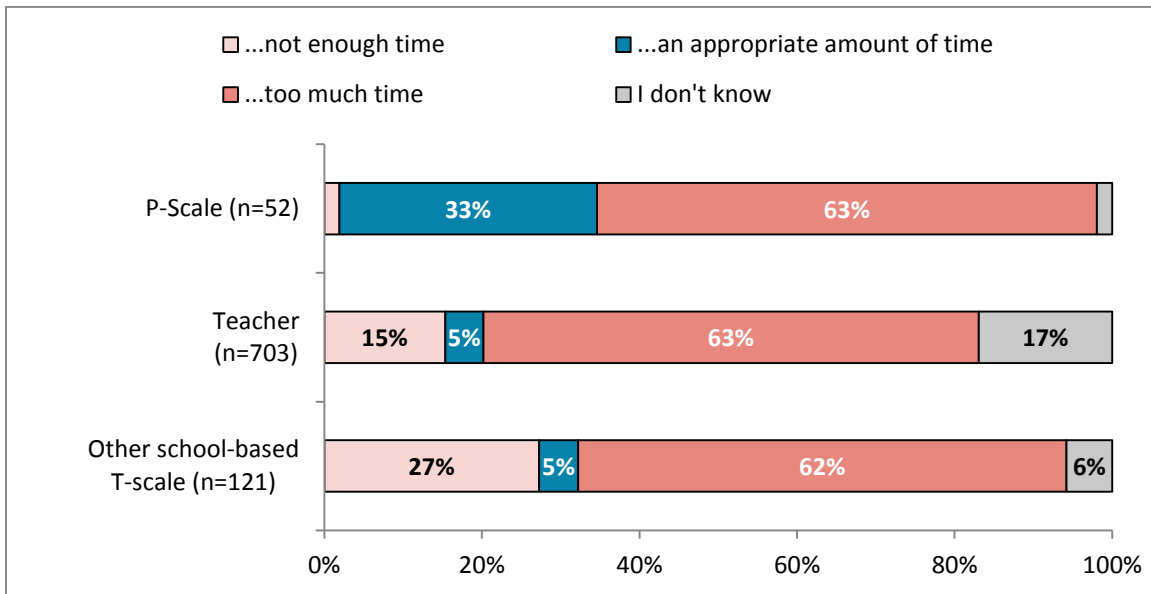
Note: This question was only asked to respondents on the "T-scale" who are school-based.

Figure 2.24: Would say this amount of time is... (by Grade Level)



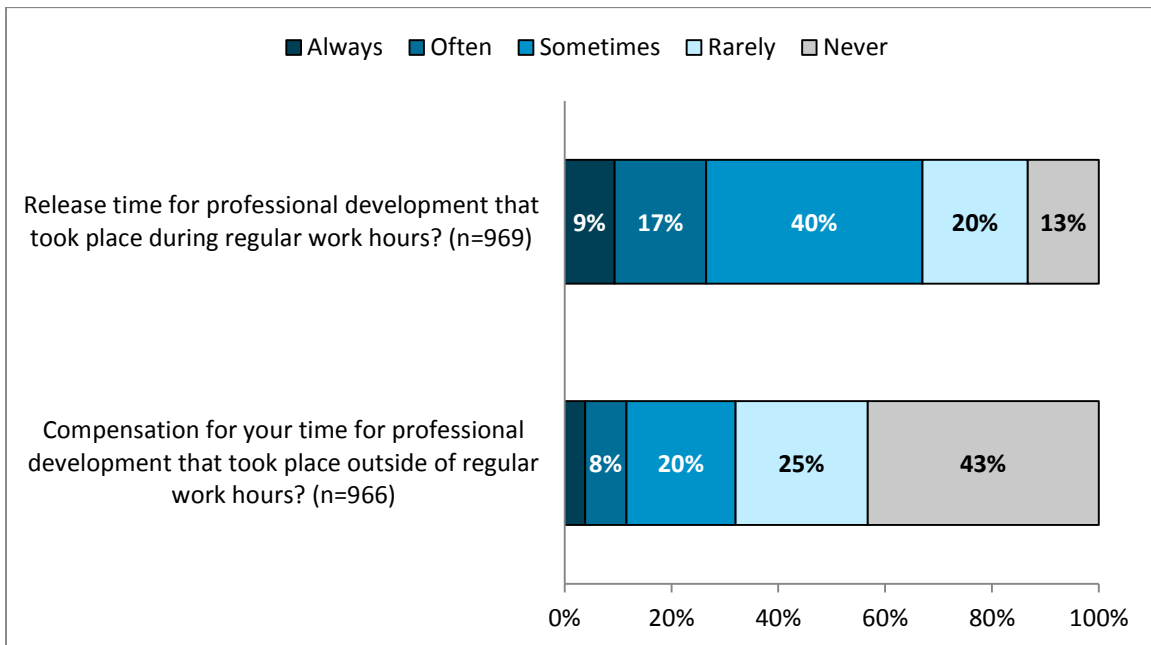
Note: This question was only asked to respondents on the "T-scale" who are school-based.

Figure 2.25: Would say this amount of time is... (by P-Scale and Teacher Type)



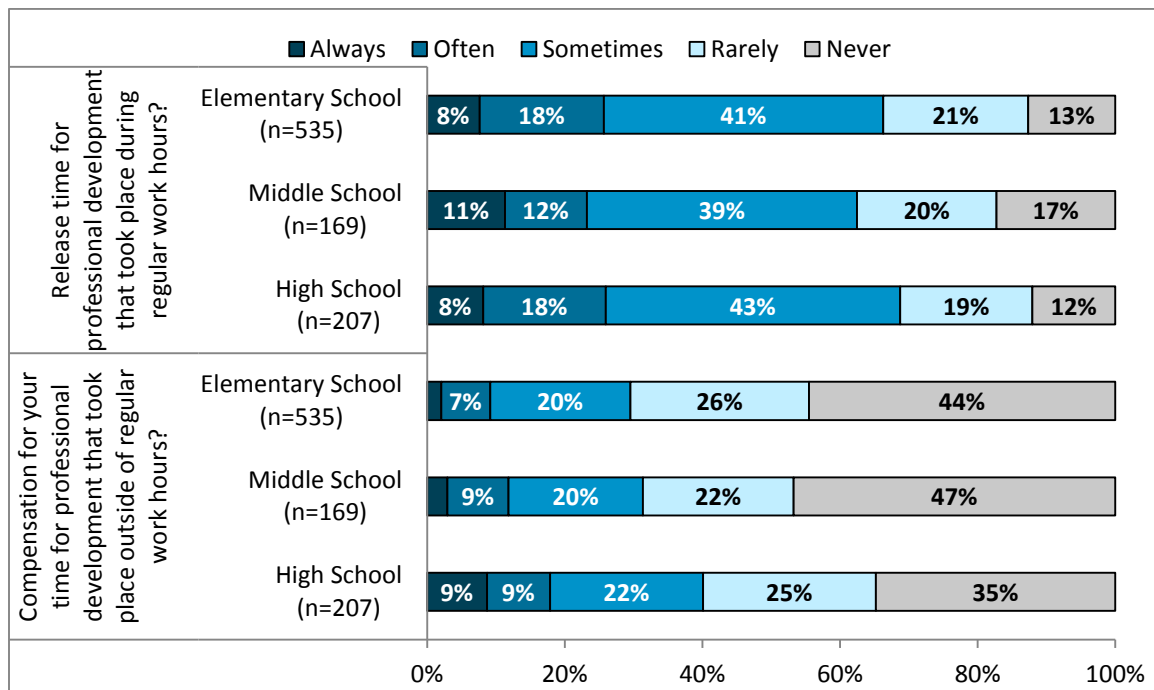
Note: This question was only asked to respondents on the "T-scale" who are school-based.

Figure 2.26: In the last five years, how frequently did you receive...⁴⁷

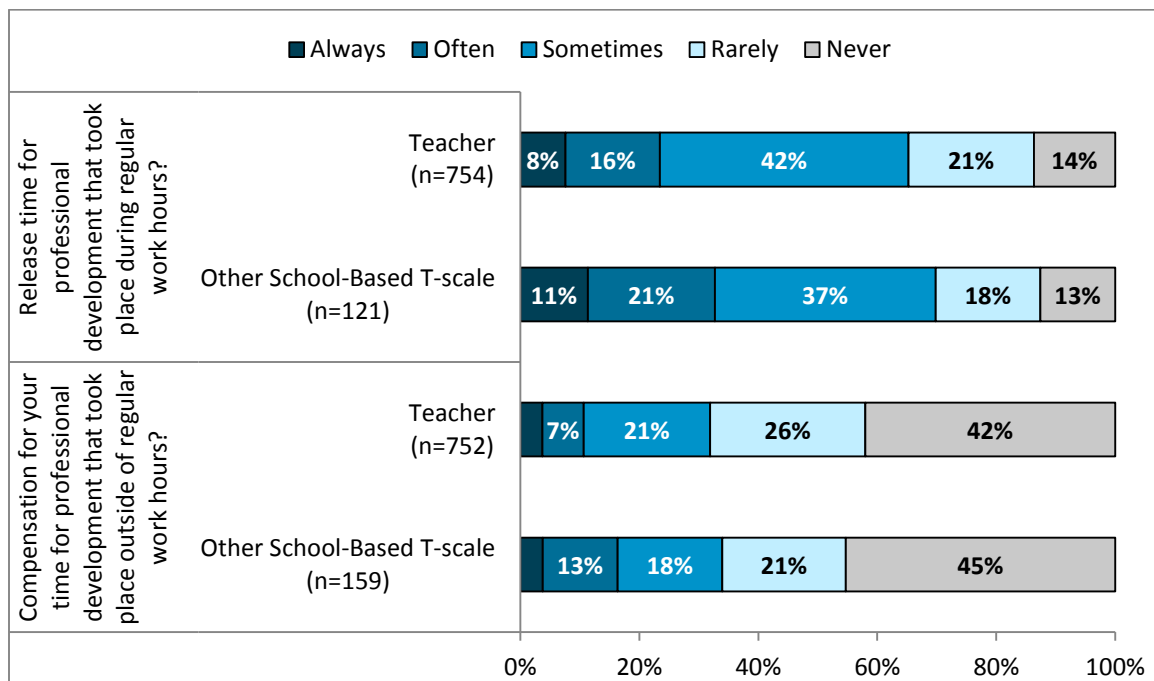


Note: This question was only asked to respondents on the "T-scale" who participated in PD in the last five years.

⁴⁷ Question 26 – Objective 1c

Figure 2.27: In the last five years, how frequently did you receive... (by Grade Level)⁴⁸

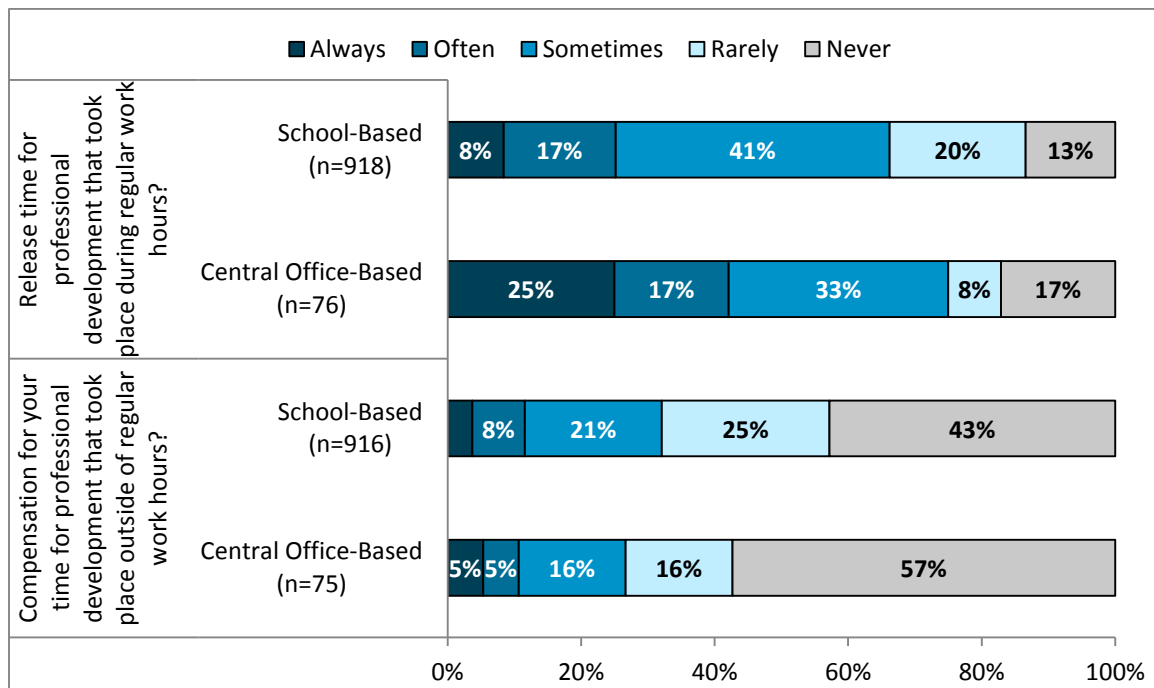
Note: This question was only asked to respondents on the "T-scale" who participated in PD in the last five years.

Figure 2.28: In the last five years, how frequently did you receive...(by Teacher Type)⁴⁹

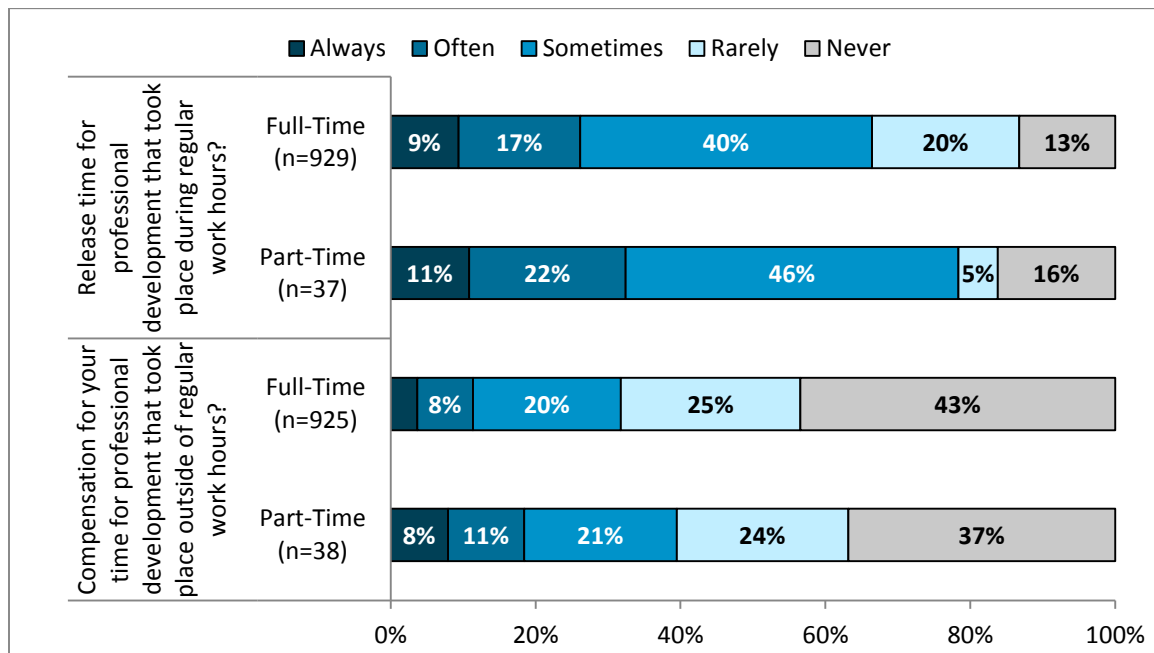
Note: This question was only asked to respondents on the "T-scale" who participated in PD in the last five years.

⁴⁸ Question 26 – Objective 1c

⁴⁹ Question 26 – Objective 1c

Figure 2.29: In the last five years, how frequently did you receive...(by Location)⁵⁰

Note: This question was only asked to respondents on the "T-scale" who participated in PD in the last five years.

Figure 2.30: In the last five years, how frequently did you receive...(by FTE Status)⁵¹

Note: This question was only asked to respondents on the "T-scale" who participated in PD in the last five years.

⁵⁰ Question 26 – Objective 1c

⁵¹ Question 26 – Objective 1c

SECTION III: INTEREST AND IMPACT

This section presents findings regarding reasons for participating in PD at APS and the impact it has on participants. Questions relate to such issues as the importance of different factors when choosing PD programs and the impact PD has had on participants' work and abilities.

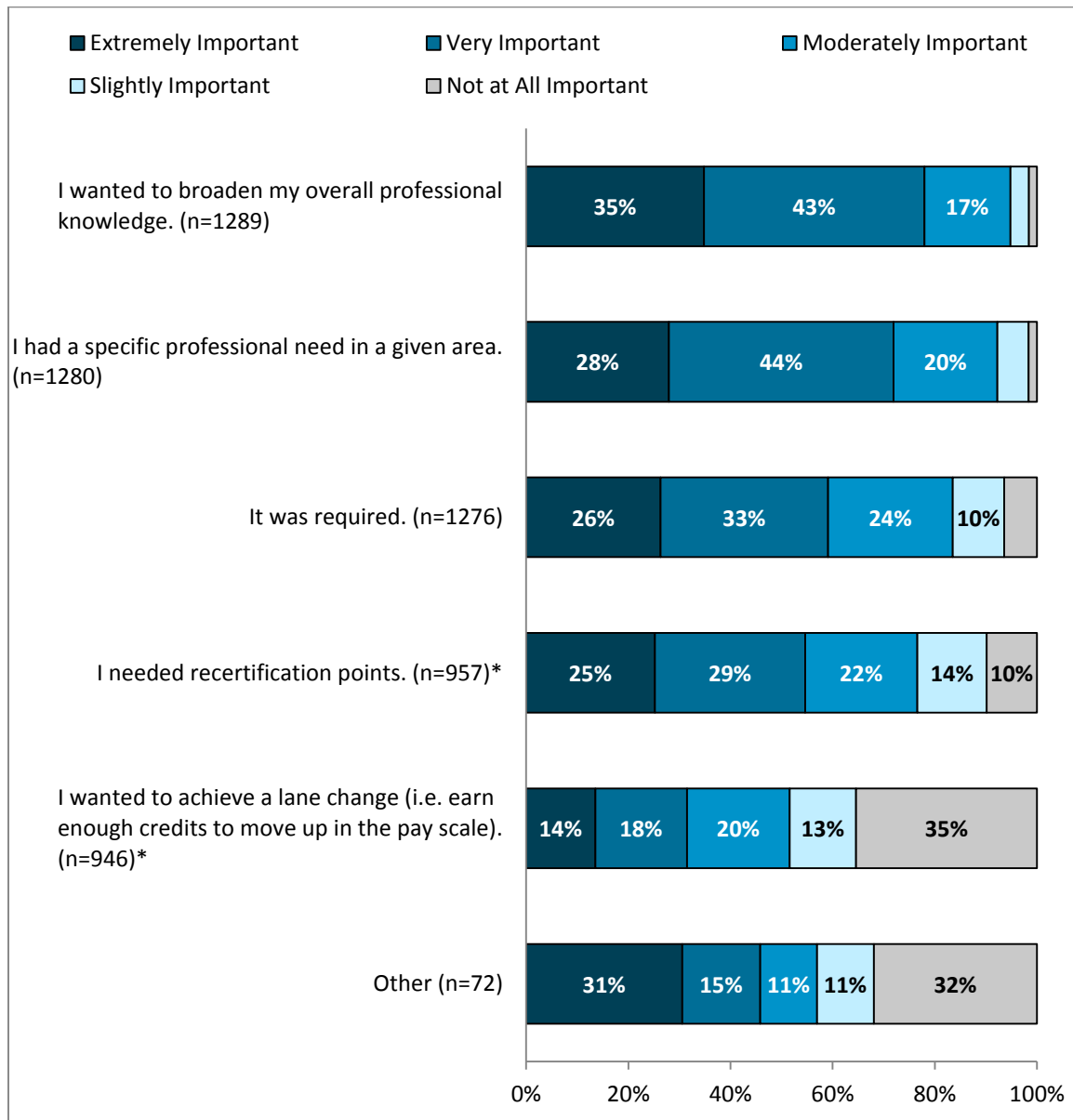
FINDINGS

- **The most common reason cited by respondents for participating in PD in the last five years is a desire to broaden their overall professional knowledge.** Seventy-eight percent of respondents who participated in PD in the last five years indicated this being an extremely important or very important factor when selecting PD programs (Figure 3.1).
- **Nearly a quarter of respondents who have participated in PD programs in the last five years disagree or strongly disagree that their PD experiences have improved student outcomes.** Seventeen percent disagree and seven percent strongly disagree, while another 16 percent indicate that they do not know how PD experiences have influenced student outcomes (Figure 3.6).
- **Elementary school teachers are more likely to agree that their PD experiences in the last five years have improved student outcomes compared to middle and high school teachers.** Whereas 66 percent of elementary school teacher respondents agree or strongly agree that their PD experiences have improved student outcomes, 56 percent of middle school teacher respondents and 51 percent of high school teacher respondents believe the same (Figure 3.7).

FIGURES

INTEREST

Figure 3.1: Please rate the importance of each factor when you selected PD programs over the previous five years:⁵²

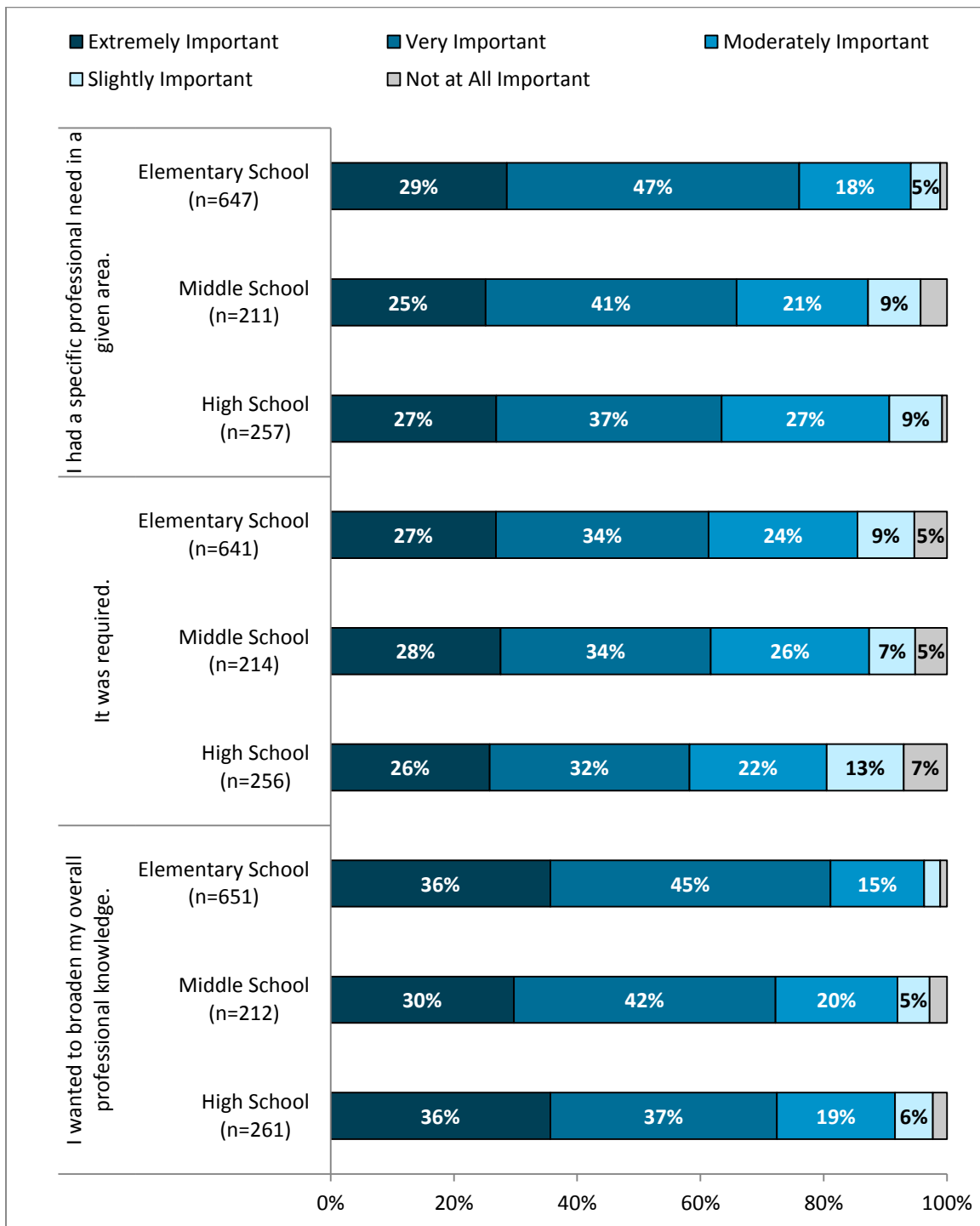


Note: This question was only asked to respondents who participated in PD in the last five years.

*Statement was only shown to respondents who selected "T-scale" in Figure 7.1.

⁵² Question 27 – Objective 1g

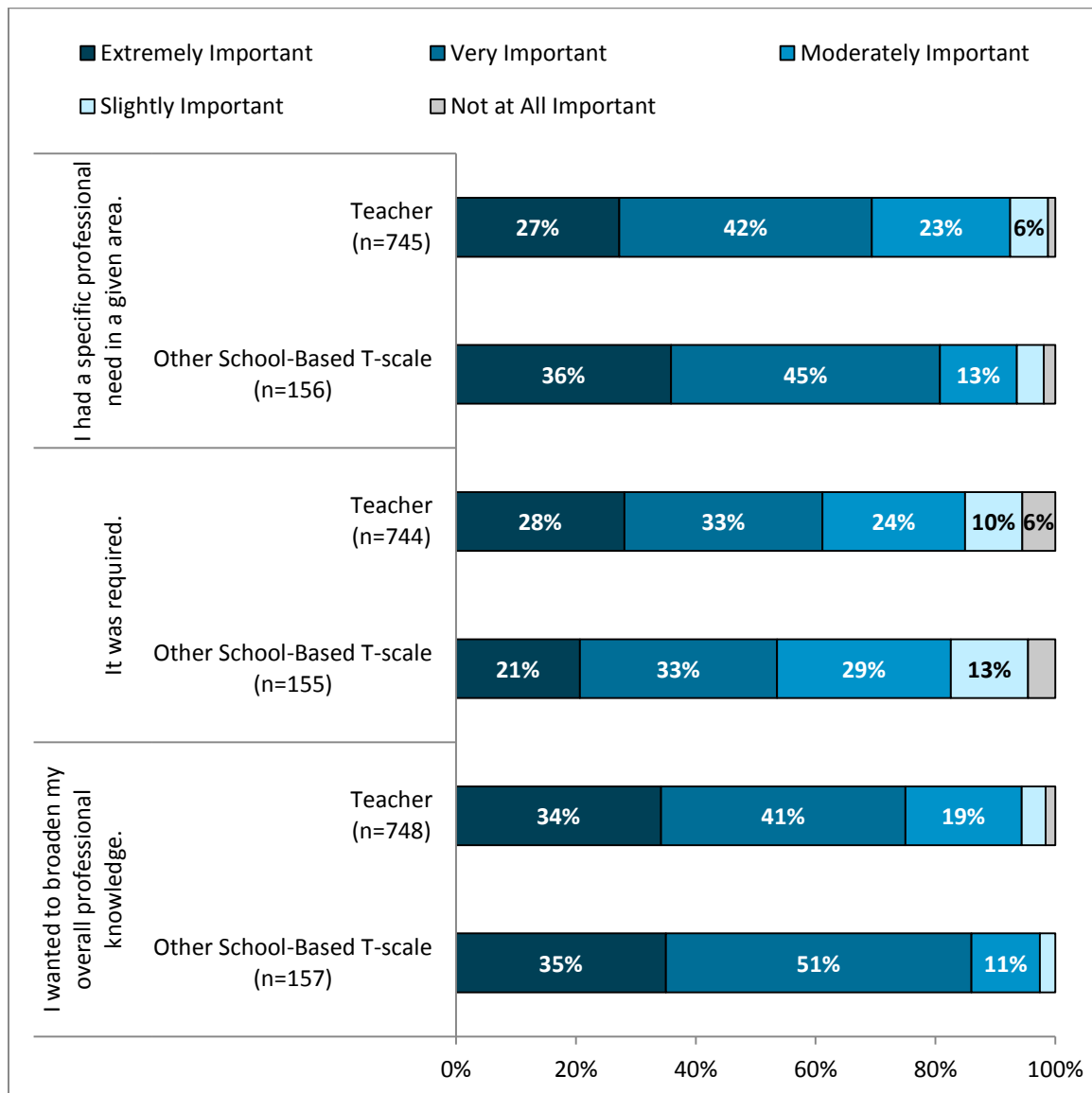
Figure 3.2: Please rate the importance of each factor when you selected PD programs over the previous five years (by Grade Level)⁵³



Note: This question was only asked to respondents who participated in PD in the last five years.

⁵³ Question 27 – Objective 1g

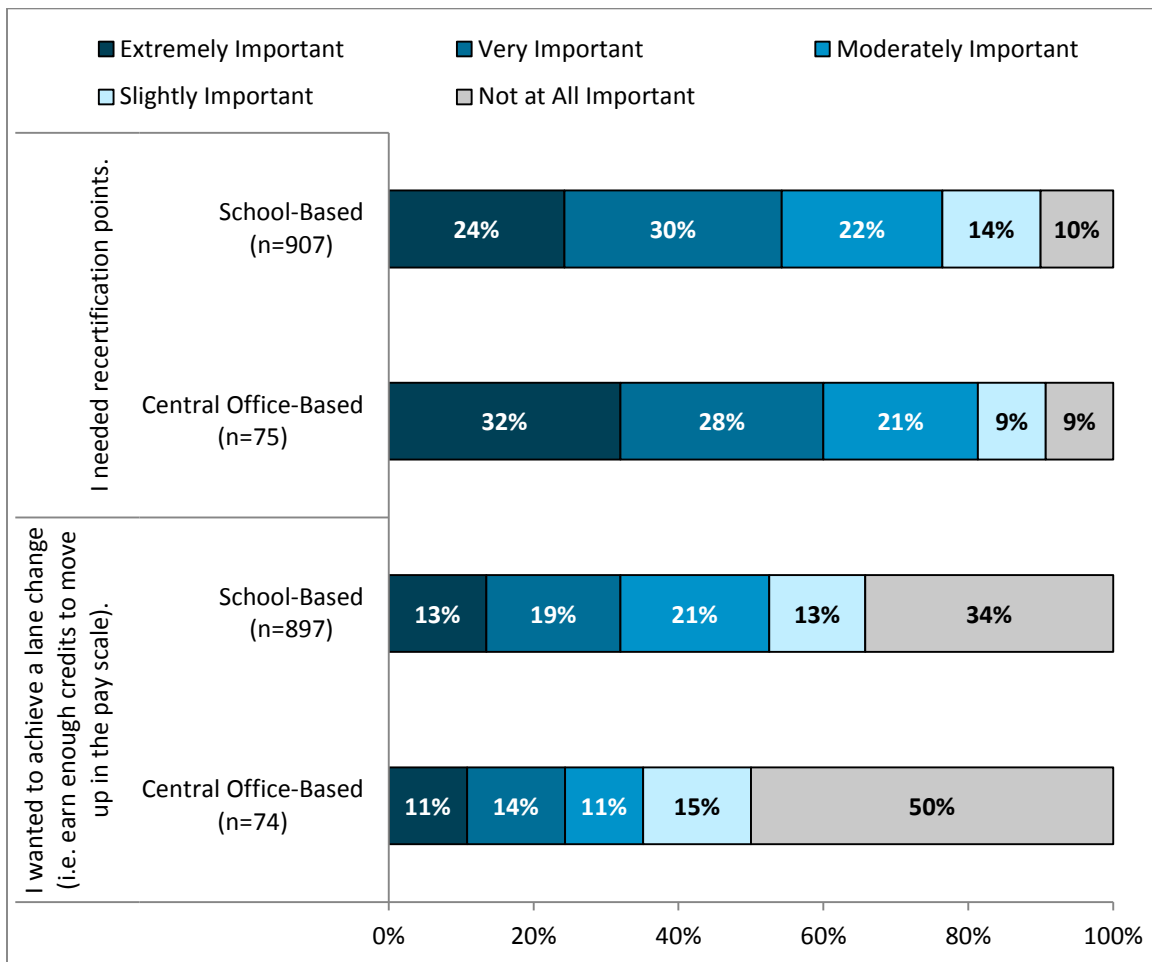
Figure 3.3: Please rate the importance of each factor when you selected PD programs over the previous five years (by Teacher Type)⁵⁴



Note: This question was only asked to respondents who participated in PD in the last five years.

⁵⁴ Question 27 – Objective 1g

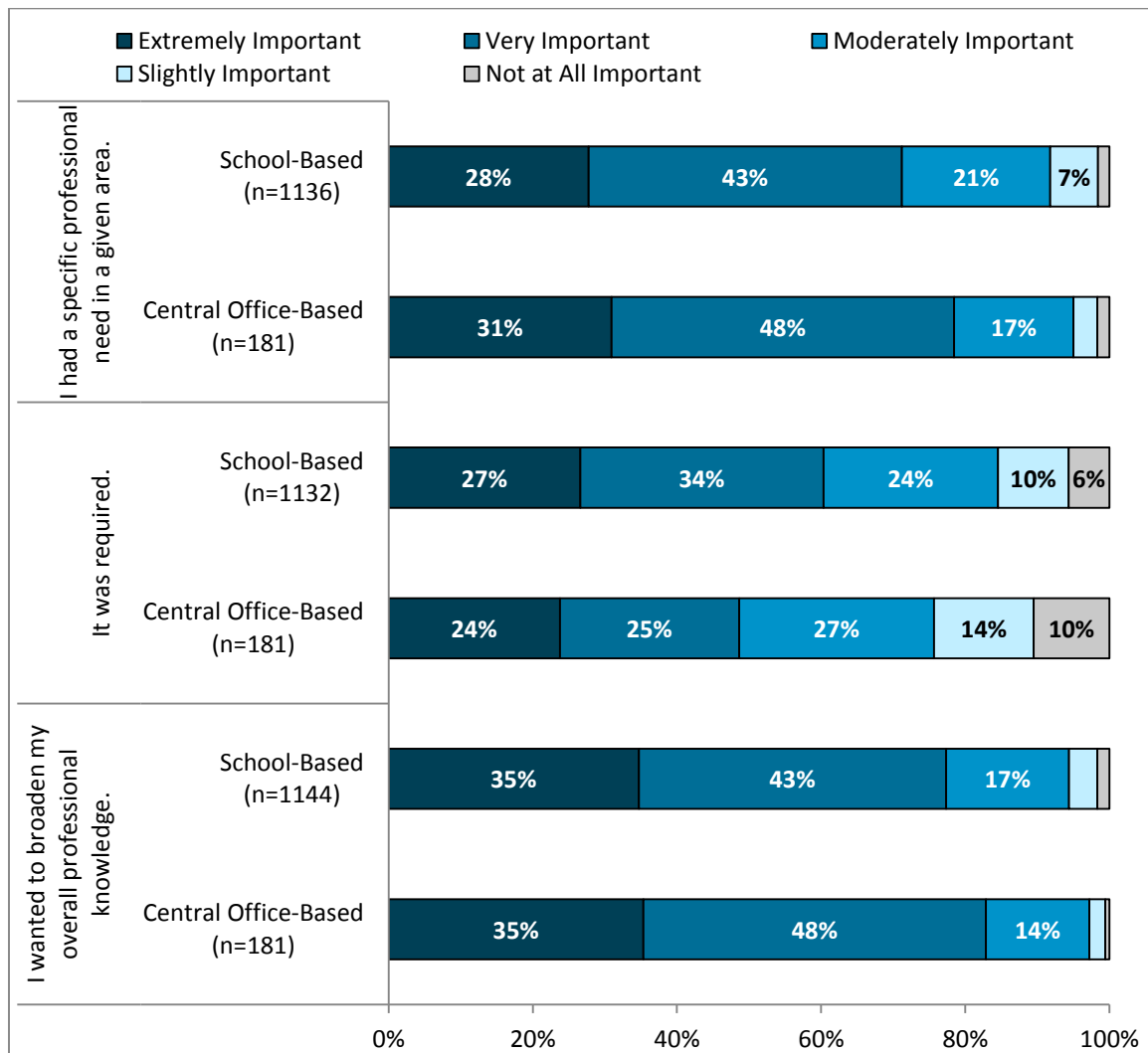
Figure 3.4: Please rate the importance of each factor when you selected PD programs over the previous five years (by Location)⁵⁵



Note: This question was only asked to respondents who participated in PD in the last five years. This particular statement was only shown to respondents who selected "T-scale" in Figure 7.1.

⁵⁵ Question 27 – Objective 1g

Figure 3.5: Please rate the importance of each factor when you selected PD programs over the previous five years (by Location)⁵⁶

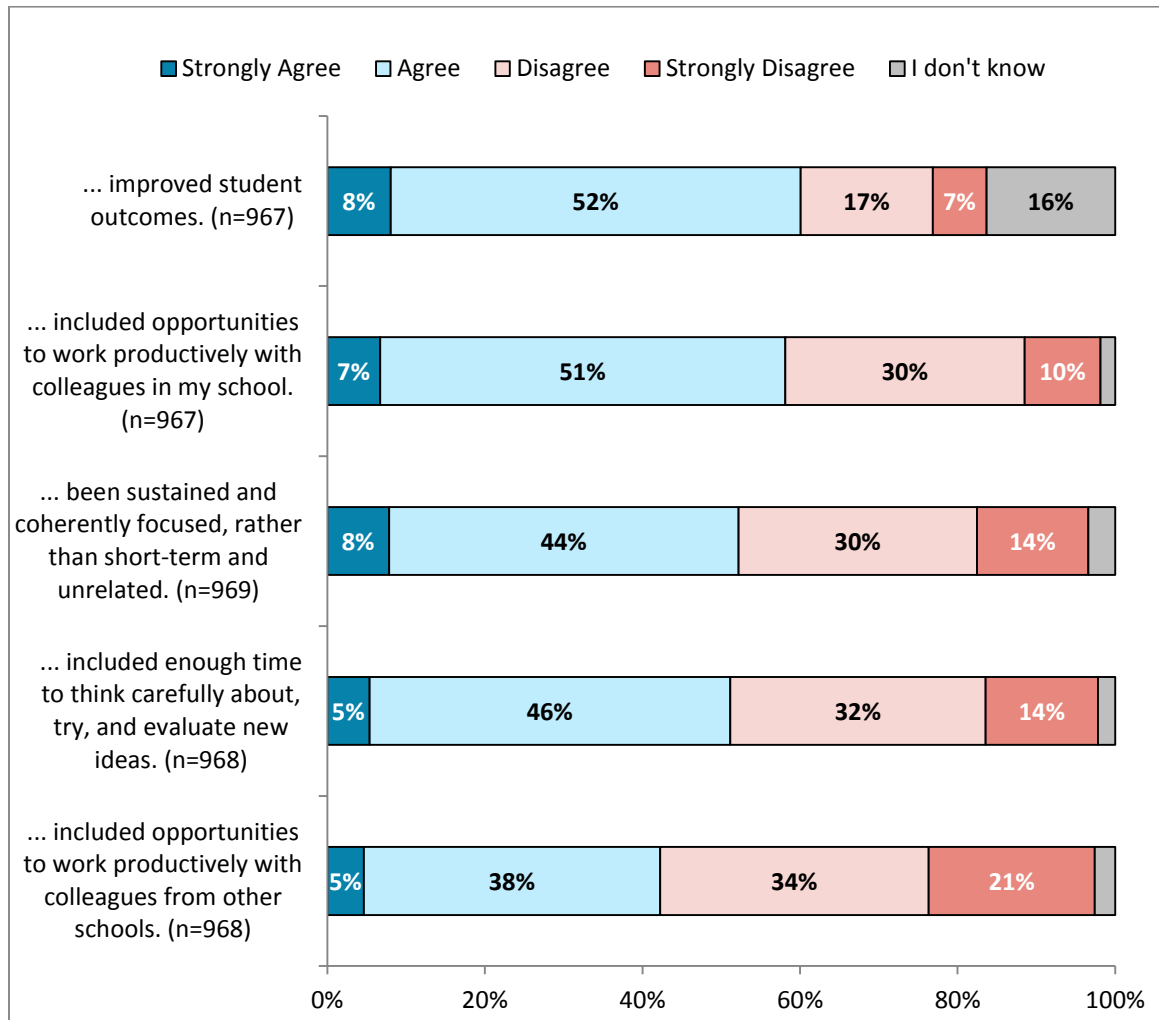


Note: This question was only asked to respondents who participated in PD in the last five years.

⁵⁶ Question 27 – Objective 1g

IMPACT

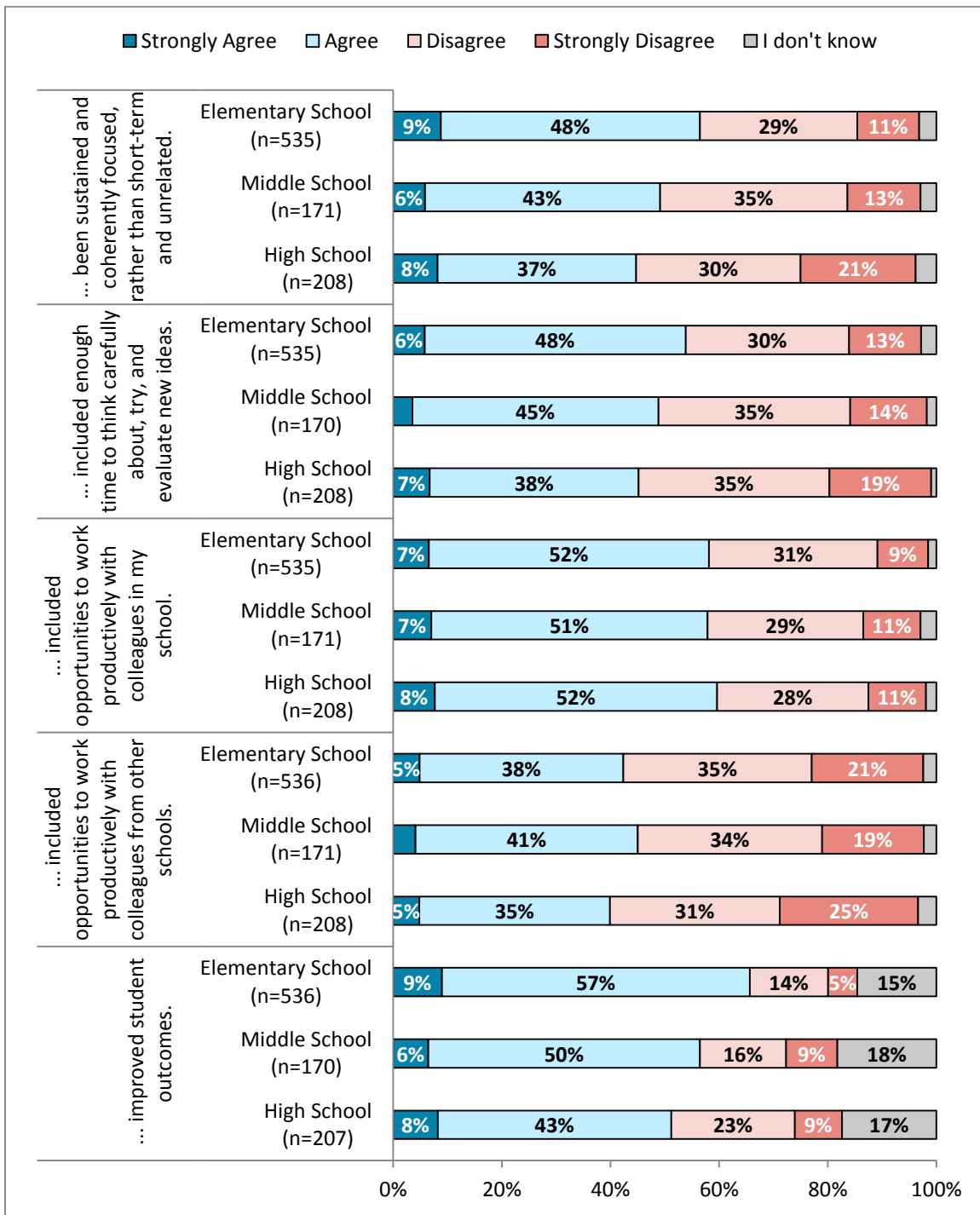
Figure 3.6: Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements. Overall, my professional development experiences in the last five years have...⁵⁷



Note: This question was only asked to respondents on the “T-scale” who are school-based and who participated in PD in the last five years.

⁵⁷ Question 28 – Objectives 2a, 5a, 5b, and 5c

Figure 3.7: Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements. Overall, my professional development experiences in the last five years have...
(by Grade Level)⁵⁸

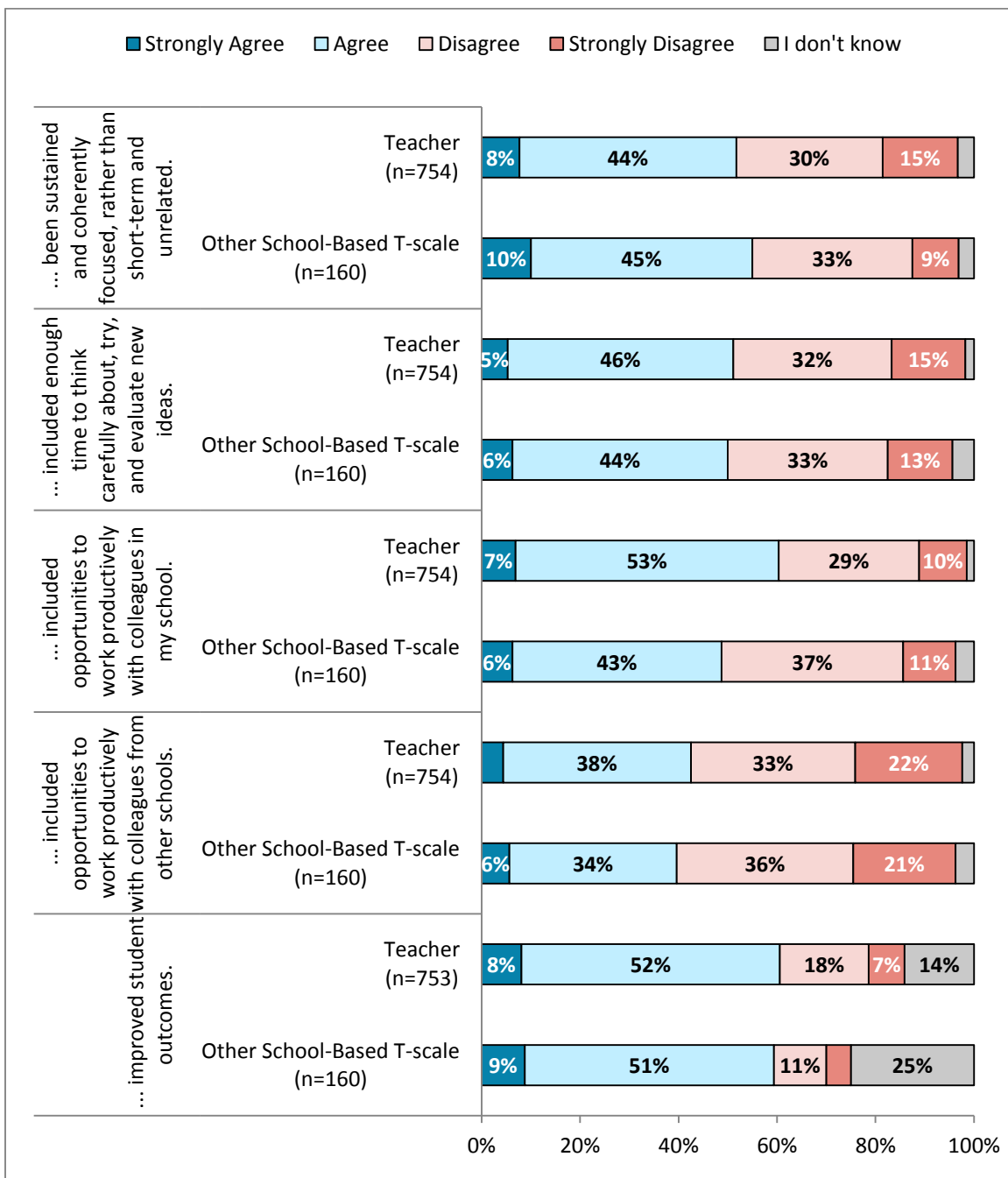


Note: This question was only asked to respondents on the "T-scale" who are school-based and who participated in PD in the last five years.

⁵⁸ Question 28 – Objectives 2a, 5a, 5b, and 5c

Figure 3.8: Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements. Overall, my professional development experiences in the last five years have...

(by Teacher Type)⁵⁹

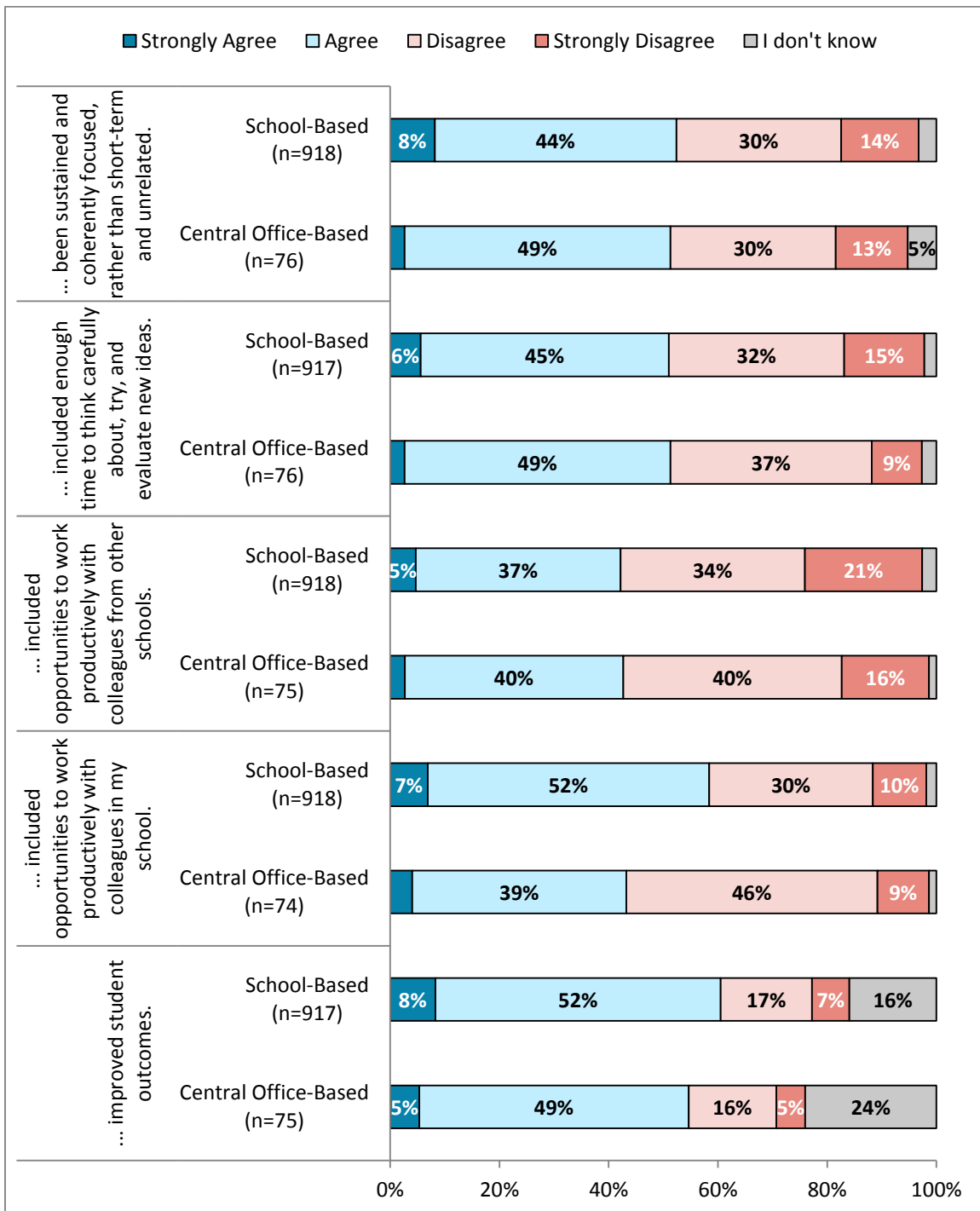


Note: This question was only asked to respondents who selected "T-scale," "school-based," and also indicated that they had participated in PD within the last five years.

⁵⁹ Question 28 – Objectives 2a, 5a, 5b, and 5c

Figure 3.9: Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements. Overall, my professional development experiences in the last five years have...

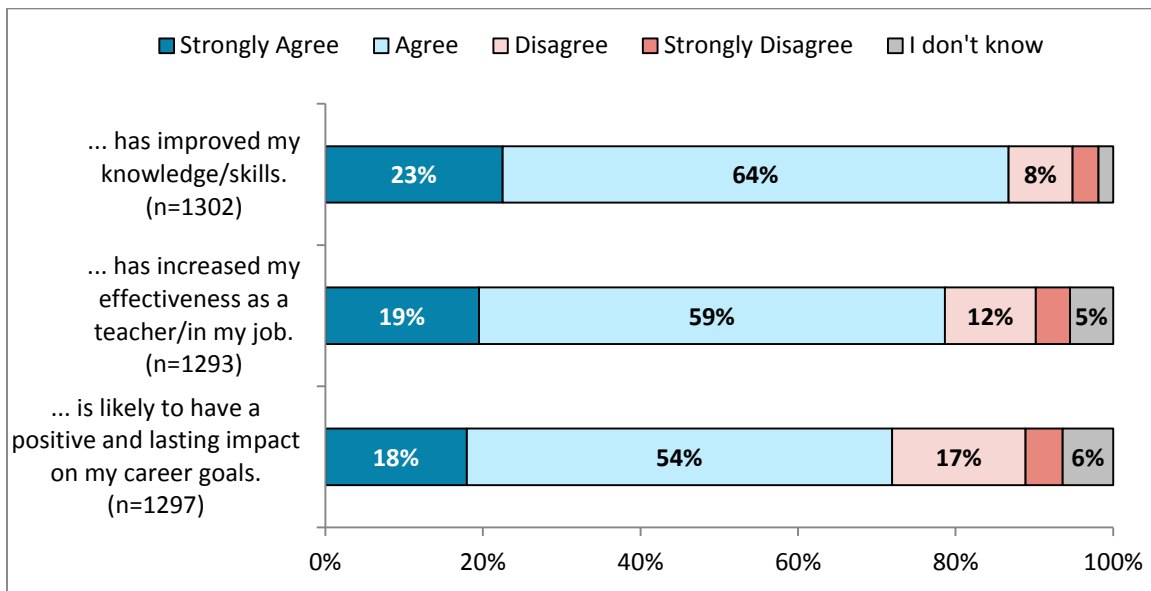
(by Location)⁶⁰



Note: This question was only asked to respondents on the "T-scale" who are school-based and who participated in PD in the last five years.

⁶⁰ Question 28 – Objectives 2a, 5a, 5b, and 5c

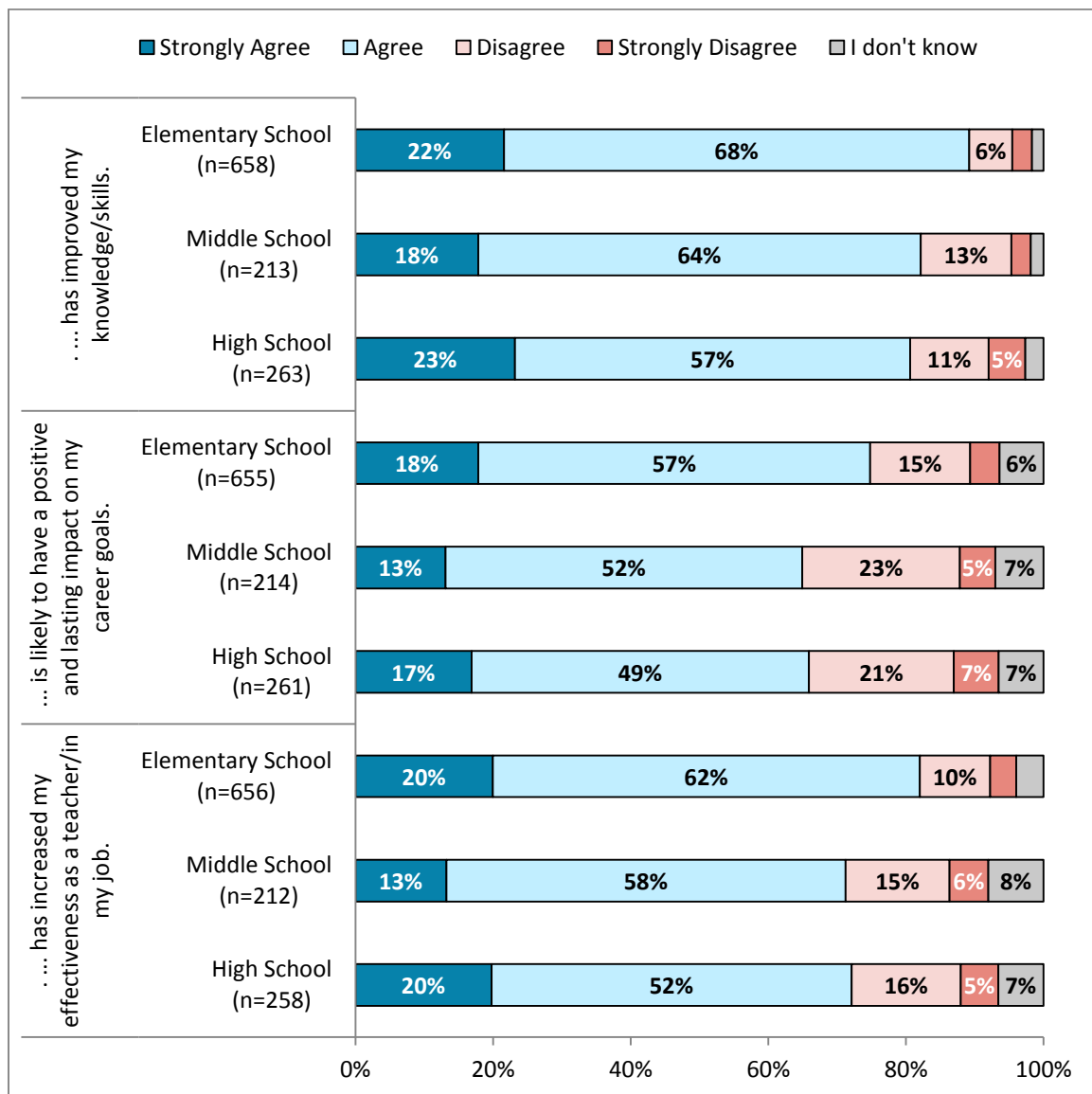
Figure 3.10: Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements. In the last five years, the PD I have participated in...⁶¹



Note: This question was only asked to respondents who have participated in PD in the last five years.

⁶¹ Question 29 – Objectives 2b, 2c, and 7a

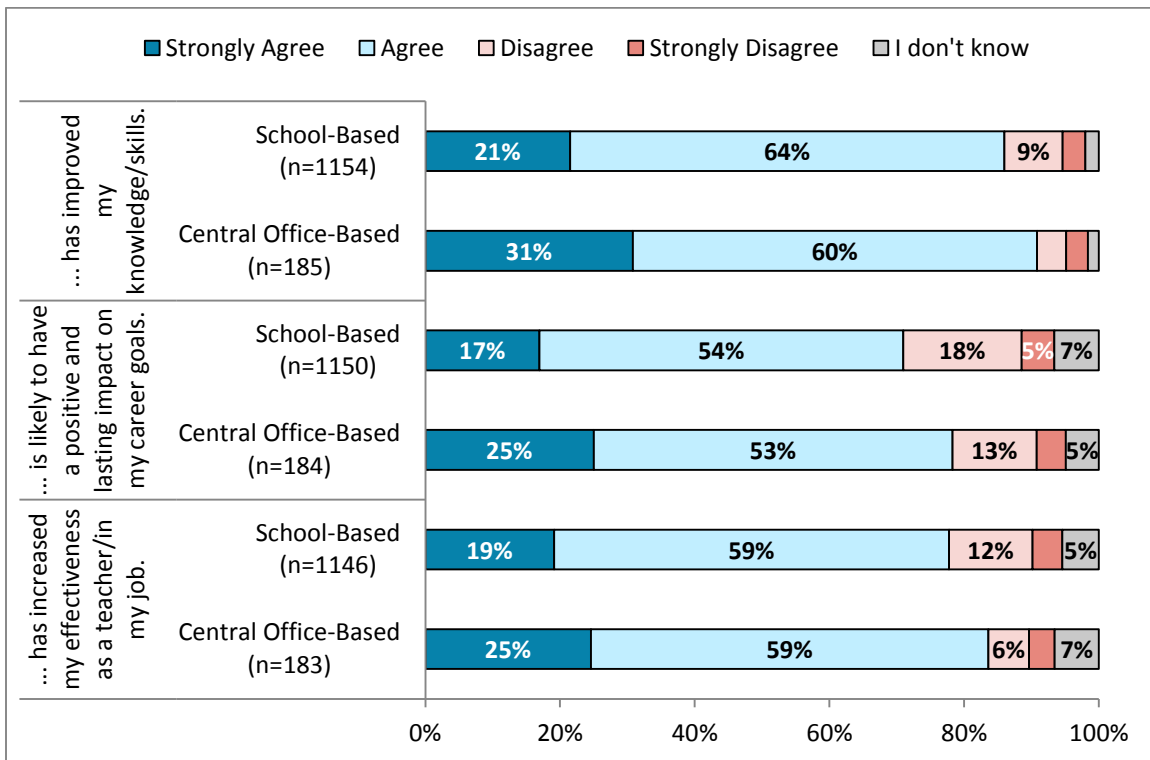
**Figure 3.11: Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements. In the last five years, the PD I have participated in...
(by Grade Level)⁶²**



Note: This question was only asked to respondents who have participated in PD in the last five years.

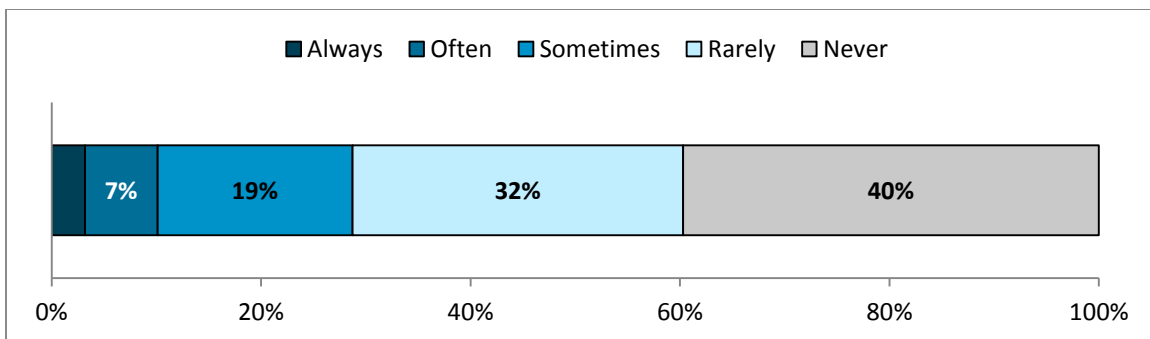
⁶² Question 29 – Objectives 2b, 2c, and 7a

**Figure 3.12: Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements. In the last five years, the PD I have participated in...
(by Location)⁶³**



Note: This question was only asked to respondents who have participated in PD in the last five years.

Figure 3.13: In the last five years, how often did your PD provider contact you following the training session to ensure you were implementing what you learned?⁶⁴



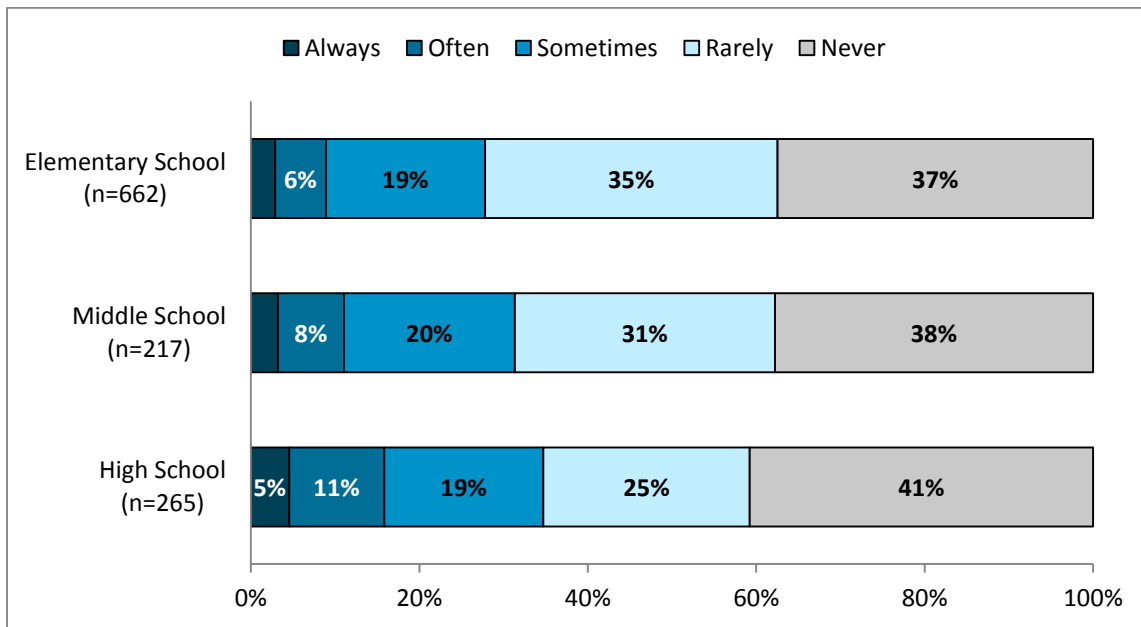
(n=1315)

Note: This question was only asked to respondents who have participated in PD in the last five years.

⁶³ Question 29 – Objectives 2b, 2c, and 7a

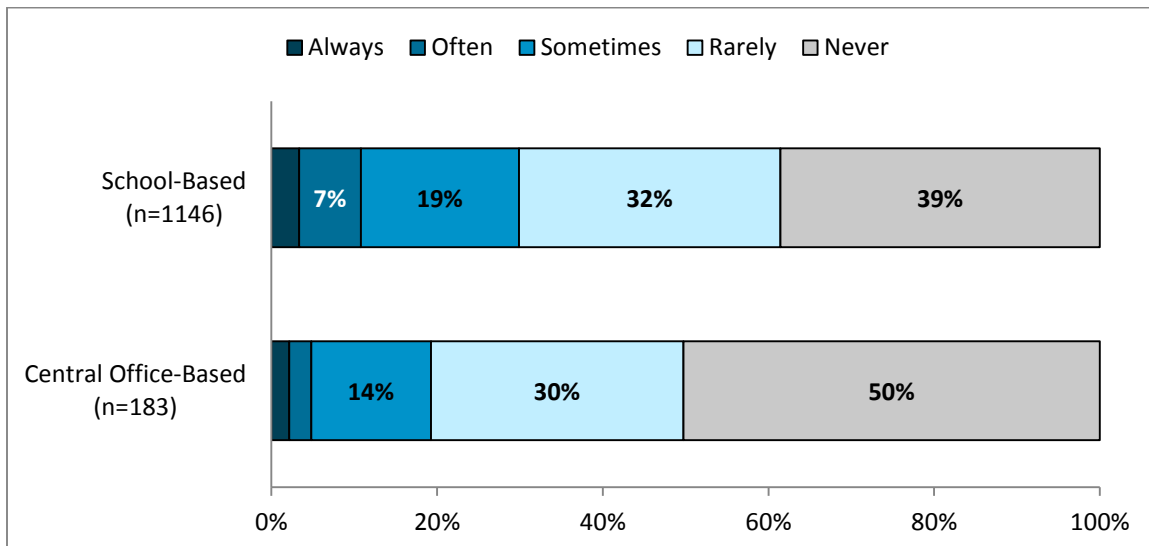
⁶⁴ Question 30 – Objectives 2b and 2c

Figure 3.14: In the last five years, how often did your PD provider contact you following the training session to ensure you were implementing what you learned? (by Grade Level)⁶⁵



Note: This question was only asked to respondents who have participated in PD in the last five years.

Figure 3.15: In the last five years, how often did your PD provider contact you following the training session to ensure you were implementing what you learned? (by Location)⁶⁶



Note: This question was only asked to respondents who have participated in PD in the last five years.

⁶⁵ Question 30 – Objectives 2b and 2c

⁶⁶ Question 30 – Objectives 2b and 2c

SECTION IV: DIFFERENTIATED COMPENSATION PROGRAM

This section presents findings regarding reasons for participating in differentiated compensation programs at APS. Note that these questions only relate to respondents who are on the T-scale pay scale. The questions in this section relate to such issues as rates of participation, knowledge of these programs, and levels of interest in participating in one of these programs in the future.

FINDINGS

- **Nearly all respondents (94%) who participated in the CAP portfolio III felt supported by the PD Office, while 79 percent of them felt supported by their principal/supervisor.** At least 70 percent of respondents who participated in the CAP portfolio I felt supported by the PD Office and their principal/supervisor (Figure 4.9 and Figure 4.10).
- **A large majority of respondents who were successfully moved to the CAP salary schedule indicate that the achievement of the CAP portfolio III influenced their desire to remain with APS.** Fifty-three percent agree and 26 percent strongly agree that it influenced their desire to remain with APS (Figure 4.11).
- **Among respondents who have not participated in one of APS's differentiated compensation programs, only 28 percent are very or extremely interested in participating in one in the future.** Forty-five percent indicate they are slightly or moderately interested, while 27 percent are not interested at all (Figure 4.12).
- **The longer respondents have worked at APS the less interested they are in participating in one of APS's differentiated compensation programs.** Only 11 to 18 percent of respondents who have been at APS 0-10 years are not at all interested in participating in one of these programs. This percentage increases to 42 percent among those who have been at APS 11-25 years and 66 percent among those who have been at APS 26 or more years (Figure 4.14).
- **Two-thirds of respondents who have not participated in one of APS's differentiated compensation programs have not done so because they are unsure of what is involved,** more than twice the percentage who selected any other category. Another 31 percent cite not participating because they cannot make the time commitment (Figure 4.15).

FIGURES

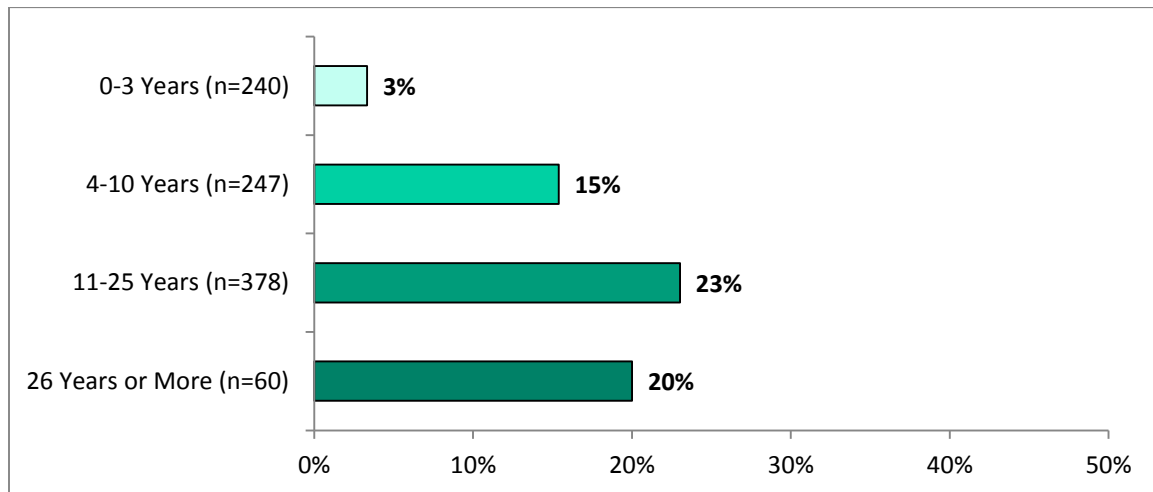
Figure 4.1: Have you participated in the APS differentiated compensation program known as the Career Advancement Program? This includes CAP I and CAP III (National Board Certification and/or other certifications identified by Student Services).⁶⁷

RESPONSE	PERCENTAGE
Yes (including current candidates)	15%
No	85%

(n=995)

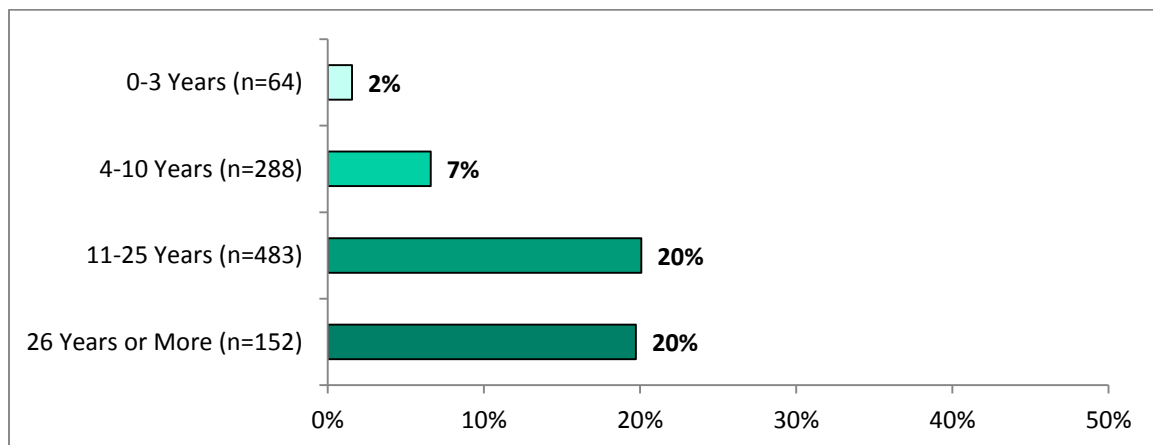
Note: This question was only asked to respondents on the "T-Scale".

Figure 4.2: Have you participated in the APS differentiated compensation program known as the Career Advancement Program? (by Years at APS)



Note: This question was only asked to respondents on the "T-Scale".

Figure 4.3: Have you participated in the APS differentiated compensation program known as the Career Advancement Program? (by Years in Education)



Note: This question was only asked to respondents on the "T-Scale".

⁶⁷ Question 31 – Objective 4a

Figure 4.4: Have you participated in the APS differentiated compensation program known as the Career Advancement Program? (by Location)

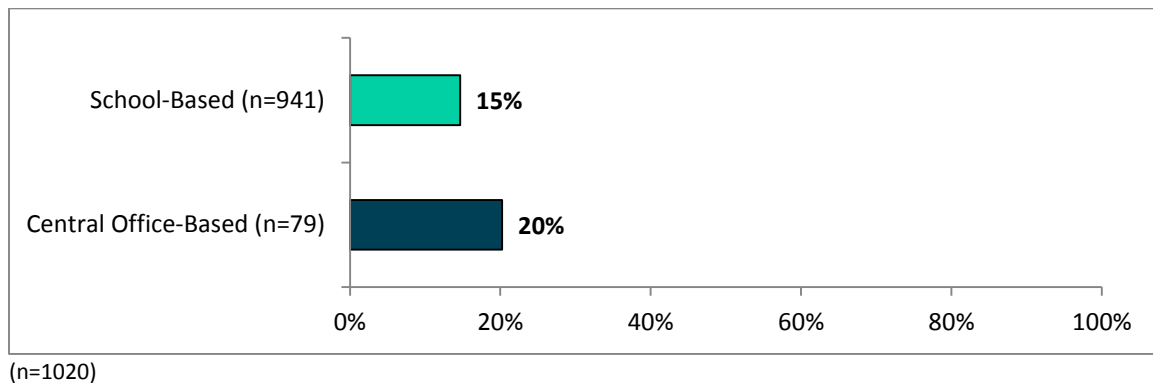
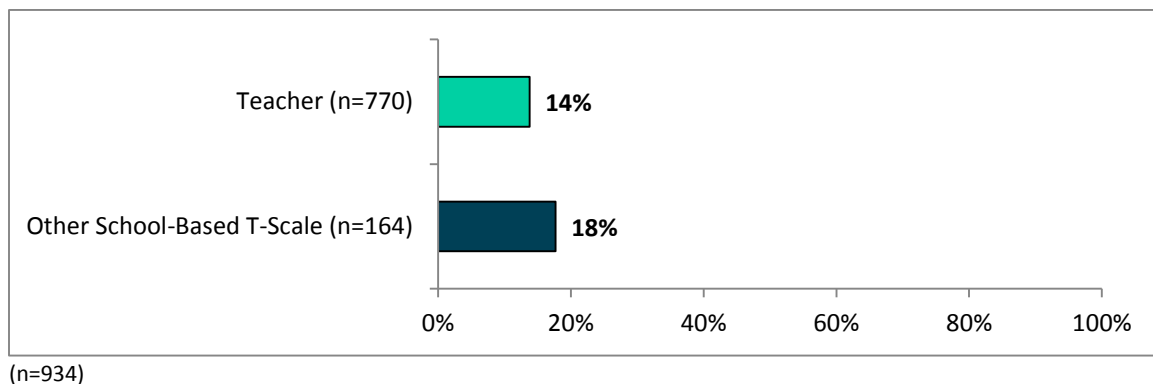


Figure 4.5: Have you participated in the APS differentiated compensation program known as the Career Advancement Program? (by Teacher Type)



PARTICIPANTS

Figure 4.6: Participation in Differentiated Compensation⁶⁸

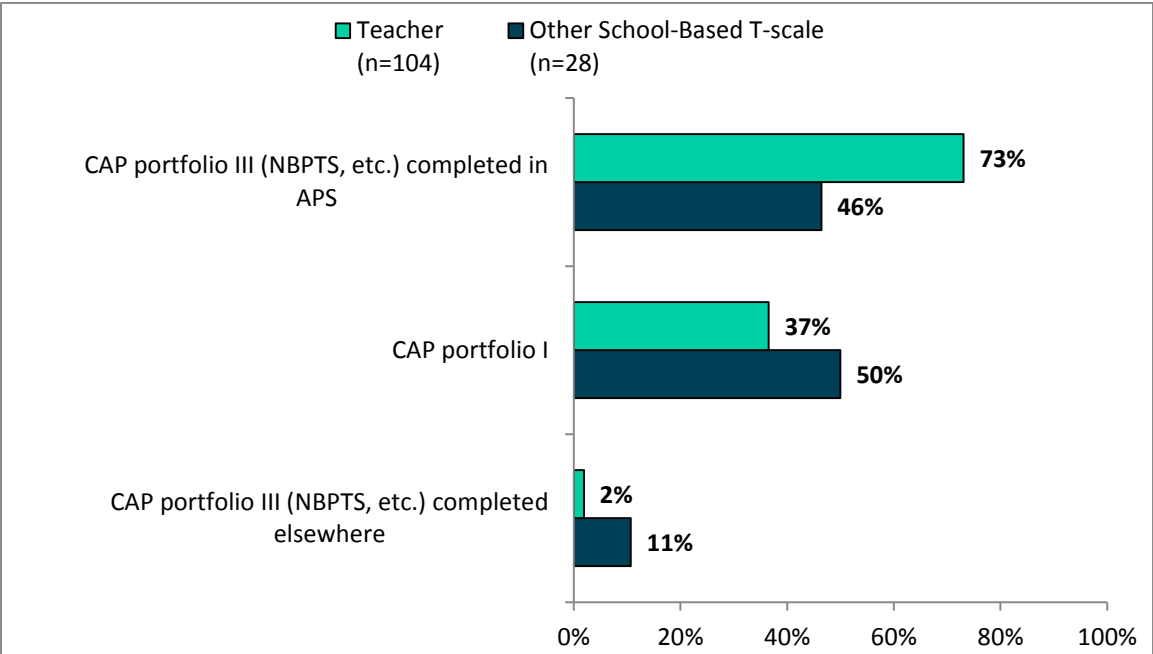
RESPONSE	PERCENTAGE
CAP portfolio III(NBPTS, etc.) completed in APS	63%
CAP portfolio I	40%
CAP portfolio III (NBPTS, etc.) completed elsewhere	7%

(n=144)

Note: This question was only asked to respondents who have participated in the APS differentiated compensation program. Totals sum to greater than 100 percent because respondents could choose multiple responses.

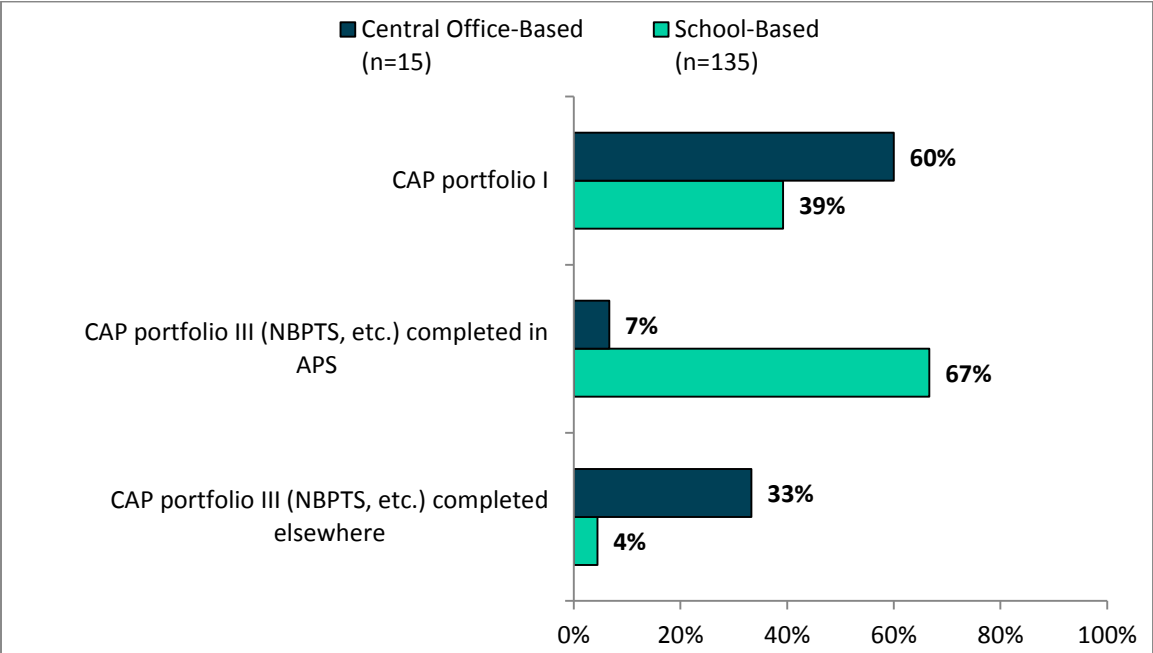
⁶⁸ Question 32 – Objective 4a

Figure 4.7: Participation in Differentiated Compensation⁶⁹ (by Teacher Type)



Note: This question was only asked to respondents who have participated in the APS differentiated compensation program. Totals sum to greater than 100 percent because respondents could choose multiple responses.

Figure 4.8: Participation in Differentiated Compensation⁷⁰ (by Location)

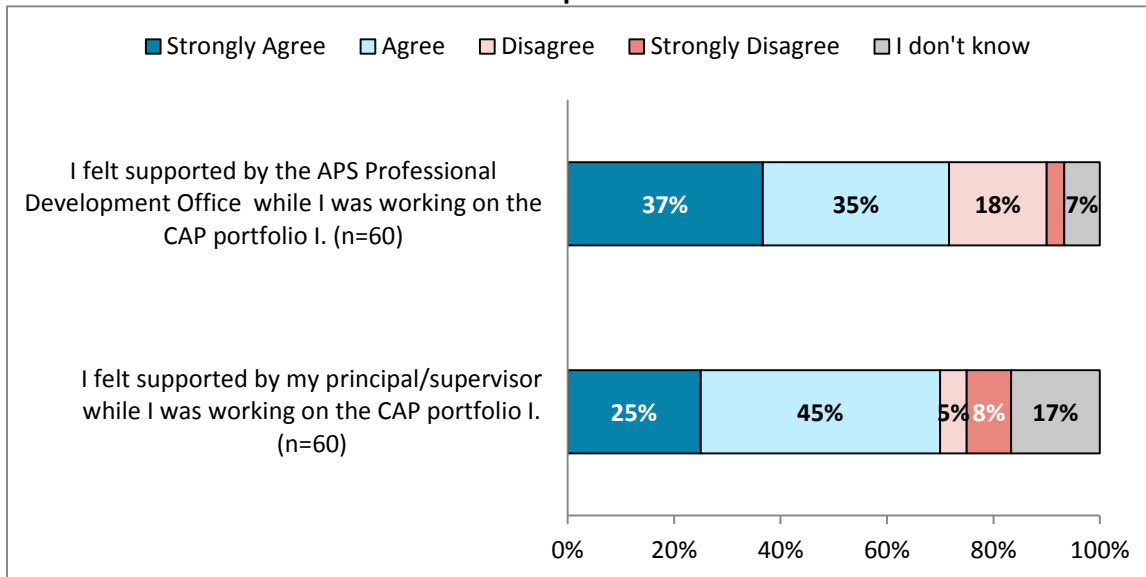


Note: This question was only asked to respondents who have participated in the APS differentiated compensation program. Totals sum to greater than 100 percent because respondents could choose multiple responses.

⁶⁹ Question 32 – Objective 4a

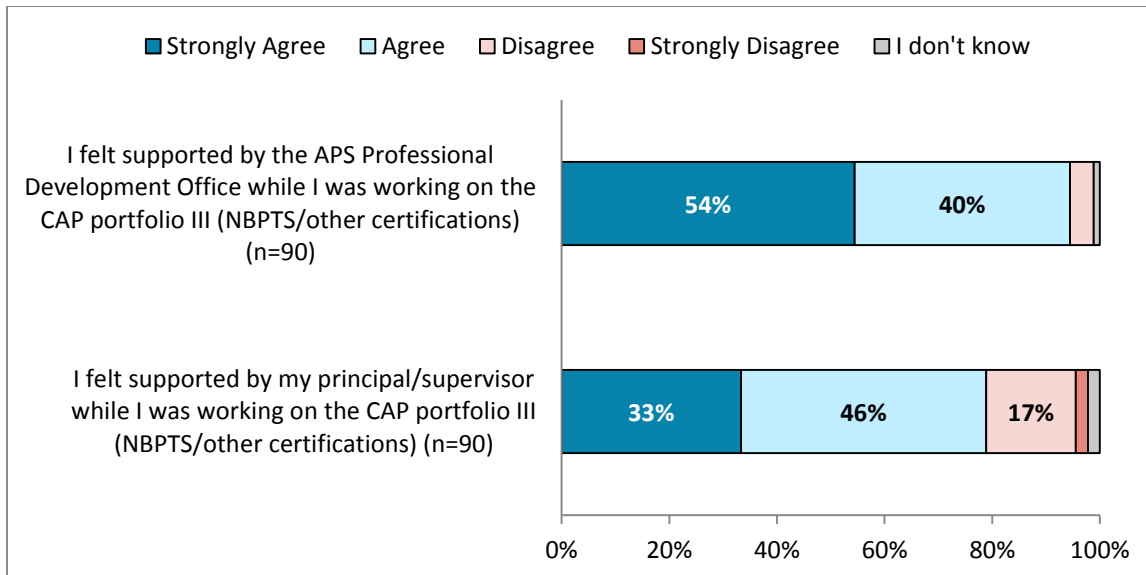
⁷⁰ Question 32 – Objective 4a

Figure 4.9: Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements regarding the CAP portfolio I⁷¹



Note: This question was only asked to respondents who have participated in the CAP portfolio I.

Figure 4.10: Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements regarding the CAP portfolio III⁷²



Note: This question was only asked to respondents who have participated in the CAP portfolio III.

⁷¹ Question 34- Objectives 4c and 8a.

⁷² Question 36- Objectives 4c and 8a.

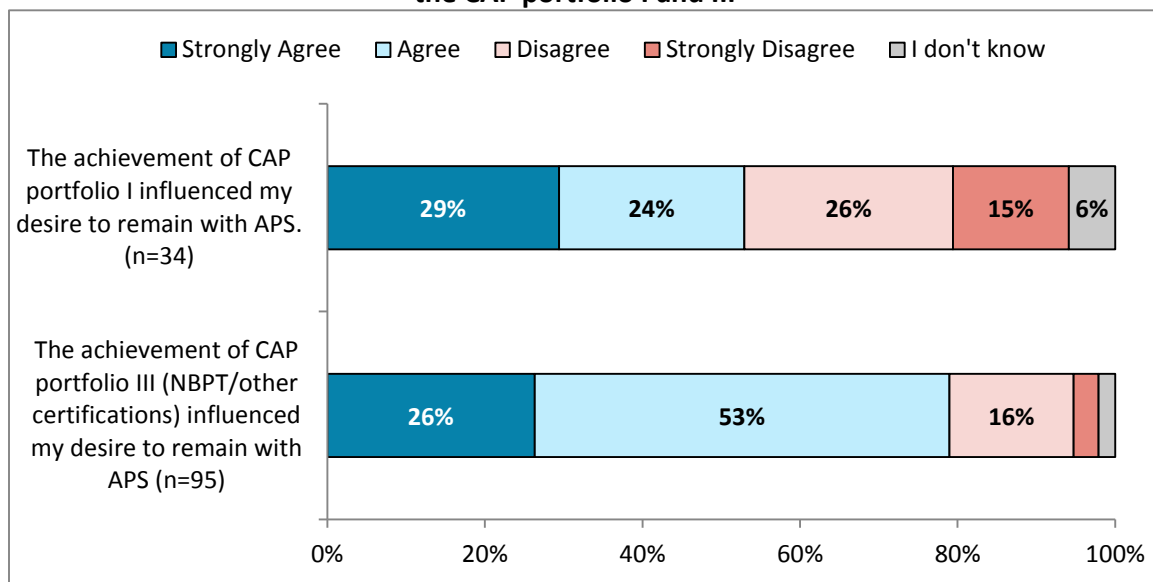
Figure 4.11: Were you successful in being moved to the CAP salary schedule?⁷³

RESPONSE	PERCENTAGE
Yes	70%
No	10%
I don't know – still in progress	20%

(n=147)

Note: This question was only asked to respondents who have participated in the APS differentiated compensation program.

Figure 4.12: Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements regarding the CAP portfolio I and III⁷⁴



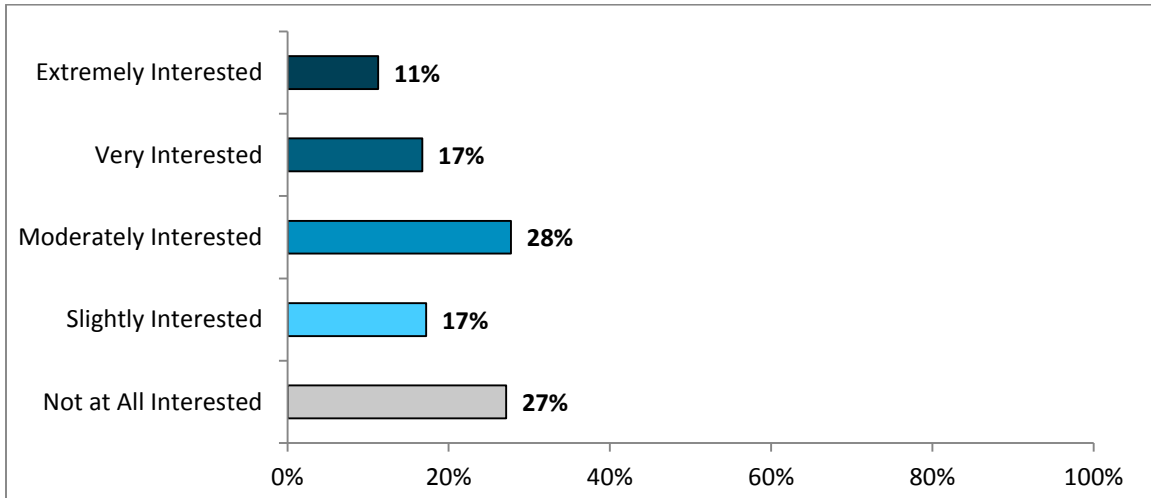
Note: This question was only asked to respondents who have participated in the CAP portfolio I or both CAP portfolio I and III differentiated compensations programs, and who were successfully moved to the CAP salary schedule.

⁷³ Question 33 – Objective 4a

⁷⁴ Question 34 – Objectives 4c and 8a

NON-PARTICIPANTS

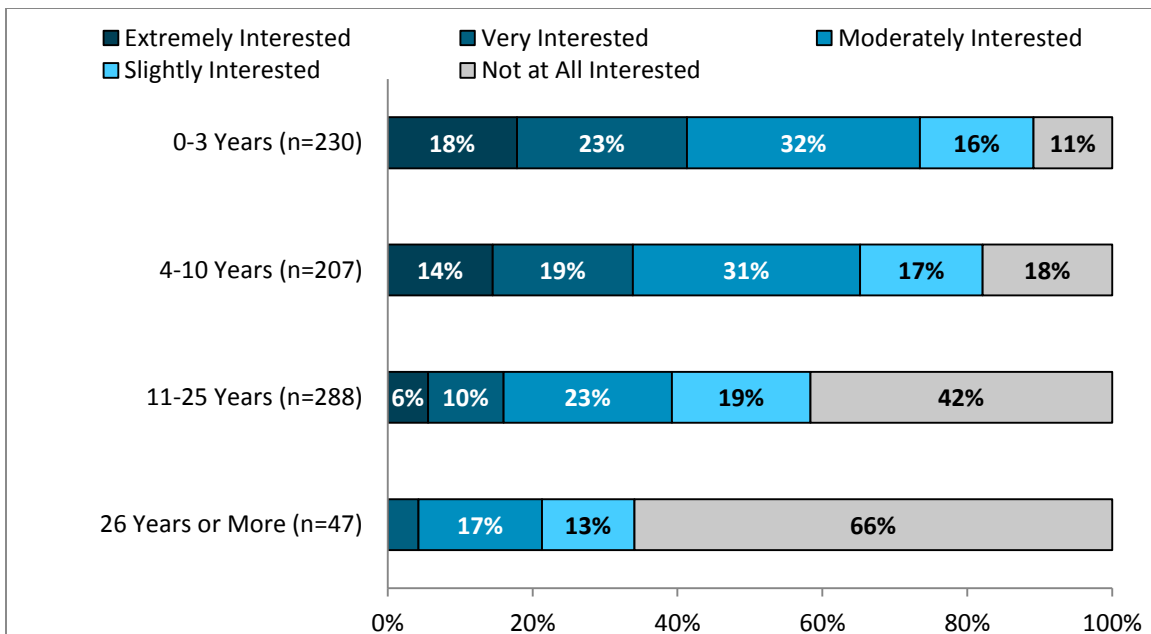
Figure 4.13: What is your level of interest in participating in one of the APS differentiated compensation programs?⁷⁵



(n=837)

Note: This question was only asked to respondents who have NOT participated in an APS differentiated compensation program.

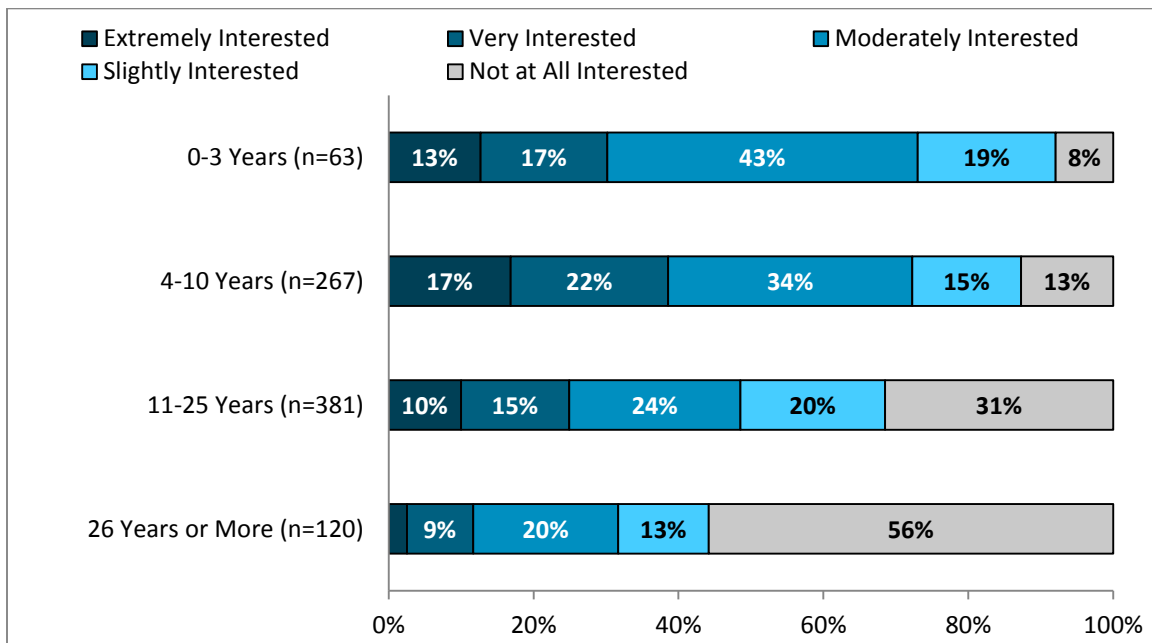
Figure 4.14: What is your level of interest in participating in one of the APS differentiated compensation programs? (by Year at APS)



Note: This question was only asked to respondents who have NOT participated in an APS differentiated compensation program.

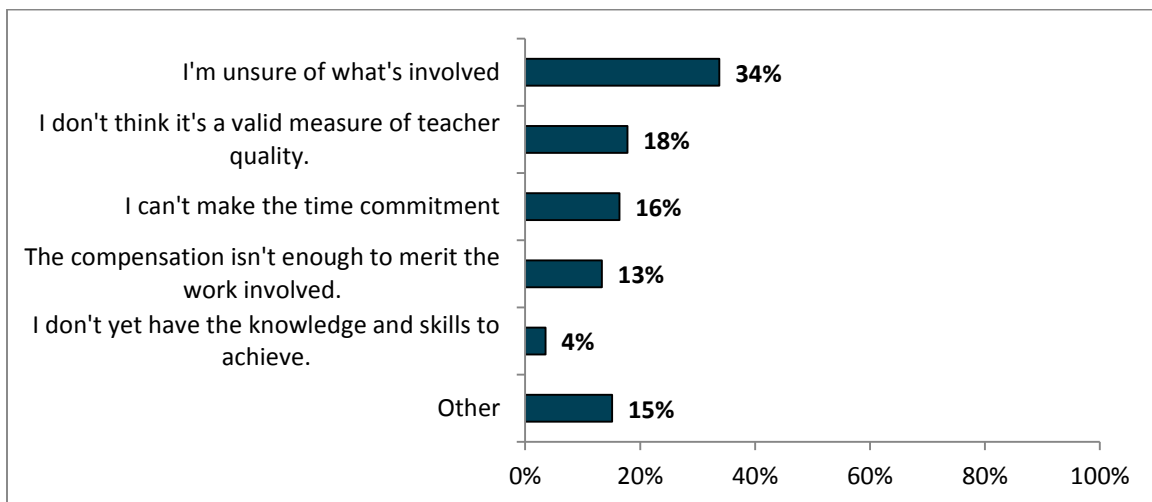
⁷⁵ Question 38 – Objective 4b

Figure 4.15: What is your level of interest in participating in one of the APS differentiated compensation programs? (by Years in Education)



Note: This question was only asked to respondents who have NOT participated in an APS differentiated compensation program.

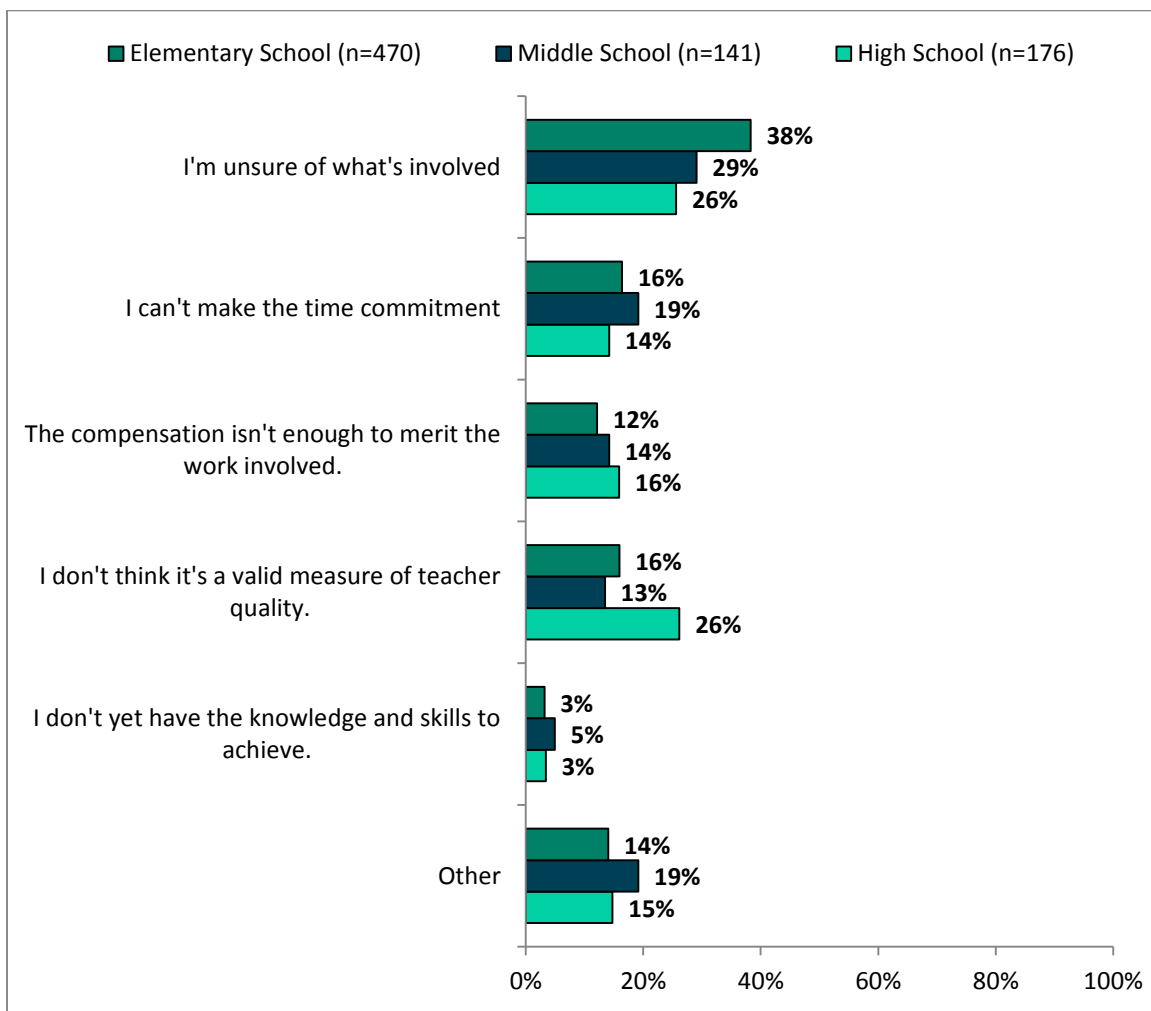
Figure 4.16: Factors Preventing Participation or Interest in Differentiated Compensation Program⁷⁶



(n=787)

⁷⁶ Question 39 – Objective 4b

**Figure 4.17: Factors Preventing Participation in Differentiated Compensation Program
(by Grade Level)⁷⁷**



⁷⁷ Question 39 – Objective 4b

Figure 4.18: Factors Preventing Participation or Interest in Differentiated Compensation Program (by Years at APS)

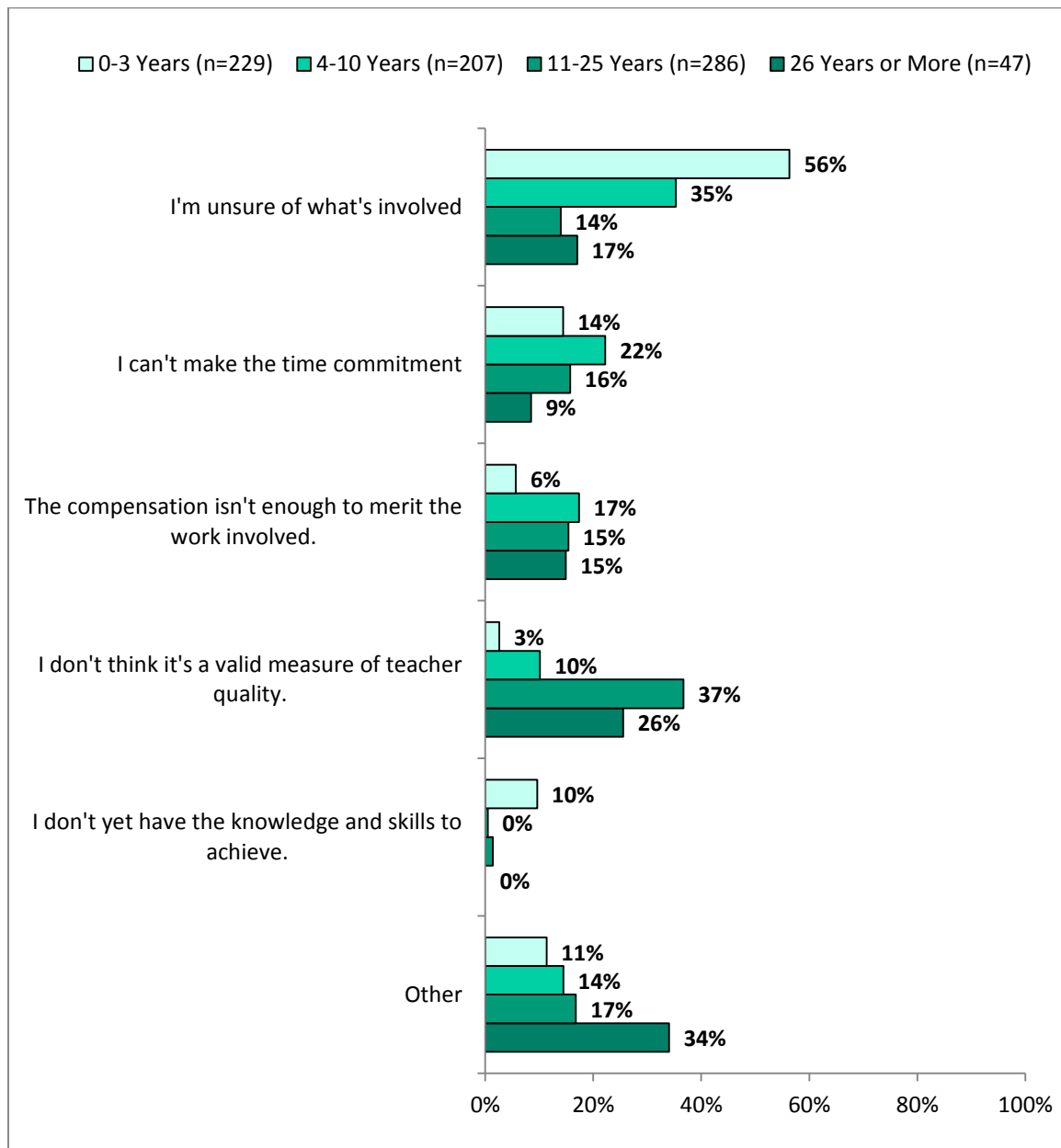


Figure 4.19: Factors Preventing Participation or Interest in Differentiated Compensation Program (by Years in Education)

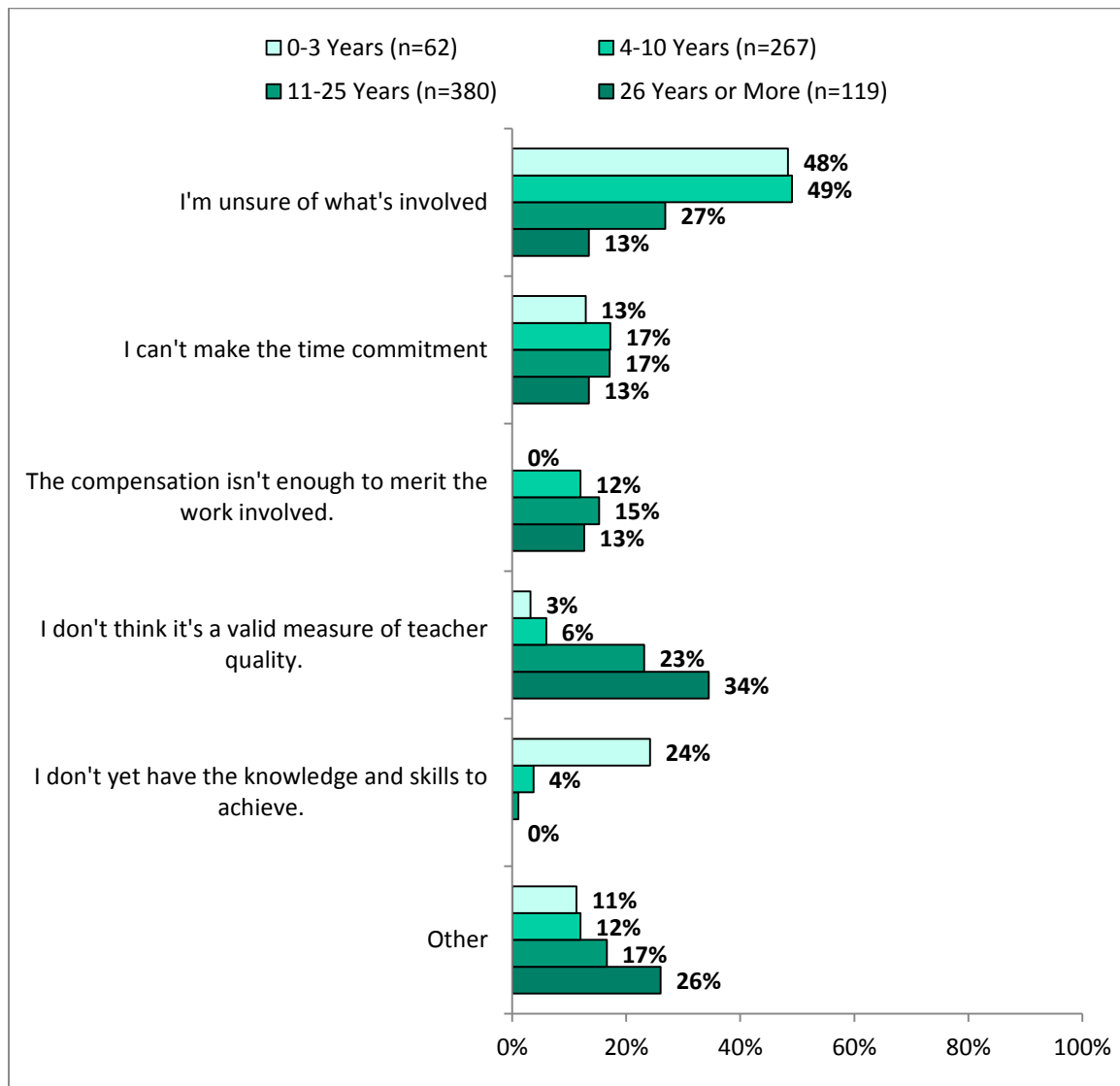
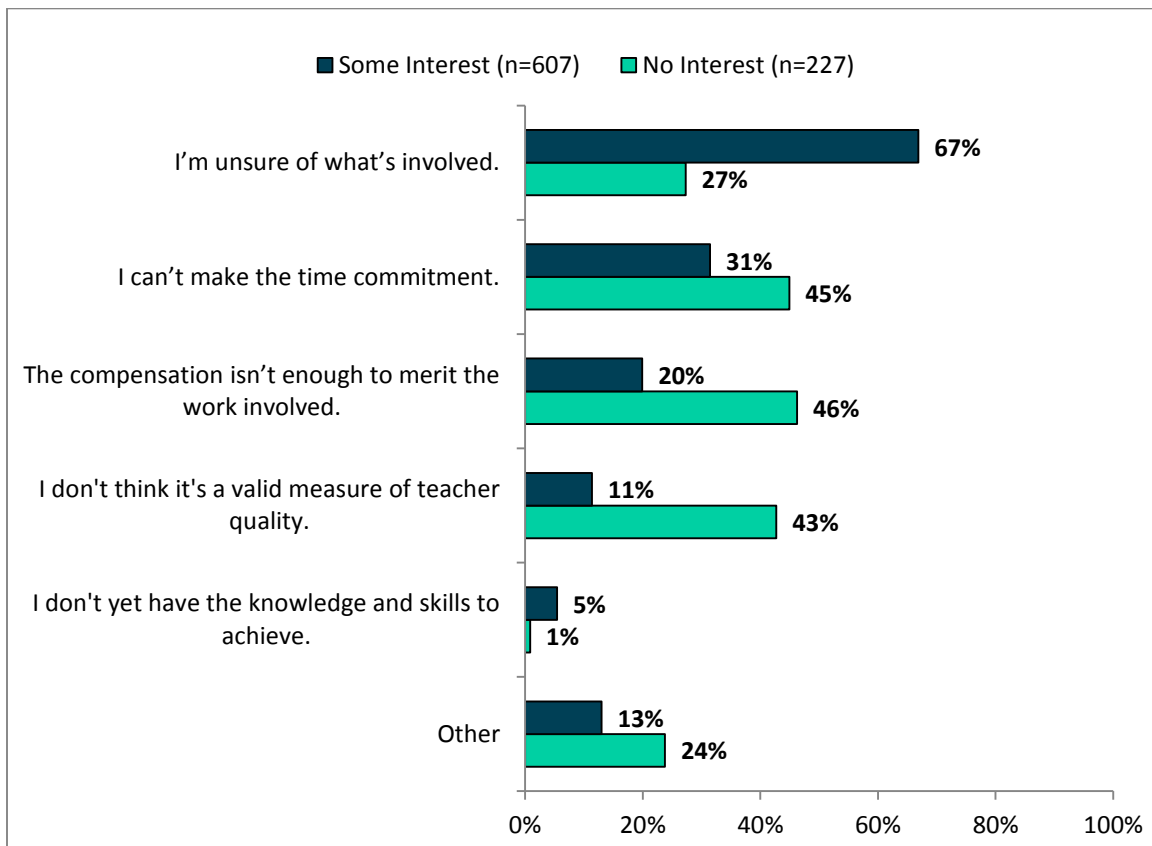


Figure 4.20: Factors Preventing Participation or Interest in Differentiated Compensation Program Participation (by Level of Interest in Participating)⁷⁸



⁷⁸ Question 40 – Objective 4b

SECTION V: PROVIDERS

This section presents findings regarding providers of PD at APS. The questions in this section relate to such issues as who these providers are, factors that influence one's ability to provide effective PD, and methods of measuring the effectiveness of the PD one provides.

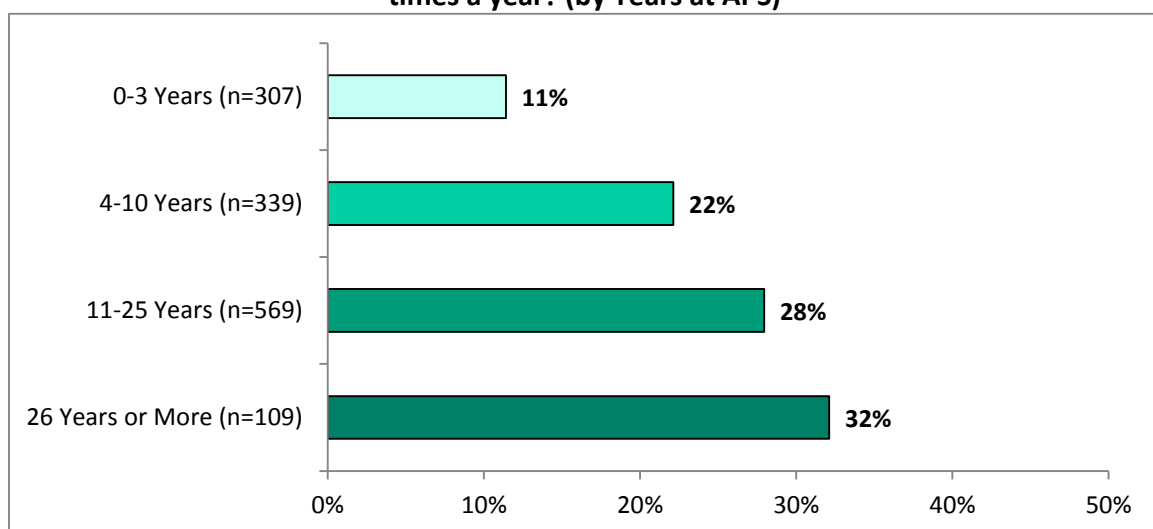
FINDINGS

- **Respondents who are regular providers of PD at APS are more likely to be central office-based than school-based, but school-based providers of PD are more likely to believe they are able to provide adequate levels of PD.** Thirty-five percent of central office-based respondents provide PD at least four times a year, compared to 21 percent of school-based respondents. By contrast, 76 percent of school-based respondents, versus 69 percent of central office-based respondents, agree or strongly agree that they are able to provide the necessary level and amount of professional development (Figure 5.3, Figure 5.4)
- **Direct follow-up with participants is the method most commonly used by providers to measure the effectiveness of the PD they provide.** Sixty-two percent of PD providers indicate they use this method to measure effectiveness. The next most common methods are participant surveys (55 percent) and classroom observation (52 percent) (Figures 5.8).

FIGURES

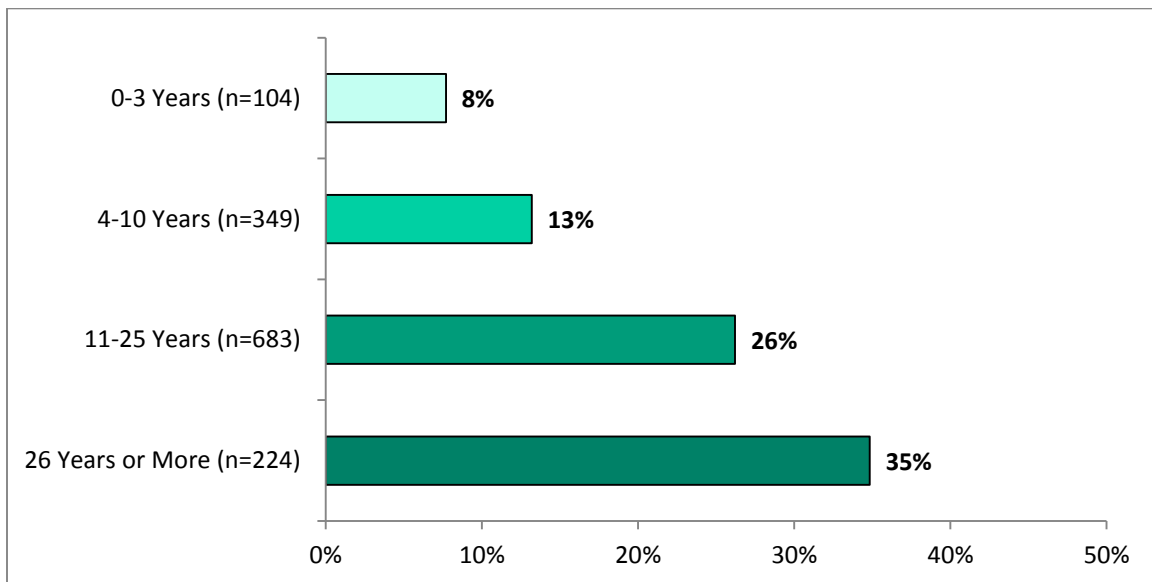
IMPLEMENTATION

Figure 5.1: Do you provide professional development to others within APS at least four times a year? (by Years at APS)



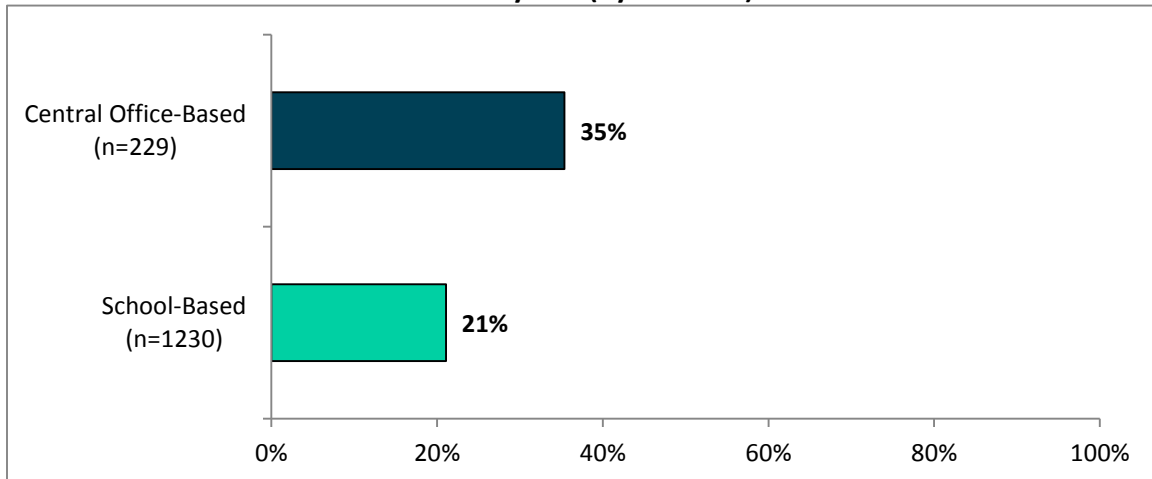
Note: Percentages represent respondents who selected "yes".

Figure 5.2: Do you provide professional development to others within APS at least four times a year? (by Years in Education)



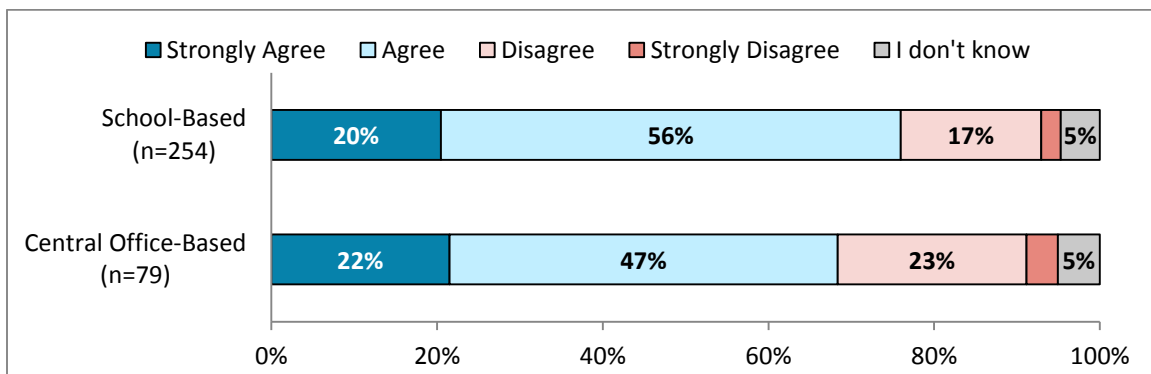
Note: Percentages represent respondents who selected “yes”.

Figure 5.3: Do you provide professional development to others within APS at least four times a year? (by Location)



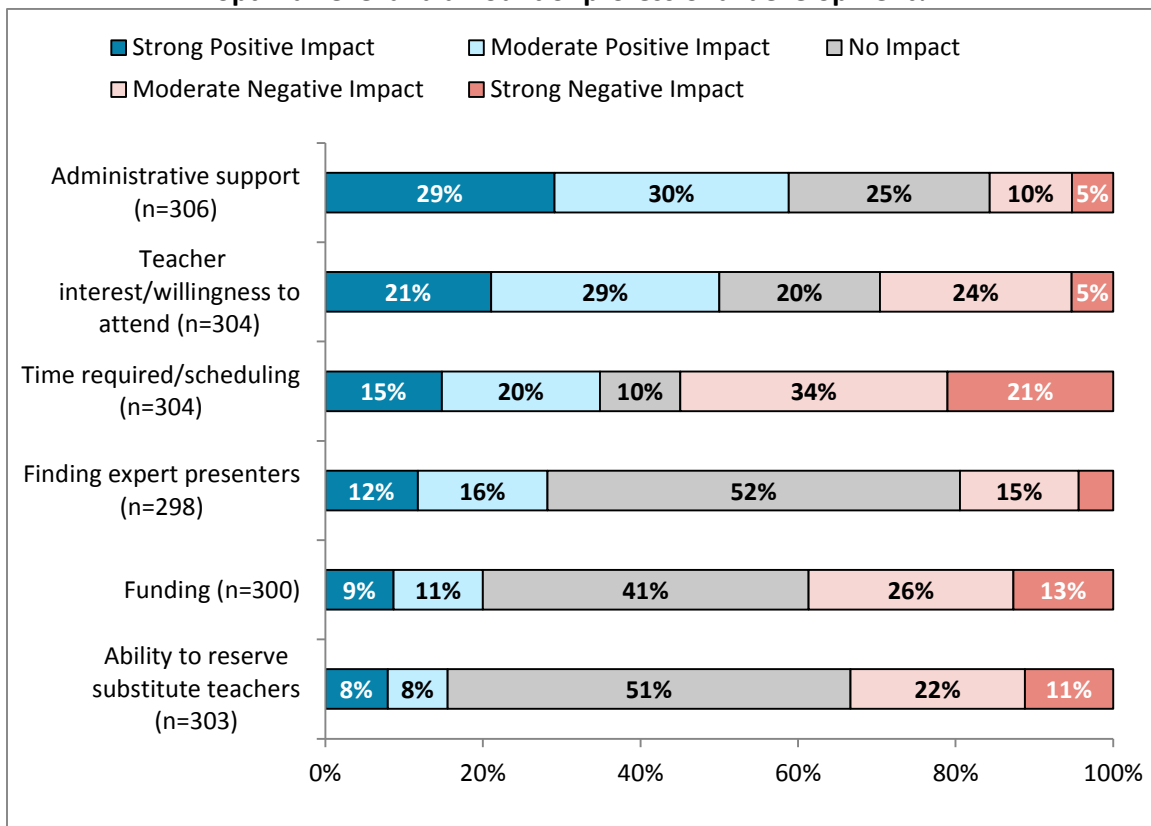
Note: Percentages represent respondents who selected “yes”.

Figure 5.4: Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statement: *I am able to provide the necessary level and amount of professional development* (by Location)⁷⁹



Note: This question was only asked to respondents who provide professional development to others within APS at least four times a year.

Figure 5.5: To what extent do the following factors impact your ability to provide the optimal level and amount of professional development?⁸⁰

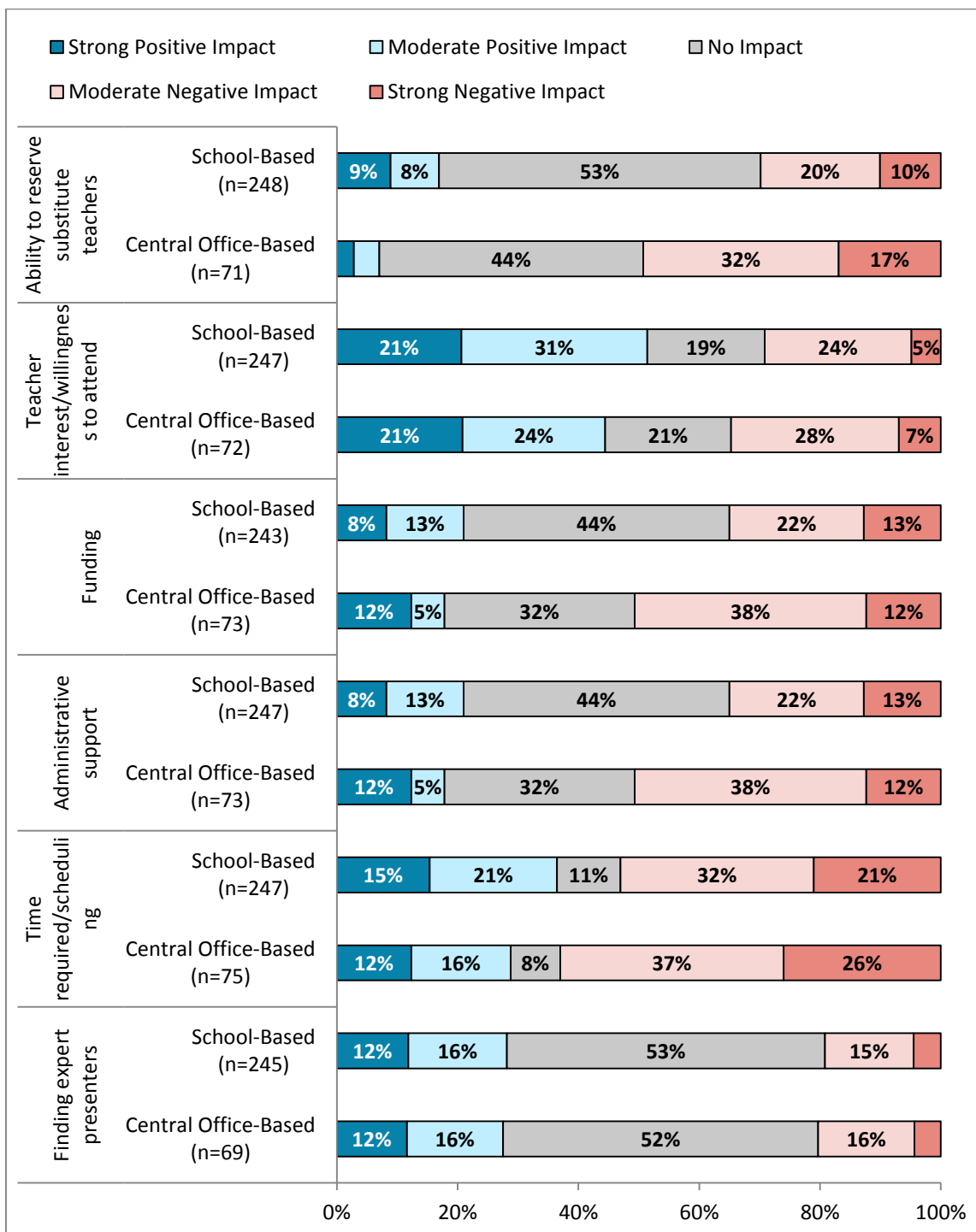


Note: This question was only asked to respondents who provide professional development to others within APS at least four times a year.

⁷⁹ Question 42 – Objective 1d

⁸⁰ Question 43 – Objectives 1d and 6c

Figure 5.6: To what extent do the following factors impact your ability to provide the optimal level and amount of professional development? (by Location)⁸¹



Note: This question was only asked to respondents who provide professional development to others within APS at least four times a year.

⁸¹ Question 43 – Objectives 1d and 6c

Figure 5.7: To what extent do the following factors impact your ability to provide the optimal level and amount of professional development? (by Pay Scale)⁸²

Factor	Group	Strong Negative Impact	Moderate Negative Impact	No Impact	Moderate Positive Impact	Strong Positive Impact
Ability to reserve substitute teachers	A-Scale (n=14)	0%	7%	36%	29%	29%
	E-Scale (n=30)	17%	27%	50%	0%	7%
	G-Scale (n=3)	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%
	P-Scale (n=52)	15%	38%	38%	4%	4%
	T-Scale (n=194)	10%	18%	56%	9%	8%
	Other Pay Scale (n=12)	17%	25%	50%	0%	8%
Teacher interest/willingness to attend	A-Scale (n=14)	0%	21%	21%	36%	21%
	E-Scale (n=32)	3%	31%	28%	16%	22%
	G-Scale (n=3)	0%	0%	67%	33%	0%
	P-Scale (n=52)	8%	27%	19%	29%	17%
	T-Scale (n=193)	5%	23%	19%	31%	22%
	Other Pay Scale (n=12)	8%	25%	25%	25%	17%
Funding	A-Scale (n=12)	0%	17%	25%	42%	17%
	E-Scale (n=32)	16%	47%	28%	3%	6%
	G-Scale (n=3)	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%
	P-Scale (n=52)	19%	42%	19%	10%	10%
	T-Scale (n=192)	11%	19%	50%	11%	8%
	Other Pay Scale (n=11)	18%	18%	45%	9%	9%

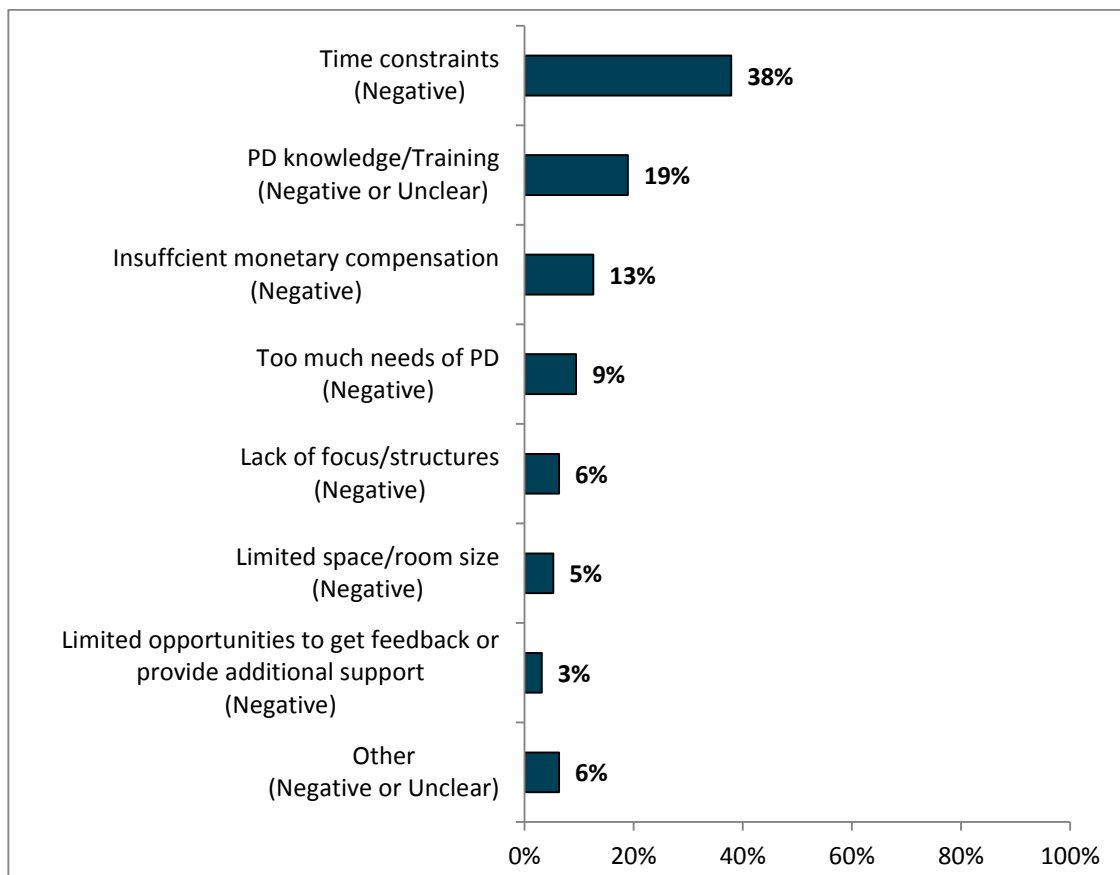
⁸² Question 43 – Objectives 1d and 6c

Note: The “Other Pay Scale” presents aggregate responses of C, D, X, and M- Scale respondents.

Factor	Group	Strong Negative Impact	Moderate Negative Impact	No Impact	Moderate Positive Impact	Strong Positive Impact
Administrative support	A-Scale (n=13)	0%	8%	23%	46%	23%
	E-Scale (n=33)	12%	21%	18%	21%	27%
	G-Scale (n=4)	0%	50%	0%	25%	25%
	P-Scale (n=52)	6%	4%	40%	13%	37%
	T-Scale (n=194)	4%	10%	24%	34%	28%
	Other Pay Scale (n=12)	17%	8%	17%	42%	17%
Time required/ scheduling	A-Scale (n=13)	0%	15%	31%	38%	15%
	E-Scale (n=33)	42%	33%	3%	9%	12%
	G-Scale (n=4)	0%	33%	0%	33%	33%
	P-Scale (n=52)	27%	40%	4%	15%	13%
	T-Scale (n=194)	18%	35%	12%	20%	15%
	Other Pay Scale (n=12)	17%	8%	0%	50%	25%
Finding expert presenters	A-Scale (n=13)	0%	8%	31%	38%	23%
	E-Scale (n=33)	10%	16%	48%	16%	10%
	G-Scale (n=3)	0%	0%	67%	33%	0%
	P-Scale (n=52)	6%	16%	57%	8%	14%
	T-Scale (n=193)	4%	16%	53%	17%	11%
	Other Pay Scale (n=12)	0%	8%	50%	25%	17%

Note: This question was only asked to respondents who provide professional development to others within APS at least four times a year. Darker blue indicates higher value, while lighter blue indicates lower value.

Figure 5.8: Open-Ended Responses – Please list any other factors that impact your ability to provide the optimal level and amount of professional development, and indicate whether the impact is negative or positive.

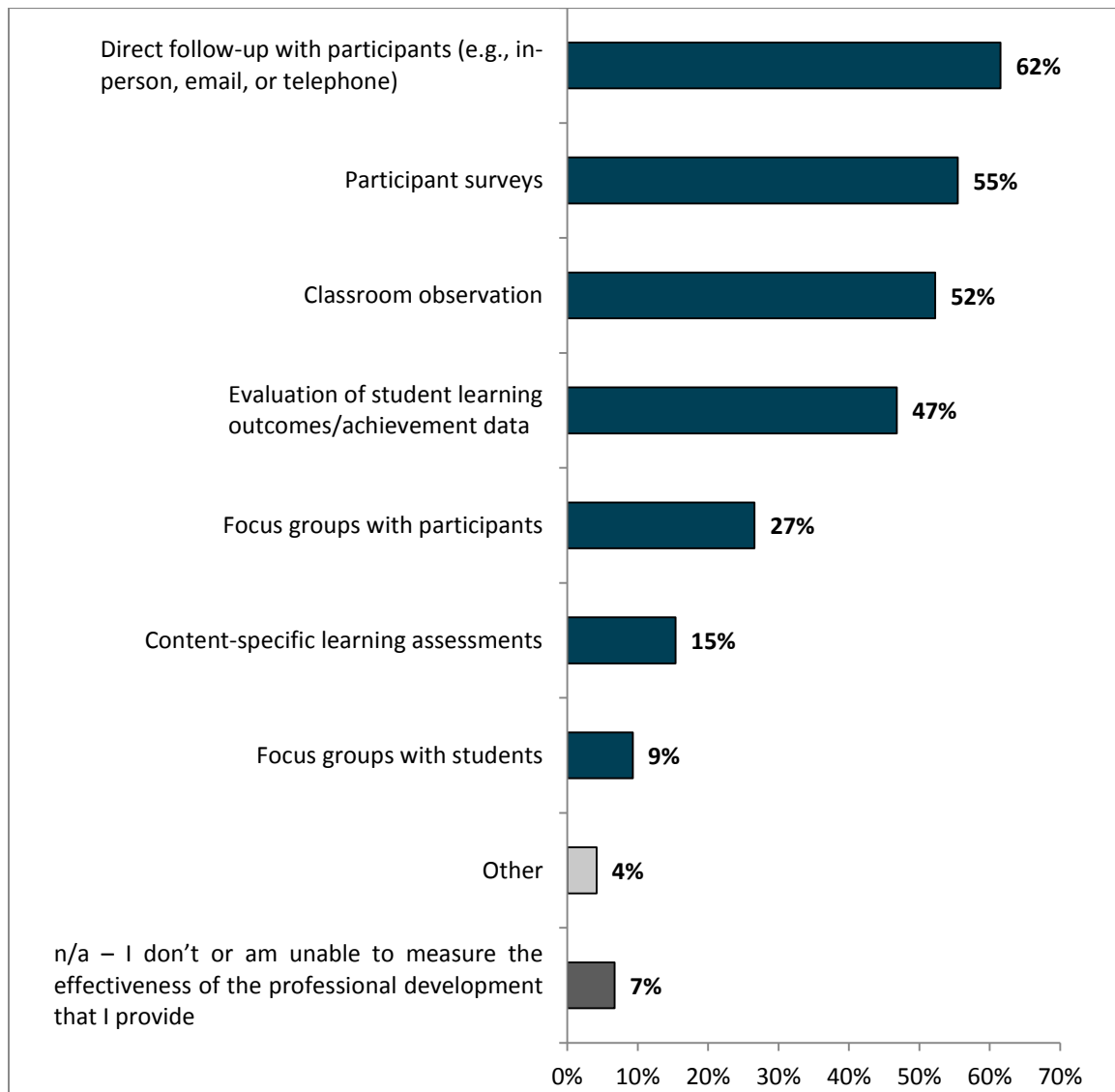


(n=72)

Note: This figure displays the most common themes, which Hanover coded from open-ended responses. Respondents were directed to indicate whether their response reflects a positive or negative impact. In most cases the response reflects a negative impact, but in some cases the respondent did not specify whether the impact is positive or negative. Percentages do not sum to 100 percent, as respondents could cite more than one factor. Respondents who provided non-codable responses were excluded from analysis. For full, verbatim answers, see the report's data supplement.

MEASURING EFFECTIVENESS

Figure 5.9: Tools/Methods Used to Measure Effectiveness of PD You Provide⁸³

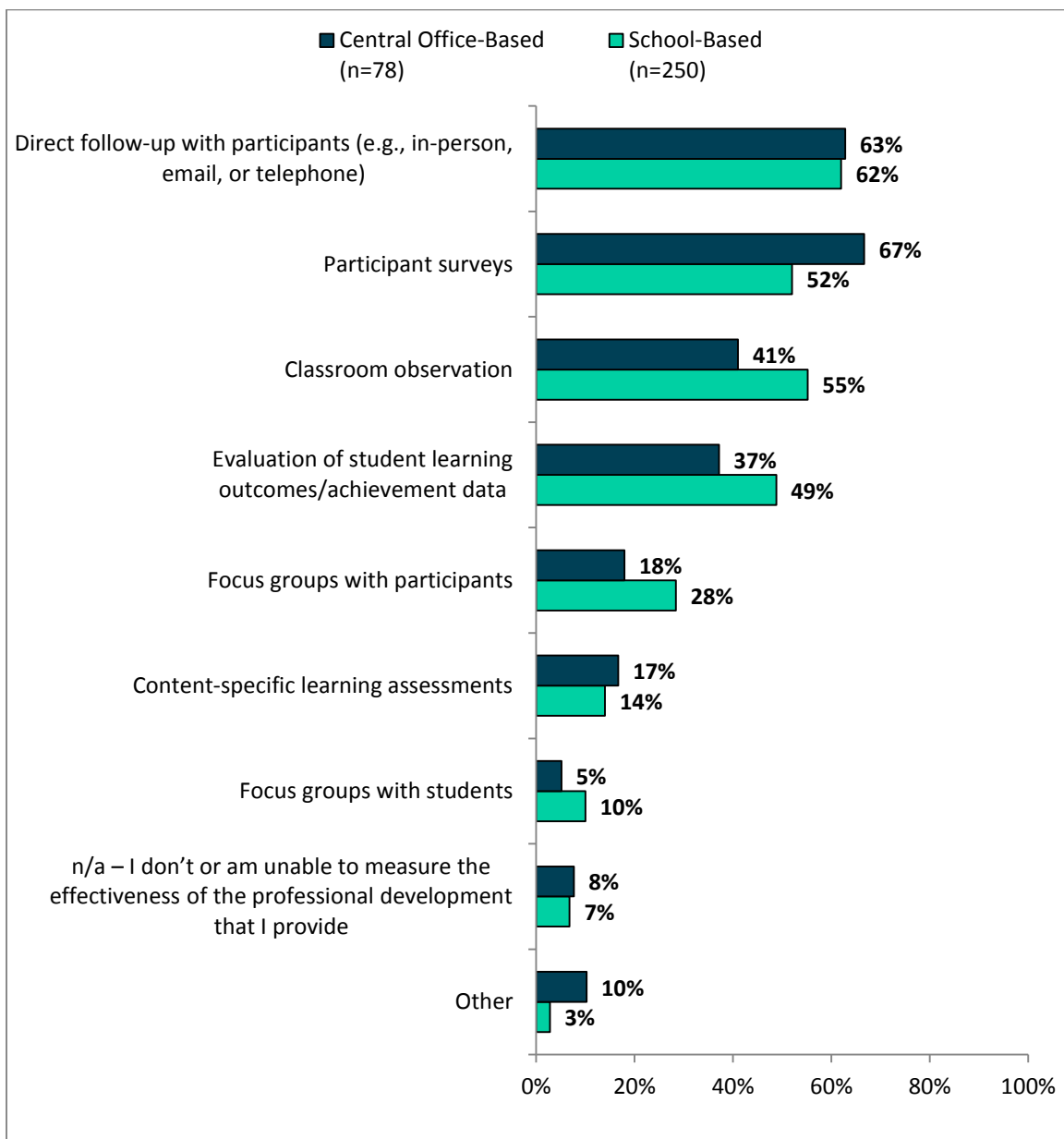


(n=312)

Note: Totals sum to greater than 100 percent because respondents could choose multiple responses.

⁸³ Question 44 – Objectives 2b and 6a

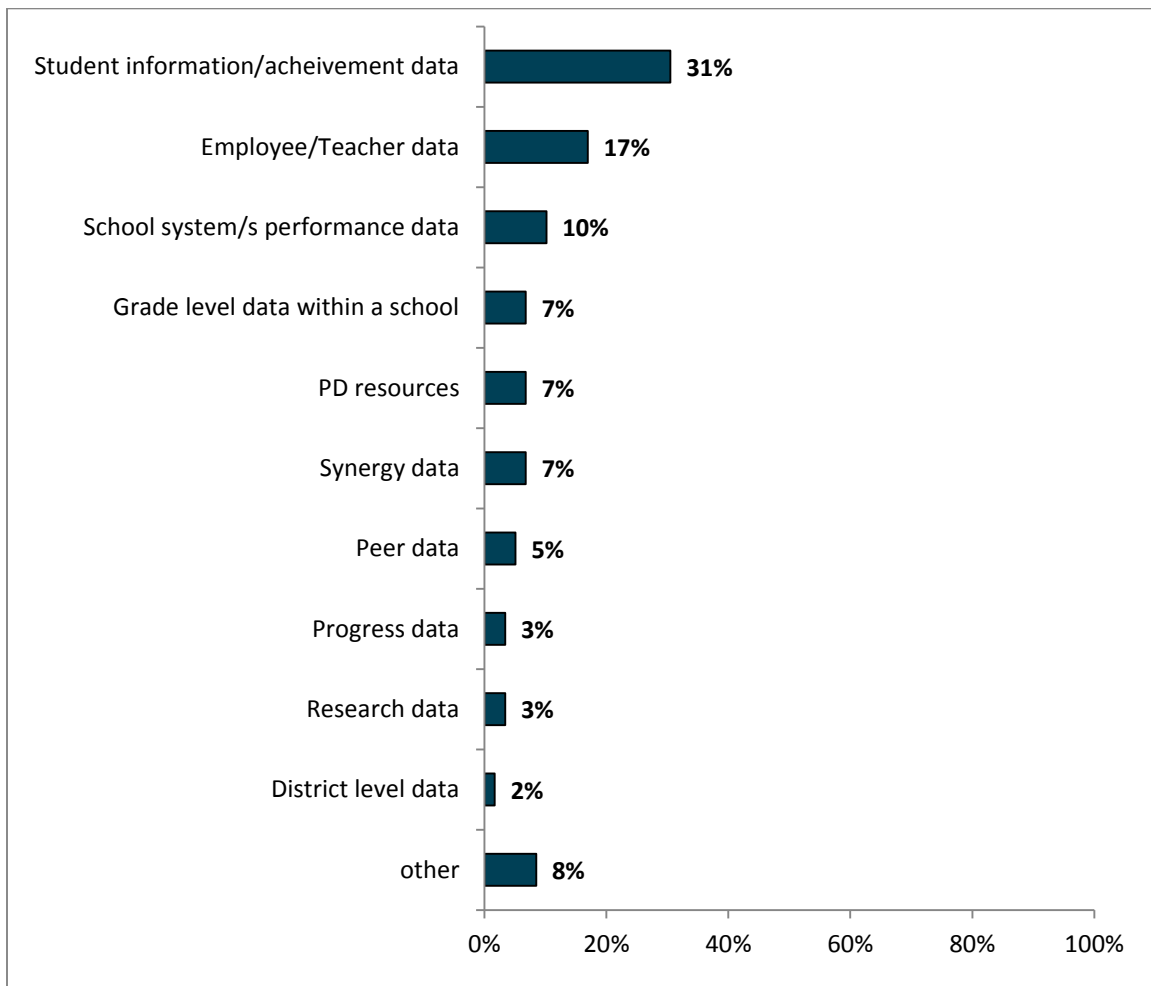
Figure 5.10: Tools/Methods Used to Measure Effectiveness of PD You Provide⁸⁴
(by Location)



Note: Totals sum to greater than 100 percent because respondents could choose multiple responses.

⁸⁴ Question 44 – Objectives 2b and 6a

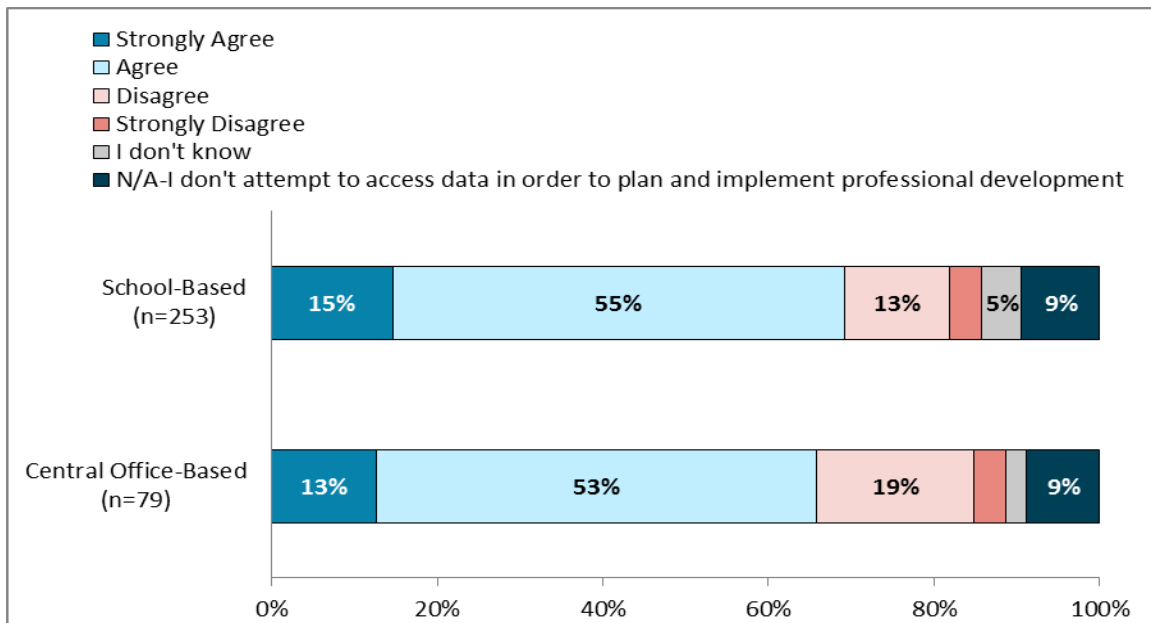
Figure 5.11: Of the data that you cannot currently access, what types of data would you find helpful in planning and implementing professional development?⁸⁵



(n=81) Note: This figure displays the most common themes, which Hanover coded from open-ended responses. Percentages do not sum to 100 percent, as respondents could cite more than one type of data that they would find helpful in planning and implementing professional development. Respondents who provided non-codable responses were excluded from analysis. For full, verbatim answers, see the report's data supplement.

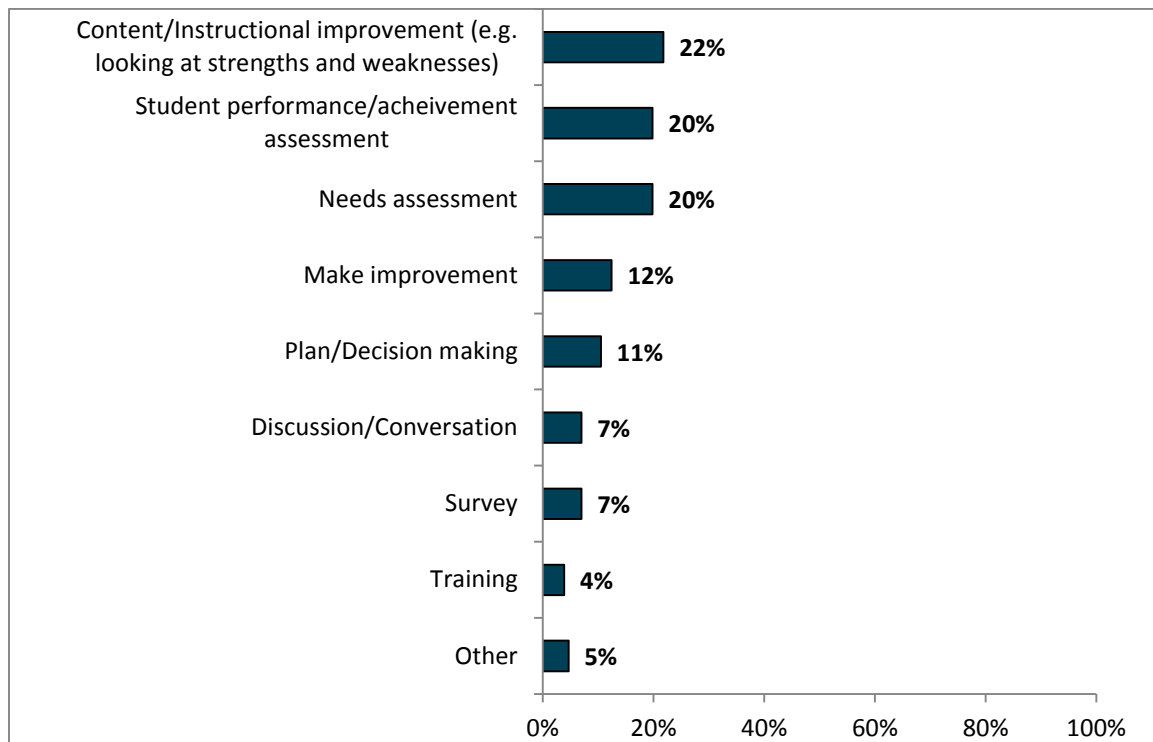
⁸⁵ Question 48 – Objective 6a

Figure 5.12: Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statement: *I have access to the data that I need in order to plan and implement professional development* (by Location)⁸⁶



⁸⁶ Question 46 – Objective 6a

Figure 5.13: How do you use data in your professional development planning?⁸⁷



(n=136) Note: This question was only asked to respondents who use data in order to plan and implement professional development. This figure displays the most common themes, which Hanover coded from open-ended responses. Percentages do not sum to 100 percent, as respondents could cite more than one way to use data in their professional development planning. Respondents who provided non-codable responses were excluded from analysis. For full, verbatim answers, see the report's data supplement.

⁸⁷ Question 47 – Objective 6a

SECTION VI: FEEDBACK AND EVALUATION

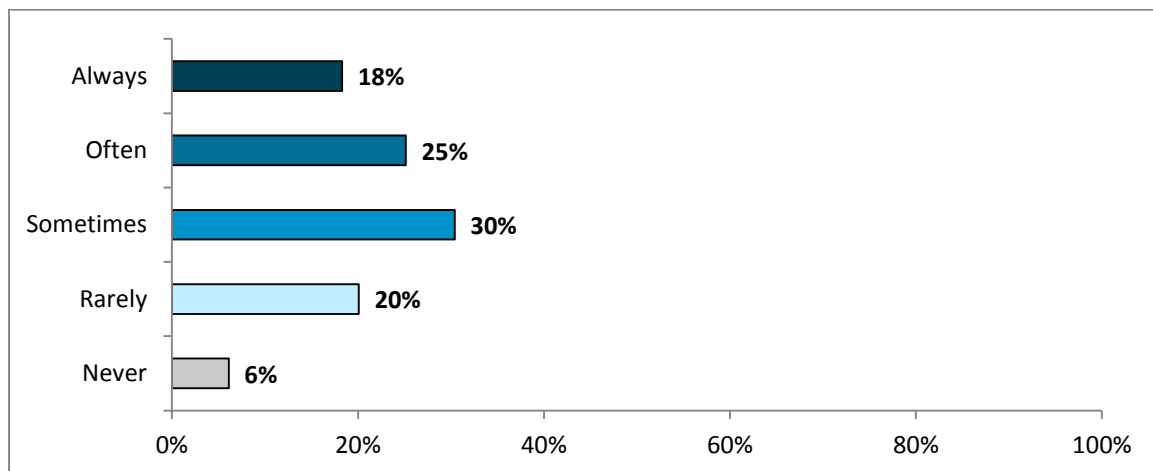
This section presents findings regarding the feedback respondents receive about their job performance, both in formal performance evaluations and in more informal settings. The questions in this section relate to such issues as the type of feedback that respondents receive, the usefulness of that feedback, and the individuals who provide feedback.

FINDINGS

- **Less than half of all respondents believe that the feedback they receive during formal evaluations can always or often be used to improve their job performance.** Eighteen percent of respondents believe they always receive such useful feedback and 25 percent believe they often receive such useful feedback. Twenty-six percent of respondents indicate they rarely (20 percent) or never (6 percent) receive feedback that they can use to improve their job performance (Figure 6.1).
- **Thirty-three percent of T-scale staff at the high school level never receive feedback from their principal.** This percentage drops to 23 percent among T-scale staff at the middle school level and 18 percent among T-scale staff at the elementary school level (Figure 6.6).

FIGURES

Figure 6.1: How frequently does your formal evaluation include feedback that you can use to improve your job performance?⁸⁸

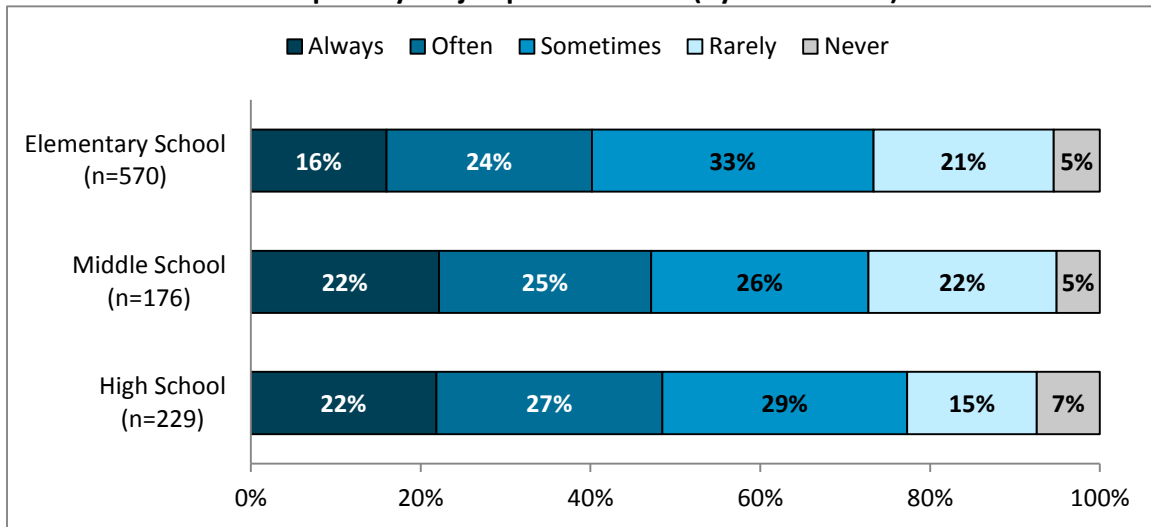


(n=1066)

Note: This question was only asked to respondents on the "T-scale" and "P-Scale" pay scales.

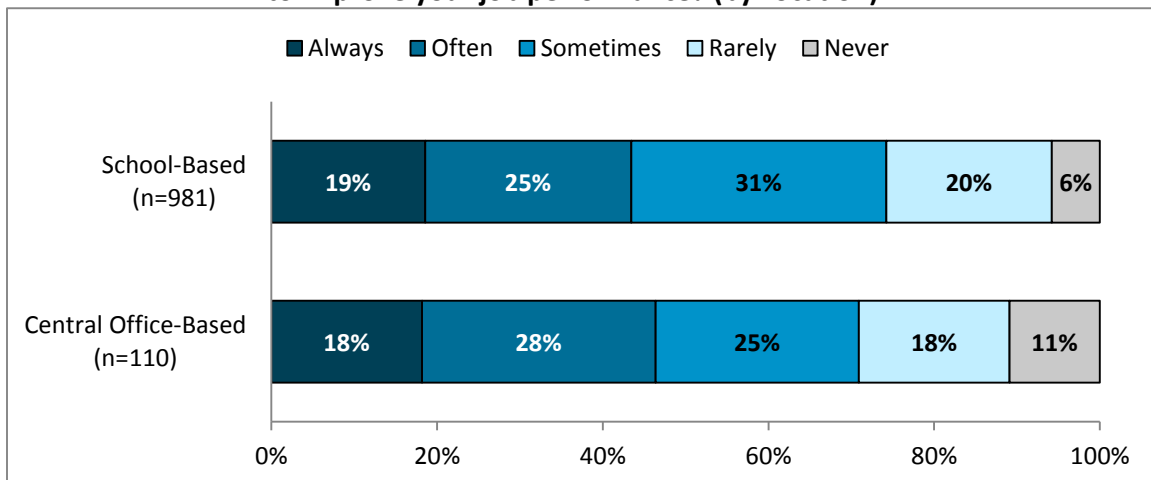
⁸⁸ Question 49 – Objective 3a

Figure 6.2: How frequently does your formal evaluation include feedback that you can use to improve your job performance? (by Grade Level)⁸⁹



Note: This question was only asked to respondents on the "T-scale" and "P-Scale" pay scales.

Figure 6.3: How frequently does your formal evaluation include feedback that you can use to improve your job performance? (by Location)⁹⁰

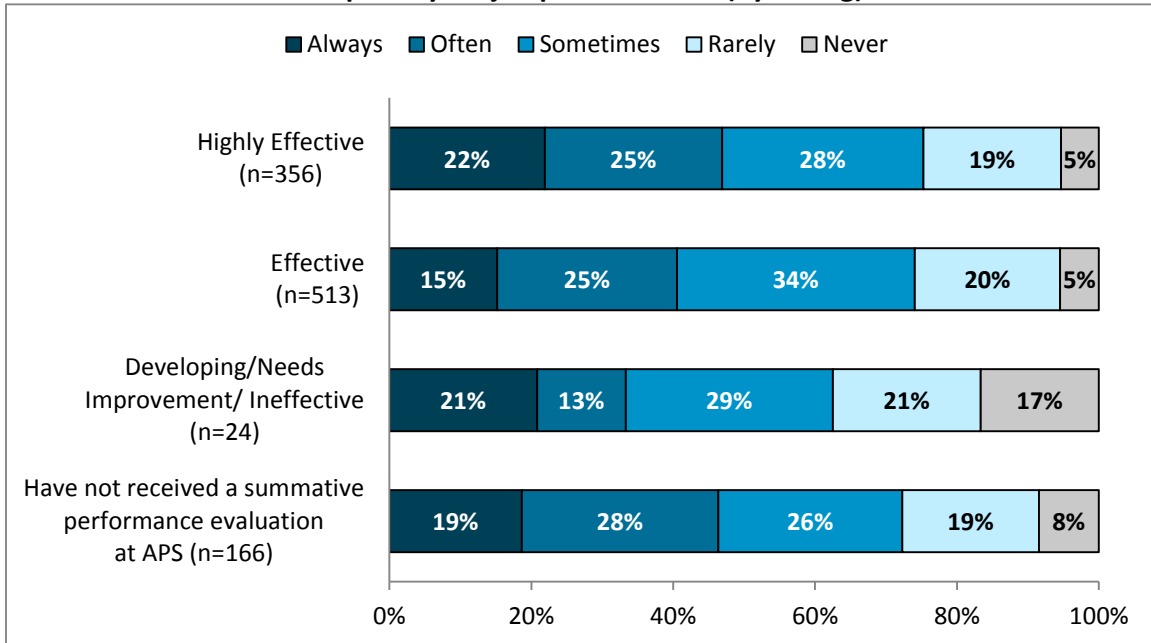


Note: This question was only asked to respondents on the "T-scale" and "P-Scale" pay scales.

⁸⁹ Question 49 – Objective 3a

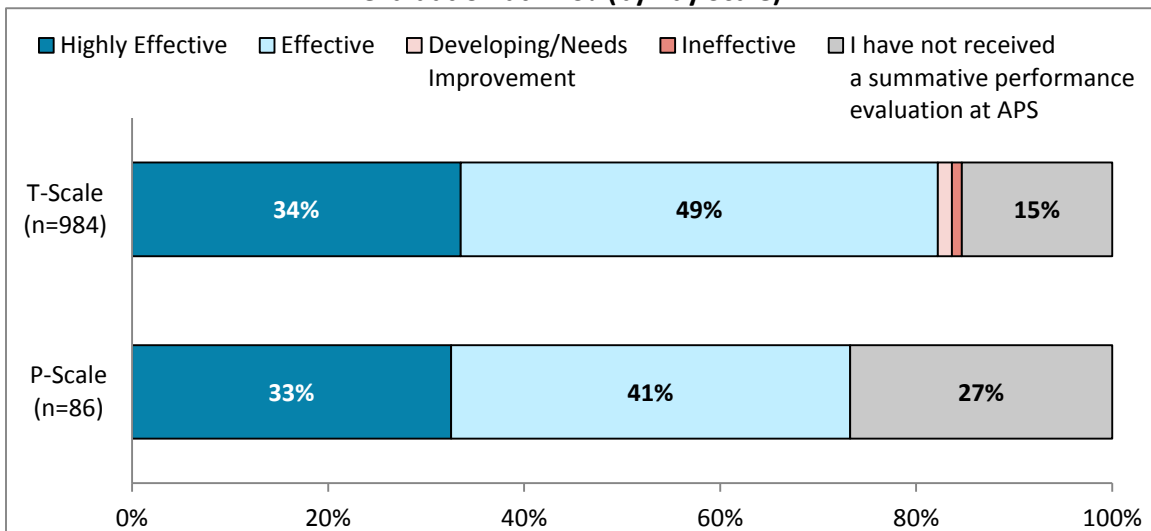
⁹⁰ Question 49 – Objective 3a

Figure 6.4: How frequently does your formal evaluation include feedback that you can use to improve your job performance? (by Rating)⁹¹



Note: This question was only asked to respondents on the “T-scale” and “P-Scale” pay scales.

Figure 6.5: What rating did you receive on your most recent summative performance evaluation at APS? (by Pay Scale)⁹²

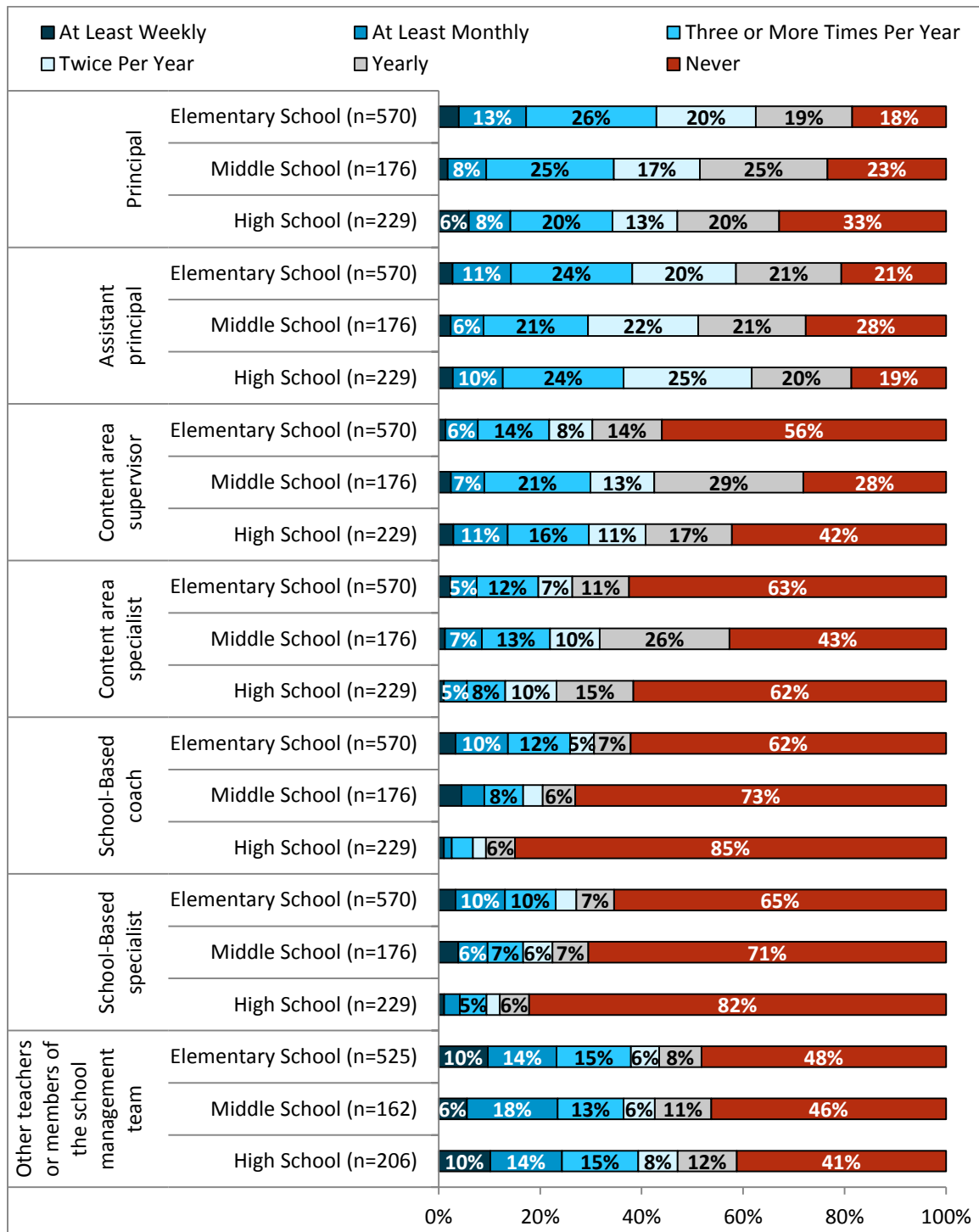


Note: This question was only asked to respondents on the “T-scale” and “P-Scale” pay scales.

⁹¹ Question 49 – Objective 3a

⁹² Responses to this question were compared with the actual data from APS’s human resources (HR) department and the numbers are largely comparable. While differences of up to 16 percent do exist between the survey responses and the HR data for P-scale staff, the overall breakdown of ratings is very similar. It is reasonable to believe that these differences are due to sampling, since not all staff responded to the survey, rather than mis-reporting.

Figure 6.6: In the last five years, how often per year have you received appraisal and/or feedback from the following people about your work in this school outside of your formal evaluation process? (by Grade Level)⁹³



Note: This question was only asked to respondents on the "T-scale" who are school-based.

⁹³ Question 51 – Objective 3a

Figure 6.7: In the last five years, how often per year have you received appraisal and/or feedback from the following people about your work in this school outside of your formal evaluation process? (by Rating)⁹⁴

	Group	Never	Yearly	Twice Per Year	Three or More Times Per Year	At Least Monthly	At Least Weekly
Principal	Highly Effective (n=312)	15%	21%	17%	27%	14%	6%
	Effective (n=464)	27%	19%	20%	23%	9%	2%
	Developing/Needs Improvement/ Ineffective (n=23)	39%	26%	17%	17%	0%	0%
	Have not received a summative performance evaluation at APS (n=145)	26%	21%	13%	23%	11%	6%
Assistant principal	Highly Effective (n=304)	16%	20%	21%	25%	13%	4%
	Effective (n=461)	22%	21%	23%	22%	10%	1%
	Developing/Needs Improvement/ Ineffective (n=23)	26%	30%	22%	22%	0%	0%
	Have not received a summative performance evaluation at APS (n=142)	30%	18%	18%	23%	6%	4%
Content area supervisor	Highly Effective (n=299)	46%	17%	8%	19%	8%	1%
	Effective (n=442)	50%	19%	10%	12%	7%	2%
	Developing/Needs Improvement/ Ineffective (n=23)	35%	22%	13%	22%	4%	4%
	Have not received a summative performance evaluation at APS (n=141)	48%	13%	11%	18%	8%	2%

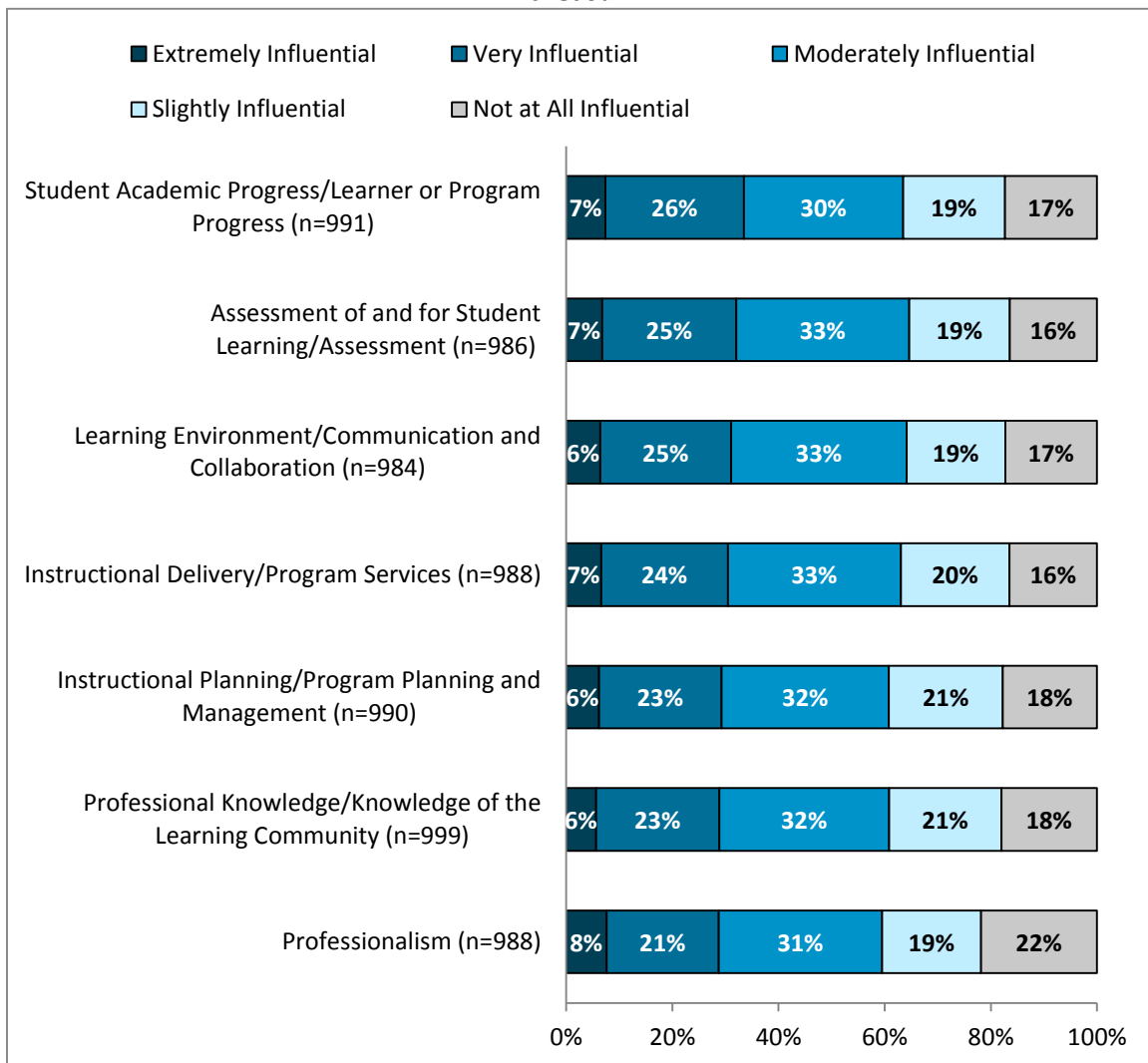
⁹⁴ Question 51 – Objective 3a

	Group	Never	Yearly	Twice Per Year	Three or More Times Per Year	At Least Monthly	At Least Weekly
Content area specialist	Highly Effective (n=287)	58%	16%	7%	14%	3%	2%
	Effective (n=436)	60%	15%	9%	9%	6%	2%
	Developing/Needs Improvement/ Ineffective (n=22)	55%	14%	0%	14%	9%	9%
	Have not received a summative performance evaluation at APS (n=138)	59%	11%	9%	12%	7%	1%
School-Based coach	Highly Effective (n=272)	70%	7%	3%	10%	7%	4%
	Effective (n=432)	70%	8%	4%	9%	6%	2%
	Developing/Needs Improvement/ Ineffective (n=24)	58%	8%	4%	13%	8%	8%
	Have not received a summative performance evaluation at APS (n=134)	69%	3%	4%	9%	12%	2%
School-Based specialist	Highly Effective (n=275)	68%	7%	5%	10%	7%	3%
	Effective (n=428)	71%	8%	4%	8%	7%	3%
	Developing/Needs Improvement/ Ineffective (n=23)	65%	4%	9%	0%	13%	9%
	Have not received a summative performance evaluation at APS (n=134)	74%	4%	4%	7%	8%	2%
Other teachers or members of the school management team	Highly Effective (n=288)	44%	10%	5%	14%	18%	10%
	Effective (n=441)	47%	10%	6%	17%	12%	8%
	Developing/Needs Improvement/ Ineffective (n=24)	50%	4%	13%	8%	8%	17%
	Have not received a summative performance evaluation at APS (n=140)	48%	11%	8%	11%	15%	8%

Note: This question was only asked to respondents on the "T-scale" who are school-based.

Note: Darker blue indicates higher value, while lighter blue indicates lower value.

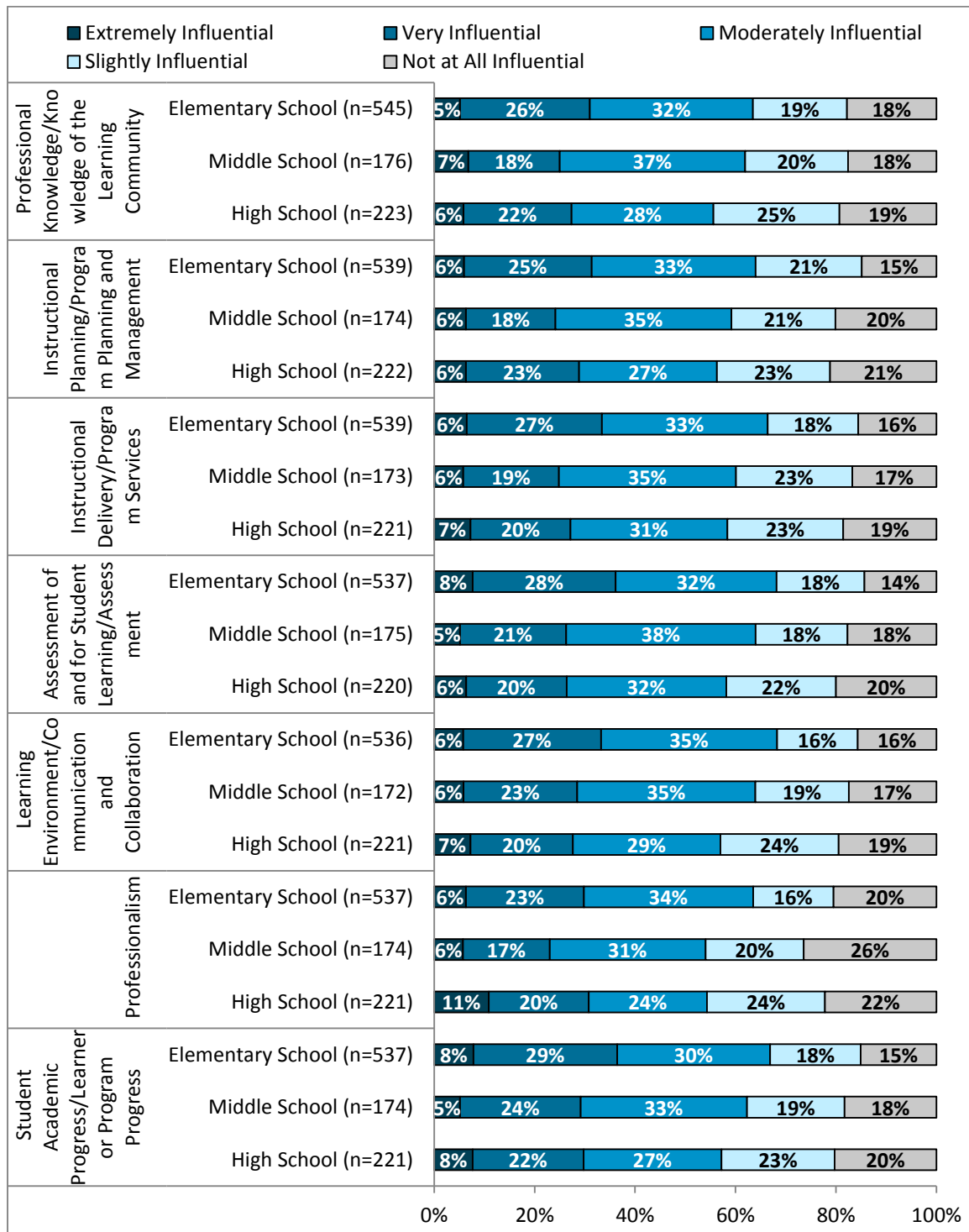
Figure 6.8: In the last five years, how influential has the appraisal and/or feedback you have received (both formal and informal) been on your practice in each of the following areas?⁹⁵



Note: This question was only asked to respondents on the "T-scale".

⁹⁵ Question 53 – Objectives 3a and 7a

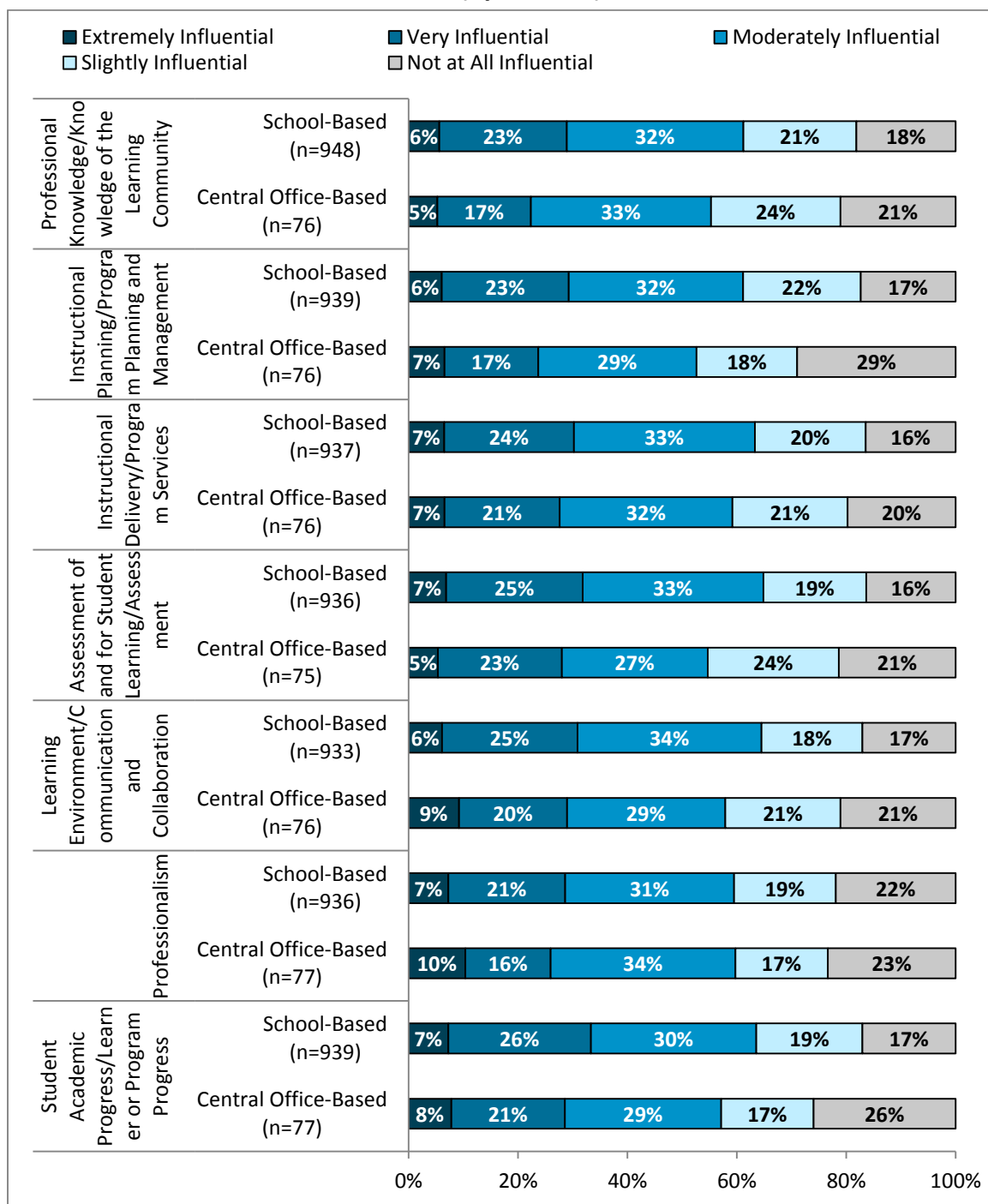
Figure 6.9: In the last five years, how influential has the appraisal and/or feedback you have received (both formal and informal) been on your practice in each of the following areas? (by Grade Level) ⁹⁶



Note: This question was only asked to respondents on the "T-scale".

⁹⁶ Question 53 – Objectives 3a and 7a

Figure 6.10: In the last five years, how influential has the appraisal and/or feedback you have received (both formal and informal) been on your practice in each of the following areas? (by Location)⁹⁷



Note: This question was only asked to respondents on the "T-scale".

⁹⁷ Question 53 – Objectives 3a and 7a

Figure 6.11: In the last five years, how influential has the appraisal and/or feedback you have received (both formal and informal) been on your practice in each of the following areas? (by Rating)⁹⁸

	Group	Not at All Influential	Slightly Influential	Moderately Influential	Very Influential	Extremely Influential
Professional Knowledge/ Knowledge of the Learning Community	Highly Effective (n=334)	18%	20%	28%	24%	10%
	Effective (n=483)	17%	23%	34%	23%	3%
	Developing/Needs Improvement/ Ineffective (n=24)	21%	25%	17%	25%	13%
	Have not received a summative performance evaluation at APS (n=152)	21%	17%	36%	22%	4%
Instructional Planning/Program Planning and Management	Highly Effective (n=333)	19%	18%	30%	23%	11%
	Effective (n=479)	17%	24%	33%	23%	3%
	Developing/Needs Improvement/ Ineffective (n=24)	21%	25%	13%	21%	21%
	Have not received a summative performance evaluation at APS (n=148)	18%	19%	35%	23%	5%
Instructional Delivery/Program Services	Highly Effective (n=331)	18%	17%	30%	23%	12%
	Effective (n=478)	15%	24%	34%	24%	3%
	Developing/Needs Improvement/ Ineffective (n=24)	21%	21%	21%	21%	17%
	Have not received a summative performance evaluation at APS (n=150)	17%	18%	35%	26%	4%

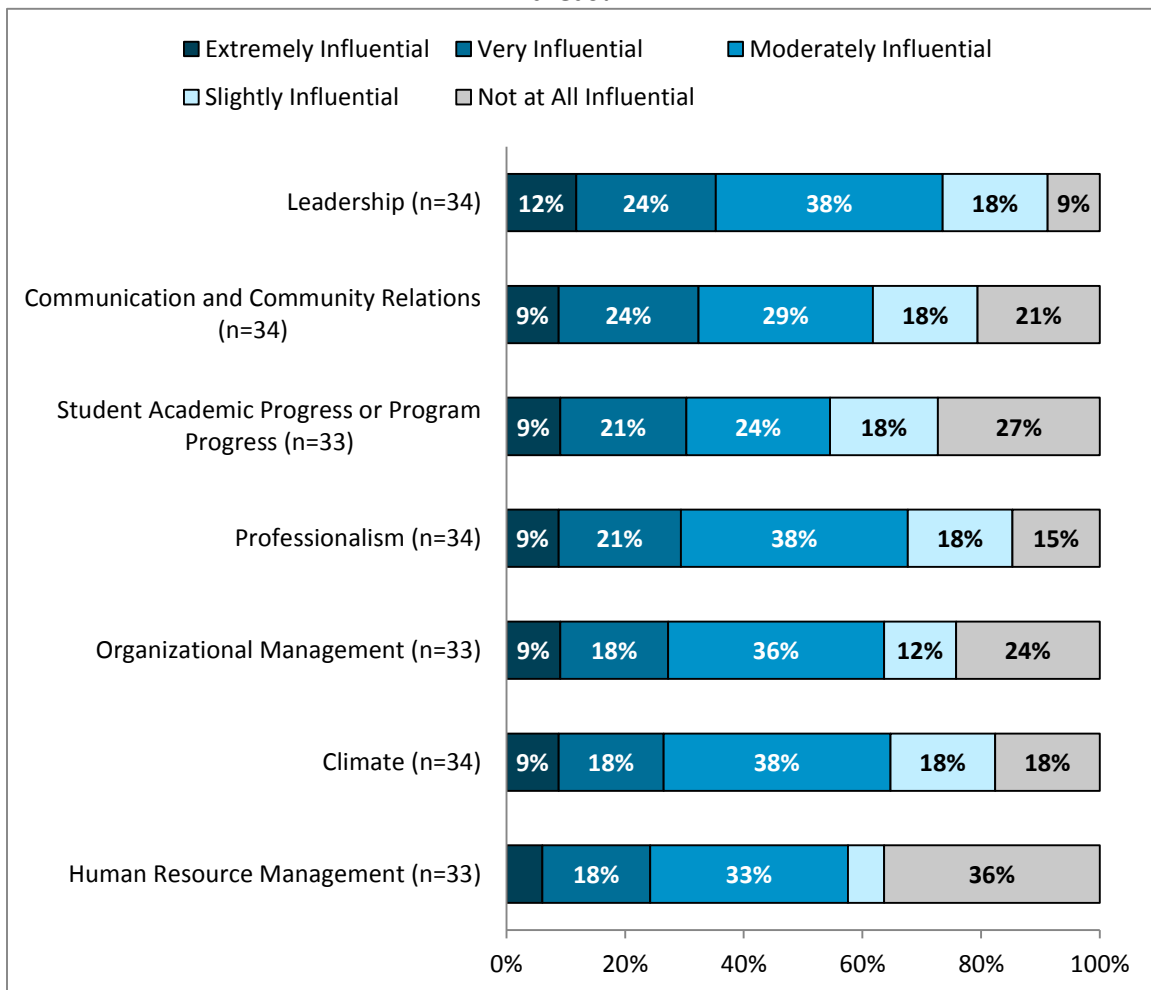
⁹⁸ Question 53 – Objectives 3a and 7a

	Group	Not at All Influential	Slightly Influential	Moderately Influential	Very Influential	Extremely Influential
Assessment of and for Student Learning/ Assessment	Highly Effective (n=329)	18%	17%	30%	24%	11%
	Effective (n=480)	15%	21%	35%	25%	4%
	Developing/Needs Improvement/ Ineffective (n=24)	17%	17%	21%	29%	17%
	Have not received a summative performance evaluation at APS (n=147)	16%	18%	33%	27%	5%
Learning Environment/Communication and Collaboration	Highly Effective (n=330)	17%	16%	30%	26%	11%
	Effective (n=479)	16%	21%	36%	23%	4%
	Developing/Needs Improvement/ Ineffective (n=24)	21%	17%	21%	29%	13%
	Have not received a summative performance evaluation at APS (n=146)	19%	17%	34%	26%	4%
Professionalism	Highly Effective (n=331)	23%	15%	28%	21%	13%
	Effective (n=479)	20%	21%	34%	20%	5%
	Developing/Needs Improvement/ Ineffective (n=24)	29%	13%	21%	25%	13%
	Have not received a summative performance evaluation at APS (n=149)	23%	19%	29%	23%	5%
Student Academic Progress/Learner or Program Progress	Highly Effective (n=331)	18%	18%	26%	26%	12%
	Effective (n=480)	16%	22%	32%	25%	4%
	Developing/Needs Improvement/ Ineffective (n=24)	25%	8%	25%	25%	17%
	Have not received a summative performance evaluation at APS (n=150)	18%	17%	32%	29%	4%

Note: This question was only asked to respondents on the “T-scale”.

Note: Darker blue indicates higher value, while lighter blue indicates lower value.

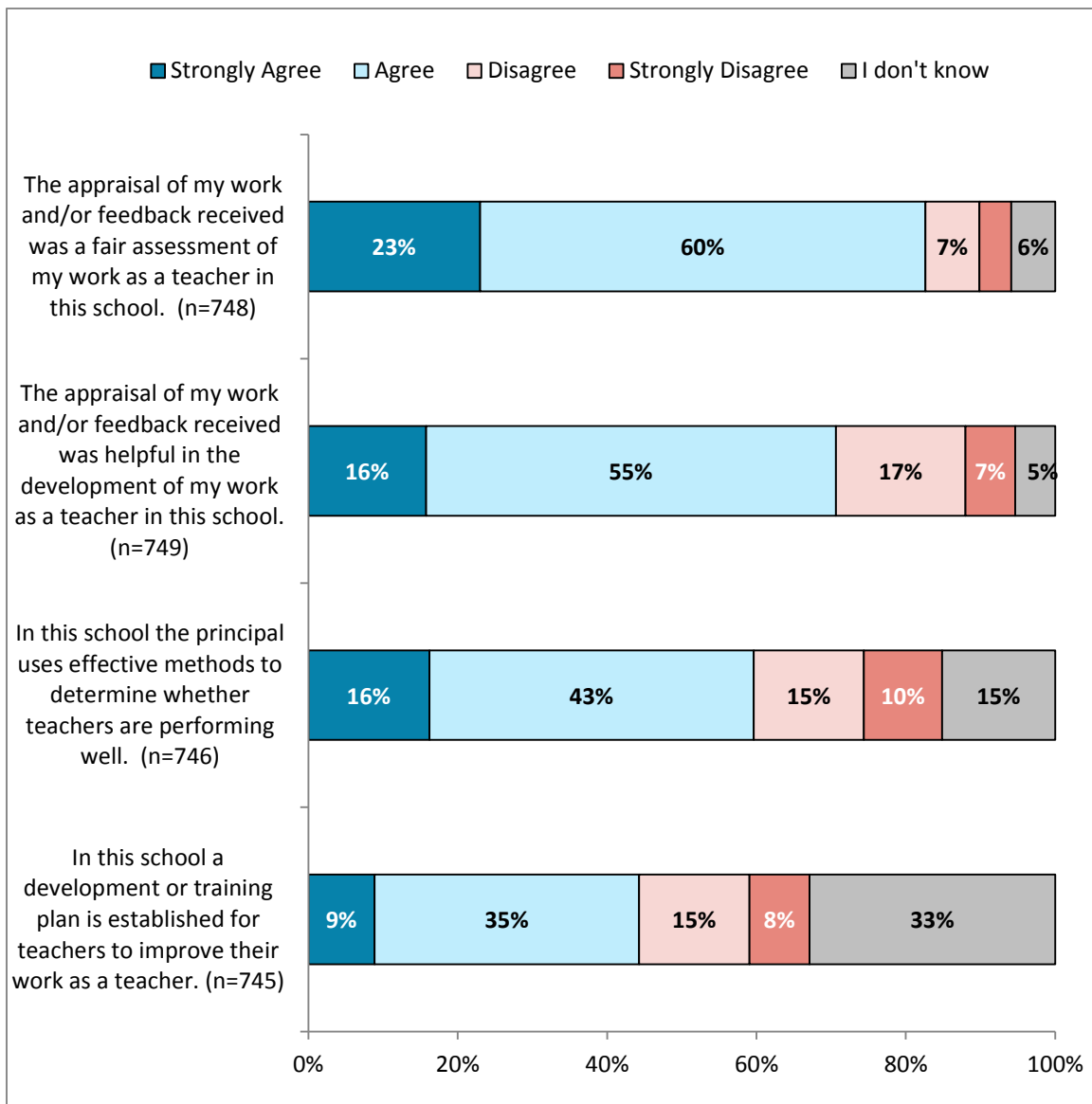
Figure 6.12: In the last five years, how influential has the appraisal and/or feedback you have received (both formal and informal) been on your practice in each of the following areas?⁹⁹



Note: This question was only asked to respondents on the "P-scale".

⁹⁹ Question 54 – Objectives 3a and 7a

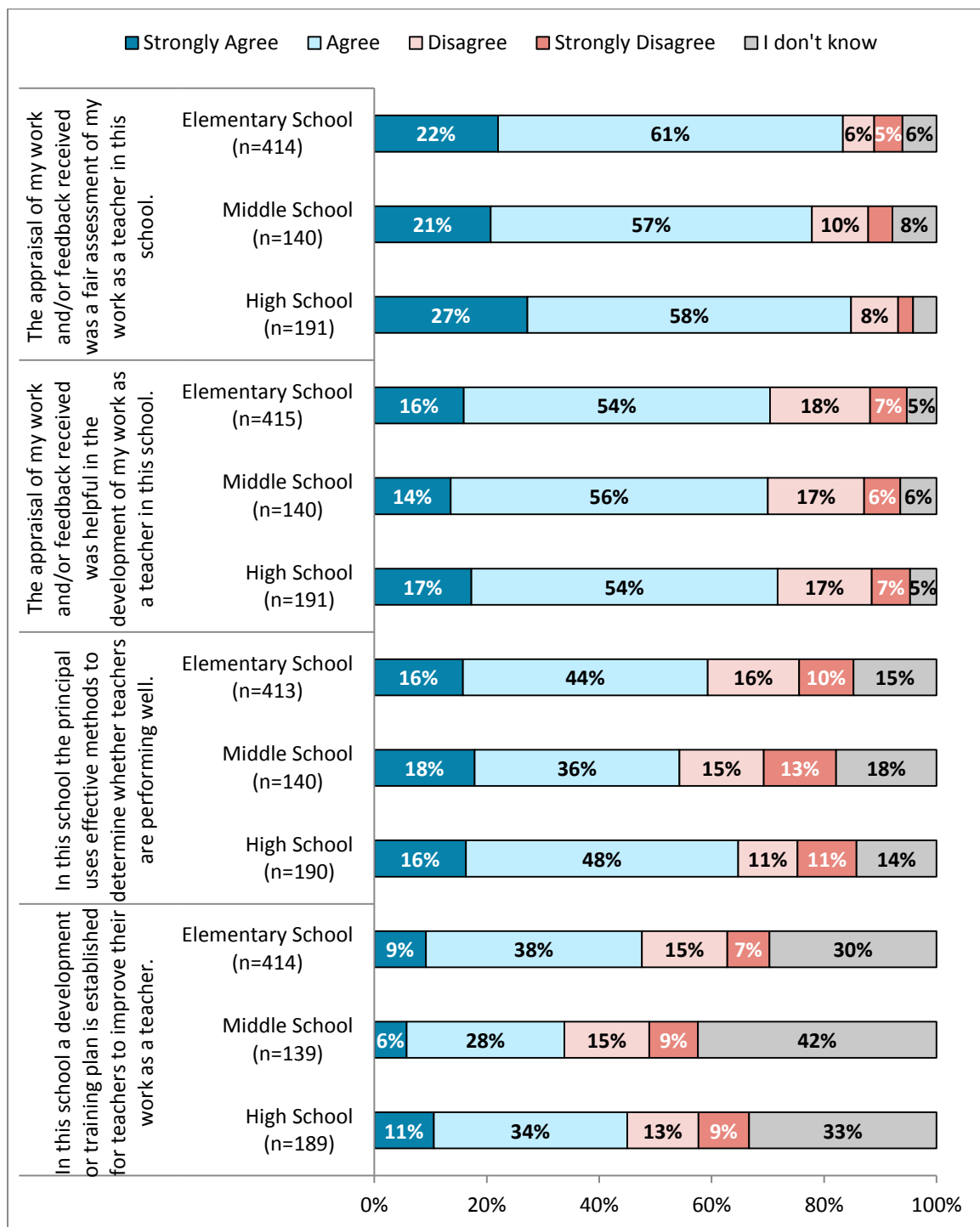
Figure 6.13: Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements¹⁰⁰



Note: This question was only asked to respondents who are teachers.

¹⁰⁰ Question 55 – Objective 3a

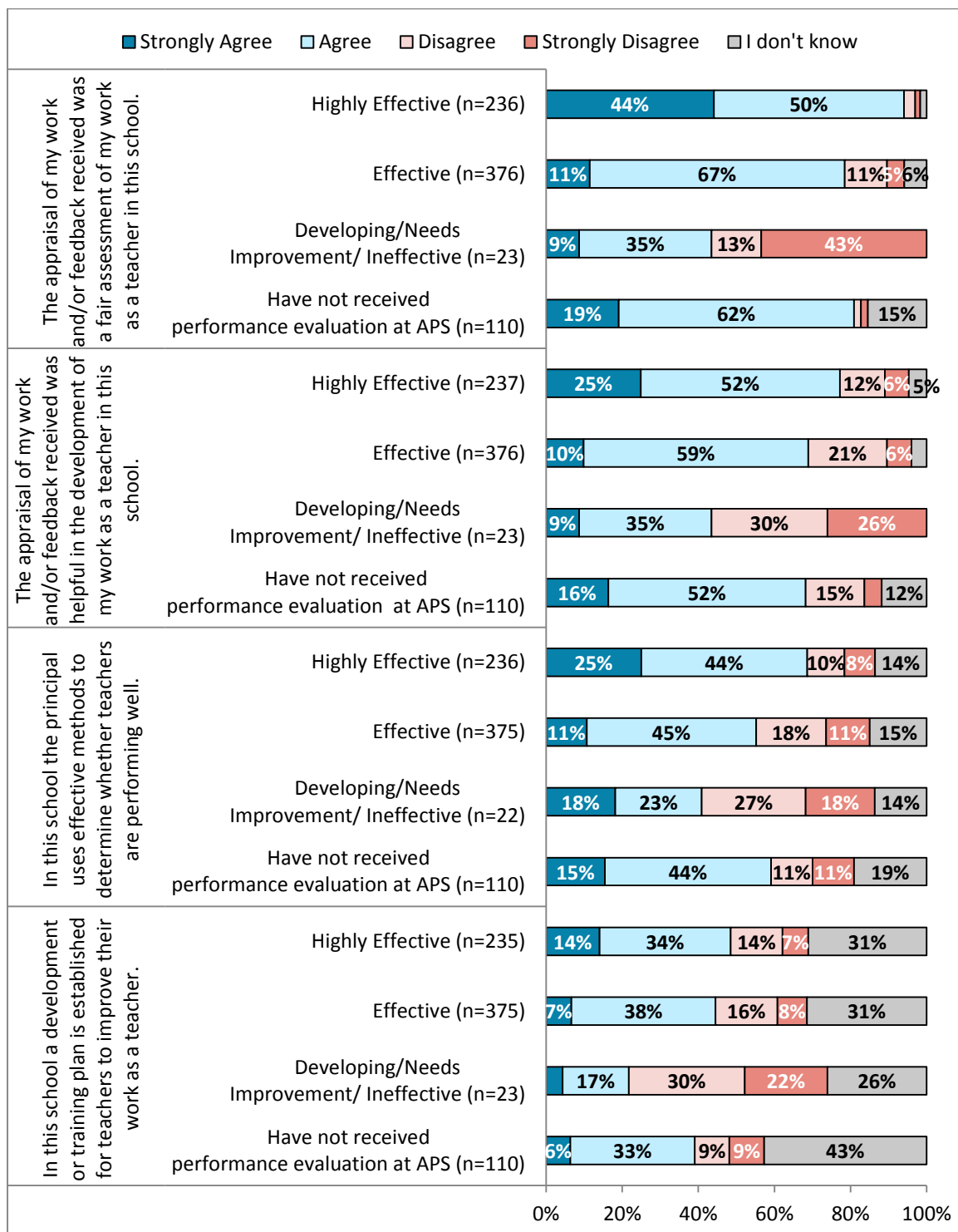
**Figure 6.14: Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements
(by Grade Level)¹⁰¹**



Note: This question was only asked to respondents who are teachers.

¹⁰¹ Question 55 – Objective 3a

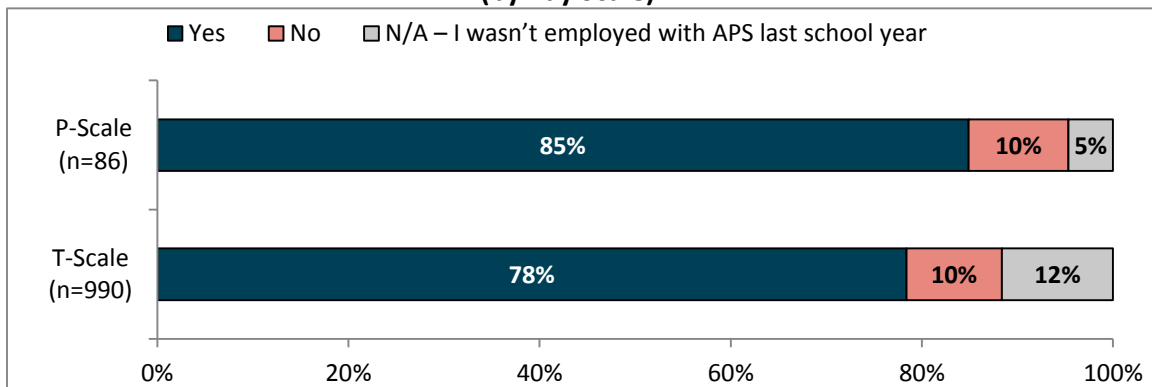
**Figure 6.15: Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements
(by Rating)¹⁰²**



Note: This question was only asked to respondents who are teachers.

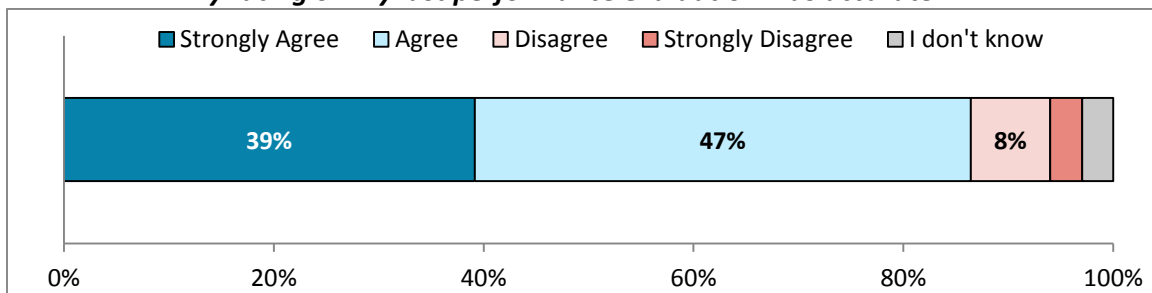
¹⁰² Question 55 – Objective 3a

**Figure 6.16: Last school year (2013-14), did you have a formal end of year evaluation?
(by Pay Scale)¹⁰³**



Note: This question was only asked to respondents on the "T-scale" and "P-Scale".

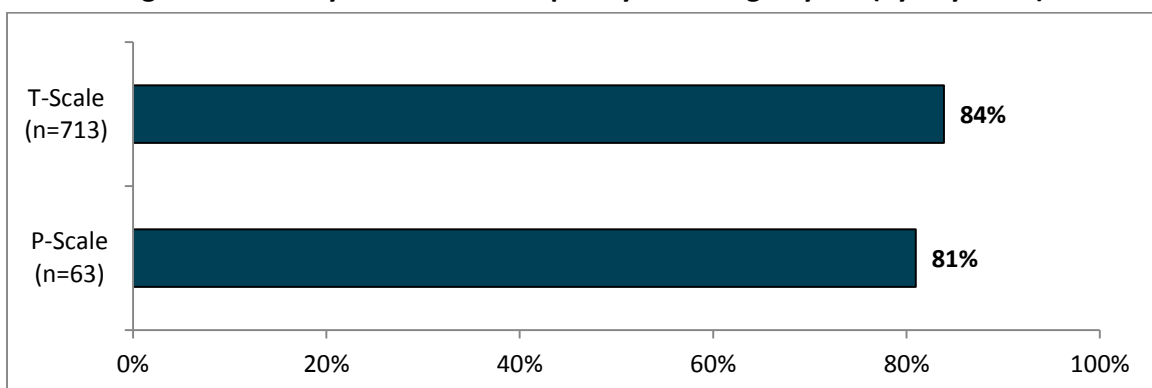
Figure 6.17: Please rate your level of agreement with the following statement: *I believe my rating on my last performance evaluation was accurate.*¹⁰⁴



(n=848)

Note: This question was only asked to respondents on the "T-scale" and "P-Scale" who also had a formal end of year evaluation.

Figure 6.18: Did your evaluator explain your rating to you? (by Pay Scale)

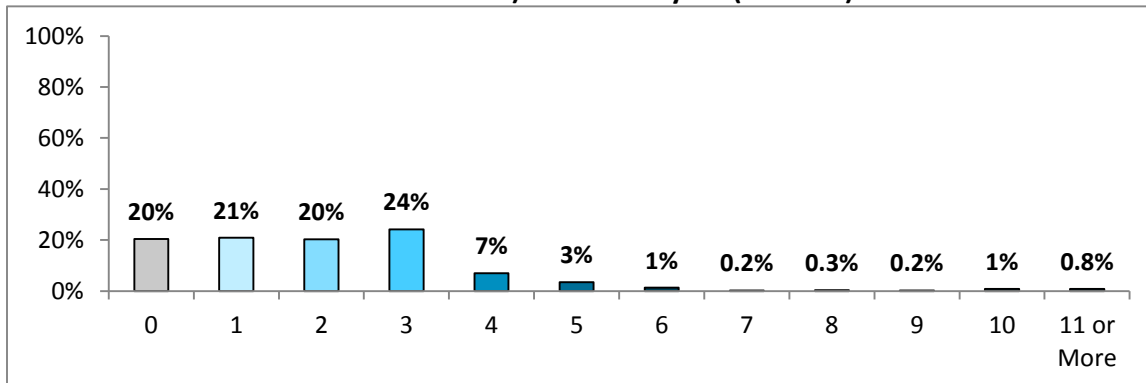


Note: This question was only asked to respondents on the "T-scale" and "P-Scale" who also had a formal end of year evaluation. Percentages represent respondents who selected "yes".

¹⁰³ Question 56 – Objective 3a

¹⁰⁴ Question 58 – Objective 3a

Figure 6.19: Number of times observed by evaluator and received feedback (announced and unannounced) last school year (2013-14)¹⁰⁵



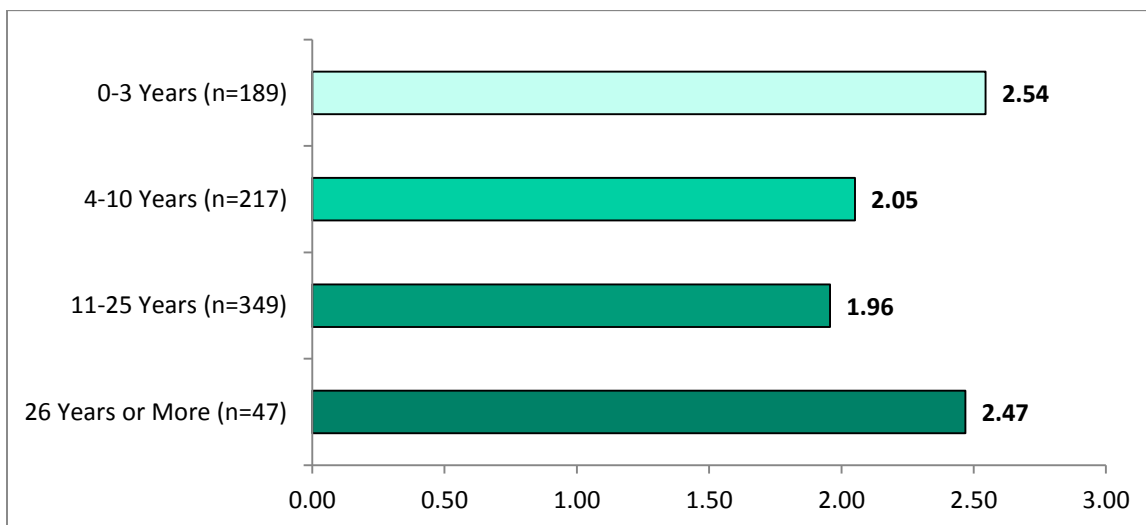
(n=861)

Note: This question was only asked to respondents on the "T-scale" who are school-based.

Figure 6.20: Summary statistics for number of times observed by evaluator and received feedback (announced and unannounced) last school year (2013-14)

MINIMUM	MAXIMUM	MEAN	STANDARD DEVIATION
0	40	2.19	2.57

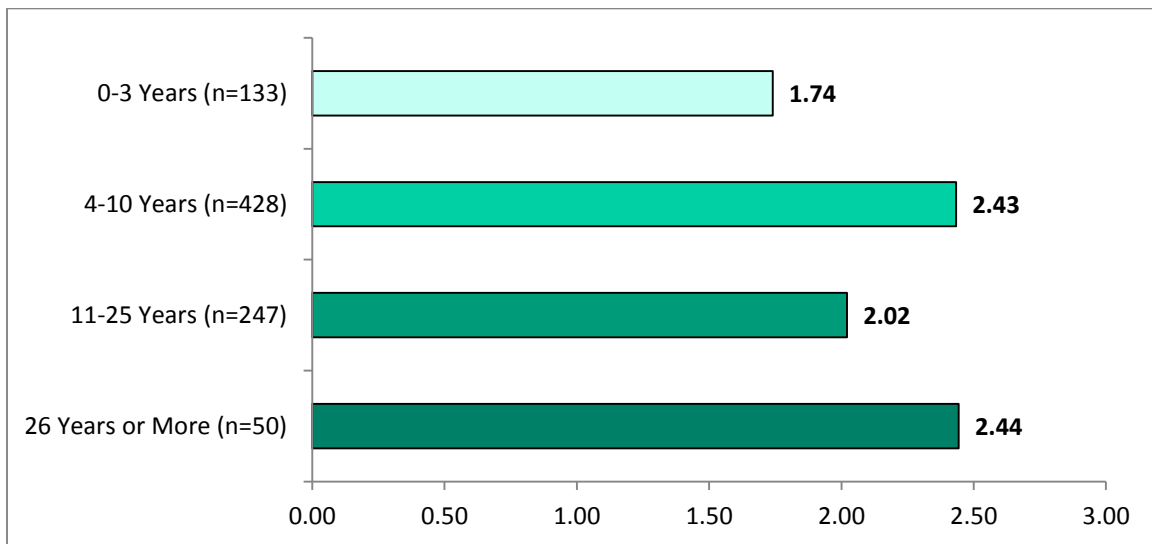
Figure 6.21: Number of times observed by evaluator and received feedback (announced and unannounced) last school year (2013-14) (by Years at APS)



Note: This question was only asked to respondents on the "T-scale" who are school-based.

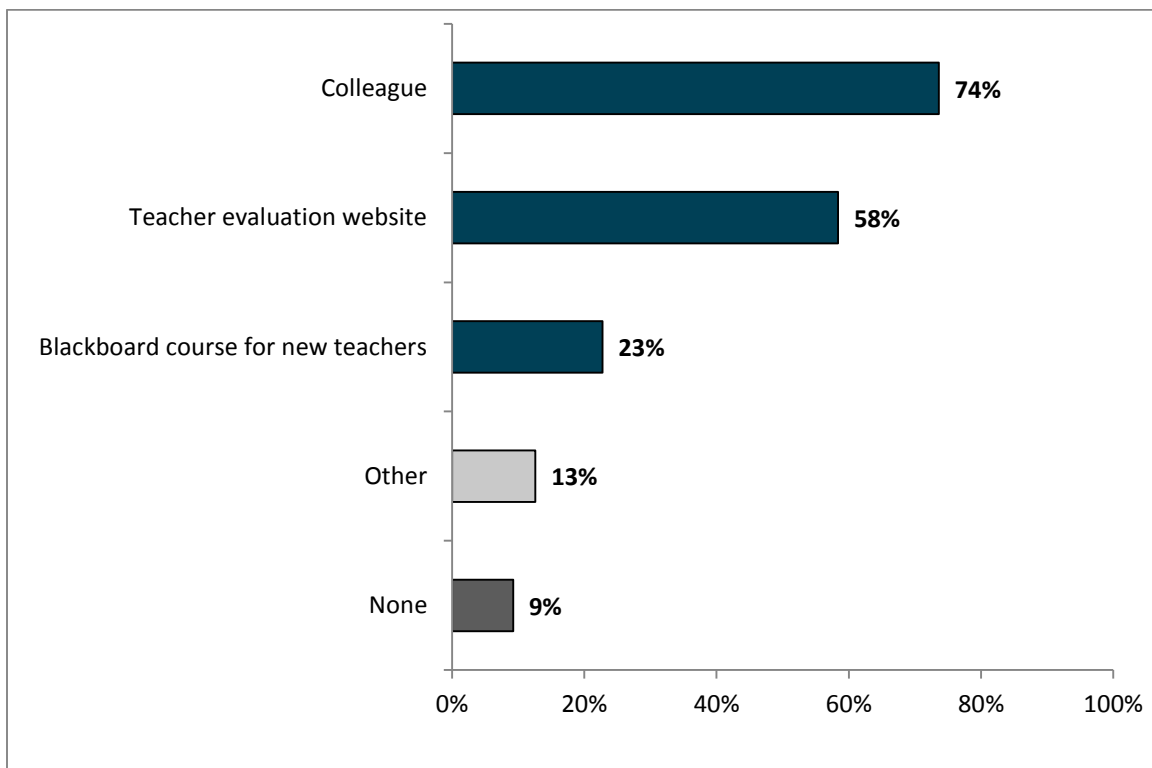
¹⁰⁵ A total of seven respondents indicated being observed or receiving feedback more than 10 times during the year. Due to the presence of outliers among these respondents, and the extreme right-skewedness of the data due to those outliers, it does not make sense to present a true histogram. To specify the responses provided by these outliers: one respondent each indicated being observed or receiving feedback 11, 12, 15, 30, or 40 times; two respondents indicated being observed or receiving feedback 20 times.

Figure 6.22: Number of times observed by evaluator and received feedback (announced and unannounced) last school year (2013-14) (by Years in Education)



Note: This question was only asked to respondents on the “T-scale” who are school-based.

Figure 6.23: Resources Used for General Help with Formal Evaluation Process¹⁰⁶

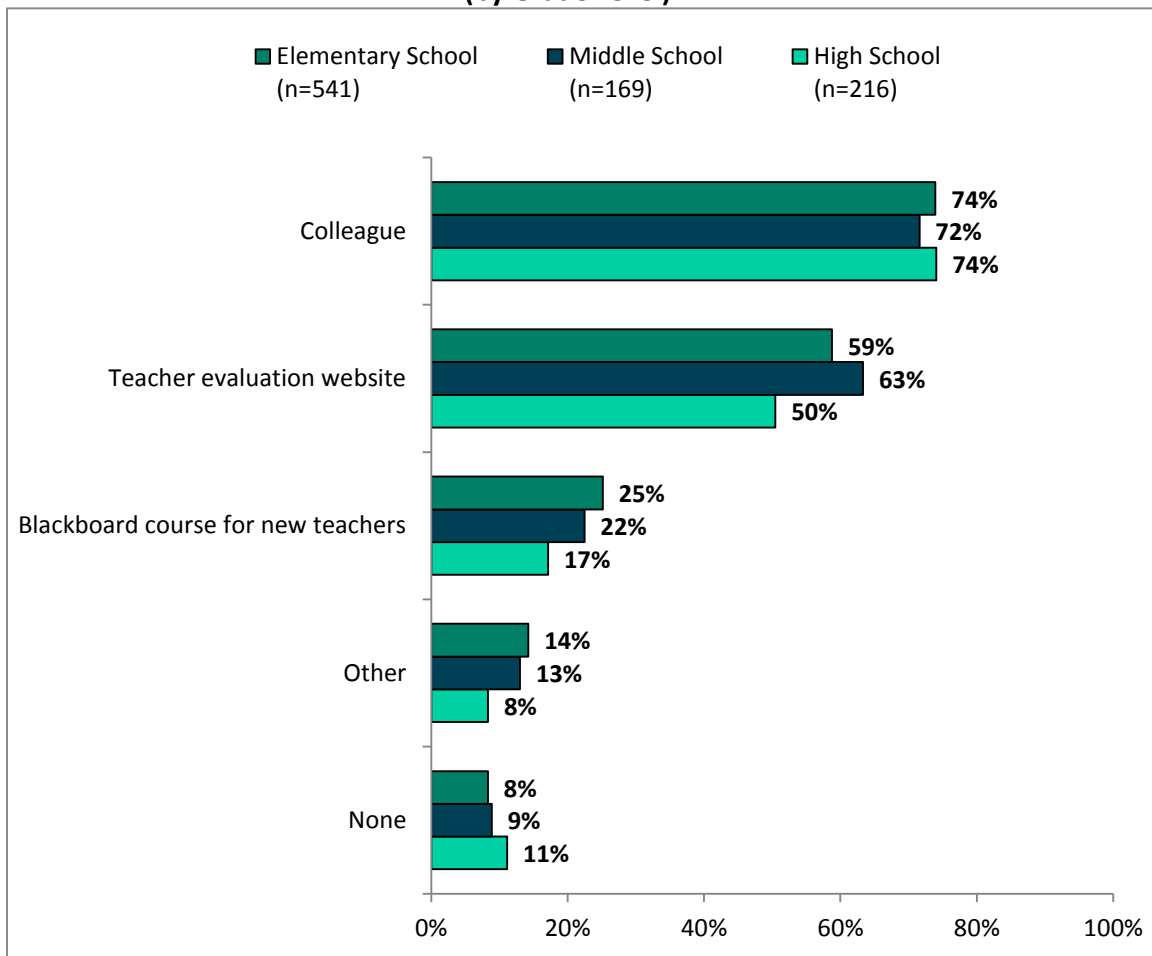


(n=985)

Note: This question was only asked to respondents on the “T-scale”. Totals sum to greater than 100 percent because respondents could choose multiple responses.

¹⁰⁶ Question 60 – Objective 3a

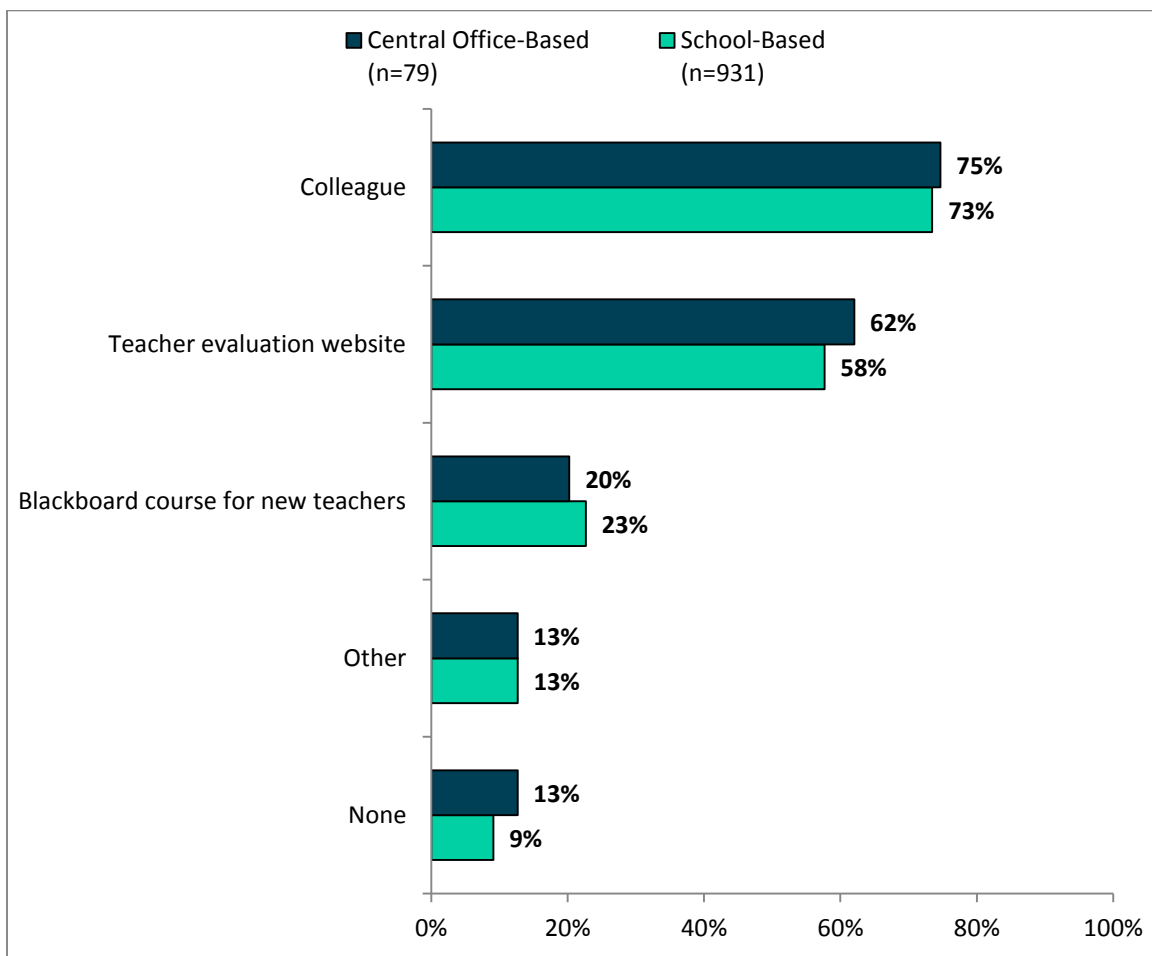
**Figure 6.24: Resources Used for General Help with Formal Evaluation Process
(by Grade Level)¹⁰⁷**



Note: This question was only asked to respondents on the “T-scale”. Totals sum to greater than 100 percent because respondents could choose multiple responses.

¹⁰⁷ Question 60 – Objective 3a

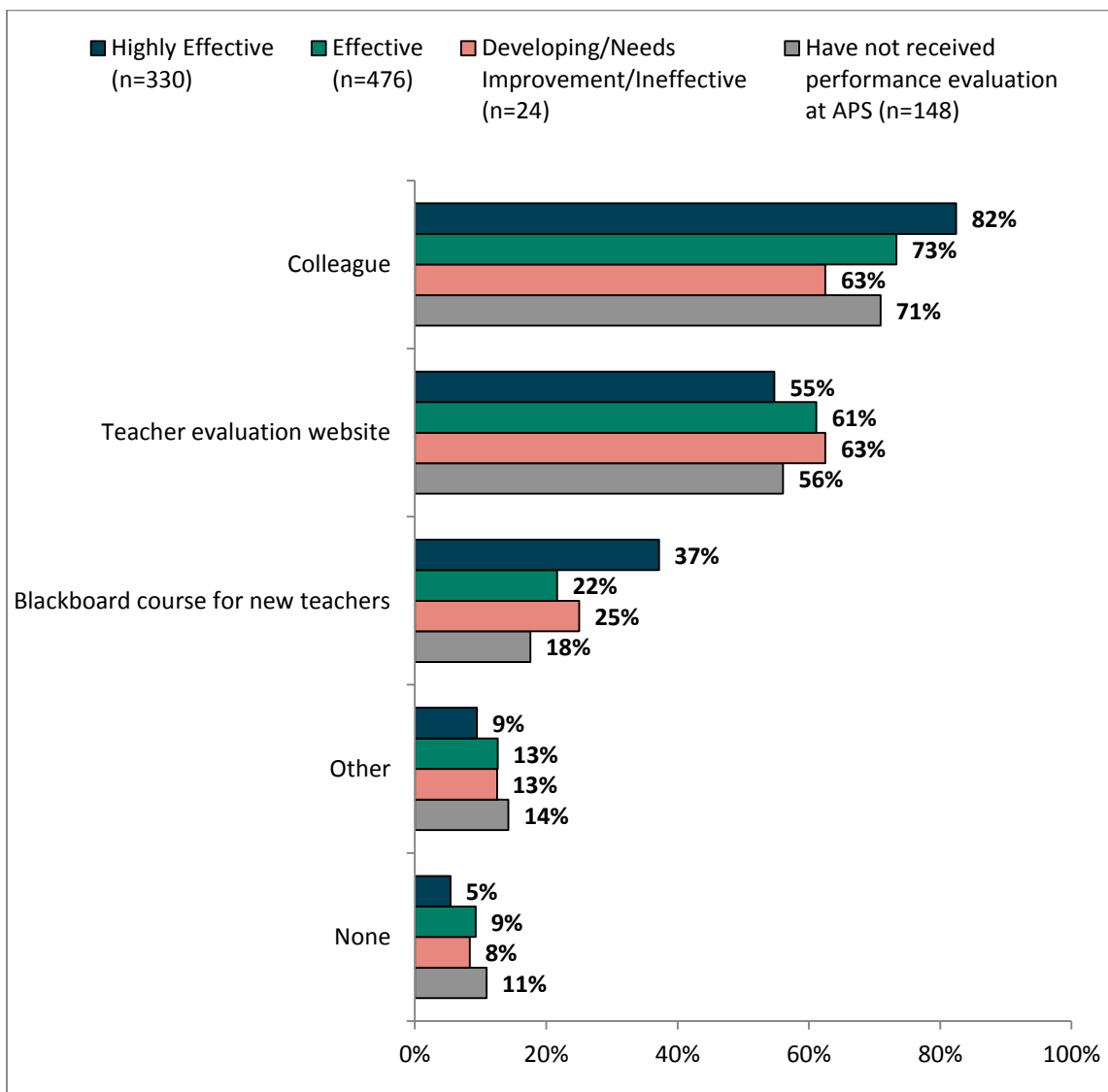
**Figure 6.25: Resources Used for General Help with Formal Evaluation Process
(by Location)¹⁰⁸**



Note: This question was only asked to respondents on the “T-scale”. Totals sum to greater than 100 percent because respondents could choose multiple responses.

¹⁰⁸ Question 60 – Objective 3a

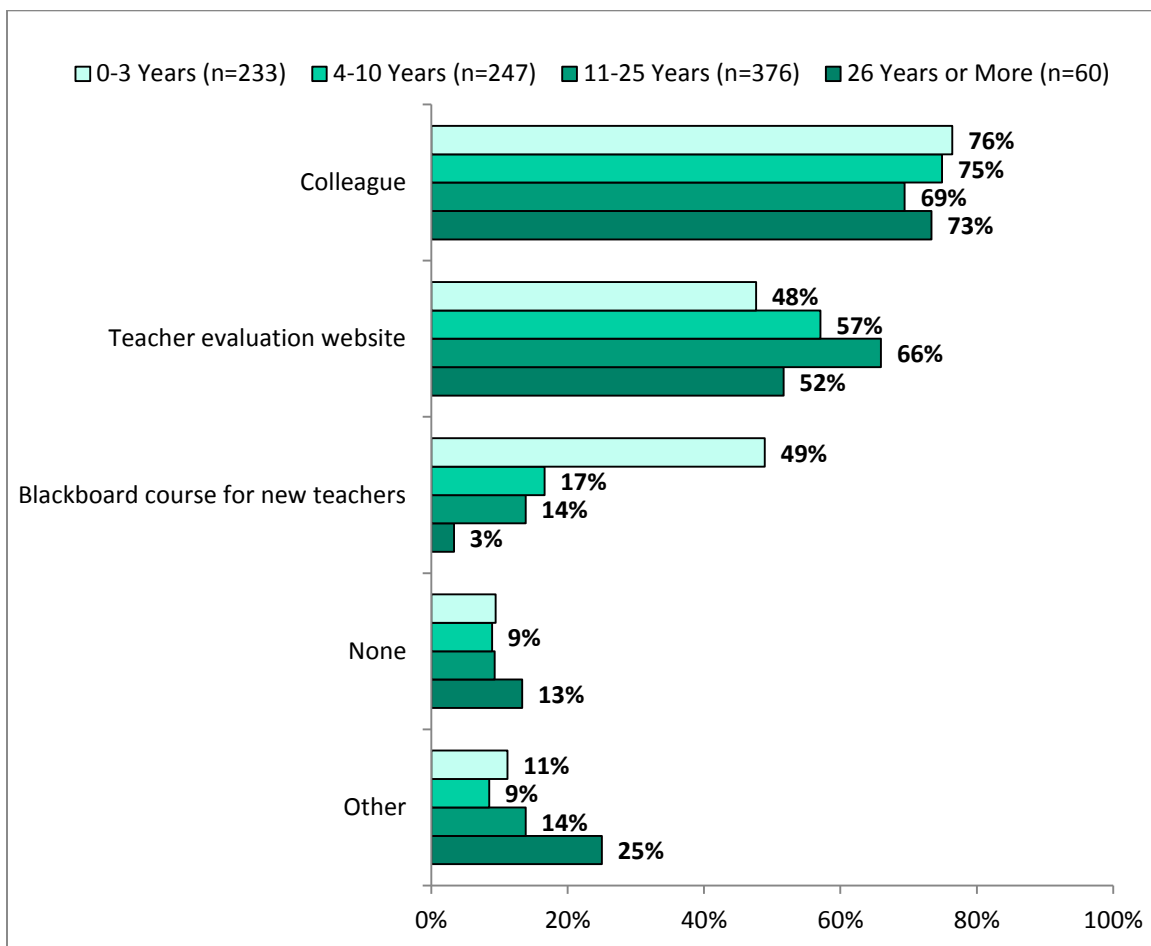
**Figure 6.26: Resources Used for General Help with Formal Evaluation Process
(by Rating)¹⁰⁹**



Note: This question was only asked to respondents on the "T-scale". Totals sum to greater than 100 percent because respondents could choose multiple responses.

¹⁰⁹ Question 60 – Objective 3a

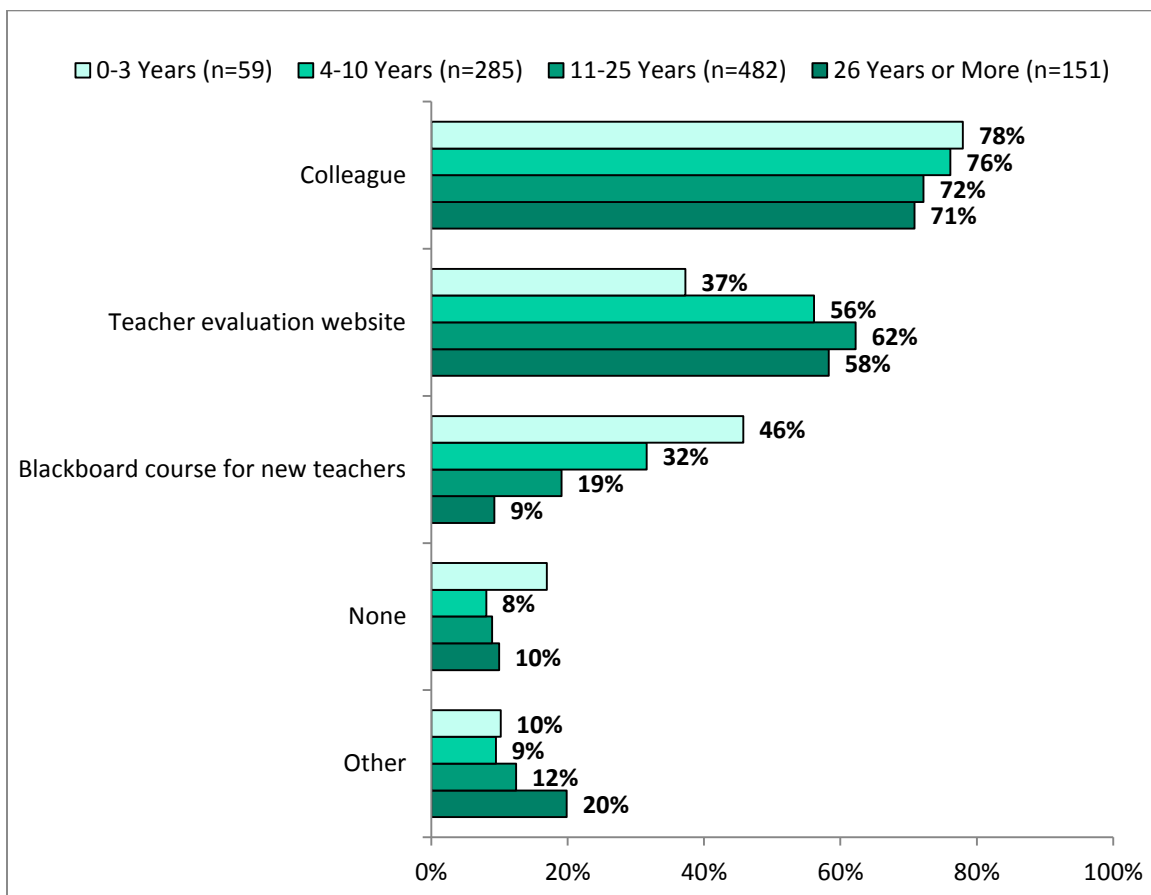
**Figure 6.27: Resources Used for General Help with Formal Evaluation Process
(by Years at APS) ¹¹⁰**



Note: This question was only asked to respondents on the “T-scale”. Totals sum to greater than 100 percent because respondents could choose multiple responses.

¹¹⁰ Question 60 – Objective 3a

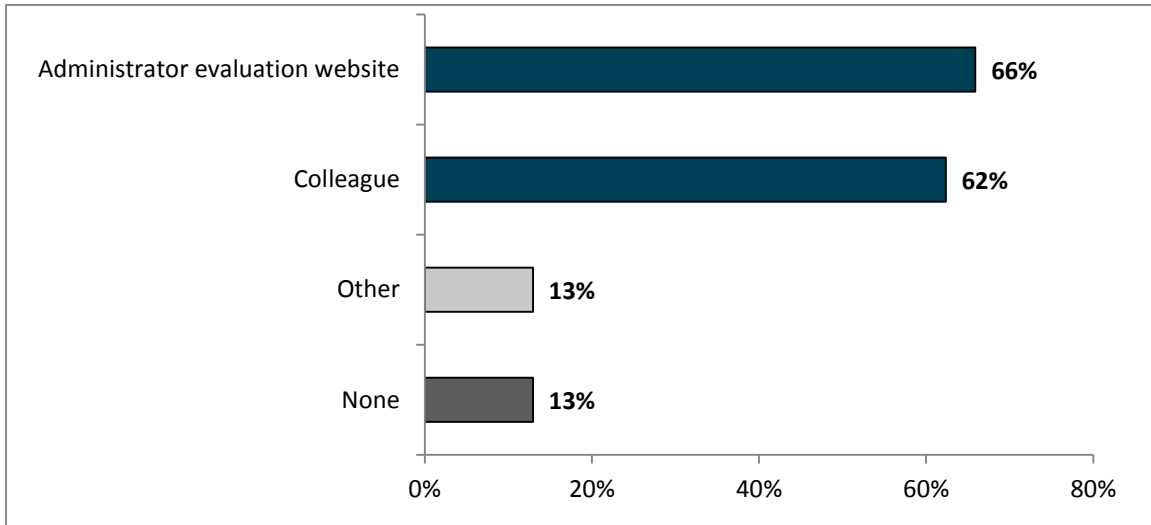
**Figure 6.28: Resources Used for General Help with Formal Evaluation Process
(by Years in Education)¹¹¹**



Note: This question was only asked to respondents on the “T-scale”. Totals sum to greater than 100 percent because respondents could choose multiple responses.

¹¹¹ Question 60 – Objective 3a

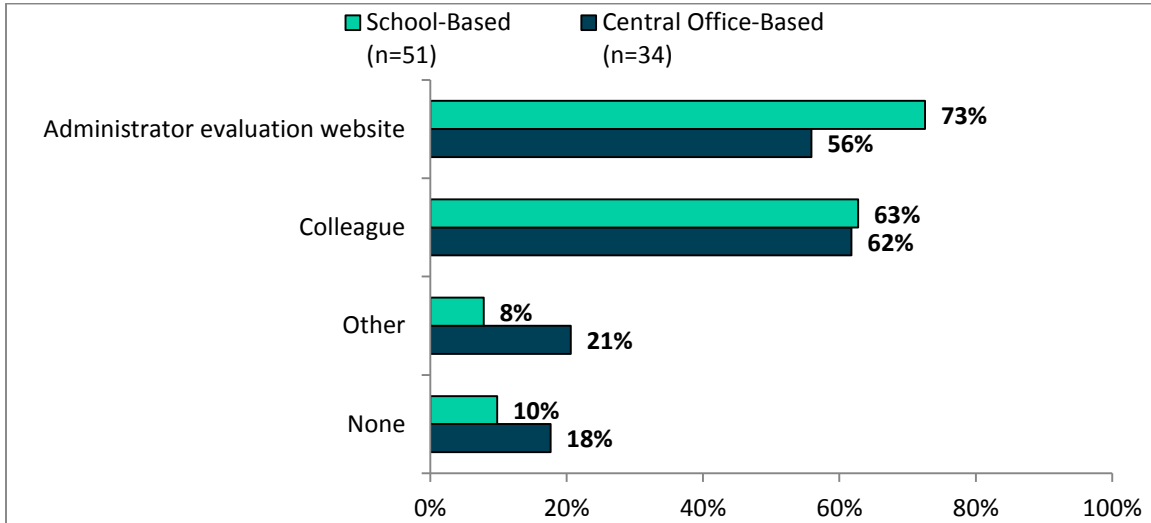
Figure 6.29: Resources Used for General Help with Formal Evaluation Process¹¹²



(n=85)

Note: This question was only asked to respondents on the “P-scale”. Totals sum to greater than 100 percent because respondents could choose multiple responses.

**Figure 6.30: Resources Used for General Help with Formal Evaluation Process
(by Location)¹¹³**



Note: This question was only asked to respondents on the “P-scale”. Totals sum to greater than 100 percent because respondents could choose multiple responses.

¹¹² Question 61 – Objective 3a

¹¹³ Question 61 – Objective 3a

SECTION VII: RESPONDENT CHARACTERISTICS

This section presents findings regarding various characteristics of respondents. These characteristics include the pay scale one is on, whether one works full-time or part-time, whether one is school- or central office-based, and one's tenure in education and at APS.

FINDINGS

- **The vast majority of respondents are teachers, on the T-scale pay scale, and school-based.** Seventy percent of respondents are on the T-scale, 87 percent are school-based, and 82 percent of those on the T-scale are teachers (Figure 7.1).
- **More than half of all respondents (57 percent) work at the elementary school level.** Twenty-four percent work at the high school level and 18 percent work at the middle school level (Figure 7.1).
- **Most respondents have been in education and at APS for more than 10 years.** Fifty-one percent of respondents have been at APS for 11 or more years and 65 percent have been in education for 11 or more years (Figure 7.1).

FIGURES

Figure 7.1: Respondent Characteristics

CATEGORY	COUNT	PERCENTAGE
Pay Scale (n=1418)		
T-Scale	995	70%
A-Scale	126	9%
G-Scale	92	6%
P-Scale	88	6%
E-Scale	88	6%
Other Pay Scale	36	3%
Full-Time/Part-Time Status (n=1411)		
Full-Time	1348	96%
Part-Time	63	4%
School-/Central Office-Based (n=1418)¹¹⁴		
School-Based	1230	87%
Central Office-Based	229	16%
Primary Responsibilities (n=934)¹¹⁵		
Teacher	770	82%
Other School-Based T-Scale	164	18%
School Level (n=1204)¹¹⁶		
Elementary School	690	57%
Middle School	222	18%
High School	292	24%
Years at APS (n=1324)		
0-3 Years	307	23%
4-10 Years	339	26%
11-25 Years	569	43%
26 Years or More	109	8%
Years in Current Position (n=1401)		
0-3 Years	400	29%
4-10 Years	469	33%
11-25 Years	471	34%
26 Years or More	61	4%
Years in Education (n=1390)		
0-3 Years	104	7%
4-10 Years	379	27%
11-25 Years	683	49%
26 Years or More	224	16%
Participated in PD Related to Job in APS within the Last 5 Years (n=1418)		
Yes	1326	94%
No	92	6%

¹¹⁴ Totals sum to greater than 100 percent because respondents could choose multiple responses.

¹¹⁵ This question was only asked to respondents who selected "T-scale" and "school-based" in previous questions.

¹¹⁶ This question was only asked to respondents who selected "school-based" previously.

APPENDIX

Figure A.0.1: Professional Development Evaluation Objectives¹¹⁷

OBJECTIVE	DESCRIPTION
1a	To what extent are staff across the district aware of professional development opportunities offered by the Office of Professional Development, by other offices, or by their school?
1b	To what extent do staff participate in professional development opportunities? (disaggregate by type, including Office of PD, other offices, schools, non-APS – college coursework, online courses, conferences, workshops, etc., self-directed)
1c	What factors facilitate staff participation in professional development?
1d	What factors facilitate delivery of professional development?
1e	To what extent are there differentiated opportunities for professional learning that address staff's varying needs?
1f	To what extent is professional development available to non-teaching staff? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Non-teaching t-scale staff ▪ Other scales
1g	How do staff decide which professional learning opportunities to pursue? (for recertification, for lane change, other?)
2a	To what extent are best practices evident in the design and delivery of professional learning?
2b	What types of purposeful follow-up activities are in place to ensure fidelity of implementation of professional learning? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Follow up – has the provider followed up after the professional development. ▪ Application – have participants tried anything that they learned
2c	To what extent are staff who participate in professional learning able to implement what they have learned?
3a	To what extent do T- and P-scale staff and supervisors of T- and P-scale staff <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Understand the evaluation process? ▪ Feel supported in the evaluation process? ▪ Follow the evaluation process?
4a	To what extent do teachers participate in and successfully complete the differentiated compensation program?
4b	What factors facilitate participation in the differentiated compensation program?
4c	To what extent do participants in the differentiated compensation program report that <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ they are supported in the process? ▪ the process fosters their professional growth?
5a	What is the level of coordination among schools, district-level offices offering professional learning, and the Office of Professional Development? (including coordination among schools of the same level)
5b	What is the level of alignment among school-based professional learning, district-based professional learning, and school- and district-based goals?
5c	What is the level of continuity in professional learning from year to year?
5d	To what extent do professional learning opportunities align with teachers' and staff's self-determined professional learning needs?
6a	To what extent is reliable data accessible to staff providing professional development? (what do providers need? What do they have?)

¹¹⁷ Evaluation objectives taken verbatim from: "Professional Development Design v7." Arlington Public Schools, August 21, 2014. Provided to Hanover Research by Arlington Public Schools.

6b	To what extent does the substitute request process impact the process of providing professional development to teachers?
6c	Are professional development resources distributed equitably throughout APS? (equitably across schools, scales). Resources include money, people, materials.
6d	What is the role of Instructional Lead Teachers (ILTs), content lead teachers, coaches, school-based specialists, and central specialists in providing professional development? By level, by content area.
6e	How is delivery of professional development structured in similar school districts?
7a	To what extent do teachers who participate in APS professional development demonstrate effective teaching practices?
8a	What is the retention rate for teachers who have achieved CAP I or CAP III in comparison to those who have not?

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**Arlington Public Schools
Focus Group Research with Staff Members on
Professional Development**

January 5, 2016

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Background

The Arlington Public Schools (APS) Professional Development Office is committed to supporting and retaining high quality teachers in Arlington Public Schools. The office coordinates and implements system-wide professional development (PD) to support teaching excellence and improve student learning for employees in APS at all stages of their careers. The services coordinated by this office include mentoring teachers, conducting workshops, coordinating in-service programs and working with universities to place field experience students. The office provides support for establishing and maintaining Professional Development Schools, and also provides support for the Teacher Evaluation System.

A multi-faceted evaluation of professional development at APS is underway. The evaluation explores the professional development program using many different means including participation and evaluation data from the Electronic Registrar Online (ERO), surveys of teachers and other staff members, commissioned reports on PD in similar school systems and relevant research literature, and classroom observations.

This report summarizes qualitative research findings from a set of six focus groups conducted with staff members in March and April 2015. Importantly, all of the evaluation's data should be considered as a whole. In other words, focus group findings will be most meaningful when considered together with findings from other facets of the overall professional development evaluation.

Research Purpose

The overarching goals of the focus groups were to understand how effectively the professional development program is implemented from the perspectives of those who provide it—at the district and school levels—and those who participate in PD offerings.

Research Method

Seven 90-minute focus groups were conducted by an independent researcher, not employed by APS. Groups were segmented such that each one represented a different population involved with PD at APS. The stratification approach was designed so that three groups were focused on their experiences as PD *participants* and four were focused on their experience as PD *providers*. Those with experience both participating in and providing PD were encouraged to share both views. The Office of Planning and Evaluation generated a random list of potential participants from each audience segment and invited them to participate. Those who agreed were included, with a cap of 9 participants per group to allow for full discussion in the 90 minutes. Thus, the initial invitation was random, but participants self-selected by opting into the research.

Appendix E2

In all, 44 staff members participated in this portion of the overall evaluation. The seven focus groups were organized in this way:

Professional Development Providers

- School-based instructional staff who provide professional development (e.g., lead teachers) (8 focus group participants).
- School-based administrators (3).
- District-based administrators—Central office staff who provide PD (8) and PD Office staff members (4).

Professional Development Participants (school-based instructional staff)

- Elementary and secondary assistants, or A-scale staff (6).
- Elementary T-scale staff, including teachers and other school-based instructional positions (e.g., librarians, resource teaches for the gifted) (7).
- Secondary T-scale staff (8).

The discussion guides are attached as Appendices A and B. The questions were developed in collaboration with the Office of Planning and Evaluation and the Professional Development Office. In brief, the discussion guide explored:

- **Participants' past experiences with APS PD** (e.g., how they find out about offerings, what is working well, what could be improved).
- **Providers' approaches to PD** (e.g., settings in which they deliver it, how providers get word out about what is available, their goals as facilitators, their planning and preparation steps).
- **Lasting change and the 7 Standards for Professional Learning as defined by Learning Forward** (e.g., what stands out in helping create lasting change, experiences with follow-up after PD experiences, which among the 7 Standards are currently APS strengths and which are not). The seven standards are shown in Appendix C.
- **Challenges and opportunities** (e.g., what supports or hinders staff members' ability to engage in PD at APS, what future PD opportunities would be appreciated or of value, the degree to which APS is perceived as valuing PD overall).
- **Providers' views on coordination between the district- and school-levels** (e.g., how well-coordinated they are, what challenges exist and how those have been addressed).

In interpreting the findings presented in this report, it is important to note that focus group discussions are a qualitative research method. While the discussions produce rich, detailed information about the perspectives of those interviewed and opportunities to further explore relevant new perspectives, focus group findings are descriptive in nature and cannot be generalized due to sampling approaches and small sample sizes.

Detailed Findings

Contextual Information

PD Takes Place Mostly (Not Always) in Meeting Rooms, Classrooms, Auditoriums

Clearly, most PD experiences are in one of three settings—meeting room, classroom, or auditoriums for lecture-type sessions. But, PD providers and recipients expressed much interest in expanding to additional forms. For example, teachers are starting Twitter chats (e.g., to discuss books such as *Teach Like a Pirate*). One district-based administrator looks for “secret spaces” in the county like laboratories because these behind-the-scenes opportunities are an attractive bonus for participants. Career Center staff pointed out the hands-on nature of their work and said they desire hands-on PD opportunities to see how ideas may work in their specialized settings. District-based administrators expressed hope that expanding from classroom- or auditorium-type sessions could help yield more tailored PD. For example, a one-on-one coaching model may be beneficial for some needs. Focus groups were interested but rather cautious about online PD, envisioning that an online tutorial model would be best for trainings about processes such as the steps in the staff evaluation process. In fact, a few debated whether this example—an evaluation tutorial—is PD at all or just a “how to.”

[I deliver PD] sometimes in a classroom, sometimes in a room like this (classroom set up meeting-style), sometimes out in the schools. (District-Based Administrator)

When we have heavy demands we do move it to the schools, because sometimes there is not space so we will move it to schools, or even community centers...we use libraries... (District-Based Administrator)

One practical item bears mention. Parking for large PD groups can be an issue. On Election Day specifically, those attending PD at small community schools with limited parking must also work around voters.

Small community-based schools can't accommodate the parking. Kenmore is overused because they have parking and technology. It's an ideal place, so it creates a demand. I imagine that it's extra work on custodial staff. (District-Based Administrator)

Schools Vary in How They Implement PD

There was widespread knowledge among T-Scale, A-Scale, and PD staff that schools implement PD differently from one another. Largely, this fact was perceived positively because schools need the ability to adapt to staff and student needs. However, such autonomy has a downside in that some schools carry out PD less effectively than others.

There has been a big focus in Arlington on Professional Learning Communities. In all of our schools we have some iteration of PLCs. Part of the initial work around that was presented by an outside group. They trained mostly administrators in a summer...and some of us went to that as well...It was fabulous training. It was wonderful training. Then it went to out to the buildings and the buildings then interpreted from there. So, some buildings have a very strong Professional Learning Community focus and it's going in the ways that it was presented. And, other places don't and it's just fallen flat. And [training] was really a wonderful opportunity, but the interpretation got lost in some places. It's just a real... negative, because there was such a great possibility there. (Secondary Participant)

“Shiny New Things” Are Often Exciting, but Can Also Be Demotivating

Among many focus group participants, there was a sense of ongoing, repeated change that felt burdensome. School-based PD providers and PD participants, especially, said their motivation to embrace or learn new ways was diminished by the knowledge that *other* new ways were certain to come soon. They wished for more time to work with new approaches before moving to something new. The term “shiny new thing” came up in most discussions. Importantly, however, APS’s long-term use of History Alive! was singled out as a stellar example of commitment that benefits student learning. And, the particular approaches that have been adopted by APS such as Understanding by Design (UBD), PLCs, and Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) were valued themselves. Thus, the difficulty people expressed was not about these approaches, but about change.

I feel like cultural competency for me as a human being and as a teacher interacting with students has been really, really valuable. It's like a shift of mindset into a new way of thinking....[But, if you] have a different focus every year, then you get just so far until you start something new. It doesn't follow through in a way that really creates change. I think it's probably because there are a lot of [intriguing] things and people are like, “Oh shiny. This will be great; this is going to solve the problem.” (School-Based Provider, Instructional Staff)

....there is also the ‘bright new shiny thing’ problem....I still hear teachers ask about [great] past programs like Understanding by Design...Why is it one new shiny thing every year that we're all about? It makes me think that from the teachers' perspective [they think], “You know, we can invest in this this year, and next year it'll be gone.” [Another agreeing] It's like the special of the month. Teachers say that. (District-Based Administrator)

Because there have been so many initiatives over the years...sometimes there are people who [dismiss them], “Oh this is just the latest and greatest.” (School-Based Provider, Administrator)

Well, I think what I find most frustrating with professional development is it seems to be fairly piecemeal. You grab onto one thing. I mean, the county grabs onto one thing, then they drop that and they pick something else. (Elementary Participant)

Every year there's something new. The problem is that we never really fully become experts at one thing before we're on to something else. You have to give at least 3 years, or 4 years for teachers to become experts at what you want them to before you move on to the next new thing around the corner...But [on second thought] I will tell you, History Alive! has lived on my whole 15+ years I've been here. UBD is kind of going to the back burner now SIOP is coming up. For 15 [or more] years, UBD was the thing. That's a long time. (Elementary Participant)

In thinking about the topic of shiny new things, District-based administrators wondered aloud whether staff members' sense of ever present change may be amplified by two factors:

- 1) The ongoing churn of curriculum and textbook adoption that occurs alongside adoption of higher level approaches, and
- 2) Communication needs, such as better district-level framing of the rhyme and reason for new adoptions of any kind and better completing the feedback loop to share reflections on past changes.

In addition, District-based administrators raised the matter of supporting staff in becoming generally agile and adaptive given today's larger context of fast-paced, ongoing change.

While we try not to jump on the shiny new things, we can't teach the way we did 20 years ago. But, [in communicating] we haven't put this in a visual or frame or box to help people see how it's all connected. We [who work in PD] understand it because we're kind of in the middle of it. [But, not everyone has the benefit of that perspective.] (District-Based Administrator)

... a lot of teachers don't see that cycle of implementation. So, we learn about it and you're supposed to go do it. But some of them, in some schools, some sites, some groups, are not getting that feedback—where it cycles back after we reflect on how it went the first year and ask now what are we going to do. I think that's part of the problem in some sites. (District-Based Administrator)

APS is Generally Seen as Valuing PD, But Money is Always an Issue

As a group, the research participants believed that APS values professional development. However, several also voiced their sense that PD operates on a tight budget, noting that funding levels in general tend to reveal priorities in any context.

I would rather just go to [a national conference]. There it's going to be tailor made for me, and I'd be surrounded by other professionals who do exactly what I do...I've asked to go for a few years. My principal is very supportive of PD but when it comes to the money it's like, "Oh, we don't really have money for this or that." (Secondary Participant)

If we look "monetarily-wise" no, I do not think PD is valued because we do not have a lot of the funds for a lot of PD stuff which means we prioritized elsewhere. (School-Based Provider, Instructional Staff)

The 7 Standards for Professional Learning: Perceived Strengths and Weaknesses at APS

A document summarizing the 7 Standards for Professional Learning was shared with all focus group participants. It is shown in Appendix C. Respondents were asked to comment on which stand out to them as strengths or weaknesses of APS. The 7 Standards are:

1. **Learning Communities**—working in communities which are committed to continuous improvement, collective responsibility, and goal alignment.
2. **Leadership**—having skillful leaders who develop capacity, advocate, and create support systems for professional learning.
3. **Resources**—prioritizing, monitoring, and coordinating resources for educator learning.
4. **Data**—using a variety of sources and types of student, educator, and system data to plan, assess, and evaluate.
5. **Learning Designs**—integrating theories, research, and models of human learning to achieve its intended outcomes.
6. **Implementation**—applying research on change and sustaining support for implementation of professional learning for long-term change.
7. **Outcomes**—aligning outcomes with educator performance and student curriculum standards.

A few patterns emerged. Leadership, resources, and learning designs were regarded as strengths. Data collection was seen as a weakness as was implementation to a lesser degree. In other words, providers of PD were not thought to have effective means to evaluate their work or measure its effectiveness in the big picture. On this topic, a couple participants countered—pointing to sources such as surveys, consulting experts, and looking to the strategic plan.

[Learning Designs] I do think we try to deliver professional development in a way that's going to engage learners. It's not "sit and get"....the people I work with are committed to delivering professional development that they would like to receive that is based on adult learning theory.
(District-Based Administrator)

...I think [leadership] is a strength. I think that when they really want to implement something like the PLC, or the teacher evaluation program. I think the Professional Development Office really supports it and have stepped up...the leadership part of it, I think is there. (Elementary Participant)

Not only do we have knowledgeable leaders, but I do think that a lot of our professional development opportunities lead teachers to become leaders in their own school. (District-Based Administrator)

[Participant 1] I would say we're dancing on the fringes of all of these [standards]. [Participant 2] We look at data....it's there in pockets, we could be more consistent across the board.
(District-Based Administrator)

I think they can improve the data collection of professional development. If you want certain things to happen, that would be a really powerful thing to show how effective something was to get more people to do it. (Elementary PD)

I don't see the sustained support for implementation. (Elementary Participant)

Experiences with PD: What is Working Well

PD that Capitalizes on Internal APS Expertise is both Top-Notch and Tailored

Virtually all focus group participants in all roles lauded the school systems' *many* internal experts and felt that PD often worked best when it drew upon those experts. When PD providers and participants were asked to reflect upon PD that had worked well or been especially beneficial, opportunities to access experienced teachers and experts within APS were uppermost in their minds—including individuals from within participants' own buildings. This theme—that APS is rich in expertise and skilled “teachers of teachers”—was very strong. Each group made this point specifically, and spontaneously (i.e., without being prompted or asked directly).

...so rather than going outside and bringing in people to do training [on teaching statistics] they brought two teachers from schools. And it was so effective, because these were teachers who were teaching algebra, just as we were teaching algebra. So we would ask each other questions...and I still have that binder that was given to us that I can refer to. (Secondary Participant)

One year we were able to get it approved that we stayed in our school and worked with our teachers and we felt that was a lot more beneficial to us. We are always running around from class to class. For me, I'm working seven mods a day. I have a morning duty, afternoon duty, lunch duty. I have no time to be with teachers. That was a perfect time to sit and plan. (A-Scale Participant)

Key suggestions for strengthening PD focused on opening up new avenues of communication within individual schools and within APS. For example, Twitter chats can easily occur among teachers at several schools at once. Or, “departmental” style communication among teachers in an elementary school as opposed to “grade level” communication might bring about new thinking on teaching that subject area.

The Twitter chats that we are starting recently have been helpful too [as well as] learning communities because I feel we are now finally talking across schools, and talking across levels. (School-Based Provider, Instructional Staff)

When I teach, I teach all subjects, maybe that's why elementaries are really having a hard time. It's because we're not departmentalizing PD. Does that make sense? The easiest thing we do is [organize ourselves] by grade level, but not by subjects or not areas of interest or areas of concern. (School-Based Provider, Instructional Staff)

Conference-Style PD Gives Choice and is Prized, Especially Festival of the Minds

There was also much enthusiasm for conference-style PD and *especially* for Festival of the Minds (year-end, conference-style PD that uses internal experts in addition to external experts). PD participants at both elementary and secondary levels consistently singled out Festival of the Minds in positive ways. In addition to the district-wide Festival of the Minds, the conference model has been used successfully at the individual-building level and among a collective of schools. Both PD participants and providers appreciated the amount of choice the model offers.

I attended two classes [at Festival of the Minds], but I think because they were presented by other teachers who are expert with whatever they were talking about it, I got a lot out of it. And I've used I think almost everything [I learned] this year. (Secondary participant)

I think the Festival of the Minds is when you have your "personal" professional development. I think that's a great time, and [I'm] seeing how crowded it is [so I believe others feel the same way]. (Elementary Participant)

One thing that's done recently in my school and in the science department...they put eight different professional development choices and then we picked which of the eight we wanted to do. In science the last three county meetings they did it that way as well. They got six or seven different presenters and then we picked. That made it so much better. (Secondary Participant)

In my last school...we did do mini-conferences...and people did presentations. You could choose...then you rotate it to the next one. It was so wonderful, people had a great time, and we learned so much and it developed relationships within building. Folks don't realize how much that there is to share and it can have a lot of possibilities. (Secondary Participant)

APS Supports National Board Certification Extremely Well

Elementary and secondary PD participants shared a strong sense that National Board Certification is well-supported at APS—financially, by peers, and at the district level.

I'm actually assisting with facilitating the cohort for National Board Certification this year, but I also got certified a couple of years ago as well. It's a really well-supported program within Arlington County and I really appreciate that kind of support. It wasn't just financial support. There is a person who will respond to you almost immediately and come and help you. (Secondary participant)

Yeah, it's a really large undertaking and it's great that they actually value that and provide both financial and academic, and moral support for the process because it's basically a master's in a year. (Secondary participant)

PD in Response to a Specific Group's Own Perceived Need is Considered Especially Useful

PD that comes to be organically—in other words, PD that teachers or schools develop or undertake in response to their own perceived needs—was clearly seen as valuable.

One [valuable PD experience was because] a need arose. A bunch of teachers wanted to participate in the conversation. A couple of us facilitated. I don't even think anybody ended up getting any professional development points for it... it was about educational philosophy. We teach in alternative schools so we're constantly rethinking our educational philosophy and, as we hire new staff members, getting their input. So, this professional development involved only people that wanted to participate. It wasn't required. We chose things to read together and then we talked about them. (School-Based Provider, Instructional Staff)

...I have been doing sort of a book study...It has been after school for an hour-and-a-half every three weeks. And, teachers have signed up for it because they want to do it. It's like taking a seminar. It has been a really good experience of collaboration with teachers. To me, it speaks again to the idea of [addressing] what a school needs, what the staff wants. Holes that they [perceive], training that they need and finding where to give them that training from some of the expertise in the building. The other thing about it that's really special is I know each of these people. I know what their classrooms are like. I know what they need....we're sort of friends and colleagues. (School-Based Provider, Instructional Staff)

We need to build a plan to support the needs of all of our staff without limiting the potential [of those who engage in professional growth or provide it organically]. (District-Based Administrator)

PD at APS Continues to Improve

In the small group of school administrators who participated, individuals who had worked in APS enough years to be able to take a long view, shared a sense that PD had generally improved over time.

I do think the quality of the professional development offered now is very good compared to a few years ago.... I think every year, there is less and less of [classes staff must just sit through]. In the past, there was a lot of that and there was no systematic approach to PD. I think the last few years, it has been really more systematic and [relevant] things that we need. I like the flexibility that Arlington has because, yes, there are some things that have to be mandated as a county. But at the same time, there's that flexibility at the individual level, at the school level because not all the schools have the same culture or type of student...or the teachers are not at

the same level, or other things that would be a particular interest to that school. There's still flexibility that those things can happen at the school level. (School-Based Provider, Administrator)

Experiences with PD: What Could be Improved

Most Have Experienced PD They Perceived as Mismatched to Their Circumstance or Needs

It was very common for focus group participants to indicate they had attended a PD session in the past in which the content was not a good match for that audience or it had not been tailored to them. This particular complaint was a strong theme—especially among PD participants. Providers, likewise, acknowledged that at times this happens—for example, particular PD is required across the school system or a class is designed for core subject teachers but it must also be taken by people in other roles. Among PD participants, there was a sense that the presenters more likely to *not* adapt PD to their audience very well are those from outside contractors. SIOP was also deeply supported in principle to help teachers effectively meet the academic needs of students learning English. But, some complained about the experience of these trainings, in particular, as mismatched to the audience.

Oh it's like being in a game show; they're like MCs as opposed to educators. They're not trained as educators, they're trained as facilitators, but if you don't know who you're facilitating, what good is it going to do? I mean that's really what it comes down to. I'm not going to say they don't care. But, they don't know us. They don't know what we do. (Secondary Participant)

I think it's tailored to the audience, that's one problem we're having with cultural competency. [In the last training, the facilitator was] talking about.... "Are you treating the white students and [minority students differently]?" My class has no white students.... And, I agree with the content and the level too, it's hard sometimes when they're talking about elementary school topics and what you need is high school. (Secondary Participant)

I think what we just went through this at [school] and we sat down in the cafeteria and we were all going through this training and it's clear to us that the facilitator having this conversation for this 3-hour long session did not research our school, did not look at our demographics of our school and assumed that every single person in the building were the first year teacher who has never taught any ESOL kid in their life. (School-Based, PD)

Last year, all assistants met at TJ and the whole discussion was about autism. And, yes, there were people sitting there doing whatever they could to stay awake because it was everyone.... [To be fair] I think it was required by the state. But, for people who work with children with autism, it was back to basics. They know all that stuff. (A-Scale, participant)

....[APS should increase guidance to colleagues at contractors' office, in which] we say, "As a part of [APS] hiring you to do this work, this is what's going to happen. We're going to have a planning conversation, you're going to send me what you're going to do. I want to make sure you know Arlington, so, you don't stand up there and say we're a Common Core state, because we're not. That planning time is really important. (District-Based Administrator)

Staff members at the district level were keenly aware of issues related to tailoring PD. Their challenges in this regard are related to:

- 1) Managing differences among their department's view of staff needs, staff members' own perceptions of their needs, school leadership plans and needs, and district leadership plans and needs, and
- 2) The need to establish a baseline shared understanding on some subjects, which means that some staff members must attend sessions on topics they already know well.

... what a beginning teacher needs is very different than what a 25-year veteran teacher needs. Also their own perception of what they need is often very different than what maybe a supervisor or a principal thinks the school needs... (District-Based Administrator)

Currently we have no way of knowing the skill level of our staff ... we're just moving to online evaluations and so I'm really excited about that, because we'll be able to ... get a big picture of where in the standards as a whole we need to build on some extra support. We won't be at the point where we can say, "Sally, you need help in here because of your evaluation. Come to this session." But maybe in working with evaluators who score their staff, we'll be able to make that connection [recognize if a large proportion] of APS teachers are mean or below in the standard. Then, we can say, "We've built some support, please share with your staff." (District-Based Administrator)

A-Scale Staff Had Difficulty Finding Relevant, Non-Repetitive PD

A-Scale employees in the focus group had particularly acute feelings on the topic of attending PD which is not directly relevant to them. All members of the group said that they generally did not find available PD tailored to their career needs and to them as an audience, or that PD experiences available to them are repetitive. And, a couple indicated that transportation challenges—such as using a bicycle for transportation or relying on others to drive them—further restrict what they can access even when choices are offered.

On our last early release they made us all go and it was about grading, the gradebook and working with Synergy which I don't even have access to. (A-Scale, participant)

If you're in middle school or high school [there is less PD available for you]. There is a lot that is geared toward elementary school. There are a lot that are geared for [special groups] VPI-only, for library assistants only, for HILT only. That leaves the rest of us with 3 or 4 choices that they

repeat year after year, like Autism. And, when you try to sign up for another one your name is highlighted with a question mark. (A-Scale, participant)

Even as a kindergarten assistant, I've tried to look for something for me and I'll say "Ok, that one is for VPI," "That's for special ed.," "That's for Montessori." What am I supposed to sign up for? (A-Scale, participant)

I've signed up for two sessions at the same school because I bike [thus my choices are restricted]. So, I hope to find two interesting things at the same school—or, like [biking between] Wakefield and Claremont is okay. [Another agreeing] Many times I've had to give people rides [from school to PD], because not everyone drives and the county is really not that accessible by bus. (A-scale Participants)

A-Scale staff members and PD professionals in another focus group provided examples of APS PD that worked well for A-Scale staff members. One case used a PLC. And, in another, the administrator learned staff members' PD needs at monthly meetings and met them—arranging English language training through the PD Office, providing opportunity to observe responsive classroom and attend a responsive classroom workshop, enabling a staff member to learn Word.

On the last early release day all of us assistants met in our own PLC (professional learning community) and we talked about behavior. That was an example of good PD. (A-Scale, participant)

It's my role to advocate for quality professional learning for all staff, because I think there are some huge inequities....(District-Based Administrator)

Challenges and Opportunities

PD Can Foster or Quash Enthusiasm

Across the board, focus group participants spoke of being energized by their work either as providers or participants in PD. They used terms like “transformational” and were clearly enthusiastic about many PD opportunities they had experienced—as teachers and as learners. Moreover, many shared instances in which PD specifically improved teaching practice. However, PD can clearly also quash enthusiasm. The most common complaints were instances of PD that took time, but were not clearly beneficial (e.g., not new information, not adapted for the audience). In a few cases, T-scale staff described PD, and documentation of PLCs in particular, as feeling punitive. A core wish, as noted above, was to be asked what ones' professional development needs are.

...my principal at that school handled it really well, before he even tried to get into the nitty-gritty of trying to make us operate like a PLC, we spent probably a good year just talking about it, we read [about it] and he gave us a chance to constantly respond and he took us off-site for a development. But he was smart, because he automatically handed it back to the teachers and

said, "What do you want, what do you need ...[what is]... going to help to do it right?" In the hands of a really good administrator, it works really well. So, by the time I left that school the teams were working really well... (Secondary Participant)

They've been asking us to do this, and this, and this, and this, in addition to what we already do, and so I think that there's a lot of negative morale around the fact that there's all these expectations about us proving that we are "professionally developed" instead of doing it as a way to build morale. I think that it's actually being used almost as a disciplinary kind of measure. It feels that way, from the top-down, instead of going towards the teachers and the communities, and respecting us as professionals saying, "What do you need?" (Secondary Participant)

If we're talking about PD, then I think if you really did establish a true PLC, a Professional Learning Community, then I think the PD would be much easier to implement....[at my school] I think against better intentions it was just basically, "You're now a PLC. You must submit these forms in order to prove it. And, then you're going to have an administrator sitting in on your meetings." (Secondary Participant)

I remember, two years ago...for two-and-a-half hours we made card. Like a birthday card. Glitter, crayons, cutouts. I felt insulted. Spent 2 ½ hours. (A-Scale Participant)

It is Difficult to Identify a "Good" Time for PD

There was virtually no agreement among participants as to what a "good" time for PD is. Every possible time—whether during the school day, summertime, weekends—has major advantages and major drawbacks. A few small-scale solutions were mentioned. Some elementary and secondary T-scale staff members were involved in once-weekly evening online chats, which seemed to work well for them—both in terms of timing and value. And, some departments have opted to hold meetings less often, but for longer duration which was regarded as helpful (e.g., instead of meeting monthly for one hour, meeting every two months for two hours).

One of my coworkers is going to SIOP training and she's [frustrated because of snow days and rescheduling]. She's just like, "Ahh, I need to be in my classroom." It's hard because you want to get that training... (Elementary Participant)

...I hear all the time, I don't want to do that [PD opportunity] because I don't want to get a sub because it's so much work to write plans...(District-Based Administrator)

It's not optimal to have people come at the end of a workday and really expect them to be engaged...And, no other profession that I know of expects people to do professional learning at the end of a day. (District-Based Administrator)

Years ago, we were asked not to do professional development and learning during the school day because it takes away from instructional time. It's very difficult for a teacher to be asked to be out of the building, to find a sub, to prepare for that sub, and then to catch up...I really wish that concept [of no PD during school day] would come back because with everything we lose in instructional time—be it a snow day, be it an assembly, test days....or science fair... I'm not knocking these. But I feel...those teachers need to be in the classroom. (District-Based Administrator)

I think the calendar is an area of concern. If we want teachers not to be pulled out of classrooms and not to do it at the end of the day, then we have to build in these days during the year that we actually get access to teachers. Right now, we don't really have very much access. (District-Based Administrator)

The Way to Engender Enthusiasm and Overcome Inconvenience Is for PD to be Valuable

A loud, clear message from PD participants was that even inconveniently timed PD can easily be accepted as long as the activities are thought-provoking, practice-changing, or are immediately useful with students. District-level PD professionals also spoke of the idea that if the districts' staff members also felt unified *as learners*, it would foster feelings of being “in this together” and make a major positive difference.

In terms of treating people like professionals...we want to change practice. Yes, I understand the difficulties of pulling people out [yet, what should also be weighed is] the value added of what they might learn and might implement over time, I think might be worth it. (District-Based Administrator)

If the professional development is effective and useful, I think any teacher that's truly “a teacher”...would honor it, respect it and probably want to do it. The problem is when you waste time when...I could be doing [work] that will help not only myself but my students. (Secondary Participant)

Valuable PD is Thought-Provoking, Practice-Changing, or Immediately Useful

Focus group participants described what is “good” PD. They focused on development that makes them think, practice differently, or even is simply immediately useful.

I had “good PD” at Festival of the Minds [sessions on blended and flexible learning and apps in the classroom]. It's relevant, and I can start to refine my practice based on the information which is what I did...or I can incorporate a technology or the apps. I can immediately either refine my practice or start using the tools. (Secondary Participant)

[Good PD is] where you actually have something that you can take with you. And it can also be where you've opened up something in my mind and made me see things differently. This is my 20th year teaching, there are some things that are very standard. But, if I can hear a presenter say something, a different approach, a different way to reach somebody, to reach especially difficult students. Sometimes... it doesn't have to be something that I change in my practice, but something I change in my mind. (Secondary Participant)

What I always hope to participate in as well as deliver is something the teacher can turn around and use the next day with confidence. (District-Based Administrator)

If they leave your seminar or whatever with a product...so, something they actually built while they were there that demonstrates that they understood what was going on....they're more likely to call you to say, "I'm doing this with my students," or "I'm leading this professional development in my building do you want to come watch or help?" (District-Based Administrator)

Follow-Up Increases the Benefits of PD

Focus group participants with various affiliations agreed that follow-up strengthens the benefits of PD and helps bring changes into the classroom.

*I would say that whatever we do, we would like to show the teachers that to be proficient, we support them until they feel they have mastered the new thinking, the new program, the new strategy. That's the ultimate. It's not just one more piece of knowledge that they have, but also that they **really use it** effectively because we're all about student learning. (School-Based Provider, Administrator)*

To me if you're going to spend the money and bring in the resources, you want to make sure you have a follow-up plan and [ask], "How will people successfully implement these things with fidelity?" That success [in classrooms] has bred more teachers being interested...and that's a success in my mind. (District-Based Administrator)

Although the overriding feeling was that follow-up is not a major strength of today's PD, PLCs were repeatedly singled out as providing valuable follow-up over time. In addition, other single examples of much-appreciated follow up were offered.

I think we could strengthen follow-up. It has gotten better, but we need to be more systematic about the follow-up. (School-Based Provider, Administrator)

We've gone through a number of outside professional trainers and also without exception there's been zero follow-up. Without exception, with outsiders. Now anything we've done with the little PLC we've established...it seems to be constructive where we can always [follow up] ... I'm speaking this year with my colleagues than I've ever spoken before... (Secondary Participant)

I was in a school that had an on-site...coach. Having that on-site person there who was conducting the professional development during meetings, but also was available to come in and observe in classrooms... It was really, it was a supportive thing, it wasn't [intrusive] it all. She would come by or she would say, "If you want me to come and see how you're implementing," or "If you'd like me to cover your classroom so you could go and watch another classroom." There was that type of flexibility, but I felt that that was more of a steady ongoing support. Because the person was part of the staff. (Elementary Participant)

We invest in teachers' college coming to provide us PD for literacy. I like that model a lot...they come 3 times across the year, all during a 2-day session. They meet with the grade level. It is based on the teacher's needs. There is always a lab where they do modeling, coaching and then they actually have a lot of times where teachers are asked try it out with a small group. We're observing each other. I think the fact that there is follow through, across the entire year...It's authentic work with a very high level, experienced person that I think we also really respect a lot because they themselves are still working with students so they can provide us pretty direct testimony of things that they are trying. That's been really helpful. (School-Based Provider, Instructional Staff)

Importantly, some forms of PD were said to not require follow-up. In other words, a quick “in-and-out” format is appropriate for sessions on topics such as how the evaluation process works, how to use Blackboard, or specific informational content (e.g., a one-day training on the Holocaust). There was one important nuance in this message. Technology in the classroom lends itself to in-and-out training for how to use it. However, once you have the “how to” down (e.g., how to use Twitter), then it takes true, long-term PD to work on effectively using the technology for teaching and learning.

Providers' Goals and Methods

Providers' Goals as Facilitators: Student Learning and Extending PD Benefits When Teachers Pass Knowledge to Peers

With a unified voice, the many PD providers who participated in this qualitative research said that the ultimate goal of PD is that it helps students learn. Several also spoke of “amplifying” what they deliver by teaching teachers well so the teachers may pass knowledge on to others. District-level staff added one nuance, which is that they have a key role in advocating for professional development itself—keeping that aspect of APS strong within the context of all of the school system’s functions. Similarly, some district-based administrators also saw themselves as advocates—especially those with roles that are student-specific (e.g., ESL, students with disabilities), as opposed to content-area-specific.

[Goal is] to have any PD intervention be effective for student learning. That's the crux of the matter. PD should somehow help children learn. Yes, I understand it should be good for the growth of the teaching staff ...because you want teaching staff to be pleased and to be learning and growing as well, because that then makes them motivated and happy and wanting to teach

in your school. At the end of the day, we want to make sure that the children are learning and getting. (School-Based Provider, Administrator)

I think at the end of the day the big goal is, as an educator, you want a student learning. That's the whole [purpose]. That's what we're trying to do. As an educator...you are working with your colleagues and you are talking and trying to figure out how to do this. (School-Based Provider, Instructional Staff)

I want the teachers to feel that they have taken away something that they're able to implement in their practice to improve student learning. (District-Based Administrator)

And, I sometimes aim for more transformative experience where they come out feeling different about their profession and about themselves. I try to create "disciples" who go out to their schools and share with others. (District-Based Administrator)

I think, too, we're trying to create school-based leadership—where they're viewing themselves as leaders in their settings. (District-Based Administrator)

Providers' Planning and Preparation: Maximizing Resources

In describing their planning and preparation, PD providers focused heavily on finding and maximizing resources. To that end, the theme that APS instructional staff are resources themselves was prevalent among providers. As noted previously, T-Scale staff members agreed with this sense that internal resources are important. However, they also pointed out that getting access to outside resources, experts, is especially invigorating as well. In addition to finding resources, district-based PD professionals must filter out sales pitches and promotions seeking access to schools.

I don't do anything without getting a grant first. I'll get a sense of what our teachers need and want and I will look for the right grant. (District-Based Administrator)

A lot of us are tapping into the knowledge that our teachers have. We have [100+ teachers of a subject]. Somewhere in that [100+], someone has been to a workshop that they really liked. So, we try to tap into that knowledge that we have and build that capacity because we can't afford to hire a professional....but, we can try to pay it forward. (District-Based Administrator)

We've become pretty astute at looking for free resources...I know where I can get free [expert] speakers....What we have done when we've brought in trainers is [build capacity by exposing staff to that expertise so they can develop it themselves]...But I think everyone here would agree that sometimes you find the money and just do it [hire experts] because you have to. (District-Based Administrator)

Communicating about PD Opportunities

Outreach about Available PD is Seen as Effective, with Email and the Electronic Registrar Online (ERO) as Core Communication Vehicles

Most participants did not experience major challenges finding out about available PD—with ERO, regular communication vehicles—primarily email—meeting their communication needs well. Moreover, some PD occurs on a set schedule or is on the calendar well before the school year begins, thus participants can plan for it well in advance. Indeed, focus group participants at the district level shared the view that APS is very effective about conveying word of required PD, especially. Communication about PD is also not as challenging with specific defined groups, such as APS mentors. One A-scale employee said that she does not have access to technology during a typical workday, thus she checks ERO only around set PD events in October and November.

We put together a calendar at the beginning of the year that we give to our teachers during the pre-service week, [saying] “These are the three-hour workshops we offer.” (District-Based Administrator)

If I’m providing professional development to a site, I work with the principal or the supervisor to determine what the dates and times are. And, we try to do it a year out so that the staff knows and can schedule accordingly. (District-Based Administrator)

Many focus group participants said that they use ERO as more than a registration tool. They also “troll” or peruse ERO to find PD opportunities that interest them.

We don’t all get much information from [my content area central office] other than what our department might be doing, I kind of troll though ERO a lot. (Secondary Participant)

A lot of the professional development that I have chosen has been motivated by me, basically. I go and I sometimes log on to ERO and I’m looking through for what I want. (Elementary Participant)

One of the things that’s funny about the ERO is that it’s almost like looking in the want ads, you’ve got to look regularly because things open up and things close....If [PD is] for assistants, [the PD Office] can email all assistants. (A-Scale, participant)

I sometimes go on ERO just for my own sense of scope, just to see what is going on. (District-Based Administrator)

Nonetheless Focus Group Participants Say They Sometimes Miss PD Information, Principals Filter It, or Opportunities are Department-Specific

Focus group participants at all levels indicated that they had missed information about PD in the past or knew someone who had. Likewise, although the overriding message was that communication is generally effective, district-level PD professionals pointed to a few concerns. Specifically, even when word of an opportunity is conveyed through all available channels, some potential participants still indicate that they missed the information. And, at the district level there is no direct way to group and communicate with subsets of people. For example, the PD Office cannot directly contact all teachers of a single grade. Other groups cited drawbacks to ERO, noting its complicated nature and the fact that sometimes PD opportunities are entered into the system with short notice.

I had a responsive classroom class that I took last week. It was great. I have to say, it was just by chance that I found out about it, because I was talking to someone in the coffee room, and they'd been talking to the principal. They'd been talking about the fact that it was a behavior-related responsive classroom class, and "Oh by the way, would you be interested in going?" I've got some real behavior issues [in my class], so I said, "Absolutely." It was a great class but I was surprised that I found out about this just in passing. When I looked for it on the ERO it wasn't listed. I typed in the date, it wasn't listed. I typed in the building, it wasn't listed. You had to type in the actual room to find it. (Elementary Participant)

I think you have to be trained on ERO. You got all these papers, when you go to teacher orientation [and ERO instructions are among the many papers]. You never look through them...you're never trained on these. You're expecting someone to tell you. ERO, it is kind of confusing. (Elementary Participant)

There were perceptions that opportunities meant for some specific groups could benefit others, yet it is difficult to find out about opportunities if you are not the primary target audience.

I don't know if it's secretive, as much as I think it's very departmentalized. What I'm trying to say is that the [content area department] is just thinking about [that department's] teachers ... They're not thinking globally. I'm just saying. ...It's not that they don't want anyone to come. They have in their mind who they want ... who [the PD] is targeted towards. (Elementary Participant)

It doesn't seem like there's a central way to find out other than [looking in different departments' ERO listings]. There's not like a central listing or calendar necessarily. I find that professional development in APS has so many scattered pieces, I think that there could be a little bit more alignment perhaps, because there's so much more available to us than we realize, and that we might have opportunities for.... If they had under the staff tab on the homepage, or if they just have a professional development link, like, "Here's everything that we have to offer..." (Secondary Participant)

I was at a school that was Title 1, so I was on the list of people who could go [to a PD opportunity at Wakefield High School]. But, ...the auditorium was maybe half full, maybe. If [the invitation] had gone out there to all the other schools, think of how many elementary

teachers could have benefited from that. Many. I get frustrated when hear, "Oh, Title 1 has the money, and that's who can go." That's happened numerous times...[I] find that a waste of all these teachers who could be growing professionally, and taking things right into the classroom with them. (Elementary Participant)

There was nearly ubiquitous acknowledgement that—for better or worse—principals filter and distribute the PD opportunities that their staffs can access. Many factors were said to play roles in filtering. These ranged from staff-specific needs and wants (e.g., connecting staff to PD suited to a current classroom situation or to their stated professional growth wishes) to practical matters (e.g., not having too many teachers away from the building at once, using less PD time for a teacher nearing retirement) to interpersonal factors (e.g., giving PD opportunities to staff who help with extras like yearbook). In some cases, filtering is beneficial, it was said. But, in other cases, filtering results in missed opportunities.

I think also some of that is filtered by principals, depending on how many teachers they want out of the building at any time. I think you have to keep that in mind also. They might not necessarily advertise it, so they target certain teachers that they want. If they think you're experienced and you're okay, then you might not be on the top of their list. (Elementary Participant)

It's interesting. Early in my career, I was kind of in the forefront. Things were suggested to me, "You might want to go here [for PD]." Now I'm that latter part of my career I don't get the suggestion, so I'm just out of the loop...It seems like it tends to go to more of the younger teachers...whether they want it or they don't. There are different points in their life and their careers. Sometimes you don't find out about things. (Elementary Participant)

This is now my 5th school in Arlington. It really does seem to be very much related to the principal. (Elementary Participant)

*There is a lot of, "I'll tell **you** but I won't tell **you** [someone else]." What they do is they give [the information] to the school. But, the principal at our school doesn't really deal with each of us individually. Then it goes to the assistant principal and then to department chairs and then to secretaries. I would rather have a choice. Have email go right to assistants. (A-Scale Participant)*

Coordination between District- and School-Level PD

PD Participants are Unsure How PD Offerings are Determined

PD in APS occurs at various levels. One administrator described the levels this way: Global (e.g., Festival of the Minds), county (e.g., PLCs), school (tying county and their own school goals), and individual (e.g., personal professional growth, often determined by teacher and principal one-on-one each school year). As the district-based providers' discussion described, various factors influence the

PD offered at each of these levels. For example, county-level offerings in a content area are influenced by state requirements, county-wide surveys of teachers, and/or the APS strategic plan. PD experiences at individual schools may be at the request of the administration or another staff member.

We normally ask our [content area] teachers because we want their buy-in and there may be something going on out there that we're not necessarily aware of. So, we'll poll our teachers and get input from them. We use [nationwide] surveys as well. That data tells us what teens are doing [behavioral, social, emotional issues and trends] to see if we need to change things within our curriculum. And, then we go by SOLs, so that sets our work clearly for the next year. (District-Based Administrator)

At least for us, it's a big focus and this year we kind of went on the needs of the teachers and tie in our strategic plan, our school's plan. We kind of broke up into PD groups, like we have, for example, an assessment group, a PLC group, an instruction group, and a [unique school program] group. Just different groups that teachers signed up for. (School-Based Provider, Administrator)

We are also bound by a set of regulations from Virginia [e.g., requirements that everyone who works with a student who has autism must meet]. We look at data.....I might also ask teachers for feedback, but at the end of the day the accountability within the department has to do with how we're progressing toward the strategic plan. (District-Based Administrator)

Although district-based administrators could describe the factors that influence what PD offerings are made and to whom, many PD participants specifically said that they do not know how these determinations are made and that they wish for more input.

I have no idea how they formulate what we learn, none at all. We don't even see it in the newspaper, it would be something if you saw an article that says, "Schools next year will need to do ..." But that doesn't even happen. (Secondary Participant)

I know [in the past] we've been talking to the administrators prior to early releases where we're going to have professional development [to ask how the PD time will be used]. [The answer will be], "We haven't determined that yet" or "that will be coming up" or "we're not sure." They even struggle with how this is going to work. (Secondary Participant)

A lot of times I feel like...the purpose is seldom there. What's the purpose for us being in the library? Is it just mandatory we have to go for 3 hours because it's a half day and we're mandated to go? I sometimes think that the bigger idea, the purpose of the why and the outcomes that they are not planned. (School-Based Provider, Instructional Staff)

In other words it's all down flow (from central office to schools and staff), not a whole lot of up flow (from schools and staff to central office). (Secondary Participant)

In the first discussion group of PD participants, a teacher mentioned that he was wondering how the two new additional PD days that will open the next school year would be used. Subsequent groups were asked about this topic and they agreed that they did not know what to expect.

If [the additional dates for PD] were amazing, exciting I would be happy, but if it's not then teachers want to be in their classrooms getting ready for the school year. (Secondary Participant)

I guarantee it [PD providers] don't know yet what's going to go on. (Secondary Participant)

I'm anticipating there's going to be new initiative. (Elementary Participant)

When focus group participants were asked to mention courses or content that they especially appreciated, or would like to see continue or introduced in the future, they mentioned:

- History Alive 1 and 2
- Understanding By Design (UBD), 3-credit course
- Foreign Language for Elementary School Students (FLES)—which taught strategies for teaching through music, teaching in hands-on ways, and teaching a second language to students in special education
- Responsive classroom
- Writing—specifically, how to prepare 5th graders for writing SOL
- Additional AP teacher training, beyond College Board's basic training
- Behavior management (a topic that was said to be needed, always)
- Behavioral interventions (strengthening responses to children who present with different issues, different tools for responding to different situations)
- Using iPads in classroom (initiative is underway, many teachers are currently self-teaching)
- Technical basics of Interactive Achievement (IA), so that testing time is not lost to managing technology
- Using, analyzing data from IA

There is a Perception that Coordination between School- and District-Created PD Could Be Improved

Focus group participants at all levels valued both school- and district-based PD. However, at the district level, especially, staff members noted the challenges of coordinating with school-based PD. District-level staff noted that they have little window into how schools identify their own needs and how they use PD for staff members' professional growth. In fact, for this 2015 evaluation the PD Office wished to identify observation opportunities at schools for the Planning and Evaluation team, but did not have ready access to a list of specific activities underway to share. These staff members were very cautious about creating more work at schools, however. One person noted that in the past the PD Office asked each school to put forth their PD focus for the year and created a summary table. But, the approach yielded little benefit. In fact, it became busy work at the school level and disruptive—essentially, a process introduced into a system that already has many processes.

For example, April 22nd is countywide professional learning day. At the schools they're doing their own thing. We don't have any way of knowing what they're doing. (District-Based Administrator)

I find it most refreshing when I can sit with [school-based] colleagues and we're not all rushed and looking at clocks saying "I gotta run to the next meeting".....to know what they're doing and what we're doing, we're finally going to get that through our Task Force...so that we're not operating alone....[We will avoid learning about school-based PD after the fact, and thinking], "Gosh, I would've loved to have been a part of that had I known, or assisted or supported them"...we all want everyone to be supported and to feel involved and engaged. (District-Based Administrator)

We know from research that site-based, school-based professional development is better, that if it comes from them it's better. Maybe the challenge is to see how we can maybe mold in, be paired and still be a part of that and still maintain that site-based [quality]. Even though we're a small county, the needs of our schools are diverse. (District-Based Administrator)

I think there is sometimes a lack of an expectation of continuous development. So, for example in SIOP training which is important for our English language learners....we've done bits and pieces of the strategies within the SIOP model. [However], there is a...lack of expectation of implementation and follow through in some ways. Some of that lies with the fact that Department of Instruction is charged with providing some of this and yet evaluation happens at the school level. (District-Based Administrator)

Conclusions

Contextual Information

- **Most APS PD experiences are in one of three settings—meeting room, classroom, or auditorium.** Although they achieve effective learning in these settings, staff members also envision benefits when settings and formats expand. For example, Twitter book chats in which some are currently involved allow for collaboration across schools.
- **There is widespread knowledge that schools differ greatly in how they implement PD—a situation largely seen in a positive light because it means schools tailor PD to their individual needs and goals.** However, the downside to such autonomy was said to be that that some schools carry out PD less effectively than others.
- **Adoption of new approaches and tools in teaching is commonly interesting and exciting. But, some factors diminish staff members' motivation to embrace the new.** Specifically, many feel as if they are made to move from one "shiny new thing" to the next (UBD, SIOP, PLCs). Some begin to feel jaded about new ways. Moreover, completely unrelated changes (curriculum, textbooks) may increase staff members' general sense of constant change. Within this context,

there were two nuances. First, staff members could point to some time-tested ways, saying that UBD and History Alive! had each been present for a long time. Also, APS PD staff note that there is an overall need to support staff in becoming generally agile and adaptive in today's larger context of fast-paced, ongoing change.

- **APS is seen as valuing PD, but both PD providers and participants are keenly aware that money is always an issue.**
- **Among the 7 Standards for Professional Development put forth by Learning Forward, focus group participants see PD leadership, resources, and learning designs as APS strengths.** Data collection was seen as a weakness. Regarding the latter, it was thought by some that PD providers need better ways to evaluate the effectiveness of PD that is delivered.

Experiences with PD: What is Working Well

- **PD that capitalizes on internal expertise is perceived as top-notch—because of talented APS staff members—and tailored, because staff members know the county and know the needs of particular schools and even of particular teachers.** In fact, key suggestions for strengthening PD focused on opening up new avenues of communication with individual schools and within APS—for example, online chats, PD in elementary school by “department” instead of by grade-level, conference-style PD among a cooperative of schools.
- **Outside experts are also highly valued for useful and refreshing professional teaching—especially when APS staff members can “amplify” what they learn by sharing with peers.** One caution—outsiders who deliver required PD were said to be more likely to fail to understand unique APS audiences and to tailor their presentations.
- **There was much enthusiasm for Festival of the Minds and for the conference model in general.** The conference model enables PD recipients to choose PD sessions that they most want or need. It has been used successfully within a single school and across groups of cooperating schools at APS.
- **There was a very strong perception, among T-scale staff especially, that National Board Certification is well supported at APS.**
- **PD that comes to be organically is important.** In other words, PD that teachers or schools undertake (on their own or together with district providers) in response to their own perceived needs was clearly seen as being extremely valuable and worthwhile.
- **PD at APS has improved over time and continues to do so.**

Experiences with PD: What Could be Improved

- **Virtually all focus group participants had experienced PD in which they were not the right audience or the content had not been adapted for them** (e.g., content that assumes teachers are new to working with English language learners, content for Career Center teachers that did not recognize ways in which their hands-on classrooms differ from others).
- **The A-Scale staff members who participated in this research feel neglected when it comes to finding relevant PD that promotes their growth.** Although they had some good PD experiences, overall they feel they have fewer PD options than others. Thus PD experiences become repetitive. Some felt that there was little genuine interest in their career growth.

Challenges and Opportunities

- **PD can bring about or quash enthusiasm.** Across the board, focus group participants spoke of being energized either by their work as providers or as participants in PD. Many used words like “transformational” and spoke with enthusiasm of learning from one another and from experts. They pointed to ways in which PD had directly benefited teaching practice. However, PD can also have a deflating effect. Specifically, this was said to happen when it takes personal or classroom time, but is not beneficial (e.g., not new information, not tailored to the audience, merely “required”). In a few cases, T-scale staff said that documentation—of PLCs in particular—felt punitive or not respectful, trusting of them as professionals.
- **It is difficult, perhaps impossible, to identify a “good” time for PD.** Clearly, no one particular time is ideal. Each possibility—during school, after school, weekends, summertime—has advantages and drawbacks.
- **The way to overcome these challenges is for PD to be valuable.** Both providers and participants described an openness to the inconveniences of PD whenever that PD betters teaching and learning.
- **“Good” PD is practice-changing, thought-provoking, or immediately useful.** Although “transformational” PD that changes practice was prized, not all PD must achieve such heights in order to be perceived as valuable. PD experiences can be valuable even if they simply prompt new ways of thinking or yield in-class tools that teachers can use right away (e.g., behavior management strategies, tangible items such as handmade game boards).
- **Varied focus group participants agreed upon the value of follow-up.** They also agreed that more follow-up would be a positive step for APS to take.

Providers’ Goals and Methods

- **From all points of view, the ultimate goal of PD is student learning.** Extending learning when teachers pass along knowledge to peers is a second goal.
- **In addition to delivering quality content, providers focus heavily on maximizing resources—**capitalizing on APS internal expertise, obtaining grants, accessing free expert resources, ensuring that teachers “amplify” what they learn by sharing with peers, and filtering out sales pitches.

Communicating about PD Opportunities

- **Most participants did not experience major challenges finding out about available PD—with ERO, regular communication vehicles, and other email meeting their communication needs**

well. Many focus group participants said that they use ERO as more than a registration tool. They also “troll” or peruse ERO to find PD opportunities that interest them.

- **Still, most PD participants could point to occasional times they or a colleague had missed information about an opportunity that would have benefitted them.** For example, principals filter information based school goals, or opportunities are department-specific and may not become more widely known. Although the overriding message was that communication is generally effective, APS district-based administrators concurred that these challenges exist. Even when word of an opportunity is conveyed through all available channels, some potential participants still indicate that they miss it. And, the PD Office has no direct way to group and communicate with subsets of people. For example, they cannot directly contact all teachers of a single grade.

Coordination between District- and School-Level PD

- **Although PD providers could describe the factors that influence what PD offerings are made and to whom, many PD participants specifically said that they do not know how these determinations are made and that they wish for more input.** Moreover, the perception that some PD decisions are made last-minute seemingly caused doubt about how valuable the PD experience would be (e.g., if a principal is unable to specify how an upcoming early dismissal afternoon will be used or when teachers speculate that there are no specific plans for how two newly added PD days before the academic year will be used).
- **When district-level providers have little window into the needs schools have identified, they feel they lose opportunities to contribute and be helpful.** While it may be tempting to require schools to report their plans and needs, district-based administrators shared that the approach had not worked well in the past and were cautious about adding process or burden to an already process-laden operational scenario for schools.

Appendix A - Professional Development Evaluation Discussion Guide
PD Participants

Focus Group Research on Professional Development
Conducted with Professional Development Participants
October 2014

INTRODUCTIONS/WARM UP (10 minutes)

Good afternoon everyone. My name is _____. First, thank you for taking the time to join us. A word on our purpose today... Everyone here participates in professional development as an Arlington Public Schools (APS) staff member in some way. Our purpose is to talk about your experiences in that role with the intention of learning from your experiences and insights in order to make professional development better in the future.

A. Disclosures

- Audio taping. The tape will only be available to me to help me write my report. Once my report is accepted in final, I will delete the tape. I will not share it with anyone else.
- Confidentiality.
 - This focus group is unusual in that you may know one another or know people in common. I hope that you will feel comfortable sharing your opinions. And, I ask that you keep what is said here in confidence. That said, I cannot legally bind anyone here to keep what they hear confidential. Therefore, you may choose *not* to say some things. If that happens and you wish to share information with me later, please feel free to contact me by phone or e-mail.
 - When I write my report, it will not identify anyone by name. Rather, I will use phrases like, "Several participants expressed the opinion that _____."
- I am a professional moderator, and not an expert on teaching, school administration, or professional development. My job is to listen to you and convey your input to the Offices of Planning and Evaluation, and Professional Development.

B. Ground rules

- Need to hear from everyone; one at a time please
- Please turn off cell phones
- No right or wrong answers

C. Participant introduction

- Your first name only.
- Your title/role at APS (if teacher, what grade and/or subjects).

I know that professional development in APS takes different forms and occurs both at the school-level and district-level. When we use the term 'professional development' today, we will mean things like workshops, courses, book study, mentoring/coaching."

PAST EXPERIENCE (30 minutes)

1. Tell me a bit about the professional development offerings/experiences you have most recently participated in. [Keep this discussion **brief**. Hear a bit about most recent and then move on to overarching conversation.]
 - a. (If needed...) What was the **topic** of the PD? The **purpose or main message**?
 - b. And, what was the experience like? What **instructional style** was used? What were the **logistics** (when, where, how long)?
2. How do you typically find out about professional development opportunities?
 - a. And, how do you decide which classes/meetings/experiences to participate in?
 - b. What are the most appealing types of PD, that is those that most interest you or that you like best, and why?
3. Let's talk about your PD experiences at APS—both positive and negative. First, broadly, what aspects of PD at APS are **working well** in your view?
 - a. Is there a particular class/meeting/experience that stands out as one that enabled you to make **positive, lasting changes**?
 - b. What about that experience made it valuable in that way?
4. How about negative experiences. Again, first broadly—what aspects of PD at APS **could be improved** in your view?
 - a. What changes would be helpful?
 - b. And, being more specific, is there a particular class/meeting/experience that stands out in a negative way?
 - c. What about it made it a negative example?

LASTING CHANGE AND 7 STANDARDS (15 minutes)

1. For the next part of the discussion, let us agree that the goal of PD provided to you is to foster lasting, positive change that ultimately strengthens education for students.
 - a. What is working?
 - b. What is not?
 - c. Inducing and supporting lasting change is especially challenging. Let's revisit this idea. Have you seen or experienced success in achieving lasting change that you have not mentioned? And, if so, what factors made it work?

- d. **What, if any, follow-up** have you experienced after you engaged PD offerings?
 - **How helpful, or not, was that follow-up** in strengthening your work?
 - What, if any, follow-up would be helpful to you?
2. Let's look over **Learning Forward's Seven Standards** for Professional Learning list. Among other uses, this list is meant as a planning tool for providers of PD. Ideally, providers plan PD experiences that meet these standards.
 - a. Looking at this list, which among the seven are areas of strength? Which are more commonly achieved? How so?
 - b. And, which standards are less commonly achieved?

CHALLENGES/OPPORTUNITIES (10 minutes)

1. Let's talk about what supports and hinders your ability to engage PD at APS. To start, what helps you to engage—or participate—in PD?
2. And, what, if anything, makes it difficult to do so?
3. How about the differentiated compensation program in particular the Career Advancement Program, or CAP, which includes National Board Certification. How familiar would you say you are with CAP?
 - a. What facilitates participation (or, for non-participants, "facilitates the participation of others in your observation")?
 - b. And, what hinders participation?

LOOKING AHEAD (10 minutes)

1. What topics would you like to see offered? In other words, in what areas would you especially appreciate PD opportunities?
 - a. Any proposed changes to the overall approach?
2. To what degree would you say APS values PD? And, why?

CLOSING (5 minutes)

What advice would you APS when it comes to providing PD that really makes a difference in teaching and learning?

Appendix B - Professional Development Evaluation Discussion Guide
PD Providers

Focus Group Research on Professional Development
Conducted with Professional Development Providers

INTRODUCTIONS/WARM UP (10 minutes)

Good afternoon everyone. My name is _____. First, thank you for taking the time to join us. A word on our purpose today... Everyone here provides professional development content to Arlington Public Schools (APS) staff members in some way. Our purpose is to talk about your experiences in that role with the intention of learning from your experiences and insights in order to make professional development better in the future.

D. Disclosures

- Audio taping. The tape will only be available to me to help me write my report. Once my report is accepted in final, I will delete the tape. I will not share it with anyone else.
- Confidentiality.
 - This focus group is unusual in that you may know one another or know people in common. I hope that you will feel comfortable sharing your opinions. And, I ask that you keep what is said here in confidence. That said, I cannot legally bind anyone here to keep what they hear confidential. Therefore, you may choose *not* to say some things. If that happens and you wish to share information with me later, please feel free to contact me by phone or e-mail.
 - When I write my report, it will not identify anyone by name. Rather, I will use phrases like, "Several providers expressed the opinion that _____."
- I am a professional moderator, and not an expert on teaching, school administration, or professional development. My job is to listen to you and convey your input to the Offices of Planning and Evaluation, and Professional Development.

E. Ground rules

- Need to hear from everyone; one at a time please
- Please turn off cell phones
- No right or wrong answers

F. Participant introduction

- Your first name only
- What your title is in APS.
- And, a bit about the work you do. To whom do you provide professional development services in APS and on what topics?

I know that professional development in APS takes different forms and occurs both at the school-level and district-level. When we use the term 'professional development' today, we will mean things like workshops, courses, book study, mentoring/coaching."

CONTEXT (15 minutes)

Just to make sure I have a good understanding of your work context before I ask more questions, I'd like to hear a bit about your work...

5. Now that I know which staff you work with, tell me about the ways in which you deliver PD.
[Explore how instruction is structured. If needed, prompt:]
 - a. What type of setting are you usually in when delivering PD?
 - b. How often and how long do you interact with staff?
 - c. What kinds of activities or assignments are part of the experience?
 - d. Advantages/Drawbacks of that setting?
6. How do you typically let staff members know what PD opportunities are available?
 - a. How well do those approaches seem to work?

PLANNING (10 minutes)

1. What is your goal as a facilitator of professional learning? In other words, what do you hope your work achieves?
2. How do you determine what professional development information or experiences need to be provided?
3. Describe any planning or preparation you do in your role.
 - a. What resources do you tend to turn to?
 - b. What are your considerations?

LASTING CHANGE AND 7 STANDARDS (20 minutes)

3. For the next part of the discussion, let us agree that the goal of the PD you provide is to foster lasting, positive change that ultimately strengthens education for students.
 - a. What is working?
 - b. What is not?
 - c. Inducing and supporting lasting change is especially challenging. Let's revisit this idea. Have you seen or experienced success in achieving lasting change that you have not mentioned? And, if so, what factors made it work?
 - d. What, if any, follow-up occurs after staff members engage PD offerings? [If needed: That is, how do you know whether (or how) PD participants implement what you have taught?]

- How helpful, or not, is current follow-up in strengthening staff members' work?
 - What, if any, other follow-up would be helpful?
4. Let's imagine the ideal scenario for professional development within the context of APS. First, brainstorming. What would an ideal PD program look like? [Easel list.]
 - a. And, getting more specific to focus on what you teach or share with staff....What is your ideal design for professional learning in the work you do? [If needed: In other words, what structure (environment, timing, processes, follow-up, etc.) would help you to be more effective at what you are trying to teach?]
 5. Let's look over Learning Forward's Seven Standards for Professional Learning list. Among other uses, this list is meant as a planning tool for providers of PD. Ideally, providers plan PD experiences that meet these standards.
 - a. Looking at this list, which among the seven are areas of strength? Which are more commonly achieved? How so?
 - b. And, which standards are less commonly achieved?
 - c. To what degree do you find you are able to consistently use these standards in planning? What supports/hinders your using them?

CHALLENGES/OPPORTUNITIES (10 minutes)

4. Let's talk about what supports and hinders staff members' ability to engage in PD at APS. To start, what helps people engage—or participate—in PD?
5. And, what, if anything, makes it difficult to do so?

COORDINATION (10 minutes)

1. Professional development work goes on at different levels—specifically, within schools and at the district level. Tell me about coordination between those two levels. Generally speaking, how well-coordinated are the two?
 - a. What are the challenges to coordination?
 - b. What ways of meeting these challenges have you seen that work? What helps?

LOOKING AHEAD (10 minutes)

3. What topics would you like to see offered? In other words, in what areas would you especially like to see PD opportunities offered?
 - a. Any proposed changes to the overall approach?
4. To what degree would you say APS values PD? And, why?

CLOSING (5 minutes)

What advice would you give APS when it comes to providing PD that really makes a difference in teaching and learning?

Appendix C - Leaning Forward's 7 Standards for Professional Learning

1. Learning Communities:

Professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and results for all students occurs within learning communities committed to continuous improvement, collective responsibility, and goal alignment.

Professional learning within communities requires continuous improvement, promotes collective responsibility, and supports alignment of individual, team, school, and school system goals. Learning communities convene regularly and frequently during the workday to engage in collaborative professional learning to strengthen their practice and increase student results. Learning community members are accountable to one another to achieve the shared goals of the school and school system and work in transparent, authentic settings that support their improvement.

2. Leadership:

Professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and results for all students requires skillful leaders who develop capacity, advocate, and create support systems for professional learning.

Leaders throughout the pre-K-12 education community recognize effective professional learning as a key strategy for supporting significant school and school system improvements to increase results for all students. Whether they lead from classrooms, schools, school systems, technical assistance agencies, professional associations, universities, or public agencies, leaders develop their own and others' capacity to learn and lead professional learning, advocate for it, provide support systems, and distribute leadership and responsibility for its effectiveness and results.

3. Resources:

Professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and results for all students requires prioritizing, monitoring, and coordinating resources for educator learning.

Effective professional learning requires human, fiscal, material, technology, and time resources to achieve student learning goals. How resources are allocated for professional learning can overcome inequities and achieve results for educators and students. The availability and allocation of resources for professional learning affect its quality and results. Understanding the resources associated with professional learning and actively and accurately tracking them facilitates better decisions about and increased quality and results of professional learning.

4. Data:

Professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and results for all students uses a variety of sources and types of student, educator, and system data to plan, assess, and evaluate professional learning.

Data from multiple sources enrich decisions about professional learning that leads to increased results for every student. Multiple sources include both quantitative and qualitative data, such as common formative

Appendix C - Leaning Forward's 7 Standards for Professional Learning

and summative assessments, performance assessments, observations, work samples, performance metrics, portfolios, and self-reports. The use of multiple sources of data offers a balanced and more comprehensive analysis of student, educator, and system performance than any single type or source of data can. However, data alone do little to inform decision making and increase effectiveness. Thorough analysis and ongoing use are essential for data to inform decisions about professional learning, as is support in the effective analysis and use of data.

5. Learning Designs:

Professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and results for all students integrates theories, research, and models of human learning to achieve its intended outcomes.

Integrating theories, research, and models of human learning into the planning and design of professional learning contributes to its effectiveness. Several factors influence decisions about learning designs, including the goals of the learning, characteristics of the learners, their comfort with the learning process and one another, their familiarity with the content, the magnitude of the expected change, educators' work environment, and resources available to support learning. The design of professional learning affects its quality and effectiveness.

6. Implementation:

Professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and results for all students applies research on change and sustains support for implementation of professional learning for long-term change.

The primary goals for professional learning are changes in educator practice and increases in student learning. This is a process that occurs over time and requires support for implementation to embed the new learning into practices. Those responsible for professional learning apply findings from change process research to support long-term change in practice by extending learning over time. They integrate a variety of supports for individuals, teams, and schools. Finally, they integrate constructive feedback and reflection to support continuous improvement in practice that allows educators to move along a continuum from novice to expert through application of their professional learning.

7. Outcomes:

Professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and results for all students aligns its outcomes with educator performance and student curriculum standards.

For all students to learn, educators and professional learning must be held to high standards. Professional learning that increases results for all students addresses the learning outcomes and performance expectations education systems designate for students and educators. When the content of professional learning integrates student curriculum and educator performance standards, the link between educator learning and student learning becomes explicit, increasing the likelihood that professional learning contributes to increased student learning. When systems increase the stakes for students by demanding high, equitable outcomes, the stakes for professional learning increase as well.

ERO Surveys

In 2003-04, APS began using Electronic Registrar Online (ERO) to track teacher professional learning, to include registration and attendance. Over the years, APS began to include professional learning for P-, E-, and A-scale staff for events such as the annual Administrative Conference and the Instructional Assistant professional learning days. Other professional learning is not tracked in ERO, such as administrative technology training (STARS, Outlook, etc.).

Beginning in the fall of 2011, all participants in professional development sessions that have been entered in ERO are required to complete a standard evaluation of the session upon being marked attended. Once a participant is marked attended, they may sign in to ERO and submit their evaluation electronically. Upon doing so, they will receive the assigned recertification points on their transcript. If participants do not complete the evaluation, their points for the activity will not appear in the transcript.

The implementation for a required evaluation was a result of an item from the Department of Instruction's action plan during the 2010-2011 school year. The rationale was that a system-wide evaluation would provide feedback on professional learning offerings both to the instructor and at a districtwide level. Tying the submission of an evaluation to the assignment of recertification points would ensure a greater response rate for each survey.

The timeframe for submitting the evaluation is open-ended and existing evaluations are available for completion at any time. In some instances, participants may wait and do all pending evaluations at one time. In addition, many E- and some P-scale staff do not have licensure requirements and do not need to earn recertification points; these staff may not have the same motivation to fill out the survey. These factors may affect the validity of some responses.

Figure 1: This professional development session met my needs.

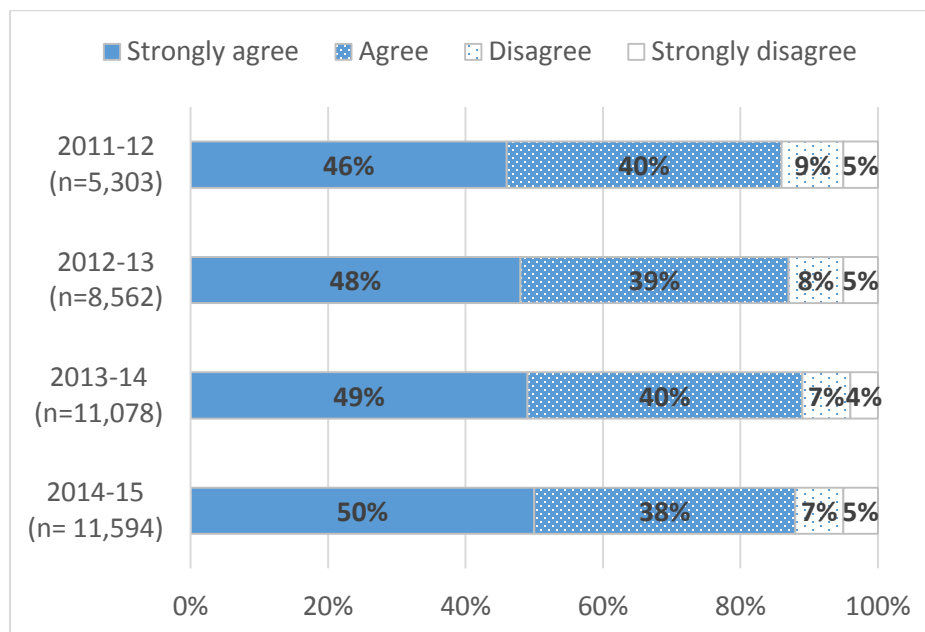


Figure 2: What about this workshop did you find to be the most helpful?

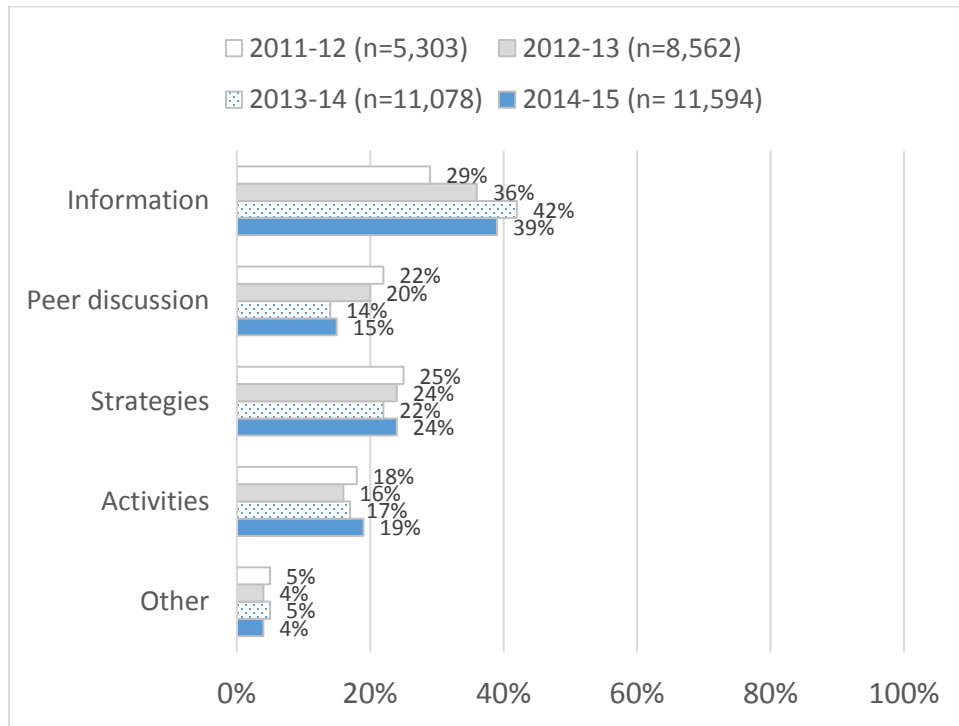


Figure 3: What about this workshop would you most have liked to change?

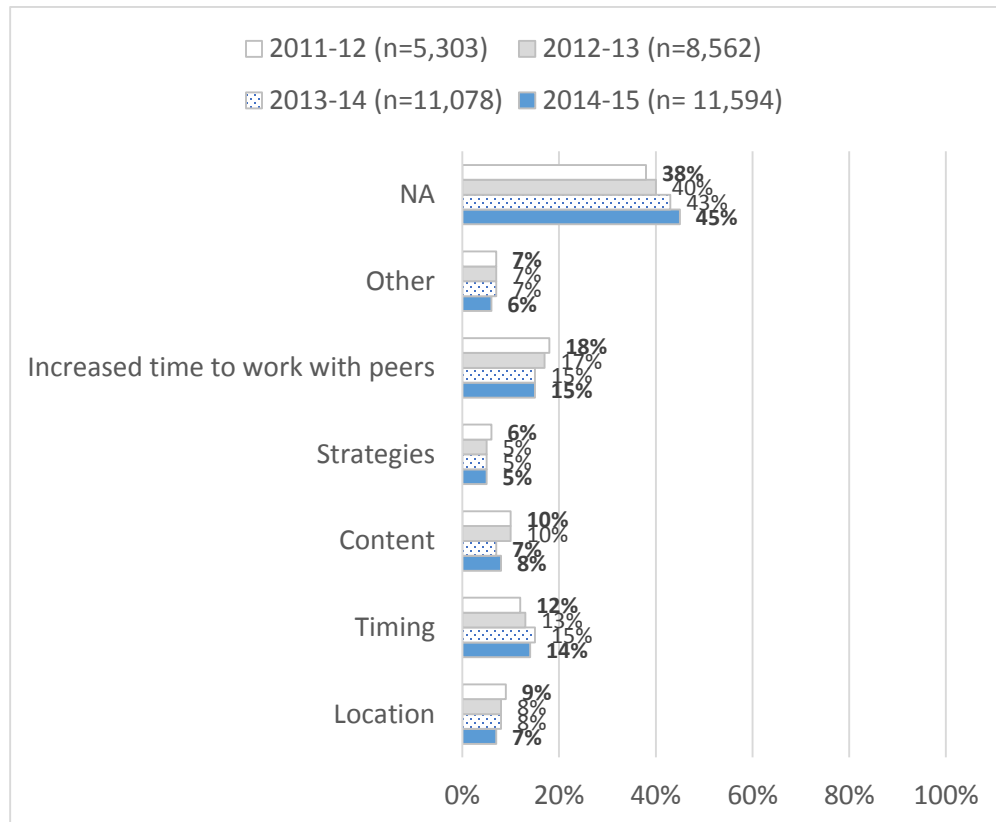


Figure 4: Why did you attend this professional development offering?

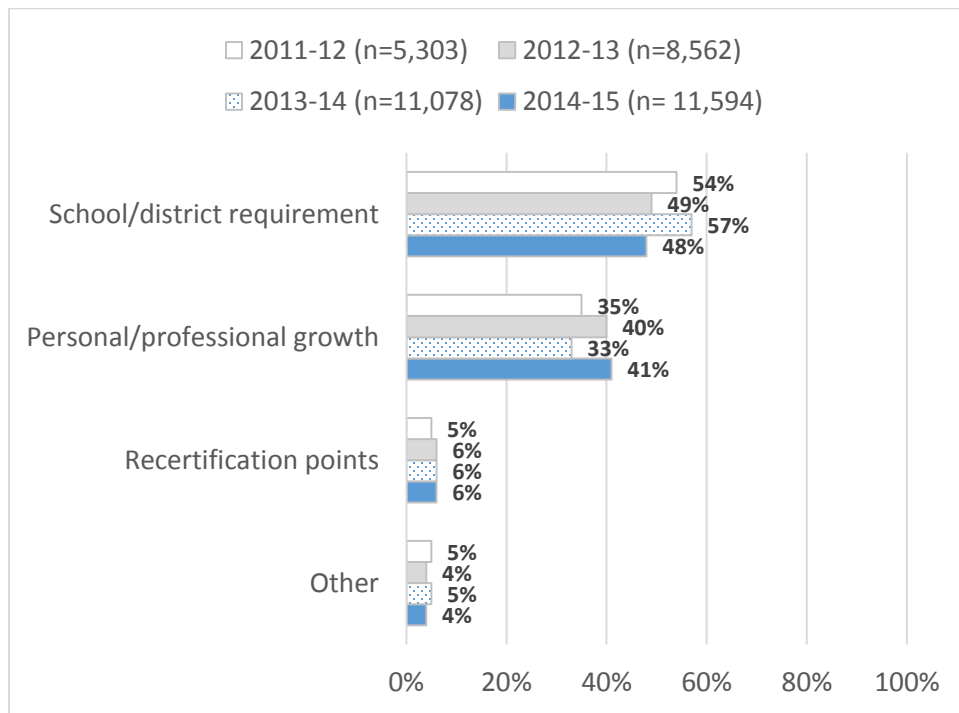


Figure 5: The presenter was knowledgeable.

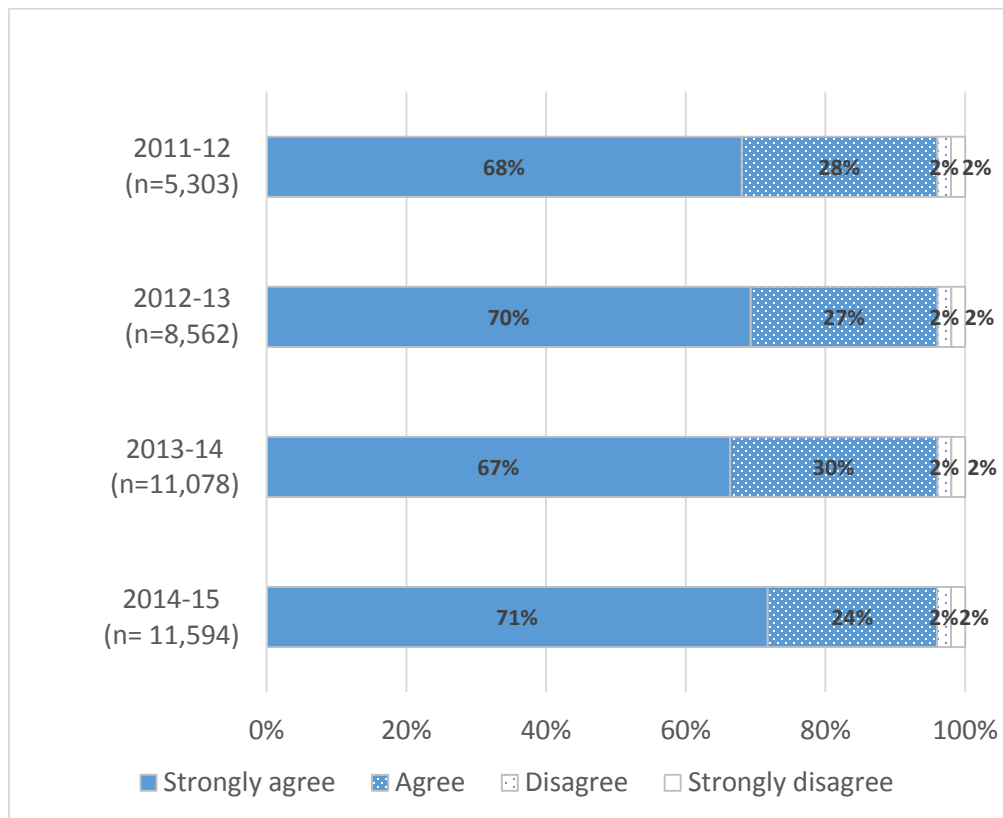


Figure 6: The presenter effectively facilitated the offering.

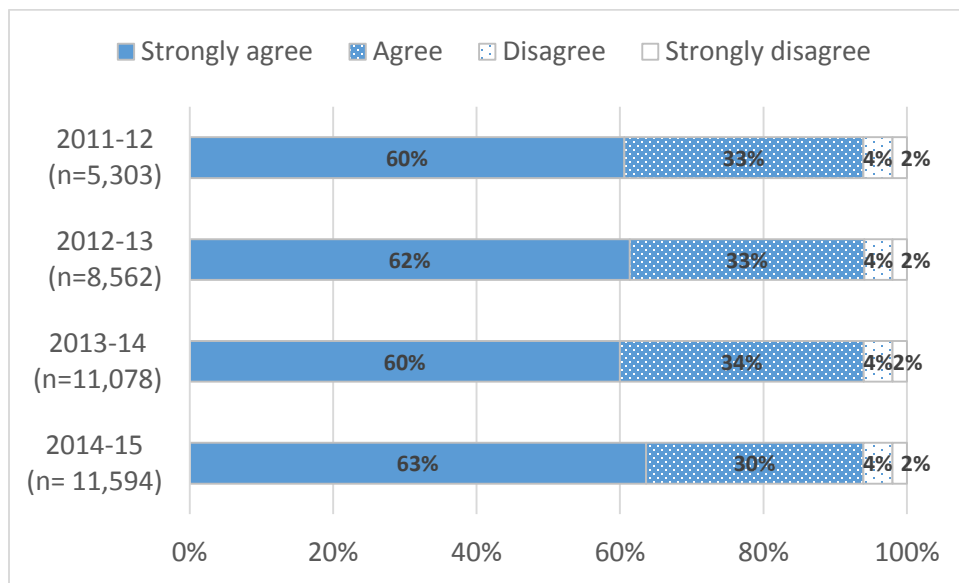


Figure 7: I plan to implement strategies from this professional development offering.

