



Wisconsin
Evaluation
Collaborative

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Evaluation of Street Law's TALCCS Program

Final Report



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About the Wisconsin Evaluation Collaborative

The Wisconsin Evaluation Collaborative (WEC) is housed at the Wisconsin Center for Education Research at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. WEC's team of evaluators supports youth-serving organizations and initiatives through culturally responsive and rigorous program evaluation. Learn more at <https://wec.wceruw.org/>.



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Section I

Introduction

Introduction

Street Law, Inc. has partnered with the Wisconsin Evaluation Collaborative (WEC) at the University of Wisconsin-Madison's Wisconsin Center for Education Research (WCER) for an evaluation of its Talking about Local, Current, and Contested Issues (TALCCS) program. TALCCS was a social studies professional development program largely geared toward teachers and administrators in school districts from a Mid-Atlantic state.¹ We have redacted all district names from the public version of this report.

Programming differed in each year of the three-year program. Year 1 (the 2021-22 school year) was largely a planning year, during which Street Law developed its programming and recruited districts to participate, with some initial professional development at the end of the academic year. In Year 2 of the initiative (2022-23), Street Law provided social studies professional development to teachers and teacher-facilitators in four school districts in this Mid-Atlantic state. Year 3 (2023-24) expanded to all participating school districts, who received less-intensive professional development; districts generally conducted their own professional development with Street Law's guidance.

Professional development included, among other things, strategies teachers could use in their classrooms, as well as resources and support for discussing potentially controversial issues. Street Law also trained teacher-facilitators to work with teachers in their schools and districts. Specific strategies included the following:

- **Deliberations:** Structured discussions informed by a common reading that presents multiple perspectives and encourages students to collaborate with peers, weigh evidence, support their decisions with facts, and seek common ground.
- **Simulations of Democratic Processes:** Role-playing activities, such as moot courts and legislative simulations, are immersive experiences that allow students to understand a scenario from different perspectives while applying civic knowledge, practicing critical thinking skills, and gaining a practical understanding of how government works.
- **Socratic Seminars:** Structured discussions that center on a deep understanding of a text and that promote critical thinking and collaboration among students.
- **Take a Stand:** An activity that asks students to explore and share personal views on an issue, listen to peers' opinions, and reweigh their own.²
- **Tug of War:** A strategy from Harvard's Project Zero: "this routine builds on children's familiarity with the game of tug of war to help them understand the complex forces that 'tug' at either side of a fairness dilemma. It encourages students to reason carefully about the 'pull' of various factors that are relevant to a dilemma of fairness. It also helps them appreciate the deeper complexity of fairness situations that can appear black and white on the surface."³

¹ While nearly all of the participating schools and districts were located this Mid-Atlantic state, three were in other locations.

² <https://streetlaw.org/helping-schools-engage-students-in-discussions-of-contested-issues/>

³ https://pz.harvard.edu/sites/default/files/Tug%20of%20War_0.pdf

Mixed Methods Approach

WEC has conducted a mixed-methods evaluation of TALCCS, using both quantitative and qualitative data to answer three evaluation questions:



1. Process

To what extent does TALCCS implement the proposed activities as intended?



2. Stakeholder Perceptions

How do key stakeholders perceive the successes and challenges of TALCCS with respect to project implementation, outcomes, and sustainability?



3. Outcomes and Impact

To inform both this project and future projects, to what extent are project outcomes being attained in school districts from this Mid-Atlantic state, and to what extent are these patterns a result of TALCCS?

Following an explanation of methodology and limitations, this report provides WEC's findings from the full TALCCS program (with a focus on Year 3), discussing fidelity of implementation; participants' preparedness for using strategies in instruction; resources and supports; cultural relevance; student engagement and growth; and participants' perceptions of professional development

delivery and content. To satisfy a grant requirement, we also report on participant growth in social studies content knowledge. However, due to a lack of data availability, we are unable to assess Evaluation Question 3 as of the writing of this report; we will report on outcomes data in a future addendum.

Section 2

Data Sources and Methodology

Data Sources and Methodology

Professional Development Participation Data

Districts self-reported data on the number of teachers who participated in Street Law professional development throughout 2023-24. We report on these data in the section on findings for Evaluation Question I.

Surveys

In Year 2 and Year 3 of the program, pre- and post-surveys were administered to participating teachers, teacher-facilitators, and school and district administrators. In Year 2, two different pre-surveys were fielded, based on participants' districts. A post-survey was administered in Fall 2022 to teachers who had already begun participating in the program, and a larger post-survey was administered in Spring 2023. In Year 3, the pre- and post-survey were administered to all districts and were nearly identical – items on experience in the program and community engagement were added in the post-survey, and the final open-ended question was different. The Year 3 post-survey instrument is provided in Appendix A.

Surveys consisted of both closed- and open-ended items, responses to which are included throughout this report. Closed-ended items asked about program implementation and instruction on current and contested issues. Open-ended survey items asked participants about their approaches to instruction on current and contested issues and the resources they had available. An additional open-ended item on the pre-survey asked participants about what they were looking forward to, and an additional item on the post-survey asked about advice they would give future participants. Surveys also included social studies content questions required to meet federal Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) requirements; these items differed between Year 2 and Year 3. Closed-ended survey items were analyzed using Excel and STATA, and we used an iterative coding process to analyze the open-ended items for common themes.

Table I shows the number of survey responses by district and programming year, and Table 2 presents the demographic characteristics of survey-takers. Here and throughout the report, unless otherwise noted, figures show pre-to-post changes in responses, and thus only include responses from participants who took both the pre- and post-surveys (n=26 in Year 2, n=121 in Year 3). We do not report closed-ended responses for subgroups with fewer than 10 respondents, and in Year 3, responses to open-ended items are provided only for participants who responded to both surveys.

Table I: Number of Survey Respondents by District

DISTRICT	YEAR 2 (N=26)		YEAR 3 (N=121)	
	N	%	N	%
District 1	2	7.7%	0	0.0%
District 2	11	42.3%	48	39.7%
District 3	6	23.1%	0	0.0%
District 4	7	26.9%	7	5.8%
District 5			4	3.3%
District 6			1	0.8%
District 7			11	9.1%
District 8			4	3.3%
District 9			13	10.7%
District 10			10	8.3%
District 11			9	7.4%
District 12			2	1.7%
District 13			5	4.1%
District 14			4	3.3%
District 15			3	2.5%

Table 2: Demographic Characteristics of Survey Respondents

DISTRICT	SUB-CATEGORY	YEAR 2 (N=26)		YEAR 3 (N=121)	
		N	%	N	%
Teaching Experience	First Year	0	0.0%	10	8.3%
	2-5 Years	6	23.1%	27	22.3%
	6-9 Years	4	15.4%	29	24.0%
	10 years or more	16	61.5%	55	45.5%
Gender Identity	Female	21	80.8%	100	82.6%
	Male	4	15.4%	19	15.7%
	Non-binary	1	3.8%	1	0.8%
	Prefer not to respond	0	0.0%	1	0.8%
Race/Ethnicity*	American Indian/ Alaska Native	1	3.8%	0	0.0%
	Asian	2	7.7%	3	2.5%
	Black/African-American	1	3.8%	11	9.1%
	Hispanic	0	0.0%	5	4.1%
	Two or More Races	1	3.8%	4	3.3%
	White	25	96.2%	106	87.6%

*Participants could choose multiple selections

Additionally, of the Year 3 survey respondents from the four initial districts, 47 (85 percent) were in their first year in the program, and eight (15 percent) had participated in the program in previous years.

Session Evaluations

Following Year 3, Street Law shared participants' evaluations of their participation in five sessions: Deliberation, Simulations, Socratic Seminar, Take a Stand, and Tug of War. As with the surveys, we analyzed the closed-ended items in Excel and STATA and used an iterative coding process to identify common themes in the open-ended responses. While we do not have pre-post data for the session evaluations (all of them were conducted post-session), they serve as a valuable source of data for assessing program implementation.

Classroom Observations

There were two sets of classroom observations as part of the Street Law evaluation. The first set was conducted in Spring 2023 in District 3 by a WEC evaluator who observed Street Law strategies in use in a classroom. The second set was conducted in Spring 2024 by instructional coaches, district supervisors, and principals in multiple classrooms.

Focus Groups

The evaluation team held five participant focus groups in Year 2 of the grant, from February to June 2023. Two of the focus groups included teacher-facilitators across districts (n=4), one included teachers from District 2 (n=4), and two were held at a District 4 professional development day, one with elementary and middle school teachers (n=5) and one with high school teachers (n=5). We coded the focus groups to find common themes in participant responses, which largely reflect the questions in the focus group protocols. The protocols are provided in Appendix B.

Student Outcomes

We have requested standardized test score data for students in the original four districts, as well as teacher-course-student linkage data. When we receive standardized test score data, we will perform our student outcomes analyses.

Section 3

Limitations

Limitations

There are several limitations associated with the survey data. Matching the pre- and post-survey respondents relied on a common identifier in both surveys; some participants did not enter the identifier as instructed.⁴ In rare cases, participants from the same district had the same identifier, and it was not possible to tell which response belonged to which individual. In Year 2, the number of survey participants who responded to both the pre- and post-survey was small, which makes the meaning of pre/post changes in responses more difficult to assess than if the sample size were larger. For the GPRA items, respondents were given an “I do not know” option, which made it difficult to determine whether they actually improved their knowledge on social studies content; in at least a few cases, it appeared that respondents answered “I do not know” to finish the survey more quickly. Thus, we removed from analysis any participants who listed “I do not know” for over half of the items in either the pre- or post-surveys. Finally, due to the small numbers of participating administrators, our report only includes survey data on teachers and teacher-facilitators.

Aside from the survey, other data sources carry limitations, as well. For instance, districts self-reported data on participation in professional development, and not all districts recorded their attendance following professional development sessions. Additionally, while we invited several participants to take part in focus groups, the small number of focus group participants may limit the generalizability of our findings; indeed, a majority of focus group participants were educators in one of the four districts. This limitation is also relevant to the Year 2 classroom observations, which occurred in one county, and the Year 3 classroom observations, which occurred mostly in one county. Thus, findings from classroom observations may not be generalizable to the ways in which other districts implemented the Street Law strategies.

4 The identifier was participants’ first and last initial, two-digit birth month, and two-digit birth date. For example, JD0704 would be the identifier for Jane Doe born on July 4.

Section 4

Findings

Findings

Evaluation Question I: To what extent does TALCCS implement the proposed activities as intended?

To answer this evaluation question on implementation fidelity, we draw upon several sources:

- Professional development attendance and participation data
- Participant responses to the pre-post survey on frequency of instruction
- Session evaluation data
- Classroom observations
- GPRA measures

Professional Development Participation

In Year 3, districts were given latitude to conduct Street Law training and professional development as they chose and self-reported data on attendance and participation. (As noted above, because districts self-reported, and not all districts reported their attendance for each session, these data may be incomplete.) Table 3 presents these data; we categorize participation by Street Law strategy and include an “other” category that encompasses additional types of trainings. Several districts combined different trainings within the same session, and of the 15 districts who reported data, 10 covered at least three of the Street Law strategies over the course of the academic year. Of the Street Law strategies, Take a Stand had the highest level of participation in terms of the number of sessions and total participants.

Table 3: Professional Development Participation in 2023-24, by District and Street Law Strategy

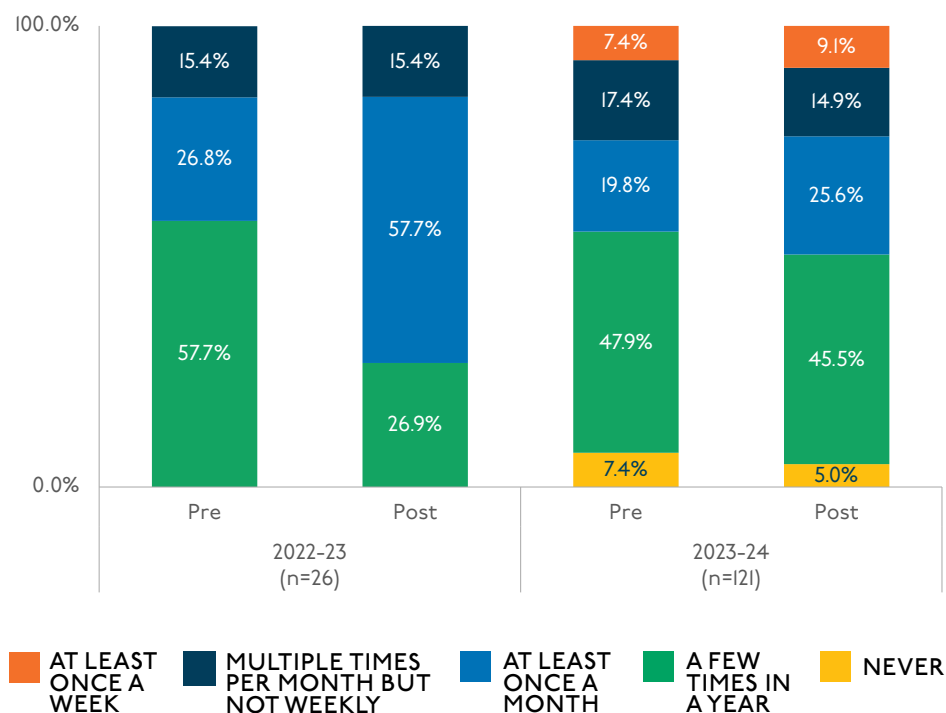
S = Number of Sessions, T = Number of Participating Teachers

DISTRICT	DELIBERATION		SIMULATIONS		SOCRATIC SEMINAR		TAKE A STAND		TUG OF WAR		OTHER*	
	S	T	S	T	S	T	S	T	S	T	S	T
District 5											2	43
District 2	3	39			5	63	6	123	4	99	3	39
District 6	1	40	1	29	1	29	1	29	1	40	1	40
District 7	1	15	1	14	1	15	1	14	1	14	4	56
District 8	1	36	1	19	1	19	1	23	1	36	2	59
District 9	1	18	1	18	1	18	1	18	1	13	4	65
District 10	2	24	1	5	1	4	1	5	1	5	2	23
District 11			1	12	1	12	1	12			3	36
District 12											1	5
District 16					1	3			1	17		
District 13	1	8	1	18	1	18	1	8			2	17
District 14	1	4	1	3	1	3	3	41	1	4	6	37
District 15											1	17
District 3	1	4					1	3			1	30
District 4	1	17	1	17	1	17	1	34			3	86
Total**	13	205	9	135	15	201	18	310	11	228	35	553

*Combines the following sessions: Welcome & Introduction to TALCCS PD, Why Discuss Current & Contested Issues, Community Agreements for PD, Reflection on Instruction Session, Structured Planning Session.

**The total row includes the sums of participating teachers in each training; these counts may be greater than the number of individuals who participated if participants attended multiple trainings on the same strategy.

Figure 1: Frequency of Instruction on Current & Contested Issues, 2022-23 and 2023-24

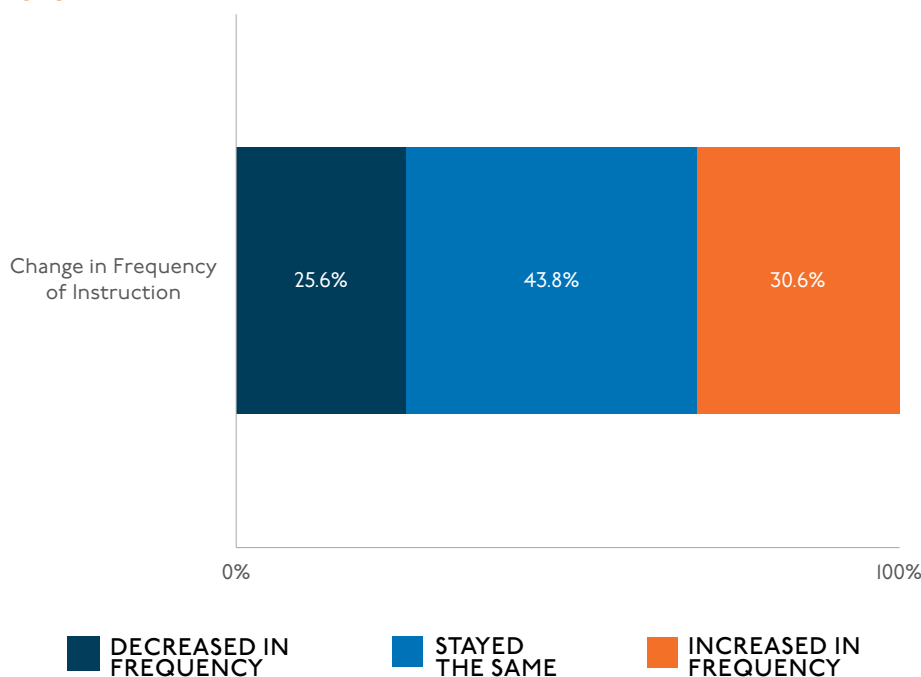


Frequency of Instruction

The pre/post surveys asked participants about the frequency of their instruction on current and contested issues in their classrooms. Figure 1 shows this measure for all participants in 2022-23 and 2023-24. In 2022-23, the majority response of participants who took both surveys shifted from “a few times in a year” to “at least once a month.” In 2023-24, the most common response remained at “a few times in a year,” but the more frequent categories (at least once a month, multiple times per month but not weekly, and at least once a week) increased by five percentage points combined (about 45 percent to about 50 percent) from pre to post.

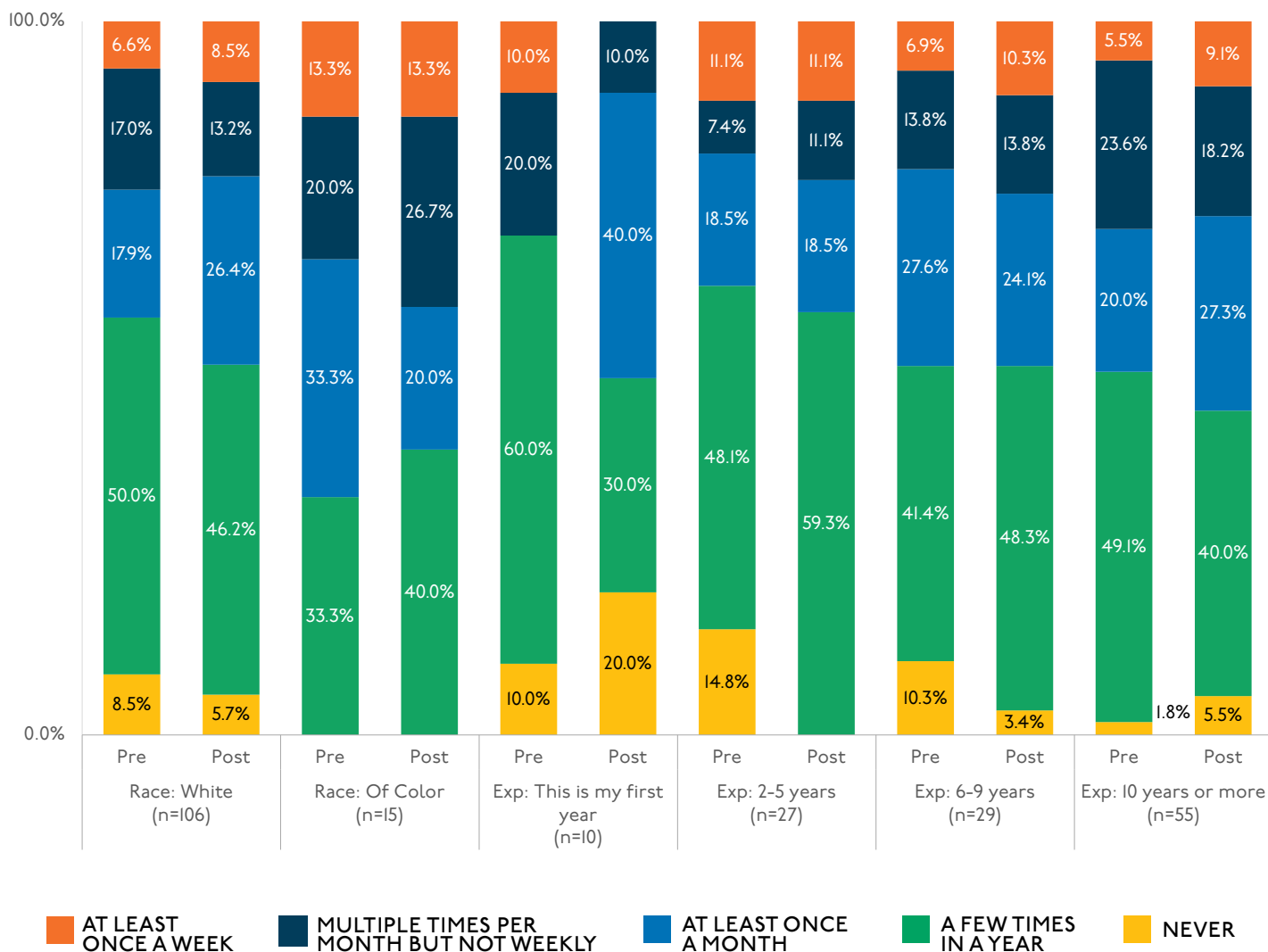
We can also evaluate the changes in *individual* responses from pre to post in the 2023-24 survey (Figure 2). Approximately 75 percent of participants either increased their frequency of instruction or stayed at the same level: 31 percent increased, and 44 percent stayed the same. Within the 25 percent who indicated their frequency of instruction decreased, four participants had stated in the pre-survey that they did so “at least once a week,” and thus their instruction could not become more frequent.

Figure 2: Change in Frequency of Instruction, Pre to Post, 2023-24



Among social studies teaching experience and race/ethnicity subgroups, the frequency of instruction in 2023-24 followed a similar pattern to the overall trends from pre- to post-survey. However, there were differences within the categories; teachers with more experience teaching social studies tended to teach current and contested issues more frequently, and teachers of color did so more often than did white teachers (Figure 3).

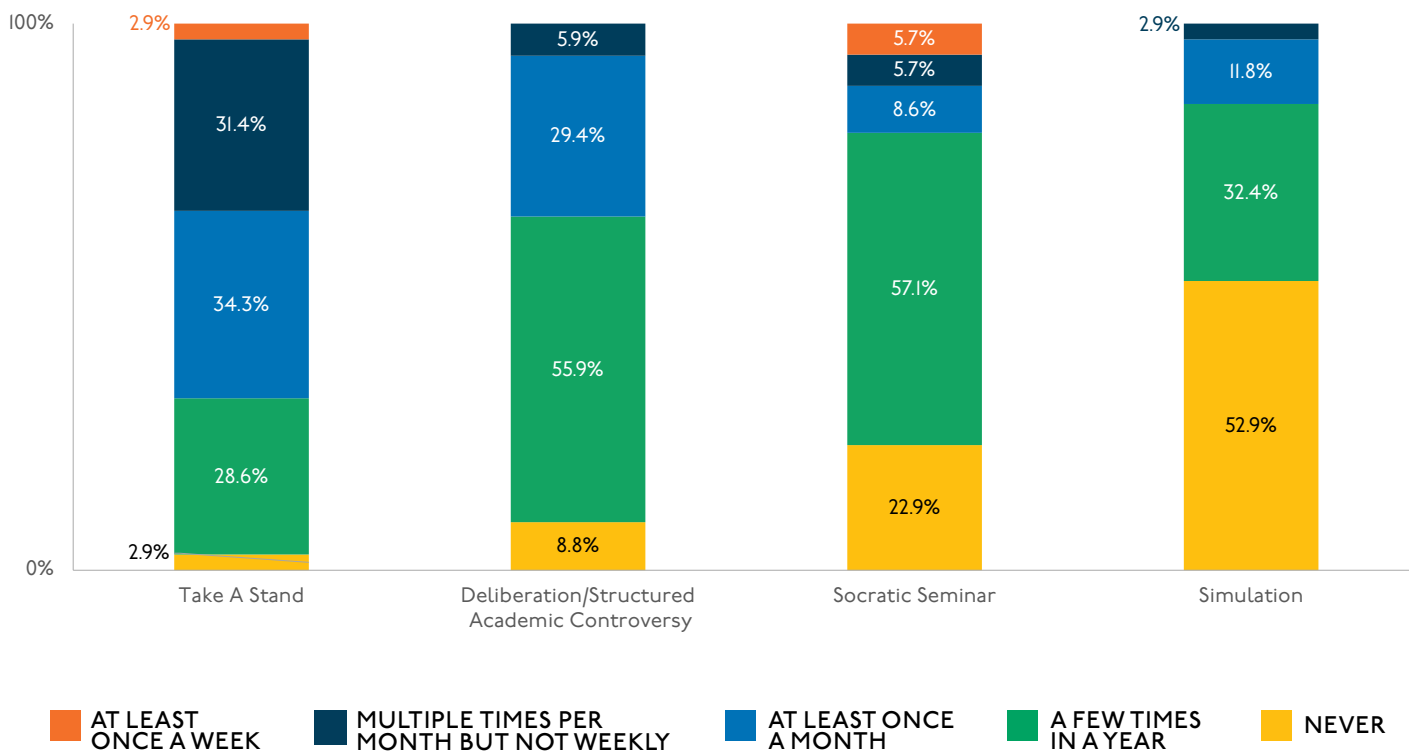
Figure 3: Frequency of Instruction on Current & Contested Issues, 2023-24
By Experience and Race/Ethnicity



Additionally, in the Year 2 (2022-23) post-survey, we asked participants in the original four districts about specific strategies they had used when instructing on current and contested issues. Figure 4 shows participant responses on the frequency with which they used four TALCCS strategies. Take a Stand was used most frequently, followed by Structured Academic Controversy (also known as Deliberation). Simulations were used least often, and only 15 respondents answered an open-ended question about Simulation types in the post-survey. There was not much consistency across responses; the most commonly-referenced Simulations were moot court (n=4), mock trial (n=2), different types of government (n=2), and simulations related to historical events (American Revolution, Cold War, etc.) (n=2).

More information on implementation of each of these strategies in Year 3 is provided in the following analysis of the professional development session evaluations.

Figure 4: Frequency of Use of TALCCS Strategies, 2022-23 Post-Survey only
n=34-35



Session Evaluations

In this section, we analyze the professional development session evaluations that participants completed. We present results overall, by district, and by grade level; we omit any subgroups with fewer than 10 responses. Overall, participants had very positive reactions to the strategies themselves and the Street Law trainings on them.

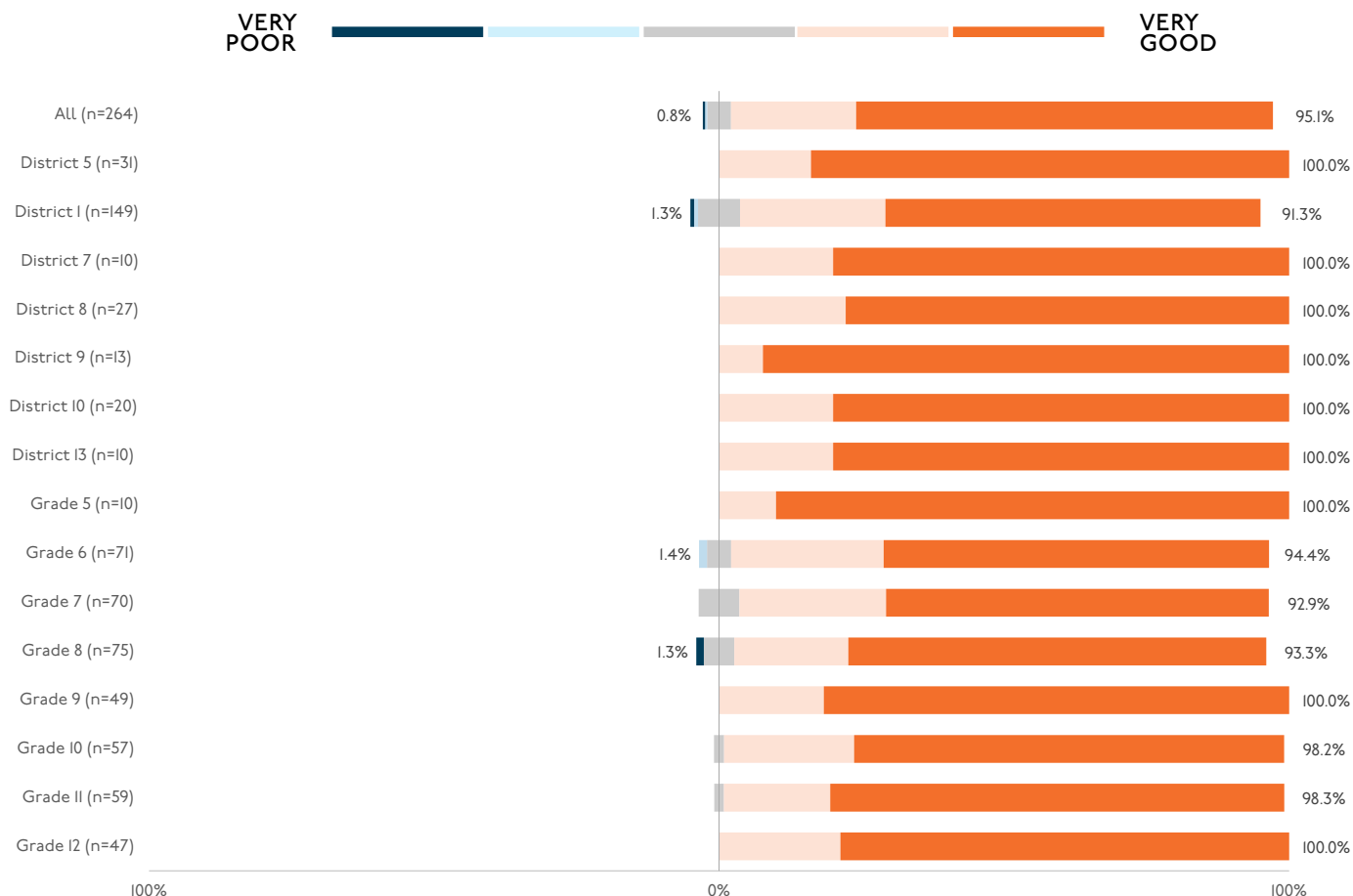
Deliberation

Street Law describes Deliberations as structured discussions informed by a common reading that presents

multiple perspectives and encourages students to collaborate with peers, weigh evidence, support their decisions with facts, and seek common ground. The first session evaluation question asked participants to rate their overall satisfaction on a 1-5 scale, with 1 being “very poor” and 5 being “very good.” Approximately three-quarters of participants (193/264, 73 percent) responded with a 5, with only one participant responding with the lowest rating of 1. Figure 5 shows that across districts and grade levels, participants responded with high levels of satisfaction, with at least about two-thirds of participants responding with the highest rating. High school grades tended to have higher ratings than did middle school grades.

Figure 5: Overall Satisfaction with Deliberation Session

Overall and by District and Grade level



Note: Percentages presented in this figure combine ratings 1 and 2 (on the left) and ratings 4 and 5 (on the right).

The survey then allowed participants to comment on their overall satisfaction rating. In addition to generally positive comments, common themes in these responses included that participants liked the Deliberation strategy and that it was useful or applicable (foreshadowing the next closed-ended question). Participants also praised the presenters, indicated the presentations were informative and clear, and appreciated the resources they were provided. A handful of respondents identified challenges, mostly associated with the grade level or subject matter they teach or the delivery of the training. A list of themes with representative quotes is presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Themes from Open-Ended Responses to Overall Satisfaction with Deliberation

n=109

THEME	N	REPRESENTATIVE QUOTE(S)
Positive	18	"I thoroughly enjoyed our lesson today regarding deliberation."
Useful/ Applicable	23	"The documents would be easy to incorporate into a lesson and they were explained very well."
Like the Strategy	19	"I am walking away from today's session with a great strategy and a huge catalog of materials to use with it. Tonight was well worth my time."
Informative	18	"This session was very informative. Helped to introduce new methods of teaching within the classroom."
Resources	17	"Amazing resources! Our instructor came prepared with resources for all grades!"
Presenters	15	"Presenters were clearly very knowledgeable and passionate about this topic and I look forward to more sessions with them."
Clear	6	"The deliberation strategy was laid out clearly and I have some ideas about where I could use it in my classroom."
Activity During Session	6	"I like that we get to do the sessions so we can know the process for our students and get a feel for the timing"
Challenges/ Suggestions	10	"Could be more engaging if presented in a different way other than Microsoft teams. Difficult to apply this PD to 6th grades. Can only take specific strategies and heavily modify. Maybe delineate between PD groups for high school and middle school."

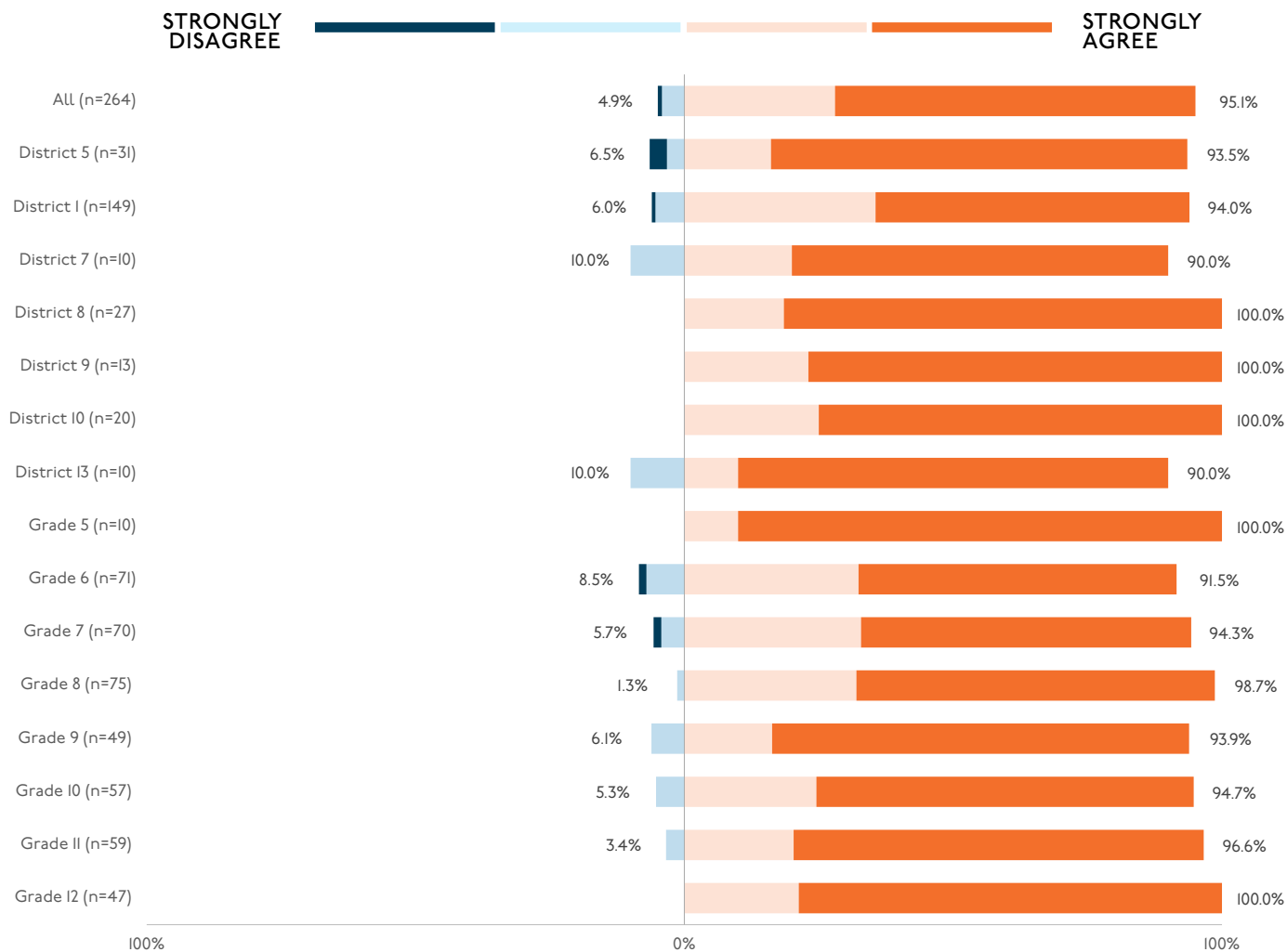
Participants were then asked to respond to three additional statements about the Deliberation strategy:

- "The Deliberation strategy will be replicable and useful in my classroom."
- "I feel more comfortable and confident teaching about current and contested issues based on today's session(s)."
- "I feel more prepared to integrate current and contested issues discussions into my classroom based on today's session(s)."

These items asked participants to rate the level of their agreement on a 1-4 scale, with 1 as “strongly disagree” and 4 as “strongly agree.” On each of these items, approximately two-thirds of participants responded with a rating of 4, and at least 90 percent responded with a rating of 3 or 4, as shown in Figure 6, Figure 7, and Figure 8. (A rating of 3 presumably reflects “agree” or “somewhat agree.”) Teachers in District I and in middle grades had lower levels of agreement than teachers in other counties or grade levels. However, in District I’s case, they conducted their Deliberation session virtually (Street Law had recommended in-person), which these ratings may be reflecting.

Figure 6: Deliberation – Replicable and Useful

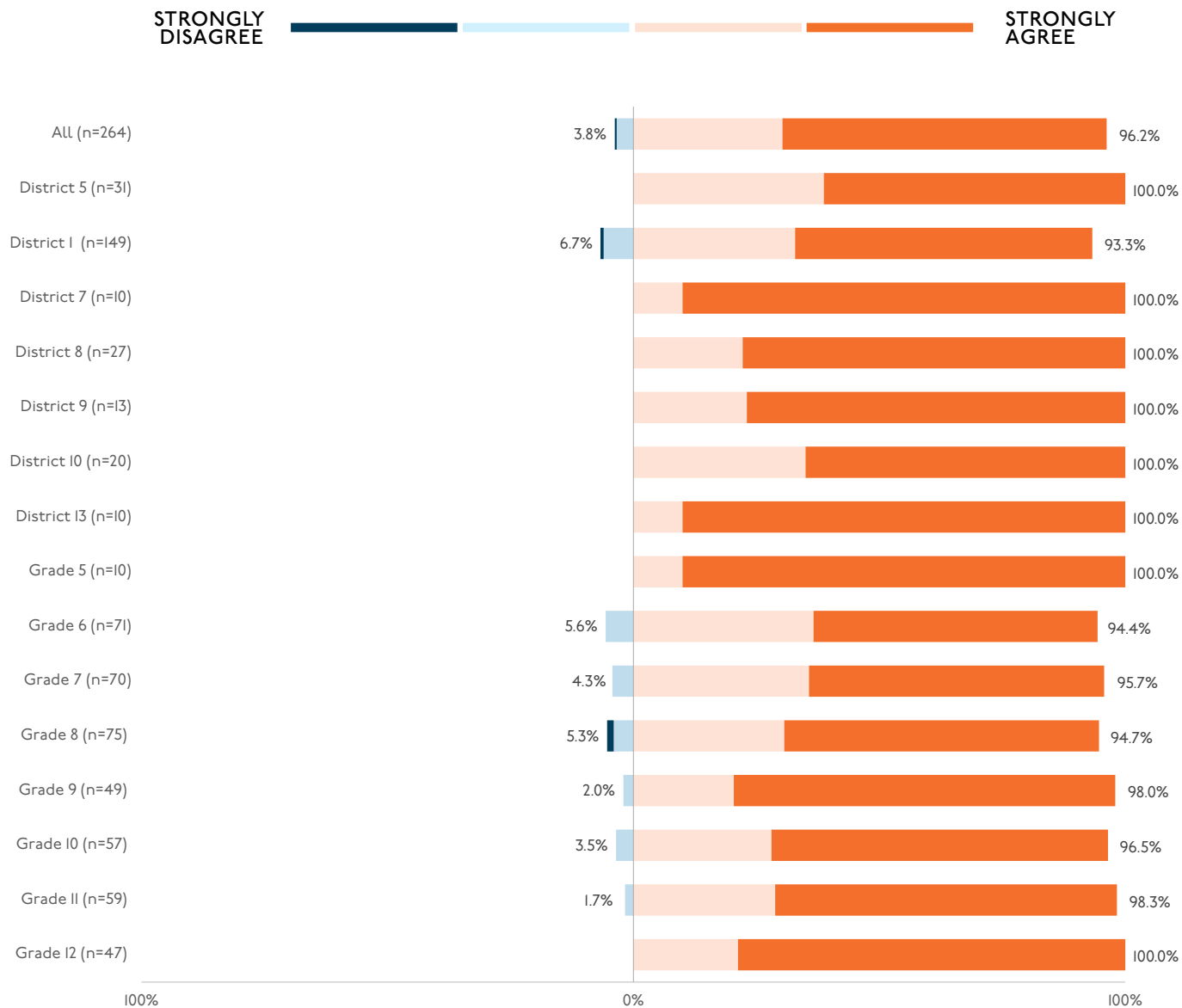
Percentage of Respondents Overall and by Subgroup



Note: Percentages presented in this figure combine ratings 1 and 2 (on the left) and ratings 3 and 4 (on the right).

Figure 7: Deliberation – Comfortable and Confident

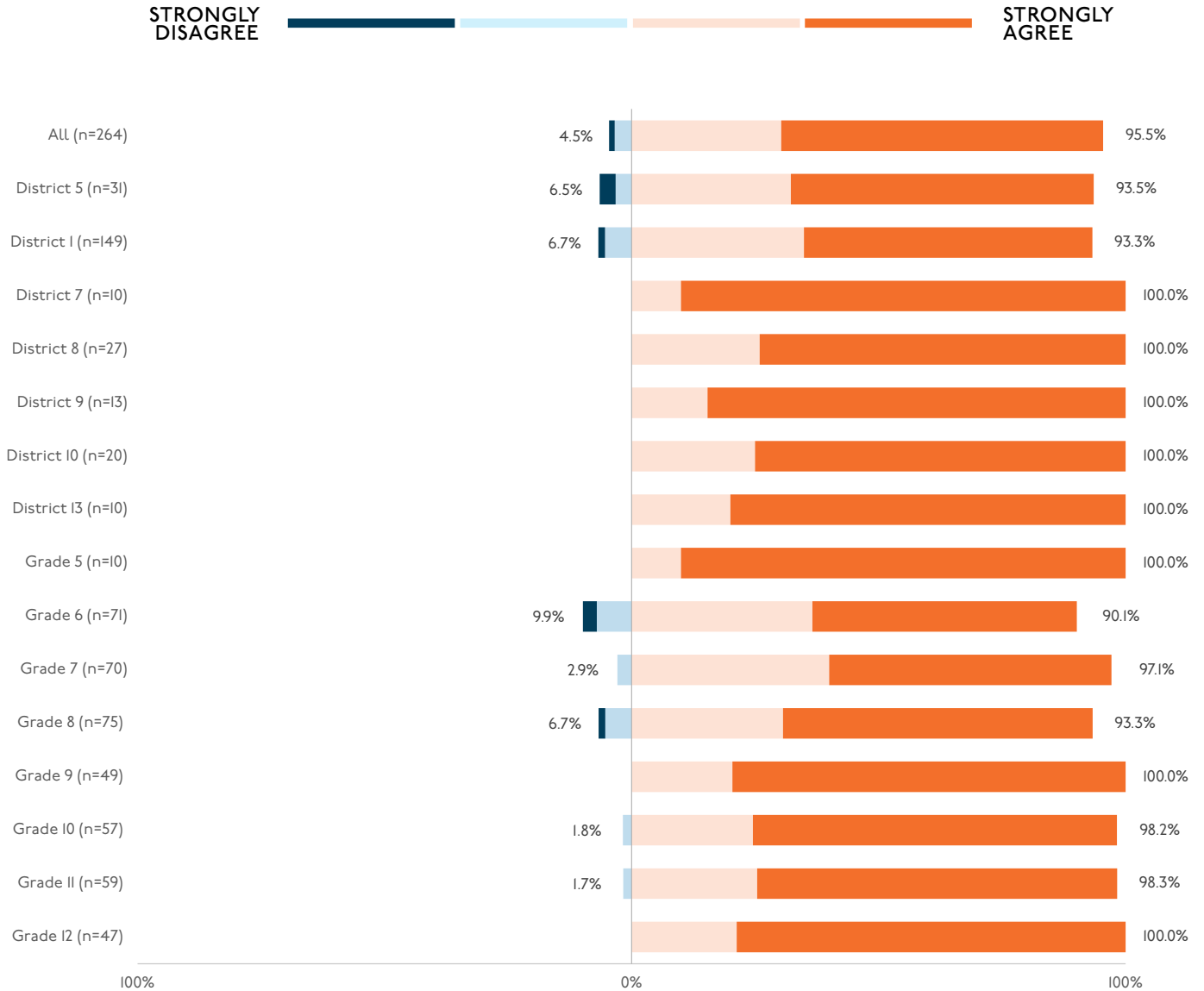
Percentage of Respondents Overall and by Subgroup



Note: Percentages presented in this figure combine ratings 1 and 2 (on the left) and ratings 3 and 4 (on the right).

Figure 8: Deliberation – Prepared to Integrate Discussions

Percentage of Respondents Overall and by Subgroup



Note: Percentages presented in this figure combine ratings 1 and 2 (on the left) and ratings 3 and 4 (on the right).

Participants were asked to comment on their ratings on each of the items presented in Figures 6-8. Eighty-three participants elaborated on whether the materials were replicable and useful. Themes that appeared frequently were overall positive impressions of the strategy, plans to incorporate it in the classroom, and discussions it would foster among students; as one teacher stated, “It is a good strategy to make students comfortable in the classroom and allow us to talk about current and contested issues in a respectful and appropriate way.” Teachers of some subjects (such as US History and Government) felt that it would work well in their classes, while others anticipated challenges in other subjects (such as World History and Psychology) and with 6th grade students. (This finding reinforces that teachers tended to find the strategy more difficult to employ in middle school grades.) Additionally, some were concerned about the preparation required and student readiness for the material; one respondent wrote that “There is a considerable amount of preparation work [that] would need to be completed in order to fit this into an already packed curriculum. The kids can barely keep up as it is. They are coming to middle school with [too] many deficits in reading and writing.”

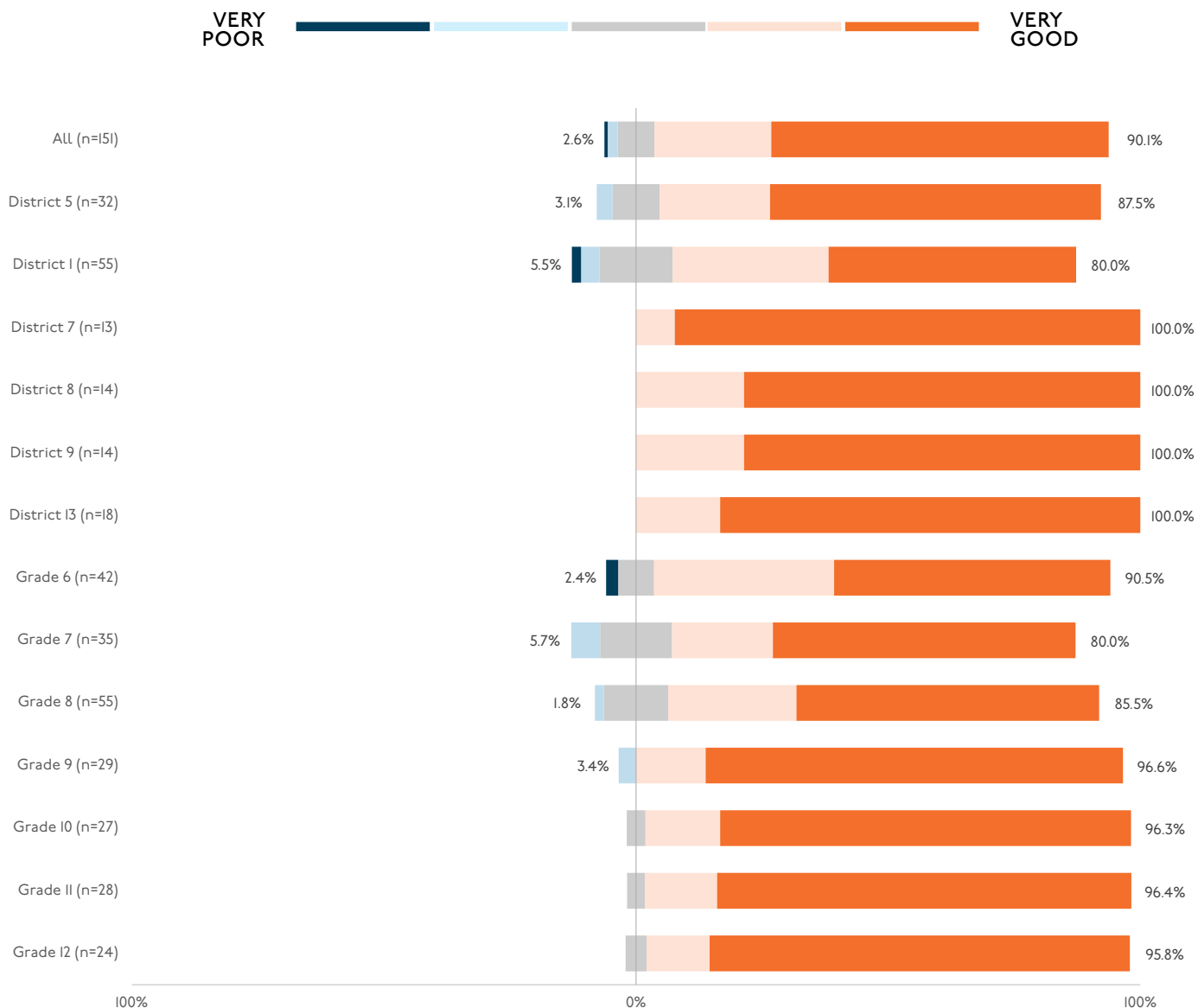
In responding to the questions about confidence (n=48) and preparedness (n=37), the most common themes were similar: overall positivity about the strategy and appreciation of the resources provided. Participants tied the resources to their confidence and preparedness; one stated, “after showing us the available resources, I feel more comfortable trying this out,” and other wrote, “the worksheets are very helpful and take some of the planning stress out.”

Simulations

Street Law’s Simulations of Democratic Processes involve role-playing activities, such as moot courts and legislative simulations, that are immersive experiences that allow students to understand a scenario from different perspectives while applying civic knowledge, practicing critical thinking skills, and gaining a practical understanding of how government works. With one exception, the questions for the Simulations evaluations were the same as those for Deliberation, with the first session evaluation question asking participants to rate their overall satisfaction on a scale of 1 (“very poor”) to 5 “very good.” Approximately two-thirds of participants (101/151, 67 percent) responded with a 5, with only one participant responding with the lowest rating of 1. Figure 9 shows that across districts and grade levels, participants responded with high levels of satisfaction, though not quite as high as the ratings for Deliberation. The data again show that high school grades tended to have higher ratings than did middle school grades, and also that District I’s ratings were below those of other counties. It also should be noted, though, that over half of the middle school teachers who responded taught in this district, and all District I teachers who responded taught middle school, so District I-middle school data are correlated.

Figure 9: Overall Satisfaction with Simulations Session

Overall and by District and Grade Level



Note: Percentages presented in this figure combine ratings 1 and 2 (on the left) and ratings 4 and 5 (on the right).

Sixty-one respondents provided additional details about their ratings, discussing that they liked the strategy, liked the presentation, found the strategy informative, and that they could use Simulations in their classroom. They also identified challenges like those identified with Deliberation (subject matter and grade level). These common themes, with representative quotes, are presented in Table 5.

Table 5: Themes from Open-Ended Responses to Overall Satisfaction with Simulations
n=61

THEME	N	REPRESENTATIVE QUOTE(S)
Positive	8	"A great experience."
Like the Strategy	12	"Wonderful presentation full of new information for me. Loved the simulations activity with small groups. Certainly a wonderful model for class activities."
Informative	10	"Very informative offering different viewpoints on how to approach a lesson."
Useful for the Classroom	7	"I learned learning activities I can modify and use for my classes."
Presenters	7	"[Name] was an engaging presenter and picked interesting source material."
Challenges/Suggestions	12	"This is more geared towards high school. Possibly gearing it more towards 7 [or] 8th grade in addition to just high school would be better." "The session needed more information on how to meet the needs of diverse learners."

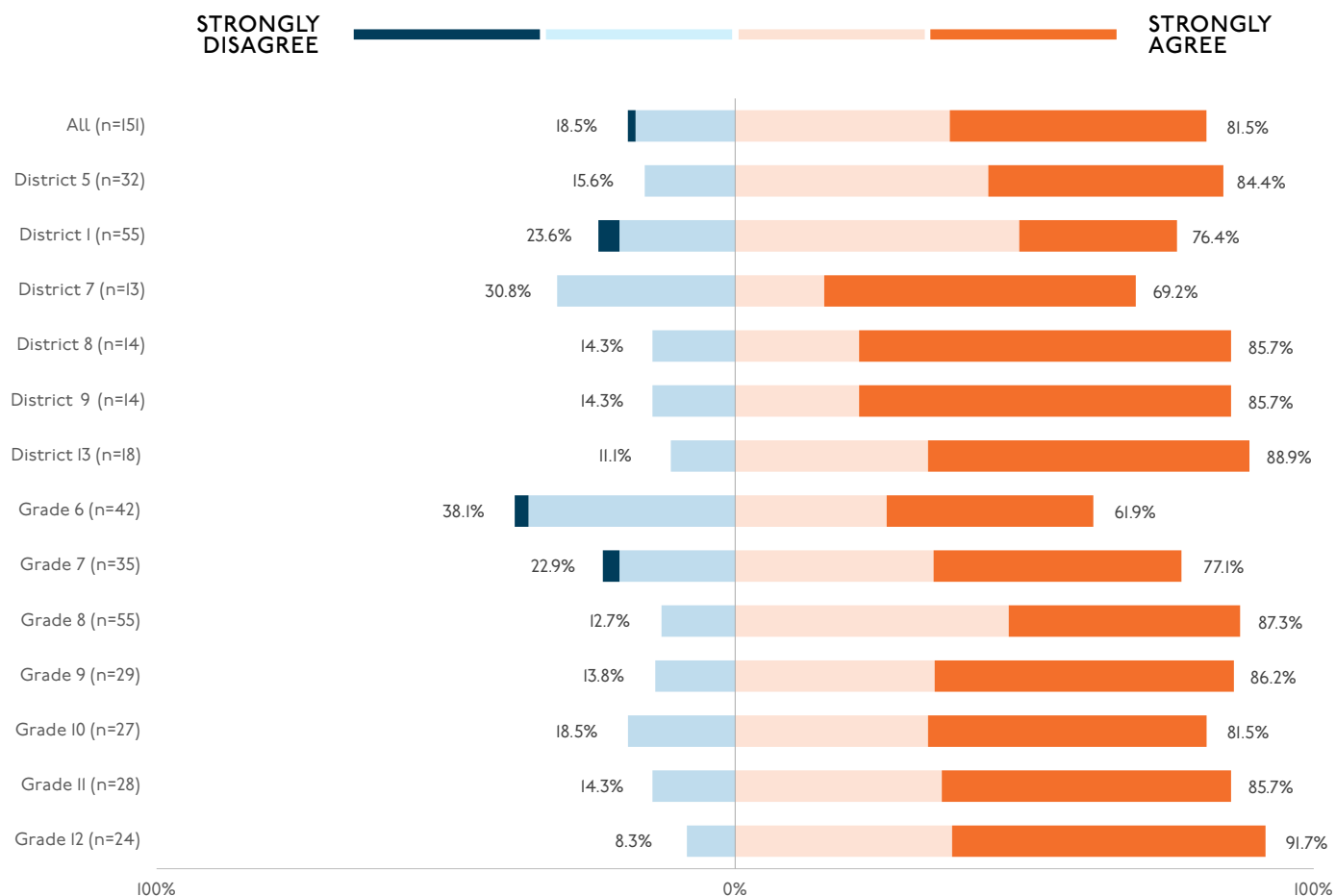
Participants were then asked to respond to three additional statements about the Simulations strategy:

- “The Simulations strategy will be replicable and useful in my classroom.”
- “I feel more comfortable and confident teaching about current and contested issues based on today’s session(s).”
- “I feel more prepared to integrate current and contested issues discussions into my classroom based on today’s session(s).”

These items asked participants to rate the level of their agreement on a 1-4 strongly disagree-strongly agree scale. The level of agreement varied by county, grade level, and question; however, in nearly all subgroups, participants showed higher levels of agreement with the items on confidence and preparedness than on whether the strategy would be replicable and useful (Figure 10, Figure 11, and Figure 12).

Figure 10: Simulations – Replicable and Useful

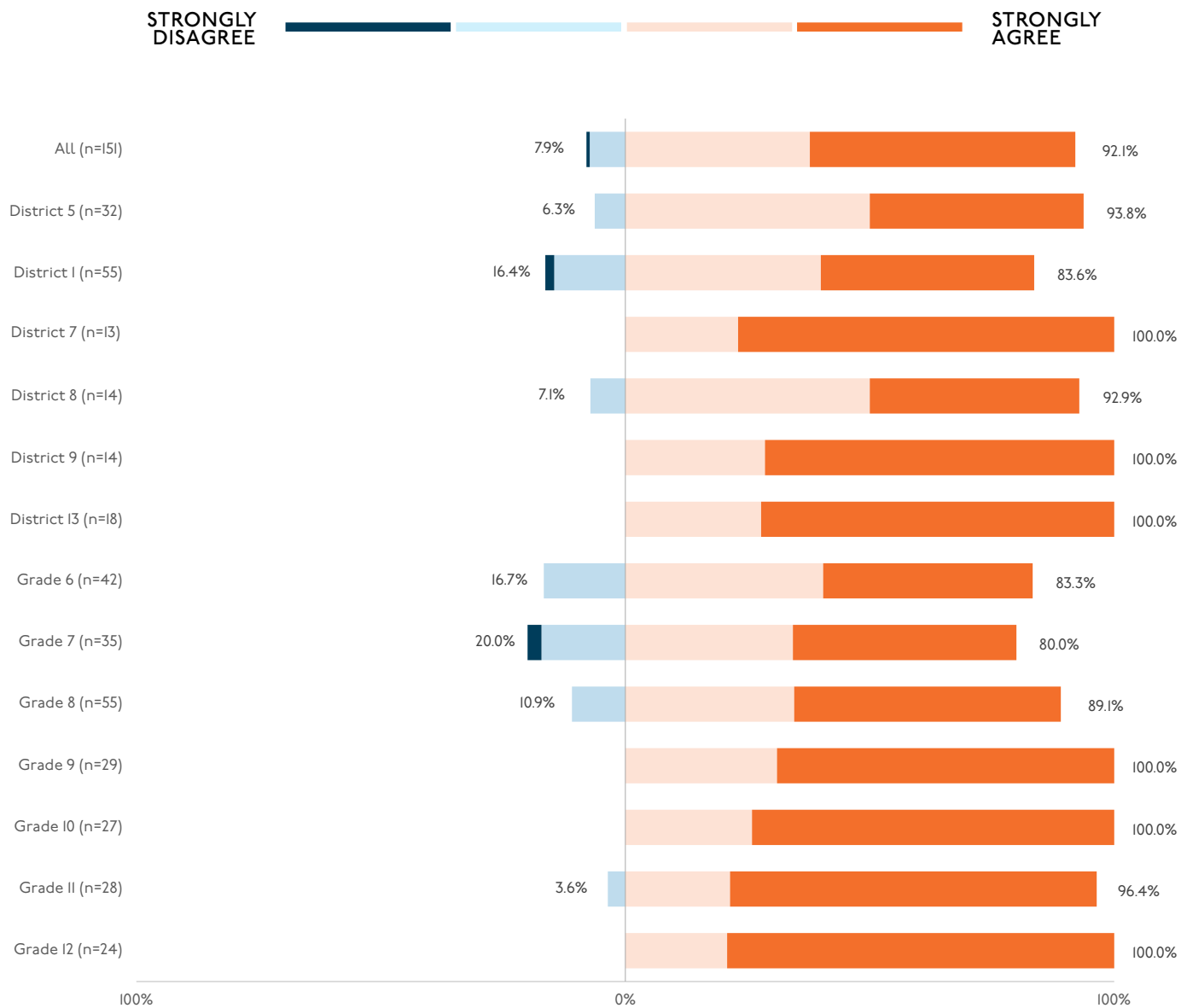
Percentage of Respondents Overall and by Subgroup



Note: Percentages presented in this figure combine ratings 1 and 2 (on the left) and ratings 3 and 4 (on the right).

Figure II: Simulations – Comfortable and Confident

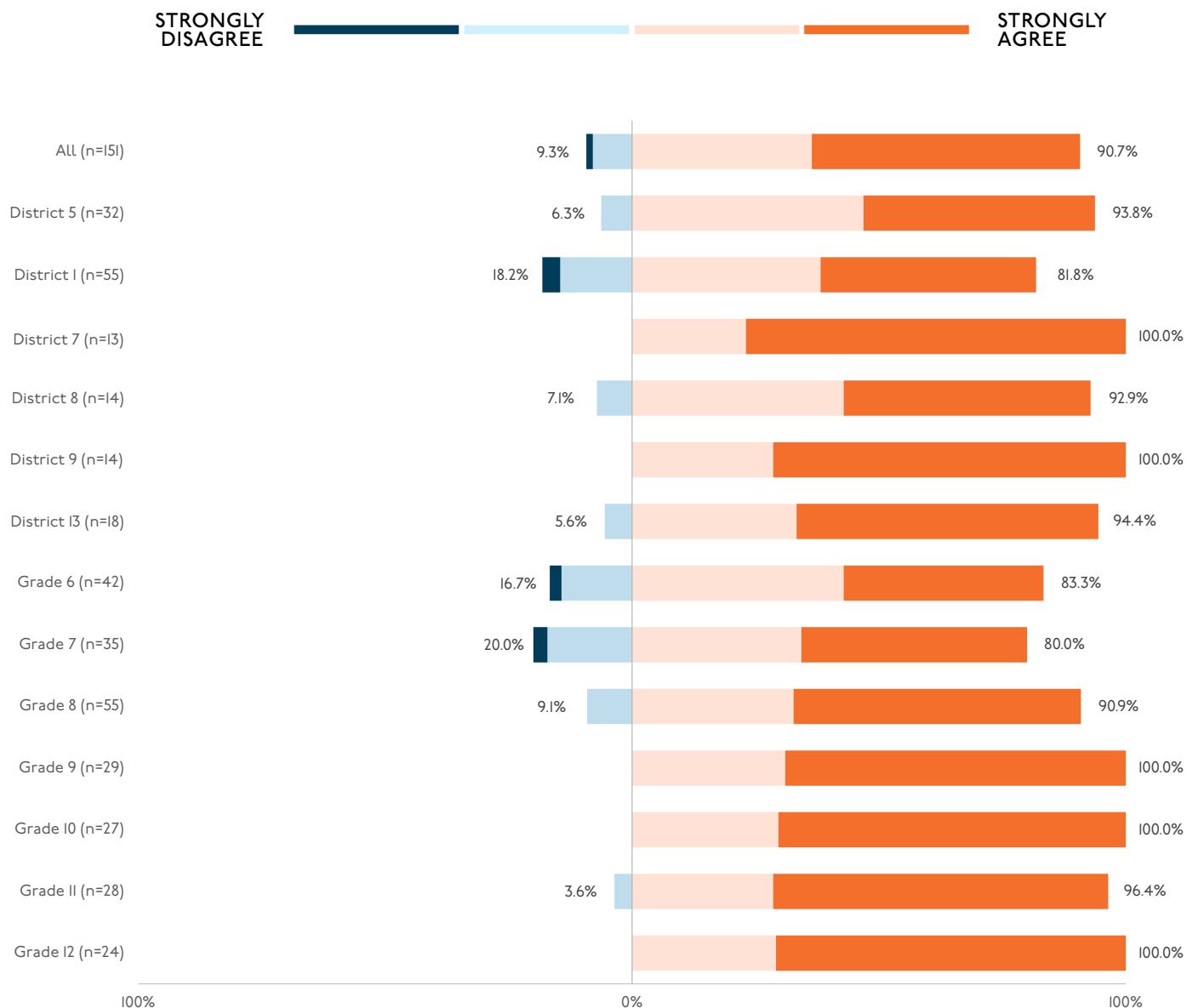
Percentage of Respondents Overall and by Subgroup



Note: Percentages presented in this figure combine ratings 1 and 2 (on the left) and ratings 3 and 4 (on the right).

Figure 12: Simulations – Prepared to Integrate Discussions

Percentage of Respondents Overall and by Subgroup



Note: Percentages presented in this figure combine ratings 1 and 2 (on the left) and ratings 3 and 4 (on the right).

Open-ended responses shed light on some of the challenges teachers anticipated in using and replicating Simulations in their classrooms. Table 6 presents themes from the 26 respondents who identified such challenges.

Table 6: Challenges with Usefulness and Replicability of Simulations

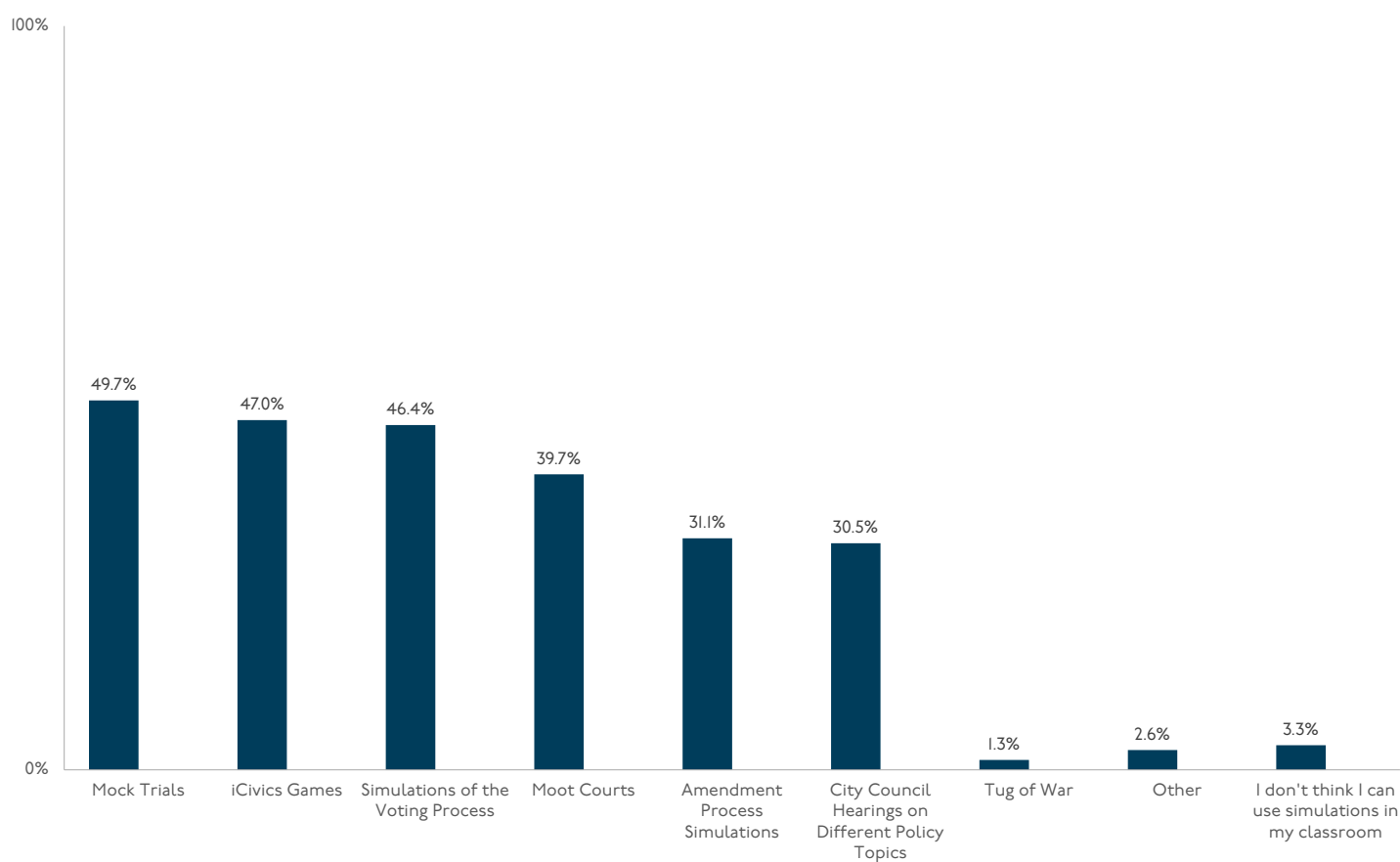
n=26

THEME	N	REPRESENTATIVE QUOTE(S)
Subject/topic/curriculum	9	"Topics are not relevant to my curriculum"
Grade level/student ability	6	"Students may be too young. Would need lots of structures."
Time	4	"This would be a very difficult activity to complete in my classes. The time commitment would be difficult."
Scaffolding/modifying	3	"More scaffolding would need to be done with my students."
Incorrect title	2	"This was the Mini-Moot Court simulation, not the School Board."
Other	2	"The current...demands to focus on literacy will make implementing this simulation a challenge."

However, more participants had positive reactions to the strategy than identified challenges. Ten participants stated in their follow-up response that they plan to use Simulations, ten noted that they liked the strategy, and ten others had generally positive responses. Three respondents discussed modifying the strategy but did not appear to view that as a challenge.

Participants were also asked about other simulation strategies they might be able to use in their classroom and invited to select as many as they liked. Figure 13 shows that Mock Trials, iCivics games, and Simulations of the Voting Process were chosen most frequently (by nearly 50 percent of all participants).

Figure 13: Simulation Strategies Participants Could Use in their Classroom



Counties and grade levels displayed similar patterns with some variation; Moot Court was the next-most common selection, followed by Amendment Process Simulations and City Council Hearings on Different Policy Topics. Only about 3 percent of respondents said they did not think they could use simulations; these respondents were only located in two counties (District 1 and District 9) and only taught middle school grades. Table 7 shows the top three Simulation strategies by subgroup.

In open-ended responses, those who responded mostly discussed how they would use the different types of strategies they had identified, with some noting they already used strategies such as iCivics and Mock Trials.

Table 7: Simulation Strategies Participants Could Use in their Classroom

Top Three Strategies by Subgroup

SUBGROUP	MOCK TRIALS	ICIVICS GAMES	VOTING PROCESS	MOOT COURT	CITY COUNCIL HEARINGS	AMENDMENT PROCESS
District 5						
District 1						
District 7						
District 8						
District 9*						
District 13						
Grade 6						
Grade 7						
Grade 8						
Grades 9-12						

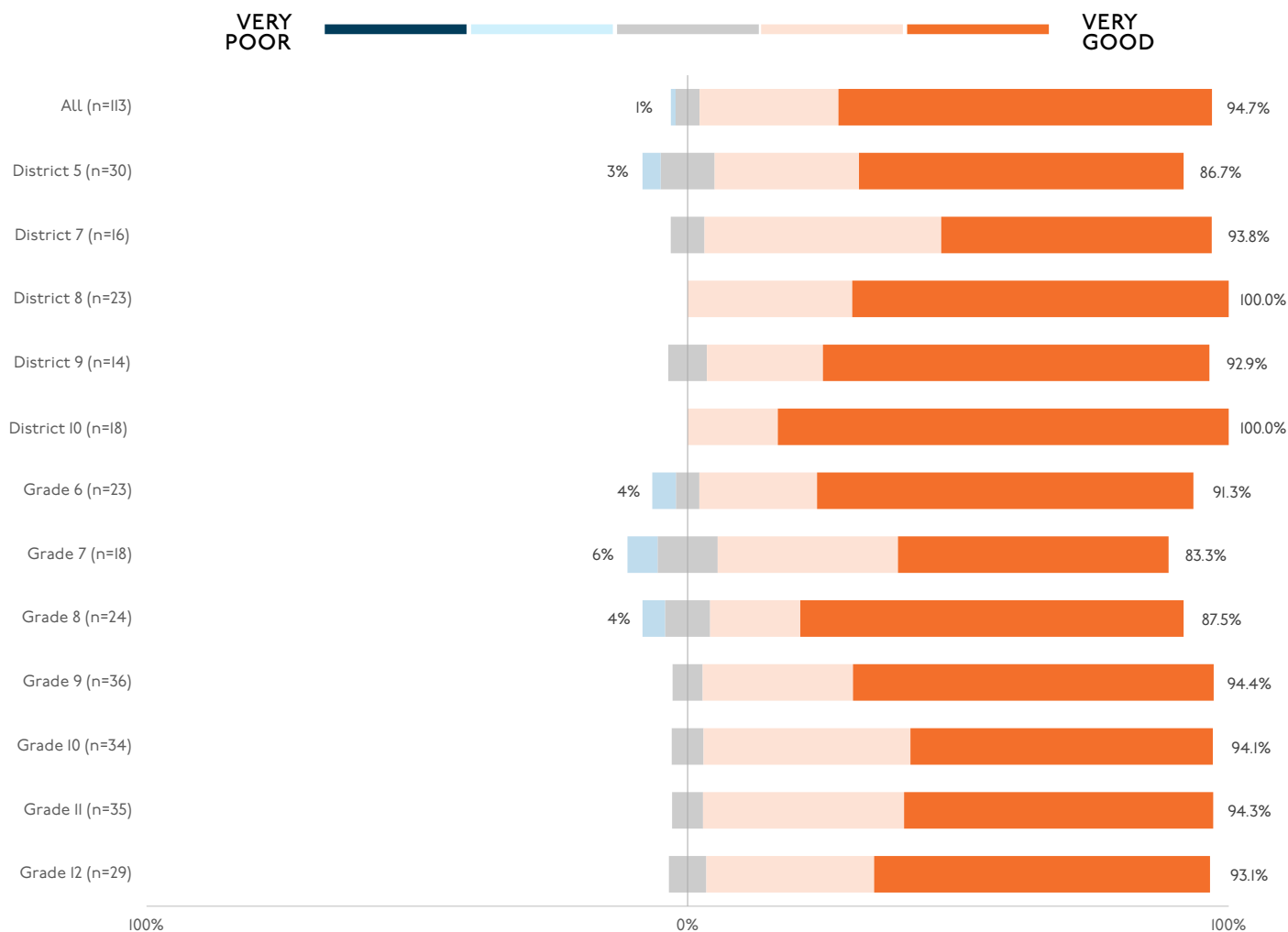
*District 9's third choice was a tie.

Socratic Seminar

Socratic Seminars are structured discussions that center on a deep understanding of a text and that promote critical thinking and collaboration among students. The first session evaluation question again asked participants to rate their overall satisfaction on a scale of 1 (“very poor”) to 5 (“very good”). Over two-thirds of participants (78/113, 69 percent) responded with a 5, and none gave the lowest rating of 1. Figure 14 shows that across districts and grade levels, participants responded with high levels of satisfaction. Unlike Deliberation and Simulations, teachers in middle and high school grades responded with similar levels of satisfaction, with the exception of 7th grade teachers.

Figure 14: Overall Satisfaction with Socratic Seminar Session

Overall and by District and Grade Level



Note: Percentages presented in this figure combine ratings 1 and 2 (on the left) and ratings 4 and 5 (on the right).

Thirty-four respondents provided additional details about their ratings, which we organized into common themes. Participants enjoyed the activities involved with the strategy, found the presentation informative, and appreciated the resources they were given. These themes, with representative quotes, are presented in Table 8.

Table 8: Themes from Open-Ended Responses to Overall Satisfaction with Socratic Seminars
n=34

THEME	N	REPRESENTATIVE QUOTE(S)
Positive	7	"Great," "Well done"
Strategy and Activities	12	"Great experience. It was uncomfortable because it was an issue that could happen in our classrooms. If we are focusing on current and contested issues students will be uncomfortable. The goal will be to have respectful conversations as a group."
Informative	5	"Very informative offering different viewpoints on how to approach a lesson."
Resources	5	"Great topics, great resources and great information!"

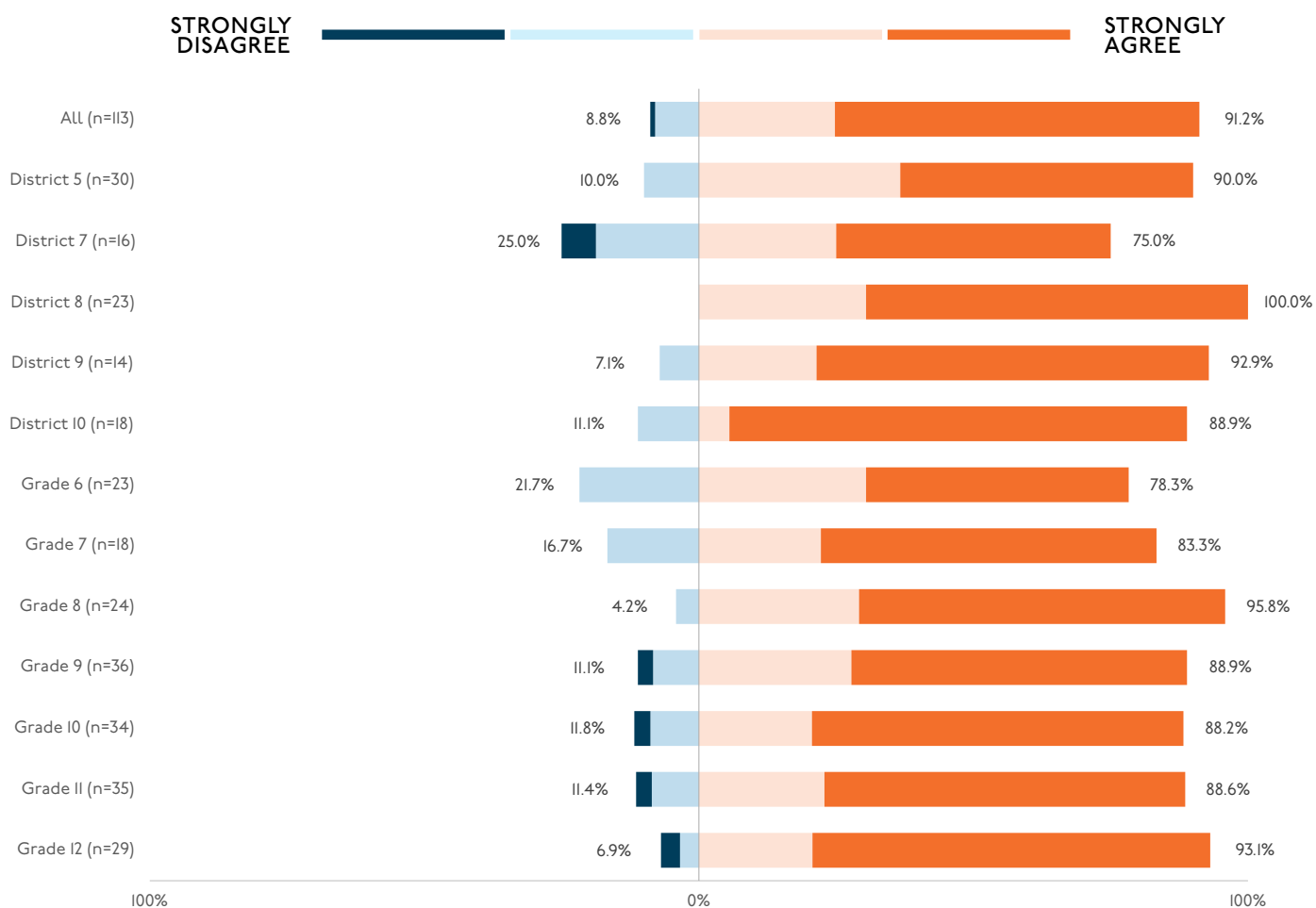
Participants were then asked to respond to three additional statements about Socratic Seminars:

- “The Socratic Seminar strategy will be replicable and useful in my classroom.”
- “I feel more comfortable and confident teaching about current and contested issues based on today’s session(s).”
- “I feel more prepared to integrate current and contested issues discussions into my classroom based on today’s session(s).”

These items asked participants to rate the level of their agreement on a 1-4 strongly disagree-strongly agree scale. Unlike with Simulations, teachers had slightly higher levels of agreement that the strategy would be replicable and useful (66 percent said “strongly agree”) compared to whether they were confident or prepared (63 percent). Teachers in grades 8-12 showed higher levels of agreement than did teachers in grades 6-7, and teachers in District 9, District 10, and District 8 showed higher levels of agreement than did teachers District 6 and District 7. Figure 15, Figure 16, and Figure 17 show the levels of agreement for each item and subgroup.

Figure 15: Socratic Seminar – Replicable and Useful

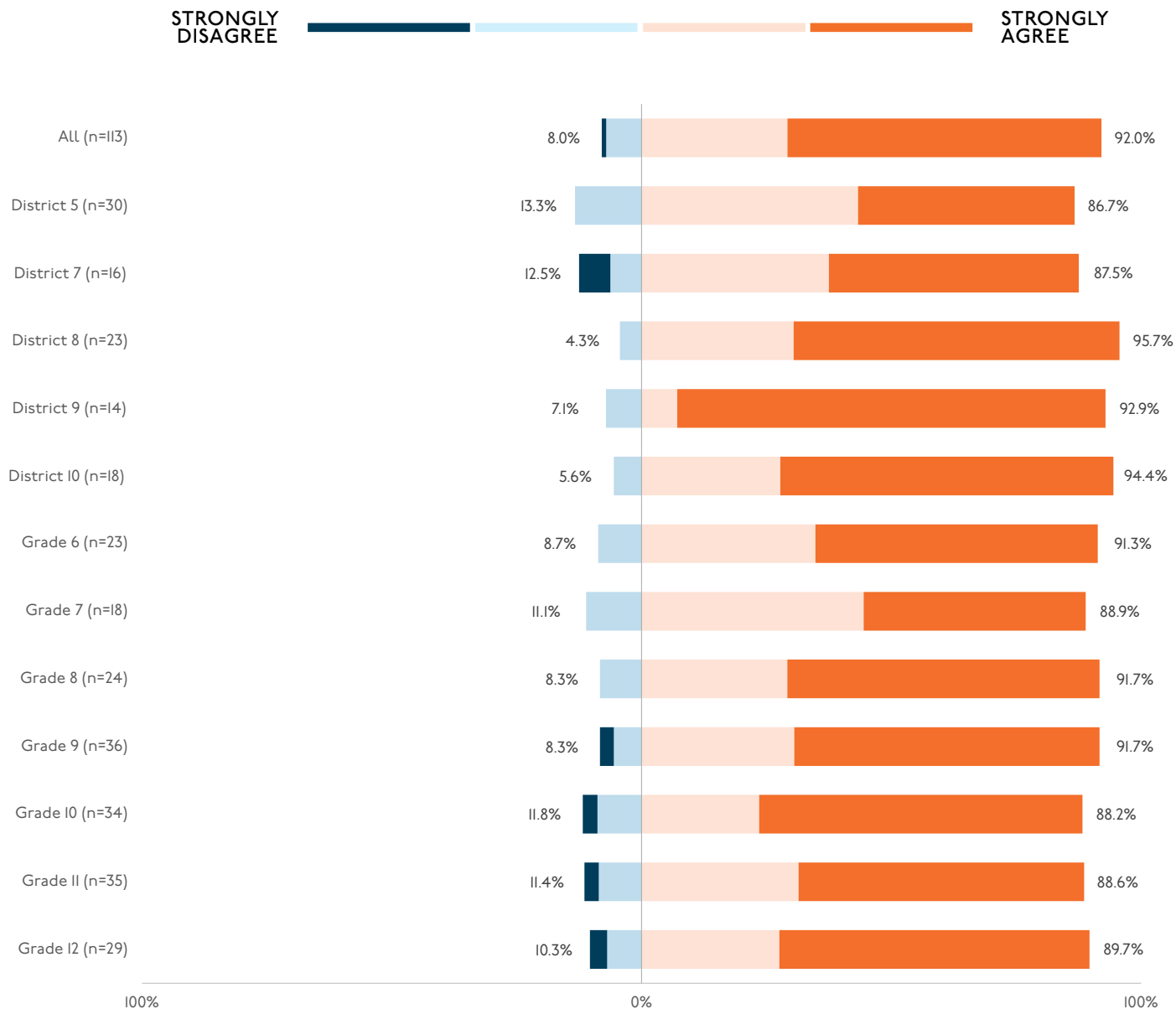
Percentage of Respondents Overall and by Subgroup



Note: Percentages presented in this figure combine ratings 1 and 2 (on the left) and ratings 3 and 4 (on the right).

Figure 16: Socratic Seminar – Comfortable and Confident

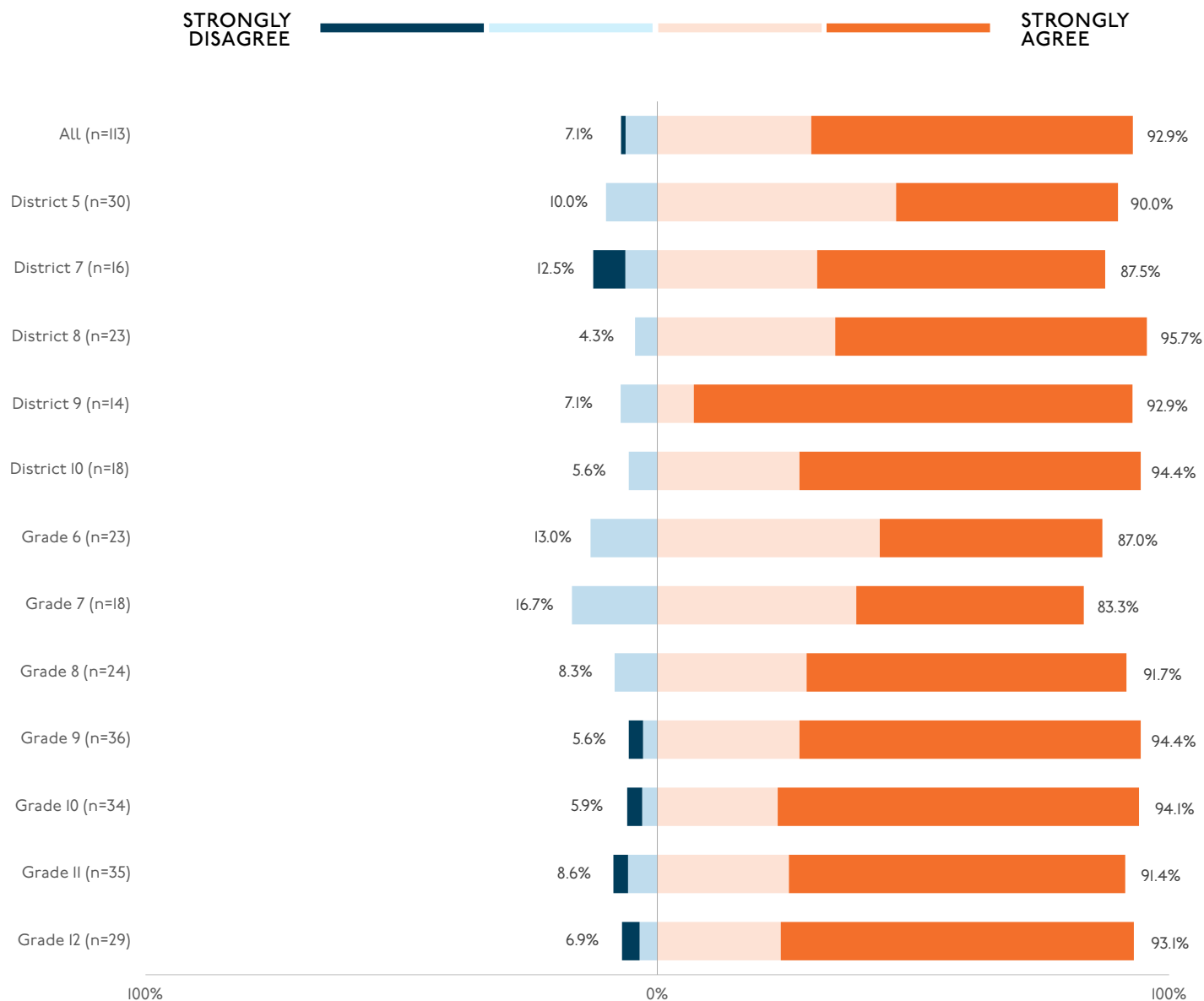
Percentage of Respondents Overall and by Subgroup



Note: Percentages presented in this figure combine ratings 1 and 2 (on the left) and ratings 3 and 4 (on the right).

Figure 17: Socratic Seminar – Prepared to Integrate Discussions

Percentage of Respondents Overall and by Subgroup



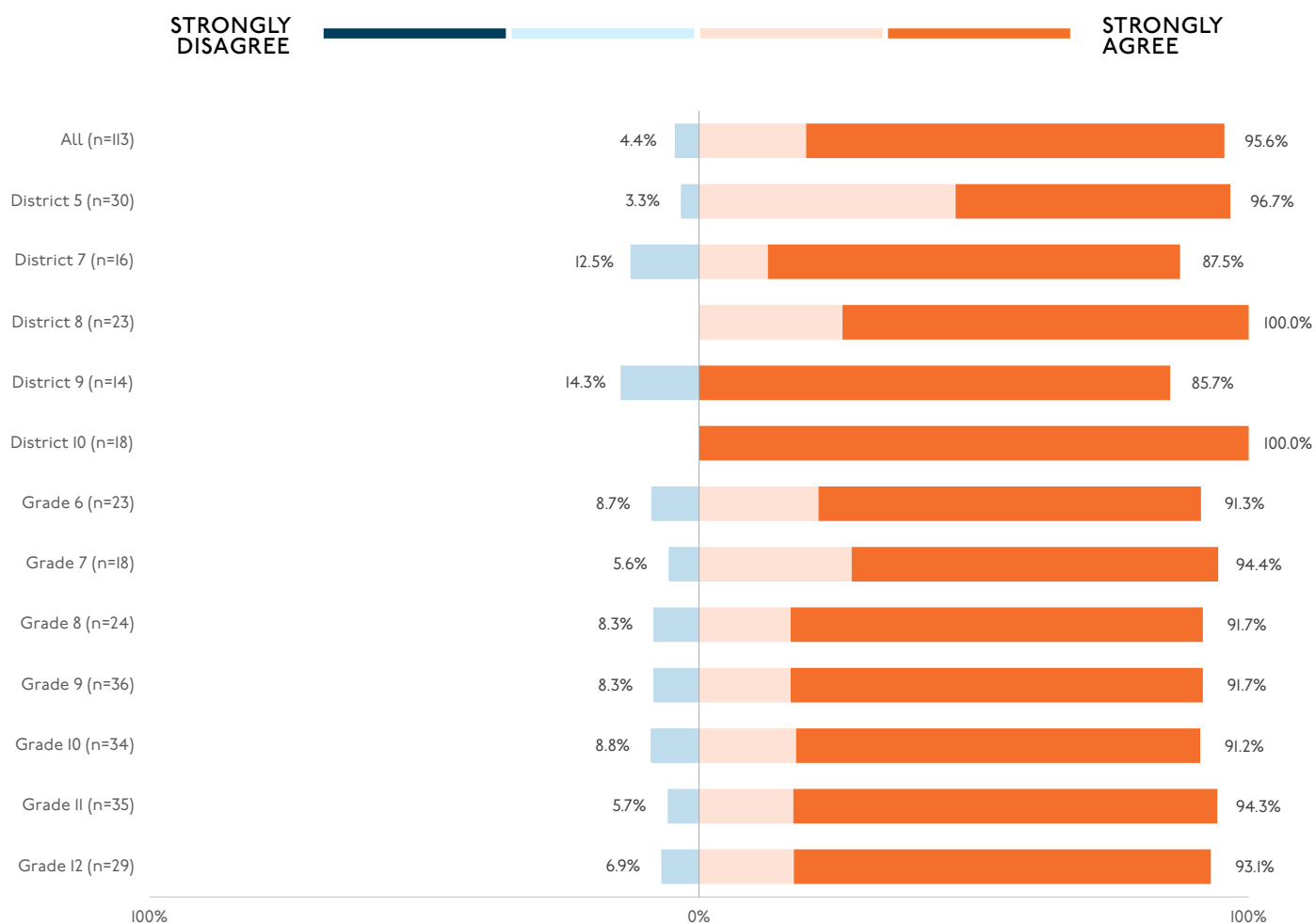
Note: Percentages presented in this figure combine ratings 1 and 2 (on the left) and ratings 3 and 4 (on the right).

Participants' follow-up responses were largely positive for these three questions, with many agreeing that Socratic Seminars could be used to approach difficult or controversial topics. In terms of usability, respondents listed similar challenges as with the other strategies, such as whether it was appropriate to their subject or grade level and the scaffolding that may need to be involved.

Socratic Seminar participants answered an additional question, as well: whether they agreed that it was helpful to discuss a case study about current and contested issues using the Socratic Seminar strategy. Response options for this item were also on a 1-4 strongly disagree-strongly agree scale, and over 75 percent of all respondents said they strongly agreed. Figure 18 shows the levels of agreement with this item across districts and grades; notably, every respondent in District 10 said they strongly agreed. Based on open-ended questions, participants appreciated getting to practice the strategy and seeing it modeled by others.

Figure 18: Level of Agreement, Helpful to Discuss a Case Study using Socratic Seminars

Percentage of Respondents Overall and by Subgroup



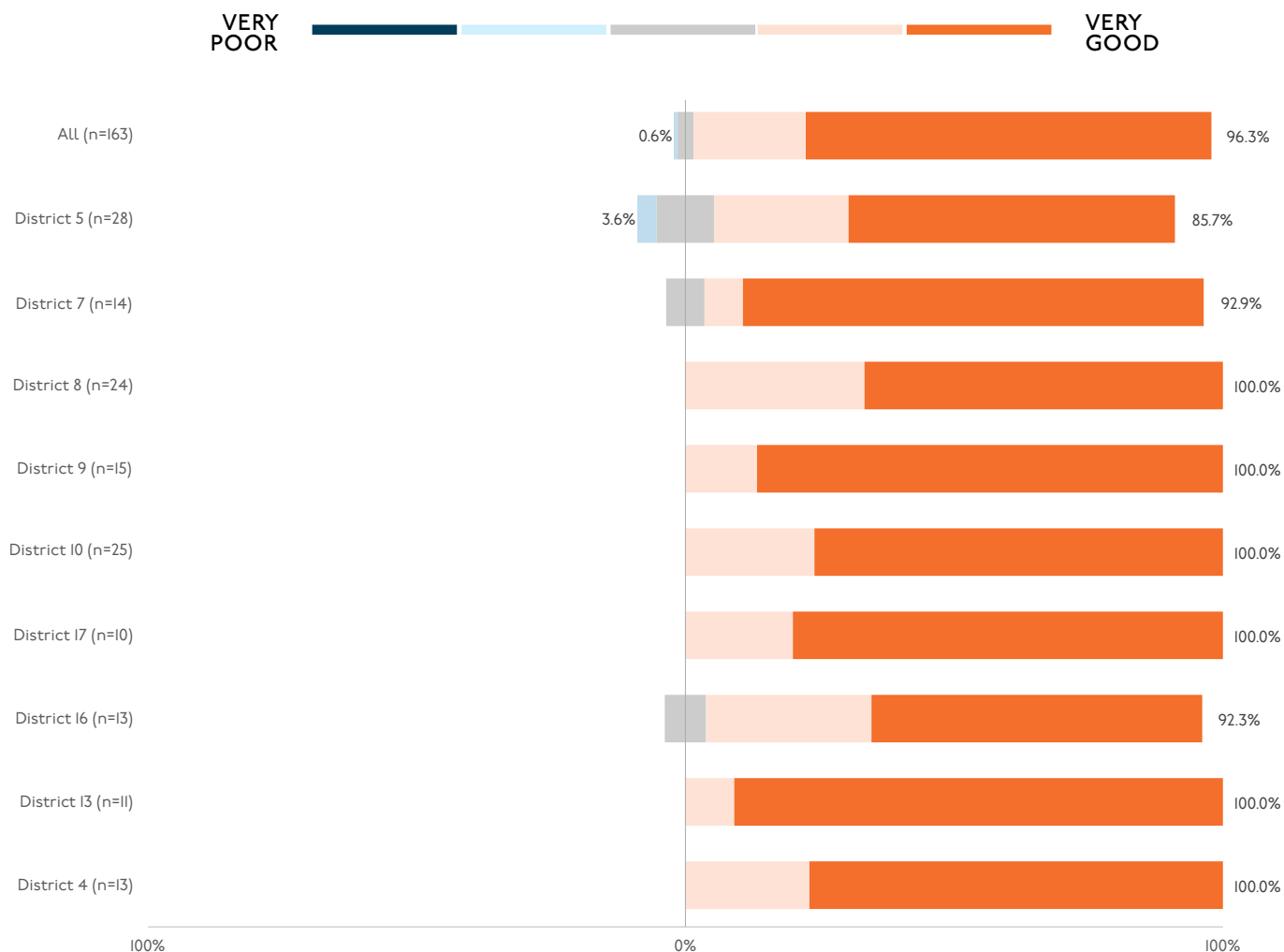
Note: Percentages presented in this figure combine ratings 1 and 2 (on the left) and ratings 3 and 4 (on the right).

Take a Stand

Take a Stand is an activity that asks students to explore and share personal views on an issue, listen to peers' opinions, and reweigh their own. The first session evaluation question asked participants to rate their overall satisfaction on a 1-5 "very poor" to "very good" scale. Approximately three-quarters of participants (123/163, 75 percent) responded with a 5, and none gave the lowest rating of 1. Respondents to this evaluation were not asked to provide their grade level, so we only present subgroup results at the district level.

Figure 19: Overall Satisfaction with Take a Stand Session

Overall and by District



Note: Percentages presented in this figure combine ratings 1 and 2 (on the left) and ratings 4 and 5 (on the right).

Sixty respondents provided additional details about their ratings. As with the other session evaluations, responses were overwhelmingly positive. Participants liked the strategy and the content in the session, praised the presenters, and indicated that they found the session informative and useful. The primary challenge participants identified related to the amount of material covered in the session. These themes, with representative quotes, are presented in Table 9.

Table 9: Themes from Open-Ended Responses to Overall Satisfaction with Take a Stand
n=60

THEME	N	REPRESENTATIVE QUOTE(S)
Positive	8	"I love how everything was modeled. The experience was memorable. The claims were meaningful and great examples of what we should be providing our students."
Strategy	12	"Reviewing in real time that strategies used in the classroom was most beneficial."
Content	7	"I really enjoyed the content of today's session."
Presenters	7	"Since our presenters are teachers, they have classroom strategies that work. [Presenter] had wonderful input as to some of the trouble topics."
Informative	6	"Very informative and high energy meeting!"
Useful	5	"...I'm very excited to learn new strategies and have tools in my tool belt for the upcoming school year! I think they will be helpful and useful as well."
Challenges	7	"Session was a bit lengthy and a lot of information had to be covered in one day."

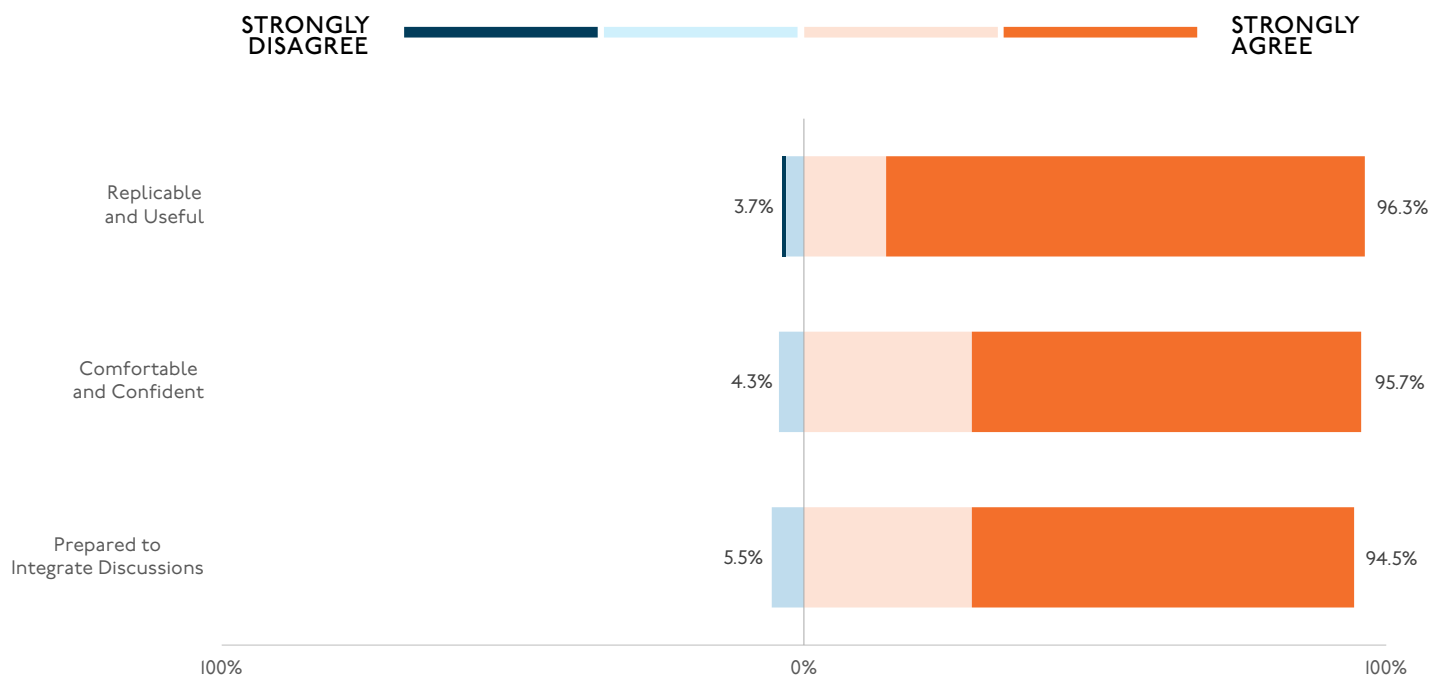
Participants were then asked to respond to three additional statements about Take a Stand:

- “The Take a Stand strategy will be replicable and useful in my classroom.”
- “I feel more comfortable and confident teaching about current and contested issues based on today’s session(s).”
- “I feel more prepared to integrate current and contested issues discussions into my classroom based on today’s session(s).”

Respondents had similar levels of agreement across the three items, though more gave the highest rating to whether the strategy would be replicable and useful compared to whether they felt confident or prepared to use it. Data for all three of those items are presented in Figure 20.

Figure 20: Take a Stand – Replicable, Confident, Prepared

Percentage of Respondents Overall (n=163)



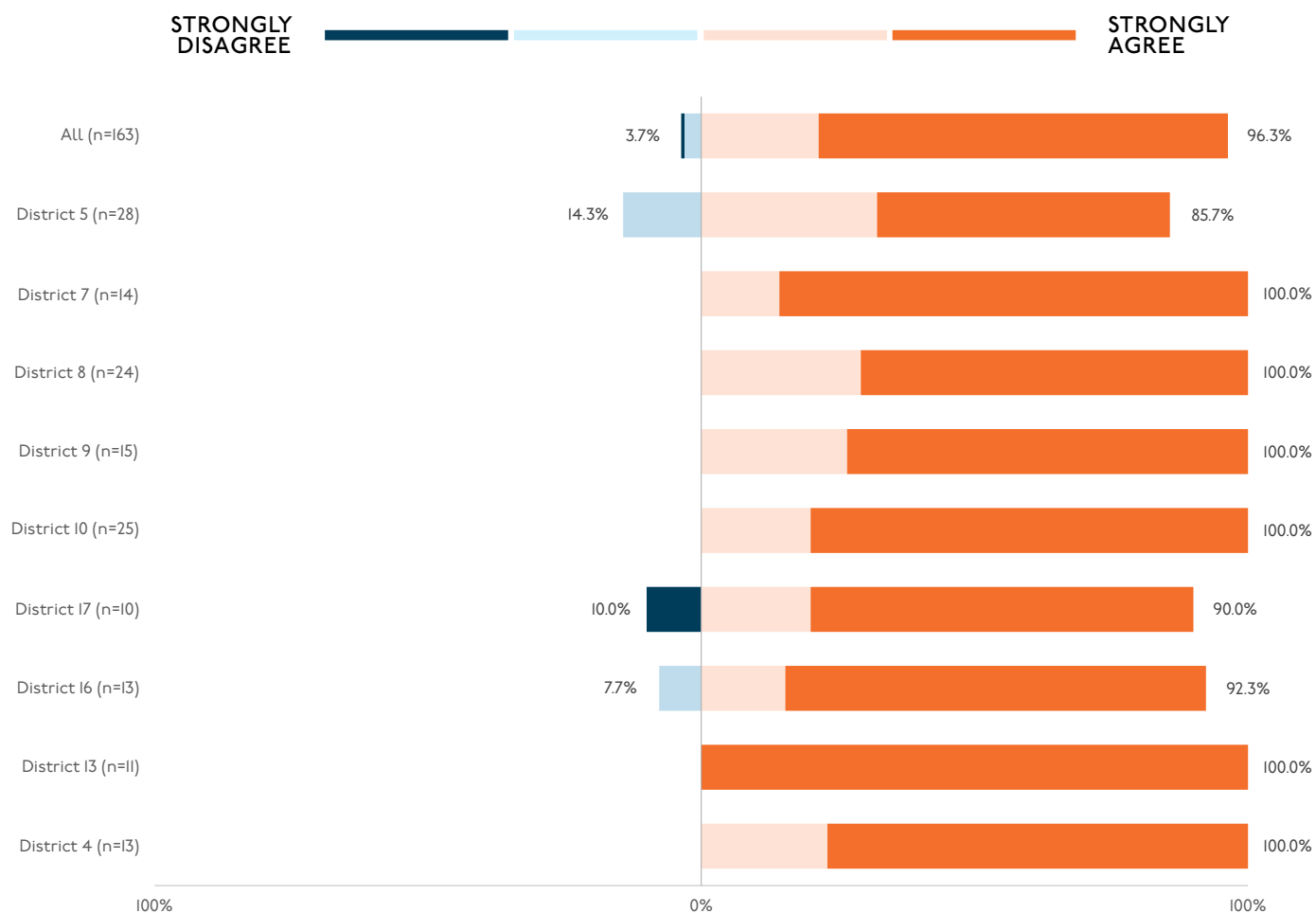
Note: Percentages presented in this figure combine ratings 1 and 2 (on the left) and ratings 3 and 4 (on the right).

Participants who responded to the open-ended item on whether the strategy was replicable and useful (n=46) mostly discussed that it would be useful or even that they already use it. (Only four respondents said they were not planning to use it at this time.) Eight respondents mentioned that they thought students would benefit from the strategy, saying it “allows student input,” “help[s] students voice opinion[s],” and “...is a great way to get students involved in the learning process.” Responses on whether participants felt confident or prepared were mostly positive and did not reveal any unique or pervasive themes.

The additional question in the Take a Stand survey asked respondents whether they agreed that “picking and/ or developing topics for Take a Stand session was a valuable learning experience.” As shown in Figure 21, about three-quarters of participants strongly agreed with this statement, including 70 percent or more in all districts except for one. Open-ended responses were similarly positive about the ideas and examples shared and the discussions they could spur.

Figure 21: Take a Stand – Selecting Topics was a Valuable Learning Experience

Percentage of Respondents Overall and by District



Note: Percentages presented in this figure combine ratings 1 and 2 (on the left) and ratings 3 and 4 (on the right).

Tug of War

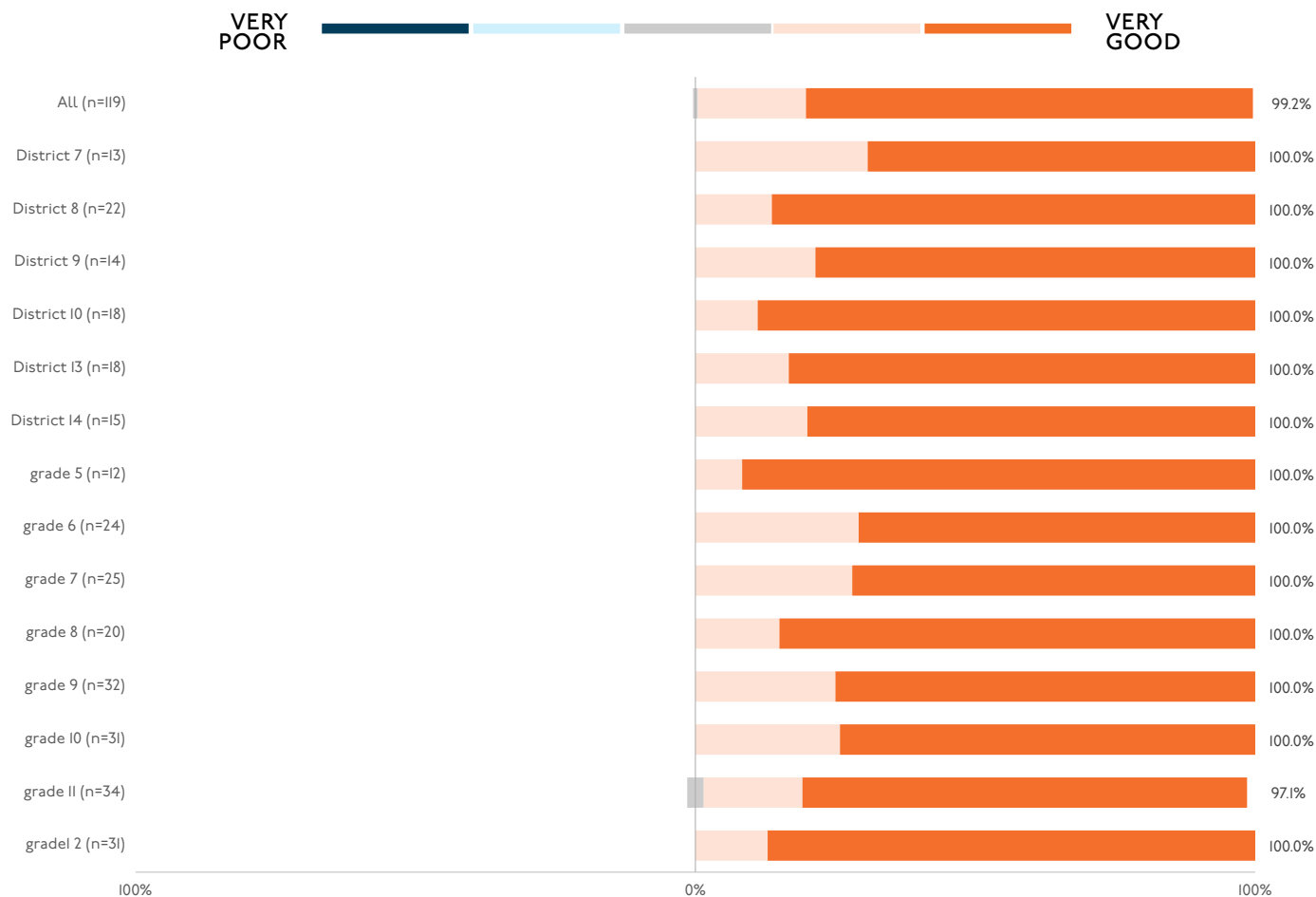
The final session evaluation was Tug of War, the Harvard Project Zero strategy that “builds on children’s familiarity with the game of tug of war to help them understand the complex forces that ‘tug’ at either side of a fairness dilemma. It encourages students to reason carefully about the ‘pull’ of various factors that are relevant to a dilemma of fairness. It also helps them appreciate the deeper complexity of fairness situations that can appear black and white on the surface.”⁵

Tug of War shows some of the highest ratings of all of the session evaluations; all but three participants responded to the first question on overall satisfaction with a 4 or 5 on the 1-5 “very poor” to “very good” scale (and the other three participants responded with a 3). Nearly 80 percent of participants (95/119) responded with a 5, and over two-thirds of the participants in every subgroup gave a rating of 5. Figure 22 provides ratings overall and by subgroup.

5 https://pz.harvard.edu/sites/default/files/Tug%20of%20War_0.pdf

Figure 22: Overall Satisfaction with Tug of War Session

Overall and by District and Grade level



Note: Percentages presented in this figure combine ratings 4 and 5.

Forty-five respondents provided additional details about their ratings. In addition to broadly positive comments, participants indicated that they liked the content of the session and the presenters, found the strategy applicable, thought the strategy would be engaging for students, and appreciated the resources provided. Only four respondents listed any challenges, and no common themes emerged from those. Open-ended response themes, with representative quotes, are presented in Table 10.

Table 10: Themes from Open-Ended Responses to Overall Satisfaction with Tug of War

n=45

THEME	N	REPRESENTATIVE QUOTE(S)
Positive	11	"Good positive session," "Great job!"
Content	11	"I enjoyed the engaging nature of [today's] PD and enjoyed the content & how to implement in my classroom."
Applicable	9	"This is a resource I can use in my classroom."
Presenters	6	"...Presentation was well done, clear and concise."
Engaging for Students	5	"I really enjoyed learning about the tug-of-war strategy and brainstorming ways to modify it. It seems like a great way to get students up and moving while also keeping them engaged with the content."
Resources	5	"The resources are very helpful and user-friendly"

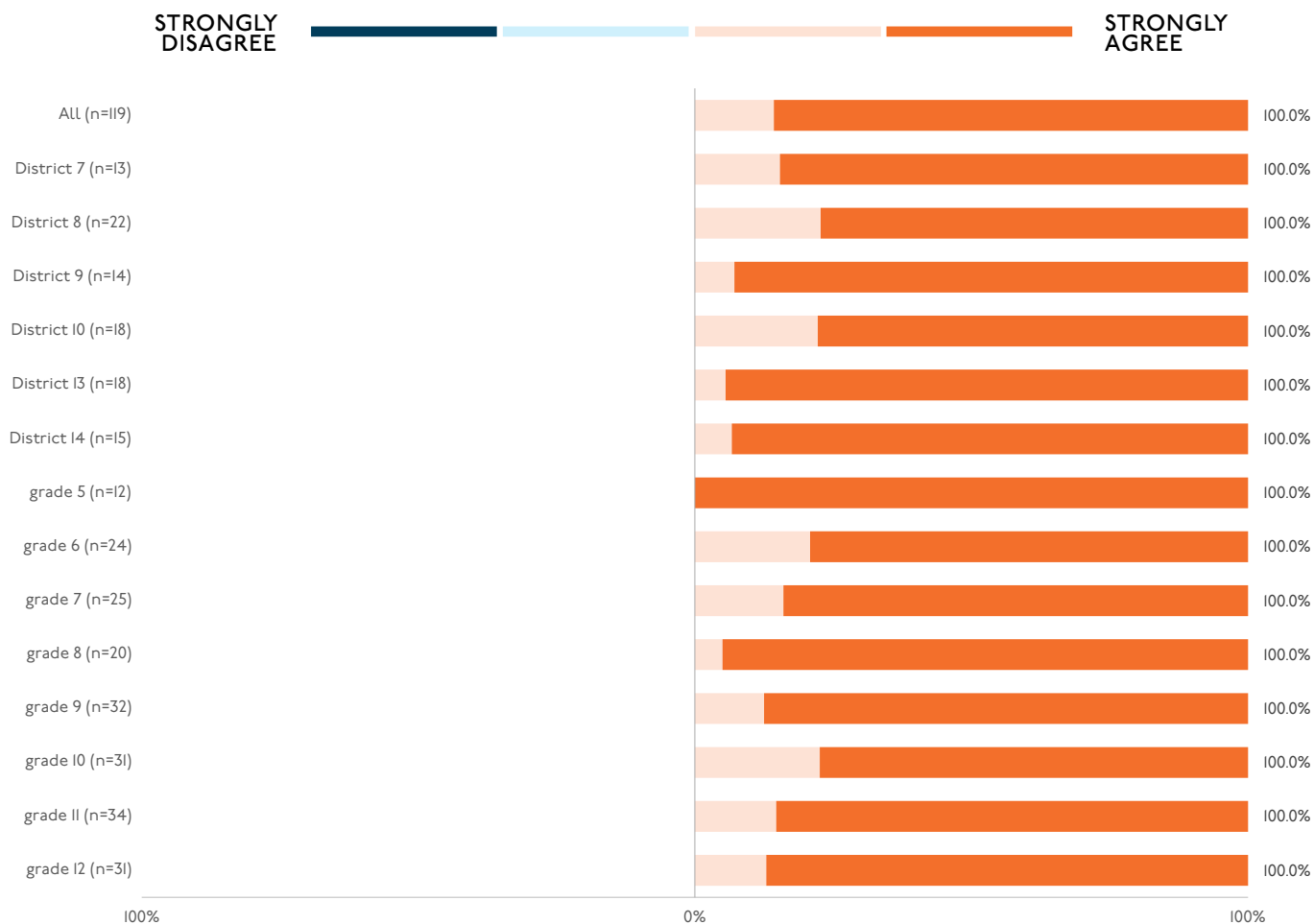
As with the other strategies, participants were then asked to respond to three additional statements on a 1-4 strongly disagree-strongly agree scale:

- “The Tug of War strategy will be replicable and useful in my classroom.”
- “I feel more comfortable and confident teaching about current and contested issues based on today’s session(s).”
- “I feel more prepared to integrate current and contested issues discussions into my classroom based on today’s session(s).”

Participants indicated high levels of agreement that the strategy would be useful and replicable – all gave a rating of 3 or 4, and over 85 percent said they strongly agreed. Participants had somewhat lower levels of agreement on the other two statements, though two-thirds strongly agreed that they were confident and nearly three-quarters strongly agreed that they felt prepared. Unlike the other strategies, we see a split between 6th grade teachers and 7th-8th grade teachers on confidence and preparedness; more 7th-8th grade teachers said they strongly agreed. Figure 23, Figure 24, and Figure 25 show the levels of agreement for each item and subgroup.

Figure 23: Tug of War – Replicable and Useful

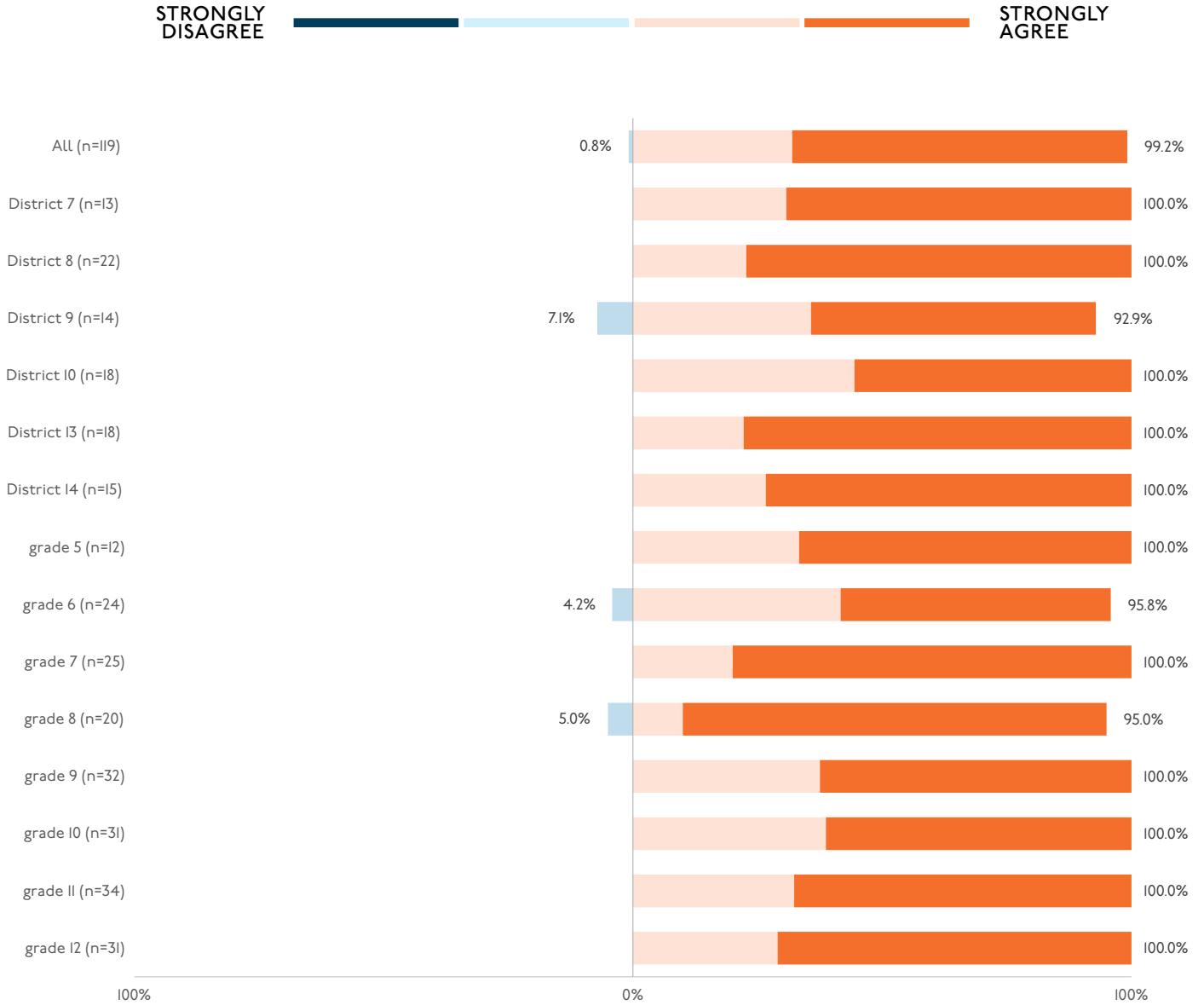
Percentage of Respondents Overall and by Subgroup



Note: Percentages presented in this figure combine 3 and 4.

Figure 24: Tug of War – Comfortable and Confident

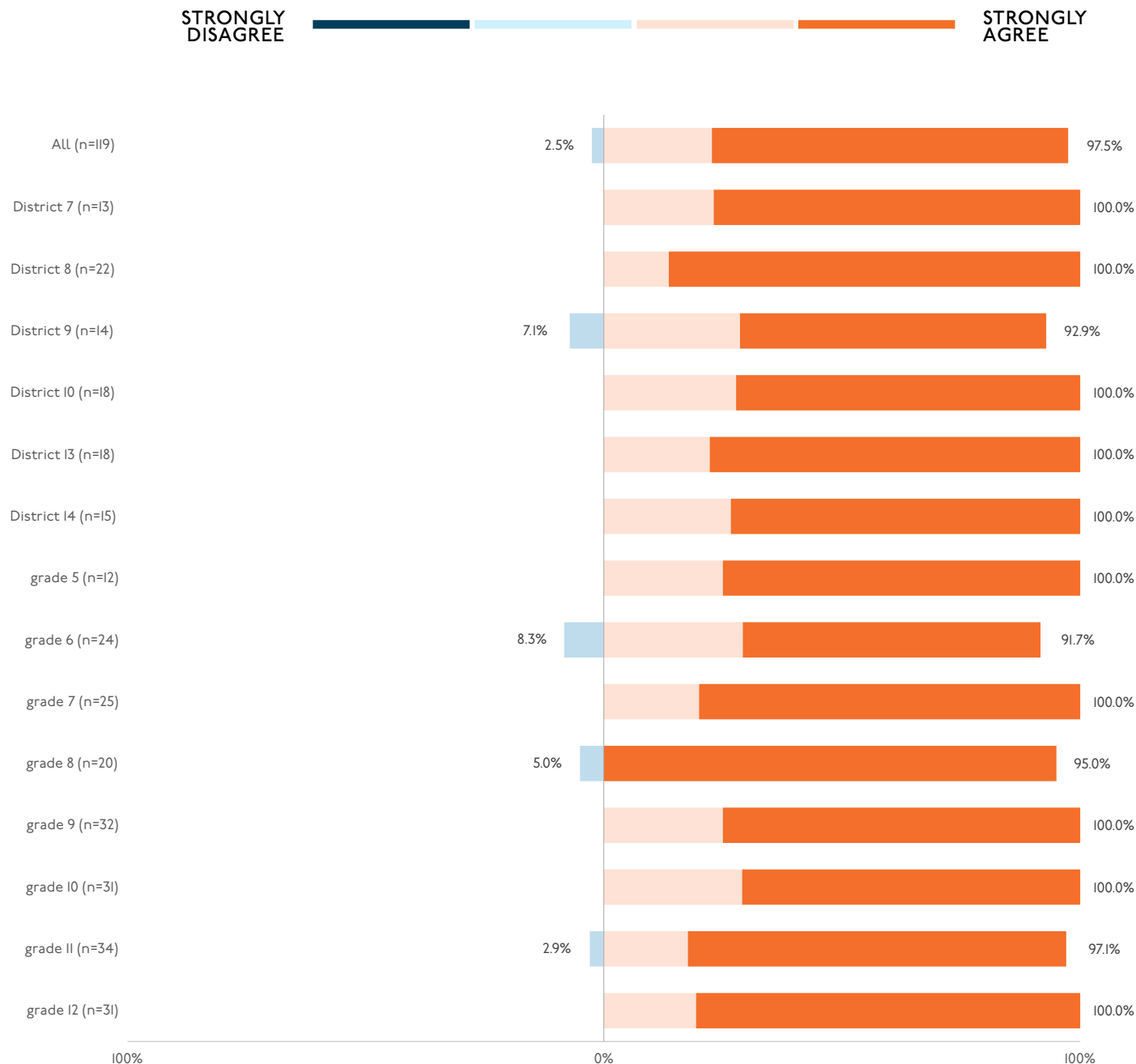
Percentage of Respondents Overall and by Subgroup



Note: Percentages presented in this figure combine ratings 1 and 2 (on the left) and ratings 3 and 4 (on the right).

Figure 25: Tug of War – Prepared to Integrate Discussions

Percentage of Respondents Overall and by Subgroup



Note: Percentages presented in this figure combine ratings 1 and 2 (on the left) and ratings 3 and 4 (on the right).

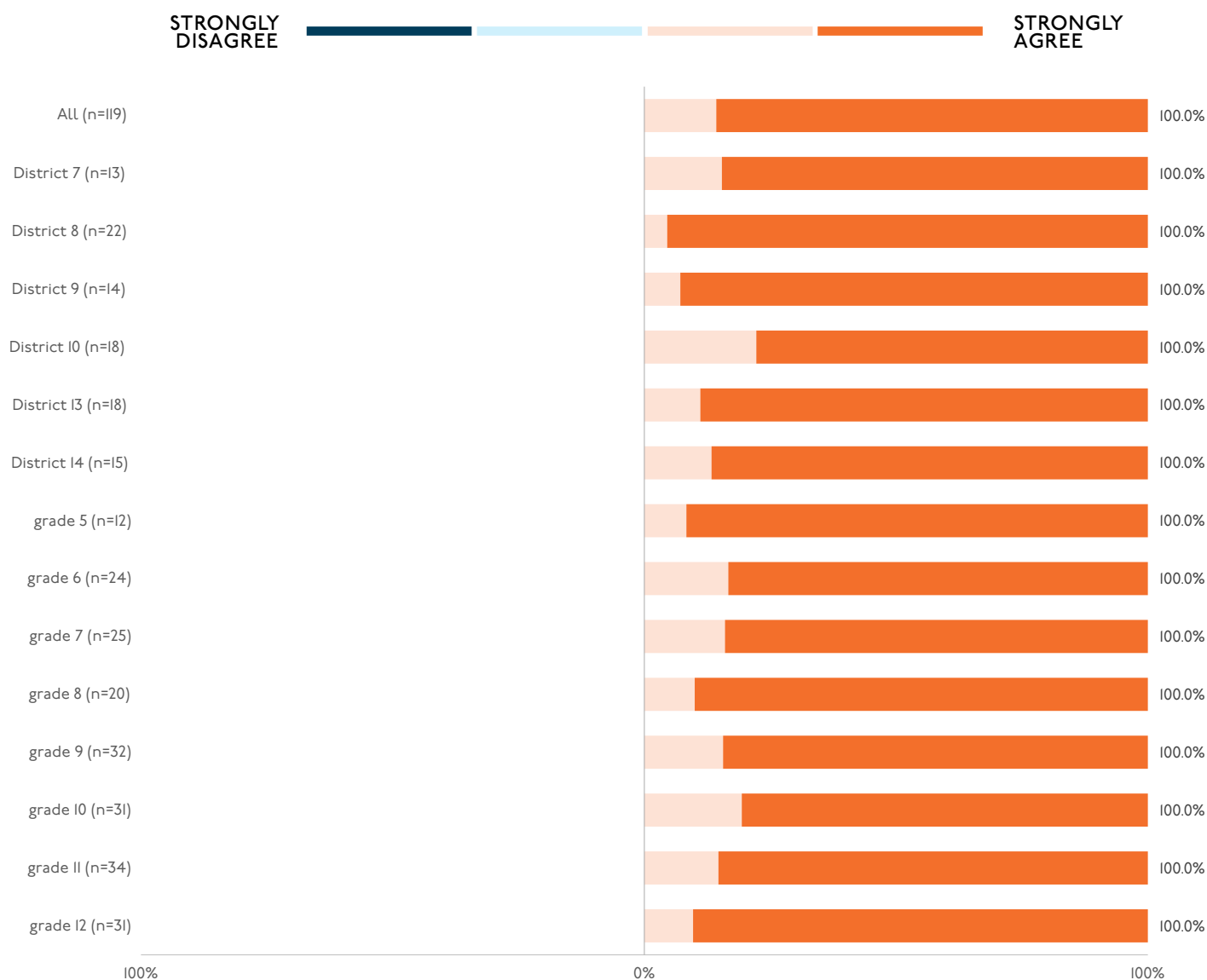
In responses to the open-ended question about replicability and usefulness, common themes related to student engagement, the subjects and topics it can be applied to, the ability to adapt and modify the strategy, and ease and quickness of use (Table II). Open-ended responses to the items about confidence and preparedness again were very positive.

Table II: Themes from Open-Ended Responses on Usefulness and Replicability of Tug of War
n=44

THEME	N	REPRESENTATIVE QUOTE(S)
Engaging for students	9	"Yes especially for my students with IEPs and 504 plans can easily participate who are less apt or shy about speaking out."
Modify/adapt	9	"I think it can modified for my different grades which is a good takeaway"
Subjects/topics	9	"Would work well in my government course"
Quick	8	"Quick activity that can be done with students to debate issues and teach acceptance of different ideas..."
Ease of use	7	"This is very easily used in my class"

A unique question for Tug of War asked participants to indicate their agreement with the following statement: “connecting values to discussions of current and contested issues is worthwhile.” Figure 26 shows very high levels of agreement with this statement overall and across districts and grade levels; no respondents rated their agreement lower than 3, and in every subgroup, over three-quarters of respondents gave it the “strongly agree” rating of 4.

Figure 26: Connecting Values to Discussions of Current & Contested Issues is Worthwhile
Percentage of Respondents Overall and by Subgroup



Note: Percentages presented in this figure combine ratings 3 and 4.

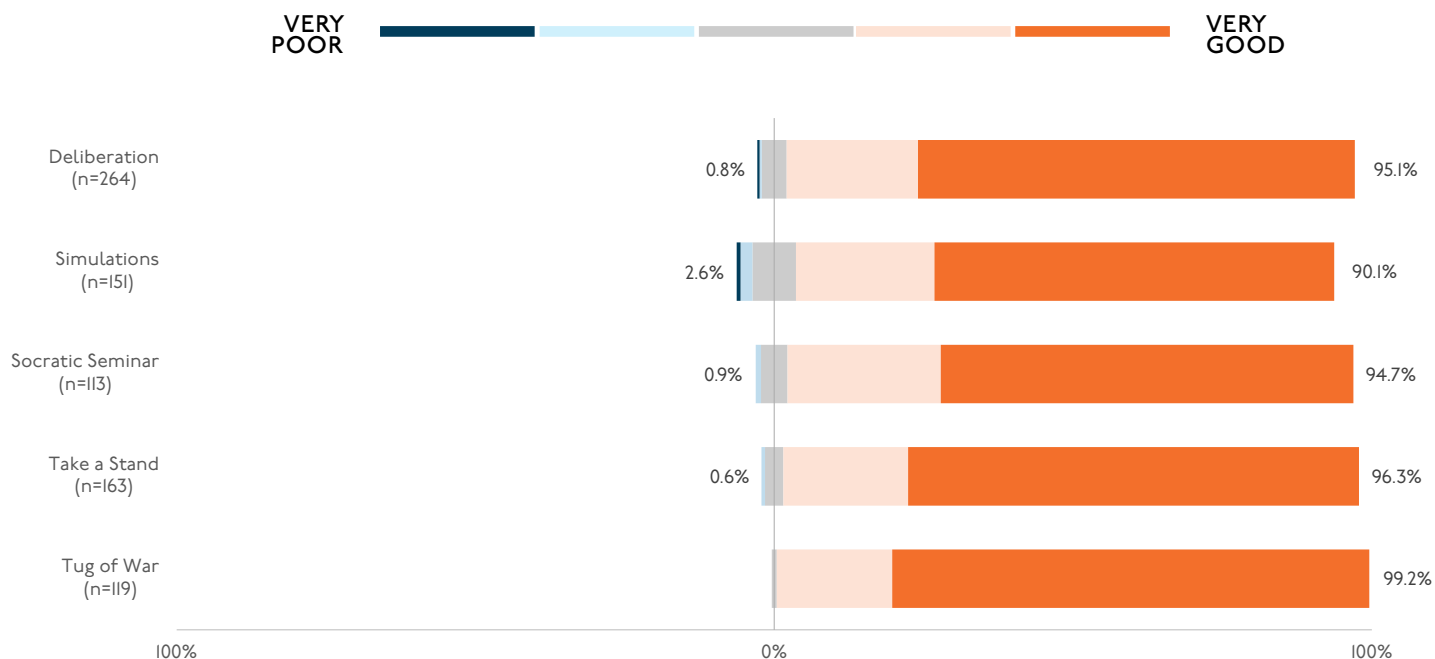
In the 19 open-ended responses following this item, eight respondents indicated that students especially benefit from connecting values to discussions of current and contested issues; some representative quotes are as follows:

- “I agree that bringing up values will assist with student buy in and to break down barriers.”
- “It forces students to implement values into their thinking.”
- “Students will benefit from awareness of the values and beliefs of those they disagree with.”

Session Evaluation Summary

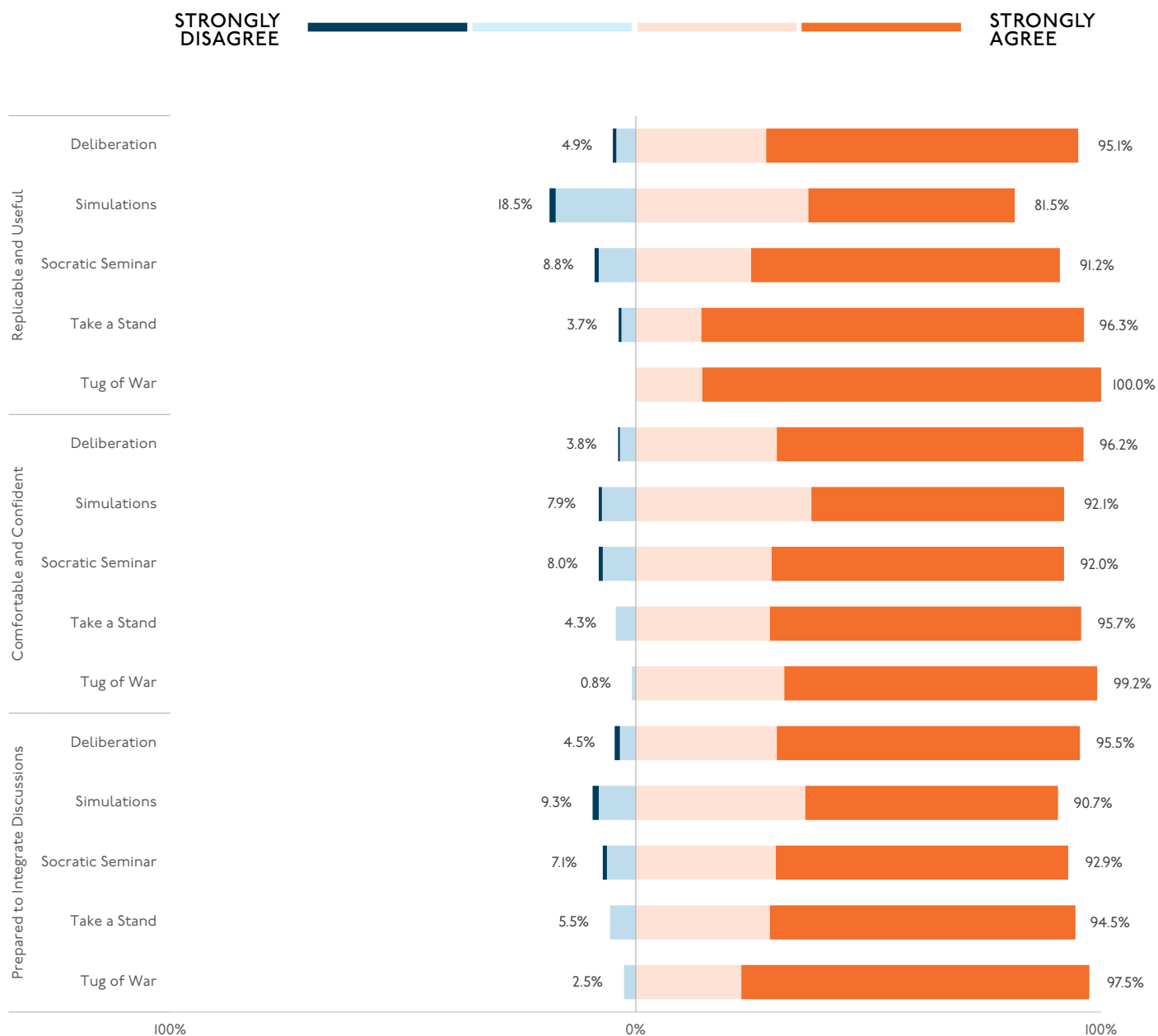
To summarize findings on session evaluations, we can compare across strategies. Figure 27 presents the ratings of overall satisfaction for each strategy, and Figure 28 presents the agreement levels for the items on replicability, confidence, and preparedness. While differences across strategies are rather small, participants had the highest ratings and levels of agreement with the statements for Tug of War and Take a Stand and the lowest for Simulations. (This pattern is especially evident in participants’ responses regarding replicability and usefulness.) Based on open-ended responses, it is likely these ratings reflect participants’ impressions that Tug of War and Take a Stand are quicker and easier to implement than the other strategies and thus perhaps more appropriate for different grade levels and subjects.

Figure 27: Overall Satisfaction, All Strategies



Note: Percentages presented in this figure combine ratings 1 and 2 (on the left) and ratings 4 and 5 (on the right).

Figure 28: Levels of Agreement with Replicability, Confidence, and Preparedness, All Strategies



Note: Percentages presented in this figure combine ratings 1 and 2 (on the left) and ratings 3 and 4 (on the right).

Table 12: Strategies Observed in Spring 2024 Classroom Observations

STRATEGY	N
Deliberation	8
Socratic Seminar	5
Simulation	3
Take a Stand	3
Tug of War	2
Step In Step Out	1

Table 13: Subjects Taught in Spring 2024 Classroom Observations

SUBJECT AREA	N	SPECIFIC COURSES LISTED
US History	7	US History; AP US History
Government	6	Local, State, and National Government; American Government; US Government; AP Government
Social Studies (general)	6	Social Studies; Grade 4 social studies; Grade 5 social studies; Grade 8 social studies
Other	3	5th Grade Inclusion; AP Human Geography; Domestic & Global Issues

Classroom Observations

As described above, there were two sets of classroom observations throughout the course of the project. In Spring 2023, a WEC evaluator observed two Government classes (with the same teacher) in a high school in District 3. In the lessons, the teacher provided a warmup prompt, followed by a conversation about the meaning of “conflict.” The classes then went outside to a courtyard and formed a circle for a Step-In-Step-Out activity, in which they stepped into the circle if they agreed with a statement about conflict or stepped out if they disagreed. Students would then give their reasons for their decision. While the teacher did have to prompt some quieter students to participate, the teacher noted in follow-up emails that students were more talkative than expected, which indicates the strategy seemed to have a positive impact on student engagement.

A broader series of 22 classroom observations took place in Spring 2024. Instructional coaches, district supervisors, principals used an Observation Fidelity Evaluation form to record their findings. The vast majority of these evaluations occurred in District 7 (n=16), with two each in District 2, District 10, and District 16. Table 12 shows the strategies observed, which fell into four main categories, shown in Table 13.

The evaluation form then asked the following four questions about the teacher’s use of the strategy.

1. To what extent did the teacher introduce the strategy’s concept, purpose, and discussion norms
2. To what extent did the teacher help students build background knowledge prior to any discussion
3. To what extent did students engage in structured discussion about the topic
4. To what extent did students debrief this discussion

Each of the questions had four possible response categories. Figure 29 shows the responses to the first question on introducing the strategy. Half of the teachers received the highest rating of “executed completely,” and none received the lowest rating (“did not execute at all”). The three teachers who received the second lowest rating (“partial execution”) taught the Take a Stand or Tug of War strategy; Deliberation, Simulation, Socratic Seminar, and Step In Step Out were all rated satisfactory or better.

Figure 29: Observation Fidelity – Introducing the Strategy

n=22, Overall and By Strategy

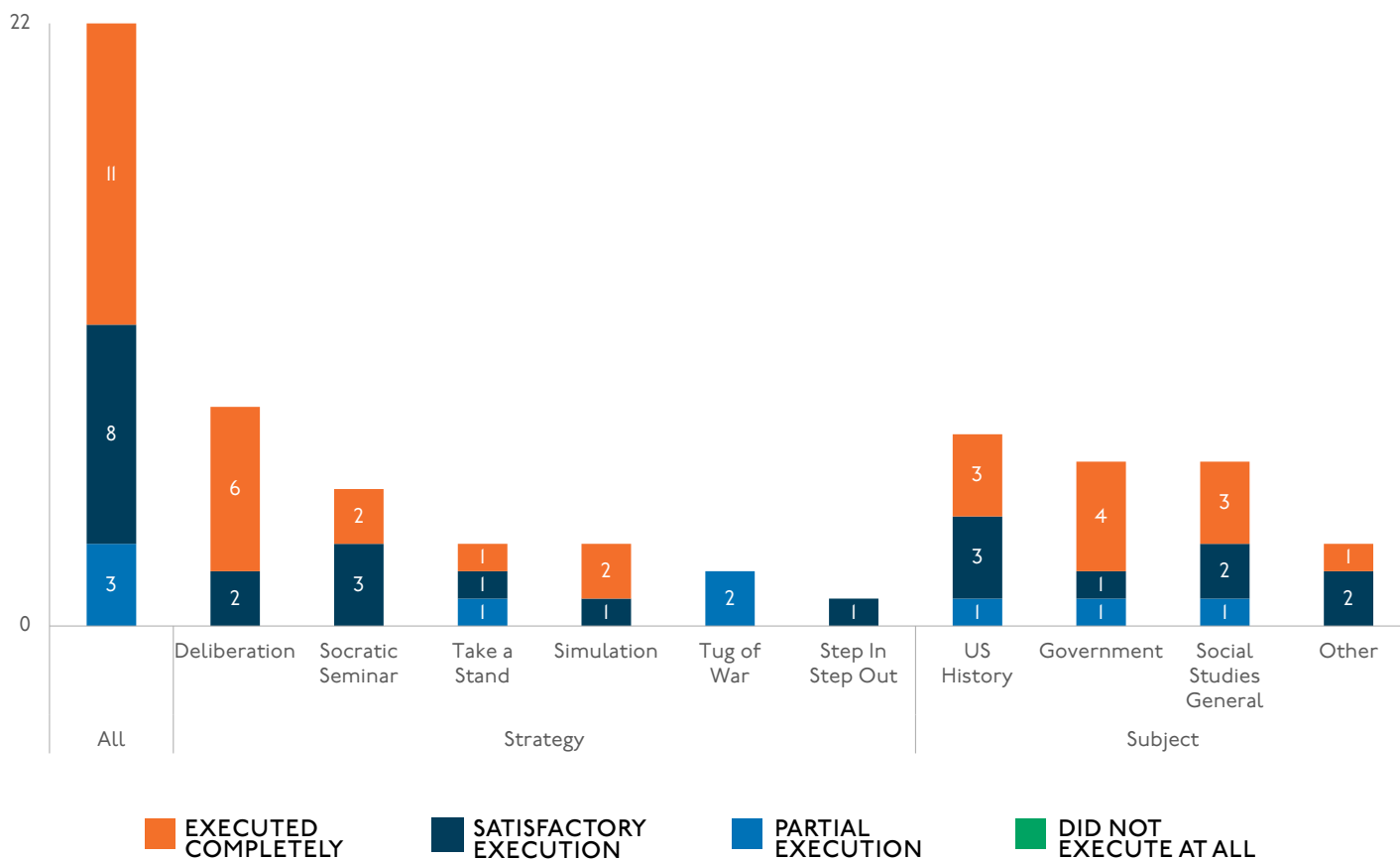
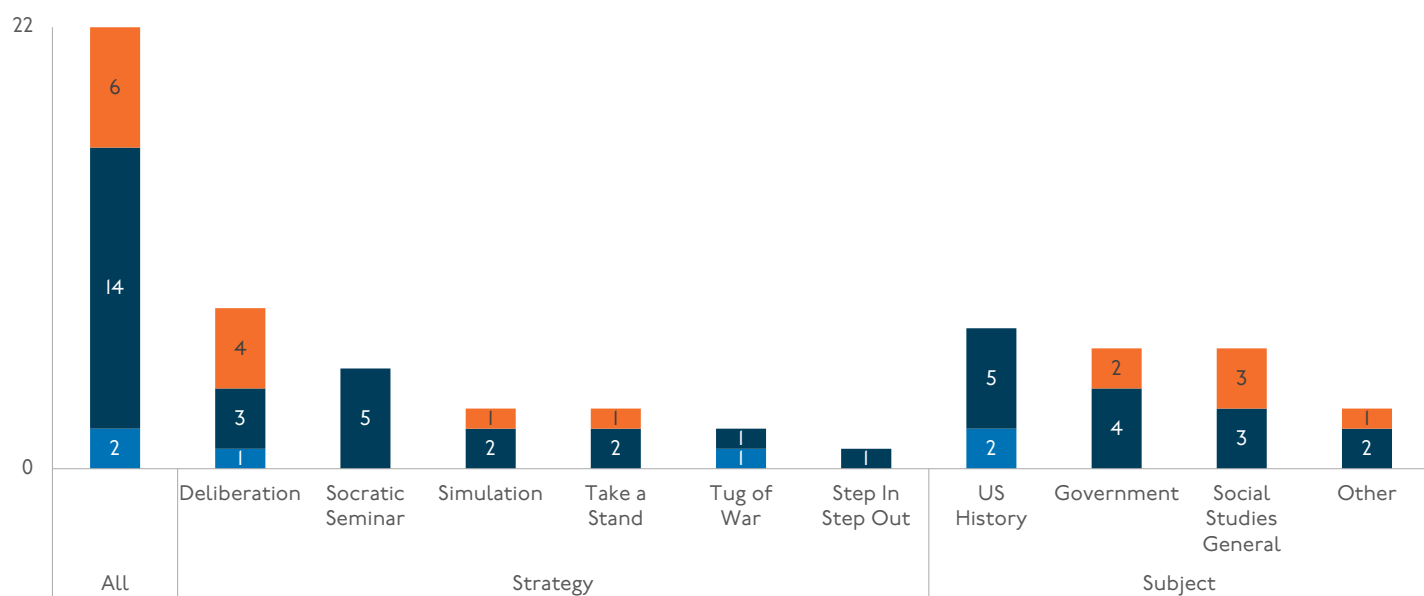


Figure 30 shows the responses to the second question on building background knowledge. The majority of observers indicated that teachers did a “sufficient” check for student understanding (the third rating level). For teachers who used Deliberations, observers more frequently noted that the teacher built “deep” background knowledge with a “full” check for understanding, the highest rating level; this finding likely suggests that Deliberation requires more background knowledge to implement with fidelity compared to other strategies. Data also revealed slightly lower fidelity of implementation in US History compared to the other subject areas. None of the teachers observed failed to build background knowledge, and only two “attempted” to build background knowledge or checked for understanding but did not do both.

Figure 30: Observation Fidelity – Building Background Knowledge

n=22, Overall and By Strategy

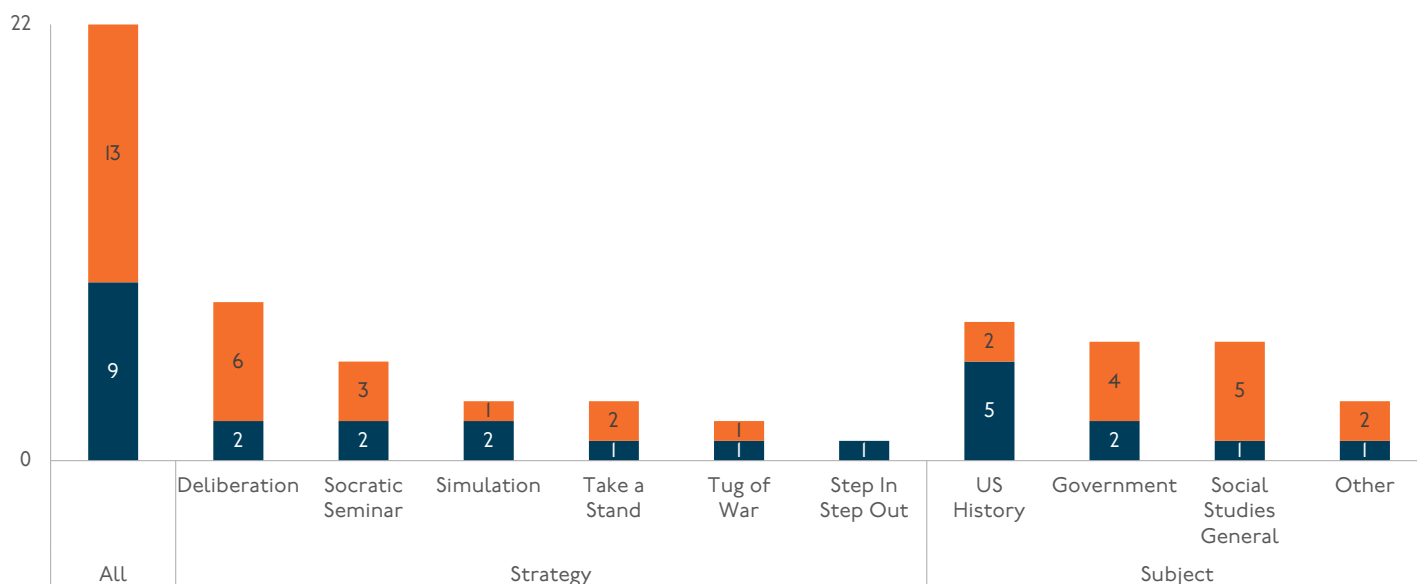


- DEEP BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE BUILDING WITH FULL CHECK FOR STUDENT UNDERSTANDING
- BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE BUILDING WITH A SUFFICIENT CHECK FOR STUDENT UNDERSTANDING
- ATTEMPT TO BUILD BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE OR CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING BUT NOT BOTH
- NO BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE BUILT OR ACCESSED PRIOR TO THE STUDENT DISCUSSION

Figure 31 shows the responses to the third question about student engagement. Here, all teachers were rated at the highest levels (3 or 4), the majority of whom were rated at the highest level (“all” students participating). At the strategy and course level, similar patterns as the first two questions are evident.

Figure 31: Observation Fidelity – Engaging in Structured Discussion

n=22, Overall and By Strategy



ALL STUDENTS PARTICIPATED IN STRUCTURED DISCUSSION(S) FOCUSED ON THE CONTENT TOPIC

MOST STUDENTS PARTICIPATED IN STRUCTURED DISCUSSION(S) FOCUSED ON THE CONTENT TOPIC

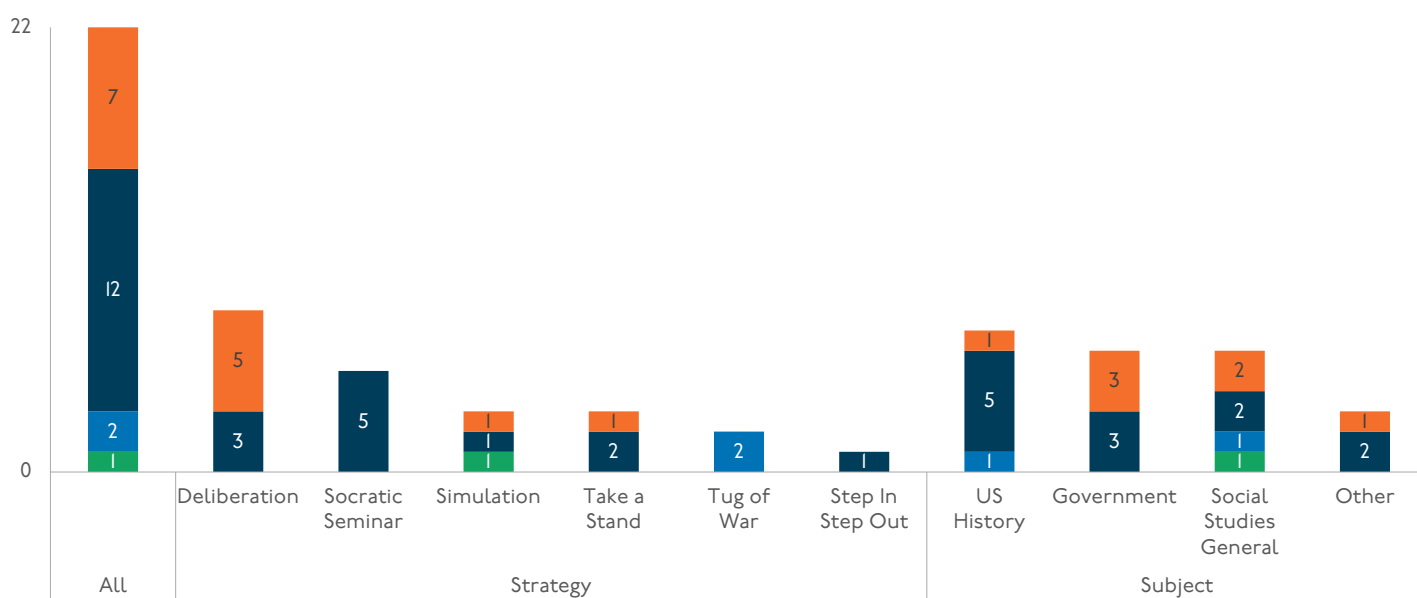
FEW STUDENTS PARTICIPATED IN STRUCTURED DISCUSSION(S) FOCUSED ON THE CONTENT TOPIC, OR MOST STUDENTS PARTICIPATED IN DISCUSSIONS THAT WERE LARGELY UNSTRUCTURED

MOST (OR ALL) STUDENTS WERE DISENGAGED FROM DISCUSSION; AND/OR DISCUSSION WAS UNSTRUCTURED AND CHAOTIC

Figure 32 shows the responses to the final question about debriefing the discussion. The majority of teachers received the second-highest rating (“most students participated”). One teacher received the lowest rating (“students did not participate in a debrief”), but the observer of that classroom noted that “the lesson was continuing to the next day.” Of the strategies, Deliberation again had the largest proportion of highest ratings (in this case, “all” students participating in the debrief).

Figure 32: Observation Fidelity – Debriefing the Discussion

n=22, Overall and By Strategy



ALL STUDENTS PARTICIPATED IN A DEBRIEF OF THE DISCUSSION, REFLECTING ON CONTENT, SKILLS, AND/OR ATTITUDES

MOST STUDENTS PARTICIPATED IN A DEBRIEF OF THE DISCUSSION, REFLECTING ON CONTENT, SKILLS, AND/OR ATTITUDES

FEW STUDENTS PARTICIPATED IN A DEBRIEF OF THE DISCUSSION, OR MOST STUDENTS PARTICIPATED BUT THE DEBRIEF DID NOT INVOLVE REFLECTING ON CONTENT, SKILLS, AND/OR ATTITUDES

STUDENTS DID NOT PARTICIPATE IN A DEBRIEF

Finally, observers had the opportunity to provide open-ended responses, 11 of whom did so. Most of the responses described the topics of the lessons and the steps teachers undertook to implement the strategies. Some observers elaborated by celebrating student engagement, praising teachers for their implementation of the strategies, and mentioning feedback they gave after the lesson. A selection of partial responses are as follows:

- "...The students did a fantastic job of participating in the strategy."
- "Students were very engaged and wanted to share their opinions and explain why."
- "The students generally did well in participating and understanding their role in the process."
- "Students were actively involved and felt comfortable sharing. Excited to engage with topic. You could see the wheels turning... Teacher was comfortable with strategy and providing accurate clarifications as needed."
- "The teacher I visited did a fantastic job of scaffolding the deliberation strategy..."
- "...My feedback consisted of making sure the students had written responses to the questions prior to participating in the activity so that they were prepared to discuss with their peers..."
- "...We discussed other ways for the students to access the text through other means of support such as small group instruction."

Content Knowledge (GPRA)

Another measure of program implementation is the extent to which Street Law met its Year 3 Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) target. (As a condition of its grants, the US Department of Education requires grantees to report on certain GPRA measures.) A long-term GPRA measure for TALCCS was:

- According to pre-and post-assessment data, participating teachers will improve content knowledge of American history, civics and government, and geography with a 15% average gain.

To satisfy this measure, participants were asked to answer 10 social studies content questions in the pre-survey and then again in the post-survey. None of the respondents scored greater than 80 percent (8/10) on the pre-survey, so all were eligible to make a 15 percent improvement. Participants were subsequently removed if they 1) did not respond to the GPRA items on the post-survey, 2) started with a score of zero and thus could make infinite improvement, or 3) had more than five responses of "I do not know" (see the methodology section above). The remaining 96 respondents who completed the GPRA items on both surveys averaged a **28.9 percent gain** in their scores. Thus, Street Law met this GPRA goal for Year 3.

Evaluation Question 2: How do key stakeholders perceive the successes and challenges of TALCCS with respect to project implementation, outcomes, and sustainability?

Evaluation Question 2 can be assessed using pre-post surveys, as well as focus group findings from Year 2 of the program (2022-23). The survey responses on participant perceptions, with corresponding focus group data, can be broken down into four categories: instructional practice, student knowledge and engagement, cultural responsiveness, and resources and supports. We also report on participant impressions of professional development from Year 2 focus groups and Year 3 open-ended survey items and conclude this section with advice participants would give to future cohorts.

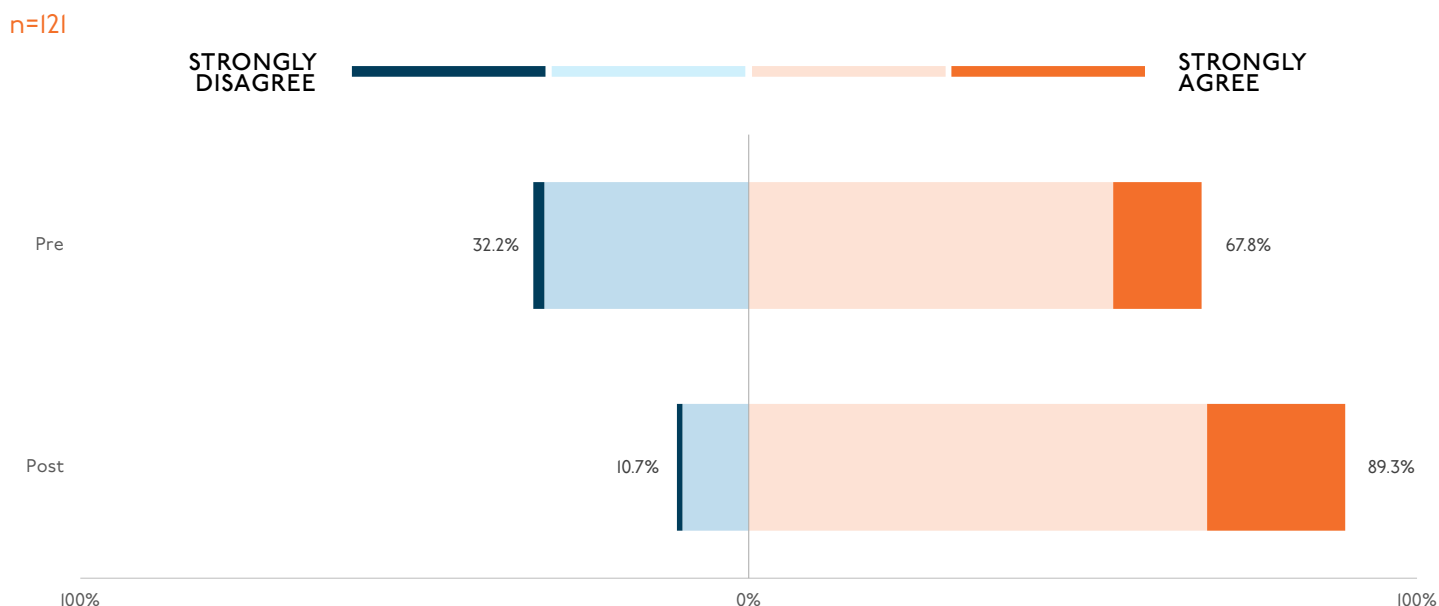
Instructional Practices

Two agree/disagree survey items related to instructional practices:

- I am confident and comfortable integrating current and contested issues into my instruction and classroom discussions.
- In my classroom, I integrate best practices in social-emotional learning in discussions of current and contested issues.

Figure 33 shows that teachers grew substantially in their confidence throughout the 2023-24 school year. On the pre-survey, approximately two-thirds of participants agreed or strongly agreed that they were confident and comfortable integrating current and contested issues; on the post-survey, almost 90 percent reported being confident. This increase occurred across all subgroups, and even though the numbers of first-year social studies teachers and teachers of color were small, all participants in those subgroups indicated they agreed or strongly agreed in the post-survey. At the individual level, only about 12 percent of participants decreased in their confidence from pre to post.

Figure 33: Level of Agreement – Confident and Comfortable, Pre to Post

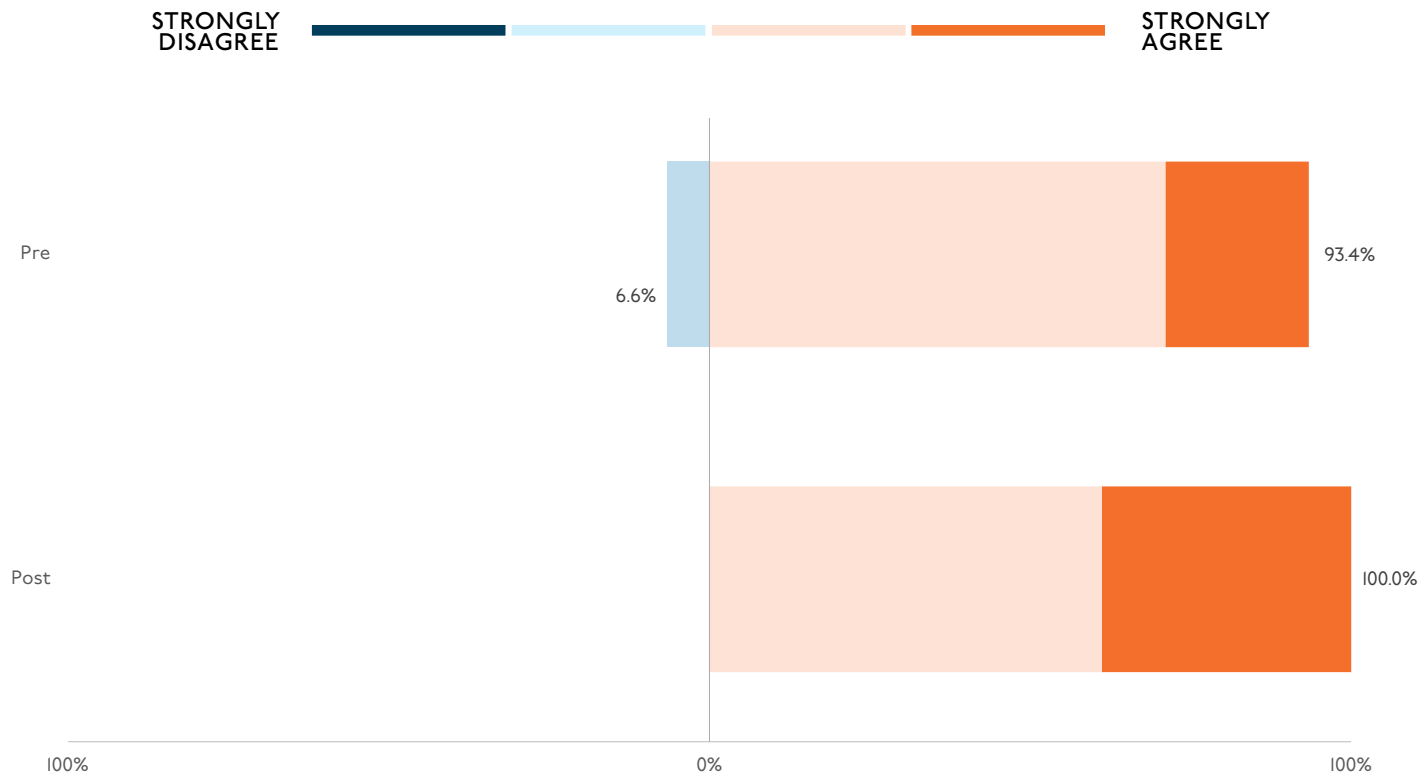


Note: Percentages presented in this figure combine strongly disagree/disagree (on the left) and strongly agree/agree (on the right).

Figure 34 shows that integrating social-emotional learning best practices was already being done by most participants in the pre-survey, perhaps as part of ongoing efforts in schools to address students' mental health. Nonetheless, while a handful of teachers disagreed with this statement in the pre-survey, every participant agreed or strongly agreed in the post-survey.

Figure 34: Level of Agreement – Integrating SEL Practices, Pre to Post

n=121



Note: Percentages presented in this figure combine strongly disagree/disagree (on the left) and strongly agree/agree (on the right).

In open-ended items, teachers were also given the opportunity to describe their approaches to instruction and discussion of current and contested issues in their classrooms. Several themes emerged from this question in the pre- and post-surveys. The most common theme (mentioned by about a quarter of respondents in both surveys) related to setting norms for discussion and mutual respect. Participants discussed exposing students to multiple perspectives (or “both sides”) of a debate through fact- and evidence-based sources and student research, and reported use of curricula for such discussions increased substantially from pre to post. Several respondents described discussions as “open” and noted whether

discussions occurred in whole- or small-group settings (and often both). Teachers also discussed specific practices such as questioning and writing and talked about other settings in which they employ discussions, such as in morning meetings and restorative circles. In terms of challenges, ten participants in each survey felt they had to be careful or cautious when raising current and contested issues, and six participants in each survey stated that they did not engage in any such discussions. Concerns about age-appropriateness were raised in the pre-survey but less frequently in the post-survey. The most common themes, with representative quotes, are presented in Table 14.

Table 14: Approach to Discussions on Current and Contested Issues

Common Themes in Open-Ended Responses (n=121)

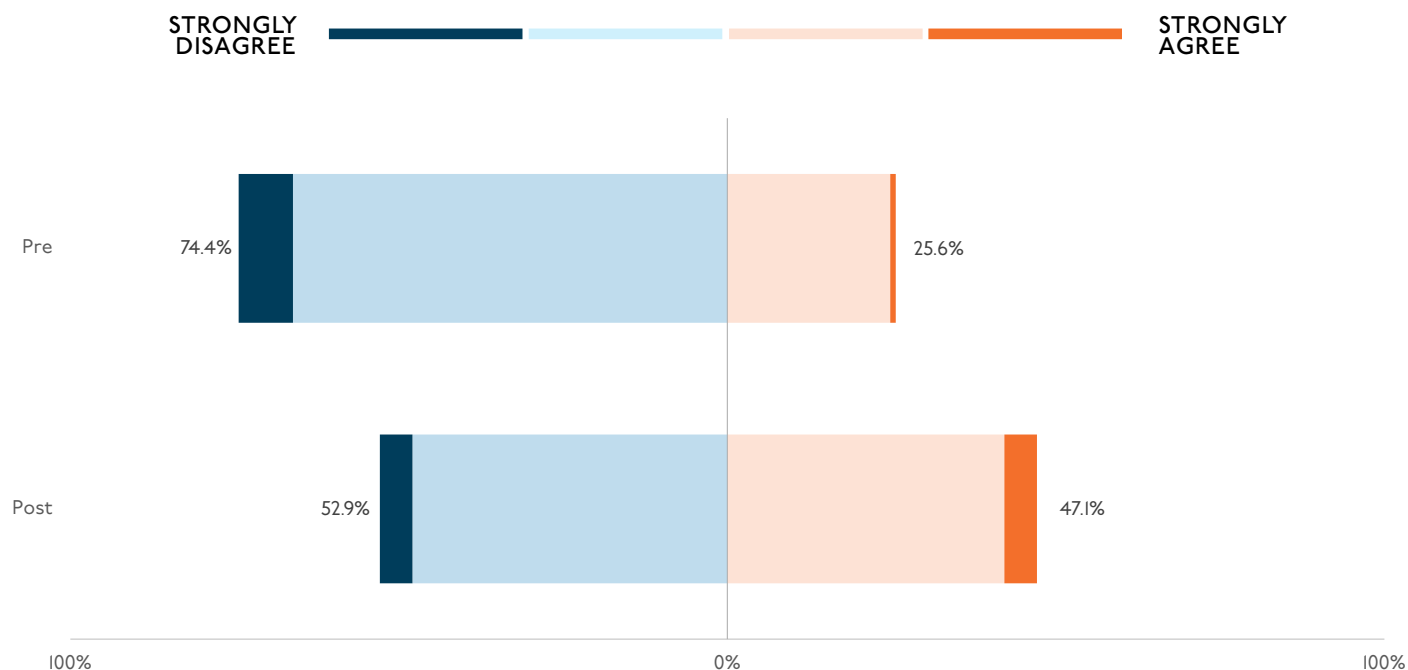
THEME	PRE N	POST N	REPRESENTATIVE QUOTE(S)
Norms/ Respect	35	30	“I establish an environment of how discussions will happen to (try) to make a safe space to share ideas/thoughts. As we discuss, we keep reminding students of the norms. We constantly look for bias so that we are aware of how language may influence the presentations/opinions.”
Curriculum	7	20	“I am strictly using curriculum to allow students to explore a variety of perspectives.”
Multiple Perspectives	20	15	“I look for opinions and articles that present multiple sides/perspectives of the argument.”
Fact-based	15	15	“We have a discussion on the facts about the subject and how it impacts my students lives now and in the future.”
Strategies	14	13	“...I give [students] an inquiry question to think about then we have a discussion about what their beliefs are based on the information given to them.”
Open Discussion	13	10	“Open discussions where students can ask questions and we work together to find resources to answer their inquiries, or guide them to form their own opinions.”
Resources/ evidence	16	9	“I try to have students ground their conversations in content knowledge and source documents.”
Whole- and/or Small-Group	11	7	“I usually incorporate small group discussions and partner work. Then incorporate whole group discussions for those groups to share answers, opinions etc.”
Research	7	5	“I approach them by encouraging students to research reliable sources on their own about the topic while speaking on issues from a factual moral standpoint.”
Careful/ Cautious	10	10	“Open, but cautious. While I am always worried about the repercussions of talking about contested issues in the current political climate, I know how important it is for my students have a safe and open space to have those discussions.”
No Discussion	6	6	“We do not discuss current issues in our curriculum. The students are young and many current issues are inappropriate”

Student Knowledge and Engagement

Four survey items asked participants to assess student knowledge and engagement. Figure 35 shows participant agreement on whether students in their classroom are knowledgeable about current and contested issues. On the pre-survey, only about one-quarter of participants agreed or strongly agreed that their students were knowledgeable, with just one respondent strongly agreeing. On the post-survey, however, nearly half (about 47 percent) agreed or strongly agreed, and over 90 percent of participants indicated that their level of agreement stayed the same or increased. At the subgroup level, this change in agreement was most pronounced for more experienced teachers, though this could be a situation in which less experienced teachers “didn’t know what they didn’t know;” in other words, they may have thought their students were more knowledgeable than they actually were at the beginning of the school year.

Figure 35: Level of Agreement – Students are Knowledgeable, Pre to Post

n=121

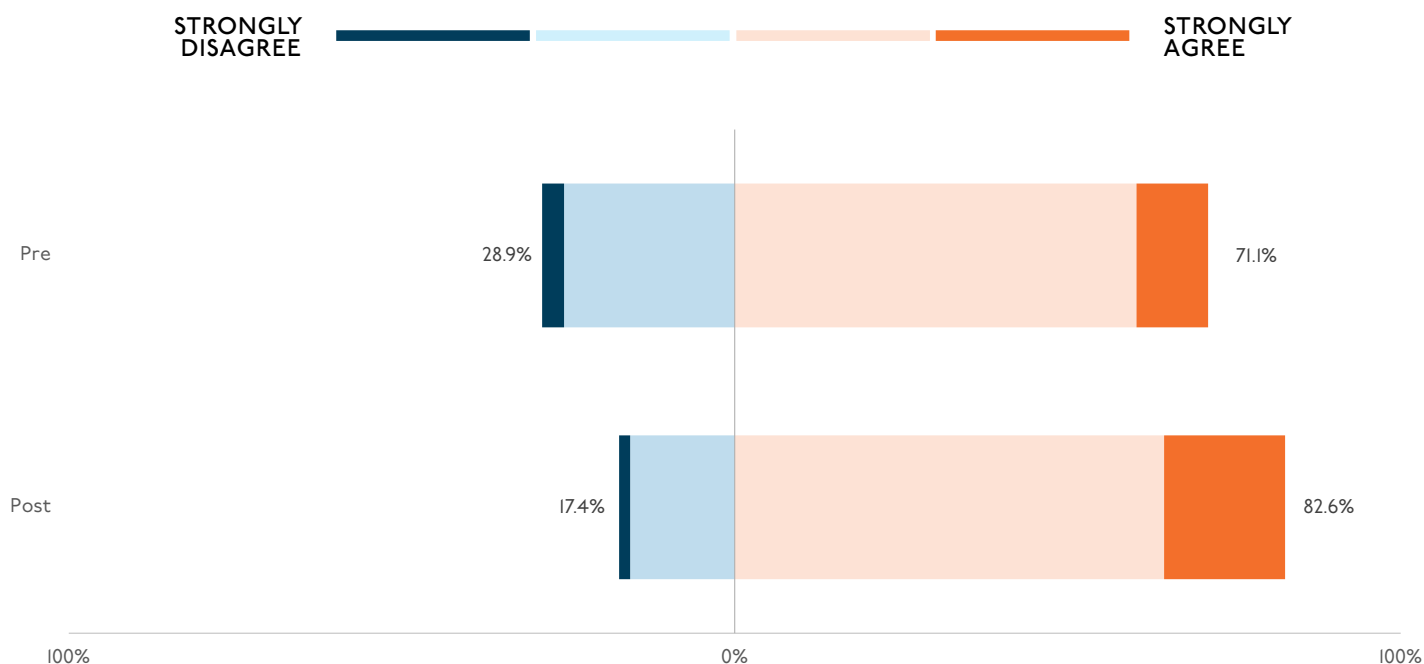


Note: Percentages presented in this figure combine strongly disagree/disagree (on the left) and strongly agree/agree (on the right).

The next item asked participants about their level of agreement that their students are engaged by discussions of current and contested issues. Overall agreement (strongly agree or agree) increased from about 71 percent in the pre-survey to about 83 percent in the post-survey, as shown in Figure 36. Most subgroups saw similar levels of increased agreement. As with the item on student knowledge, over 90 percent of participants indicated their level of agreement increased or stayed the same.

Figure 36: Level of Agreement – Students are Engaged, Pre to Post

n=121



Note: Percentages presented in this figure combine strongly disagree/disagree (on the left) and strongly agree/agree (on the right).

Year 2 focus groups provided additional nuance and context regarding student engagement, as presented in Table 15.

Table 15: Year 2 Focus Group Themes – Student Engagement

THEME	REPRESENTATIVE QUOTE(S)
Student Voice	“They want to be heard just like anybody else does. It gives a good framework for them to be able to have their opinions, have their ideas, and then be able to communicate them effectively without stepping on people’s toes.”
	“...it allowed for a lot more student voice. Many of the strategies are very speaking- and listening-based.” “My kids love to talk. They love the fact they get to share their opinion. My students beg to do that – ‘Can we do Take a Stand?’ They just like the opportunity to share their thoughts.”
Movement	“...the opportunity to get up. They loved the Take a Stand and Tug of War because they get to put up the sticky notes, and they get to talk about what they’re doing. They like that those strategies actually get them up and moving around.”
	“Take a Stand, even Tug of War – when it’s like, all right, time to go over something, let’s stand up and do it this way. It’s a way to bring them back in, bringing that physical aspect of get up, stand here.”
Critical Thinking	“I don’t have to prompt them as often for ‘why do you think that?’ I’ve even had a couple of times where a classmate might follow up with, ‘what makes you say that,’ or ‘why do you think that.’ As a teacher, you’re like...yes, this is it! They’re better listeners. There’s a bigger understanding of the fact that there’s a lot of different opinions that are inside the classroom and that there isn’t one singular right or wrong.”
	“It’s really helped my kids learn how to engage in productive talk. Not just talking to share out ideas, but get them to critically think about why they feel that specific way.” “Middle school students are impulsive. Being able to integrate some of these practices have created a slowdown effect in their thinking The first thing that pops in doesn’t just come out. It’s allowing them to be a little more introspective.”
Novel Strategies	“...it’s always a good thing to have a new tool, a new strategy to use. Just because having kids in front of you for 180 days, or 90 days, you need a variety of things to keep them engaged. You can’t do the same discussion techniques, you can’t use the same products all the time...”
Relevance to Other Academic Areas	“...these strategies can really improve writing skills because they’re talking so much before they start writing.” “I actually had a math teacher come to me, and she’s like, they now give the answer and then say ‘because.’ When they’re taking a stand, or they’re doing their step-in, step-out, they always have to give their reason why they did it. She said she just asked them a simple math question, expecting them just to give an answer and not say “because,” and she’s like, I know that’s what you’re doing over there, and they’re doing it in math.”

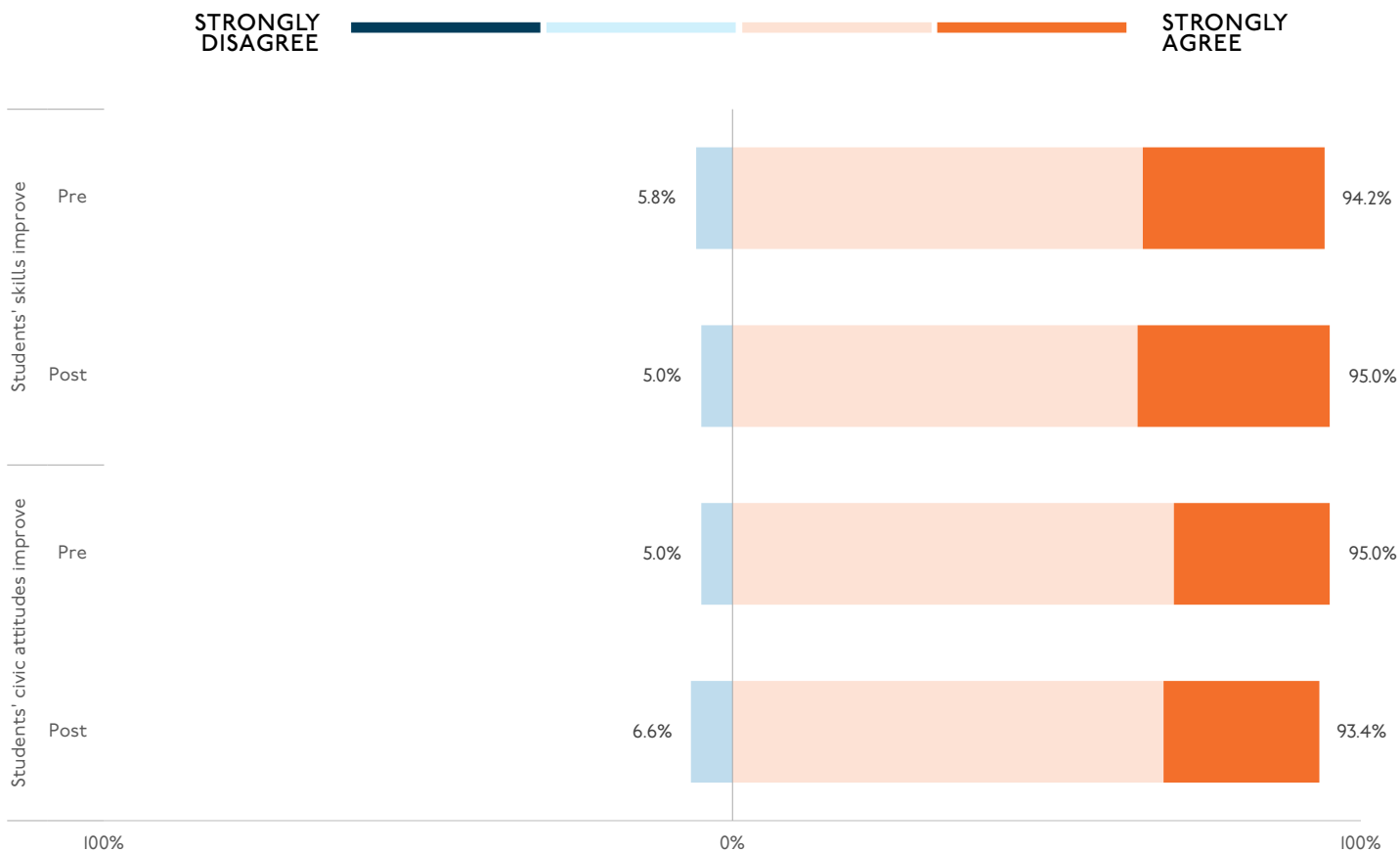
Figure 37 combines the two other items on student knowledge and engagement:

- Students’ speaking and listening skills improve as a result of participating in discussions of current and contested issues.
- Students’ civic attitudes (such as believing their voices and opinions matter, interest in current events and following the news, intending to vote) improve as a result of participating in discussions of current and contested issues.

Both of these statements began with very high levels of agreement; around two-thirds of participants agreed with both statements and a quarter or more strongly agreed. These agreement levels changed little in the post-survey.

Figure 37: Level of Agreement – Students’ Skills and Attitudes Improve, Pre to Post

n=121



Note: Percentages presented in this figure combine strongly disagree/disagree (on the left) and strongly agree/agree (on the right).

Survey participants were also asked to estimate the percentage of students in their classroom(s) who are proficient in social studies skills, such as understanding multiple perspectives, developing claims using text-based evidence, and analyzing sources for bias. In the pre-survey, teachers estimated that about 44 percent of their students on average were proficient in social studies skills, which grew to nearly 60 percent in the post-survey, a gain of over 15 percentage points (Figure 38). By subgroup, perceptions of growth increased the most among more experienced educators; newer social studies teachers may have overestimated their students' proficiency at the start of the school year.

Figure 38: Teacher-Estimated Student Proficiency in Social Studies
Overall and by Subgroup



Cultural Responsiveness

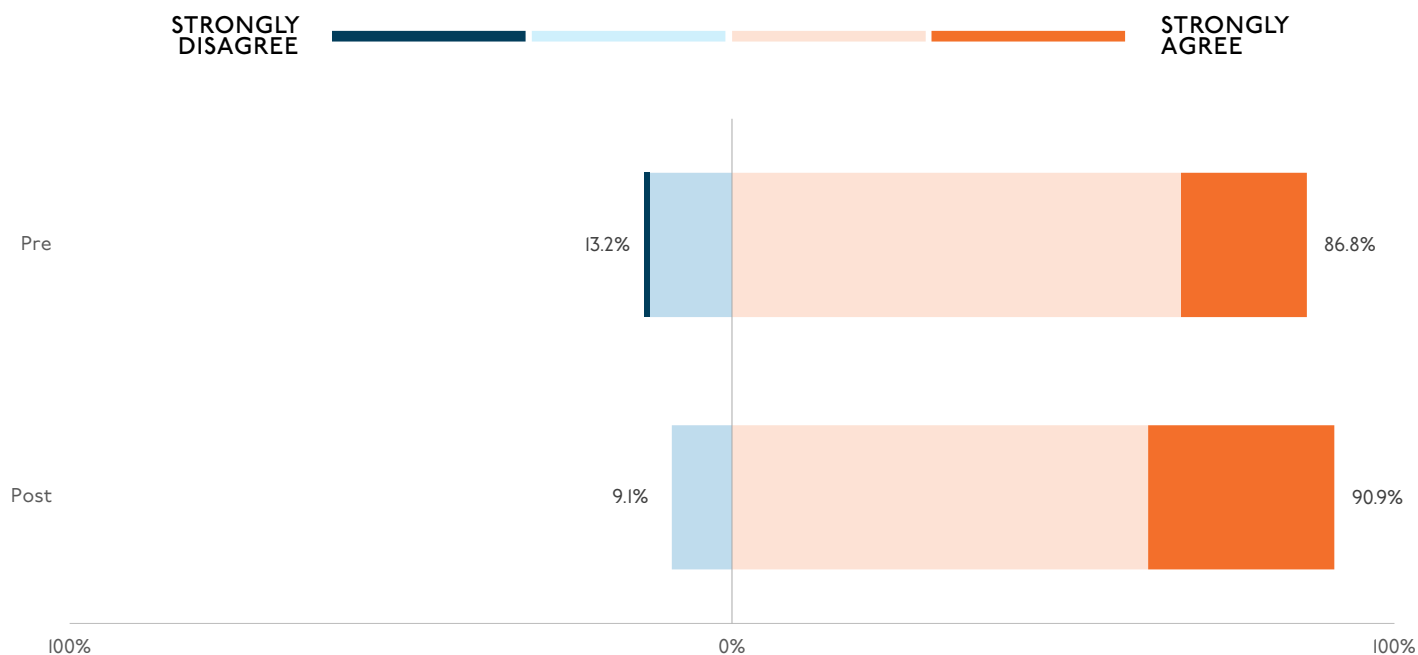
One of the stated goals of our evaluation is to examine TALCCS through a culturally responsive lens. To that end, we asked questions about cultural responsiveness both in the survey and in Year 2 focus groups. The survey item directly dealing with cultural responsiveness was as follows:

- In my classroom, discussions of current and contested issues are relevant to students' cultural beliefs, practices, and experiences.

Figure 39 presents the responses to this item. Teachers indicated a high level of agreement in the pre-survey (over 86 percent strongly agree or agree), but agreement increased further in the post-survey, to over 90 percent. Further, the percentage of respondents who answered strongly agree jumped from 19 percent in the pre-survey to 28 percent in the post-survey.

Figure 39: Level of Agreement – Discussions are Culturally Relevant, Pre to Post

n=121



Note: Percentages presented in this figure combine strongly disagree/disagree (on the left) and strongly agree/agree (on the right).

There were two additional items in the post-survey that related to community engagement, which is tangentially related to cultural responsiveness:

- I can foster community support of discussions of current and contested issues in my classroom.
- Cross-generational dialogue on current and contested issues would be valuable in the context of my community.

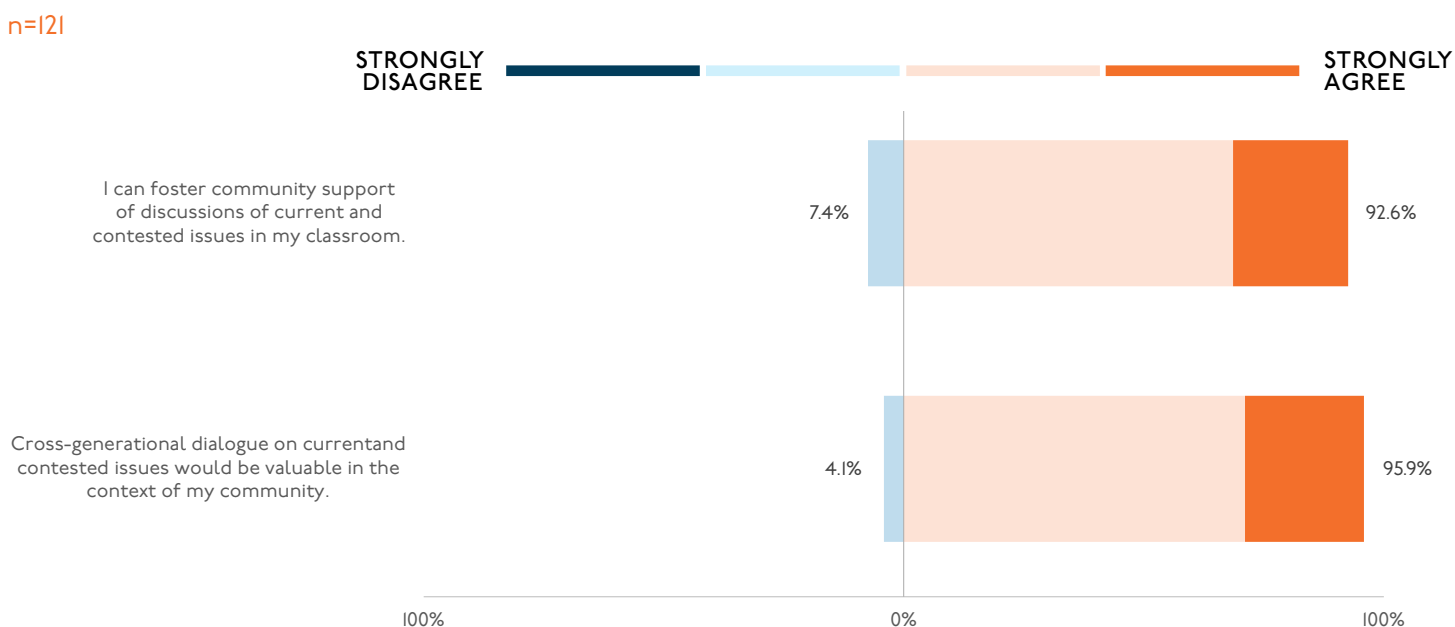
Encouragingly, participants indicated very high levels of agreement with both of these statements, as shown in Figure 40 (over 90 percent for the first statement and 95 percent for the second). About a quarter of respondents strongly agreed with each statement.

We also draw upon additional data from focus groups conducted in the 2022-23 school year, as reported in our Year 2 evaluation. Focus group participants discussed the extent to which professional development allowed them to teach social studies in a more culturally responsive or relevant way. Many responses were a variation of the theme that these lessons created a safe space for students to express themselves. Teachers also discussed how cultural

responsiveness could be brought into lessons: “It’s broad enough and it’s neutral enough that it’s going to allow the teacher to, if there’s culturally responsible teaching, that can be built into the lessons that you’re teaching, the topics you choose to discuss when you do Take a Stand or Tug of War.” Another similarly stated, “It’s easy enough to modify for your specific area, your specific group of students.”

Additionally, participants spoke about how students could bring their own background knowledge into the conversations: “With these activities, there’s more chances for them to use their own background, knowledge, their own personal history to inform how they want to interact with these lessons, how they contribute to their conversations or their group discussions...” One participant provided a set of suggestions for “bringing the gap” between students with different levels of background knowledge, recommending “...video options where people could watch instead of reading, or images, pictures, photographs, painting, art, things like that. A painting with a caption, that would be something to help give some historical context. Or watching a video to build some background knowledge. Give different modalities to how they access the information to be able to have a good conversation about it.”

Figure 40: Level of Agreement – Community Support and Dialogue, Post-Survey



Note: Percentages presented in this figure combine strongly disagree/disagree (on the left) and strongly agree/agree (on the right).

“One of the coolest things I saw all year was when we did the legislative hearing. I had a kid who hates coming to school, he’s just really not into it, and isn’t really checked into class. But in his group, he was the leader, and I definitely did not see that coming. He was the one keeping people on task and on topic. I don’t know if it was the topic of the hearing, but it was really neat to see that. He actually was very engaged. He just took total control of it.”

A related question was the extent to which all students were able to participate. We heard often that students who were quieter or less talkative appeared more engaged with Street Law strategies:

- “Another equity issue that came up for me is allowing space for students to, either because of their personality or their culture, don’t speak up a lot in class. International students are told, when you go to school you listen to the teacher and that’s it. That was one of the biggest challenges in terms of an equity lens – is everybody really getting a chance to voice themselves?”
- “I believe it stands the chance of bringing some students up that maybe are a little more hesitant or not comfortable expressing themselves, or have historically not participated in your class.”
- “Some students that were not normally engaged, this facilitated engagement. Which was cool. Especially Take a Stand.”
- “...I definitely had a lot of students who have rarely talked before. With the involvement that the Deliberation demands, it’s been, here you go, this is your opportunity to argue. I’ve heard a lot more from my quieter students.”
- “I believe I’ve seen instances where students have been in their shell, or had been in their shell early in the year, and they’ve come out of it a little bit, depending on the topic.”
- “One of the coolest things I saw all year was when we did the legislative hearing. I had a kid who hates coming to school, he’s just really not into it, and isn’t really checked into class. But in his group, he was the leader, and I definitely did not see that coming. He was the one keeping people on task and on topic. I don’t know if it was the topic of the hearing, but it was really neat to see that. He actually was very engaged. He just took total control of it.”

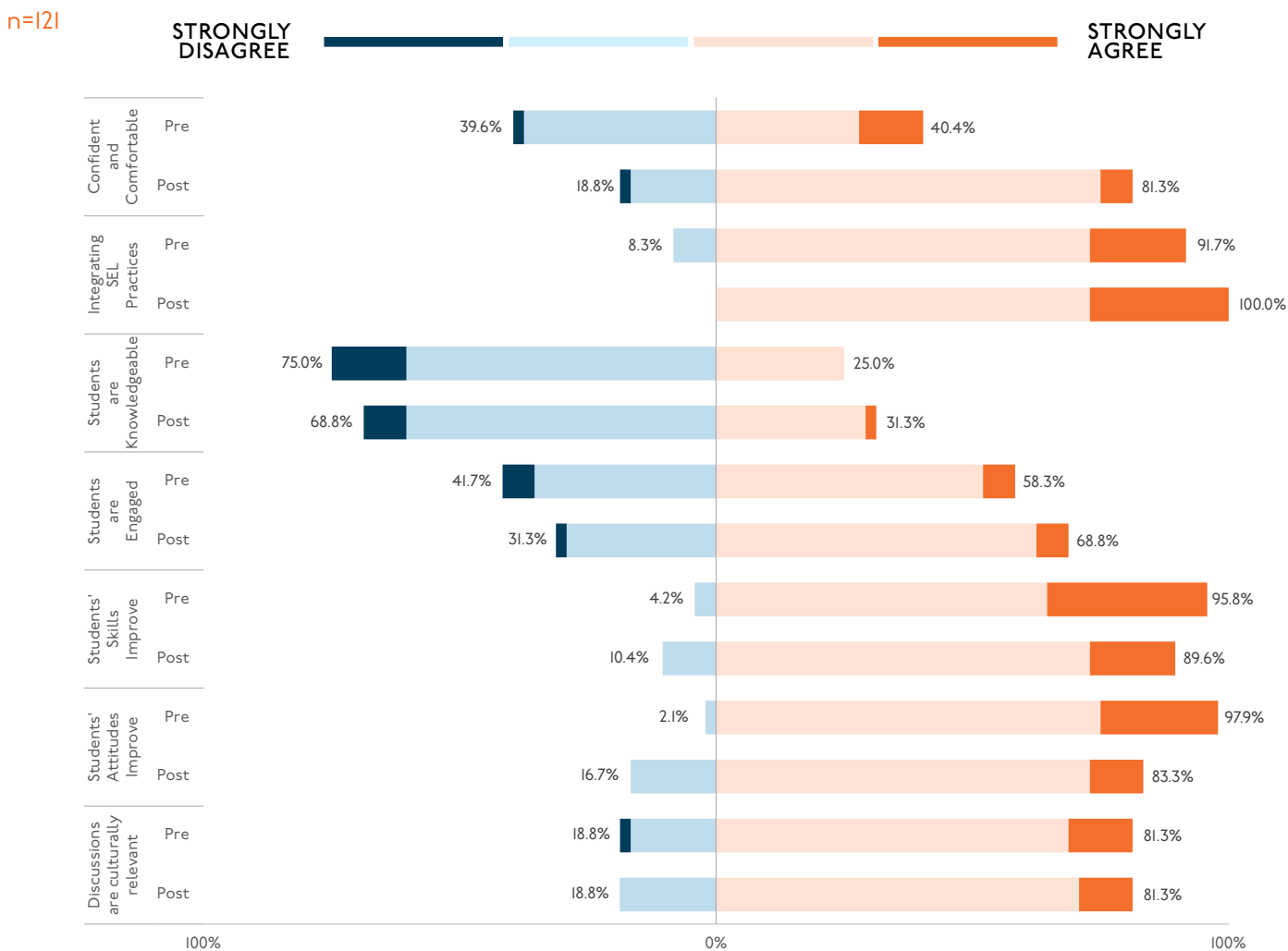
Elementary School Teachers

Street Law expressed interest in seeing pre/post survey data for elementary teachers specifically. The pre/post survey did not ask teachers for the grade level they taught, but we do know that all teachers in District 2 in 2023-24 were elementary teachers, 48 of whom responded to the survey. Figure 41 presents their responses. For the most part, these responses follow similar patterns to those of all teachers, with slightly lower agreement levels (see Figures 33-37 and 39). Except for the item on student knowledge, a substantial majority (over two-thirds) agreed or strongly agreed with each of these items by the time they took the post-survey.

Additionally, while the session evaluation data referenced under Evaluation Question 1 is limited by the small number of 4th and 5th grade responses, elementary teachers showed high ratings and levels of agreement with the items in those surveys, similar to those of high school teachers (as opposed to the somewhat lower ratings from middle school teachers).

Finally, District 2 teachers who responded to the item about student social studies proficiency (n=30) indicated in the pre-survey that about 38 percent of their students were proficient in social studies skills, which grew to about 57 percent in the post-survey. Compared to all teachers, the pre-survey percentage was slightly lower, but the 19-point growth was slightly larger (see Figure 38).

Figure 41: District 2 teachers' responses to select pre/post survey items



Note: Percentages presented in this figure combine strongly disagree/disagree (on the left) and strongly agree/agree (on the right).

Resources and Supports

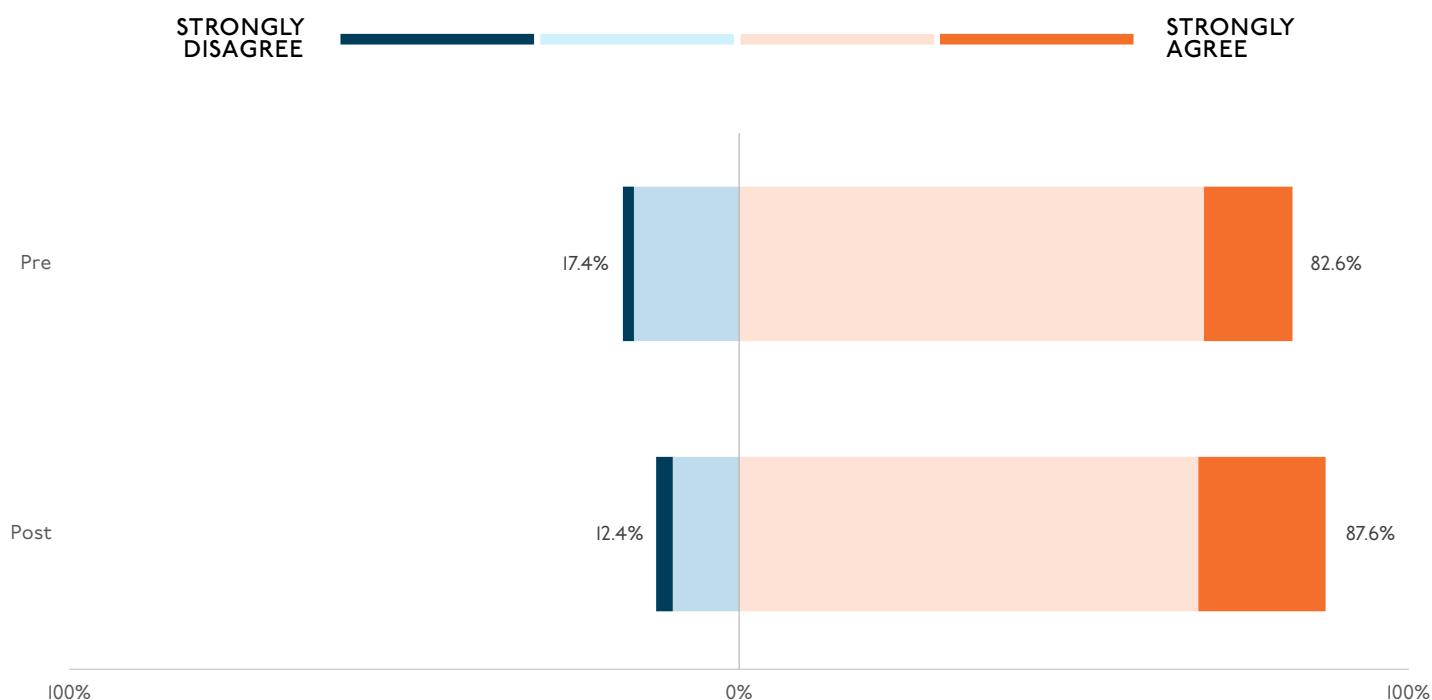
Participants were asked one closed-ended item regarding support:

- My administrator(s) support me in integrating current and contested issues into my instruction and classroom discussions.

As shown in Figure 42, teachers had high levels of agreement – over 82 percent agreed or strongly agreed in the pre-survey, and over 87 percent agreed or strongly agreed in the post-survey. Only about 12 percent decreased in their level of agreement from pre to post. Patterns among subgroups generally followed this same trend, though teachers with 2-5 years of teaching experience in social studies had relatively lower ratings in both surveys (around 78 percent) and did not display an increase in agreement from pre to post. It is possible that this reflects that teachers are given less support after their first year in the classroom, and that teachers who are more experienced may not feel like they need as much assistance from their administrators.

Figure 42: Level of Agreement – Administrator Support, Pre to Post

n=121



Note: Percentages presented in this figure combine strongly disagree/disagree (on the left) and strongly agree/agree (on the right).

Teachers were also asked an open-ended question about resources in their school or district for supporting instruction and discussions on current and contested issues. Themes included professional development (often including Street Law, especially in the post-survey); websites and online resources; curricula; district-provided resources; administrators, supervisors, and support staff; news sources; and books. Another common response was that participants did not know, were unsure, or received limited or minimal resources, though the frequency of this response decreased from pre to post. Table 16 presents the results of this analysis.

Table 16: Resources for Supporting Instruction and Discussion on Current and Contested Issues

Common Resources in Open-Ended Responses (n=116 in pre, n=115 in post)

RESOURCE	PRE N	POST N
Street Law	17	40
Website/online	24	35
Professional Development	29	24
Curriculum	19	17
Administrators, Supervisors, Support Staff	7	14
News Sources	8	13
Books	7	10
District support	12	9
Minimal/None/Unsure	22	13

Professional Development

Two sources inform our analysis of how participants received professional development. First, in the Year 3 survey, we asked participants about their expectations for the trainings. The most common theme was that teachers wanted more information on how to conduct discussions and conversations in their classrooms. Teachers were excited to learn about how to approach current and contested issues and sought useful information, strategies, and resources they could employ in their instruction. Some respondents wanted to know about incorporating the information in their grade or subject area, and others expressed concerns about discussing issues in the current political environment. Only six participants (not included in the table) indicated they had no expectations. Table 17 presents the common themes with representative quotes.

Table 17: Expectations for Professional Development, 2023-24 Pre-Survey

n=66

THEME	N	REPRESENTATIVE QUOTES
Discussions/conversations	19	"My expectation is that I will come away from this PL with usable strategies I can apply to discussions in my classroom."
Current and Contested Issues	12	"I am hoping to find ways to build constructive conversations about current events in my classroom"
Useful information	12	"My expectations is to leave this PD being able to feel confident in using learned strategies with my students and be able share those strategies with my colleagues."
Resources	11	"I expect to be given the tools and materials necessary to have meaningful conversations with my students..."
Excited	9	"I am excited to learn anything new that can be applied in my classroom."
Grade or subject-specific	7	"I am looking forward to this opportunity and learning how to implement this in the elementary level." "Specific examples of how this can work for middle school students appropriate for all learning levels."
Political concerns	6	"I want to get my students talking with each other again. Since Covid students have been struggling with that and also struggle with our culture of hyper-partisanship."

We can also review Year 2 focus group findings to assess participants' perceptions of professional learning. Participants had positive impressions of the ways they received professional development, as evidenced by the following representative quotes:

- “I...like the organization of how they have it set up – it’s very, very clear.”
- “It’s just enough time to process the strategy and develop a plan of implementing it into the classroom and then reflecting, which are three very big, important parts of doing this well.”
- “...plan future lessons while it’s still fresh in our minds. It’s not something that we just forget about later.”
- “I like doing it during the school year because I feel like I can immediately go back into my classroom and be like, oh, this will work for tomorrow. If I did it over the summer, I think it would be harder.”
- “I don’t feel like I’m wasting my time, like I’d be better off in the classroom with my kids right now. What I’m getting from this is benefiting my teaching practice. It’s worth taking the time.”

Teachers particularly appreciated the time to plan collaboratively; a handful of teachers also mentioned collaborative planning as a resource in the pre- and post-surveys, as well. Representative quotes from focus groups are as follows:

- “I have really appreciated getting to work with my colleagues on these things. The team planning is big for me.”
- “Listening to other teachers and how they adapted their different techniques for their classroom helped me adapt mine ... It’s very valuable when we meet and see strategies demonstrated.”
- “I...like how we have time to practice [strategies] amongst ourselves in small groups...”
- “This has been a great opportunity to collaborate with colleagues, both at our grade level and [who] teach what we do, and to hear about people who teach outside of our curriculum, get their perspective into this, and how they use it, and then the modeling of the strategies or practice with them at these meetings has been wonderful.”

Participants also praised the content of the trainings:

- "...when we had looked over the syllabus with our cohort, a lot of people were like, oh, we've done Socratic Seminars, what else are you really going to teach us? So we did a Socratic Seminar on Socratic Seminars. It was just good for us all to participate in one, even if you've been trained on one, or you've done them in your classroom. Participating in one as an adult is a learning experience."
- "Each PD has been focused on a singular strategy, which is really nice. It's not like getting everything all at one time. It's very focused. Today, we're going to talk about this one. So it really feels like it's given us time to really fully process in a way that we don't always have that luxury in a PD, where they're throwing a bunch of stuff at you. This feels very strategic that it's been a slow roll."
- "...here's a bunch of stuff you can do, do what will benefit your classroom, do what will benefit your kids. It's low pressure, and it gives you a menu of options to pull from. Even if you're not going to pull from this year or this unit, it's something you have in the future."

Across the board, focus group participants felt "very well-prepared" based on their training; as one teacher-facilitator said, "Looking at PD overall, I would give them an A+." Participants also had some suggestions for improvement. One participant addressed the progression of the training: "I would start with the simpler ones in the beginning. We did Take a Stand, and Tug of War would have been a good one in the beginning, too. Then I think we're more likely to try them in our classroom, get comfortable with the whole idea of discussing current and contested issues, and then build into those more complex ones."

"...don't underestimate your students! I was very impressed with how mine rose to the occasion when discussing serious topics."

Advice for Future Cohorts

The final question on the Year 3 post-survey asked respondents about advice they would give to future participants in Street Law programming. Several participants mentioned specific practices teachers should use to implement the material, including adapting or modifying it for their students. Another common theme was time – learning the Street Law strategies, getting students comfortable with the strategies, and being persistent in applying them all takes time. Teachers praised the Street Law training and the resources they had at their disposal. Additionally, respondents mentioned setting norms around respectful conversations and trusting students to handle the material. And many respondents urged future participants to be open-minded and not to be afraid to try the strategies. These themes, with representative quotes, are presented in Table 18.

Table 18: Advice for Future Cohorts, 2023-24 Post-Survey

n=80

THEME	N	REPRESENTATIVE QUOTES
Specific practices	13	“Start small, use activities like take a Stand or tug of war to get comfortable and work your way to deliberation or mock trials, and you will find students engagement increases and your mastery of the techniques will also improve.”
Time to prepare	12	“It is wonderful but you need to commit the time to do it justice.”
Resources	10	“Take advantage of these resources! These are so helpful in facilitating difficult, but important conversations surrounding contested and controversial issues.”
Persistence	9	“Try, try again. You will make mistakes, but you will get better. It's so worth it.”
Don't be afraid to try	9	“Don't be afraid to try these resources out. Students may engage in a different way than you have seen them do before.”
Open-minded	9	“My best advice is to be open. Often times teachers feel as though they do not have the ability to allow students to engage and express themselves on controversial topics because they do not know where it may go but many students want that type of engagement and as long as you follow a criteria and guidelines and structure. It could be one of the most engaging activities for students.”
Political concerns	6	“I want to get my students talking with each other again. Since Covid students have been struggling with that and also struggle with our culture of hyper-partisanship.”
Adapt/modify	7	“Don't be afraid to adapt to make it work in your classroom- students gain valuable experience and knowledge”
Norms/respect	6	“Be careful to set expectations so that all opinions are respected and encourage students to listen and learn from each other.”
Street Law	6	“Do it! Street Law does an excellent job.”
Trust students	5	“...don't underestimate your students! I was very impressed with how mine rose to the occasion when discussing serious topics.”

Evaluation Question 3: To inform both this project and future projects, to what extent are project outcomes being attained in school districts from this Mid-Atlantic state, and to what extent are these patterns a result of TALCCS?

As described above, we have not yet received the standardized test data from the original four participating districts that would be required to answer this question. Outcomes data will be addressed in a future report addendum.

Section 5

Conclusion

Conclusion

Teachers who participated in TALCCS were overwhelmingly positive about the professional development they received from Street Law. Participants overall and across districts, grade levels, and experience and race/ethnicity subgroups found the strategies applicable to their classrooms, gained confidence as they learned about the strategies, praised the trainings, and felt their work was culturally responsive. While a few teachers expressed concerns about the relevance of the material to certain subjects or grades, the vast majority were effusive in their appreciation of the program and the resources it provided. It is our hope that the findings in this report are useful to Street Law as it plans future iterations of TALCCS or similar projects.

Section 6

Appendices

Appendix A: 2023-24 Post- Survey

Thank you for being a part of Street Law's professional development programming! The Wisconsin Evaluation Collaborative (WEC) at the University of Wisconsin-Madison has partnered with Street Law to conduct an evaluation of this program. In part, the evaluation will capture your perceptions of the programming and its use in your classroom, as well as inform future professional learning sessions. This survey is optional, but only should take about 10-15 minutes to complete. **Although we may use the results of this survey in reporting, your responses will never be connected to you.**

Please enter the **first letter of your first name, first letter of your last name, your two-digit birth month, and your two-digit birth date**, with no spaces. This will create an identifier that we can use to link your responses over time. Example - Jane Doe, born July 4: **JD0704**

Please select your school district.

In which academic year(s) have you participated in this program? Select all that apply.

- 2021-22
- 2022-23
- 2023-24

Please select your role.

- Teacher
- Teacher-Facilitator
- School Administrator
- District Administrator
- Other (please describe)

For how many years have you taught Social Studies?

- This is my first year
- 2-5 years
- 6-9 years
- 10 years or more

How would you describe your race/ethnicity? Select all that apply.

- American Indian/Alaska Native
- Asian
- Black/African American
- Hispanic
- Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander
- Two or More Races
- White
- Not listed above
- Prefer not to respond

How would you describe your gender?

- Female
- Male
- Non-binary
- Not listed above
- Prefer not to respond

The first set of questions will ask you about instruction on current and contested issues in your classroom or school. How do you approach instruction and discussions on current and contested issues in your classroom? (Teachers and Teacher-Facilitators)

The first set of questions will ask you about instruction on current and contested issues in your school or district.

How does your school or district approach instruction and discussions on current and contested issues? (School and District Administrators or Other)

Please respond to the following question.

How frequently do you instruct and facilitate discussions on current and contested issues in your classroom? (Teachers and Teacher-Facilitators)

- Never
- A few times in a year
- At least once a month
- Multiple times per month but not weekly
- At least once a week

How frequently do teachers in your school instruct and facilitate discussions on current and contested issues? (School Administrators)

- Never
- A few times in a year
- At least once a month
- Multiple times per month but not weekly
- At least once a week

Teachers

Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements.

- Strongly Disagree**
- Disagree**
- Agree**
- Strongly Agree**

I am confident and comfortable integrating current and contested issues into my instruction and classroom discussions.

My administrator(s) support me in integrating current and contested issues into my instruction and classroom discussions.

Students in my classroom are knowledgeable about current and contested issues.

Students in my classroom are engaged by discussions of current and contested issues.

Students' speaking and listening skills improve as a result of participating in discussions of current and contested issues.

Students' civic attitudes (such as believing their voices and opinions matter, interest in current events and following the news, intending to vote) improve as a result of participating in discussions of current and contested issues.

In my classroom, discussions of current and contested issues are relevant to students' cultural beliefs, practices, and experiences.

In my classroom, I integrate best practices in social-emotional learning in discussions of current and contested issues.

I can foster community support of discussions of current and contested issues in my classroom.

Cross-generational dialogue on current and contested issues would be valuable in the context of my community.

Teacher-Facilitators

Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements.

- Strongly Disagree**
- Disagree**
- Agree**
- Strongly Agree**

I am confident and comfortable integrating current and contested issues into my instruction and classroom discussions.

My administrator(s) support the teachers in my school in integrating current and contested issues into instruction and classroom discussions.

Students in my classroom are knowledgeable about current and contested issues.

Students in my classroom are engaged by discussions of current and contested issues.

Students' speaking and listening skills improve as a result of participating in discussions of current and contested issues.

Students' civic attitudes (such as believing their voices and opinions matter, interest in current events and following the news, intending to vote) improve as a result of participating in discussions of current and contested issues.

In my classroom, discussions of current and contested issues are relevant to students' cultural beliefs, practices, and experiences.

In my classroom, I integrate best practices in social-emotional learning in discussions of current and contested issues.

I can foster community support of discussions of current and contested issues in my classroom.

Cross-generational dialogue on current and contested issues would be valuable in the context of my community.

School Administrators

Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements.

- Strongly Disagree**
- Disagree**
- Agree**
- Strongly Agree**

Teachers in my school are confident and comfortable integrating current and contested issues into their instruction and classroom discussions.

District-level administrators and staff support my school's efforts to integrate current and contested issues into instruction and classroom discussions.

Students in my school are knowledgeable about current and contested issues.

Students in my school are engaged by discussions of current and contested issues.

Students' speaking and listening skills improve as a result of participating in discussions of current and contested issues.

Students' civic attitudes (such as believing their voices and opinions matter, interest in current events and following the news, intending to vote) improve as a result of participating in discussions of current and contested issues.

In my school, discussions of current and contested issues are relevant to students' cultural beliefs, practices, and experiences.

In my school, teachers integrate best practices in social-emotional learning in discussions of current and contested issues.

Cross-generational dialogue on current and contested issues would be valuable in the context of my community.

District Administrators or Other

Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements.

- Strongly Disagree**
- Disagree**
- Agree**
- Strongly Agree**

Teachers in my district are confident and comfortable integrating current and contested issues into their instruction and classroom discussions.

I support school administrators in their work with teachers to integrate current and contested issues into instruction and classroom discussions.

Students in my district are knowledgeable about current and contested issues.

Students in my district are engaged by discussions of current and contested issues.

Students' speaking and listening skills improve as a result of participating in discussions of current and contested issues.

Students' civic attitudes (such as believing their voices and opinions matter, interest in current events and following the news, intending to vote) improve as a result of participating in discussions of current and contested issues.

In my district, discussions of current and contested issues are relevant to students' cultural beliefs, practices, and experiences.

In my district, teachers integrate best practices in social-emotional learning in discussions of current and contested issues.

Cross-generational dialogue on current and contested issues would be valuable in the context of my community.

Please estimate the percentage of students in your classroom(s) who are proficient in social studies skills, such as understanding multiple perspectives, developing claims using text-based evidence, and analyzing sources for bias. (Teachers and Teacher-Facilitators)

0-100 or I do not know

Please estimate the percentage of students in your school who are proficient in social studies skills, such as understanding multiple perspectives, developing claims using text-based evidence, and analyzing sources for bias. (School Administrators)

0-100 or I do not know

Please estimate the percentage of students in your district who are proficient in social studies skills, such as understanding multiple perspectives, developing claims using text-based evidence, and analyzing sources for bias. (District Administrators)

0-100 or I do not know

The next part of the survey includes 10 multiple choice questions on your content knowledge.

1. Which country has compulsory voting?

- a. Cuba
- b. Ghana
- c. Australia
- d. Germany
- e. I do not know

2. What has the Supreme Court said about school dress codes?

- a. Schools can create dress codes as long as they do not violate students' First Amendment rights.
- b. The Court has never directly addressed school dress codes.
- c. Students cannot wear clothes that disrupt the learning environment.
- d. Schools can prohibit students from wearing clothes that are symbolic of other things.
- e. I do not know.

3. What type of speech is viewed by the Supreme Court as more important than other types of speech?

- a. Speech that expresses political views
- b. Obscene speech
- c. Non-verbal speech, like what people wear
- d. Speech that takes place online
- e. I do not know

4. Which of the following is an example of a democratic process that happens at the local level?

- a. Supreme Court hearings
- b. School board hearings
- c. Congressional Oversight committee hearings
- d. Presidential elections
- e. I do not know

5. The Code of Hammurabi is an ancient artifact. It is originally from _____ and a piece of it is now on display in _____.

- a. Ancient Mesopotamia; Paris, France
- b. Ancient Rome; London, England
- c. Ancient Egypt; Cape Town, South Africa
- d. Ancient China; New York, New York
- e. I do not know

6. The First Amendment's free speech clause protects which one of these things:

- a. Speech that promotes imminent lawless action
- b. True threats of violence
- c. All student speech
- d. Burning the U.S. flag
- e. I do not know

7. What statement is in the opinion of the Tinker v. Des Moines case?

- a. "It can hardly be argued that either students or teachers shed their constitutional rights to freedom of speech or expression at the schoolhouse gate."
- b. "the government may not prohibit the expression of an idea because society finds the idea itself offensive or disagreeable"
- c. "The warrant requirement, in particular, is unsuited to the school environment"
- d. "It is emphatically the province and duty of the judicial department to say what the law is."
- e. I do not know.

8. Democracy is a form of government in which:

- a. people are not allowed to question their government.
- b. the people elect representatives to serve their interests.
- c. there are three branches of government: an executive branch, a legislative branch, and a judicial branch.
- d. the power is with the people.
- e. I do not know.

9. All the following are methods of flag desecration EXCEPT:

- a. Intentionally tearing
- b. Hanging upside down
- c. Dragging the flag on the ground
- d. Burning when it is no longer in good condition
- e. I do not know.

10. What is the best definition of the term “free and fair election”?

- o a. “Free” means that anyone who is a citizen can vote in the election. “Fair” means that voters must follow a set of rules when they vote, such as not taking pictures of their ballot.
- o b. “Free” means that people do not need to pay any money or pass any tests in order to vote. “Fair” means that voters all must cast their ballots under the same conditions. For example, all voters must vote on the same day.
- o c. “Free” means everyone who is allowed to vote has the right to register to vote. “Fair” means that all candidates can work for voter support and that people can question the fairness of the election. It also means that the government will have an official process to determine the fairness of an election.
- o d. “Free” means that the government cannot prohibit anyone from voting. “Fair” means that the government must follow a set of rules when conducting elections.
- o e. I do not know.

Please rate your level of agreement with the following statement. (District Administrators)

My district has the resources to support ongoing implementation of professional development and curricular resource design beyond the life of this project.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

You may elaborate on your response here.

The first question in this final block is required; the second is optional but encouraged.

Please describe the resources your school or district has to support instruction and discussions on current and contested issues. (Teachers, Teacher-Facilitators, School Administrators)

As a result of your experience with Street Law’s professional development, what advice would you give to others implementing this work?

Appendix B: Teacher and Teacher-Leader Focus Group Protocols

Introductions and thank you

1. Introduce yourself as working with WCER/WEC on the Street Law evaluation. The evaluation is a partnership between Street Law and WEC to take a close look at the implementation, successes, and challenges of Street Law's professional development programming.
2. Any questions or concerns about the evaluation can be directed to the project director, Daniel Marlin, daniel.marlin@wisc.edu, (608) 262-7283.
3. Thank you for taking part in this focus group. It is a very important way for us to get a full picture of Street Law's professional development programming!
4. A summary of this evaluation will be available at the conclusion of the project.

Format of focus group

- Your participation is totally voluntary. Nothing you say will be connected to your name or any identifiable information in evaluation reports. You may leave at any time.
- This focus group is a structured but informal conversation about your experiences with Street Law's professional development programming.
- We have a list of guiding questions or topics, but there may be other, related topics that come up.
- We would like to audio record the focus group to help us accurately collect what you say. The recording will be destroyed after we write up the summary report. Do we have your consent to record?
- We expect this focus group to last approximately 30-45 minutes. Are there any questions?

Note: questions for teacher-leaders only are in orange.

FOCUS GROUP QUESTION

RELATED EVALUATION QUESTION

<p>1. First, we want to start with your overall impressions of Street Law’s professional development programming.</p> <p>a. To what extent has the professional development provided you and participating teachers with understanding and mastery of how to conduct high-quality, research-based discussions of current and contested issues?</p> <p>b. Every district has different methods of delivering the professional development. Did you and your teachers find your district’s method to be effective? Why or why not? What would you change?</p>	<p>1. To what extent does TALCCS implement the proposed activities as intended?</p> <p>2. How do key stakeholders perceive the successes and challenges of TALCCS with respect to project implementation, outcomes, and sustainability?</p>
<p>2. To what extent have you and other participants been engaged by the professional development?</p> <p>a. How do you know whether the trainings have been effective?</p> <p>b. What suggestions might you have for overall improvement to the professional development?</p>	<p>2. How do key stakeholders perceive the successes and challenges of TALCCS with respect to project implementation, outcomes, and sustainability?</p>
<p>3. Think about how your students have reacted when you have used strategies you’ve learned through this professional development (discussing current and contested issues, deliberations, and simulations).</p> <p>a. To what extent are students engaged by these strategies?</p> <p>b. To what extent have you seen growth in your students as a result of using these strategies in your classroom?</p>	<p>3. To inform both this project and future projects, to what extent are project outcomes being attained in these school districts and to what extent are these patterns a result of TALCCS?</p>
<p>4. How are these strategies, and Street Law’s training on these strategies, responsive to students’ cultural beliefs, practices, and experiences?</p> <p>a. Has the professional development allowed you and the teachers you work with to teach social studies in a more culturally responsive or relevant way? If not, what suggestions might you have that could make it more relevant to students?</p> <p>b. To what extent are all students able to participate?</p> <p>b. To what extent did the Street Law’s professional development help you to include all students?</p>	<p>1. To what extent does TALCCS implement the proposed activities as intended?</p>
<p>5a. What challenges have you experienced in incorporating these strategies into your classrooms?</p> <p>5b. What challenges have you experienced in working with other teachers on these strategies?</p> <p>5c. What challenges might teachers have with using the strategies they have learned?</p>	<p>2. How do key stakeholders perceive the successes and challenges of TALCCs with respect to project implementation, outcomes, and sustainability?</p>
<p>6. Do you feel supported by your school and/or district in this work? Why or why not?</p> <p>a. To what extent has Street Law’s preparation and support allowed you to facilitate the professional development with your colleagues?</p> <p>b. What supports would you need to improve your support of teachers?</p> <p>c. What supports would you need to improve your teaching of these strategies in the classroom, both now and in the future, using what you have learned from Street Law’s professional development?</p>	<p>2. How do key stakeholders perceive the successes and challenges of TALCCs with respect to project implementation, outcomes, and sustainability?</p>
<p>7. Do you have anything else to add?</p>	<p>All</p>

