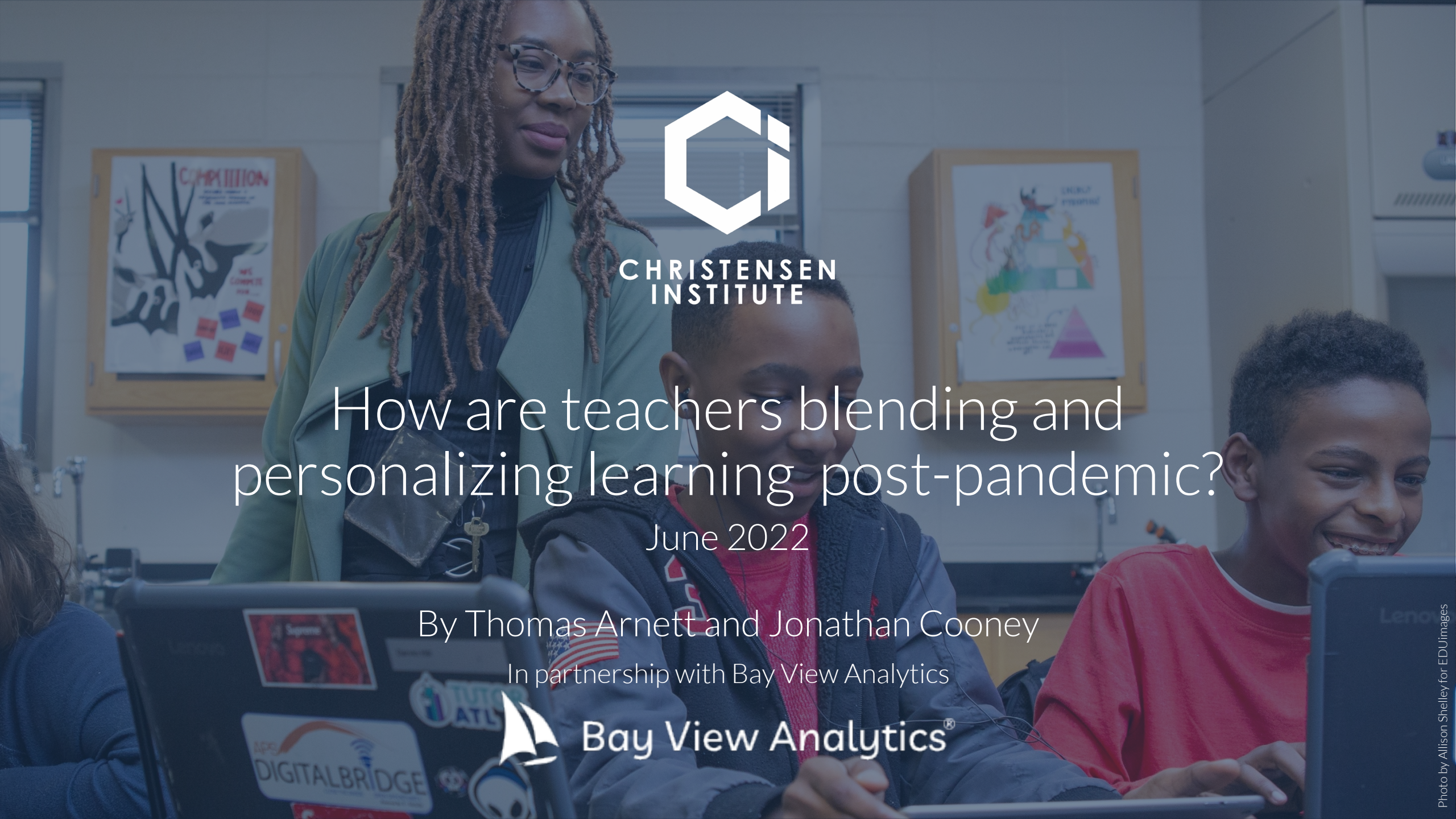


CHRISTENSEN INSTITUTE

How are teachers blending and personalizing learning post-pandemic?

June 2022

By Thomas Arnett and Jonathan Cooney

In partnership with Bay View Analytics

Bay View Analytics®

Photo by Allison Shelley for EDUimages

Study details

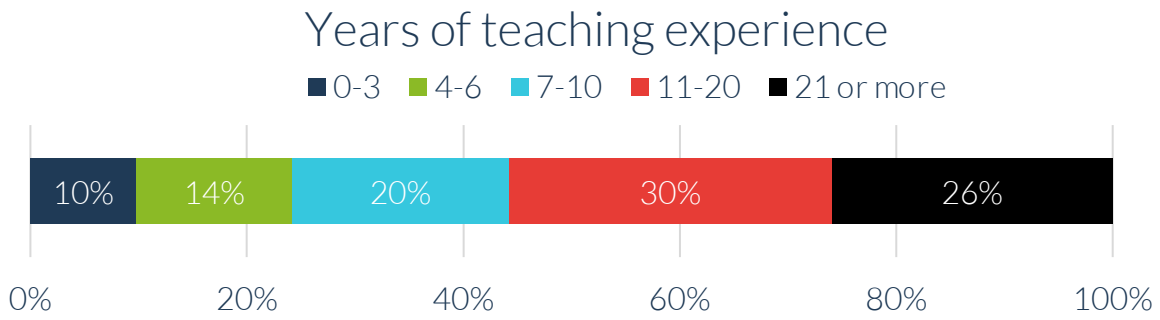
Since its founding in 2008, the Clayton Christensen Institute has studied the varied uses of online learning within K–12 education. Beginning in the fall of 2020, the Institute undertook a two-year series of nationally-representative surveys to track the adoption of online learning in the wake of the COVID-19 global pandemic to better understand its various uses and associated instructional practices. These factsheets share insights from the most recent round of surveys, which collected responses in April of 2022.

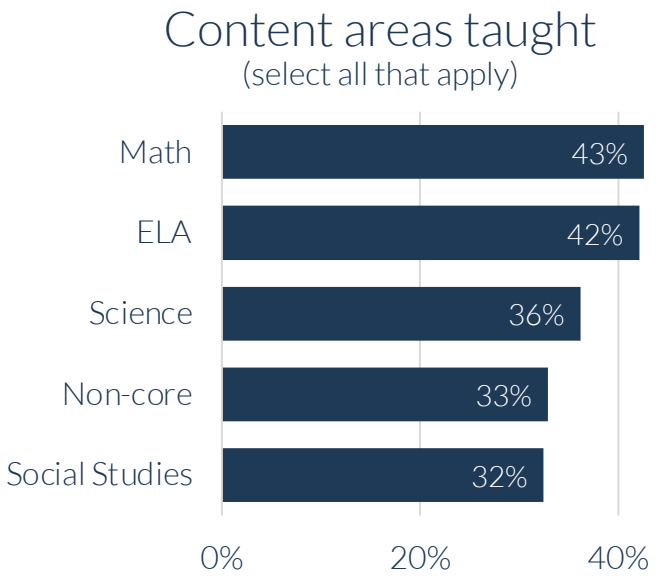
The Sample

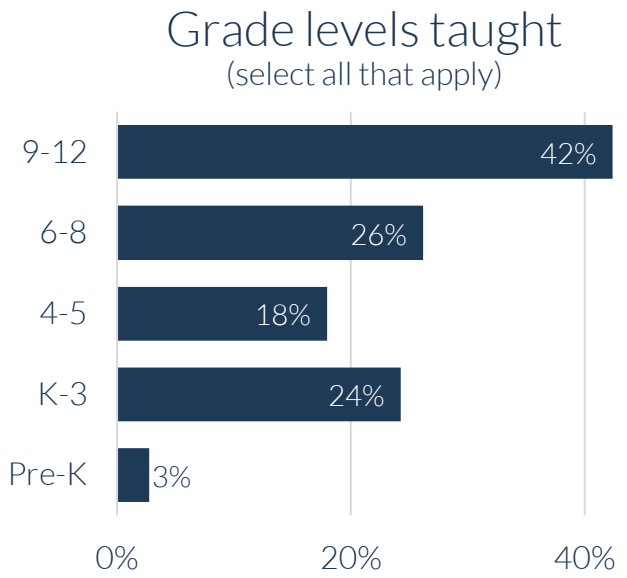
Surveys were sent to nationally-representative lists of teachers and administrators leased from MDR.

Responses were collected from 1,097 teachers representing:

- 1,042 schools
- 639 school systems
- 46 states & D.C.







What is blended learning?

A formal education program in which a student learns at least in part through online learning, with some element of student control over time, place, path and/or pace, and at least in part in a supervised brick-and-mortar location away from home (such as school). The modalities along each student's learning path within a course or subject are connected to provide an integrated learning experience.

See Clayton Christensen, Heather Staker and Michael B. Horn, "Is K–12 blended learning disruptive? An introduction to the theory of hybrids," Clayton Christensen Institute, May 22, 2013, https://www.christenseninstitute.org/publications/hybrids/.

Blended learning includes various classroom models.

Station rotation — Students rotate through stations on a fixed schedule, where at least one of the stations is an online learning station.

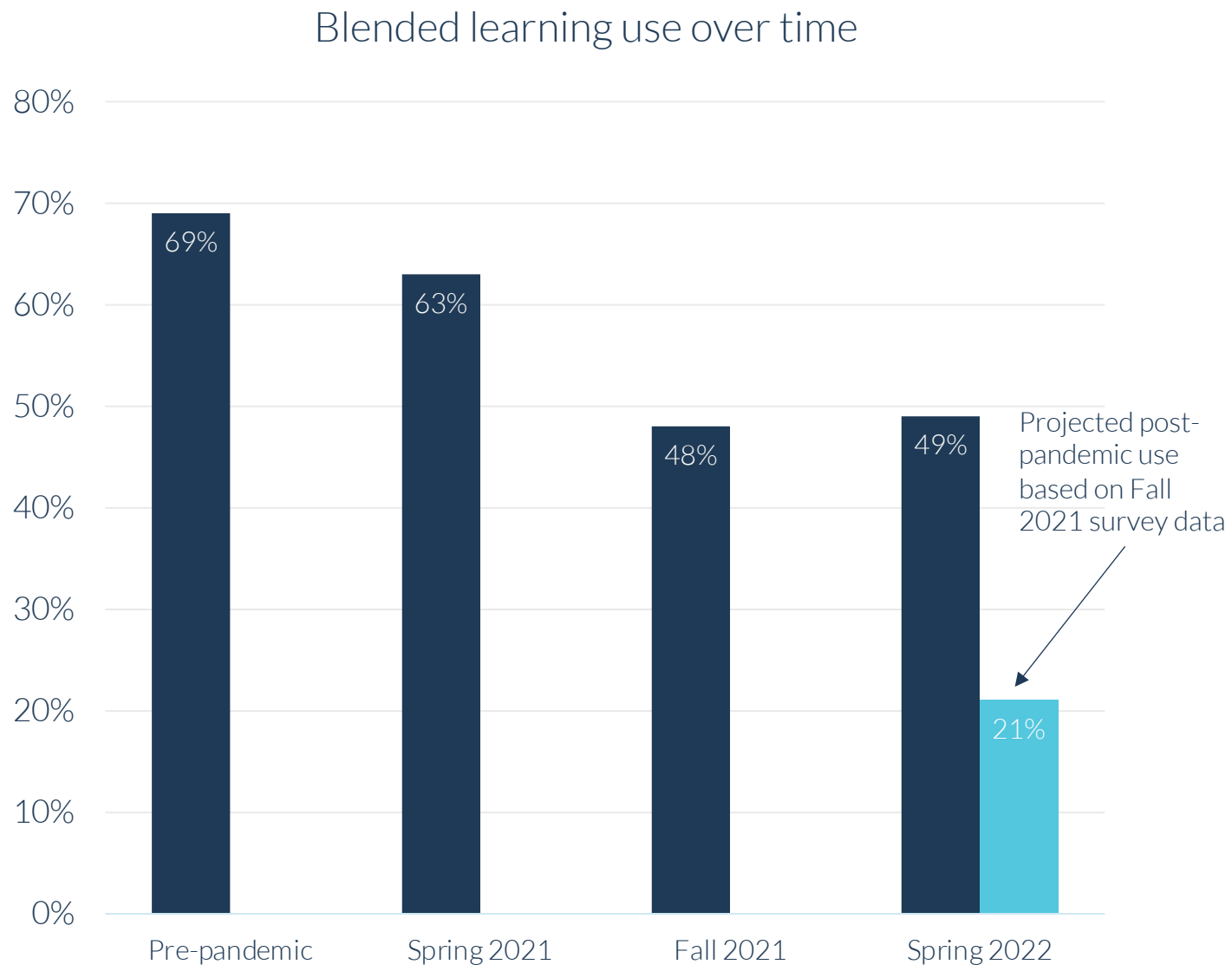
Lab rotation — Students rotate on a fixed schedule between teacher-led instruction in class and online learning in a separate room designated for computer-based learning.

Flipped classroom — Students receive online learning assignments that cover class content for homework, and in-person instruction focuses on discussions, projects, practice problems, etc.

Individual rotation — Students rotate on an individually customized schedule among online and offline learning activities.

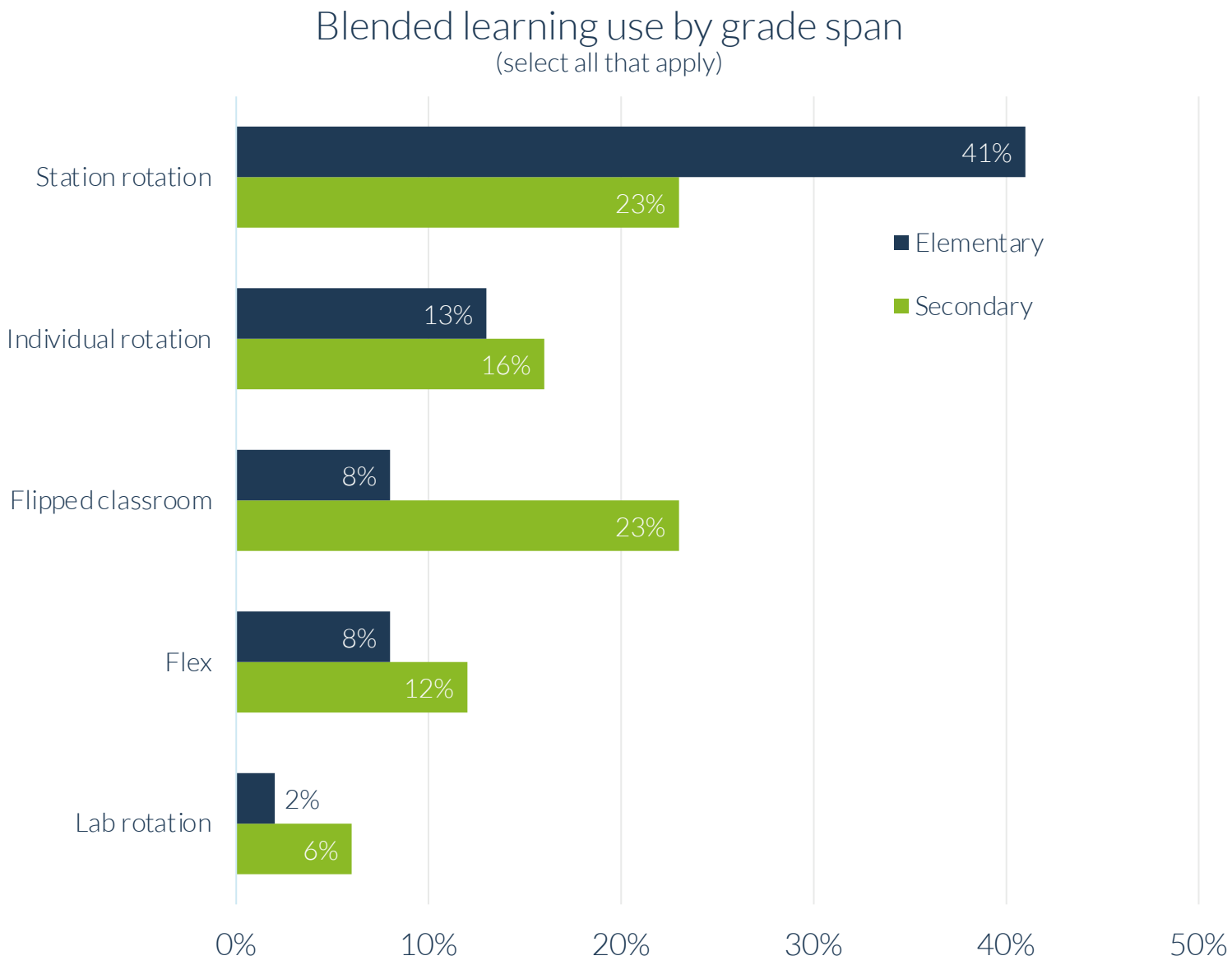
Flex — Online learning is the backbone of instruction. Students move on a flexible, fluid schedule through their learning activities according to their needs and preferences.

Roughly half of all teachers used some form of blended learning in the 2021-22 school year. Blended learning use has declined from levels reported before and during school closures but has not declined as much as projected by our Fall 2021 survey responses.

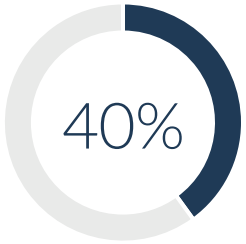


Station rotation was by far the most popular model among elementary teachers.

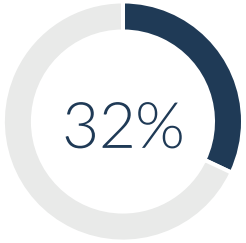
Secondary teachers used a variety of models.



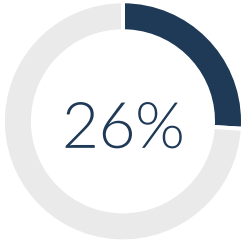
Some teachers' practices were inconsistent with the blended learning models they reported, suggesting that blended learning models are not widely understood.



Teachers who reported using a "flipped" model and also indicated that they "do not typically assign video/online instruction for outside of school completion."



Teachers who reported using a "flex" model and also indicated that "all students move through lessons and assignments at the same pace."



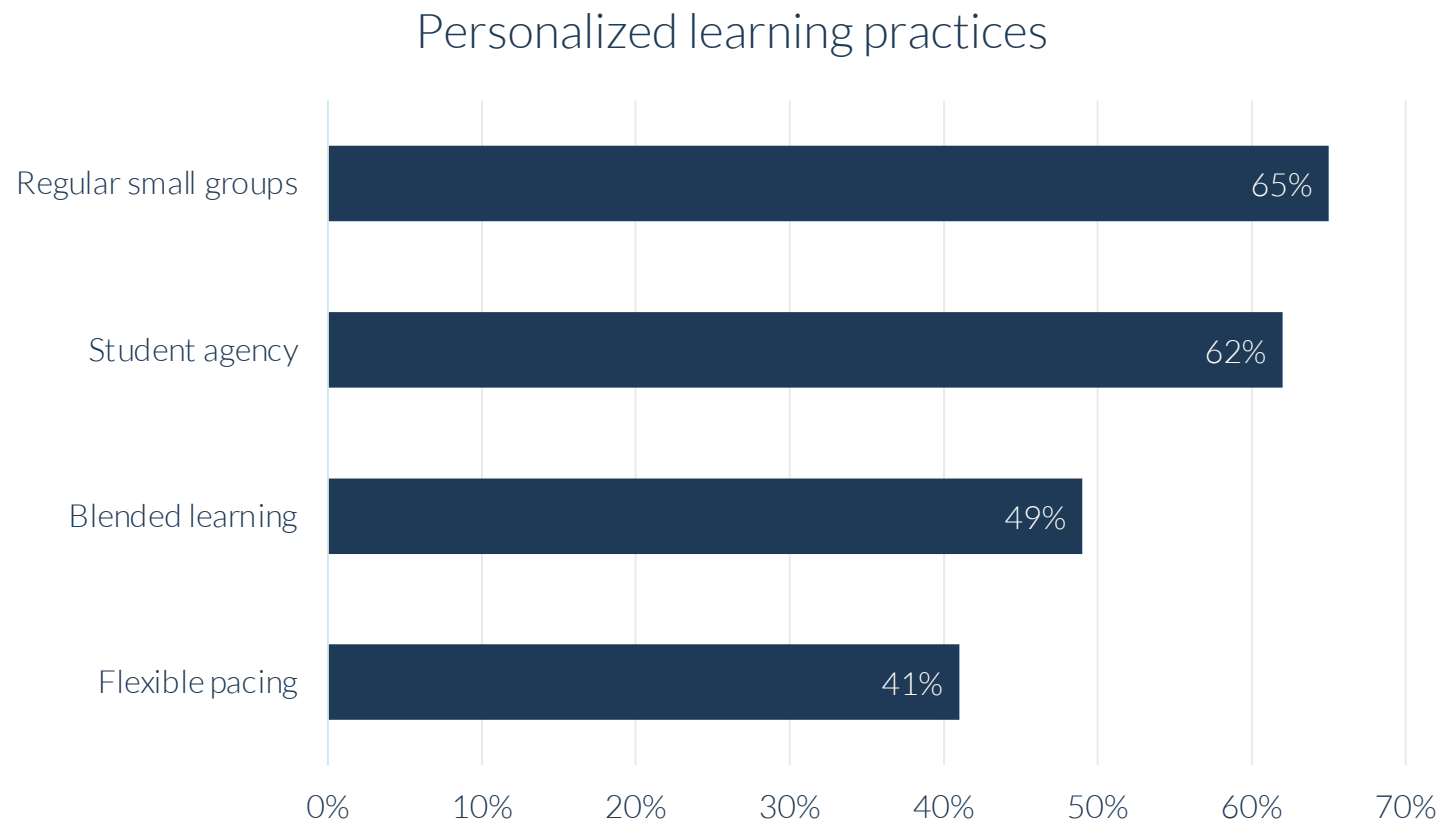
Teachers who reported using an "individual rotation" model and also indicated that students are typically "assigned the same work as one another."

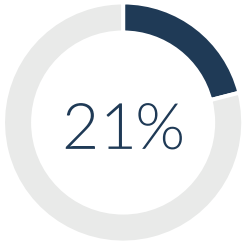
What is personalized learning?

Personalized learning is a pedagogical philosophy, tending to refer to a host of efforts and modalities (blended learning is one such modality) that tailor learning and development to the individual student, based on beliefs about what outcomes educators want students to reach and how to best help them get there.

See Julia Freeland Fisher, "Defining personalized learning and blended learning: Is there a difference?" Clayton Christensen Institute, January 15, 2019, https://www.christenseninstitute.org/blog/defining-personalized-learning-and-blended-learning-is-there-a-difference/.

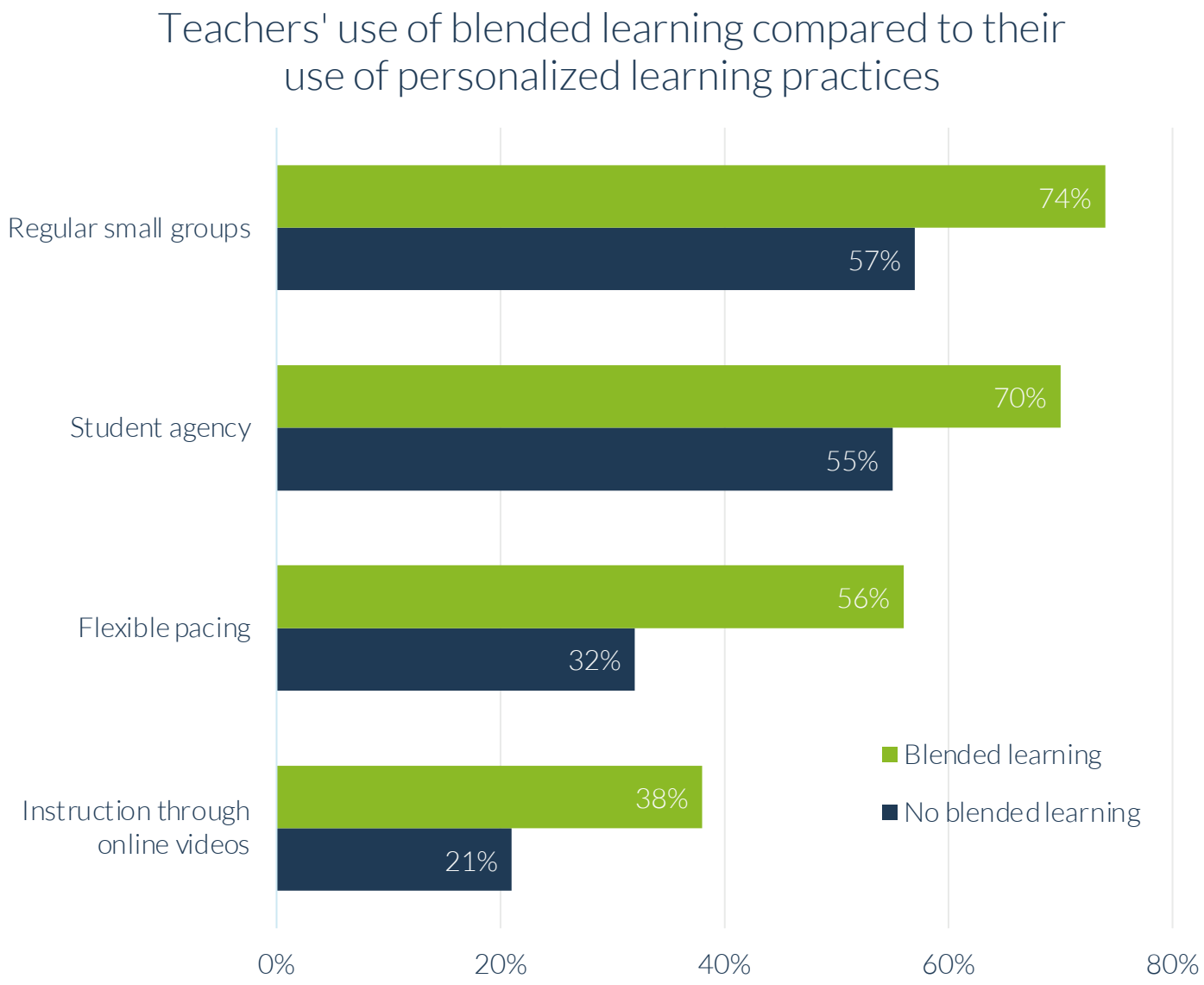
Personalized learning practices varied in their adoption. Only 21% of teachers reported using all the personalized practices mentioned in the survey.



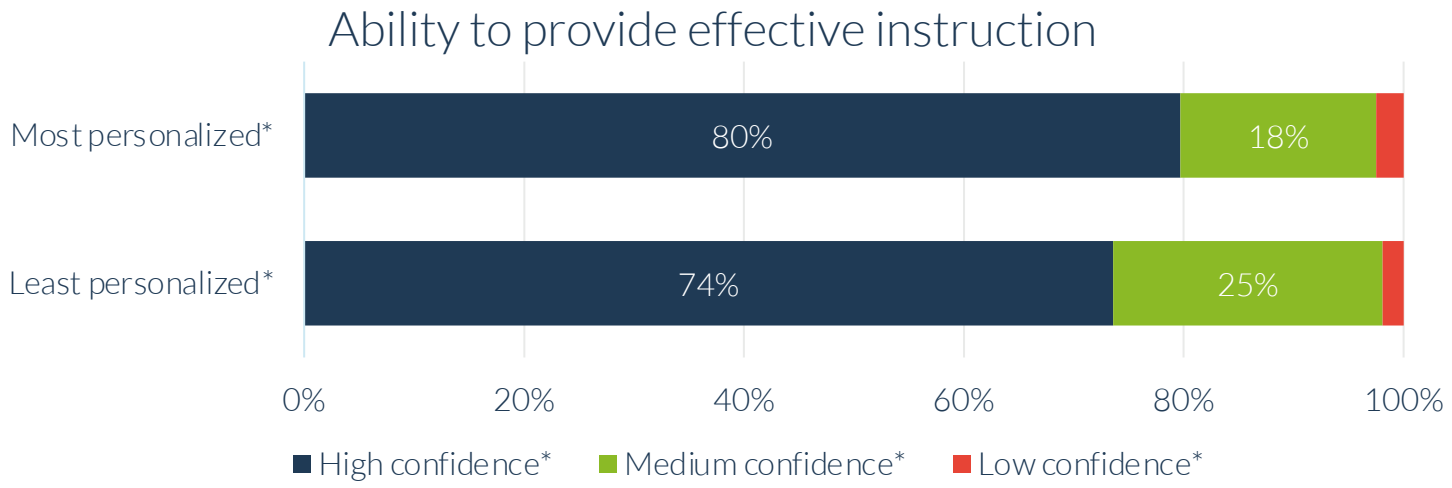


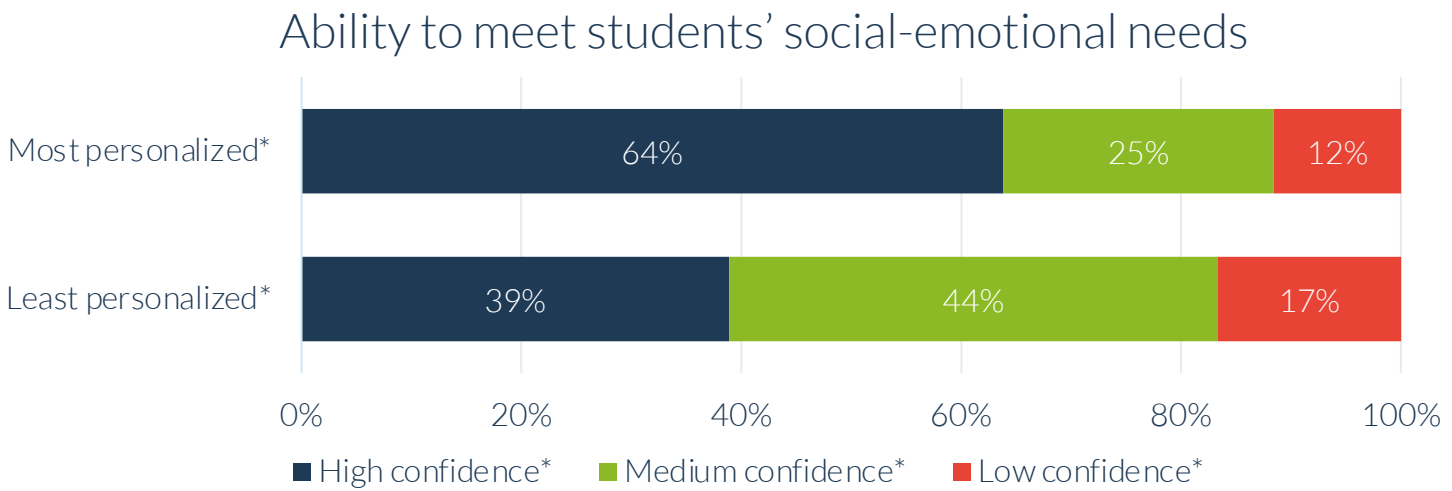
Teachers who use all four of the above practices

Teachers who used blended learning were much more likely to use personalized learning practices than teachers who did not use blended learning.

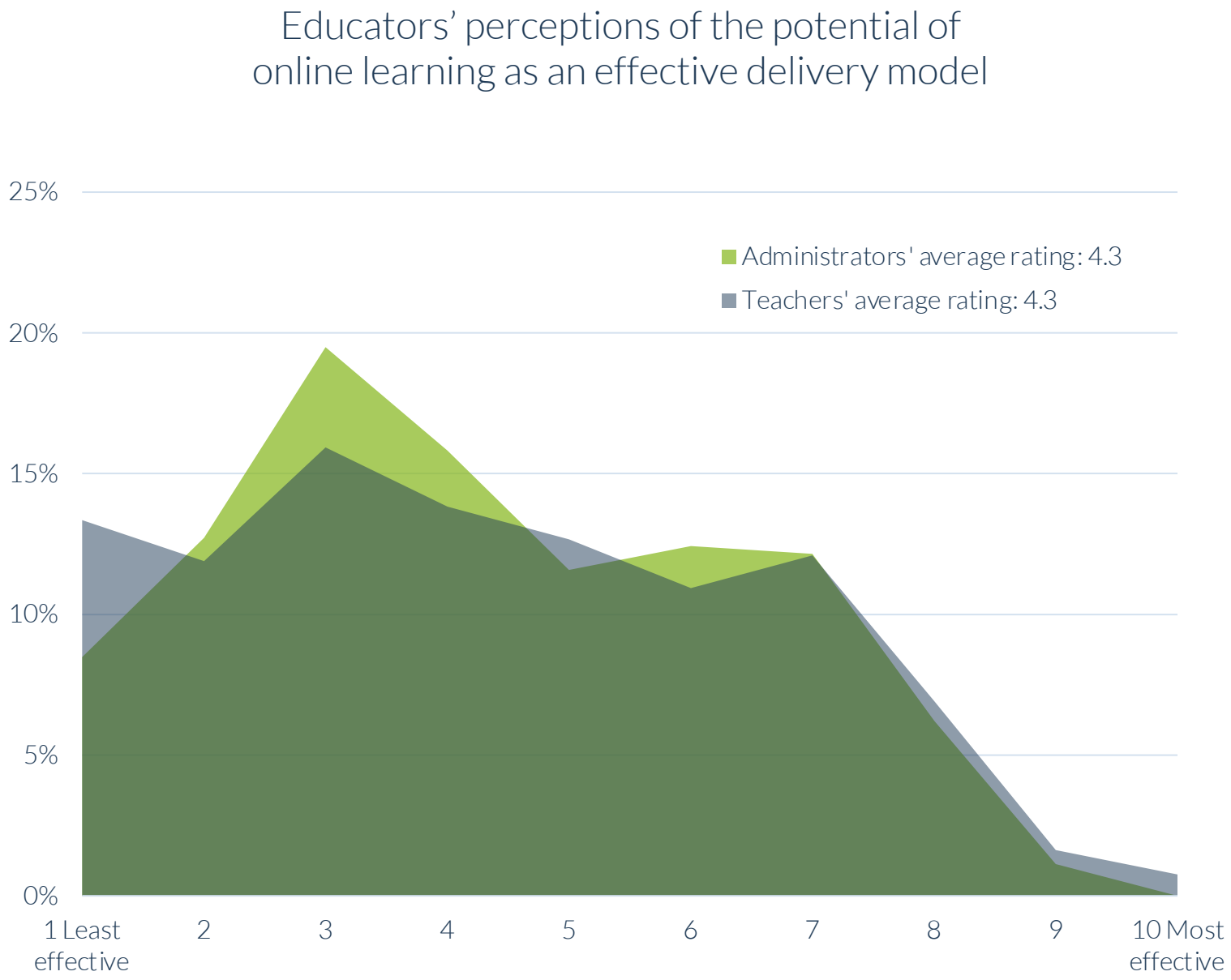


Teachers who used all the personalized practices mentioned in the survey were more likely to feel confident in providing effective instruction and far more confident in meeting students' social-emotional needs.





In general, neither teachers nor administrators regarded online learning as a highly effective mode of instruction.



Teachers shared how they used online learning to enable personalized instruction and student agency.

"I teach my grammar curriculum as a flipped classroom. I have videos that I made during remote learning, and they have been extremely helpful in giving kids instruction during small group time. My teammate and I also love using PearDeck as a way to give assessments and self-directed lessons." — *Elementary Teacher*

"Using more online tools that allow students to practice skills on their own and I get to focus on helping individual students that need it--rather than giving whole-class instruction when 85-90% of students can complete the material without me reading it to them." — *High School Teacher*

"I have been including voice and choice into my assignments, such as the use of menu boards and choice of what to read and what to respond to. I plan to move more into self-directed learning." — *Middle School ELA Teacher*

"Using learning platform Seesaw to provide individualized lessons with Loom imbedded videos. I am working on providing different leveled reading opportunities for my students with F&P phonics lessons as well." — *Elementary Teacher*

*Notes

1. For items that categorized respondents as “low confidence,” “medium confidence,” and “high confidence,” respondents indicated their confidence on a scale from 0-100. The “low confidence” category represents responses that fell within the lowest tertile (0-33). The “medium confidence” category represents responses that fell within the middle tertile (34-66). The “high confidence” category represents responses that fell within the highest tertile (67-100).
2. Respondents categorized as “least personalized” were those who indicated no use of small group instruction, no flexible pacing, no student agency in completing assignments, and no use of blended models. Respondents categorized as “most personalized” were those who indicated regular small group instruction, some flexibility in pacing, some student agency on assignments, and use of at least one blended model.

Acknowledgments

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Photographs included in this report come from Allison Shelley for EDUimages.

About

The Clayton Christensen Institute is a nonprofit, nonpartisan think tank dedicated to improving the world through Disruptive Innovation. Founded on the theories of late Harvard professor Clayton M. Christensen, the Institute offers a unique framework for understanding many of society's most pressing problems. Its mission is ambitious but clear: work to shape and elevate the conversation surrounding these issues through rigorous research and public outreach.

Bay View Analytics, formerly known as the Babson Survey Research Group, is a survey design, implementation, and analysis organization. Bay View Analytics partners with and conducts research for universities, businesses, foundations, and agencies including the London School of Business, Hunter College, the College Board, the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation, The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, The Gates Foundation, and Tyton Partners. Bay View Analytics' activities cover all stages of projects, including initial proposals, sample selection, survey design, methodological decisions, analysis plan, statistical analyses, and production of reports.

Thomas Arnett is a senior research fellow in education for the Christensen Institute. His work focuses on instructional models enabled by online learning and the role of Disruptive Innovation in transforming K–12 education. His work in education includes teaching middle school math for Kansas City Public Schools and serving as a board member for various school systems.

Dr. Jonathan Cooney has been an educator for the past 24 years. After 23 years serving K-12 students and families as a teacher and school principal, he is now an assistant professor in the Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies at the University of Northern Colorado. He has earned degrees from the University of Virginia, Colorado State University, and the University of Northern Colorado.

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