



# **Southern Connecticut State University**

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**CCSAR – Center for Community  
and School Action Research**

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**Academic Year 2006-2007**

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**SCSU Educator Preparation Program Evaluation**

*An Analysis of Principal Survey Responses*

# **SCSU Educator Preparation Program Evaluation**

## **An Analysis of Principal Survey Responses**

### **Academic Year 2006-2007**

SCSU is interested in learning the thoughts and opinions of principals regarding the quality and level of preparation of recent SCSU graduates. The *Principal Survey* is designed to evaluate graduate performance in relation to the State of Connecticut Common Core of Teaching (CCCT) and the Interstate New Teachers Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC) standards. The purpose of this study is to assess the quality and level of preparation of recent SCSU graduates through an analysis of responses provided on the *Principal Survey*.

The specific goals of this study are:

- to determine principals' assessments of the level of performance competencies displayed by SCSU prepared teachers relative to NCATE, INTASC, and State of Connecticut standards;
- to gather ideas and suggestions for improving the quality of the educational and field experiences that SCSU provides students; and
- to meet the needs of Connecticut schools for highly trained and well-prepared classroom teachers and other professional educators.

## **Method**

### ***Participants***

School principals that had been identified as employing recent SCSU Educator Preparation Program graduates were asked to complete and return a *Principal Survey* packet. These principals were identified by the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) BEST program database that lists the names of SCSU graduates and the names of the schools where they were working when they submitted their BEST portfolio. In total, 82 principals completed and returned a survey to CCSAR. The principals that responded represented: (1) all grade levels - pre-K through high school; (2) urban, suburban, and rural communities; (3) special education and nontraditional charter schools; and (4) both public and private schools.

### ***Apparatus***

CCSAR created a double-sided *Principal Survey* (see Appendix) to reflect the state of Connecticut Common Core of Teaching (CCCT) attributes and indicators. The CCCT attributes and indicators also align with the Interstate New Teachers Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC) standards and reflect the SCSU's School of Education conceptual framework known as S.A.I.L.S. (Scholarship, Attitudes and Dispositions, Integrity, Leadership, and Service). S.A.I.L.S. "*represents the SOE's principled*

*approach to teacher preparation, informing practice and connecting coursework, field experiences, and faculty-student-teacher interactions”.*

The survey consists of 21 items, each with three possible responses: ‘Met+’, ‘Met’, or ‘Met-’. Space is also provided at the end of the survey for additional comments. Principals rate SCSU graduates using the following three-point scale:

- 1 = Met -** professional educator has failed to meet the standard
- 2 = Met** professional educator has met the standard
- 3 = Met+** professional educator has met and exceeded the standard.

***Procedure***

In November 2006, 257 survey packets were mailed to school principals that had been identified as employing recent SCSU Educator Preparation Program graduates. Survey packets contained a cover letter, a *Principal Survey*, a confidential information sheet, a report request form, and a stamped, self-addressed envelope (see Appendix). Whenever possible, the cover letter included the identification of the student(s) who was working at the respective school when they submitted their BEST portfolio in the spring 2005. This was done to ensure that principals reflected only on recent SCSU graduates as opposed to other SCSU graduates employed at their school. This mailing produced 77 completed surveys by December 2006. In January 2007, CCSAR sent reminder post cards to the principals in an effort to increase the response rate. The reminder mailing yielded an additional 5 surveys for a final count of 82 completed and returned surveys.

***Data Analysis***

Data were entered into SPSS and frequency analyses conducted. Item responses are presented in Table 1 and include the mean score and standard deviation for each individual item response. This table also includes the mean score and standard deviation for each INTASC Standard and the items that collectively measure this standard. The ten INTASC competency standards are: 1. Knowledge of Subject Matter, 2. Knowledge of Human Development and Learning, 3. Instruction Adapted to Meet Diverse Learners, 4. Use of Multiple Instructional Strategies & Resources, 5. Effective Learning Environment Created, 6. Effective Communication, 7. Lesson Planning, 8. Assessment of Student Learning to Improve Teaching, 9. Reflection and Professional Development, and 10. Partnership with School and Community. The Appendix includes bar charts that show the percentage of met+, met, and met- responses for each item.

**Table-1 Mean scores for INTACSC Standards and Accompanying Survey Items**

<b>Principal Survey</b>	<b>Mean Score</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>
<b>INTASC Standard 1 Knowledge of Subject Matter</b>	<b>M=2.55</b>	<b>SD= 0.475</b>
3. Demonstrate proficiency in reading	M=2.60	SD=0.540
4. Demonstrate proficiency in writing	M=2.58	SD=0.545
5. Demonstrate proficiency in mathematics	M=2.45	SD=0.553
6. Understand the central concepts and skills, tools of inquiry and structures of the disciplines they teach	M=2.54	SD=0.549

<b>INTASC Standard 2</b> <b>Knowledge of Human Development and Learning</b>	<b>M=2.51</b>	<b>SD= 0.527</b>
1. Understand how students learn and develop	M=2.51	SD=0.527
<b>INTASC Standard 3</b> <b>Instruction is Adapted to Meet Diverse Learners</b>	<b>M=2.51</b>	<b>SD=0.555</b>
2. Understand how students differ in their approaches to learning	M=2.51	SD=0.572
8. Recognize the need to vary their instructional methods	M=2.51	SD=0.614
<b>INTASC Standard 4</b> <b>Use of Multiple Instructional Strategies and Resources</b>	<b>M=2.52</b>	<b>SD=0.564</b>
12. Create instructional opportunities to support students' academic, social and personal development	M=2.51	SD=0.593
14. Employ a variety of instructional strategies that enable students to think critically, solve problems and demonstrate skills	M=2.52	SD=0.593
<b>INTASC Standard 5</b> <b>An Effective Learning Environment is Created</b>	<b>M=2.65</b>	<b>SD=0.541</b>
11. Establish and maintain appropriate standards of behavior and create a positive learning environment that shows a deep commitment to students and their success	M=2.61	SD=0.643
16. Conduct themselves as professionals in accordance with the Code of Professional Responsibility for Teachers	M=2.68	SD=0.542
<b>INTASC Standard 6</b> <b>Effective Communication to Foster Inquiry and Collaboration</b>	<b>M=2.54</b>	<b>SD=0.593</b>
13. Use effective verbal, nonverbal and media communications techniques which fosters individual and collective inquiry	M=2.51	SD=0.593
<b>INTASC Standard 7</b> <b>Lesson Planning</b>	<b>M=2.53</b>	<b>SD=0.536</b>
7. Know how to design and deliver instruction	M=2.55	SD=0.612
9. Plan instruction based upon knowledge of subject matter, students, the curriculum, and the community	M=2.53	SD=0.572
10. Create a structure for learning by selecting and/or creating significant learning tasks that make the subject matter meaningful to students	M=2.52	SD=0.593
<b>INTASC Standard 8</b> <b>Assessment of Student Learning to Improve Teaching</b>	<b>M=2.50</b>	<b>SD=0.572</b>
15. Use various assessment techniques to evaluate student learning and modify instruction as appropriate	M=2.50	SD=0.752
<b>INTASC Standard 9</b> <b>Reflection and Professional Development</b>	<b>M=2.46</b>	<b>SD=0.526</b>
19. Seek out opportunities to grow professionally	M=2.51	SD=0.551
21. Demonstrates a passion for improving their profession	M=2.43	SD=0.570
<b>INTASC Standard 10</b> <b>Partnerships with School and Community</b>	<b>M=2.38</b>	<b>SD=0.552</b>
18. Continually engage in self-evaluation of the effects of their choices and actions on students and the school community	M=2.55	SD=0.570
20. Serve as a leader in the school community	M=2.23	SD=0.659

## Results

Responses indicate that the majority of principals believe that graduates of SCSU Educator Preparation Programs are well prepared in their specialty areas. All of the survey items have a mean score above **2.00**, indicating that the *professional educator has met the standards* in all areas. The highest mean score received was **2.68** on survey question #16 - *Generally speaking, the educators prepared at Southern Connecticut State University conduct themselves as professionals in accordance with the code of Professional Responsibility for Teachers*. The lowest mean score was **2.23** on question #20 - *Generally speaking, the educators prepared at Southern Connecticut State University serve as leaders in the school community*. Mean scores for INTASC standards were also high. Standard 5, *An Effective Learning Environment is Created*, received the highest mean score at **2.65** while standard 10, *Partnerships with School and Community*, received the lowest mean score at **2.38**.

### ***Qualitative Findings***

Approximately 50% of the responding principals chose to provide a comment at the end of the survey. These comments were tallied to determine the frequency of a response, and then similar responses grouped together to define a theme or key concept.

### **Programmatic Strengths**

The majority of principals that made comments (70%) were satisfied with their SCSU graduates and the SCSU Educator Preparation Program. Typical comments included: *“In my more than three decades as an educator, I have never encountered such a young teacher of art who was so creative and yet such a fine instructor,”* another principal commented on a graduate’s strong *“innovative methods and practices,”* and about the program: *“SCSU continues to prepare highly qualified teachers. As an administrator, I always consider hiring people if SCSU is listed on their resume,”* and *“Southern has provided an overall complete teacher training program.”*

### **Suggestions and Concerns**

Suggestions for improvement included the desire for more training in: *“classroom management and motivation work,” “strategies in presenting student data and progress information to parents,”* as well as more *“education classes in the areas of reading and writing instruction.”* The most often cited suggestion was for increased training in differentiated instruction, *“Differentiating instruction is a critical piece that needs to be focused on for young teachers.”* One principal also noted that schools are looking for teachers that have skills which go far beyond teaching the curriculum, *“Beginning teachers need to be prepared for the breadth of education today. The complexity of society results in schools becoming the resource for issues well beyond education.”*

Five of the responding principals had concerns about specific SCSU trained teachers in their schools. Concerns about specific individuals ranged from *“She tends to march to a different drummer in this regard, failing to see the importance of fulfilling one’s professional responsibilities”* to *“this teacher is very weak,”* although as one principal noted, *“It is difficult to determine to what degree the responses to the survey are reflective of the teacher preparation program or the individual talents.”*

## Discussion

As indicated by both the quantitative and qualitative results, principals are satisfied with the quality and level of preparation of their teachers who recently graduated from an SCSU Education Preparation Program. Mean scores of **2.23** and above on the survey item responses, indicate that the “professional educator has met the standard[s]” in all areas surveyed as measured by the *Principal Survey* which was aligned with CCCT and INTASC standards. Also, a majority (70%) of principals that made comments (approximately 50% of all respondents) indicating that they are satisfied with their SCSU graduates.

Comments that point to possible areas in need of improvement represent some common trends that have been seen throughout previous *Principal Survey* results. Provide more training in differentiated instruction, reading and writing instruction, and classroom management, were all suggested. These remarks should be considered when reflecting on future revisions, or additions to, the SCSU Educator Preparation Programs.

**SCSU Educator Preparation Program Evaluation**  
**Principal Survey: Connecticut's Common Core of Teaching**

*Please use the following scale in evaluating educators who are SCSU graduates. Indicate your response to each item by placing an 'x' in the appropriate space.*

<b>SCALE:</b>	
<b>Met+</b>	Professional educator has met and exceeded the standard
<b>Met</b>	Professional educator has met the standard
<b>Met-</b>	Professional educator has failed to meet the standard

Generally speaking, the educators prepared at Southern Connecticut State University:

	<b>MET -</b>	<b>MET</b>	<b>MET +</b>
1. Understand how students learn and develop			
2. Understand how students differ in their approaches to learning			
3. Demonstrate proficiency in reading			
4. Demonstrate proficiency in writing			
5. Demonstrate proficiency in mathematics			
6. Understand the central concepts and skills, tools of inquiry and structures of the disciplines they teach			
7. Know how to design and deliver instruction			
8. Recognize the need to vary their instructional methods			
9. Plan instruction based upon knowledge of subject matter, students, the curriculum, and the community			
10. Create a structure for learning by selecting and/or creating significant learning tasks that make the subject matter meaningful to students			
11. Establish and maintain appropriate standards of behavior and create a positive learning environment that shows a deep commitment to students and their success			

***Please turn over and continue on the back.***

**SCALE**

- Met+** Professional educator has met and exceeded the standard
- Met** Professional educator has met the standard
- Met-** Professional educator has failed to meet the standard

**Generally speaking, the educators prepared at Southern Connecticut State University:**

	<b>MET -</b>	<b>MET</b>	<b>MET +</b>
12. Create instructional opportunities to support students' academic, social and personal development			
13. Use effective verbal, nonverbal and media communications techniques which fosters individual and collective inquiry			
14. Employ a variety of instructional strategies that enable students to think critically, solve problems and demonstrate skill			
15. Use various assessment techniques to evaluate student learning and modify instruction as appropriate			
16. Conduct themselves as professionals in accordance with the Code of Professional Responsibility for Teachers			
17. Seek out opportunities to grow professionally			
18. Share responsibility for student achievement and well-being			
19. Seek out opportunities to grow professionally			
20. Serve as a leader in the school community			
21. Demonstrates a passion for improving their profession			

**Please provide any additional comments:**

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**Thank you very much!**

**January 2, 2006**

Dear Principal:

I need your help! Teacher education is at a crossroads in our State and I need your feedback on this survey to demonstrate that our programs do, in fact, produce the kind of teachers you need to hire. The information that I am asking you to provide will help us improve the quality of the educational and field experiences that our students receive, and will help us to continue to meet the standards set by all of our accrediting bodies. Your input will also help us continue to meet the needs that your school has for highly qualified classroom teachers and other educational professionals.

I would greatly appreciate your help by completing and returning the enclosed survey **January 16, 2006**. For your convenience, a self-addressed stamped envelope has been enclosed. Additionally, we are providing you with the names of SCSU alumni who were working at your school during Spring 2005. The CSDE provided us with a list of SCSU graduates and the name of the school where each graduate was working when they submitted their BEST portfolio. This additional information should be helpful to you as you complete the survey. We will not include any individual names or identifying information regarding the school or the SCSU graduate in any subsequent reports we may generate.

**SCSU Alumni: e.g. Joe Johnson**

As an expression of my appreciation, I would be happy to send you a copy of the report when all the data have been analyzed. If you wish to receive a copy, please indicate this by completing and returning the attached sheet along with your completed questionnaire.

If you should have any questions, please contact Maureen Gilbride-Redman at **CCSAR-Center for Community and School Action Research** at 203/392-6439. The fax number at CCSAR is 203/392-5017.

As the Interim Dean in the School of Education, and as a colleague in the field of education, I trust you appreciate the need to quantify the results of our programs and to be accountable to others. Thanking you in advance for your help. I look forward to receiving your important feedback in the form of a completed questionnaire by **January 16, 2006**.

Sincerely,

James M. Granfield, Ph.D.  
Interim Dean  
School of Education

**Please Complete and Return.**  
**ALL INFORMATION ON THIS FORM WILL BE KEPT CONFIDENTIAL**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Title: \_\_\_\_\_  
School Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
School Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone/Fax and E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_  
School Grade Level: \_\_\_\_\_  
School Setting: \_\_\_\_\_

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**1. How many SCSU graduates work or have some type of affiliation to your school? \_\_\_\_\_ Approximate year of graduation from SCSU \_\_\_\_\_**

**2. Please check below their affiliation:**

Teacher \_\_\_\_\_ (please write specific area they teach) \_\_\_\_\_

Interns \_\_\_\_\_ Substitute Teacher \_\_\_\_\_ School Counselor \_\_\_\_\_

**School Psychologist** \_\_\_\_\_ **School Administrator** \_\_\_\_\_

**Other (please be specific)** \_\_\_\_\_

**3. Have you ever attended or taken any classes at SCSU?**

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Did you graduate from SCSU? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, which field of study did you graduate from? (please be specific) \_\_\_\_\_

If no but you have taken classes at SCSU, please write which ones (please be specific).  
\_\_\_\_\_

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**4. Would you be interested in participating in our bi-yearly focus groups?**

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

**CCSAR 2006**

**Educator Preparation Report  
Request Form  
(Principal)**

I have enclosed the completed educator preparation questionnaire. Please send me a copy of the report on the evaluation of the educator preparation programs at Southern Connecticut State University.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail Address (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Numbers:

Work: \_\_\_\_\_

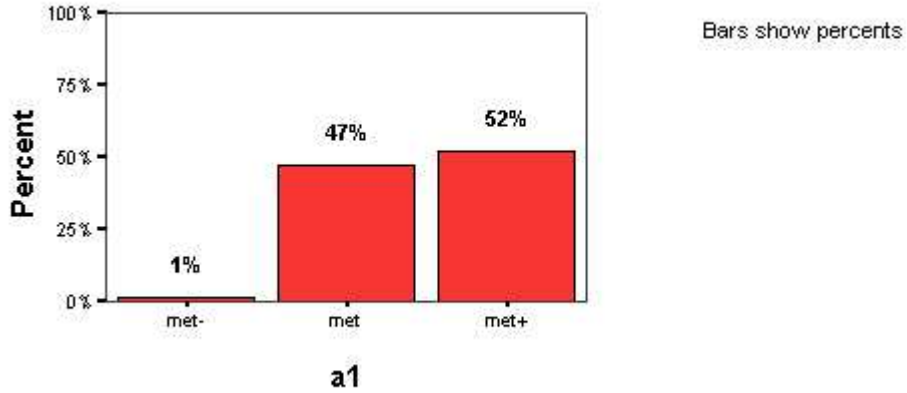
Home: \_\_\_\_\_

Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

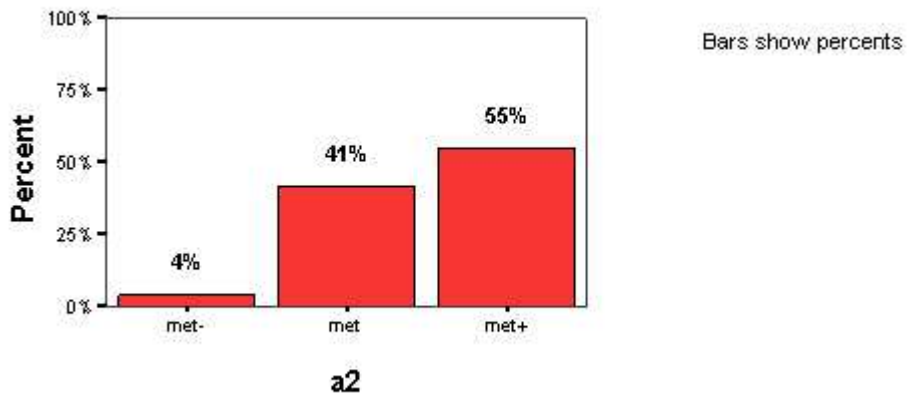
**CCSAR 2006**

# Generally speaking, the educators prepared at Southern Connecticut State University:

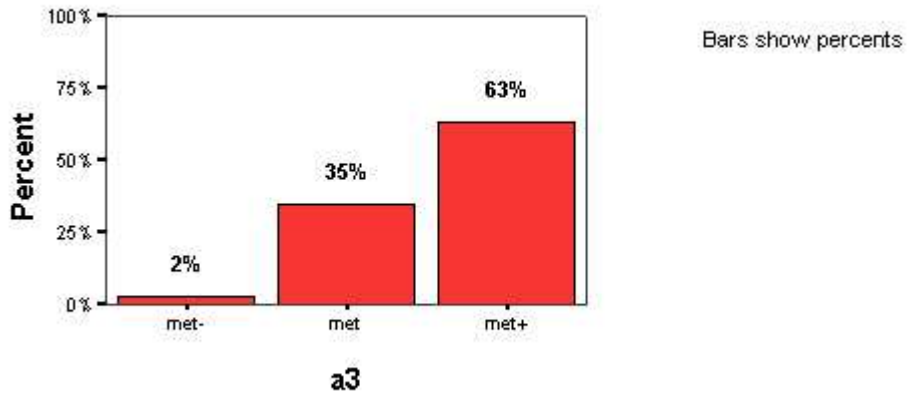
1. Understand how students learn and develop



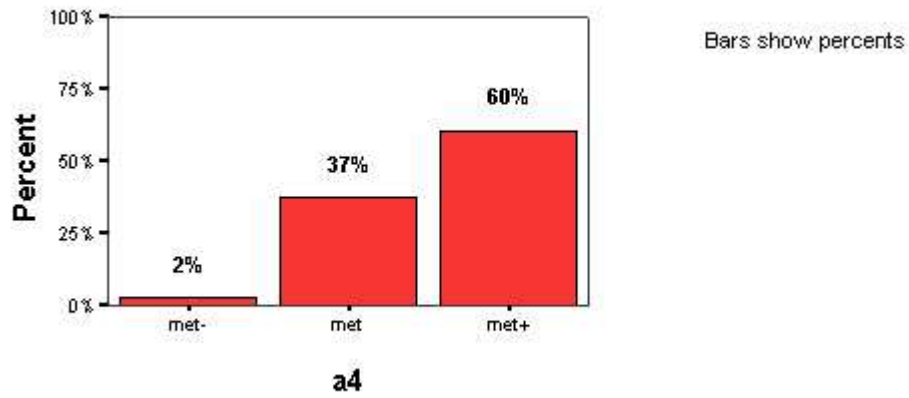
2. Understand how students differ in their approaches to learning



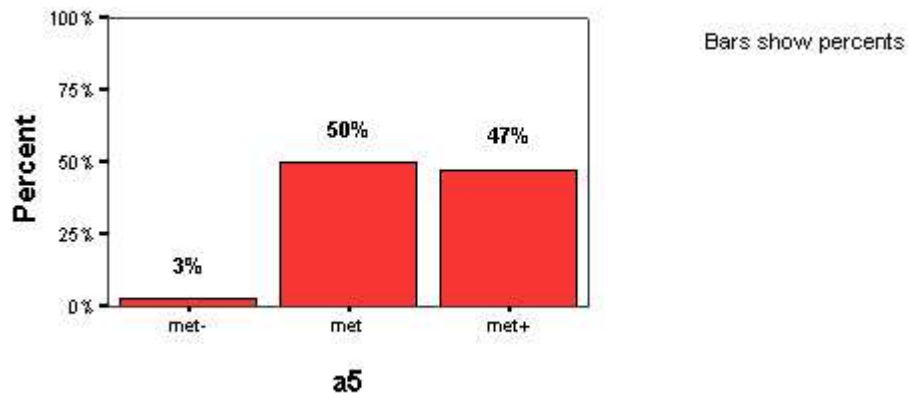
3. Demonstrate proficiency in reading



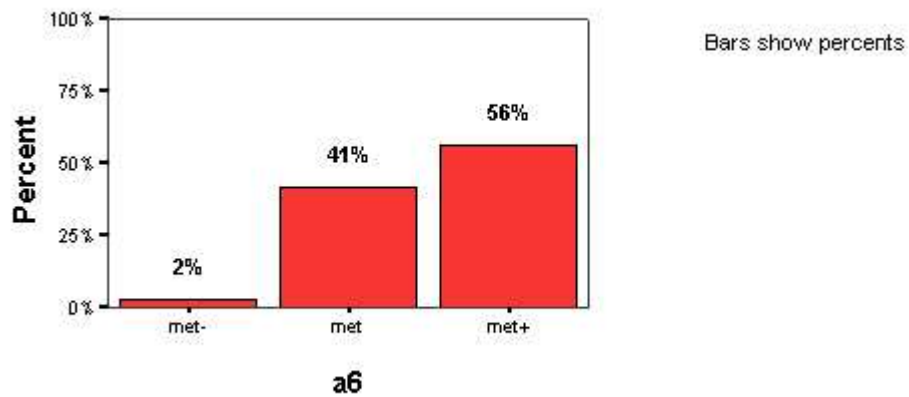
4. Demonstrate proficiency in writing



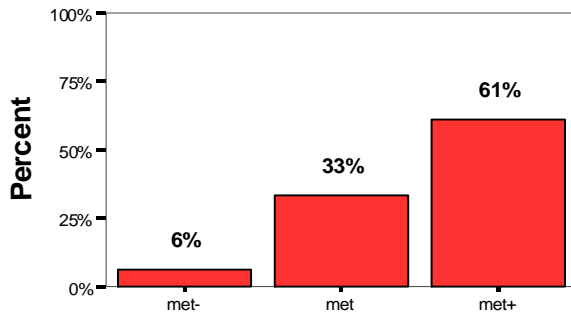
5. Demonstrate proficiency in mathematics



6. Understand the central concepts and skills, tools of inquiry and structures of the disciplines they teach



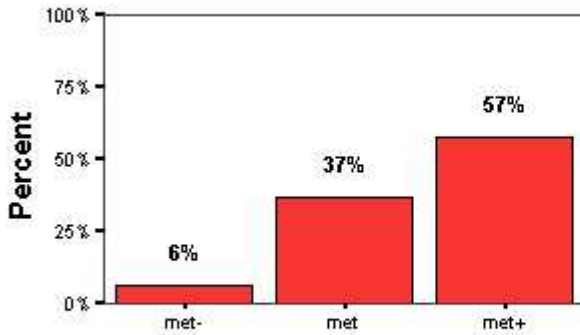
7. Know how to design and deliver instruction



Bars show percents

**a7**

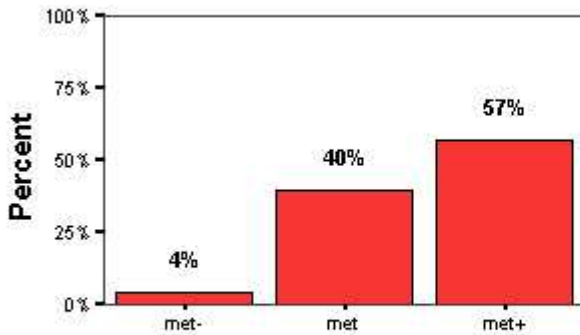
8. Recognize the need to vary their instructional methods



Bars show percents

**a8**

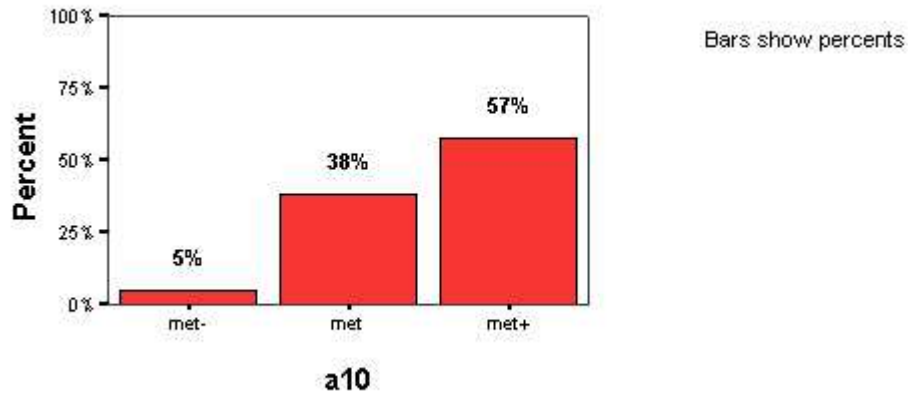
9. Plan instruction based upon knowledge of subject matter, students, the curriculum, and the community



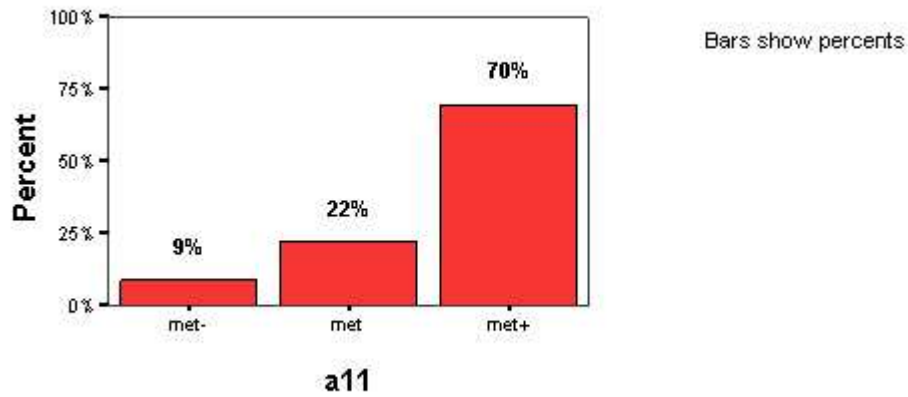
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**a9**

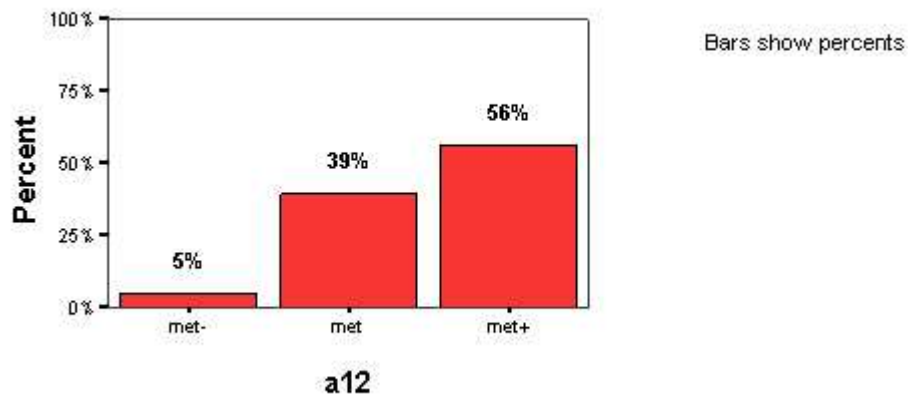
10. Create a structure for learning by selecting and/or creating significant learning tasks that make the subject matter meaningful to students



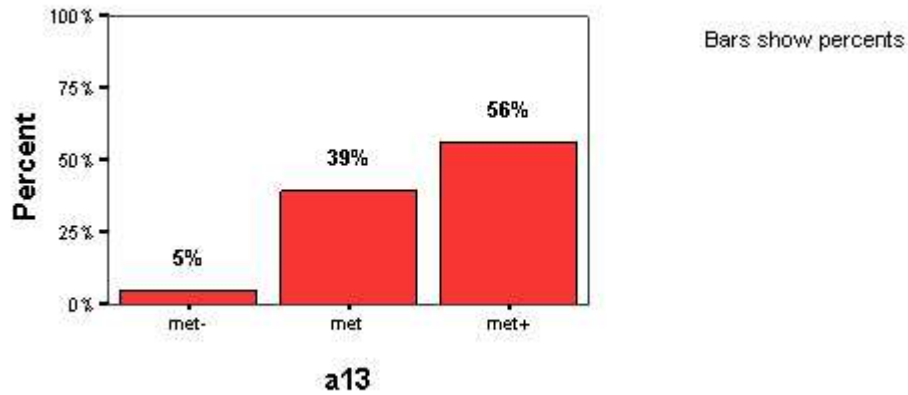
11. Establish and maintain appropriate standards of behavior and create a positive learning environment that shows a deep commitment to students and their success



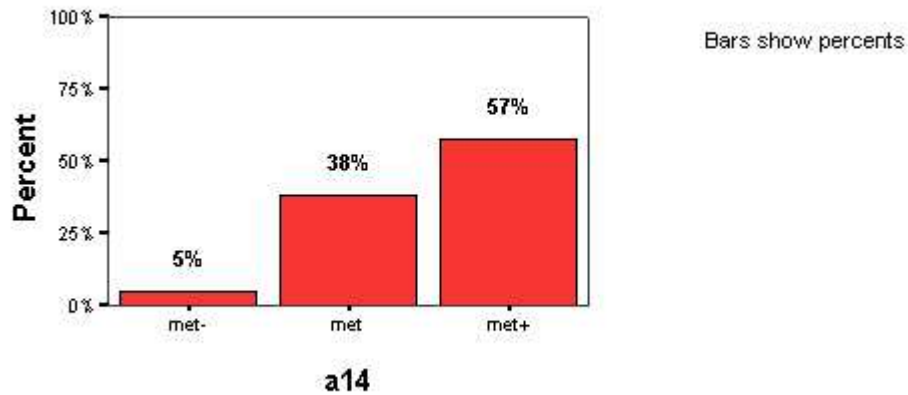
12. Create instructional opportunities to support students' academic, social and personal development



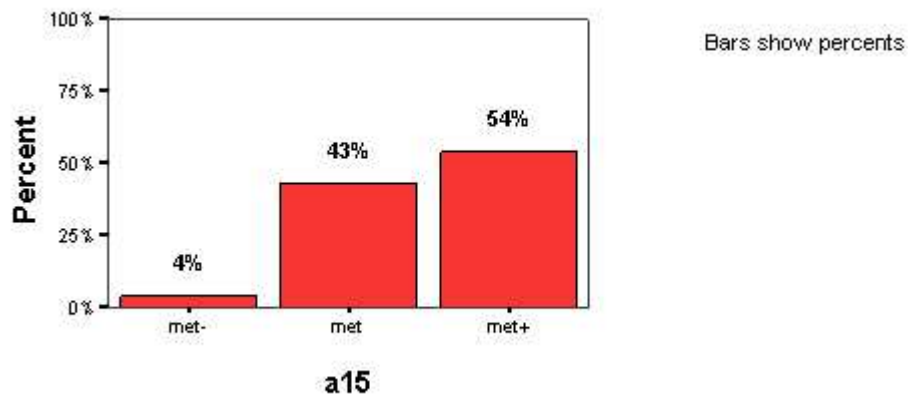
13. Use effective verbal, nonverbal and media communications techniques



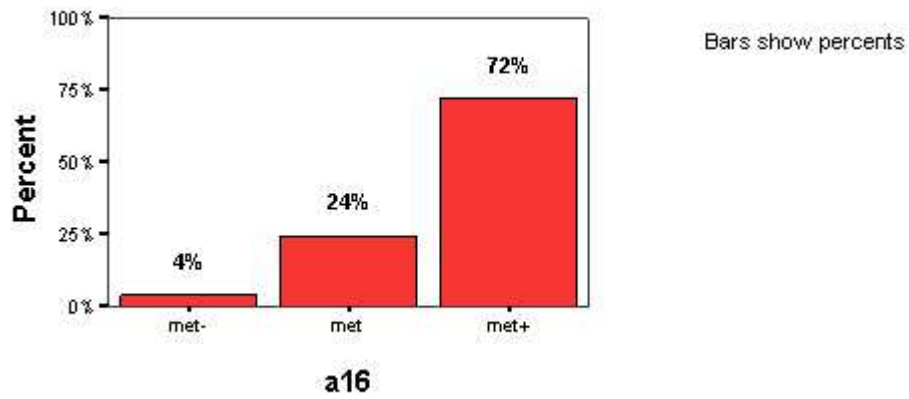
14. Employ a variety of instructional strategies that enable students to think critically, solve problems and demonstrate skills



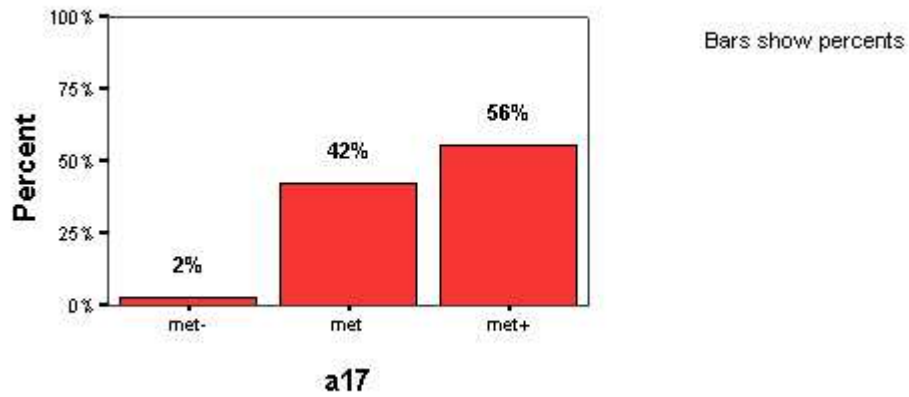
15. Use various assessment techniques to evaluate student learning and modify instruction as appropriate



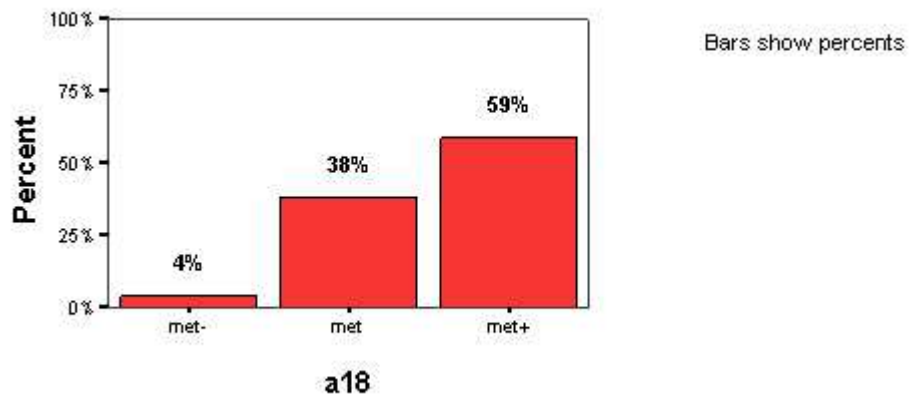
16. Conduct themselves as professionals in accordance with the Code of Professional Responsibility for Teachers



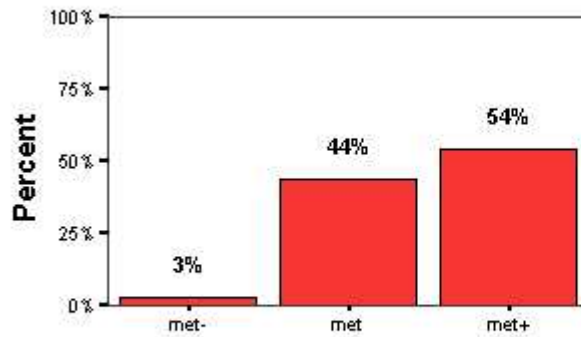
17. Share responsibility for student achievement and well-being



18. Continually engage in self-evaluation of the effects of their choices and actions on students and the school community



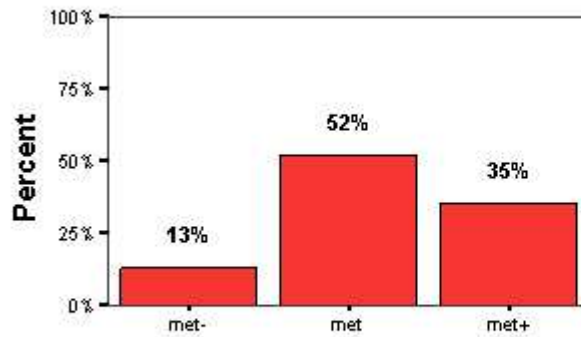
19. Seek out opportunities to grow professionally



Bars show percents

**a19**

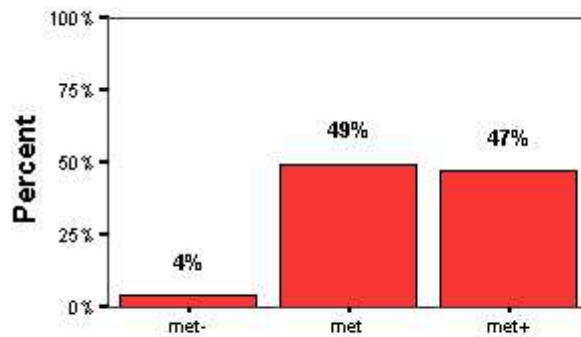
20. Serve as a leader in the school community



Bars show percents

**a20**

21. Demonstrates a passion for improving their profession



Bars show percents

**a21**