



Southern Connecticut State University

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

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Academic Year 2007-2008

SCSU Educator Preparation Program Evaluation

An Analysis of Principal Survey Responses

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The Center for Community and School Action Research (CCSAR) distributes the *SCSU Educator Preparation Program Evaluation Principal Survey* to principals who have been identified as employing a graduate of the SCSU Educator Preparation Program. The objective of this survey is to learn the thoughts and opinions of principals regarding the quality and level of preparation of recent SCSU graduates. The *Principal Survey* is designed to evaluate SCSU 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 specific goals of the *Principal Survey* 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,
- 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, 71 principals completed and returned a survey to CCSAR. The principals that responded represented: (1) grade levels K-12; (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 of 2007, 203 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* (some principals received multiple copies), 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. 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 57 completed surveys by December 2007. In December 2007, 132 survey packets were mailed again to principals who had not responded to the first mailing. The additional mailing yielded an additional 14 surveys, for a final count of 71 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 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 is Adapted to Meet Diverse Learners, 4. Use of Multiple Instructional Strategies and Resources, 5. An Effective Learning Environment is Created, 6. Effective Communication to Foster Inquiry and Collaboration, 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

Scale: 1 = Met-, 2 = Met, 3 = Met+

Principal Survey 2007-2008	Mean Score	Standard Deviation
INTASC Standard 1 Knowledge of Subject Matter	M=2.45	SD= 0.476
3. Demonstrate proficiency in reading	M=2.46	SD=0.530
4. Demonstrate proficiency in writing	M=2.39	SD=0.547
5. Demonstrate proficiency in mathematics	M=2.47	SD=0.535
6. Understand the central concepts and skills, tools of inquiry and structures of the disciplines they teach	M=2.50	SD=0.532

INTASC Standard 2 Knowledge of Human Development and Learning	M=2.49	SD= 0.504
1. Understand how students learn and develop	M=2.49	SD=0.504
INTASC Standard 3 Instruction is Adapted to Meet Diverse Learners	M=2.54	SD=0.491
2. Understand how students differ in their approaches to learning	M=2.49	SD=0.531
8. Recognize the need to vary their instructional methods	M=2.59	SD=0.553
INTASC Standard 4 Use of Multiple Instructional Strategies and Resources	M=2.52	SD=0.489
12. Create instructional opportunities to support students' academic, social and personal development	M=2.58	SD=0.497
14. Employ a variety of instructional strategies that enable students to think critically, solve problems and demonstrate skills	M=2.49	SD=0.586
INTASC Standard 5 An Effective Learning Environment is Created	M=2.61	SD=0.487
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=2.58	SD=0.552
16. Conduct themselves as professionals in accordance with the Code of Professional Responsibility for Teachers	M=2.66	SD=0.535
17. Share responsibility for student achievement and well-being	M=2.58	SD=.497
INTASC Standard 6 Effective Communication to Foster Inquiry and Collaboration	M=2.53	SD=0.531
13. Use effective verbal, nonverbal and media communications techniques which fosters individual and collective inquiry	M=2.53	SD=0.531
INTASC Standard 7 Lesson Planning	M=2.57	SD=0.469
7. Know how to design and deliver instruction	M=2.61	SD=0.521
9. Plan instruction based upon knowledge of subject matter, students, the curriculum, and the community	M=2.54	SD=0.556
10. Create a structure for learning by selecting and/or creating significant learning tasks that make the subject matter meaningful to students	M=2.57	SD=0.554
INTASC Standard 8 Assessment of Student Learning to Improve Teaching	M=2.49	SD=0.558
15. Use various assessment techniques to evaluate student learning and modify instruction as appropriate	M=2.49	SD=0.558
INTASC Standard 9 Reflection and Professional Development	M=2.47	SD=0.547
19. Seek out opportunities to grow professionally	M=2.52	SD=0.559
21. Demonstrates a passion for improving their profession	M=2.44	SD=0.632
INTASC Standard 10 Partnerships with School and Community	M=2.38	SD=0.510
18. Continually engage in self-evaluation of the effects of their choices and actions on students and the school community	M=2.51	SD=0.557
20. Serve as a leader in the school community	M=2.25	SD=0.612

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 **2.66** 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 **2.25** 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 **2.61** while standard 10, *Partnerships with School and Community*, received the lowest mean score at **2.38**.

Qualitative Findings

Approximately 40% 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 (about 75%) were satisfied with their SCSU graduates and the SCSU Educator Preparation Program. Typical comments included: “[The new teacher] *has been a outstanding addition to our faculty*”, “[The new teacher] *is an energetic and conscientious educator who works extremely well with all [levels] of students.*”, or “[The new teacher] *was very well-prepared for the many tasks [a new teacher] does each day.*” Another principal “*looks forward to supporting [the new teacher’s] continued growth and development,*” and another felt “[The new teacher was] *well versed in reading workshops, differentiation, and data-driven instruction.*”

Suggestions and Concerns

The two main concerns were the graduates quality of writing, and their ability to communicate with parents. Spelling and grammar errors on report cards and posters was a concern of one principal. Another principal felt the new teacher required “*a lot of assistance [with the BEST] portfolio*”. Two principals expressed concerns about the graduates communication skills with parents. One principal did not like the graduates’ “*use of informal language*” when speaking to parents, and another suggested more “*coursework in the area of communicating [with parents] ...respectfully and tactfully (and thoroughly)... how to handle hostile or difficult parents, how to foster bringing in parents as part of a team, and valuing their contributions as a team members, etc.*” Other concerns were classroom management and teaching young children to read. One principal felt “[The survey] *was difficult to complete because of the range of teachers involved.*”

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 **2.25** 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 of the principals that made comments indicated that they are satisfied with their SCSU graduates.

Comments that point to possible areas in need of improvement include more training in reading instruction, classroom management, and communicating with parents. Also, new teachers need to improve their writing skills. 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.

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:

	MET -	MET	MET +
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:

	MET -	MET	MET +
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. Share responsibility for student achievement and well-being			
18. Continually engages in self-evaluation of the effects of their choices and actions on students and the school community			
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:

Thank you very much!

Return of this survey indicates my consent to have my data used in this research.

November 1, 2007

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 by **November 22, 2007**. 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, M.P.A. 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 **November 22, 2007**. Return of this survey indicates your consent to have your data used in this research.

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: _____

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).

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

Yes _____ No _____

CCSAR 2007-2008

Report Request Form
Educator Preparation Report
Principal Survey

I have enclosed the completed educator preparation questionnaire. Return of this survey indicates my consent to have my data used in this research. Please send me a copy of the report on the evaluation of the educator preparation programs at Southern Connecticut State University.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Street

Town

State

Zip Code

E-mail Address (if applicable): _____

Telephone Numbers:

Work: _____

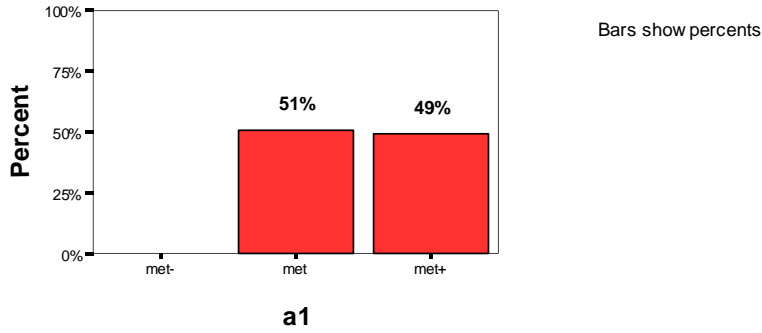
Home: _____

Fax: _____

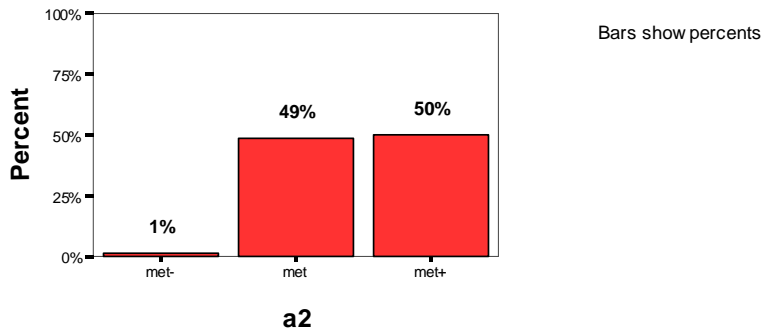
CCSAR 2007-2008

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

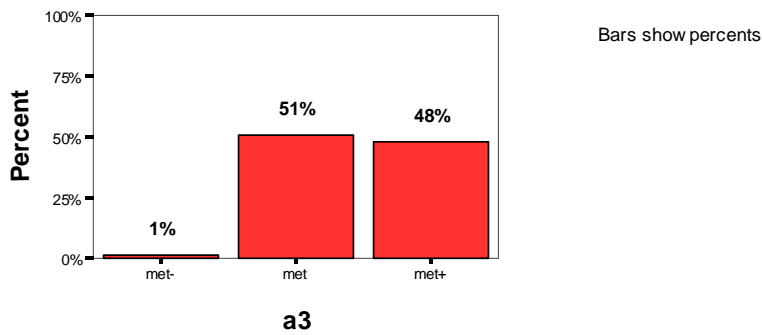
1. Understand how students learn and develop



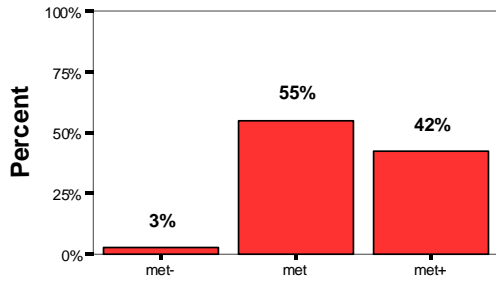
2. Understand how students differ in their approaches to learning



3. Demonstrate proficiency in reading



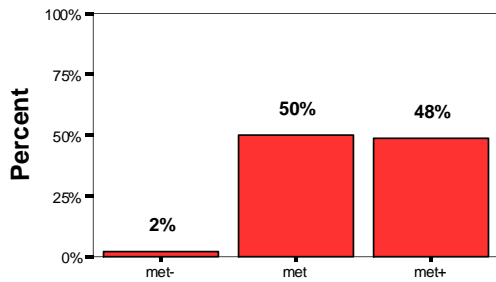
4. Demonstrate proficiency in writing



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a4

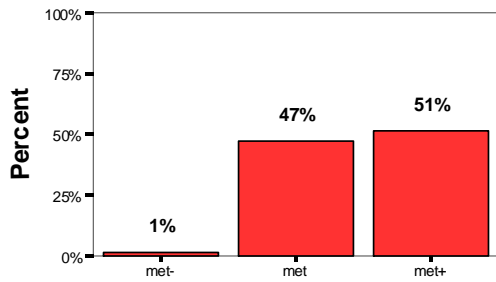
5. Demonstrate proficiency in mathematics



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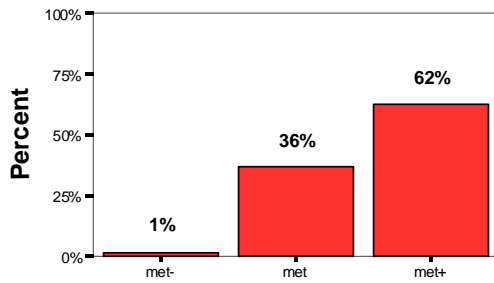
6. Understand the central concepts and skills, tools of inquiry and structures of the disciplines they teach



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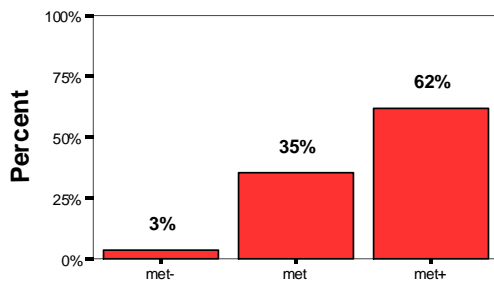
7. Know how to design and deliver instruction



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a7

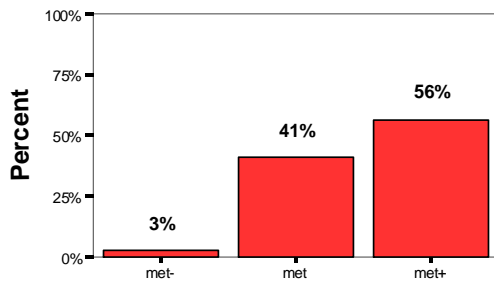
8. Recognize the need to vary their instructional methods



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a8

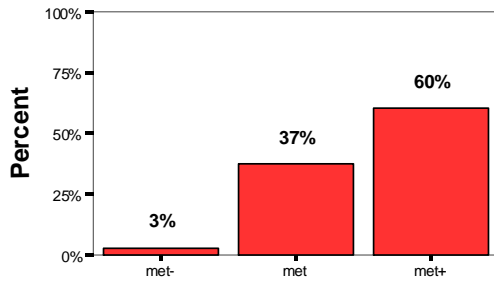
9. Plan instruction based upon knowledge of subject matter, students, the curriculum, and the community



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a9

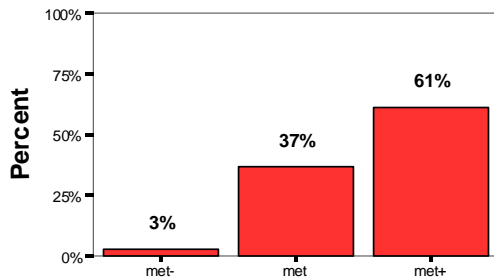
10. Create a structure for learning by selecting and/or creating significant learning tasks that make the subject matter meaningful to students



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a10

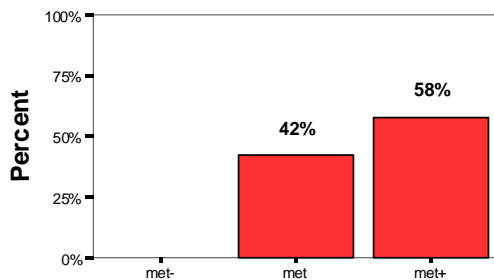
11. Establish and maintain appropriate standards of behavior and create a positive learning environment that shows a deep commitment to students and their success



Bars show percents

a11

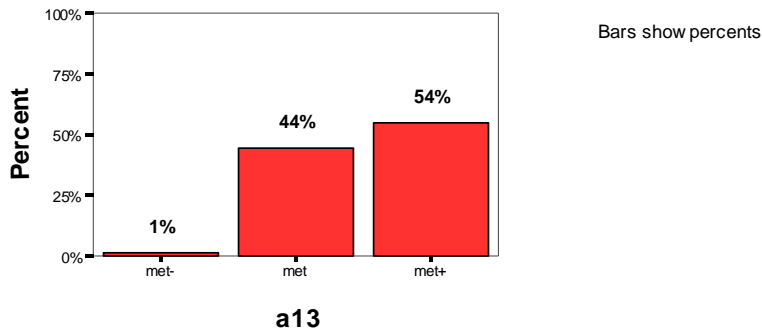
12. Create instructional opportunities to support students' academic, social and personal development



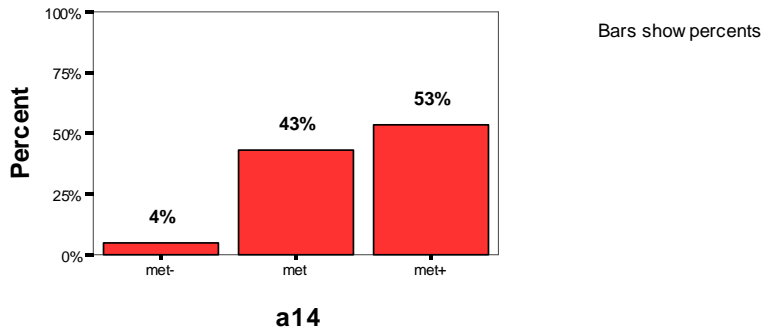
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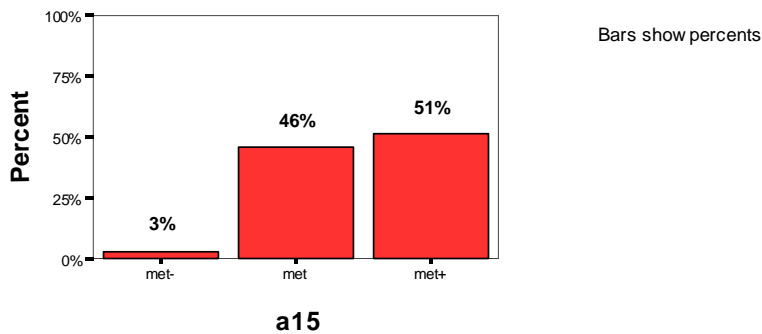
13. Use effective verbal, nonverbal and media communications techniques



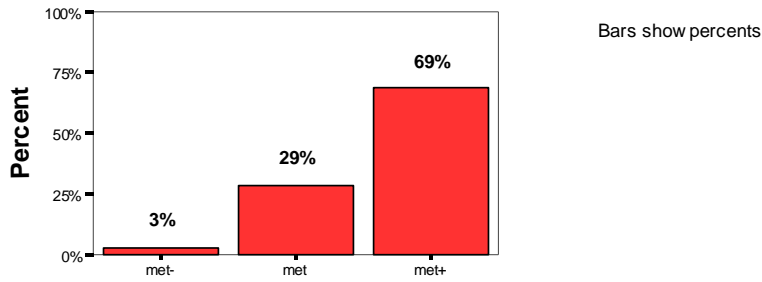
14. Employ a variety of instructional strategies that enable students to think critically, solve problems and demonstrate skills



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

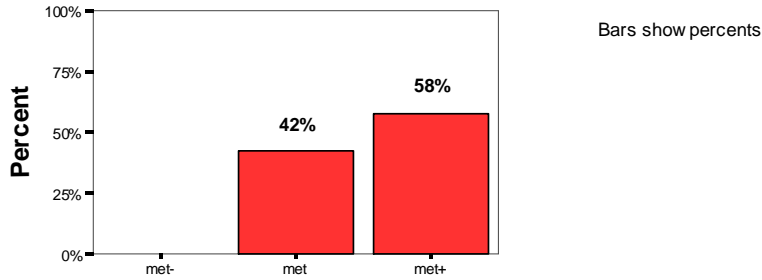


16. Conduct themselves as professionals in accordance with the Code of Professional Responsibility for Teachers



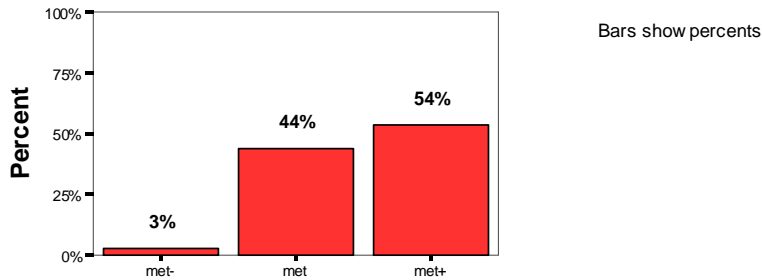
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17. Share responsibility for student achievement and well-being



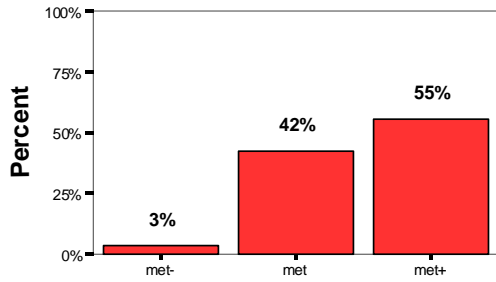
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18. Continually engage in self-evaluation of the effects of their choices and actions on students and the school community



a18

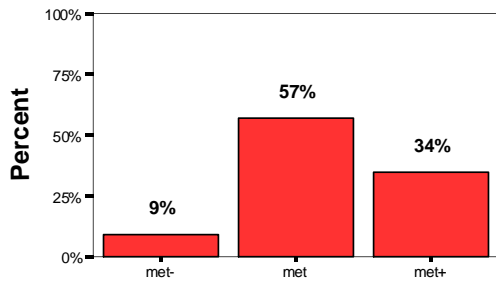
19. Seek out opportunities to grow professionally



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a19

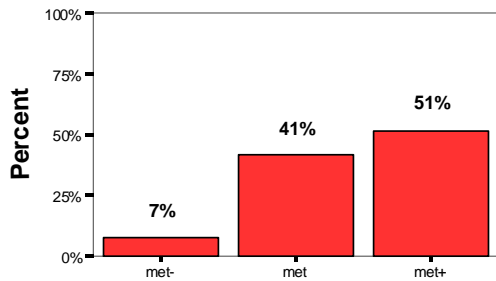
20. Serve as a leader in the school community



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a20

21. Demonstrates a passion for improving their profession



Bars show percents

a21