



# **Southern Connecticut State University**

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

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**Academic Year 2008-2009**

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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 2008-2009**

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; 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 through the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) BEST program database. This database lists the names of SCSU graduates and the names of the schools where they were working when they submitted their BEST portfolio. Additional school principals were identified through CCSAR's own Alumni database. In total, 144 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) magnet, special education and nontraditional charter schools; and (4) both public and private schools

### ***Apparatus***

CCSAR created a double-sided *Principal Survey* (see Appendix) using various items to measure the attributes and standards identified as the Connecticut Common Core of Teaching (CCCT) standards. The CCCT standards also align with the Interstate New Teachers Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC) standards and reflect the School of Education's conceptual framework known as S.A.I.L.S. (Scholarship, Attitudes and Dispositions, Integrity, Leadership, and Service). This framework "*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. Space is also provided at the end of the survey for additional open-ended 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 early November of 2008, 242 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* (one for every SCSU grad. employed at the school), 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 93 completed surveys. In an effort to increase response, a second mailing was launched in mid-November. This mailing included 193 survey packets, addressed to principals who had yet to respond to the first mailing. This second mailing yielded an additional 51 surveys, for a final count of 144 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. Partnerships with School and Community. The Appendix includes bar charts showing the percentage of ‘met+’, ‘met’, and ‘met-’ responses for each item.

**Table-1 Mean Scores for INTASC Standards and Accompanying Survey Items**

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

<b>Principal Survey 2008-2009</b>	<b>Mean Score</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>
<b>INTASC Standard 1 Knowledge of Subject Matter</b>	<b>M=2.43</b>	<b>SD= 0.527</b>
3. Demonstrate proficiency in reading	M=2.48	SD=0.615
4. Demonstrate proficiency in writing	M=2.38	SD=0.616
5. Demonstrate proficiency in mathematics	M=2.44	SD=0.570
6. Understand the central concepts and skills, tools of inquiry, and structures of the disciplines they teach	M=2.42	SD=0.621

<b>INTASC Standard 2</b> <b>Knowledge of Human Development and Learning</b>	<b>M=2.47</b>	<b>SD= 0.541</b>
1. Understand how students learn and develop	M=2.47	SD=0.541
<b>INTASC Standard 3</b> <b>Instruction is Adapted to Meet Diverse Learners</b>	<b>M=2.46</b>	<b>SD=0.567</b>
2. Understand how students differ in their approaches to learning	M=2.49	SD=0.579
8. Recognize the need to vary their instructional methods	M=2.43	SD=0.634
<b>INTASC Standard 4</b> <b>Use of Multiple Instructional Strategies and Resources</b>	<b>M=2.36</b>	<b>SD=0.577</b>
12. Create instructional opportunities to support students' academic, social, and personal development	M=2.40	SD=0.609
14. Employ a variety of instructional strategies that enable students to think critically, solve problems, and demonstrate skills	M=2.31	SD=0.656
<b>INTASC Standard 5</b> <b>An Effective Learning Environment is Created</b>	<b>M=2.53</b>	<b>SD=0.486</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=2.50	SD=0.649
16. Conduct themselves as professionals in accordance with the Code of Professional Responsibility for Teachers	M=2.60	SD=0.546
17. Share responsibility for student achievement and well-being	M=2.50	SD=.569
<b>INTASC Standard 6</b> <b>Effective Communication to Foster Inquiry and Collaboration</b>	<b>M=2.39</b>	<b>SD=0.583</b>
13. Use effective verbal, nonverbal and media communications' techniques which foster individual and collective inquiry	M=2.39	SD=0.583
<b>INTASC Standard 7</b> <b>Lesson Planning</b>	<b>M=2.49</b>	<b>SD=0.542</b>
7. Know how to design and deliver instruction	M=2.49	SD=0.616
9. Plan instruction based upon knowledge of subject matter, students, the curriculum, and the community	M=2.49	SD=0.591
10. Create a structure for learning by selecting and/or creating significant learning tasks that make the subject matter meaningful to students	M=2.48	SD=0.603
<b>INTASC Standard 8</b> <b>Assessment of Student Learning to Improve Teaching</b>	<b>M=2.27</b>	<b>SD=0.596</b>
15. Use various assessment techniques to evaluate student learning and modify instruction as appropriate	M=2.27	SD=0.596
<b>INTASC Standard 9</b> <b>Reflection and Professional Development</b>	<b>M=2.37</b>	<b>SD=0.577</b>
19. Seek out opportunities to grow professionally	M=2.40	SD=0.597
21. Demonstrates a passion for improving their profession	M=2.33	SD=0.653
<b>INTASC Standard 10</b> <b>Partnerships with School and Community</b>	<b>M=2.25</b>	<b>SD=0.550</b>
18. Continually engages in self-evaluation of the effects of their choices and actions on students and the school community	M=2.34	SD=0.643
20. Serve as a leader in the school community	M=2.16	SD=0.631

## Results

### *Quantitative Findings*

The range for mean scores was **2.16 – 2.60**. The lowest mean score was given to survey item #20 -*Generally speaking, the educators prepared at Southern Connecticut State University serve as leaders in the school community*, **M=2.16, SD=0.63** and the highest mean score was given to item #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*, **M=2.60, SD=0.55**. The INTASC standards' mean scores were also positive, ranging from **2.25 – 2.53**. Standard 10, *Partnerships with School and Community*, received the lowest mean score, **M=2.25, SD=0.55** and Standard 5, *An Effective Learning Environment is Created*, received the highest mean score, **M= 2.53, SD=0.49**

### *Responses to Open- Ended Questions*

Approximately 33% (n=47) of the sample provided a comment(s) at the end of the survey. These comments were tallied to determine the frequency of a response, while concurrently grouping similar items that collectively measured a key concept, theme, or behavior.

### Program Strengths

Two key themes emerged regarding the quality of SCSU graduates. One theme centered on students' ability to establish and build rapport and to work collaboratively with students, parents, and colleagues. The other theme referenced students' ability to demonstrate the attitudes and behaviors of a successful educator. These behaviors included: high expectations, enthusiasm, motivation, initiative, and continuous growth and learning. There were also specific comments praising individual alumni in skill areas such as technology, IEP's, and strategies working with special education students.

### Areas in Need of Improvement

Areas in need of improvement were few and reflected the behaviors of a very small number of students. The feedback given addressed limited skills or ability in these areas: difficulty with classroom management, not prepared and committed, not able to teach reading to elementary school- aged children, and not able to pass the BEST portfolio.

## Discussion

These results suggest that principals are satisfied with the quality and level of preparation of recent graduates from an SCSU professional educator program. Mean scores of 2.16 and above, on all survey item responses, indicate that the “professional educator has met the standard[s]” as measured by the Principal Survey. The commentary provided by principals further supports this position. Positive comments focused on students’ ability to establish and build rapport, and to work collaboratively with students, parents, and colleagues; and students’ facility in demonstrating the attitudes, attributes, and behaviors of a professional educator.

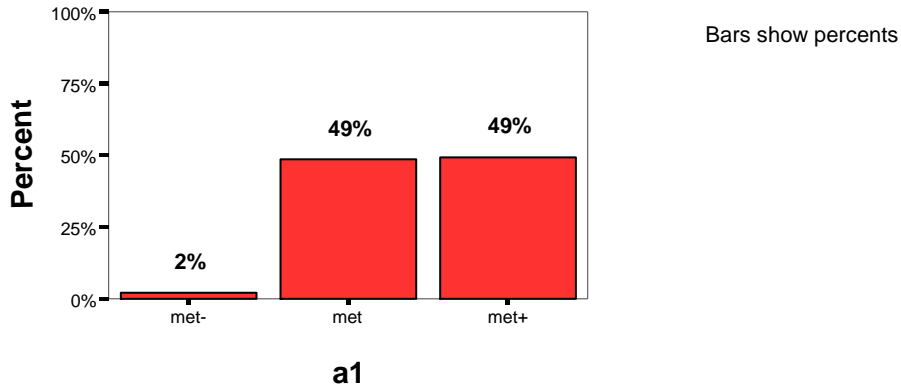
Areas noted for improvement are limited, but their acknowledgement serves to enhance programs for future educators: classroom management, passing the BEST portfolio, and the ability to teach reading to elementary school-aged children. A small number of principals also offered comments on the instrument’s scale. These principals’ articulated that beginning teachers (i.e., recent graduates) were not experienced enough to earn a score of ‘met+’. The top score (i.e., met+) is reserved for experienced, veteran teachers (e.g., teachers with years of practical experience, learning opportunities, and support and mentoring from experienced teachers).

## **APPENDIX**

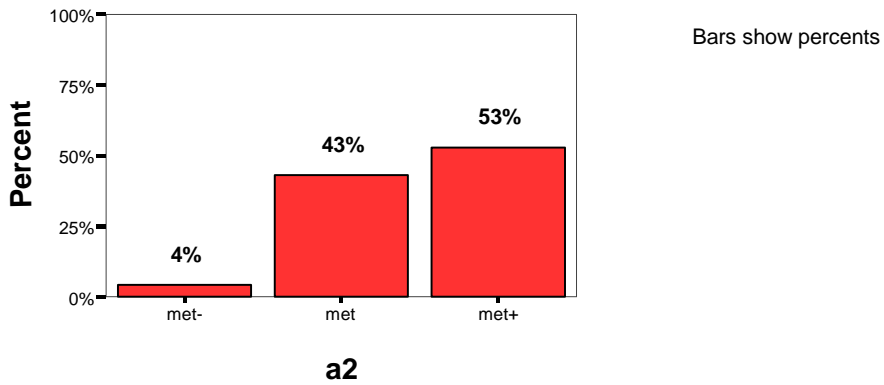
<b>SECTION I.....</b>	Charts- the distribution of item responses (#1-21)
<b>SECTION II .....</b>	Mailing Packet- Principal survey, cover letters, request form

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

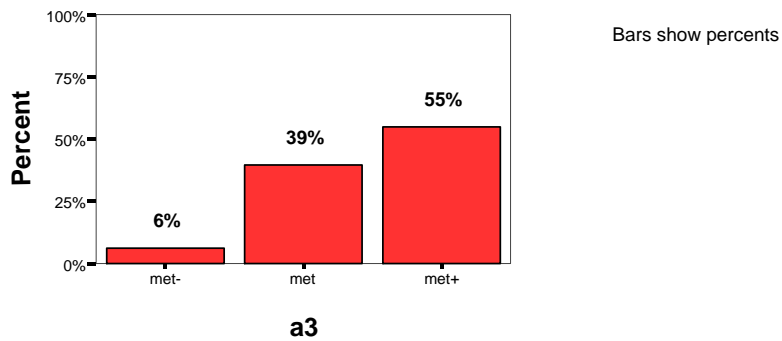
1. Understand how students learn and develop



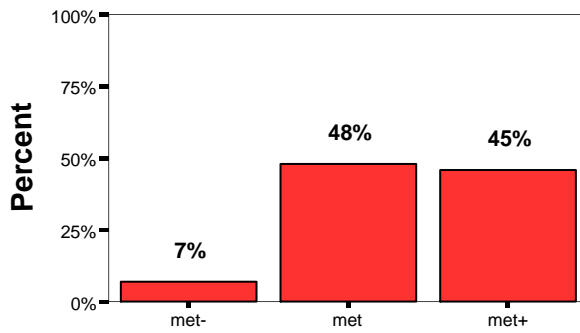
2. Understand how students differ in their approaches to learning



3. Demonstrate proficiency in reading



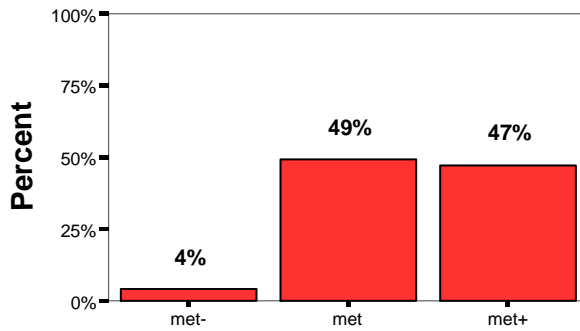
4. Demonstrate proficiency in writing



Bars show percents

**a4**

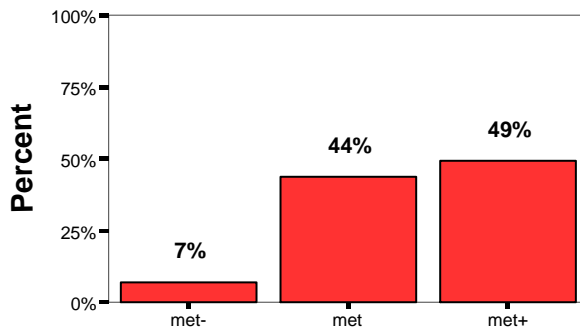
5. Demonstrate proficiency in mathematics



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**a5**

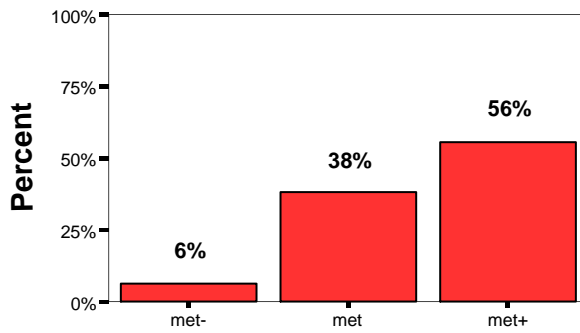
6. Understand the central concepts and skills, tools of inquiry, and structures of the disciplines they teach



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**a6**

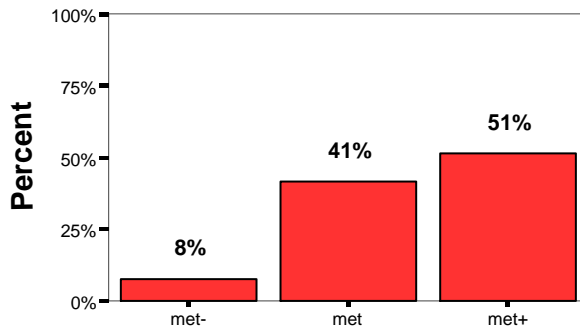
7. Know how to design and deliver instruction



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**a7**

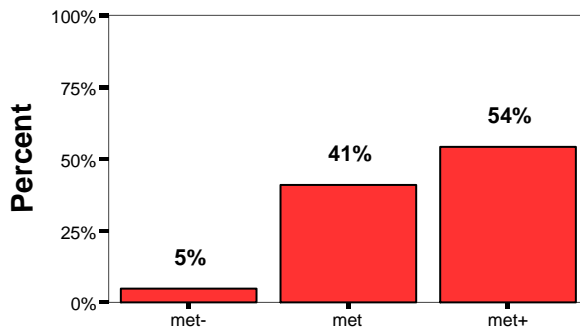
8. Recognize the need to vary their instructional methods



Bars show percents

**a8**

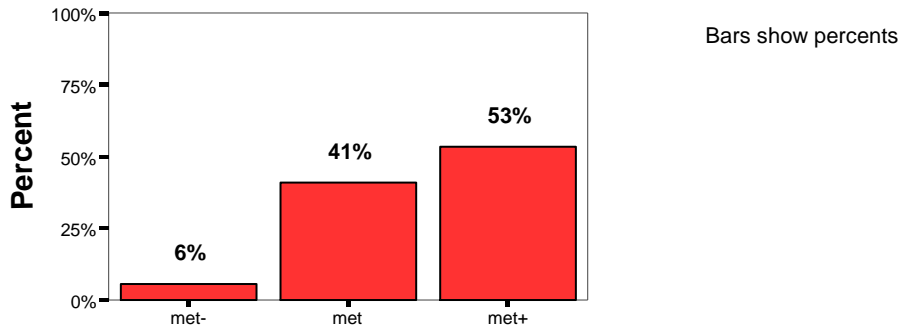
9. Plan instruction based upon knowledge of subject matter, students, the curriculum, and the community



Bars show percents

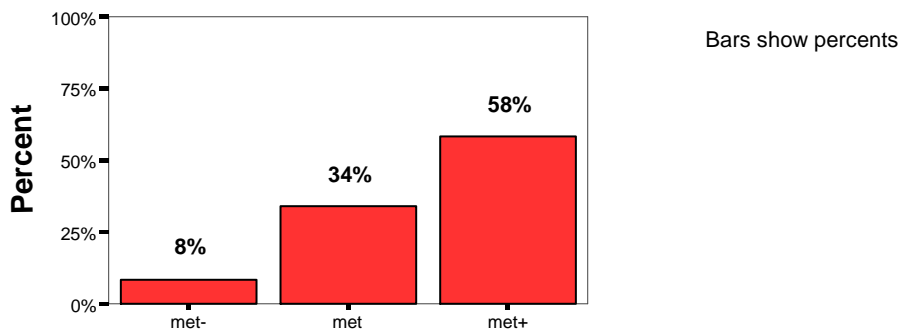
**a9**

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



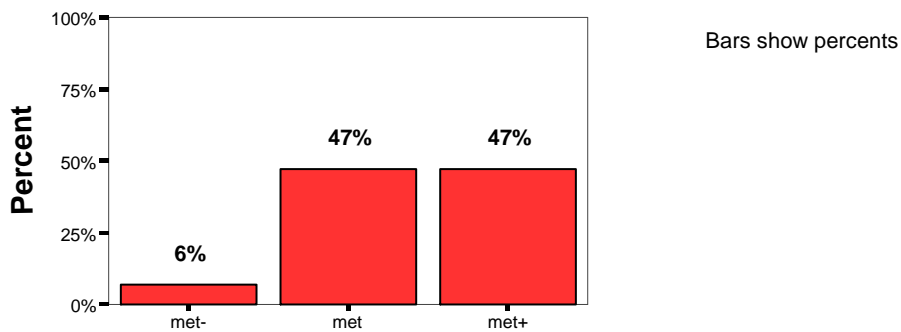
**a10**

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



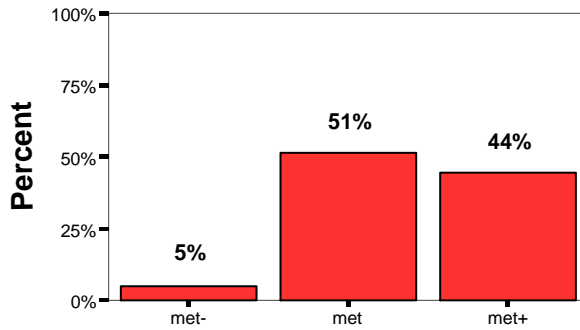
**a11**

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



**a12**

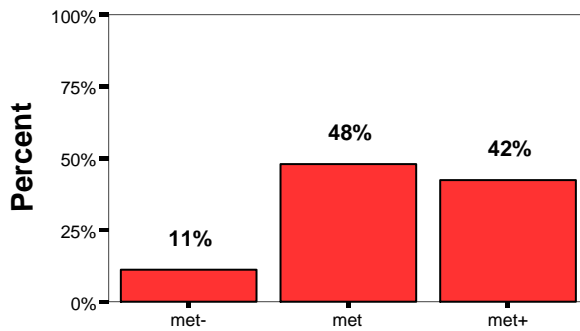
13. Use effective verbal, nonverbal and media communications' techniques which foster individual and collective inquiry



Bars show percents

**a13**

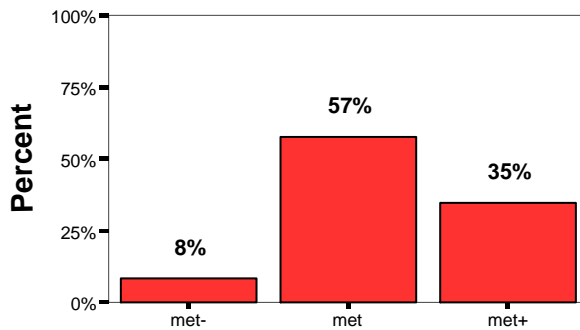
14. Employ a variety of instructional strategies that enable students to think critically, solve problems, and demonstrate skills



Bars show percents

**a14**

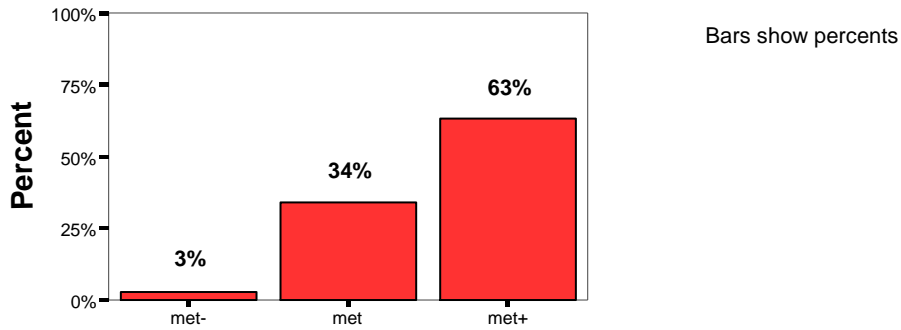
15. Use various assessment techniques to evaluate student learning and modify instruction as appropriate



Bars show percents

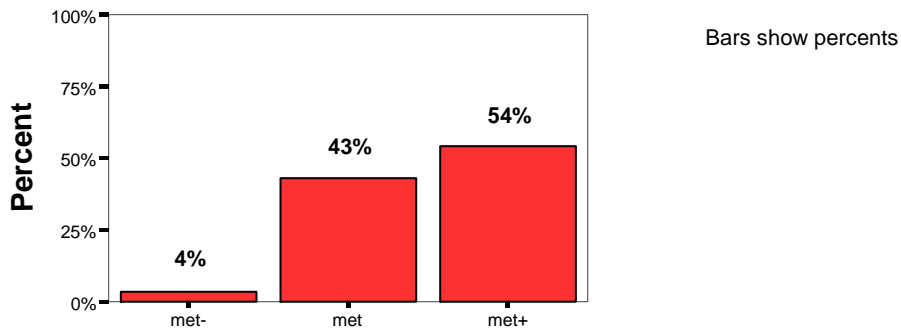
**a15**

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



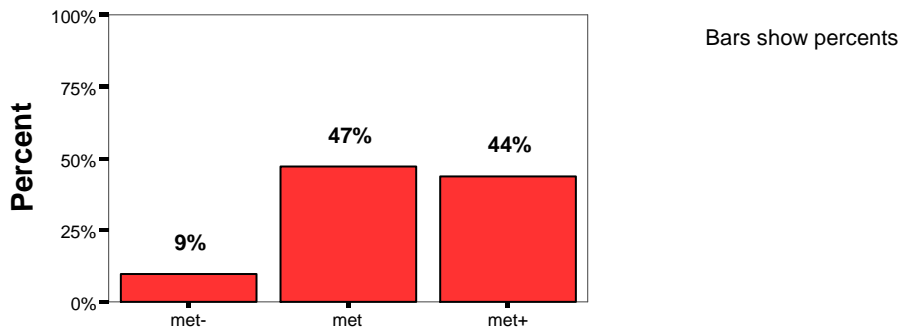
**a16**

17. Share responsibility for student achievement and well-being



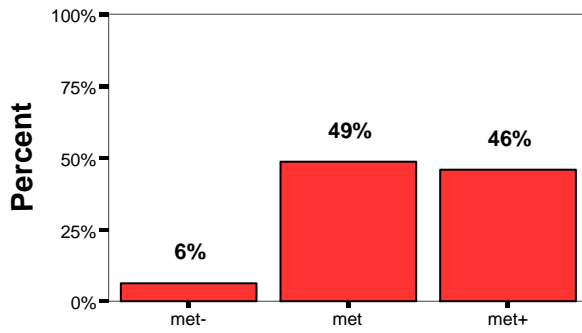
**a17**

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



**a18**

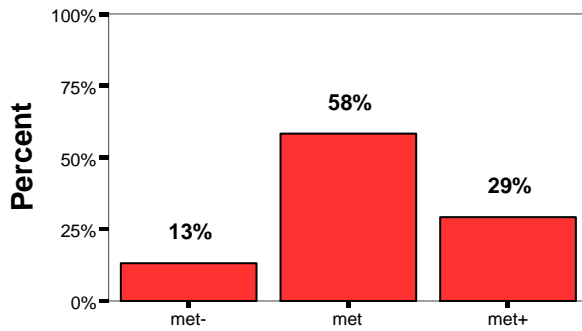
19. Seek out opportunities to grow professionally



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**a19**

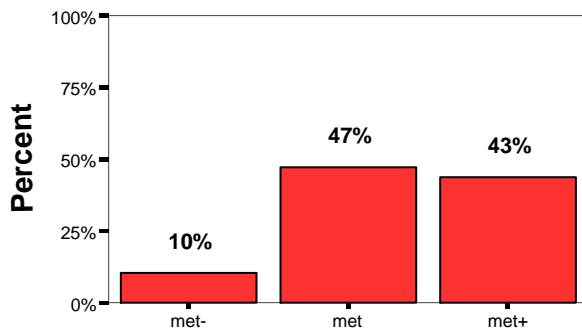
20. Serve as a leader in the school community



Bars show percents

**a20**

21. Demonstrates a passion for improving their profession



Bars show percents

**a21**

**SECTION II - 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 foster individual and collective inquiry			
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 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:**

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**Thank you very much!**

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

November 1, 2008

Dear Principal:

I need your help! Teacher education is at a crossroads in our State and I need your feedback on this survey to determine how well our programs 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, 2008**. For your convenience, a self-addressed stamped envelope has been enclosed. 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. 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, 2008**. 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

2008-2009 CCSAR

November 17, 2008

Dear (insert school name here) Principal:

Earlier you should have received a mailing from CCSAR, at SCSU, asking for your help. If you have filled out the survey and returned it, thank you, if not, the information that I am asking you to provide will help us improve the quality of the educational and field experiences that Southern 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 professional educators.

I would greatly appreciate your help by completing and returning the enclosed survey by **December 5, 2008**. For your convenience, a self-addressed stamped envelope has been enclosed. Additionally, we are providing you with the name(s) of the SCSU alumni who submitted their portfolio in spring 2008 and/or who graduated two years ago. 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 recent alumnus/alumni: (insert name here)**

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 **December 5, 2008**. 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 Educations

2008-2009 CCSAR

**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 when it is completed.

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

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

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

Street

Town

State

Zip Code

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

Would you be interested in participating in a focus group? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Numbers:

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

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

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