

This document contains Chapter 4: Principal, Teacher, and Site Testing Coordinator Reactions from the California High School Exit Examination (CAHSEE): Year 5 Evaluation Report dated September 30, 2004, as prepared by the Human Resources Research Organization (HumRRO) for the California Department of Education. All sections of the report are located at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/hs/year5.asp>

CHAPTER 4: PRINCIPAL, TEACHER, AND SITE TESTING COORDINATOR REACTIONS

Introduction

As in previous years of the evaluation, principals, teachers, and site testing coordinators within a sample of schools completed surveys to report current experiences, impressions, and expectations regarding the CAHSEE exam. This was the fifth administration for principals and teachers and the third administration for site testing coordinators. To the maximum extent possible, survey items were retained intact from previous years to facilitate comparisons over time.

In order to identify trends over time, HumRRO established a longitudinal sampling base. We began in 2000 with a representative sample of 92 high schools from 27 districts to be surveyed each spring. We collected Year 1 data from this sample in spring 2000, Year 2 data in spring 2001, Year 3 data in spring 2002, Year 4 data in spring 2003, and Year 5 data in spring 2004. The number of participating districts and schools varied slightly from year to year as some dropped out or were replaced.

Three surveys were administered to capture Year 5 data: one for principals, one for teachers in the same schools, and another for the CAHSEE school site testing coordinators in the same schools. The survey of principals requested information about issues such as preparation for, planning for, and impact of the CAHSEE (see Appendix A). The teacher survey emphasized classroom practices, issues regarding the planning and preparation for administration of the CAHSEE, and its impact on teachers, students, and parents (see Appendix B). The site coordinator survey asked for feedback on training and guidance, students tested, and the general approach to conducting the examination (see Appendix C). All surveys contained several open-ended questions to allow respondents to clarify their responses and to inform HumRRO of any additional information they felt was worth sharing.

Survey Development

The following are the main questions addressed in these surveys:

1. What is the extent and type of current preparation for the CAHSEE?
2. What degree of awareness of the CAHSEE do students and parents currently have?
3. What activities have schools undertaken to prepare students for the CAHSEE?
4. How do principals and teachers address the issue of students who are unsuccessful on the CAHSEE?

5. What are the principals' and teachers' judgments of the impact of the CAHSEE?
6. How do principals and teachers respectively assess the influence of the CAHSEE on instructional practices?
7. What percentage of students, by various student subgroups, do principals and teachers respectively estimate to have received instruction in each of the content standards?

To the extent possible, survey items on the spring 2004 surveys were identical to those on the spring 2000, 2001, 2002, and 2003 surveys. This consistency served to maximize comparability across years, so that trends could be inferred. However, some items were improved in response to earlier feedback. Where questions have been revised substantially, the changes are noted.

Sampling and Administration

The goal for the sampling plan was to select districts for inclusion in the CAHSEE evaluation data collection efforts that would be as representative as possible. A complete description of the sampling procedure is presented in Wise et al. (2000a). In short, a representative sample of 27 districts was selected in spring 2000 for intensive study over the course of the CAHSEE evaluation. Replacements were identified for each district in case the targeted district could not participate. In each original and replacement district, we selected 1–15 high schools, depending on district size, to create a representative sample of 92 schools. Where possible, we identified replacements for each selected school. In small districts containing only one or two high schools, all schools were in the original sample. Sampling ratios were established so that each school would represent approximately the same number of 10th grade students. In this way simple averages across the schools in the sample would provide estimates for all 10th grade students in the state.

We surveyed the principals and teachers of these schools in spring 2000; results are reported in Wise et al. (2000a). Schools from all but three districts participated at that time. In spring 2001, all of the previously participating districts as well as two of the previously nonparticipating districts indicated a willingness to participate. One nonparticipating district was replaced (Wise et al., 2001). One district declined to participate in the spring 2002 survey, and we identified and contacted a replacement district. Details of the three participating schools were not confirmed in sufficient time to allow teachers and the principal to complete the surveys. In spring 2003, two districts declined to participate, and a replacement was made for the one that declined early in the process. Six individual schools declined to participate and replacements were made for three.

In 2004 the respondent sample for the surveys comprised 26 districts. Initial contact was made with a district contact person to inform them that it was time for the longitudinal survey and to ensure that it was acceptable to contact the schools in the sample from that district. Once approval from the district had been verified, we made initial contact with the schools' principals through a faxed or mailed

information packet. We offered to provide the surveys in either print or electronic formats, and asked principals to indicate their preference for survey format when they confirmed their schools' participation.

The web-based (Internet) survey was based on the paper version of the survey. We e-mailed instructions, a unique password, and the Web address (i.e., Uniform Resource Locator, or URL) of the survey to those respondents who preferred the Internet version. The online survey went live on April 7, 2004 and remained online until June 23. The paper-based survey packets were shipped in April and May 2004 to the attention of the principal or designee. The packets included the following:

- Cover letter and instructions to principal
- One principal survey
- Cover letter and instructions to teachers
- Four teacher surveys—two labeled for English-language arts (ELA) and two labeled for mathematics
- One school site testing coordinator survey
- Instructions and packaging for returning evaluation materials

We asked principals to complete their questionnaires or to designate someone to do so. We asked them to identify one or two teachers of Algebra 1, or other appropriate mathematics course, and one or two 9th or 10th grade ELA teachers to complete the teacher surveys (if faculty size was sufficient). We also asked the principals to identify the person in their school responsible for administration of the CAHSEE. Each survey was contained in a sealable envelope to be returned to the principal for shipment to HumRRO; the envelope was intended to facilitate candid responses. The cover letters to each group encouraged respondents to contact a HumRRO project member if they had questions or concerns.

We requested that evaluation materials be returned to HumRRO by May 28. Schools planning May administrations were asked to delay completion of the school site testing coordinator survey until testing was complete. In late April we conducted a regular schedule of follow-up faxes and telephone calls to schools that had not initially responded and to schools that had not returned their evaluation materials. In mid-May we initiated an intensive round of phone calls to non-responding schools. In early June the CDE sent an e-mail or fax message to non-responding schools to encourage them to return their evaluation materials.

Principal and Teacher Findings

Thirty-four high school principals, 135 teachers, and 42 test coordinators representing 53 schools across 19 districts completed surveys. Results are reported in the following areas:

- Background
- Awareness
- Preparation
- Use of Results
- Expectations
- Other

We have reported the results in three ways, as summaries of principal, teacher, and test coordinator responses to the spring 2004 survey. In addition, as appropriate, we compared the 2004 responses with comparable questions on the spring 2000, 2001, 2002, and 2003 surveys to provide information regarding trends and stability of responses over time. Note that these comparisons are presented at a summary level; that is, changes in responses from individual schools are not presented.

Of the 86 schools in the spring 2004 sample, 53 (62 percent of the original sample, from across 19 of the 26 districts [73 percent]) returned surveys. The remaining schools in the sample were unable to complete the surveys, presumably due to heavy staff demands at the end of the school year. One or more teacher surveys were received from 48 schools (56%).

Background

Principals indicated that they have held principal or other school-level administration positions for 2–28 years, with a mean of 10 years. They reported 2–28 years of teaching experience, 1–27 years in their present schools, and 6–39 years of working in public schools.

Teachers were asked to provide demographic information. Twelve percent reported having only a bachelor's degree; most respondents reported education beyond a bachelor's degree (39 percent some graduate school, 46 percent master's degrees, 2 percent doctoral degrees and 3 percent other); 53 percent indicated that the primary subject area they taught was English or language arts and 47 percent specified mathematics as their primary subject area. Ninety-three percent indicated that they are certified in their primary subject area. Both ELA and math teachers reported a mean of 15.3 years of teaching experience.

Principals were asked to provide background information on their schools. The current number of teachers on staff ranged from 3 to 221, with a mean of 76 (SD=51). Principals reported that the percentage of teachers with advanced degrees ranged from 1 percent to 99 percent (median=45%). When asked the percentage of teachers who have taught at this school for 3 or more years, principal responses ranged from 0 to 95 percent, with a median of 78 percent. Principals reported that 10–100 percent of their teachers were certified in the subject they are teaching (median=95%). They reported, on average, a graduation rate of 79 percent (SD=23), with rates varying by race/ethnicity group. Twenty-six out of 34 (77%) principals responded on whether and what major staff or faculty changes have taken place in their school over the past three years. Of those who responded, 13 (50%) reported changes in teachers, including either increasing or reducing number of teachers, retirements, and new teachers; seven (27%) reported changes in principal and other administrative staff members; and five (19%) reported no changes in faculty or staff taking place.

The survey asked principals to indicate whether their schools offered various specialty education programs. Sixty-five percent offer remedial courses; 21 percent, magnet programs; 82 percent, special education; 73 percent, programs for English learners (EL); 9 percent, multicultural/diversity-based programs [courses?]; 67 percent, Advanced Placement (AP); 3 percent, International Baccalaureate; 42 percent, school/community/business partnerships; 39 percent, targeted tutoring; and 15 percent, other. Besides the programs listed by the survey, five principals provided other responses such as support classes and independent study program that their schools offer to students.

Principals were asked to summarize post-graduation plans of their seniors. Twenty-three percent of respondents indicated that they do not collect such data. Table 4.1 summarizes the responses of the principals with access to such information.

Teachers were asked to provide some information about their own classes; 13 percent of teachers reported that 100 percent of their students were fluent English speakers; 49 percent indicated that 90–99 percent were fluent in English; 22 percent reported 75–89 percent; 11 percent reported 50–74 percent; and 5 percent indicated that less than 50 percent of their students were fluent English speakers. The average class size was 28 students.

Principals were also asked what percentage of their schools' current 12th grade students have passed both parts of the CAHSEE. Because a large number of principals refrained from responding to each item, it is difficult to report these numbers with any confidence. For example, Table 4.2 indicates that 41 percent of respondents reported that 81–100 percent of seniors had passed both parts of the test; if non-respondents were eliminated from the respondent pool, that percentage would increase from 41 to 56 percent. Therefore Table 4.2 includes a column for non-respondents. Principals report that students with disabilities and EL students have passed the CAHSEE at lower rates than the overall student population.

TABLE 4.1. Percentage of Principals Reporting Post-Graduation Plans for Seniors in Their Schools (N=34)

Post-Graduation Plans	Percentage of Seniors				
	0–20%	21–40%	41–60%	61–80%	81–100%
Working full time	88	8	0	4	0
Attending a vocational, technical, or business school	83	13	0	0	4
Attending a 2-year college	17	35	39	4	4
Attending a 4-year college, service academy, university	41	36	18	4	0
Serving in the regular military service	100	0	0	0	0
Other	100	0	0	0	0

TABLE 4.2. Percentage of Principals Reporting 12th Grade Students Who Have Passed Both Parts of the CAHSEE (N=34)

Student Category	Percentage of Seniors					
	0-20%	21-40%	41-60%	61-80%	81-100%	No Response
All your school's 12 th grade students	9	12	6	6	41	26
12 th grade students with disabilities in SDC (Special Day Classes)	47	6	3	3	3	38
12 th grade students with disabilities in RSP (Resource Specialist Programs)	27	15	9	3	12	35
12 th grade students who are or were English learners	12	18	18	9	3	41

Within the survey sample, ELA teachers appeared to be more specialized in grade-level teaching than were math teachers. Table 4.3 indicates the grade levels taught by these teachers.

TABLE 4.3. Percentage of Surveyed Teachers That Teach at Each Grade Level (N=135)

Grade Level Taught	ELA	Math
Grade 9	56	97
Grade 10	69	89
Grade 11	48	81
Grade 12	39	70

Note: Columns exceed 100% because respondents could select multiple options.

The survey asked teachers to estimate the amount of time, on average, they believed students spend working on assignments in the subject they teach (as opposed to total homework time) outside the classroom each week. Two percent estimated none; 27 percent, less than 1 hour; 57 percent, 1 to 3 hours; and 13 percent estimated more than 3 hours.

Teachers were asked to estimate how often they plan for students to participate in specific types of activities. The activities rated most frequently (once or twice a week or almost every day) were:

- do work from textbooks (87%)
- do work from supplemental materials (80%)
- apply subject area knowledge to real-world situations (73%)
- write a few sentences (65%)
- work in pairs or small groups (64%)
- take quizzes or tests (61%)

These ratings were nearly identical to ratings in 2003. These top six-rated activities were endorsed in the same rank order both years and percentages differed by only 0–3 percentage points.

Awareness

Principals were asked to estimate how aware their students and parents were of the CAHSEE. Three percent estimated that their students knew nothing about the exam, 26 percent estimated that their students had at least general information, and a substantial proportion of respondents estimated their students had specific knowledge of the exam (e.g., 79 percent reported the students knew what knowledge and skills are covered; 85 percent indicated they knew the time of year when the exam is given; 79 percent of students knew which students have the opportunity to take the exam). Three percent of principals estimated that their students’ parents knew nothing about the exam, 65 percent estimated their students’ parents had only general information, and an additional 44–79 percent estimated that their students’ parents had advanced knowledge of the exam (e.g., 44 percent reported that parents knew what knowledge and skills are covered, 79 percent indicated they knew the time of year when the exam is given, and 68 percent believe parents know which students have the opportunity to take the exam). In general, principals’ ratings of student and parent familiarity with the CAHSEE have increased over prior years (Table 4.4). Between 2003 and 2004, ratings of student and parental knowledge have continued to rise (as noted in bold in Table 4.4).

Principals were asked to estimate the percentage of students and parents in their school who know what knowledge and skills are covered by the exam. The 2004 mean estimate of student familiarity was 69 percent (SD=27.60) compared to the 2003 estimate of 63 percent (SD=25.67); the 2004 mean estimate of parent familiarity was 44 percent (SD=29.74) compared to the 2003 estimate of 43 percent (SD=29.94).

TABLE 4.4. Principals’ Responses to Estimated Percentage of Students and Parents Familiar with the CAHSEE

Familiarity	Respondent Group	2001	2002	2003	2004
They know which students have the opportunity to take the exam.	Students	49	67	81	79
	Parents	18	54	60	67
They know the time of year when the exam is given.	Students	38	67	71	85
	Parents	38	63	57	79
They know what knowledge and skills are covered by the exam.	Students	33	51	79	79
	Parents	18	17	26	44
Have general information only	Students	67	60	33	26
	Parents	78	89	62	65
No familiarity	Students	2	4	10	3
	Parents	7	4	12	3

Note 1: Respondents could select multiple responses, thus the columns total more than 100 percent.

Note 2: Discernable increases in familiarity over the past year are noted in bold.

Preparation Thus Far

One precursor to a successful statewide program is to align school curricula with the state content standards to ensure that students are being taught what will be tested. Thus we queried respondents about alignment with state content standards. Table 4.5 presents comparison data of responses given across survey years regarding preparations made to align curricula with the California Content Standards. The percentage of principals that reported efforts to align with state content standards in 2004 is slightly lower than the percentage in 2003; in part this can be explained by answers to the next question about current alignment.

Principals were asked to compare their district standards and the state content standards. Table 4.6 presents comparison data on the similarity between district and state standards across the five survey years. Overall, alignment between state and district standards is quite high, with nearly one-fifth of districts adopting standards that extend beyond the state requirements. In 2004, there was a slight increase in the number of principals reporting that their district had adopted state math content standards. No principals indicated that their districts do not have an official set of standards, that the district standards are different from the state standards, or that the principals could not judge the status of district standards.

TABLE 4.5. Principals’ Reported Percentages of Preparations for Alignment with California Content Standards

Preparation	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Districts/schools encourage the use of content standards to organize instruction	100	91	96	93	91
Textbooks align well with content standards	74	56	81	74	N/A
ELA	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	79
Math	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	82
Adopted algebra as a graduation requirement	N/A	N/A	74	81	79
Hiring only teachers certified in their field	N/A	N/A	43	60	74
Cover all content standards with a mix of textbooks and supplemental materials	38	44	47	50	56
Have plans to ensure all high school students receive instruction in each of the content standards	52	40	45	57	53
Assigning teachers only in their certified field	N/A	N/A	49	60	47
In process of aligning curriculum across grade levels	N/A	N/A	72	38	44
Have plans to ensure that all pre-high school students are prepared to receive instruction in each of the content standards	N/A	N/A	30	36	41
In process of aligning curriculum with standards	81	56	74	38	29

Along similar lines, teachers were asked at what level their school’s current curriculum covers the standards tested by the CAHSEE. Tables 4.7a and 4.7b provide further information on this item for ELA and mathematics, respectively. The majority of the teachers indicated that almost all of the standards are covered by their school’s curriculum. The responses indicated that ELA coverage was more complete than that of mathematics. None of the math teachers reported that their school’s curriculum covered less than one quarter of the content standards whereas three percent of ELA teachers estimated that their school’s curriculum covered less than a quarter of the content standards. Another 21 percent of math teachers and 12 percent of ELA teachers indicated that they had no knowledge of the content standards.

TABLE 4.6. Percentage of Principals Reporting Similarity between District and State Standards

Similarity Between Standards	Content Area	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
District adopted state standards	ELA	69	67	72	79	76
	Math		71	74	79	82
District standards include more than state standards	ELA	19	29	17	21	21
	Math		22	15	18	18
State standards include more than district standards	ELA	7	2	2	0	3
	Math		5	2	0	0
Two sets of standards are different	ELA	N/A	N/A	2	0	0
	Math		N/A	4	0	0
District has no official set of standards	ELA	0	2	2	0	0
	Math		2	2	0	0
I cannot judge	ELA	N/A	N/A	4	0	0
	Math		N/A	2	3	0

Note: 2000 survey did not distinguish between ELA and Math standards.

TABLE 4.7a. Percentage of Teachers Indicating Coverage of ELA Standards by Curriculum

Coverage of Standards	2001	2002	2003	2004
Almost all	60	54	57	57
About ¾	20	28	28	22
About ¼–½	11	13	15	6
Less than ¼	6	4	0	3
No knowledge of standards	3	1	0	12

TABLE 4.7b. Percentage of Teachers Indicating Coverage of Mathematics Standards by Curriculum

Coverage of Standards	2001	2002	2003	2004
Almost all	57	72	64	55
About $\frac{3}{4}$	14	17	13	13
About $\frac{1}{4}$ – $\frac{1}{2}$	16	9	16	11
Less than $\frac{1}{4}$	5	3	4	0
No knowledge of standards	8	0	4	21

Respondents were asked how much time they personally spent during the 2003–2004 school year in activities related to the CAHSEE (e.g., meetings, discussions, curriculum review, professional development). A minority of principals reported spending more than 35 hours (15%). Just over a quarter reported spending between 16 and 35 hours (27%) and nearly two-fifths reported spending between 6 and 15 hours (38%) Twenty-one percent reported spending fewer than 6 hours. No principals reported spending none of their time in CAHSEE-related activities. Table 4.8 indicates teachers’ estimates of the number of hours spent on classroom instruction and the number of hours spent on other activities related to the CAHSEE. In 2003 teachers reported less time spent on classroom activities and CAHSEE-related activities, relative to the 2002 responses (as noted in bold in Table 4.8).

TABLE 4.8. Percentage of Teachers Estimating Various Amounts of Time on the CAHSEE Activities

Activity	Academic Year	None	Fewer than 6 Hours	6–15 Hours	16–35 Hours	More than 35 Hours
Time spent on classroom instruction preparation activities related to CAHSEE (e.g., department planning, lesson plan review)	2001–2002	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	2002 – 2003	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	2003–2004	4	25	28	24	19
Total classroom instruction time spent on activities they would not have engaged in if it weren’t for the CAHSEE (e.g., unit or course review)	2001–2002	28	35	25	6	2
	2002–2003	24	41	14	14	7
	2003–2004	28	37	22	10	3
Time spent on activities related to the CAHSEE (e.g., faculty and department meetings, discussions, staff development)	2001–2002	2	40	31	13	8
	2002–2003	3	34	30	19	14
	2003–2004	3	40	37	11	9

Note: Discernable decreases in time over the past year are noted in bold.

By way of comparison, Table 4.9 reports the amount of time teachers reported spending in professional development workshops, in-service, or seminars in their primary subject area. They were instructed to include attendance at district-sponsored training and external training. Results are reported separately for ELA and math teachers. Comparison of Tables 4.8 and 4.9 reveals that teachers spend substantially more time in subject-area training than in the individual categories of CAHSEE activities.

TABLE 4.9. Percentage of Teachers Estimating Various Amounts of Time in Professional Development, In-Service, or Seminars in Primary Subject Area (N=135)

Respondent Group	None	Fewer than 6 Hours	6–15 Hours	16–35 Hours	More than 35 Hours
ELA Teachers	4	18	23	23	32
Math Teachers	3	20	22	30	25

Teachers were asked to rate the quality of CAHSEE-related professional development they have received this year from local and state sources. Table 4.10 indicates that, overall, ratings of local professional development activities were higher than ratings of state professional development activities. The 2001–2002 survey did not have “None” as a response option. In 2004, 22 percent of teachers indicated that they did not receive professional development from local sources and 38 percent indicated that they did not receive professional development from state sources. Among those who did receive such an opportunity, ratings of professional development from local sources was rated more highly than state sources (44 percent versus 31 percent ratings of “excellent” or “good”), although ratings of locally provided professional development received fewer “excellent” ratings in 2004 than in 2003 (9% versus 14%).

TABLE 4.10. Percentage of Teachers Rating Quality of Professional Development Experiences

Quality of Professional Development You Have Received	From Local Sources			From State Sources		
	2001–2002	2002–2003	2003–2004	2001–2002	2002–2003	2003–2004
Excellent	6	14	9	2	2	4
Good	35	26	35	15	26	27
Fair	35	20	21	36	12	19
Poor	16	12	12	38	16	10
None	N/A	26	22	N/A	44	38
No response	9	2	1	9	4	2

Note: 2001–2002 survey did not offer “None” as a response option.

Teachers were also asked to rate the extent to which their instruction has benefited from professional development over the past four years. Table 4.11 reveals that ELA teachers responded more positively than math teachers.

TABLE 4.11. ELA and Math Teacher Ratings of Instructional Benefit Garnered from Professional Development Over Four Years (in percentages) (N=135)

Rating	ELA Teachers	Math Teachers
To a great extent	14	11
To a moderate extent	33	21
To a slight extent	24	44
Not at all	26	24

Survey questions investigated the usefulness of two information sources: the CDE website and the CAHSEE Remediation Guide. Principals were asked about the website and teachers were asked about both sources. Table 4.12 indicates that ratings were generally positive, although a substantial percentage of teachers were unfamiliar with the resources in question. A greater percentage of math teachers than ELA teachers indicated no knowledge of both resources. Principals rated the usefulness of the CDE website more highly than either teacher group.

TABLE 4.12. Principal, ELA and Math Teacher Ratings of Usefulness of CAHSEE Resources (in percentages) (Principal N=34; Teacher N=135)

Rating	CDE Website			CAHSEE Remediation Guide	
	Principal	ELA Teacher	Math Teacher	ELA Teacher	Math Teacher
Very Useful	35	18	16	23	19
Somewhat Useful	39	27	30	36	36
Slightly Useful	17	14	11	17	16
Not At All Useful	9	4	3	3	0
I am not familiar with this resource	0	37	41	21	30

Principals were asked to indicate the types of activities their school undertook to prepare faculty/staff for the spring 2004 administration of the CAHSEE. Table 4.13 indicates that 2004 responses were largely consistent with 2003 responses. However, more principals indicated that they were employing local workshops on the CAHSEE test administration in 2004 than in 2003.

TABLE 4.13. Percentage of Principals Undertaking Activities to Prepare Faculty/Staff for the CAHSEE Administration

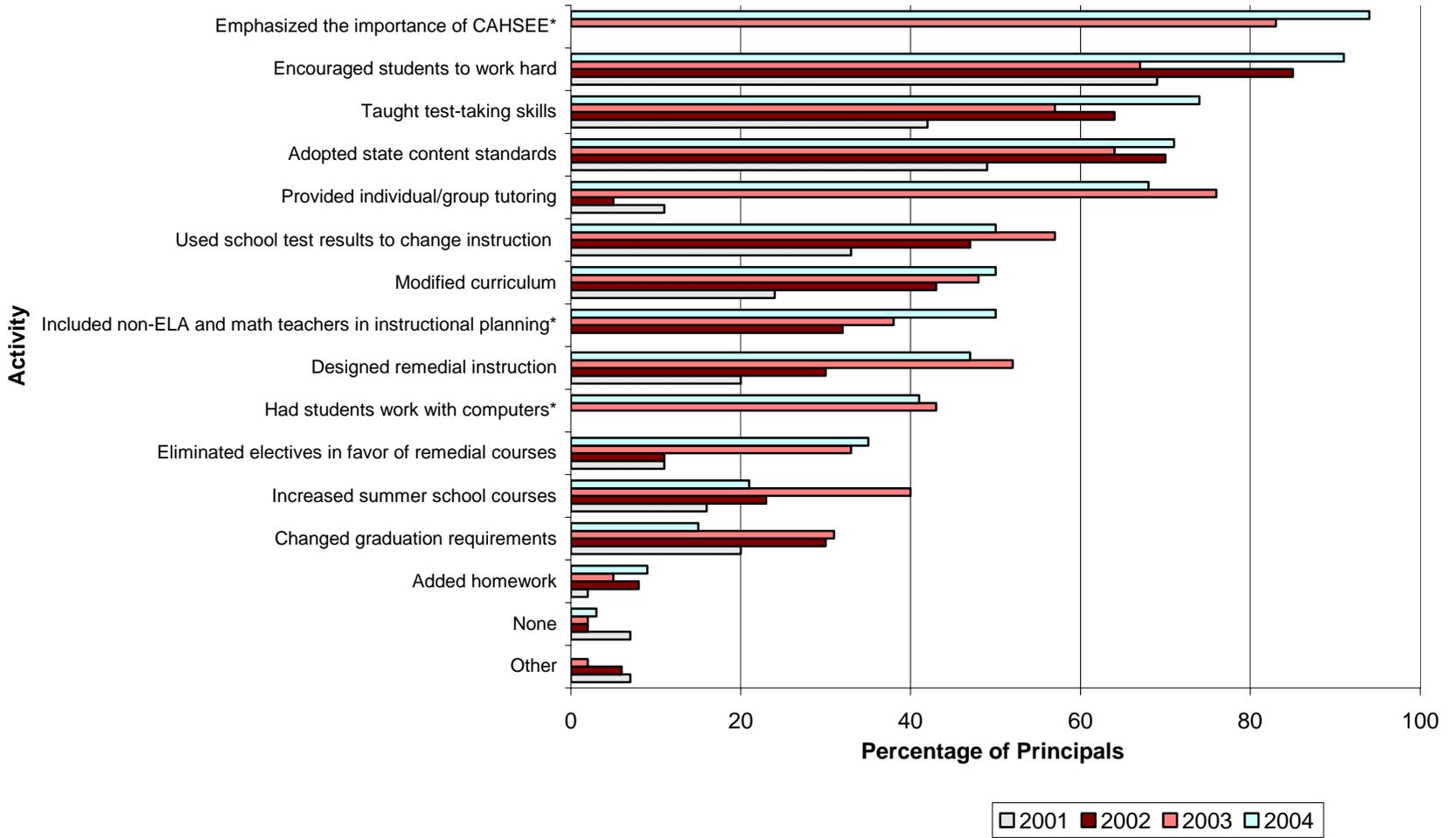
Activities	2001	2002	2003	2004
Administrators participated in test administration workshops	71	70	67	71
Provided test taking strategies	42	61	67	65
Delivered local workshops on CAHSEE content (e.g., used Teacher Guides as a focal point for discussion)	36	41	62	59
Delivered local workshops on test administration	58	48	43	50
Other	7	8	12	12
No special preparation	9	4	5	9

Respondents were asked to identify the specific activities they had undertaken to prepare students for the spring 2004 administration of the CAHSEE. Most principals reported initiating some activities; only one principal indicated that his school did not implement any activities to prepare students for the spring 2004 CAHSEE. Figure 4.1a presents the percentage of principals who reported implementing each activity, in descending order of endorsement in 2004; Figure 4.1b presents teachers' responses. Principals did not provide other activities besides those listed on the survey; while teachers provided diverse responses, for example, preparing benchmarks, designing curricular maps to meet the CAHSEE standards, and using "previous released items" and "example problems."

In general, preparatory activities have increased over the years of this evaluation. Activities that increased substantially in 2004 included emphasizing the importance of the CAHSEE, encouraging students to work hard, teaching test-taking skills, and including non-ELA and non-math teachers in instructional planning for the CAHSEE. On the other hand, several activities seemed to drop off in 2004 (e.g., providing individual/group tutoring, using school test results to change instruction and remedial instruction, increasing summer school offerings, and changing graduation requirements).

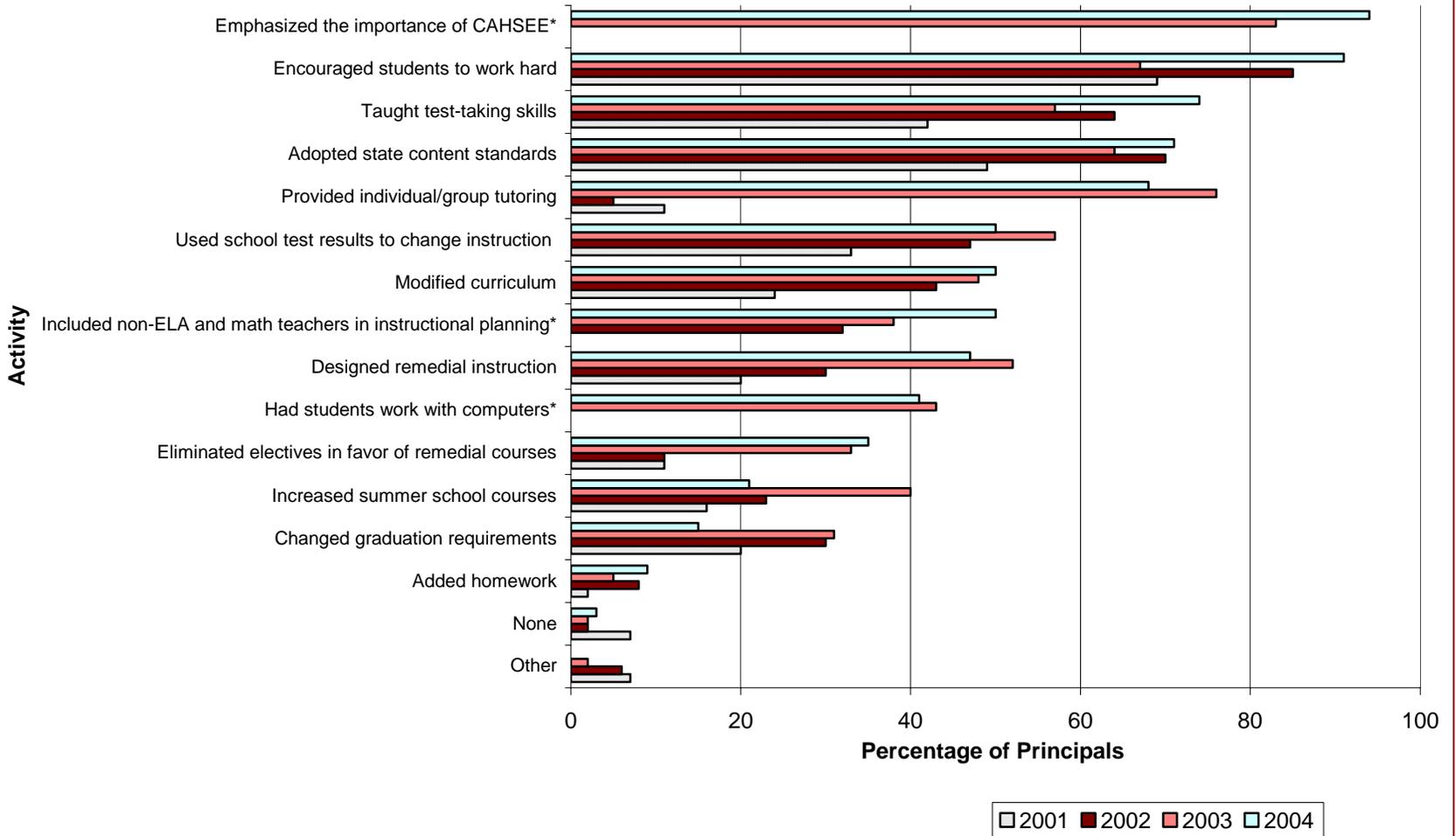
Principals were asked what information they use to identify students who are at risk of not passing the CAHSEE or scoring Below Basic (or Far Below Basic) on the CST (California Standards Test). All listed options were selected by a substantial proportion of respondents. In descending order, they were: CST results (91%), teacher judgment (71%), district assessments (62%), district end-of-course results (56%), NRT (norm-referenced test) results (38%), and other (12%).

Principals identified the three activities they consider the most important in CAHSEE preparation. Forty-four percent of principals indicated that emphasizing the importance of the CAHSEE was among the top three; 26 percent identified encouraging students to work hard, and 26 percent selected adoption of state content standards. Teachers also were asked to indicate the three most important activities. Teachers rated activities in the following order of importance: teaching test taking skills (44%), emphasizing the importance of the CAHSEE (39%), and increased classroom attention to content standards covered by the CAHSEE in the weeks preceding the CAHSEE (39%).



* Question not asked in all years.

Figure 4.1a. Percentage of principals reporting activities undertaken in preparation for the spring 2001, 2002, 2003, and 2004 administrations of the CAHSEE.



* Question not asked in all years.

Figure 4.1b. Percentage of teachers reporting activities undertaken in preparation for the spring 2001, 2002, 2003, and 2004 administrations of the CAHSEE.

Use of Results

In addition to any preparatory steps taken thus far, the surveys inquired about future plans to deal with the CAHSEE requirement. In particular, the survey queried principals on efforts to prepare teachers and others for the exam and about remediation plans subsequent to exam administration.

The survey provided principals with a list of possible remedial practices for students who do not pass the CAHSEE or do not seem prepared to take it. Principals were asked the degree to which each activity has been implemented on a scale of: no plans to implement, plan to implement, partially implemented, and fully implemented. None of the principals indicated that they had no special plans to assist these students. Table 4.14 lists the percentage of principals who indicated plans to implement each activity in 2002, 2003, and 2004. Activities with consistently increasing implementation are listed in bold. These increased activities reveal a few themes. First, they indicate a focus on content alignment; alignment activities include adopting state content standards, altering the high school curriculum, ensuring that demanding courses are offered from the beginning, and ensuring that students are taking them. Second, a broad, systemic approach to the CAHSEE is evident in the increased implementation of activities such as involving teachers other than ELA and mathematics teachers in instructional planning for the CAHSEE and working with feeder middle schools. An increasing number of principals report having students work with computers. The development of parent support programs, while still not widespread, shows an increase over the past three years. Table 4.14 also indicates that two activities were less frequently implemented than in the previous year: increasing high school remedial courses and increased high school summer offerings. These are indicated by underlined percentages in the table. It is not clear whether this pattern reflects an actual decrease in the activities or an increase in the intended level of implementation.

Figure 4.2 presents the same information shown in Table 4.14 for 2004 only, as a percentage of those responding. Activities are listed in descending order of endorsement; thus, those activities that all responding principals indicated plans to implement are listed first.

TABLE 4.14. Percentage of Principals Indicating Plans for Activities to Assist High School Students Who Do Not Pass the Exit Exam or Who Do Not Seem Prepared to Take It

Activity	Status	2002	2003	2004
Increased high school remedial courses	Fully Implemented	10	<u>33</u>	<u>17</u>
	Partially Implemented	33	37	41
	Plan to Implement	24	10	24
	No Plan to Implement	33	20	17
Reduced high school electives in favor of remedial classes	Fully Implemented	5	13	14
	Partially Implemented	5	33	36
	Plan to Implement	16	27	11
	No Plan to Implement	74	27	39
Increased high school summer offerings	Fully Implemented	45	<u>43</u>	<u>31</u>
	Partially Implemented	15	0	0
	Plan to Implement	10	32	52
	No Plan to Implement	30	25	17
Provided individual/group tutoring	Fully Implemented	29	45	40
	Partially Implemented	38	16	0
	Plan to Implement	24	32	53
	No Plan to Implement	10	6	7
Had students work with computers	Fully Implemented	N/A	23	31
	Partially Implemented	N/A	50	38
	Plan to Implement	N/A	17	14
	No Plan to Implement	N/A	10	17
Added homework	Fully Implemented	10	0	17
	Partially Implemented	10	0	17
	Plan to Implement	21	12	8
	No Plan to Implement	58	88	58
Adopted California Content Standards	Fully Implemented	45	82	88
	Partially Implemented	55	18	13
	Plan to Implement	0	0	0
	No Plan to Implement	0	0	0
Altered high school curriculum	Fully Implemented	5	34	39
	Partially Implemented	62	38	45
	Plan to Implement	29	14	6
	No Plan to Implement	5	14	10
Included teachers other than ELA and math in instructional planning for the CAHSEE	Fully Implemented	16	26	31
	Partially Implemented	42	32	31
	Plan to Implement	42	29	22
	No Plan to Implement	0	13	16
Worked with feeder middle schools	Fully Implemented	5	18	28
	Partially Implemented	55	29	38
	Plan to Implement	10	21	22
	No Plan to Implement	30	32	12

TABLE 4.14. Percentage of Principals Indicating Plans for Activities to Assist High School Students Who Do Not Pass the Exit Exam or Who Do Not Seem Prepared to Take It

Activity	Status	2002	2003	2004
Developed parent support program	Fully Implemented	0	0	11
	Partially Implemented	25	25	25
	Plan to Implement	50	25	25
	No Plan to Implement	25	50	39
Used school test results to change high school instruction	Fully Implemented	5	25	23
	Partially Implemented	65	50	61
	Plan to Implement	30	19	10
	No Plan to Implement	0	6	6
Evaluated high school students' abilities and placed them in courses/programs accordingly	Fully Implemented	23	57	55
	Partially Implemented	43	27	36
	Plan to Implement	19	13	6
	No Plan to Implement	14	3	3
Ensured that students are taking demanding courses from the beginning	Fully Implemented	20	33	64
	Partially Implemented	50	27	26
	Plan to Implement	20	13	10
	No Plan to Implement	10	7	0
Ensured we are offering demanding courses from the beginning	Fully Implemented	25	43	64
	Partially Implemented	55	40	26
	Plan to Implement	20	10	10
	No Plan to Implement	0	7	0
Other	Fully Implemented			
	Partially Implemented			
	Plan to Implement			
	No Plan to Implement			

¹ Percentages of 2002 respondents are based on the 21/47 respondents who answered this series of questions.

² Percentages of 2003 respondents are based on the 33/42 respondents who answered this series of questions.

Note: Discernable increases in implementation over the years are noted in bold. Discernable decreases in implementation over the years are noted with underline.

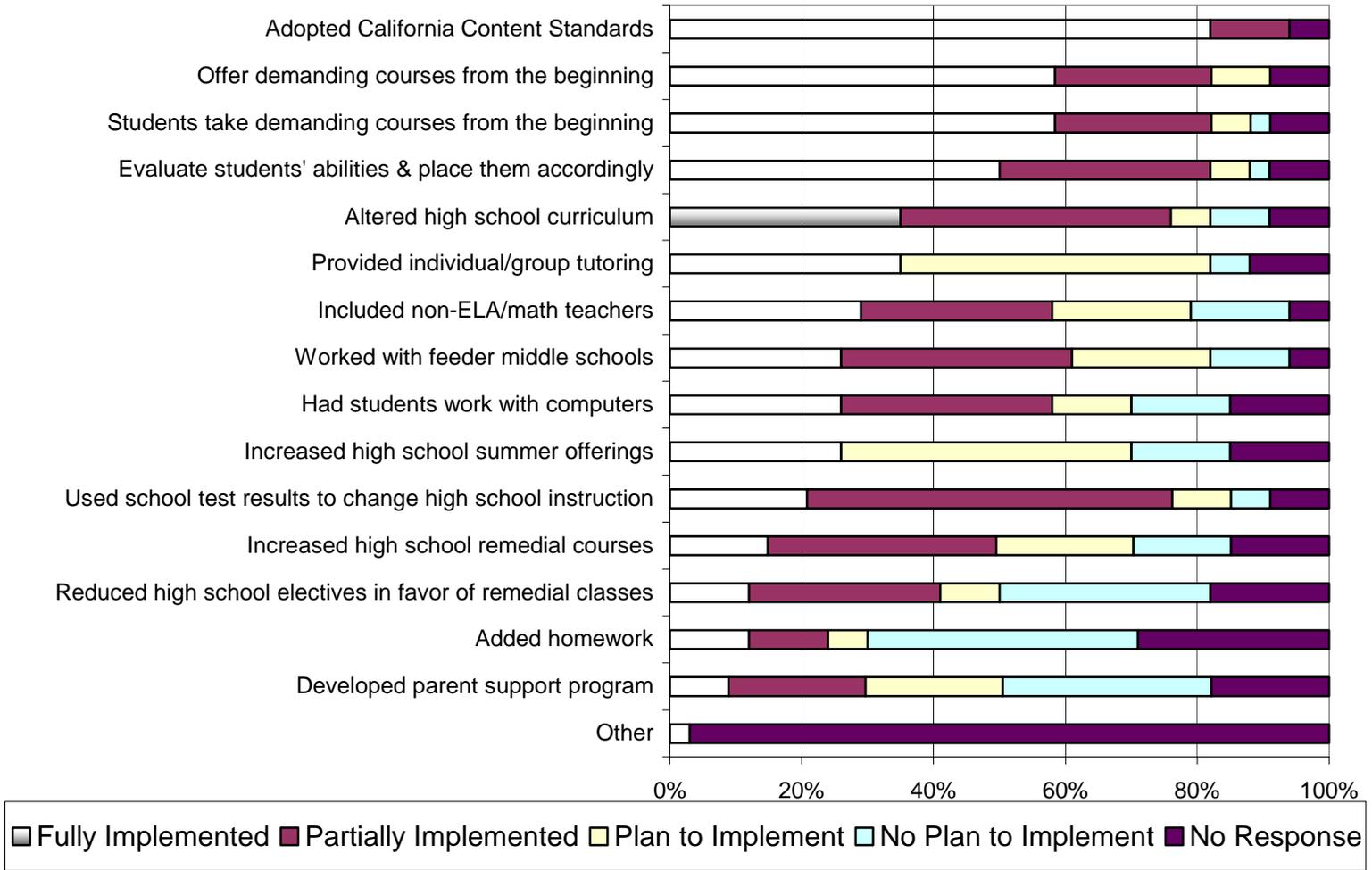


Figure 4.2. Percentage of principals in 2004 reporting plans for remediation of students who do not pass the CAHSEE (N=34).

Twenty-two principals (65%) responded to a question about plans or strategies for changes in Individualized Education Programs (IEP) or 504 plans to address participation of students with disabilities. Of these responses, 64 percent (14 responses) stated that they either made or followed the IEP/504, provided accommodations and/or additional assistance, or made modifications with IEP/504. Another 23 percent (5 out of 22 responses) stated their schools offered special academic work programs (e.g., tutoring, summer or after school classes, or intervention classes). Fourteen percent (3 responses) mentioned they had or were suggesting staff development in special education. Nine percent (2 responses) indicated that students with disabilities were being mainstreamed. Only five percent (1 response) stated there was no plan addressing the needs of students with disabilities. Compared with responses from last year, more schools have been addressing the needs of students with disabilities, either by building accommodations or modifications into the IEP/504, providing special academic work programs, or offering staff development.

A similar question asked principals about plans or strategies to help English learners (EL) overcome language barriers in order to succeed in meeting the requirements of the CAHSEE. Twenty-six principals (76%) responded to this question. Of these responses, 42 percent (11 responses) stated that they provided accommodations and/or additional assistance, or modifications to English learners. Thirty-eight percent (10 out of 26 responses) stated that special academic work programs (e.g., tutoring, summer or after school classes, or intervention classes) were available. Eight percent (2 responses) stated that staff development or language specialists were in use. Two stated that there were few or no EL students. Another eight percent (2 responses) said there was no plan to address the language barrier. Four percent (1 response) indicated that EL students were being mainstreamed. Again, compared with responses from last year, a greater proportion of schools have been addressing the needs of EL students, either providing accommodations or assistance, providing special academic work programs, or having trained or specialized staff available.

Principals were asked about the quality of the CAHSEE individual and group score reports, in terms of the major dimensions of ease of understanding, comprehensiveness, timeliness, and usefulness for instruction. Twenty-two principals responded, providing open-ended comments; four (12 %) said that they had not seen a score report; 36 percent (8 out of the 22) noted the ease of understanding, commenting that the reports are “easy to understand”. In terms of the usefulness for instruction, their opinions were diverse: 23 percent (5 out of 22) mentioned that the reports are helpful for instruction, e.g., the teachers “use the results to modify their instruction”; while 18 percent (4 out of 22) disagreed, making negative comments such as that the reports were “not a highly useful tool in instruction.” Fourteen percent (3 out of 22) of the responses criticized the timeliness of the reports.

Expectations

Several survey questions queried the respondent's expectations for the exam: anticipated pass rates, impact of the exam on student motivation and parental involvement, and so on.

Twenty-three principals made comments on the specific challenges their schools and students face in successfully meeting the requirement of the CAHSEE. Similar to last year's findings, they noted three areas of challenges: (a) school/district/state-related issues (57 percent, 13 responses), including scheduling, loss of instruction time, and such logistical constraints as time, facilities and place to administer the test, and availability of faculty and staff; (b) academic issues (48 percent, 11 responses), including working with EL students and students receiving special education services, working with students who are below grade level proficiency, and students lacking adequate preparation; and (c) behavior issues (39 percent, 9 responses), including low student motivation, high mobility, and poor attendance.

Of the 135 teachers who completed surveys, 103 (76%) made comments on the specific challenges their schools and students face in successfully meeting the requirement of the CAHSEE. Teachers identified the same three areas of challenge as principals but reversed the order of the first two: (a) academic issues (49 percent, 50 responses), including working with EL students and students receiving special education services (27 percent, 28 responses), working with students who are below grade level proficiency (10 percent, 10 responses), and students of inadequate preparation (14 percent, 14 responses); (b) school/district/state-related issues (44 percent, 45 responses), including alignment between instruction and curriculum and state standards, loss of instruction time, too much testing, and such logistical constraints as time, facilities and place to administer the test, and (3) behavior issues (30 percent, 31 responses), including low student motivation and seriousness, lack of parent support and involvement, poor attendance, and high mobility. In addition, teachers noted another two factors that were worth mentioning: economic/community/parental factors, and the credibility of the CAHSEE, that is, whether the CAHSEE will really be enforced as a graduation requirement. Twelve percent (12 responses) of respondents indicated the impact of such economic/community factors as "dysfunctional families," "low socio-economic migrant, second-language community" on students' preparation for or performance on the CAHSEE. Another five percent (5 responses) indicated the impact of postponing the CAHSEE, noting, for example, "Postponing the year of implementation blows credibility"; "the fluctuation in the 'required pass' status at the state level leads to students and parents failing to take the test seriously."

Regarding benefits to their schools and students, about 50 percent (10 of the 21 principals commenting on this issue), said the CAHSEE requirement provides accountability, increases students' seriousness, and enhances students' motivation. Last year, only 13% made similar comments. Thirty-eight percent (8 respondents) noted the benefits of the CAHSEE on instruction and curriculum, commenting that the CAHSEE helped "focus on standards," "increase attention on standards," and standardize and improve the instruction. About a quarter (4 responses) stated that it

provided no benefit. Ten percent (2 respondents) said that the CAHSEE showed students their mastery of and/or progress in the content knowledge.

Seventy-nine out of 135 teachers (59%) responded to the question regarding benefits to their schools and students associated with the requirement of the CAHSEE. About one-third (25 respondents) said that it provides accountability, increases students' seriousness, enhances students' motivation and parent involvement, and promotes students' sense of esteem and competency. Fifteen percent (12 respondents) noted the benefits of the CAHSEE on instruction and curriculum, commenting, for example, that the CAHSEE helped "teach to the standards," and "alignment of instruction with standards." Another 15 percent (12 respondents) indicated that the CAHSEE served to ensure that students master the required knowledge and competencies, that they were "better prepared." About 15 percent (12 responses) stated that the test provided no benefit. Ten percent (8 teachers) noted that meeting the requirements of the CAHSEE enhanced teachers' motivation and accountability. Another ten percent (8 teachers) noted that meeting the requirements of the CAHSEE benefited students with disabilities and EL students, by motivating schools to offer additional support and assistance to help them pass the exam.

Teachers rated 10th grade students' preparedness to pass the CAHSEE. Table 4.15 compares responses to this question over five years of teacher surveys. The 2000 survey was administered before the CAHSEE was ever administered to any students, so reflected the least-informed expectations. The spring 2002 rating was an estimate of how prepared that year's freshmen would be in the 10th grade. The 2003 and 2004 ratings indicate how prepared teachers' current 10th graders were. Ratings among the five years showed a steady increase in preparedness over time.

TABLE 4.15. Teachers' Ratings of Preparedness of Students in the 10th Grade (in percentages)

Preparedness	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Very well prepared	1	3	5	5	8
Well prepared	9	17	15	21	25
Prepared	30	47	38	44	37
Not well prepared	47	28	39	26	28
Not at all prepared	5	5	3	4	2

Principals and teachers were also asked to predict the impact of the CAHSEE on student motivation and parental involvement, under various circumstances: prior to the first administration of the exam, for students who pass, and for students who do not pass. Table 4.16 lists the percentage of respondents selecting each possible impact, for each of the five survey years. Predicted impacts on student motivation are positive for all three student categories. Predicted impact on parental involvement is positive for parents of students who do not pass the CAHSEE on the first attempt, and neutral-to-positive for the other two categories. Notably, some of the early predictions of negative impact have dissipated in recent years.

Figures 4.3a and 4.3b reflect the percentage of respondents who predicted “increased” or “strongly increased” impact on these same questions. Response patterns are included for all five years of survey administration. This graph facilitates comparison of the predicted positive effects for various groups. In the early years of the CAHSEE (2000 and 2001), principals anticipated more of a positive motivational effect on students who passed the exam, relative to those students who did not pass. However, in the later years as familiarity with the CAHSEE increased, this pattern reversed and became less pronounced. The majority of principals now predict that students will have increased motivation due to the CAHSEE across all categories, and students who do not pass will be more motivated than students who do pass. Principals’ predictions of effects on parental involvement are weaker than on student motivation. The pattern across groups is similar, but more marked, for parents of these students. Principals predict a substantial boost in parental involvement for students who do not pass.

Teachers continue to be less optimistic than principals regarding student exam motivation and parental involvement (see Table 4.16 and Figure 4.3b). Teachers’ predictions of student motivation remained steady from 2002 through 2004, with the exception of an increase for motivation of students who do not pass the CAHSEE. Predicted impacts on parental involvement remained neutral-to-positive.

TABLE 4.16. Principals' Predicted Impact of the CAHSEE on Student Motivation and Parental Involvement (in percentages)

Impact	Student Motivation					Parental Involvement				
	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Impact prior to first administration										
Strongly positive/Strongly increased	2	4	11	24	25	0	5	7	3	6
Positive/Increased	45	42	69	55	53	31	23	39	29	32
No effect	19	29	20	13	22	55	68	52	63	62
Negative/Decreased	17	20	0	8	0	7	3	8	3	0
Strongly negative/Strongly decreased	17	4	0	0	0	5	3	0	3	0
Impact for students who pass on 1st attempt										
Strongly positive/Strongly increased	12	7	7	13	21	12	5	2	3	6
Positive/Increased	50	50	54	42	33	33	37	24	19	21
No effect	33	32	36	42	42	50	56	74	68	73
Negative/Decreased	5	9	2	3	3	2	0	0	8	0
Strongly negative/Strongly decreased	0	2	0	0	0	2	2	0	3	0
Impact for students who do not pass on 1st attempt										
Strongly positive/Strongly increased	2	2	11	11	12	2	2	12	5	18
Positive/Increased	33	34	59	54	49	41	42	56	56	39
No effect	17	18	16	14	24	14	16	26	33	39
Negative/Decreased	36	34	11	16	12	36	30	7	3	3
Strongly negative/Strongly decreased	10	11	2	5	3	7	9	0	3	0

Note: Wording of response options was changed from Positive/Negative to Increased/Decreased in 2002 survey administrations.

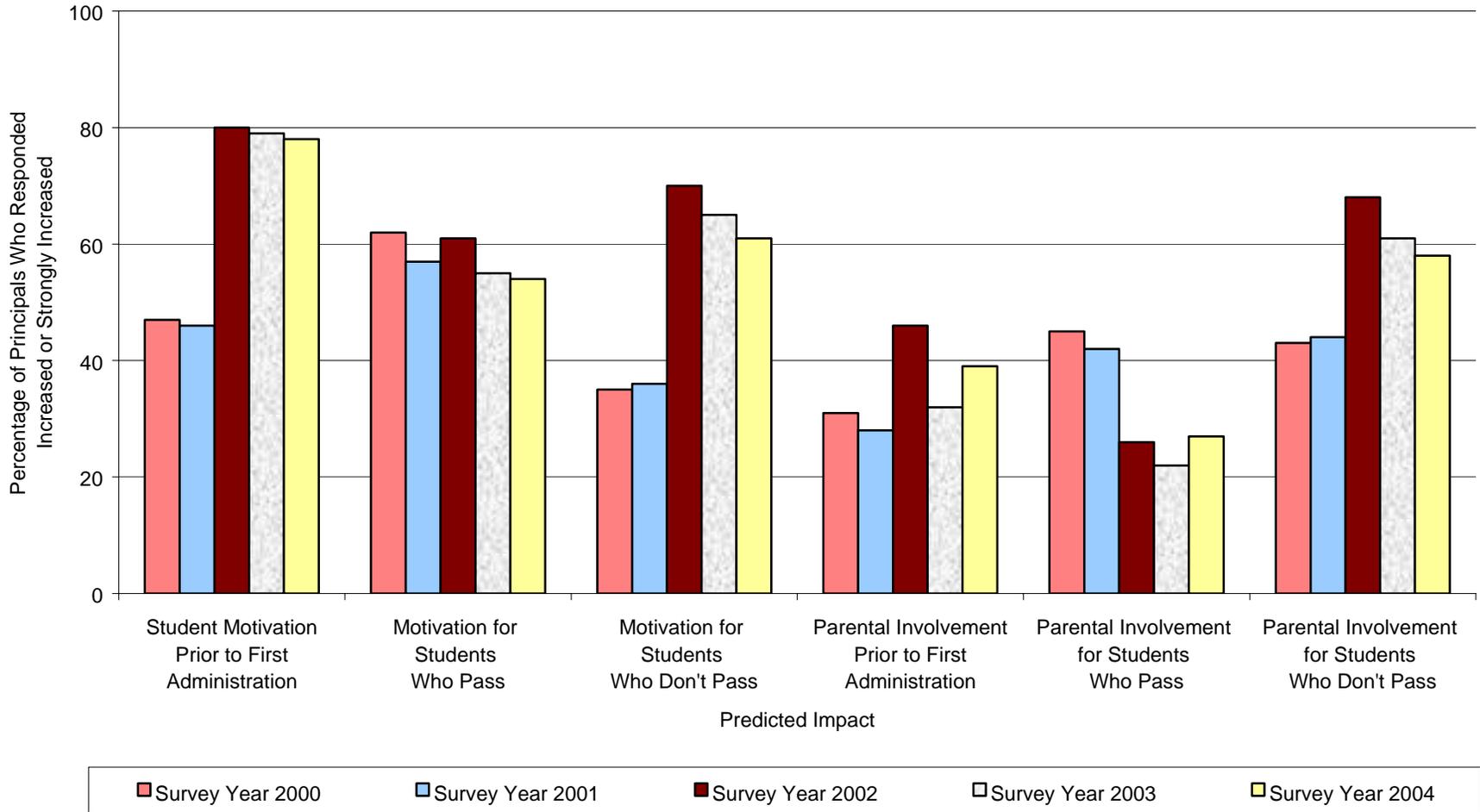


Figure 4.3a. Percentage of principals predicting increased or strongly increased student motivation and parental involvement in 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, and 2004.

TABLE 4.17. Teachers' Predicted Impact of the CAHSEE on Student Motivation and Parental Involvement (in percentages)

Impact	Student Motivation					Parental Involvement				
	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Impact prior to first administration										
Strongly positive/Strongly increased	3	4	6	6	7	3	3	N/A	N/A	N/A
Positive/Increased	23	42	60	58	57	21	28	N/A	N/A	N/A
No effect	26	35	29	25	31	48	61	N/A	N/A	N/A
Negative/Decreased	32	16	3	9	4	13	7	N/A	N/A	N/A
Strongly negative/Strongly decreased	7	4	1	2	1	5	1	N/A	N/A	N/A
Impact for students who pass on 1st attempt										
Strongly positive/Strongly increased	11	5	4	1	4	6	4	3	1	2
Positive/Increased	28	49	38	37	37	29	32	19	10	19
No effect	38	39	54	58	54	49	64	75	86	73
Negative/Decreased	11	5	3	3	4	4	0	4	3	5
Strongly negative/Strongly decreased	3	0	1	1	0	4	0	0	0	1
Impact for students who do not pass on 1st attempt										
Strongly positive/Strongly increased	4	4	5	5	3	2	4	7	3	2
Positive/Increased	33	37	48	45	52	32	38	50	38	36
No effect	16	23	24	24	32	28	32	51	55	57
Negative/Decreased	30	28	21	21	11	21	19	1	4	3
Strongly negative/Strongly decreased	7	8	3	6	2	6	7	1	0	2

Note: Wording of response options was changed from Positive/Negative to Increased/Decreased in 2002 survey administration. Due to missing responses, some columns do not total to 100 percent.

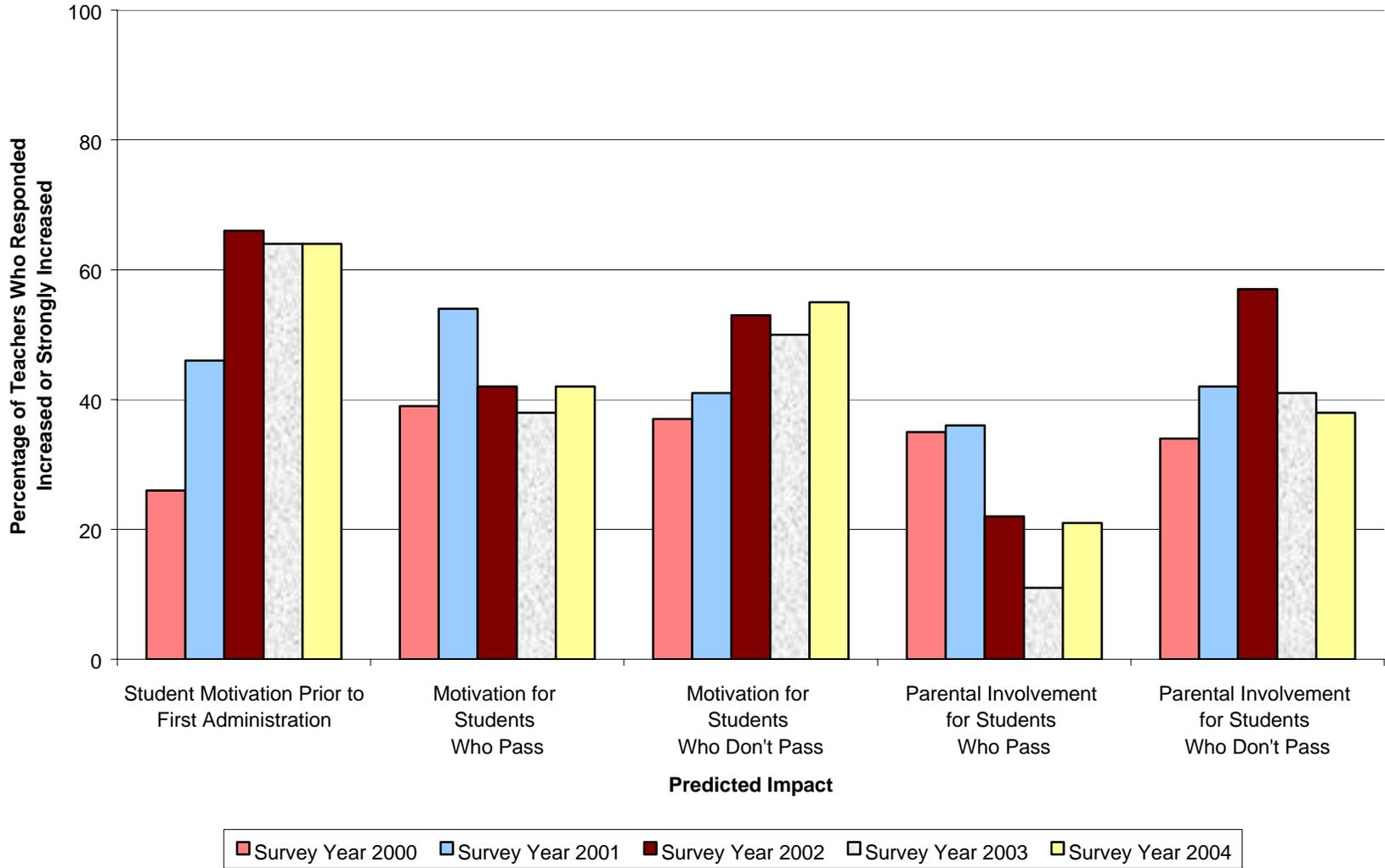


Figure 4.3b. Percentage of teachers predicting increased or strongly increased student motivation and parental involvement in 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, and 2004.

Principals and teachers were also asked to predict the impact of the CAHSEE on student retention and dropout rates. Responses remained generally negative in 2004. Table 4.18 provides detailed response patterns over the five survey years. Principals' 2004 responses were slightly less negative than those in 2003 (also see Figure 4.4a). Fewer principals predicted a strongly increased student retention rate, but responses shifted only as far as a negative impact. The shift in principals' predictions regarding student dropout rates tended toward predicting no effect. Across the four years of the survey, more principals responded more negatively than did teachers regarding student dropout rates. Principals' 2004 retention rate responses were slightly less frequently negative than those in 2003. In 2004, 3 percent of principals predicted that the CAHSEE would have a strongly negative impact on retention rates whereas 13 percent predicted a strongly negative impact in 2003.

Teachers' 2004 predictions of the retention rate were very similar to those in 2003. In both years, 35 percent of teachers predicted that the exam would result in an increase in the retention rate. Teachers' 2004 retention rate responses were slightly less negative than those in 2003. In 2004 41 percent of teachers predicted that the CAHSEE would have a negative/strongly negative impact on retention rates, compared to 60 percent in 2003.

TABLE 4.18. Principals' and Teachers' Predicted Impact of the CAHSEE on Student Retention and Dropout Rates

Predicted Impact	Principals									
	Student Retention					Student Dropout				
	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Strongly positive/ Strongly decreased	2	2	0	0	0	2	5	0	0	0
Positive/Decreased	14	7	19	18	18	12	9	7	8	3
No effect	29	36	46	31	33	21	7	25	15	24
Negative/Increased	41	41	26	38	46	41	50	52	51	52
Strongly negative/ Strongly increased	14	14	9	13	3	24	30	16	26	21
Teachers										
Strongly positive/ Strongly decreased	0	1	1	0	2	1	1	1	0	2
Positive/Decreased	11	14	14	14	10	9	11	4	3	2
No effect	20	53	40	51	53	20	26	37	38	54
Negative/Increased	44	27	41	29	33	44	43	46	44	38
Strongly negative/ Strongly increased	12	5	4	6	2	14	18	12	16	3

Note: Some columns total less than 100 percent due to rounding.
 Note: Discernable changes in predicted impact are noted in bold.

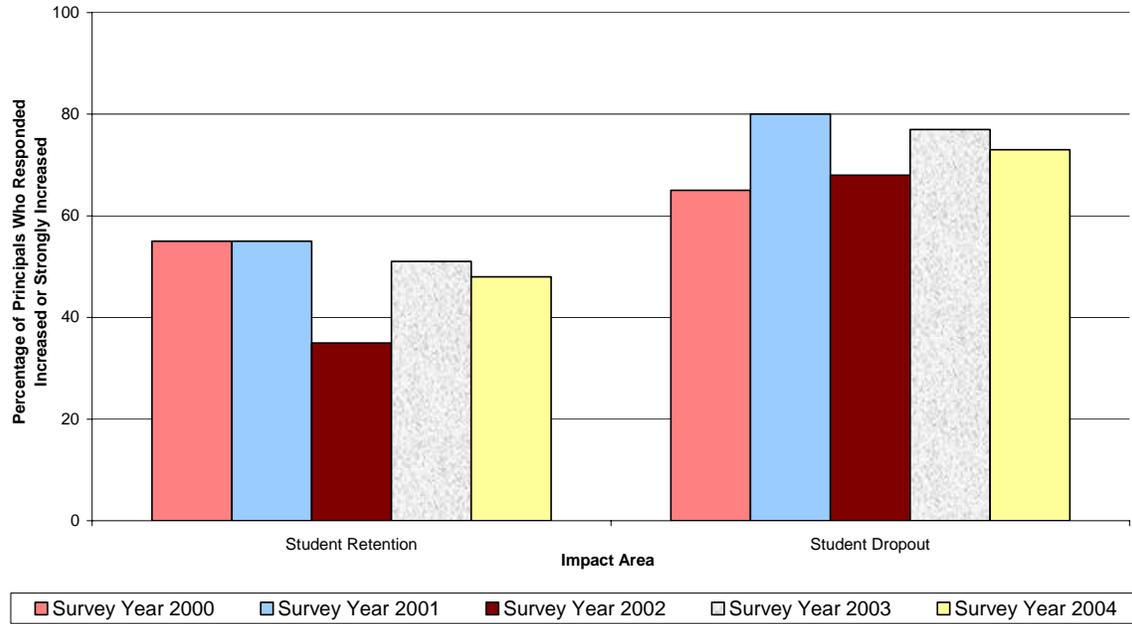


Figure 4.4a. Percentage of principals predicting increased or strongly increased student retention and dropout rates in 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, and 2004.

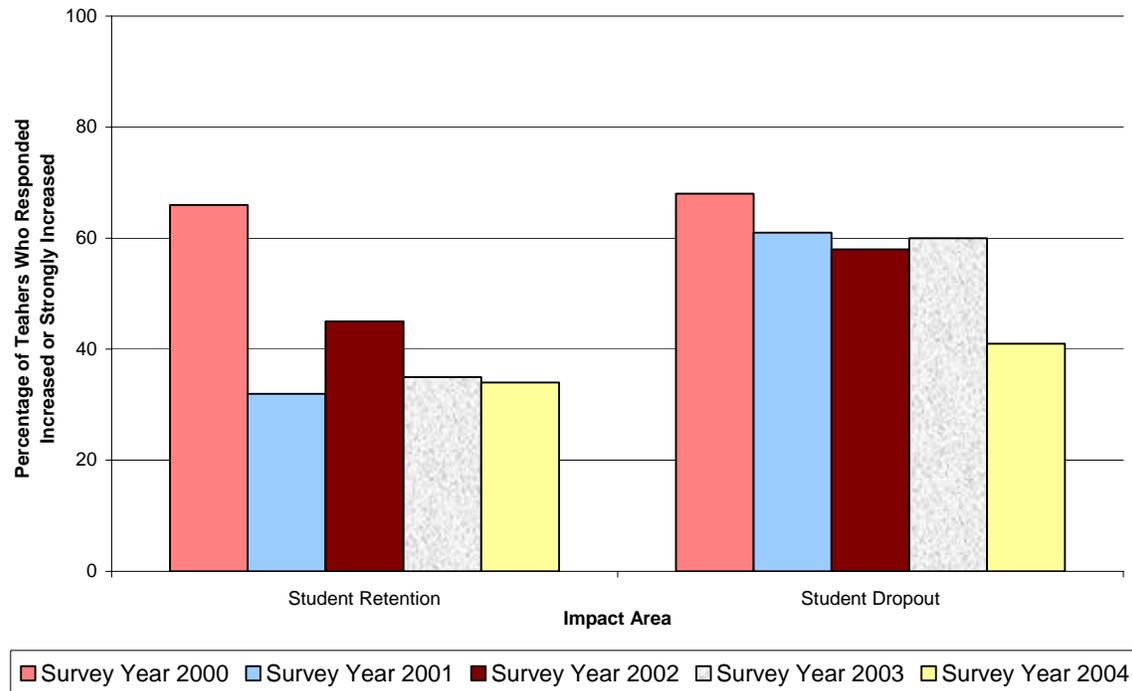


Figure 4.4b. Percentage of teachers predicting increased or strongly increased student retention and dropout rates in 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, and 2004.

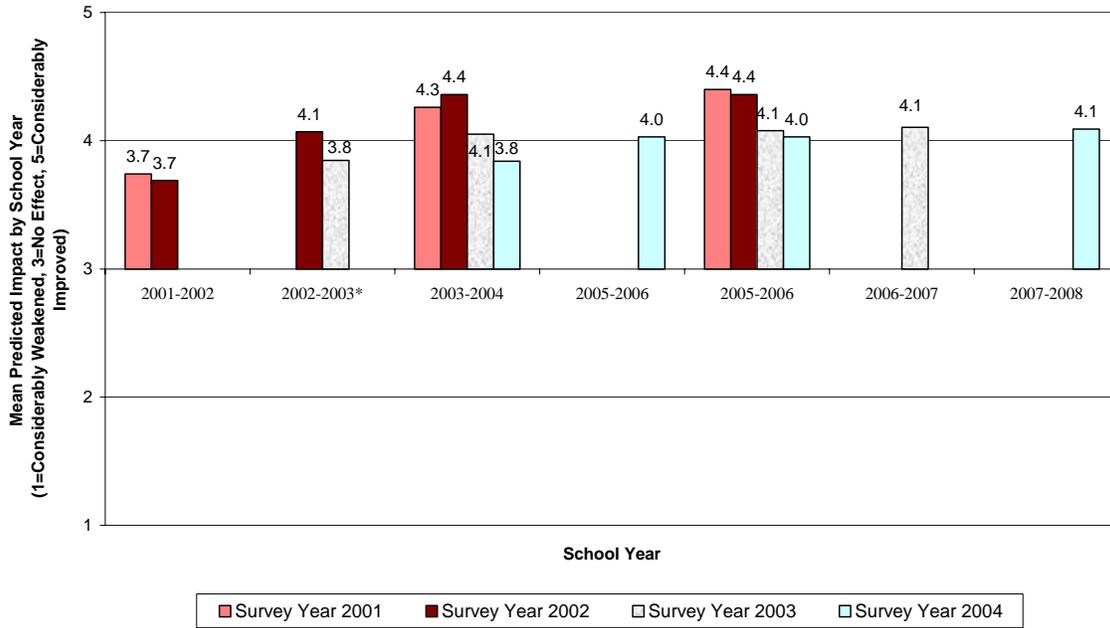
Principals and teachers were asked to rate the influence of the CAHSEE on instructional practices in their schools. Table 4.19 indicates that both groups perceived positive effects thus far, with principals reporting more improvement than teachers.

TABLE 4.19. Principal and Teacher Ratings of Influence of the CAHSEE on Instructional Practices (in percentages) (Principal N=34; Teacher N=135)

Effect on Instructional Practices	Principal	Teacher
Considerably improved	19	5
Improved	59	56
No effect	19	37
Weakened	3	2
Considerably weakened	0	0

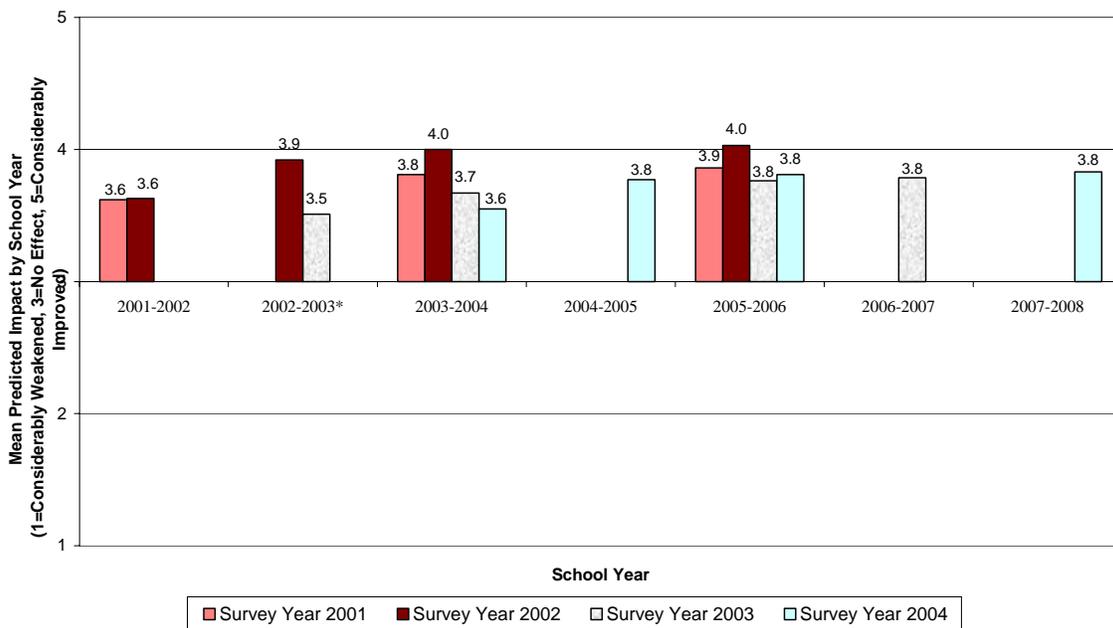
Principals were also asked to predict, based on what they knew about their schools, the influence of the CAHSEE on classroom instructional practices over time. Only one of the principals who completed the 2004 survey indicated that practices would be weakened as a result of the CAHSEE. Figure 4.5a presents a summary of the mean ratings made by principals for each school year for which they were surveyed: 2001, 2002, 2003, and 2004 (1=Considerably Weakened, 2=Weakened, 3=No Effect, 4=Improved, 5=Considerably Improved). Note that the survey did not inquire about the effect on every school year, but rather identified a few years to rate. In general, respondents to the 2004 survey indicated that classroom instructional practices would be improved as a result of the CAHSEE at a fairly constant level. Throughout the survey years, principals have consistently predicted greater improvement in outlying years than in the current year. For example, the predictions for the 2003–2004 school year—initially the year in which diplomas would first be withheld from students who did not pass the CAHSEE—were consistently positive, but generally decreasing in magnitude as the year approached. In survey year 2001, the average rating was 4.3 (i.e., slightly above an “improved” rating of 4.0); in survey year 2002 it raised slightly to 4.4; in survey year 2003 it dropped to 4.1; and finally, in 2004, the rating of the now-current school year dropped to 3.8.

Teachers were asked the same question about the influence of the CAHSEE on instructional practices for the four school years. Figure 4.5b presents a summary of the average ratings made by teachers for each school year they were surveyed: 2001, 2002, and 2003. Teachers also predicted that the overall effect of the CAHSEE would be an improvement; only two teachers indicated that they thought the result would be to weaken instructional practices.



*Note: Different school years were asked on different survey years. Missing bars indicate that the prediction was not requested.

Figure 4.5a. Principals' predictions of influence of the CAHSEE on instructional practices over time.



* Note: Different school years were asked on different survey years. Missing bars indicate that the prediction was not requested.

Figure 4.5b. Teachers' predictions of influence of the CAHSEE on instructional practices over time.

One of the concerns when implementing a new exam is whether there is a differential impact on various subgroup populations. We asked principals to estimate the percentage of 10th grade students who have had instruction in the ELA and mathematics standards; the question was broken down to elicit responses regarding the total student population and the following specific subgroups: students with disabilities in Special Day Classes (SDC), students with disabilities in Resource Specialist Classes (RSC), and EL students. Figures 4.6a and 4.6b present the results for ELA and mathematics, respectively. Each student subgroup is represented by a horizontal bar containing four segments. The leftmost segment indicates the percentage of principals who estimated that greater than 95 percent of their student population within that demographic subgroup have had instruction that covers the CAHSEE content standards; the next segment represents 75–95 percent; the next, 50–74 percent; and the rightmost segment indicates fewer than 50 percent. The longer the leftmost segments, the greater the preparedness. Principals estimated that fewer students with disabilities and EL students are prepared in ELA and math.

Comparisons among principals' 2001, 2002, 2003, and 2004 estimates of instruction received, by student groups, are presented in Table 4.20. Ratings of preparedness of students with disabilities and all students were higher in 2004 than in previous years.

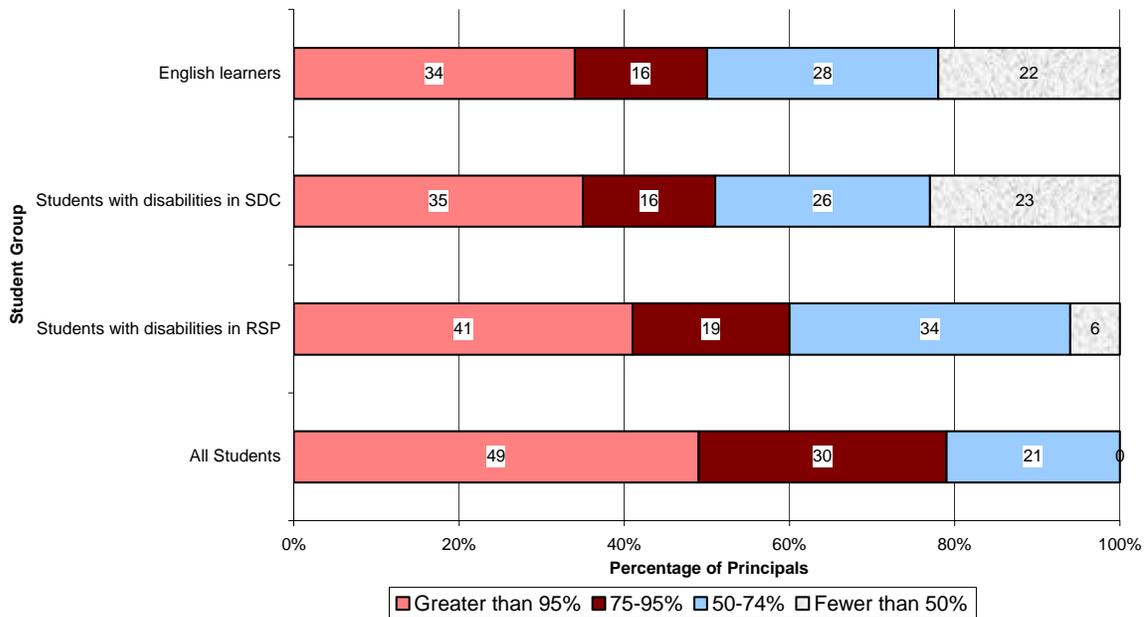


Figure 4.6a. Percentage of principals estimating the percentage of students who have had instruction in ELA content standards (ordered by least instruction).

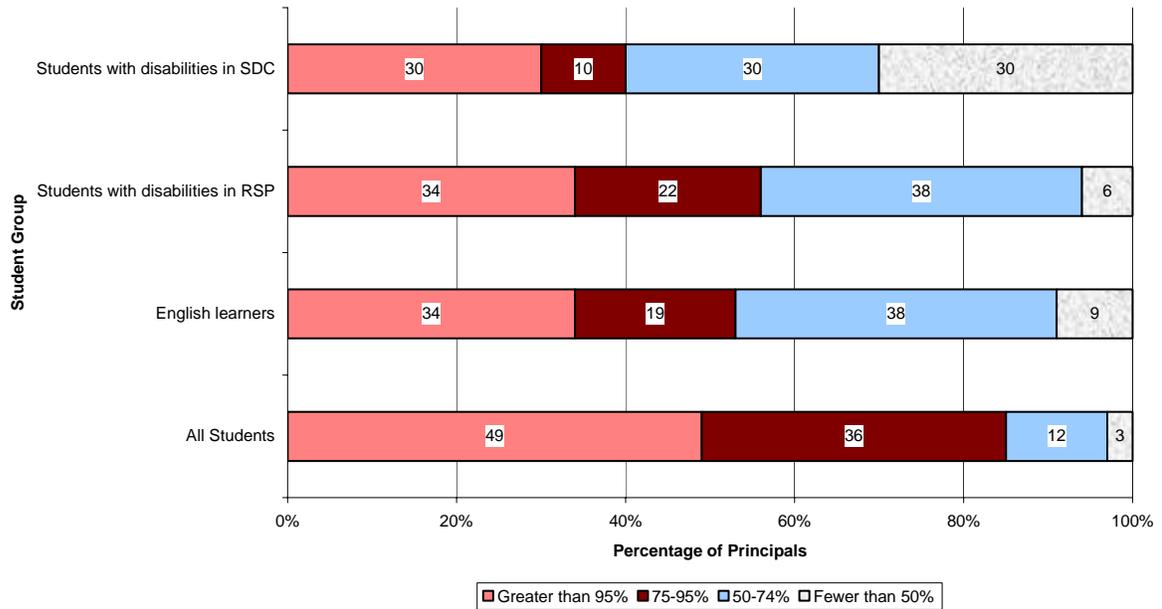


Figure 4.6b. Percentage of principals' estimating the percentage of students who have had instruction in mathematics content standards (ordered by least instruction).

TABLE 4.20. Principals' 2001 through 2004 Estimates of the Percentage of Students with Instruction in Content Standards (in percentages)

Student Group	2001		2002		2003		2004	
	ELA	Math	ELA	Math	ELA	Math	ELA	Math
English learners								
Greater than 95%	8	6	28	22	41	28	34	34
75–95%	18	29	15	22	16	22	16	19
50–74 %	18	15	30	32	28	28	28	38
Fewer than 50%	56	50	28	24	16	22	22	9
Students with disabilities (in SDC for 2003, 2004 columns)*								
Greater than 95%	12	5	26	14	16	9	35	30
75–95%	22	23	14	19	23	19	16	10
50–74%	24	28	24	21	10	19	26	30
Fewer than 50%	42	44	36	45	52	53	23	30
Students with disabilities in RSP								
Greater than 95%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	25	14	41	34
75–95%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	31	30	19	22
50–74%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	22	27	34	38
Fewer than 50%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	22	30	6	6
All students								
Greater than 95%	16	9	43	22	34	33	49	49
75–95%	36	43	23	30	39	35	30	36
50–74%	27	17	25	26	24	23	21	12
Fewer than 50%	21	31	9	22	3	10	0	3

*Note: The 2003 and 2004 surveys separated students with disabilities into two sub-categories: Students with disabilities in Special Day Classes (SDC) and Students with disabilities in Resource Specialist Programs (RSP). The 2001 and 2002 surveys had only one overall category.

Postponement of CAHSEE Consequences

When the CAHSEE was postponed from impacting the Class of 2004 to the Class of 2006, many students in the Classes of 2004 and 2005 had already taken (and passed) the CAHSEE. The CDE implemented no statewide rule regarding these students, but left the decision up to individual districts whether to (a) acknowledge students who passed the exam or (b) offer additional opportunities for these students to sit for the exam. The CDE provided a Certificate of Achievement that districts could opt to award to students who passed the test. The survey asked principals whether they were offering current juniors and seniors who passed both parts of the CAHSEE a seal or the CDE certificate. Twenty-one percent of principals indicated they were offering one of these documents; 47 percent answered “no” and 32 percent did not answer.

Other

Principals were asked to rate the likelihood that specific factors would affect their students' success in meeting the requirements of the CAHSEE. The results are presented in Table 4.21, in decreasing order of endorsement in 2004. The factors for which most principals indicated "definitely a factor" were identical to those in 2003: poor attendance, language barriers, lack of motivation, and lack of preparation. However, ratings of the impact decreased in all of these categories except lack of motivation, which remained fairly stable at 57 percent and 59 percent, respectively. Most notably, fewer principals cited lack of preparation and the requirement to prepare for too many tests as definite factors, relative to 2003.

TABLE 4.21. Percentage of Principals Indicating Factors Affecting Student Success on the CAHSEE

Factor	Definitely a Factor			
	2001	2002	2003	2004
Poor attendance	67	61	68	62
Language barriers	39	50	62	58
Lack of motivation	47	43	57	59
Lack of preparation needed to pass	48	42	54	41
Too many tests to prepare for	53	48	47	23
Lack of credentialed math teachers	N/A	N/A	5	6
Lack of credentialed E-LA teachers	N/A	N/A	0	0
District's current level of standards in math or algebra	14	25	14	N/A
District's current level of standards in English or writing	14	20	11	N/A

Principals were asked to indicate what actions the school plans to take or has implemented to promote learning for all students. The results are presented in Table 4.22. In every case, a larger percentage of principals indicated that the activities were fully implemented than in any prior survey year. Activities presented in bold in Table 4.22 obtained an increase of more than 10 percentage points since 2003.

TABLE 4.22. Percentage of Principals Indicating Actions to Promote Student Learning

Action	Fully Implemented			
	2001	2002	2003	2004
Encouragement of all students to take Algebra I	45	65	72	97
Teacher access to in-service training on content standards	50	58	60	73
School, teacher, and student access to appropriate instructional materials	54	57	54	85
Teacher access to in-service training on instructional techniques	47	45	50	64
Individual student assistance	27	33	43	50
Teacher and school support services	24	29	41	52
Administrator and teacher access to in-service training for working with diverse student populations and different learning styles	33	23	49	53
Student and parent support services	17	5	10	27

Note: Increases greater than 10% over the past year are noted in bold.

One common criticism of the instructional impact of standardized tests is the tendency for teachers to “teach to the test,” effectively narrowing the curriculum to prepare students to do well on the test at the expense of other instruction. The policy intent of a program such as the CAHSEE is not to have teachers focus their instruction on passing the test, but rather to align curriculum with content standards—some of which are then tested. Principals were asked what percentage of their teachers they thought understood the difference between “teaching to the test” and “aligning the curriculum and instruction to the standards.” The results from four annual surveys are displayed in Figure 4.7. Throughout the survey years, principals have consistently estimated that the majority of teachers understand this difference and there has been a notable increase in the past two survey years. In 2004, 70 percent of responding principals indicate that at least 75 percent of their teachers perceive this difference.

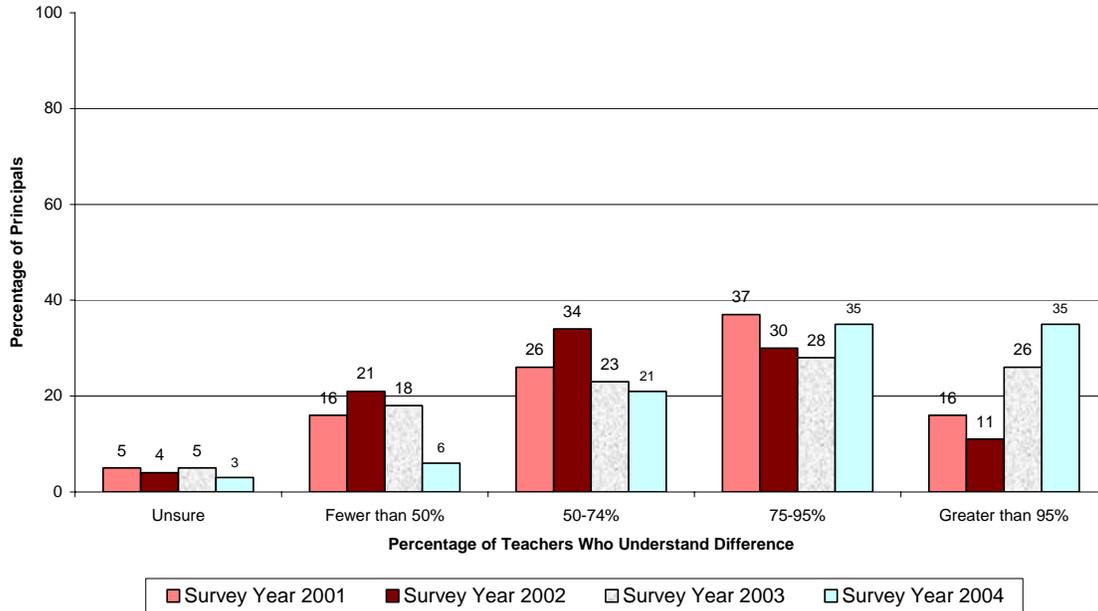


Figure 4.7. Percentage of principals indicating the percentage of teachers who understand the difference between “teaching to the test” and “aligning the curriculum and instruction to the standards” in 2001, 2002, 2003, and 2004.

An intermediate step in ensuring teachers are aligning their curricula to the content standards is to put the standards in the hands of the teachers. Principals were asked what percentage of their teachers have copies of the CST/CAHSEE blueprints, as well as what percent of teachers use the blueprints for lesson planning. Table 4.23 indicates that while three-quarters of principals report that more than half their teachers have a copy of the blueprint, a substantially smaller proportion of teachers use those blueprints in instructional planning.

TABLE 4.23. Percentage of Principals Indicating the Percentage of Teachers Who Have/Use the CST/CAHSEE Blueprints (N=34)

Percent of Teachers	Have a Copy of Blueprint	Use the Blueprints for Instructional Planning
Greater than 95%	29	3
75–95%	26	27
50–74%	24	20
Fewer than 50%	18	43
Unsure	3	7

Principals were probed further on this question of whether teachers teach to the standards. The principal survey asked what evidence the principal collects to verify that teachers are using standards documents, frameworks, and/or blueprints. Table 4.24 lists the offered sources, in decreasing order of endorsement.

TABLE 4.24. Percentage of Principals Who Gather Evidence That ELA and Math Teachers Are Teaching to the Standards (N=34)

Types of Evidence	ELA Teachers	Math Teachers
Classroom visits—Walk-through or other informal interactions	91	91
Discussions at faculty meeting	85	82
Teacher-generated instructional and assessment materials	68	65
Goal setting and other individual conferences	65	65
School or district level in-service	56	56
Reports from department chairs or others responsible for supervising instruction	53	56
Other	3	3

A large majority of principals report they conduct classroom visits and have related discussions at faculty meetings. Two principals offered two other sources they use. One principal cited student work samples; the other principal commented, “Standards are stated on lesson plans and course outlines. All activities are standards-based.”

Another common criticism of other testing programs that test students on a small number of content areas is that the teachers in those areas are perceived as responsible for preparing students, as opposed to a school-wide emphasis on student success. To assess whether this concern was valid for the CAHSEE, principals and teachers were asked to what degree teachers other than those in ELA and math view themselves as sharing responsibility for student success on the CAHSEE. Table 4.25 indicates that principals perceive more shared responsibility by the teachers (as well as a greater increase over time), as compared to the perception of teachers of ELA and math. This difference is both substantial and sustained. For example, in 2004, 41 percent of principals believed other teachers felt “very responsible,” compared to only 10 percent of teachers. At the other extreme of the scale, 22 percent of teachers believed other teachers felt “not at all responsible” compared with only six percent of principals. Between 2003 and 2004, principals have grown substantially more optimistic while teachers have become more pessimistic.

TABLE 4.25. Responsibility Felt by Teachers Other Than ELA and Math (percentages as perceived by principals, ELA, and math teachers)

Level of Perceived Responsibility	Principals			Teachers		
	2002	2003	2004	2002	2003	2004
Very responsible	11	22	41	10	16	10
Somewhat responsible	70	49	35	32	28	29
Slightly responsible	13	27	18	41	36	39
Not at all responsible	6	3	6	16	20	22

Note: Columns do not all total to 100 due to rounding.

Principals were asked the extent to which several activities have been implemented to promote learning for all students, and the extent to which financial constraints have limited their ability to provide these services during the past four years. Table 4.26 summarizes results from all three questions. The left half of the table indicates the extent to which each service has been implemented; a majority of principals reported that every listed activity has been partially/fully implemented. Next, for each activity the right half of the table addresses financial constraints. The top line for each activity depicts the extent to which financial constraints have had an effect over the past four years; the bottom line predicts impact in the near future. A majority of principals reports that every activity has been affected to a slight/moderate extent. In every case except “School, teacher, and student access to appropriate instructional materials” more principals predicted greater financial constraints in the future than in the past. Notably, at least a quarter of principals predicted that individual student assistance, student and parent support services, and remediation would be impacted to a great extent in the near future.

TABLE 4.26. Extent to Which Services have Been Implemented to Promote Learning for All Students and Related Financial Constraints, According to Principals (in percentages) (N=34)

Activity	To what extent has your school implemented these services to promote learning for all students?				To what extent have/will financial constraints limit(ed) your ability to provide these services?				
	No Plan to Implement	Plan to Implement	Partially Implemented	Fully Implemented	Past 4 years	Not At All	To a Slight Extent	To a Moderate Extent	To a Great Extent
School, teacher, and student access to appropriate instructional materials	0	0	15	85	Past 4 years	30	21	46	3
					Near future	18	36	36	9
Individual student assistance	6	9	34	50	Past 4 years	12	22	47	19
					Near future	12	18	42	27
Teacher and school support services	6	15	27	52	Past 4 years	21	30	36	12
					Near future	21	15	46	18
Student and parent support services	15	15	42	28	Past 4 years	15	39	27	18
					Near future	22	19	34	25
Teacher access to in-service training on content standards	0	6	21	73	Past 4 years	30	30	33	6
					Near future	22	19	50	9
Teacher access to in-service training on instructional techniques	6	0	30	64	Past 4 years	27	27	39	6
					Near future	18	27	42	12
Administrator and teacher access to in-service training for working with diverse student populations and	6	0	41	53	Past 4 years	21	36	39	3
					Near future	15	30	46	9
Encourage all students to take Algebra 1	0	0	3	97	Past 4 years	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
					Near future	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Remediation	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Past 4 years	12	33	39	15
					Near future	12	21	42	25

Principals were asked the extent to which the CAHSEE draws away resources from several course categories. Table 4.27 lists the categories in descending order of impact. Over half the principals indicated that the CAHSEE drew resources away from courses in the arts and vocational courses to a moderate/great extent. Courses in other academic subject areas and advanced courses were impacted to a lesser, but discernible, extent.

TABLE 4.27. Extent to Which the CAHSEE Draws Resources Away from Various Categories of Courses, According to Principals (in percentages) (N=34)

Course Category	Extent to Which the CAHSEE Draws Resources Away			
	Not At All	To a Slight Extent	To a Moderate Extent	To a Great Extent
Courses in the arts	21	27	21	30
Vocational courses	25	19	31	25
Courses in other academic subject areas	31	25	34	9
Advanced courses	44	19	31	6
Other	0	0	0	0

Surveyed teachers were asked to characterize their own opinion of the CAHSEE and to compare those opinions to those of other teachers in their departments. Table 4.28 compares responses to these two questions. The rightmost column indicates the distribution of teachers' opinions. Overall, the opinions tend to be neutral-to-positive; 14 percent are (very) negative; 40 percent, neutral; and 46 percent, (very) positive. These ratings were higher across the board than in 2003, when they were 27 percent, 37 percent, and 36 percent, respectively. The bottom row summarizes the comparison of the respondents' opinions to their colleagues. Fifty-nine percent of teachers report that their own opinions are about the same as other teachers in their departments; 5 percent, somewhat/much more negative; and 29 percent, somewhat/much more positive.

TABLE 4.28. Surveyed Teachers' Own and Others' Opinions of the CAHSEE (in percentages) (N=135)

Your Opinion of CAHSEE	How You think Your Opinion Compares To Other Teachers In Your Department						Total
	Do not know	Much more negative	Somewhat more negative	About the same	Somewhat more positive	Much more positive	
Very negative	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	1%
Negative	0%	0%	2%	11%	1%	0%	13%
Neutral	5%	0%	2%	25%	8%	0%	40%
Positive	2%	1%	2%	21%	15%	1%	40%
Very positive	0%	0%	0%	1%	3%	2%	6%
Total	7%	1%	4%	59%	26%	3%	100%

Note: Row and column percentages do not equal cell totals, due to rounded cell values.

Site Testing Coordinator Findings

The survey of teachers and principals in the longitudinal sample of schools included the third administration of a survey of site coordinators. The site-coordinator survey asked for feedback on training and guidance, students tested, and the general approach to conducting the exam. Table 4.29 summarizes the responses received in each year of the survey. All schools reported administering both the ELA and mathematics parts of the CAHSEE.

TABLE 4.29. Site Coordinator Responses and Positions

	2002	2003	2004
Districts	17	17	19
Schools	42	35	42
Most Common Position Held			
Principal			5
Assistant Principal	18	14	50
Test Coordinator	20	15	67
Counselor			12
Teacher			10
Other			5

Note: Columns exceed 100% because respondents could select multiple options.

Nineteen out of 42 (45%) test coordinators responded to an open-ended question asking about specific factors that they felt influenced the school’s planning or performance on the CAHSEE. Of the test coordinators, 42 percent (8 out of 19 responses) noted the administration of the CAHSEE, including (a) scheduling, (b) logistic/facility constraints, such as space limitation and supervision, (c) the length of testing session, e.g., “the math test needs to be reduced in both time and the number of questions,” and (d) credibility of CAHSEE, e.g., “have the concern whether the State Board of Ed will hold the line on using CAHSEE as a graduation requirement;” 26 percent (5 out of 19 responses) mentioned such behavior issues as (a) student motivation or attendance, (b) parent support, and (c) high mobility; and 16 percent (3 out of 19 responses) referred to inadequate preparation of students and EL and special education challenges

Preparation

Site coordinators received information on how to administer the CAHSEE mainly through the sources shown in Table 4.30. Sources are listed in descending order of 2004 endorsement. Site coordinators reported a striking increase in the use of the School Coordinator’s Manual and district workshops in 2004, as well as a marked increase in the use of the ETS CAHSEE Administration training video.

TABLE 4.30. Site Coordinator Sources of Information on Administering the CAHSEE

	2002	2003	2004
School Coordinator's Manual	39	35	90
District workshop	26	23	79
ETS Video	2	10	38
ETS Test Administration Training workshop	13	5	14
CDE update meetings	1	2	5

Note: Columns exceed 100% because respondents could select multiple options.

When asked what, if any, of the information needed clarification or correction, 11 out of 14 (79%) responded with either no clarification or correction needed, or a positive comment on the provided information. Twenty-seven out of 42 (64%) site coordinators commented on the usefulness of information that they received on how to administer the CAHSEE. Among them, 14 coordinators (52%) cited the *Directions for Administration and School Coordinator's Manual* as the most helpful source of information, due to its clarity, specificity and self-explanatory nature; six coordinators (22%) cited the *District Workshop*, largely because of the chance to ask questions and request follow-up guidance from the district; and four (15%) cited the *ETS Training Workshops* as the most helpful.

Logistics

The observations and surveys provided information on seven aspects of logistics:

1. type of test facility
2. security
3. preparation of proctors/monitors
4. use of precoded answer sheets
5. handling different finishing times
6. impact of the revised schedule
7. problems encountered

The question about *test facility* asked where schools administered the CAHSEE in spring 2004—on- or off-site classrooms or large rooms such as a library, cafeteria, or gymnasium—and where they plan to administer it in spring 2005. Table 4.31 details the responses to these questions, as well as the facilities reported in the 2003 survey.

TABLE 4.31. Percentage of Site Coordinators Reporting Various Types of Testing Facilities

	2003	2004	2005 (Planned)
On-site classrooms	71	62	67
On-site large room (e.g., auditorium or gymnasium)	69	55	52
Off-site classrooms	0	5	2
Off-site large room (e.g., auditorium or gymnasium)	0	2	2
Not sure	0	2	2

Note: Columns exceed 100% because respondents could select multiple options.

None of the site coordinators over the three years of the site testing coordinator survey thought that they had real *security* issues. One comment this year suggested that it would be better to have a separate answer book for math or at least a two-day gap between the ELA and math tests, noting that it takes several hours to reorganize math booklets and answer documents, which is difficult to accomplish during the school day because most students need several hours to complete the ELA test.

Test coordinators were asked how they prepared proctors and monitors for the administration of the CAHSEE. The response choices were (a) no preparation, (b) conducted workshop, (c) distributed excerpts of directions for test administrators, (d) developed step-by-step procedures, (e) described general requirements, and (f) other. Respondents could mark more than one approach. Techniques employed were: workshop (62%), excerpts of directions (48%), step-by-step procedures (50%), general requirements (40%), and other (21%). Seven percent of site coordinators (3) indicated that their schools did nothing to prepare the proctors and monitors.

Site coordinators were asked whether they took advantage of the pre-coding option for answer sheets. The response is difficult to interpret because over half the survey respondents did not answer the question at all (57%). Of those who did answer, 89 percent said yes (which is only 38 percent of the entire respondent pool). However, 93 percent indicated that they planned to use the pre-coding option next year.

Each year, the annual survey asked site testing coordinators three questions about how their schools dealt with variations in students' finishing times on the CAHSEE. Tables 4.32 through 4.34 present their responses.

TABLE 4.32. How schools handled students who finished first section early (in percentages)

	2002 N=42	2003 N=35	2004 N=41
Go directly to second section	7	17	7
Stay in room until scheduled break	76	77	85
Wait outside room until scheduled break	12	5	5
Other	5	0	2

TABLE 4.33. How schools handled students who had not finished by time of break between sessions (in percentages)

	2002	2003	2004
	N=42	N=35	N=41
All finished by break	47	23	34
Delayed break until all finished	5	14	2
All took break and finished after, if needed	5	14	32
Students not finished worked through break	13	17	10
Moved students not finished to another room	18	31	20
Other	11	0	2

TABLE 4.34. How schools handled students who had not finished by lunchtime (in percentages)

	2002	2003	2004
	N=42	N=35	N=41
All finished by lunch	60	40	41
Went to lunch and finished after	31	29	45
Worked through lunch	10	17	12
Other	0	11	2

The survey asked test coordinators how their schools handled the schedules of other grades during the period when the CAHSEE was being administered and what impact the CAHSEE schedule had on attendance of students in other grades. Table 4.35 shows how the schools handled scheduling, and Table 4.36 presents the reported impact on attendance. Responses in 2004 were similar to the 2003 responses, although in 2004 seven percent of the responding schools reported higher attendance than normal in the other grades.

TABLE 4.35. How schools scheduled students in other grades during the CAHSEE administration (in percentages)

	2002	2003	2004
	N=42	N=35	N=41
Special school-wide activity	0	3	5
Regular classes but revised schedule	15	40	43
Regular classes and regular schedule	76	57	50
Other	10	0	2

TABLE 4.36. Impact of the CAHSEE administration on attendance in other grades (in percentages)

	2002	2003	2004
	N=42	N=35	N=41
Higher attendance than normal	5	0	7
No impact	77	82	80
Lower attendance than normal	18	18	12

The survey included a question about problems that were not covered by guidance documents for the CAHSEE administration. The only comment mentioned that if there were any questions, they were handled by the district coordinator and staff, who were always available by phone or e-mail.

Accommodations and Modifications

Accommodations include changes to test presentation, response, or scheduling to provide a more appropriate assessment of students with disabilities. Modifications are changes that also change what is being measured and so invalidate the resulting test scores. According to CDE regulations, the decision to grant accommodations or allow modifications must be based on the student’s Individual Education Program (IEP) or Section 504 Plan. Students whose plans require test modifications cannot pass the exam directly, but may apply for a waiver if their test scores and other evidence suggest that they have mastered the required skills.

This year’s test coordinators estimated their schools tested most of the eligible EL students and special needs students. Table 4.37 shows the results and compares the responses to last year’s. The results indicate that more EL and special needs students were included in the CAHSEE program this year.

TABLE 4.37. Proportion of eligible EL and SD students tested (in percentages)

	2002	2003	2004	
			EL	SD
	N=42	N=35	N=39	N=40
None	10	3	0	0
Fewer than half	15	6	13	12
About half	0	15	0	0
Most	61	55	64	65
All	15	21	23	23

The accommodations and modifications used in the surveyed schools are reported in Tables 4.38 and 4.39, in descending order of use in 2004. Timing/scheduling and setting continued to be the most frequent accommodations. Every type of accommodation was reported at a lower rate than in 2003. In the modification category, some schools allowed some students to use calculators for math and audio or oral presentation for ELA but the numbers continue to decline.

TABLE 4.38. Accommodations provided (in percentages)

	2002 N=42	2003 N=35	2004 N=39
Timing/scheduling	72	80	51
Setting	75	60	49
None	0	0	23
Large print	9	24	18
Assistive devices and technologies regularly used during testing	3	12	10
Verbal, written, or signed responses	6	12	8
Braille	3	8	8
Audio or oral presentation (math only)	19	36	3
Test item enlargement	0	0	0
Markers, mask or other visual attention	24	8	0
Reduced numbers of items per page	24	0	0

Note: Respondents could mark more than one accommodation.

TABLE 4.39. Modifications provided (in percentages)

	2002 N=42	2003 N=35	2004 N=41
None	[not an option]	49	66
Calculators for math	83	36	27
Audio or oral presentation for ELA	42	24	12
Signed response (ELA only)	N/A	N/A	5
Other	8	9	2

Note: Respondents could mark more than one modification.

This year’s survey asked site testing coordinators if there were any students receiving special education services who were unable to take the test even with accommodation or modification. Only five respondents indicated that this happened, explaining:

- Students taking the alternative test, CAPA, did not take the CAHSEE (2).
- “The student who required the large print and audio CD did not take the test because the special education instructor was not trained in the procedure. I would like to request a workshop to train special education teachers.”
- “Two students in our severely handicapped classes did not take the test. They are autistic/retarded—unable to read, write—severely limited oral communication skills.”
- “Student who was Resource Specialist Program (RSP) refused to take test.”

Test Results

Test coordinators were asked how the CAHSEE test results would be used. A list of possible uses was provided from which respondents could mark all that apply. Responses (in descending order) were individual counseling (81%), design remedial

courses (60%), revise current courses (24%), and other (14%). Written-in “other” responses included:

- Continue with test prep for students in their homerooms twice a week.
- Augment test prep materials in ELA and math classes.
- Notify English and math teachers of results for their students.
- Indicate need for summer school enrollment for the CAHSEE.

Classes of 2005 and 2006

The CAHSEE was originally planned to take effect with the graduating Class of 2004. Since its postponement to the Class of 2006, many students in the preceding two classes have taken (and passed) the CAHSEE. The CDE left the decision of whether and how to acknowledge the accomplishment of these students up to individual districts. The survey asked test coordinators whether the school is offering the current 11th and 12th grade students who passed both parts of the CAHSEE a seal or Certificate of Achievement made available by the CDE. Sixteen of the 42 survey respondents (38%) responded in the affirmative³. This leads to a second, related question: Did the site coordinator administer the released form of the CAHSEE to 11th and 12th grade students who had not passed one or both parts of the CAHSEE but who wanted to continue trying to pass this year to receive the seal or certificate? Only nine percent of site coordinators indicated they are doing so.

Summary

School staff survey responses tell a promising story over the five-year period since the inception of the California High School Exit Examination program. A longitudinal sample of high school personnel were surveyed each spring from 2000 through 2004 to elicit awareness, preparation, expectations, and impact of the CAHSEE results. Surveys in the early years relied heavily upon anticipation and expectations but as schools gained experience with the CAHSEE the focus turned toward actual effects and action. Adjustments were also made to survey items (and interpretation of the responses) after the California State Board of Education postponed the implementation of the CAHSEE consequences from the Class of 2004 to the Class of 2006. It is important to note, however, that the timing of this short postponement ensured that high schools were continually motivated to actively address CAHSEE-related issues.

Unsurprisingly, principals report that student and parent familiarity with various aspects of the CAHSEE have increased over time (Table 4.4). The rate of increase has slowed, but continues. Principals also report increased alignment between district and state standards, although teachers’ estimations of the coverage of these

³ Note that this percentage differs from the responses to the principal survey. Twenty-one percent of principals reported their schools were offering one of these documents, compared to 38 percent of test coordinators. However, as 32 percent of principals did not answer the question it is impossible to determine whether the principals and test coordinators are actually in disagreement.

standards remain incomplete (Tables 4.7a and 4.7b). Teachers report less time spent on CAHSEE-related activities in 2004 than in 2003. ELA teachers acknowledge more time spent in content-area professional development than math teachers, and also rate the instructional benefit derived from this training more highly (Tables 4.9 and 4.11).

Principals rate the usefulness of the CDE website more highly than do teachers, although a considerable percentage of both groups reported that both this site and the CAHSEE Remediation Guide were useful. Approximately a third of surveyed teachers, however, are unfamiliar with both resources (Table 4.12). A majority of principals report various activities to prepare faculty/staff for the CAHSEE, including test administration workshops, local workshops on the CAHSEE content and test administration, and providing test-taking strategies (Table 4.13).

Principals were provided lists of activities to prepare students for the CAHSEE. In general, preparatory activities have increased over time. Interestingly, the most common activities in 2004 were not activities geared toward explicitly preparing students for the content covered by the CAHSEE, but were instead motivational in nature: emphasizing the importance of the CAHSEE and encouraging students to work hard (Figure 4.1a). Schools followed the motivational activities with the teaching of test-taking skills—an effort that would presumably provide students a benefit beyond the CAHSEE. The fourth most-commonly reported activity was adopting the state standards—again, an alignment activity with implications beyond the CAHSEE. Principals report that many of the activities planned to assist students to pass the CAHSEE are not yet fully implemented (Table 4.14).

In open-ended responses, both principals and teachers noted that the CAHSEE program benefits California schools by providing accountability and increasing students' seriousness and motivation. A minority of each group (10% of principals and 15% of teachers) indicated that the CAHSEE provided no benefit. Principals' judgments regarding the score reports included some negative feedback. Some respondents noted that the reports were not useful instructionally and others criticized the timeliness of the reports.

Over the years, teachers have consistently reported that approximately a third of 10th grade students are not well prepared (or not at all prepared) (Table 4.15). While estimates of the number (or percentage) of well-prepared (and very well-prepared) students have steadily but gradually increased, the pool of unprepared students has stayed persistently high.

Principal and teacher ratings of the effects of the CAHSEE on student motivation and parental involvement have increased, despite some unrelenting patterns (Tables 4.16, 4.17 and Figures 4.3a, 4.3b). A majority of both groups seem to indicate that facing the hurdle of passing the CAHSEE is a motivating factor for students, whether they have not yet taken the exam or they have taken it and not passed. Once students have passed the exam, responses indicate that the effect is somewhat

muted, although still neutral-to-positive. The demotivating effects on high-achieving students anticipated by some opponents of the program seem not to have emerged. Both groups report that parental involvement is boosted for students who do not pass the exam, compared to those who have already passed.

However, a large percentage of both principals (73%) and teachers (41%) predict that the CAHSEE will have a negative (or strongly negative) impact on student retention and student dropout rates, yielding increases in both rates (Table 4.18, Figures 4.4 and 4.4b). Although the state-maintained enrollment data do not provide evidence to date of such an effect, the perception persists.

One of the concerns when implementing a new exam is whether there is a differential impact on various subgroup populations. Principals acknowledge that students with disabilities and EL students, on the whole, have had less exposure to the ELA and math content standards than the overall student population (Figures 4.6a and 4.6b). While the coverage has reportedly increased for all groups since the inception of the CAHSEE, the disparity remains. Most test coordinators indicate that most or all of these students are tested and that these numbers have increased over the past three years (Table 4.37). Conversely, the rate of testing accommodations and modifications decreased in 2004.

Despite these concerns, most principals and teachers perceive the CAHSEE as having a positive influence on instructional practices (Table 4.19) and expect that positive influence to continue in coming years (Figures 4.5a and 4.5b). Most principals report that most teachers understand the difference between “teaching to the test” and “aligning the curriculum and instruction to the content standards” (Figure 4.7). They base this conclusion on multiple sources of information, including classroom visits, discussions at faculty meetings, instructional materials, and other sources (Table 4.24). However, while a large majority of principals report that more than half their teachers have a copy of the blueprint, a substantially smaller proportion of teachers use those blueprints in instructional planning (Table 4.23).

A whole-school approach to helping students achieve is widely endorsed in educational literature. Principals and teachers differ in their opinions of whether all teachers (including those who do not teach ELA or mathematics) perceive a shared responsibility for student success on the CAHSEE (Table 4.25). Principals clearly sense more shared responsibility than do the ELA and math teachers. In fact, a constant theme through the survey responses is that the optimism of principals is higher than that of their teachers. For example, note principal and teacher ratings of the usefulness of the CDE website, student exam motivation, and parental involvement (Tables 4.12, 4.16, 4.17, and Figures 4.3a, 4.3b).

Principals are less sanguine, however, regarding the constraints on student services that will be imposed by financial limitations in the future (Table 4.26). They see individual student assistance as well as support services for students, parents, teachers, and schools at particular risk. Across the board for several activities, they

expect greater financial constraints in the near future as compared to the past four years.

Overall, the five years of the CAHSEE school surveys paint a picture of a maturing program. Awareness regarding the test and supporting materials such as the CDE website, remediation materials, and school coordinator support documentation and training are on the rise. Principals and teachers perceive a variety of benefits of the program, although they remain concerned about potential exacerbating effects on student retention and dropout rates. All told, one might sum up their position as believing that the CAHSEE program is improving education for students who persist.

