

School Counselor Update

Board of Regents Meeting
Joint P-12 and Higher Education
Committees
December 2014

Board of Regents Meeting - October 2013

In October 2013, the Department reviewed with the Board of Regents a range of issues regarding school counseling in New York State.

- **This discussion included:**
 - Current School Guidance Program Requirements (P-12)
 - Current School Counselor Requirements (Higher Education)
 - General recommendations from the American School Counselor Association (ASCA)- A Framework for School Counseling Programs

Board of Regents Meeting - October 2013

At the October 2013 Board of Regents meeting staff were directed to:

- Conduct a field survey to obtain additional information, analyze results, and develop next steps to address identified concerns.
- Create the School Counselor Advisory Council (SCAC) with practitioners from across New York State to examine and recommend improvements to both school counseling preparation programs and comprehensive school guidance plans represented in Commissioner's Regulations.

New York State School Counselor Summit

The Summit was held in April 2014 and brought together over 200 practitioners to advise the Department in the following areas:

- Promote the development of comprehensive, data-driven, standards-based practices in school counseling programs;
- Propose best practices for New York State based on input from state and national experts; and
- Develop recommendations – a Blueprint for Change - to enhance the leadership at the district level.

School Counselor Advisory Council

Membership: a total of 16 practitioners from across New York State - 8 representing P-12 and 8 representing Higher Education.

Purpose: to examine both school counseling preparation programs represented in Commissioner's Regulations §80-2.3(b) and current comprehensive school guidance plans as represented in Commissioner's Regulations §100.2(j).

School Counselor Survey

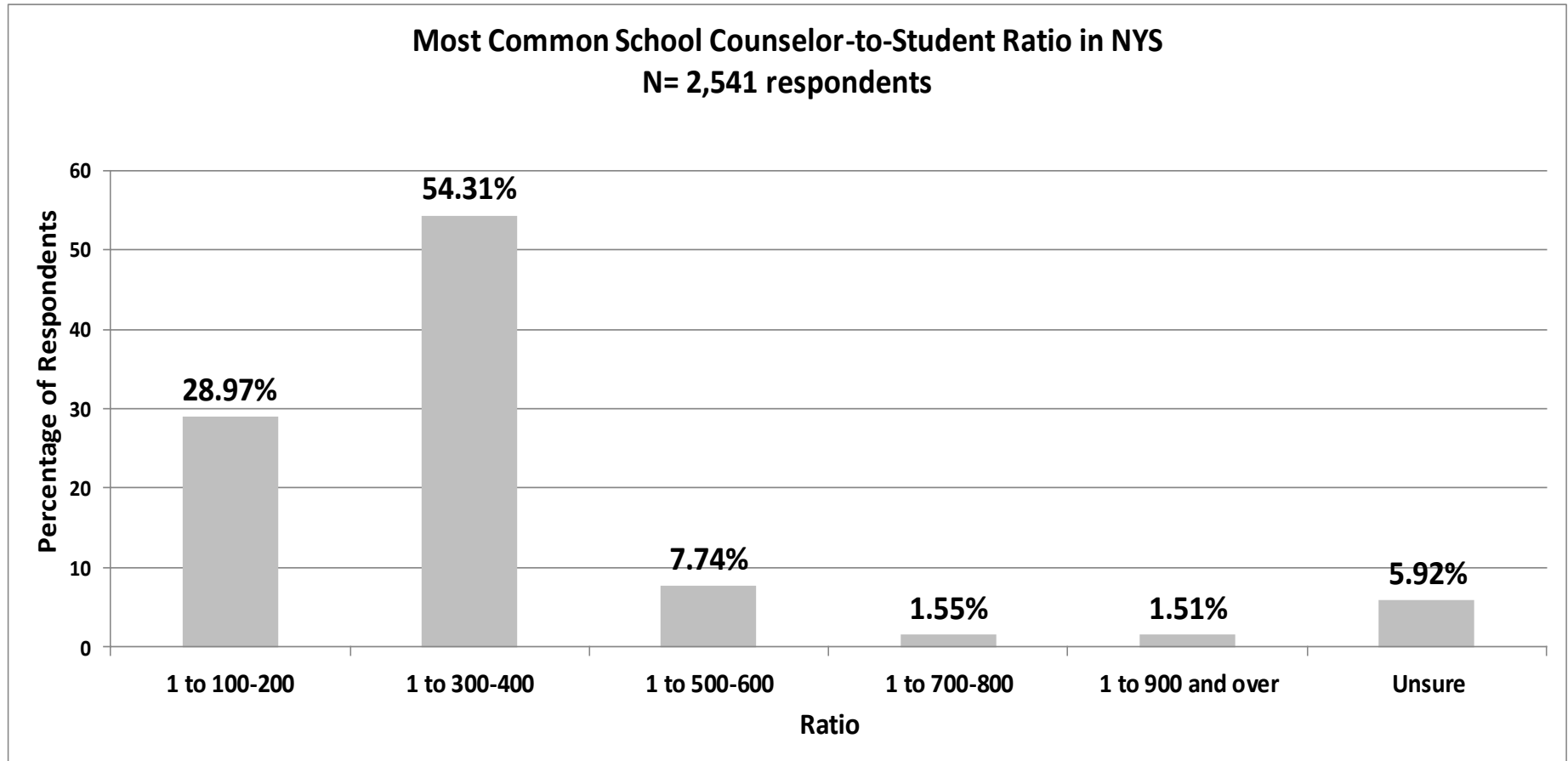
Two separate surveys were developed and conducted anonymously to obtain input from the field on ways to improve school counseling at the district level and school counselor preparation programs.

- **The P-12 survey:** sent to the BOCES district superintendents, school district superintendents, and building principals for distribution to school counselors throughout New York State. There were a total of 2,541 respondents - 2,092 (82.33%) of these respondents were school counselors currently employed in New York State public school districts. The remaining 449 respondents were school administrators. *BEDS data from the 2012- 2013 school year shows a statewide school counselor population of 6,375.*
- **Higher Education Survey:** sent to a total of 34 school counselor preparation programs including deans, coordinators, directors, advisors, and chairpersons in school counseling.

**Data includes NYC schools*

P-12 Survey Results

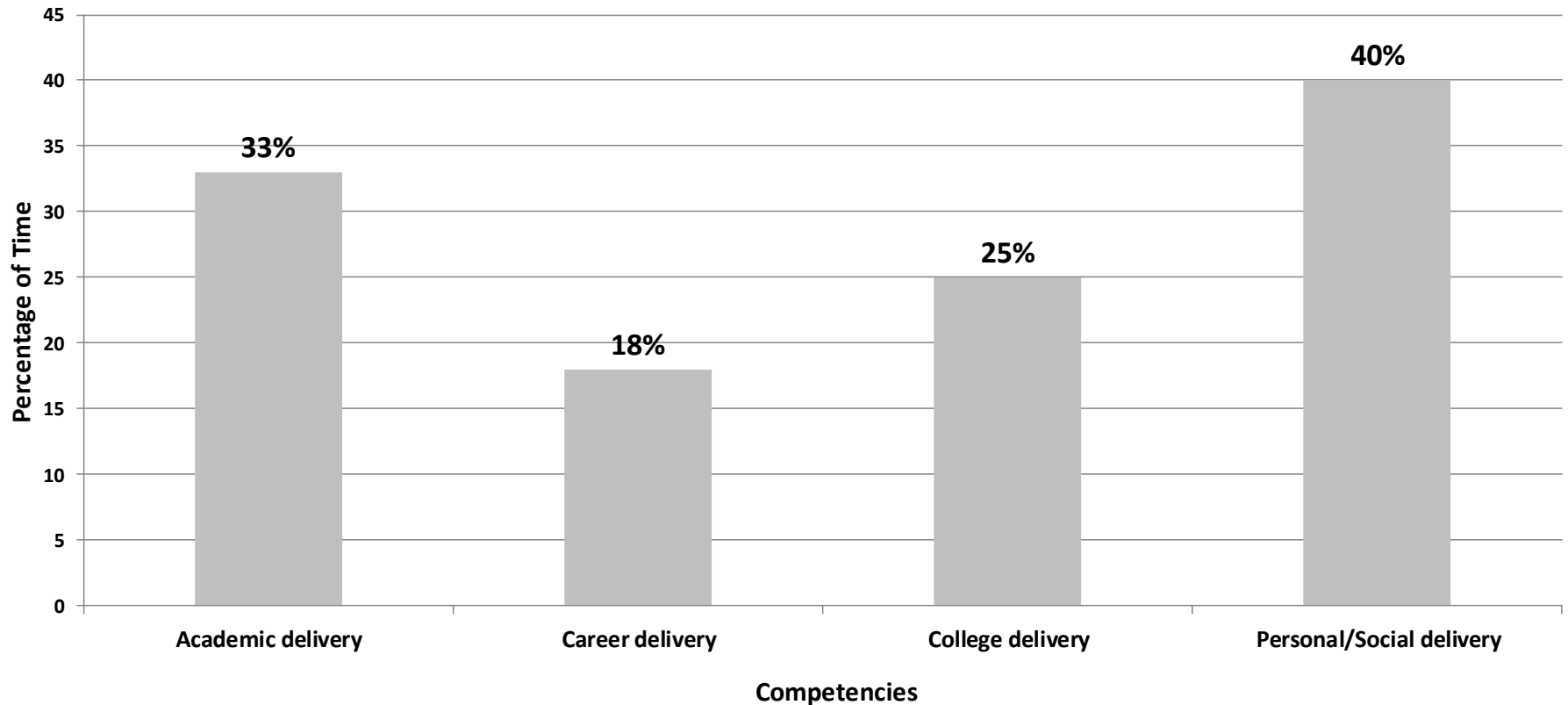
To the best of your knowledge, which of the following best represents the average school counselor-to-student ratio in your school district?



P-12 Survey Results

Over the course of the school year, what percentage of time do the school counselors in your district spend on the following competencies?

School Counselor Average Percentage of Time Spent on Competencies
N= 2,541 respondents

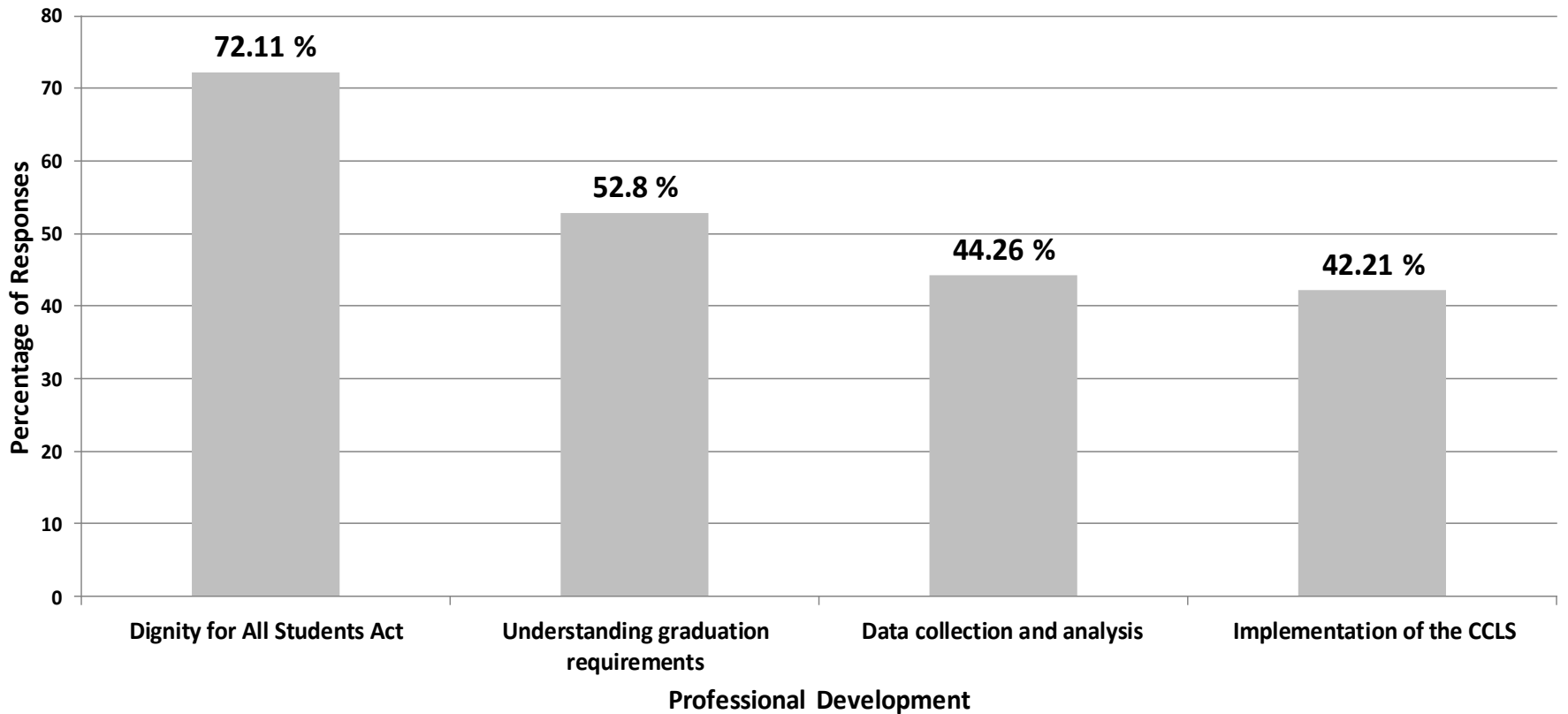


P-12 Survey Results

Within the past two years, what professional development opportunities have you participated in?

Areas of Professional Development with the Greatest Participation

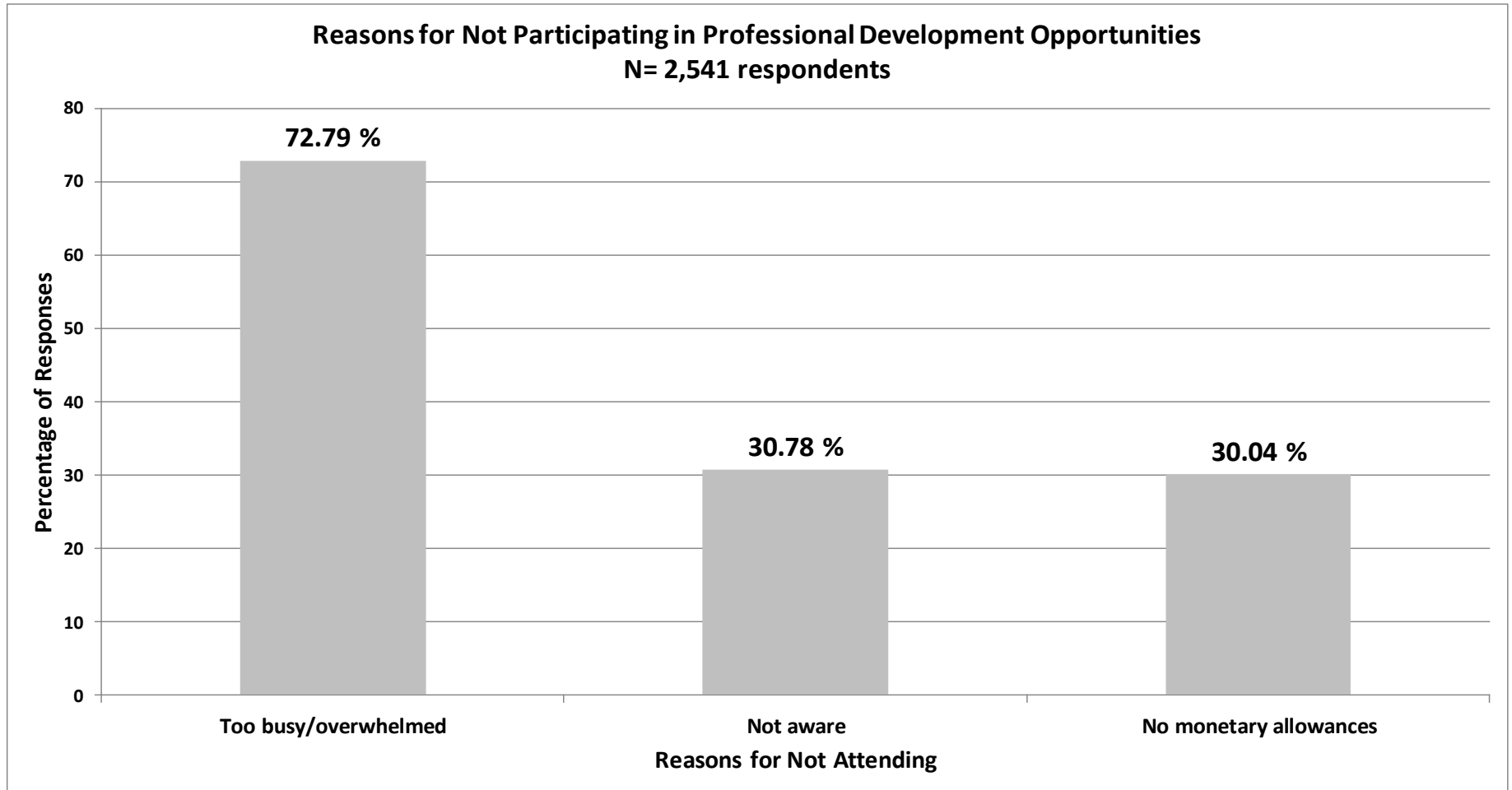
N= 2,541 respondents



* Respondents could choose more than one area of professional development. Percentages may not add up to 100%.

P-12 Survey Results

If you or your school counselors have not participated in professional development, which of the following are reasons for not participating?



* Respondents could choose more than one reason for not participating in professional development. Percentages may not add to 100%.

Current School Counselor Program and Certification Requirements

Commissioner's Regulations §80-2.3:

- **Provisional certification: (5 year renewable)**
 - **Option 1:** Completion of a NYS registered school counseling program
 - **Option 2:** Bachelor's degree **AND** 30 credit hours of approved graduate study in school counseling
 - **Option 3:** Certified in school counseling by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS)
- **Permanent certification: (lifetime)**
 - 30 graduate semester hours in school counseling which includes a Master's degree **PLUS** 2 years of school experience in pupil personnel services.

Higher Education Survey

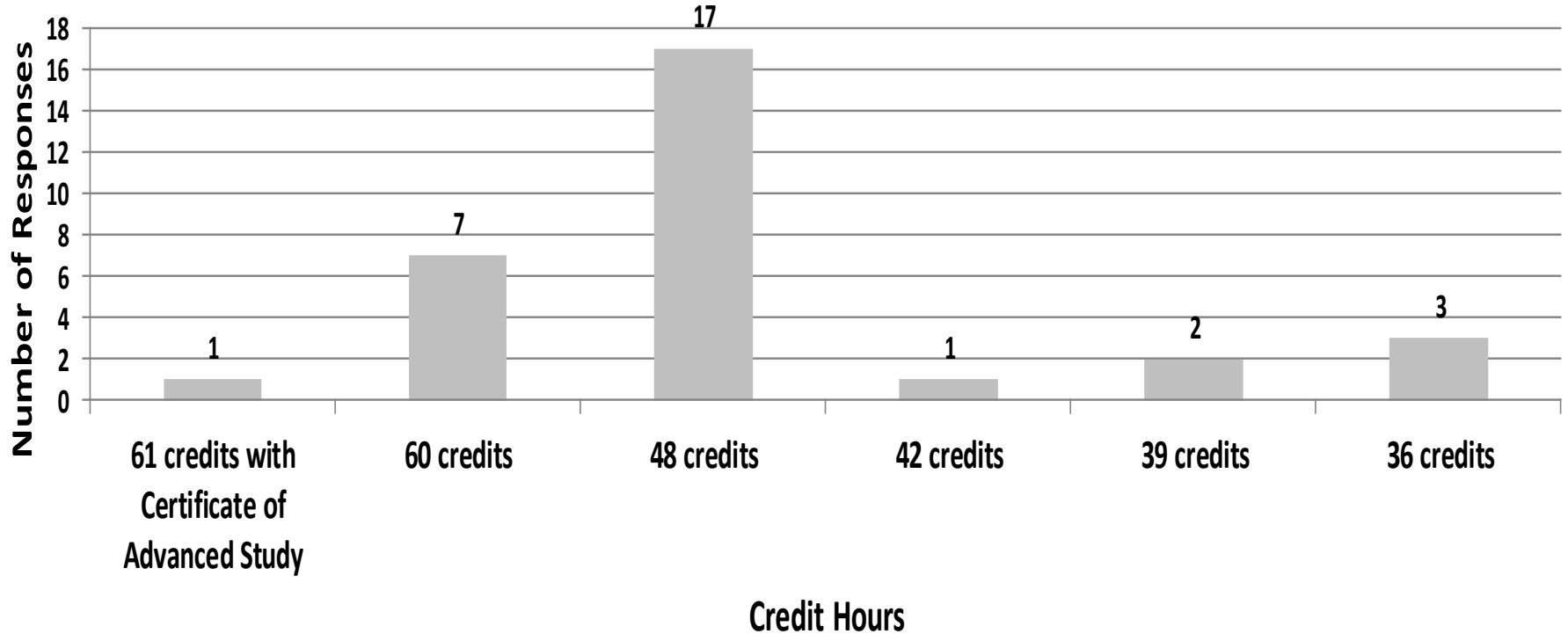
- In New York State there are a total of 41 registered programs, with some institutions having two or three school counselor preparation programs registered at multiple campuses.
- The higher education survey was sent to deans, coordinators, directors, advisors, and chairpersons of approved school counseling programs. Of the 34 individual campuses that were sent the survey, 31 programs responded.

Higher Education Survey Results

How many credits are required for graduation for the master's degree program in school counseling?

Credit Hours Required in School Counseling Master's Programs

N= 31 respondents

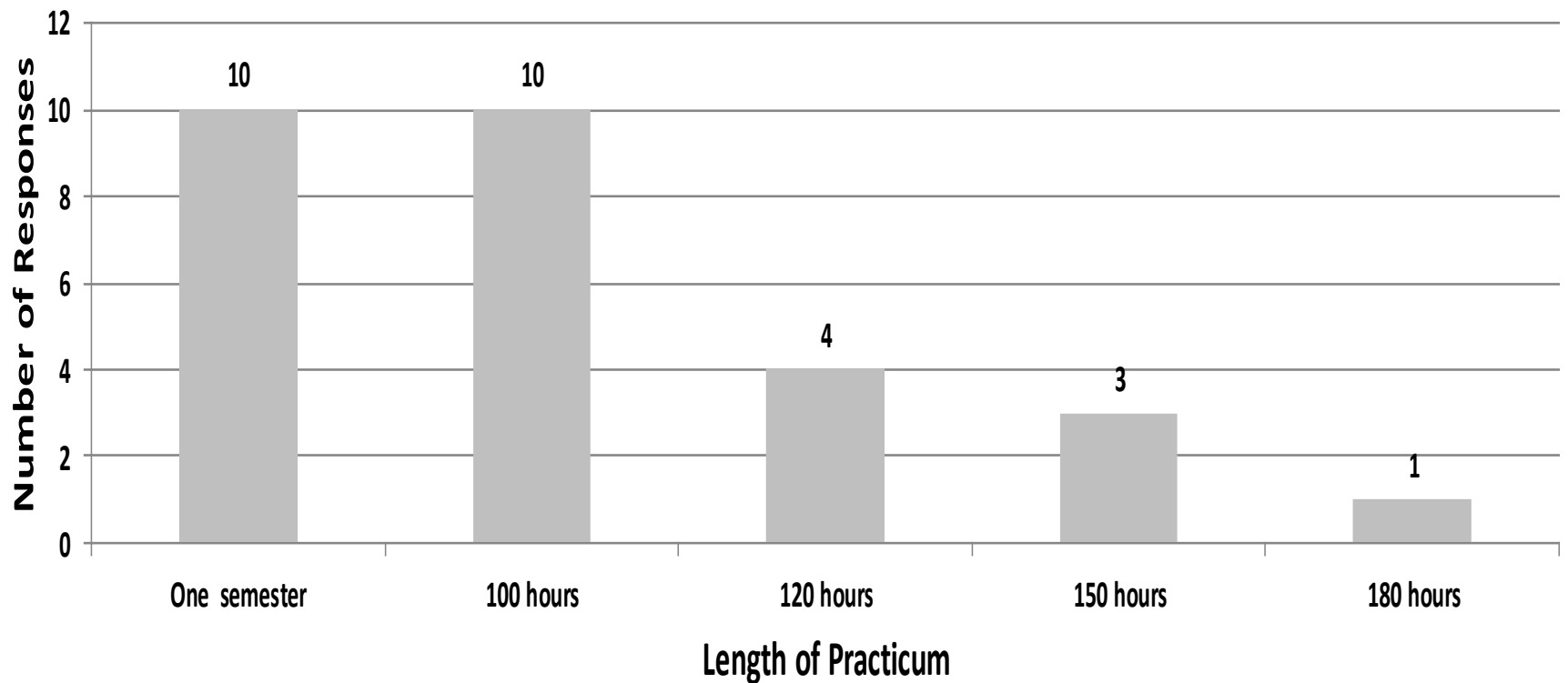


Higher Education Survey Results

How long is the practicum in your program?

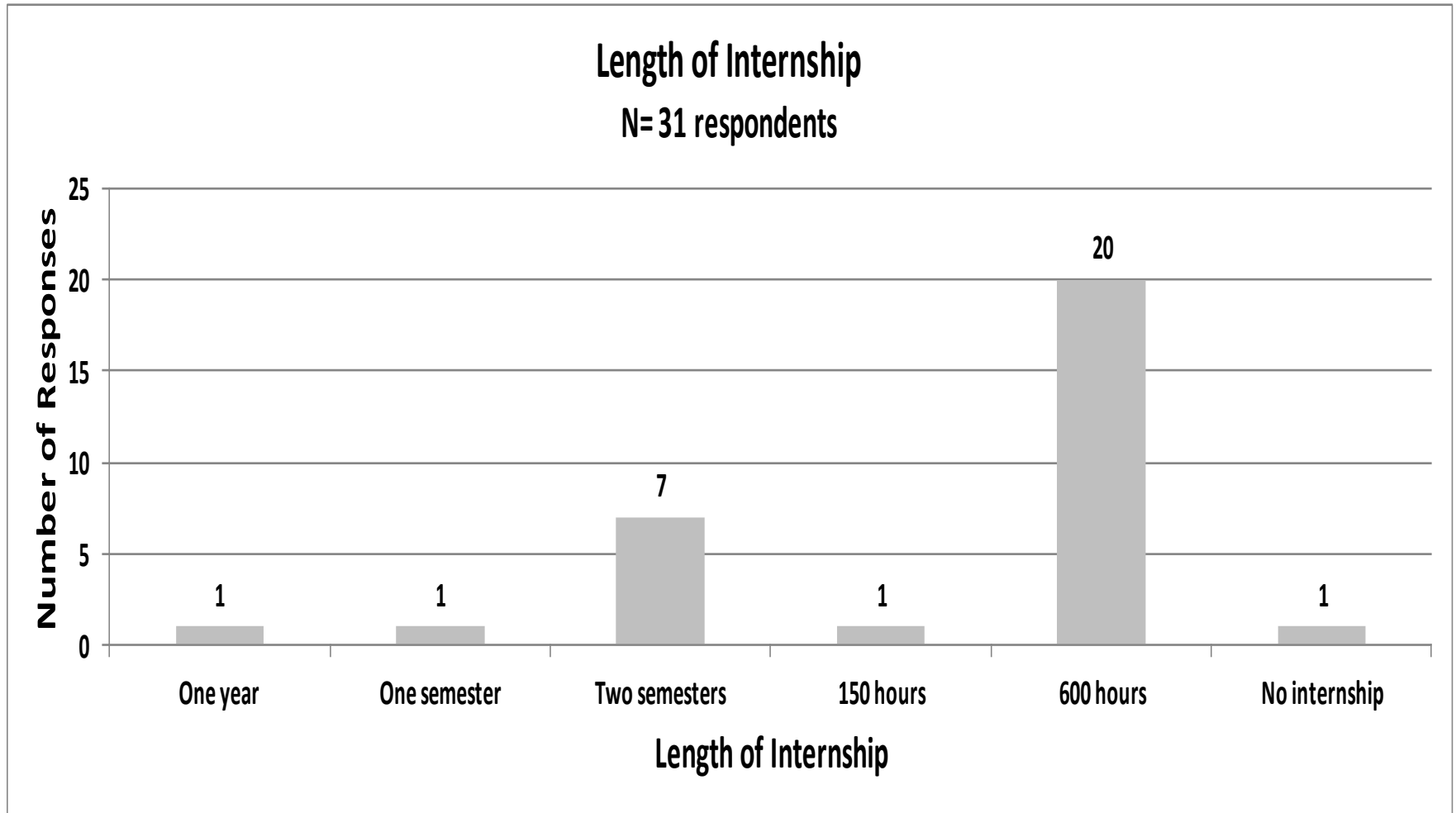
Length of Practicum

N= 28 respondents



Higher Education Survey Results

How long is the internship in your program?



Practicum vs. Internship

Practicum:

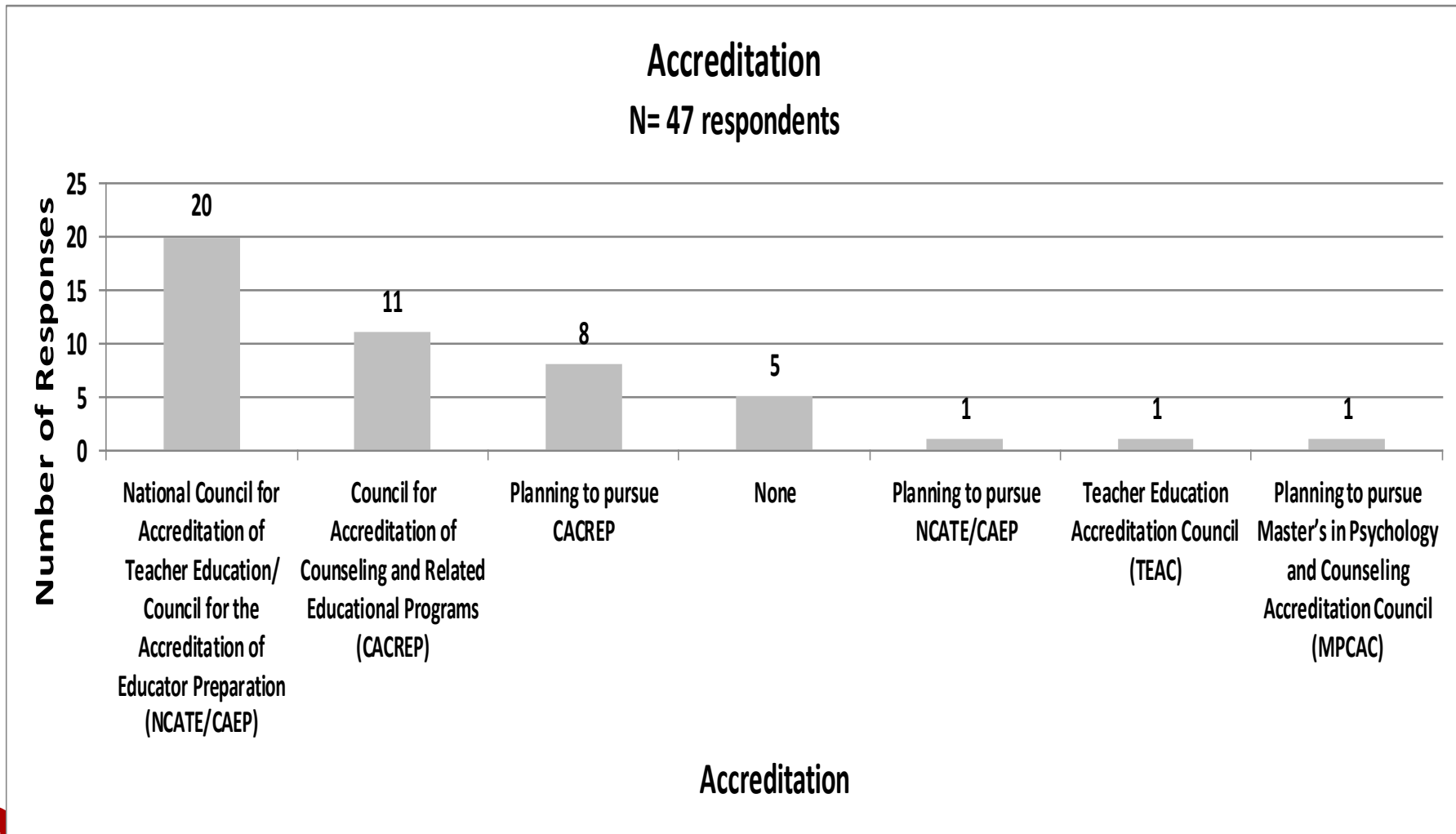
- Candidates must enroll in a specific course which outlines practicum expectations and requirements.
- Candidates are placed in a school building to observe and document how school counselors perform their job responsibilities.
- Participation is limited under the supervision of program professors and on-site staff.
- Candidates must be under the supervision of a professor and on-site program staff.

Internship:

- Candidates are placed with on-site school counselors who manage their workload and oversee their performance much like a school counselor would.
- Candidates take on the characteristics of a school counselor.
- Program instructors visit the student 2-3 times during the internship to evaluate his/her progress and performance.

Higher Education Survey Results

What specialty accreditation does your school counseling master's program have?



* Some programs may have multiple accreditations.

Best Practices in School Counseling: Higher Education

American School Counselor Association (ASCA) recommends:

- Counselor educators have appropriate preparation including knowledge of school counseling models and school counselor competencies, organization and administration of P-12 schools, counseling children and adolescents, and current issues and trends in school counseling.
- School counseling programs promote and enhance the learning process of all school counselors through professional development.

Best Practices in School Counseling: Higher Education (Cont.)

Institutions of higher education can provide training to current school counselors and school building leaders through:

- Workshops
- 1 Credit courses
- Conferences

Related training topics could include: comprehensive school counselor program and its implementation, financial aid, graduation requirements, and college and career pathways.

Best Practices in School Counseling: P-12 (Cont.)

American School Counselor Association (ASCA) recommends:

- A maximum school counselor to student ratio of 1:250 (1:100 is recommended)
- Stronger program alignment that is data-driven
- High quality and effective counseling programs for P-12, delivered in a systematic fashion
- Collaboration between the professional school counselor, families, and other educators to create an environment promoting student achievement

Best Practices in School Counseling: P-12 (Cont.)

American School Counselor Association (ASCA):

- Advocates for school counselors to design and deliver a comprehensive school counseling program that promotes student achievement.
- Recommends that school counseling programs are driven by data and based on standards in academic, career, and personal/social development.

Overall Recommendations

The following six common recommendations emerged from the School Counselor Summit, the School Counselor Advisory Council, and the survey results:

- The need for a comprehensive school counseling program approach including regulatory changes for school guidance programs that include four major program components: Foundation, Delivery, Management, and Accountability;
- Professional development requirements for school counselors and administrators;
- Direct communication and support from the Department to school counselors;
- Consistent pre-service preparation and certification of school counselors, including regulatory changes to counselor preparation programs and P-12 school districts;
- Development of a certification assessment in order to obtain a school counselor initial certificate; and
- A change to school building leader programs to make candidates more aware of the comprehensive school counseling program model and its implementation.

Next Steps

With guidance from the Board of Regents, the Department will draft amendments to current regulations for both P-12 and higher education programs and report back to the Board in April 2015.

Thank You.