

# RESEARCH-BASED EDUCATOR SUPPORT SYSTEM (RESS) GENERAL REPORT FOR PARTICIPATING DISTRICTS

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Dr. Barbara L. Adams, Adams Analytic Solutions



and

Jerry Covey, JSC Consulting, LLC



## INTRODUCTION

In Alaska, continuously high levels of certificated educator turnover (teachers, counselors, principals, school district administrators, superintendents) adversely impacts student learning, school district stability, community, and public support for education.

The five school districts participating in a pilot study conducted by Adams Analytic Solutions and JSC Consulting, LLC are Alaska Gateway (AGSD), Kashunamiut, Nome, Northwest Arctic Borough (NWABSD), and Yupiit. Districts were strategically selected to include a cross-section of size, location, governance structure, and cultural region. The purpose of the study is to apply a third-party, research based systems model to understand and track educator satisfaction with their work, social, and basic needs environments throughout the school year and to share that data with school districts to ensure a timely, well informed response to address educator concerns and thereby reduce turnover. The research design uses a series of surveys with the same respondents throughout the school year to evaluate effectiveness based on district responses to data.

The RESS pilot study is funded by the Coalition for Education Equity (CEE). Oversight for the study is provided jointly by the Alaska Department of Education & Early Development (DEED) and CEE. All participating districts are CEE members and were represented in the Moore Settlement.

## SURVEY ADMINISTRATION

Survey 1 was administered September 11-19, 2017, online using Survey Monkey. Districts provided email addresses for their certificated workforce a week in advance. Educators were contacted by email to complete the survey. To work towards a high-response rate, talking points were shared previously with district administrators in the hope that teachers would be aware of and on the look-out for the email. Reminders were sent out throughout the week to those who had not yet responded. Finally, the administration period was extended for two days to accommodate personnel schedules.

The final response rate averaged 72% across the five participating districts with each district individually having a response rate over 50%. These high response rates provide a higher level of confidence that we have potentially representative data to support your decision making.

RESPONSE RATES	AGSD	KASHUNAMIUT	NOME	NWABSD	YUPIIT	TOTAL
Number Invited	31	26	59	172	40	328
Number Completed	21	18	42	129	25	235
Response Rate	68%	69%	71%	75%	63%	72%

## SURVEY QUALITY

The survey questions were created by researchers with extensive experience in the field of education in Alaska. In-depth input from district personnel played heavily into the question

development. In addition, the survey was reviewed by other experts in education administration providing an elevated level of face validity and strong content validity. The survey included 36 questions, 31 of them with the response options: 6-absolutely, 5-mostly, 4-more than not, 3-maybe, 2-a little bit, 1-not at all, 0-not applicable.

Cronbach alpha was calculated for the full survey and each of the scales providing strong measures of reliability, most above the acceptable level of 0.70.

SCALE	NUMBER OF ITEMS	CRONBACH ALPHA
Survey 1	31	0.920
Work Environment	10	0.832
Leadership	5	0.821
Community	7	0.871
Efficacy	4	0.753
Quality of Life	6	0.724
Strengthening the Workforce	4	0.681

**PAGE 3 CASE SUMMARIES**

A review of the case summaries of responses, reveals that overall, scores definitely trend toward the positive with the highest mean score reported in the leadership scale. Although there is some variability in the standard deviation, the overall mean indicates a positive beginning-of-the-year view of district leadership. The scale scores for Strengthening the Workforce and Quality of Life received the lowest overall scale scores and represent the greatest opportunities for improvement.

**PAGES 4-17 WORK ENVIRONMENT & LEADERSHIP SCALE**

This section, with 10 questions, is the largest in the survey. The Work Environment questions 1-5, trend toward the positive. The highest-ranking question was question 4 (appreciating the welcome from the district). The area of greatest opportunity for improvement in this section relates to the ability of the districts’ in-services to support teachers’ understanding of students from various cultural contexts (question 3).

**LEADERSHIP SCALE**

Leadership, the focus of the last five questions in this section, trended high and received the highest scores in creating success for all students (question 7). Interactions with principals also ranked highly (questions 8, 10). Overall this shows principals are starting off the year engaging with teachers in a very positive way. Respondents identified the greatest opportunity for improvement in this section related to communicating with their principal about their classroom practice (question 9).

**PAGES 18-26 COMMUNITY SCALE**

The bar graph for Community presents strong positive scores with more variability across responses (standard deviation of 1.22). The highest mean scores for this category fall under feeling safe (question 19) and actively engaging with community members (question 16).

The greatest opportunities for growth in this category are parental engagement strategies (question 15) and positive introduction to the culture of the community (question 18). These results feel appropriate for the beginning of the school year.

#### **PAGES 27-32 EFFICACY SCALE**

The bar graph for Efficacy indicates positive response by teachers although less so than the previous scales. Respondents indicated high levels of confidence of success in their teaching assignments (question 24). Question 22 (development as a professional educator) represents the greatest opportunity for improvement in this section as expected for the beginning of the school year.

#### **PAGES 33-40 QUALITY OF LIFE SCALE**

The bar graph for Quality of Life trends toward the middle of the scale and ranks second lowest on the Case Summaries Scale. Being prepared for the logistics of living in the community and teacher housing scored highest. The greatest opportunities for improvement in this category are linked to quality of life for family and work life balance.

#### **PAGES 41-46 WORKFORCE SCALE**

The bar graph for Strengthening the Workforce trends slightly toward the positive side with a wide variety of responses. There is strong evidence the workforce commitment level is high (question 36). However, the other questions in this scale have the highest variability in responses out of the entire survey. Responses related to recruitment efforts, teacher preparation, and initial engagement with HR indicate opportunities to work together to increase teacher retention.

#### **PAGES 47-48 YEARS OF TEACHING DEMOGRAPHICS**

The bar graphs for teaching demographics provide important insights into the reality of our rural teacher workforce. The distributions change significantly from total years in the workforce to the number of years teaching in Alaska and again to the number of years in the district and school. This invites an ongoing look toward policy decisions that will increase teacher retention and strengthen our workforce.

#### **OPEN-ENDED RESPONSE EXAMPLES**

Exploration of the five open-ended response questions across districts together show a preponderance of comments around collegiality, community, students, classroom, administration, personal, and school in that order. The following representative quotes from respondents across districts and schools highlight these themes.

*I love my colleagues and my principal. They are supportive, helpful, and kind. If I didn't have such an awesome support system around me I might not have been able to transition into the school year as well as I have. I also like my classroom because there was so much in terms of supplies and materials at my disposal, but at the same time having every single cabinet and shelf in my room packed with tools and activities and materials that I didn't pick and I don't know the use for has been frustrating at times.*

*Question 29 - on the balance of life - is a tricky one in the village school. I love my job so I feel like my life has quality - but I do feel like 95% of my time is "on the job", investing in kids.*

*I feel safe in my home, however I am missing more of a balance between school and home. I also wish I knew of more opportunities to participate in activities outside of my home in order to support quality of life*

*There are lots of grey areas in terms of behavior expectations and norms. It has been hard to hold my own classroom accountable when they get away with it in the hallways before and after school, on the playground, and in other classes.*

*I am always encouraged by the adults around me, but the students have been rather trying. I think that with time and help from admin this can be less extreme.*

*I feel very busy at the moment... but that is because of personal choices for extra activities with the school, which is great! It honestly is different than I am used to. I am used to going places on the weekend, hiking, being outside.... and I haven't had as much opportunity to do that yet. I know it is out there, I just need to have the time to do it.*

*Some colleagues are supportive while others aren't. I don't know if the education system is doing more damage than it is good under these circumstances. I teach 5 different subjects at the secondary level.*

*We had a supportive new principal who knew what she was doing, unlike last year. Supplies for the class would have been great, like pencils and a working pencil sharpener.*

*I love where I work, the staff, and the admin. I just wish the new teachers had more information of procedures.*

*The job is bigger than anyone and changing admin every year has not helped. We spend all of our time and energy addressing issues beyond our control.*

#### **PROJECT SUMMARY**

This is the first of four surveys conducted in this year-long pilot study with districts across the system. Results from this survey will provide important information for participating school districts and potentially provide insights into state policy development. Additional surveys will be conducted in November 2017, March 2018 and May 2018 and reports will be shared following each of the surveys.

**SURVEY 1 RESULTS GENERAL REPORT**  
**RESEARCH-BASED EDUCATOR SYSTEM SUPPORT (RESS) PILOT STUDY**  
BY JERRY COVEY AND BARBARA L. ADAMS

What is Research-based Educator Systems Support (RESS)?

RESS is a third-party, researched-based systems model that uses teacher surveys to understand and track educator satisfaction with their work, social, and basic needs environments throughout the school year and share that data with school districts to ensure a timely, well-informed district response to address educator concerns, increase satisfaction, and thereby reduce turnover.

This survey, the first of four, had 36 questions – 31 multiple-choice questions divided into five groups:

- ❖ Work Environment/Leadership
- ❖ Community
- ❖ Efficacy
- ❖ Quality of Life
- ❖ Strengthening the Workforce

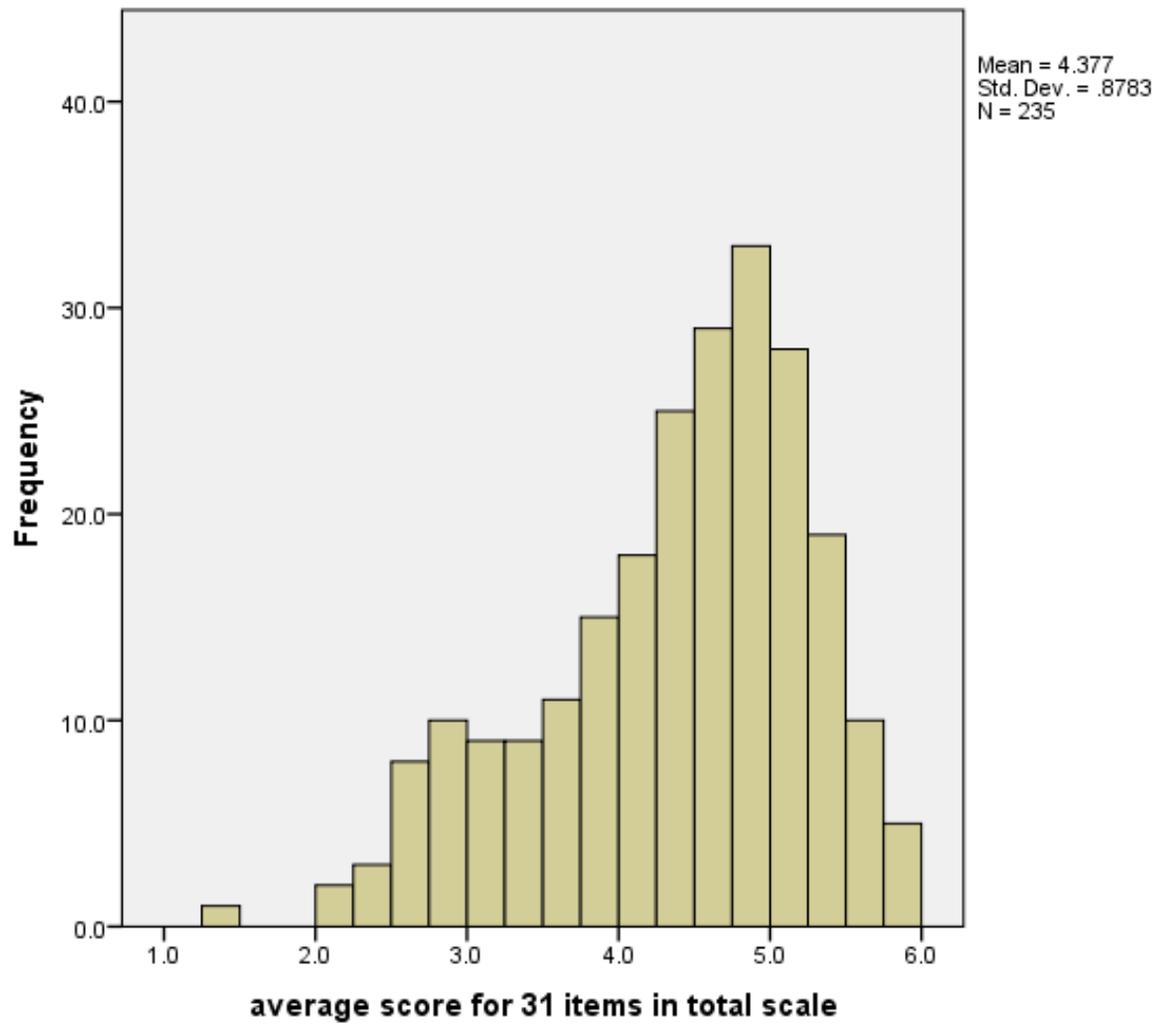
There were also five narrative questions on this survey, one for each of the above groups, that allowed teachers to share any thoughts and/or ideas.

The following scale was used for all questions and is reflected in the attached histograms and bar charts.

- 6 – Absolutely
- 5 – Mostly
- 4 – More than not
- 3 – Maybe
- 2 – A little bit
- 1 – Not at all
- 0 – Not Applicable

## SURVEY 1 RESULTS GENERAL REPORT

**Figure 1: Distribution of Total Scores for RESS Survey 1, September 2017**



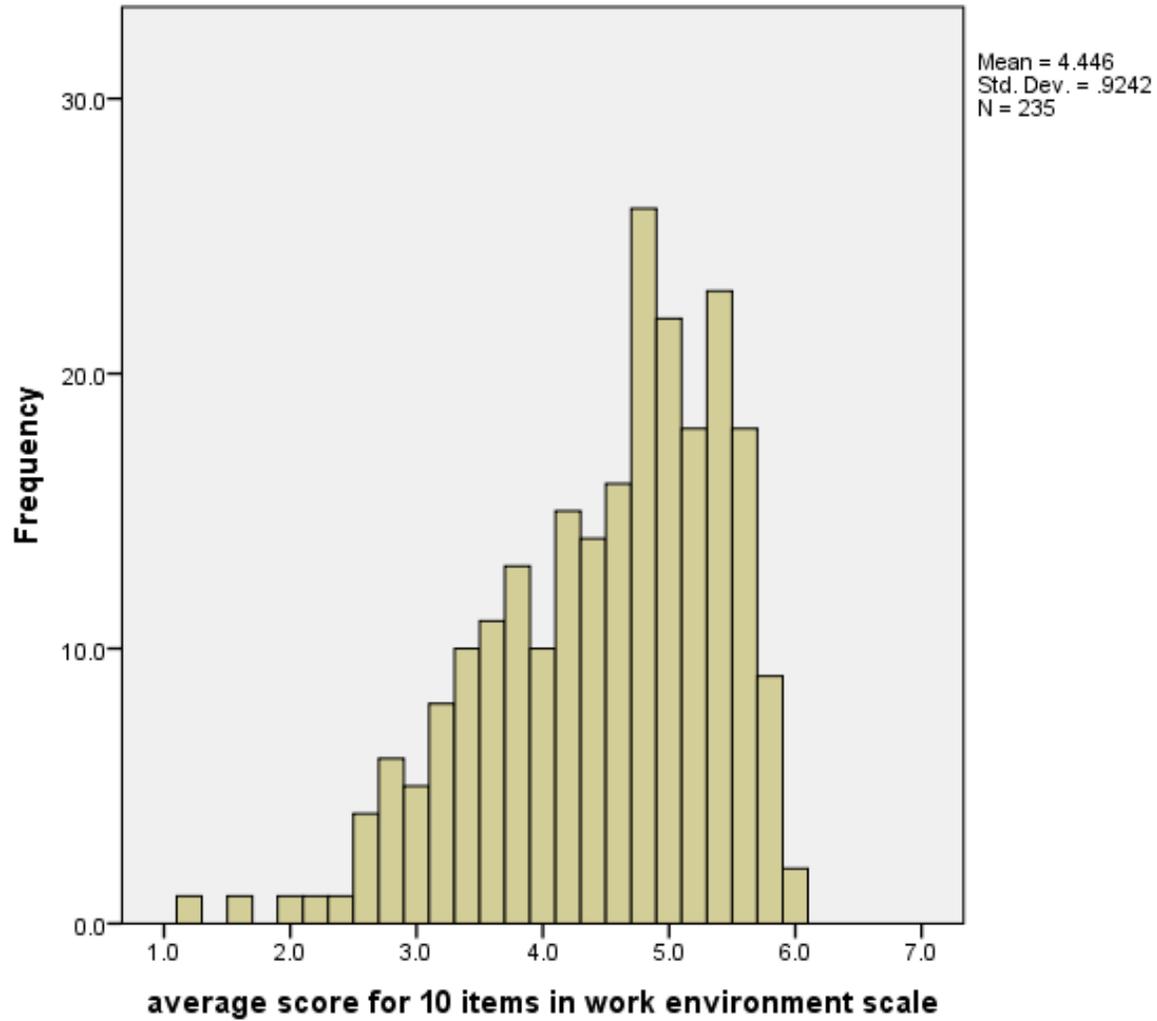
## SURVEY 1 RESULTS GENERAL REPORT

### Scale Scores – Descriptive Statistics

	Leadership Average  (5 items)	Work Environment Average  (10 items)	Community Average  (7 items)	Efficacy Average  (4 items)	Quality of Life Average  (6 items)	Strengthening the Workforce Average  (4 items)	Total Average  (31 items)
N	235	235	235	235	235	235	235
Mean	4.984	4.446	4.499	4.557	4.199	4.093	4.377
Std. Deviation	1.0204	.9242	1.2253	1.1458	1.1016	1.3837	.8783
Median	5.400	4.700	4.857	4.750	4.167	4.250	4.516
Minimum	1.2	1.2	1.0	1.3	.0	.0	1.5
Maximum	6.0	6.0	6.0	6.0	6.0	6.0	6.0

# SURVEY 1 RESULTS GENERAL REPORT

## Figure 2: Distribution of Scores - Work Environment



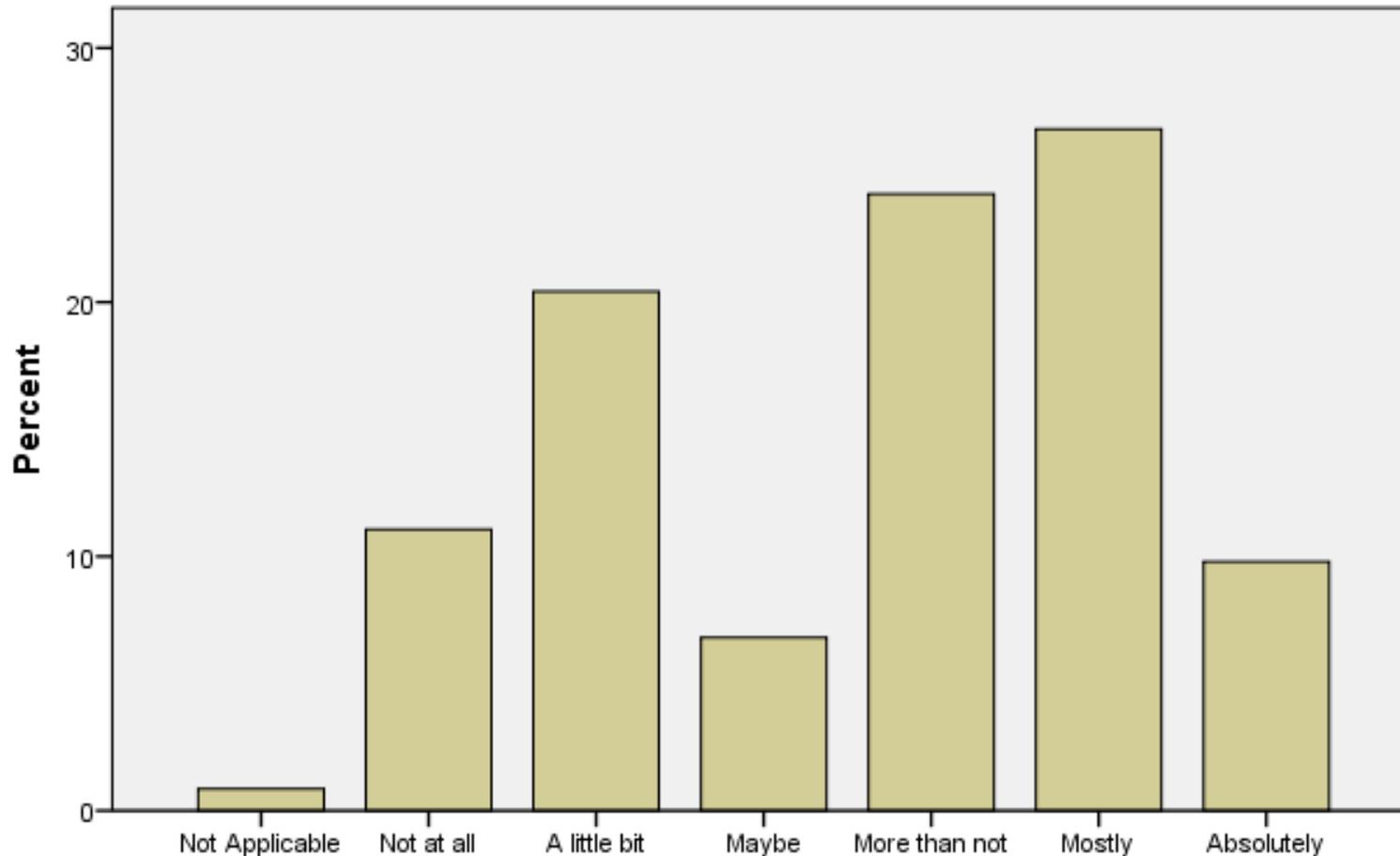
## SURVEY 1 RESULTS GENERAL REPORT

### Work Environment Questions – Descriptive Statistics

		Q1: At the start of this year, I had all the resources necessary to prepare my classroom and plan instruction focused on academic growth for all students I teach.	Q2: The district (school) opening in-services supported a smooth start to the school year.	Q3: The district (school) opening in-services provided me with what I needed to understand and support students from various cultural contexts.	Q4: I appreciate the welcome I received this year from the district (school) where I teach.	Q5: I have a sense of clarity about the performance level of the students I teach this year.
N	Valid	235	235	235	235	235
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0
Mean		3.62	3.45	3.43	4.57	4.32
Median		4.00	4.00	4.00	5.00	5.00
Std. Deviation		1.595	1.577	1.692	1.664	1.370

**SURVEY 1 RESULTS GENERAL REPORT**

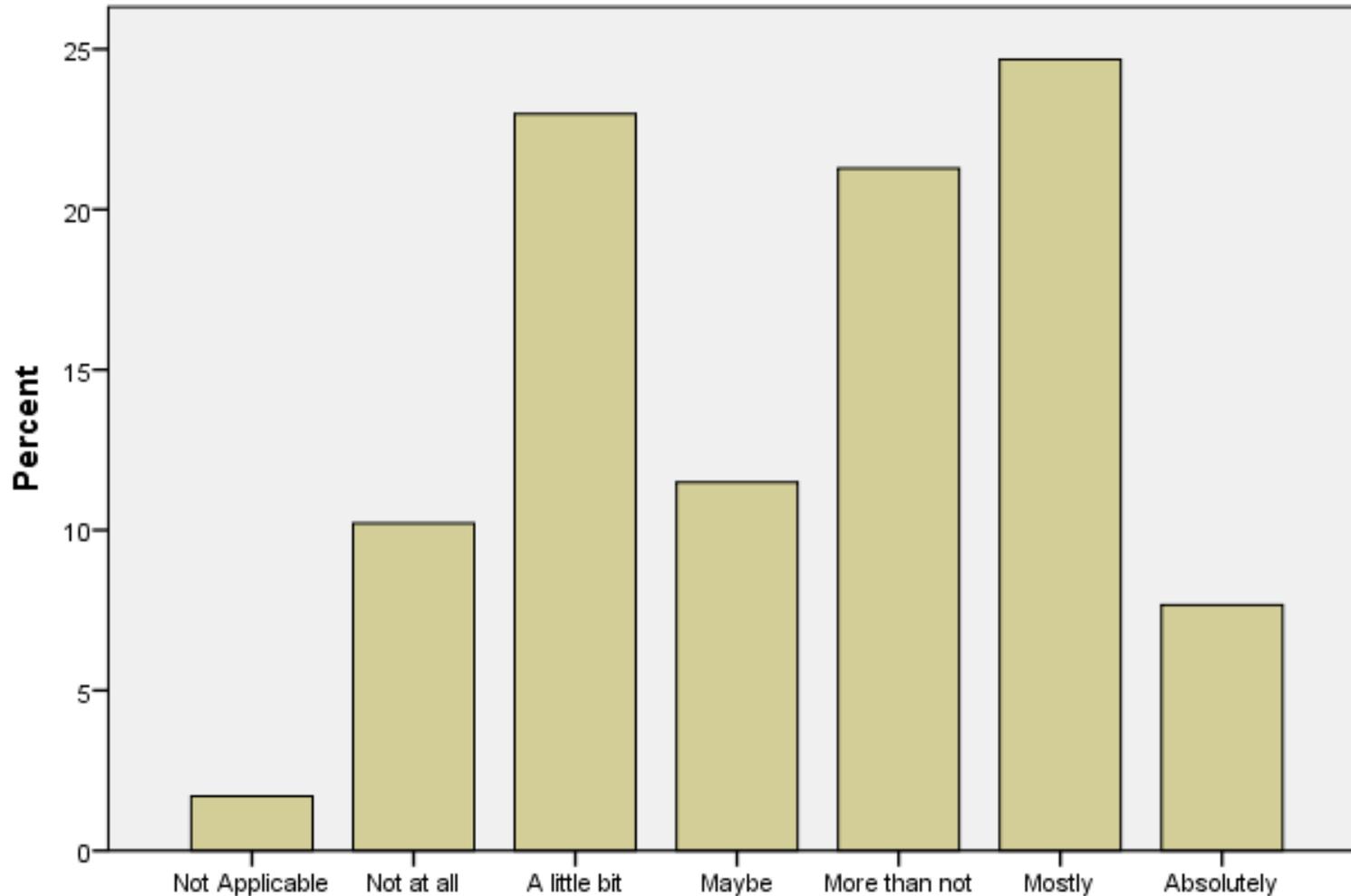
**Q1: At the start of this year, I had all the resources necessary to prepare my classroom and plan instruction focused on academic growth for all students I teach.**



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**SURVEY 1 RESULTS GENERAL REPORT**

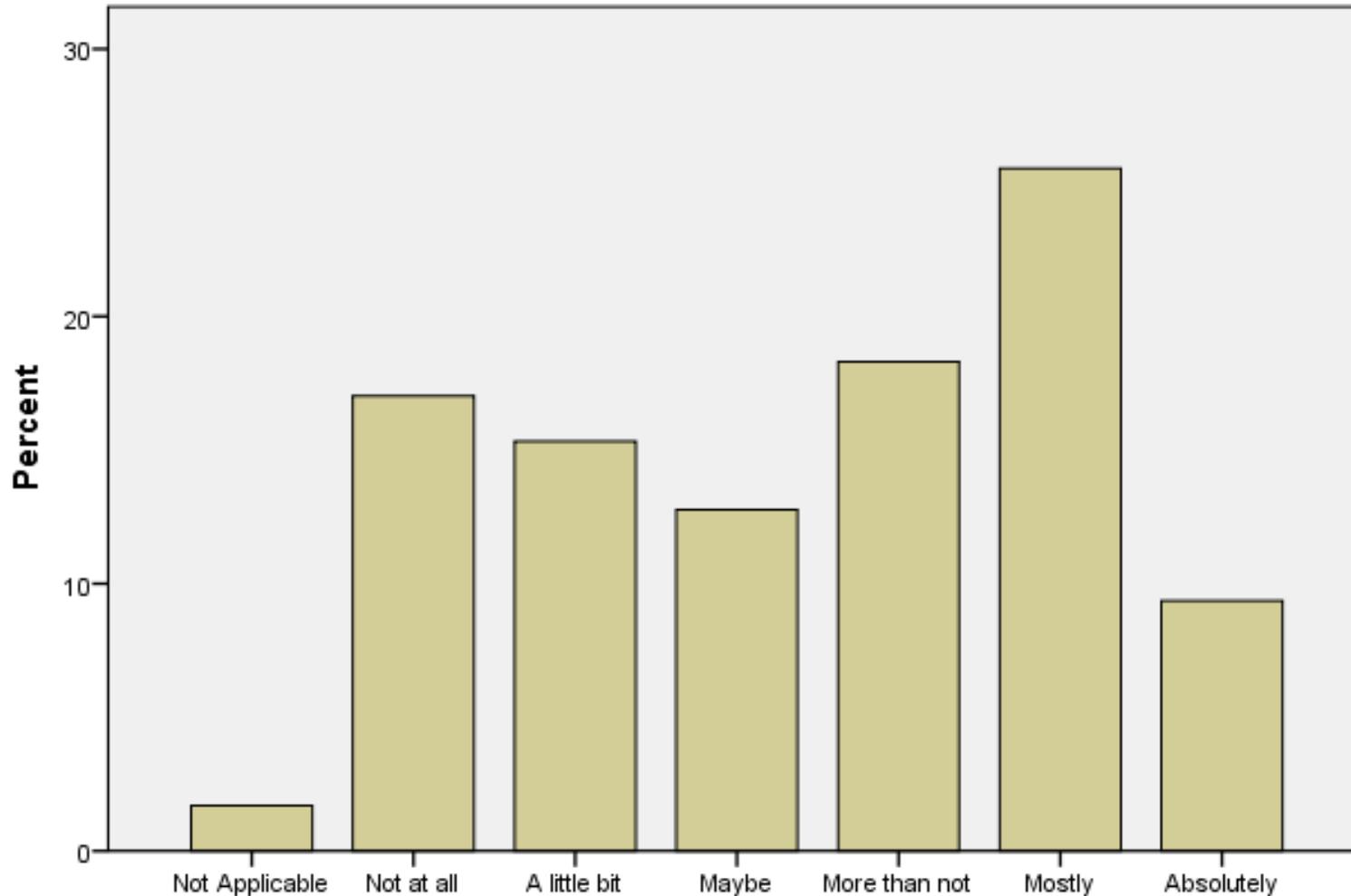
**Q2: The district (school) opening in-services supported a smooth start to the school year.**



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SURVEY 1 RESULTS GENERAL REPORT

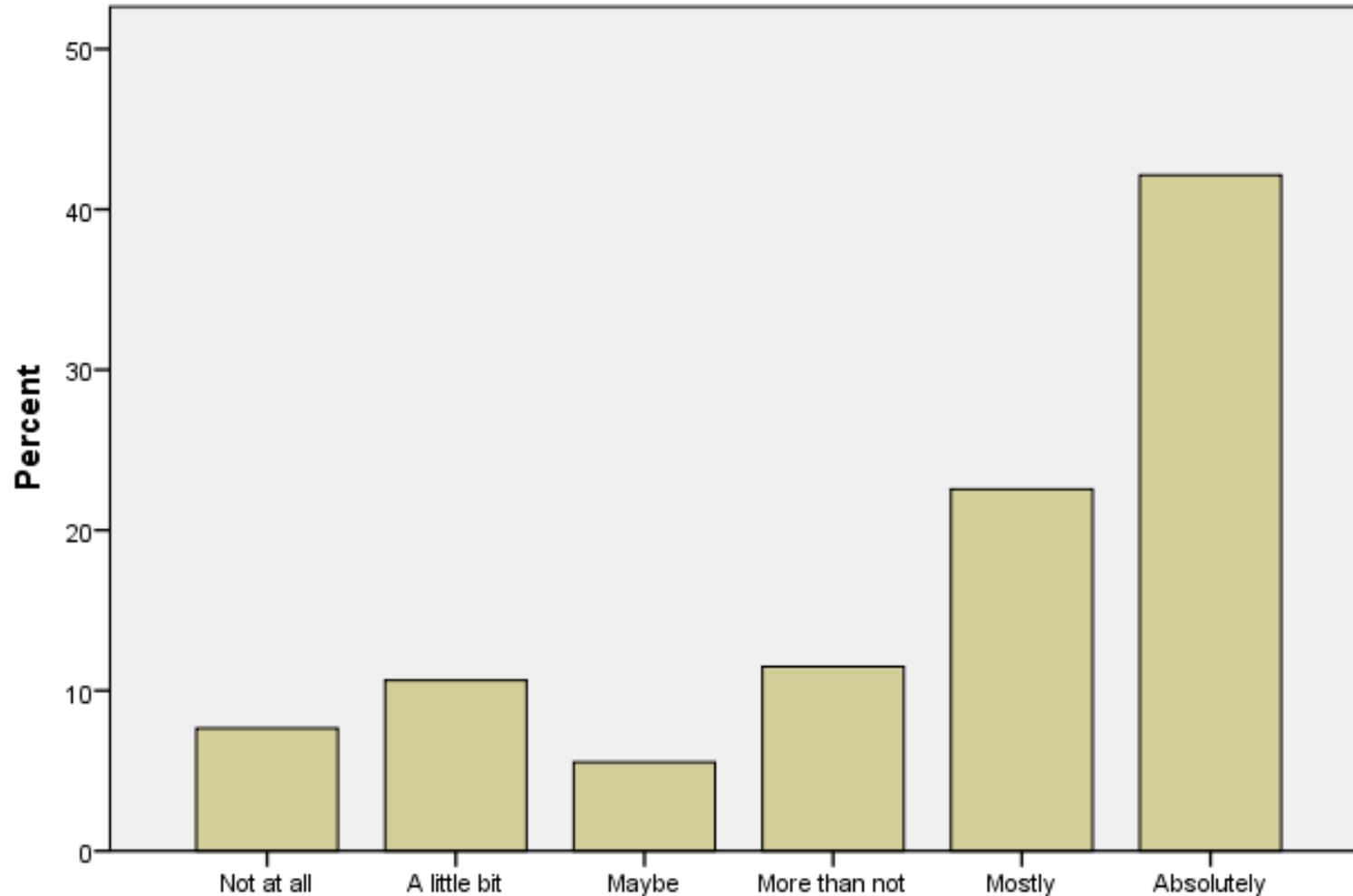
**Q3: The district (school) opening in-services provided me with what I needed to understand and support students from various cultural contexts.**



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## SURVEY 1 RESULTS GENERAL REPORT

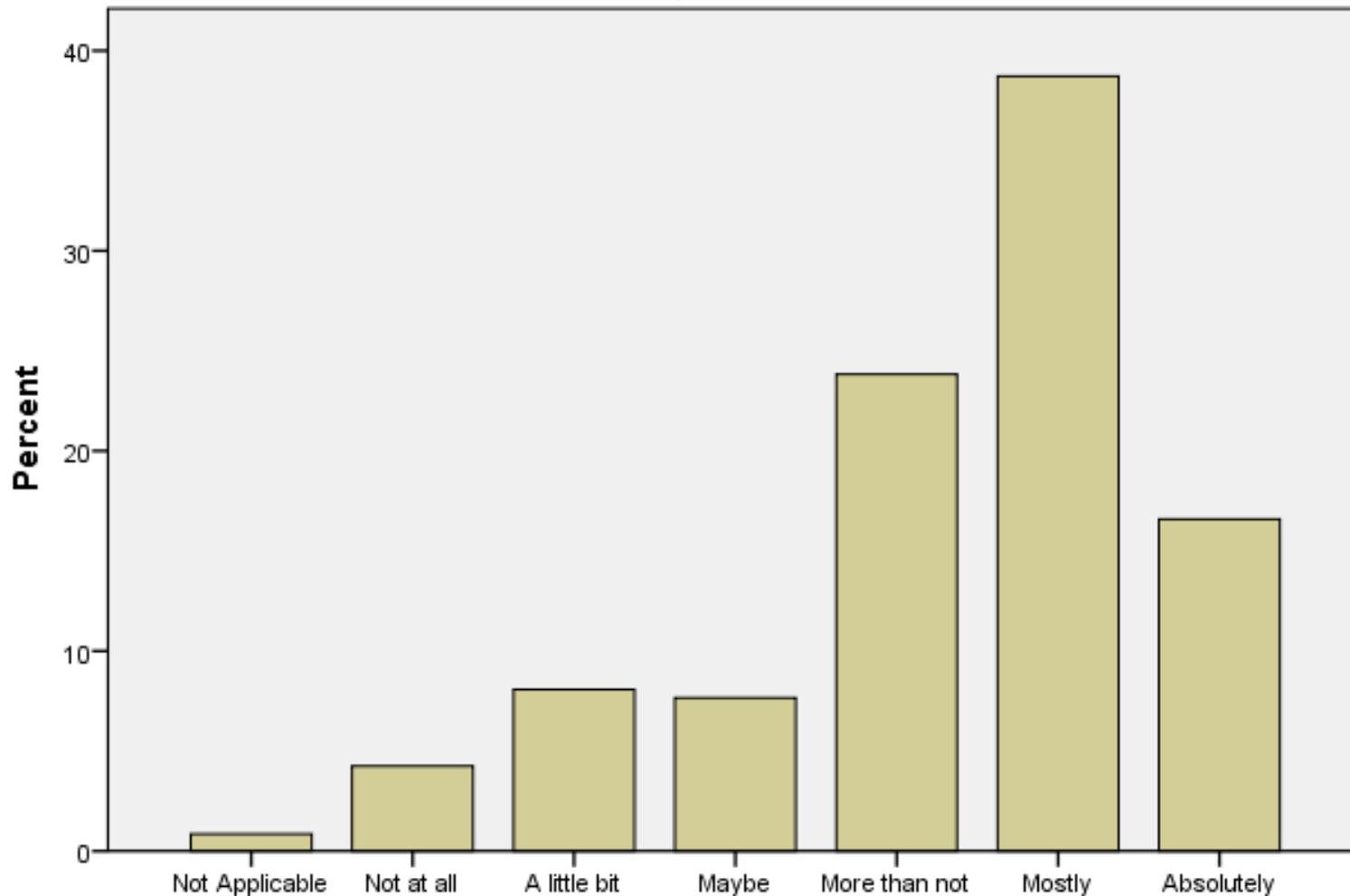
**Q4: I appreciate the welcome I received this year from the district (school) where I teach.**



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**SURVEY 1 RESULTS GENERAL REPORT**

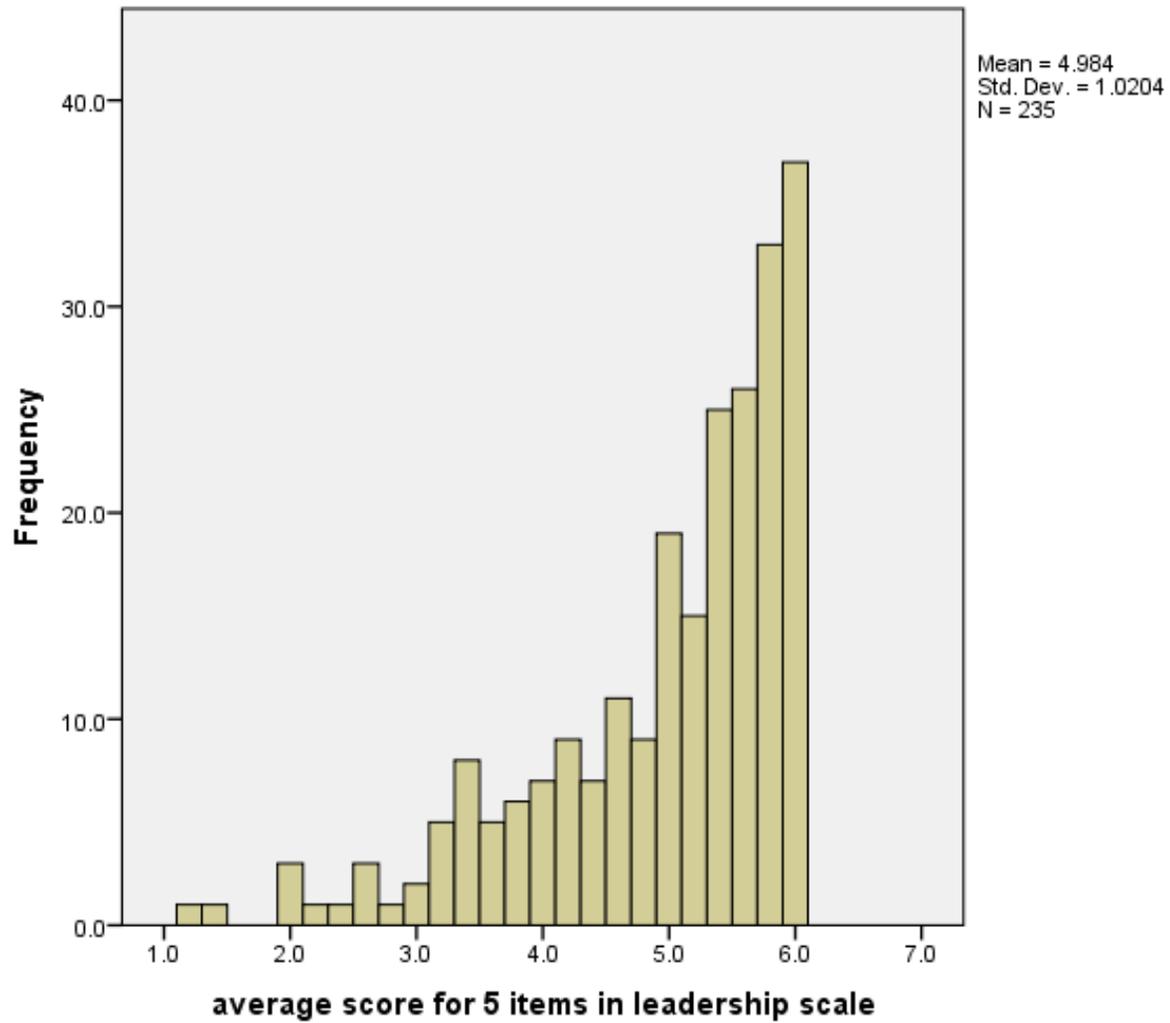
**Q5: I have a sense of clarity about the performance level of the students I teach this year.**



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## SURVEY 1 RESULTS GENERAL REPORT

**Figure 3: Distribution of Scores - Leadership**



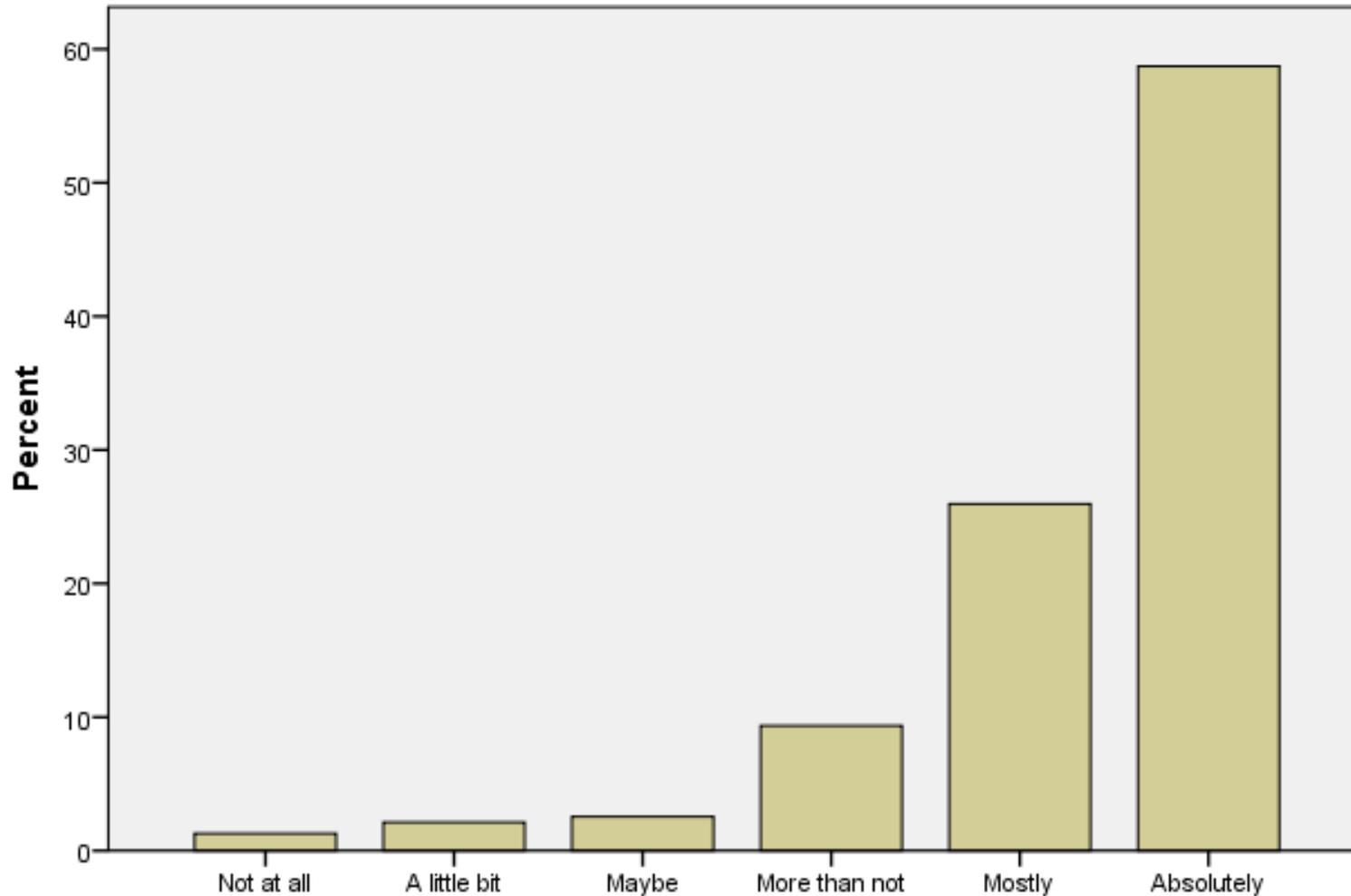
## SURVEY 1 RESULTS GENERAL REPORT

### Leadership Questions – Descriptive Statistics

		Q7: I understand my role in the school (district) in creating an environment of success for all students I teach.	Q8: My principal communicates with me regularly and helps me improve.	Q9: My initial engagement with my principal this year set me up for successful classroom practice.	Q10: My principal fosters team work and inclusiveness amongst the staff.	Q11: I understand how my school functions in terms of safety, behavior management, rules and procedures, and attendance policies.
N	Valid	235	235	235	235	235
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0
Mean		5.33	5.02	4.86	4.97	4.82
Median		6.00	5.00	5.00	6.00	5.00
Std. Deviation		1.037	1.301	1.536	1.394	1.350

**SURVEY 1 RESULTS GENERAL REPORT**

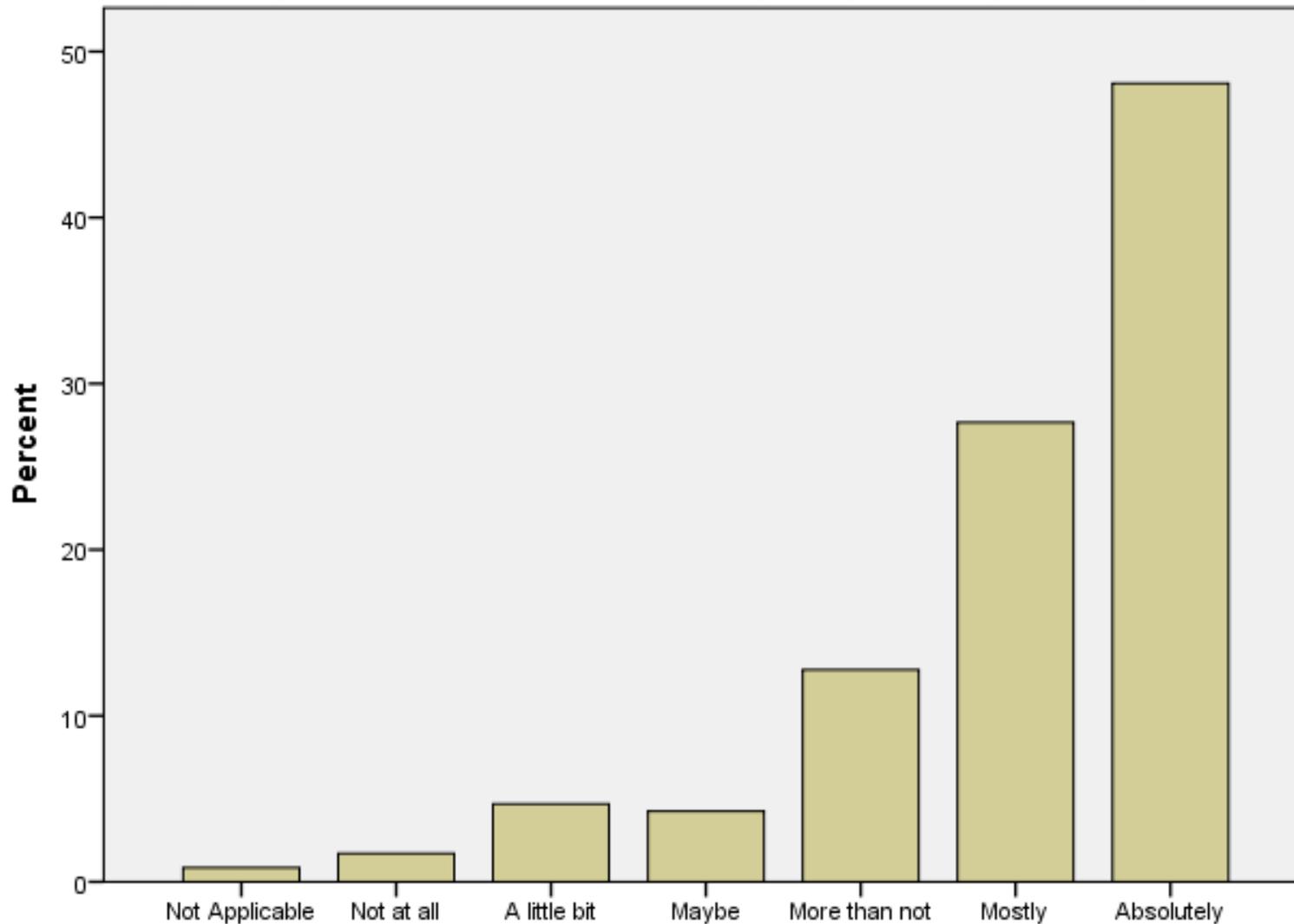
**Q7: I understand my role in the school (district) in creating an environment of success for all students I teach.**



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**SURVEY 1 RESULTS GENERAL REPORT**

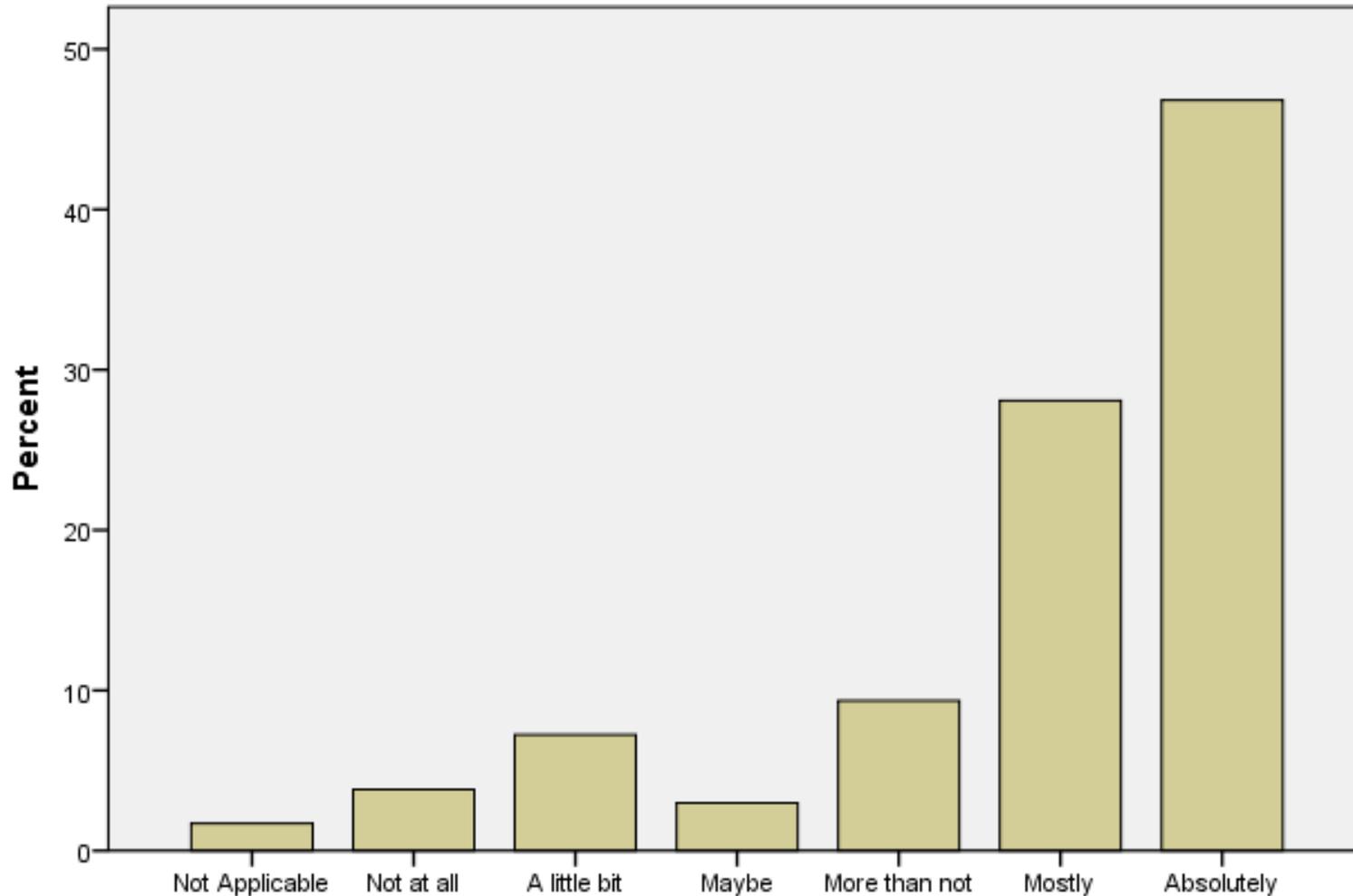
**Q8: My principal communicates with me regularly and helps me improve.**



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**SURVEY 1 RESULTS GENERAL REPORT**

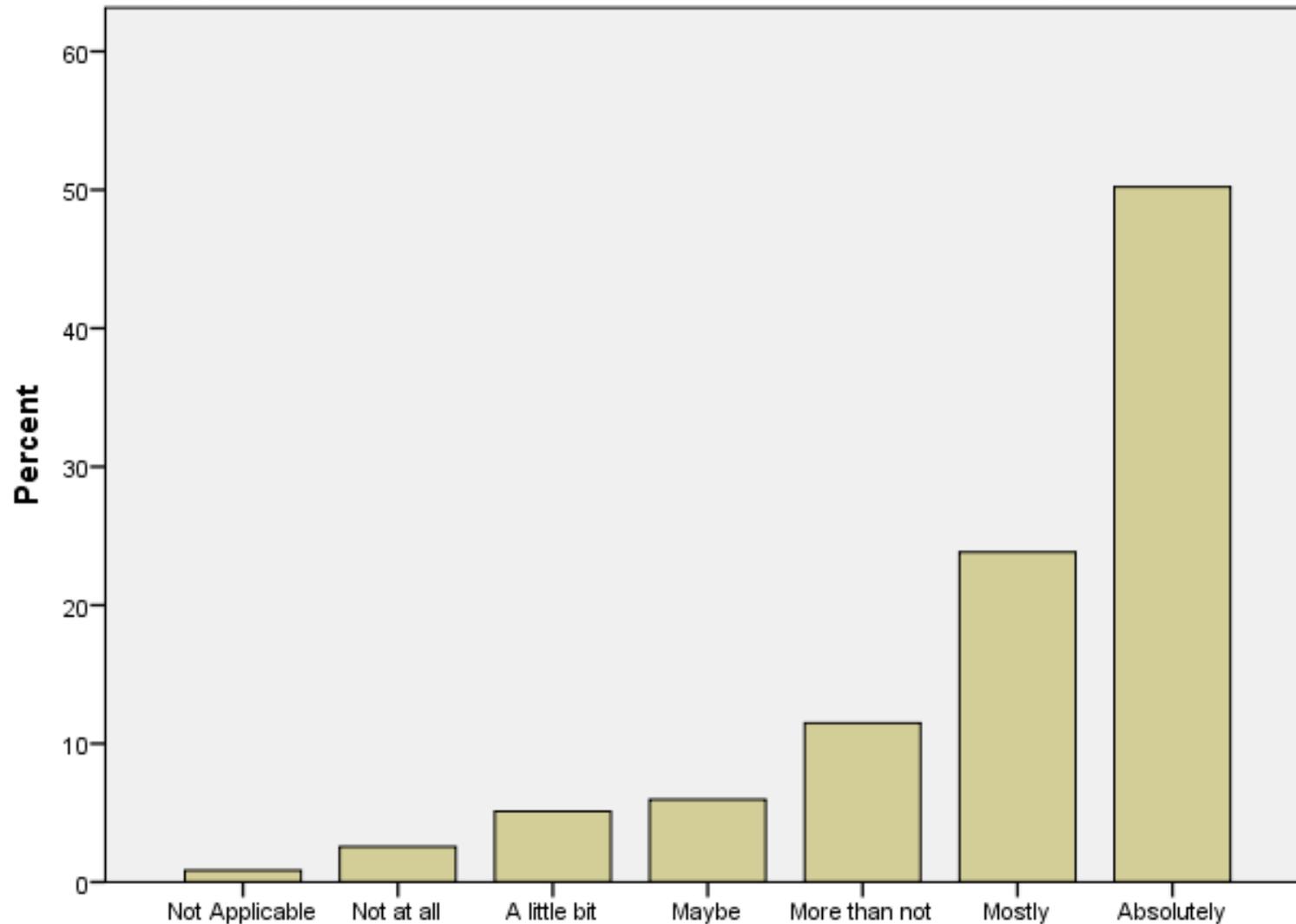
**Q9: My initial engagement with my principal this year set me up for successful classroom practice.**



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## SURVEY 1 RESULTS GENERAL REPORT

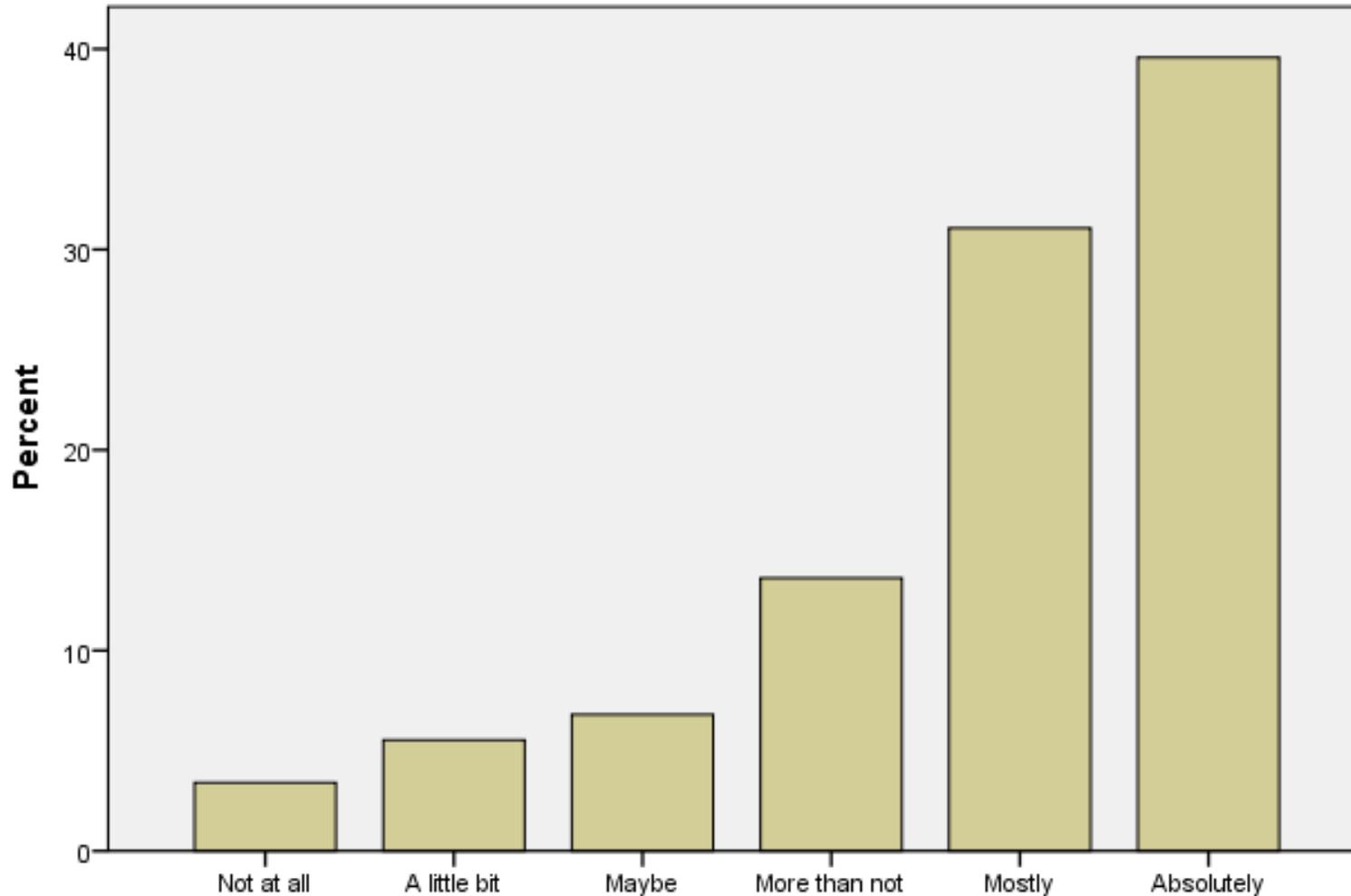
**Q10: My principal fosters team work and inclusiveness amongst the staff.**



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SURVEY 1 RESULTS GENERAL REPORT

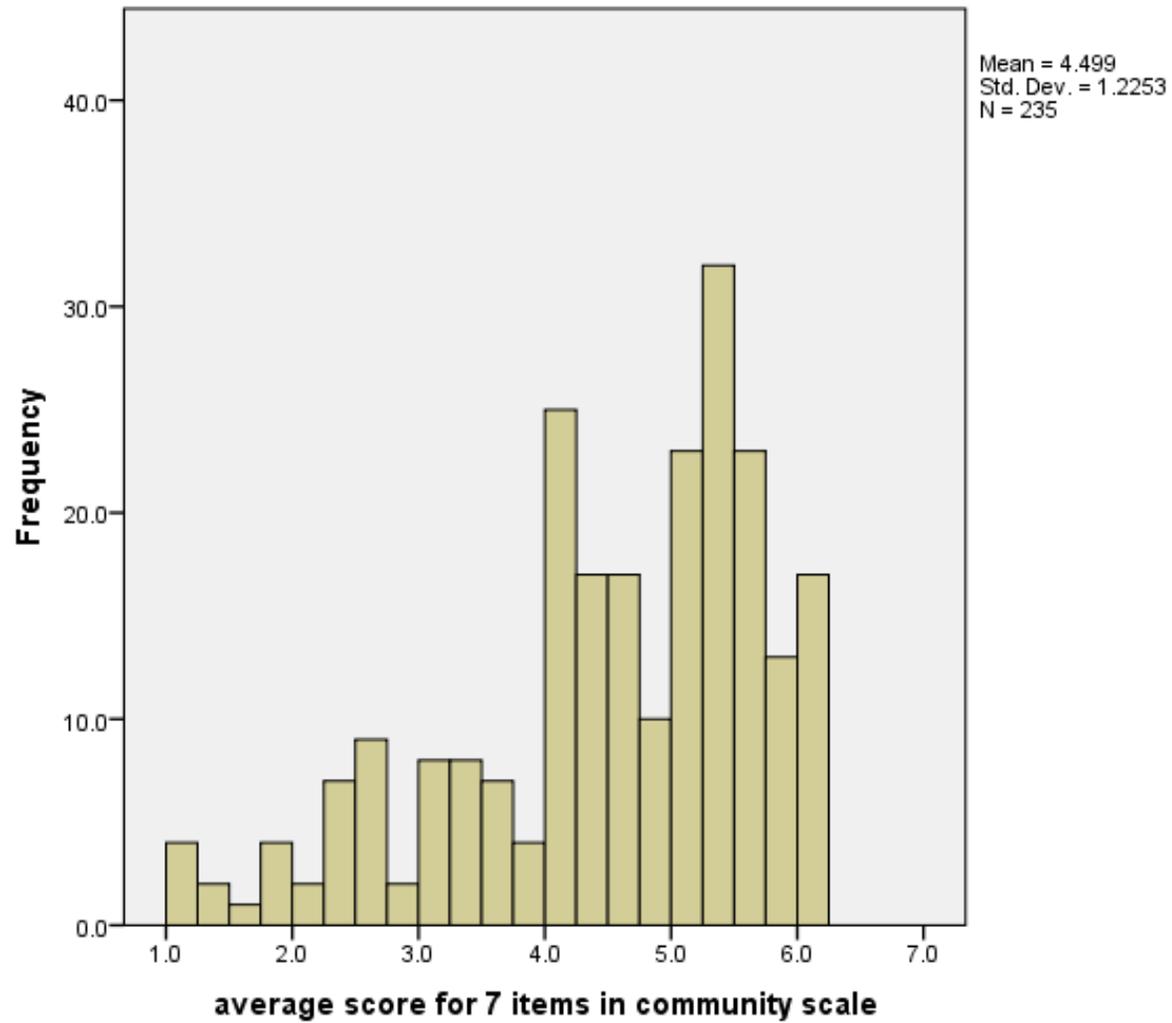
**Q11: I understand how my school functions in terms of safety, behavior management, rules and procedures, and attendance policies.**



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## SURVEY 1 RESULTS GENERAL REPORT

**Figure 4: Distribution of Scores – Community**



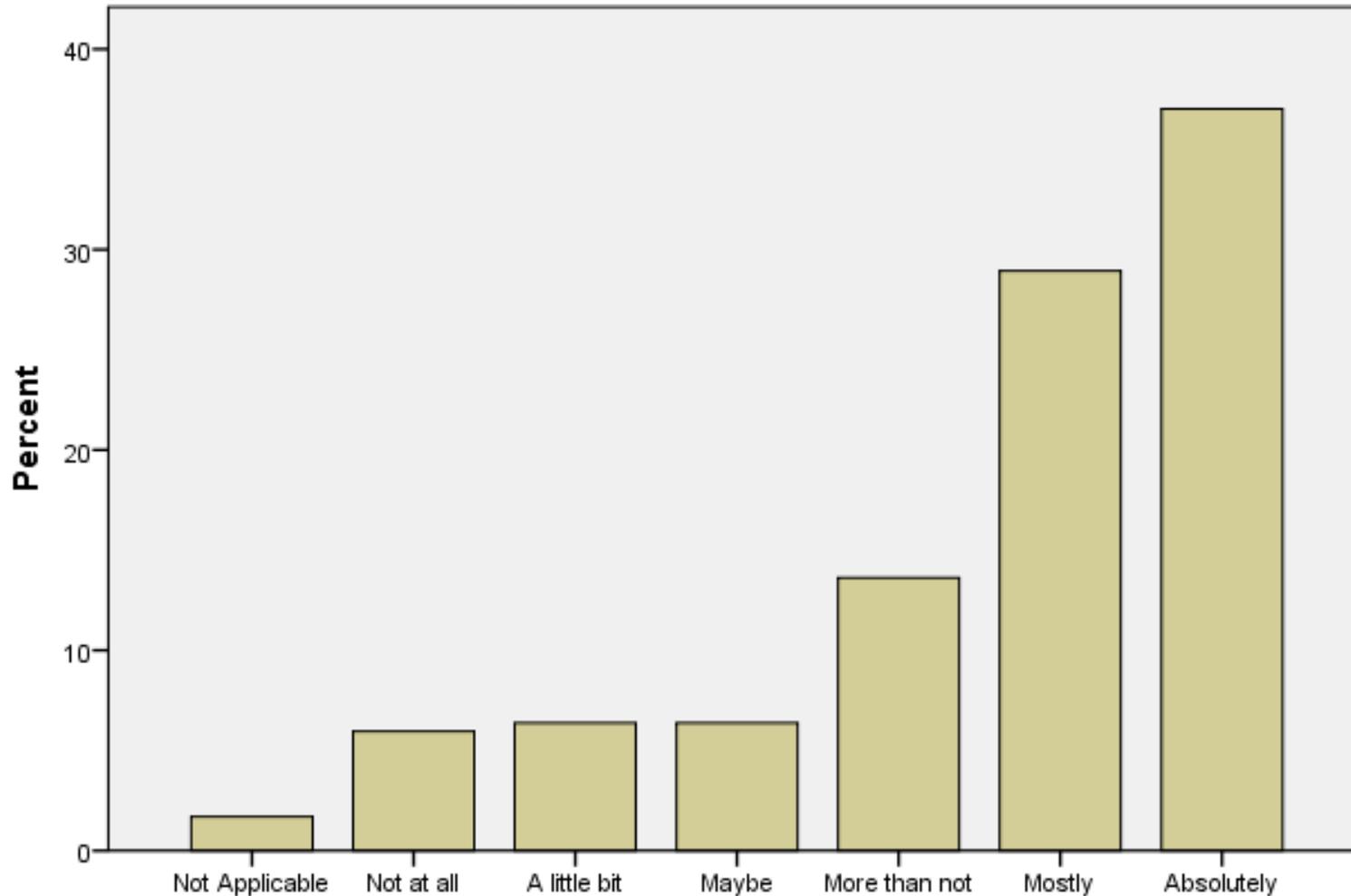
## SURVEY 1 RESULTS GENERAL REPORT

### Community Questions – Descriptive Statistics

		Q13: My initial and/or ongoing exposure to the community helped me get off to a good start this year.	Q14: I appreciate the welcome I received this year from the community where I teach.	Q15: I am informed about parental engagement strategies that will support my communication with parents and community.	Q16: I have actively engaged with community members to learn of the values of the community in which I teach.	Q17: I am informed about community events and dynamics that will support my interaction within the community.	Q18: I had a positive introduction this year to the culture of the community in which I teach.	Q19: Based upon my interactions this year, I feel safe in the community where my school is located.
N	Valid	235	235	235	235	235	235	235
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mean		4.59	4.68	4.11	4.72	4.29	4.25	4.85
Median		5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00
Std. Deviation		1.600	1.681	1.665	1.440	1.685	1.899	1.420

**SURVEY 1 RESULTS GENERAL REPORT**

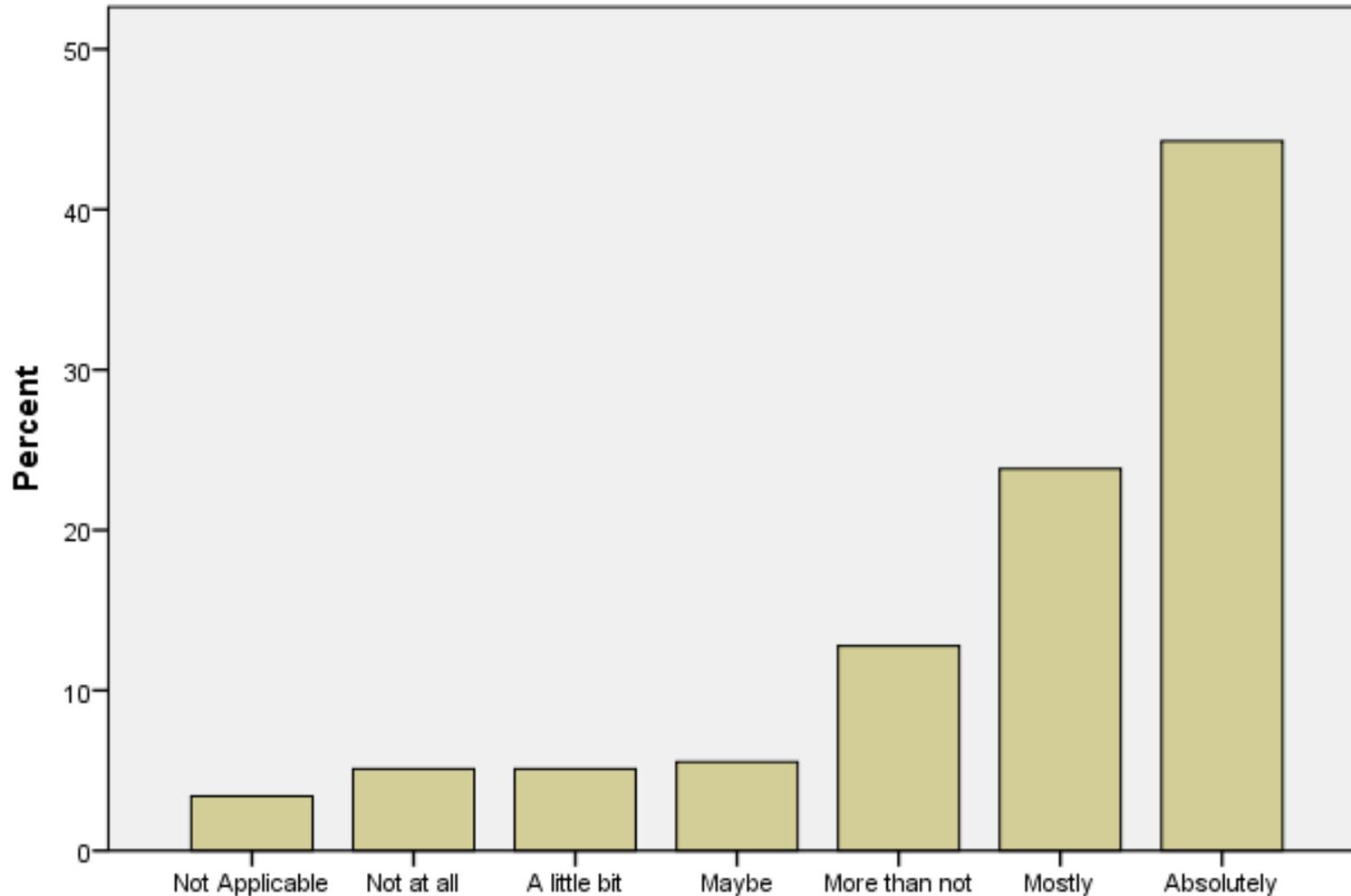
**Q13: My initial and/or ongoing exposure to the community helped me get off to a good start this year.**



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**SURVEY 1 RESULTS GENERAL REPORT**

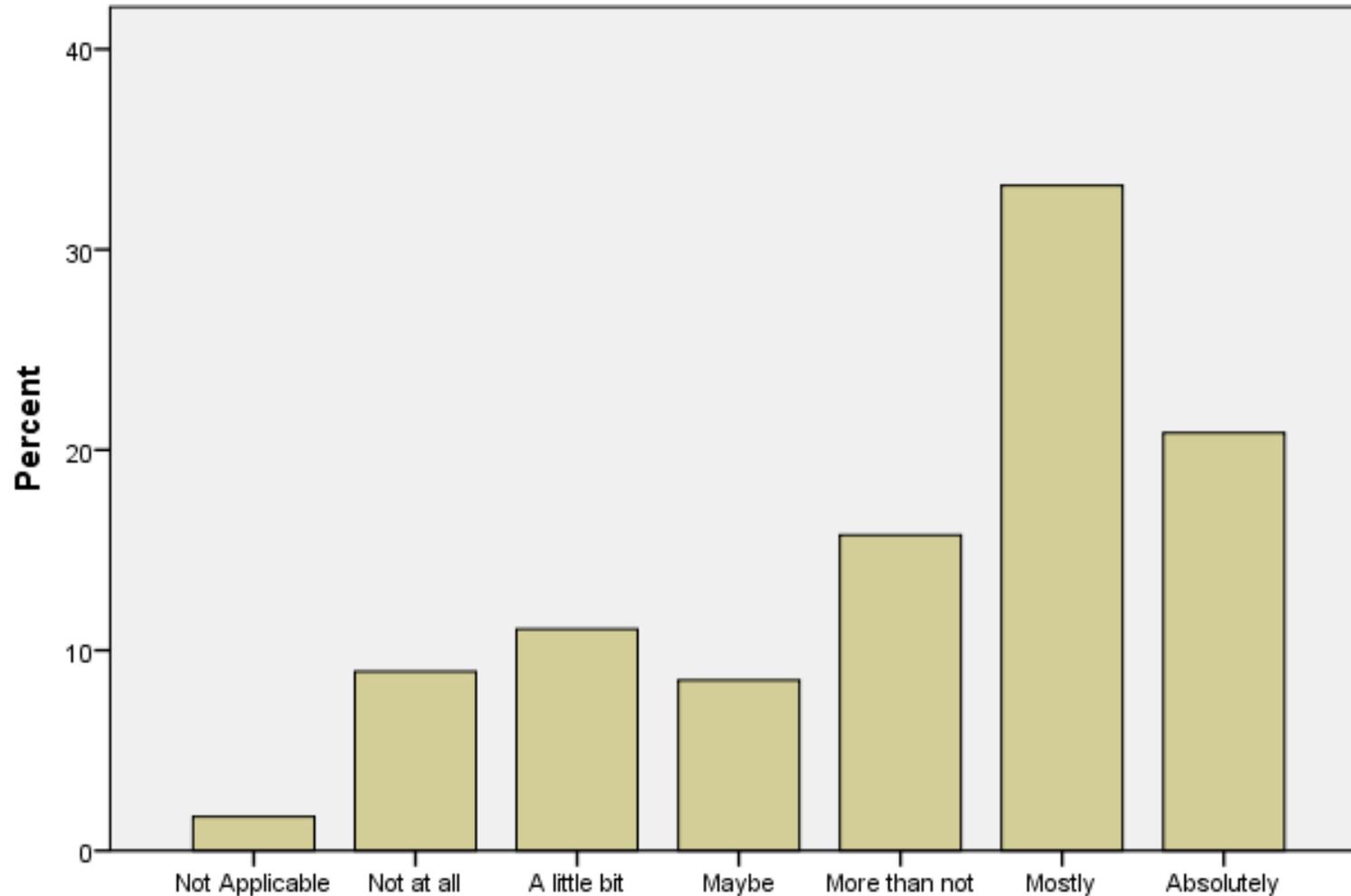
**Q14: I appreciate the welcome I received this year from the community where I teach.**



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## SURVEY 1 RESULTS GENERAL REPORT

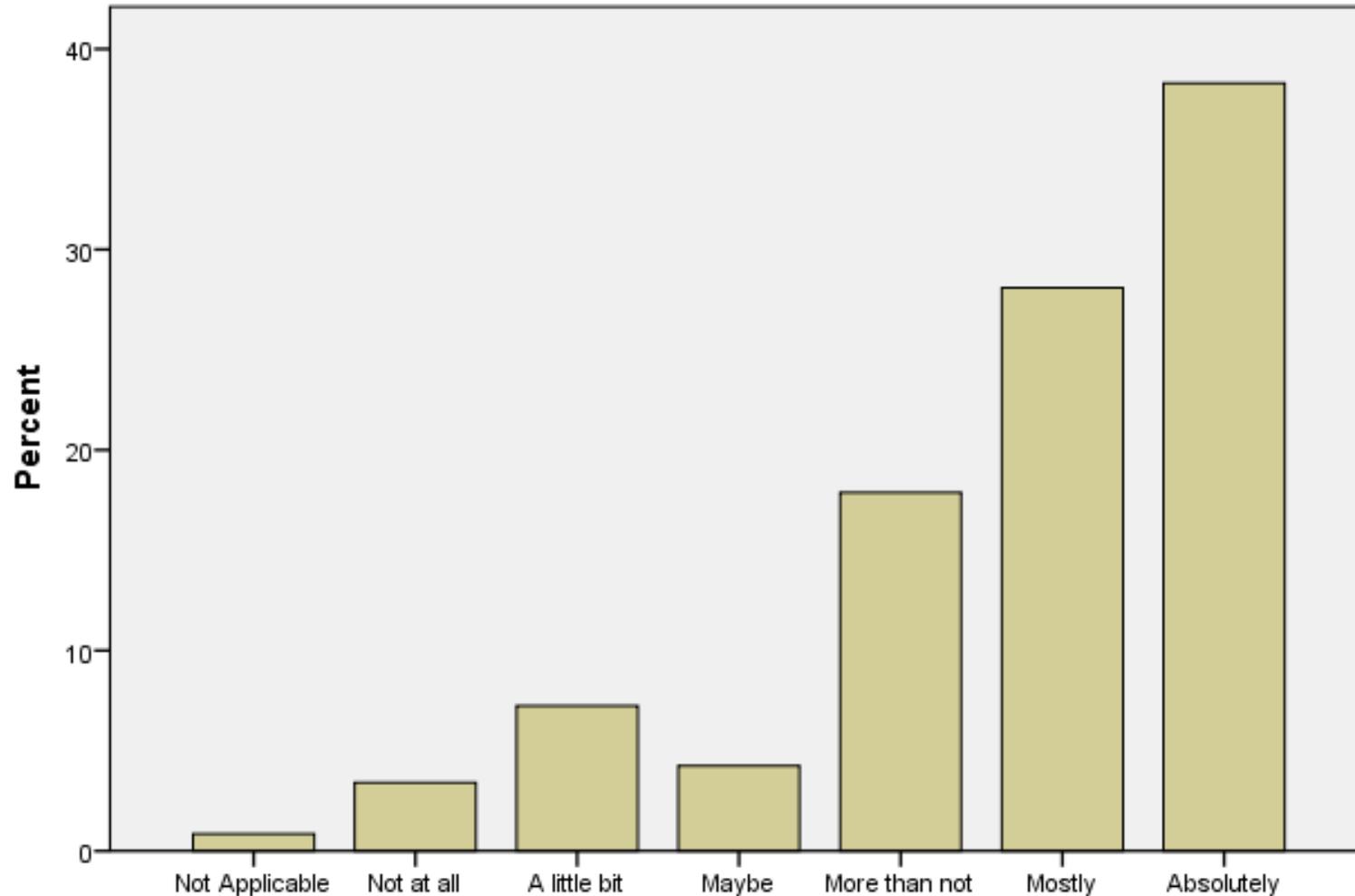
**Q15: I am informed about parental engagement strategies that will support my communication with parents and community.**



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SURVEY 1 RESULTS GENERAL REPORT

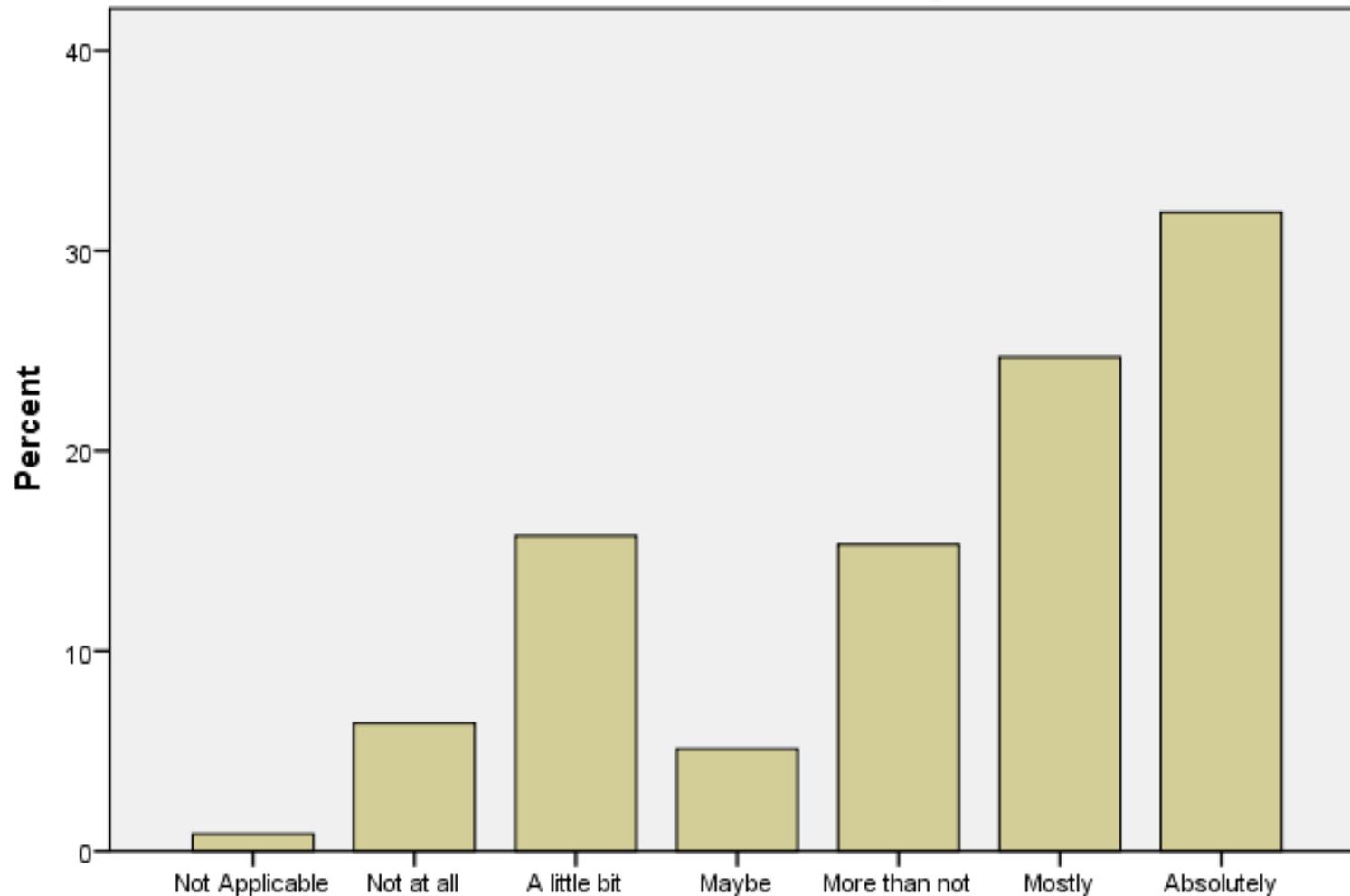
**Q16: I have actively engaged with community members to learn of the values of the community in which I teach.**



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**SURVEY 1 RESULTS GENERAL REPORT**

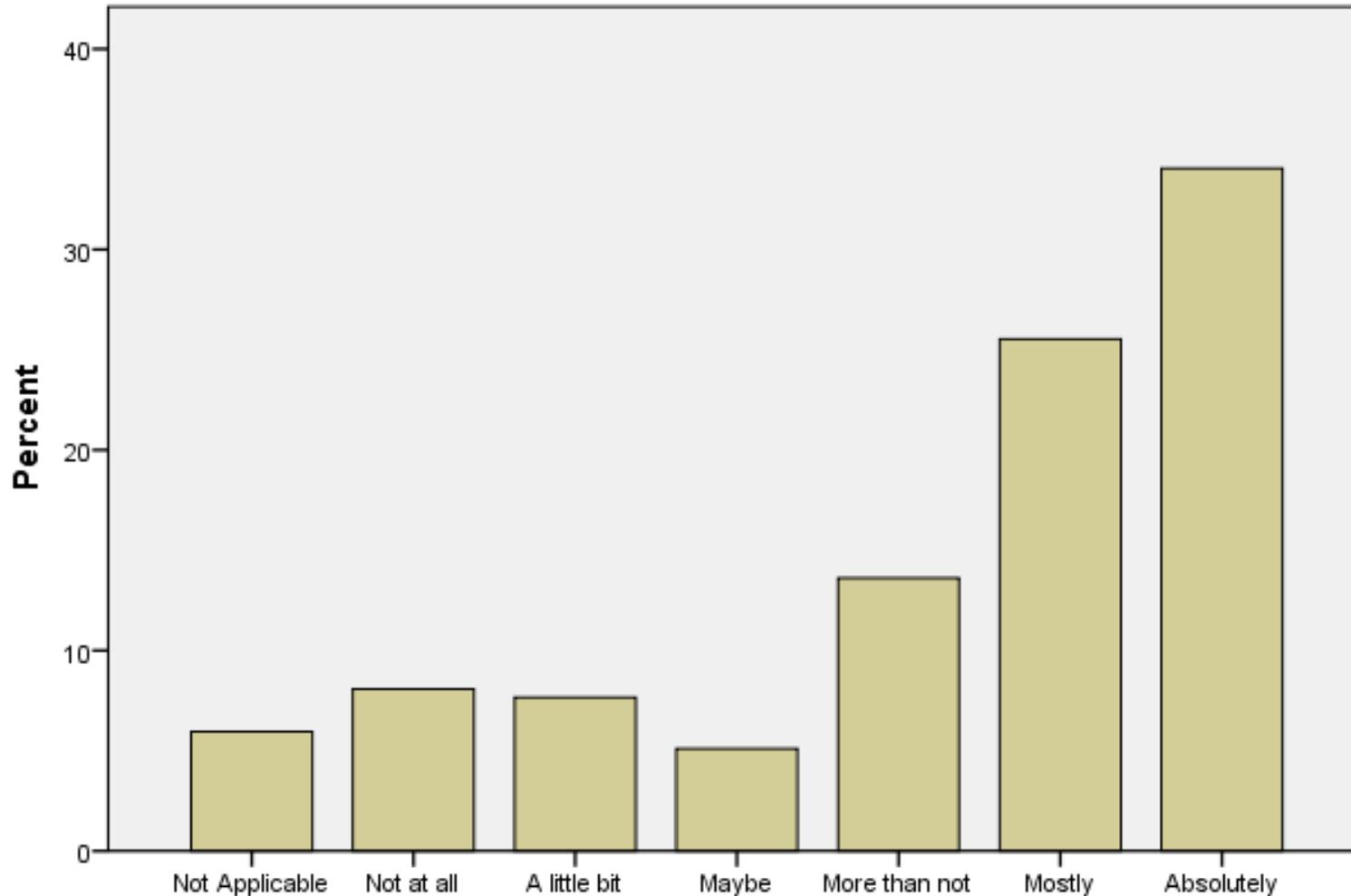
**Q17: I am informed about community events and dynamics that will support my interaction within the community.**



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**SURVEY 1 RESULTS GENERAL REPORT**

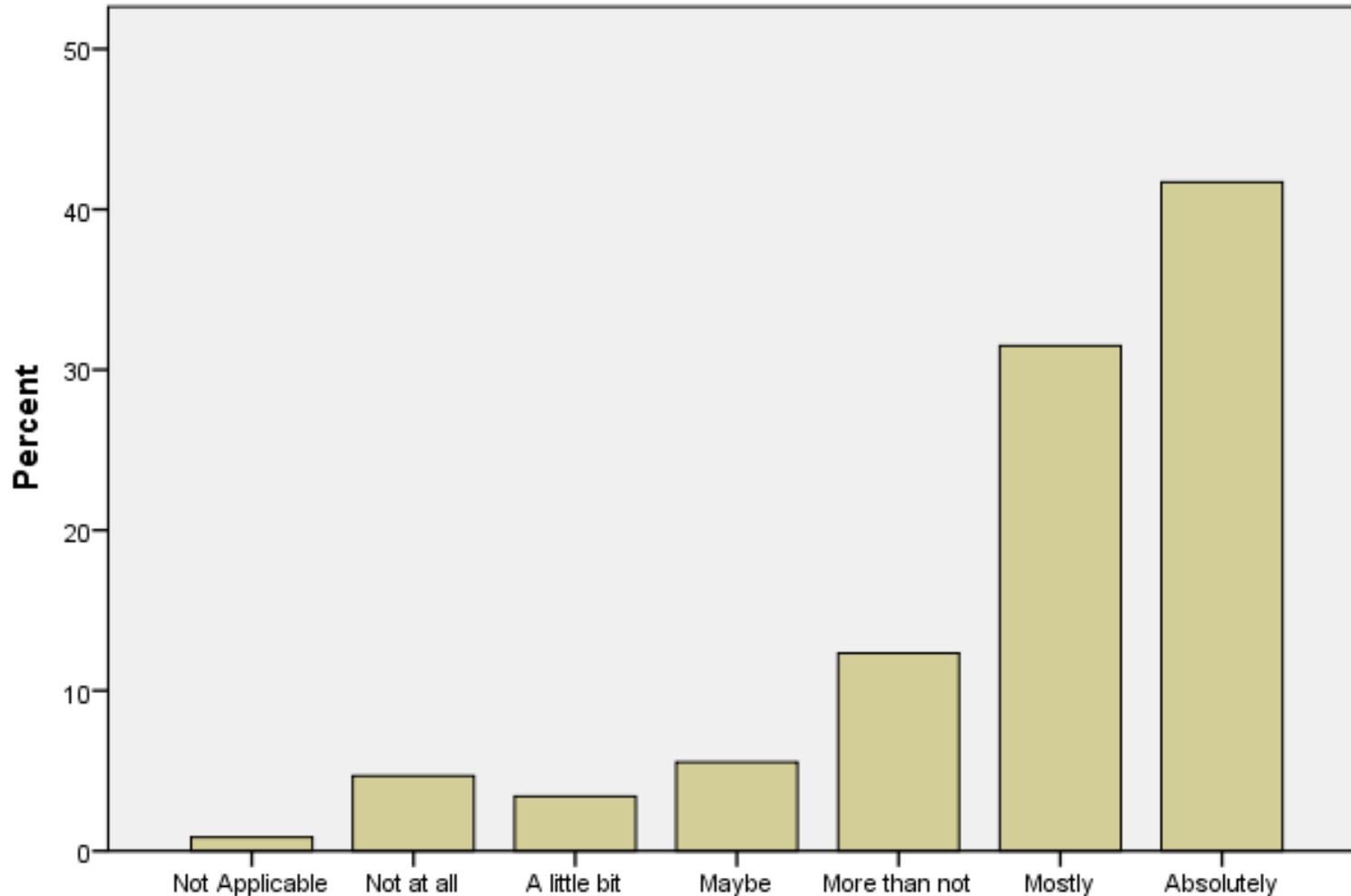
**Q18: I had a positive introduction this year to the culture of the community in which I teach.**



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**SURVEY 1 RESULTS GENERAL REPORT**

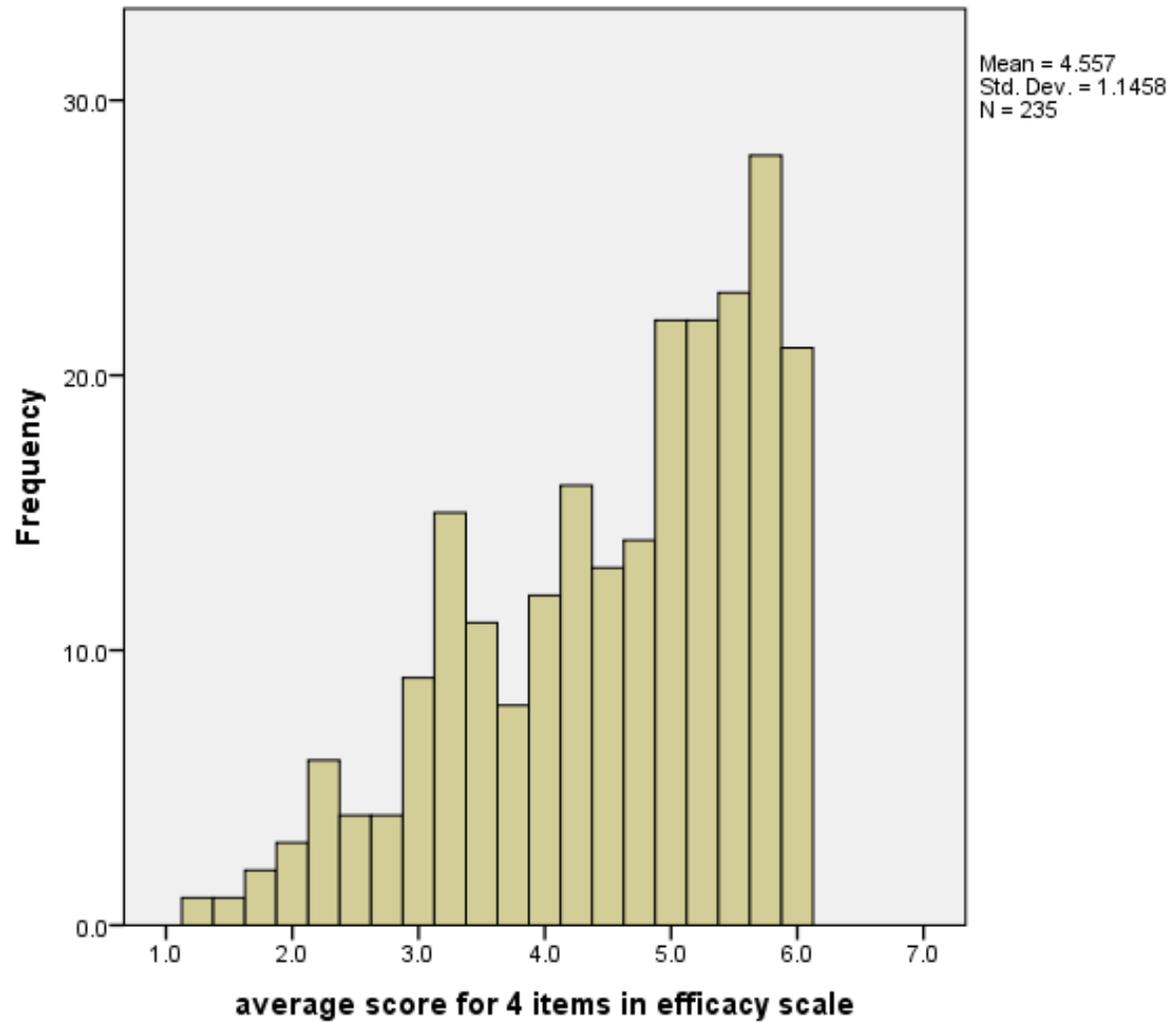
**Q19: Based upon my interactions this year, I feel safe in the community where my school is located.**



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## SURVEY 1 RESULTS GENERAL REPORT

**Figure 5: Distribution of Scores – Efficacy**



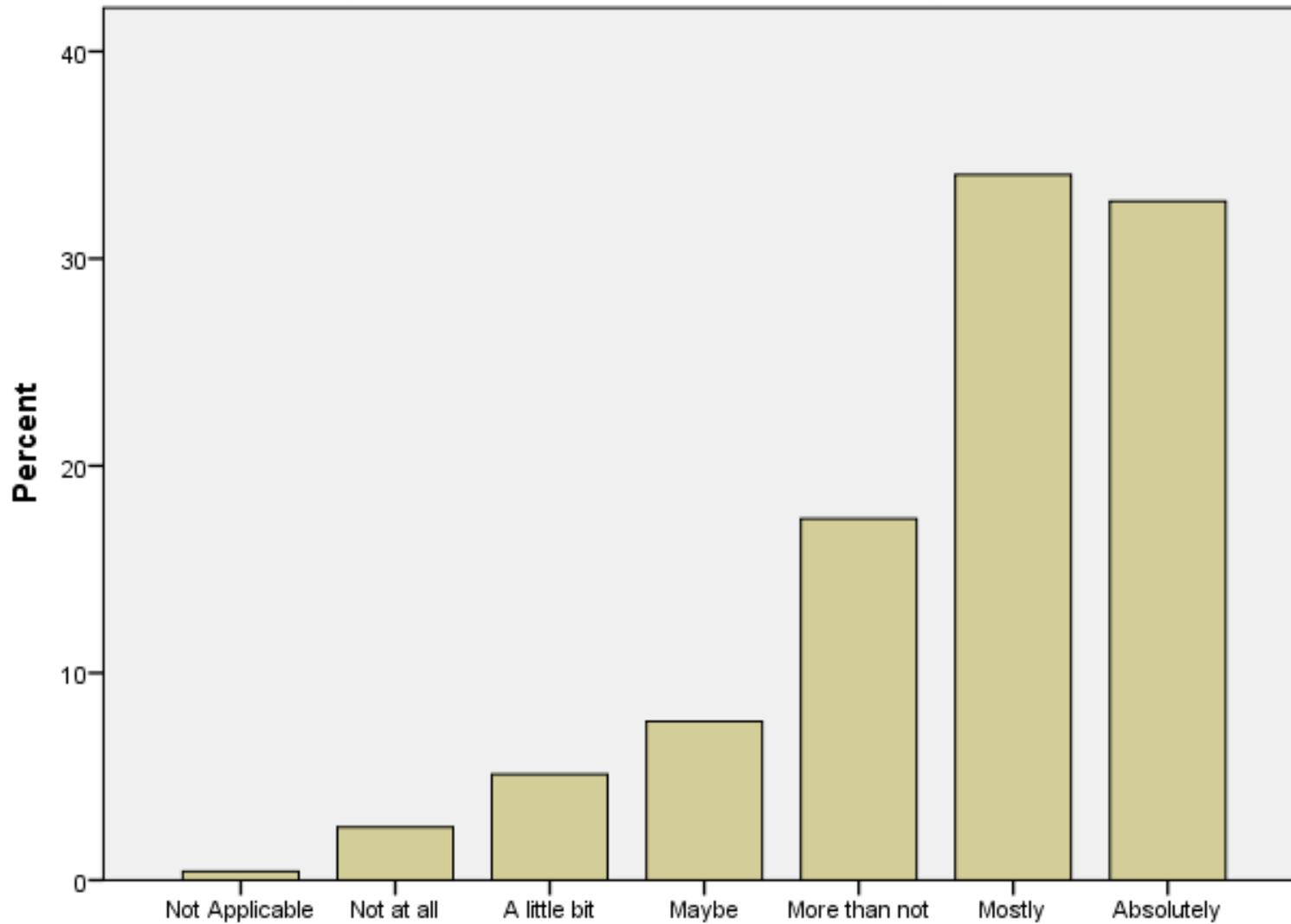
## SURVEY 1 RESULTS GENERAL REPORT

### Efficacy Questions – Descriptive Statistics

		Q21: People I work with care about me and my success.	Q22: Someone at work has talked to me about my development as a professional educator.	Q23: Someone has recognized and valued me for what I can contribute to the school.	Q24: I am confident I will be successful in my teaching assignment this year.
N	Valid	235	235	235	235
	Missing	0	0	0	0
Mean		4.72	3.82	4.55	5.14
Median		5.00	4.00	5.00	6.00
Std. Deviation		1.309	1.864	1.628	1.144

**SURVEY 1 RESULTS GENERAL REPORT**

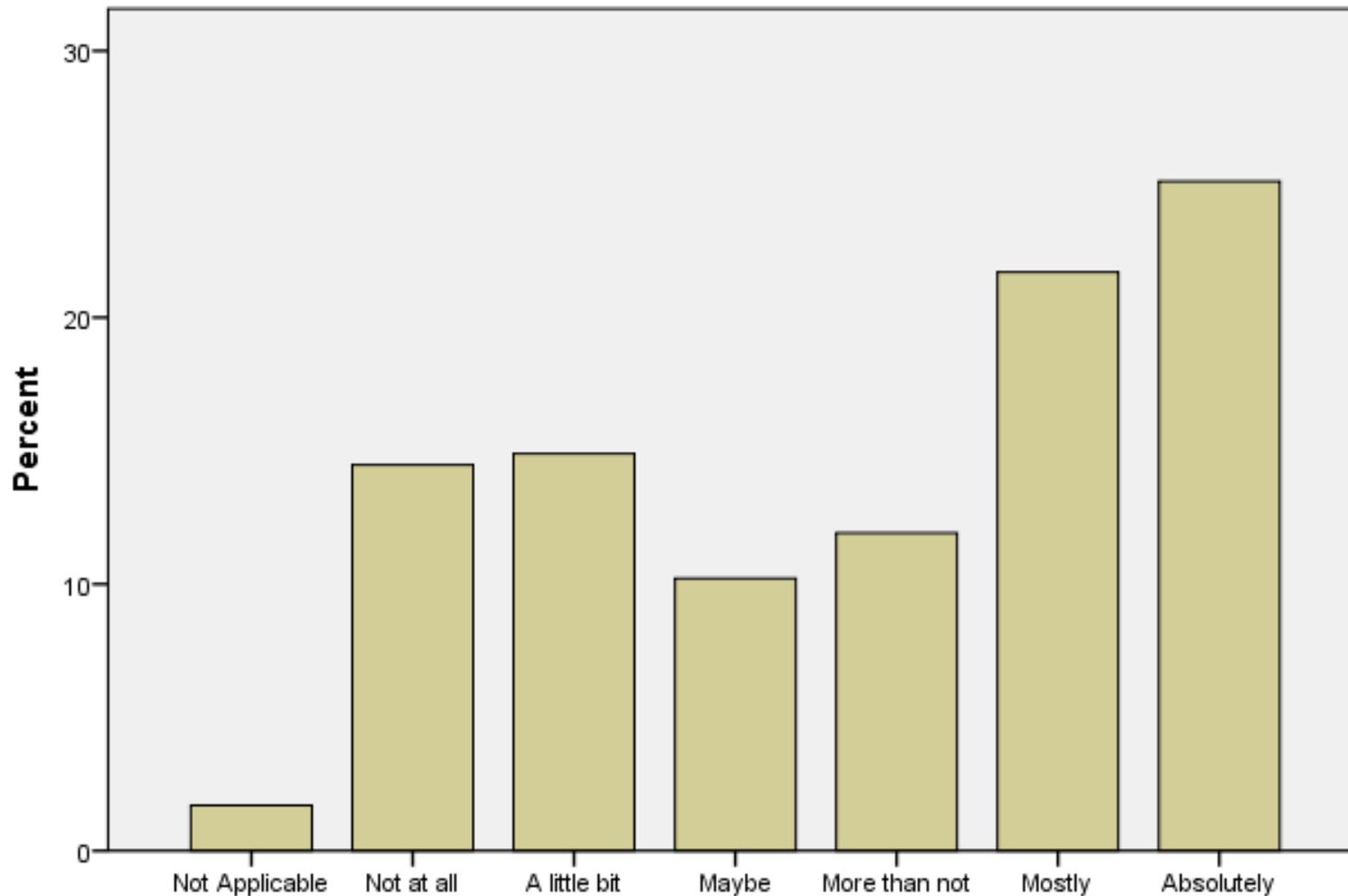
**Q21: People I work with care about me and my success.**



**Q21: People I work with care about me and my success.**

SURVEY 1 RESULTS GENERAL REPORT

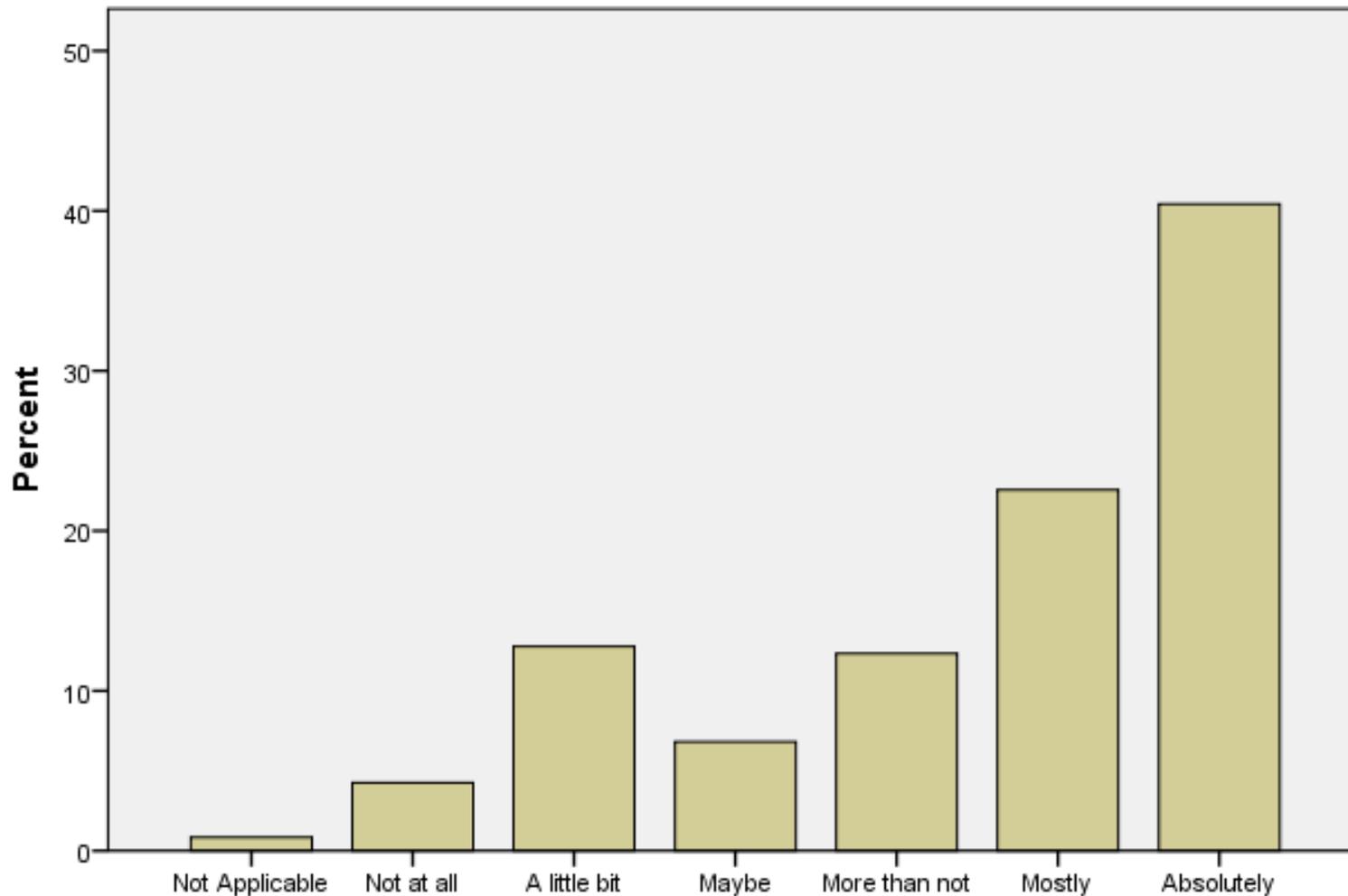
**Q22: Someone at work has talked to me about my development as a professional educator.**



**Q22: Someone at work has talked to me about my development as a professional educator.**

SURVEY 1 RESULTS GENERAL REPORT

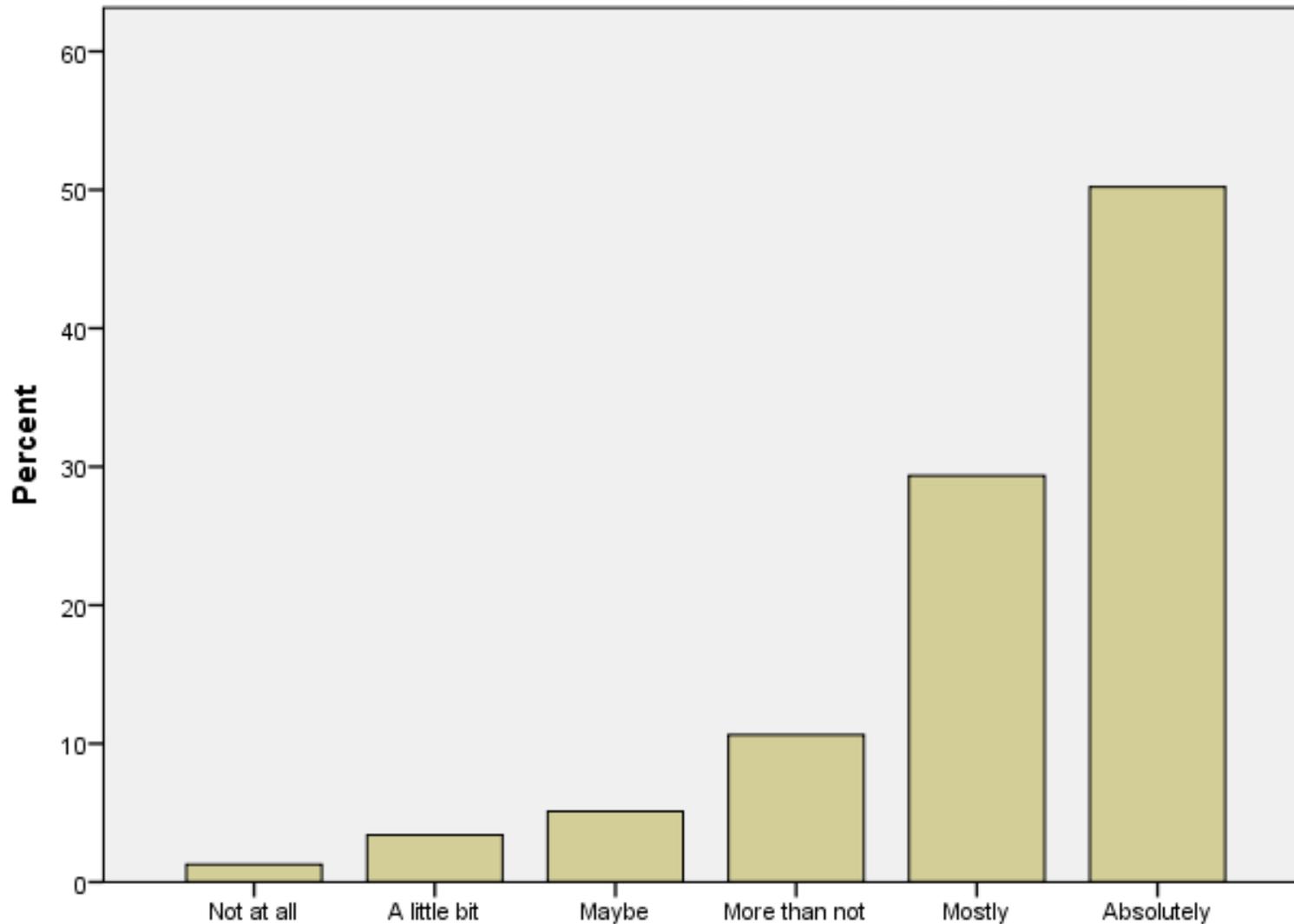
**Q23: Someone has recognized and valued me for what I can contribute to the school.**



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**SURVEY 1 RESULTS GENERAL REPORT**

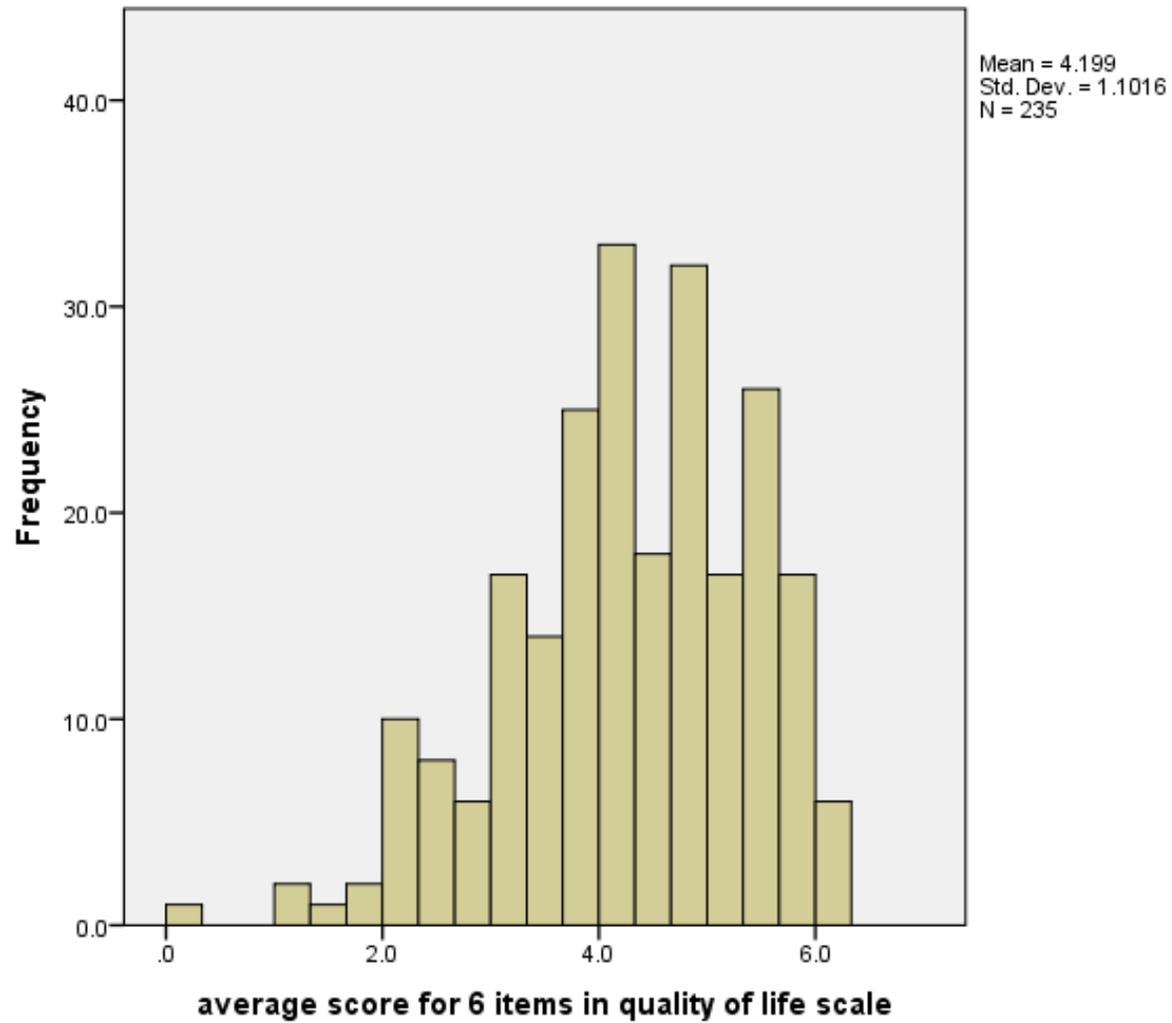
**Q24: I am confident I will be successful in my teaching assignment this year.**



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## SURVEY 1 RESULTS GENERAL REPORT

**Figure 6: Distribution of Scores - Quality of Life**



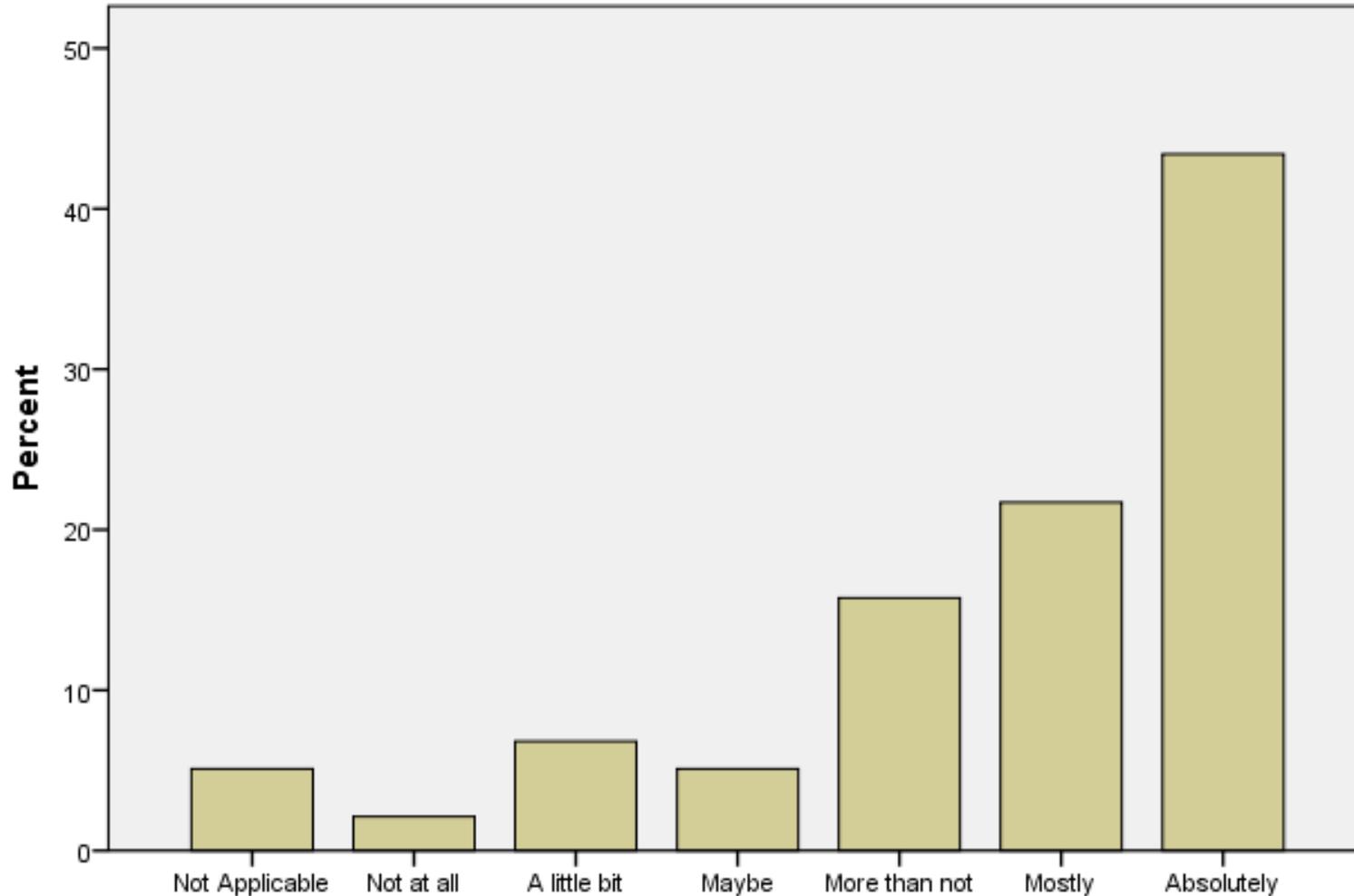
## SURVEY 1 RESULTS GENERAL REPORT

### Quality of Life Questions – Descriptive Statistics

		Q26: My housing is convenient, safe, secure, well maintained, and includes basic amenities (heat, water, septic) for my needs.	Q27: My family has opportunities to pursue activities that support their quality of life.	Q28: I have access to technology that meets my needs.	Q29: I have a balance between my work and my personal life.	Q30: I am prepared for the logistics of living where I live (food, clothing, shopping, entertainment, etc.).	Q31: My health needs are satisfactorily met in the community.
N	Valid	235	235	235	235	235	235
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mean		4.63	3.34	4.53	3.73	5.04	3.92
Median		5.00	4.00	5.00	4.00	5.00	4.00
Std. Deviation		1.703	2.258	1.506	1.636	1.295	1.648

SURVEY 1 RESULTS GENERAL REPORT

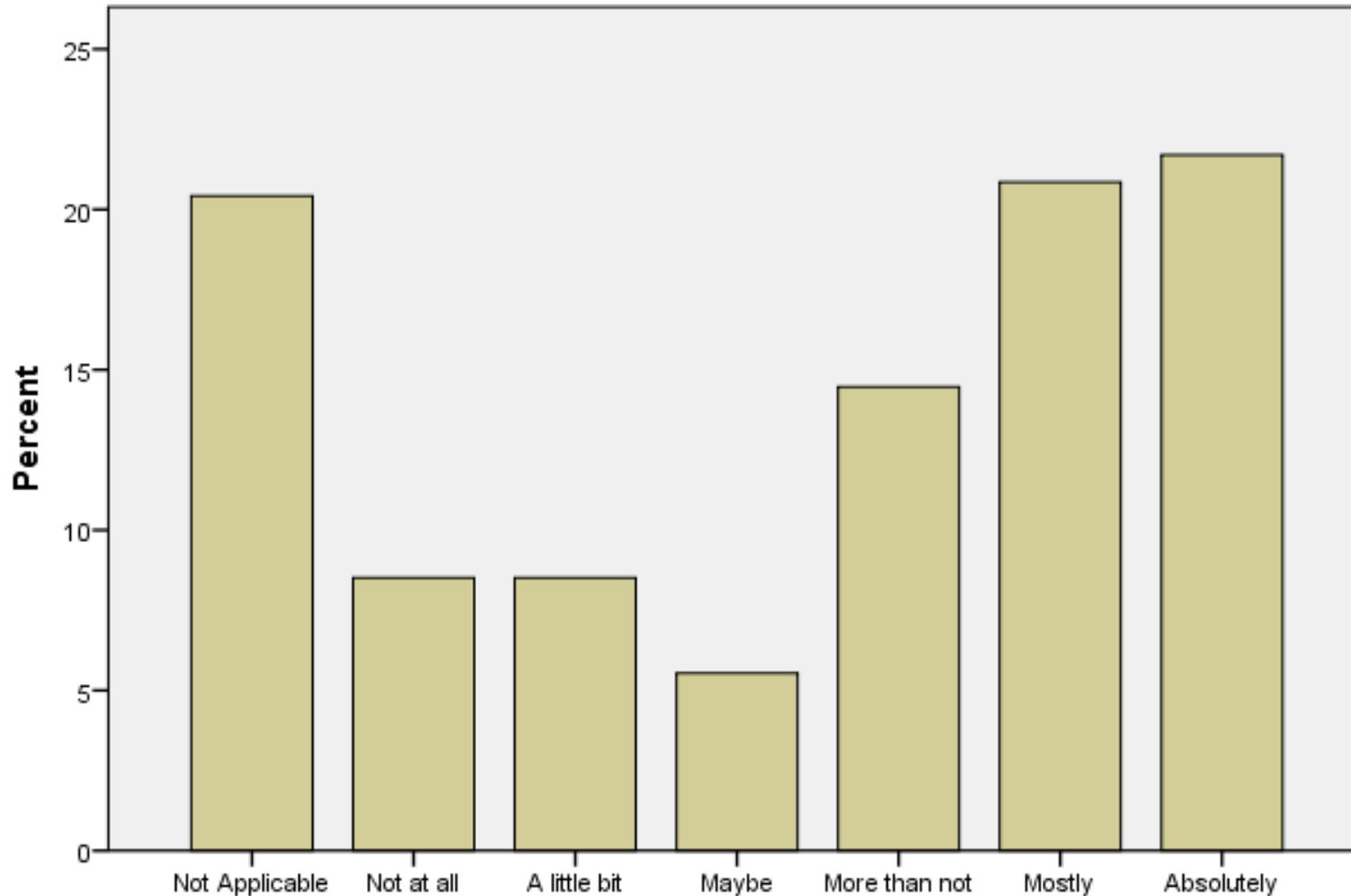
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**Q26: My housing is convenient, safe, secure, well maintained, and includes basic amenities (heat, water, septic) for my needs.**

SURVEY 1 RESULTS GENERAL REPORT

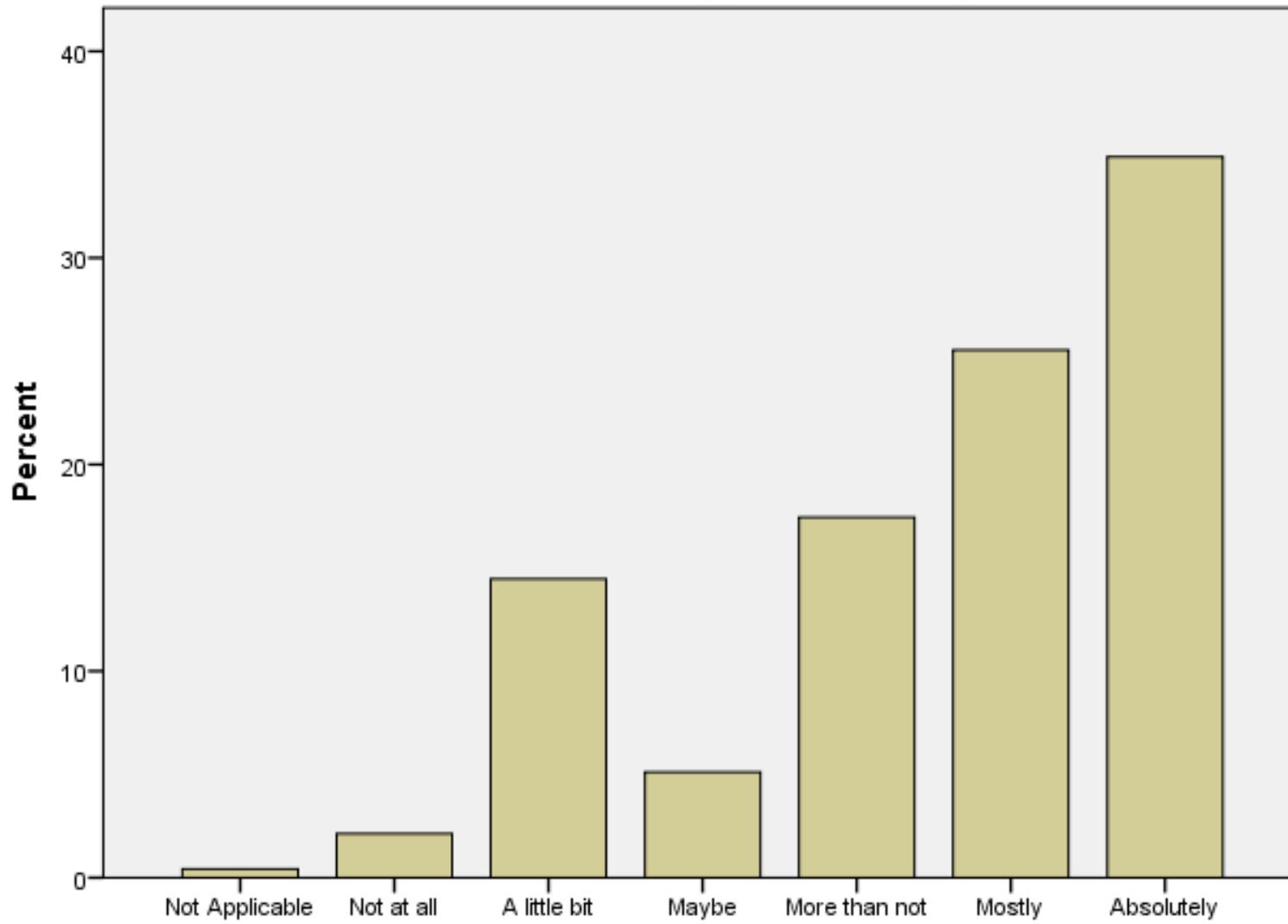
**Q27: My family has opportunities to pursue activities that support their quality of life.**



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**SURVEY 1 RESULTS GENERAL REPORT**

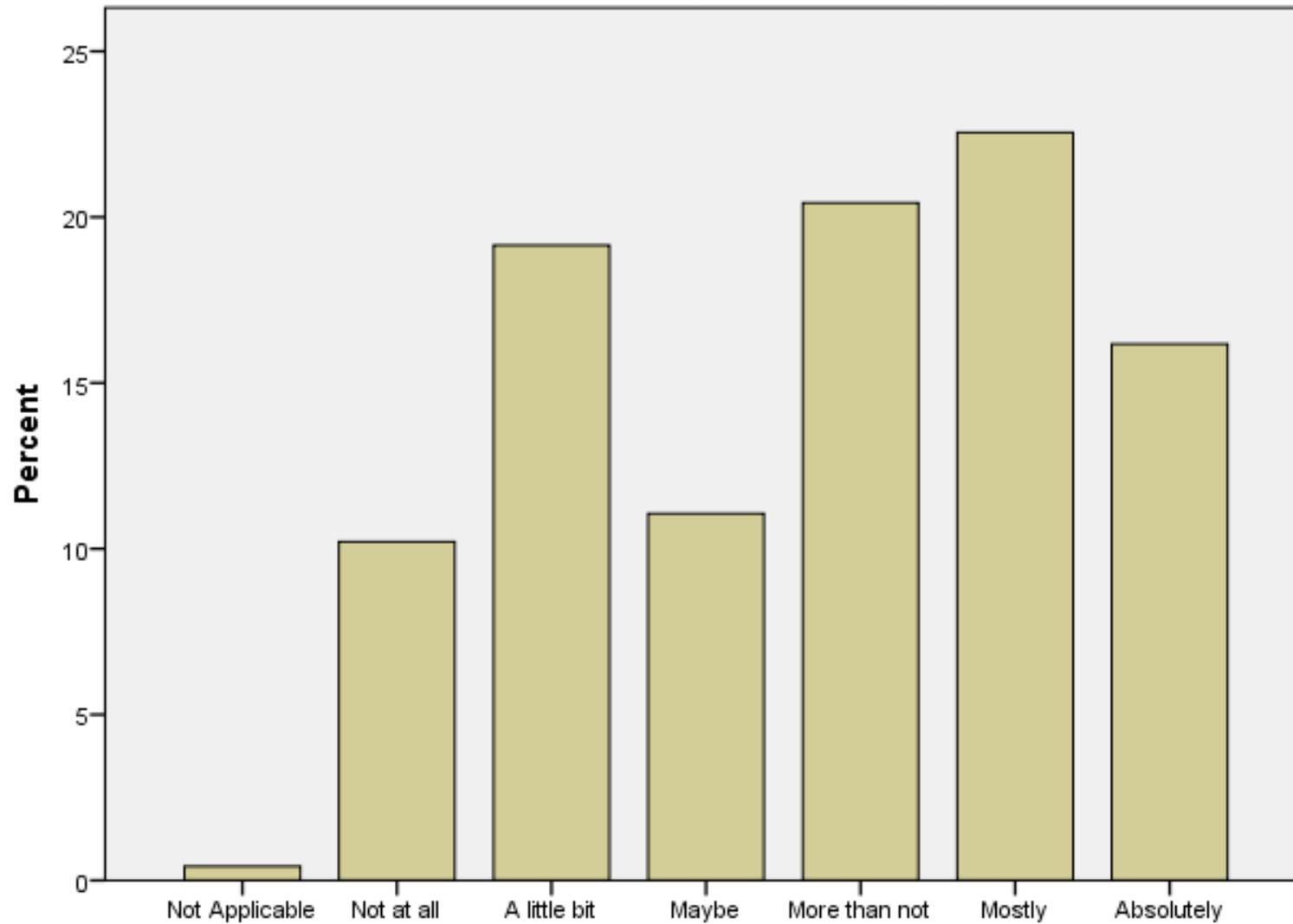
**Q28: I have access to technology that meets my needs.**



**Q28: I have access to technology that meets my needs.**

## SURVEY 1 RESULTS GENERAL REPORT

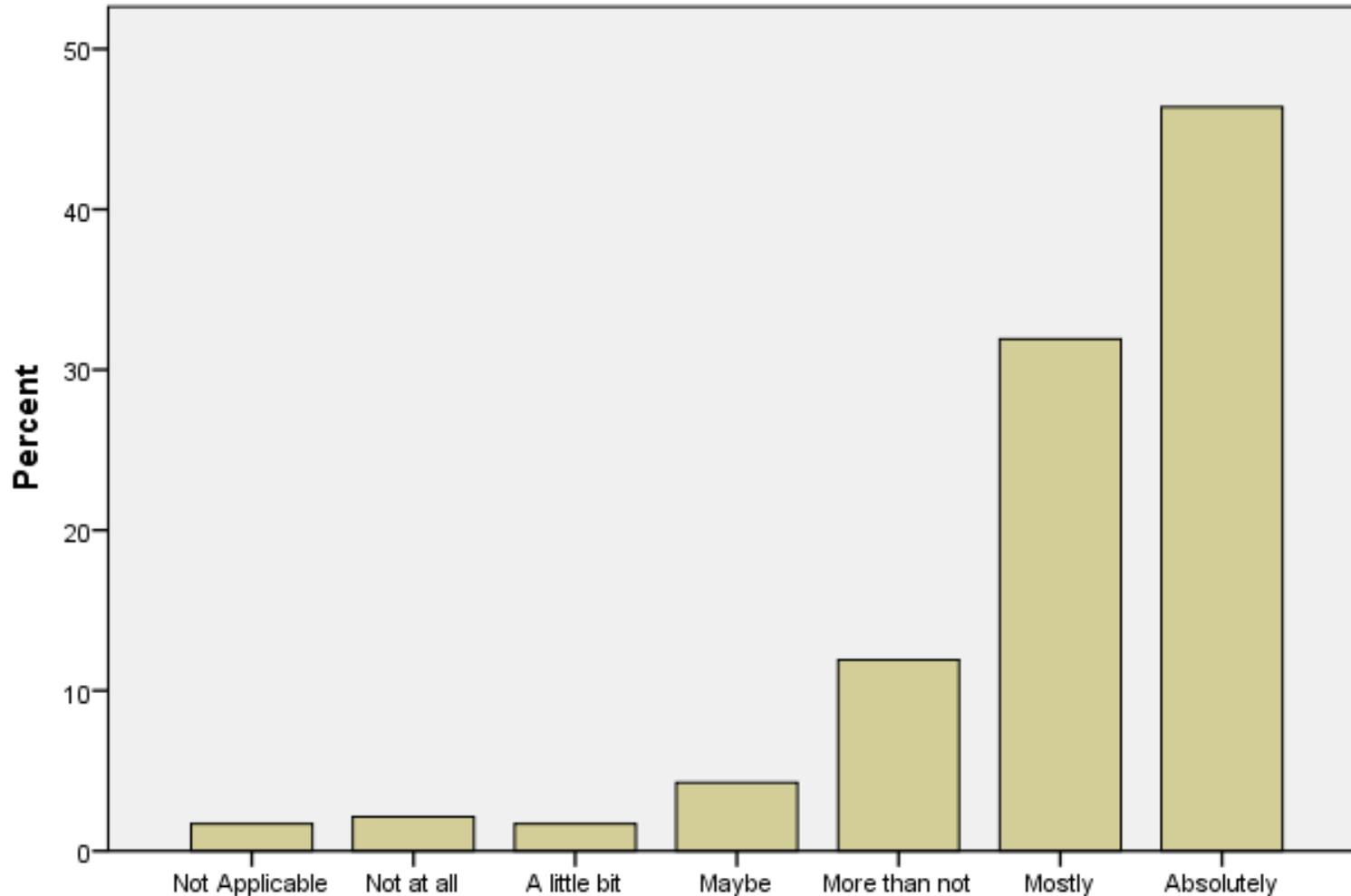
**Q29: I have a balance between my work and my personal life.**



**Q29: I have a balance between my work and my personal life.**

SURVEY 1 RESULTS GENERAL REPORT

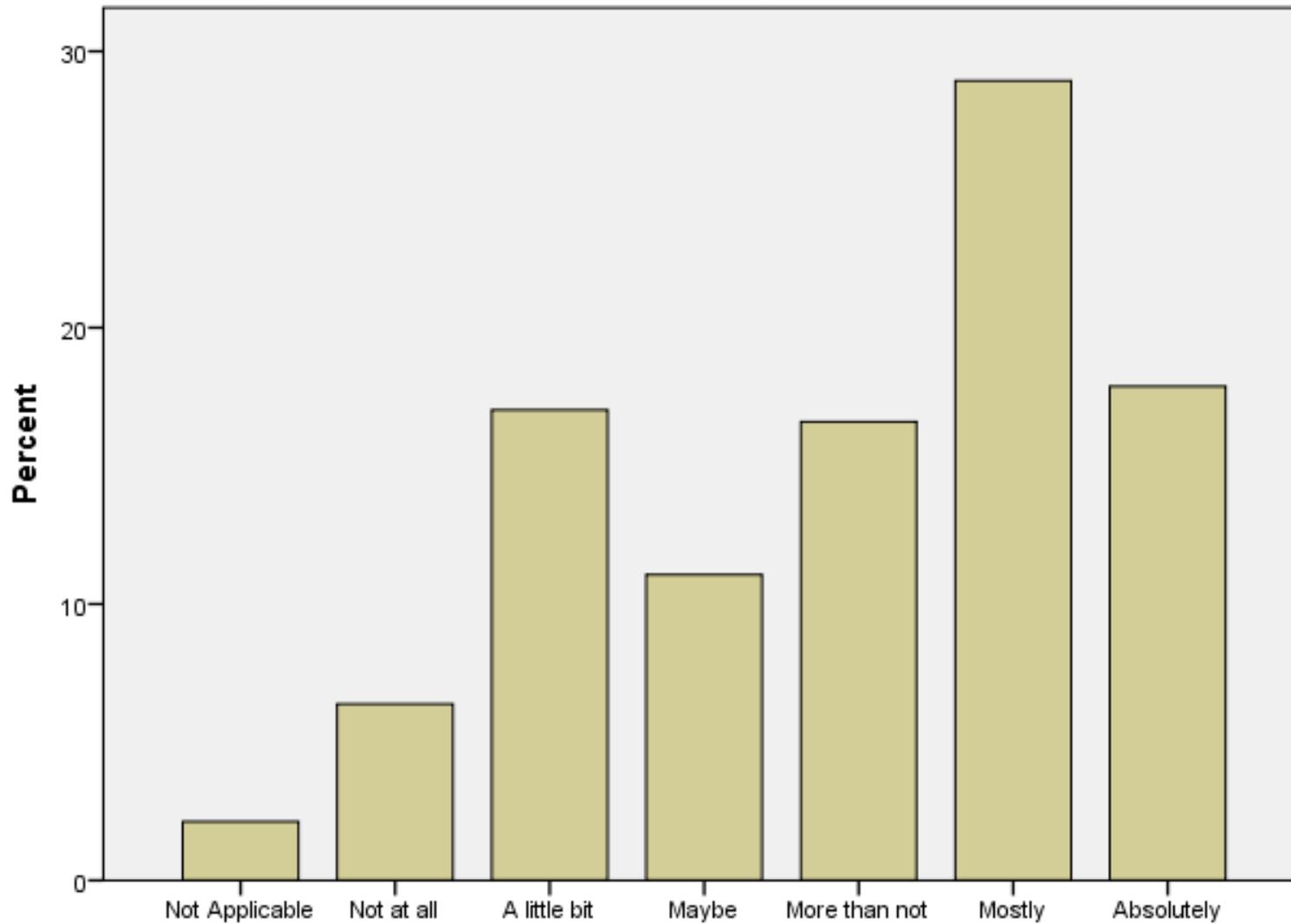
**Q30: I am prepared for the logistics of living where I live (food, clothing, shopping, entertainment, etc.).**



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**SURVEY 1 RESULTS GENERAL REPORT**

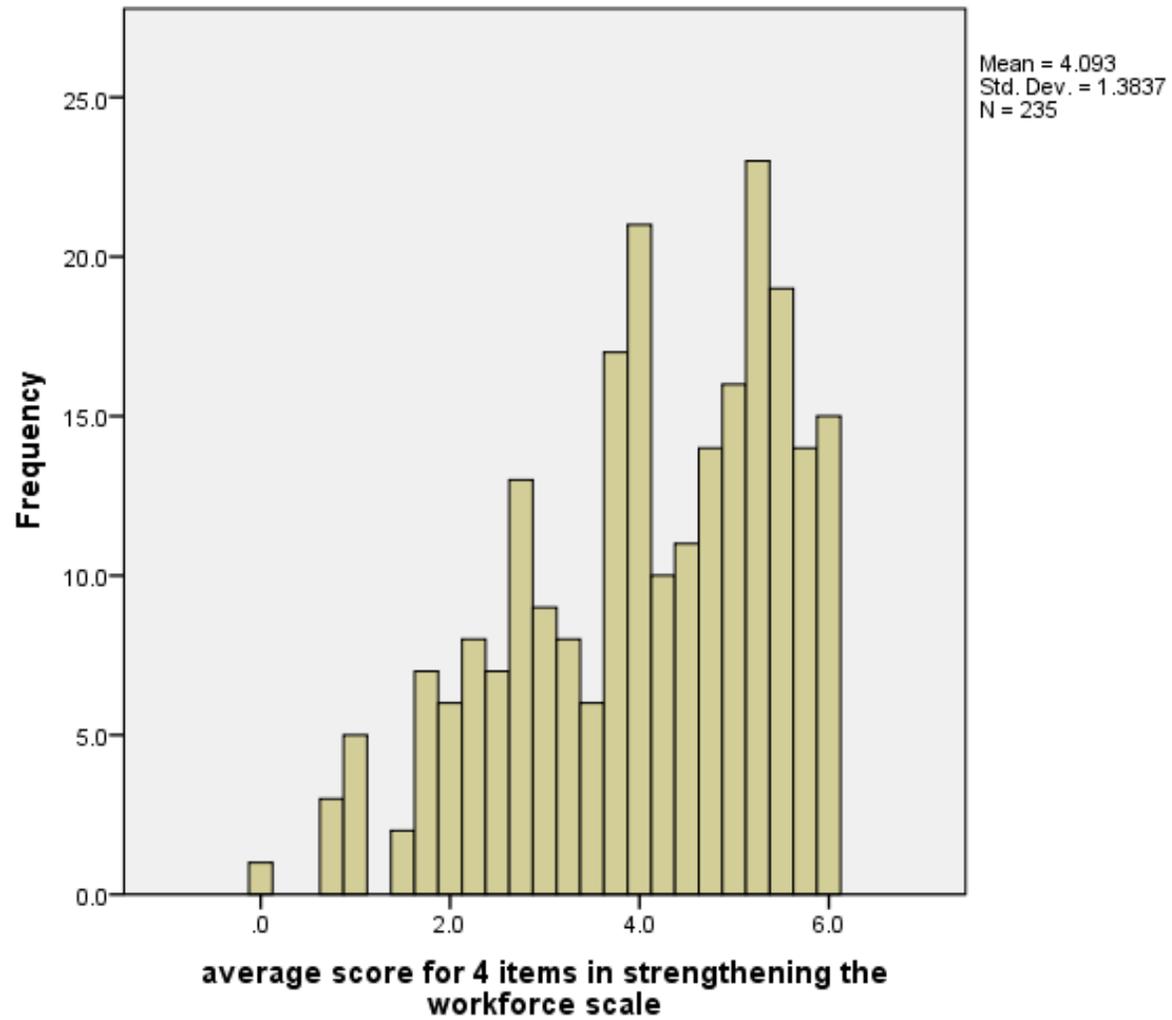
**Q31: My health needs are satisfactorily met in the community.**



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## SURVEY 1 RESULTS GENERAL REPORT

**Figure 7: Distribution of Scores - Strengthening the Workforce**



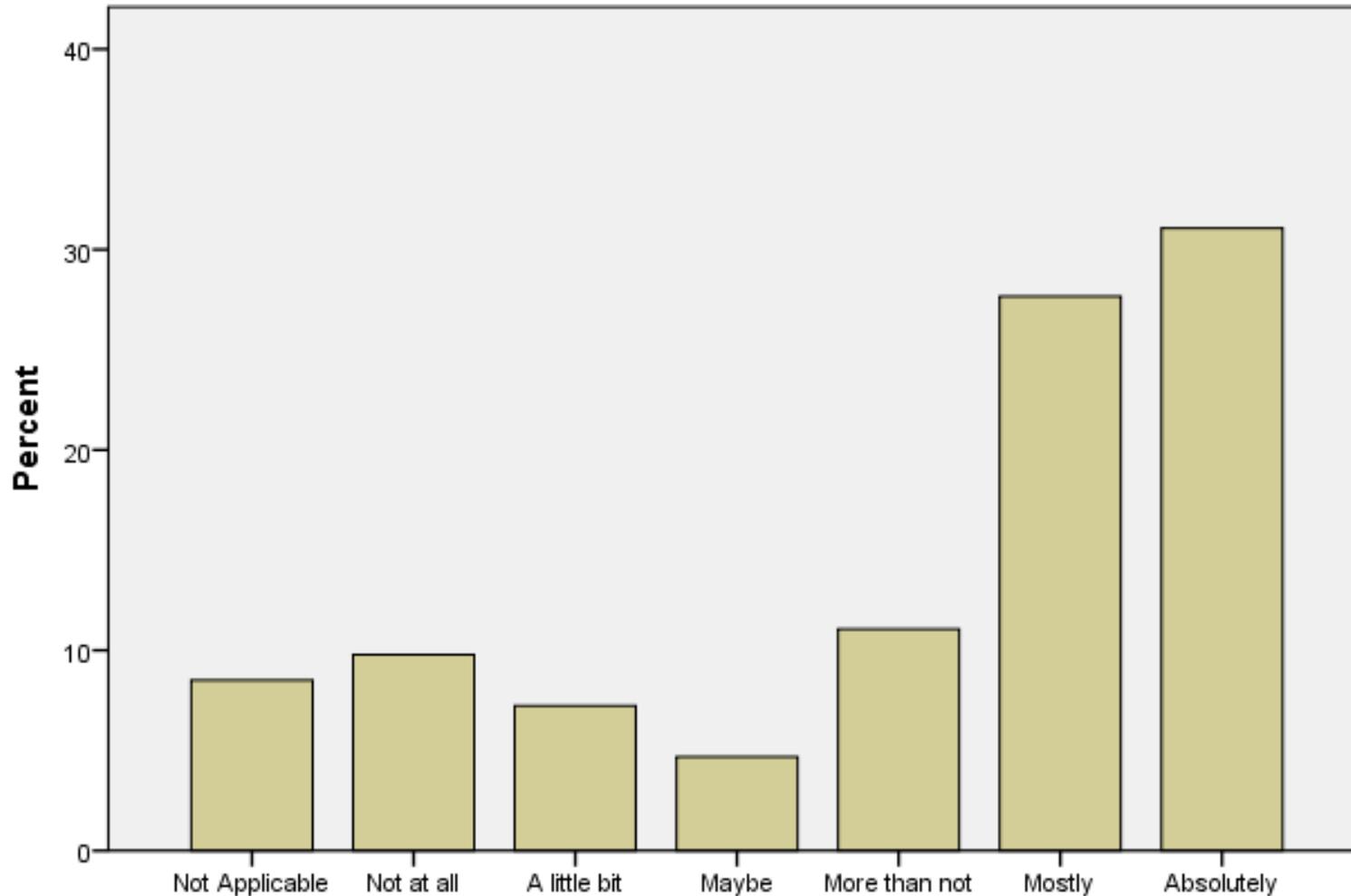
## SURVEY 1 RESULTS GENERAL REPORT

### Strengthening the Workforce Questions – Descriptive Statistics

		Q33: My initial engagement with human resources (HR) this year has been positive and helpful.	Q34: What I was told about my school and community during recruitment was accurate.	Q35: My teacher preparation program / professional development prepared me for my teaching assignment this year.	Q36: At this time, I want to continue teaching in this school next year.
N	Valid	235	235	235	235
	Missing	0	0	0	0
Mean		4.07	3.60	3.95	4.75
Median		5.00	4.00	5.00	6.00
Std. Deviation		2.027	2.123	1.939	1.640

**SURVEY 1 RESULTS GENERAL REPORT**

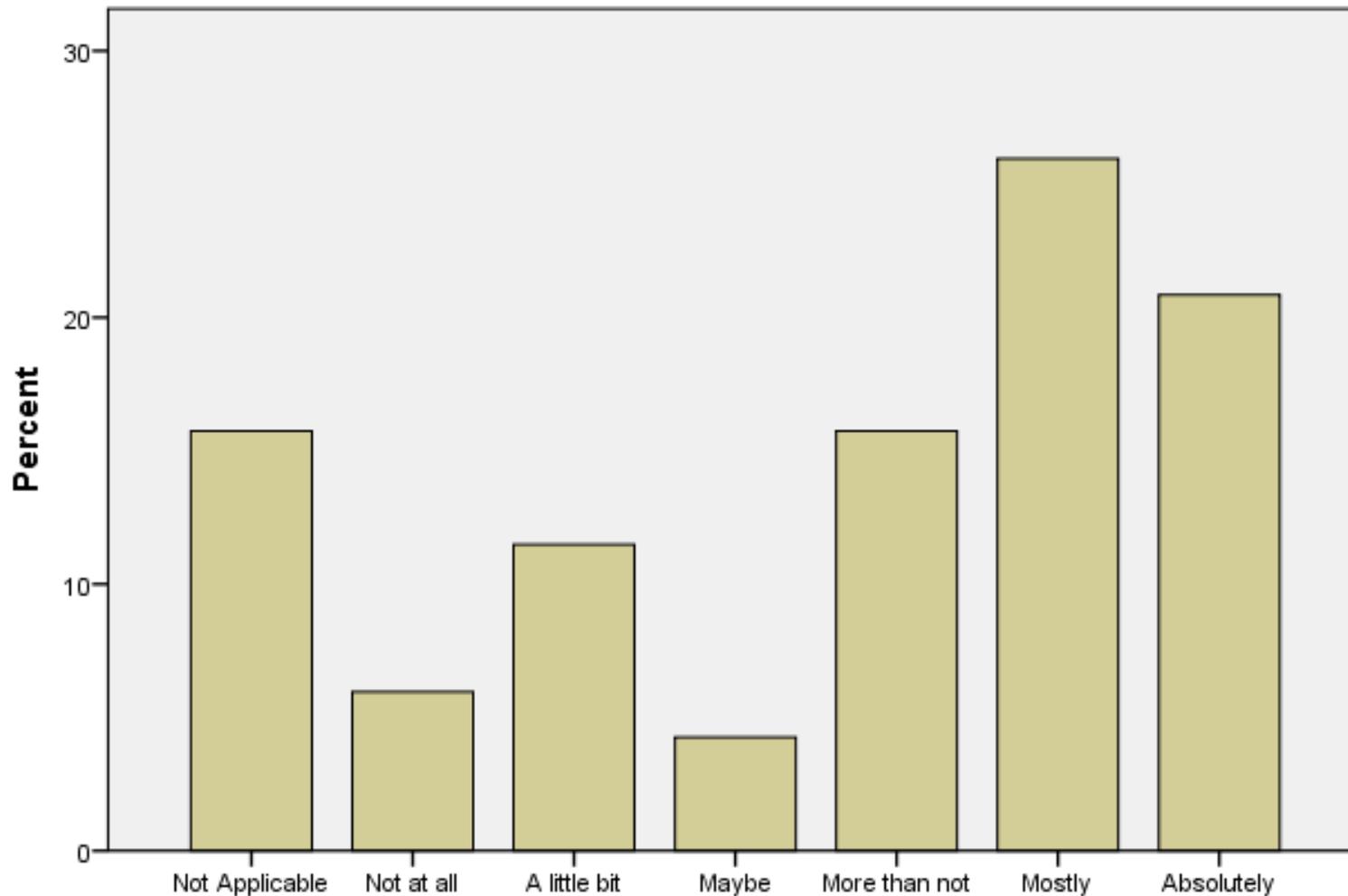
**Q33: My initial engagement with human resources (HR) this year has been positive and helpful.**



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SURVEY 1 RESULTS GENERAL REPORT

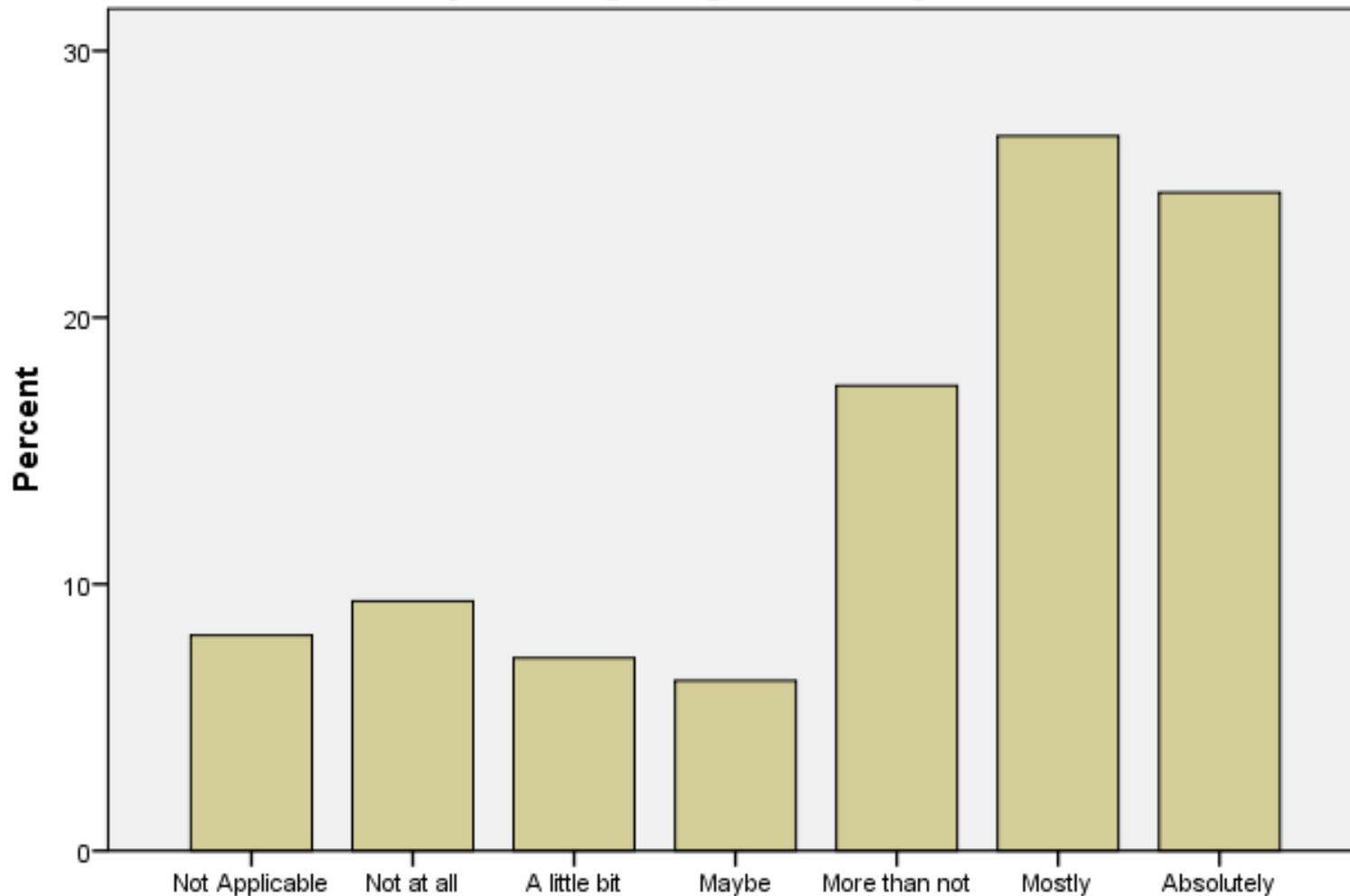
**Q34: What I was told about my school and community during recruitment was accurate.**



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SURVEY 1 RESULTS GENERAL REPORT

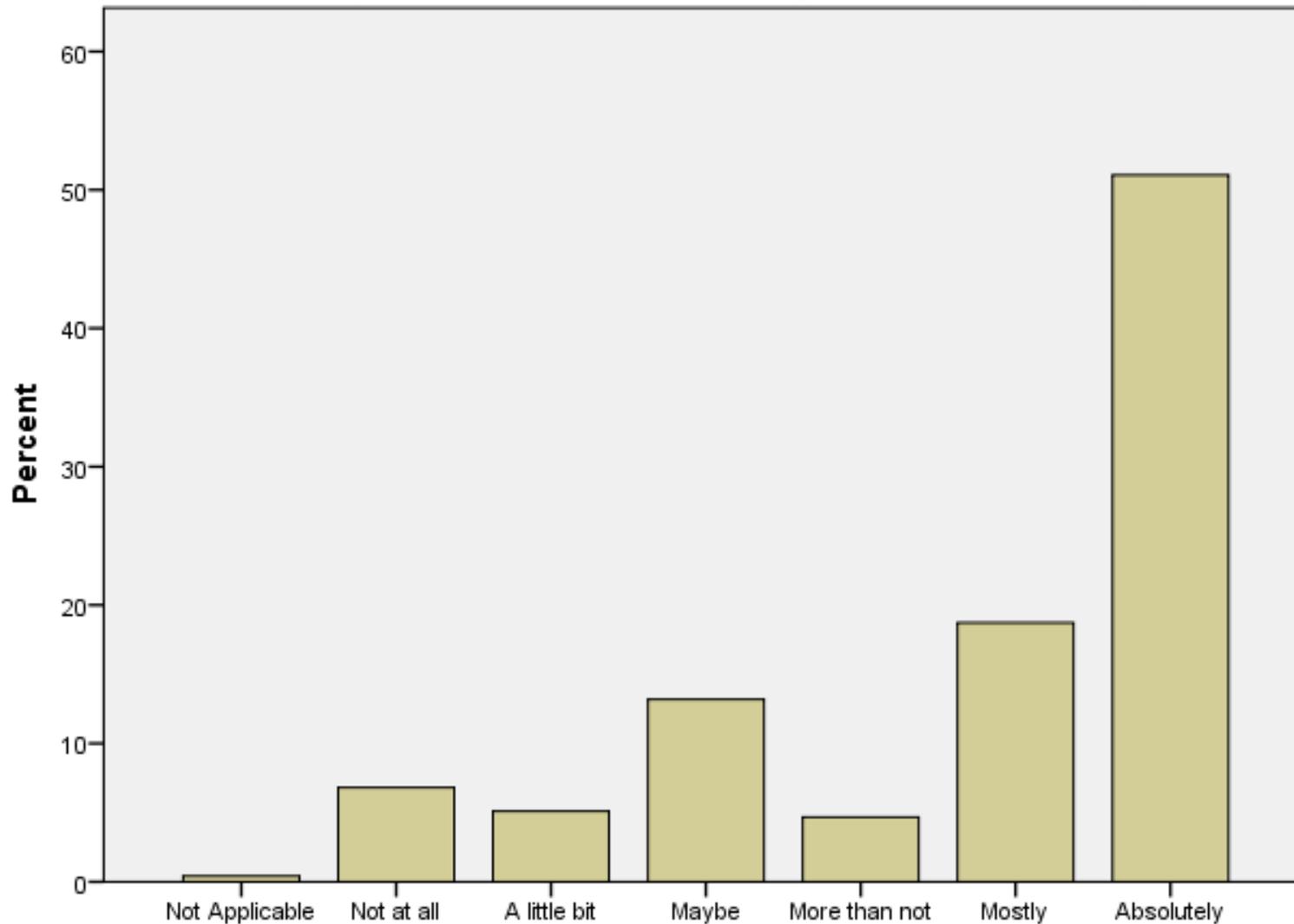
**Q35: My teacher preparation program / professional development prepared me for my teaching assignment this year.**



**Q35: My teacher preparation program / professional development prepared me for my teaching assignment this year.**

**SURVEY 1 RESULTS GENERAL REPORT**

**Q36: At this time, I want to continue teaching in this school next year.**



**Q36: At this time, I want to continue teaching in this school next year.**

## SURVEY 1 RESULTS GENERAL REPORT

### Summary of Years Teaching Demographics

	Total years teaching	Years teaching in AK	Years in district	Years in school
N	235	235	235	235
Mean	11.89	6.97	4.80	4.37
Median	10.00	5.00	3.00	2.00
Std. Deviation	9.310	6.697	5.534	5.398

# SURVEY 1 RESULTS GENERAL REPORT

