



### Chapter IV. Participants in the dialogue

This chapter offers a statistical picture of participants who completed a registration or evaluation form: areas where they live, demographic characteristics, what they say about how active they are in government and politics, whether they knew about the Master Plan before they received information about the dialogue, how frequently they use the Internet and for what, how they heard about the dialogue, and to what extent they read or posted messages during the dialogue. (Questions in the registration form and evaluation questionnaire are shown in Appendix A, p. 88.) Non-responses are not included in the frequencies and percentages. Responses to open-ended questions, comparisons and issues will be discussed in the following chapters.

#### ***Registration and evaluation data***

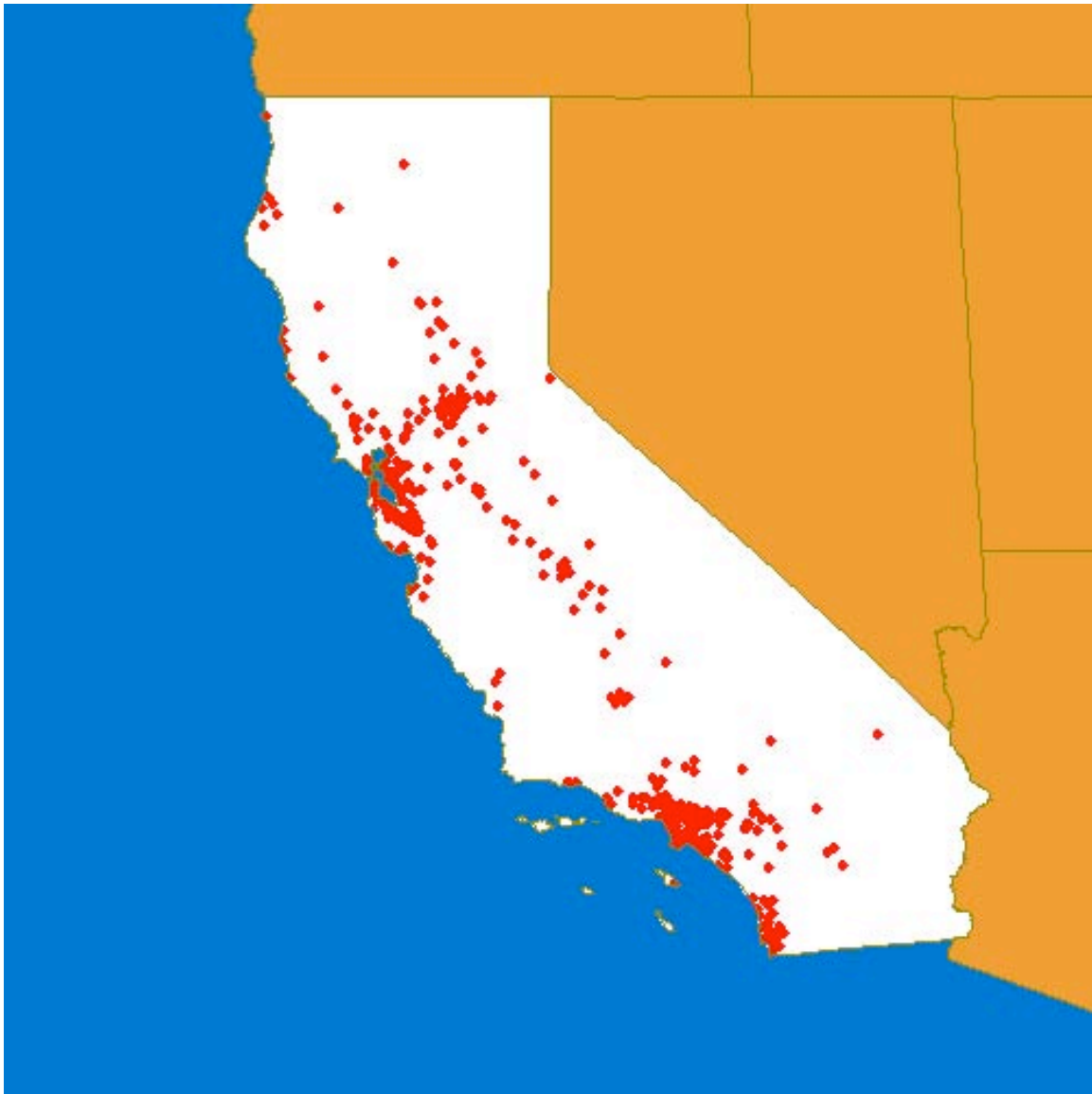
Registration for the CAMP dialogue opened on May 1, 2002. By the time the dialogue began, 631 people had registered. By the end of the dialogue, this number had increased to 935. Those who registered were required to give some personal information: name, e-mail address, city, county, zip code and telephone number (in case of e-mail problems). A short biography was optional. They were also asked if they wanted to take an active part in the discussion or if they would prefer to be an observer, reading but not posting messages (this choice did not prevent later posting). 67% said they wanted to be active participants in the dialogue; 33% said they preferred to be observers. During the dialogue 251 people posted messages. Postings were also accepted from 44 people who had not filled out the registration form. Thus only a third of those who had expected to be active participants actually became ones.

As described under *Methodology* (p. 22), those who registered were asked if they were willing to complete an evaluation form following the dialogue. Where equivalent questions were asked during registration and evaluation, both sets of responses are shown.

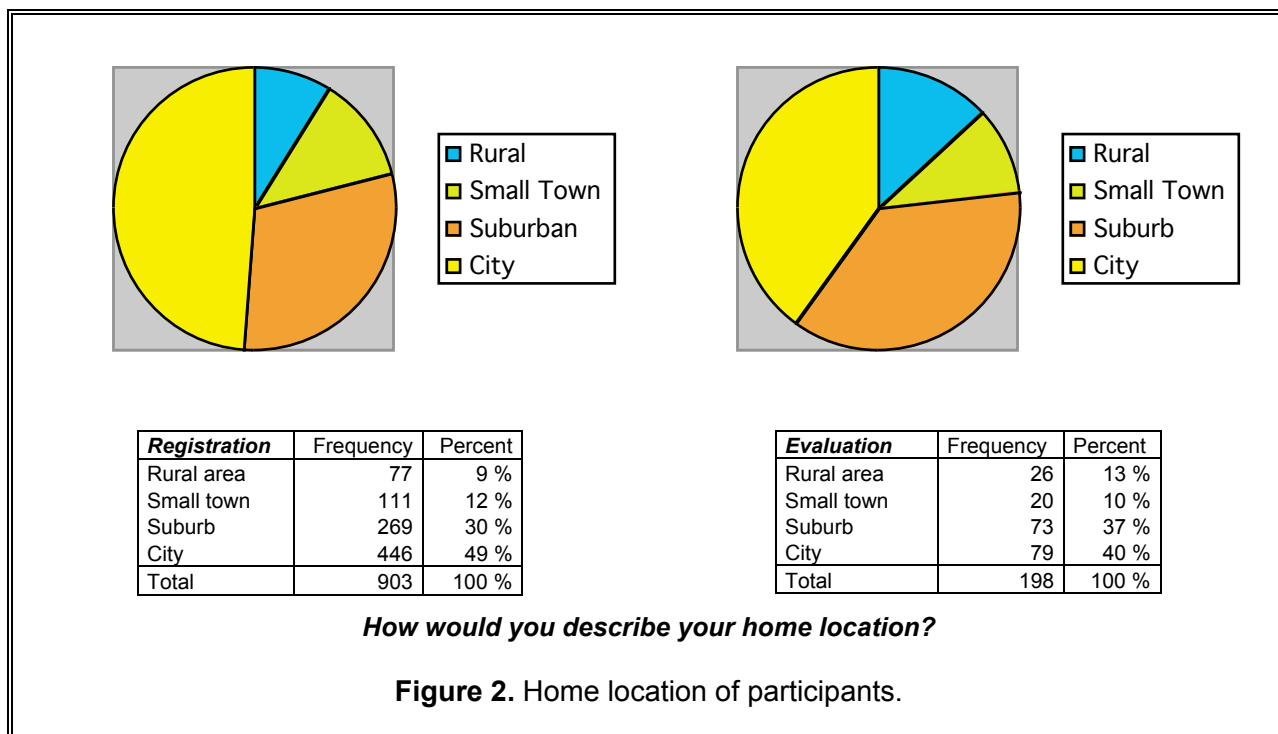
## ***Participants' characteristics***

### *Home location*

The distribution of registered participants by zip code is shown in Figure 1. They were located in 47 of California's 58 counties. The counties that were not represented (Colusa, Glenn, Imperial, Inyo, Lake, Lassen, Modoc, Mono, Plumas, Sierra and Trinity) were all rural.



**Figure 1.** Map of participants by ZIP code: 935 people in 506 ZIP codes.



Respondents were asked to describe the area in which they live as a rural area, city, suburb or small town. Results from both sets of data are shown in Figure 2. When these four categories are aggregated as “rural and town” and “city and suburb,” the response rates from the registration and evaluation forms are roughly similar (21% vs. 79% and 23% vs. 77%, respectively).

### *Capacity in which individuals participated*

In both questionnaires, respondents were asked in what capacity they were participating in the dialogue. Figure 3 shows the distribution of those who registered and of those who completed the evaluation. In both cases a strong majority (66% and 72%) were employed in the education sector, though of course many would be parents as well. Nevertheless, 37% of those who registered said they had not heard of the California Master Plan for Education before they heard about the online dialogue. This will be discussed below in *New Voices* (p. 46).

### *Demographics*

Of those who registered, 45% were under 50 years of age, and 55% were over 50 (Figure 4). On average, those who completed the evaluation were older: 70% were over 50. For the state as a whole at the time of the 2000 Census, 75% of the population was under 50.<sup>32</sup> The timing of the dialogue, outlined in Table 1 (p. 14), may have influenced the age distribution of participants, since it was at a particularly busy time of year for students and parents as well as educators.

<sup>32</sup> Figures calculated from 5-year age Census ranges for California: see “Census Bureau Quick Table QT-P1. Age Groups and Sex: 2000” (Data Set: Census 2000 Summary File 1 (SF 1) 100-Percent Data; Geographic Area: California, [http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/QTTable?\\_ts=70468952031](http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/QTTable?_ts=70468952031)).

<b>Registration</b>	Frequency	Percent
Parent, guardian or other family	126	14 %
Student	23	3 %
Educator	326	36 %
Education administrator	176	19 %
Rep. of education organization	100	11 %
Elected or appointed official	32	3 %
Business person	17	2 %
Interested Californian	63	7 %
Other	53	6 %
Total	916	100 %

<b>Evaluation</b>	Frequency	Percent
Parent, guardian or other family	15	8 %
Student	3	2 %
Educator	76	39 %
Education administrator	52	26 %
Rep. of education organization	13	7 %
Elected or appointed official	7	4 %
Business person	2	1 %
Interested Californian	19	10 %
Other	10	5 %
Total	197	100 %

***In what capacity are you participating/have you participated in the dialogue?***

**Figure 3.** Capacity in which individuals participated.

<b>Registration</b>	Frequency	Percent
17 or younger	3	<1 %
18 – 29	41	5 %
30 – 49	357	40 %
50 – 64	440	50 %
65 or older	45	5 %
Total	886	100 %

<b>Evaluation</b>	Frequency	Percent
17 or younger	0	0 %
18 – 29	1	<1 %
30 – 39	12	6 %
40 – 49	48	24 %
50 – 64	126	63 %
65 or older	13	7 %
Total	200	100 %

**Figure 4.** Age.

<b>Registration</b>	Frequency	Percent
Female	539	62 %
Male	324	38 %
Total	863	100 %

<b>Evaluation</b>	Frequency	Percent
Female	120	64 %
Male	67	36 %
Total	187	100 %

**Figure 5.** Sex.

In both cases (Figure 5), women are in the majority (62% at registration, 64% at evaluation); at the time of the Census, California was 50% female and 50% male.<sup>33</sup>

The percentage who have attended or are attending graduate school is high (Figure 6), and similar in the two sets of data – 69% of registrants and 74% of evaluation participants said they

<sup>33</sup> California percentages here and in the remainder of this section are from the US Census, 2000 ([http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/2001/tables/dp\\_ca\\_2000.PDF](http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/2001/tables/dp_ca_2000.PDF) – Table DP-1. Profile of Demographic Characteristics for California: 2000; sex & ethnicity; and [http://factfinder.census.gov/bf/\\_lang=en\\_vt\\_name=DEC\\_2000\\_SF3\\_U\\_DP2\\_geo\\_id=04000US06.html](http://factfinder.census.gov/bf/_lang=en_vt_name=DEC_2000_SF3_U_DP2_geo_id=04000US06.html) – DP-2. Profile of Selected Social Characteristics: 2000; educational attainment).

<b>Registration</b>	Frequency	Percent
Some high school/in high school	3	< 1 %
High school graduate	8	< 1 %
Some college/in college now	61	7 %
College graduate	214	23 %
Graduate school/in grad school	626	69 %
Total	912	100 %

<b>Evaluation</b>	Frequency	Percent
Some high school/in high school	0	0 %
High school graduate	1	< 1 %
Some college/in college now	13	6 %
College degree	39	19 %
Graduate school/in grad school	148	74 %
Total	201	100 %

**Figure 6. Education.**

have completed or are now in graduate school. In California as a whole, 27% of the population has obtained a bachelor's degree, while 9.5% have a graduate or professional degree.

Responses on ethnicity (Figure 7) were also roughly similar in the registration and evaluation forms. Percentages at registration, followed by evaluation figures in parentheses: Caucasian non-Latino 77% (77%), Latino or Hispanic 8% (9%), Asian or Pacific Islander 5% (1%), African American 4% (4%), Native American 2% (2%). For California, total population percentages in the 2000 Census were: Caucasian non-Latino, 47%; Latino or Hispanic, 32%; Asian or Pacific Islander, 11%; African American, 6%; Native American 1% (two or more races 5%).

### **Political activity and attitudes**

#### *Perceived political activity*

Those who registered were asked how active they saw themselves as being in government and politics. In the evaluation questionnaire, this question was worded in the past tense, and a follow-up question asked whether the dialogue had had an effect on the degree of interest. The percentage who said at registration that they were very or fairly active (42%) was somewhat lower than at evaluation (54%), but in both cases many said they had not been too involved in the past (58% at registration and 46% at evaluation). At evaluation, 38% reported that the dialogue had increased their interest either in government and politics in general, or specifically in relation to education. These results (Figure 8) and a cross tabulation (Figure 21) between degree of activity and change in interest are discussed in *New Voices* (p. 46).

<b>Registration</b>	Frequency	Percent
African American	31	4 %
Asian or Pacific Islander	40	5 %
Caucasian (non-Latino)	667	77 %
Latino or Hispanic	68	8 %
Native American	16	2 %
Other	50	6 %
Total	872	100 %

<b>Evaluation</b>	Frequency	Percent
African American	7	4 %
Asian or Pacific Islander	2	1 %
Caucasian (non-Latino)	142	77 %
Latino or Hispanic	16	9 %
Native American	4	2 %
Other	13	7 %
Total	184	100 %

**Figure 7. Ethnicity.**

<b>Registration</b>	Frequency	Percent
Not too active	230	28 %
Somewhat active	248	30 %
Fairly active	196	24 %
Very active	149	18 %
Total	823	100 %

***How active would you say you are in government and politics?***

<b>Evaluation</b>	Frequency	Percent
Not too active	37	19 %
Somewhat active	53	27 %
Fairly active	58	29 %
Very active	49	25 %
Total	197	100 %

***How active would you say you have been in government and politics in the past?***

<b>Evaluation</b>	Frequency	Percent
Decreased	1	< 1 %
Decreased, but only for education	0	0 %
Remains about the same	120	61 %
Increased, but only for education	32	16 %
Increased	44	22 %
Total	197	100 %

***Has the Dialogue changed your interest in government and politics?***

**Figure 8.** Change in political activity and interest.

<b>Evaluation</b>	Frequency	Percent
Very positive	8	4 %
Moderately positive	55	29 %
Neither positive nor negative	29	15 %
No opinion	2	1 %
Moderately negative	72	38 %
Very negative	24	13 %
Total	190	100 %

***Prior to the dialogue, what was your opinion about education policy at state level?***

<b>Evaluation</b>	Frequency	Percent
More positive	69	35 %
No change	110	56 %
More negative	18	9 %
Total	197	100 %

***How would you describe your current opinion about education policy at state level?***

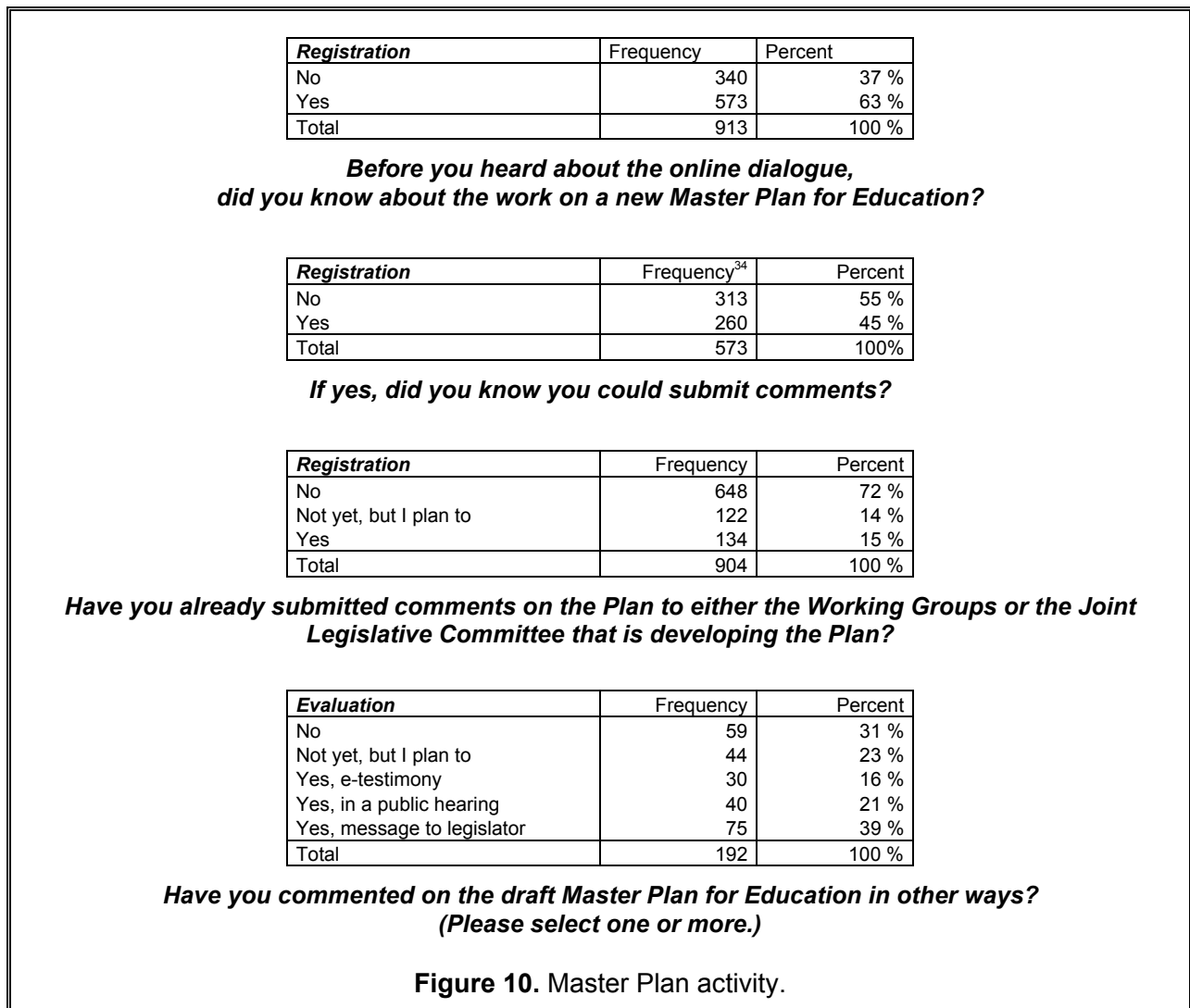
**Figure 9.** Perceived opinion on education policy.

### *Perceived opinion of education policy*

The evaluation asked respondents to state what their opinion of state-level education policy had been prior to the dialogue, and then to give their opinion at the time of the evaluation. As shown in Figure 9, 33% reported a moderately or very positive attitude before the dialogue, and 51% a moderately or very negative attitude. Just over one-third (35%) said their attitude was more positive after the dialogue, while 9% said they had become more negative.

### *Master Plan activity*

During registration, participants were asked whether they knew of the Master Plan prior to hearing about the dialogue (Figure 10). More than one-third (37%) appear to have learned



<sup>34</sup> Some who said they did not know about work on the Master Plan answered “yes” to this question; these answers are not included in the cited frequencies.

about the Plan through the dialogue outreach. (In Figure 20, these numbers are disaggregated to allow comparison of responses of education personnel and others.) While about 15% had submitted comments (and 14% said they planned to do so), 55% of those who did know about the Plan had not known they could submit comments. At the time of the evaluation, 31% said they had not yet commented in ways other than the dialogue; 49% had commented in one or more ways (of these 20% were messages to legislators, without other activity), and 23% said they planned to do so. In addition to messages to legislators, other types of input included e-testimony (see footnote 19), public hearings, and combinations of these mechanisms. The percentage of people who had heard about the Plan – and particularly the percentage who had commented on it – may have been increased by the adult education lobbying campaign described on page 22: as noted, a large number of e-testimony responses were about this issue, and those involved were also quite active in public meetings.

### *Internet use*

Participants were fairly evenly divided (Figure 11) between those using the Internet relatively little (one to seven hours a week: 37% for registrants and 32% at evaluation), those using it eight to fourteen hours per week (28% for registrants; 37% at evaluation), and those online for 15 or more hours per week (32% for registrants; 28% at evaluation).<sup>35</sup> A majority of those who registered had used this means previously to access government services or to contact an elected official or government office, and a remarkable 97% had used it to find government information. Aggregating all evaluation respondents who report using the Internet 8 or more hours a day, rates at registration and evaluation are roughly similar (60% versus 65%). The location of the computer most frequently used to take part in the dialogue (requested only at evaluation) was about evenly divided between work (48%) and home (46%).

The data suggest that with respect to Internet use, participants on average were rather unlike those described in a recent Pew study,<sup>36</sup> in which 70% of users of government sites were under 50 (26% were 50 or older), and 52% had less than a college education. On the other hand, in the Pew survey too, information-seeking was the most popular use of government sites.

### *How people heard about the dialogue*

How to let potential participants know that an online policy discussion will take place is an important issue. Information Renaissance makes it a point to carry out an outreach program that encourages a broad variety of people to join in. Participants often say they have received information from more than one source, so the registration form allows more than one response to the question of how they heard about the dialogue. Demographic information from the registration form can be used to target announcements to groups that appear to be unrepresented.

In preparing for the CAMP dialogue, personal contacts were combined with thousands of e-mail messages announcing the event: over 4600 messages were sent to individuals or groups. Major

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<sup>35</sup> Harris Interactive data ([http://www.harrisinteractive.com/harris\\_poll/index.asp?PID=295](http://www.harrisinteractive.com/harris_poll/index.asp?PID=295)) released in April, 2002 gives average Internet use as 7-8 hours per week.

<sup>36</sup> Larsen, E. and Rainie, L. (April, 2002). "The Rise of the E-Citizen: How People Use Government Agencies' Web Sites." Pew Internet and American Life Project, p. 5 (<http://www.pewinternet.org/reports/toc.asp?Report=57>; age distributions are online at [http://www.pewinternet.org/reports/chart.asp?img=57\\_users.jpg](http://www.pewinternet.org/reports/chart.asp?img=57_users.jpg)).



<b>Registration</b>	Frequency	Percent
No	124	14 %
Yes	787	86 %
Total	911	100 %

***access government services?***

<b>Registration</b>	Frequency	Percent
No	31	3 %
Yes	877	97 %
Total	908	100 %

***find government information?***

<b>Registration</b>	Frequency	Percent
No	279	31 %
Yes	626	69 %
Total	905	100 %

***offer your opinion to an elected official or government office?***

<b>Registration</b>	Frequency	Percent
No	616	68 %
Yes	290	32 %
Total	906	100 %

***participate in an online dialogue?***

***Have you used the Internet previously to ...***

<b>Registration</b>	Frequency	Percent
None	5	< 1 %
Less than one hour	18	2 %
One to seven hours	331	37 %
Eight to fourteen hours	250	28 %
Fifteen or more hours	287	32 %
Total	891	100 %

<b>Evaluation</b>	Frequency	Percent
None	0	0 %
Less than one hour	4	2 %
One to seven hours	64	32 %
Eight to fourteen hours	74	37 %
Fifteen or more hours	56	28 %
Total	198	100 %

***On average, how many hours per week do you use the Internet (including work)?***

<b>Evaluation</b>	Frequency	Percent
Home	93	46 %
Work	96	48 %
Library	1	< 1 %
School/university	8	4 %
Family or friends	0	0 %
Other	3	1 %
Total	201	100 %

***Where was the computer you most frequently used to participate in this Dialogue?***

**Figure 11.** Internet use.

groups that are involved directly in education and others that involve potential participants were contacted; where names were available, for example, both board members and regional contacts were included. In addition, many groups provided enthusiastic support, putting announcements on Web site home pages, printing them in newsletters and mailings, sending e-mails to members and handing out flyers at conferences and board meetings, and many of those who received e-mails probably forwarded them to friends and colleagues.

Approximately 45 large state-level education organizations were contacted, including those for school board members, school administrators, teachers' unions, organizations of teachers and librarians, technology-interest organizations, charter schools, and so forth; school districts in each county were also contacted. In addition, there were contacts with seven higher education associations, five student organizations, five business organizations, and five organizations that target rural areas. Personal contacts and announcements also went to six major parent or

community groups and to hundreds of smaller groups that work on themes related to children and education; to others who might also be interested, including faith-based organizations; to groups that advocate dialogue; and to policy institutes. To reach minority populations, 21 organizations were contacted, as were the minority caucuses of the Legislature and a large number of media that serve wide-ranging minority communities. Government offices contacted included the California Department of Education, the office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, and the Leagues of California Cities and Mayors.

In addition to the Info Ren outreach, Joint Committee members sent information about the dialogue to their constituents and staff made media contacts. The draft Plan was also distributed; hard copies were mailed to school superintendents, county offices of education, state libraries and other state agencies, as well as individuals who had monitored the development of the draft. When the draft was posted on the Committee Web page, e-mail announcements were sent to hundreds of organizations and individuals notifying them that the Plan could be viewed electronically and printed locally, if desired.

Given the alternatives shown in Figure 12, the majority of participants said at registration that they had heard of the dialogue via e-mail (320 participants through this mechanism alone, 127 in combination with other mechanisms). The next most frequent response was “through my work or business” (170 and 117); third was “friend or colleague” (129 and 88). Other categories (Web site, other, conference announcement, newsletter, newspaper or magazine, flyer) were much less frequently identified as the sole source of information.

<b>Registration</b>	Frequency	Percent
E-mail from an organization	447	49 %
Through my work or business	287	31 %
Friend or colleague	217	24 %
Newsletter	37	4 %
Flyer	18	2 %
Conference announcement	41	4 %
Web site	78	8 %
Newspaper or magazine	37	4 %
Other	61	7 %
Total	918	100 %

***How did you hear about this dialogue?  
(Check one or more.)***

**Figure 12.** How people heard about the dialogue.

<b>Evaluation</b>	Frequency	Percent
Very frequently	67	33 %
Frequently	86	43 %
Sometimes	40	20 %
Never	8	4 %
Total	201	100 %

*I read messages ...*

<b>Evaluation</b>	Frequency	Percent
Very frequently	8	4 %
Frequently	28	14 %
Sometimes	101	52 %
Never	57	29 %
Total responses	194	100 %

*I posted messages ...*

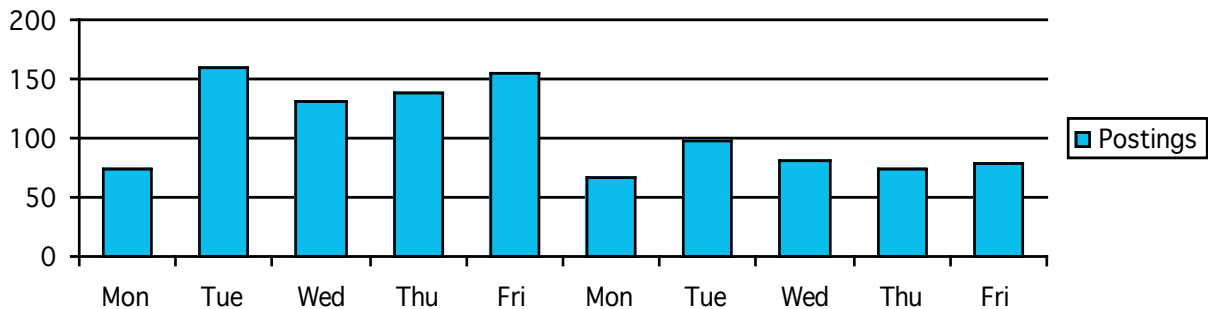
**How active were you in the Dialogue?**

**Figure 13.** Activity in the dialogue.

### *Activity in the dialogue*

Participants were asked in the evaluation how active they had been in the Dialogue – how often they had read or posted messages (Figure 13): 76% said they had read very frequently or frequently, while only 18% said they had posted very frequently or frequently; 49% said they posted “sometimes” and 28% “never.” Two series of follow-up questions were asked about decisions to post or not. These will be discussed in the following chapter.

A total of 251 people posted messages. Of these, 44 had not registered, so the fraction of registrants who posted was 207/935, or 22%; if non-registrants are included in the total population this percentage becomes 26%, but this is misleading since non-posting observers may also not have registered. There were 1057 postings in all, distributed on a-day to-day basis as shown in the graph in Figure 14.



**Figure 14.** Daily Postings.