Languages in the Schools
Policy Issues and Practical Applications
(with a focus on K-12 Arabic)

February 24, 2006
Interagency Language Roundtable Meeting
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Charting a Path to Bilingualism: Policy and Practice Support

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Center for Applied Linguistics

Overlapping Issues

- The U.S. lacks the language resources (in languages other than English) to meet its various goals, and many members of our society do not experience the benefits that proficiency in multiple languages and cultures can bring.

- Students enter U.S. schools with native-like proficiency in a language other than English (their heritage language) and are not encouraged to develop high levels of proficiency in their native language while also mastering English.

Policy and Practice Supports Needed

▸ A well-marked route: clear and accessible *paths* to language proficiency

▸ Few bumps in the road: cumulative language learning that is supported for long sequences

▸ Aligned policies from all sources that affect language learning to work toward common goals

Paths to Bilingualism

▸ *Start to teach additional languages early*

▸ *Offer more immersion and other intensive approaches* throughout an individual's education

▸ *Build on heritage language skills that exist* through clear pathways for speakers of heritage languages that foster maintenance and development of their skills

▸ *Use technology* to improve the effectiveness of language learning opportunities and provide access to new ones

▸ *Construct appropriate and effective assessments* that will inform instruction and help learners understand their strengths and areas needing improvement

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Crossing Boundaries

Long sequences of language learning require bridging the gaps between levels and groups in education:

▸ *Schools in a feeder pattern*

▸ *Secondary schools and universities*

▸ *Schools and communities (*especially important for heritage language communities)

Two-Way Immersion

www.cal.org/twi

Directory of TWI Programs

1987:30 programs

2005: 315 programs-- Spanish (296), French (7), Cantonese(4), Korean (4), Navajo (2), Japanese (1), Mandarin (1)

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Policy Supports

Achievement of our language goals requires support from education and language policies at all levels (federal, state, local) to foster the ongoing development of second language and heritage language proficiency in all ways possible.

- Legislation
- Regulations
- Appropriations

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Aligned Policies

▸ Encourage high quality, well-articulated K-12 school-based programs that teach heritage languages for native speakers and second languages for all students

▸ Include proficiency in languages other than English among core areas of achievement that will be measured and accounted for, both locally and in national assessments such as NAEP

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Aligned Policies

▸ Give credit and provide incentives for individual English language learners who achieve high levels of proficiency in their native language as well as English

▸ Give credit and provide incentives for English speakers who learn other languages

▸ Require effective articulation between community-based programs and schools, and partnerships where possible

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Aligned Policies

▶ Include in standards for teacher preparation for <u>all</u> teachers the understanding of language learning, awareness of the value of language proficiency, and knowledge of ways to support heritage language development

▶ Establish rigorous standards for language teacher preparation to increase the availability of effective teachers in a wide variety of languages

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Paths to Language Learning

▸ Multiple entry, multiple exit

▸ Paths to basic levels of language proficiency in languages other than English (expanding what has been called "the pool") for as many students as possible

PLUS

▸ Strong, coherent paths to high levels of language proficiency for individuals who seek to pursue that goal, with all the incentives and resources we can muster

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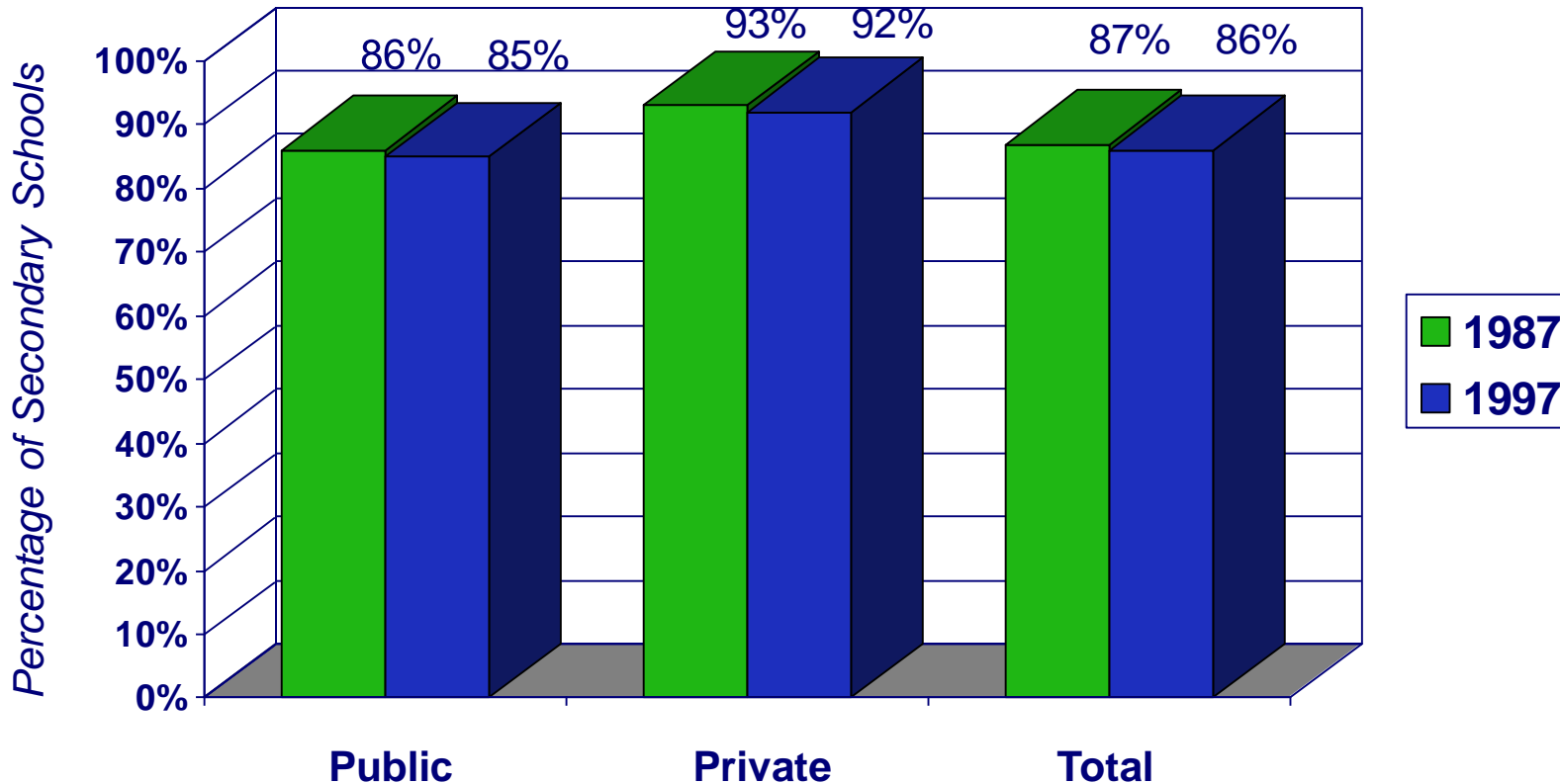# K-12 Foreign Language: Strengths and Needs

Nancy Rhodes
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Figure 1: Elementary Schools Teaching Foreign Languages (Public, Private, Total) (1987 and 1997)
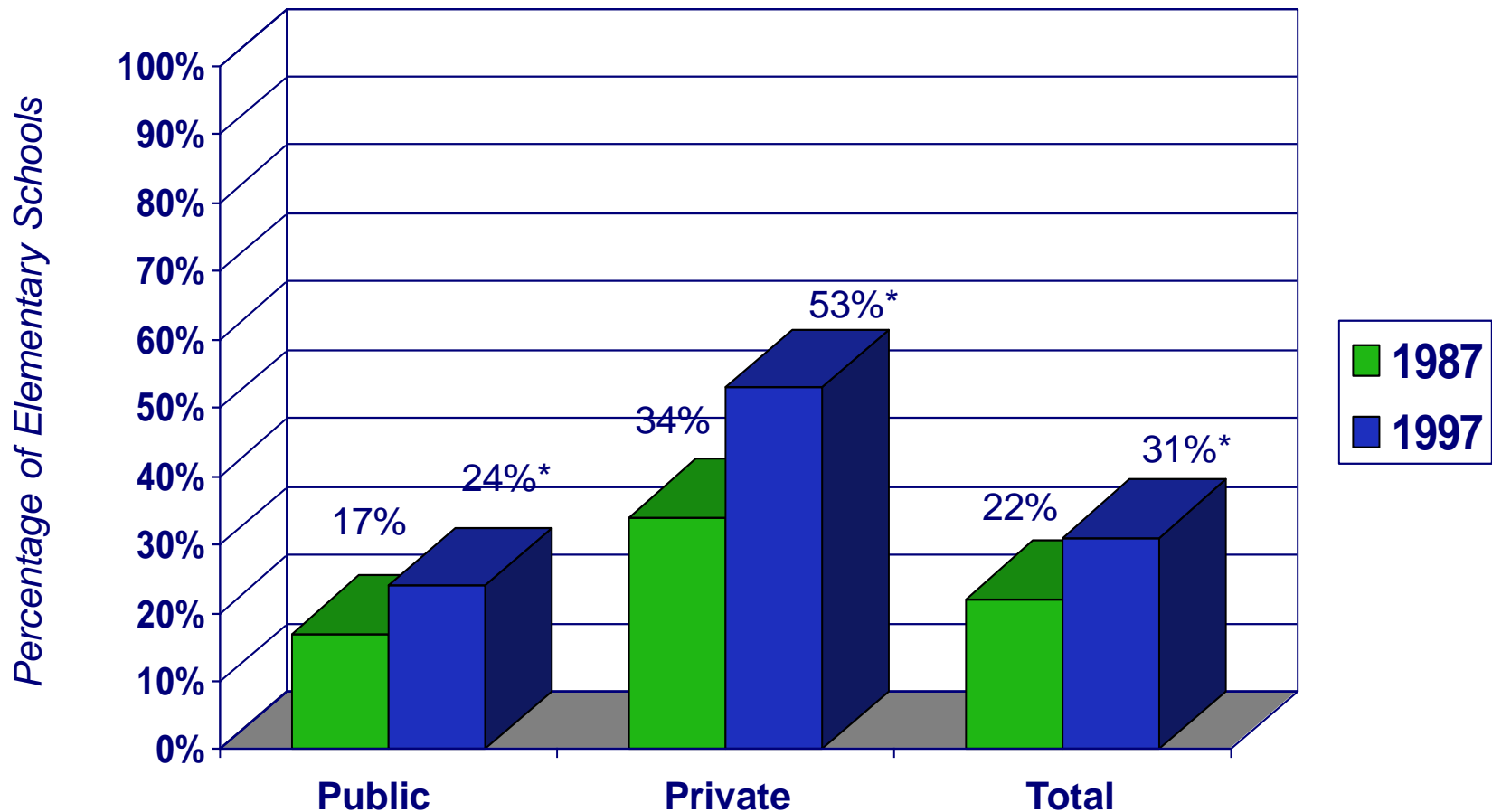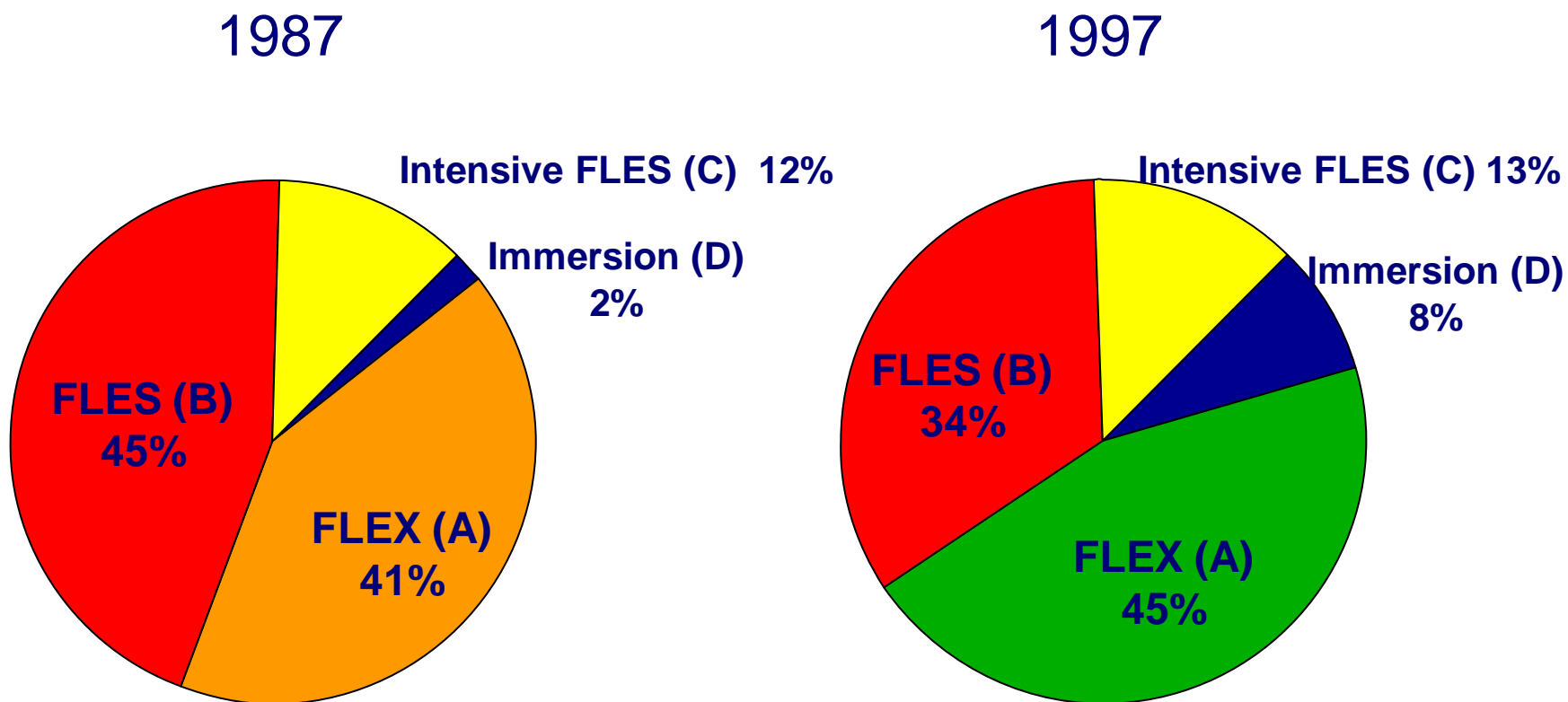
* Indicates a statistically significant increase from 1987 to 1997

Figure 2: Secondary Schools Teaching Foreign Languages (Public, Private, Total) (1987 and 1997)

Note: The decreases from 1987 to 1997 were not statistically significant.

Figure 3: Elementary Schools with Foreign Language Programs that Offer Various Program Types (1987 and 1997)

1987

1997

Intensive FLES (C) 12%

Immersion (D) 2%

FLES (B) 45%

FLEX (A) 41%

Intensive FLES (C) 13%

Immersion (D) 8%

FLES (B) 34%

FLEX (A) 45%

Note: Some schools have more than one program type.

Figure 4: Secondary Schools with Foreign Language Programs that have Foreign Language Teachers Using the Foreign Language in the Classroom Most (75 - 100%) of the Time (1987 and 1997)
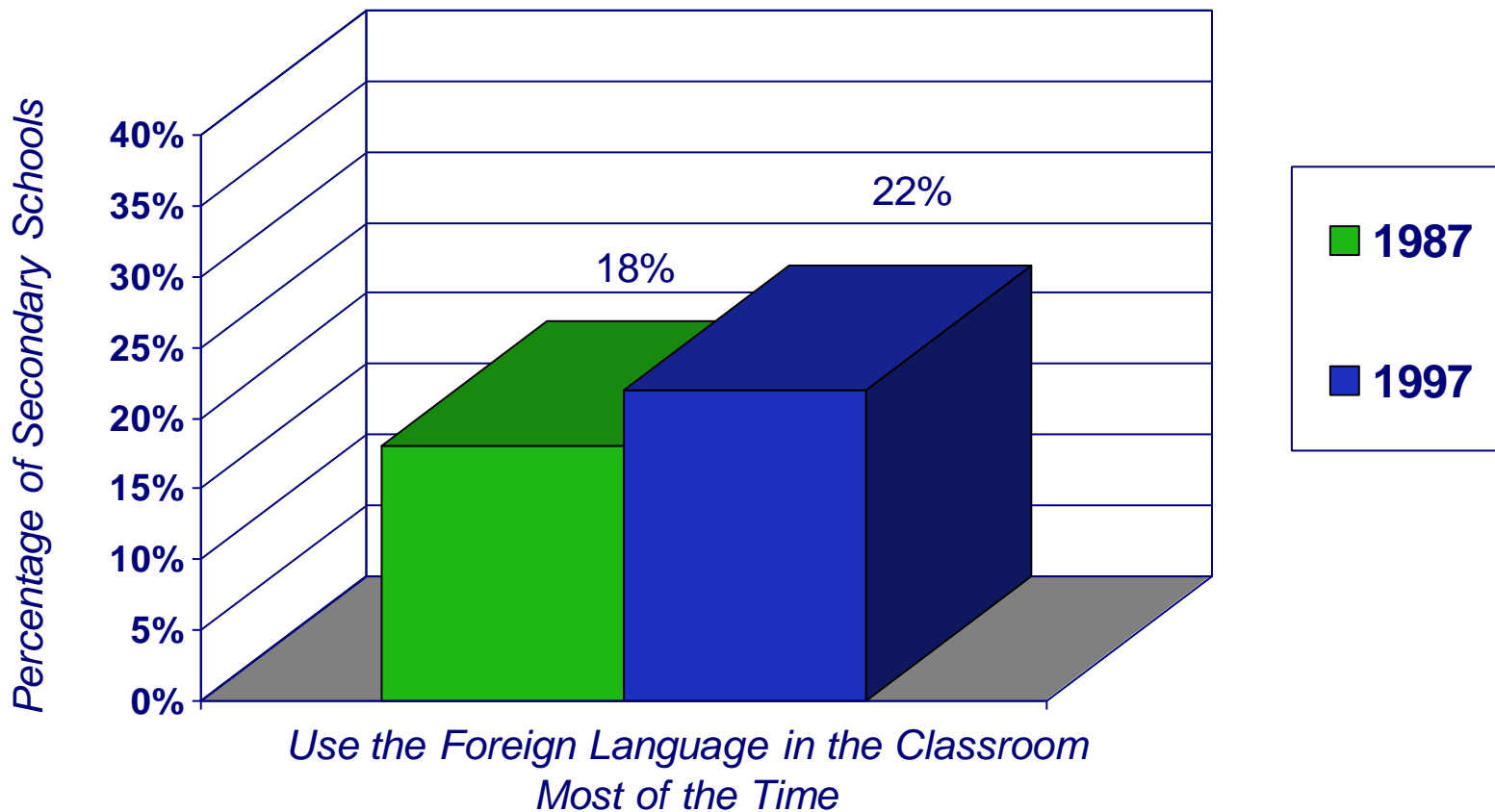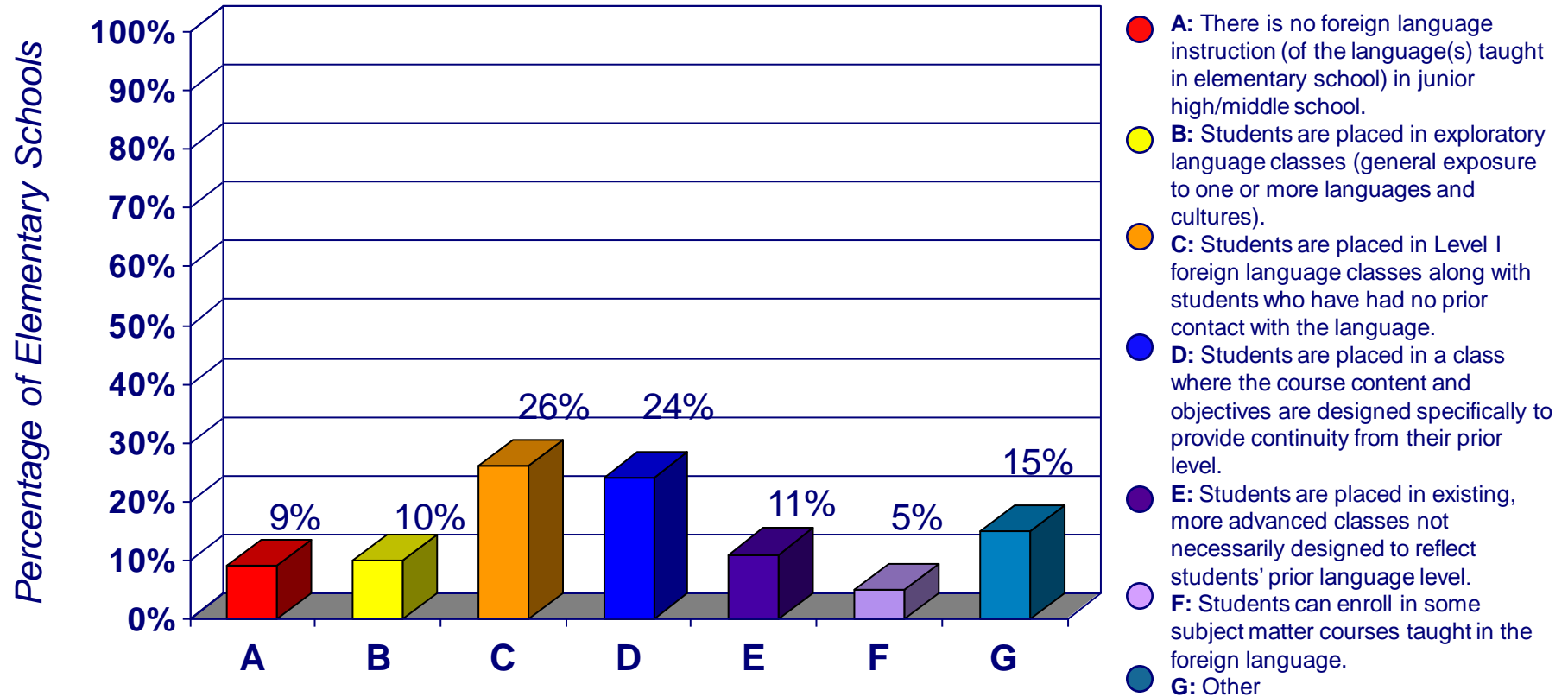
Figure 5: Elementary Schools with Foreign Language Programs Reporting Various Sequencing Patterns for Language Instruction from Elementary through Secondary School (1997)

Percentage of Elementary Schools

Type of Sequencing Planned for Foreign Language Students

A: There is no foreign language instruction (of the language(s) taught in elementary school) in junior high/middle school.

B: Students are placed in exploratory language classes (general exposure to one or more languages and cultures).

C: Students are placed in Level I foreign language classes along with students who have had no prior contact with the language.

D: Students are placed in a class where the course content and objectives are designed specifically to provide continuity from their prior level.

E: Students are placed in existing, more advanced classes not necessarily designed to reflect students' prior language level.

F: Students can enroll in some subject matter courses taught in the foreign language.

G: Other

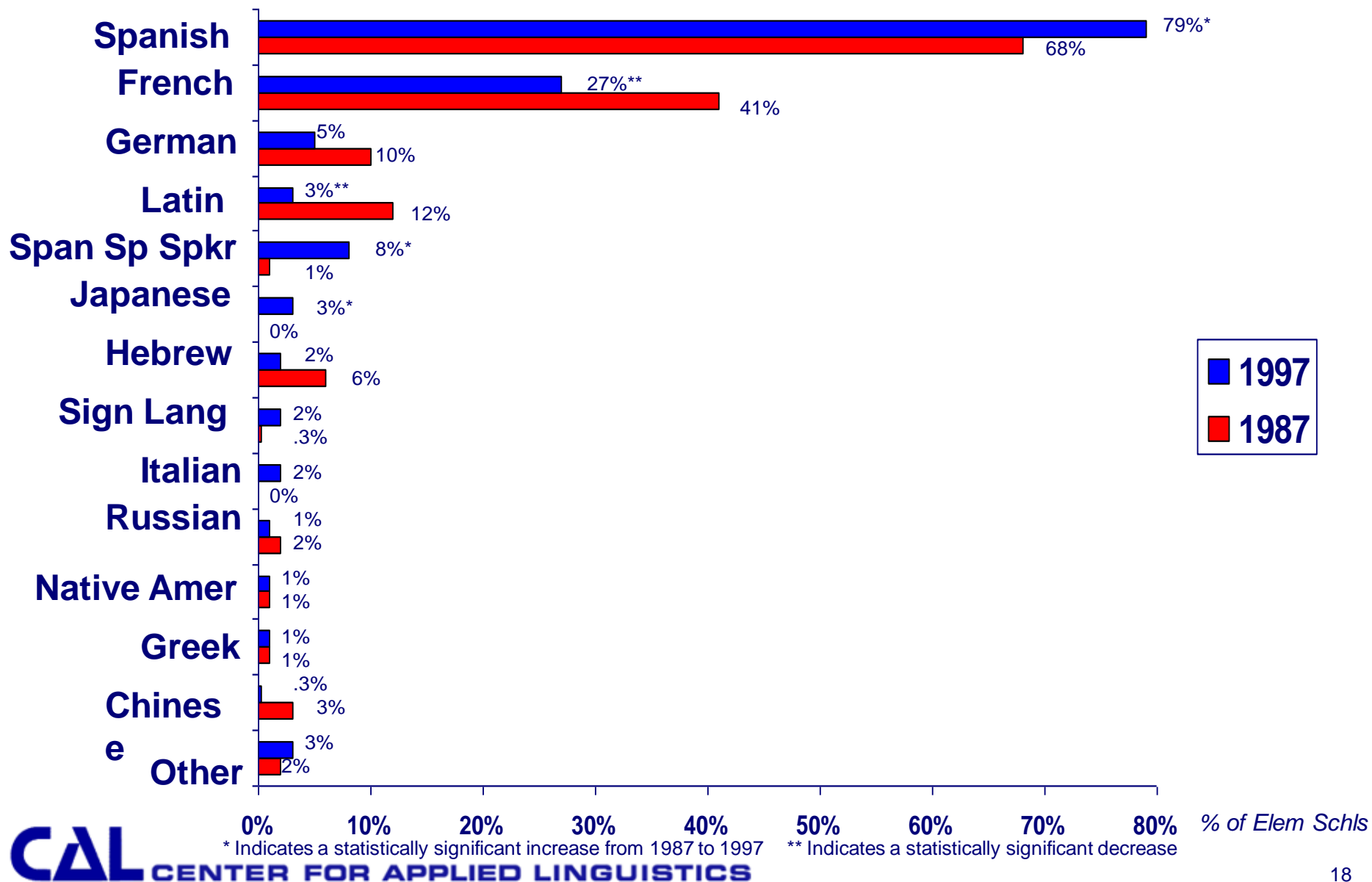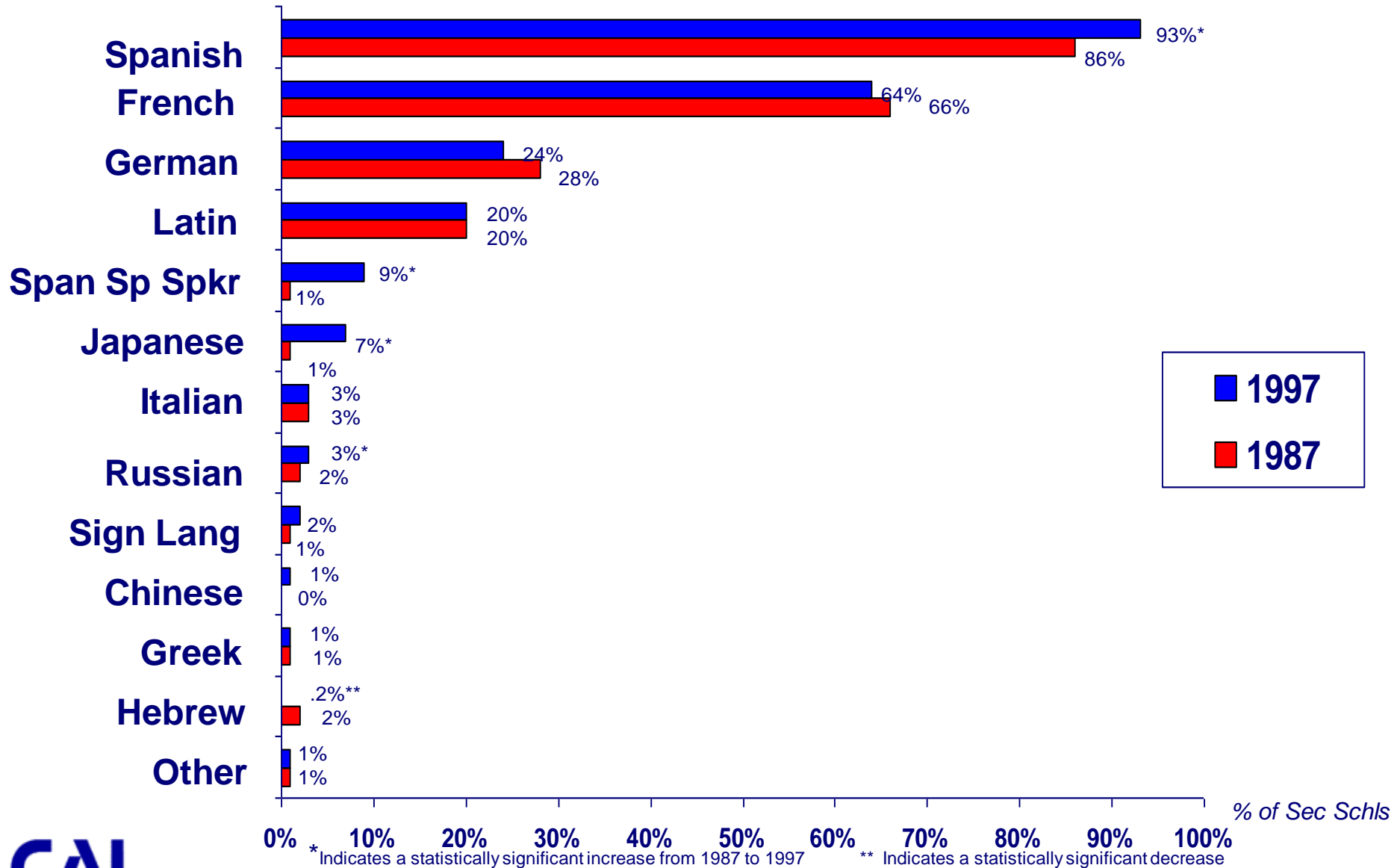**Figure 6: Elementary Schools with Foreign Language Programs that Teach Various Foreign Languages (1987 and 1997)**

Spanish: 79%* (1997), 68% (1987)
French: 27%** (1997), 41% (1987)
German: 5% (1997), 10% (1987)
Latin: 3%** (1997), 12% (1987)
Span Sp Spkr: 8%* (1997), 1% (1987)
Japanese: 3%* (1997), 0% (1987)
Hebrew: 2% (1997), 6% (1987)
Sign Lang: 2% (1997), .3% (1987)
Italian: 2% (1997), 0% (1987)
Russian: 1% (1997), 2% (1987)
Native Amer: 1% (1997), 1% (1987)
Greek: 1% (1997), 1% (1987)
Chinese: .3% (1997), 3% (1987)
Other: 3% (1997), 2% (1987)

Legend: 1997 (blue), 1987 (red)

% of Elem Schls

* Indicates a statistically significant increase from 1987 to 1997   ** Indicates a statistically significant decrease

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18

Figure 7: Secondary Schools with Foreign Language Programs that Teach Various Foreign Languages (1987 and 1997)

* Indicates a statistically significant increase from 1987 to 1997   ** Indicates a statistically significant decrease

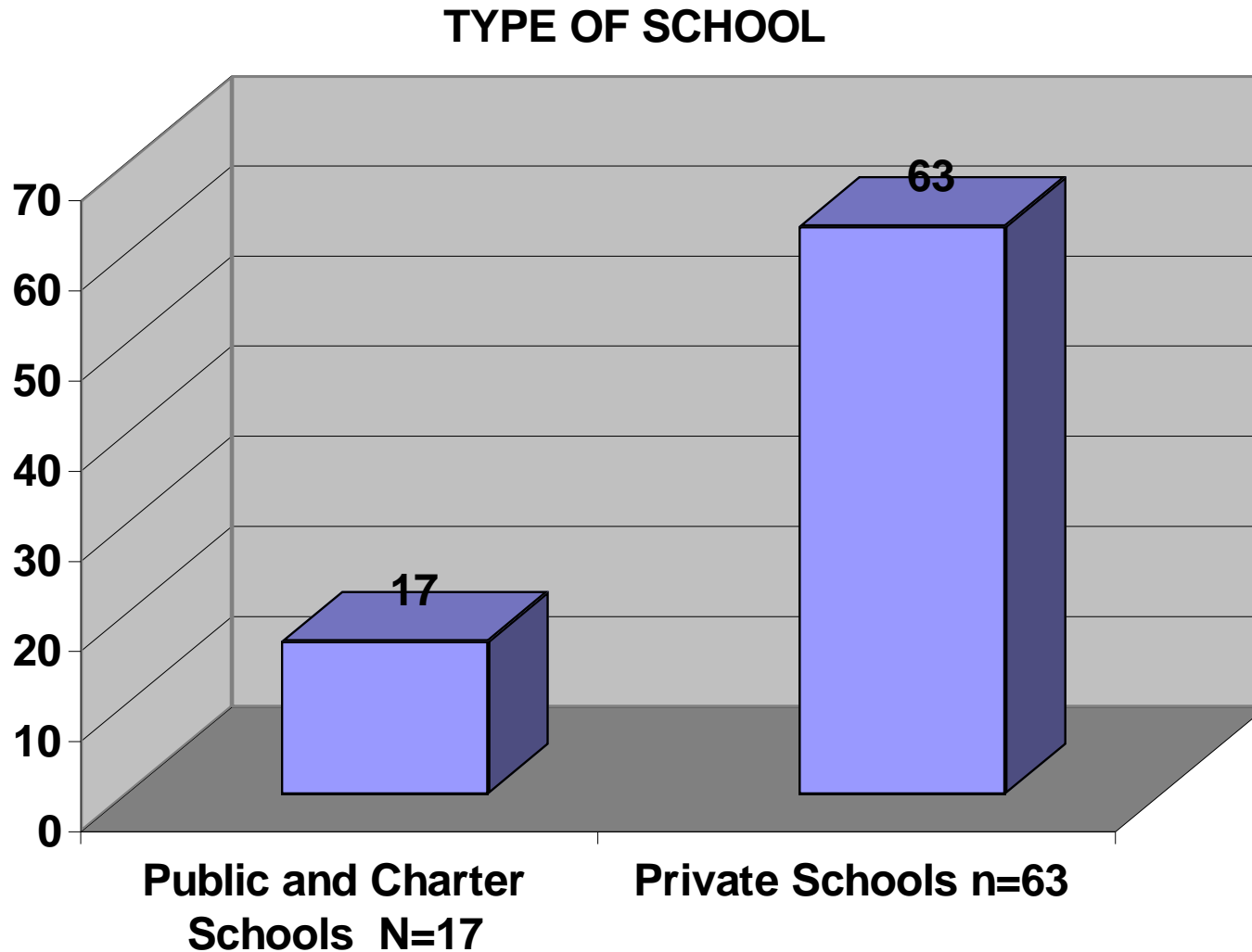# Strengths and Needs

STRENGTHS

- Model programs

- Variety of assessments

NEEDS

- Setting of higher proficiency goals

- Better teacher training
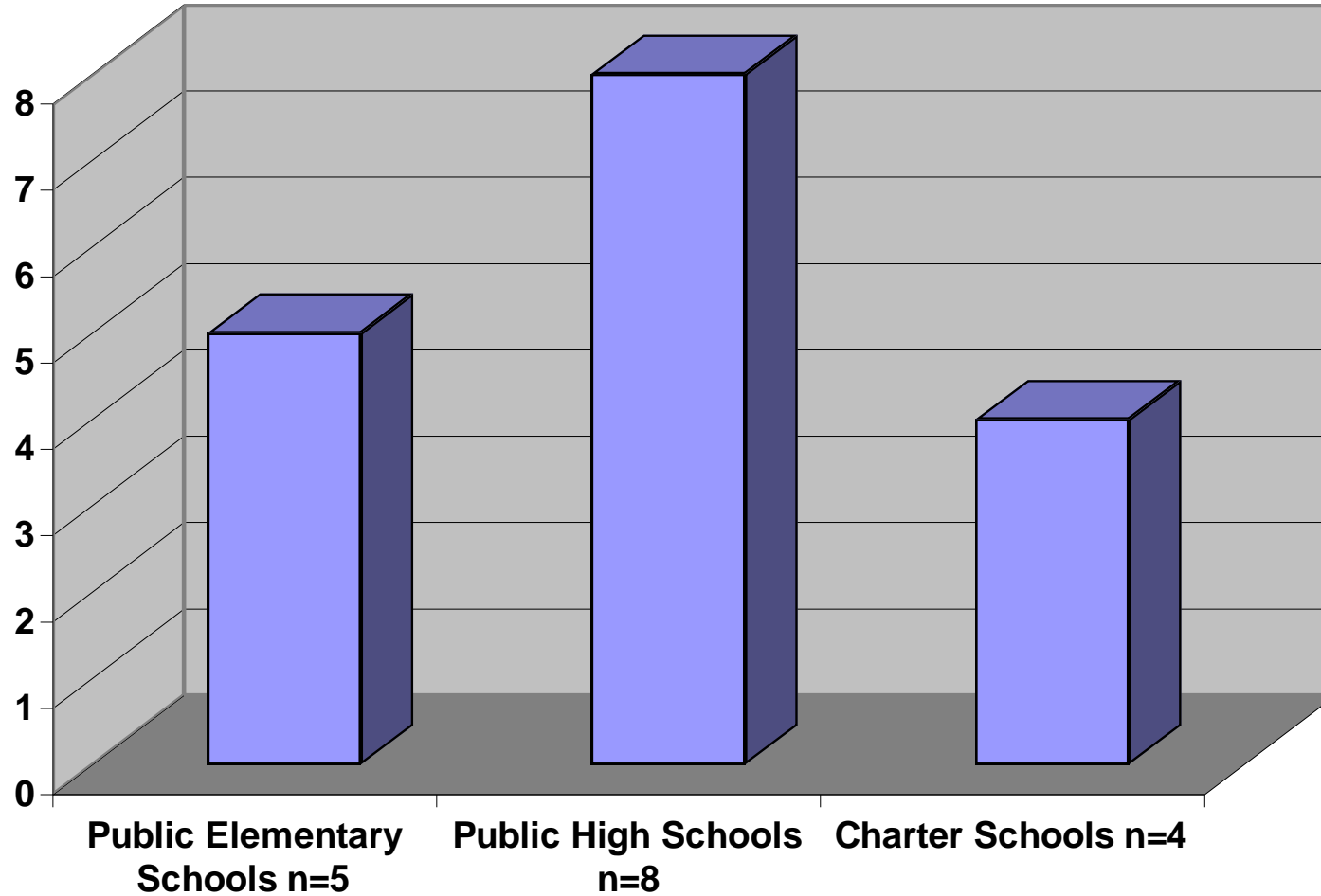
- Improved K-12 articulation

- More variety of languages

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K-12 Arabic Instruction in the U.S.

Dora Johnson

Center for Applied Linguistics

PUBLIC vs. PRIVATE

TYPE OF SCHOOL

Bar chart showing type of school. Public and Charter Schools N=17 (value 17); Private Schools n=63 (value 63).

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STATES

NUMBER OF SCHOOLS PER STATE

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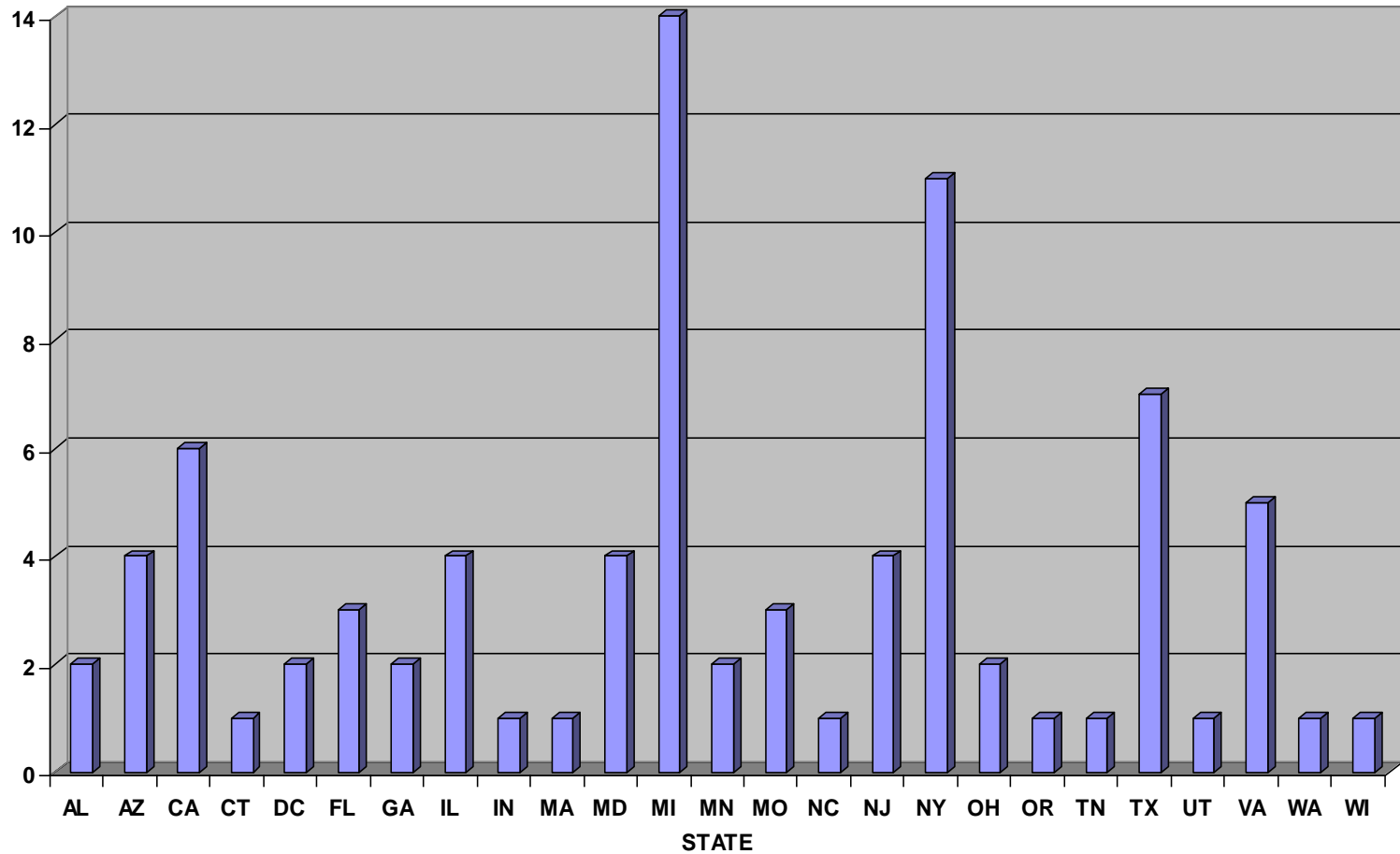
TEACHERS

AVERAGE NUMBER OF TEACHERS PER SCHOOL

CLASS SIZE
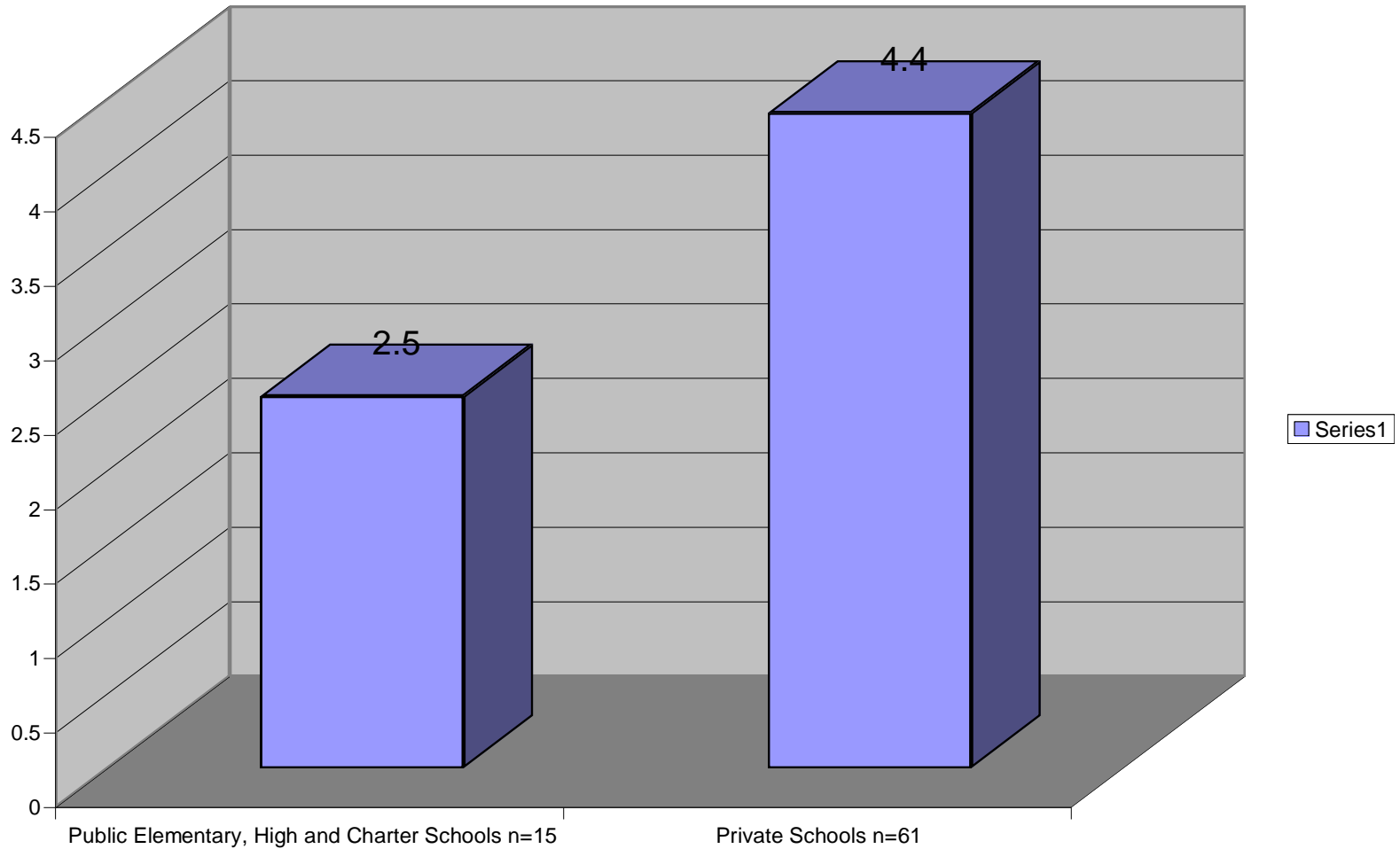
AVERAGE NUMBER OF STUDENTS PER CLASS BY SCHOOL TYPE
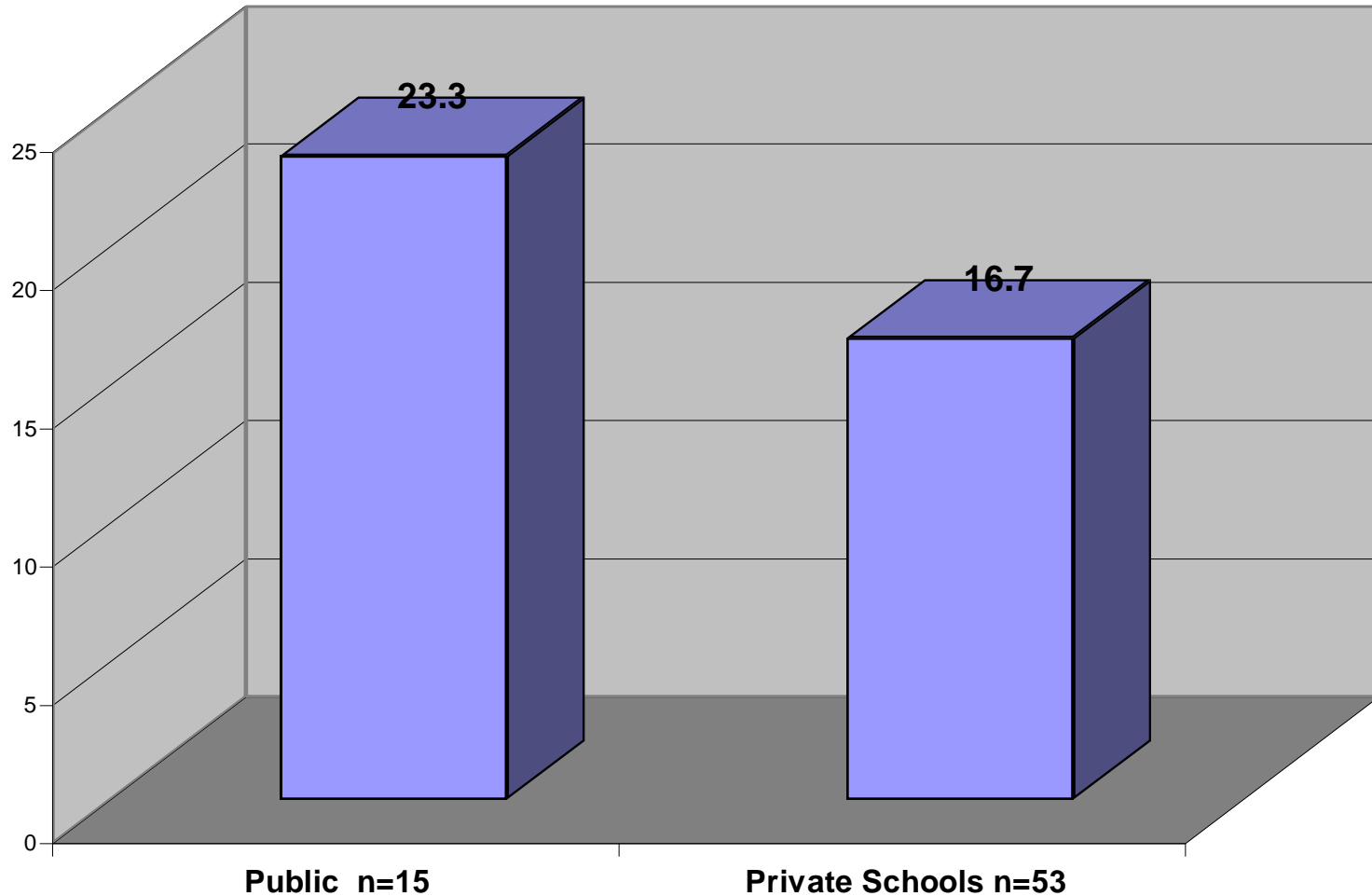
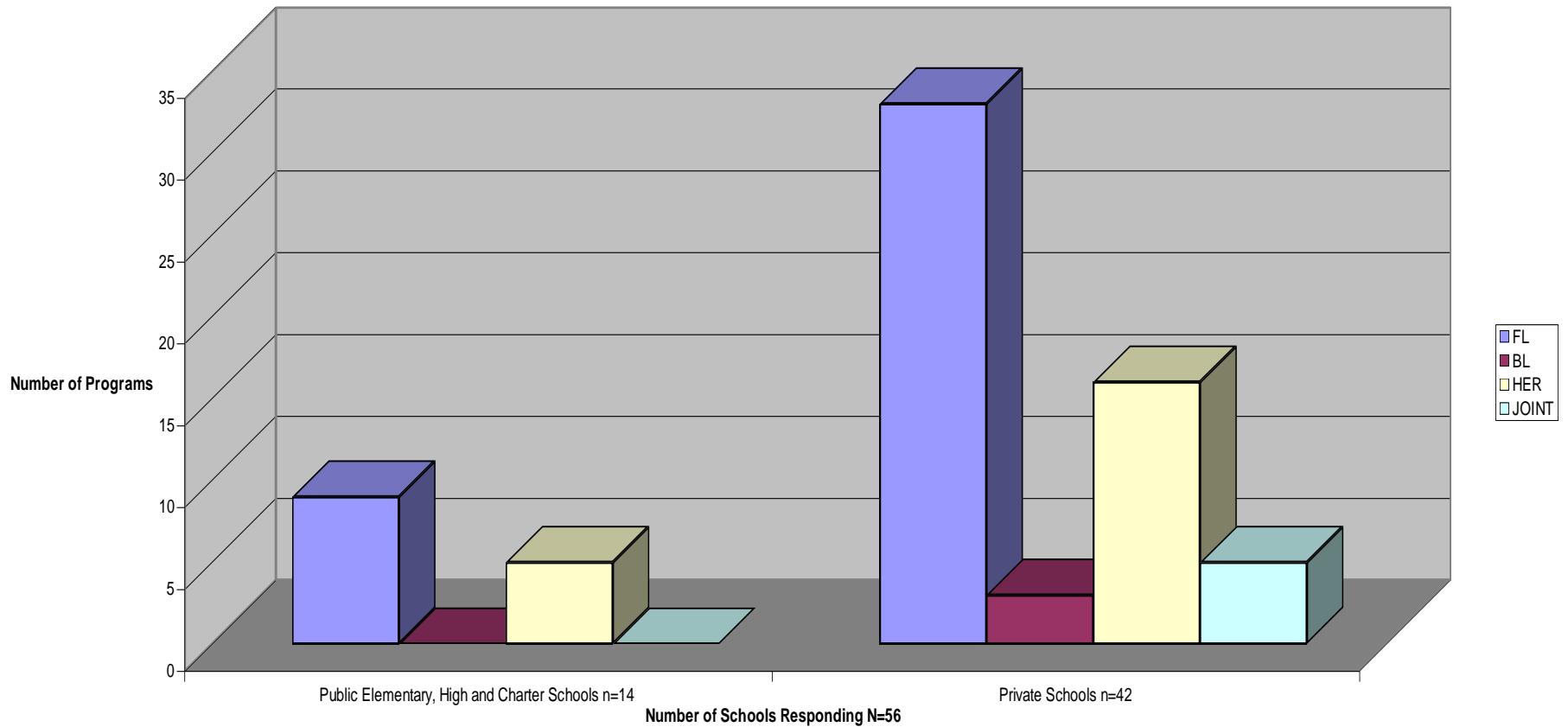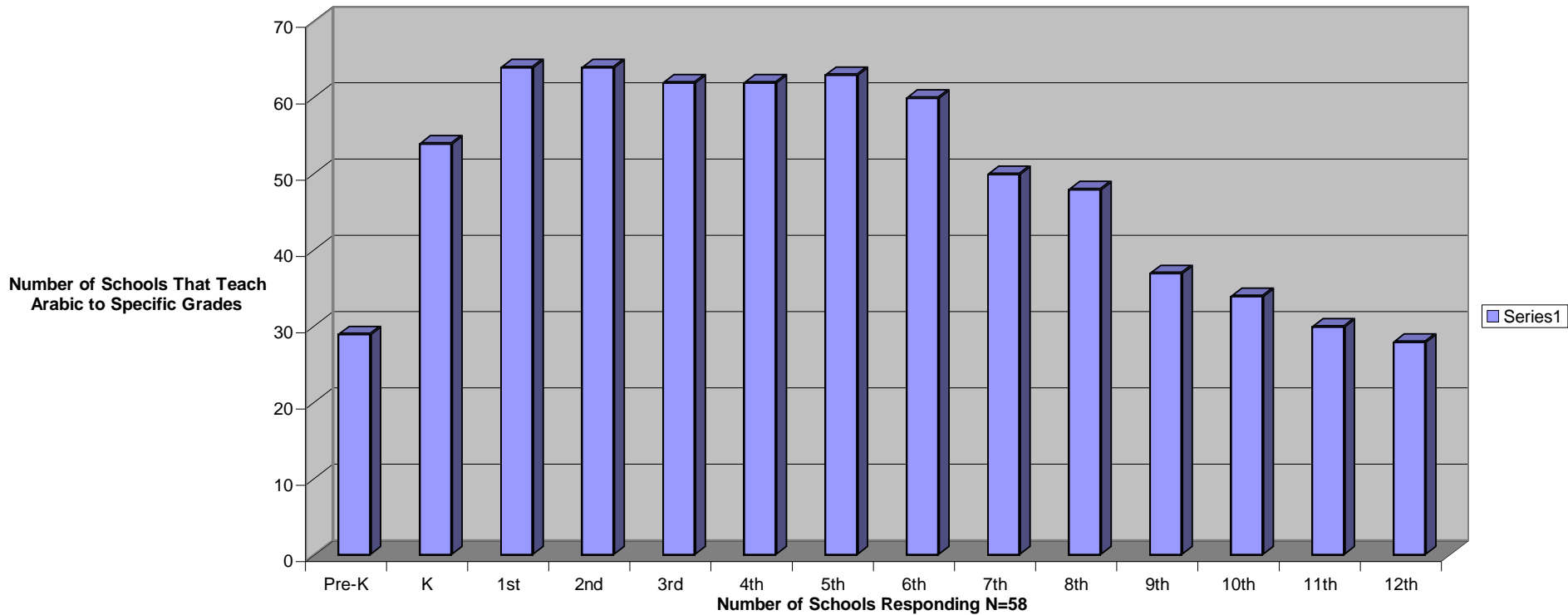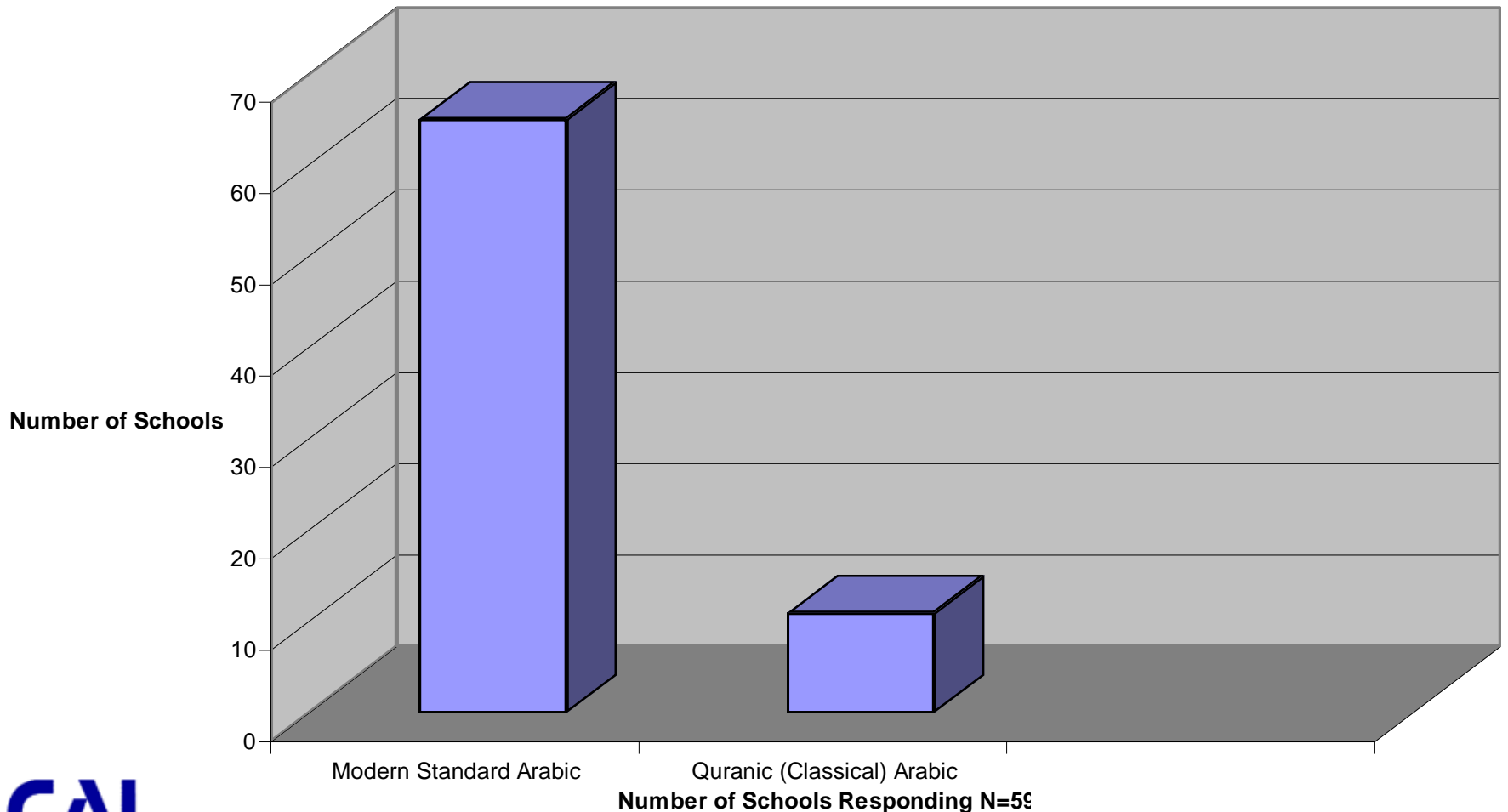**LANGUAGE EXPERIENCES OF STUDENTS**
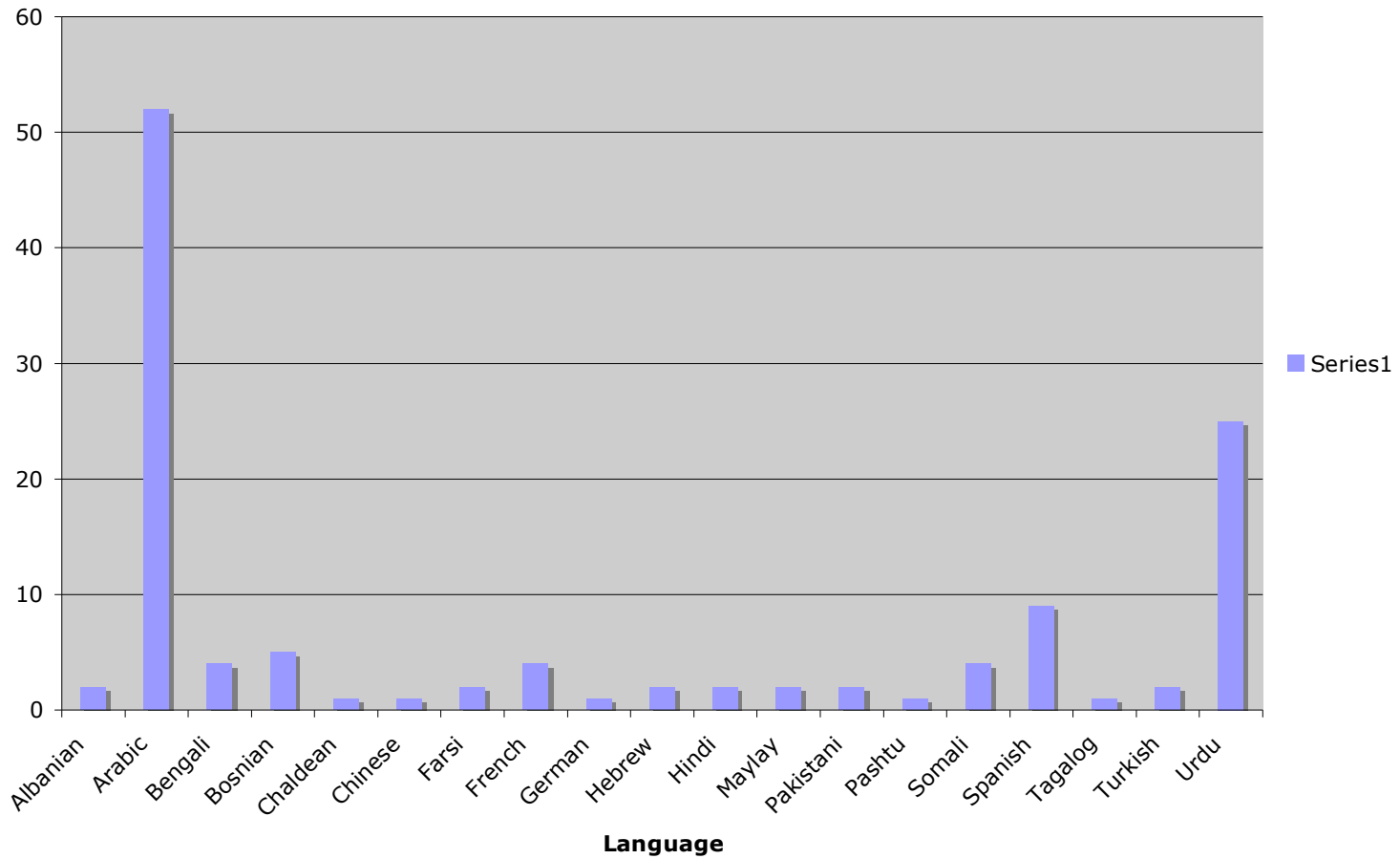
The Number of the Different Types of Arabic Programs By Type of School

GRADES AT WHICH SCHOOLS TEACH ARABIC

Graph 9: The Number of Schools That Teach the Different Forms of Arabic

Number of Schools Responding N=59

MATERIALS

18. Percent Schools Using different Materials

Legend:
- Only teacher developed
- Only published in an Arab country
- Only published in the U.S.
- Both teacher developed and published in an Arab country
- Both teacher developed and published in the U.S.

Public Schools n=18: 39%, 11%, 17%, 11%, 0%

Private Schools n=46: 17%, 37%, 30%, 9%, 4%

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