Authorizing is the most consequential public school governance reform of the past two decades. Over the last 20+ years, diverse authorizers have created a new landscape, where school autonomy balanced by fierce accountability and equitable access—can exist and thrive. THE LAST 20+ YEARS We know where authorizing came from and we know where it is going, but where is it right now?

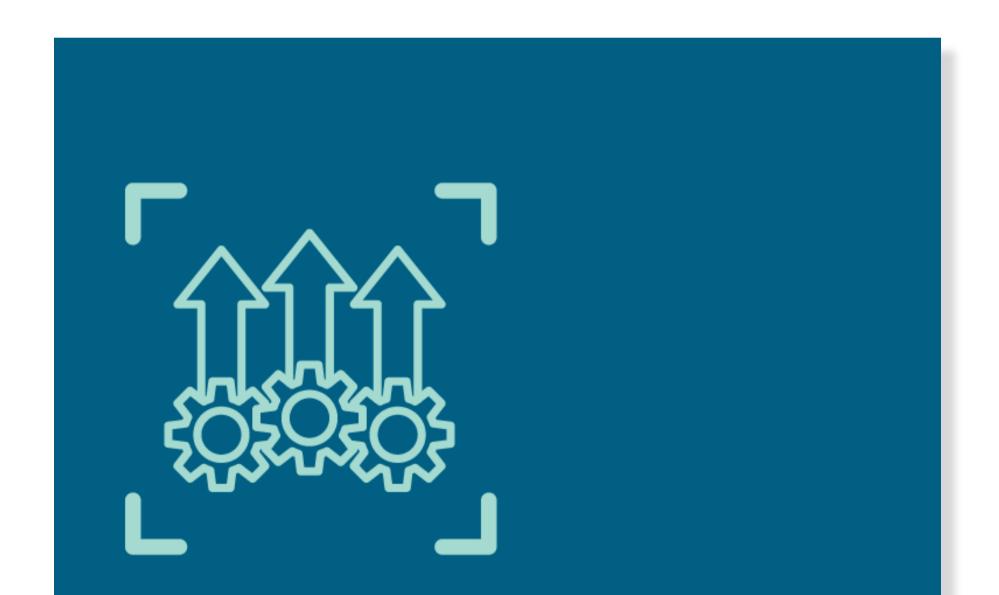
STATE OF AUTHORIZING REPORT

Over the next decade, NACSA envisions new authorizing systems that embrace innovative ways of organizing learning that are objectively equitable, excellent, and built from the high standards communities have for their children. We see a world where new and existing schools match communities' expressed desires, and many more are governed and led by people of color and those with deep ties to local communities.

THE NEXT DECADE

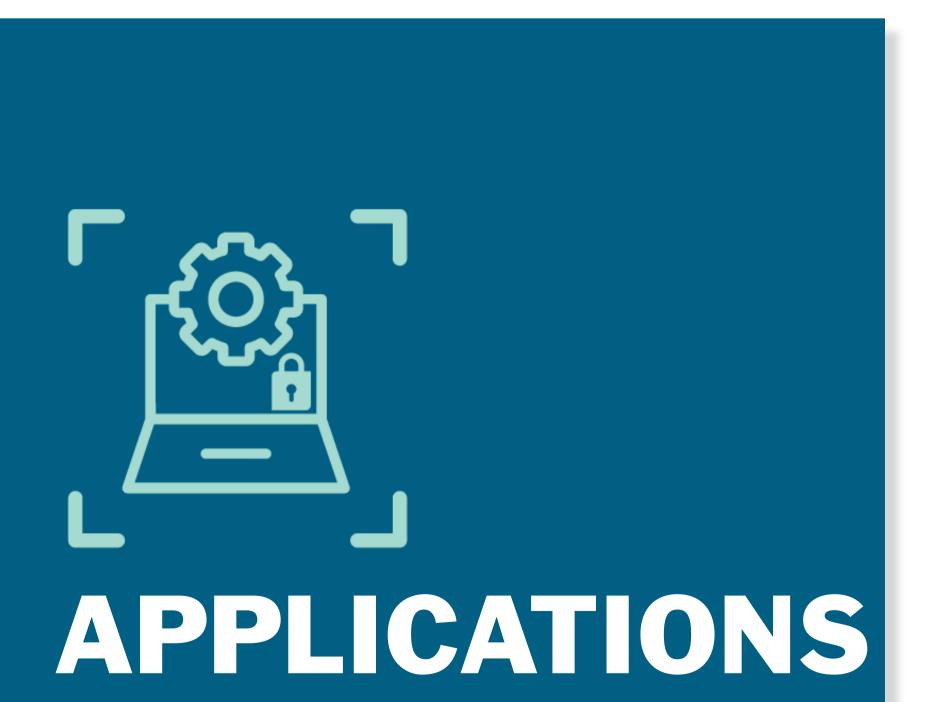
This comprehensive look at who is doing what in authorizing in this present moment. Having a dynamic picture of where we are helps us navigate this landscape and chart our next steps on this journey of tapping into Excellence from Communities.





WHO AUTHORIZES?

EVOLVING EXCELLENCE





& CLOSURES

READ ABOUT HOW THIS DATA SAMPLE WAS COLLECTED AND REPORTED



WHO AUTHORIZES?

We've been spending a lot of time asking some important questions about how to keep providing high-quality education opportunities: What role does innovation play? How should we measure school quality?

But it's also important to stop and ask who is doing the work of authorizing.

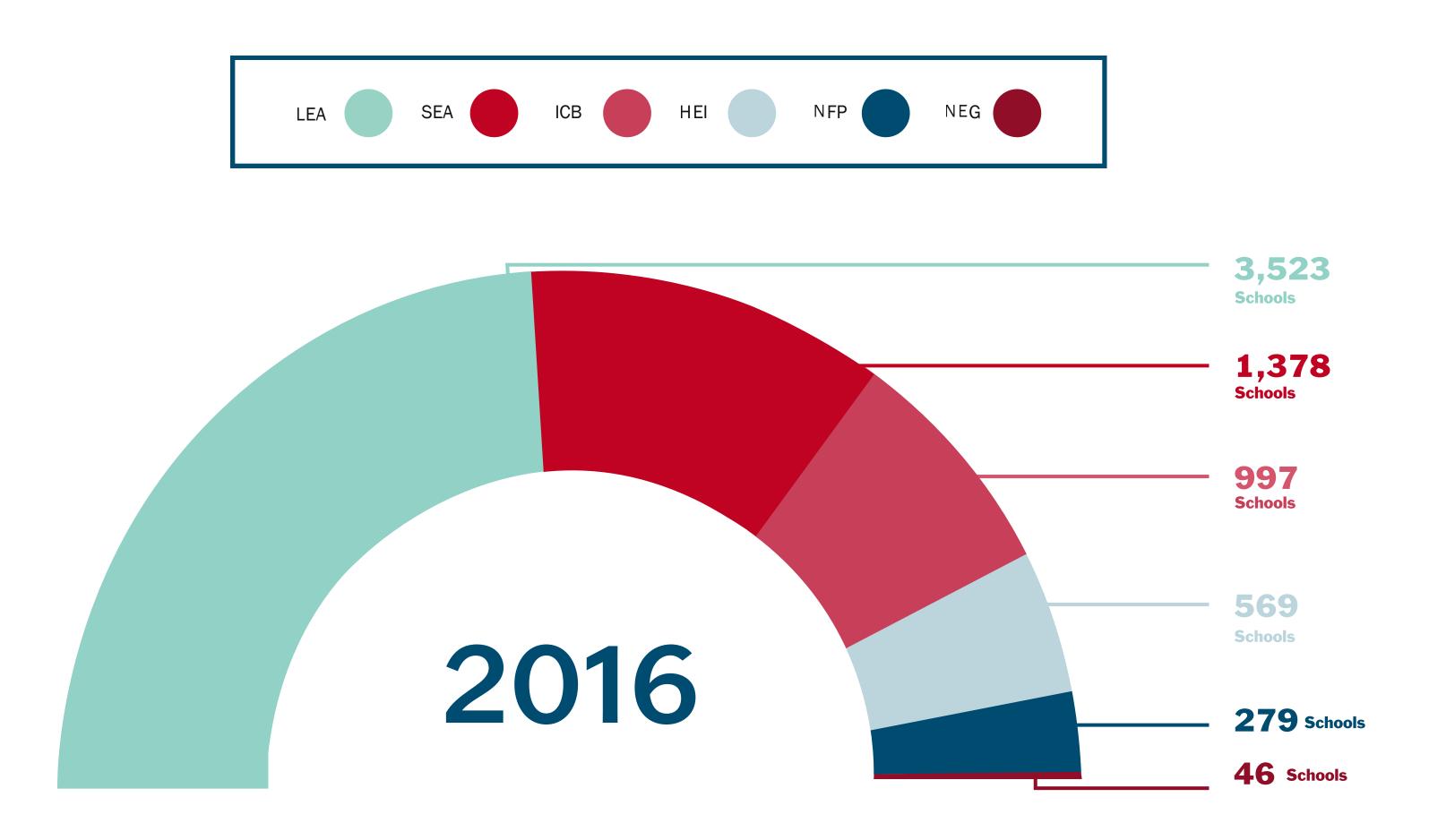
As authorizing matures, those with high-quality portfolios are focused on their leadership, commitment, and judgment.

TYPES OF AUTHORIZERS

LEA: Local Education Agency SEA: State Education Agency ICB: Independent Chartering Board HEI: Higher Education Institution NFP: Nonprofit Organization NEG: Non-Educational Government Entity

FIGURE 01

GROWTH ACROSS ALMOST EVERY AUTHORIZER TYPE



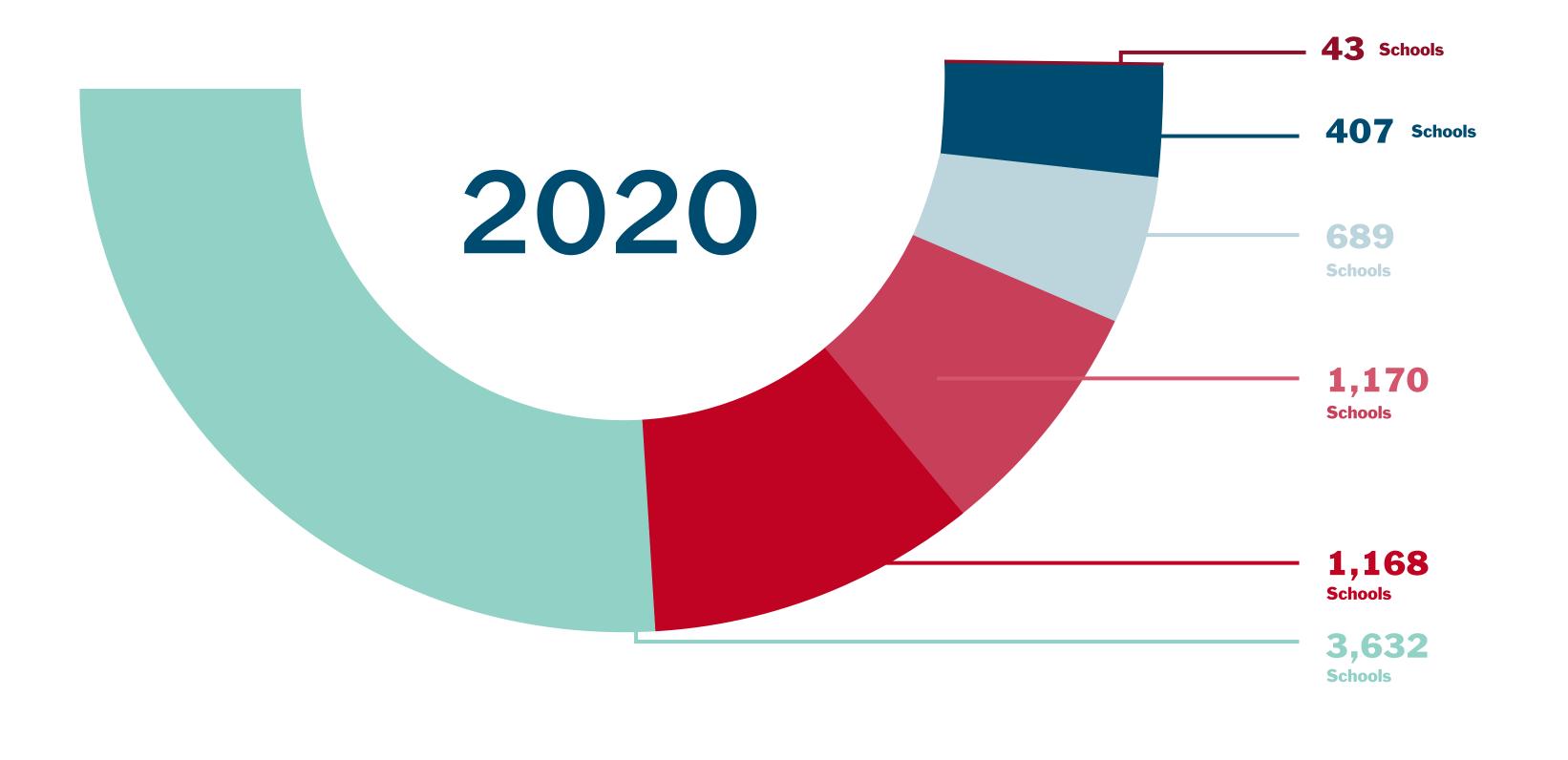


FIGURE 02

THE AVERAGE NUMBER OF SCHOOLS PER AUTHORIZER GREW IN ALMOST EVERY AUTHORIZER TYPE

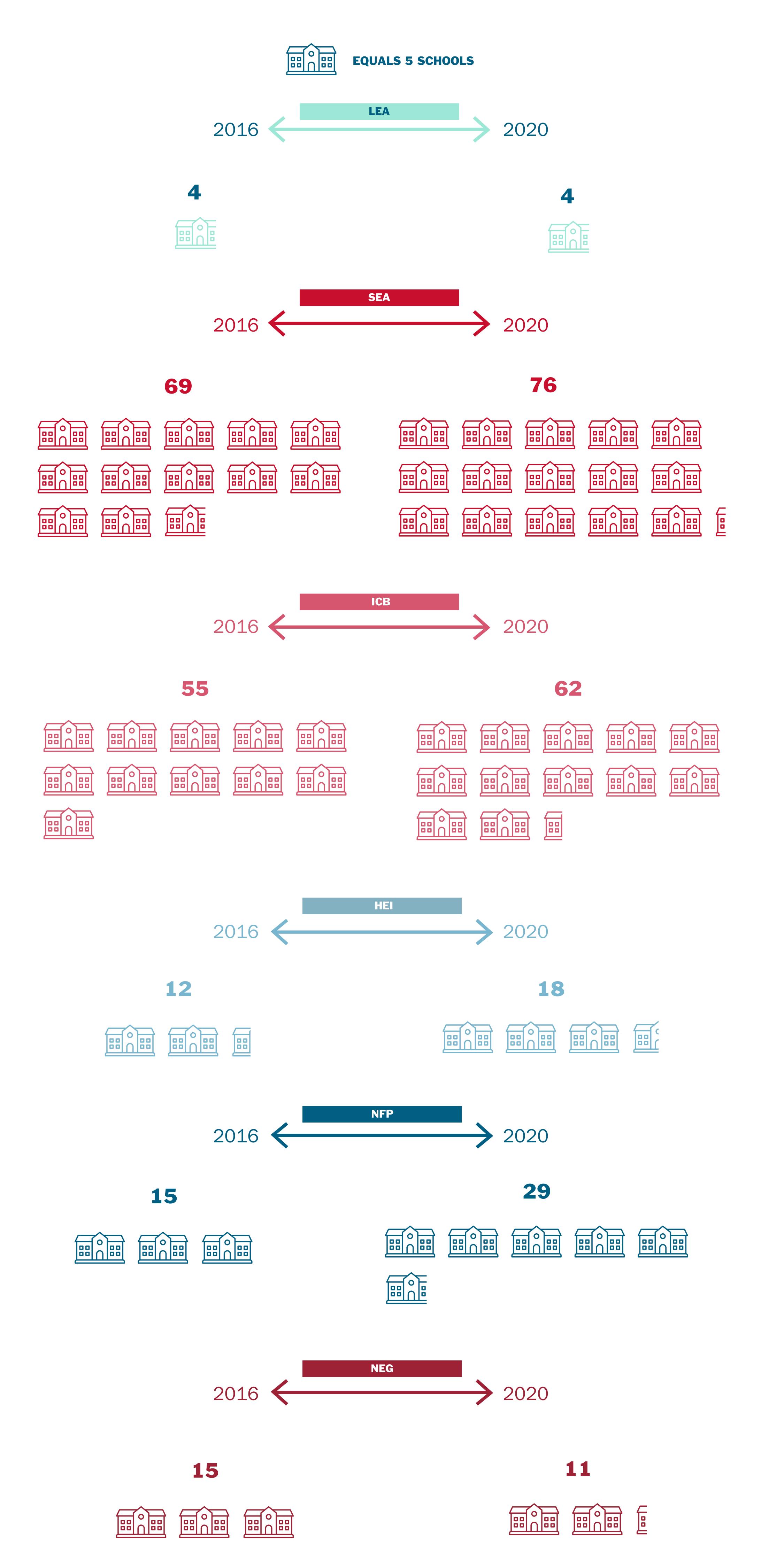
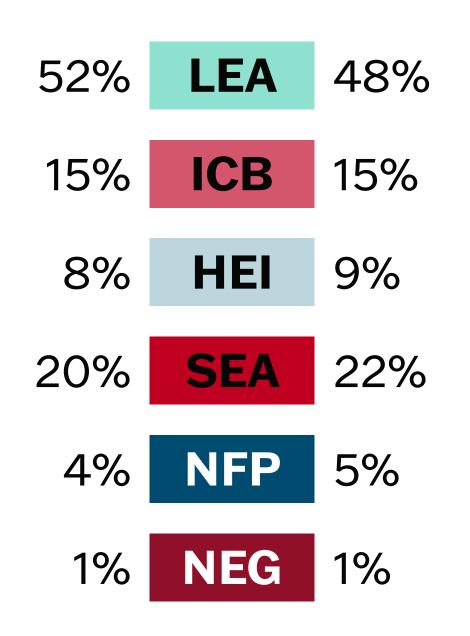


FIGURE 03

PROPORTION OF SCHOOLS OVERSEEN BY TYPE

2016



2020



After several decades of charter schooling and authorizing, authorizing continues to

GROW, MATURE, & PROFESSIONALIZE

Read more about what great authorizers do differently to achieve stellar outcomes.

QUALITY PRACTICE PROJECT

QPP is the first-of-its-kind research that is an important step toward developing a more evidence-informed connection between practices and outcomes.



EVOLVING DEFINITIONS OF EXCELLENCE

A common incorrect criticism of charter schools is the lack of accountability. However, authorizing is designed to ensure charter schools have high standards of accountability. And authorizers are going above and beyond to hold schools accountable for reading/math results and so much more.

"A school's mission is a promise to families. It's an authorizers job to make sure the school upholds that promise."

-Erin Anderson, Dir. Of Charter School Authorizing, Osprey Wilds

Data included in this section are indicators of school quality authorizers are using for formal accountability (e.g., as part of their performance framework or contract with the school). They do not reflect other informal ways authorizers or schools may use this data.

FIGURE 01

DIFFERENT MEASURES OF SCHOOL QUALITY AUTHORIZERS ARE USING

Student Academic Growth Findings from School Climate Measures **Attendance Rates**

Findings from Parent Surveys, Focus Groups, or Interviews

Findings from Teacher Surveys, Focus Groups, or Interviews

Disaggregated or Subgroup Measures of Student/Family Engagement & Wellness

Suspension and/or Expulsion Rates

Student Re-enrollment Rates

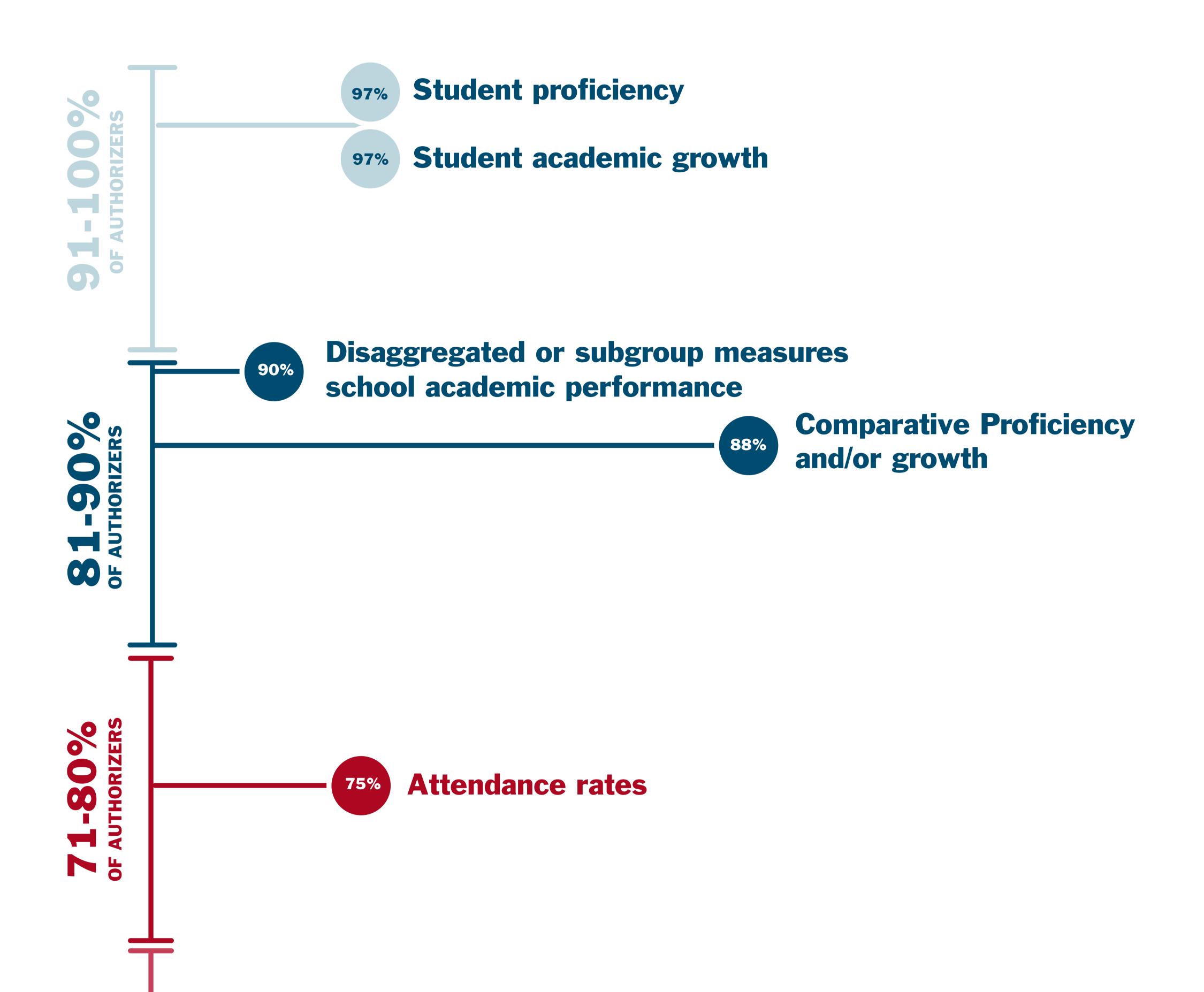
Chronic Absenteeism or Truancy

Findings from Student Surveys, Focus Groups, or Interviews **Comparative Proficiency and/or Growth Student Proficiency**

Disaggregated Measures of Academic Performance

FIGURE 02

AUTHORIZERS ARE USING A WIDE RANGE OF INFORMATION FOR SCHOOL QUALITY



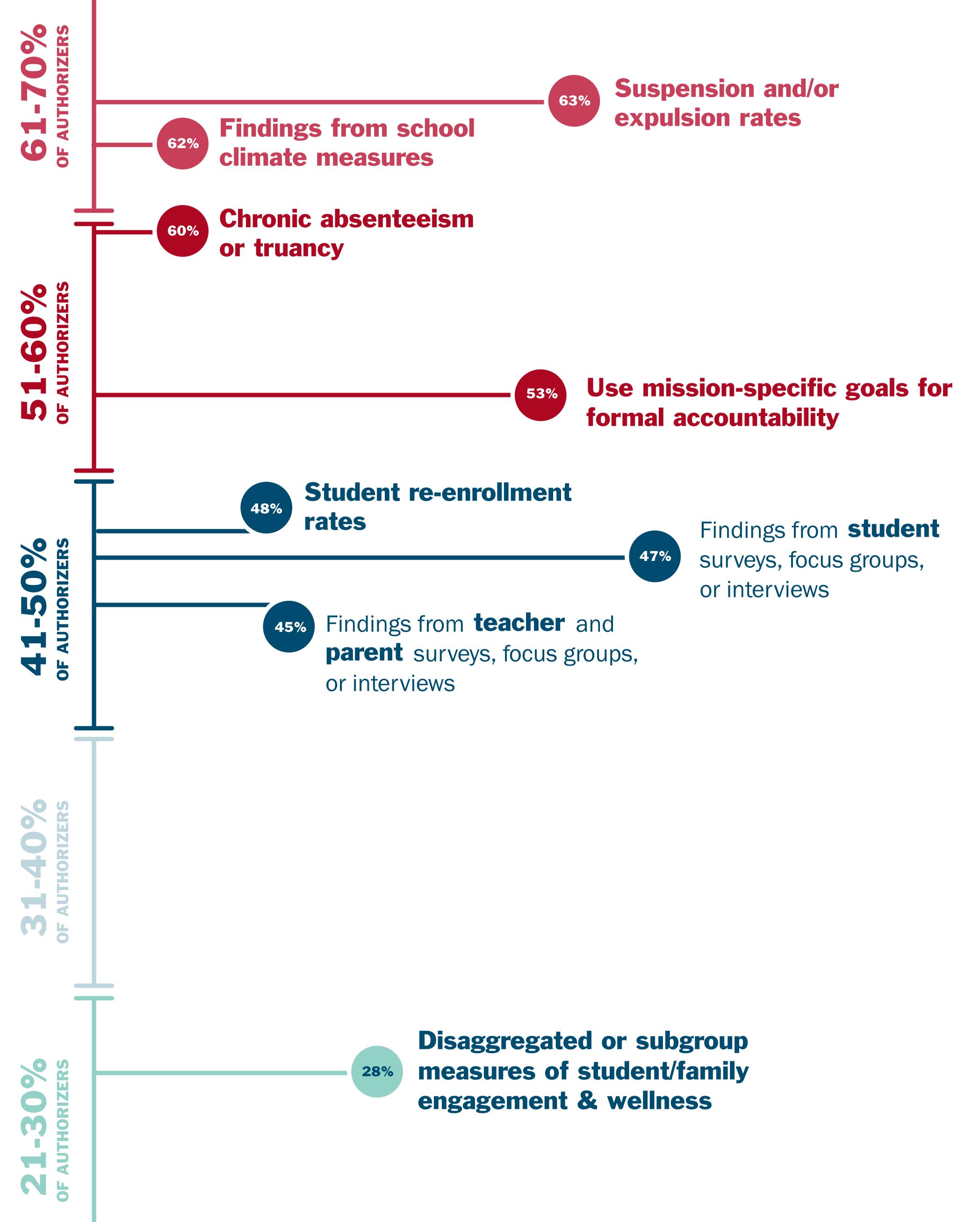
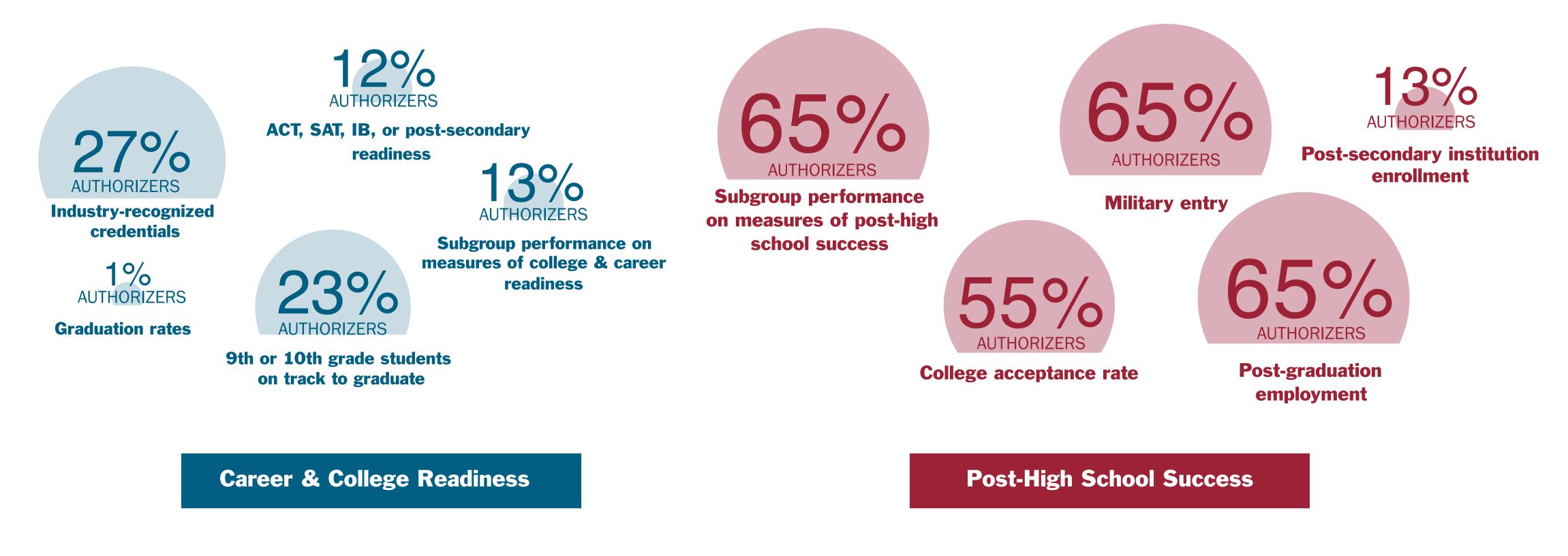


FIGURE 03

MANY AUTHORIZERS DON'T HAVE ACCESS TO COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS DATA



Percentages are proportion of authorizers reporting not having access to these data for formal accountability.



Using multiple measures of school performance is not easy work and we have a long way to go to make sure we do it right.

10 STEPS TOWARD MEASURING GREAT SCHOOLS DURING AND AFTER THE PANDEMIC



APPLICATIONS & CLOSURES

Authorizers collaboratively determine which charter schools open, hold those schools accountable to meeting community needs, and — in rare instances — close schools that are not meeting students' needs.

We learned that some types of new school applications—like certain types of school models, those connected to large networks, and those with the backing of significant resources—were more likely to be approved than others. Intentional or not, it is important that every applicant is evaluated fairly, and given an equal opportunity to see their vision for schooling come to fruition. This is exactly why it is important to attend to broad trends in applications and closures: to create the ecosystem where community aspirations are honored so that new types of school models are able to be realized and schools that fail students and communities no longer are given that privilege.

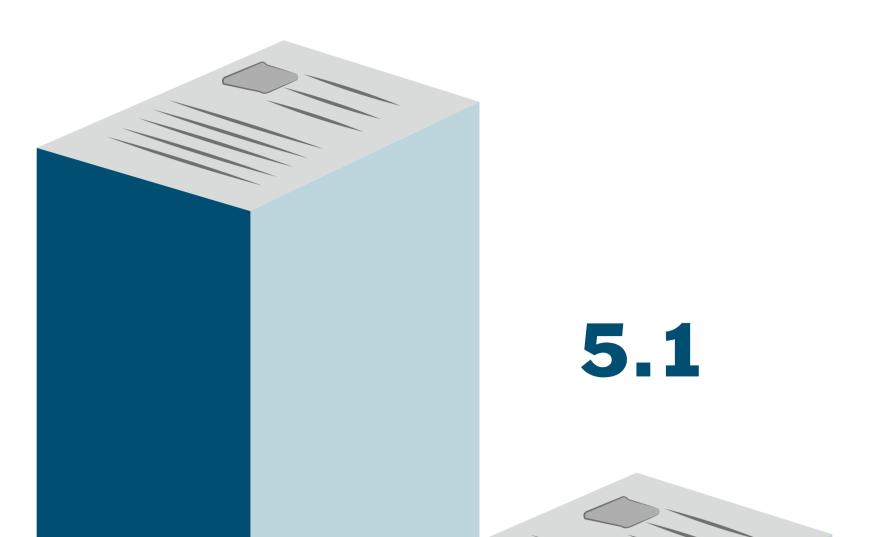
PIPELINE PROJECT

Read our analysis of the different school models, operator types, and external supports in the current Charter School Pipeline.

FIGURE 01

THE AVERAGE NUMBER OF APPLICATIONS IS LOWER THAN THE HISTORICAL AVERAGE





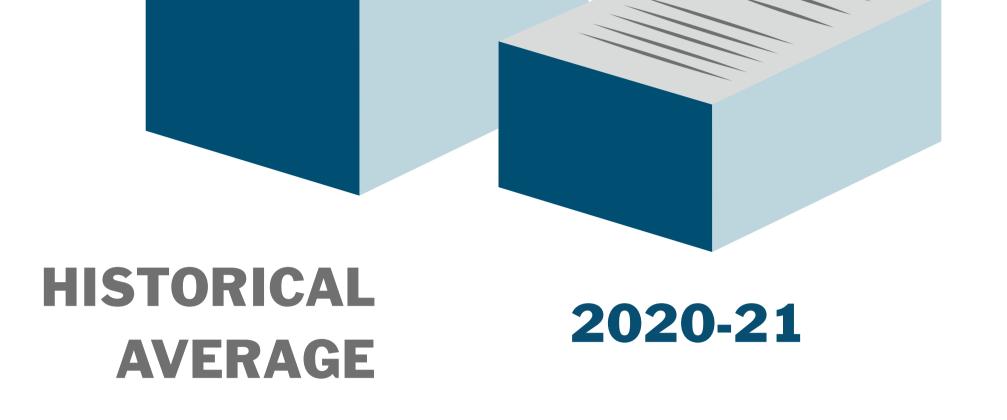
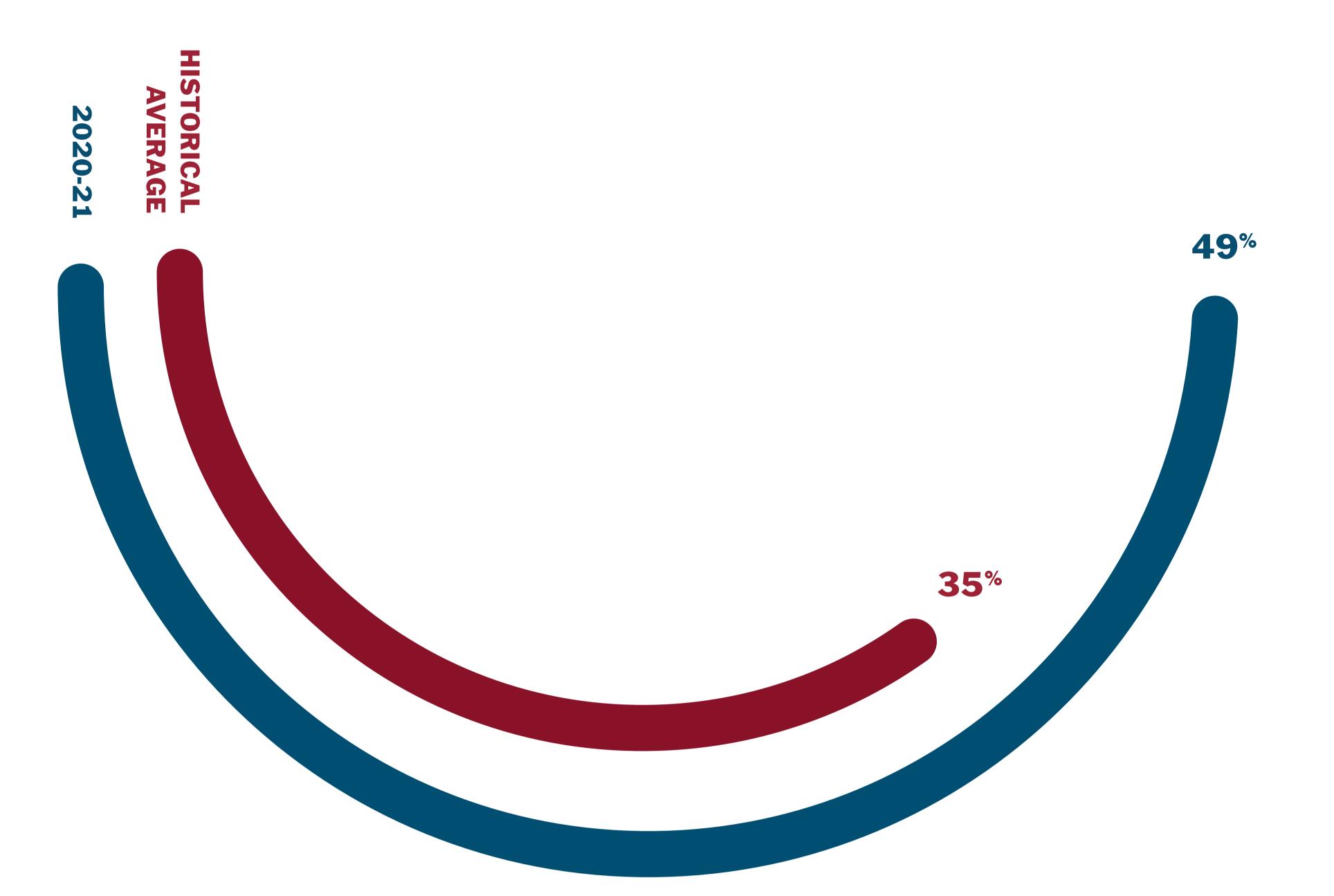


FIGURE 02 AVERAGE APPLICATION APPROVAL RATES ARE HIGHER THAN THE HISTORICAL AVERAGE



Historical Average is from 2010-2016.

Despite the number of new school applications being down, NEW SCHOOL APPROVAL RATES ARE INCREASING

Based on our conversation with

"Our office is seeing fewer applications and a higher application approval rate. The applications we are seeing are generally higher-quality applications."

- Kathryn Mullen Upton, Vice President for Sponsorship & Dayton Initiatives, Fordham Institute

"We are seeing an increase in applications for replication schools and applications for a new type of charter school that targets students in state-designated, low-performing schools."

- Tiffanie Pauline, Chief Strategic Officer at Miami-Dade County Public Schools

"We are starting to see new opportunities to operate schools—like microschools and online schooling—within an existing charter."

- Johanna Medina, Assistant Director of Strategic Development, Arizona State Board for Charter Schools

FIGURE 03

THE CLOSURE RATE IS DOWN AMONG LARGE AUTHORIZERS*

*based on authorizers with 10 or more schools

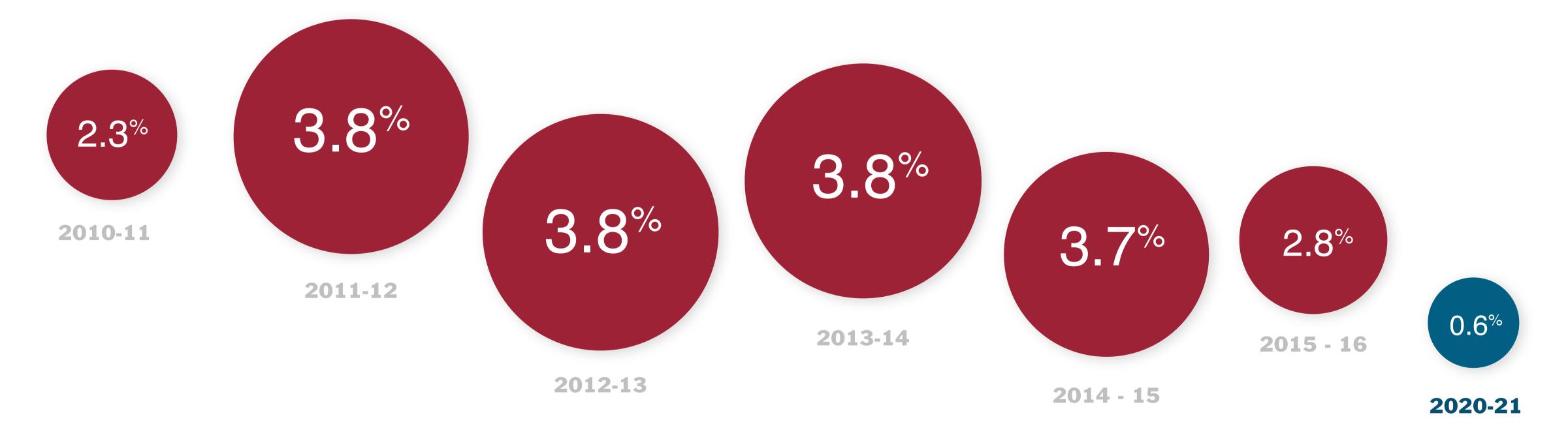
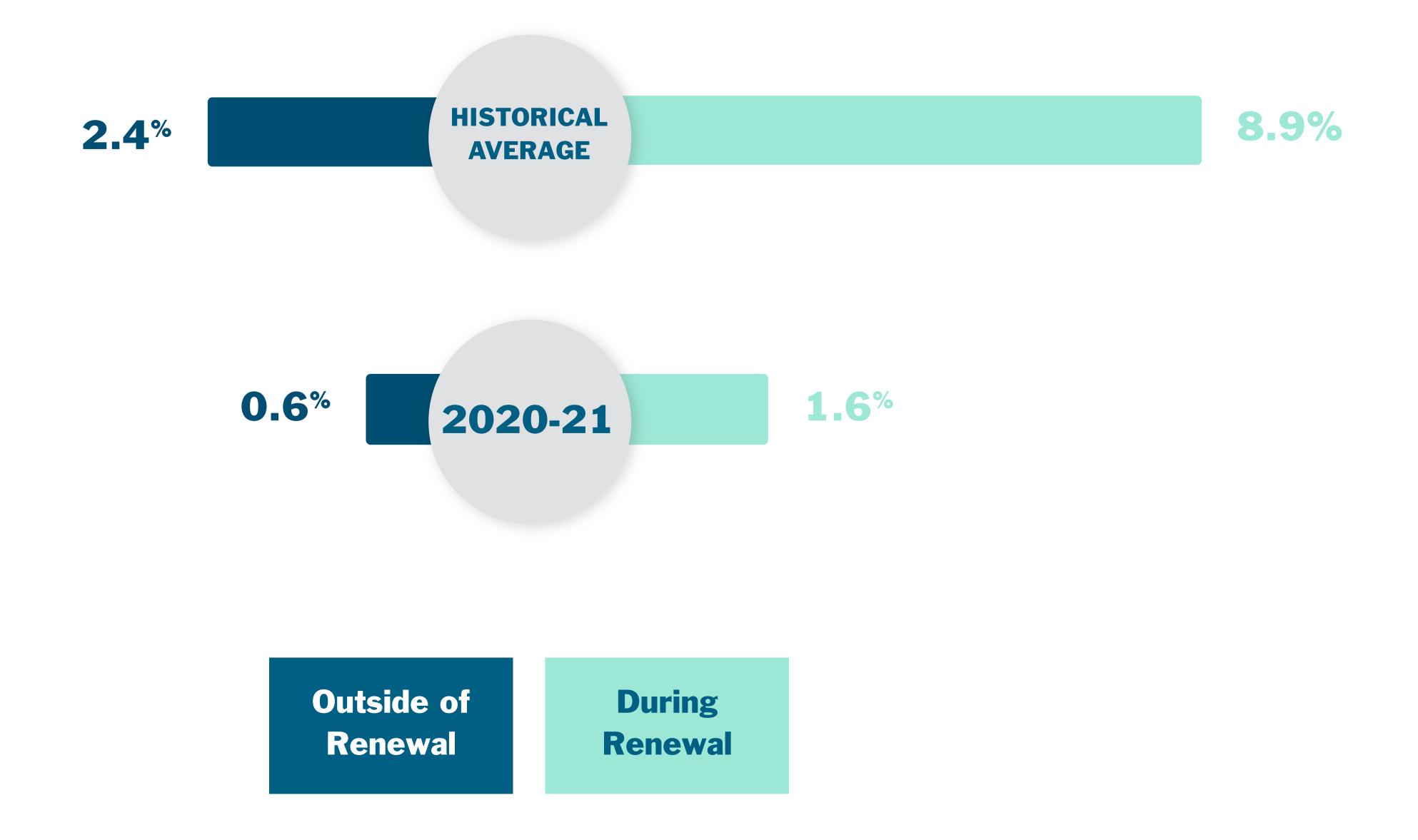


FIGURE 04 ANNUAL CLOSURE RATES HAVE FALLEN DRAMATICALLY DURING AND OUTSIDE OF RENEWAL*

*based on authorizers with 10 or more schools



Communities want schools to be accountable for high standards of literacy and numeracy and other goals that measure student preparedness for their chosen futures. And one of the most difficult parts of authorizing is when a school isn't meeting those expectations. There remains a need for authorizers to close failing schools, and innovative ways of supporting school improvement, without compromising school autonomy.

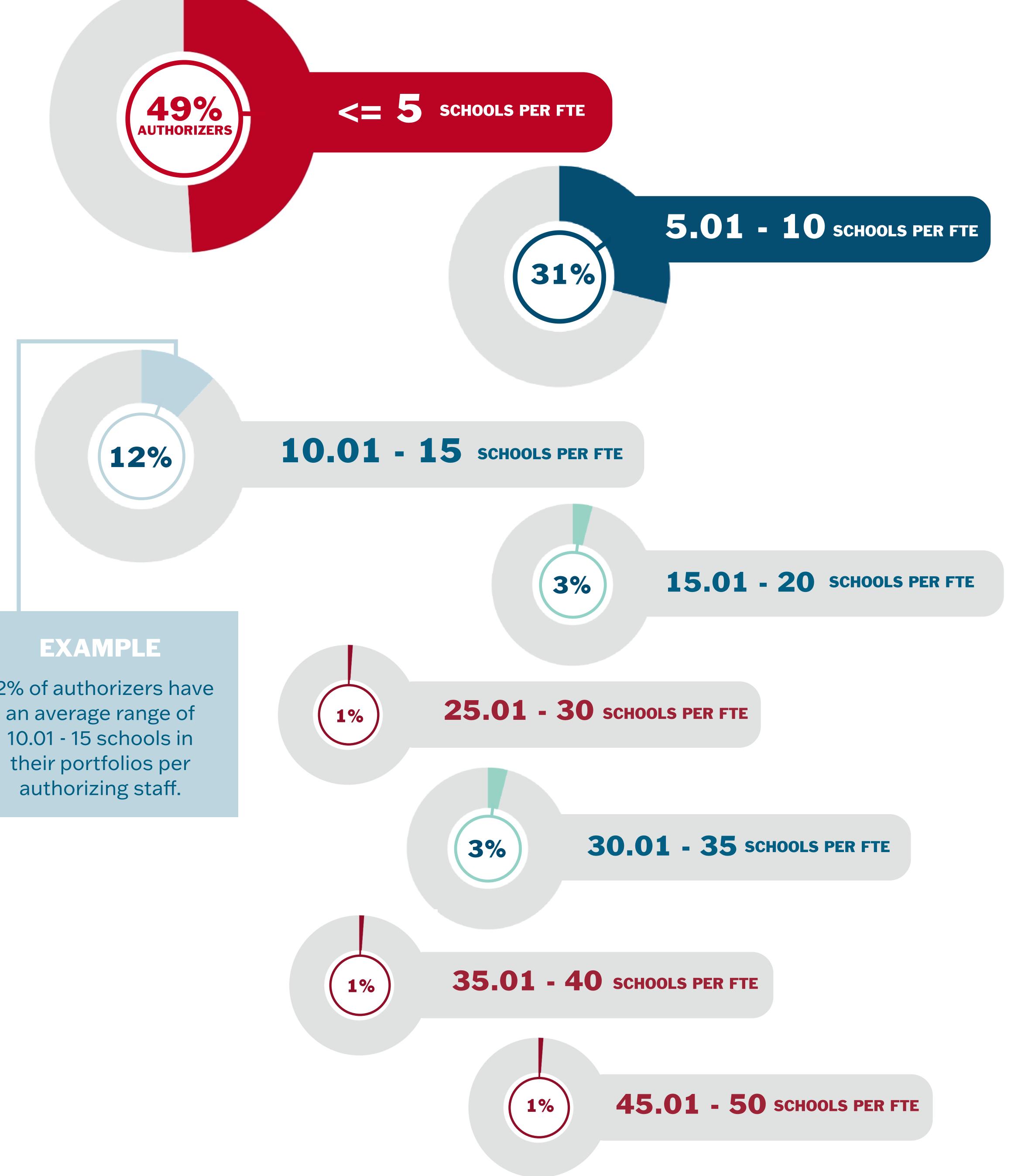


STAFFING

For years, many authorizing offices—across type—were learning to do more with less. However, as we are emerging from the ravages of the pandemic, the authorizing profession is focused on ways to take the bureaucratic burden off the shoulders of school leaders and staff-allowing them to focus on teaching and learning, which is especially critical during this moment of student recovery.

FIGURE 01 THE AVERAGE NUMBER OF SCHOOLS PER FULL TIME AUTHORIZING STAFF





12% of authorizers have

FIGURE 02 **GROWTH PLANS**

