



AUTHORIZING BY THE NUMBERS



LEGEND

—
Authorizers

NEG- Non-Educational
Government Entity

NFP- Nonprofit Organization

SEA- State Education Agency

HEI- Higher Education Institution

ICB- Independent Chartering
Board

LEA- Local Education Agency

We spend plenty of time talking about the why and how of our work, as we seek to ensure more high-quality, innovative, and equitable educational opportunities for children. But every few years, it's critical that we also talk about the who. Who is doing the work of charter school authorizing today, how is that changing, and why does that matter?

We're pleased to present *Authorizing by the Numbers*, a comprehensive study of the numbers and types of authorizers, the size of their portfolios, and how authorizing has changed from 2016 to 2020.

Thank you to the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools for their partnership with data collection.

IMPORTANT THEMES

1. Fewer authorizers oversee more charter schools, and the data suggests that's generally a good thing.

There were nearly 70 net fewer authorizers in 2020 compared to 2016, but remaining authorizers oversee a growing charter school sector. Authorizers exiting the profession oversaw few charter schools: 95% of authorizers exiting oversaw three or fewer schools, including more than three-quarters that oversaw only one school.

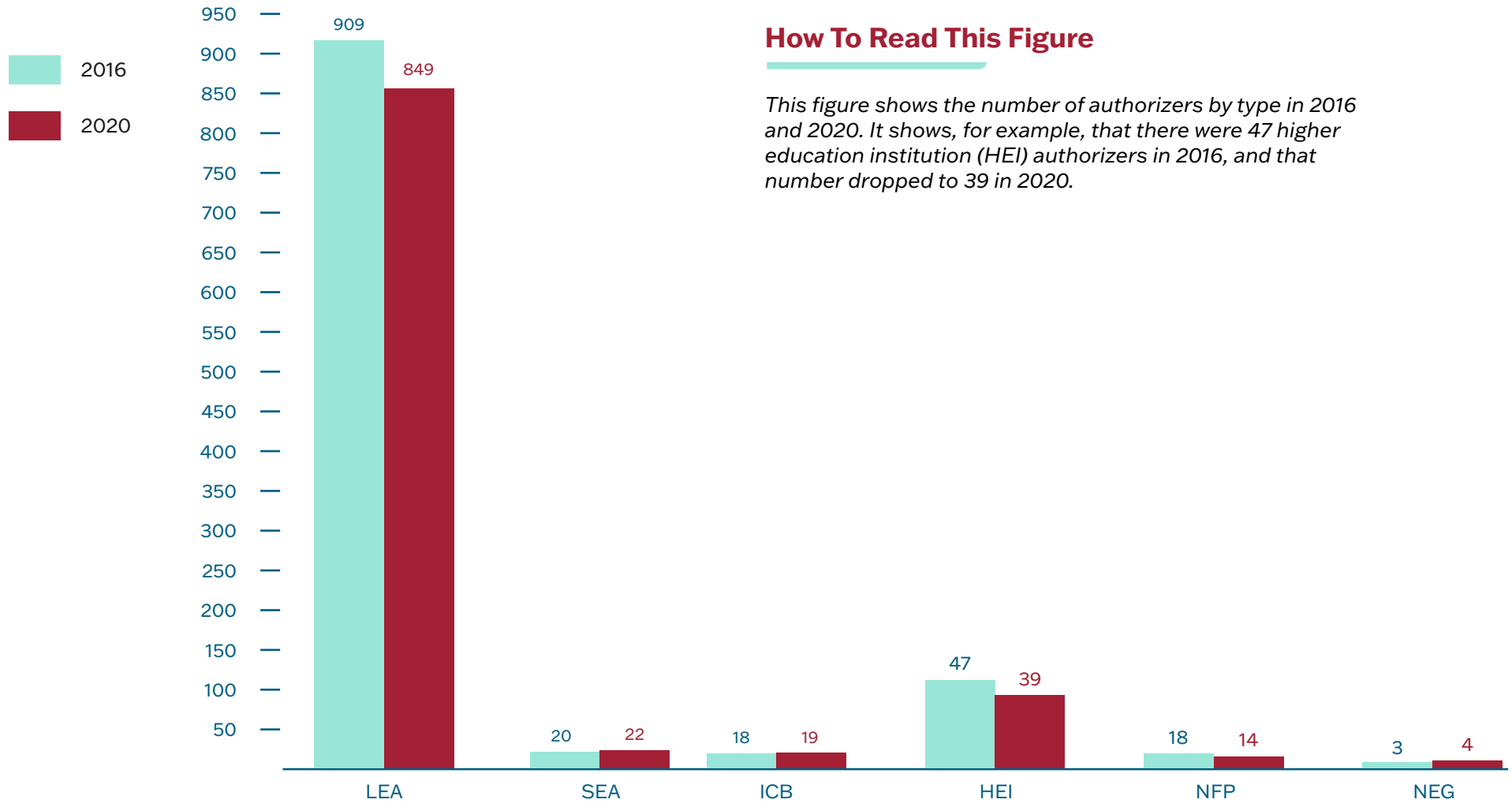
2. There is churn among school district authorizers.

The vast majority of institutions leaving and entering authorizing are school district authorizers overseeing few charter schools. While school districts remain the biggest group of authorizers, the data also shows that they do not oversee the majority of our nation's charter schools: only 48% of all charters were overseen by districts in 2020, down from 52% in 2016.

3. As high-quality charter schooling expands, innovative thinking about who authorizes could be key to expanding quality opportunities for students.

NACSA will continue to support policies that enable potential charter schools to have access to more than one quality authorizer within a state, along with policies and practices ensuring that multiple authorizers do not dilute quality. Interesting ideas like specialized authorizing focused on new ways of organizing teaching and learning, not only can provide high-quality, innovative, and equitable educational opportunities, but may also lead to a more diverse, thriving profession resulting in stronger student outcomes.

NUMBER OF AUTHORIZERS BY TYPE

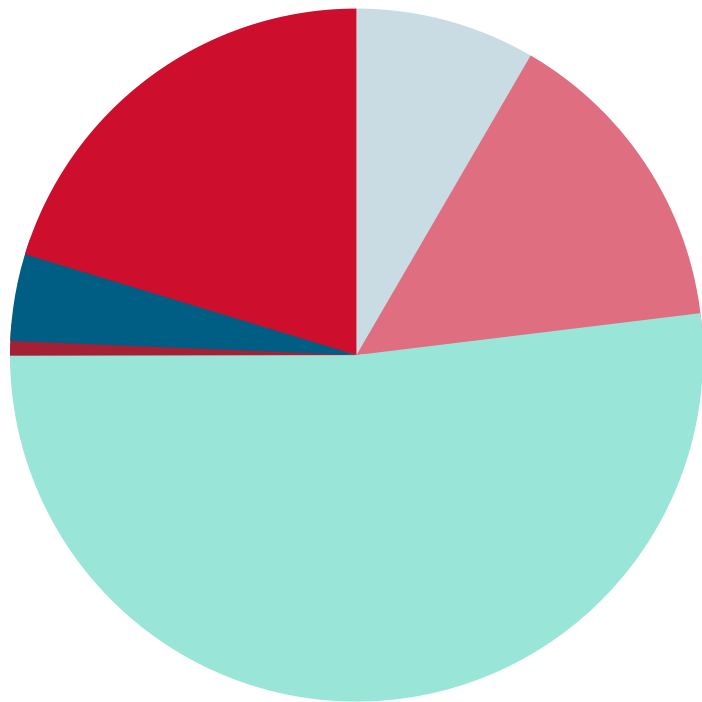


PROPORTION OF SCHOOLS OVERSEEN BY TYPE

How To Read This Figure

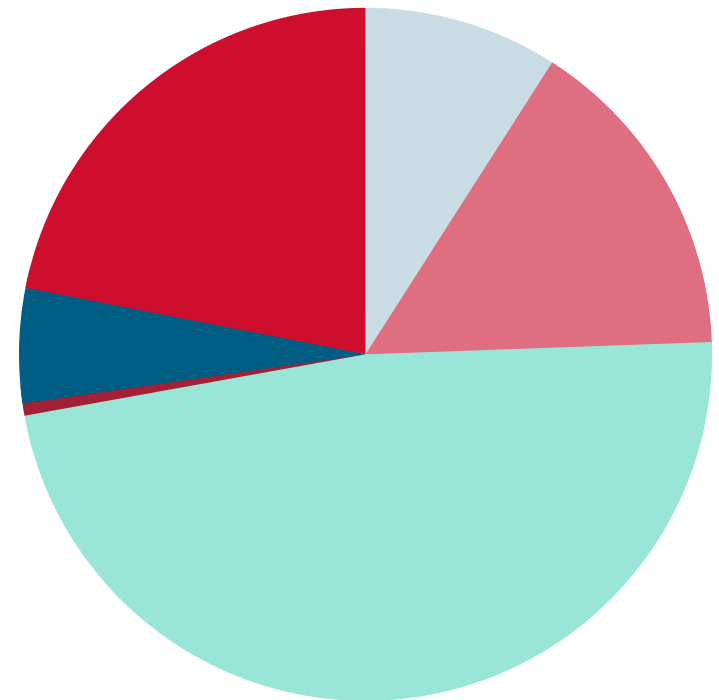
This figure shows the proportion of charter schools overseen by authorizing type in 2016 and 2020. It shows, for example, that state education agency (SEA) authorizers oversaw 20 percent of all charter schools in 2016, and that proportion increased to 22 percent in 2020.

2016

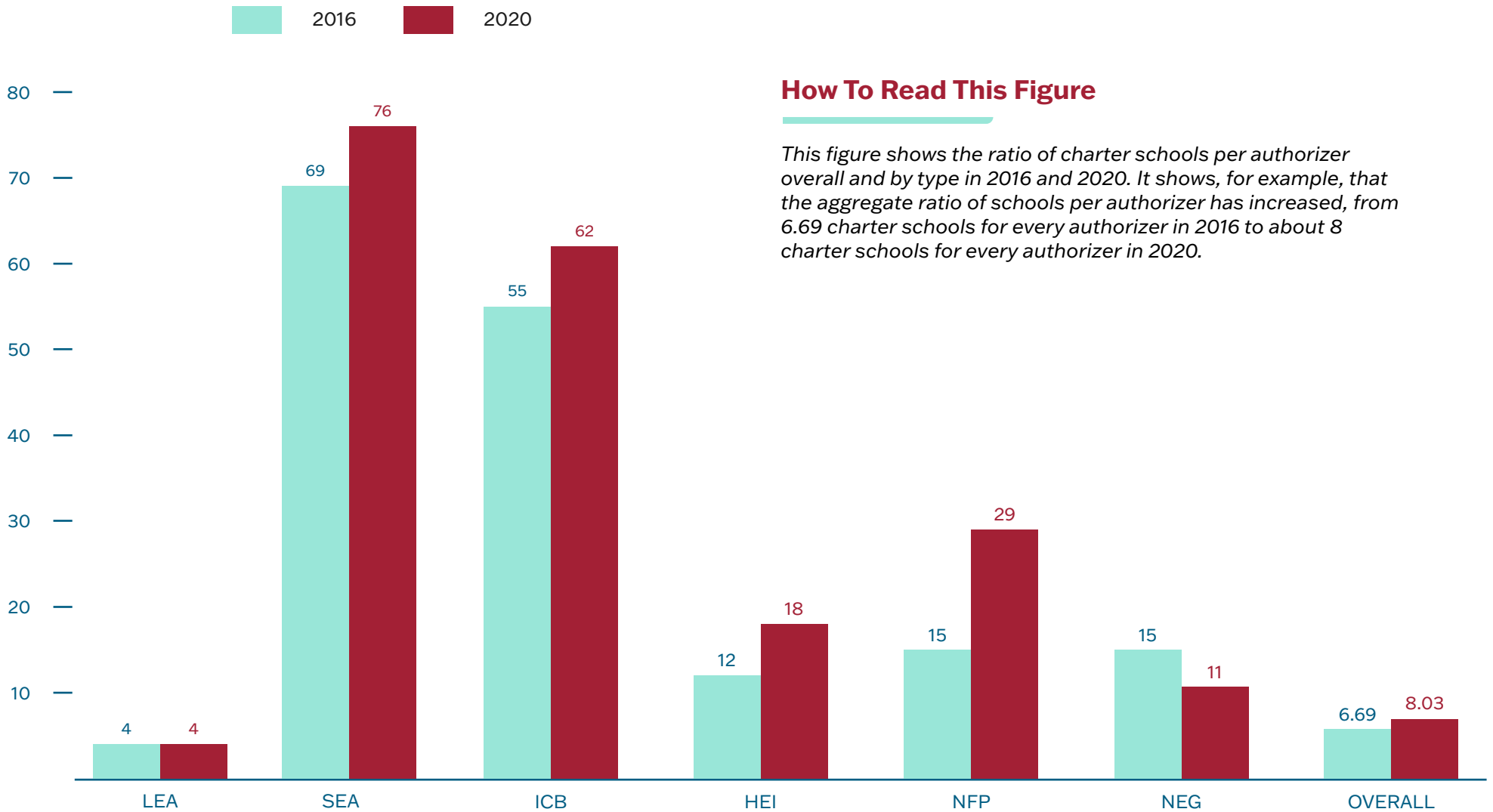


1%	NEG	1%
4%	NFP	5%
20%	SEA	22%
8%	HEI	9%
15%	ICB	15%
52%	LEA	48%

2020



RATE OF AUTHORIZERS TO SCHOOLS OVERSEEN BY TYPE IN 2016 AND 2020



How To Read This Figure

This figure shows the ratio of charter schools per authorizer overall and by type in 2016 and 2020. It shows, for example, that the aggregate ratio of schools per authorizer has increased, from 6.69 charter schools for every authorizer in 2016 to about 8 charter schools for every authorizer in 2020.

CHANGES IN AUTHORIZING (2016-2020)

How To Read This Chart

This chart shows the proportion of authorizers by state in 2016, and the proportion of exiting and new authorizers by state between 2016 and 2020. The 2016 proportion of authorizers is provided as a benchmark to evaluate the magnitude of exiting and new authorizers: all other things being equal, one might expect the 2016 proportion to roughly match the proportion of exiting and new authorizers. In some instances that is not the case. For example, while the state of Ohio was home to 6 percent of all authorizers in the country in 2016, the state accounted for 26 percent of all exiting authorizers and zero percent of all new authorizers between 2016 and 2020.

State	2016 Proportion of Authorizers	Proportion of Exiting Authorizers	Proportion of New Authorizers
AK	1%	0%	0%
AR	0.1%	0%	0%
AZ	1%	2%	1%
CA	32%	19%	34%
CO	4%	2%	4%
CT	0.1%	0%	0%
DC	0.1%	0%	0%
DE	0.2%	0%	0%
FL	5%	1%	2%
GA	3%	4%	1%
GU	0.0%	0%	1%
HI	0.1%	0%	0%

State	2016 Proportion of Authorizers	Proportion of Exiting Authorizers	Proportion of New Authorizers
IA	0.3%	0%	1%
ID	1%	2%	1%
IL	1%	2%	1%
IN	1%	1%	0%
KS	1%	1%	0%
LA	1%	1%	2%
MA	0.1%	0%	0%
MD	0.5%	0%	0%
ME	0.1%	0%	0%
MI	4%	5%	10%
MN	3%	8%	0%
MO	1%	2%	2%

CHANGES IN AUTHORIZING (2016-2020) CONTINUED

How To Read This Chart

This chart shows the proportion of authorizers by state in 2016, and the proportion of exiting and new authorizers by state between 2016 and 2020. The 2016 proportion of authorizers is provided as a benchmark to evaluate the magnitude of exiting and new authorizers: all other things being equal, one might expect the 2016 proportion to roughly match the proportion of exiting and new authorizers. In some instances that is not the case. For example, while the state of Ohio was home to 6 percent of all authorizers in the country in 2016, the state accounted for 26 percent of all exiting authorizers and zero percent of all new authorizers between 2016 and 2020.

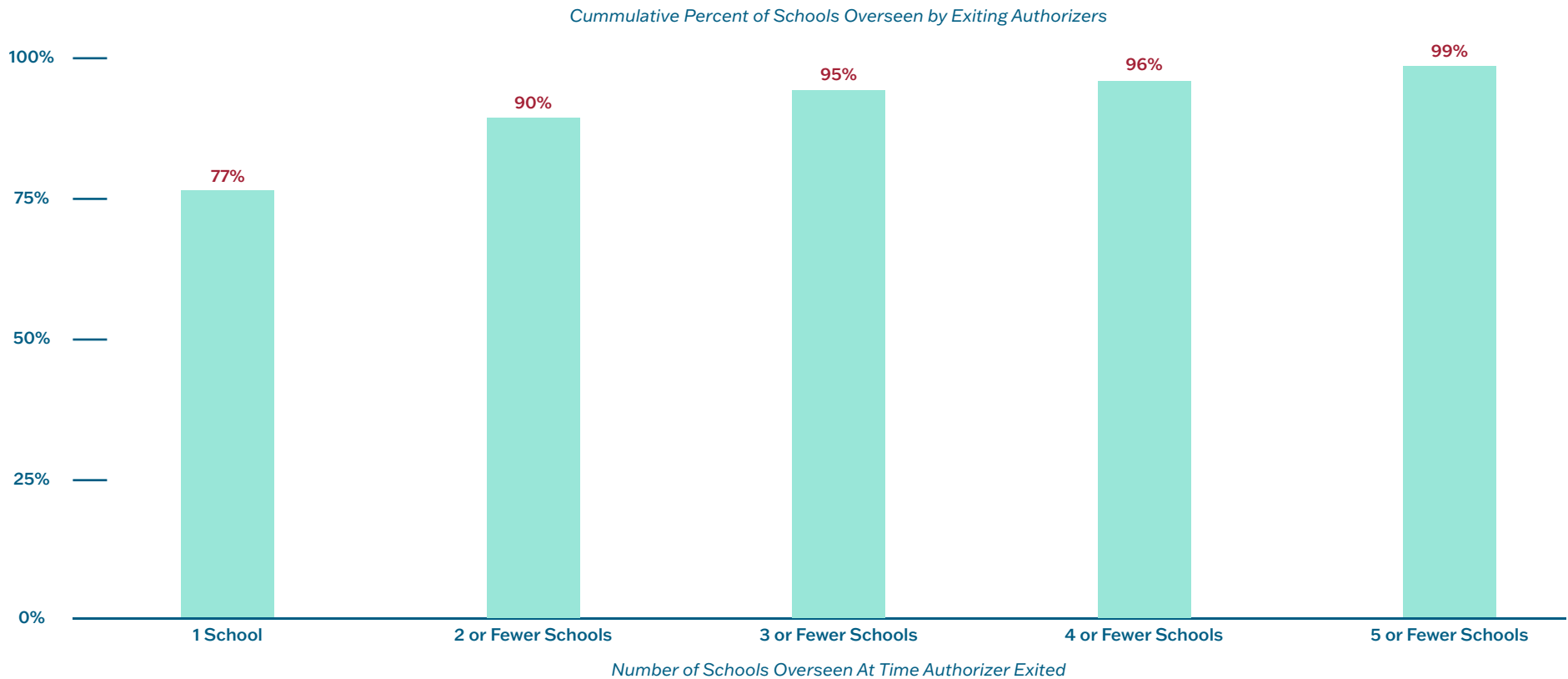
State	2016 Proportion of Authorizers	Proportion of Exiting Authorizers	Proportion of New Authorizers
MS	0.1%	0%	0%
NC	0.1%	0%	0%
NH	0.2%	0%	0%
NJ	0.1%	0%	0%
NM	2%	3%	0%
NV	0.5%	1%	0%
NY	0.4%	0%	0%
OH	6%	26%	0%
OK	1%	0%	2%
OR	8%	4%	8%
PA	7%	3%	4%

State	2016 Proportion of Authorizers	Proportion of Exiting Authorizers	Proportion of New Authorizers
PR	0.0%	0%	1%
RI	0.1%	0%	0%
SC	2%	2%	2%
TN	0.5%	0%	1%
TX	2%	1%	6%
UT	1%	0%	1%
VA	0.5%	0%	0%
WA	0.1%	0%	1%
WI	10%	10%	10%
WV	0%	0%	1%
WY	0.2%	0%	2%

NUMBER OF SCHOOLS OVERSEEN WHEN EXITING (2016-2020)

How To Read This Figure

This figure shows the cumulative proportion of authorizers by number of schools overseen when authorizers exited the profession between 2016 and 2020. It shows, for example, that 77 percent of authorizers exiting the profession oversaw only 1 school, and 99 percent of authorizers exiting the profession oversaw 5 or fewer schools.

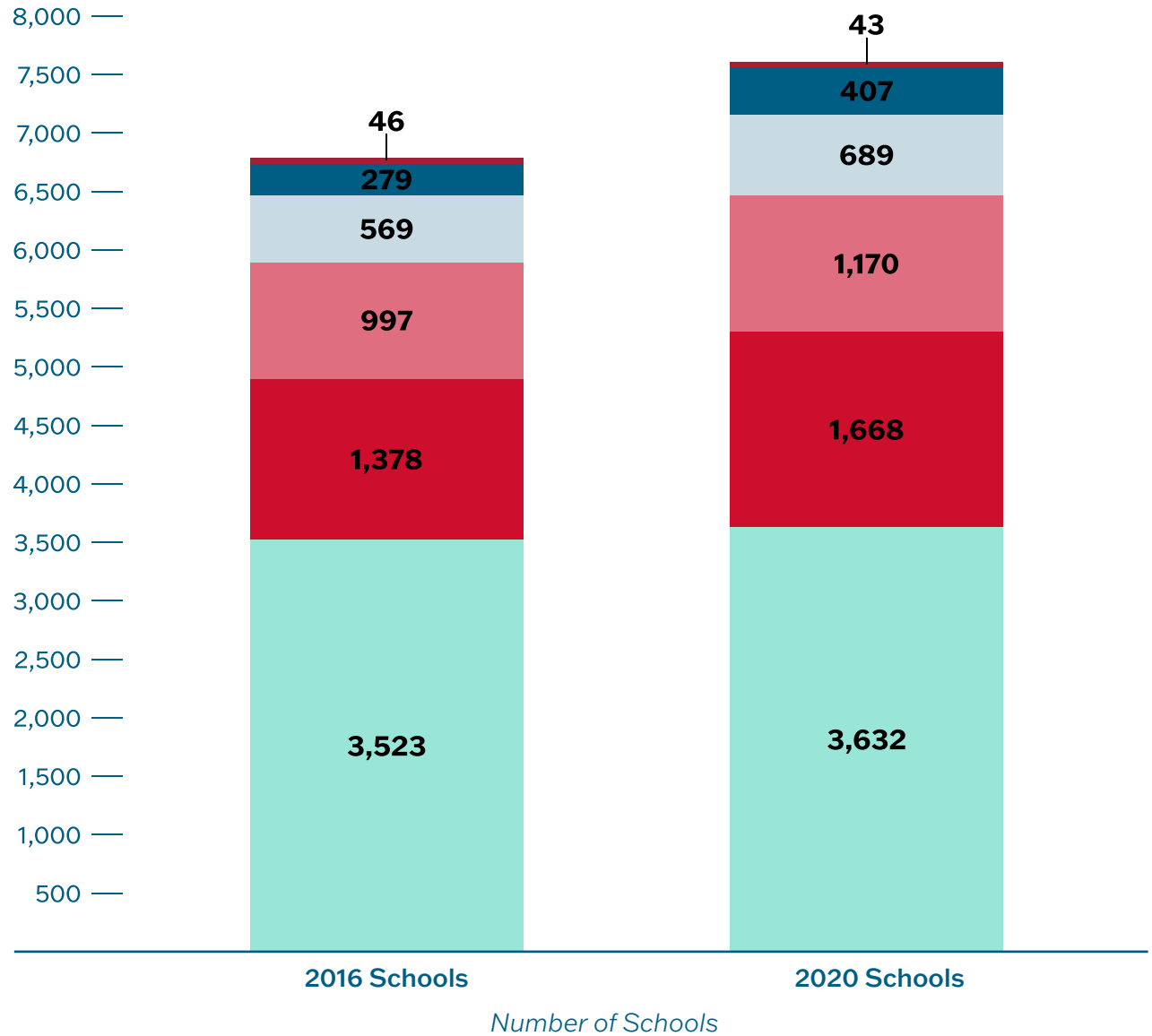


WHERE IS CHARTER SCHOOL GROWTH COMING FROM?

How To Read This Figure

This figure shows the change in schools overseen by authorizing type in 2016 and 2020. It shows that while nearly types of authorizers are overseeing more charter schools in 2020 compared to 2016 – showing broad growth – some authorizing types are overseeing significantly more schools: state education agency (SEA) authorizers, for example, oversaw 1,378 schools in 2016, and that number had risen to 1,668 schools overseen in 2020 which is nearly a 300-school net increase.

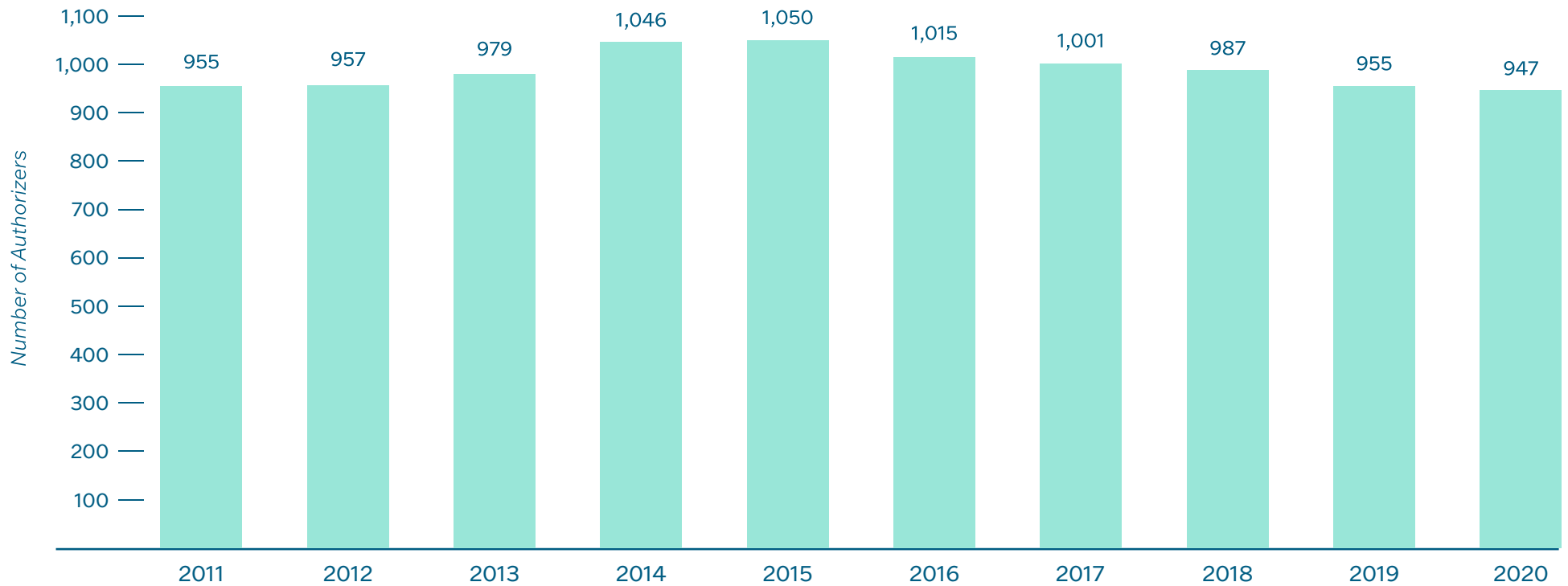
- LEA
- SEA
- ICB
- HEI
- NFP
- NEG



NUMBER OF AUTHORIZERS OVER TIME

How To Read This Figure

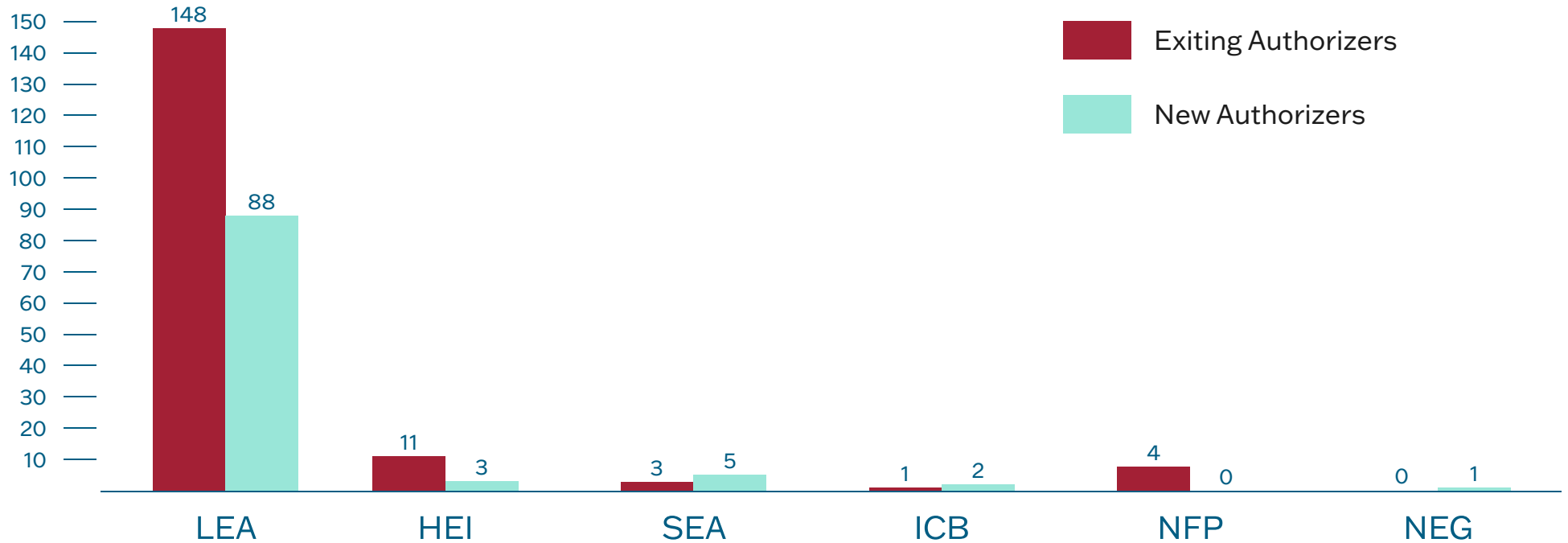
This figure shows the number of authorizers by year from 2011 to 2020.



CHANGES IN AUTHORIZING: NEW & EXITING AUTHORIZERS BY TYPE FROM 2016-2020

How To Read This Figure

This figure shows the number of exiting and new authorizers by type between 2016 and 2020. It shows, for example, that 148 local education agency (LEA) authorizers exited authorizing and 88 new LEA authorizers entered the field between 2016 and 2020.





Over the coming months, we will explore these and other key themes more deeply to extract key learnings for authorizing, policymaking, and other school oversight approaches. Be on the lookout for additional data, perspectives, webinars, and more.

We'll also discuss the impact of this research at our upcoming leadership conference, NACSACon 2022: Excellence from Communities. If you haven't already registered, it isn't too late! Come and be part of some fascinating and inspiring conversations as we build the future of authorizing.

