

# SOCIOECONOMIC INTEGRATION & WEIGHTED LOTTERIES

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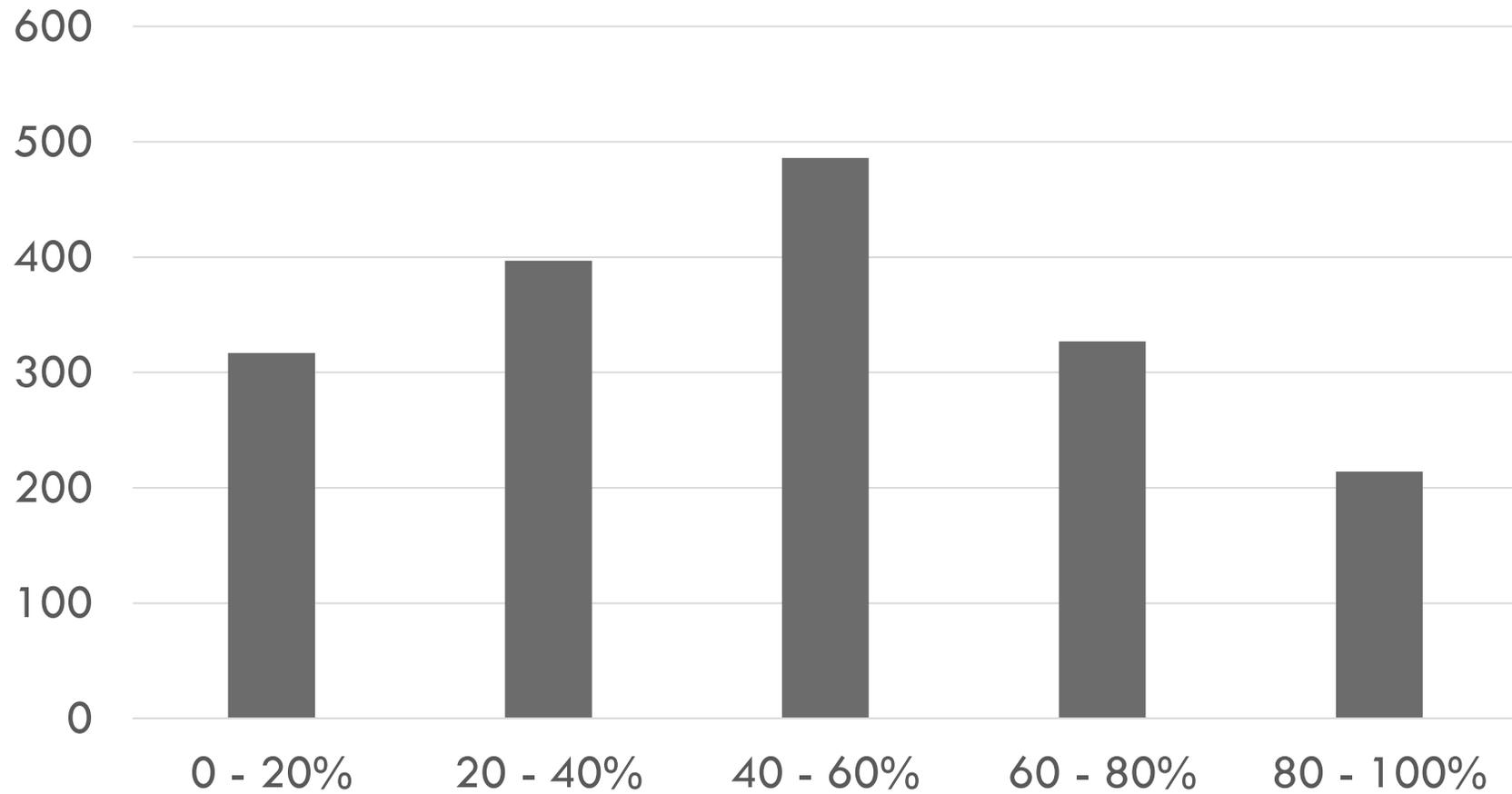
ATLANTA NEIGHBORHOOD  
CHARTER SCHOOL  
Helping students learn to use their minds well

# Within-School Diversity in Georgia

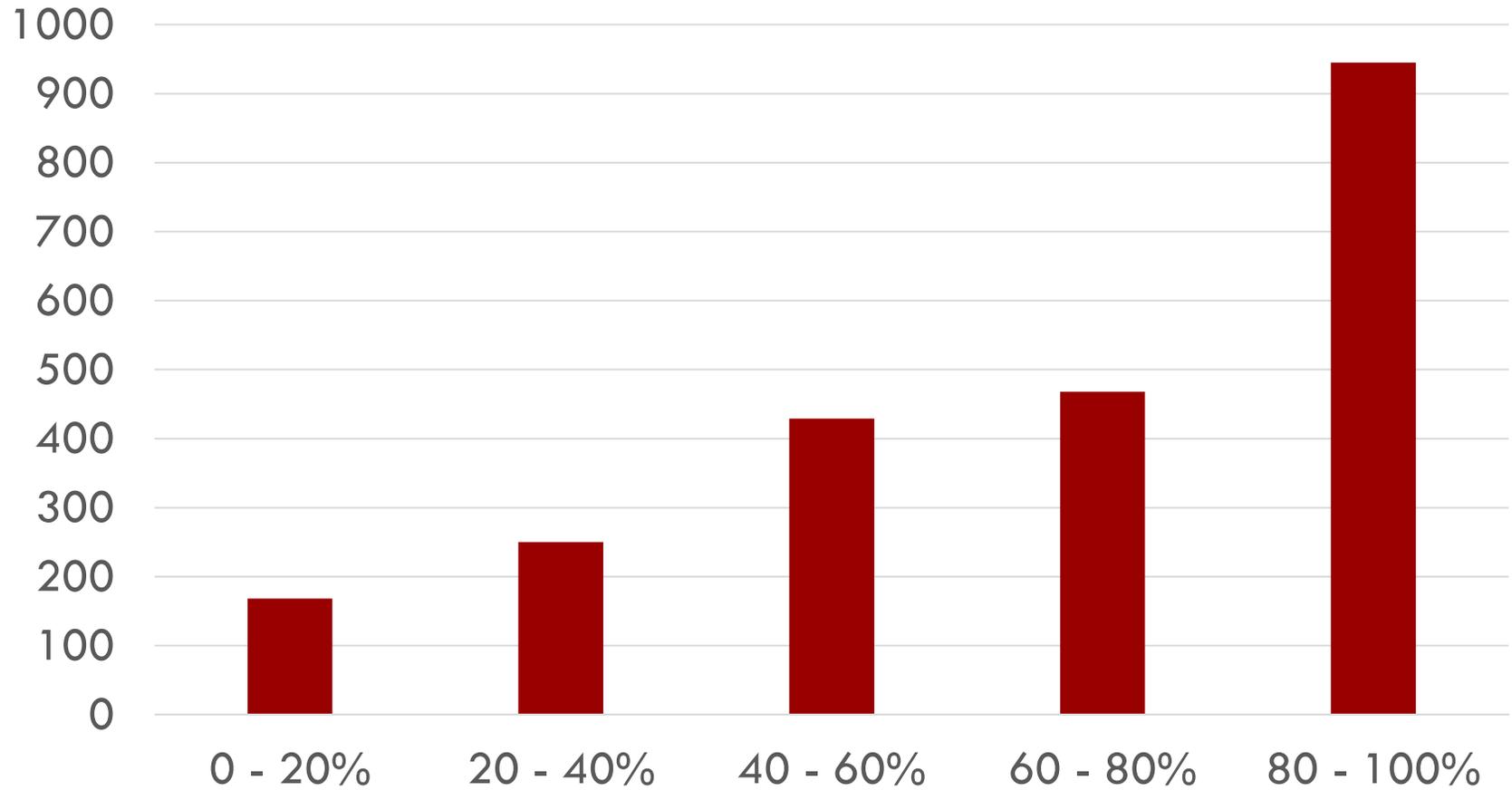


- 3 Points
  - Two decades ago middle class schools were most common; that isn't the case today.
  - Schools tend to be located near other schools with similar income levels.
  - Charter schools are uniquely positioned to have greater within-school diversity.

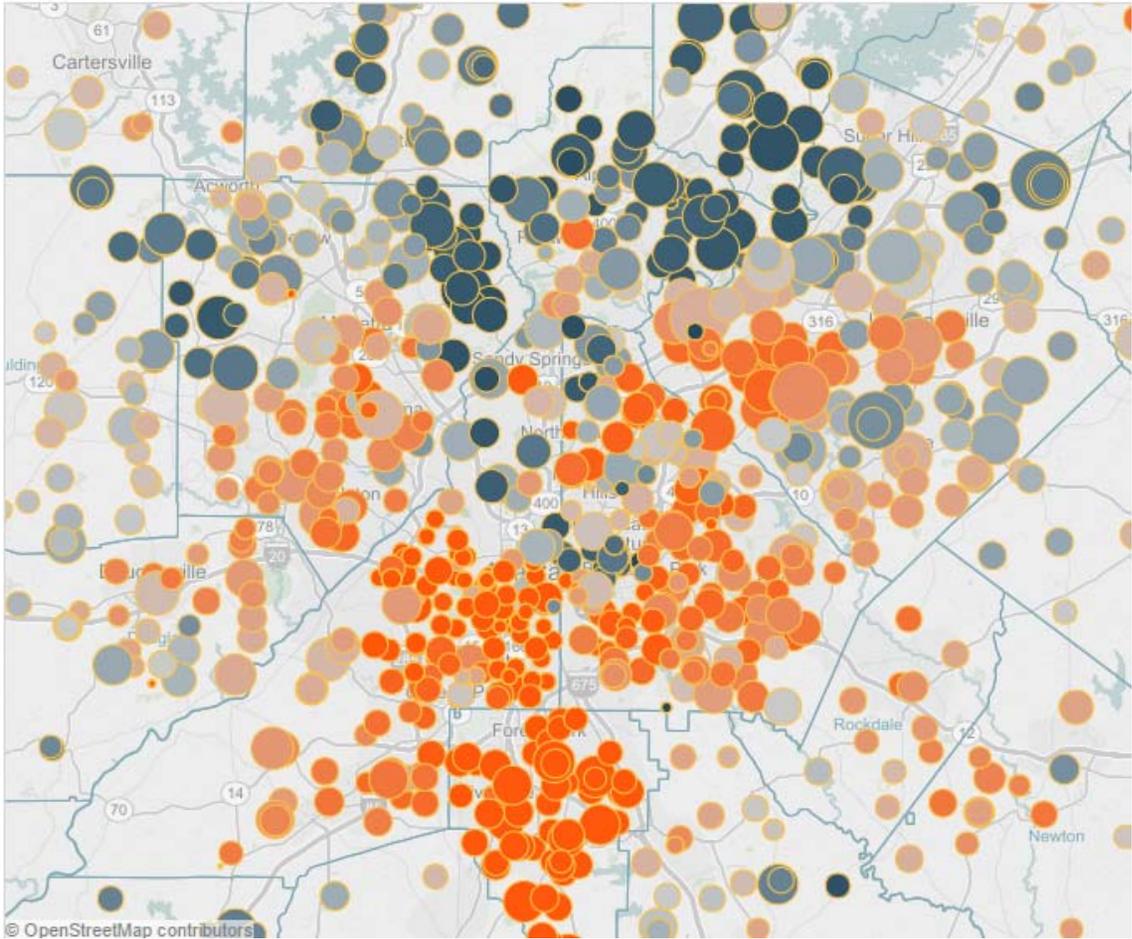
# 1994 Georgia Schools by FRL Percentage



# 2015 Georgia Schools by FRL Percentage



# Geography and School Income



## Charters are unique

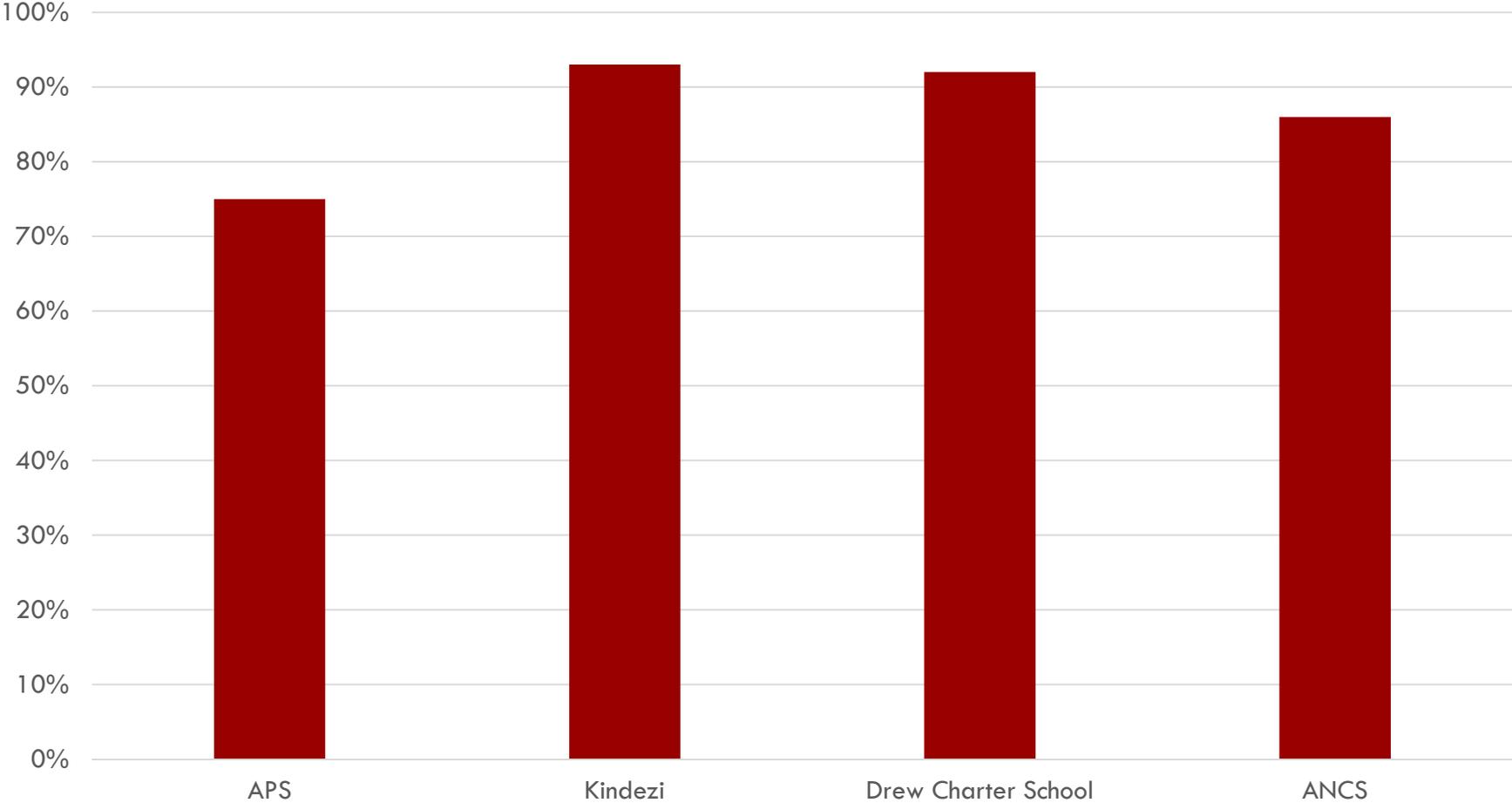


- Can admit students from a wider geographic area, circumventing zoning policies.
- Not bound by the political process that sets traditional school attendance zones.
- Allow families to separate neighborhood choice from school choice.

# Quality Charter Schools Serving Low-Income Students

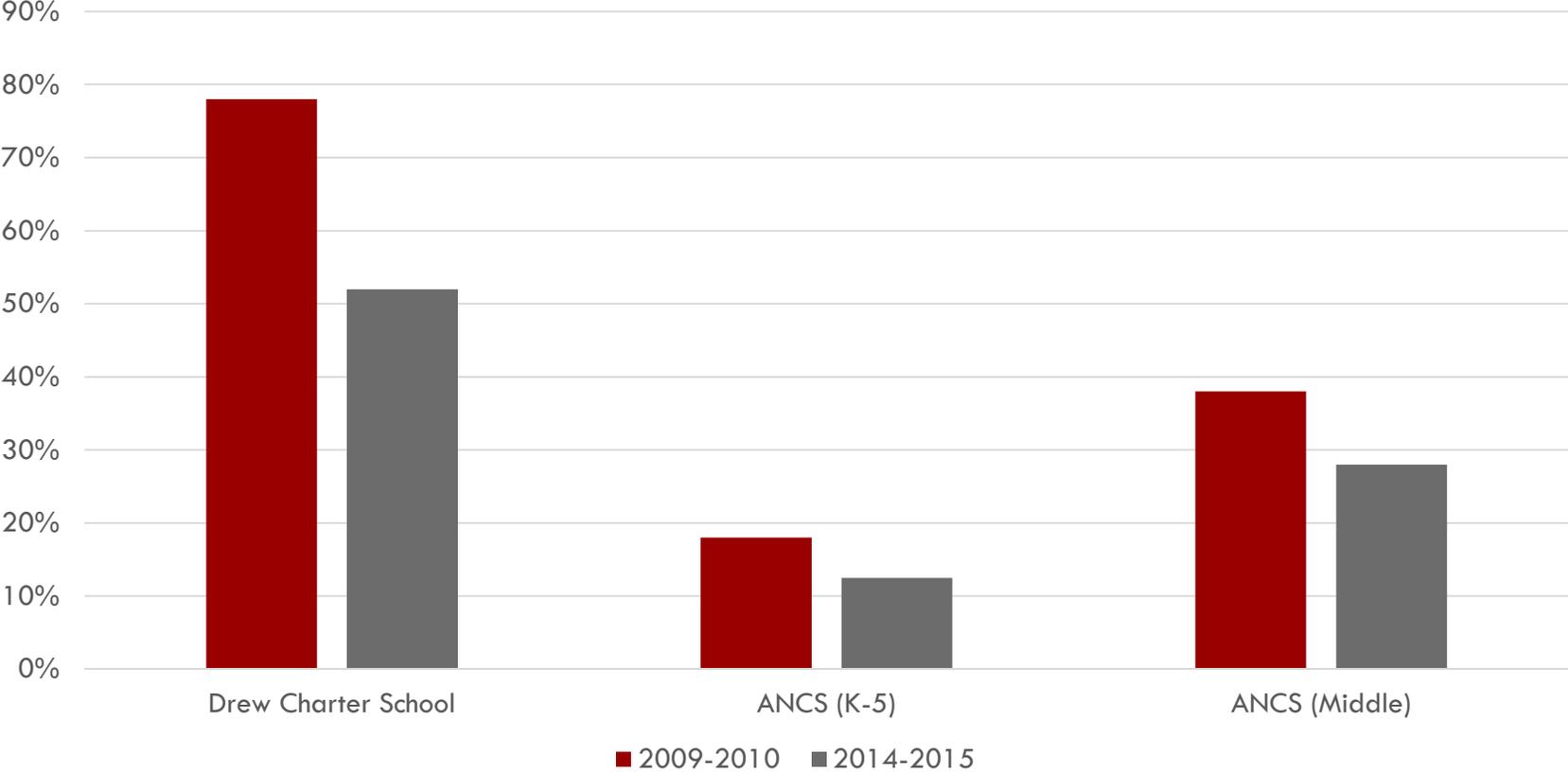


Percentage of Free and Reduced Lunch Students Passing CRCT



# Fewer Opportunities

FRL Populations



## Disparities in Socio-economic Diversity



- Georgia – 62% FRL
- APS – 76% FRL
- APS – less than 1 in 5 school have FRL between 40% and 80%

# United States Dept. of Education – Charter Schools Program Non Regulatory Guidance



## **E-3. Are weighted lotteries permissible?**

“Weighted lotteries (i.e., lotteries that give additional weight to individual students who are identified as part of a specified set of students, but do not reserve or set aside seats for individual students or sets of students) are permitted only in certain circumstances.

... Third, consistent with section 5204(a)(1) of the ESEA, a charter school may weight its lottery to give slightly better chances for admission to all or a subset of educationally disadvantaged students if State law permits the use of weighted lotteries in favor of such students.”

# The Current Law – OCGA § 20-2-2066(a)(1)(A)

## OCGA § 20-2-2066 Admission, enrollment, and withdrawal of students

(a) A local charter school shall enroll students in the following manner:

(1)(A) A start-up charter school shall enroll any student who resides in the attendance zone specified in the charter and who submits a timely application as specified in the charter unless the number of applications exceeds the capacity of a program, class, grade level, or building. ***Except for educationally disadvantaged students who may be provided an increased chance of admission through a weighted lottery if permitted by the school's charter,*** all such applicants shall have an equal chance of being admitted through a random selection process unless otherwise prohibited by law; provided, however, that a start-up charter school may give enrollment preference to applicants in any one or more of the following categories in the order of priority specified in the charter:

(i) A sibling of a student enrolled in the start-up charter school;

(ii) A sibling of a student enrolled in another local school designated in the charter;

(iii) A student whose parent or guardian is a member of the governing board of the start-up charter school or is a full-time teacher, professional, or other employee at the start-up charter school;

(iv) Students matriculating from a local school designated in the charter; and

(v) Children who matriculate from a pre-kindergarten program which is associated with the school, including, but not limited to, programs which share common facilities or campuses with the school or programs which have established a partnership or cooperative efforts with the school.

## Which Students Can Get a Boost?



(4.1) “Educationally disadvantaged students” means all or a subset of the following: students who are economically disadvantaged, students with disabilities, limited English proficient students, neglected or delinquent students, and homeless students, as each such subset is defined by the State Board of Education in accordance with federal education guidelines and regulations.

**OCGA § 20-2-2062**

# Strategies for Increasing Socioeconomic Diversity

|                                       | <b>Currently Allowed In Georgia</b> | <b>Eligible for Charter School Program Grants*</b> | <b>Allowed in some other states</b> |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|
| Recruitment                           | YES                                 | YES  | YES                                 |
| Change Attendance Zones               | YES                                 | YES  | YES                                 |
| Weighted Lotteries                    | <u>YES</u>                          | YES  | YES                                 |
| More Direct Preferences or Set Asides | NO                                  | NO   | YES                                 |

## Current Law - SBOE Rule 160-4-9-.04

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**(c) Charter attendance zone** – may include all or any portion of the local school system in which the charter school is located and may include all or any other portion of other local school systems if the charter school is jointly authorized pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2063(c).

# Example: Central Park School for Children (Durham, NC)

## Enrollment Priorities:

1. Siblings of students already enrolled
2. Children of staff
3. Children whose families' household income makes them eligible for federal free and reduced lunch up to ...
  - Year 1      2013-14 - 15% of enrolled students qualifying for FRL
  - Year 2      2014-15 - 25% of enrolled students qualifying for FRL
  - Year 3      2015-16 - 30% of enrolled students qualifying for FRL
  - Year 4      2016-17 - 40% of enrolled students qualifying for FRL
4. General enrollment

## ANCS: Background Info



- Elementary school opened in 2002-2003 school year; separate middle school opened in 2005-2006 school year
- Merged to form single charter school with two campuses for 2011-2012 school year
- Named Georgia “Charter School of the Year” by GCSA in 2015
- Affiliated with the Coalition of Essential Schools, international network of schools focused on personalized learning and democratic practices
- Serve students in grades K-8 zoned for Atlanta Public Schools – have a primary attendance zone, upon renewal, of Grant Park, Ormewood Park, and Summerhill neighborhoods
- Current total student enrollment is 655

## ANCS: Background Info



- Demographics of school have shifted since the school's founding:
  - *Increasing*: Students with disabilities – in first year of school, roughly 10% of students had IEP or 504 plan; currently, roughly 17% of students have IEP or 504 plan
  - *Decreasing*: Students who qualify for free/reduced price meals (FRL) – in first year of school, roughly 35% FRL rate; currently, school wide FRL rate is roughly 20% (higher at middle school campus, which was Title I school until this school year)
  - *Decreasing*: Students of color – in first year of school, roughly 50% students of color; currently, roughly 36% students of color

# Why decreasing diversity is a problem for us at ANCS



- CES principles call for a focus on building on diversity of school community and engaging in equitable practices
- We seek to address decreasing racial and economic diversity of our student body for three primary reasons:
  - Well-documented academic, social, and civic benefits to students from learning in diverse classrooms
  - Opportunity for real innovation by being diverse school in era of widespread school segregation, including among charter schools
  - Need and want to more closely reflect racial and economic diversity of our surrounding neighborhoods

# What we are doing to address decreasing diversity at ANCS

- As a part of our school's three year strategic plan adopted in the fall of 2014, included diversity/equity initiative with goal of increasing economic diversity of school by attracting and retaining a student population with minimum FRL rate of 30% (target is to be between 30-50% FRL)
- Monitoring a range of data to measure progress with this initiative, including:
  - Applicant data
  - Enrolled student demographic data
  - Feedback surveys from students, teachers/staff, and parents
  - Disaggregated student outcomes data: achievement, attendance, behavior, high school performance
- Have taken/will take a number of actions aligned with diversity/equity initiative

## What we are doing to address decreasing diversity at ANCS (cont'd)

### ***Actions taken 2014 to present***

- Appointed staff diversity coordinator to facilitate community diversity committee
- Committee worked on enrollment outreach in historically underrepresented neighborhoods in our attendance zone
- Worked with other charter schools and legislators to change Georgia law to allow for weighted enrollment lottery for “educationally disadvantaged” students
- Added neighborhood of Summerhill to school’s primary attendance zone in part because of its economic diversity and close proximity to our school
- Began connecting with other schools, organizations locally and nationally committed to school diversity, including National Coalition of Diverse Charter Schools

What we are doing to address  
decreasing diversity at ANCS (cont'd)



### ***Actions taken 2014 to present***

- Hired facilitation team to led faculty/staff through diversity/equity sessions
- Providing free MARTA passes for students in need for daily transportation to/from ANCS

### ***Actions ahead for 2016 and beyond***

- Expansion of work of diversity/equity facilitation team to include board and parents
- Evaluate potential use of weighted enrollment lottery after seeing impacts of more comprehensive enrollment outreach efforts and expansion of attendance zone

## Challenges we are facing in addressing decreasing diversity at ANCS



- Balancing desire to remain neighborhood school (easily walk-able and bike-able) with desire for diversity among area generally segregated economically
- Providing transportation options for school with limited size and budget
- Aiming for *diversity* (i.e. 30-50% FRL) is more difficult to enrolling high-poverty student population – requires more fine-tuned approach to recruitment, outreach
- Fighting perceptions about certain approaches to teaching and learning being better for certain types of students