

Universal Choice Redefined


What Are We Really Trying to Do Here?



The EdChoice Mission

To advance educational freedom and choice for all as a pathway to successful lives and a stronger society

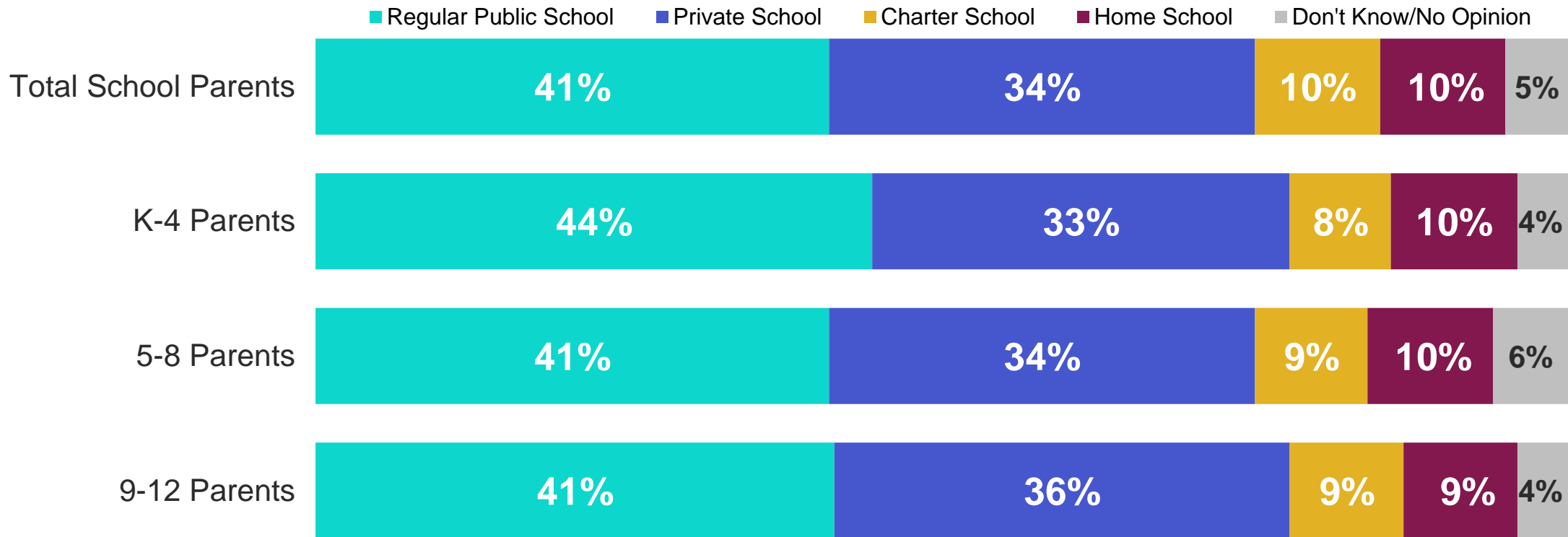


A woman with dark hair, wearing a white cardigan over a dark top, is sitting and reading a book to a group of children. The children are sitting on a bench or table, looking towards her. The scene is set in a classroom or library, with a globe and other educational items visible in the background. The entire image has a blue tint. In the top right corner, there is a decorative graphic consisting of several overlapping squares in shades of purple and white.

A Revolution at the Roots

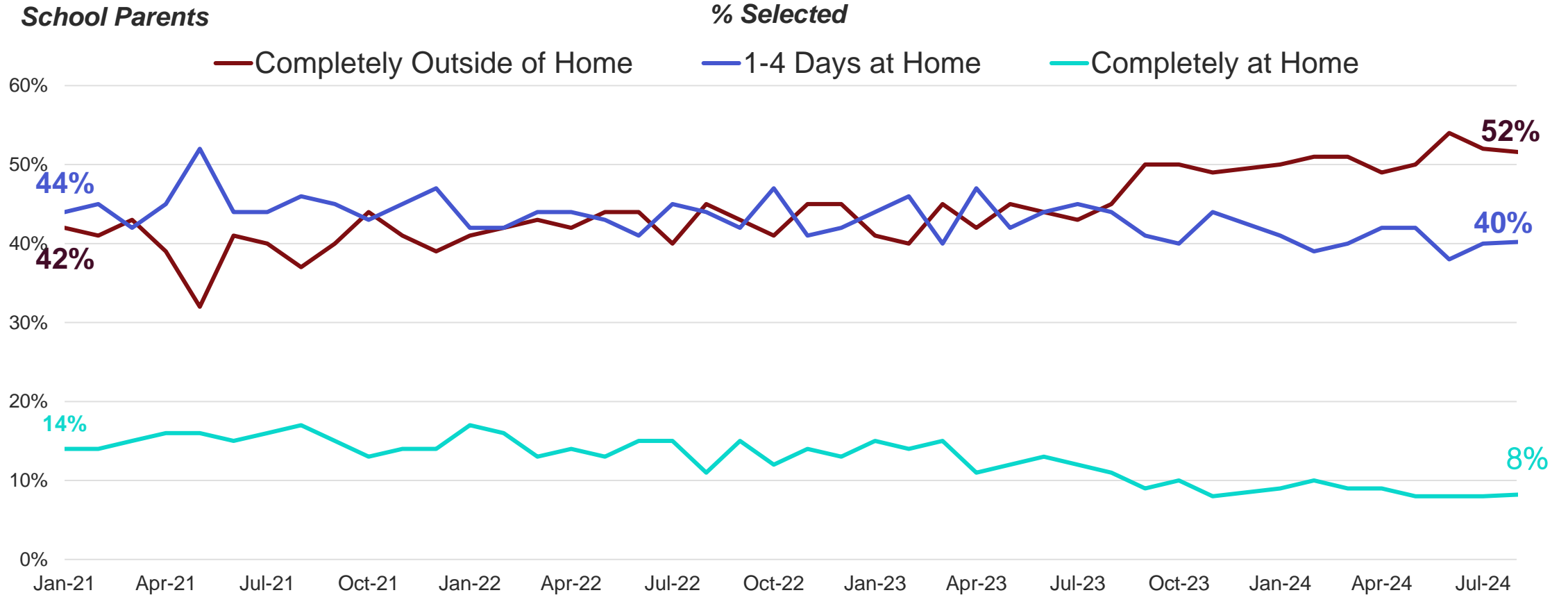
Parents have a diverse range of schooling preferences.

If given the option, what type of school would you select in order to obtain the best education for your child?



Nearly half of parents would prefer having their child learn at home at least one day per week.

In order to provide the best education for your child/children, what would be your preferred weekly schedule and location between schooling at home with a parent/teacher/tutor, or outside the home?

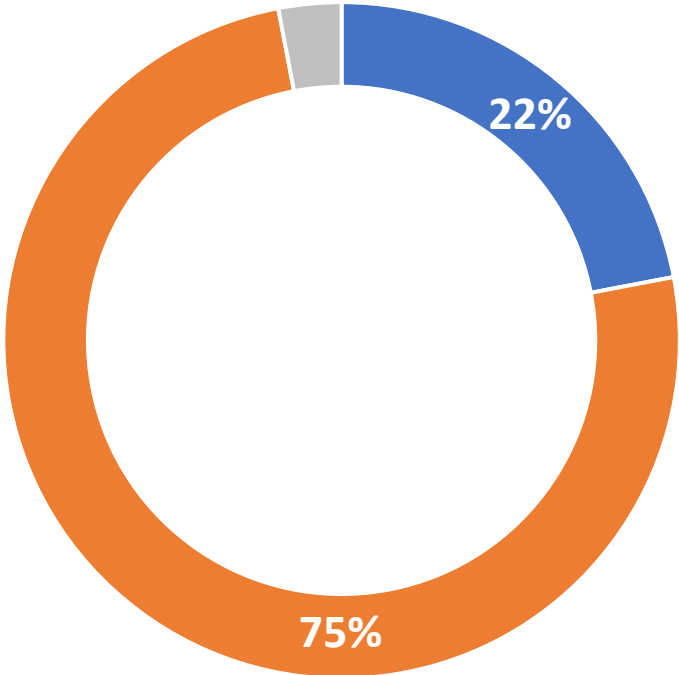


Just over 1 in 5 parents indicate that their child has switched from one school type to another.

Besides moving from grade school to middle school or middle school to high school, has your youngest/oldest child ever switched from one type of school (or school sector) to another? The various types/sectors include public district schools, public charter schools, private schools, full-time virtual schools, and home schooling.

School Parents

- Yes, my child has changed school types
- No, my child has not changed school types
- I don't know if my child has changed school types



Top % Yes

Private School	36%
Special Needs	28%
Special Education	27%

Bottom % Yes

Low Income: <\$50k	19%
District School	18%
Rural Area	17%



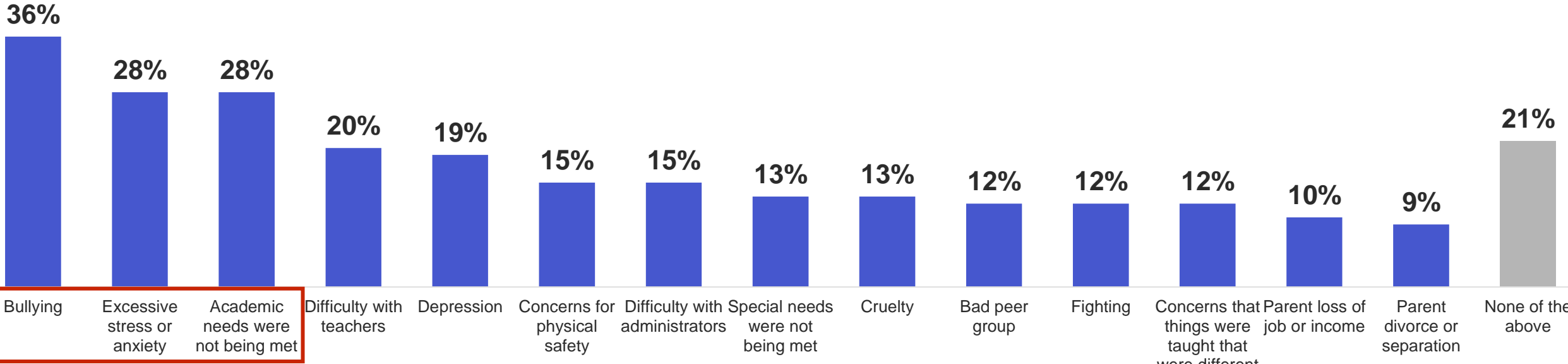
Source: Survey conducted June 5, 2024 – June 7, 2024, among U.S. adults

Note: Results are composite numbers between those who were asked about their youngest child and those who were asked about their oldest child.

Parents are most likely to switch schools due to bullying, stress/anxiety and academic needs not being met at their former school.

Children may encounter different circumstances both inside and outside of school that make it hard for them to achieve academic and personal success. Has your youngest/oldest child experienced any of these difficulties at her/his **former school**? Please select all that apply.

School Parents

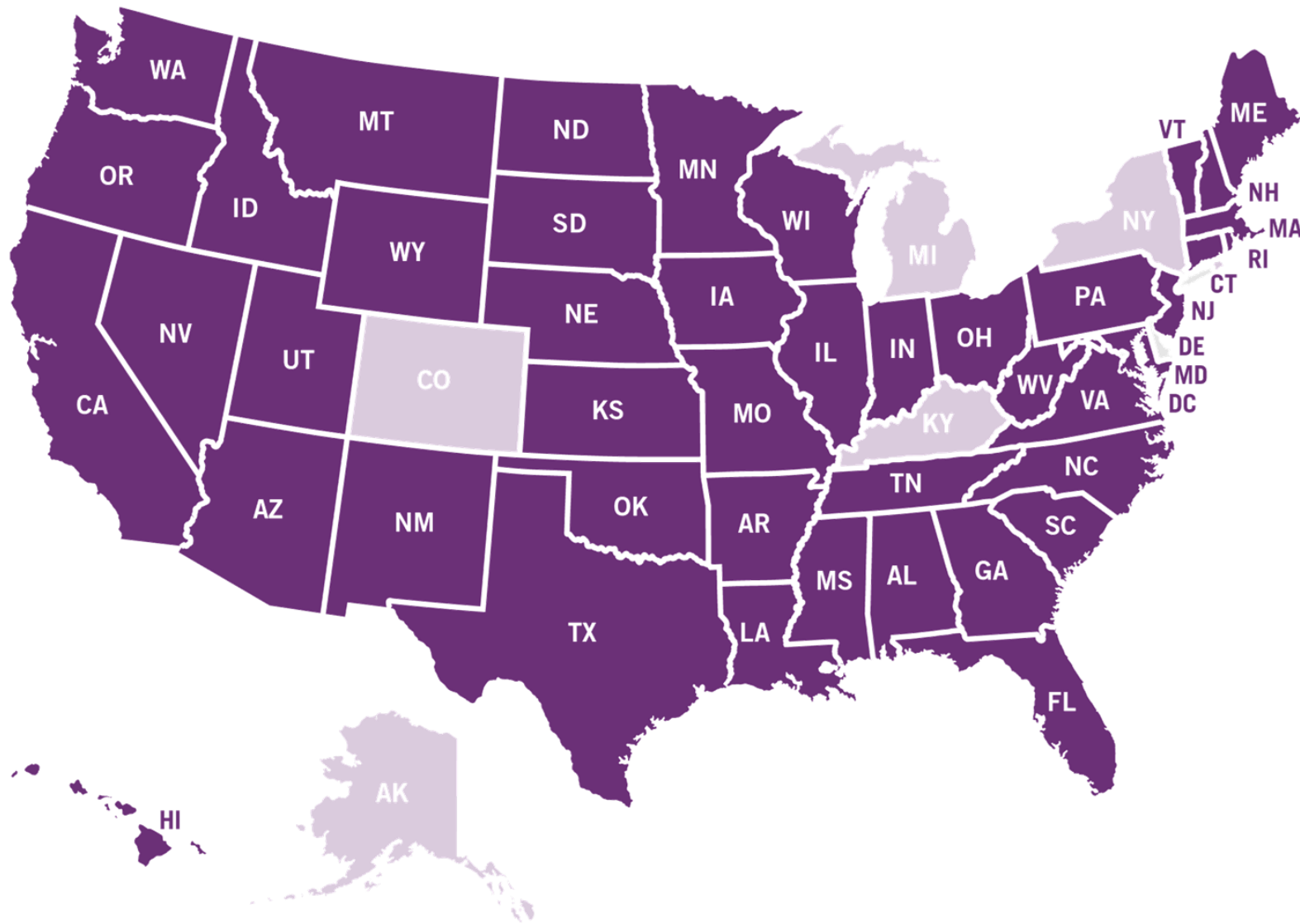


Note: Results are composite numbers between those who were asked about their youngest child and those who were asked about their oldest child.
 * Only respondents who indicated that their children have switched schools were asked about their child's former school.



Revolution Drives Policy Change

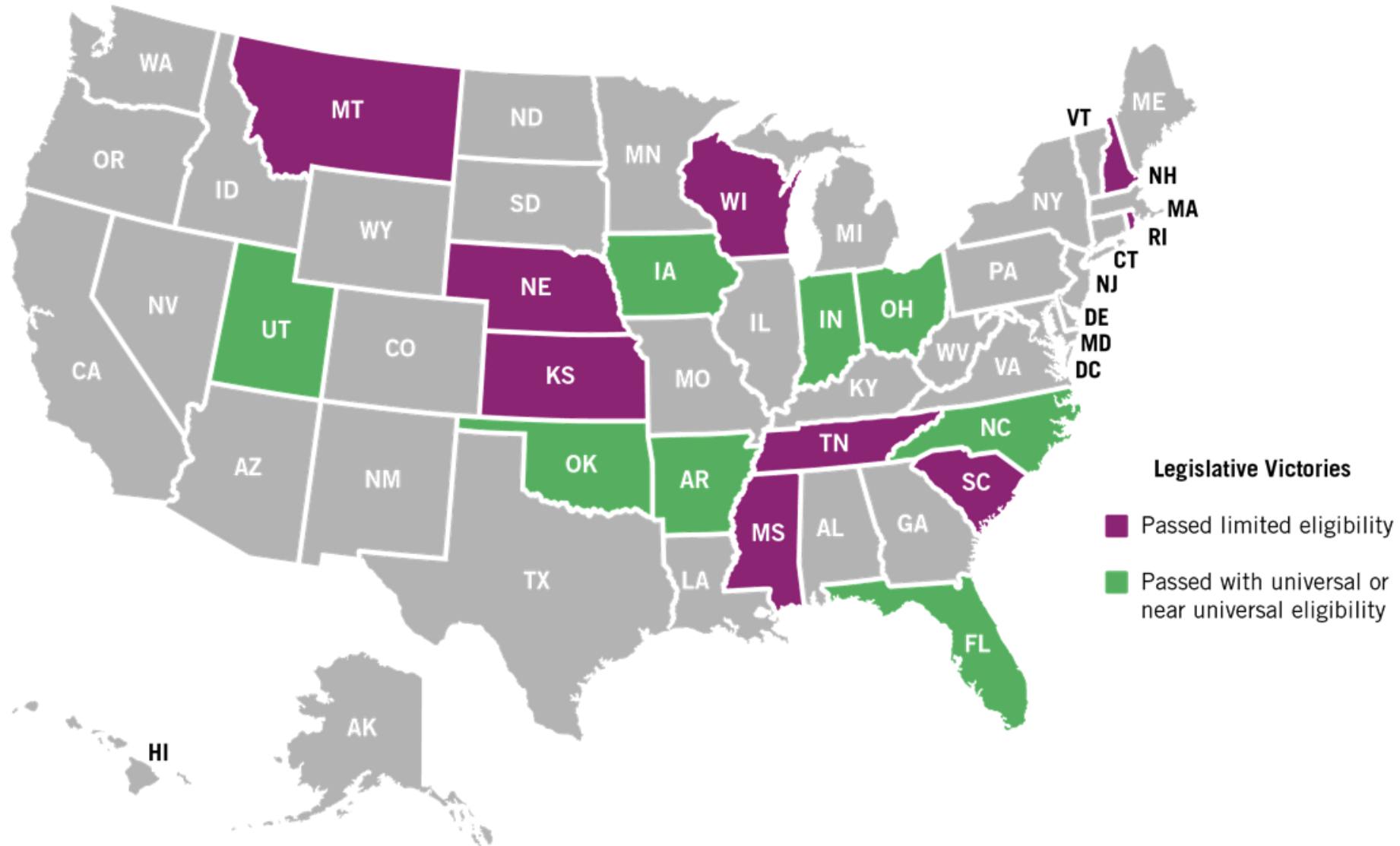


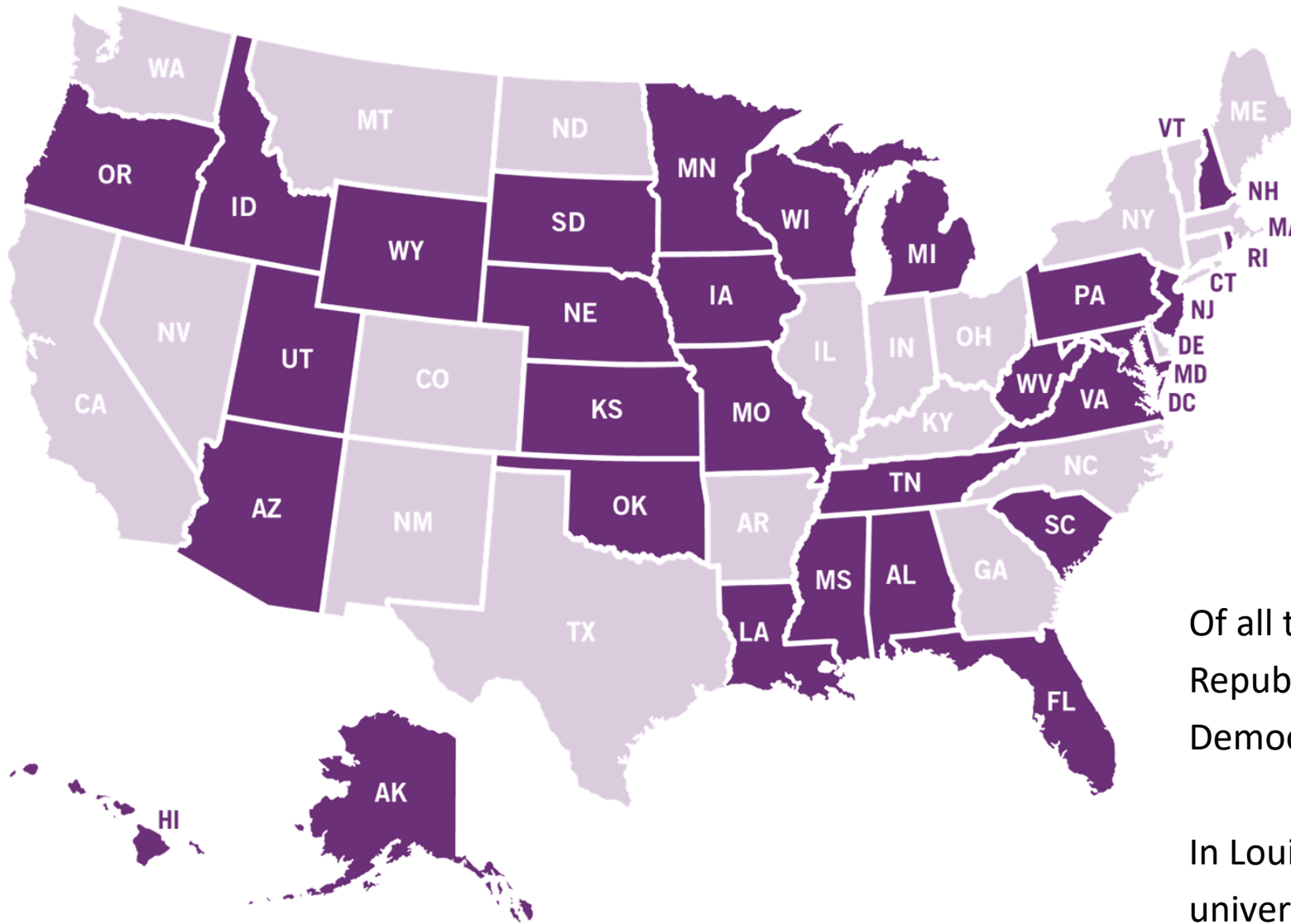


2023- The Year of Universal Choice via ESAs

- 125 private school choice bills were introduced in 43 states.
- 79% of those bills were related to ESAs.
- Nearly 1 in 5 students live in a state with universal choice.
- Approximately 22 million students – or 40% – nationwide are eligible for a choice program

2023 – 17 States Passed Choice Programs, 8 with Universal or Near Universal Eligibility





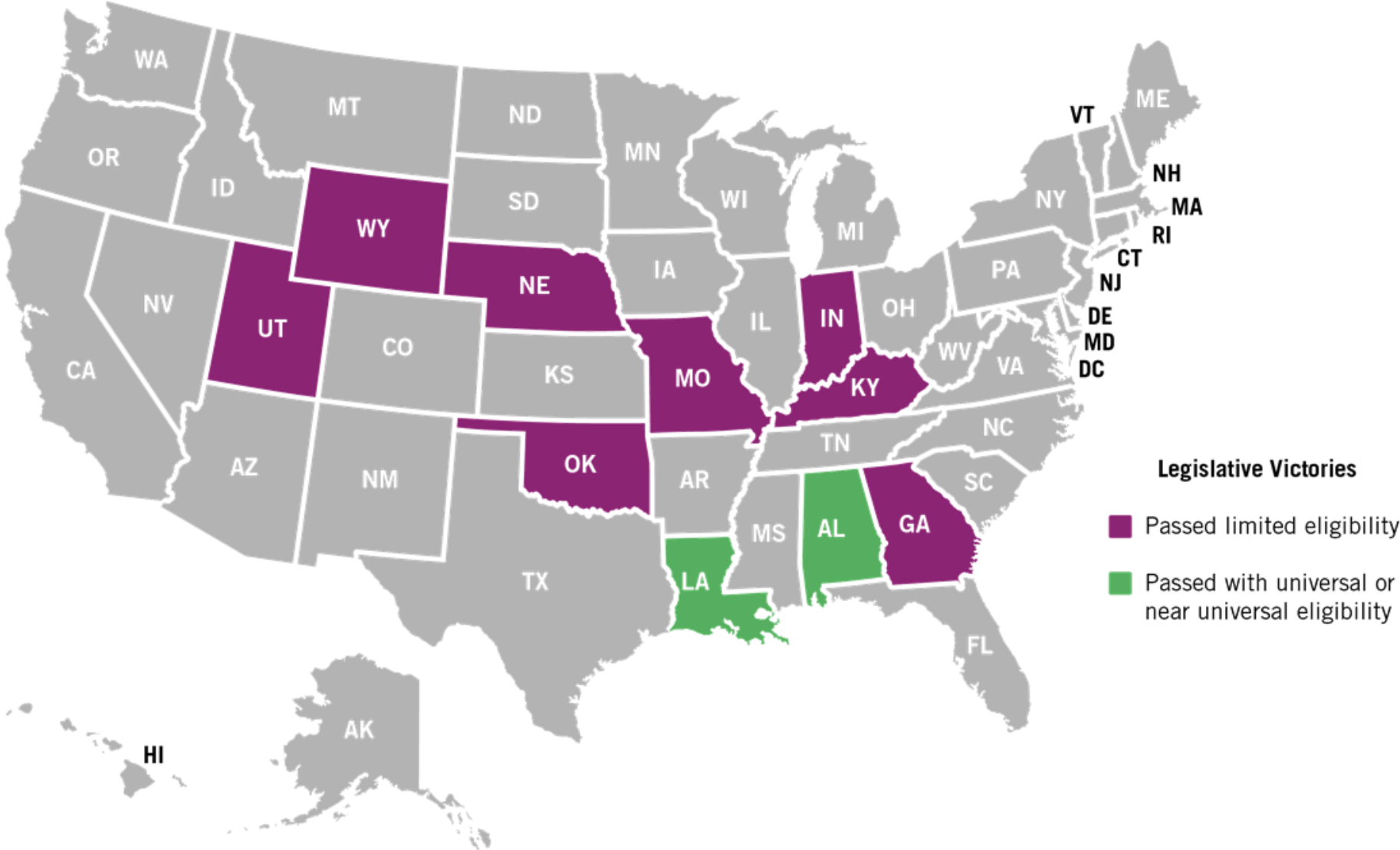
2024 – The Beat Goes On

- This year, 87 choice bills were introduced in 29 states
- 80% of those bills were related to ESAs

Of all those bills, 80% were sponsored by Republicans and 20% were sponsored by Democrats.

In Louisiana recently, 6 democrats voted for universal choice, as did Democrats in Missouri & Nebraska

2024 – 10 States Pass Choice Programs, 2 with Universal or Near Universal Eligibility





Improvement across ed. sectors w/ competition

Parents can send wherever they want

Autonomy

Availability

Transportation

Universality Information

Choice

Satisfaction

Chpice

Choices

Options

Multiple vendors

Consumerdriven

Unconstrained supply and a demand driven

Supply, demand, information, and money.

Affordability

Meets specific needs

Broad with limited regulation

A young girl with curly hair, wearing a red sweater over a light blue collared shirt, is sitting at a desk. A man with short dark hair, wearing a blue sweater, is leaning over her, smiling and holding a pen. They appear to be working together on a project or assignment. The background is softly lit, showing a potted plant and a desk lamp. The entire image has a purple tint.

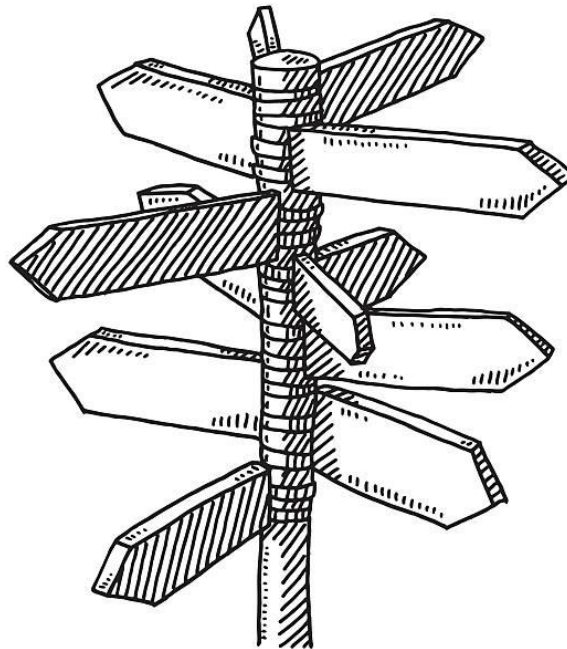
What is **UNIVERSAL CHOICE?**



All families should have access to unencumbered, **universal** educational choice.



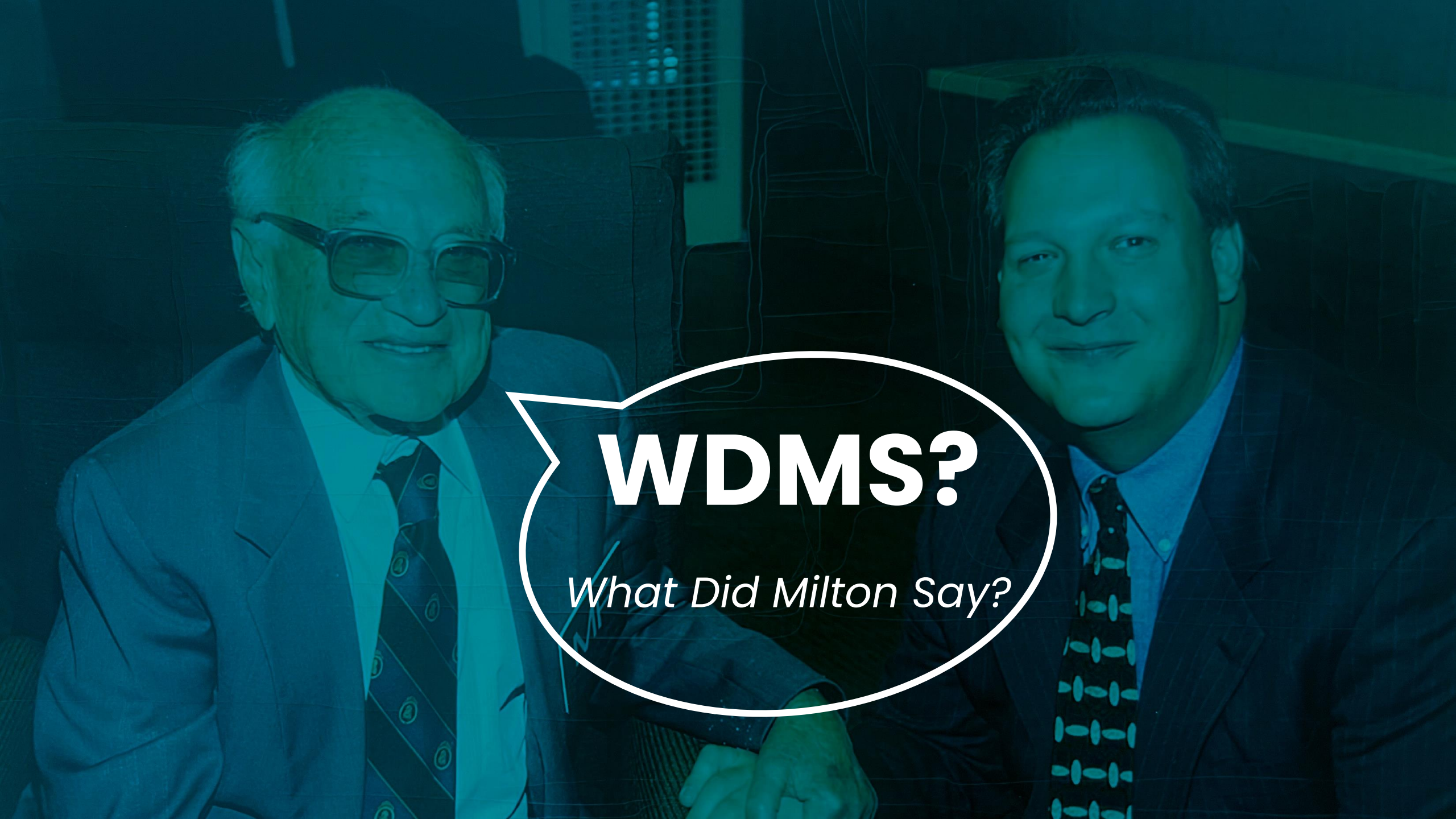
All Kids



All Options



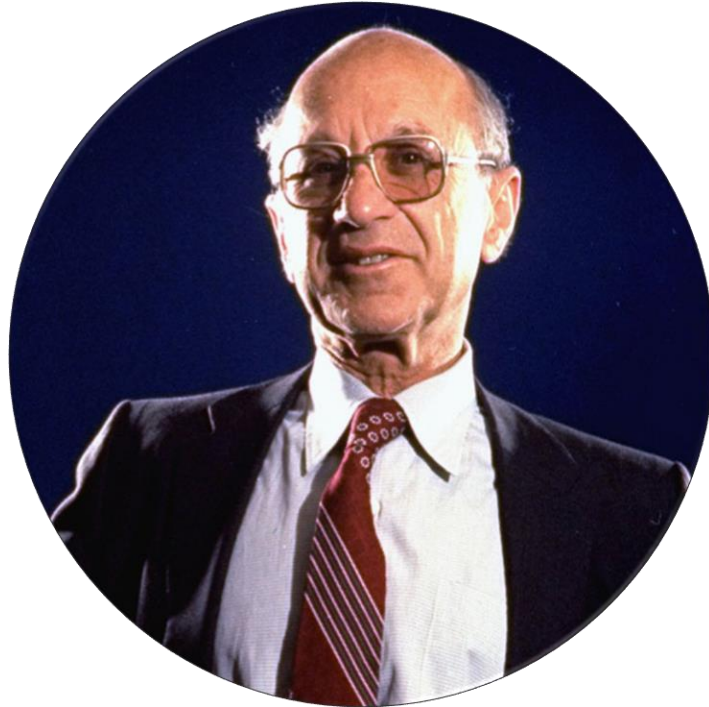
All Funding



WDMS?

What Did Milton Say?

About Universal Eligibility



“A far better alternative to political control is to introduce competition in schooling, to give parents a real choice. Why not say to **every parent**, “The community is committed to spending X dollars a year on schooling your child. If you do not send your child to our public school, you relieve us of this cost. In return, the community will give you a voucher for X dollars a year per child.”

“Our goal is to have a system in which **every family** in the U.S. will be able to choose for itself the school to which its children go.”

“Vouchers limited to low-income families are a welfare program”

About Universal Options

“We know from the experience of every other industry how imaginative competitive free enterprise can be, what **new products and services** can be introduced, how driven it is to **satisfy the customers** — that is what we need in education.”

“The interjection of competition would do much to promote a **healthy variety of schools**. It would do much, also, to **introduce flexibility** into school systems.”

“But why require parents to spend the voucher in a single school? Why not offer **divisible vouchers**? Let part be spent for the core school and the rest for mathematics lessons, music lessons or vocational training purchased from another source. One does not buy all one’s groceries at a single store.

Why should one buy all of a child’s schooling at a single school?”



About Universal Funding



Governments could require a minimum level of education which they could finance by giving parents vouchers redeemable for a **specified maximum sum per child** per year if spent on “approved” educational services.

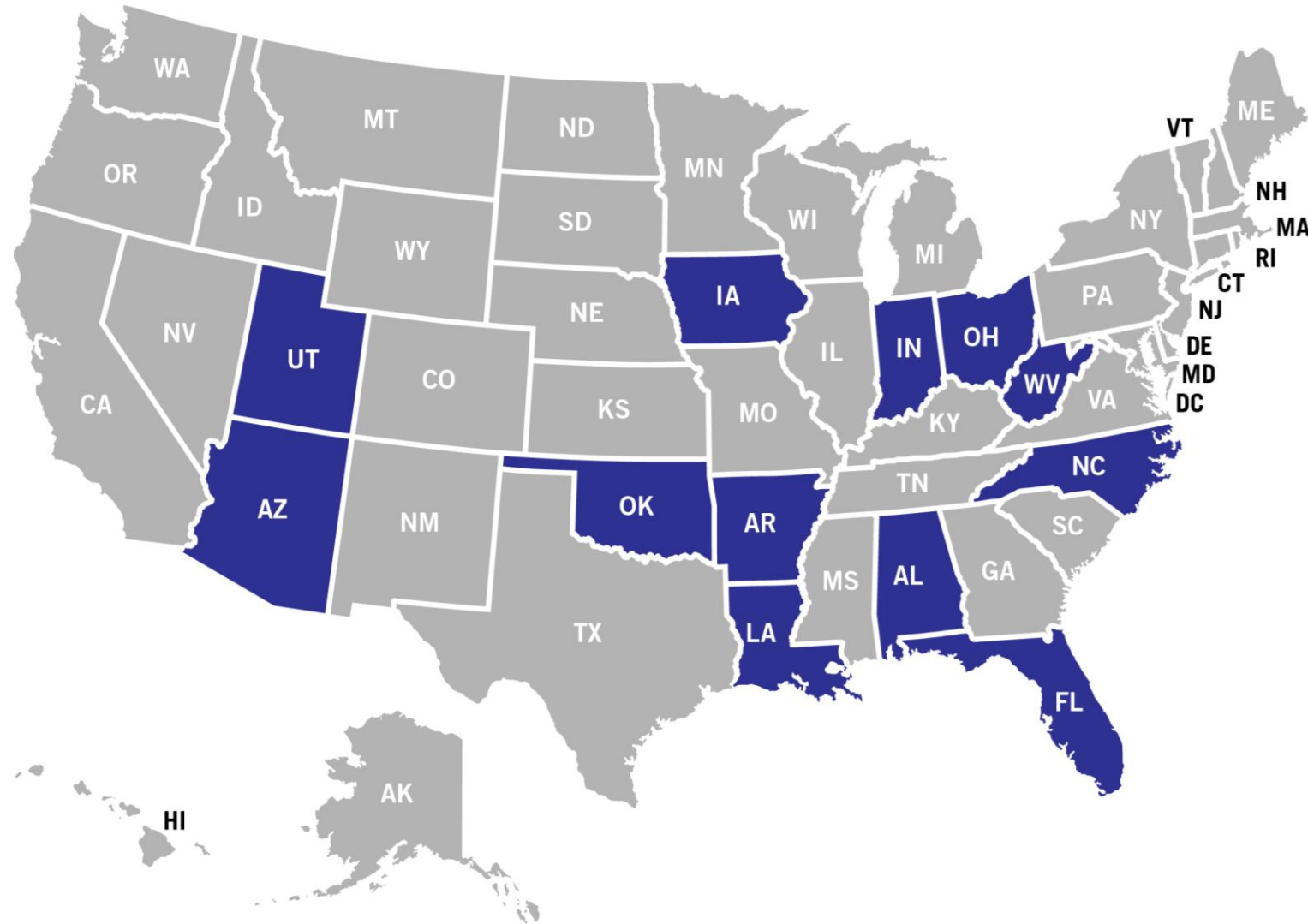
A far more effective and equitable way for government to finance education is to **finance students, not schools.**

What is needed for a truly competitive educational industry is an **unrestricted voucher of substantial size.**

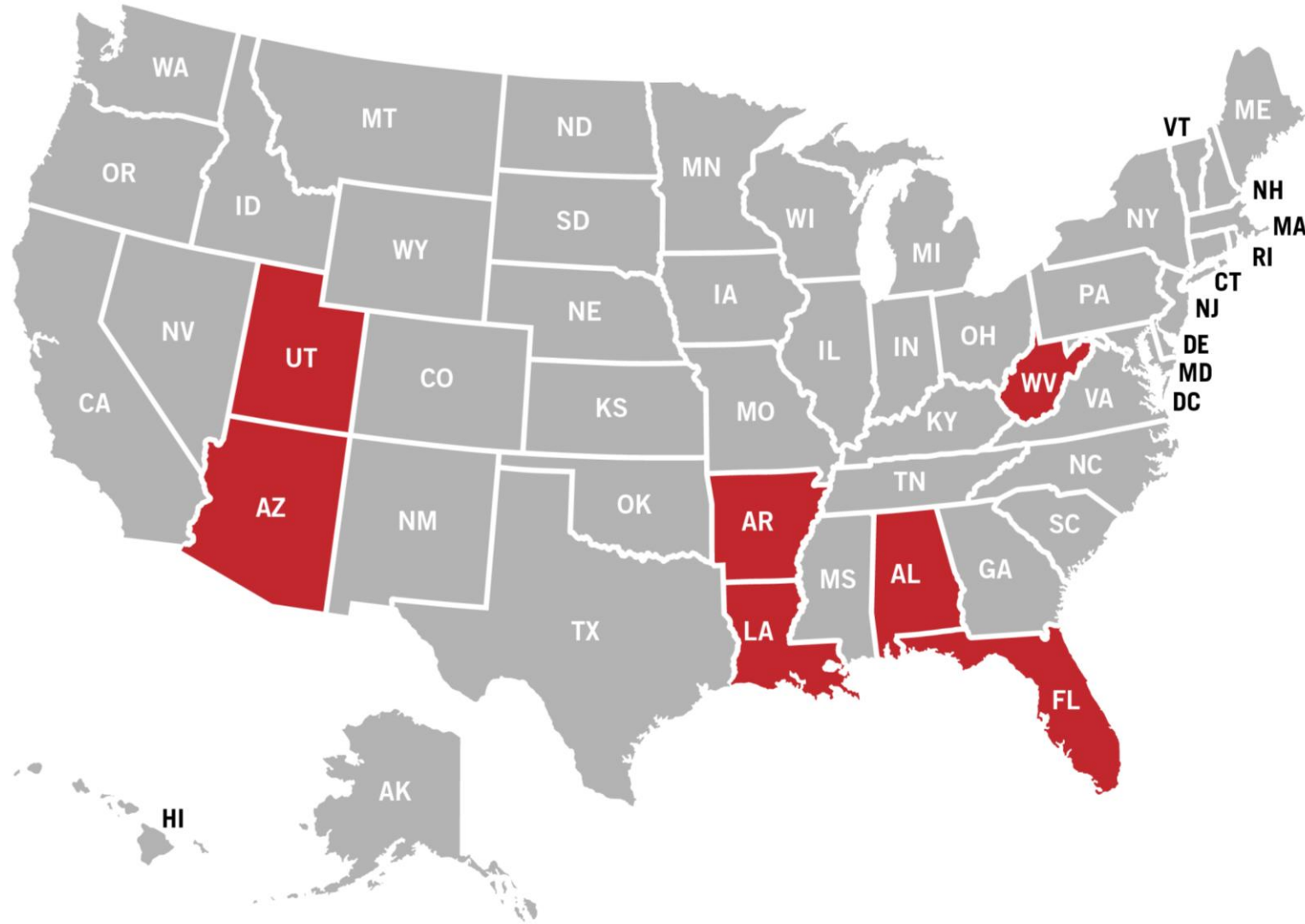
A woman and a young girl are shown in a close-up, smiling together. The girl is holding a pencil and appears to be writing. The image has a blue tint. In the top right corner, there is a decorative graphic of purple and white squares of varying sizes.

**Let's revisit the idea of
universal choice using
Milton's framework**

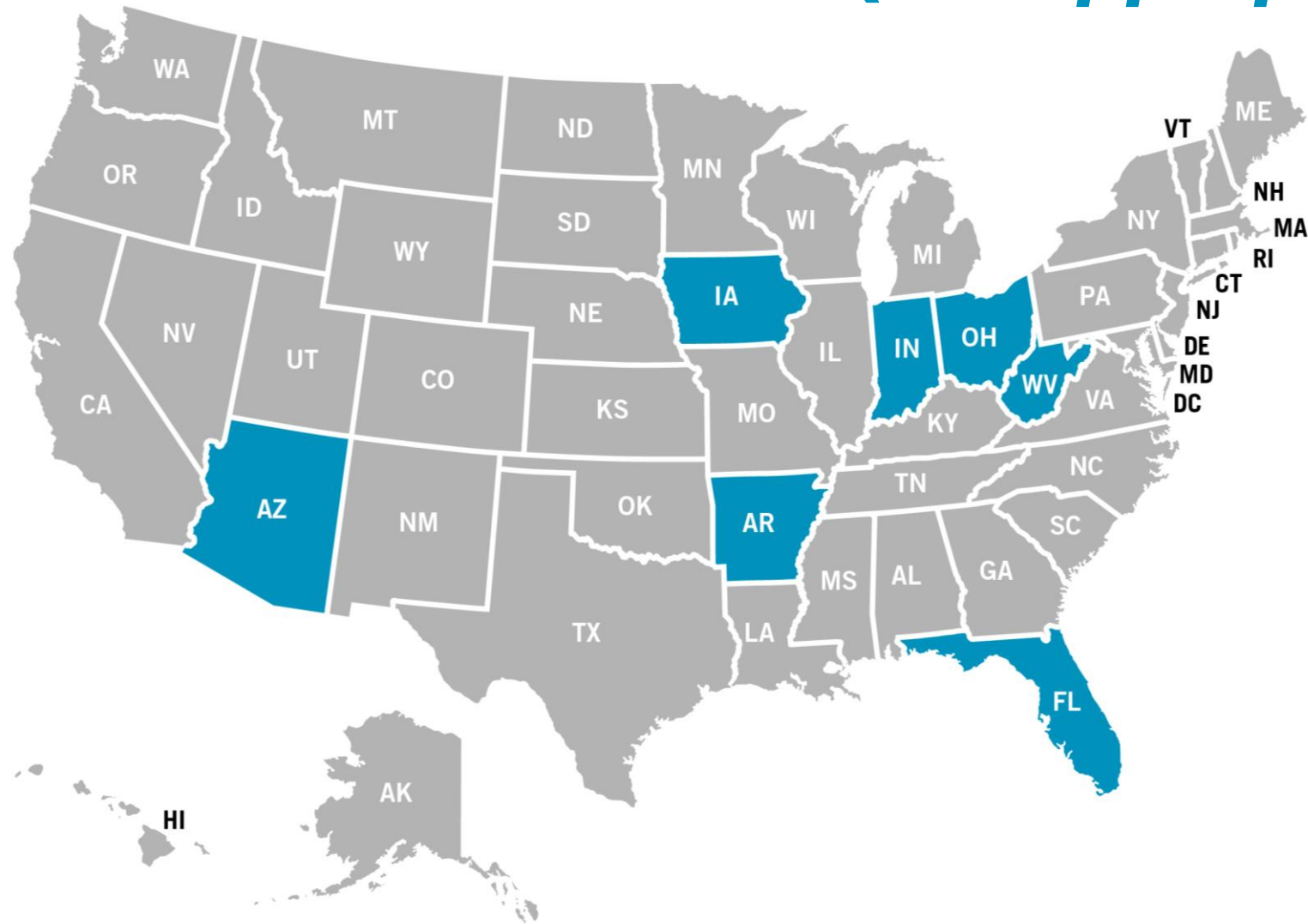
12 states with universal or near universal eligibility



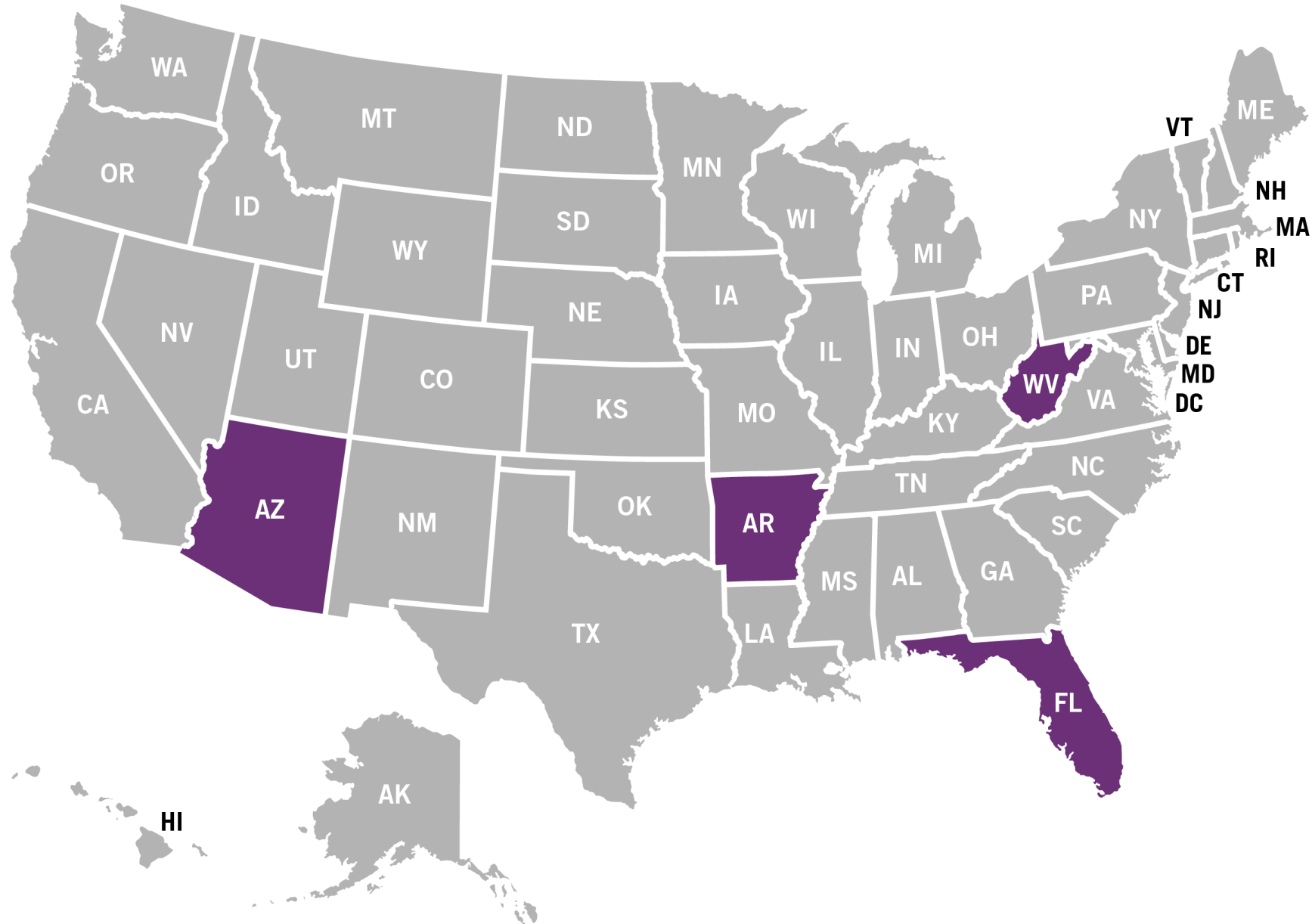
7 states with universal options



7 states with universal or near universal funding *(not appropriation)*



FOUR states meet all criteria – Eligibility, Options, Funding

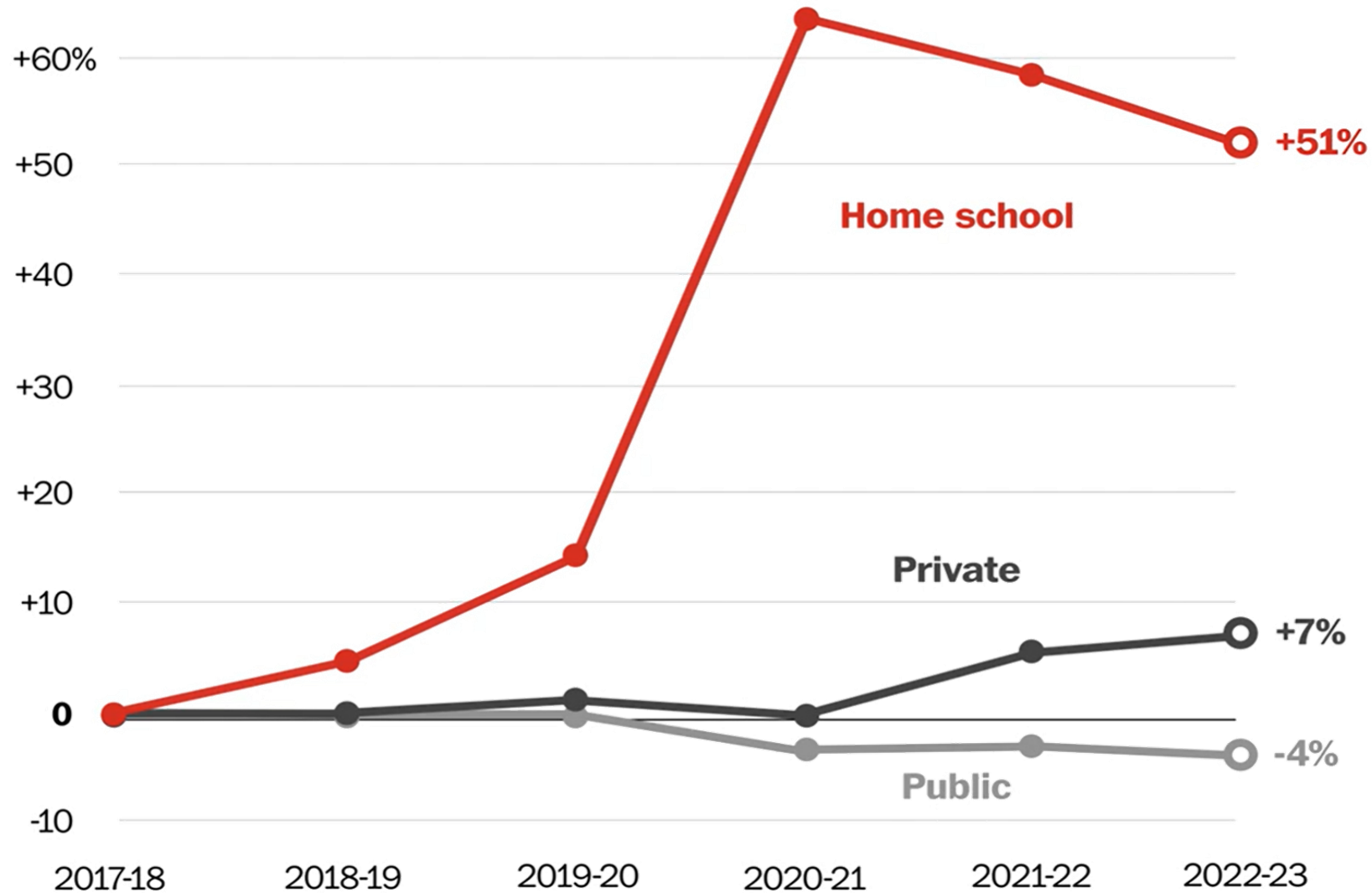




What Challenges Lie Before Us?



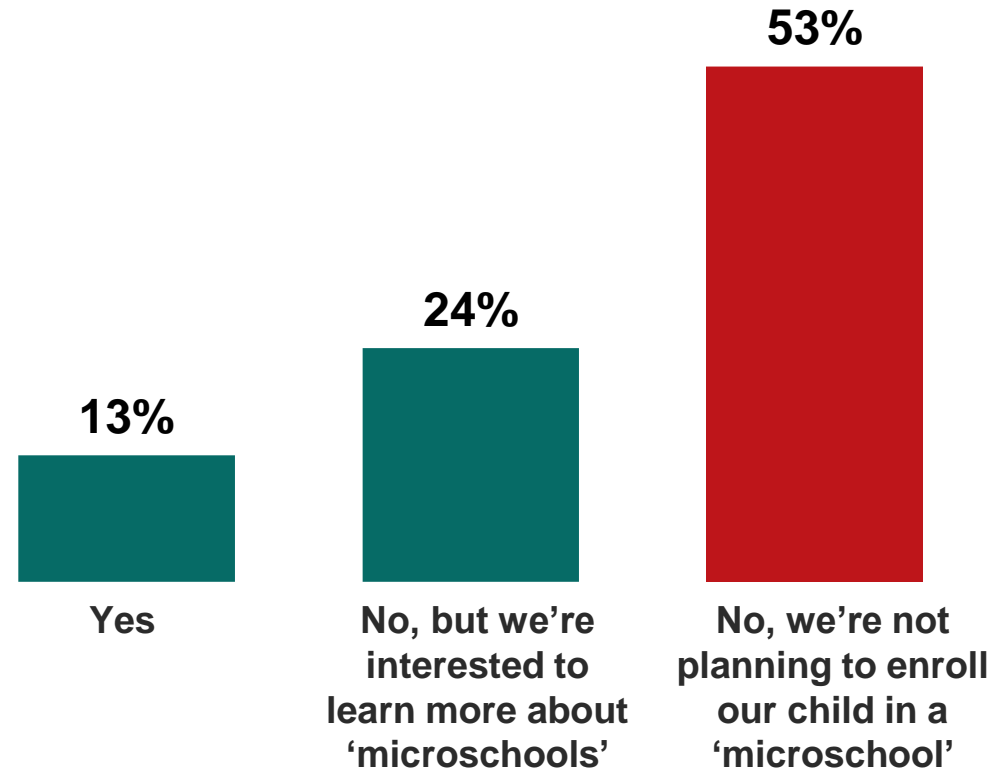
Homeschooling Rates are Rising



Microschooling is on the Rise

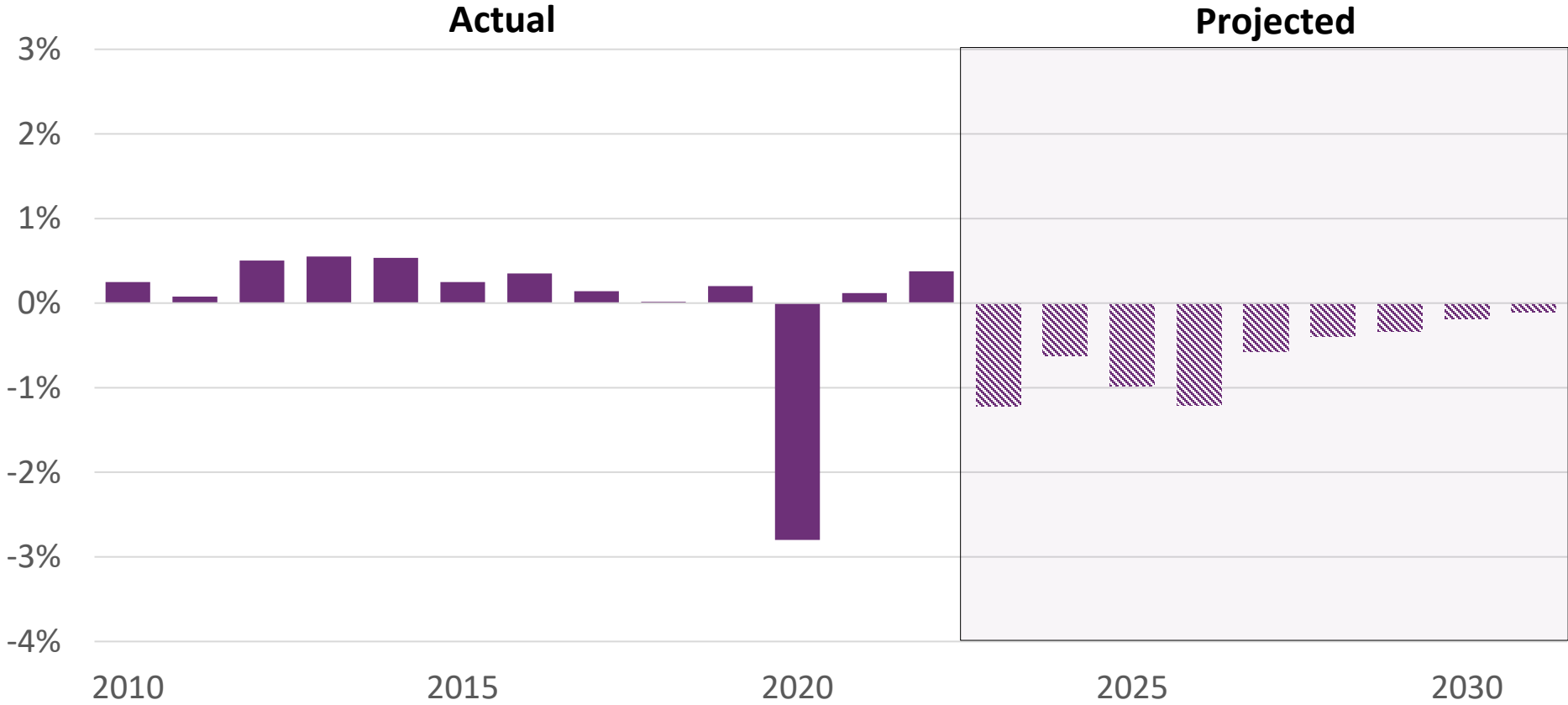
At least one-third of parents report having a child attending a microschool or are interested in learning more about microschools.

Microschools' are small learning environments in K-12 education typically enrolling no more than 25 students. Do you have a child currently enrolled in a 'microschool'?

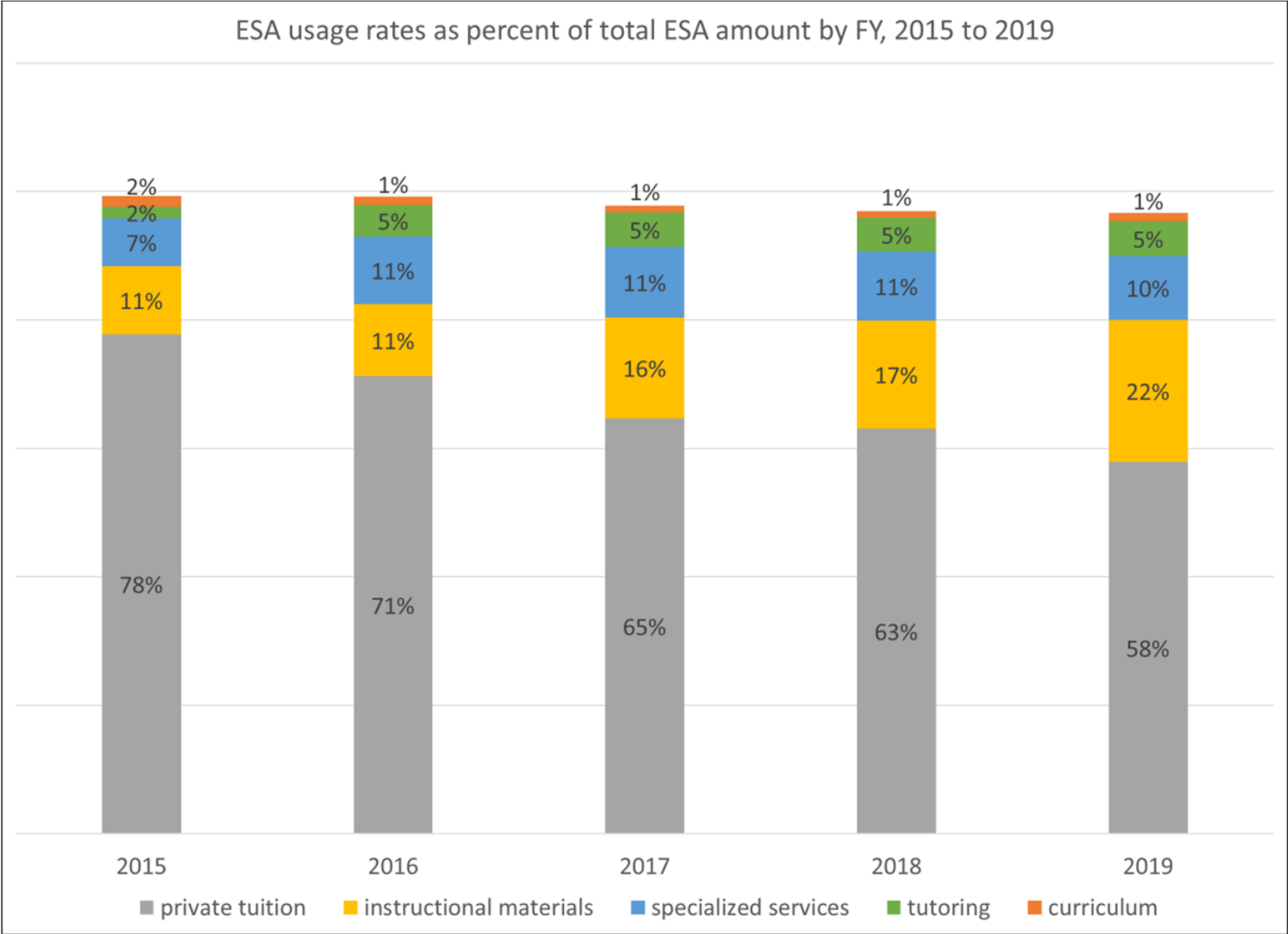


Public School Enrollment is Projected to Decrease

Annual percentage change in public elementary and secondary schools: Fall 2010 to Fall 2031



ESA funds are Being Used with Greater Diversity



Source: Author's estimates; Step Up for Students

School District ESSER 3 Spending: Detail by State

Categories of spending detail and data definitions vary by state. We have taken some liberty in matching those definitions to the selected categories below.

Stronger match to column header Partial match to column header

For a complete list of available data by state, visit the ESSER Expenditure Dashboard at edconomicslab.org/esser-spending/. Numbers in cells correspond to footnotes.

For questions or feedback, email Katie Silberstein at ks1747@georgetown.edu. Revised: 4/6/23

	Spending By District Available in a Timely Way	20% Learning Loss vs. 80% Flexible	DETAIL ON WHAT ACTIVITIES / SERVICES WERE DELIVERED					DETAIL ON WHAT WAS PURCHASED		
			Tutoring	Summer Learning	Lengthen Day or Year	SEL, Mental Health	Facilities	Labor (Salary, Benefits)	Supplies / Materials	Contracts, Purchased Services
AK							13			24
AL										
AR							13			
AZ	1			34	34		13		32	25
CA							14			
CO										
CT										
DE		2					13			
DC		2					9			
FL										
GA										
HI		2			6				16	
IA		3								
ID		3								
IL						11	13			25
IN							13			25
KS										
KY	1									
LA							13			26
MA										
MD	1					10	13	17		
ME	1					11	13			
MI										
MN	1						13			25
MO										
MS					7	11	13			24
MT	1		4				13			24
NC							13			25
ND							13			26
NE										
NH						12	13			26
NJ							13			26
NM							13			
NV							13	18	21	26
NY										
OH										
OK							13			33
OR			5			11	13	19	22	27
PA	1									
RI							13			26
SC				8	8		13			
SD							15			25
TN										
TX							13	20		28
UT	1									
VA										
VT										
WA				8	8					29
WI				8	8					
WV	1						13			30
WY	1			8	8		13	19	23	31

We are ALL going broke

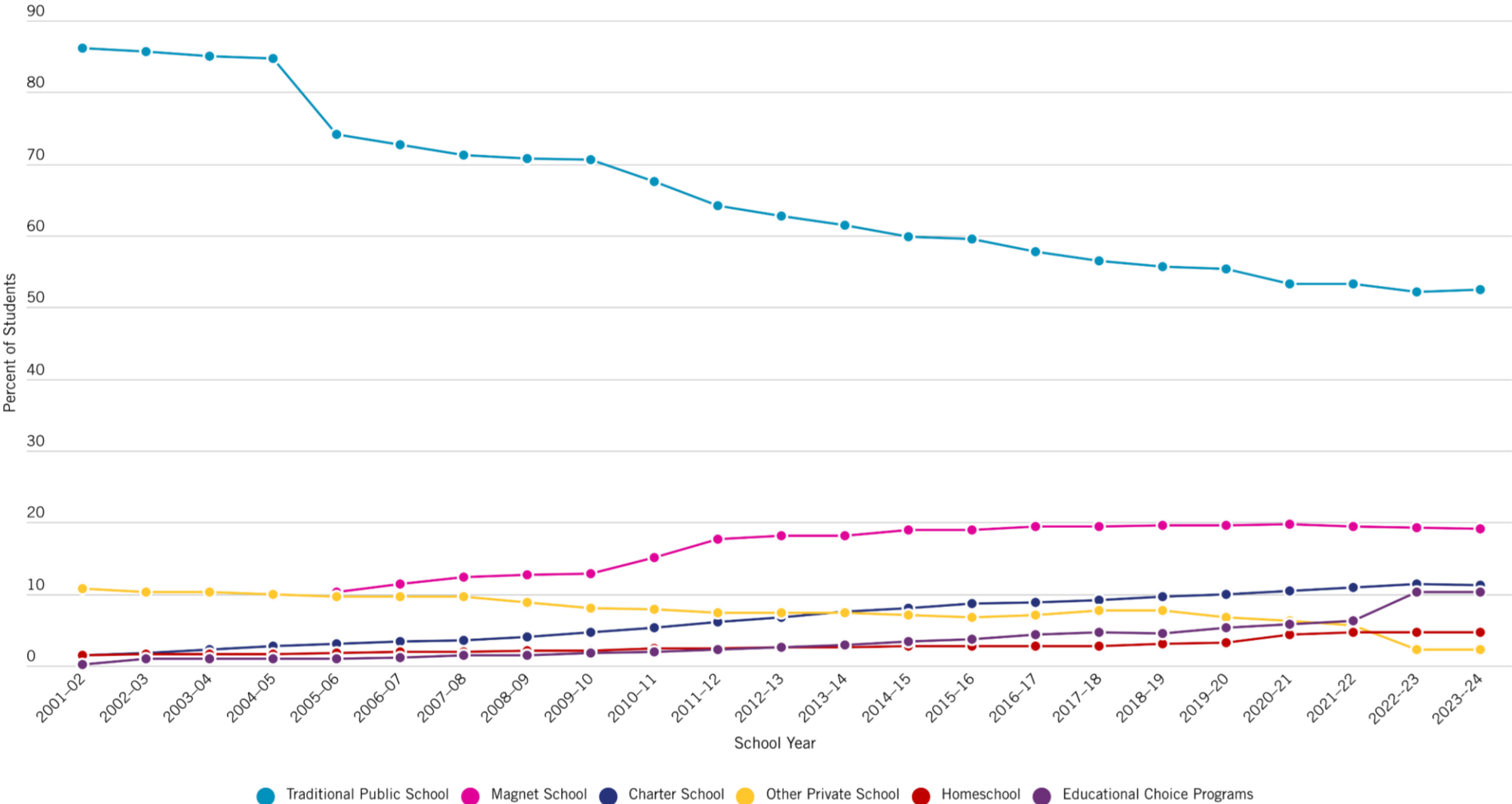


A young girl with curly hair is looking down at a document she is holding. A man is sitting next to her, smiling and looking at the document. They appear to be in a classroom or office setting. The image has a blue tint and a decorative graphic of purple and white squares in the top right corner.

What is Happening in Choice-Rich States?

EdChoice Share: Florida

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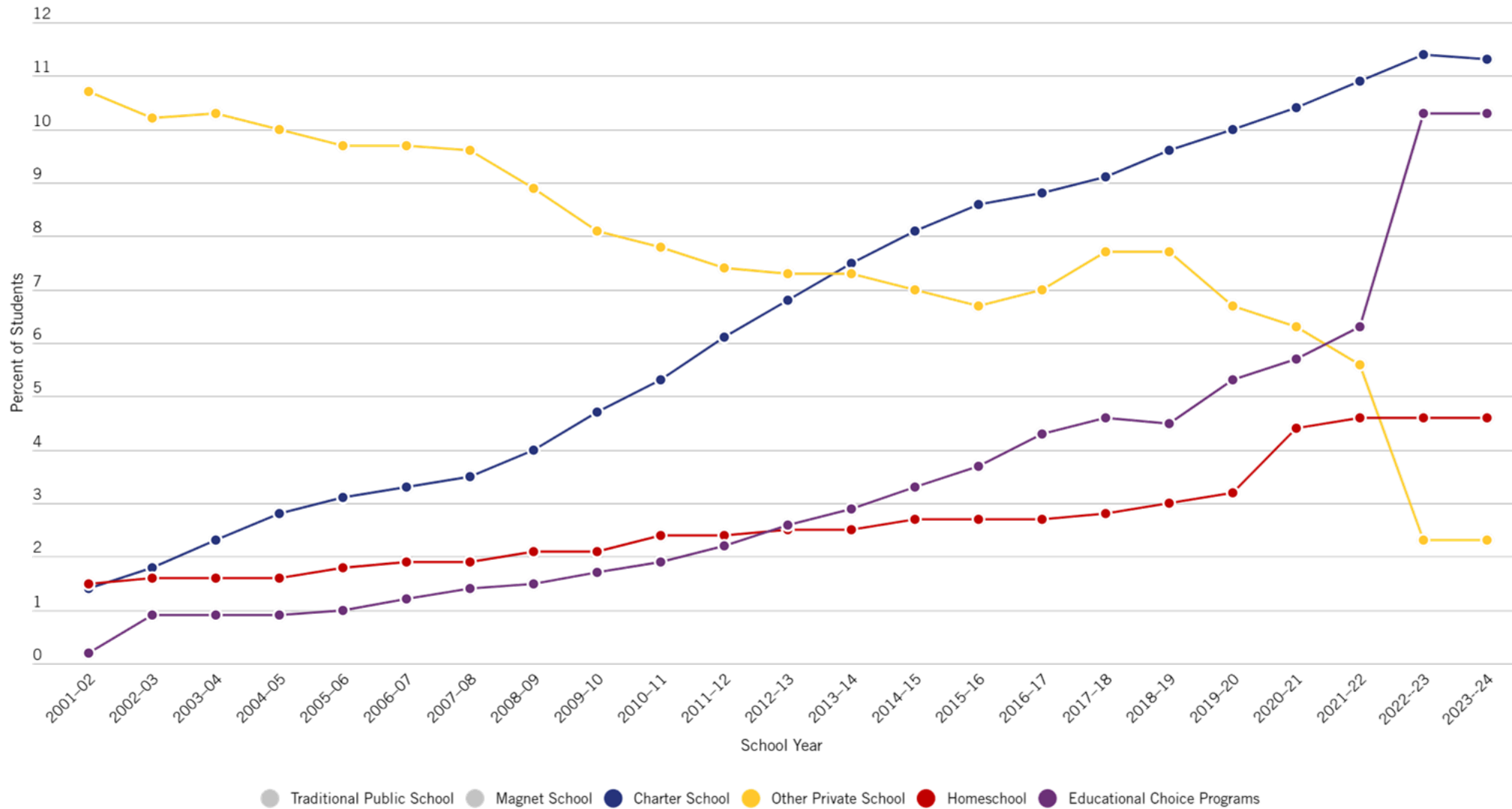


Download data
 Sources: NCES, EdChoice, Step Up For Students and Angela Watson (Johns Hopkins University)



EdChoice Share: Florida

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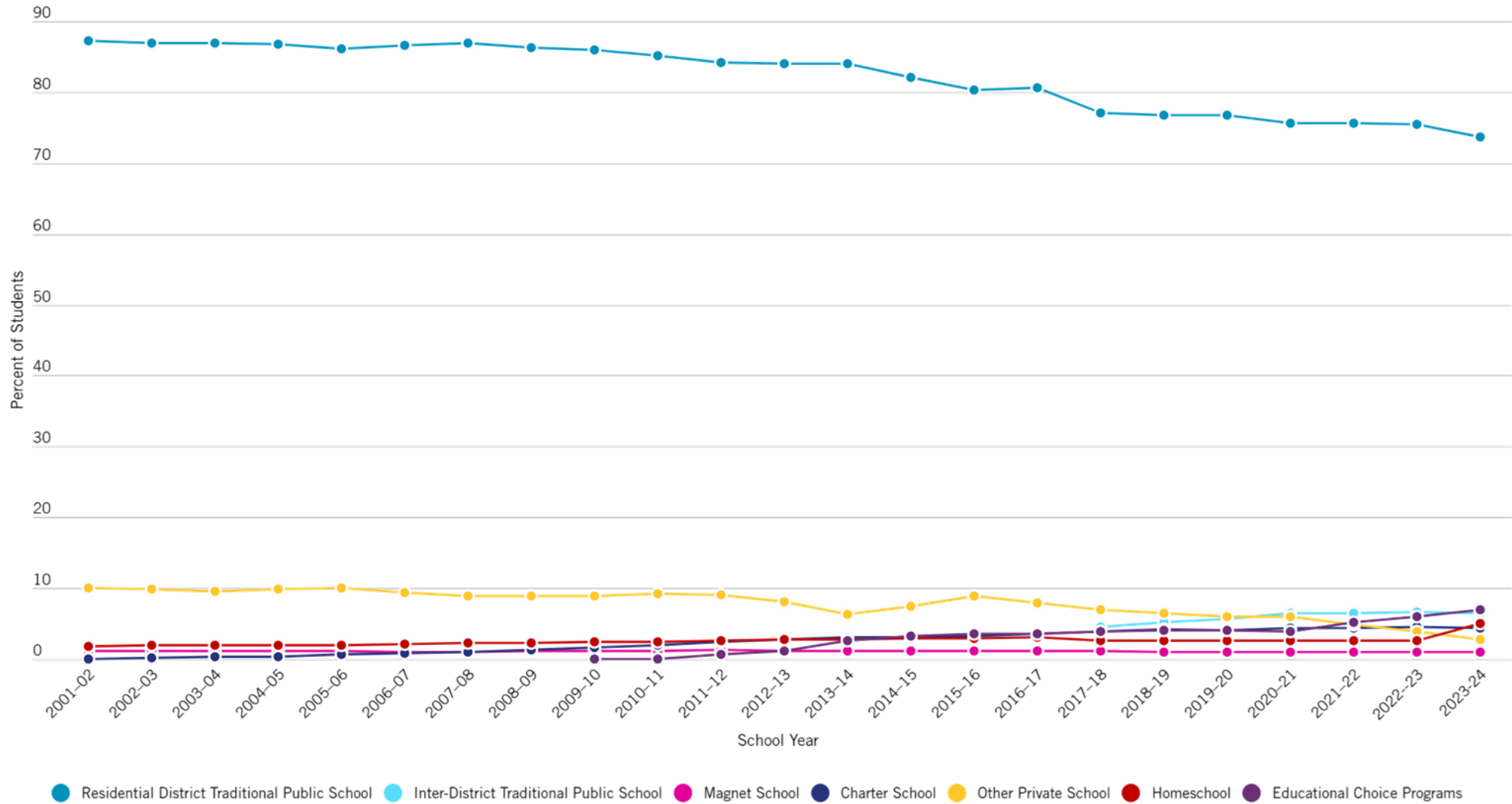
[Download data](#)

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EdChoice Share: Indiana

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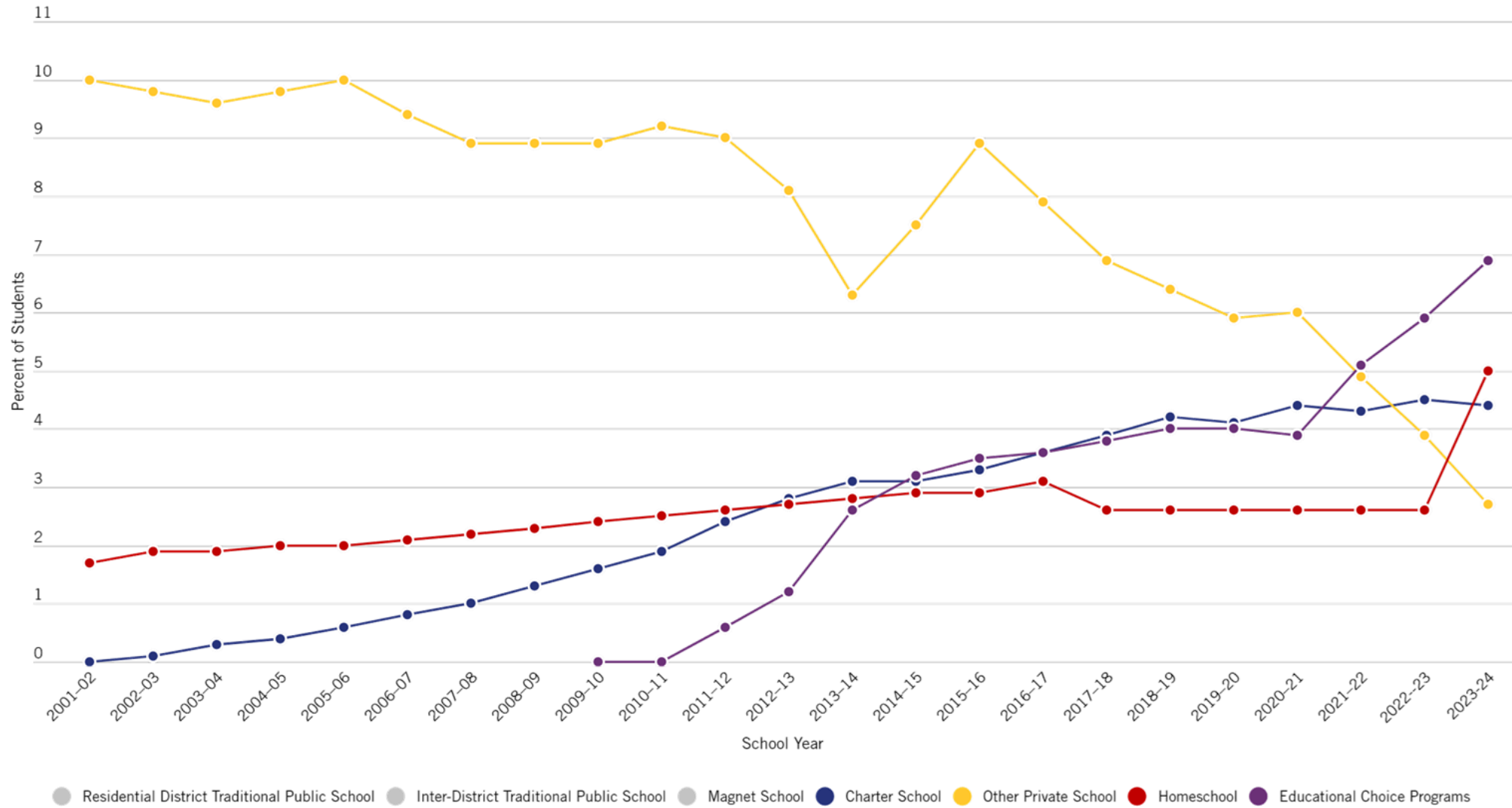
[Download data](#)

Sources: NCES, EdChoice, Indiana Department of Education, and Angela Watson (Johns Hopkins University)



EdChoice Share: Indiana

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[Download data](#)

Sources: NCES, EdChoice, Indiana Department of Education, and Angela Watson (Johns Hopkins University)



Key Takeaways



- We need to return to the North Star of Milton and Rose D. Friedman.
- We are still working towards the free market ideal.
- Radically reforming education requires a marketplace that involves **all kids, all options and all money.**

ONE MILLION

lives being made better each
day by school choice.

