



 **FACTS** K - 12

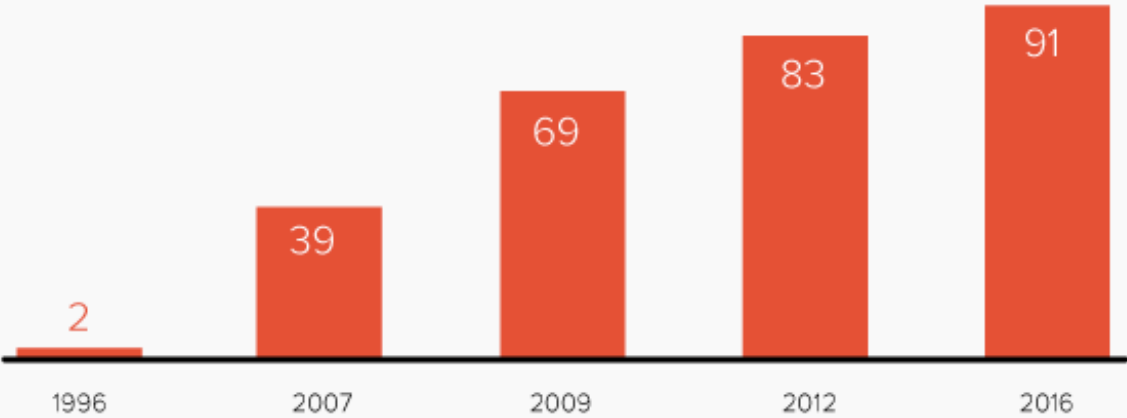
## The Growth of Socioeconomic School Integration

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Students in racially and socioeconomically integrated schools experience academic, cognitive, and social benefits that are not available to students in racially isolated, high-poverty environments. A growing number of school districts and charter schools across the country are promoting socioeconomic and racial integration by considering socioeconomic factors in student assignment policies.

- **As of 2016, The Century Foundation has identified a total of 91 districts and charter networks across the country that use socioeconomic status as a factor in student assignment.** When The Century Foundation (TCF) first began supporting research on socioeconomic school integration in 1996, it could find only two districts that employed a conscious plan using socioeconomic factors to pursue integration. In 2007, when TCF began compiling a list of class-conscious districts, researchers identified roughly 40 districts that used student socioeconomic status in assignment procedures. Nine years later, TCF has found that figure has more than doubled, to 91, including 83 school districts and 8 charter schools or networks.

## NUMBER OF IDENTIFIED DISTRICTS AND CHARTERS WITH SOCIOECONOMIC INTEGRATION POLICIES, 1996–PRESENT



Source: Authors' research.



- **The 91 school districts and charter schools with socioeconomic integration policies enroll over 4 million students.** Roughly 8 percent of all public school students currently attend school districts or charter schools that use socioeconomic status as a factor in student assignment.
- **The school districts and charter networks identified as employing socioeconomic integration are located in 32 different states.** The states with the greatest number of districts and charters pursuing socioeconomic integration are California, Florida, Iowa, New York, Minnesota, and North Carolina.
- **The majority of districts and charters on the list have racially and socioeconomically diverse enrollments.** All but 10 districts and charter schools identified by TCF have no single racial or ethnic group comprising 70 percent or more of the student body. All but 17 of the districts and charters have rates of free or reduced price lunch eligibility that are less than 70 percent.
- **The majority of the integration strategies observed fall into five main categories: attendance zone boundaries, district-wide choice policies, magnet school admissions, charter school admissions, and transfer policies.** Some districts use a combination of methods. The most common strategy for promoting socioeconomic integration used by districts and charters is redrawing school attendance boundaries, observed in 38 school districts; 25 districts include magnet schools that consider socioeconomic status in their admissions processes; 17 districts have transfer policies that consider socioeconomic status; 16 districts use some form of district-wide choice policies with explicit consideration of diversity in the design of these programs; and 10 charters networks and school districts have charter school lottery processes that consider socioeconomic status in order to promote diverse enrollment.

Adapted from *A New Wave of School Integration: Districts and Charters Pursuing Socioeconomic Diversity* (2016) by Halley Potter and Kimberly Quick, with Elizabeth Davies

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