

National **Charter School** **Resource** Center

Welcome to the Webinar!

What Does the Research Say About Charter Schools, Strategies, and Student Achievement?

We will be starting soon.



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The National Charter School Resource Center is funded by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Innovation and Improvement and administered by Learning Point Associates, an affiliate of American Institutes for Research, under contract number ED-04-CO-0109/0004.

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About the Resource Center

The **U.S. Department of Education** is committed to promoting effective practices, providing technical assistance, and disseminating the resources critical to ensuring the success of charter schools across the country. To that end, the Education Department, under a contract with Learning Point Associates, an affiliate of American Institutes for Research, has developed the **National Charter School Resource Center**.

Presenters

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Agenda

- I. Research on Charter Schools:
Study Research Questions, Methods, and Findings

- II. Highlights from *Out of the Debate and Into the Schools*

Research on Charter Schools

- **Achievement Studies:**
 - Research Question: What is the impact of charter school enrollment on student achievement?
 - Varied results and methodologies
 - High-profile
- **Strategy Studies:**
 - Research Question: What strategies are being employed in charter schools?
 - Limited research, qualitative methodologies

Research on Charter Schools: Achievement Studies

- Mixed results: No definitive “answer” to the question about student performance in charter schools vs. traditional schools.
- Interpretation of research requires careful consideration and understanding of variations in study methodologies, samples, and research questions.
- Study examples: Hoxby et al., 2009; Abdulkadiroglu et al., 2009; CREDO, 2010; Mathematica (Gleason, Clark, Tuttle, & Dwoyer, 2010)

Achievement Study Examples: Hoxby et al. (2009)

- **Sample:** Students who applied to charter school lotteries in New York City between 2000–01 and 2008–09
- **Method:** Lottery-based evaluation
- **Findings:** Lotteried students outperformed non-lotteried students in math, English, science, and social studies, and on Regents exam scores, and are more likely to earn a Regents diploma.
- **Other:**
 - There was variation among charter schools, with some demonstrating negative effects.
 - Long school year, more minutes devoted to English, rewards/penalties disciplinary policy, performance-based teacher pay, and academic mission statement were associated with charter schools' better effects on achievement.

Achievement Study Examples: Abdulkadiroglu et al. (2009)

- **Sample:** Students in charter and traditional middle and high schools in Boston between 2001–02 and 2006–07
- **Method:** Lottery-based evaluation and observational analysis
- **Findings:** Both methods found that middle and high school charter school students outperformed middle and high school non-charter school students in English language arts and mathematics.

Achievement Study Examples: CREDO (2010)

- **Sample:** Charter schools students and matched traditional school students in 15 states (AR, AZ, CA, CO, FL, GA, IL, LA, MA, MN, MO, NM, NC, OH, TX) and the District of Columbia
- **Method:** Comparison of growth in achievement for charter school students against that of “virtual twins”
- **Findings:**
 - On average, charter school students underperformed their virtual twins in reading and math, but the difference is very small.
 - The effect is slightly positive for elementary and middle school students; negative for high school and multi-level school students.

Achievement Study Examples: CREDO (2010)

- **Findings** (continued)
 - Effect is positive for low-income students.
 - For reading, effect is positive in 6 states, negative in 5 states, and no effect in 5 states.
 - For math, effect is positive in 6 states, negative in 6 states, and no effect in 4 states.
- **Other:**
 - significant variation among charter schools
 - state caps on charter schools, and availability of multiple authorizers, associated with negative charter school effect

Achievement Study Examples: Mathematica (2010)

- **Sample:** Students who applied to lotteries in 36 charter middle schools across 15 states
- **Method:** Lottery-based evaluation
- **Findings:** On average, lotteried students performed the same as non-lotteried students in math and reading.
- **Other:**
 - There was significant variation among charter schools.
 - There were positive effects in charter schools serving more low-income or low-achieving students.
 - Small enrollments and use of ability grouping were associated with charter schools' positive effects on achievement.

Achievement Studies: What Does It All Mean?

- Although results are mixed, there are some common patterns:
 - (1) Positive effects in urban areas
 - (2) Positive effects for low-income students
 - (3) Variation in quality of charter schools
- Some information on strategies employed in charter schools, and relationship with student achievement

Strategy Studies

- Limited research
- Some information comes from achievement studies; others from descriptive studies
- Some emerging findings and themes:
 - Autonomy over staff, schedule, and budget
 - Extended time
 - Innovative curricula
 - Flexible instructional approaches

Strategy Studies: *Out of the Debate and Into the Schools*

- Follow-up to *Informing the Debate*
- Builds on assumption of stronger student achievement in charter schools in the city of Boston
- Generalizable to city of Boston
- Qualitative study
 - Principal survey
 - Site visits
 - Extant data
 - Focus on high-achieving schools

***Out of the Debate and
Into the Schools:
Comparing Practices and Strategies in
Traditional, Pilot and Charter Schools
in the City of Boston***

Research Questions

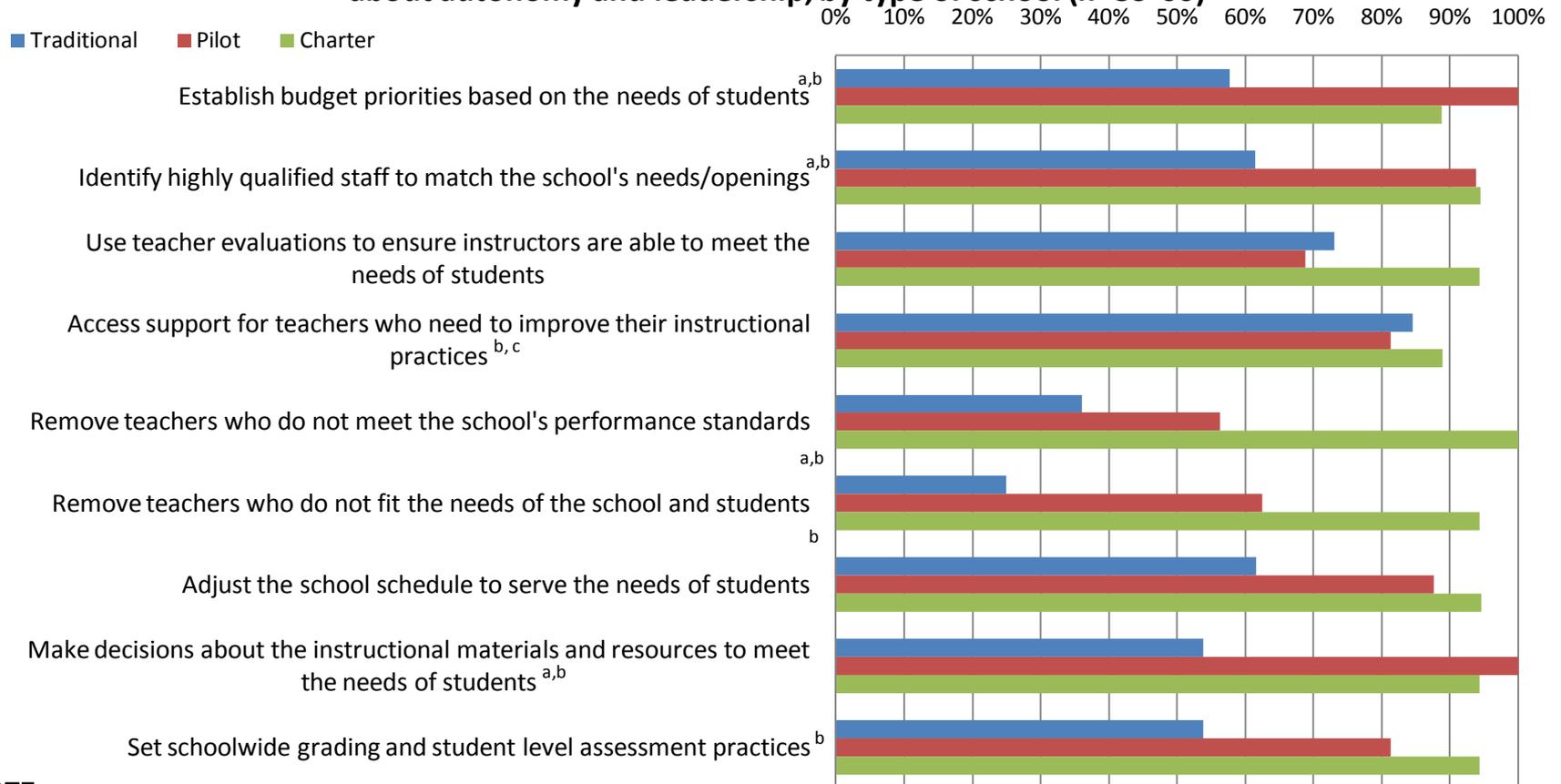
- How do traditional, pilot, and charter schools within each element of the autonomy framework operate?
- What practices within the elements of this framework may account for differences in student performance levels?
- How do high-performing traditional, pilot, and charter schools operate within these autonomies, and how are they similar or different from one another?

The Autonomy Framework

- Staffing
- Scheduling and Time
- Governance and Leadership
- Budget
- Professional Development
- Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment

Autonomy and Leadership

Percentage of principals reporting that they “agree” or “strongly agree” with statements about autonomy and leadership, by type of school (n=59-60)



NOTE:

a = Difference between traditional and pilot schools is statistically significant at the .05 level.

b = Difference between traditional and charter schools is statistically significant at the .05 level.

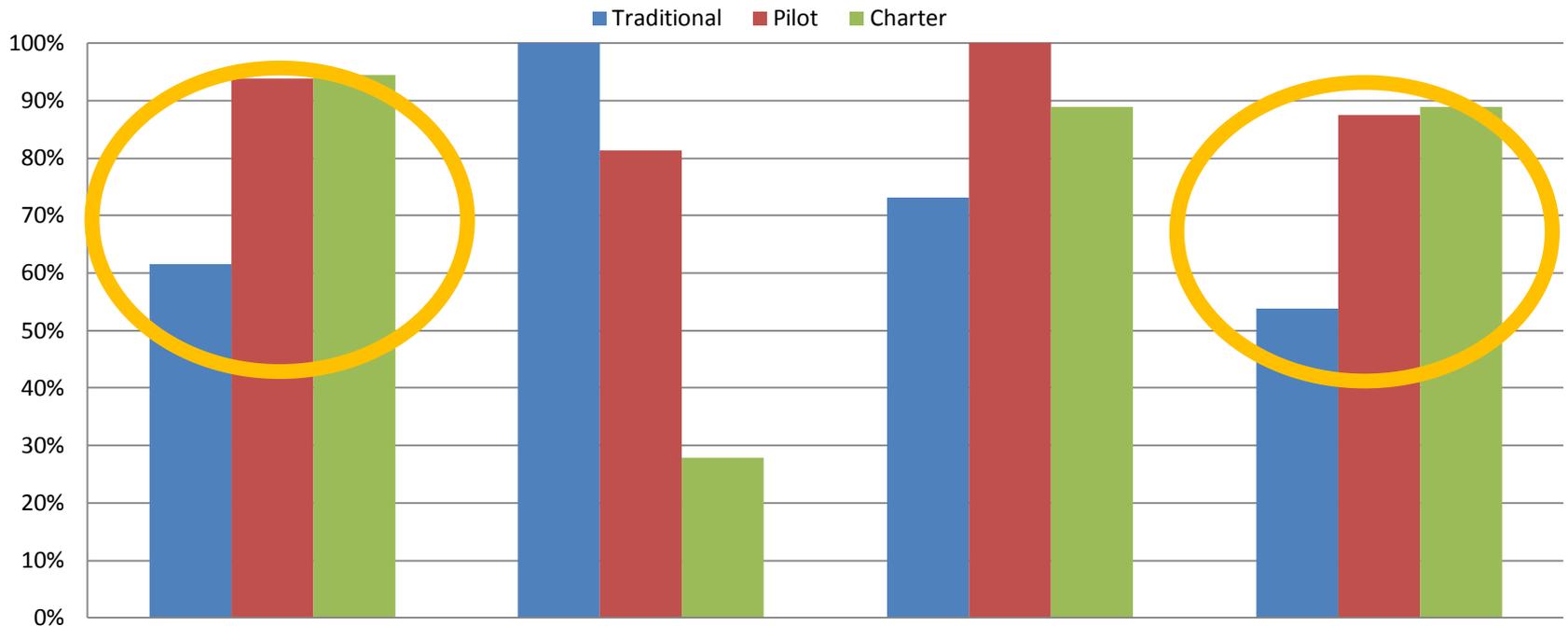
c = Difference between charter and pilot schools is statistically significant at the .05 level.

SOURCE: Principal Survey

Staffing

Staffing

Percentage of principals reporting that they “agree” or “strongly agree” with statements about hiring staff, by type of school (n=60)



I am able to identify highly qualified staff to match the school's needs/openings^{a,b}

The level of salary and benefits offered to teachers at my school helps to attract qualified teacher candidates^{b,c}

The reputation of this school helps to attract qualified teacher candidates

The process for identifying and hiring qualified staff takes a reasonable amount of time^{a,c}

Note:

a = Difference between traditional and pilot schools is statistically significant at the .05 level.

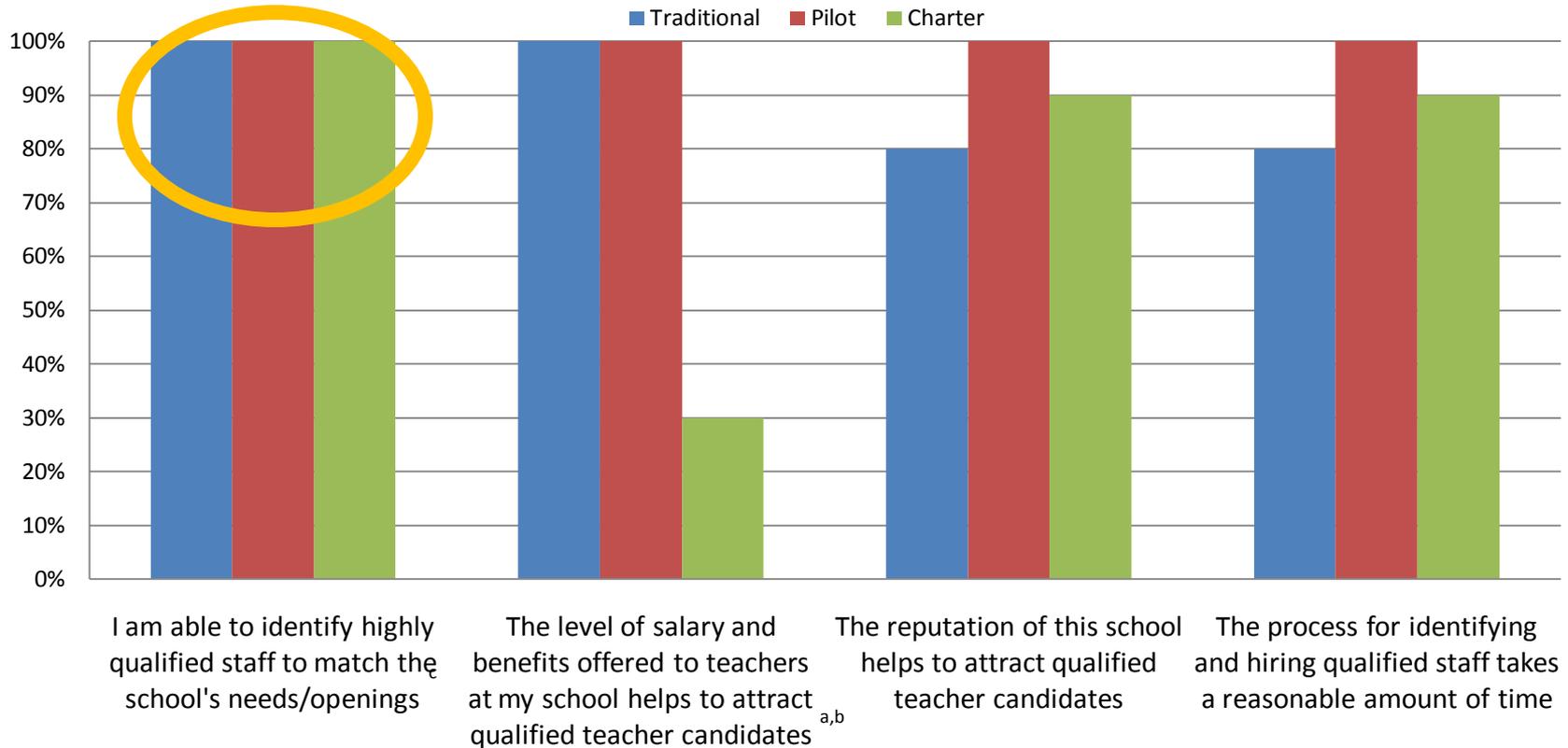
b = Difference between traditional and charter schools is statistically significant at the .05 level.

c = Difference between charter and pilot schools is statistically significant at the .05 level.

SOURCE: Principal Survey

Staffing

Percentage of principals of HIGH ACHIEVING SCHOOLS reporting that they “agree” or “strongly agree” with statements about hiring staff, by type of school (n=19)



Note:

a= Difference between traditional and charter schools in the high-achieving sub-sample is statistically significant at the .05 level.

b= Difference between charter and pilot schools in the high-achieving sub-sample is statistically significant at the .05 level.

c= Difference between traditional schools in the full sample and traditional schools in the high-achieving sub-sample is statistically significant at the .05 level.

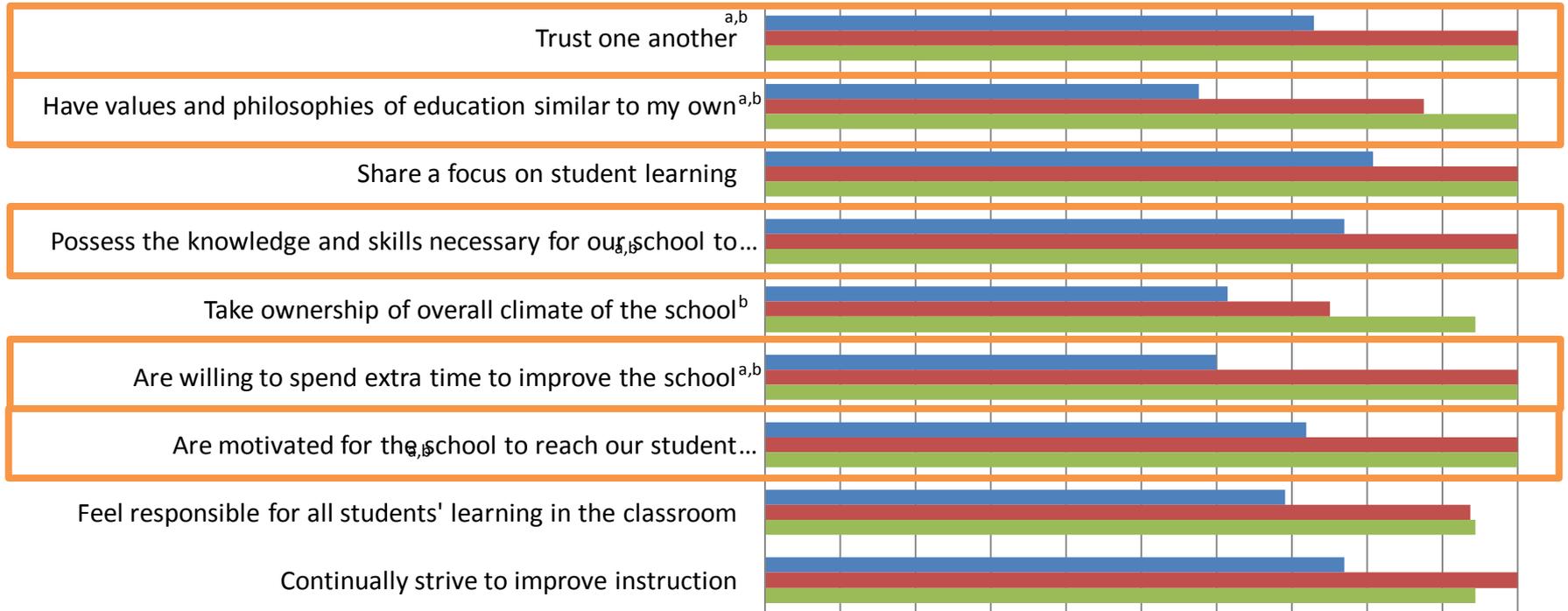
SOURCE: Principal Survey

Staffing

Percentage of principals reporting that they “agree” or “strongly agree” with statements about the characteristics of staff within their school, by type of school (n=59-60)

■ Traditional ■ Pilot ■ Charter

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%



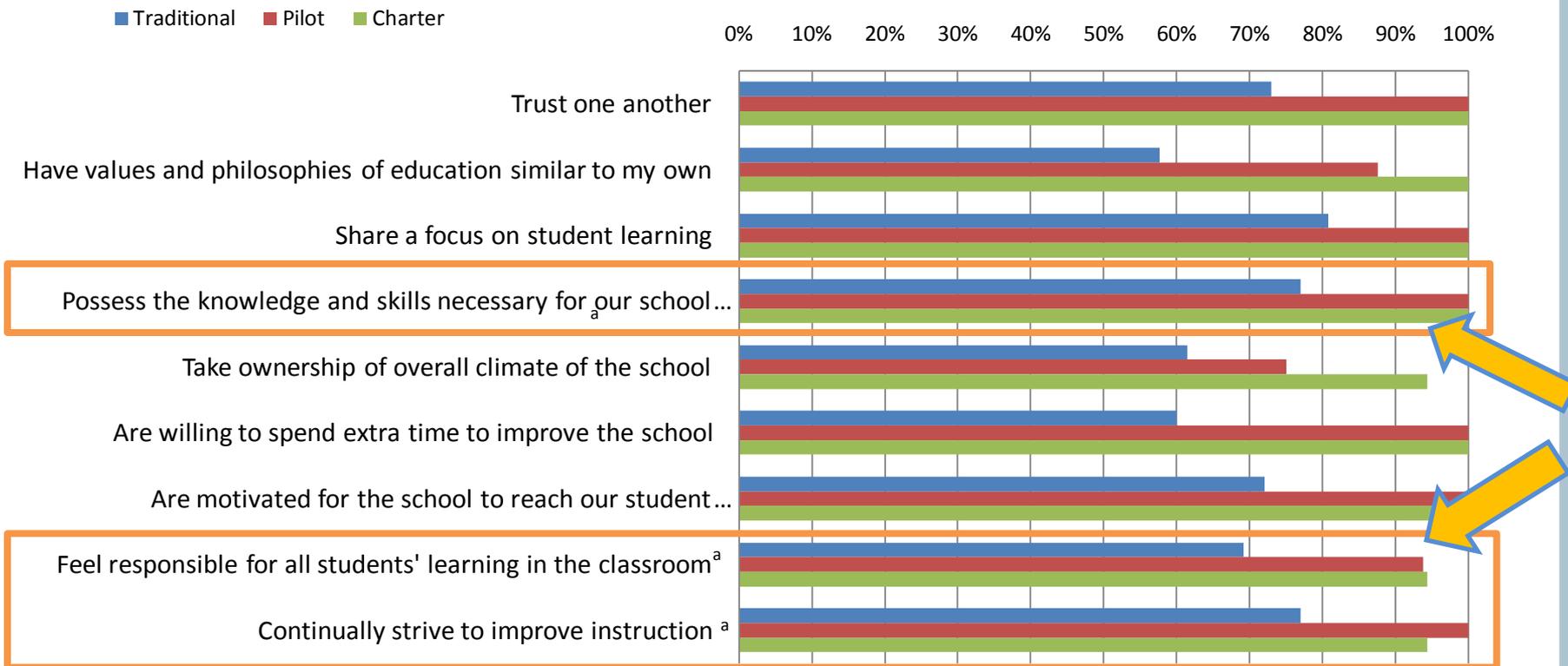
Note:

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 b = Difference between traditional and charter schools is statistically significant at the .05 level.
 c = Difference between charter and pilot schools is statistically significant at the .05 level.

SOURCE: Principal Survey

Staffing

Percentage of principals from HIGH ACHIEVING SCHOOLS reporting that they “agree” or “strongly agree” with statements about the characteristics of staff within their school, by type of school (n=19)

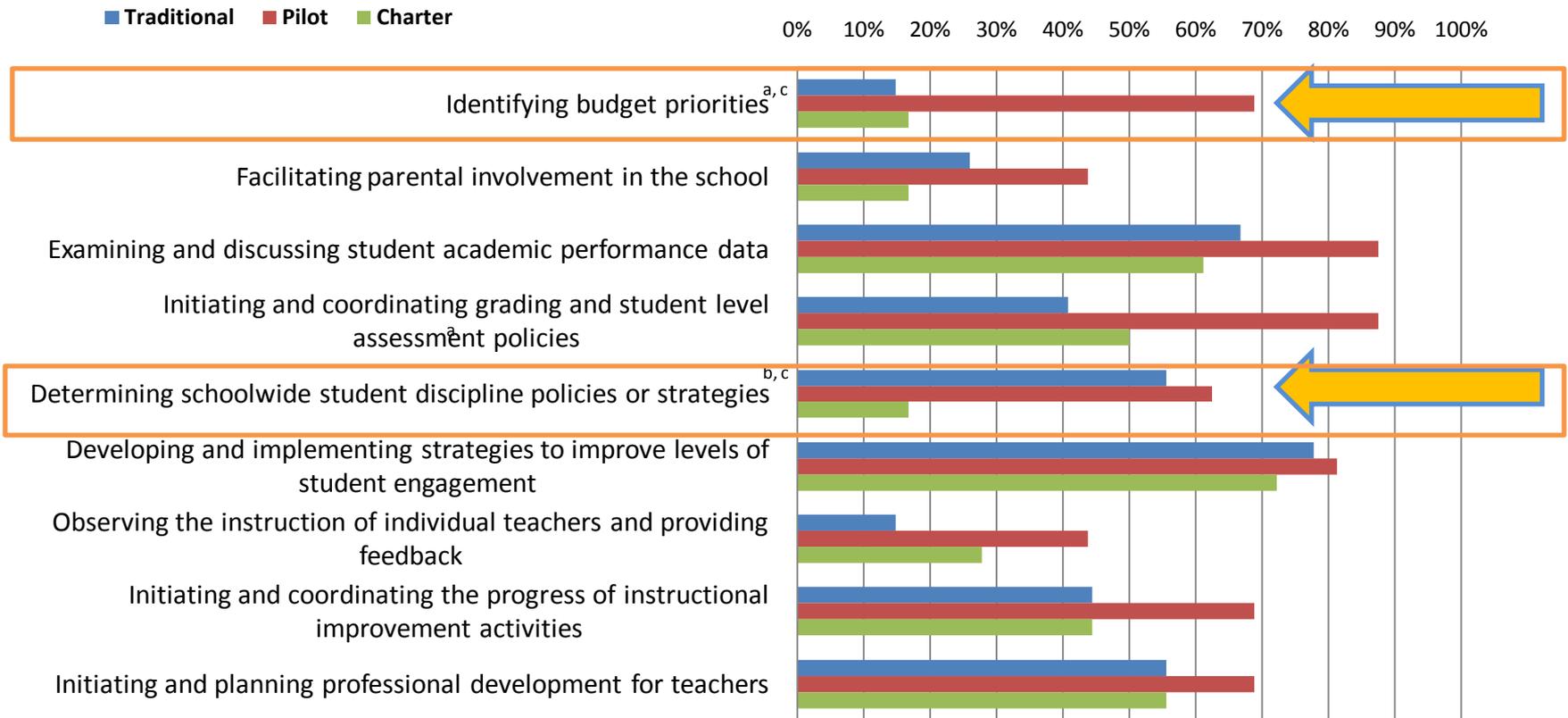


Note:

a=Difference between traditional schools in the full sample and traditional schools in the high-achieving sub-sample is statistically significant at the .05 level.

Staffing: Governance and Leadership

Percentage of principals reporting that either their Department chairs of grade/subject lead teachers are primarily responsible for various school activities, by type of school (n=61)



Note:

a = Difference between traditional and pilot schools is statistically significant at the .05 level.

b = Difference between traditional and charter schools is statistically significant at the .05 level.

c = Difference between charter and pilot schools is statistically significant at the .05 level.

SOURCE: Principal Survey

Scheduling and Time

Scheduling and Time

Average length of day, for students, contracted for teachers, and reported for teachers, by type of school ($n=59$)



Note:

a = Difference between traditional and pilot schools is statistically significant at the .05 level.

b = Difference between traditional and charter schools is statistically significant at the .05 level.

c = Difference between charter and pilot schools is statistically significant at the .05 level.

SOURCE: Principal Survey

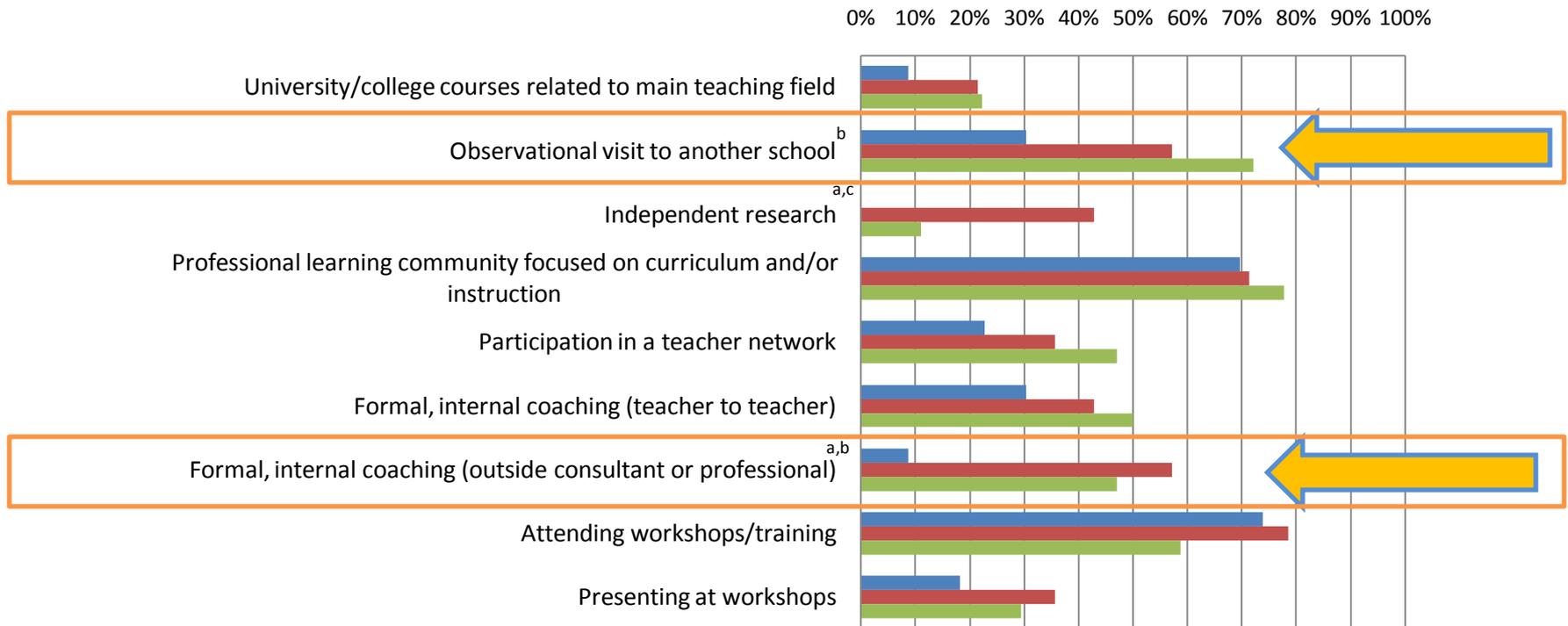
Scheduling and Time

- Key takeaway: *It is not simply, more time, but how that time is used and organized in schools*
- Impacts other autonomy areas:
 - *Professional Development*
 - Collective professional development opportunities
 - *Curriculum and Instruction*
 - Time spent receiving instruction or working in content areas
 - Student academic supports

Scheduling and Time: Professional Development

Percentage of principals reporting that either a team of teachers or the whole school (all or nearly all teachers) participated in various forms of professional development in 2008-09, by type of school (*n*=53-55)

■ Traditional ■ Pilot ■ Charter



Note:

a = Difference between traditional and pilot schools is statistically significant at the .05 level.

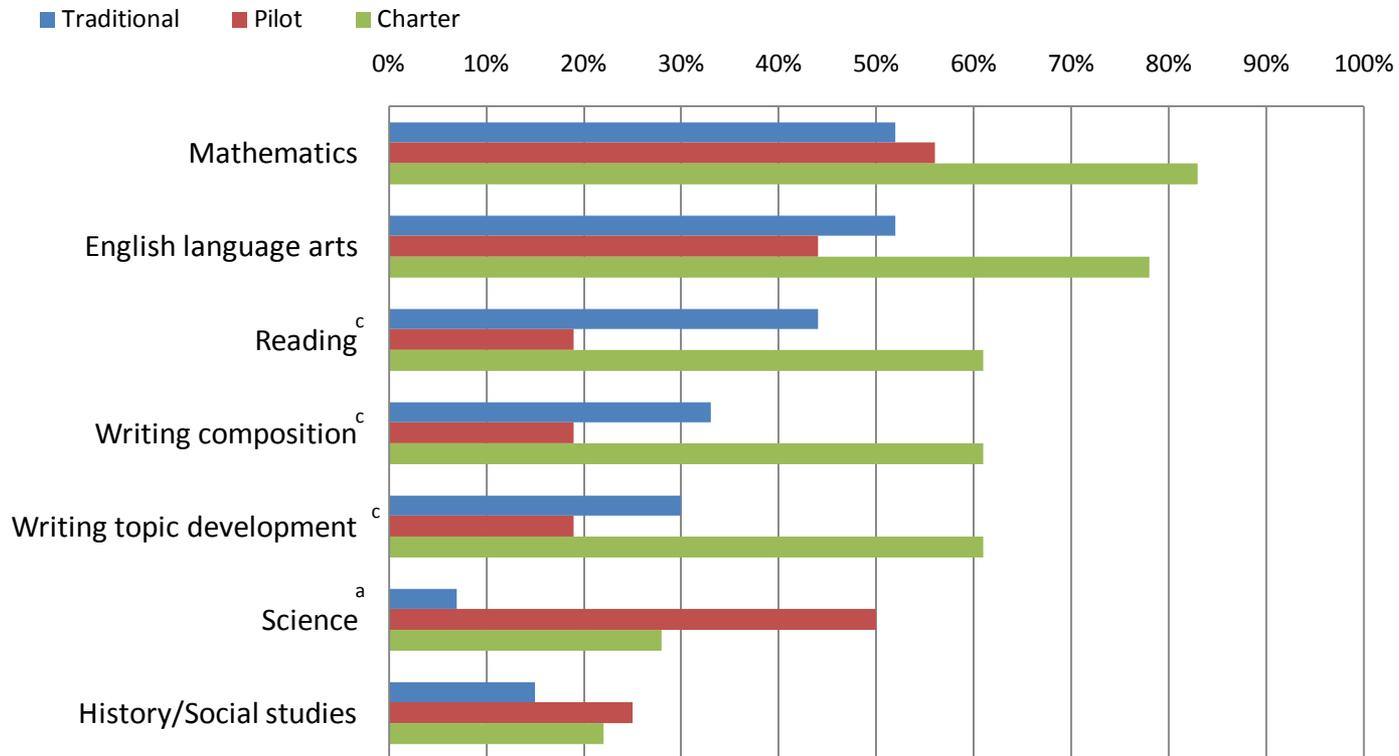
b = Difference between traditional and charter schools is statistically significant at the .05 level.

c = Difference between charter and pilot schools is statistically significant at the .05 level.

SOURCE: Principal Survey

Scheduling and Time: Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment

Percentage of principals reporting that their students spend 5 hours or more per week receiving instruction or doing work in different content areas, by type of school ($n=54-59$)



Note:

a = Difference between traditional and pilot schools is statistically significant at the .05 level.

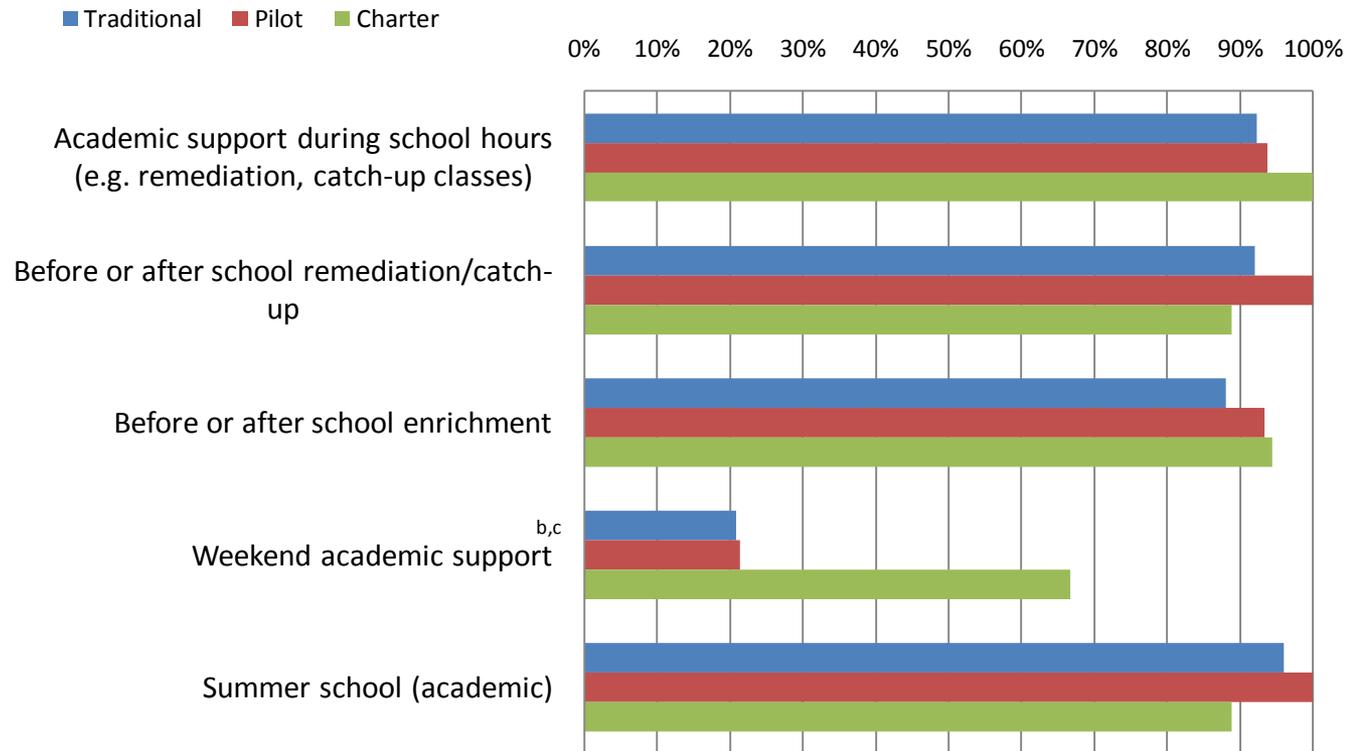
b = Difference between traditional and charter schools is statistically significant at the .05 level.

c = Difference between charter and pilot schools is statistically significant at the .05 level.

SOURCE: Principal Survey

Scheduling and Time: Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment

Percentage of principals reporting that various type of supports are available for students, by type of school (n=56-60)



Note:

a = Difference between traditional and pilot schools is statistically significant at the .05 level.

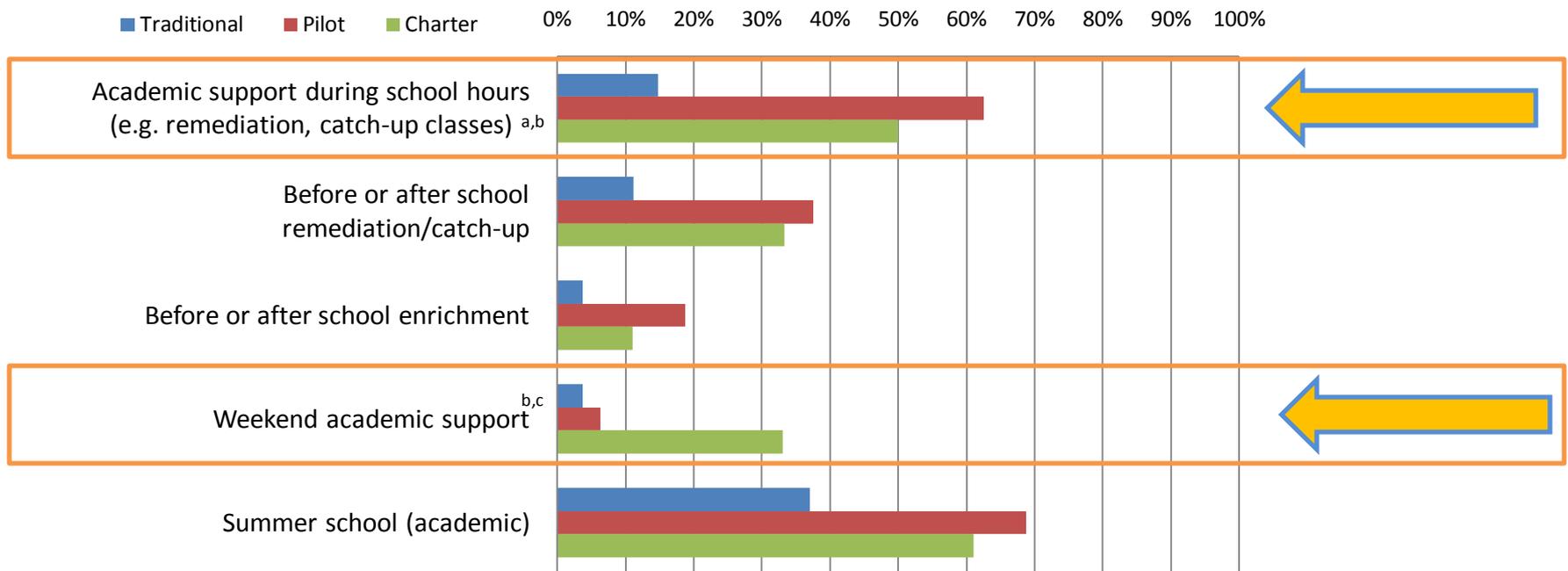
b = Difference between traditional and charter schools is statistically significant at the .05 level.

c = Difference between charter and pilot schools is statistically significant at the .05 level.

SOURCE: Principal Survey

Scheduling and Time: Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment

Percentage of principals reporting that various type of supports are required for some or all students, by type of school (n=56-60)



Note:

- a = Difference between traditional and pilot schools is statistically significant at the .05 level.
- b = Difference between traditional and charter schools is statistically significant at the .05 level.
- c = Difference between charter and pilot schools is statistically significant at the .05 level.

SOURCE: Principal Survey

Conclusion

- Gateway Autonomies
 - Staffing
 - Fit between staff and school is important
 - Trust
 - Flexible staffing structures
 - Increased time, and attention to how time is used
 - Systems for routinely monitoring student needs
 - Support embedded into the regular school day
 - School-based professional development

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Questions?



Raise your hand or enter your question in the chat box
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Thank you for participating.

- We look forward to your participation in future webinars hosted by the National Charter School Resource Center.
- This webinar will be archived at the following website:
<http://www.charterschoolcenter.org/webinars>
- Please share your feedback with us through the evaluation.