



# Independent Schools

Make a Difference

# Every Day

**America's  
Independent  
Schools**

*learning  
leading  
achieving*

# What are independent schools?

There are approximately 2,000 independent schools across the United States, providing more than 700,000 students from pre-kindergarten through high school with a unique and high-quality education.

Independent schools are “independent” because they each have a distinct educational mission, are independently governed, and are supported by tuition payments, charitable contributions, and endowment revenue. What they share is a commitment to achieving excellence and inspiring innovation.

As part of the private school community, independent schools include coeducational, single-sex, and special focus institutions, as well as boarding and day schools. Each school meets high accreditation standards and is held accountable by its Board of Trustees.

## About independent schools

Independent schools are home to educational innovation, which teaches young people both academic skills and the importance of hard work, leadership, personal responsibility, and good citizenship. Each school features close-knit learning environments, challenging instruction, and safe communities.

Independent schools are also good neighbors and partners, making both social and economic contributions to their communities.





## **Independent schools...**

- **Provide an academically challenging environment for students that nurtures intellectual curiosity, stimulates personal growth, and encourages critical thinking.**
- **Develop and model supportive learning environments, where service-learning, athletics, and the arts are as important as classroom lessons.**
- **Motivate students to achieve excellence—in and out of the classroom.**
- **Create a culture that ensures life-long returns for students, including a commitment to community involvement, a heightened social responsibility, and an understanding of what it means to be a global citizen.**
- **Graduate students who are more likely to complete a bachelor's or higher degree.**
- **Attract high quality teachers who teach in their areas of expertise and are committed and passionate about what they do.**
- **Encourage active participation of parents in their children's education.**
- **Contribute to the economic well being of their local communities.**
- **Partner with neighbors, local governments, public schools, and businesses.**



## Did You Know?\*

**ACCOUNTABILITY** Independent schools are accountable to their boards of trustees, the families they serve, and the accrediting agencies that evaluate them. Every independent school undergoes a thorough evaluative process by a recognized accrediting body. In addition, independent schools comply with all appropriate federal, state, and local laws and regulations, including those that govern 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations.

**AFFORDABILITY** Independent schools work with families to help them meet the costs associated with their child's education. Financial aid often includes grants, scholarships, or loans from schools and a variety of other sources. Nearly 17 percent of independent school students receive financial aid for a median award of \$9,600 per student.

**ACCESS** Independent schools are home to students and families of all types of backgrounds and nationalities. They are committed to promoting a diverse school community and a high-quality education for all.

**GOOD NEIGHBORS** Independent schools have a strong history of reaching out to their communities, through student and faculty involvement in neighborhood, town, or city initiatives; welcoming neighbors at school-wide events; and offering use of school facilities.

**PARTNERS** Independent schools across the country partner with their public school colleagues in a variety of ways: teacher training and exchanges; sharing governance and site-based management learnings; and creating curricular materials, among many others.

*\*For details about independent schools in your area, please consult the enclosed pocket school facts and resources.*

### U.S. Department of Education Study Confirms Private Schools Are on the Right Track

#### Study finds that independent schools:

- Have average student-teacher ratios of 13:1, leading to greater student success in college.
- Place a strong emphasis on small schools, which often leads to higher achievement for students.
- Have teachers who are able to communicate consistent goals to their students and collaborate more effectively on raising student achievement.

Source: "The Condition of Education, 2002"