



# School Options




## Public Schools

Funded by public dollars, public schools offer every child a free education. Policy and organization are largely controlled by state and federal government agencies. Local school districts handle the day-to-day operation of the schools within each district. Features of public schools include a set number of days of attendance, pre-approved curriculum, and certified teachers. They often have standardized testing.

-  **Charter Schools** operate under a contract negotiated between the organizers who manage the school (teachers, parents, or others from the public or private sector), and the sponsors who oversee the provisions of the charter (some type of public authority). They are financed by public money and cannot charge tuition. Specific application and acceptance criteria are required.
-  **Magnet Schools** are specialized public schools whose curriculum is based on a special theme or method of instruction. Specific application and acceptance criteria may be required.

## Non-Public/Private Schools

Private schools receive their funds from tuition fees and other private sector sources. Policy and organization are dependent on the sponsoring institution and the laws of the state in which they are located.

-  **Independent schools** are independently governed by a board of trustees. This board defines the school's particular mission. Each school is accountable to the parents who enroll their children in the school. Many independent schools are members of the National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS). NAIS schools are accredited by a regional association authorized by the state regulatory educational authority to grant accreditation.
-  **Parochial or religious schools** are owned and operated by a religious body or organization. The curriculum and activities are usually determined by the church and clergy. These schools adhere to state requirements offering a basic academic program that they may enrich as they choose. They also offer religious instruction focusing on morals and values.
-  **Other private schools** include nondenominational or nonsectarian schools, boarding schools, military schools, for-profit schools, and special schools.