

Fast Facts about Private Schools

Did you know that in America:

- One in four schools is a private school;
- One child in nine attends a private school;
- Private schools produce an annual savings to taxpayers estimated at more than \$48,000,000,000;
- Private school students perform better than their public school counterparts on standardized achievement tests;
- Ninety percent of private high school graduates attend college, compared to 66 percent of public high school graduates;
- Private school students from low socio-economic backgrounds are more than three times more likely than comparable public school students to attain a bachelor's degree by their mid-20s, meaning that private schools contribute to breaking the cycle of poverty for their students;
- Private schools are racially, ethnically, and economically diverse. Twenty-three percent of private school students are students of color; 28 percent are from families with annual incomes under \$50,000;
- Private secondary school students are nearly 50 percent more likely to take AP or IB courses in science and math than public school students;
- The participation of private school students in community service projects is significantly higher than their public school counterparts.

CAPE member organizations:

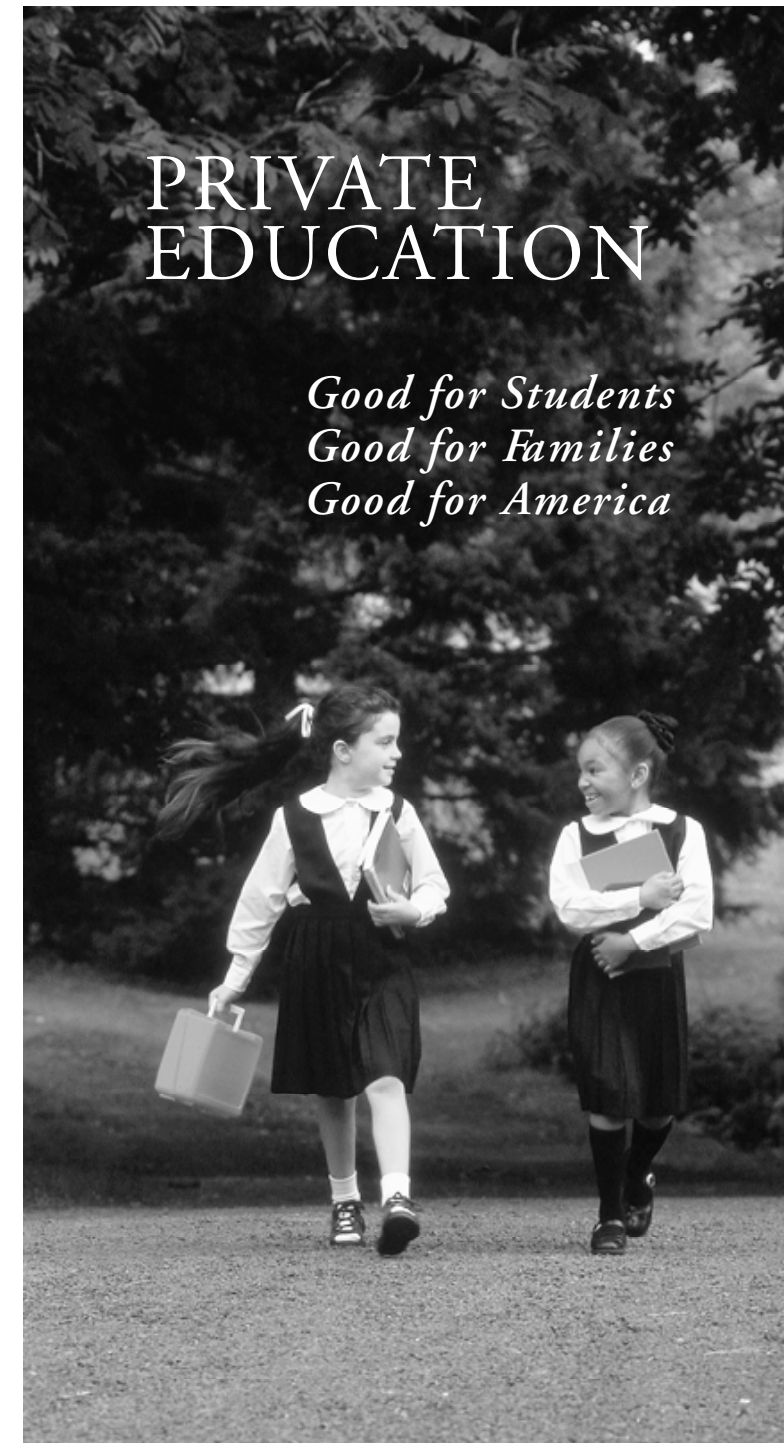
American Montessori Society
Association Montessori International–USA
Association of Christian Schools International
Association of Waldorf Schools of N.A.
Christian Schools International
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
Friends Council on Education
Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod
National Association of Episcopal Schools
National Association of Independent Schools
National Catholic Educational Association
National Christian School Association
Oral Roberts University Educational Fellowship
Seventh-day Adventist Board of Education
Solomon Schechter Day School Association
Southern Baptist Association of Christian Schools
United States Conference of Catholic Bishops
28 Affiliated State Organizations

The Council for American Private Education (CAPE) is the primary advocate for American private K–12 education. Based in Washington, D.C., with organizations in most states, CAPE strengthens the nation's educational system by working with parents, educators, and legislators to preserve educational pluralism and ensure that parents have a choice in the schooling of their children.

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PRIVATE
EDUCATION

*Good for Students
Good for Families
Good for America*

CAPE | Council for American
Private Education

Voice of America's Private Schools

America's first schools were private schools. Its first leaders were taught in private schools, whose goal was to graduate a student capable of making a positive contribution to society. Today, private schools gladly join their newer counterpart—public schools—in creating an educational system that is the envy of the world and the hope for our continued freedom.

In a 1999–2000 survey by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), the number one goal of private schools was academic excellence. Thanks to committed parents, motivated students and limited distractions, private schools are free to focus on quality education for the more than six million children they enroll.

More than 350 years after John Milton claimed that truth emerges from “the marketplace of ideas,” the rich diversity of private schools is a staple in the marketplace of American education, and the nation is stronger for it.

Our common motto is simple: Private education is good for students, good for families, and good for America.

Good for Students

In a June 2002 report, NCES found that private school students scored higher on standardized tests, had more demanding graduation requirements, and sent more graduates to college than public schools. The report said that students who had completed at least the eighth grade in a private school were twice as likely as other students to graduate from college as a young adult. NCES statistics also showed that students in private schools are much more likely than others to take advanced-level high school courses.

Students thrive when allowed to learn in a safe and supportive environment. Joint reports by the NCES and the Bureau of Justice Statistics, and a private study by the Horatio Alger Association have found that private school students are significantly more likely than others to feel safe and be safe in their schools.

Good for Families

Choosing a school for their children is one of the most important decisions parents must make. Whether they move into a school district, apply to a private school, or adjust family duties to make home schooling possible, most families want school choice.

For the parents of more than six million children, the choice is private education. They choose a private education for many reasons, with quality academics, a safe and orderly environment, and moral and ethical values the common reasons cited.

And choice makes them satisfied consumers. The NCES reports that more than three-quarters of private school parents are “very satisfied” with their child's school compared with less than half of parents whose children were assigned to a public school.

Parents often look to private schools as an extension of the home in promoting the values they embrace, and private schools respond. A recent NCES survey found that promoting religious/spiritual life was second only to academic excellence in the goals of private school principals.



Good for America

Nothing in a democracy is more important than the education of the next generation of its citizens. In standardized tests designed to measure how well American youth are prepared to meet their citizenship responsibilities, students in private schools score higher than their public school counterparts.

Gaps between minority students and majority students are narrowed in private schools. According to NCES, minority students in private schools are more than twice as likely to enter four-year colleges than their counterparts in public schools, making private schools the nation's greatest hope for boosting minority participation in society from boardroom to classroom.

The public applauds the accomplishments of private education. Public Agenda, a national research organization, found that adults believed, by a wide margin, that private schools do a better job of providing a quality education than public schools. That's why we say “*Private education promotes the public good.*”

Sources

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An annotated version of this brochure with footnotes and links to data sources can be found on the CAPE Web site at www.capenet.org/benefits4.html.