

Fast Facts about Private Schools

Did you know that in America:

- One in four schools is a private school [10];
- One child in nine attends a private school [11];
- Private schools produce an annual savings to taxpayers estimated at more than \$48,000,000,000 [12];
- Private school students perform better than their public school counterparts on standardized achievement tests [13];
- Ninety percent of private high school graduates attend college, compared to 66 percent of public high school graduates [14];
- 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 [15], 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 [16]; twenty-eight percent are from families with annual incomes under \$50,000 [17];
- Private secondary school students are nearly 50 percent more likely to take AP or IB courses in science and math than public school students [18];
- The participation of private school students in community service projects is significantly higher than their public school counterparts [19].

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.

Sources

- [Digest of Education Statistics: 2002](#), NCES, 2003
- [Federal, State, and Local Governments Public Elementary-Secondary Education Finance Data 2002](#), U.S. Census Bureau, 2004
- [High School Transcript Study \(HSTS\) 2000](#), NCES, 2004
- [Indicators of School Crimes and Safety: 2003](#), Bureau of Justice Statistics and NCES, 2003
- [National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988](#) (NELS: 88), NCES, 1990-2003
- [The NAEP 1998 Civics Report Card for the Nation](#), NCES, 1999
- [On Thin Ice](#), Public Agenda, 1999
- [Private School Universe Survey: 1999-2000](#), NCES, 2001
- [Private Schools: A Brief Portrait](#), NCES, 2002

- [Projections of Education Statistics to 2013](#), NCES, 2003
 - [School Enrollment--Social and Economic Characteristics of Students: October 2002](#), U.S. Census Bureau, 2004
 - [Service-Learning and Community Service Among 6th- through 12th-Grade Students in the United States: 1996 and 1999](#), NCES, 1999
 - [The State of Our Nation's Youth: 2000-2001](#), Horatio Alger Association, 2000
 - [Trends in the Use of School Choice: 1993-1999](#), NCES, 2003
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Notes

1. U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, [Private Schools: A Brief Portrait](#) (NCES 2002-013) (Washington, D.C., 2002) figure 7.
2. U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, [Private Schools: A Brief Portrait](#) (NCES 2002-013) (Washington, D.C., 2002) tables 11 and 12, figures 9 and 10.
3. U.S. Departments of Education and Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics and National Center for Education Statistics, [Indicators of School Crime and Safety: 2003](#) (NCES 2004-004) (Washington, D.C., 2003) tables 3.1, 6.1, 12.1, 13.1, 14.1, 15.1.
4. Horatio Alger Association of Distinguished Americans, [The State of Our Nation's Youth: 2000-2001](#) (Alexandria, VA, 2001) p. 8.
5. U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, [Trends in the Use of School Choice: 1993 to 1999](#) (NCES 2001-003) (Washington, D.C., 2003) table 3.
6. U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, [Private Schools: A Brief Portrait](#) (NCES 2002-013) (Washington, D.C., 2002) figure 7.
7. U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, [The NAEP 1998 Civics Report Card for the Nation](#) (NCES 2000-457) (Washington, D.C., 1999) pp. 63-64.
8. College-going rates were provided to CAPE by the National Center for Education Statistics using data from the [National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988](#) (NELS: 88). Details are available in the [October 2001 issue of CAPE Outlook](#).
9. Public Agenda, [On Thin Ice](#) (New York, NY, 1999) p. 29.
10. U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, [Digest of Education Statistics: 2002](#) (NCES 2003-060) (Washington, D.C., 2003) [table 5](#).
11. U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, [Projections of Education Statistics to 2013](#) (NCES 2004-013) (Washington, D.C., 2003) [table 1](#).

12. This figure was calculated by multiplying the average national public school per-pupil expenditure (\$7701) for 2002 by the number of students in private schools (6,256,000). Data tables for per-pupil expenditures in 2002 are available from the U.S. Census Bureau at <http://www.census.gov/govs/www/school02.html> (download the state level tables and refer to table 8). Enrollment data are available in [table 1](#) of the NCES publication [Projections of Education Statistics to 2013](#) (NCES 2004-013).
13. U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, [Private Schools: A Brief Portrait](#) (NCES 2002-013) (Washington, D.C., 2002) table 11.
14. U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, [Digest of Education Statistics: 2002](#) (NCES 2003-060) (Washington, D.C., 2003) [table 185](#).
15. U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, [Private Schools: A Brief Portrait](#) (NCES 2002-013) (Washington, D.C., 2002) table 13.
16. U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, [Private School Universe Survey: 1999-2000](#) (NCES 2001-330) (Washington, D.C., 2001) table 16.
17. U.S. Census Bureau, [School Enrollment--Social and Economic Characteristics of Students: October 2002](#) (Washington, D.C., 2004) [table 6, All Races](#).
18. AP and IB science and math course rates for private and public schools were calculated by NCEES staff for CAPE using data from the following source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, [High School Transcript Study \(HSTS\) 2000](#) (Washington, D.C., 2004).
19. U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, [Service-Learning and Community Service Among 6th- through 12th Grade Students in the United States: 1996 and 1999](#) (NCES 2000-028) (Washington, D.C., 1999), table 2.