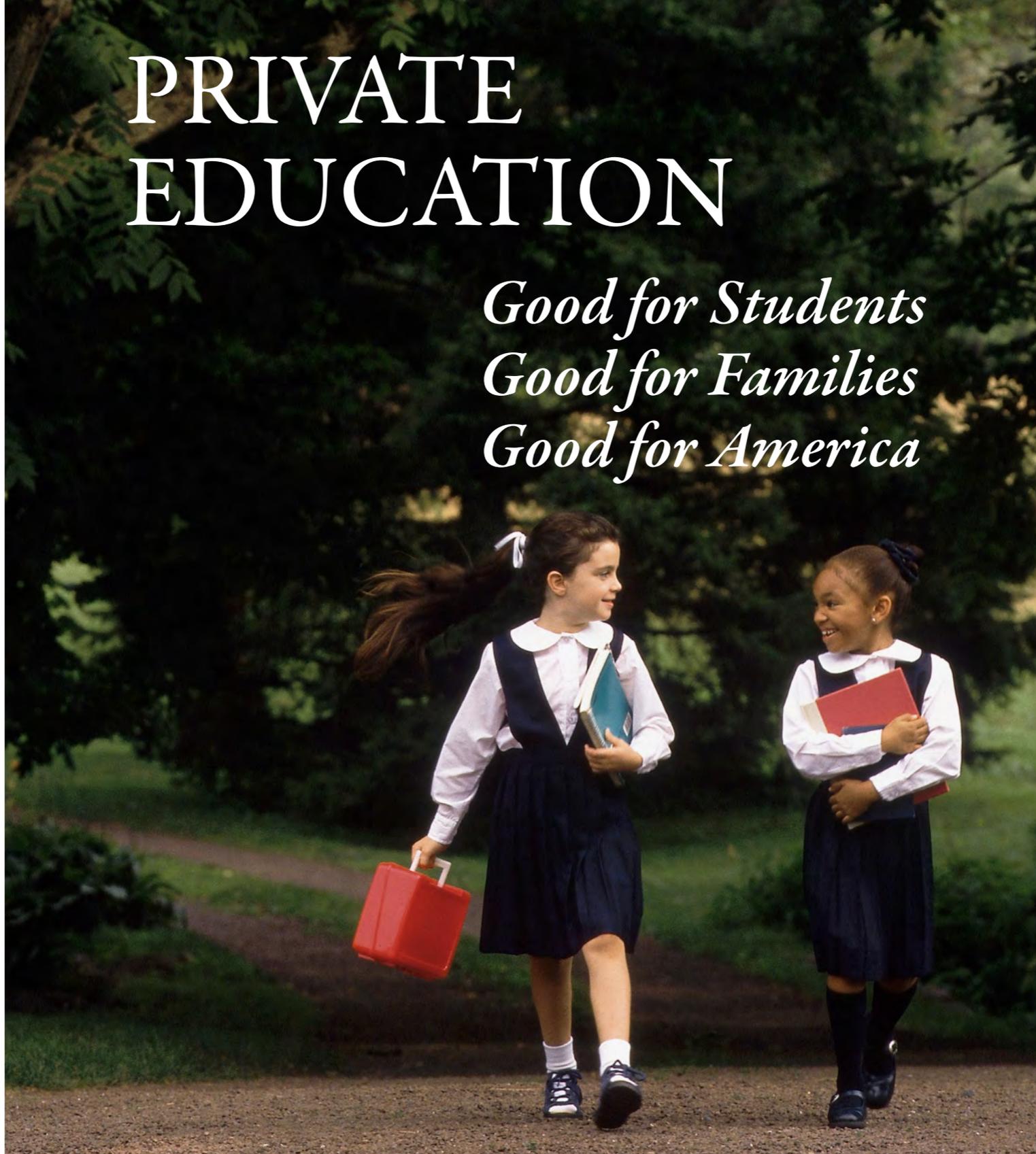


PRIVATE EDUCATION

*Good for Students
Good for Families
Good for America*



CAPE

Council for American
Private Education

Voice of America's Private Schools

Introduction

Choosing a school for a child is one of the most important decisions parents must make. For the parents of more than five million children, the choice is private education. They choose religious and independent schools for many reasons:

- quality academics
- a focus on the whole person
- a safe environment
- caring teachers
- moral and ethical values
- supportive communities
- individualized attention
- and much more



There are 33,000 religious and independent schools in the United States, and more than five million students attend them.

Private schools have been part of our country from the start. Indeed, a number of them predate the signing of the Declaration of Independence. Many of our country's finest leaders were formed in private schools, and to this day, such schools continue to strengthen the nation by remaining a highly valued part of the fabric of thousands of local communities.



Private schools foster academic excellence and high achievement; they educate the whole child within a values-based setting and

prepare youngsters not just for college and career, but for life. Parents looking for a caring, challenging, nurturing, safe, and secure environment for their children—a place where children can learn and succeed—should consider a private school.

At CAPE we say, “Private schools are *good for students, good for families, and good for America.*” This booklet helps explain why.



Fast Facts About Private Schools

Did you know that in America:

- One in four schools is a private school.
- One child in ten attends a private school.
- Private schools produce an annual savings to taxpayers estimated at \$50 billion.
- Private school students perform well above the national average on standardized achievement tests.
- Sixty-seven percent of private high school graduates attend four-year colleges, compared to 40 percent of graduates from other schools.
- Nineteen percent of all private schools had students who received services under Title I of the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)*.
- Fifty-nine percent of all private schools had one or more students with an Individual Education Plan (IEP).

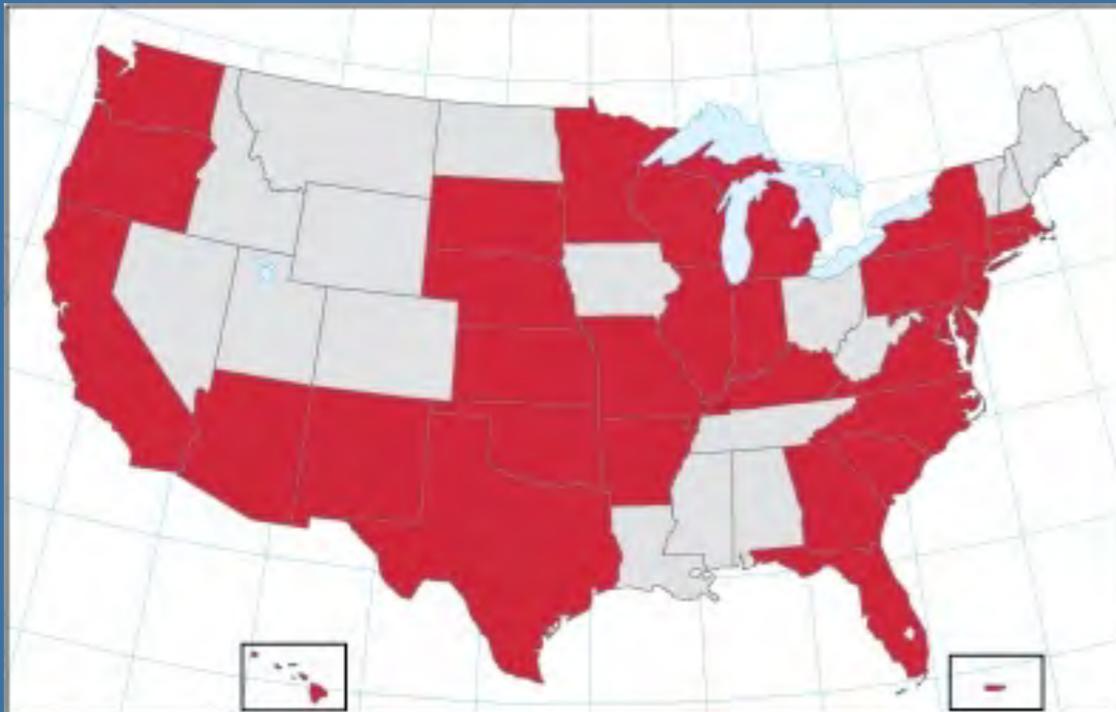


**Council for American
Private Education**

Voice of America's Private Schools

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.

State CAPE Affiliates



CAPE Member Organizations

- Agudath Israel of America
- American Montessori Society
- Association Montessori International–USA
- Association of Christian Schools International
- Association of Christian Teachers and Schools
- 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
- United States Conference of Catholic Bishops
- Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod Schools

Find out how private schools promote the public good and provide a path to a promising future at:

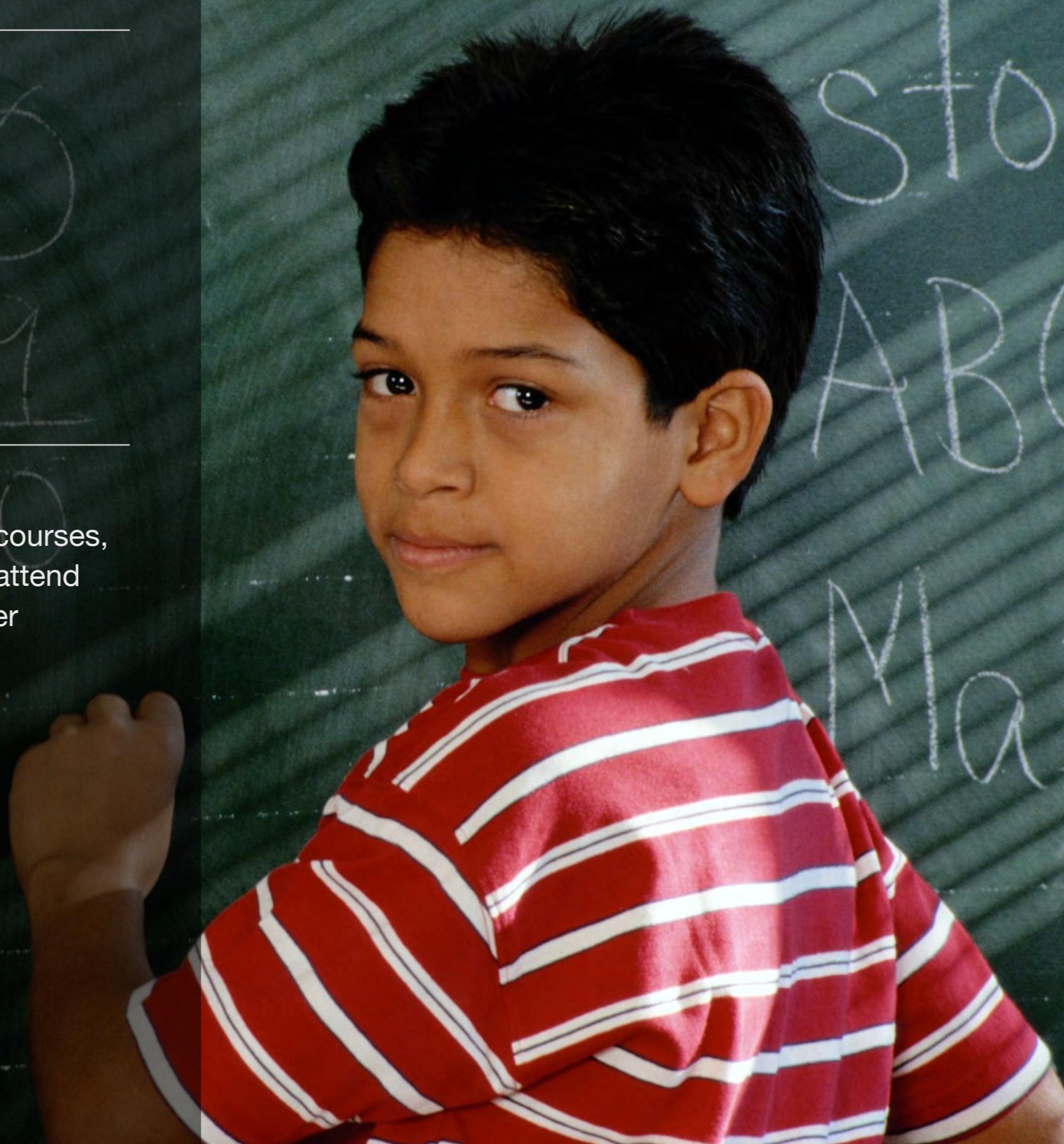


www.capenet.org



Good for Students

Private school students score higher on standardized tests, take more demanding courses, feel safer at school, and are more likely to attend and complete college than students in other schools.

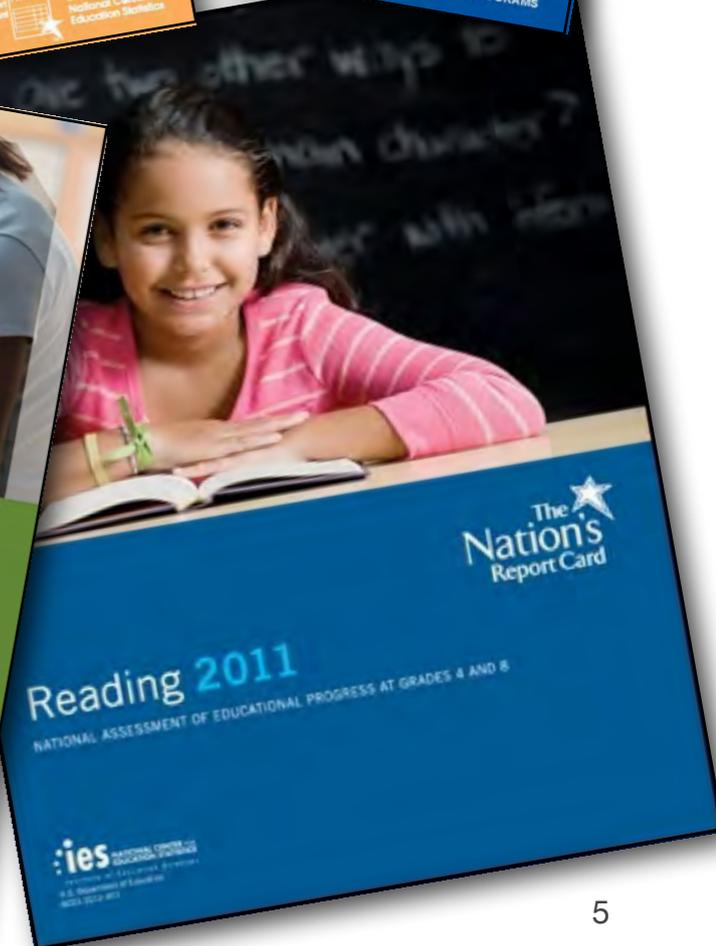
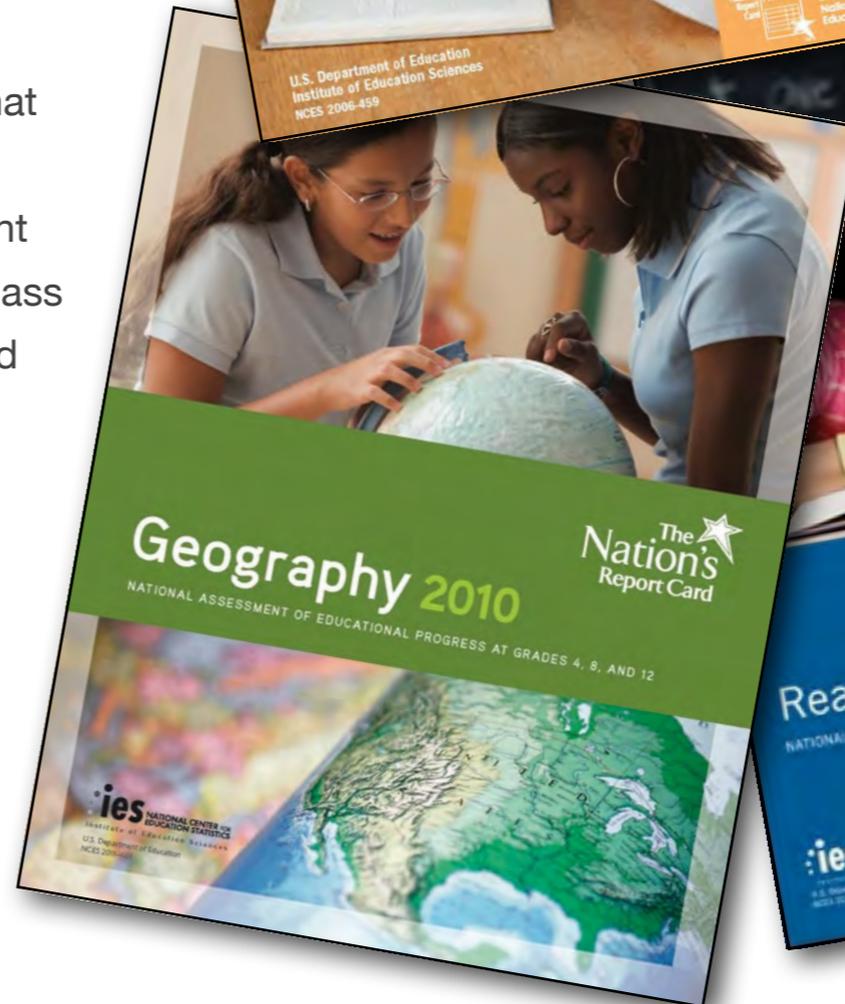
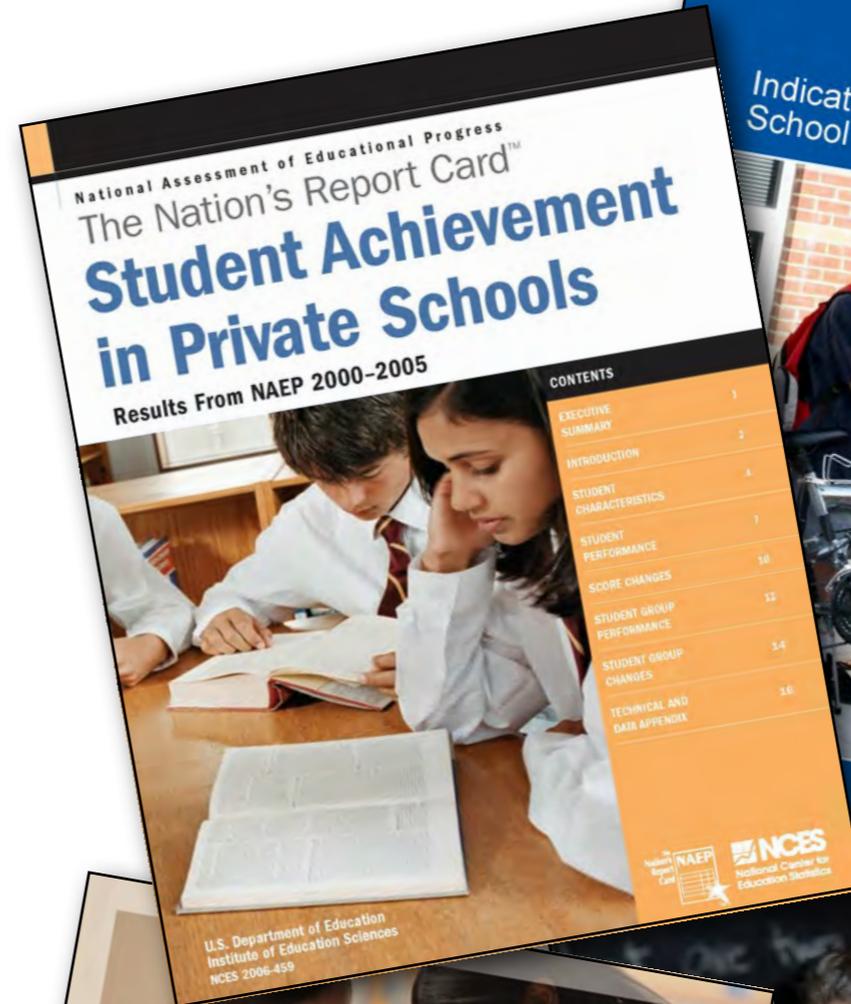


Known for the high standards they set, private schools engage students and spark the desire to learn. Teachers expect excellence from students, and students respond. The high expectations and academic rigor help account for above-average levels of student success.

Let's look at the facts. Private school students outperform the national average on standardized achievement tests. On the 2011 National Assessment of Educational Progress, also known as NAEP, eighth-grade students in private schools scored 12 points higher than average in math (296 vs. 284) and 17 points higher (265/282) in reading. Ten points on these two scales equal roughly one grade level. As you will see in the pages ahead, performance is also above average on every other NAEP test.

Data from the National Center for Education Statistics show that students in private high schools take more rigorous courses in math and science than their counterparts. Seventy-five percent of private high school graduates in the class

of 2004 completed high-level math courses like trigonometry, statistics, pre-calculus, or calculus.





Not surprisingly, SAT scores and ACT scores are much higher in private schools. And students are much more likely to graduate, go to college, and complete college. A lot is said these days about getting students college and career ready. Private schools seem to have that covered.

Private schools are orderly and safe—the kind of setting necessary for students to learn. A 2011 federal report on school violence indicates that students in private schools are much less likely to be victims of school crime. And in another government survey, private school teachers report much lower rates of students being disrespectful or coming to class unprepared to learn.

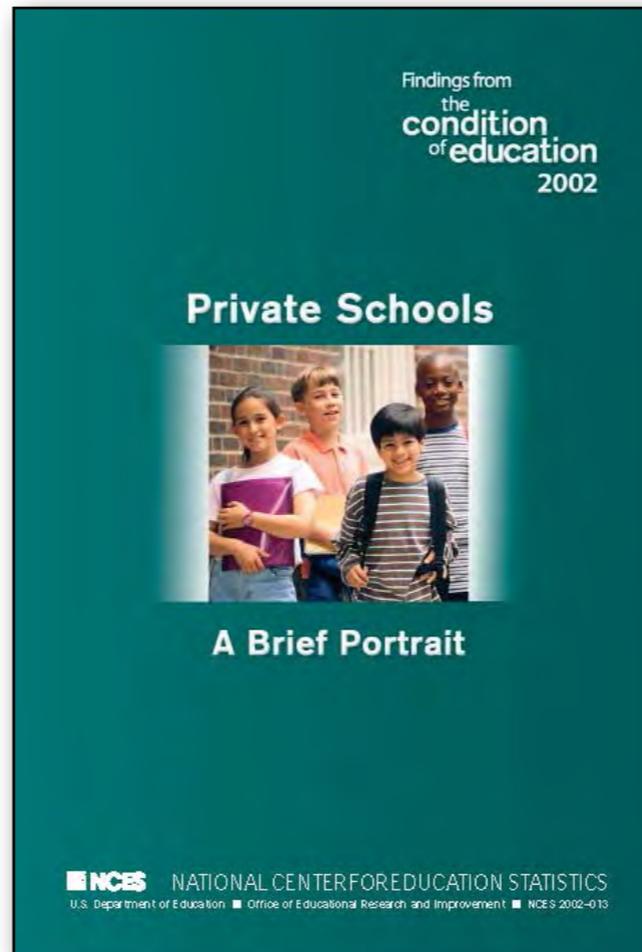
Finally, private schools can focus on the essentials—that which provides purpose and meaning to life. With so many children adversely influenced by media and peers and losing sight of what's important, many parents desperately desire the opportunity to choose schools whose primary purpose is to provide youngsters a sound moral and religious education. Private schools are the only schools we have that can directly assist parents with the religious and spiritual development of their children—a sphere of development so essential for their complete and proper upbringing.

Parents looking to help their children reach their potential in a school committed to safety, excellence, and success should consider a private school.

Private Schools: A Brief Portrait

In a landmark report titled *Private Schools: A Brief Portrait*, the U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics in 2002 had this to say about the academic performance of private schools:

- Private school students generally perform higher than their public school counterparts on standardized achievement tests.
- Private high schools typically have more demanding graduation requirements than do public high schools.
- Private school graduates are more likely than their peers from public schools to have completed advanced-level courses in three academic subject areas (Figure 1).
- Private school students are more likely than public school students to complete a bachelor's or advanced degree by their mid-20s (Figure 2).



The report also found that “students who had attended private school in 8th grade were twice as likely as those who had attended public school to have completed a bachelor's or higher degree by their mid-20s (52 versus 26 percent).”

For students from the lowest quartile of socioeconomic status (SES), the advantage of having attended a private school was even more pronounced. Those students were nearly four times more likely than their public school counterparts to have attained a bachelor's or higher degree (Figure 2). Private school attendance even seems to overcome a parent's low-expectations for a child. “[F]or students whose mother's expectation (in 8th grade) was for them to attain an associate's degree or less, those who had attended private school completed a bachelor's or higher degree at a

rate about four times that of public school students (30 versus 7 percent).”

The report explains that students from a low SES family who had "completed a calculus course in high school were much more likely than those who had not studied calculus to earn a degree by their mid-20s." It also notes that students in private schools "are more likely than those in public schools to take challenging courses like calculus, and private schools are more likely to require them." Specifically, private high schools require more courses for graduation than public high schools in math, science, social studies, foreign language, and computer science, and the coursework is more likely to include advanced courses in science (chemistry, physics, advanced biology), mathematics (trigonometry, precalculus, calculus), and foreign language (a third year or more) (Figure 1).

Demanding coursework and high expectations are good for students. As this classic report states, "Applying high academic standards—both requiring students to complete high-level, challenging courses

and pushing students to strive and excel in their work—is a central schooling component that many experts recommend."

Of course, numerous reports since 2002 attest to the above-average performance of students in private schools, and the following pages provide some key findings.

Figure 1

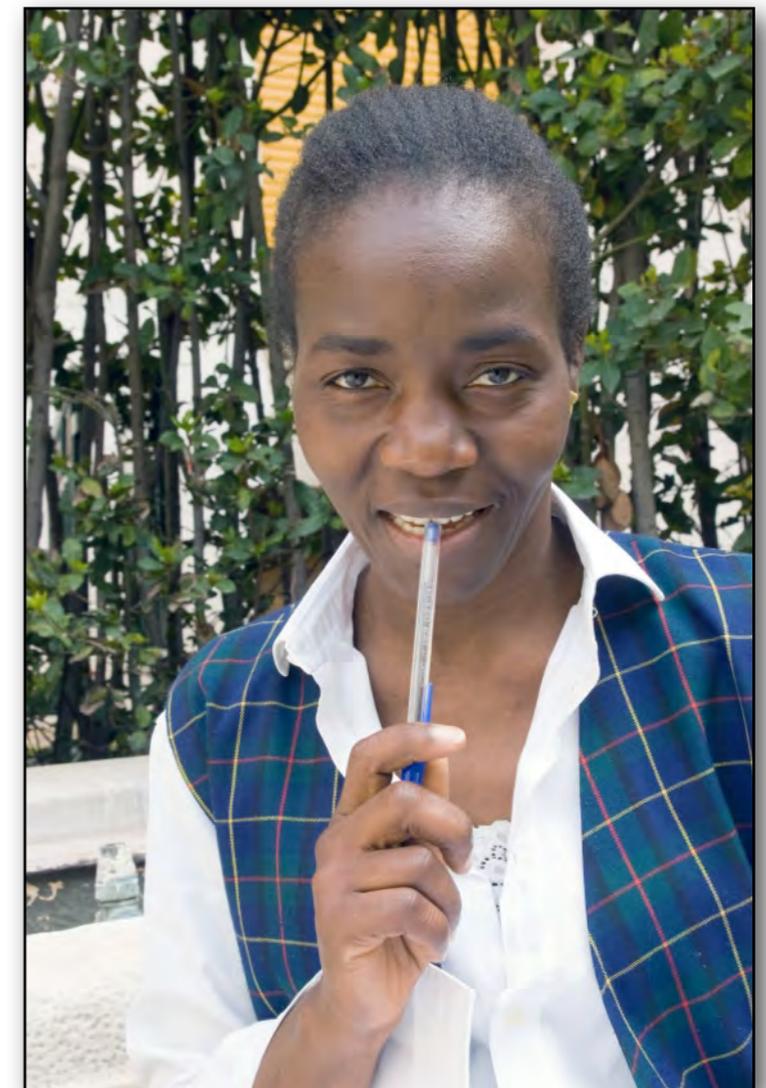
% of 1998 High School Graduates Taking Advanced Academic Courses in High School		
	Private	Public
Science	81	60
Mathematics	70	39
Foreign Language	55	28

Source: Private Schools: A Brief Portrait

Figure 2

% of 1988 8th Graders Attending Public or Private School Who Had Completed a Bachelor's or Higher Degree by 2000		
Socio-Economic Status	Private	Public
Lowest Quartile	24.4	6.6
Middle Two Quartiles	38.6	22.3
Highest Quartile	69.1	56.9
All Quartiles	52.2	26.1

Source: Private Schools: A Brief Portrait

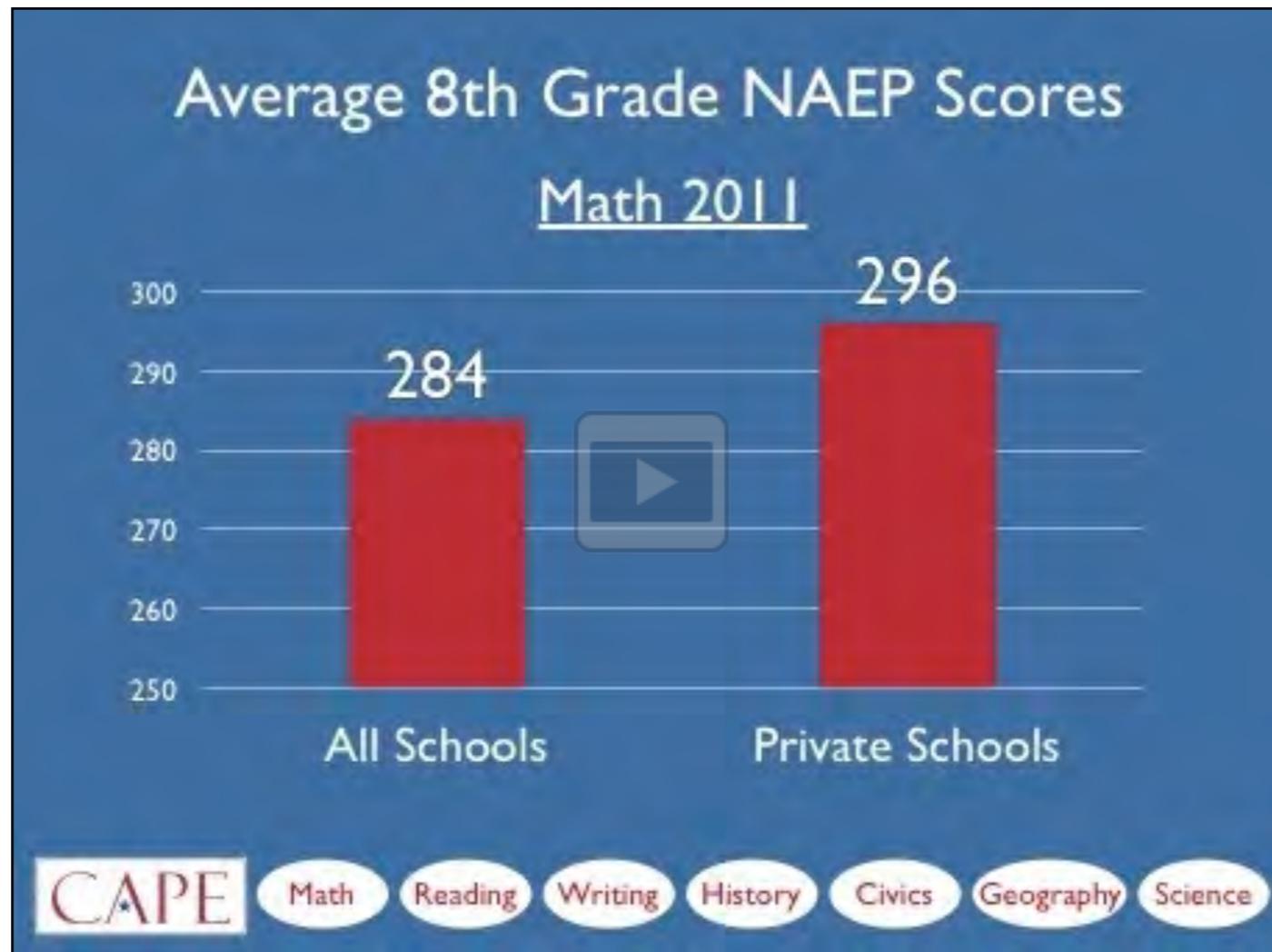


National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)

The latest results from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) show that private school students substantially outperform the national average in math, reading, science, writing, history, geography, and civics. NAEP results are reported as scale scores and as percentages of students meeting various achievement levels (basic, proficient, and advanced).

According to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), which administers the NAEP

Interactive 1 - NAEP Scale Scores



Click a button to see the scores for that subject.

program and reports the results, “Basic denotes partial mastery of prerequisite knowledge and skills that are fundamental for proficient work at each grade. Proficient represents solid academic performance. Students reaching this level have demonstrated competency over challenging subject matter. Advanced represents superior performance.”

Interactive 1 allows you to scroll through scale scores in various NAEP tests comparing private schools with the national average.

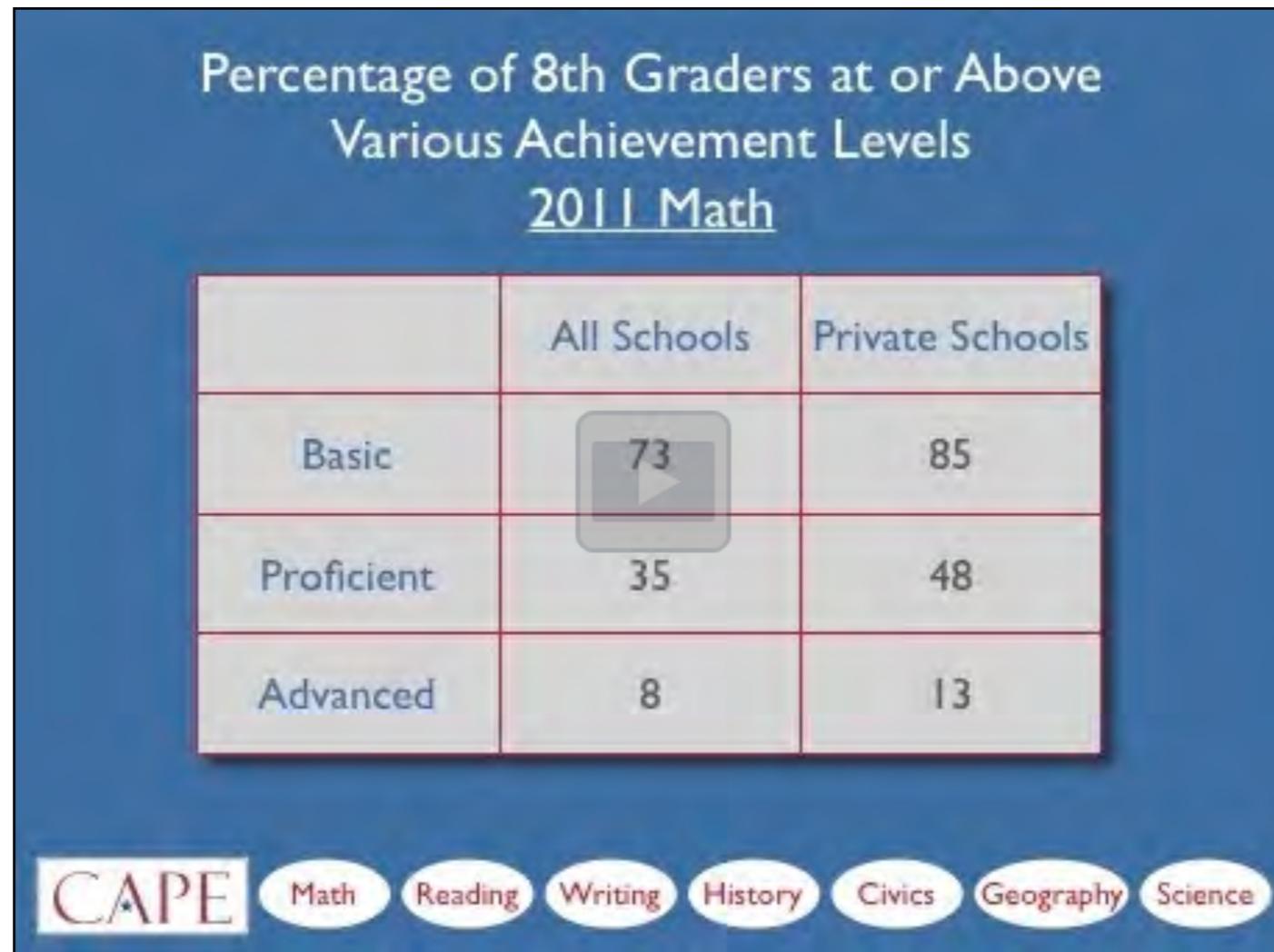
Reading

The average reading score for eighth-graders across the nation was 18 points lower than the average score for students attending private schools. Ten points on the 500-point scale represent roughly one full grade level. The average eighth-grade scale score for all students across the nation was 265, and the average for private school students was 282. To provide context, a scale score of 267 represents performance at the 50th percentile, and 289 represents performance at the 75th percentile. (See Interactive 1 for scale scores.)

Among eighth graders in 2011, 76 percent of all students across the nation and 90 percent of private school students performed at or above

basic in reading; 34 percent of all students and 54 percent of private school students performed at or above proficient, while students at the advanced level included 3 percent of all students and 8 percent of private school students. (See Interactive 2 for achievement levels.)

Interactive 2 - NAEP Achievement Levels



Click a button to see the scores for that subject.

Math

In math, the private school advantage was 12 points in grade eight. The average eighth-grade scale score for all students was 284, and the average for private school students was 296. A scale score of 285 represents performance at the 50th percentile, and 309 represents performance at the 75th percentile. (See Interactive 1 for scale scores.)

With respect to achievement levels the pattern was similar, with

73 percent of students in general and 85 percent of private school students scoring at or above basic; 35 percent of all students and 48 percent of private school students performing at or above proficient, and 8 percent of all students and 13 percent of private school students reaching the advanced level. (See Interactive 2 for achievement levels.)

Civics

Results from the 2010 NAEP civics assessment show how students “responded to questions designed to measure the civics knowledge and skills that are critical to the responsibilities of citizenship in America’s constitutional democracy.”

Scores are reported on a 300-point scale for each grade. In grade 8, a scale score of 131 represents performance at the 25th percentile, while 155 represents the 50th percentile, and 175 the 75th percentile. The average eighth-grade scale score for all students across the nation was 151, and the average for private school students was 169. (See Interactive 1 for scale scores.)

Results are also provided as the percentage of students at various levels of performance: below basic, basic, proficient, and

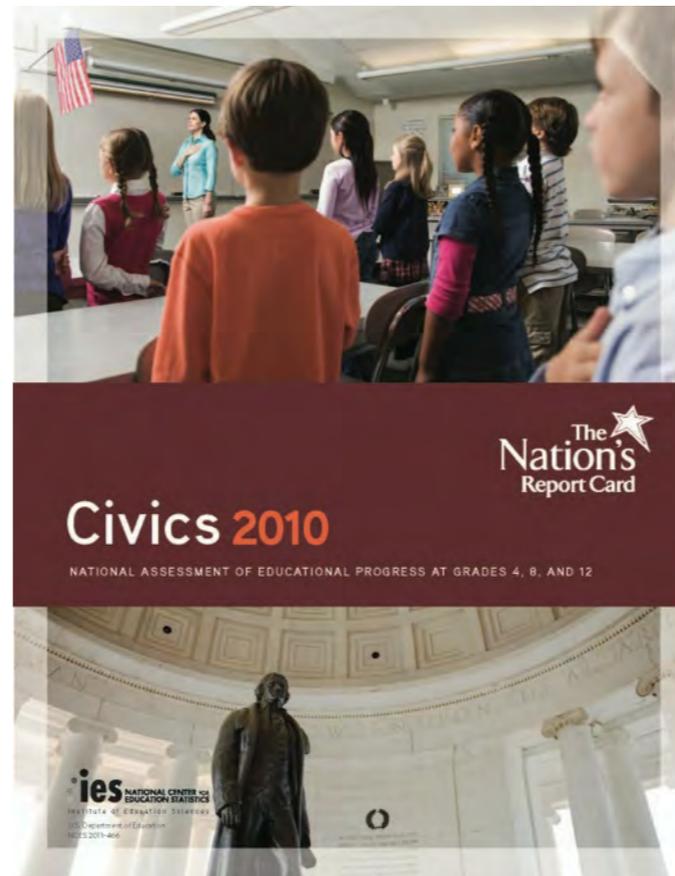
advanced. In 2010, 22 percent of grade 8 students in general scored at or above the proficient level on the civics assessment, compared to 38 percent of students in private schools. (See Interactive 2 for achievement levels.)

Geography

Eighth graders in private schools are twice as likely as student in general to have an “advanced” knowledge of geography, a level that reflects superior academic performance, according to the NAEP 2010 report on geography. The test is designed to measure “knowledge of geography in the context of space and place, environment and society, and spatial dynamics and connections.”

Ninety percent of eighth-grade students from religious and independent schools scored at or above basic, compared to 74 percent of students in general. Forty-five percent of private school students scored at or above the proficient level, and 6 percent scored at or above the advanced level. The percentage of

proficient students across the nation was 27, while that for advanced students was 3. (See Interactive 2 for achievement levels.)



The average eighth-grade scale score for all students was 261, and the average for private school students was 276. A scale score of 263 represents performance at the 50th percentile, and 284 represents performance at the 75th percentile. (See Interactive 1 for scale scores.)

U.S. History

On the 2010 NAEP assessment in U.S. history, students in religious and independent schools again significantly outperformed those from other schools.

The test is designed to measure “knowledge of American history in the context of democracy, culture, technological and economic changes, and America’s changing world role.”

Eighty-seven percent of private school eighth-grade students scored at or above the basic level, compared to 69 percent of all students. Twenty-nine percent of students in private schools scored at or above the proficient level, a level that reflects “solid academic performance,” compared to 17 percent of students in general. And 2 percent of private school students demonstrated advanced knowledge of history, compared to 1 percent of all students. (See Interactive 2 for achievement levels.)



In grade 8, a scale score of 246 represents performance at the 25th percentile, while 267 represents the 50th percentile, and 286 the 75th percentile. The average eighth-grade scale score for all students across the nation was 266, and the average for private school students was 280. (See Interactive 1 for scale scores.)

Science

Eighth-graders in private schools have significantly surpassed national average performance levels in science, according to the latest NAEP science assessment.

Seventy-seven percent of private school students in 2011 scored at or above the basic level, compared to 65 percent of students in general. Similarly, 43 percent of private school students scored at or above the proficient level, while only 32 percent of all students did so. (See Interactive 2 for achievement levels.)

Results are also reported as scores on a 300-point scale. The average score of private school students was 163, 11 points higher than the national average of 152. By way of reference, the 50th percentile score for the nation was 155, and the 75th percentile score was 176. (See Interactive 1 for scale scores.)

SAT/ACT Scores and College Attendance

SAT

If you graduated from a private high school in 2012, chances are your SAT scores were higher than the national average in all three subjects tested (critical reading, mathematics, and writing). According to the College Board, which publishes and scores the tests, average Class of 2012 SAT scores for students in public schools were 481 in writing, 491 in reading, and 505 in math, while comparable scores for students in religious schools were 529, 531, and 534. Students in

independent schools scored 548, 539, and 580 (Figure 3).

Private school scores also surpassed the SAT “College and Career Readiness Benchmark,” a combined

score of 1550 in the three subjects. For all college-bound public school seniors across the nation, the combined average SAT score was 1477, 73 points shy of the benchmark, while the

average for religious school students was 1594 (44 points above the benchmark) and that for independent school students was 1667, exceeding the benchmark by 117 points (Figure 5).

The College Board considers the benchmark “a very reliable tool for measuring the college and career readiness of groups of students.” The score indicates “a 65 percent likelihood

of achieving a B- average or higher during the first year of study at a four-year college.”

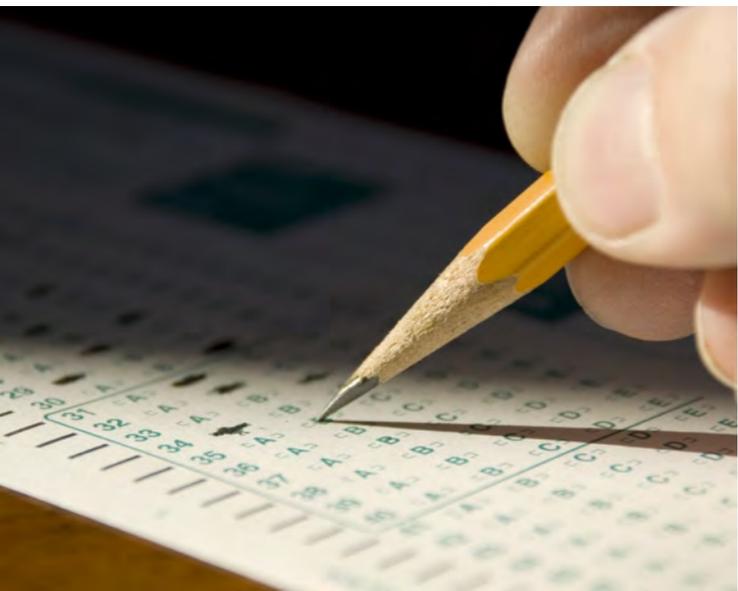
ACT

Data from the ACT also show that students who graduated from private high schools in 2012 were significantly more likely than graduates of other schools to be ready for college coursework

Figure 3

SAT Test Scores Class of 2012			
	Writing	Reading	Math
Independent	548	539	580
Religious	529	531	534
Public	481	491	505

Source: College Board

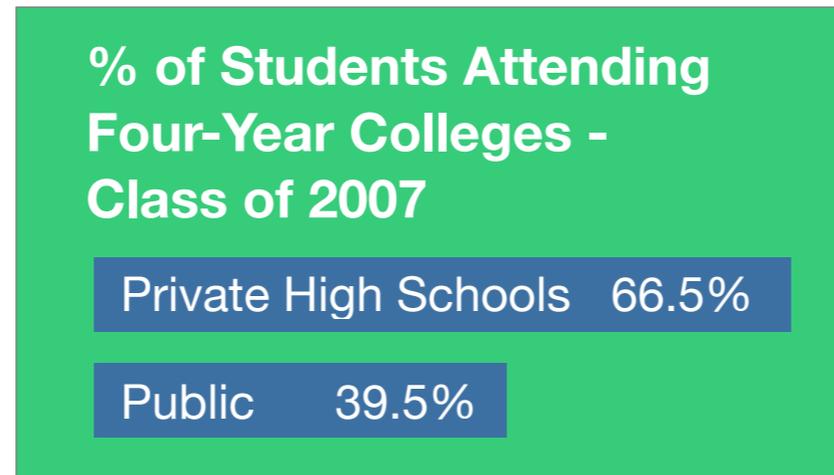


Eighty-three percent of 2012 graduates of religious and independent schools who took the ACT met or surpassed the test's college readiness benchmark score in English, compared to 64 percent of graduates from public schools. The share of students who met the benchmark scores in other subjects was also higher in private schools (reading – 68 percent vs. 50 percent; math – 60 vs. 44; science – 42 vs. 29).

According to the ACT, college readiness benchmarks “are the minimum scores needed on the ACT subject area tests to indicate a 50 percent chance of obtaining a B or higher or about a 75 percent chance of obtaining a C or higher in corresponding credit-bearing first-year college courses.”

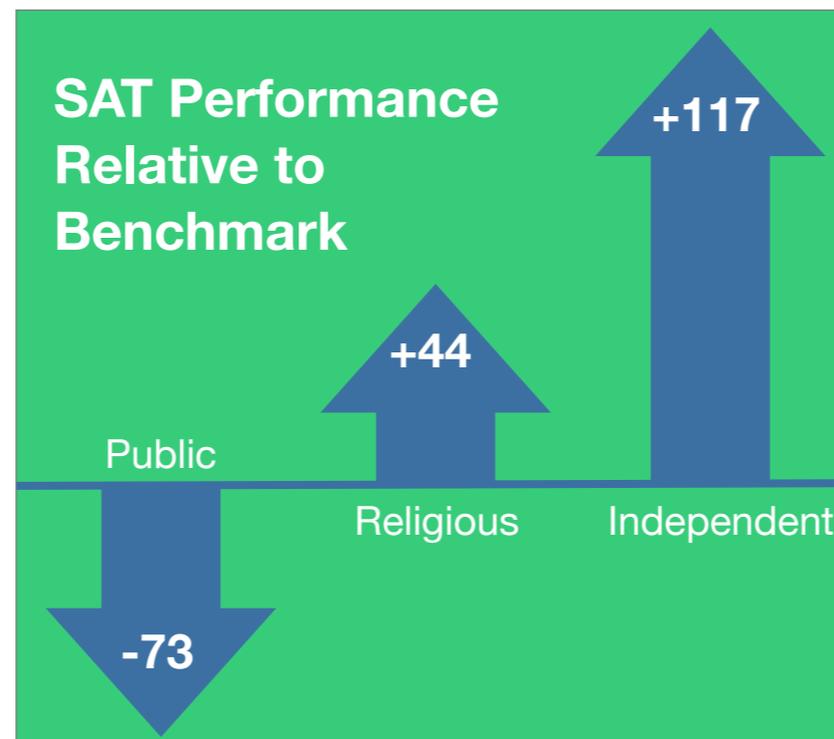
Average actual ACT scores for 2012 graduates of private schools were significantly above the national average. The ACT mean composite score for 2012 private school graduates was 23.2, compared to 20.8 for public school

Figure 4



Source: Digest of Education Statistics 2011, Table 211

Figure 5



Source: College Board, 2012



graduates, and the private school advantage remained steady across all subject areas: English – 23.5 vs. 20.1, reading – 23.5 vs. 21.0, math – 22.8 vs. 20.9, and science – 22.5 vs. 20.7. (To help decipher the scale, an ACT English score of 20 has a national percentile rank of 50, but an English score of 24 places a student at the 74th percentile.)

College Attendance

Not surprisingly, students at private high schools schools are much more likely to attend college than students in other schools. In the class of 2007, 66.5 percent of private school 12th graders attended four-year colleges the next year, compared to 39.5 percent of students in public schools (Figure 4).

Safe and Supportive Environment

Students thrive when allowed to learn in a safe and supportive environment. Private school students are significantly more likely than other students to feel safe and to be safe in their schools.

Student Safety

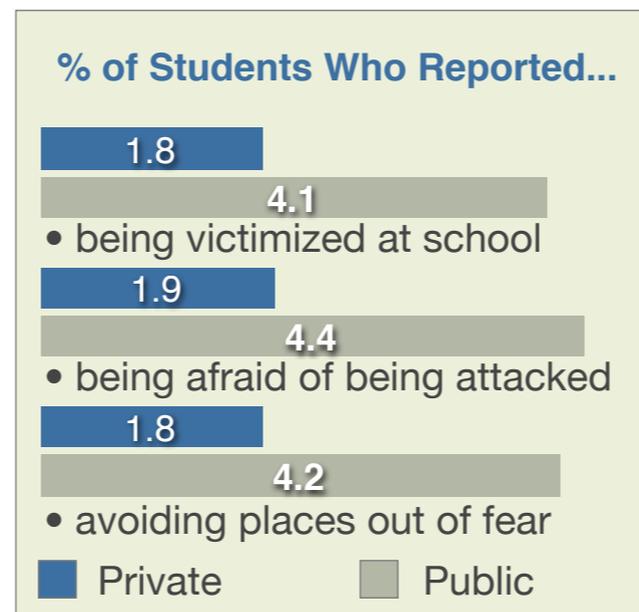
A report by the National Center for Education Statistics titled *Indicators of School Crime and Safety: 2011* notes that in 2009, “4 percent of students ages 12–18 reported being victimized at school during the previous 6 months.” But the numbers differed considerably by type of school:

“Students attending public schools reported being victimized at about twice the rate of students attending private schools [4.1 percent vs. 1.8 percent].”

About 20 percent of students in the 12-18 age bracket reported that there were gangs at their school, though again the percentage was higher among students attending public schools

(22 percent) than among those attending private schools (2.3 percent). (ISCS, Table 8.1)

Figure 6



Source: *Indicators of School Crime and Safety: 2011*, Tables 3.1, 17.1, 18.2

Thirty-two percent (31.7) of public school students said they saw hate-related graffiti at school. This compares to 11.8 percent of private school students. (ISCS, Table 10.1)

How afraid are students of being attacked at school? Again, the answer depends on what kind of school they attend. In public schools 4.4 percent of students reported being afraid of being attacked or harmed at school, compared to 1.9 percent of students in private schools.

And what about being attacked in particular locations? More public school students (4.2 percent) than private school students (1.8 percent) reported avoiding one or more places inside school because of fear of attack or harm.

Teacher Safety

Anyone who has a teacher in the family knows that concerns about personal wellbeing often determine where the teacher works. Teachers are sometimes subject to sassy backtalk and even threats and violence. The report notes, “A greater percentage of public than private school teachers reported being threatened with injury [8.1 vs. 2.6 percent] or physically attacked [4.3 vs. 1.9 percent] by students during 2007–08. Among teachers in city schools, there were at least five times as many public school teachers as private school teachers who reported being threatened with injury [12.1 vs. 2.3 percent]



and at least four times as many public school teachers as private school teachers who reported being physically attacked [5.7 vs. 1.4 percent].”

Not surprisingly, the percentage of teachers who reported that student misconduct hampered their

instructional effectiveness also varied by type of school. As the report puts it, “a greater percentage of public school teachers than private school teachers reported that student misbehavior [36.1 vs. 20.6 percent] and student tardiness and class cutting [33.5 vs. 17.8 percent] interfered with their teaching.” (ISCS, Table 12.1)

Figure 7



Source: Indicators of School Crime and Safety: 2011, Tables 5.1, 5.2

Religious and independent schools transmit more than academic skills. They teach students to respect one another, to resolve differences peacefully, and to live side-by-side. They provide a safe haven for students and a secure and stabilizing force in their lives.

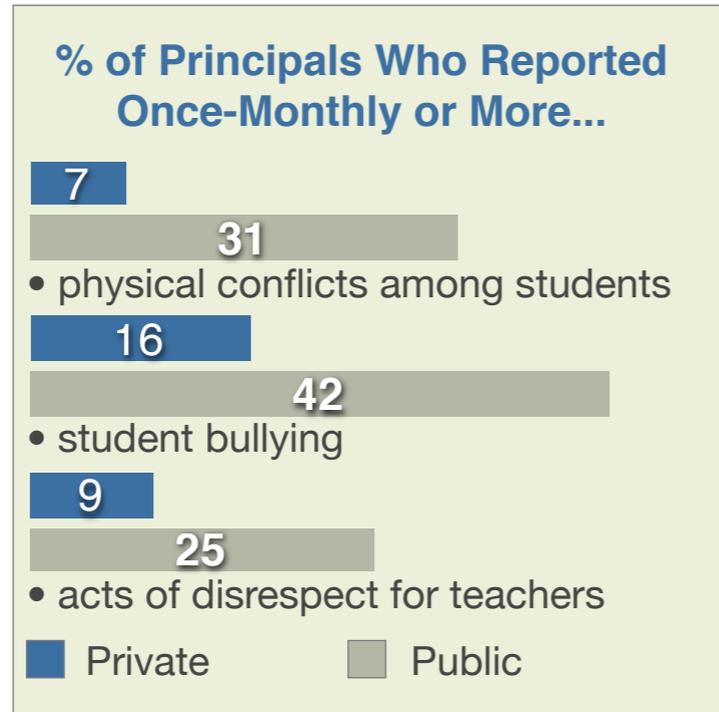
Principals Weigh In

In June 2010, NCES issued a report titled *Principal Attrition and Mobility*, which contained information on certain working conditions and school characteristics that

administrators faced in the 2007-08 school year. Principals were asked whether physical conflicts among students, student bullying, and student acts of disrespect for teachers occurred “at least once a month or more often” in their schools.

It turns out that public school principals were over four times more likely to report occurrences of physical conflicts than private school administrators (31 percent vs. 7 percent) and nearly three times more likely to report occurrences of bullying (42 and 16 percent) and disrespect for teachers (25 and 9 percent).

Figure 8



Source: Principal Attrition and Mobility

The Ethics of American Youth

In “The Ethics of American Youth: 2010,” one of the largest private studies ever on student attitudes and conduct, the Josephson Institute reported that one-third of U.S. high school students believe that “physical violence is a big problem” at their school. However, the results varied significantly by type of school, with 39 percent of public school



students saying such violence (defined as fighting, bullying, and intimidation) is a huge issue, compared to only 8 percent of students in religious schools and 6 percent in other private schools (see Table).

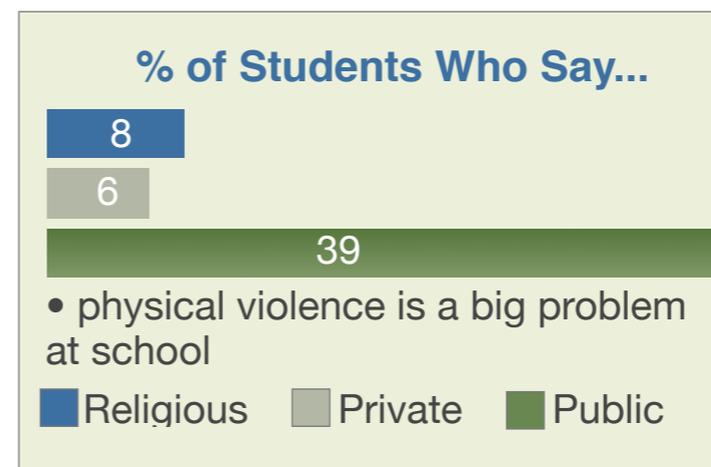
A related question found that 27 percent of public school students, 7 percent of religious school students, and 6 percent of other private school students do not “feel very safe” when they are at school.

Weapons, Drugs, Alcohol

The Josephson study also found that twice as many public school students as private school students (10 percent vs. 5 percent) said they had taken a weapon to school at least once in the past year. Adding drugs and alcohol to the mix, 17 percent of students in public schools, 8 percent of students in religious

schools, and 6 percent of students in other private schools said they had been “under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol at school at least once in the past 12 months.” Over 43,000 students took part in the survey.

Figure 9



Source: The Ethics of American Youth: 2010

High School Longitudinal Study

The first look at findings from a study following ninth graders through high school and into higher education and early work shows significant differences in achievement and expectations between the students in private schools and their counterparts in public schools.

Two reports published in 2011 by the National Center for Education Statistics, examine select characteristics from the base year of the High School Longitudinal Study of 2009 (HSL:09), a massive project tracking a cohort of roughly 20,000 ninth graders in 944 public and private schools.

The companion reports focus on the results of mathematics assessments, exposure to math and science courses, and students' long-term educational expectations, while also offering contextual data provided by parents, teachers, counselors, and administrators. Both reports deal only with the cohort when they were in ninth grade in 2009.

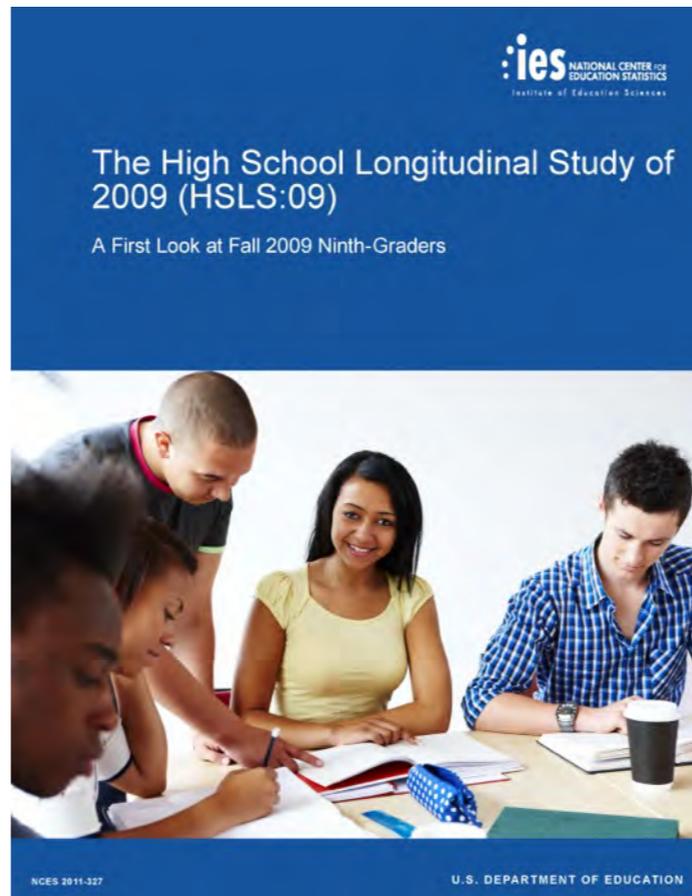
Achievement & Courses

Mathematics achievement among ninth graders varied considerably by type of school, with 59.2 percent of private school students scoring in the top two quintiles of performance, compared to 38.5 percent of public school students.

Not surprisingly, course-taking patterns varied as well. In private schools, 91.3 percent of ninth graders were enrolled in algebra I, algebra II, or geometry, while only 78.8 percent of public school students took the same courses. Private school students also took more challenging science courses, with 76.2 percent of ninth graders enrolled in biology or physics, compared to 57.0 percent of students in public schools.

Expectations

If expectations tend to be self-fulfilling, private school students seem headed toward a promising future. For 53.1 percent of



private school students, educational expectations included a graduate or professional degree after college, a hope shared by 38.0 percent of public school students.



High Expectations

More than half of private school students expect to get an advanced degree beyond college

The high expectations students have for themselves likely reflect the expectations their parents have for them. For 86.5 percent of private school parents, the expectation

was that their children would complete a bachelor's degree, a master's degree, a Ph.D., law degree, or other high-level professional degree. The same held true for 68.2 percent of public school parents.

Experience

To the extent experienced teachers are a factor in student success, private school students have a considerable edge in mathematics and a slight edge in science. Among mathematics teachers, 48.5 percent of private school teachers had more than 10 years experience, in contrast to 33.7 percent of public school teachers. In science, the difference was much less dramatic, with

37.2 percent of private school teachers and 36.4 percent of public school teachers having experience exceeding 10 years.

With all courses, it helps when students come with the prerequisite skills to handle the material being covered. Asked what percentage of students were not prepared for the course at hand, 44.9 percent of math teachers and 40.2 percent of science teachers in public schools indicated that 26 percent or more of their students were not adequately prepared to tackle the material. The same response was given by 13.4 percent of math teachers and 17.4 percent of science teachers in private schools.

Counseling Goals

At the high school level, counseling plays an important role in steering students to the next step in their education. Asked to identify the goal that the school's counseling program



emphasized the most, 73.4 percent of private school counselors identified “helping students plan and prepare for postsecondary schooling,” compared to 46.6 percent of public school counselors.

Absenteeism and Tardiness

Teachers’ commitment to the school and dedication to their vocation is demonstrated in a variety of ways, one being the number of absences during the course of a year. Administrators were asked to what degree teacher absenteeism was a problem in their school. In private schools, 1.1 percent of administrators said it was a moderate or serious problem, compared to 11.5 percent of administrators in public schools. Similarly, 1.5 percent of private school administrators and 9.1 percent of public school administrators identified student absenteeism as a serious



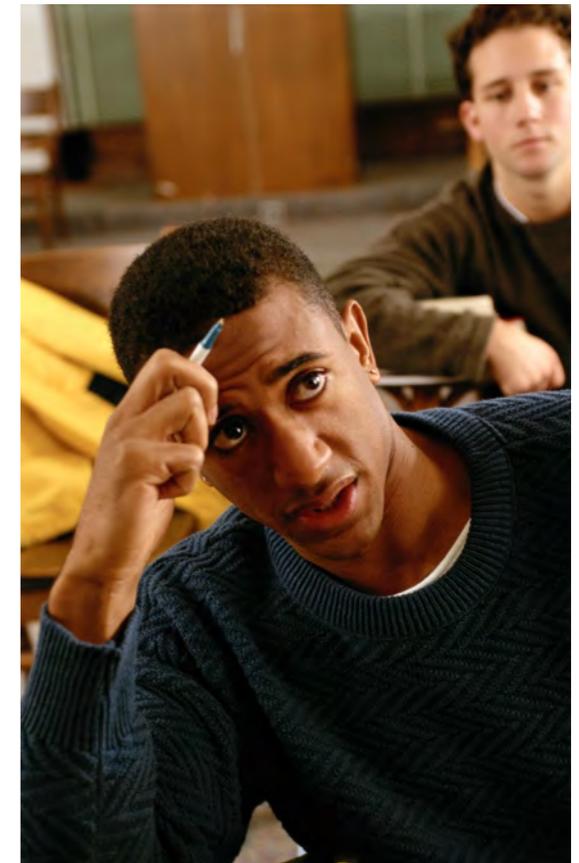
problem. Student tardiness was labeled a serious problem by 0.6 percent of administrators in private schools and 8.1 percent of administrators in public schools.

Just for Fun: A Quiz on HSLs:09

Question 1 of 5

What percent of private school ninth graders scored in the top two quintiles in math in 2009?

- A. 38 percent
- B. 59 percent
- C. 40 percent
- D. 19 percent



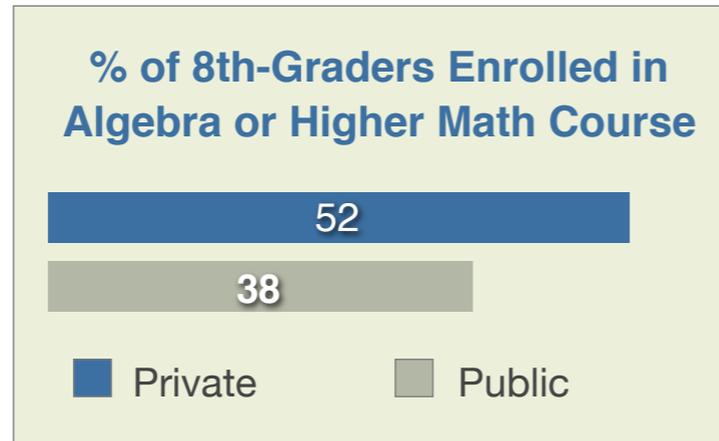
Check Answer



Rigorous Coursework

Private school eighth graders tend to take more rigorous math courses than their public school peers, according to a 2010 report from the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) titled *Eighth-Grade Algebra: Findings From the Eighth-Grade Round of the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, Kindergarten Class of 1998–99*. Two findings are of particular interest. First, “A larger percentage of private school students were enrolled in algebra or a course more advanced than algebra (52 percent) than were public school students (38 percent).” Second, “A larger percentage of students attending a private school were in a school with a high level of eighth-grade algebra enrollment than were public school students (24 vs. 9 percent).”

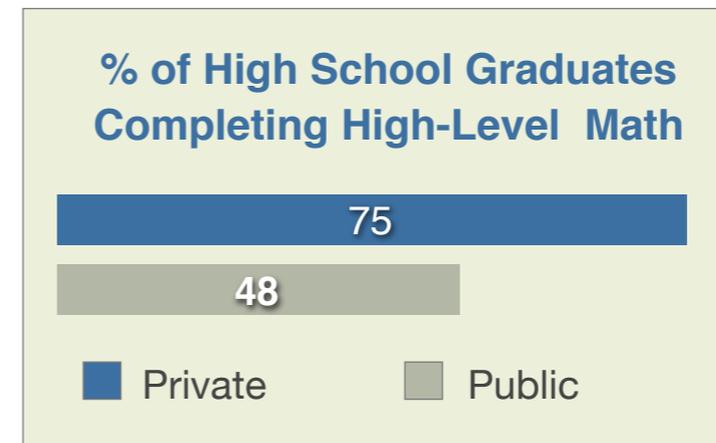
Figure 10



Source: *Eighth-Grade Algebra...*, NCES

The NCES also collects data on courses taken at the high school level, where it is also the case that students in private high schools take more rigorous courses in math and science than their public school counterparts. The 2009 edition of the *Digest of Education Statistics* reports in Table 152 that 75 percent of private high school graduates in the class of 2004 completed high-level math courses (i.e., trigonometry, statistics, precalculus, or calculus), compared to 48 percent of public high school graduates. In science, 83 percent of Catholic school graduates and 89 percent of graduates from other private schools completed one or more courses in chemistry I, physics I, chemistry II, physics II, or advanced biology, compared to 67 percent of public school graduates.

Figure 11



Source: *Digest of Education Statistics 2009*, Table 152

Character and Self-Control



Schools can be powerful factors when it comes to developing character and habits that form a foundation for life and that support what is taught at home.

In his latest book, *The Social Animal*, David Brooks devotes considerable space to the role played by institutions and communities in forming character—the habits of mind and behavior that shape a person’s core and set the stage for success. Self-control is among those habits, and Brooks correctly calls the trait “one of the essential ingredients of a fulfilling life.”

It is no secret that many religious and independent schools put a premium on instilling self-discipline in students: paying attention in class, attending to the task at hand, doing homework without excuses, refraining from disruptive

outbursts, behaving courteously during assemblies, not speaking out of turn, and on and on. Students get a whole lot of practice and encouragement when it comes to regulating their own behavior. “Character,” says Brooks, “emerges gradually out of the mysterious interplay of a million little good influences.” Families, schools, religious institutions—all with their particular social and moral capital—contribute to the mix. “It is very hard to build self-control alone,” he writes.

Just as many parents provide children opportunities to learn to postpone gratification (no TV until your homework is done; no dessert unless you finish your dinner), religious and independent schools help children develop a work ethic and a sense of self-discipline in pursuit of a higher purpose that sets the groundwork for success and accomplishment later in life. They instill routines of order and respect that build, exercise, and strengthen enduring traits of character. Brooks calls the rules and habits of self-control promulgated by institutions “external scaffolds that penetrate deep inside us.” Indeed, the scaffolds of discipline that private schools provide help students resist instant gratification in the pursuit of a more substantial and lasting good.

Chapter 2

Good for Families

Whether they move into a good school district, enroll in a religious or independent school, or adjust family duties to make home schooling possible, most families want school choice. Parents of more than five million children choose private education, and studies show they are very satisfied customers.



Parent Satisfaction

The National Center for Education Statistics reported in 2010 that parents with children in private schools are much more satisfied with their schools than are parents with children in public schools. Specifically, 79 percent of students in private schools have parents who report being very satisfied with their schools, compared to 52 percent of students in assigned public schools and 62 percent of students in chosen public schools, such as charter schools. The report, titled *Trends in the Use of School Choice: 1993 to 2007*, noted that high levels of satisfaction among private school parents also extend to opinions about their children’s teachers, academic standards of

Interactive 3 - Swipe image to see next slide



Source: *Trends in the Use of School Choice: 1993 to 2007*



the school, order and discipline at the school, and interactions with school personnel. In 2007, 76 percent of children in religious schools and 74 percent of children in other private schools had parents who said they were very satisfied with the teachers their students had, compared to 57 percent of children in assigned public schools and 64 percent of children in chosen public schools. Parents of 82 percent of religious school students and 79 percent of other private school students were very satisfied with the academic standards of their school, as were the parents of 56 percent of students in assigned public schools and 66 percent of students in chosen public schools.

When asked about the interactions between parents and school staff, the parents of 75 percent of religious school students and 73 percent of other private school students were very satisfied, contrasted with the parents of 48 percent of students in assigned public schools and 57 percent of students in chosen public schools.

And when it came to order and discipline, 83 percent of religious school students, 80 percent of other private school students, 55 percent of assigned public school students, and 61 percent of students in chosen public schools had parents who said they were very satisfied with that particular aspect of the school their child attended.

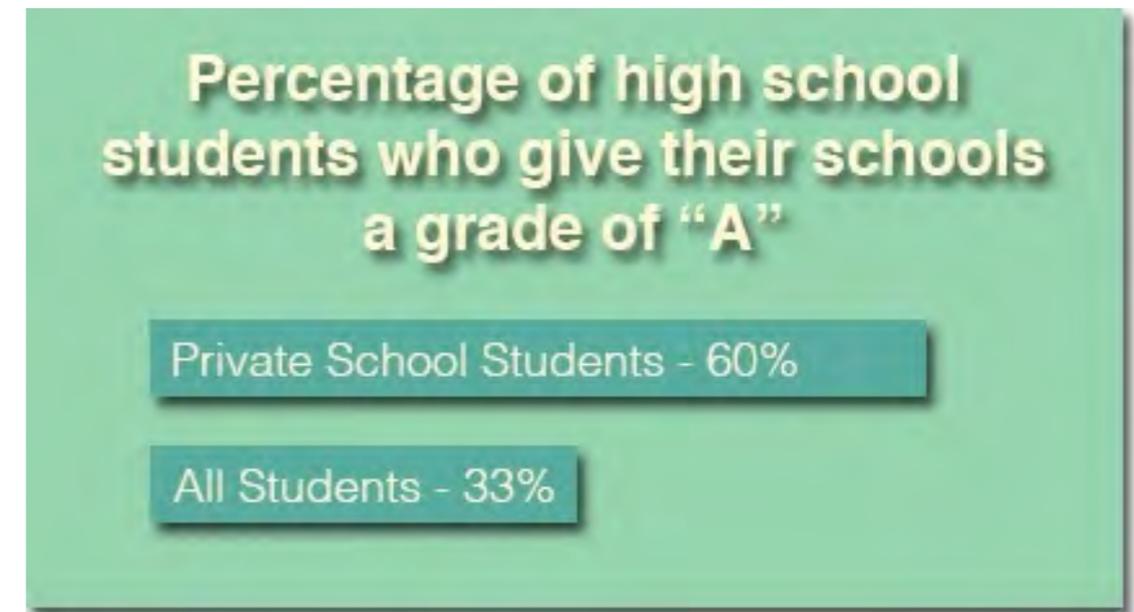
Student Satisfaction

Of course, parents are not the only ones satisfied with private schools. The 2012-13 *State of Our Nation's Youth* report revealed that private school students are nearly twice as likely as students in general to give their schools a grade of "A." Six out of every ten students in private high schools awarded their schools the highest grade possible, while one in three students overall did so.

Choice

Private education benefits families by offering a wide range of educational options, including schools rooted in religious traditions, schools that provide intensive academic experiences, schools that reflect a particular view of the child and offer a

Figure 12



Source: 2012-13 *State of Our Nation's Youth*

particular pedagogy, and schools that are specialized for specific populations. Children learn in different ways. Given the full array of private school options, parents are able to select an educational setting based on the needs of their children and their sense of what a school should be.

Accountability

Parents are the primary educators of children, and the schools are their partners. Without the support of parents, private schools cease to exist. If a school doesn't meet the parents' expectations of what a school should be, parents take their business someplace else, and the school closes. Now that's accountability: direct, demanding, and tough. It's what makes private schools the most accountable schools in the country.

Educating the

Whole Child

Touch Image to View
Video on How Private
Schools Educate the
Whole Child

Parents want to give their children the things that matter most in life. Not just stylish clothes or the latest gadgets, but lasting treasures: love, values, purpose, responsibility, a sense of being rooted in life and connected to its source.

Children only get one education. It should focus on what really counts.



Note: Requires Internet access to play.

There is a great deal of talk about having children master standards in reading and math. Of course those skills are important, and in private schools, their mastery is expected. But learning math formulas and decoding words are not the goals of education, but paths to a goal, means to an end. The goal is the formation of the whole person—moral, spiritual, cultural, academic, aesthetic, physical. And when constructing a beautiful puzzle, it's always best to have the full picture in mind.

But these days, some schools are losing sight of the whole picture while obsessing about particular pieces. The very survival of some schools depends on whether students meet adequate yearly progress on standardized tests in two subjects, reading

and language arts. Naturally, that's where teachers put their focus and energy. What's more, the new common core standards that most states have adopted for public schools suggest more of the same because those standards, not to mention the state assessments that will measure mastery of those standards, deal exclusively with reading and language arts. It's as if the whole has been sacrificed for a couple of parts.

Private schools do more than teach children to decipher sounds and apply formulas because a fully rounded person is more than the sum of those skills. Of course, private schools teach math and reading, and every assessment shows their students well exceed the national average. But private schools also cover art, music, science, social studies, physical education, and in most schools, religion. Why are we here? What is our responsibility to others and society? What is our ultimate destiny? Those are some of the issues tackled in religious and independent schools. Just look at the mission statement of a private school, or better yet, visit one. Find out how private

schools can help parents provide their children with a lasting treasure.

Swipe to See How Private Schools Educate The Whole Child



Language Arts

1 of 12



Good for America

Some of America's first schools were private schools. Many of its finest 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 counterparts—public schools, public charter schools, and home schools—in creating an educational system that is the hope for our continued freedom.



Nothing in a democracy is more important than the education of the next generation of its citizens. Policymakers at the state and federal levels are decrying the current state of education, with America lagging behind other countries on international benchmarks. And within our nation, too many low-income children are sentenced to chronically underperforming schools, and high percentages of black and Hispanic students never graduate from high school.

But across the country, religious and independent schools are doing amazing work in sparking student performance, combating the drop-out rate, and closing the achievement gap. And they do it at enormous savings to taxpayers—roughly \$50 billion annually.

In standardized tests designed to measure how well America's young people are mastering core subjects, students in private schools score higher than their public school counterparts. In fact, since the federal government first started measuring achievement through the National Assessment for Education

Progress, known as NAEP, students in religious and independent schools have consistently and substantially outperformed students in government-run schools.



And according to other reports, private high school students take tougher courses, score much better on the SATs and ACTs, and go to college at significantly higher rates than their public school peers. Many factors are likely involved, but the substantial achievement advantage suggests that one way to improve education may simply be to allow more parents to select schools with a proven record of performance.

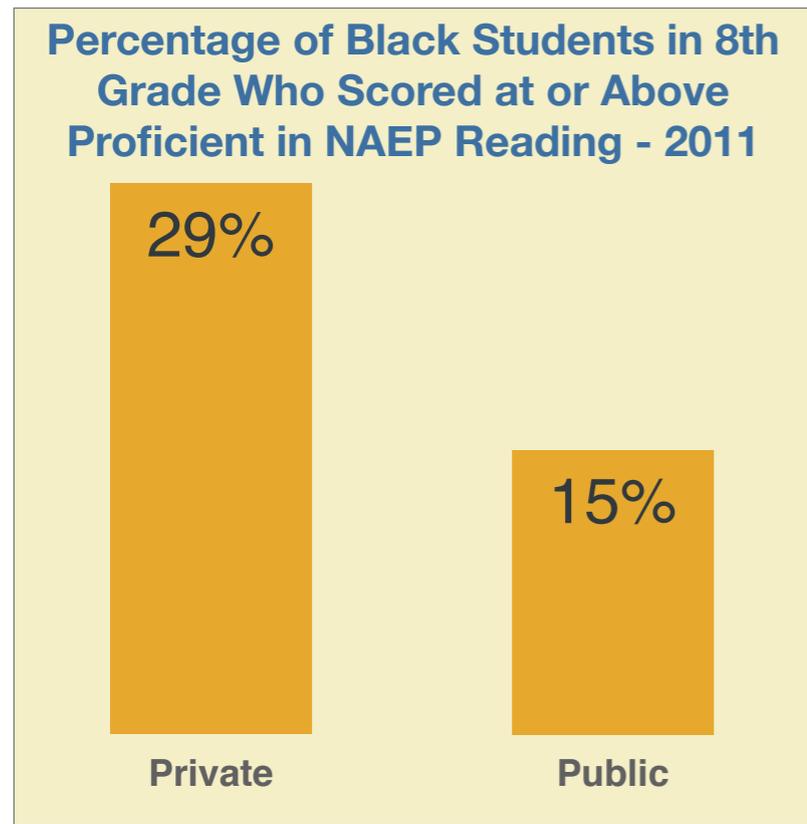
Parents tend to know what's best for their children. They know that schooling helps shape a child's sense of self and sets the stage for a lifetime of learning. The decisions parents make about schools help ensure that the country has citizens who are well educated and contributing to the common good.

Private schools are good for America, and the following pages explain why.

Closing the Achievement Gap

According to the 2011 National Assessment for Educational Progress (NAEP), black eighth-grade students in private schools

Figure 13



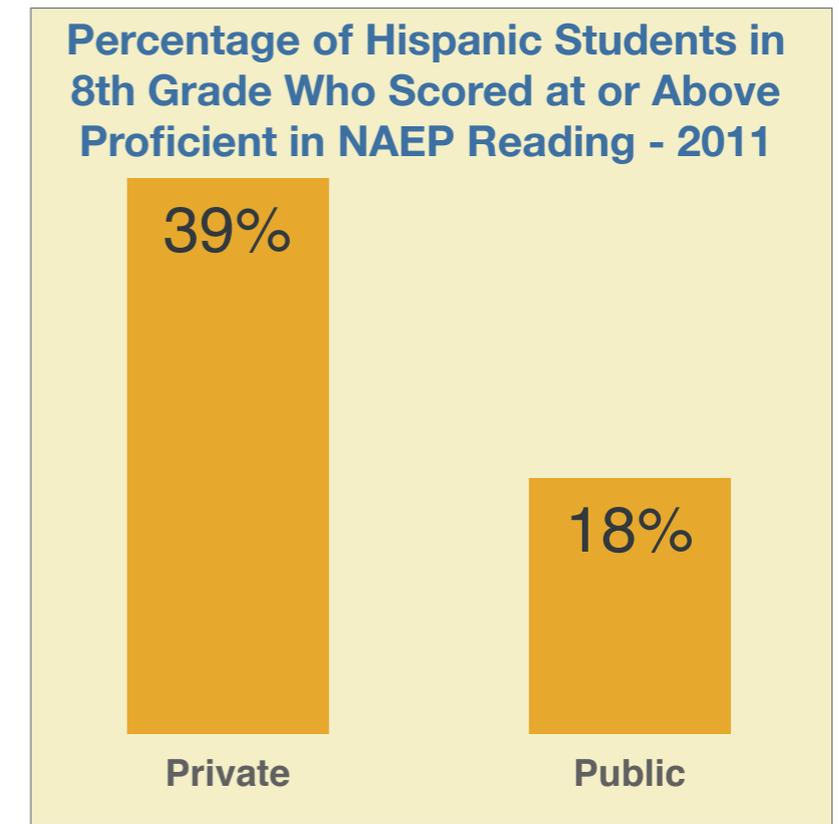
Source: NAEP Reading Report, 2011

scored nearly two full grade levels higher in reading than their peers in public schools. The NAEP scale score for black students in private schools was 265, compared to 248 for black students in public schools. Ten points on the NAEP reading scale equals roughly one grade level. NAEP also reports that 29 percent of black students in private schools scored at or above

the proficient level, compared to 15 percent of black students in public schools.

The picture was similar with Hispanic students, where the average scale score for eighth-graders in reading was 20 points higher in private schools (271) than public schools (251), and 39 percent of Hispanic students in

Figure 14



Source: NAEP Reading Report, 2011

private schools scored at or above the proficient level, compared to 18 percent of Hispanic students in public schools.

Graduation Rate

Two other studies demonstrate the advantages of private schools for minority students.

A random-assignment study commissioned by the U.S. Department of Education and published in June 2010 found that students who attended private schools through the Opportunity



Source: *Evaluation of the DC Opportunity Scholarship Program, Final Report*

Scholarship Program (OSP) in the District of Columbia

were more likely—by 21 percentage points—to receive a high school diploma than a control group that did not take part in the program. And here’s

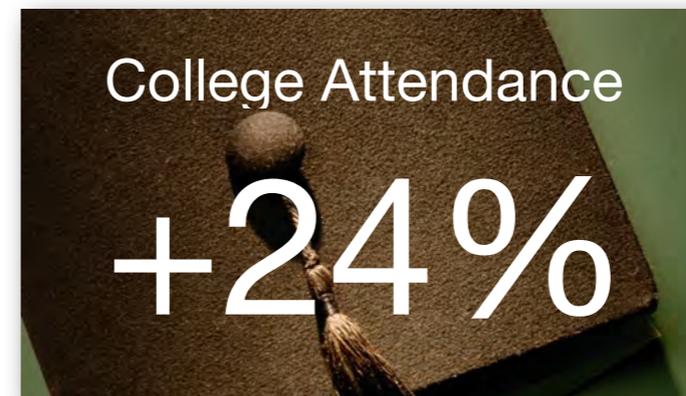
the kicker: the program achieves the success at substantial savings to taxpayers. The scholarships were worth a maximum of \$7,500 per student, far less than the per-pupil cost in DC public schools.

In an editorial following the report’s release, *The Washington Post* wrote: “Few things are more critical to future success than graduation, so it’s hard to discount the difference that vouchers made for the low-income students participating in the program.”

College-Going Rate

And a report published in 2012 by Harvard University and the Brookings Institution found that African American students who used vouchers to attend private elementary schools were 24 percent more likely than their peers to attend college.

In the first randomized experiment to look at the effect of vouchers on college enrollment, the study tracked low-income students who in the 1990s were offered scholarships of up to \$1,400 through a privately funded program in New York City. The study employed what is regarded as the gold standard in



Source: *The Effects of School Vouchers on College Enrollment: Experimental Evidence from New York City*

research by comparing outcomes for students in the same selection pool, namely, participants in a lottery to receive the scholarships. Students who randomly won the lottery were compared to those who did not.

The study finds that African American students who received a scholarship and actually attended private schools enjoyed a 24 percent advantage (over students who did not win the lottery) in attending any college and a 31 percent advantage in full-time college enrollment.

Good Neighbors, Good Citizens

A 2011 study out of Notre Dame Law School examined the effects of religious schools (in this case, Catholic schools) on the quality of life in the surrounding communities. “We find strong evidence that Catholic elementary schools are important generators of social capital in urban neighborhoods. Our study suggests that neighborhood social cohesion decreases and disorder increases following an elementary school closure,” according to an abstract of the legal studies paper. The paper states that such schools are “important sources of neighborhood social capital in the poor urban communities that arguably need it the most.” Specifically, “They appear to suppress social disorder, increase social cohesion, and bolster collective efficacy in these neighborhoods—all findings strongly suggesting that residents’ quality of life decreases when a school closes.”

Community Service

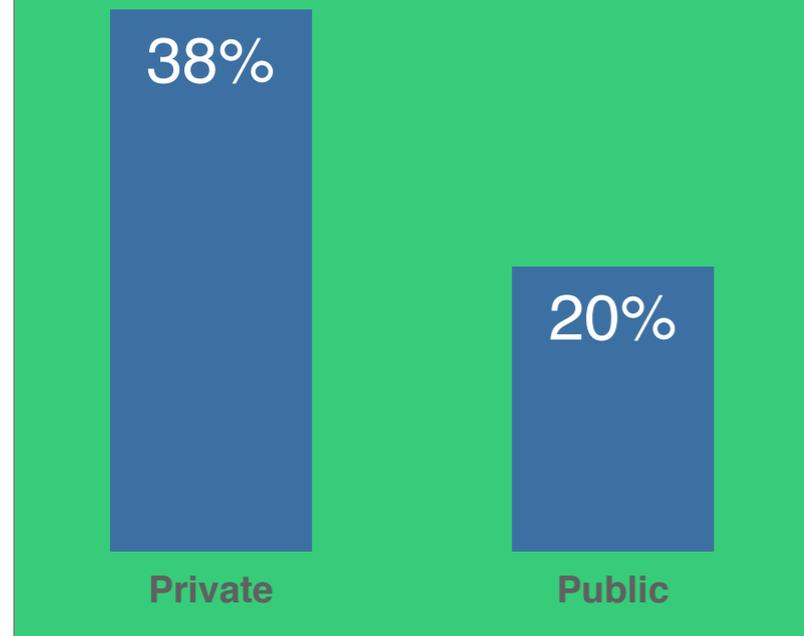
Private school students give back to the community. In November 1999, the National Center for Education Statistics reported on the participation of students in grades 6-12 in community service projects. The report showed a significant difference in community service based on the type of schools that students attend. In public schools, 50% of students in grades 6-12 in 1999 reported participating in community service. For church-related private schools, the participation rate was 72 percent, and for non-church-related private schools it was 68 percent (Source: Table 2, *Service-Learning and Community Service Among 6th- through 12th Grade Students in the United States: 1996 and 1999*).



Preparing Good Citizens

Private schools do an outstanding job of preparing students to participate in the democratic process. On the NAEP civics test, a test intended to measure, among other things, civic dispositions, meaning “the traits of private and public character essential to the

Percentage of Students in 8th Grade Who Scored at or Above Proficient in NAEP Civics - 2010



preservation and improvement of American constitutional democracy," students in private schools scored well above the national average. Thirty-eight percent of private school students scored at or above the proficient level,

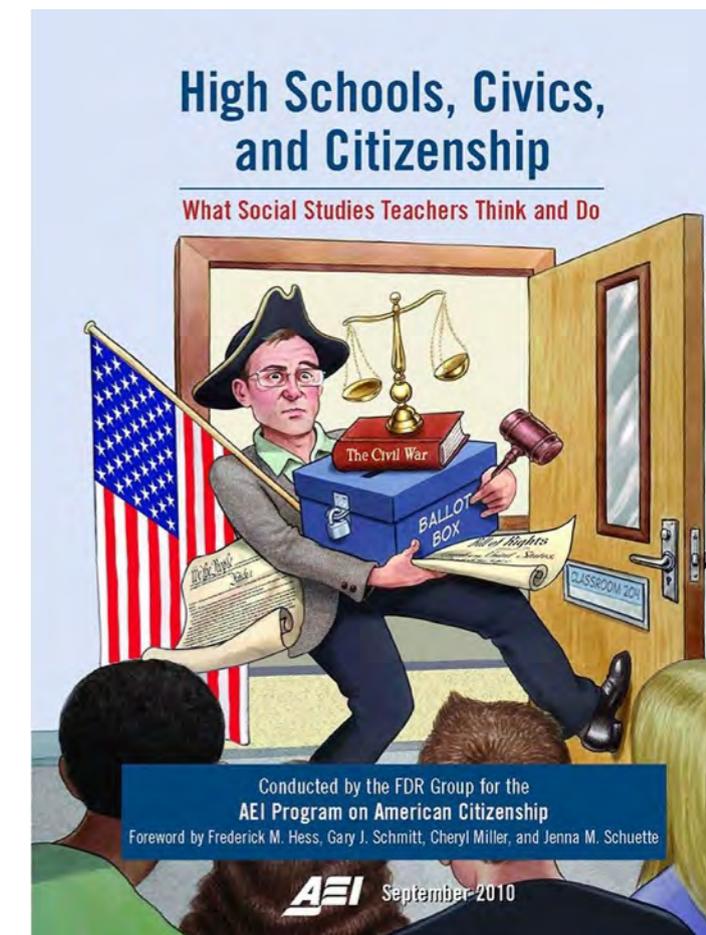
compared to 20 percent of public school students. Private schools are second to none in instilling democratic principles and preparing good citizens.

What Social Studies Teachers Think

Public and private school teachers have remarkably dissimilar opinions about whether their students are actually learning what

should be taught in social studies. The findings come from *High Schools, Civics, and Citizenship: What Social Studies Teachers Think and Do*, a report released in 2010 by the American Enterprise Institute’s Program on American Citizenship. The authors sought to find out “What are teachers trying to teach our youth about citizenship and what it means to be an American?” They surveyed high school social studies teachers—866 from public schools and 245 from religious and independent schools.

Private school teachers are significantly more confident than their public school peers that their students have actually learned what they are supposed to learn by the time they graduate. Have students learned to “develop habits of community service, such as volunteering and raising money for causes”? Fourteen percent of public school teachers are very confident that they have, compared to 54 percent of private school teachers. What about learning to be “tolerant of people and groups who are different from themselves”? Only 19 percent of public school teachers are very confident that students have in fact mastered the outcome, compared to 43 percent of private school teachers.



The report notes that the “confidence differential is especially stark on items pertaining to the implicit curriculum, such as teaching good work habits and respect for authority.” For example, 6 percent of public school teachers and 31 percent of private school teachers are “very confident” that students have learned “to have good work habits, such as being timely, persistent, and hard-working.”

Teachers in private schools are also “more likely to report an overall more positive school atmosphere for conveying the importance of citizenship.” Their schools are more likely to have “a community-service requirement for graduation” (82 percent versus 37 percent). Their administration is more likely to “maintain an atmosphere where the rules and the authority of adults are respected” (88 percent versus 65 percent). And their schools “encourage student involvement in student government, debates, and issues-oriented clubs and organizations” (91 percent versus 73 percent).

Figure 15

Percentages of High School Teachers Who Are Very Confident That Students Have Learned the Following Concepts By the Time They Graduate		
	Private	Public
Follow Rules and Be Respectful of Authority	29	12
Develop Habits of Community Service	54	14
Have Good Work Habits	31	6
Be Knowledgeable About Key Periods in History	32	15
Be Tolerant of People/Groups Who Are Different	43	19

Source: *High Schools, Civics, and Citizenship: What Social Studies Teachers Think and Do*

Transmitting Democratic Values

Are private schools effective at transmitting democratic values and producing good citizens? The NAEP civics assessment

shows that students in private schools score substantially above the national average. A number of other studies demonstrate a positive correlation between private school attendance and adult civic behavior. And if further evidence is needed, just look at the numerous U.S. presidents, vice presidents, and members of Congress who graduated from private schools. The AEI study

cited above suggests that private schools seem to provide “a more positive school atmosphere for conveying the importance of citizenship” and that their teachers are more confident that the lessons of citizenship are actually being absorbed. In short, private schools do a very good job of instilling in students a love of democracy and preparing them to be engaged citizens.

Educational Pluralism and Diversity

Among America's first schools, private schools helped established our country's foundation for education. Today, private schools help fulfill the American ideal of educational pluralism. Our nation is blessed by a rich diversity of schools. Whether public or private, these diverse schools constitute the American educational experience and share a worthy goal: the education of our country's children. Together, public and private schools work to ensure an educated citizenry; together they strive to help students reach their potential and contribute to the common good.

Even within the private school community, there is great diversity: Jewish schools, Lutheran schools, Episcopal schools, Montessori schools, Evangelical Christian schools, Independent schools, Seventh-day Adventist schools, Catholic schools, Waldorf schools, Pentecostal schools, Friends schools, and this list goes on. Diversity is also found within the schools themselves by race, ethnicity, income, and

disability. Minority students accounted for 27 percent of private school students in 2010. In 2008, 19 percent of all private schools had students who received services under Title I of the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)*. (Such services

are focused on providing high-need students with extra support in math and reading.) In the same year, 59 percent of all private schools had one or more students with an Individualized Education Program (IEP) (source for 2008 data: NCES, Schools and Staffing Survey).

How are private schools good for America? They help educate the public—including students from a wide diversity

of backgrounds, income levels, and ability levels—at considerable savings to taxpayers. They offer parents choice in education. They produce high-achieving students who make significant contributions to the country. And they strengthen their communities economically, socially, and educationally.



Choosing a School

Choosing a school for a child is one of the most important decisions parents must make. The right school for a child depends on that child's specific needs. Just like children, different schools have different characteristics, and finding the right match between child and school is worth the time.

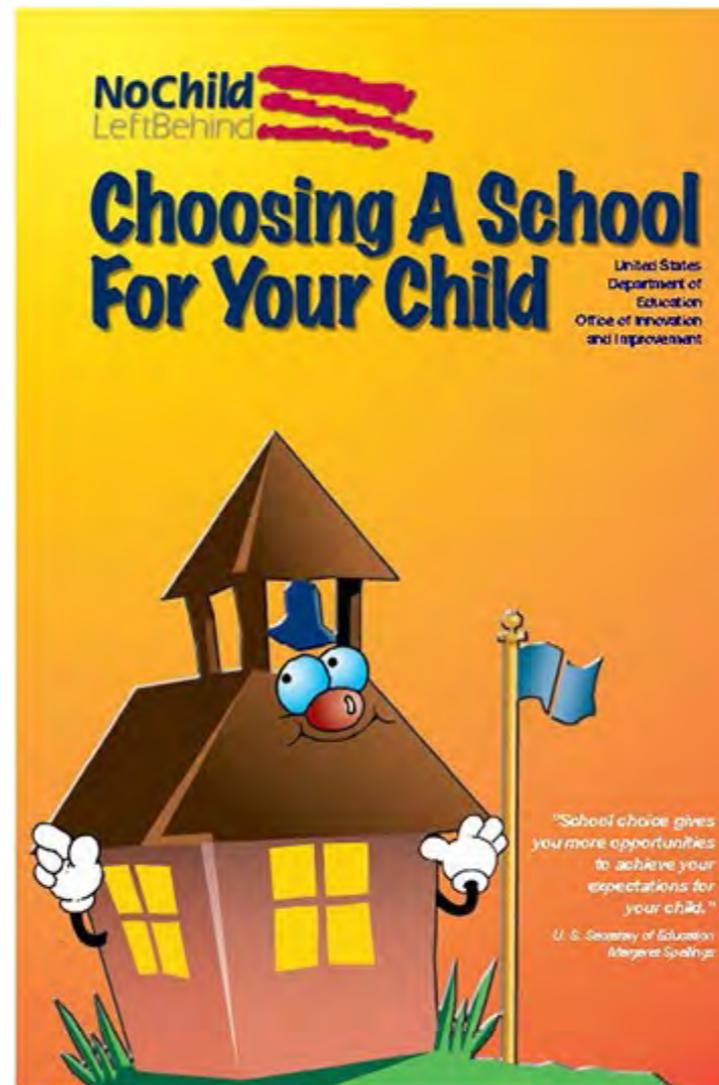


There are several steps involved in finding the best school for your child. First, consider your family's values and beliefs and decide whether you want a school that supports and nourishes those values.

Second, look at your child. What kind of environment is best for him/her? A school that promotes creativity, is structured, supports special learning needs, focuses on particular gifts, responds to a certain learning style? Is a particular pedagogy best suited for your child?

Third, visit the school and talk to administrators, teachers, and parents. What evidence does the school provide that students are thriving, growing, and succeeding? What is the school's curriculum, assessment program, extra-curricular activities, fine arts and sports programs? Does the school educate the whole child: intellectual, spiritual, physical, aesthetic, social, cultural? What happens to students once they graduate? Is the school safe and orderly? Do students respect one another and their teachers? Are they focused on their work? Does the school welcome parents and see them as partners.

These are just some of the questions parents must answer when choosing a child's school. They draw from a more detailed list prepared by the U.S. Department of Education for the informative publication *Choosing a School for Your Child*.



To start the selection process find out what private schools are in your area by visiting [CAPE's Web site](#). Under the "Private Schools" drop-down menu, click on "School Locator," which links to a searchable database of private schools prepared by NCES.

Summary

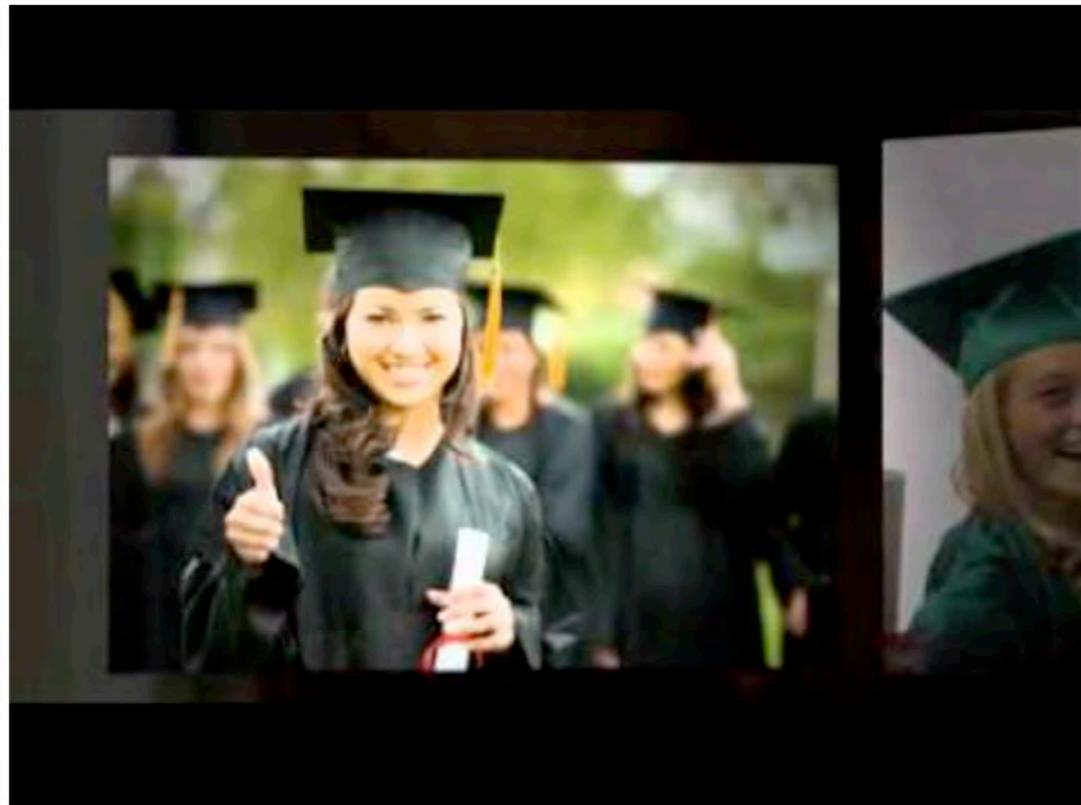
Private schools have a well-deserved reputation for quality. Seventy-eight percent of Americans describe the education that children receive in independent private schools as "excellent or good;" 69 percent say the same about parochial or church-related schools, while only 37 percent think that way about traditional public schools. Results come from Gallup's annual Work and Education poll conducted in August 2012.

Private schools have a long history and a respected record of strong student performance. They give students a well-rounded education. They provide families with unique educational options and alternatives to the government

schools. They are free of excessive government regulations and standardization that can stifle success, hinder creativity, and compromise a school's identity. They reflect the beliefs and values of a particular community and weave those values into lessons that matter most for living a productive, happy and meaningful life. What's more, private schools accomplish all this while saving taxpayers an enormous amount of money.

That's why at CAPE we say private schools are *Good for Students, Good for Families, and Good for America.*

CAPE Video - Serving the Public Good



Note: Requires Internet access to play.

