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Primary and lower secondary teachers teach kindergarten through sixth grade. They teach children life skills, motor skills and social skills in a classroom environment, as well as language arts, science, mathematics, art and history [source: bls]. This is what you need to become a primary school teacher: You have to enjoy children, since you will be working with them all day, every day. A good way to see if teaching is for you is by working with children through voluntary activities. You need a creative, engaging personality to motivate students to participate. You must take a bachelor's degree with teacher education or bachelor's degree in education (BSE) primary and lower secondary education teacher, to be eligible to teach in primary school [source: education portal]. As part of your school course, you will study or participate in the following: Ad pedagogyActive learning techniquesHand-on activitiesGroupworkChildren's psychology and developmentPublished speaking PedagogyDiversity management [source: Education Portal] Before you can teach primary school, you must meet the following requirements: Student teaching Your coursework will include a certain number of necessary hours as a student teacher. This will help you gain experience in classrooms under the direct supervision of professional teachers [source: certification map]. Certification Most states require their teachers to be certified by the State Board of Education. Certification includes passing a competency test, earning a bachelor's degree, completing a teacher education program, and completing supervised internships (e.g. student teaching) [source: certification map]. Continued education Although this is not necessary, you may want to take several courses to continue your professional development. You may also want to get a master's degree to gain more knowledge about curriculum development, childcare and children's health and safety [source: Education Portal]. Naturally, this would give you a professional advantage. National certification Although this is not necessary, you may want to be certified by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. This will involve taking courses in areas such as understanding young children and promoting children's development and learning [source: nbpts]. Paying for a private primary school education places a significant burden on families, especially when one believes that the corresponding public education is essentially free. Still, many parents believe that a solid, private education for their children is worth expense, giving students the artistic, religious or personal attention they may not find elsewhere. Tweet this Discover the best private elementary schools! The schools on this list each have their own special An affordable tuition can be the crucial consideration for some parents (annual tuitions on this list range from \$5,000 to \$50,000 annually). Small class sizes and personal attention can be crucial for others. Some families look for academic difference, or a way to escape bullying, specialized education in a particular field, or a place where children will be valued and encouraged. The ranking criteria include the following: Schools must have at least three of the six grades (first to sixth grades) traditionally categorized as primary school grades. They must exceed nearby public schools in course choices and success. They must have a reputation for producing students who are well prepared to take the next steps in their education. Even if they are organized as businesses, schools must have a reputation for treating families with justice and compassion. They actively seek to treat parents as partners in the educational process. They openly and regularly celebrate the students and their achievements. By determining whether and to what extent these criteria were met, we did extensive research in these schools, which included finding and evaluating parent and student assessments. Finally, we decided to put a premium on geographical diversity in the choice of schools. Instead of focusing on a few high-density population centers with a high concentration of private schools, we felt it important that all regions of the country should be represented. Here, then, is our list of the best private elementary schools across America's full length and breadth. (Fayetteville, AR) On a 26-acre campus with an amphitheater, certified wildlife habitat, trails and outdoor classrooms, children in kindergarten through eighth grade enjoy a varied STEAM (science, technology, engineering, art and mathematics) curriculum. Students in grades one through eight have data access. In kindergarten and preschool, the young students have their own indoor gym, and physical education begins at the age of three. There are four playgrounds and four school buildings. The new school has over 350 pupils, 52 part-time teachers and 63 full-time teachers. Founded in 1971, the school is accredited by the Independent Schools Association of the Central States, the Arkansas Nonpublic School Accrediting Association and The Arkansas Better Beginnings: 3-Star. The undergraduate school consists of first to fourth grade and the technology is integrated into all phases of learning. Students are grouped for literacy and math training by ability, so that all students can succeed and move on to their full potential. Students receive standardized tests to measure learning and their scores exceed the scores of students regionally and nationally. Students have thorough study of vocabulary, phonics, and spelling, as well as frequent assessment of reading with the development reading assessment. Math students are encouraged through innovative teaching to develop critical and creative thinking skills. Students learn problem-solving strategies, and teachers use manipulative and visual models to engage students with practical learning activities to give students a view of how mathematics applies to everyday life. Students also learn social sciences and science. Social services projects are integrated into the social science programme where students learn about economics and geography, as well as history and social sciences. Science teachers provide projects for students who want to ignite an interest in science. All students from preschool to eighth grade take art classes. Art is heavily integrated into the curriculum, which is technology. All students in kindergarten to fourth grade have personal iPads, while students in grades five through seven get a MacBook Air to use for their lessons. Students also have the opportunity to participate in choirs, Lego robotics, science club, drama club and private music lessons in guitar, violin and/or piano, as well as many other enrichment activities. (Lexington, KY) The school starts at Lexington School with kindergarten and goes through eighth grade, with nearly 600 students who are geographically and ethnically diverse. The school has a special learning program for dyslexia and is accredited by the National Association of Independent Schools and the Independent Schools Association of the Central States. The ratio between students and teachers is about seven to one. Sports offered at LS include archery, ultimate Frisbee, lacrosse, football, tennis, chess, and several other athletic pursuits. Students have eight extra-teaching courses to choose from: Girls on the Run, Chess, Intramurals, Math Counts, Chinese, Applied Music Lessons, Speech and Debate, and Scouts. The curriculum is vertically aligned for each class of handwriting without traces, science, integrated technology, English, Open Court reading program, social sciences and Everyday Math. Competitive athletics is offered in cheer leading, archery, lacrosse, tennis, and several others. Intramurals are available in golf, yoga, drama, dance, lacrosse, hockey, cooking and several academic offerings. In first to third grade, students learn art, computer, PE, music and Spanish in classrooms specifically designed for these subjects. In academics, students advance at their own pace, developing their basic skills before transitioning to fourth and fifth grades where students graduate a more thorough study of science. They study mathematics with a variety of specialists. English and social sciences are carefully planned with other courses. All this work helps students go from elementary school to high school. Students in fourth and fifth grades get lockers. They are encouraged to keep up their own tasks and learn more independently. Fourth-grade students deliver skits to each lower-class classroom, and fifth-graders lead the school recycling program. Lexington School uses mission skills assessment to measure the characteristics of resilience, ethics, creativity, curiosity, time management and teamwork, giving the school a way to measure how well students assimilate these skills. Students are allowed to take trips through a stream to help them understand the dynamics of that ecosystem. If students have language problems, they are offered an alternative to the regular classroom at the learning center, where the ratio between students and teachers is much lower. Multisensory approaches help students with difficulties in mathematics. Science and social sciences in the Learning Center are taught with projects that students can perform using their hands. Computer skills help students become independent students, and their special interests are examined through Talent Classes, which students are allowed to choose. (Winston-Salem, nc) In January 2014, Forsyth Family Magazine reported that 60 percent of students at Forsyth County Day School in grades four through seven qualified for the Duke Talent Identification Program (TIP). Because they ranked in the top five on the national Education Records Bureau tests. Students who enrolled in FCDS during or before class one were two times more likely to qualify for the TIP program than those who enrolled when they were older. Duke University actively seeks academically gifted students in primary school to help fund their education. Many parents become concerned about college admission when their kids are in high school. It seems that early childhood education is just as important as high school education, and this is certainly the approach that Forsyth County Day School takes. In 2014, a new curriculum titled Our Path to Excellence began and will follow it up with even more innovative programs in the next school year. FCDS offers a year-round program for children aged two to four, called the Early Advantage Program, which will prepare students for the grades to come. During this time, children gain knowledge that will serve as the basis for the future in mathematics, writing, communication, literacy and phonemic awareness. The kindergarten is part of the lower school. Kindergarten to fourth grade consists of the rest of the lower school where students study the core subjects, but also world languages, art, PE, science and social sciences. Lower school students interact with middle and high school students, so they learn from other groups in a community atmosphere. Undergraduate students take more trips a year to places like the Carolina Raptor Center, All-a-Flutter Butterfly Farm in High Point, North Carolina Zoo, museums, science center in Greensboro, and other centers of educational interest. There are also several after-school enrichment programs such as ballet, press dancing, football, and ukulele class, to name a few. Private music lessons are offered on several different types of instruments. In the spring, the Community School of the Arts puts on a play with undergraduate students. The secondary school consists of grades five to eight, where students are taught skills and offered a wider range of learning opportunities, including community service projects and clubs and academic competitions. (Niceville, FL) Rocky Bayou Christian Academy is a member of the Northwest Florida Education Association and Christian Schools International. RBCA is also accredited by the Florida Association of Christian Colleges and Schools, and the National Institute of Learning Development. The RBCA begins with a preschool program and goes through twelfth grade. Over the past 10 years, 90 percent of RBCA candidates have been eligible for the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship, and graduates earn millions of dollars in scholarships each year. The school has a special service program for students from three to seven years of age who have developmental delays, or who need basic academic skills, with measures designed to help each student succeed. Kindergarten students learn to read and are taught phonics, short and long vowels, silent vowels and diphthongs. They are taught to count money, tell time, and basic additions and subtraction, as well as count to 100. The talent development program concentrates its efforts on students in grades one to six, giving individual attention to students. Victors Class exists for the benefits of students with cognitive challenges to develop their academic and life skills. Therapy services offer children with unique learning challenges help to help them navigate through school. In addition, rca uses the National Institute for Learning Development Model, which includes a science and teaching program, Discovery Educational Therapy, Group Educational Therapy, Prescription for Reading, Speech and Language Therapy and Testing Services. All of these programs offer interventions for students who have difficulty processing information, academic skills and language acquisition. Another campus in Destin serves grades K to sixth grade with a high performance program with advanced technology in each classroom. The ratio between students and teachers is about eight to one. Talent development class students who may have differences in the way they learn have the possibility of advanced placement. Students are taught foreign languages, music, art, computer, and can even participate in the Ukulele Club. The elementary curriculum includes Singapore Math and Student Technology operated through a partnership with Boston University and the University of Richmond. Students will take a standardized performance test in the spring, where the results are used to monitor students' learning success. (New York, NY) Brearley School carries the award as one of the oldest schools in the country. The school was founded in 1884 and remains an all-girl college preparatory school, teaching about 700 students, kindergarten through twelfth grade. The undergraduate school has about 250 pupils and includes kindergarten through fourth grade. The middle school has just over 200 pupils and includes fifth to eighth grade. The core values of the lower school are responsibility, respect, honesty, courage and kindness. Students are encouraged to behave with integrity and act with integrity so that they make a coherent and credible statement. Homerom is the foundation of all learning, but as situational becomes more accountable, they gain more privileges and responsibilities. There is an assembly every week where the girls sing, recite, and put on plays. There are also quiet speakers on a wide range of topics from going for rescued wildlife to the history of jazz. At fourth grade, students will be well trained in handling fractions, decimals and percentages. They will write papers with multiple paragraphs and engage in the planning of what they write. They will read short stories and novels and participate in speech, debate, skits and plays. They will learn about Judaism, Christianity and Islam. In science, they will learn how machines work, including levers and gears, as well as the anatomical structures of animals and the phases of the moon. Students will continue their knowledge of the Mandarin language and rotate through several art courses, including ceramics and ceramics. They learn carpentry, music and photography, as well as physical education and service learning. In other words, students at Brearley have a robust curriculum. The lower school seeks to develop character in all its students to be a basis for their behavior in the middle and upper class, and for life. Students are taught to respect the thoughts and work of others, while giving back to society through service projects. Students discuss peer conflicts in discussions arising out of the academic activities in the lower school. Undergraduate students are offered gymnastics and football programs after school. After-school football does not begin for students before grade two, but gymnastics is open to all girls in lower school. Brearley also works with Chapin School to provide LS Clubhouse after school for Grade K through 6, where students engage in a variety of physical, intellectual and artistic activities. (Schererville, I) Children from junior kindergarten to eighth grade attend Forest Academy. Junior kindergarten uses several active learning experiences where they interact with classmates, people, events and practical learning centers. Teachers lay out the current schedule in writing and in symbols, so that children will be encouraged to read. Children are given the opportunity to make choices about what they do and participate in problem-solving activities. Children are encouraged to describe in words what they are experiencing. They are taught the alphabet, visual words, and begin to read skills through a phonics program. Mathematical concepts are taught through the use of manipulative objects, and students are taught to recite and write their numbers, as well as count with fives and tens. They also participate in courses in PE, music, art, Spanish, computer, sign language, woodwork and science. Science includes trips on nature trails, excursions and age-appropriate experiments. The kindergarten program has a complex reading, writing, spelling, math, social sciences and science program. Science uses experiments with magnets, light and sound, as well as the different stages of butterflies and ladybugs. Students also participate in the same special classes as junior kindergarten students, including sign language and music. As students enter first grade, they are taught using Whole Brain Teaching. They learn about science through an intensive classroom garden and learn to read different types of media such as articles and poems. Students are taught tolerance for diversity, drawing, age-appropriate musical production, painting and writing stories and essays up to five paragraphs long. Students get to take exciting excursions to the Art Institute of Chicago, as well as many other places. Second-graders attend the Chicago Field Museum and take part in a scavenger hunt. They also tour Pawnee Earth Lodge and learn about the life of Pawnee Native. Every two years, students return there for an overnight trip with the third graders and their parents. Third- and fourth-graders take an overnight trip to Indiana Dunes to learn about nature and explore the multiple ecosystems found on the Dunes. Fifth-graders travel to medieval times restaurant, take a trip to Camp Tecumseh, and go to the Field Museum in Chicago when they study Egypt so they can see the Egyptian exhibition. At the end of the year, they head to Space Camp where they experience many fun activities that simulate walking in near-zero gravity and what it's like to fly in a spacecraft. (Jackson, WY) Journeys School offers education to pre-kindergarten through twelfth grade. Currently, Journeys is a day school, although boarding is considered an option for the future. There is also a long-term home residency program for international students. Primary school pupils are immersed in a seven-course programme that includes the usual academic courses, as well as art. The curriculum complies with national standards known as Common Core. Students are assigned to teach math and language art classes based on each student's ability and social and emotional development so that they can learn, get help, and accelerate at their own pace. The literacy and literacy material provides children with a strong basis for both reading and writing, and uses several reputable and proven literacy programs. Students have reading and writing workshops daily and are instructed in skills that will make them strong readers and writers. Mathematics is taught with fewer subjects delivered in a more intense method using Math in Focus: The Singapore Approach. Science is taught using all scientific disciplines, including technology, to teach students to think like scientists through a method of investigation, so that students learn to ask questions and design their own experiments. Classes take place both indoors and outdoors. Social studies classes emphasize citizenship and society. All classes are taught in such a way that students can create real applications. In addition to visual arts, elementary students also have music or drama classes twice a week. Elementary students give public musical and dramatic performances. Students study the type of sounds each instrument makes and the characteristic characteristics of different types of music. The instruments played by elementary students are mostly limited to percussion instruments, keyboards and recorders. Elementary students go on frequent day trips in and around the community and go on three extended day trips (of one to five days) per year to areas of Wyoming, Washington and Idaho. Elementary students also participate in service projects designed for their age groups, such as building birdhouses and collecting wildflower seeds to plant in areas that need reforestation. In summer, a number of camps are available for undergraduate students, such as Jackson Hole Summer Science Camp, Journeys School Summer Innovation Academy and Teton Valley Community School Summer Camps. At these camps, students can study the environment, discover different animals, make their homes, explore natural waterways, go on horseback walks in the wild and camp out. (Atlanta, GA) Cliff Valley School is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, and the Southern Association for Independent Schools. Cliff Valley is also a member of the Georgia Independent School Association and the National Association of Independent Schools. There are about 300 students and 57 full-time teachers, most of whom have higher education. There is a very low turnover among the faculty, which provides continuity in the school. The campus is located on nearly five acres in Northeast Atlanta and has 47,000 square feet of amenities, including a music room and performance stage, lab, art studio, gym, outdoor classroom, a roof terrace, outdoor play areas for recess and organized sports, and nature trails. Spanish language acquisition begins at the age of three in Cliff Valley School. Preschoolers learn through exploration and visual effects. Students work in a garden to plant and nourish what they grow. The kindergarten through fifth grade is taught by teams offering warm-up exercises in central, activity centers and teaching language arts and mathematics. Students go to recess and then lunch, after which they study science and social sciences and go to enrichment classes in art, environmental science, PE, Spanish, technology, library and music. Different assessments are used to determine student competencies and parents receive weekly progress reports and newsletters. Standardized tests are used in the upper grades to determine how well students acquire knowledge and skills. Students go on several excursions during the year, and guest speakers come to school from different disciplines, so students can connect between what they learn and the world around them. Primary and preschool students have reading mats and lunchmats, so older pupils can experience what it's like to guide younger people and act as role models. Students in grades three through five can participate in club-style sports with no chance of being cut from the team. Sports include cross country skiing, volleyball, basketball, flag football and football. An after-school program gives students the opportunity to learn about and participate in drama, art, fencing, chess, golf, robotics and music. After-school care is available for all students who are three years of age or older. Activities include games, free play, crafts, arts projects and activities, and homework time. In summer, camps are arranged for all age groups with age-appropriate activities that include computer programming, games, cooking and sports. Before care and finishing, students participate in less structured activities with their own age groups such as free play, arts and crafts, and reading time. (Washington, DC) The Maret School, a preparatory school founded in 1911, serves nearly 650 students in kindergarten through twelfth grade on a seven-and-a-half-acre campus. Originally it was a French school that taught students from different nations, and with such beginnings respects and celebrates its diversity. Students come from 41 countries and 42 percent are students of color. Students attend classes on a single campus with an average class size of 15, with a student-teacher ratio of seven to one. There are 106 teachers and 65 percent of them have master's degrees or higher. The school is accredited by the Association of Independent Maryland Schools. Spanish instruction begins in while the study of French and Latin begins in grade six. In ninth grade, students study Chinese. Each student is required to take classes in visual and performing arts, and each student must take classes on twenty-first-century essential skills. Although Maret is a college preparatory school, elementary school does not try to teach at an accelerated pace or teach more than students need for a good foundation before entering middle school. Children are allowed to become children while attending science classes twice a week, along with art and music. Students go to the library once a week and have PE four times a week. The number of times students go to Spanish courses depends on the student's grade level. The fourth-graders act as reading buddies for kindergarten, and students from the plant gardens in high school with kindergarten classes. High school students help first-grade students raise fish (shade) and release them into a river. There are celebrations where every student in each class participates. All students have access to laptops, and there are also 3D printers, tablets, digital cameras and more for students to use and learn from to prepare them for life in the twenty-first century. Service learning is also part of the curriculum. An after-school program is in place for pupils in kindergarten to eighth grade. Students receive student help if necessary, but it's a time for them to relax with activities like a weekly movie, Puzzle Club, Girls on the Run, Culture Club, French Club and Chess Club. During the year, the lower school has several celebrations, assemblies and guest speakers. Maret is accredited by the Association of Independent Maryland Schools and a member of eight professional education associations. (Anchoring, AK) In August 2013, Pacific Northern moved into a brand new campus that includes a multipurpose gymnasium, a music room and a large art studio, and an extensive science laboratory where students are challenged daily to develop independent and critical thinking skills. Students will have the opportunity to explore topics across the curriculum. Although students cooperate, they are held individually responsible for their learning in this school's preparatory school. Nevertheless, teaching is differentiated so that all students can achieve their own potential. Helping students in this quest is a team of devoted small-class teachers. There are about 150 students in this pre-kindergarten through eighth grade school. The Responsive Classroom program is used to make students comfortable discussing their ideas and get the support they need to continue stretching their thinking skills to new heights. Tuition is currently \$16,995 a year, and teaching help is available. PNA also offers an after-school program. The youngest students through third grade in both indoor and outdoor social and athletic activities. The fourth to eighth grade students attend the Homework Club where they have an hour to quietly work on homework on the computer, then participate in both outdoor and indoor social and athletic activities. Beginners and kindergarten are considered kindergarten, kindergarten to fourth grade is considered lower school and fifth to eighth grade is considered middle school. All core subjects are taught by the classroom teacher and specialists teach optional courses in PE, performing arts, Spanish and studio art. Students are encouraged to work through self-developed projects and consider with others the different ways the problems associated with the project can be solved. Students will learn to compare and analyze their solutions. All students are taken on field trips, some of which are overnight, and all of which are linked to the curriculum. Students have visited Alaska sea life center, Kachemak Bay, Denali National Park, Alaska Native Heritage Center, Performing Arts Center, and Campbell Creek Science Center, Puget Sound, Washington, D.C. and Costa Rica. Steps 2, 5 and 7 are required to attend the Science Fair; participation is optional for all other grades. All students participate in a day of service (to the community), an autumn concert, a spring musical and a student art exhibition. Different programs are used for each, thereby maximizing student learning. (Sandy, OUT) Waterford School serves children in primary school through twelfth, integrating academics, sports, art and social development into an interdisciplinary whole. In preschool and kindergarten, students begin the process of learning to become readers, writers, listeners and speakers. They are taught to tell time and use a calendar. They learn colors and numbers as well as graphs and shapes. Their learning is enriched with an introduction to dance, music, photography, theatre and art. In the undergraduate school, students begin an academic program that will teach students studying habits and skills that they will use for the rest of their lives while studying elementary math, English, computers, science, history, dance, music, visual arts, PE, and library science. Lower-school students can also be members of a math club in third and fourth grades, an inventor's club for second- and third-graders, a fifth-grade robotics program and lower school students in grades three through five put on a play each year produced by high school students. Fourth- and fifth-grade students compete in both math and geography. All lower school students can join a Saturday program, eight-week ski and riding programs. Pupils in sixth grade are considered part of the middle school. It is in middle school that competitive sports begin. The curriculum is liberal arts/college preparatory. From preschool on time, students can join Waterford Dance Academy where they learn ballet and modern dance. Preschoolers start with creative dance and five- and six-year-olds start with pre-ballet. After that, there are five levels of ballet teaching that students must qualify. There are open classes in jazz dance, modern dance and contemporary dance. Founded in 1981, the Sandy suburban school is located on a 40-acre campus with the majestic Wasatch Mountains towering behind it. There are 10 buildings with 250,000 square meters of teaching space. The lower school building includes rooms for music, art, science, computer labs, mathematics, gym and library. Instruction in string instruments begins in fourth grade, with brass and wood wind added next year. It is the school's mission to provide a liberal arts and college preparatory program combined with the latest technology. The school is accredited by the Northwest Accreditation Commission and the Northwest Association of Independent Schools. There are a total of 396 pupils in primary and 210 in secondary school. The school calendar runs on a trimester system. (Sewickley, PA) On a 16-acre campus just north of Pittsburgh, 700 students in prekindergarten through twelfth grade attend Sewickley Academy, on a campus with 60 classrooms, nine science labs, two robotic labs, five computer labs, a digital design lab, a media center, and two libraries. There is an outdoor classroom with a garden and two greenhouses. There are two auditoriums, both large and small, a visual and performing art studio, an art gallery and individual fitness rooms for musicians. The goal of the language art program is to create critical readers and writers who can distinguish between credible and bad sources. In fifth grade, students read five main strategies while practicing writing, editing, grammar, spelling, and vocabulary. Students read classic and nonfiction novels as a class, and alone. In social sciences, students learn about American history, as well as ancient cultures, American government, personal rights and how people from different parts of the world came to live in the United States. The math program is college and life preparatory. At fifth grade, students learn to apply a set of rules or concepts to new problems. They learn computational flow and have the opportunity to participate in the math counting program. In science, students learn the scientific method of observing, taking notes and analyzing their observations. At fifth grade, students study life cycles, the universe, celestial bodies, the atmosphere, oceans, and other environments on Earth. Fifth grade students have a teleconference with the Challenger Learning Center and visit the Sunship Study Station at McKeever Center. Spanish is offered in the pre-kindergarten through twelfth grade. Students can start taking French, Chinese, Latin or Italian in sixth grade, and an after-school Chinese program is offered for students in first to fifth grade. All students take classes in engineering and robotics. In fifth grade, students work together to share work that designs robots fairly, and game design and programming. Students can choose to continue their pursuit of robotics in the after-school program. The students also express themselves through classes taught in the Department of Art: visual arts, dance, theatre and music. At fifth grade, students participate in a musical put on by the dance, music and theater departments. All students must participate. The school has outdoor and indoor gardens so they can learn in an outdoor classroom so they can understand the context of the environment and the importance of sustainability. Students prepare soil and organically grow their own plants that they then cultivate and harvest. There are many types of gardens, including a butterfly garden and a flower garden. The lower school begins the week with a Monday morning congregation where birthdays are recognized, students sing, tell stories, and put on skits, and to which parents are invited. Each home room must prepare an assembly at least once a year. In addition to excursions, guest speakers and artists are brought in to talk to students. (San Francisco, CA) While teaching is significant at CSB, it includes daily hot lunches and outdoor education programs, as well as books and computers. The school raises money to supplement the education program that helps reduce teaching. Students at the school are also awarded nearly one and a half million dollars in tuition fees. Although volunteering is an important part of the operation of the school, there is no quota for parents to fulfill. Cathedral School for Boys is a kindergarten through eighth grade, all boys Episcopal school. The school seeks boys who are highly motivated to learn, from a diverse cultural and ethnic background, and who are of good moral character. Students are scheduled for a tour of the school after all records are received and a family interview is conducted at that time as part of the admissions process. The lower school consists of kindergarten through fourth grade. Community service is part of the education program, and students participate through a community-wide composting program and support from the Bayview Mission, an institution that provides services and food to people living in the Hunters Point and Bayview neighborhoods. At the undergraduate school, students learn some of their mathematics through projects that allow students to solve real problems in an analytical and creative way, while using mathematics principles. It many learning opportunities in others, too, with students working independently or in small groups. Whenever possible, interdisciplinary lessons are given. A community spirit is promoted through class meetings and community circles, as well as the curriculum for human development and chapel services. The school seeks to build a strong grade in all pupils so that they are socially fit, as well as steeped in academic sharpness and physical fitness. The boys are taught to be supportive team players in the athletic program and how to show good sportsmanship regardless of the situation. When boys reach sixth grade, they are in high school (through eighth grade) where students are taught in a humanities program that integrates religious studies with English and history. Art teaching is founded in the belief that art helps to develop the creative brain and celebrate the talents of each child. In addition to physical education, community service, drama, jazz bands, mathematics, outdoor education, science and dance, students are taught in Spanish and Mandarin languages and culture. Students in language classes take trips to China and Chile. (Santa Fe, NM) About 130 students from preschool to eighth grade attend the Santa Fe School for the Arts and Sciences. Mathematics and science are taught together with multicultural art, all integrated into a curriculum that builds strong academic skills through expedition learning (EL). EL joins challenging academics with learning expeditions (real projects), community service and character development. Expeditionary Learning has several advantages, including creating a culture of respect, creating deep thinkers, providing support for all learning methods, and creating curious and knowledgeable students and teachers. For middle school students who have been home-schooled, a bridge program is offered that allows middle school students to participate in selective classes at school while continuing home schooling in others. An interdisciplinary approach is used so that students see the relevance of everyone and how they are connected. Technology is integrated into everyone, as well as learning appropriate communication skills. The school has a variety of extracurricular activities, including chess, soccer, basketball, and tennis. (Edison, NJ) In preschool, RPRY seeks to awaken the imagination, creativity and curiosity of children through motivational programs that promote care, responsibility and self-reliance. The lower school goes through fourth grade and uses practical activities and mixed learning opportunities, while teaching to the distinctive style of each pupil. Students learn interactively and work in small groups. Individual teaching allows students to develop as they are constantly participating in projects, quizzes, tests, and individual examination as you work towards targeted targets. Academic courses are taught in an interdisciplinary way so that students see the relevance of what they learn. Reading and writing, for example, crosses all disciplines. Students read stories and books and participate in STEM-focused goals. Students write about topics that are relevant to them. They learn about health through a class and through physical education. Middle school begins in grade five and goes through grade eight. In middle school, students become more active in the community, initiating community projects to raise money for people in need. Class sizes are kept small, and the school's motto is: Challenge the mind and nurture the soul. Because students learn differently, each student's learning is individualized and aligned with the state's common core goal in a small group setting. Students with learning disabilities are not pressured to achieve beyond their abilities, but accelerated learning programs are available to advanced students so that they are not held back by others. Students can take support classes, as well as independent enrichment opportunities. Students have access to optional classes through distance learning, a new digital social science program, weekly STEM classes, science, computer and state-of-the-art science labs. RPRY ranks sixth among the top 50 middle schools in the United States (Vienna, VA) Preschoolers at Green Hedges are taught a Montessori program. Primary school teaches students in traditional classrooms for grades one to eight. GHS is a member of the American Montessori Society, the National Association of Independent Schools and the Virginia Association of Independent Schools. Founded in 1942, GHS has approximately 190 students and 23 teachers, 57 per cent of whom have advanced degrees. It began in the home of the founder and had 10 students and a teacher. By 1955, the school had flourished to 60 students, so four acres were purchased in Vienna, of which it expanded to encompass all levels through grade eight. GHS is committed to its students' achieving distinction with character while exploring opportunities. Students begin to learn French in preschool and Spanish in fifth grade. Through primary school, students study music and art, as well as physical education. In the upper grades, they are taught to play the recorder and learn music theory. Students can also participate in fifth-grade bands. All grades go on age-appropriate excursions, and from fourth grade they go on overnight trips. Students begin learning first-grade technology skills by learning terminology, digital drawing, iPad navigation, and keyboard skills. Keyboard skills are taught every year in elementary grades. Starting in step five, students begin to participate science fair and start learning pre-algebra. Art is integral to the curriculum, not only for the sake of art, but to show students how art is connected to history, science and language art. When students are in fifth grade, they are sculpting, painting, and using clay and multimedia to create art projects. Also after fifth grade, students learn research skills (including how to quote references) and create their own media presentations. The school produces a monthly magazine called Clip Art where school philosophy, teachers, parents and students are presented in various articles and interviews. The school sponsors several events during the year that bring families together, such as Founders' Day, Grandparents' Day, DragonFest (an afternoon of play, competitions, food, face painting and more), a spring concert, a first class game, and a spring dance, to name a few. At GHS, it's not just about education, but about the community where students, parents, community members, relatives and alumni can join students and teachers in celebrating what they achieve. (Bloomfield, MI) It may seem to some a trite and clichéd target, but one only needs to tune in to the news on TV or pick up a newspaper to see that the simple lesson of learning to be nice to each other is an important ingredient in the social contract that binds communities together. Roeper is prekindergarten through fifth grade school with about 250 students and in the lower school children learn to work together, to be kind to each other, and show respect for others. It is to be hoped that children will develop the desire to make a difference in the world through civic engagement, personal and social awareness, and respect for diversity. Roeper seeks gifted students who are prepared for postgraduate education. Students must take a gifted IQ test and many things are taken into account when a child applies for a place at Roeper, including strong academic performance in previous grades and teacher recommendations. Pupils in the lower secondary school are introduced to art as early as three years and get access to various media where they produce their own art. They are exposed to different types of art and are encouraged to deal with different things to get a feel for different textures. In step 2 of the art program, students are exposed to visual literacy using a variety of tools and materials as they develop the individual's student skills. In stage 3 Art, students are taught respect for the work of other artists as they explore different themes and techniques. Finally, in step 4, students get a wider range of artistic experiences while exposing students to art history and multiculturalism. There is also a four-stage performing arts program in the lower school and seeks to expose children to different types of both oral and instrumental. On stage 3 they play the soprano, and on stage 4 they can choose an instrument and play in the band or sing in a large choir. It is a beginning and advanced band class for primary school students. Each elementary student begins the day in the home room where English, mathematics and social sciences are covered. Students then take several classes in French, science, PE, dance and movement, art, music and library and computer skills. (Chicago, IL) At Cambridge School, students receive an individual learning plan based on their strengths and weaknesses, socially, academically and spiritually. Students are taught in a way that shows how all courses are interconnected, so that students will develop

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