



**WORKBOOK**

HOW TO *choose* A PRIVATE SCHOOL  
10 ESSENTIAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR FAMILIES

A PUBLICATION OF THE EPISCOPAL SCHOOL OF DALLAS PRESS



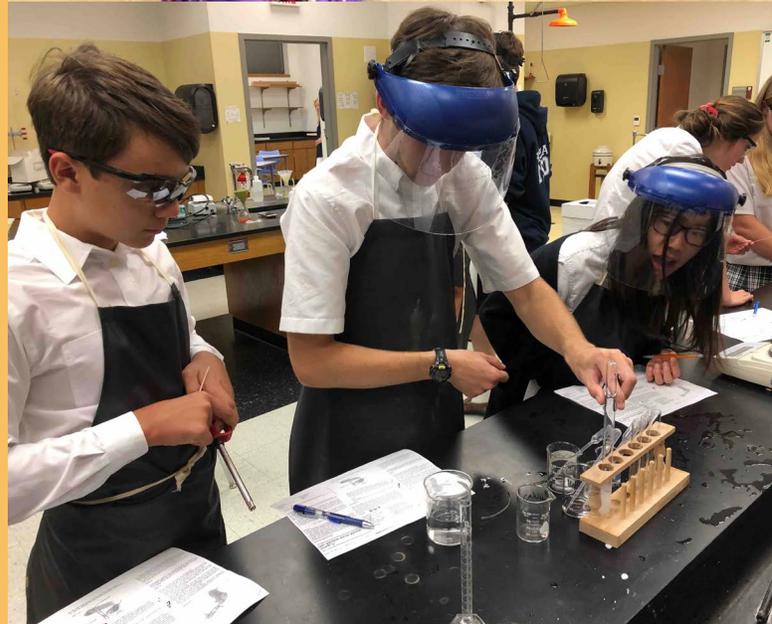
# Welcome.

Choosing a private school for your child is a very personal process. Across the United States, there are many excellent schools to choose from – public, private, parochial, magnet and charter.

How do you begin to narrow down your choices? And how do you ultimately decide which school is best for your child, and your family?

This workbook can help as you start to think about variables that may factor into your decision-making. Determining your non-negotiable criteria, and discovering where you have some flexibility, will help narrow your focus and avoid distractions.

We recommend printing the workbook, having each family member complete it, and then coming together to compare and discuss your findings. By empowering your child to be part of the decision-making process, it's likely they will experience less stress and be excited about their prospective school choices.



# Let's get started.

## WHAT TYPES OF SCHOOLS DO YOU PREFER?

- Day School
  - Boarding School
  - Single-Sex
  - Co-ed
  - No preference
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## WOULD YOU PREFER YOUR CHILD STAY AT ONE SCHOOL FOR THE DURATION (PRE-SCHOOL TO GRADE 12) OR CHANGE SCHOOLS AFTER A MAJOR DIVISION BREAK?

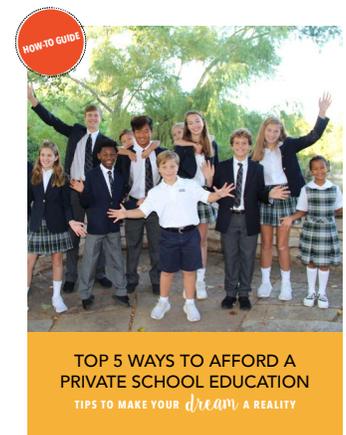
- Stay at one school, Pre-School through Grade 12
  - Change schools after elementary or middle school
  - No preference
- 

## WHAT SIZE SCHOOL WOULD BEST SUIT YOUR CHILD AND FAMILY?

- Small (<200)
  - Medium (between 200 and 600)
  - Large (>600)
  - No preference
- 

## IS IT IMPORTANT THAT YOUR CHILD BE REQUIRED TO WEAR A UNIFORM?

- Yes
- No
- No preference



## CAN YOU AFFORD PRIVATE SCHOOL?

Our free ebook can help.

[Download Now.](#)

**IS A SCHOOL'S RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION, OR LACK THEREOF, IMPORTANT TO YOUR FAMILY?**

- Christian
  - Jewish
  - Non-denominational
  - No preference
- 

**WHAT IS THE TUITION RANGE YOU CAN AFFORD, AND WILL YOU NEED FLEXIBLE FINANCING OPTIONS AND/OR TUITION ASSISTANCE?**

- Yes, we would like flexible financing options
  - Yes, we will need tuition assistance
  - No, we will not need financial assistance
- 

**IS DIVERSITY IMPORTANT TO YOU? DIVERSITY CAN BE RELATED TO SOCIO-ECONOMICS, ETHNICITIES, RELIGIONS, AND A VARIETY OF OTHER FACTORS.**

- Diversity is important
  - Diversity is somewhat important
  - Diversity is not important
  - No preference
- 

**WHAT IS AN ACCEPTABLE COMMUTE TIME, AND HOW IMPORTANT IS IT?** Consider not only time to and from school, but the ease in which you can attend campus community events, activities, sports, playdates, etc.

- Less than 10 minutes
- Between 10 and 20 minutes
- No more than 30 minutes
- Very flexible on commute time



*A U.S. Department of Education study found that nearly 68% of all private schools are affiliated with a religion.*

**WHAT SPECIAL PROGRAMS OR EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES MEET YOUR CHILD'S INTERESTS OR NEEDS? ARE GLOBAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPORTANT TO YOU? HOW ABOUT SPORTS AND FINE ARTS? CAN THE SCHOOL PROVIDE THESE?**

**EXTRACURRICULARS:**

**GLOBAL OPPORTUNITIES:**

**SPORTS OR FINE ARTS:**

No preference

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**DOES YOUR CHILD HAVE A DIAGNOSED LEARNING DIFFERENCE THAT REQUIRES ACCOMMODATIONS?**

- Yes, my child has a learning difference
  - No, my child does not have a learning difference
- 

**ARE YOU STRONGLY INTERESTED IN A SPECIFIC TYPE OF ACADEMIC PROGRAM?**

- Traditional college preparatory
- International Baccalaureate
- Montessori
- Dual Language
- No preference



# Congratulations.

Your completed workbook will allow you to identify the schools that meet your basic criteria, and eliminate those that do not. Once you have identified your target schools, complete the private school short list below. We recommend starting with 3-5 schools.

## PRIVATE SCHOOL SHORT LIST

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

You are now ready to start researching and visiting the schools on your short list.

“

Navigating the world of Independent Schools can be intimidating but it doesn't have to be. I hope that by sharing my experience with prospective parents, they will feel more at ease.

*- Ruth Burke, Associate Head of School, The Episcopal School of Dallas.*

## **ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

RUTH BURKE is the Associate Head of School at The Episcopal School of Dallas, overseeing Enrollment, Communications, Community Culture, and Strategic Initiatives.

Ruth's experience in independent school administration spans 31 years with 24 in service to ESD, and The Bolles School and University Liggett School. Her roles include administrator, teacher, coach, advisor, and dean. Always with the best possible student experience and learning and teaching resources in mind, most recently Ruth oversaw the fundraising, planning, and construction of ESD's award-winning lower school building. She has served as conference chair for the Independent Schools Association of the Southwest (ISAS) Admission Conference and led numerous panel discussions and seminars for the Secondary School Admission Test Board (SSATB), National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS), and ISAS.

Ruth earned a Bachelor of Science in Psychology and a Masters in School Administration from Shippensburg University of Pennsylvania.

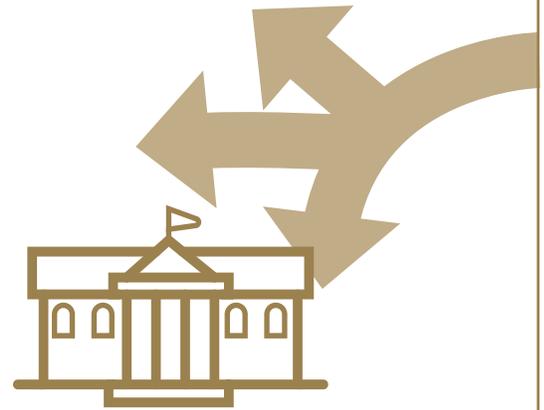


## 8 Dilemmas in Admission Decision Season *(Solutions Included!)*

Admission decisions can be an exciting, disappointing, or confusing time for families. Learn everything you need to know about being accepted or denied to your school of choice, wait lists, and how to navigate the complexities of each scenario.

**DOWNLOAD NOW**

Or visit [esdallas.org/decisions](http://esdallas.org/decisions)



## 5 Ways to Afford a Private School Education

Are you wondering if you can afford a private school education for your child? Our how-to guide can help. You may be surprised to find a private school education is within your reach.

**DOWNLOAD NOW**

Or visit [esdallas.org/affordingschool](http://esdallas.org/affordingschool)



## 7 Tips for Acing Your Private School Admission Interview

Is your child nervous about the admission interview process? Not knowing what to expect can be nerve wracking. Our how-to guide will show you it doesn't have to be as intimidating as it may seem.

**DOWNLOAD NOW**

Or visit [esdallas.org/admissioninterview](http://esdallas.org/admissioninterview)

