



School Choice

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Kindergarten

**Transition from toddler
exploration to school-age
expectations**

No Naps

More Structure

More Expectations

Eligibility to join a Kindergarten Program in Texas

- **Be five years old by September 1st of the school year**
- **Reside in the school district**
- **Have up-to-date immunizations**
- **Have a legal birth certificate.**
- **Have undergone the required screening tests.**
- **Social Security Number (optional)**

Parent Questions:

- Is kindergarten required in Texas?
- If my child's birthday is close to the cutoff date, is there an assessment to determine if they are ready for kindergarten?
- What is better - being the youngest in the classroom vs. being oldest?

How do you select the best fit for your child?

Choosing a school for your rising kindergartener is a significant decision and can set the foundation for their educational journey. Here is a checklist of important factors to consider when deciding on the right school:

Key Considerations

Understanding your Child

- **Learning Style:** Does the school cater to your child's preferred learning style (visual, auditory, kinesthetic)?
- **Temperament:** Will the school's environment suit your child's personality (introverted vs. extroverted, independent vs. collaborative)?
- **Interests and Strengths:** Does the school offer programs that align with your child's interests and talents (arts, STEM, languages)?
- **Needs and Challenges:** Is the school equipped to support any special educational needs or challenges your child may have?

Assessing the Schools

- **Educational Philosophy:** Does the school's teaching philosophy align with your family's values and your child's learning preferences?
- **Curriculum and Programs:** Does the curriculum cater to your child's academic level and interest? Are there programs for advanced learners or support for those who need it?
- **Social Environment:** Is the school known for a supportive social environment that would allow your child to thrive?
- **Classroom Dynamics:** Would your child do better in a school with smaller classes that offer more individual attention, or do they thrive in larger group settings?
- **Extracurricular Opportunities:** Are there clubs, sports, and other activities that match your child's non-academic interests?
- **Teacher Engagement:** Do teachers seem engaged and caring? How do they interact with students?

Key Considerations

Aligning Values and Logistics

- **Family Involvement:** Does the school encourage and provide opportunities for parent involvement?
- **Logistics:** Consider commute time, school hours, after-school care, and how these factors fit with your family's routine.
- **Future Pathways:** Does the school provide a strong foundation for your child's educational future, including transitions to higher grades?

Communication and Support

- **Feedback and Support:** How does the school communicate with parents about a child's progress? What support systems are in place for academic or personal issues?
- **Community:** Is there a sense of community and shared goals among students, parents, and staff?

Kindergarten Options

In the Boerne/San Antonio area, several options are available for parents when their children are ready to transition from preschool to a K-12 organization

Options:

- Kindergarten at ExcelLED Montessori
- Public School
- Charter School
- Magnet School
- Private School
- Religious School
- Home Schooling
- Online Schools



Kinder at ExcellED

Preparatory Preschool

ExcellED Montessori Plus was founded to promote academic excellence and cultivate problem-solving skills. Since its inception in 2019, we have successfully graduated over 90 preschoolers who have thrived in Kinder.

Information:

- Enrollment Date: March 2024
- Benefits of kinder at ExcellED:
 - Smaller classes
 - Educational Advancement
 - Personalized & Hands-On Learning
 - Development of Independence
 - Continuity
 - Grace and Courtesy
 - Teachers specializing in social/emotional development

Public Schools

Public schools can be a great choice for many families, offering a comprehensive education that is accessible to a wide range of students. They offer a wide range of elementary, middle, and high schools, providing diverse educational opportunities.

San Antonio / Boerne Area has over 18 School districts
Boerne ISD, NEISD, NISD, SAISD, others

Information:

- Enrollment Date: March 2024
- Benefits of Public School:
 - **Accessibility** and No Tuition Costs
 - Extracurricular Activities, including sports, arts, and clubs
 - Facilities including Transportation
 - K-12 (Elementary, Middle, High)
 - Qualified Teachers
 - Special Education Programs
 - Diversity
- Challenges
 - Overcrowded Classrooms
 - Standardized Testing Focus
 - Variability in Quality
 - One-Size-Fits-All Approach

Charter Schools

A charter school is a type of public school that operates independently of the traditional public school system but is still funded with public money.

Basis, Great Hearts, School of Science & Technology, IDEA, KIPP, Ekhla, others

<https://sachartermoms.com/san-antonio-charter-schools-guide/>

Information:

- Enrollment Date: Nov 2023 for 24-25 School Year
- Application & Admission via Lottery
- Benefits of Charter Schools:
 - Innovative Teaching Methods
 - No Tuition Costs
 - Smaller Class Sizes
 - Focus on Specialized Subjects
 - Parental Involvement
 - Accountability for Performance
- Challenges
 - Limited Accountability and Oversight
 - Limited infrastructure - no transportation, Spots, Programs
 - Varied Performance
 - Access and Equity Issues
 - Resource Diversion from Public Schools

Private Schools

Boerne and San Antonio have a variety of private schools, each with its own curriculum and educational philosophy.

Keystone, Saint Mary's Hall, Montessori School of San Antonio, Hill Country Montessori, TMI, and others

Information:

- Enrollment Date: Nov 2023 - March 2024
- Application and admission via enrollment process
- Benefits of Private Schools:
 - Enhanced Academic Opportunities
 - Smaller Class Sizes
 - Focus on Values and Culture
 - Facilities and Extracurriculars
 - Community Environment
- Challenges
 - Tuition Costs
 - Limited Diversity
 - Admission Selectivity
 - Less Regulation
 - Limited Special Education Services
 - Transportation, Extra activities like Sports

Magnet Schools

Magnet schools are public schools with specialized courses or curricula. "Magnet" refers to how these schools draw students from across the normal boundaries defined by authorities (as school boards) to attract a diverse student body.

Health Careers, ISA, John J Science & Engineering, Northside School of Innovation, Technology, and Entrepreneurship, Communications Arts High School

Information:

- Enrollment Date: Nov 2023 - March 2024
- Application and admission via a lottery process
- Benefits of Magnet Schools:
 - Specialized Programs
 - Diverse Student Body
 - Innovative and Engaging Curriculum
 - Access to High-Quality Education
 - No Tuition Cost
- Challenges
 - Competitive Admission
 - Transportation
 - High Demand
 - Potential for Increased Pressure
 - Less Emphasis on Neighborhood Community
 -

Religious Schools

Religious schools, also known as parochial schools when they're connected to a specific parish, are private schools affiliated with a particular religion. They integrate faith-based education with traditional academic subjects

St. George's Episcopal, Cornerstone Christian School, Geneva
<https://sachartermoms.com/san-antonio-catholic-schools-enrollment-guide/>

Information:

- Enrollment Date: Nov 2023 - March 2024
- Application and admission via an application process
- Benefits of Religious Schools:
 - Value-Based Education
 - Discipline and Structure
 - Community and Shared Values
 - Smaller Class Sizes
 - Academic Performance
- Challenges
 - Transportation
 - Tuition Costs
 - Less Diversity
 - Limited Curriculum Choices
 - Enrollment and Staffing Restrictions
 - Variable Accreditation and Academic Standards

Home Schools

Texas is known to have relatively lenient homeschooling laws, giving parents considerable freedom to direct their children's education.

Legal Requirements:

- **Notification:** Texas does not require parents to notify any state or local educational authorities to begin homeschooling.
- **Curriculum:** The instruction must include reading, spelling, grammar, mathematics, and a course in good citizenship.
Qualifications: There are no teacher qualification requirements for parents or tutors in Texas.
- **Assessment:** Texas does not require standardized tests for homeschooled students.
- **Record Keeping:** No state requirements for keeping educational records, but it's recommended to maintain detailed records in case of a future return to public school or college applications.

Resources and Support:

- **Homeschooling Groups:** San Antonio has an active homeschooling community with various support groups and co-ops that offer opportunities for extracurricular activities, social outings, and shared educational resources.
- **Public School Access:** Homeschooled students in Texas may have access to public school classes or extracurricular activities on a case-by-case basis.
- **Educational Resources:** Libraries, museums, and educational centers in San Antonio can provide supplementary educational opportunities for homeschooled students.
- **Conventions and Book Fairs:** Annual events like the Great Homeschool Conventions in Texas can be a valuable resource for curriculum materials, workshops, and networking with other homeschooling families.

Online Schools

The Texas Virtual School Network Online Schools (TXVSN OLS) program provides full-time online instruction to eligible Texas public school students through enrollment in one of the TEA-accredited public school districts and open-enrollment charter schools approved to participate in the program. These free online public schools offer 100 percent virtual instructional programs to students across the state. Students who enroll in one of the [TXVSN online schools](#) are public school students.

<https://sachartermoms.com/texas-full-time-online-schools-for-kids/>



Information:

- Enrollment Date: ???
- Application and admission
- Benefits of Religious Schools:
 - Flexibility
 - Accessibility
 - Customized Learning
 - Comfortable Learning Environment
 - Technological Literacy
- Challenges
 - Limited Social Interaction
 - Self-Discipline Required
 - Varied Academic Rigor
 - Technical Issues
 - Less Hands-On Learning
 - Limited Extracurricular Activities

Summary

If you're looking into alternatives to the traditional public school program offered by your local Independent School District (ISD), starting your research early is crucial.

- **Understand Your Child's Needs**
- **Explore Educational Alternatives**
- **Research and Visit Schools**
- **Consider Practicalities**
- **Check Accreditation and Standards**
- **Look into Supplemental Resources**
- **Network with Other Parents and Educators**
- **Make Use of Online and Community Resources**
- **Evaluate and Decide**

Understanding your Child

1. Personality:

- Is your child introverted or extroverted?
- How do they respond to new people and situations?

2. Interests and Preferences:

- What activities does your child enjoy?
- What are their favorite subjects or toys?

3. Learning Style:

- Does your child learn best by seeing, hearing, or doing?
- Do they prefer structured or unstructured activities?

4. Social Skills:

- How does your child interact with peers and adults?
- Are they a leader, a follower, or independent in group situations?

5. Emotional Regulation:

- How does your child handle frustration or disappointment?
- What strategies help them calm down?

6. Physical Abilities and Development:

- How is your child progressing in terms of fine motor and gross motor skills?
- Do they have any particular physical talents or challenges?

7. Communication Skills:

- How effectively does your child express themselves?
- Do they understand and follow instructions well?

8. Independence and Self-Care:

- What tasks can your child do independently?
- What areas do they still need help with?

9. Academic Skills:

- What are your child's strengths and challenges in academic areas like reading, writing, and mathematics?
- How do they approach problem-solving?

10. Attention Span and Focus:

- Can your child concentrate on tasks for an age-appropriate length of time?
- What types of activities hold their interest?

11. Health and Well-being:

- Does your child have any allergies, medical conditions, or dietary restrictions?
- How does your child respond to physical activity and rest?

12. Behavioral Tendencies:

- What motivates your child's behavior – is it rewards, praise, or something else?
- Are there any behavioral concerns you or others have noticed?

13. Cultural and Family Background:

- How does your family's cultural background influence your child's experiences and identity?
- What family traditions are important to your child?

14. Adaptability and Resilience:

- How does your child adjust to change?
- What helps them bounce back from setbacks?

Assessing the School

1. Educational Philosophy and Approach:
 - a. What teaching methods and educational philosophies does the school follow (traditional, Montessori, Waldorf, Reggio Emilia, etc.)?
 - b. How does the school's philosophy align with your child's learning style and needs?
2. Curriculum:
 - a. What is the curriculum's focus, and how is it structured?
 - b. How does the school integrate core subjects with arts, physical education, and technology?
 - c. What kind of special programs or advanced courses are offered?
3. Faculty and Staff:
 - a. What are the credentials of the teachers and staff?
 - b. How does the school support ongoing professional development for educators?
 - c. What is the staff turnover rate?
4. Student Outcomes:
 - a. What are the school's standardized test scores and college acceptance rates (if applicable)?
 - b. How do students typically perform academically in later years?
5. Class Size and Student-to-Teacher Ratio:
 - a. What are the average class sizes, and what is the student-to-teacher ratio?
 - b. How does the class size potentially impact individual attention to students?
6. School Culture and Climate:
 - a. What is the overall atmosphere of the school? Is it nurturing and inclusive?
 - b. How does the school handle bullying and discipline?
 - c. What values does the school emphasize?
7. Extracurricular Activities:
 - a. What kind of extracurricular and enrichment activities are available?
 - b. Are there clubs, sports, music, and arts opportunities?
8. Facilities and Resources:
 - a. What kind of facilities are available – libraries, playgrounds, sports fields, computer labs, etc.?
 - b. How does the school ensure the safety and security of students?
9. Parent and Community Involvement:
 - a. How does the school engage with parents and the community?
 - b. Are there active parent-teacher organizations?
10. Inclusivity and Diversity:
 - a. How diverse is the student body and staff?
 - b. What programs or policies are in place to promote inclusivity and cultural competency?
11. Special Education:
 - a. What kind of support and resources are available for students with special needs?
 - b. How does the school personalize learning for all students?
12. Transportation and Location:
 - a. How will your child get to school, and how does the school's location affect this?
 - b. What are the start and end times of the school day, and how does this fit with your schedule?
13. Policies and Communication:
 - a. What are the school's policies on homework, grading, attendance, and communication?
 - b. How does the school communicate with parents?
14. Financial Considerations:
 - a. If it's a private school, what is the cost of tuition, and are there additional fees or financial aid available?
 - b. What are the expectations for fundraising and parental contributions?
15. Reputation and Reviews:
 - a. What do reviews from parents, students, and educational organizations reveal about the school?
 - b. Can you talk to current parents or attend a parent-teacher association meeting?
16. Future Planning:
 - a. How does the school prepare students for the next stages of their education?
 - b. Are there transition programs for middle school, high school, or college planning?
17. Visit the School:
 - a. Have you arranged a visit to the school to observe classes and the school environment?
 - o Can you meet with the principal, teachers, or attend an open house?