School districts in the Dallas–Fort Worth region are locally administered and independent of one another and the cities and towns they serve. For example, the Richardson Independent School District (RISD) includes students in Richardson, as well as parts of Dallas and Garland.

The Dallas Independent School District—or Dallas ISD—is the region’s largest school district with approximately 155,000 students. Students attending Dallas ISD schools reside in Addition, Balch Springs, Carrollton, Cockrell Hill, Dallas, Farmers Branch, Garland, Highland Park, Hutchins, Mesquite, Seagoville, University Park, and Wilmer. Dallas ISD hosts 27 magnet schools and academies, including several that have been nationally recognized. Booker T. Washington High School for the Performing and Visual Arts is in the heart of the Dallas Arts District and includes several internationally known artists among its alumni. The arts magnet, along with the School for the Talented and Gifted and the School of Science and Engineering at Yvonne A. Ewell Townview Center in Dallas, are consistently recognized as among the best high schools in the nation by U.S. News and World Report.

Other area schools recognized by U.S. News include Westlake Academy (Westlake), Highland Park High School (Highland Park), Uplift Academy (Arlington, Dallas, Irving), Lovejoy High School (Lucas), and Texas Academy of Biomedical Sciences (Fort Worth). In 2019, five area schools were recognized as Blue Ribbon Schools, a national honor awarded to those that have achieved academic excellence or made significant progress in closing the achievement gap.

The Fort Worth ISD dominates Tarrant County, serving approximately 85,000 students. The district is home to the Leadership Academy Network, a system of five leadership academies impacting nearly 3,000 students made possible by a partnership with the Texas Wesleyan School of Education and authored by Texas Senate bill 1882, the Texas Partnership Opportunity.

### Choosing a District

Choosing a school for schooling in the Dallas–Fort Worth area, public, private, or charter, and homeschooling should you want to send your kids to public school, rest assured that the Dallas–Fort Worth area has many fine choices. In Texas, public school districts operate independently and are governed by locally elected school boards that implement state guidelines through a selection of instructional programs, curriculum, and local expectations that often exceed state minimums.

Local districts are governed by an independently elected school board of trustees who hires a superintendent as CEO; sets a district’s philosophy (vision and mission) and fiscal policies; selects a curriculum within the state guidelines; and sets the local ISD tax rate, budget, and district boundaries.

#### 1. The district and school’s philosophy vs. your family’s interests and needs
- Athletics
- Fine arts
- Gifted and talented
- Extracurricular activities
- Parent engagement

#### 2. Program offerings and compatibility with your child’s interests and needs
- Vision, mission, goals
- Size of school and class size
- Grade level alignment (K-4, K-5, K-6, etc.)
- Elective options
- Parent engagement

#### 3. Student achievement and performance (including staff and parental performance)
- Academic performance
- Charter Schools
- District characteristics
- Each district has a unique profile. Visiting district websites and reading the expanded district profiles at SavetoDallas.com will reveal their distinct features and offerings.