

# Schools - Public Education

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.

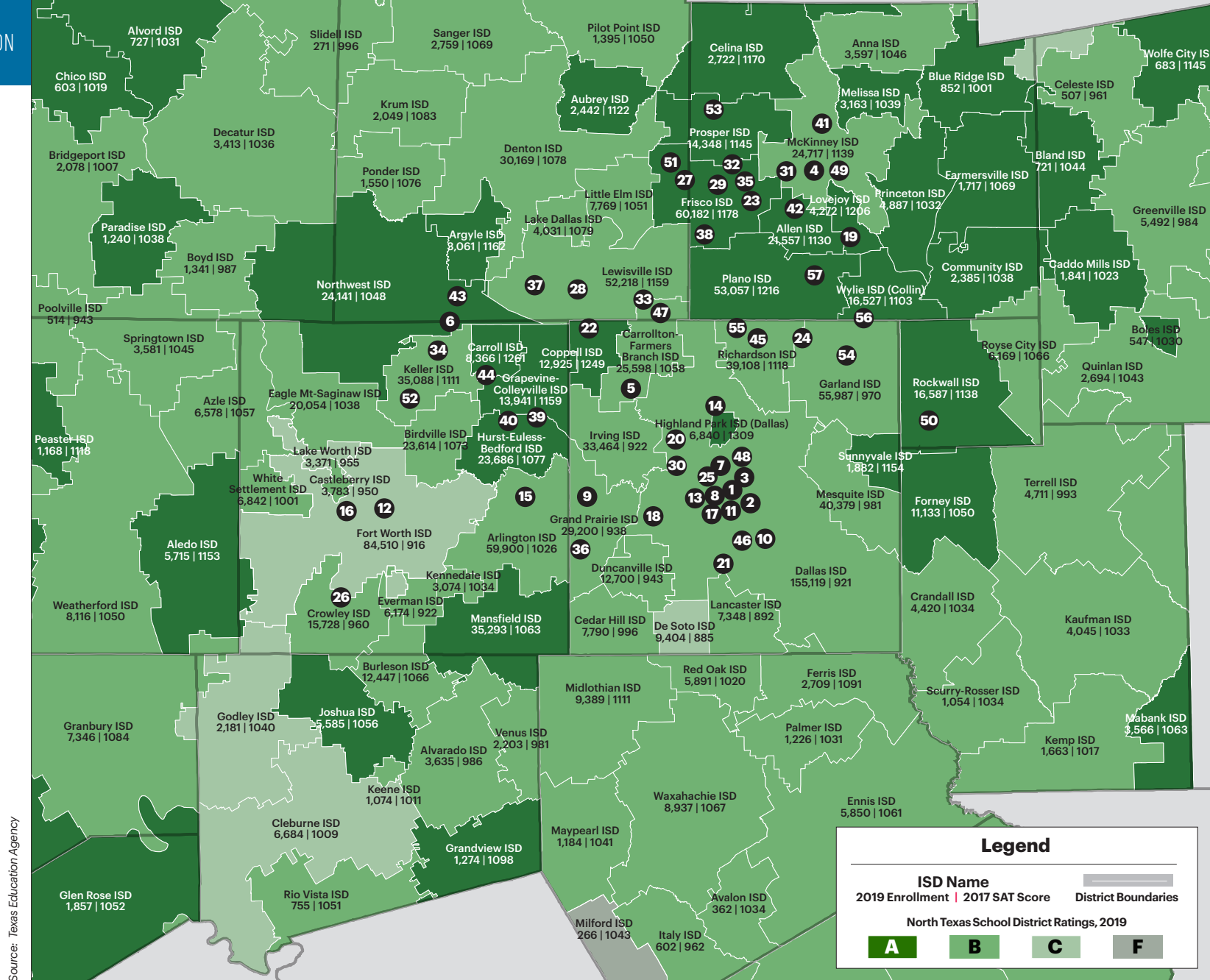
The Dallas Independent School District—or Dallas ISD—is the region’s largest school district with approximately 155,000 students. Students attending Dallas ISD schools reside in Addison, Balch Springs, Carrollton, Cockrell Hill, Dallas, Farmers Branch, Garland, Highland Park, Hutchins, Mesquite, Seagoville, 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 serves most of the city of Fort Worth, as well as those of Benbrook, Westover Hills, and Westworth Village. Students from parts of Forest Hill, Haltom City, and Kennedale also attend FWISD schools. 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 authorized by Texas Senate bill 1882, the Texas Partnership Opportunity.



Source: Texas Education Agency

# U.S. News & World Report Best High Schools (2019)

Rank	School	City
1	12 School of Science and Engineering Magnet (SEM)	Dallas
2	16 School For The Talented And Gifted (TAG)	Dallas
3	63 Irma Lerma Rangel Young Women's Leadership School	Dallas
4	104 Imagine International Academy of North Texas	McKinney
5	114 Uplift Education - North Hills Prep HS	Irving
6	116 Westlake Academy	Westlake
7	117 Booker T. Washington SPVA	Dallas
8	124 Judge Barefoot Sanders Law Magnet	Dallas
9	135 Grand Prairie Fine Arts Academy	Grand Prairie
10	180 Barack Obama Male Leadership Academy	Dallas
11	181 School of Business and Management	Dallas
12	200 Young Women's Leadership Academy	Fort Worth
13	206 School of Health Professions	Dallas
14	210 Highland Park HS	Dallas
15	242 Uplift Summit International HS	Arlington
16	253 Texas Academy of Biomedical Sciences	Fort Worth
17	299 Rosie Sorrells School of Education and Social Services	Dallas
18	384 Trinidad Garza Early College At Mountain View	Dallas
19	399 Lovejoy HS	Lucas
20	438 Uplift Williams Preparatory HS	Dallas
21	550 Kathlyn Joy Gilliam Collegiate Academy	Dallas
22	557 Coppell HS	Coppell
23	560 Liberty HS	Frisco
24	640 International Leadership of Texas - Garland HS	Garland
25	657 Dr. Wright L Lassiter Jr Early College HS	Dallas
26	665 Harmony School of Innovation - Forth Worth	Fort Worth
27	686 Wakeland HS	Frisco
28	716 Founders Classical Academy	Lewisville
29	779 Centennial HS	Frisco
30	886 Uplift Heights Preparatory HS	Dallas
31	934 McKinney Boyd HS	McKinney
32	955 Heritage HS	Frisco
33	1003 Harmony Science Academy - Carrollton	Carrollton
34	1074 Keller HS	Keller
35	1083 Independence H S	Frisco
36	1181 John Dubiski Career HS	Grand Prairie
37	1243 Flower Mound HS	Flower Mound
38	1295 Frisco HS	Frisco
39	1296 Colleyville Heritage HS	Colleyville
40	1307 Harmony Science Academy - Euless	Euless
41	1324 McKinney North HS	McKinney
42	1391 Allen HS	Allen
43	1402 Byron Nelson HS	Trophy Club
44	1457 Grapevine HS	Grapevine
45	1520 Richardson HS	Richardson
46	1578 A Maceo Smith New Tech HS	Dallas
47	1579 Creekview HS	Carrollton
48	1702 Uplift Peak Preparatory HS	Dallas
49	1772 McKinney HS	McKinney
50	1791 Rockwall -Heath HS	Rockwall
51	1798 Lone Star HS	Frisco
52	1840 Central HS	Keller
53	1917 Prosper HS	Prosper
54	1930 Harmony School of Innovation - Garland	Garland
55	1947 Pearce HS	Richardson
56	1954 Wylie HS	Wylie
57	1957 Plano East Senior HS	Plano

## Choosing a District

Choices abound for schooling in the Dallas-Fort Worth area: public, public charter, private or parochial, 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 which hires a superintendent as CEO; sets a district philosophy (vision and mission) and local policies; selects a curriculum within the state guidelines; and sets the local ISD tax rate, budget, and district boundaries.

Here’s what you need to consider in finding the right school district for you:

### 1 The district and school’s philosophy vs. your family’s interests and needs

- Vision, mission, goals
- Size of school and class size
- Grade level alignment (K-4, K-5, K-6, etc.)
- Curriculum variations
- Parent engagement

### 2 Student achievement and performance (including staff and teacher performance)

The Dallas County area education coalition, COMMIT! and its partners offer a way of best assessing student achievement within schools and districts. Find it online at [commit2dallas.org](http://commit2dallas.org).

### 3 Program offerings and compatibility with your child’s interests and needs

- Athletics
- Career and technology
- Dual credit
- Extracurricular activities
- Fine arts
- Gifted and talented
- Performing arts
- Special education

### 4 Charter Schools

In 1995, the 74th Texas Legislature passed legislation giving the state the authority to create open-enrollment charter schools. These schools are subject to fewer state laws than other public schools and support the idea of ensuring fiscal and academic accountability without undue regulation of instructional methods or pedagogical innovation. Like school districts, charter schools are monitored and accredited under the statewide testing and accountability system.

### 5 District Characteristics

Each district has a unique profile. Visiting district websites and reading the expanded district profiles at [SayYesToDallas.com](http://SayYesToDallas.com) will reveal their distinct features and offerings.