

# 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.

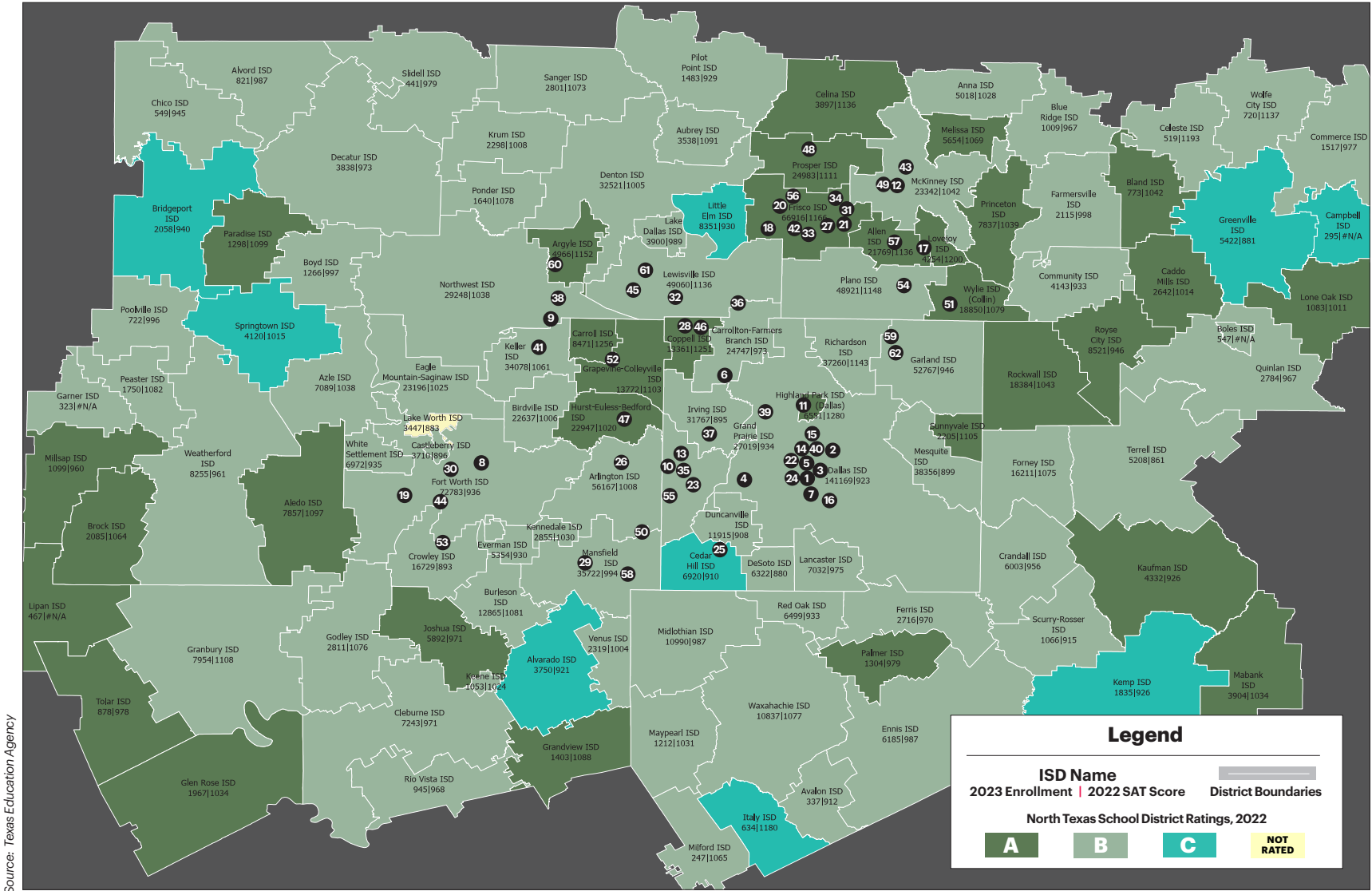
The Dallas Independent School District—or Dallas ISD—is the region’s largest school district with approximately 141,000 students. Students attending Dallas ISD schools reside in Addison, Balch Springs, Carrollton, Cockrell Hill, Dallas, Farmers Branch, Garland, Highland Park, Hutchins, Mesquite, Seagoville, University Park, and Wilmer.

Dallas ISD hosts 29 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 being 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), Grand Prairie Collegiate Institute (Grand Prairie), Highland Park High School (Highland Park), Uplift Academy (Arlington, Dallas, Irving), and Young Women’s Leadership Academy (Fort Worth).

In 2023, five area schools were recognized as Blue Ribbon Schools, increasing the total number of awards to 60 since 2014. The Blue Ribbon designation is a national honor awarded to those schools that have achieved academic excellence or made significant progress in closing the achievement gap.

The Fort Worth ISD dominates Tarrant County, serving approximately 73,000 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 six leadership academies made possible by a partnership with the Texas Wesleyan School of Education and authorized by Texas Senate bill 1882—the Texas Partnership Opportunity—to improve academic performance.



Source: Texas Education Agency

## 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
- 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
- 5 District Characteristics**

Each district has a unique profile. Visiting district websites will reveal their distinct features and offerings.
- 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 [commitpartnership.org](http://commitpartnership.org).
- 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.

# U.S. News & World Report Best High Schools (2023)

Rank	School	City
1	6 School For The Talented And Gifted (TAG)	Dallas
2	18 Irma Lerma Rangel Young Women's Leadership School	Dallas
3	23 School of Science and Engineering Magnet (SEM)	Dallas
4	91 Trinidad Garza Early College At Mountain View	Dallas
5	93 Judge Barefoot Sanders Law Magnet	Dallas
6	129 Uplift Education - North Hills Prep HS	Irving
7	132 School of Health Professions	Dallas
8	159 Young Women's Leadership Academy	Fort Worth
9	184 Westlake Academy	Westlake
10	188 Grand Prairie Collegiate Institute	Grand Prairie
11	206 Highland Park HS	Highland Park
12	241 Imagine International Academy of North Texas	McKinney
13	242 Grand Prairie Fine Arts Academy	Grand Prairie
14	249 Dr. Wright L. Lassiter Jr Early College HS	Dallas
15	309 Booker T. Washington SPVA	Dallas
16	346 Barack Obama Male Leadership Academy	Dallas
17	360 Lovejoy HS	Lucas
18	385 Reedy HS	Frisco
19	388 World Languages Institute	Fort Worth
20	417 Wakeland HS	Frisco
21	436 Liberty HS	Frisco
22	445 Rosie Sorrells School of Ed. and Social Services HS	Dallas
23	448 Young Women's Leadership Academy at Arnold	Grand Prairie
24	498 School of Business and Management	Dallas
25	522 Cedar Hill Collegiate HS	Cedar Hill
26	537 Uplift Summit International HS	Arlington
27	557 Centennial HS	Frisco
28	578 Coppell HS	Coppell
29	585 Mansfield Frontier HS	Mansfield
30	645 Texas Academy of Biomedical	Fort Worth
31	687 Independence HS	Frisco
32	710 Founders Classical Academy	Lewisville
33	831 Lebanon Trail HS	Frisco
34	837 Heritage HS	Frisco
35	988 Uplift Grand HS	Grand Prairie
36	1064 Harmony Science Academy - Carrollton	Carrollton
37	1067 Uplift Infinity HS	Irving
38	1090 Byron Nelson HS	Trophy Club
39	1138 Uplift Williams Preparatory HS	Dallas
40	1176 Uplift Luna Preparatory HS	Dallas
41	1261 Keller HS	Keller
42	1268 Frisco HS	Frisco
43	1271 McKinney North HS	McKinney
44	1284 Fort Worth Academy of Fine Arts	Fort Worth
45	1346 Flower Mound HS	Flower Mound
46	1358 New Tech HS at Coppell	Coppell
47	1406 Harmony Science Academy - Euless	Euless
48	1429 Prosper HS	Prosper
49	1432 McKinney Boyd HS	McKinney
50	1471 Arlington Collegiate HS	Arlington
51	1473 Wylie HS	Wylie
52	1547 iUniversity Prep	Grapevine
53	1551 Harmony School of Innovation - Forth Worth	Fort Worth
54	1588 Plano East Sr HS	Plano
55	1623 John Dubiski Career HS	Grand Prairie
56	1678 Memorial HS	Frisco
57	1704 Allen HS	Allen
58	1817 Mansfield HS	Mansfield
59	1843 International Leadership of Texas - Garland HS	Garland
60	1901 Argyle HS	Argyle
61	1968 Marcus HS	Flower Mound
62	1999 North Garland HS	Garland