



Magnet schools

are the **original** and largest form of public school choice, dating back more than 40 years.

There are now approximately 4,340 magnet schools across the U.S. serving nearly 3.5 million students.

Magnet schools make up one quarter of the top 100 high schools. (U.S. News & World Report)

What are the benefits of magnet schools?

Magnet Schools serve a wide array of students from all backgrounds. They provide rigorous education and promote higher level cognitive and social learning that helps students transition to postsecondary education and careers.

While the achievement gap continues to widen nationwide, many communities across the country have used magnet schools to close that gap, reduce racial tensions, and make a lasting, positive impact on children, their families, their communities, and our national economy.



Did you know?

Magnet schools are:

Free public elementary, middle, and high schools that are operated by school districts

Open and accessible to all students, regardless of where they live—most use a lottery system for admission to accommodate the significant demand

Innovative, offering theme-based curricula in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM), Fine and Performing Arts, International Baccalaureate, International Studies, Career and Technical Education (CTE), World Languages (immersion and non-immersion), and many others

Accountable to state and district supervision, and to state academic standards

Turnaround low-performing schools.

Magnet schools revitalize low-performing schools through specialized curriculum, high-quality instruction, and family and community partnerships that include mentoring, internships, financial support, and field trips. Magnet school students are less likely to be absent or skip class—and provide more peer support for academic achievement.

Preparing students for the future.

Magnet school curricula provide all students with the skills to be career and college ready. Often, magnet school requirements exceed those of their district and state. Students take more credits and more rigorous courses that align with college admissions requirements.

Innovative, high-quality curricula and diverse teaching styles.

Magnet school teachers and administrators are well-trained to meet the unique needs of students and nurture their talents. This makes students more interested in school and more excited to learn.

School choice in the public school system.

Parents should have the option to send their kids to a school that focuses on their strengths, engages them, and motivates them to learn.

Diversity. Research shows students learn better and are more prepared for the real world when they work alongside other students with different backgrounds.

Why do we need magnet schools?

Our nation's educational system remains largely segregated by both race and class. It needs to be improved so all students from a wide array of socio-economic backgrounds have access to diverse and academically rigorous learning environments. We need all students to be well-prepared for college and career opportunities.

- High school teachers estimate that one-third of graduating high school seniors are not college ready and will need remedial course work.
- 63 percent of all jobs in the United States will require some postsecondary education.
- 90 percent of all new jobs in growing industries like STEM with high wages will require some postsecondary education.

Low-income and minority children are being left behind. More than 16 million children in the U.S.—22 percent of all children—live in poverty. These students, many of whom are also members of racial minority groups, disproportionately attend the lowest-achieving, segregated schools.

- By the end of 4th grade, low-income, African-American and Hispanic students are, on average, two years behind their peers in reading. By the time they reach the 12th grade, they are four years behind.
- A majority of African-American and Latino students now attend schools that are predominantly low-income and non-white, leading to what researchers define as “double segregation.”
- Even more disheartening is evidence that suggests that schools that once had successful integration programs, especially in the South, are becoming segregated yet again.

The bottom line

Magnet schools have taught us how to reduce the achievement gaps among students from different backgrounds and give all of them a real chance to thrive. We must invest in providing all students—regardless of background and zip codes—with access to a first-rate education that lays the foundation for a successful future.

How are magnet schools different than charter schools?

	Magnet Schools	Charter Schools
Part of the public school system?	Yes	Charters operate autonomously
Who operates and provides oversight?	Same district administration and school board as public schools	Varies: authorizers may include state or local school boards, local universities, nonprofit entities, or charter boards.
Adherence to state and local regulations	Must adhere to state and local rules	Laws often exempt charter schools
Can they be for-profit?	No	Yes
Cost	Free	Free

Learn more at www.magnet.edu

