



Choosing A School For Your Child: The Independent Private School Option

(NAPSA)—Parents everywhere want what’s best for their children, and education is a priority. With all the school options out there, how do you find the right one for your child?

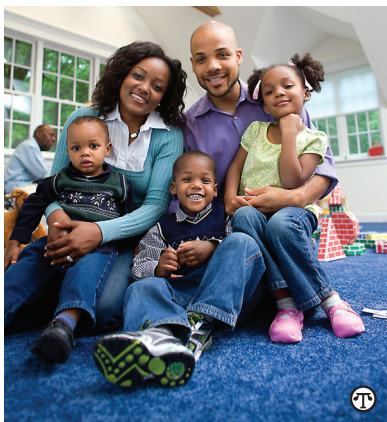
For more than half a million families each year, the answer is an independent private school, according to the National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS).

Each independent school has a unique mission that guides its offerings. According to NAIS president Patrick Bassett, this means that “whether you’re looking for a specific style of teaching, a particular class or sport, or a community that shares your values, you can find an independent school that meets your child’s needs.”

Independent private schools ask students to apply for admission and the admission process typically begins almost a year before the student wants to enroll. In the fall, families read school websites, visit school open houses and narrow down a list of the schools to which they’d like to apply.

As a first step, it helps to consider what the ideal school for your child would be like. Is it small or large? Competitive or more nurturing? Are there aptitudes or interests you’d like to foster in your child? Challenges you’d like to address? Are you looking for a school nearby or is living away from home at a boarding school more appealing?

Most applications are due in January but deadlines can vary from school to school. Independent schools usually require some testing for admissions, transcripts from the child’s last school and



An independent school might be the right fit for your child.

recommendations from current teachers. Interviews with students and their families take place in the fall and winter. For very young children, schools often conduct group interviews or have the child visit a class to help gauge whether the school is the right fit for the student’s needs.

“It’s very important to check with the school about its specific requirements and deadlines,” notes Bassett. The admissions office can also tell you about various options for paying for an independent school education. Most schools offer financial aid for families that qualify and some offer tuition payment plans, which spread fees out over multiple payments. Bassett adds that “if you’re concerned about paying for a private school education, asking about options makes good sense.”

For a list of questions to ask to help you find the right school, as well as more detailed information about the admissions process and financial aid, visit www.nais.org/go/parents.